The Aquidneck Island Planning Commission (AIPC), founded in 1985, serves as a regional agency fostering communication, coordination and consensus building among the municipalities of Middletown, Newport, Portsmouth, as well as Naval Station Newport and other civic, state, and federal organizations.

**AIPC Initiatives**

- **West Side Master Plan** – As AIPC’s most ambitious effort, this planning process evaluated the 5,000 acres along the Island’s West Side, generating recommendations for land use, transportation, economic development, and utilities.

- **Aquidneck Island Transportation Study** – AIPC is in the midst of this two-year study to develop a Comprehensive Multi-Modal Transportation Plan for the island. The goals are to increase mobility, transportation choices, and safety.

- **Regional Traffic Management** – AIPC is developing a traffic management program for the island to improve traffic planning during special events through improved coordination and the use of intelligent transportation systems.

- **Energy Conservation** – AIPC is leading an effort to reduce energy consumption on the island through the creation of the Island Energy Alliance and the development of education and conservation programs.

- **Reuse of Navy Land** – AIPC serves as the federally-designated “point of contact” in the Base Realignment and Closure process for the island’s surplus Navy properties.
TIMELINE FOR AIRPA ACTIVITIES

May 25, 2010    Official recognition of AIRPA in the Federal Register

June, 2010    Grant funding officially available from Office of Economic Adjustment for AIRPA

May 25 - June 25, 2010    AIRPA must advertises in at least two local newspapers to inform all parties of LRA process

June 2010    AIRPA hires a reuse coordinator to coordinate its work.
   AIRPA selects a BRAC -experienced consulting firm to conduct its market analysis, create a redevelopment plan and provide other necessary expertise in the redevelopment process

July 28, 2010    Public Workshop and Surplus Property Tours   (One day event)
   Conducted in collaboration with Naval Station Newport, all municipalities, AIPC, the Office of Economic Adjustment, HUD and the BRAC Program Management Office

June 25 –Nov. 25, 2010    AIRPA receives applications for public use of properties (150 days)

Nov. 25 - August 25, 2011    AIRPA completes a balanced redevelopment plan (additional 270 days)

August, 2011    Municipalities sign off on Redevelopment Plan

August 26, 2011    Completed plan is submitted to HUD and the Navy for review/approval
The West Side Master Plan

The West Side Master Plan has been specifically created to support important, common interests in shaping the future of the West Side of Aquidneck Island. Prepared by the West Side Task Force of the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission, this Master Plan contains strategies to advance a shared, community-based vision for the West Side. Linked to the Vision are lists of actions that could manage change in order to fulfill this vision. Some highlights include:

**Land Use Strategies**

- Expand the inventory of systematically preserved open space and natural resources
- Provide a series of new public places and facilities to enjoy Narragansett Bay
- Protect and enhance scenic roads and vistas within the West Side
- Support the continued military use of those land areas that are needed for Naval Station Newport and the evolving national priorities
- Ensure that the reuse of excess Navy Land is consistent with the economic, civic and environmental goals

**Economic Development Strategies**

- Consistently support all actions that improve the quality of life for residents of Aquidneck Island as an economic strategy
- Actively support the existing cluster of military activities and associated “research and development” businesses
- Actively support the specialized cluster of marine-related and marina uses
- Preserve land assets that are potentially prime development opportunities for job-generating businesses
- Ensure that the reuse and redevelopment of excess Navy property accomplishes both local and regional economic goals
- Promote affordable housing development within the West Side as an economic strategy
- Promote mixed-use development that appeals to the citizens of Aquidneck Island and the quality of life they seek
- Promote high value, high quality tourism, resort and second-home development

**Transportation Strategies**

- Create the Shoreline Drive, connecting Coddington Highway and the Gate 17 Access Road via an extension of Simonetti Drive through Naval Station Newport.
- Adopt special principles of design to enhance safety and create a systematic, access management approach to traffic calming
- Plan, design, and create remote parking at stations and stops in conjunction with the West Side Transit Strategy
- Support on-island rail service enhancements
- Support expansion of ferry and water shuttle service
- Provide a bicycle way along the Newport Secondary north of the Pell Bridge ramps to the Sikorskiet Bridge
- Evaluate and designate qualifying segments of streets and roads for “Share the Road” bikeways
- Require construction of sidewalks
- Create and market a Blue Trail of kayak and small-boat put-in locations

**Utilities Strategies**

- Support the establishment of a regular forum, ongoing discussions and collaboration among the City of Newport, Towns of Middletown & Portsmouth, the Navy, PWEI, and RIECD regarding water treatment and distribution issues
- Resolve issues related to the Safe Drinking Water Act
- Provide for the transfer, purchase or privatization of Navy utilities and regionally-important utility corridors
- Support the provision of wastewater treatment systems and solutions that are needed to fulfill the economic development goals and land use vision contained in the West Side Master Plan
- Promote the location of wind turbines to supplement electric generation and distribution

**About AIPC**

The Aquidneck Island Planning Commission (AIPC) is a regional agency fostering communication, coordination and consensus building among the municipalities of Middletown, Newport, Portsmouth as well as Naval Station Newport and other civic, state and federal organizations.

