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DEVELOPMENT

R.I. issues call for 'smart-growth' proposals



RICHARD GODFREY, right, executive director of Rhode Island Housing and a founding partner of KeepSpace, announces a public-private initiative that will award \$10 million in grants to developers of up to five "KeepSpace Communities."

PROVIDENCE – Rhode Island Housing, accompanied by the R.I. Department of Planning and GrowSmart Rhode Island, today announced a \$10 million affordable-housing and smart-growth initiative that will fund up to five proposals from municipalities and developers.

The initiative calls for the development – or redevelopment – of KeepSpace Communities: neighborhoods where people can live, work and shop inclusively.

“Rhode Islanders want, demand and deserve good homes, a healthy environment, strong commerce, sensible infrastructure, positive community impacts, integrated arts, recreation, culture and religion,” Richard Godfrey, executive director of Rhode Island Housing, said at the early-afternoon press conference. “These are the elements of a KeepSpace community.”

The deadline for proposals is Nov. 15. Each should demonstrate smart planning for a different type of community – urban, suburban, rural and transit-oriented, Godfrey said.

The initiative is a step toward greater synergy between government organizations and private developers in the drive to develop the state while preserving open space, according to Kevin Flynn, associate director of the Department of Planning. He called the effort “truly innovative and visionary.”

“The type of development that KeepSpace is trying to promote used to happen naturally,” said Flynn. “But now, communities and developers need help to overcome the hurdles that make this sort of development pattern very difficult to achieve today.”

