



MAYOR BRETT P. SMILEY
CITY OF PROVIDENCE

February 26, 2026

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney, Chair
House Finance Committee
Rhode Island State House
82 Smith Street
Providence RI, 02903

Dear Chair Abney and Honorable Members of the Committee:

I am writing to express the City of Providence's strong support for the allocation of \$1 million towards the Main Streets RI Streetscape Improvement Fund as included in the Governor's proposed Fiscal Year 2027 budget. This would also include an extension of the sunset of the program to December 31, 2027. This funding and extension will allow municipalities to continue making targeted, high-impact investments in their commercial corridors.

In Providence, these funds have been used to support projects that enhance walkability, public safety, and economic growth in the City's urban core. In Wayland Square, funds are being used to implement critical pedestrian safety and traffic-calming strategies. These strategies include realigned crosswalks, curb extensions, and improved ADA accessibility through the installation of a new signal system. All of these improvements will result in an enhanced experience for all those who visit or live in the area.

In Federal Hill, funds are supporting a comprehensive lighting infrastructure update along Atwells Avenue. Visible improvements in lighting and street conditions have already resulted in improvement in visibility for both pedestrians and vehicles as well as increased business activity in the area.

Downtown, the Main Street Commercial Corridor Wayfinding Project has been completed in full. The "You Belong Here" initiative involved physical and digital wayfinding elements, including banners, engagement events, sculptures, and QR-enabled tools. Improvements made through this initiative have improved connectivity between major downtown destinations, elevated cultural and historical storytelling, and strengthened community identity.

These projects have all improved the experience of residents and visitors to Providence and demonstrate the success of the Main Streets RI Streetscape Improvement Fund. Continued funding will allow Providence and other municipalities to continue investing strategically in their commercial corridors.

I thank Governor McKee for including this funding in his proposed FY2027 budget for sponsoring House Bill 7218 and respectfully urge the Committee's support for the appropriation and program extension.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brett P. Smiley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "S" at the end.

Brett P. Smiley
Mayor