The AIPC is a 501 (c) (3) organization operating under Rhode Island General Law, Title 45, Chapter 22. In 1985 the towns of Middletown and Portsmouth and the City of Newport each passed a resolution of commitment that set up the structure and purpose of the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission, including the role of facilitating solutions on critical island-wide comprehensive planning issues such as transportation, water quality, land use and development.

The West Side Master Plan

Addressing the short and long-term planning issues of the West Side of Aquidneck Island, the West Side Master Plan represents the collaborative effort of hundreds of Island residents and supporters. Under the auspices of the AIPC, members of the West Side Master Plan Task Force worked closely with Council members, municipal planners and local board members from the Island’s three communities, representatives from Naval Station Newport, Rhode Island Coastal Resources Center, Rhode Island Office of Statewide Planning, Rhode Island Department of Transportation, and the Newport County Chamber of Commerce to produce this comprehensive regional planning document, the first of its kind in the State of Rhode Island.

The project was funded through the assistance of the Rhode Island Congressional Delegation, who succeeded in securing a grant from the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration to the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission. The grant will close out in December of 2006.

The Master Plan was finalized and released to the public on November 28, 2005 with the participation and overwhelming support from the Congressional Delegation, the Governor of Rhode Island, state and local officials, and the public at large. The AIPC is now working diligently to identify and secure funds for the implementation of projects identified in the plan recommendations.

Recommendations of the West Side Master Plan include implementation strategies for reducing congestion on West Main Road, setting aside land for public access to Narragansett Bay, supporting marine-related businesses and development, creating safe bicycle paths and walking trails, developing an alternate travel route, and many additional planning ideas and tools throughout the 350-page report.
The Vision for the West Side

- The land will reach a stable balance among uses.
- Large areas of land will remain undeveloped, preserved in linked patterns that encompass non-profit ownership, public land, and portions of private property.
- New developments will be designed to preserve the character of the landscape, conceal many of the new buildings from prominent vantage points, and use emerging techniques to dramatically diminish impacts relative to previous practices.
- The West Side’s agricultural land will be maintained in the future as long and as much as possible.
- New residential development will be limited to types of housing that clearly contribute to the Island’s needs, economic circumstances, and townscape.
- Retail development will be constrained to re-development and improvements to previously developed areas.
- The Pell Bridge ramps and the areas around them will be transformed into an attractive mixed-use district.
- The West Side will host several sites along the Newport Bristol "Heritage Corridor" - using a system of signage and interpretive enhancements that links the past to the present.
- Moving along the West Main Road network will be safer and more pleasant.
- The Defense Highway will be converted into Shoreline Drive—a pleasant and useful alternative route for some of the Island’s employees, visitors, and residents.
- Getting to, from, and along Narragansett Bay will be improved.
- Pedestrian trails and bicycle paths will extend along the entire West Side, linking amenities and crossing through natural areas.
- The utility infrastructure will efficiently and equitably provide services to any of the land uses that the communities deem appropriate for the West Side.
- Natural and man-made hazards will be minimized, and to the extent possible, controlled.

PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

- Pedestrian trails and bicycle paths will extend along the entire West Side.
- The utility infrastructure will efficiently and equitably provide services to any of the land uses that the communities deem appropriate for the West Side.
- Natural and man-made hazards will be minimized, and to the extent possible, controlled.

AQUIDNECK ISLAND WEST SIDE MASTER PLAN
AQUIDNECK ISLAND PLANNING COMMITTEE WEST SIDE TASK FORCE

Prepared by: The Ceci Group • Ture Engineering Corporation • SMWM •
Edwards and Kelty • Thomas and Company • Nimitz Partners
Greene Lane Park Concept

The Midway Pier area has the potential for development as a public scenic overlook along Shoreline Drive near Greene Lane. This Navy property is currently an unpaved parking lot between Burma Road and the Newport Secondary rail line. The area provides scenic vistas of the Bay, Pell Bridge, and Islands and could be developed as a public picnic area, scenic overlook, shoreline trailhead to a scenic overlook at McAllister Point, access to a fishing pier, and as a destination for kayaks and small boats on the Blue Trail.
Shoreline Drive Concept

The existing Burma Road/Defense Highway along the West Side has the potential to become “Shoreline Drive,” a scenic roadway connecting Coddington Highway and the Gate 17 Access Road via an extension of Simonpietri Drive through Naval Station Newport. The enhanced roadway with landscaping, a textured median, and wooden guide rails would offer a scenic drive for visitors as well as an alternate route for daily commuters of West Main Road. A dedicated bikeway adjacent to the roadway would provide a connection from downtown Newport north to the Sakonnet Bridge and beyond.
Melville Marina Village Concept

The Melville Marina Village in Portsmouth is conceived as a water-edge cluster of boating and residential uses that includes the possibility of restaurants, marine-related retail or other appropriate business enterprises in the mix. Marina slips would extend out into the cove, and feature a convenient docking location for future ferry or water shuttles along the Bay. A continuous band of public walkways and open space would line the Cove.