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Pawtucket's new commuter rail great amenity for businesses - by Donald Grebien

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By 2020, the City of Pawtucket will be one of only three Rhode Island municipalities that have a Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (MBTA) commuter rail with a Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) transit hub. The MBTA rail station enables commuters to reach Rhode Island's T.F. Green Airport within 15 minutes and downtown Boston and Logan International Airport within 45 minutes. I-95 with four exit/on ramps to the train station district is just minutes away.

The cities of Pawtucket and Central Falls have already been jointly planning for the development of the Train Station District which encompasses over 160 acres and includes 2 million s/f of unique, historic mill buildings and the potential to more than double that square footage with new construction.

The area surrounding the new commuter rail also boasts a thriving arts community, connection to our expanding network of bicycle paths, riverfront access, recreational amenities and a newly opened Isle Brewers Guild. The Slater Mill National Historic Park is nearby as is the site of the proposed new AAA ballpark for the Pawtucket Red Sox.

Pawtucket and Central Falls created a new joint planning commission earlier this year to provide a more streamlined development process in the district by breaking down municipal regulatory barriers. These two cities have also been working together with the state and the town of Cumberland on the Broad Street Initiative, the revitalization of a main street that cuts across all three municipalities.

Located in the heart of the Northeast corridor just 10 minutes from Providence, 40 minutes to Boston, and three hours to New York City, the Train Station District is in the center of the Providence Metro Area with 1.6 million people. It is also in the middle of the Boston/Providence statistical metro area with 8 million people, giving local businesses close proximity to quality, affordable inland and coastal communities. The area is also surrounded with some of the best institutions of higher learning in the United States including Harvard, Yale, Brown, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Rhode Island School of Design, Babson, Providence College, the University of Rhode Island, Bryant, Salve Regina, Roger Williams, Williams,

Amherst, Wesleyan, and Johnson & Wales.

This is where innovation began with the Industrial Revolution.

Pawtucket's new commuter rail and transit hub will surely have a major economic impact on the city, helping to continue the revitalization of our mills that are within walking distance of the station, expanding residential options, and drawing additional businesses.

For details, contact Jeanne Boyle, Pawtucket's commerce director at Jboyle@pawtucketri.com.

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