



# Keep Newport Moving

2023



City of Newport  
**TRANSPORTATION  
MASTER PLAN**  
Keep Newport Moving

# Contents

Keep Newport Moving will guide the implementation of multimodal transportation investments in Newport, Rhode Island. The Action Plan is divided into several sections including a look at the realities of getting around Newport today, recommendations for policies and projects, and a guide to implementation and funding.

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Find out more information about this plan including appendices at:  
[www.cityofnewport.com/en-us/city-hall/departments/planning](http://www.cityofnewport.com/en-us/city-hall/departments/planning)

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- Valerie J. Southern Transportation Consultant, LLC
- Smart Mobility
- Green International

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# Introduction

Newport's rich history and seaside location attract visitors from all over the world, who explore the city via its network of beautiful and historic streetscapes. These same streets make Newport uniquely well-positioned to build on its strengths and become a great walking and biking city. The Plan's vision is for Newport to be a safe and inviting place for all people to travel, whether on foot, by bike, by bus, or by vehicle. With major transportation investments and new development on the horizon, now is the time to ensure that multimodal projects play a leading role in Newport's future. These investments can ensure the safety, affordability, and enjoyment of all people traveling in Newport.







NO  
PARKING  
ANY  
TIME  
←→

Cliff Walk  
→  
Narragansett  
Avenue  
1/2 Mile





# What is in a mobility plan?

Keep Newport Moving is the City's first mobility plan in over 20 twenty years and represents a collaboration between the City of Newport, the State of Rhode Island, and the public. The Plan will provide a comprehensive, actionable strategy to make it safer, easier, and more enjoyable for people to navigate Newport's historic street grid, no matter how they choose to move around the city.

Keep Newport Moving ties the City's existing goals, plans, policies, and programs to its transportation needs. This Plan provides recommendations for programs, policies, and projects that will elevate Newport's unique environment and prepare the city for an equitable, sustainable, and healthy future. This plan also includes an implementation framework for moving the recommendations forward. The Plan aligns with the 2017 Comprehensive Land Use Plan, and it will help achieve goals related to preservation, sustainability, resiliency, and community development.

Newport's street network was originally designed for non-motorized and water transportation. The narrow streets in the historic core were not built for—and are struggling to accommodate—today's demands. The city is experiencing high volumes of vehicle traffic, insufficient and inaccessible sidewalks, vehicle parking demand that exceeds the supply, unregulated freight movement, and the need for improved stormwater management.

Newport has changed a lot since the previous transportation plan completed over 20 years ago. The city has been a major tourist destination since the mid-1800s but the nature of the tourism has shifted in recent years. Newport's population of 24,697 people is joined by millions of tourists every year, primarily in the summer months. The city's popularity has stimulated significant private investment in retail shopping facilities, hotels, timeshare units, restaurants, clubs, and other tourist-oriented enterprises. This influx of tourists also present challenges to the city's historic street grid and people in Newport feel the chaotic impacts of these combined issues.



## Keep Newport Moving Development

- February 2020: Initial public engagement on transportation master plan
- March/April 2021: *Keep Newport Moving* kicks off
- May – July 2021; Stakeholder interviews
- July 2021 – October 2021: Public engagement phase 1 (plan goals and transportation needs)
- November 2021 – February 2022: Existing conditions analysis
- April – June 2022: Public engagement phase 2 (proposed plan recommendations)
- July – December 2022: Finalize transportation master plan



# Goals and Performance Measures

The goals and performance measures are the result of ideas put forward by the Working Group, the Resident Advisory Committee, community members, and stakeholders. These goals will guide the City of Newport and other stakeholders in implementing the Plan’s recommendations. Each goal is supported by performance measures, which provide data-driven metrics for evaluating the Plan’s progress and success. Underpinning each below goal is idea of safety. All of the goals can only be achieved through making travel safe.

## Equity

### Goal

Support the mobility needs of people of all ages, abilities, races, and economic backgrounds.

### Performance measures

- Decrease household transportation cost burden\*
- Increase the diversity of people participating in Newport’s outreach, specifically increasing involvement from people of color\*
- Increase the number of mobility projects installed in neighborhoods with low auto ownership, higher portions of people of color, and higher portions of people with low incomes\*

## Mode Shift

### Goal

Increase the share of trips made by walking, biking, and transit.

### Performance measures

- Decrease the share of people driving to work alone
- Decrease the number of people walking and biking who are killed or seriously injured in traffic crashes per year
- Increase the share of residents within a half-mile of a high-comfort bike facility
- Increase the mileage of fully accessible sidewalks\*
- Increase transit ridership
- Increase publicly available micromobility options, both in number and geographic distribution

## Access

### Goal

Support economic development in Newport through increased multimodal access to local businesses, tourist destinations, and job centers.

### Performance measures

- Increase the number of tourist destinations and employers within a half-mile of a bike facility that feels comfortable to most people and walking distance to a high frequency transit stop
- Decrease the share of short trips (less than 2 miles) made by automobile\*
- Increase the frequency of public transit connections between Newport and Amtrak, MBTA, and the airport

## Environment

### Goal

Prepare for the impacts of climate change and embrace Newport’s environmental resources.

### Performance measures

- Increase the share of land area covered by tree canopies\*
- Decrease the amount of stormwater entering the sewer system from the right-of-way\*
- Increase the availability of electric vehicle charging stations, particularly for low income neighborhoods

\* baseline data needed

# Mobility in Newport Today

Newport's network of dense, gridded streets and sidewalks are a strong foundation for a great walking and biking city. The densest residential neighborhoods, and many tourist destinations, are less than two miles from Newport's downtown and main job center – a reasonable walking and biking distance. Multimodal investments are already playing a leading role in projects in Newport's northern neighborhoods including highway removal, shared use paths, and trails.





Over the last three years, many Americans have rediscovered their neighborhood outdoor public spaces in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Trails, parks, bike lanes, and bike shops are busier than ever. Changes in technology have brought an increase in “micromobility” options, including scooters and e-bikes. Commuting patterns have shifted as more people work remotely, and Newport is an appealing place to relocate. However, the City still contends with serious traffic crashes, rising housing prices, and looming climate threats over the city’s infrastructure. Keep Newport Moving must plan for a changing environment, technology, and demographics. The City must ensure that people have equitable and sustainable options for getting around their community.

Newport has been investing in new transportation policy and infrastructure. In October 2021, the City passed a Complete and Green Streets Policy. The policy outlines multimodal goals and best practices that support the design of safe and green streets. The City Council also passed a companion ordinance, which requires that all streets and public rights-of-way conform to this policy. Over time, this

will result in street projects that are responsive to their role in the city-wide multimodal network.

The Rhode Island Department of Transportation’s (RIDOT) ongoing Pell Bridge ramp realignment project includes a collection of multimodal investments. The core of the project consolidates and removes existing highway ramps in The Point and North End neighborhoods. In addition to the ramp removal, a new sidepath was installed along JT Connell/ Coddington Highway and extended as a multimodal path to America’s Cup Avenue along the existing rail line. Also, the rotary at Admiral Kalbfus is being updated as a modern roundabout, including new bike lanes and crosswalks. Keep Newport Moving’s proposed “Ride to the Beach” route, highlighted in Section 3, builds on this multimodal path.

