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February 19, 2025

Doug Brockway, Chair
Westerly Economic Development Committee
Westerly Town Hall
45 Broad Street
Westerly, RI 02891

RE: Improvements to Westerly Station

Dear Mr. Brockway,

On behalf of Grow Smart RI, I'm writing to support your committee's efforts to modernize the boarding platforms at Westerly Station.

Grow Smart RI is Rhode Island's statewide smart growth advocacy organization. We represent a big-tent coalition of business and civic leaders along with community stakeholders committed to strengthening and growing Rhode Island's economy in a sustainable and equitable way. We work with community partners across the state to integrate smart land use, transportation and housing policies in a way that uses resources most efficiently and that create thriving, vibrant and opportunity rich places.

I would call your attention to the upcoming update of the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) that is now open. They are accepting project nominations from municipalities February 17 – March 14. It is the first time since 2017 that the State Division of Planning is conducting a solicitation of project priorities from municipalities. Nominating and getting projects listed on the STIP is an essential step toward funding and advancing these improvements.

As you know, Westerly Station is one of the last remaining railroad stations on the Northeast Corridor with outdated 'low' platforms which present accessibility challenges and unnecessarily slow the boarding process. Together with new passing sidings, we believe these improvements to Westerly Station would help to facilitate more frequent rail service to Westerly's benefit.

I'd be happy to discuss if I can be of any assistance.

Best,

John Flaherty
Senior Advisor and Special Projects