

Rhode Island Historic Tax Credits: A Proven Economic & Housing Engine

2026 Status Report

preserve
RHODE ISLAND



GrowSmartRI
Sustainable Economic Growth
& Quality of Place

State Historic Tax Credits Economic Impact: 2002 - 2026



Addressing Critical RI Housing Needs

State Historic Tax Credits are a significant generator of much needed housing, creating **6,564 new** since 2002, with around 5,600 net new units. Data from 2013 to 2024 show that rehabilitation projects accomplished through state Historic Tax Credits have produced approximately **20% of all new housing units** in Rhode Island and 20% of all new affordable housing units.



Investment in Rhode Island

324 historic buildings have been rehabilitated, turning blighted areas into neighborhood assets, since 2002 when state Historic Tax Credits were first available. The \$446.4 million of state Historic Tax Credits issued over that period catalyzed over **\$2.18 billion in investment in RI communities.**

A 2017 study by PlaceEconomics found that 50¢ of every \$1 was returned to the state through sales, income and corporate taxes paid before the credit is even awarded. Further, the same study found that every \$1 dollar in tax credits leverages more than 10 times that amount in economic activity.

Built in 1898, Paragon Mill in Olneyville was a textile and manufacturing facility. By 2018, its blighted condition put it on Providence's Most Endangered Properties list. Completed in 2023, a \$32 million project used \$4.3 million in state Historic Tax Credits to convert into the mill 101 low- and middle-income apartments and commercial space.



Rhode Island Historic Tax Credits 2026: Where Do We Go From Here?

2026 Status

Active Projects: As of April 20, 2026, there are 33 projects underway, representing over \$528 million in total project investment that would use \$92.4 million in Historic Tax Credits.

Importantly, these projects would create 1,895 housing units, including 1,736 net new units and 256 affordable units.

Projects on the Waiting List: As of April 27, 2026, there are 53 applications on the waiting list seeking \$88.5 million in credits that would generate total projects estimated to invest \$434.5 million. These projects are stalled: there is not enough program funding for the next project in line.

Copley Chambers was built in 1913 as a rooming house. By 2020 the building was vacant and had severe structural issues. This \$6 million rehabilitation leveraged \$955k in state Historic Tax Credits to create 26 furnished apartments and support services for young adults who have aged out of the foster care system.



Call to Action

Legislation has been filed in the Legislature! Complimentary bills S3151 and H8408 aim to address the problems with the Historic Tax Credit Program. These bills would:

- Raise the credit for projects involving housing creation from 20% to 30%
- Raise the credit for projects involving significant affordable housing creation from 20% to 35%
- Lower the filing fee from 3% to 1% of qualified rehab expenditures, and make the fee refundable after project completion
- Extend the program's sunset for 5 years to June 30, 2031.
- Allow for better oversight of the waiting list, including public access

To address these important issues, and get the program funded, we still need your help! Click here to write to your local representatives and support this vital program!