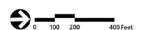
The housing market is directly tied to mobility discussions. Housing policy such as affordability, regulations around short-term rentals, and new development shape transportation habits within cities. In Newport, the farther a person lives from downtown, the more limited the mobility options are. At the same time, living downtown is not affordable for



## Illustrative Site Plan

Pell Bridge  
Newport, RI

Source: RIDOT, 2021  
Project ID: 1212/2021  
Date: 12/12/2021



Pell Bridge Illustrative Site Plan, provided by RIDOT

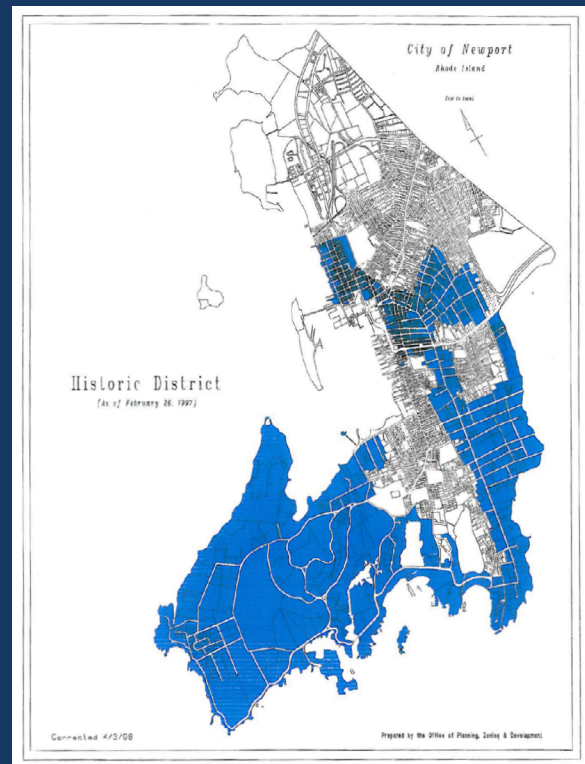
many. While Newport is one of only six (out of thirty-nine) Rhode Island municipalities currently meeting the State’s requirement that at least ten percent of its housing be affordable,<sup>1</sup> there is still a need for more. According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), if an occupant is paying more than thirty percent of their income for housing costs, including utilities, their housing is not affordable for them.<sup>2</sup> Based on this definition, twenty-eight percent of home owners and forty-five percent of renters in Newport are already paying more than they can afford in order to live in the city.<sup>3</sup>

Mixed-use development can be part of an affordable housing strategy. This type of development includes residential, commercial, retail, recreation, cultural, and open space activities all in the same location. This approach supports “twenty-minute neighborhoods”—neighborhoods where people can access their daily needs within twenty minutes of their home. Newport’s Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP), adopted in 2017; the Innovation Hub Floating Overlay Zone, adopted in 2021; and the North End Urban Plan (NEUP), adopted in 2021, all support mixed-used development.

Transit Forward RI 2040, Rhode Island’s Transit Master Plan, outlines short-, mid-, and long-term plans for service improvements, including increased frequency on many of the routes in Newport. As part of the Plan’s implementation, the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) added new route service in the summer of 2022 – Route 68 connects the North End to and Corporate Park in Middletown, via Easton’s Beach. This new route expands access to jobs and social services for Newport residents. Additionally, due to contributions from Discover Newport and the Episcopal Dioceses of Rhode Island, RIPTA began piloting free service on Route 67 and Route 68 during the summer of 2022.

Vehicle parking issues is one of the largest complaints from stakeholders and the public. Existing parking and freight ordinances are dated and do not address emerging parking trends or

technology. They also do not consider administrative mechanisms that tie compact land development to site-specific parking services, and vehicle parking policies that can enable smart growth.



## Newport Historic District

Newport is known for an abundance of well-preserved mid-18th Century buildings and over 250 acres of the city was designated as a historic district in 1968. The District sits in the center of Newport, roughly bounded by Kingston, Bellevue, Pope, Thames, Bridge, and Van Zandt Streets. Street design and streetscapes can contribute to a historic district’s character through the design of their scale, materials, signage, and structures. The Newport Historic District Commission oversees development within the Historic District including defining historic standards, design guidelines and reviewing proposed designs.

1 Apartment Market Study (September 2020), Keystone Consulting Group, accessed <https://www.middletownri.com/DocumentCenter/View/1192/Apartment-Market-Study>

2 [www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov)

3 2020 Housing Fact Book , HousingWorks RI, accessed <https://www.housingworksri.org/Local-Housing-Facts/Southeast-RI/Newport>

## Key feedback

### Make walking connections safer

Improve sidewalk construction, maintenance, and accessibility. Make crossings safer through improved signal design and intersection geometry.

### Reduce travel stress

Organize vehicle parking information and make it easy to access. Install safer bicycle facilities and separate bicycles from cars. Control speeding through street design. Increase transit-related amenities (shelters, benches, information, etc.) at bus stops.

### Support biking

Install bike racks and high-comfort, connected bike facilities throughout Newport to make biking accessible and comfortable for more people.

### Embrace micromobility

Embrace new technologies that will reduce car use, such as e-bikes and bikeshare, and organize their use.

### Organize the curb

Reduce stress at the curb by improving signage and information available to people parking vehicles and making deliveries. Organize and enforce curbside use based on local needs such as loading, short-term parking, and pick-up/drop-off zones.

### Connect to the community

Provide more mobility options that connect to community destinations, such as schools. Reduce speeds on residential, neighborhood streets.

### Prepare for climate change

Reduce impervious surfaces, especially in areas that are at greater risk for flooding. Ensure mobility options remain as sea levels rise.

## Hear from Newport

The City of Newport wants to create a plan that will work for everyone. Through stakeholder interviews, public workshops, open houses, pop-up events, and paper and online surveys, hundreds of people shared their feedback to help shape the recommendations in this Plan.

The community engagement process for the Plan incorporated the voices of stakeholders, the broad public (including residents, employees, and visitors), and the Spanish-speaking population. The process consisted of four phases, each with its own set of goals. The team aimed to build awareness and support for the Plan in all phases of engagement.

The most common priorities that respondents suggested for supporting tourist activity were providing better public transit (including shuttles and trolleys), providing more or better vehicle satellite parking, restricting traffic in busy areas, enforcing traffic laws, and providing bikeshare.

Phase 0 outreach was conducted by the City of Newport to identify transportation priorities among the broad public prior to hiring a consultant to develop the Plan.





## Phase 0 (Oct to Nov 2019)

Identify initial transportation priorities of those who live in, work in, and visit Newport.

See the [City of Newport Transportation Master Plan Public Engagement Final Report \(Feb 2020\)](#).

## Phase 1 (May to Oct 2021)

Confirm TMP goals, identify transportation and TMP priorities, learn about transportation needs and problems.

See the [TMP Existing Conditions Report \(Jan 2022\)](#).

## Phase 2 (Apr to Jun 2022)

Gather feedback on proposed policy and project recommendations.

## Phase 3 (Nov to Dec 2022)

Gather feedback on the draft Transportation Master Plan.



Outreach at Donovan Manor

During Phase 1, 20 stakeholder interviews and one focus group with City staff were conducted in addition to public outreach.

## Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Group

### City Governance

1. Mayor, City Council Chair – Jeanne Marie Napolitano
2. City Council Vice Chair – Lynn Underwood Ceglie
3. At Large City Councilor – Jamie Bova
4. At Large City Councilor – Elizabeth Fuerte
5. 1st Ward City Councilor – Angela McCalla
6. 2nd Ward City Councilor – Charles M Holder
7. 3rd Ward City Councilor – Kathryn E. Leonard
8. City Planning, Economic Development, Parking, and Public Services:
  - Director, Planning and Economic Development – Patricia Reynolds
  - Planner, Planning and Economic Development – Peter Friedrichs
  - Intern, Planning and Economic Development – Becky Trefethen
  - Director, Public Services – William Riccio, PE
  - Superintendent, Public Services, Parks, Grounds & Forestry – Scott Wheeler
  - Public Services – Steven Bollett
  - Public Services – Cory Dexter
  - Parking Manager, Police – Patrick Segerson
  - Traffic Sergeant, Police – Michael Naylor

### Special Transportation Interests

9. Aquidneck Island Planning Commission – Allison McNally, Program Manager
10. Newport Housing Authority – Pauline Perkins-Moye, Program Manager

11. Naval Station Newport – Cornelia Mueller, Community Planning Liaison Officer
12. Newport Hospital – Crista Durand, President
13. Newport School District – Colleen Burns Jermain, Superintendent
14. Martin Luther King Community Center – Heather Hole Strout, Executive Director

### Transportation Advocacy

15. Newport Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission and Bike Newport – Bari Freeman, Member / Executive Director
16. Newport for All Ages – Mary Alice Smith, Coordinator

### Business and Tourism

17. Discover Newport – Evan Smith, Executive Director
18. Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce – Erin Donovan-Boyle, Executive Director
19. Newport Festivals Foundation – Kira Favro, Chief Operating Officer
20. Preservation Society of Newport – Trudy Coxé, Chief Executive Officer

### Trucking and Freight

21. Rhode Island Trucking Association:
  - President and Chief Executive Officer – Chris Maxwell
  - Centrex Distributors – John Clogher and David D’Onofrio
  - United Parcel Service, RI Division – Steve Clarke
  - United Parcel Service – Zachary Reay

During Phases 1 and 2, the team conducted a parallel set of activities, with a two-part survey that included a mapping activity, both online and in person. The online surveys were advertised through stakeholder networks, email sign-ups from the *Keep Newport Moving* website, and the City’s social media channels. The in-person outreach consisted of multiple public workshops, open houses, pop-up events, and presentations.

