



**DONALD R. GREBIEN
MAYOR**



January 8, 2018

Dear Neighbor:

Let me begin by wishing you a safe and happy New Year as we begin 2018!

I'm reaching out today to provide an update regarding the ongoing discussions about relocating the current transfer station and former site of the incinerator and landfill, currently located at 240 Grotto Avenue.

There can be no dispute that the City's current transfer station, which was neglected for decades, must be replaced. It has been hopelessly outdated for years, has environmental issues, poses challenges to the neighborhood, and presents a potentially devastating liability for the City. Not surprisingly, the Department of Environmental Management (DEM) instituted a landfill closure program, per regulation, in 2001. They required the City to submit a closure plan, which the City did in 2008 through its environmental consultants - Fuss and O'Neill. Once again in 2016, DEM requested an update from the City on the landfill closure plan in order to continue operations.

I was born in Pawtucket and grew up in Fairlawn. I understand the impact of the City's long-established outdoor transfer station on that great neighborhood going back to the days when the Grotto Avenue site was an operating incinerator. I value your input and take my responsibility to listen and balance the needs of the whole city seriously. To make the right choice, it's important that everyone have accurate and complete information.

The proposed modern, fully-enclosed, state-of-the-art facility at Concord Street could address all of the shortcomings in the existing facility. Additionally, the proposed Concord Street facility would generate \$750,000 in a fund for improvements in the neighborhood as well as generate additional revenue and savings for Pawtucket taxpayers as a whole.

This challenge is one of many inherited by this administration in 2011, including the threat of state takeover and bankruptcy. The site was too costly and challenging for the City to operate. The City successfully outsourced its transfer station operation which continues to save taxpayers around \$1 million per year, while preserving the transfer services for all residents.

With hard work and a willingness to make the tough decisions, Pawtucket, an old mill city, has begun to turn the corner. Our services are improving, new businesses are moving in - including all the new breweries - and the Commuter Rail is scheduled to open in 2020. However, there are still some inherited challenges like the current transfer station we need to deal with together.

The need to relocate this facility is being driven by neighborhood concerns that have gone unaddressed for too long and serious environmental and financial concerns. The current site will require substantial environment mitigation and clean-up. If left unaddressed, DEM will require the City to cease operation at 240 Grotto Avenue.

This process began more than three years ago (see enclosed timeline) when we discussed the relocation to Concord Street with the district Councilor, local businesses, residents and the FACT neighborhood group. After hearing the legitimate concerns of Fairlawn residents, business owners

and elected officials late last year, I acknowledge that the City should have better communicated the problems associated with maintaining the site of the current transfer station which resulted in the decision to propose the transfer station relocation. As a result, I have committed to revisiting the relocation process and reviewing the facts that led to this proposal in greater detail.

To that end, the City has reached out to the well-respected Hassenfeld Institute at Bryant University. The Institute will facilitate a process where the City along with stakeholders will review and consider the impact of all options to the community and the city as a whole. This will include reviewing the option of closing the transfer station altogether. This is an option proposed by some of the neighbors that had not been previously considered because the loss of revenue would almost certainly lead to increased costs to all taxpayers and reduced services.

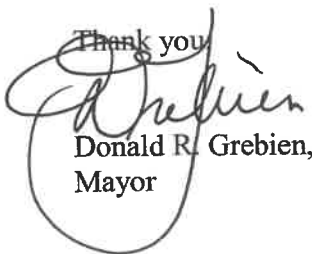
It is important to note that many factors were considered which led to this proposed relocation. These factors included the proposed site's location in a less densely populated, industrial zoned area and one that is away from the existing school zone and city parks (see enclosed map). Unfortunately, there seems to be a lot of misunderstandings about the process and the next steps. If moving (or eliminating) the transfer station were a simple decision, it would have been made a long time ago.

I am confident that by working together we can solve this problem, like we solved the looming bankruptcy of our city, restored our reserves, and have begun reinvesting in our roads, infrastructure, and schools – also issues which had gone unaddressed for far too long. Thanks to the collaboration of the Council and the School Committee we are turning the corner and meeting Pawtucket's challenges head on. That is our responsibility as leaders.

As Mayor, balancing the needs and services of the residents can be challenging. I think we can all agree that the current transfer station, brought to its current condition by decades of neglect, is no longer a feasible option. The Concord Street alternative will move the existing transfer station to a more industrial area next to a power plant and an asphalt plant and directly off the highway. Most importantly it will be a fully-enclosed facility that would resolve the challenges and impacts associated with the current outdoor facility. An expanded traffic study is currently underway, which will identify any traffic concerns and suggest additional traffic improvements.

