



GrowSmartRI
Sustainable Economic Growth
& Quality of Place

Grow Smart RI Announces Executive Director Transition

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PROVIDENCE, RI (June 8, 2026) -- Grow Smart RI (GSRI) announced that Scott Wolf, the organization's Executive Director for more than 27 years, is planning to step down from his role at the end of December 2026. Wolf intends to pursue other opportunities to build upon his work at Grow Smart RI enhancing Rhode Islanders' economic mobility and neighborhoods, as well as their access to affordable housing, transportation and policy decision makers.

"I'm proud of the impact Grow Smart RI has made during my tenure," Wolf added. "We've helped Rhode Island capitalize on our outstanding physical and natural assets. Our efforts have substantially improved the quality of daily life in our State."

Wolf praised Grow Smart RI's dynamic Board of Directors and staff, describing them as "visionary, community spirited, collaborative, pragmatic, whip-smart and committed to community and economic development policy reforms and best practices grounded in research and public interest. They understand that developing long-term, enduring solutions to our State's economic, housing, transportation, and climate challenges requires Grow Smart RI continuing to be a thought leader, capacity builder, and issue and organizational connector."

"Under Scott's leadership, Grow Smart RI has been a leading voice for revitalization of urban and town centers, strong transportation systems, thoughtful land use, and protection of the state's many assets," said Nick Roach, Chair of GSRI's Board of Directors. "Scott has been an instrumental player in advancing smart growth principles in the State. There is no doubt he is and will continue to be an inspiring force of good for RI communities."

Wolf expressed special pride in the organization's leading role for decades promoting the State Historic Tax Credit. "I and many others believe that this redevelopment incentive has been the most powerful economic and community development tool for RI during the last quarter century," Wolf said.

Grow Smart RI has laid the groundwork for a more secure, healthy, and affordable quality of life for Rhode Islanders by championing a comprehensive, location efficient approach to solving our housing supply and

affordability crises, Wolf said, in part through his tenure on the State House of Representatives' Commission on Housing Affordability and the Housing Works RI Advisory Board.

Wolf lauded GSRI's transportation policy leader John Flaherty for working with the State and stakeholders to develop the Transit Master Plan, an ambitious long-range plan for a more robust, convenient and economically catalytic transit system.

Wolf's decades long service on the State Planning Council has provided another vehicle for advancing GSRI's vision for a healthier, more economically and environmentally resilient State. And his involvement with Smart Growth America, including serving on its Board for 18 years, has enhanced GSRI's ability to bring best practices and innovative policy reform ideas to RI.

Wolf highlighted the policy thought leadership and agenda-setting impact GSRI has achieved through its signature networking and consciousness raising events, including its Power of Place Summit, Smart Growth Awards, and, more recently, under the skilled leadership of Deputy Director Jillian Finkle, its annual Main Street Together statewide conference, roundtables, and learning cohorts.

Regarding Grow Smart RI's award-winning smart growth capacity building and training, Wolf highlighted the long-term value of GSRI and its multi-partner Land Use Training Collaborative providing in-depth guidance on smart growth techniques and policy reforms to 3,000+ attendees over a 15-year period.

Looking ahead, Wolf is committed to helping GSRI successfully transition to new leadership. He concluded that his planned professional transition represents an exciting opportunity for him and the organization, expressing confidence that Grow Smart RI's accomplishments, alliances, and well-respected brand provide a powerful foundation for his successor to build upon for even greater beneficial economic and community revitalization for all Rhode Islanders.

To find a strong successor for Wolf, the Grow Smart RI Board of Directors has established a five-member Executive Director Search Committee and prepared a comprehensive Executive Director [job description](#).

Interested Executive Director candidates can apply by sending both a resume and cover letter to the GSRI Search Committee, gsri.search@gmail.com

[Find more information on Grow Smart RI's key accomplishments since its founding here.](#)