**There were ten Phase 1 public workshops and pop-up events:**

- July 24, 2021 – Newport Folk Festival at Fort Adams
- August 5, 2021 – Innovate Newport
- August 18, 2021 – Aquidneck Growers Market on Memorial Boulevard
- August 26, 2021 – Newport City Hall
- August 28, 2021 – Aquidneck Growers Market on Dexter Street
- September 11, 2021 – Rogers High School Paint Your Parking Spot event
- October 1, 2021 –Tijuana Burrito Grille
- October 1, 2021 – Leo’s Market & Restaurant
- October 2, 2021 – Audrain Concours (Bellevue Car Display)
- October 2, 2021 – Festa Italiana (Festival in the Park)

**There were ten Phase 2 open houses and pop-up events:**

- April 17, 2022 – Little League Opening Day
- May 14, 2022 – CCRI Health Fair
- May 17, 2022 – Pell Elementary
- May 18, 2022 – Public Library
- May 21, 2022 – Elliot’s Ride
- May 25, 2022 – Aquidneck Growers Market on Memorial Boulevard
- May 31, 2022 – Conexion Latina’s Vaccine Clinic
- June 2, 2022 – Thompson Middle School
- June 15, 2022 – Donovan Manor
- June 15, 2022 – Edward King House

Additionally, during Phase 2, there were three presentations to different stakeholder groups:

- May 17, 2022 – Interdepartmental Traffic Committee
- June 6, 2022 – Planning Board
- June 9, 2022 – Waterfront Commission

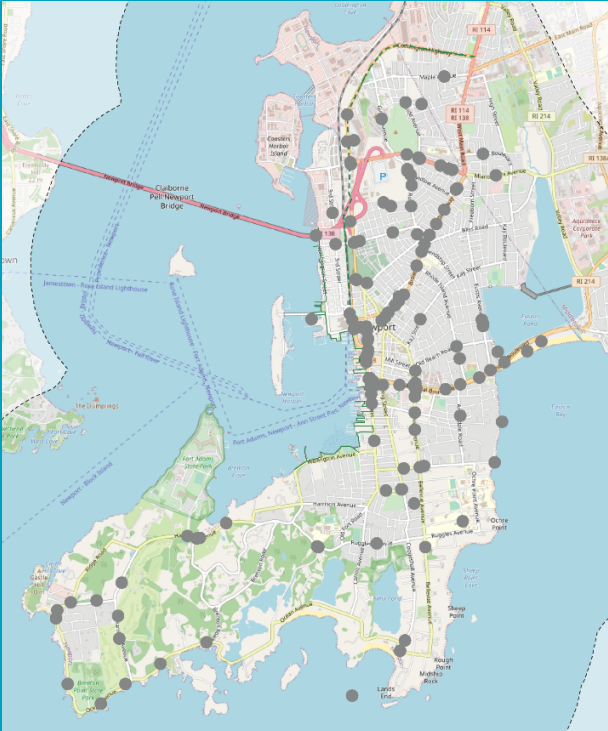
# PHASE 1 BY THE NUMBERS

<p>Survey respondents</p> <p>Over <b>200</b> people</p>	<p>Transportation priorities survey</p> <p><b>184</b> responses</p>	<p>May survey and location-specific comments</p> <p><b>531</b> responses</p>
---------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------

# PHASE 2 BY THE NUMBERS

<p>Comments from pop-up events</p> <p>Over <b>140</b> comments</p>	<p>Vehicle parking policies survey</p> <p><b>177</b> responses</p>	<p>Webmap survey</p> <p><b>318</b> responses</p>
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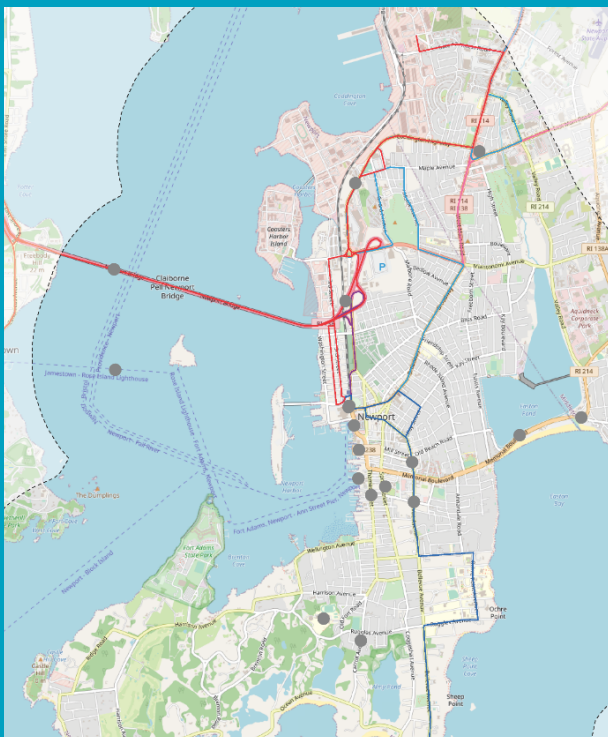
The Phase I online webmap collected general comments about walking, biking, transit, and driving.



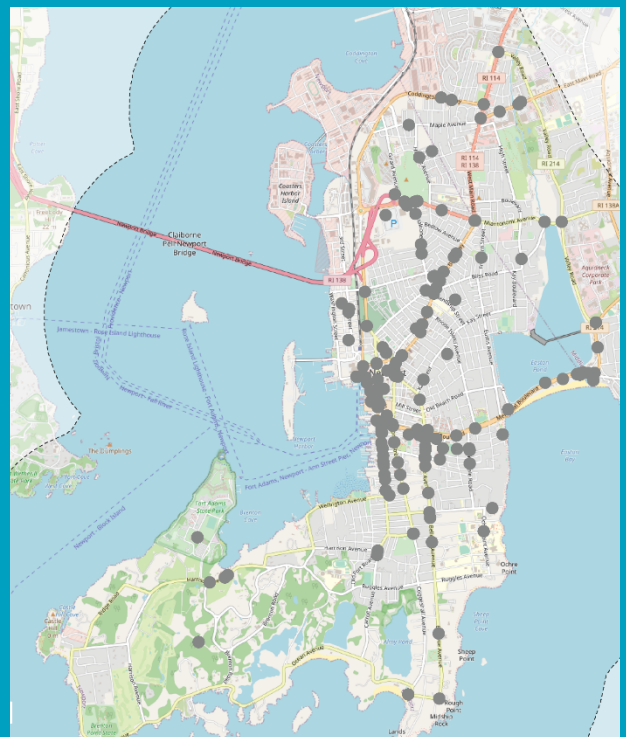
Walking Responses



Bicycling Responses



Transit Responses



Driving Responses



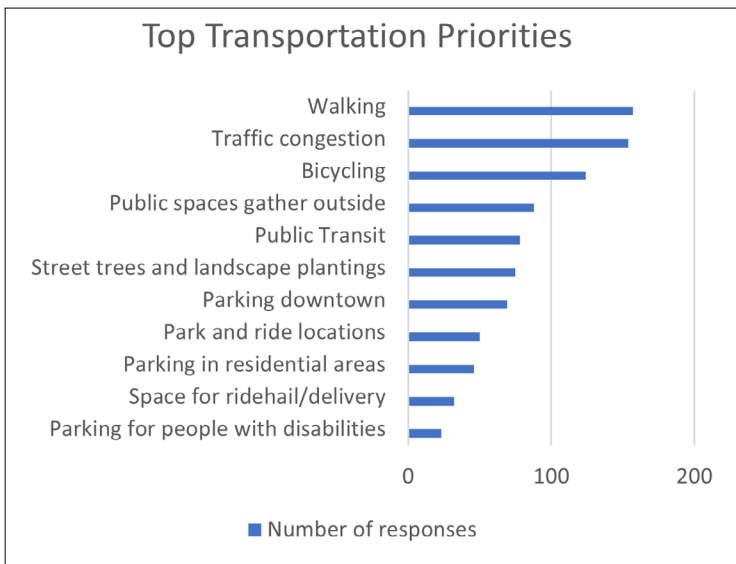
**KeepNewportMoving Outreach at Elliot’s Ride**

Phase 1 feedback was gathered through hand-written and online surveys as well as e-mails. Survey respondents were asked to select up to five of their top transportation priorities from a list of 12 items that were developed based on early engagement completed by the City in 2019. Walking (85.3%), Traffic congestion (83.7%), and Bicycling (67.4%) were selected by the vast majority of respondents.

