



American Planning Association
Rhode Island Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

2015 Award Winners

Current Topic: Excellence in Community Engagement

Art Bridges Pawtucket
City of Pawtucket

This project, the City of Pawtucket's first major public art project, was designed to transform the George Street overpass of I-95 "into an iconic gateway and engaging streetscape that better reflects the city's artistic and economic vibrancy." Pawtucket's Department of Planning was awarded a National Endowment for the Arts grant to bring artwork to this overpass bridge. By the fall of 2016, a highly visible public art piece will be installed on the bridge's walkway, fence and overpass structure.

The City could have simply put out a call for artists, gathered a small selection committee, hired their preferred candidate and installed the work. However, a major goal of the project was to have community engagement efforts that reached residents in Pawtucket who have not traditionally been included in the City's arts renaissance. This goal served at least two purposes. First, the resulting art work will have significance and meaning for a broad variety of the cultures and backgrounds of Pawtucket's residents. Second, the City has found that people are generally much more willing to engage in discussions about public art than about traditional planning activities. Art can be both a figurative and literal bridge that brings different people together and connects them to issues of transportation, economic development, and more in a more accessible way. This knowledge will help Pawtucket in the future, as they design future community outreach efforts, and can serve as a lesson for communities all over Rhode Island.

More information

Award for Outstanding Comprehensive Plan

Town of Barrington

Barrington's 2015 Comprehensive Plan, a full rewrite of the 2010 plan, is first of all notable for having been completed in-house. Town Planner Philip Hervey, AICP, took the lead developing drafts of each element, updating data, creating and updating maps for the plan and designing and publishing the final

