



March 1, 2015

Dear Fellow East Siders:

This week's letter discusses the I-195 land, the block grant program and the City's bonding program.

Last week, the new owners of the Pawtucket Red Sox began a media campaign to highlight their proposal to move the team to downtown Providence, and to build a new ballpark in a parcel on the I-195 land. The proposal generated extensive discussion both by the media and within groups in our neighborhood. The major decisions affecting this proposal will be made by (1) the I-195 Commission (which controls the land), (2) the Governor and General Assembly (which set State policy and control McCoy Stadium), (3) the Mayor, and possibly (4) the City Council if the team seeks a concession on property tax. Some of you have asked me to state my position on the issue, which will take some time to develop. I need to learn more about the concessions sought from the City and the State, the (accurately) projected benefits of the stadium and the alternative possible uses of the I-195 land. With that in mind, I look forward to a presentation this **Tuesday night (March 3) at 6:00 p.m. on the third floor of City Hall**. At that time, the Director of the I-195 Commission and the City's Director of Planning-designate shall make a presentation to the City Council as a whole regarding the entire I-195 land program. The public is invited to attend.

As stated in my February 15 letter, this year will be the first in which neighborhoods in Ward 2 are eligible for funding under the federal government's Block Grant Program as indicated on this [Map](#). Ward 2 will receive approximately \$58,000 of federal funds, which can be used to fund facilities and infrastructure improvements either (a) within the designated area (marked in blue) or (b) for organizations that serve primarily people in poverty. I will join Councilman Yurdin at a forum taking place on **Wednesday, March 4 at 6:30 p.m. at Fox Point Boys and Girls Club, 90 Ives Street**. The City has published a [master schedule](#) of the meetings take place across the City in the coming six weeks. The public is invited to all of these meetings, each of which will include a discussion of the City-wide program; therefore, if you are unable to attend the meeting in your own neighborhood, you are welcome to attend another one at which time your neighborhood-specific questions will still be welcome.

In 2011, the Taveras administration introduced an online constituent service program called [ProvConnex](#). The program is designed to allow constituents to submit requests for City services through their computer or smartphone, and then receive updates through a tracking system. ProvConnex also provides a tool for the administration to compile data on service requests. From time to time, I receive feedback from constituents with a range of reviews and suggestions for improvement. With that in mind, I introduced a resolution for the City Council's meeting on Thursday, March 5 requesting that the administration make the first of what I hope will become regular annual reports concerning the ProvConnex program, including data tabulating such performance measurements as the number and types of cases opened, the number and types of cases closed and the average response time. I am hopeful this report (and the ones that follow) will help us assess the record of this program and identify ways to operate it more effectively.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Samuel D. Zurier'.