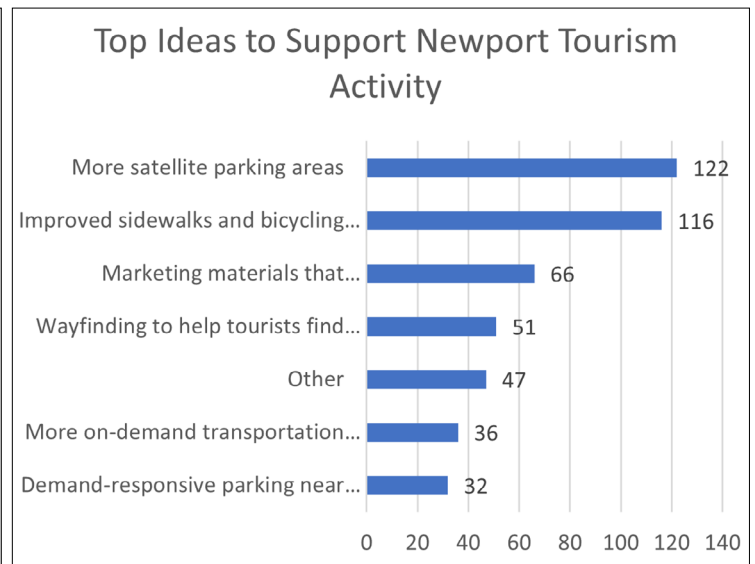
Additionally, survey respondents were asked to select their top three priorities from seven ideas to better support Newport’s tourist activity that add additional pressure to the transportation system.

Two priorities selected by nearly three-quarters of participants are vehicle satellite parking areas (73.9%) and improved sidewalks and bicycling infrastructure (70.1%).

**Figure 1: Top Transportation Priorities**



**Figure 2: Top Ideas to Support Newport Tourism**



Phase 3 feedback was gathered through our website and e-mails. The draft Newport Transportation Master Plan was released on our website in November 2022 and advertised to our stakeholders and email lists. We received 165 comments on the draft plan.



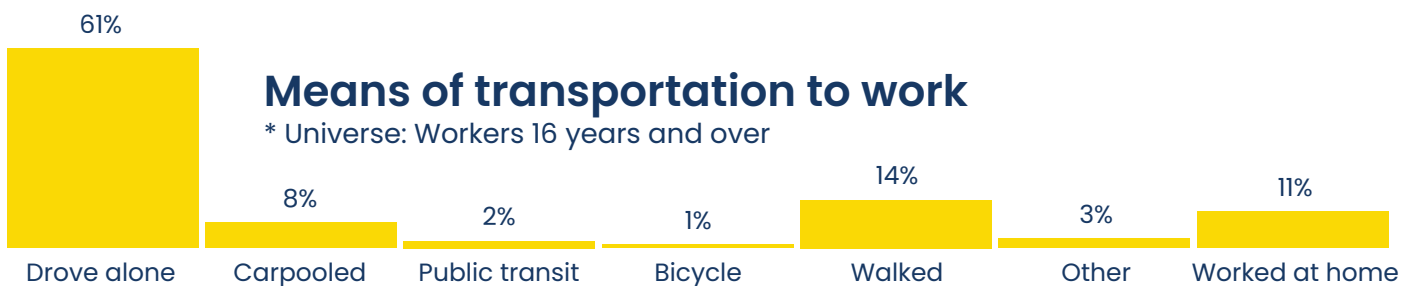
**Outreach at William S. Rogers High School**



# How are people traveling today?

The project team reviewed commute to work data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) 2019 five-year estimates to assess travel and modal patterns. The limitations of this data are important to consider when using it to make decisions. In general, commuting to work only accounts for approximately sixteen percent of all person trips and nineteen percent of all miles travelled. The ACS commute data also does not capture trips made by retired people, those currently unemployed, stay-at-home parents, kids under sixteen, and people who are currently unhoused. While the ACS commute data is not representative of all trips, it is the only source with modal split for analysis with a large population sample.

**Figure 3: Means of Transportation to Work for Newport Workers over the age of 16 from the American Community Survey's 2019 5-year rolling average**



In general, Newport reports a shorter travel to work time than many surrounding communities. In Newport, the average commute trip time is just 18.3 minutes. In Providence, the average time is 26.5 minutes and statewide the average is 25.2 minutes. This may be a result of Newport's geographic inaccessibility, which makes it more difficult for people to live in Newport and travel to larger employment centers, such as Boston, on a daily basis. This short commute time is also a result of Newport's compact development pattern, which makes it possible for a large share (14 percent) of Newport residents to walk to work. Finally, many people in Newport reported working from home even before the COVID-19 pandemic, a figure that is likely to grow in the future. This high walking share and high working-from-home share results in a relatively low percentage of people who report driving alone to work. Only 60 percent of Newport residents drive alone to work compared to 80 percent in Providence and state-wide.

## Safety

To identify existing safety issues in Newport, crash data from RIDOT for the most recently available five-year period (2016–2020) for the City of Newport was reviewed and evaluated.

Figure 4 shows a heat map of injury crashes in Newport from 2016 to 2020. The most concentrated crash areas are along Broadway, Admiral Kalbfus, Memorial Boulevard, and Thames St/America’s Cup Avenue, as well as at the JT Connell rotary.

Broadway and the Washington Square area has the greatest number of crashes involving people walking. Although traffic calming and streetscape elements were installed in Broadway in 2019, there has not been enough time to understand the impact that these designs will have on crashes. Crashes that involve people biking are most frequent on Thames Street, Spring Street, Americas Cup Avenue, and upper Broadway.

