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Providence: Innovation and entrepreneurship

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Providence, Rhode Island is gaining a hard-earned reputation as a center for innovation and entrepreneurship. From Providence's IIP (Innovation Investment Program) to Betaspring to the HATCH, to Social Venture Partners and the Business Innovation Factory, we are a fast-growing hub of smart, talented professional start-ups and big thinkers.

Providence is also the home of major universities - including Ivy League Brown University, a world-leading design institution Rhode Island School of Design, and internationally-renowned culinary arts leader Johnson and Wales University, along with other highly-regarded institutions such as the University of Rhode Island, Providence College, Roger Williams University - and soon, its Law School - Rhode Island College, and more.

Our strategic location on the Boston-Washington corridor; access to major interstates, rail lines, deep water port and nearby international T.F. Green Airport make it easy to get in and out of the city, and our affordability and internationally recognized quality of life are attracting designers, doctors, inventors, researchers, chefs and professionals who are looking for a place to live and work and grow.

Just last week, Horizon - an Irish medical engineering company - announced plans to open offices in Providence because of our comparative affordability and proximity to big pharmaceuticals in New Jersey and New York. Reportedly, they are so delighted with the opportunities here they are engaging other companies from Ireland and the United Kingdom to follow suit.

With the expansion of our "eds-to-meds" corridor, along our waterfront and close to downtown, more attention will center around Brown University's Warren Alpert Medical School, a soon-to-be-built joint URI-RIC nursing school and up-and-running JWU Physician Assistant School, and especially the acres of prime property - with infrastructure in place and many nearby R&D centers - for business and start-ups. Soon, we'll also begin work on a Streetcar system to traverse the area, which was just funded by a TIGER grant.

There's plenty of reason to locate in Providence - diverse neighborhoods, world-class cuisine, affordability and ready-accessible to major cities like Boston, New York, Hartford, Philadelphia and D.C. - all within a 500 mile radius of a trillion dollars in gross metropolitan product. It just makes good business sense.

Call our office of economic development, learn about and visit our great small city with a "big-city" feel, and then consider seriously locating here. For information visit www.providenceri.com/economic-development.

Angel Taveras is the mayor of Providence.

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