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Verizon Business names Pawtucket one of 50 Best Small Cities to Start a Small Business listing - by Donald Grebien

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Donald Grebien,
Mayor of Pawtucket

In a recently released 2018 Best Small Cities for Small Businesses report, Verizon Business ranks the City of Pawtucket #35 out of 50 small cities. The ranking puts Pawtucket, birthplace of the nation's industrial revolution, in the top 16.6% across the nation.

We are honored to be recognized by one of the nation's largest multinational telecommunication companies for being one of the best small cities for small businesses. Small businesses are the backbone of our city and we continue to work hard and focus on helping the owners of these companies thrive in Pawtucket.

According to Verizon Business, data culled from nearly 300 small cities, as defined by the U.S. Census, enabled Verizon Business to compile its listing of the nation's top 50 small cities. The elements pulled revealed the financial climate and demographics of each city. The ranking of the top cities was based on level of the local workforce, in-city commute times, income per capita, broadband access, availability of SBA loans, and overall tax friendliness – relevant to small business owners.

Cassie Tolhurst of Verizon Business, says that Pawtucket, the only Rhode Island municipality to make the company's 50 Best Small Cities to Start a Small Business report, ranked highly in 4 of the major ranking factors, specifically, in-city commute time, affordable and fair wages, broadband access, and small business loan availability.

The U.S. Small Business Administration notes that small businesses make up 99.7% of U.S. employer firms. Recognizing this, an economic development strategy was created to provide the necessary assistance and resources to help small businesses to grow and thrive in the community.

Pawtucket has worked diligently to create a vibrant business community. In 2015, we created a joint planning/zoning department to enhance one-stop-shopping for businesses seeking zoning and building permits. E-permitting is now also available allowing businesses to quickly register for permits online and to track the project. Businesses can also opt to have weekly preconstruction

meetings with city regulatory officials to get immediate feedback on their project.

Our customer service approach is to work with our local businesses to quickly resolve fire, zoning and building code issues. The Pawtucket Business Development Corporation's financing tools are also among our resources to assist businesses grow and thrive in our city.

In the city's economic tool box, Pawtucket offers a tax stabilization treaty for projects that creates jobs. This program phases in decreases in property taxes for new construction or rehabilitation of property.

Finally, we even offer property searches to assist businesses seeking leads on Pawtucket properties that are available for sale or lease. This detailed listing provides information about each property detailing square footage, ceiling height, loading docks, utilities and asking price for sale and/or lease.

The link to the Verizon Business's ranking list can be found at <https://go.verizon.com/resources/the-best-small-cities-to-start-a-small-business/>.

For more details about Pawtucket's economic development incentives, contact Jeanne Boyle, commerce director.

Donald Grebien is mayor of the City of Pawtucket, R.I.

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