

Northern Narragansett Bay Regional Initiative

July 2004 – February 2008

Vision and Expected Results

Vision: We imagine people around a Bay where choices are shaped by a concern for quality of life, equity, economic opportunity and the environment. Specifically, the four cities of the Upper Narragansett Bay (Cranston, East Providence, Pawtucket, Providence) recognize that they belong to a coherent urban ecosystem promoting a shared vision, with measurable goals to enhance both economic opportunity and a healthy environment at a regional scale. The SAMP is an effective decision-making tool for coordinating the cities and state agencies. The policies, goals and recommendations are consistent with the vision of the region, and fit within the context of the broader geographic and economic region while embracing local community implementation. The citizens, leaders, and decision-makers of the Upper Narragansett Bay work to ensure that waterfront redevelopment and use of the coastal resources provide not only economic and social, but also net environmental benefits for the region.

Mission: In support of the vision, the program will work to mobilize governments, business and communities around the Upper Narragansett Bay to work collectively as stewards of our urban waterfront, coast and tidal waters – to define and achieve the health, equitable allocation, and sustainable use of coastal resources. The SAMP will be developed in a manner that ensures waterfront redevelopment is regionally coherent and supportive of the States' Bay plan. The program will assist municipalities to work together to take advantage of opportunities to advance plans for waterfront development, solve regional problems, and incorporate community needs to the process, as appropriate.

Expected Results

The Metro SAMP effort will help to:

- Redevelop the Metro Bay waterfront as a diverse and vibrant place and a national model for waterfront place-making
- Integrate the individual municipal visions into a long-term, sustainable, regional vision for Metro Bay area
- Better understand the connection and cumulative impact the four municipalities have on the shared tidal waters of northern Narragansett Bay.
- Improve our knowledge of the regional impacts and potential mitigation of natural hazards
- Increase preparedness and reduce the impact of natural hazards
- Streamline the permitting process for appropriate redevelopment
- Increase public access to and along the coast
- Protect ecologically valuable habitat corridors within this urban setting
- Maintain a vibrant and diverse working waterfront
- Establish a regional decision-making framework
- Provide opportunities for residents and other stakeholders to play a significant role in regional decision – making for the Metro Bay area.
- Establish effective regional communication and coordination.
- Create a regional cumulative knowledge-base

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Work Plan

Overall Goals

Key agencies (CRMC, DEM, EDC) and the four municipalities (Cranston, East Providence, Pawtucket, Providence):

- Work in partnership with each other and with resource users, including Latino leaders, to design and implement a shared vision for their urban waterfront, coast, and tidal waters.
- Formally adopt the SAMP as a decision-making tool that integrates environmental policy and regulatory language with economic investment policy.
- Share responsibility for the SAMP implementation, enforcement, and monitoring and use streamlined permitting.
- Cooperate to update annual work plans and fund pertinent initiatives to achieve the goals of the SAMP.

Year 1 Objectives (July 2004 – June 2005)

- 1) Identify the major regional issues that need to become part of the Metro Bay SAMP (completed).
- 2) Identify the major stakeholders and their interests to more effectively involve them in the SAMP process (completed, however continuos).
- 3) Understand the existing and proposed land and water uses within the Metro Bay SAMP region as well as the underlying economic and social dynamics that drive them (completed, however continuos).
- 4) Develop the project's capacity to analyze regional spatial data including land cover, property values, key urban infrastructure systems, environmental attributes, flood hazard areas, brownfields, social and demographic patterns that will assist municipal, state and federal decision-makers make better decisions, for project sites, adjacent neighborhoods, municipalities and the region (ongoing).
- 5) Develop mechanisms to streamline the redevelopment regulatory process for the Metro Bay SAMP region (ongoing).

Year 1 Highlights

1. Determined SAMP boundary and issues
2. Determined the "format" of the revised SAMP
3. Developed Communication products (web site, brochure, display panel)
4. Began to hold monthly municipal forum events
5. Began development of a regional GIS database
6. Drafted Urban Coastal Greenway Policy

Year 2 Objectives (July 2005– June 2006)

- 1) Initiate a public process framework that involves municipalities, state and federal agencies and civic institutions in the development of the SAMP. Determine long-term goals for this public involvement.
- 2) Increase preparedness and reduce the impact of natural hazards through technical support, training and education to the region.
- 3) Analyze regional spatial data including land cover, property values, key urban infrastructure systems, environmental attributes, flood hazard areas, social and demographic patterns that will assist municipal, state and federal decision-makers make better decisions, for project sites, adjacent neighborhoods, municipalities and the region.
- 4) Foster the mechanisms to streamline the redevelopment regulatory process for the Metro Bay SAMP region.

Year 2 Activities

1. Development of a public outreach structure

- a) *Establish the Metro Bay Partnership, which serves as advisory for the Metro SAMP effort.*
- b) *Hold public meetings at each municipality*
- c) *Continue Website updates and listserv*
- d) *Hold “Metro Bay Summit”*
- e) *Develop on line searchable database for Metro Bay issues.*

2. SAMP components

- a) *Develop **Urban Coastal Greenway Design Manual** to support the policy.*
- b) *Work with URI experts and other state and federal experts to improve our knowledge of the regional impacts and potential mitigation of natural hazards*
- c) *Provide municipalities with technical training and assistance to increase preparedness and reduce the impact of natural hazards*
- d) *Implement an educational campaign to increase preparedness and reduce the impact of natural hazards.*

3. Regional vision and goals

- a) *Develop a document that presents the regional vision.*
- b) *Develop time-bound measurable goals that integrate economic, environmental and social aspects necessary for evaluation future decisions and initiatives in urban redevelopment. Monitor annually.*

4. Regional Framework

- a) *Continue to hold monthly municipal forum to guide SAMP process.*
- b) *Determine best mechanism to involve state and federal agencies into SAMP process.*

Year 3 Objectives (July 2006– June 2007)

- 1) Continue a public process framework that involves municipalities, state and federal agencies and civic institutions in the development of the SAMP. Determine long-term goals for this public involvement.
- 2) Develop recreation and land conservation strategies to increase public access to and along the coast, better manage present and future recreational activities while still protecting and restoring ecologically valuable habitat corridors within this urban setting.

Year 3 Activities

1. Development of a public outreach structure

- a) *Continue to facilitate the Metro Bay Partnership, which serves as advisory for the Metro SAMP effort.*
- b) *Continue to hold public meetings at each municipality*
- c) *Continue Website updates and listserv*

2. SAMP components

- a) *Develop a **Recreation** policy to better manage recreational activities including marina development and increased boating activities.*
- b) *Rezone the water types and user conflicts.*
- c) *Develop a Metro Bay Land Conservation Strategy that identifies potential public access points and natural habitat corridors.*
- d) *Begin to develop policy and recommended actions for both the **working waterfronts** and **brownfield redevelopment** issues*

3. Regional vision and goals

- a) *Develop a cumulative impact study that analyzes and presents the economic, social and environmental impacts of this regional vision(not funded)*
- b) *Begin to evaluate success based on measurable goals.*

4. Regional Framework

- a) *Continue to hold monthly municipal forum to guide SAMP process.*
- b) *Begin to pose strategies for a sustainable institutional framework*

Year 4 Objectives (July 2007– February 2008):

- 1) Complete project activities
- 2) Synthesize products in one document
- 3) Ensure sustainability of the institutional framework for the Metro Bay SAMP
- 4) Ensure CRMC and Municipalities have electronic and hard copies of all project products.