



April 28, 2026

Senate Finance Committee
Rhode Island General Assembly
c/o Jamie Plume, Committee Clerk
SenateFinance@rilegislature.gov

Re: Support for Senate Resolution S2676 – Main Street RI Funding

Dear Chair and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

On behalf of GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc., with 77 employees in Providence, I am writing to express our strong support for Senate Resolution S2676, which would appropriate \$150,000 to Grow Smart RI to continue its partnership with Main Street America and sustain the Main Street RI program through 2027.

As a planner who volunteers with Grow Smart RI in a company deeply engaged in planning, resilience, and infrastructure projects across Rhode Island, GZA has seen firsthand the importance of vibrant, well-supported Main Streets to the long-term economic, environmental, and social health of the communities we live and work in. Programs like Main Street RI provide critical technical assistance, capacity building, and networking, that enable municipalities and local organizations to translate planning into implementation, particularly in communities that may not otherwise have access to these resources.

We have also observed the unique value of Main Street programming as a space where professional expertise and grassroots knowledge come together in meaningful and productive ways. The ability for planners, small business owners, community leaders, and residents to share skills, exchange ideas, and co-develop solutions is not only effective, it is essential to Rhode Island's culture of innovation. This cross-pollination of perspectives strengthens outcomes and ensures that revitalization efforts are both technically sound and deeply grounded in local context.

The continued funding proposed under S2676 is both timely and strategic. Rhode Island communities are navigating complex economic challenges, including climate resilience, economic transition, and equitable development. Main Street RI serves as a key platform for addressing these challenges at the local level by strengthening small business ecosystems, fostering place-based economic development, and supporting community-driven revitalization efforts.

From our professional perspective, this type of targeted funding yields outsized returns. It empowers local leaders, supports shovel-ready initiatives, and ensures that planning efforts are grounded in strong community engagement and implementation capacity. Continued support for Grow Smart RI and Main Street RI will help ensure that communities across the state remain competitive, resilient, and inclusive.

We respectfully urge the Committee to support Senate Resolution S2676 and advance this important investment in Rhode Island's communities. If you have any questions regarding project costs or status, please feel free to call Rosemarie Fusco on 401-421-4140.

Very truly yours,

GZA GEOENVIRONMENTAL, INC.

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