



March 26, 2026

The Honorable Carol Hagan McEntee
Chair, House Judiciary Committee
Rhode Island House of Representatives
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: HOUSE BILL 8004 – AN ACT RELATING TO TOWNS AND CITIES -- RHODE ISLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AND LAND USE ACT

Dear Chair McEntee and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, we write to express support for House Bill 8004, which provides technical amendments to regulations governing comprehensive planning, land use, subdivisions, zoning, and moderate-income housing.

These amendments clarify existing rules and help municipalities administer land use and development processes more effectively. Across Rhode Island, updates to zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations that align with state law and local comprehensive plans have contributed to meaningful housing development, including both market-rate and affordable units.

While these regulatory improvements have encouraged growth, they have also increased workloads for municipal planning and zoning staff. As expressed by some of our members, many cities and towns are seeing a substantial rise in land development and subdivision applications, underscoring the importance of clear, practical, and predictable frameworks for both municipalities and property owners.

We support the bill's overall objective of improving clarity in development review and promoting consistent application of land use rules. We also understand that Section 45-24-38(d) aims to shorten review timelines for minor land development projects and subdivisions, encouraging timely and predictable approvals. Municipalities already work diligently to process applications efficiently. However, with the recent surge in development activity driven by regulatory changes, maintaining the current review periods is essential to ensure municipal staff can manage workloads effectively. For this reason, we respectfully request that these timeframes remain as they are.

The League appreciates the General Assembly's ongoing efforts to address housing needs in Rhode Island and commends this bill for providing technical improvements that support municipalities in implementing effective and predictable land use policies.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and for your consideration of our perspective.

Sincerely,

Randy R. Rossi
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House Judiciary Committee