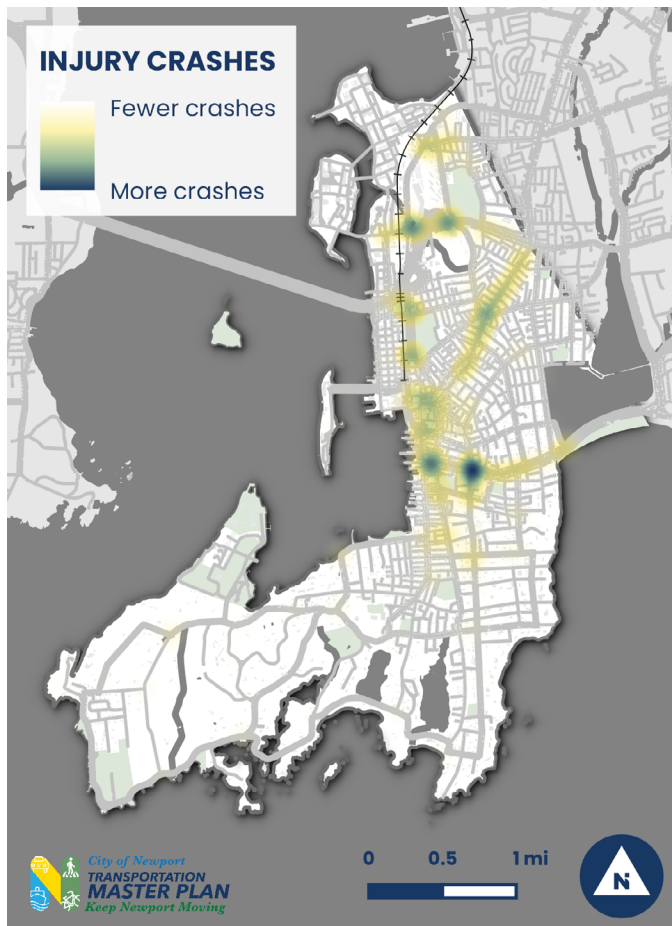


Figure 4: Heat Map of Injury Crashes in Newport, 2016–2020

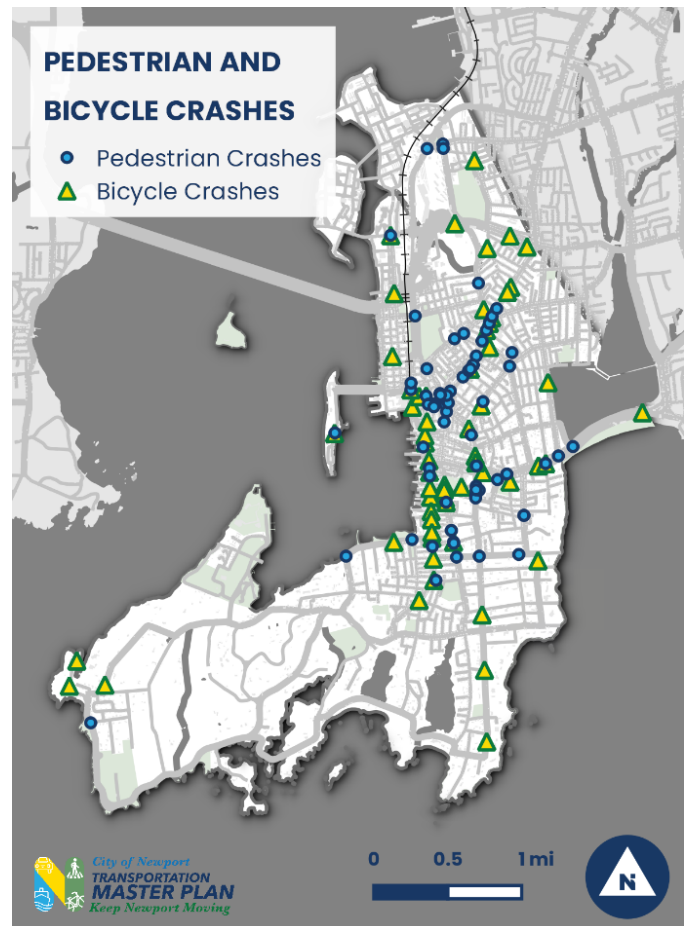


Figure 5: Pedestrian and Bicycle Crash Locations in Newport, 2016–2020

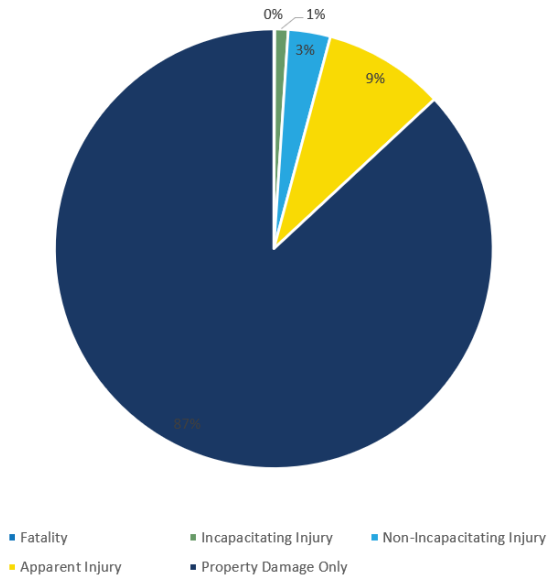


Walking and bicycling are disproportionately unsafe on Newport's streets.

Between 2017 and 2020, 87 percent of crashes resulted in property damage only and 13 percent resulted in an injury or fatality.

However, for the crashes that involved a person walking or biking, the rate of injuries and fatalities is 79 percent.

Crash Severity (All Crashes), 2016-2020



Crash Severity Involving People Walking or Biking, 2016-2020

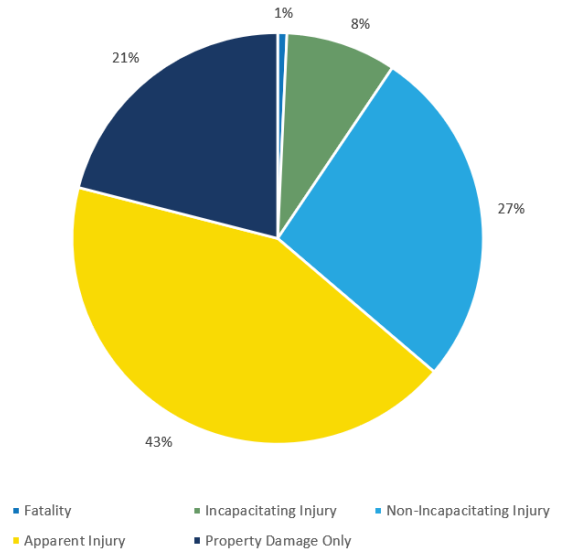


Figure 6: Crash Severity of All Crashes in Newport, 2016-2020

Figure 7: Crash Severity of Crashes Involving People Walking or Biking in Newport, 2016-2020

## Community Partner: Edward King House

The Edward King House (King House) is Newport's Senior Center that provides a wide variety of programming and resources to keep our 50+ population active and engaged. The King House welcomes an average of four hundred weekly visitors and continues to be a vital City partner in improving the quality of life for our senior residents.

Located centrally in the City, the facility is a hub for individual and family referrals regarding senior issues and opportunities that support adult learning, independent living, and an enriched quality of life. The City's only outdoor fitness park, which was designed for adults of all ages and abilities, is right outside the doors of the King House.

## Community Partner: Conexión Latina Newport

Conexión Latina Newport (CLN) connects the City's Hispanic/Latino community to essential resources and provides advocacy for increased access and representation throughout Newport. CLN is an integral City partner who can encourage civic participation from a growing population that has been historically underserved.

Conexión Latina Newport identifies gaps in services and partners with community groups and organizations to build trust with families that depend on essential resources. During the pandemic, CLN provided assistance with access to food and vaccinations.



**70 percent** of Phase 1 survey respondents said that improved sidewalks and bicycling infrastructure would alleviate some of the pressure on the City's transportation system that comes from seasonal tourist activities.

# Walking in Newport

In general, Newport has small block sizes and much of the downtown and near-downtown neighborhoods have continuous sidewalks with developed tree canopies. Tourists flock to Newport to enjoy the quaint streets, lively retail environment, and historic architecture. Its small size and compact street network are key assets for Newport: many destinations are within a twenty-minute walk from the center of downtown. Maintaining, expanding, and improving the pedestrian-friendly environment is critical to the comfort and enjoyment of Newport residents and visitors.

However, not all neighborhoods have the same development patterns or connected pedestrian networks as downtown. Outside of the downtown core, some streets lack sidewalks completely, and the neighborhoods south of downtown lack connected sidewalks, despite hosting some of the city's major tourist attractions. This lack of a comprehensive pedestrian network limits safe access to bus stops and the transit network, further limiting mobility throughout the city.

Even though many streets have sidewalks, accessibility for people using mobility devices, strollers, or personal shopping carts is a major issue. Many sidewalks are narrow and made narrower by the placement of utility poles and street signs. Snowbanks can further reduce the width of the sidewalks, making pedestrian travel after winter storms difficult. Narrow sidewalk widths also make access ramps into buildings or at street corners challenging. The City is gradually upgrading curb ramps and public facilities to be ADA-compliant, but there is no comprehensive ADA Transition Plan. Finally, people are often observed parking their vehicles on the sidewalks on narrow streets, with no apparent signage or enforcement to stop it. In addition to causing an accessibility and equity issue, narrow sidewalks limit the ability to walk side by side or with children.

