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City of Providence, Rhode Island

November 7, 2018

Joseph R. Paolino, Jr.
Partner/Owner, Paolino Properties
100 Westminster Street
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Mr. Paolino:

Last June, you invited Councilman Jennings and me to your office to lobby me personally to vote to override the Mayor's veto of the smoking ban ordinance, which I had previously voted to pass. I came willing to consider a compromise. We discussed and agreed upon a temporary smoking ban. You originally proposed a 2-year sunset, but ultimately we reached a firm agreement on an expiration date of October 1, 2018. We also discussed your interest in advancing a public-private partnership for Kennedy Plaza, leading you to write the enclosed letter to the Mayor and Acting Council President. I upheld my side of our agreement, voting to override the veto at the Council's June 15, 2017 meeting. At the same meeting, I introduced a supplemental ordinance to establish an October 1, 2018 expiration date on the smoking ban to uphold your end of the agreement. I told my constituents that my vote to override was based on our agreement. The legislation was referred to the Ordinance Committee.

The Ordinance Committee did not act on the ordinance until last month, after the stated sunset date. At that meeting, committee members asked for data to demonstrate the effectiveness of the smoking ban. I responded that the business community had agreed to the sunset without the need to assemble data. I telephoned your office to request a confirming letter to provide to the Ordinance Committee. Much to my disappointment, you declined, even while acknowledging that my override vote was based on your agreement to support the sunset. I spoke with Councilman Jennings, who confirmed our discussion and what you specifically had agreed to. Because you have not (at least to this date) honored that agreement, I have had to explain to my constituents why I failed to achieve what I promised them. Just as the City makes progress when government and the business community work together in good faith, so do the City, its government and its business community all suffer a setback when business leaders fail to keep their word. For that reason, I ask you as a business leader to reconsider your position. On a related note, I wish to remind you of the interest you previously stated in the attached letter to invest directly in the neighborhood, as those sentiments also remain unfulfilled.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Enclosure

JOSEPH R. PAOLINO, JR.

June 15, 2017

Honorable Jorge Elorza
Mayor, City of Providence
25 Dorrance Street
Providence, RI 02903

Honorable Sabina Matos
Acting President, Providence City Council
25 Dorrance Street
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Greater Kennedy Plaza

Dear Mayor Elorza and Acting President Matos:

Over the past two years, we have discussed different ways to enhance the public space located in Greater Kennedy Plaza (including Burnside Park and the bus terminal). In some discussions, we noted the success of the public/private partnership that manages Bryant Park in New York City. I believe the Bryant Park model can be adapted to enhance and improve this vital part of our City's downtown. I am particularly encouraged by the vision of the Downtown Providence Parks Conservancy, which under Cliff Wood's leadership has a strong record of accomplishment and a wealth of knowledge and experience.

With that in mind, I write to offer my support to work with you, as leaders of our City, to bring to Greater Kennedy Plaza a bright new future using the public/private partnership of Bryant Park as a model. I look forward to working with Cliff and my fellow business owners in the coming months, first to develop some ideas and then to gain a base of support in the business community to make this happen.

I am excited about the opportunity to collaborate with you on this project, and I will be glad to meet with you at your earliest convenience. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Joseph R. Paolino, Jr., Chairman
Providence Downtown Improvement District

cc: Cliff Wood
Providence City Council Members