

**PRESS RELEASE**

**May 12, 2003  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**May 21<sup>st</sup> forum in Providence to focus on Rhode Island  
urban and town center revitalization plans and tools**

**Revitalizing and Renewing Rhode Island**, a forum highlighting new opportunities and tools for urban and town center redevelopment, will take place on Wednesday, May 21, 2003 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Rhode Island Convention Center in downtown Providence. Sponsored by Grow Smart Rhode Island, Fannie Mae, and the Rhode Island Association of Realtors, the forum will provide an opportunity for the development community to learn about new state and local redevelopment tools and review case studies of the successful application of those tools, learn about future development opportunities to be provided by the relocation of I-195, and provide input about further steps that the public and private sectors should take to promote urban and town center revitalization in Rhode Island. Developers, realtors, business leaders, architects, property owners, government officials, economic development and planning officials and others interested in urban and town center revitalization are invited to register.

The forum luncheon will feature keynote speaker Bruce Katz, Vice President and Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C. and Director of the Institution's Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy. Mr. Katz is a frequent writer and commentator on urban and metropolitan issues, whose op-eds and articles have appeared in a wide range of major national and regional newspapers including *The Atlantic Monthly*, the *Washington Post*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, the *Boston Globe*, the *Baltimore Sun*, and the *Hartford Courant*. In his

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presentation, Mr. Katz will discuss demographic and development trends in Rhode Island within a national context, assess the fiscal, environmental, social and competitive consequences of those trends, examine the impacts of state investment policy, governance and other influences on development, and recommend state policy reforms to facilitate desired growth patterns in the state.

The forum is open to the public, with advance registration required no later than May 19. Registration, including luncheon and materials, is \$60.00 for the for-profit sector and \$30 for non-profits and government representatives. The full conference brochure and registration form can be accessed through the Calendar on the Grow Smart Rhode Island web site: [www.growsmartri.com](http://www.growsmartri.com). For further information, contact Magin Urdanick at Fannie Mae, 276-2116.

GROW SMART RHODE ISLAND is a statewide non-profit organization representing a broad coalition of constituencies dedicated to reversing the negative economic, social and environmental impacts of suburban sprawl and urban disinvestment. More information about Grow Smart can be found on the Internet at <http://www.growsmartri.com>.

Fannie Mae is a New York Stock Exchange company and the largest non-bank financial services company in the world. It operates pursuant to a federal charter and is the nation's largest source of financing for home mortgages. Fannie Mae is working to shrink the nation's "homeownership gaps" through a \$2 trillion "American Dream Commitment" to increase homeownership rates and serve 18 million targeted American families by the end of the decade. Since 1968, Fannie Mae has provided \$4.5 trillion of mortgage financing for more than 49 million families. More information about Fannie Mae can be found on the Internet at <http://www.fanniemae.com>.

THE RHODE ISLAND ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS is the second largest professional organization in Rhode Island. Its mission is to preserve, protect, and promote the American Dream of homeownership. More information about RI Realtors Association can be found on the Internet at <http://www.riliving.com>.