Specific pedestrian issues include:

- The North End neighborhood has inconsistent sidewalks and a street network with limited pedestrian access, resulting in superblocks surrounded by high-speed, high-volume arterials. The North End Urban Plan aims to make the North End less reliant on automobiles through the installation of high-quality bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.
- Many of the streets in Bellevue Avenue and Estates lack sidewalks, and dirt footpaths made from walking tourists seeking to tour the historic mansions or reach the Cliff Walk line the street. Additionally, many of the transit stops in this neighborhood are not ADA compliant. This neighborhood is less than a half-hour walk from the intersection of Thames and America's Cup Avenue and a ten-minute walk from Bellevue Avenue.
- The Ocean Drive neighborhood, which is a primary route for people traveling to Fort Adams for major events, lacks sidewalks and dedicated bicycle infrastructure.
- Newport's existing Harbor Walk is incomplete and in disrepair, making it difficult to access one of Newport's natural and cultural amenities. Improving public access to Newport's waterfront is also part of the 2017 Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP).



## Community Partner: Bike Newport

Newport's local bike advocacy organization has been a partner with the City to improve the conditions for people biking since 2011. In addition to advocacy, Bike Newport builds a positive bike culture through:

**Keeping bikes running smoothly** – The Bike Garage, located in Bike Newport's office, is a community-oriented space for DIY bike repairs and education.

**Building community** – The Big Blue Barn in Newport's North End hosts summer camps, a community garden, and a pump track.



## Bicycling in Newport

The bike network within Newport is relatively sparse, with 3.35 miles of bike lanes (many of which are narrow) and seven miles of shared lane markings (shared with vehicle traffic). The existing bikeways are uncomfortable for most people to ride due to the lack of separation from moving vehicles. Additionally, they are not part of a connected network, making it difficult for people to confidently navigate and safely get from one destination to another. Newport does have many neighborhood streets that are low-speed and low-volume. These can be great biking streets, but the busier streets create barriers for all but the most confident bicyclists.

Today, there are shared lane markings on Thames Street, Spring Street, Broadway, and Ocean Avenue. These streets have higher vehicle volumes than is comfortable for most people to share a travel lane with automobiles. Painted bike lanes are provided on America's Cup Avenue, but they are often blocked by loading or parked vehicles. Bike lanes on Memorial Boulevard are not continuous. The Pell Bridge project will result in a strong north-south multi-use path along Coddington Highway, JT Connell Highway, and the rail line. This will connect the North End neighborhood with America's Cup Boulevard.

In 2021, a sidepath was installed along JT Connell that will eventually connect to Downtown Newport forming the Newport Connector Trail.



Photo of the Newport Connector Trail along JT Connell under construction



Photo of a truck loading in the America's Cup bike lanes

# WALK AND BIKE FACILITIES

 Pedestrian Walkways

## Bike Facilities

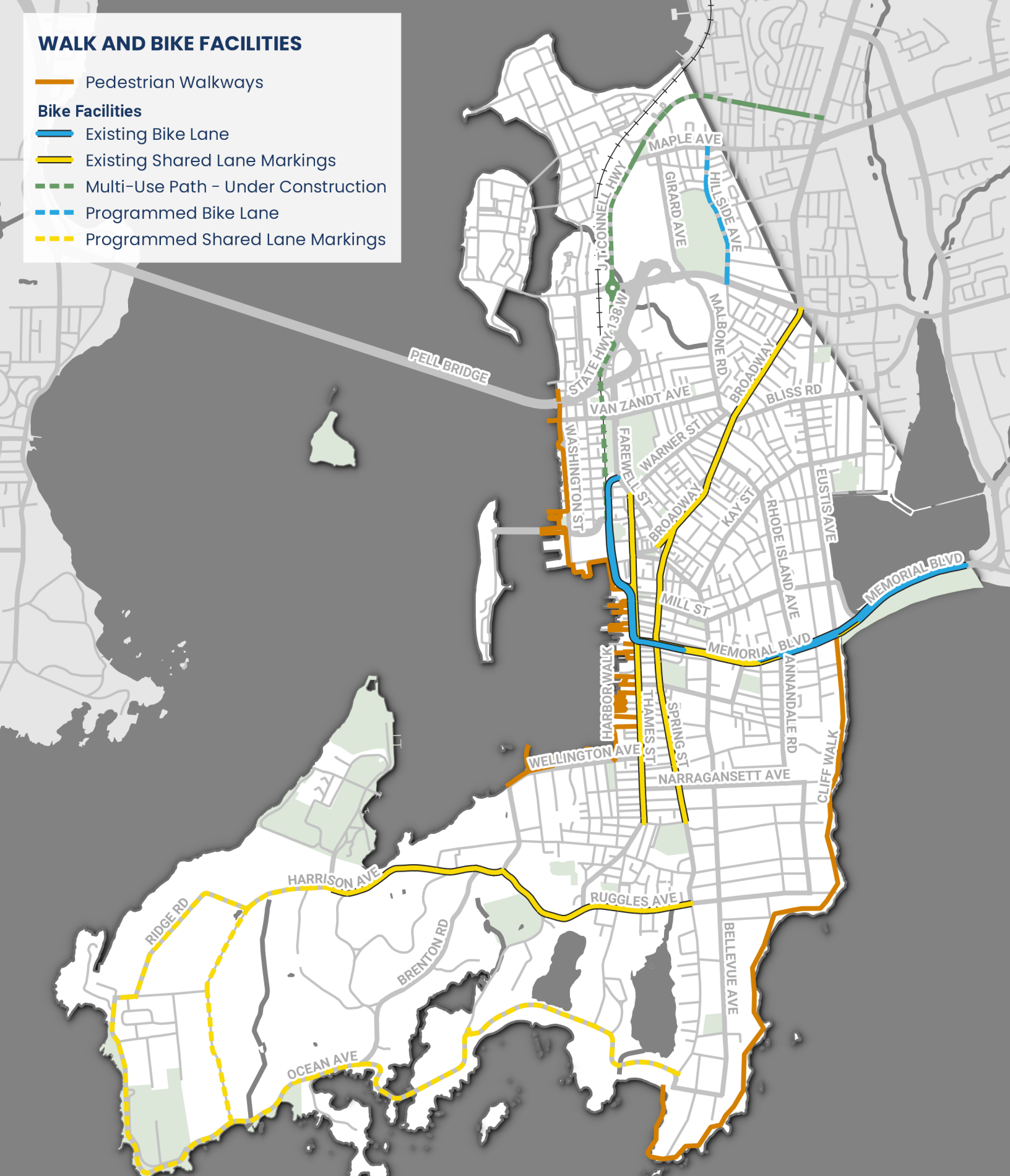
 Existing Bike Lane

 Existing Shared Lane Markings

 Multi-Use Path - Under Construction

 Programmed Bike Lane

 Programmed Shared Lane Markings



# Taking Transit in Newport

Newport's location in coastal Rhode Island and its historical significance makes it a popular destination for tourists for approximately half the year (mid-spring through mid-fall), and the city is intensely busy during the summer. RIPTA operates bus services for many destinations within Newport and connecting to Providence and other centers around the region. The Newport Gateway Visitors Information and Transportation Center (Gateway Center), located on America's Cup Avenue, is Newport's transportation hub. The Gateway Center serves as a layover and transfer destination for RIPTA's seven routes, Greyhound buses, taxis, charter bus services, and tour buses. Discover Newport, Newport's Visitor Information Center, was also located at the Gateway Center for over three decades before its relocation to Long Wharf Mall, just across the street, in 2020.

Transit service in Newport primarily serves residents and people who travel to and from Newport for work. The most frequent service routes within and around Newport are Route 67, which serves Salve Regina University, and Route 63, which provides access to a grocery store, library, and destinations in Middletown. Regionally, Newport is easily accessed via the East Bay (Route 60) and West Bay (Route 14). In addition, a regional east-west connection is available via Route 64. Route 60, which connects Newport to Providence via Middletown, Portsmouth, Bristol, Warren, and Barrington, is one of the busiest routes in the RIPTA system. One further regional connection between Providence and Newport is Route 24L. Via Fall River, this limited-stopping peak service provides a faster service between two major areas of the state.

