



THE CITY OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

Planning Board

September 9, 2019

Re: Request for a Transportation Master Plan

Dear Honorable Mayor Bova and members of the City Council:

At the September 9, 2019 Planning Board meeting, the six Planning Board members in attendance voted **unanimously** to submit this letter to the City Council requesting a Transportation Master Plan for the City of Newport.

The Planning Board for the City of Newport respectfully requests City Council approve and execute a Transportation Master Plan of the entire City. Additionally, the Board requests an initial public forum be held to define the areas of focus prior to the hiring of a consultant and the commencement of the planning exercise.

The last comprehensive analysis of traffic circulation and transportation was completed in August of 2000. Since then, the mobility needs of those who live and work in, and visit our city have changed. Full-time residents have been replaced with seasonal residents and short-term rentals, and increasing housing costs require many of our community's employees to reside outside of Newport, resulting in long commutes and increased demand for parking and transit options. Traffic and parking are a primary concern among full-time residents, part-time residents, commuters, business owners, and tourists. The Planning Board believes that it is in the City's best interest to evaluate its transportation needs and to make improvements necessary to increase safety and create a more effective and efficient transportation infrastructure compatible for all modes.

The resulting Transportation Master Plan will assist City of Newport staff, Planning Board, City Council, and the Newport citizenry in assessing the effects of a proposed development, developing coordinated projects at local, regional, and state levels, taking advantage of emerging trends in mobility and transportation technology, and ensuring that proposed strategies align with other City initiatives. The Comprehensive Plan is a binding City ordinance requiring action by City officials. In compliance with Newport's Comprehensive Plan, the attached Goals, Policies, and Actions necessitate a Transportation Master Plan in order to move forward with actionable improvements.

Thank you for your work in this important matter. The Board is eager to see continued improvement to our streets and the City's mobility to create an even greater and more equitable Newport.

Sincerely,

Kim Salerno
Chair, Planning Board

Attachment

Attachment: Relevant Goals and Policies Necessitating a Transportation Master Plan

Goal T-1: To provide a comprehensive, multimodal transportation system for all users

- *Policy T-1.1:* The City shall develop a design guide that support all modes of transportation and addresses the inclusion of pedestrian and bicycling in new and existing road corridors, as specified in the City's Complete Streets policy.
- *Policy T-1.2:* The City shall provide traffic calming measures on local / residential streets and require new developments (or projects) that share roadways with residential areas, to integrate traffic calming methods as part of site design.
- *Policy T-1.3:* The City's transportation system shall be designed to safely accommodate all bicyclists, pedestrians, and especially those with disabilities.
- *Policy T-1.4:* The City's transportation system shall be designed to safely accommodate all people, including those with disabilities.
- *Policy T-1.5:* The City shall incorporate measures to support older citizens and people with special needs when planning and designing streets, parking areas, and facilities.
- *Policy T-1.6:* The City shall advocate for the special populations in its efforts to plan, program, design, and implement a comprehensive transportation and circulation system, including people who are older, have physical and/or mental health challenges, and/or limited income.
- *Action T-1C:* Safely accommodate bicycles as a mode of transportation.

Goal T-2: To link into the overall regional multi modal transportation network on Aquidneck Island.

- *Policy T-2.3:* The City shall plan, design and create remote parking at stations and stops in conjunction with the West Side transit strategy.
- *Policy T-2.4:* The City shall work closely with adjacent jurisdictions and RIPTA to ensure transportation links and support the completion of facilities to connect regional transit, trails, and bike systems and facilitate circulation enhancements in Newport and throughout Aquidneck Island.
- *Policy T-2.5:* The City shall evaluate and designate qualifying segments of streets and roads for bike lanes and shared lane use.
- *Action T-2A:* Participate in State and regional planning for transportation systems.
- *Action T-2B:* Work to implement local actions needed to accomplish applicable State and regional mobility strategies.

Goal T-3: To provide appropriate funding and financing of transportation infrastructure.

- *Policy T-3.1:* The City shall pursue dedicated and collaborative transportation funding sources from State and regional agencies on its own and in partnership with other local and regional organizations and agencies.
- *Policy T-3.4:* The City shall place a priority on Vulnerable Road User (VRU) safety, considering pedestrian and bicycle safety and accessibility in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) program.
- *Action T-3A:* Work in close collaboration with State legislative representatives and agency staff, and local and regional agencies and organizations to assess and adjust

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current funding formulas and approaches to increase support for tourism and to mitigate related impacts.

Goal T-4: To use state-of-the-art design and technology to create a safe, efficient, environmentally sound and user-friendly transportation system.

- *Policy T-4.1:* The City's road network shall incorporate "intelligent transportation systems" to manage traffic congestion using real time data, particularly during peak seasons and major community events and incorporating successful solutions and best practices.
- *Policy T-4.2:* The City shall identify and promote Transit-Oriented Development in areas that can support the regional transit system and related plans (North End).
- *Policy T-4.4:* The City shall work with transit and tourism providers to enhance protections to the city's natural resources. This includes reducing commercial vehicle traffic to the city's south shores, designing routes to minimize impacts on residential neighborhoods, and elimination of idling engines during stops of more than two minutes.
- *Action T-4B:* Continue to create multi-modal, mixed use corridors along major arterial streets within the city through the uses of "complete streets" practices.
- *Action T-4C:* Design bike and pedestrian facilities into street improvement plans and link these into the larger regional network of bike, pedestrian and transit systems.
- *Action T-4D:* Promote the development of strategically located mixed use nodes (i.e. North End and the City's historical urban core area).
- *Action T-4E:* Continue to collect and evaluate data concerning local transit use and use this data to refine plans, programs and operations.
- *Action T-4F:* Continue to assess the potential to use the former rail spur in the city as a multiuse trail component to serve both residents and visitors as included in the Rhode Island TIP.

Goal T-5: To provide sufficient and suitably located parking, designed to eliminate, mitigate or reduce impacts.

- *Policy T-5.1:* The City shall strive to develop, implement and actively manage a plan and program intended to provide sufficient parking to support local businesses and tourist activity sites.
- *Action T-5A:* Evaluate the potential to establish parking areas outside of the main tourist areas and use transit to move visitors into and around the community.
- *Action T-5B:* Develop and implement a comprehensive parking plan.
- *Action T-5C:* Continue to endorse and promote transportation options, particularly during peak tourism season.