

**Innovative Techniques for
Open Space Preservation in Rhode Island.**

by

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Thesis

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ABSTRACT

Open space preservation is a pressing issue in Rhode Island. The New England economy is strong and Rhode Island is facing the growing development pressures of the region. Sixty percent of the State is still undeveloped, but the rash of new construction threatens the natural resources which are an integral part of Rhode Island's beauty, ecological integrity and rural character.

Presently development and preservation activities are segregated. This thesis explores techniques which incorporate land preservation into the development process; in effect, letting development pay to protect the natural resources it threatens. After discussing why we need to protect open space, and summarizing existing land preservation programs in the State, this paper looks at four innovative techniques: transferable development rights, impact fees, creative development, and transfer taxes, and analyzes their potential use in the context of development and preservation in Rhode Island.