Due to the large increase in activity during the tourist season, RIPTA generally increases the frequency of Route 67 buses to every 15 minutes between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Even given the available transit service and increased frequency during the summer months, people would like to have more local transit options during Newport's busiest months to reduce car congestion. Public and stakeholder input during the development of this transportation master plan indicated the desire for an internal or circulator-type transit service in Newport during the city's busiest months. Due to

generous financial contributions from both Discover Newport and the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island, RIPTA has made Routes 67 and 68 a free, hop-on/hop-off service between May and October 2022.

Bus services provided by RIPTA are complemented by two regional ferry services in Newport. SeaStreak, supported by RIDOT, provides ferry service to Providence and Bristol seasonally from June through October. The high-speed Islander ferry connects to Block Island and generally runs between May and August. However, regional connectivity is difficult without a car, and public input has indicated a need for transit options to Boston and connection to MBTA and Amtrak services.

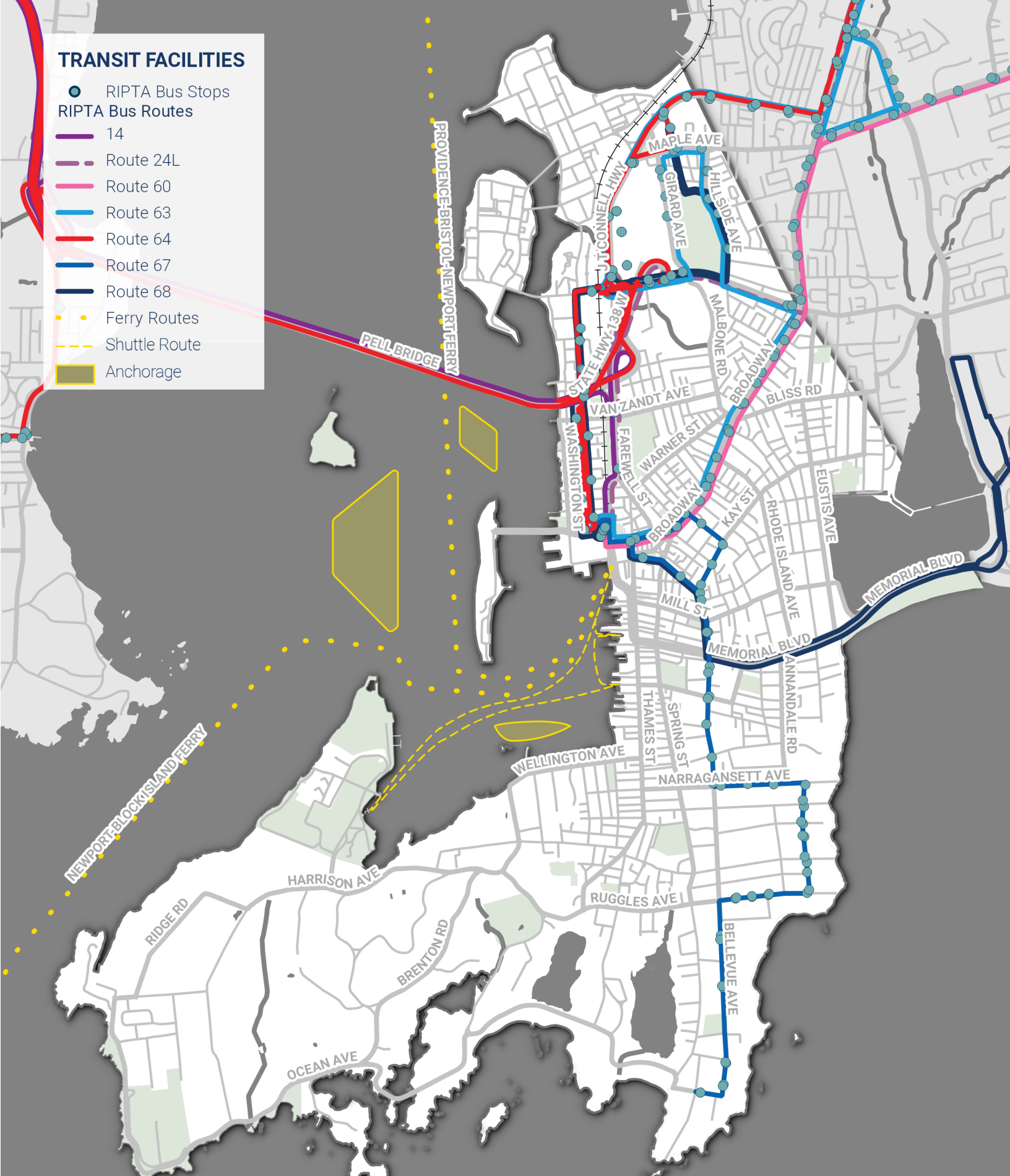
Rail transit does not run to Newport. However, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) provides a commuter rail line to Providence, where then both buses and ferries are available to get to Newport.

## Water Transportation

Being a seaside city, the City of Newport also has several ferry services for both residents and visitors. RIPTA operates the Seastreak Providence/Newport Ferry that travels between the two cities as well as Bristol during the summer and fall season. Private operators also run ferries to Providence, as well as Block Island, and Jamestown. There are also ferry and harbor shuttle companies offering cruises and hop-on-hop-off service for visitors to get around the lower Narragansett Bay and various destinations along the Newport Harbor (such as Fort Adams, Rose Island Lighthouse, Ann Street Pier, and Perrotti Park) without needing a vehicle and increasing congestion in the busy waterfront and downtown area. Water transportation and water taxis are a critical services for the large events held during the summer months, such as the Folk and Jazz Festivals.

# TRANSIT FACILITIES

- RIPTA Bus Stops
- RIPTA Bus Routes
- 14
- Route 24L
- Route 60
- Route 63
- Route 64
- Route 67
- Route 68
- Ferry Routes
- - - Shuttle Route
- Anchorage





## Driving in Newport

Traffic was commonly mentioned as a concern by both stakeholders and the public, although it ranked fifth by survey respondents as the most important concern. Complaints about speeding were expressed nearly as often as traffic congestion. People's opinions about traffic congestion varied widely. Residents who make frequent trips on Newport's streets were more concerned about travel times than visitors. The analyses in this section are based on travel and traffic data from 2019 (more recent data were greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic).

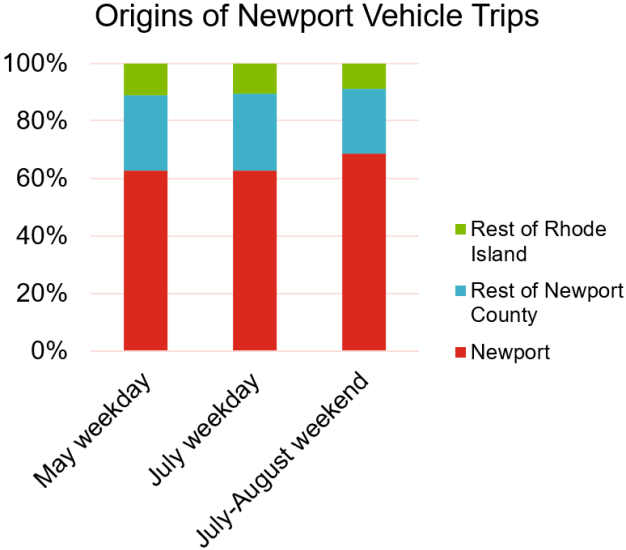
Average daily vehicle volumes indicated that some of Newport's four-lane roadways could be redesigned to reduce the number of lanes. Peak hour vehicle count data for America's Cup Avenue and Memorial Boulevard confirm that there could be one lane in each direction with sufficient vehicle capacity. The extra space could be used to support safer and more comfortable walking, biking, and transit use, as well as for greenery to increase climate resilience. Increasing transportation alternatives on these key principal arterials could have a significantly positive impact on congestion along these routes during peak summer periods as well as increase overall safety for users.

