

Project Name: **Providence River Relocation Project: Creating a Place for Community and Art**  
 Owner: City of Providence and the State of Rhode Island  
 Location: Providence, Rhode Island  
 Project Use: Walking; jogging; boating; performances: WaterFire, theatre, music; Convergence sculpture exhibit; gathering: social, educational, religious, civic events

Project Size: 11 acres (immediate park area)  
 Total Development Cost: \$60 million Annual Operating Budget: N/A  
 Date Initiated: August 1984 Percent Completed by December 1, 2002: 100%  
 Project Completion Date: Construction completed in phases, with Waterplace Park first opening in 1994, Memorial Park in 1996, and the southern extension of the park walkway system dedicated in April 2002. Programming has been ongoing since 1995.

**Application submitted by:**

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Signature 

## River Relocation Project Chronology

118-03

- October 1982 Robert Bendick, former director of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM), William Warner, Architect, and the Providence Foundation apply to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) for funding of a Providence Waterfront Study.
- February 1983 The Providence Foundation secures commitment of both Governor Garrahy and Mayor Cianci to support a study of Providence's waterfront. Architect and planner William Warner is asked by the Providence Foundation to develop a plan to reclaim the city's waterfront.
- May 1983 Planning grant from NEA is announced. The Providence Foundation is asked to include in the study a plan to solve the anticipated traffic congestion that would be created in Memorial Square once Capital Center was completed. The plan calls for extending Memorial Boulevard along the Providence River and relocating the Moshassuck and Woonasquatucket Rivers.
- October 1983 The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) conduct an Environmental Assessment for the proposed Memorial Boulevard Extension Project.
- August 1984 A public hearing is conducted in Providence for comment on the four alternatives identified in the Environmental Assessment. The River Relocation Project is selected.
- November 1984 Cost sharing formulas for city / state share of the River Relocation are agreed to by the FHWA, Governor Garrahy, and Mayor Paolino.
- February 1985 Engineering by Maguire Group Inc. (MGI) and design work by William D. Warner Architects and Planners (WDWAP) begins on the Memorial Boulevard Extension (River Relocation Project).
- October 1985 RIDEM announced it would fund Waterplace elements ineligible for highway or walkway funds.
- April 1986 The federal government agreed to fund the river walk system.
- March 1987 Contract awarded to dismantle the World War I monument in Memorial Square and store it for future use.
- May 1987 A veterans ceremony is held at the World War I monument as the last stones are removed. A time capsule is recovered and turned over to a conservator for inspection and preservation.
- April 1988 Ground-breaking ceremonies are held for the relocation of the Moshassuck River and construction of bridges.
- June 1989 Ground-breaking takes place for College and Crawford Street bridges—Contract 4.
- August 1989 The Moshassuck River is diverted to its new channel.
- September 1990 Citizens Bank formally dedicates its new building.
- September 1991 Ground-breaking ceremonies are held for Contract 5. Work includes relocating the Woonasquatucket River and constructing Waterplace.
- May 1993 Contract 6 is awarded for work including constructing Memorial Park, relocating the World War I monument, and completing the Memorial Boulevard Extension.
- November 1993 Opening of Memorial Boulevard to traffic.
- July 1994 Dedication of Waterplace Park
- December 1994 First lighting of WaterFire as part of First Night Providence.
- June 1996 Dedication of Memorial Park, the World War I monument, and the Providence River Waterfront.
- June 1996 The International Sculpture Conference is presented by the Sculpture Center and the Convergence International Arts Festival. WaterFire is expanded to include more of the park.
- July 1996 The Providence Waterfront Festival moves to Waterplace Park.
- May 1997 Gondola service begins on Woonasquatucket and Providence Rivers.
- June 1997 The Liquor Amnii Project, a cultural exchange between artists in Providence and in the republic of Macedonia, takes place in Waterplace and Memorial Parks.
- October 1998 Completion of the handicapped accessible dock facilities for the water taxi service.
- October 1999 Scenes for the NBC television show "Providence" are shot in Waterplace Park.
- August 2001 100<sup>th</sup> lighting of WaterFire is celebrated by expanding the installation to 100 bonfires.
- April 2002 Opening of riverwalk pathway extension connecting the park to the harbor area.