

TOWN OF BARRINGTON, RHODE ISLAND

MUNICIPAL RESOLUTION

IN SUPPORT OF 2026 HOUSE BILL 8031

**ALLOWING MUNICIPALITIES A ONE-TIME, STATE-APPROVED EXTENSION TO UPDATE A
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Whereas Rhode Island municipalities are statutorily charged with the duty and responsibility for preparing, adopting, and amending comprehensive plans. (RIGL § 45-22.2-8)

Whereas Rhode Island municipalities shall periodically review and amend its plan in a timely manner to account for changing conditions. At a minimum, a municipality shall fully update and re-adopt its entire comprehensive plan, including supplemental plans, such as, but not limited to, special area plans, that may be incorporated by reference, at least once every ten (10) years from the date of municipal adoption. A minimum twenty-year (20) planning timeframe in considering forecasts, goals, and policies must be utilized for an update. If a municipality fails to fully update and re-adopt its comprehensive plan within twelve (12) years from the date of the previous plan's adoption, such municipality shall not be able to utilize the comprehensive plan as a basis for denial of a municipal land use decision. (RIGL § 45-22.2-12(b))

Whereas Rhode Island municipalities periodically could benefit from additional time to fulfill the requirements for carrying out an update to its comprehensive plan so as not to jeopardize its duties and responsibilities related to land use decision-making along with carrying out its continuing planning process.

Be it resolved that the Town of Barrington supports passage by the Rhode Island General Assembly of House Bill 8031.

Such act would authorize municipalities to request a one-time, state-approved extension of the deadline for updating their comprehensive plans, provided the municipality demonstrates active engagement in the update process, and to ensure that the existing comprehensive plan remains in effect during the extension period.

Adopted April 6, 2026, by The Barrington Town Council



Braxton Cloutier, Town Council President

Attest:



Stephanie Bernardo, CMC Town Clerk

Contact Information (for coordination purposes)


Herb Durfee, Director of Planning & Resilience

Email: hdurfee@barrington.ri.gov

401-247-1900 x347



MEMORANDUM

TO: Barrington Town Council
CC: Phil Hervey, Town Manager
Stephanie Bernardo, Town Clerk
FROM: Herbert A. Durfee, III, Director of Planning, Building & Resilience 
DATE: April 02, 2026
SUBJECT: Proposed Resolution Supporting the Passage of Rhode Island House Bill 8031
Enabling a One-Time Extension of the Deadline for Updating Comprehensive
Plans

ISSUE: The issue for the Town Council is whether to resolve support for passage of H8031 that would enable a one-time extension of the deadline for update to a municipality's comprehensive plan.

BACKGROUND: According to the draft bill, the act would authorize municipalities to request a one-time, state-approved extension of the deadline for updating their comprehensive plans, provided the municipality demonstrates active engagement in the update process, and to ensure that the existing comprehensive plan remains in effect during the extension period. The act would take effect upon passage.

Attached for your consideration:

1. Housing Bill 8031, as introduced.
2. 4/1/26 email correspondence sent to the House Municipal Government & Housing Committee. Representatives Boylan and Knight have acknowledged receipt.

RECOMMENDATION: The Planning, Building & Resiliency Department staff recommends that the Town Council support passage of House Bill 8031 in form as introduced and request staff to relay such support to the Rhode Island General Assembly, including the Town of Barrington's legislative delegation, and to other applicable, interested entities including the Rhode Island League of Cities & Towns and the Legislative Committee of the Rhode Island Chapter of the American Planning Association.

Thank you for your consideration!

2026 -- H 8031

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LC005091
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

A N A C T

RELATING TO TOWNS AND CITIES -- RHODE ISLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING
AND LAND USE ACT

Introduced By: Representative Joseph J. Solomon

Date Introduced: February 27, 2026

Referred To: House Municipal Government & Housing

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 45-22.2 of the General Laws entitled "Rhode Island Comprehensive
2 Planning and Land Use Act" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

3 45-22.2-12.1. Extension of municipal comprehensive plan deadlines.

4 (a) Upon written request of a city or town, the Rhode Island division of statewide planning
5 ("the division") may grant an extension of the deadline for the update of a municipal comprehensive
6 plan for a period not to exceed twelve (12) months; provided that, the municipality has
7 demonstrated active engagement in the comprehensive plan update process, as determined by the
8 division, toward the preparation and submission of an update in accordance with this chapter.

9 (b) In determining whether a municipality has demonstrated active engagement in the
10 update process, the division may consider, but shall not be limited to, whether the municipality has:

11 (1) Initiated the comprehensive plan update process;

12 (2) Engaged or procured professional planning or consulting services;

13 (3) Conducted public outreach, workshops, or hearings;

14 (4) Coordinated with state agencies or the division; or

15 (5) Submitted draft materials or documentation for preliminary or formal review.

16 (c) During any extension granted pursuant to this section, the municipality's existing
17 comprehensive plan shall be deemed to remain in full force and effect for all purposes including,
18 but not limited to, zoning consistency, regulatory compliance, and eligibility for state or federal

1 funding.

2 (d) A municipality may be granted one extension pursuant to this section.

3 (e) The division may issue guidance or procedures necessary to implement the provisions

4 of this section.

5 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T
RELATING TO TOWNS AND CITIES -- RHODE ISLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING
AND LAND USE ACT

1 This act would authorize municipalities to request a one-time, state-approved extension of
2 the deadline for updating their comprehensive plans, provided the municipality demonstrates active
3 engagement in the update process, and to ensure that the existing comprehensive plan remains in
4 effect during the extension period.

5 This act would take effect upon passage.

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Support for H8031 - Extension for Comprehensive Plan Updates

From Herbert Durfee III <hdurfee@barrington.ri.gov>

Date Wed 4/1/2026 12:35 PM

To HouseMunicipalGovernmentandHousing@rilegislature.gov
<HouseMunicipalGovernmentandHousing@rilegislature.gov>

Cc Rep. Boylan, Jennifer <rep-boylan@rilegislature.gov>; rep-knight@rilegislature.gov <rep-knight@rilegislature.gov>; sen-lauria@rilegislature.gov <sen-lauria@rilegislature.gov>; Philip Hervey <PHervey@barrington.ri.gov>; RI League of Cities and Towns <cdonovan@rileague.org>; Mara, Susan <mara.susan@wseinc.com>

Dear House Municipal Government & Housing Committee Members,

Regarding H8031 and the merits for allowing municipalities a one-time extension of their Comprehensive Plan update process, such enabling legislation is warranted.

As a local planner that's been involved with municipalities for 40 years, including many plan updates, enabling a provision for an extension would be appreciated. As plans and planning become more sophisticated due in part to state-imposed requirements, and the time it can take to prepare a plan that meets those requirements while ensuring localism and maintenance of municipal characteristic traits, it's important for municipalities to have access to some additional, short-term time to prepare and adopt their plans, Barrington included.

If you require additional insight or clarification, please let me know. Otherwise, thank you for your timely consideration of the proposed bill.

Herb

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