To keep the lines of communication open and to continue to provide information, you can visit our website: <http://www.pawtucketri.com/municipal-transfer-station>. If you have any questions, or comments or would like to receive project updates, please email your name and address to: transferstation@pawtucketri.com or you can email or call me directly. My contact information is enclosed.

We are now moving forward with the stakeholder panel and Hassenfeld Institute to evaluate all options. This will require all of us to trust - but verify - what is in the best interests of Fairlawn and Pawtucket as a whole. I look forward to continuing to work with everyone on an open and transparent process that will address this matter in the best interests of our great city.

Thank you

Donald R. Grebien,
Mayor

Transfer Station Timeline- Working Draft, January 8, 2018

Date	Action
1963	Pawtucket's Incinerator is built
1982	The City ceases operation of the Pawtucket Incinerator/Landfill (Grotto Avenue)
1984	Grotto Avenue site is open to waste disposal
1993	City leases Grotto Avenue site for a Municipal Transfer Station
April 2001	RI Department of Environmental Management (DEM) creates landfill closure program and promulgates rules and regulations.
January 2003	The City's environmental consultant, Fuss & O'Neill, investigated the Grotto Avenue site.
March 2008	The City, through Fuss & O'Neill, submit a remedial action work plan and closure plan for the Grotto Avenue Landfill to DEM
June 2009	DEM approves the City's work and closure plan
2010	City renews its license to operate a municipal transfer station
2010	Previous discussions by prior administration regarding transfer station vendor selection, access road, tonnage
May 2011	Evaluation of the Blackstone Valley Regional Transfer Station by Bryant University, and review by Fuss and O'Neill
May 2012	City enters into contract with private vendor for waste transfer station (Waste Haulers)
May 2012	Waste Haulers contracts with an engineering firm for the design of the access road.
January 2013	DPW and Waste Haulers commit to daily reports
April 2013	Councilor Rudd requests response from Waste Haulers, Zoning and DEM regarding complaints from residents (oil disposal, out of state vehicles, status of the building, etc.)
June 2013	City launches rat/rodent control program
August 2013	Transfer Station undergoes structural repairs
April 2014	Waste Haulers explores building the access road at Grotto Ave site
May 2014	Mayor and DPW Director (Lance Hill) meet with Councilor Rudd regarding the transfer station agreement and proposed alternatives
Fall 2014	In response to the issues with the access road proposal, Waste Haulers proposes exploring other sites in Pawtucket
January 2015	Waste Haulers changes the name of their entity to Link Environmental
June 2015	DPW Director (Lance Hill) requests an update on the access road from Link Environmental
July 30, 2015	Mayor's communication to Council regarding Link Environmental's letter and the access road issues
August 2015	Communication to Council responding to questions regarding liquidated damages
September 8, 2015	Meeting with Councilor Rudd and Link Environmental
October 20, 2015	Link Environmental meets with Fairlawn Neighborhood Association and neighbors regarding the proposal for the new site
March 2016	Transfer Station structural repairs
March 2017	Council requests update on contract

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April 2017	Link Environmental signs a contract extension with the City of Pawtucket
June 2017	J.R.Vinagro Corp. becomes managing member and majority owner of Link Environmental
August 2017	Link Environmental submits development plan review to the Planning Commission to begin the approval process
August 2017	Link Environmental submits application for dimensional variance with the Zoning Board
September 2017	The Planning Department meets with DEM to review state approval process
September 2017	Planning Department reviews the transfer station plan
October 2017	Planning Department meets with members of the Fairlawn Neighborhood Association to review the proposal and answer any questions.
October 17, 2017	Planning Commission holds its first public meeting on the proposal
October 30, 2017	Zoning Board Meeting
November 2017	Link Environmental commissions expanded traffic study
November 3, 2017 November 16, 2017 November 30, 2017	City updates City Council on the process
November 28, 2017	City and Link Environmental meet with Fairlawn Neighborhood Association members
December 6, 2017	City Council approves a resolution for no further action to be taken on the transfer station proposal
January 9, 2017	City forms a community stakeholder group to work with the Hassenfeld Institute for Public Leadership (Bryant) to explore all of the options for the transfer station.
TBD	Link Environmental submits full proposal to DEM

Relocation of Transfer Station