A vehicle's speed is one of the largest predictors of survival rates in a crash that involves someone walking or bicycling. On streets that serve all modes of travel, the target vehicle operating speed should be 20 miles per hour. Speed data collected by RIDOT indicates that speeds are in the safe multimodal range on many of Newport's streets, but that people are driving above the posted speed limit on the Pell Bridge, JT Connell, and Coddington Highway. Lower average speeds were common on America's Cup Avenue and Memorial Boulevard, although average speeds across Easton's Beach were above the posted speed limit during the May period. Average speeds were also consistently in the unsafe range on East and West Main Roads outside the city limits.



Anonymous data from mobile devices is a useful tool in understanding travel patterns, and how they change with the seasons. Data available from the Rhode Island Department of Transportation shows that between 60 and 70 percent of vehicle trips that begin in Newport also end within the city limits. The percentage of local trips is highest during peak summer weekends, nearly 70%, which adds to vehicle parking demand and congestion. This high portion of short, local trips indicates that there is great potential for people to switch from driving to walking or biking, as many people are willing to walk up to 1 mile and willing to bike up to 3 miles, especially when they are on vacation and have a flexible schedule.

*Source: Regional Integrated Transportation Information System, RIDOT*





## Vehicle Parking in Newport

Seasonal changes in the number of Newport visitors cause large variations in vehicle parking needs. This results in a need for different parking regulations at different times of year. During the busy season, people circle Newport's short blocks to find parking, contributing to traffic congestion. Additionally, many people make short car trips within the city (less than two miles) and look for parking at the end of each trip. These short trips could be walking or biking trips for people who are able. However, safe options for walking and biking (as well as convenient transit options) are limited.

These factors create a frustrating experience for everyone traveling on Newport's streets, whether driving, walking, bicycling, or taking transit. This frustration is often attributed to the vehicle parking supply.

### **In the city of Newport, there are approximately**

- 16,000 off-street vehicle parking spaces (4,000 are public)
- 1,000 on-street vehicle parking spaces
- 400+ on-street residential vehicle parking spaces
- 300+ metered vehicle parking spaces
- 200 spaces dedicated to accessible parking, electric vehicles, taxis, and other uses

## Metered Vehicle Parking

The City provides on-street metered vehicle parking on select streets downtown, along the Cliff Walk and Forty Steps, along Memorial Boulevard, and at Easton's Beach. The meters are operational from May 1 through October 31. From 9 AM to 9 PM, parking rates range from \$0.25 to \$0.50 per minute (or \$1.25 to \$2 per hour) and are limited to three or four hours. Parking is free between 9 PM and 9 AM.

The City provides a sufficient supply of affordable public vehicle parking. The demand for affordable and easily accessible parking is growing though, particularly downtown. This demand is seasonal and attributed to the concentration of commercial and retail uses within a small area. Demand for parking in other parts of the city (with the exception of the Newport Hospital area and, to a lesser extent, within the Bellevue commercial district) is less acute.

## Tour Buses

Stakeholders and members of the public mentioned issues with the abundance of large vehicles, such as tour buses and RVs parking on Newport's narrow streets. Tour buses are permitted to park in locations serving the Bellevue Avenue area mansions and similar tourist attractions.

## Pick-up/Drop-off

As the use of app-based transportation services and on-demand delivery services continues to rise, Newport will see an increase in drop-off and pick-up activities throughout the city. On-demand, app-based transportation services (such as Uber and Lyft) currently only have one designated pick-up and drop-off location at the Gateway Center. Similarly, taxicab stands are only located downtown at the Visitor's Center, Market Square, and Thames-East.





## Residential Vehicle Parking

The intent of the Residential Parking Program is to enable vehicle parking for residents near their homes. However, current regulations enable any person, including those who live outside of the designated permit area or outside of the city, to obtain a residential parking permit. The abundance of parking permits creates high competition for on-street vehicle parking and makes it difficult for residents to park near their own homes.

## Parking Administration and Regulation

Administrative parking functions are not clearly defined. Most of the critical day-to-day City parking administrative functions are located within the Newport Police Department's parking and parking enforcement divisions. Within the former, parking operations are monitored, administered, and managed. While comprehensive, the City's parking ordinance does not address critical items such as emerging parking technologies, electric vehicle (EV) parking, or micromobility and bike parking. Additionally, it does not include vehicle parking policies for compact land development that enable productive public-private parking partnerships (such as shared use parking) which contribute to more compact development.

Though City ordinance does not address EV parking, state and federal policies that have recently been adopted have the potential to incentivize the development of new EV charging stations, creating an opportunity to identify potential future sites as part of this Plan. There are currently six EV parking spaces at the Gateway Center and more at the Newport Hospital visitor's parking lot. There are additional EV charging spaces planned in conjunction with North End redevelopment projects.

## Loading and Freight

Residents expressed concern that large vehicles, such as trucks, are using small streets. The Rhode Island Trucking Association indicated that they often park close to buildings because designated truck parking spots are too sparse, too far away, or simply not there. They also indicated that the time-of-day permitted loading times (4:30 AM–11:30 AM) do not accommodate their delivery schedules. As a result, most truck deliveries do not occur in designated areas. Loading and unloading occur directly at building sites with the truck often parked in a general vehicle parking space, on the sidewalk, within the roadway travel lane, or on the opposite side of the roadway.

## Wayfinding

In downtown Newport, wayfinding signs are varied and generally consist of vehicle parking signs as well as destination signs for pedestrians, and bicyclists. Eleven distinct styles of wayfinding signs were documented on the study corridors, plus several miscellaneous wayfinding signs that did not fit into any series. The signs had varying shapes, colors, sizes, and fonts, making them difficult to follow.

The lack of a cohesive signing system may result in confusion for users who are unfamiliar with the area and who are most likely to need assistance with wayfinding. In addition, the travel mode group being targeted (people walking, biking, driving buses, driving cars, or driving trucks) is often unclear.

# Climate Change in Newport

There are significant threats to Newport's infrastructure that are expected to increase in the coming years due to climate change. There has already been increased flooding on Newport streets brought on by a combination of sea level rise, more frequent and increased intensity of heavy rainfalls, and increased frequency and strength of major storms (along with reduced rates of stormwater discharge given the existing infrastructure).

## Sea Level Rise

Average sea level has increased by more than seven inches since 1930 in Newport (according to the University of Rhode Island) and the increase in sea level has become faster in the past few decades. At this rate, sea level is projected to rise by one foot by 2050, and by three to five feet by 2100. With a three-foot sea level rise, many historic neighborhoods in Newport would become flooded. "Sunny day" flooding would also occur in low-lying locations near the shore where the stormwater drainage is blocked or reduced during high tides, resulting in a buildup of water on the streets. Figure 9 shows the areas in Newport that will be vulnerable to sea level rise of one, three, and five feet by 2100 in a 100-year flood scenario (one percent chance of flood occurring in any given year). Areas surrounding the Newport Naval Station, Easton's Beach, the Point neighborhood, both ends of the Goat Island causeway, as well as the entire coastline and the ponds in the southern portion of the city would be affected.

## Increasing Intensity and Strength of Hurricanes

Hurricanes are intensifying more rapidly, and the strongest hurricanes (categories 4 and 5) are becoming more frequent. Many of Newport's greatest assets are vulnerable to storm surge, including many historic homes and the city's signature scenic walks, bikes, and drives (see Figure 10). The entire Thames Street waterfront, the Pell Bridge landing area in the North End, many dense residential areas, and many vital street connections are within FEMA flood hazard areas. This threat is expected to increase at a faster rate over the coming decades.

## More Intense Rainfall

Warmer air due to climate change holds more moisture and produces more rainfall. With the high percentage of impervious surfaces in Newport's urban core, stormwater systems can get quickly overwhelmed. High-intensity rainfall can cause significant damage, and the sea level rise that has already occurred can reduce the discharge rates, making flooding worse. There are a wide range of strategies being used in Newport to mitigate flooding, including disconnecting roof drains and sewers from the stormwater pipe network.

## Areas of Flooding Concerns

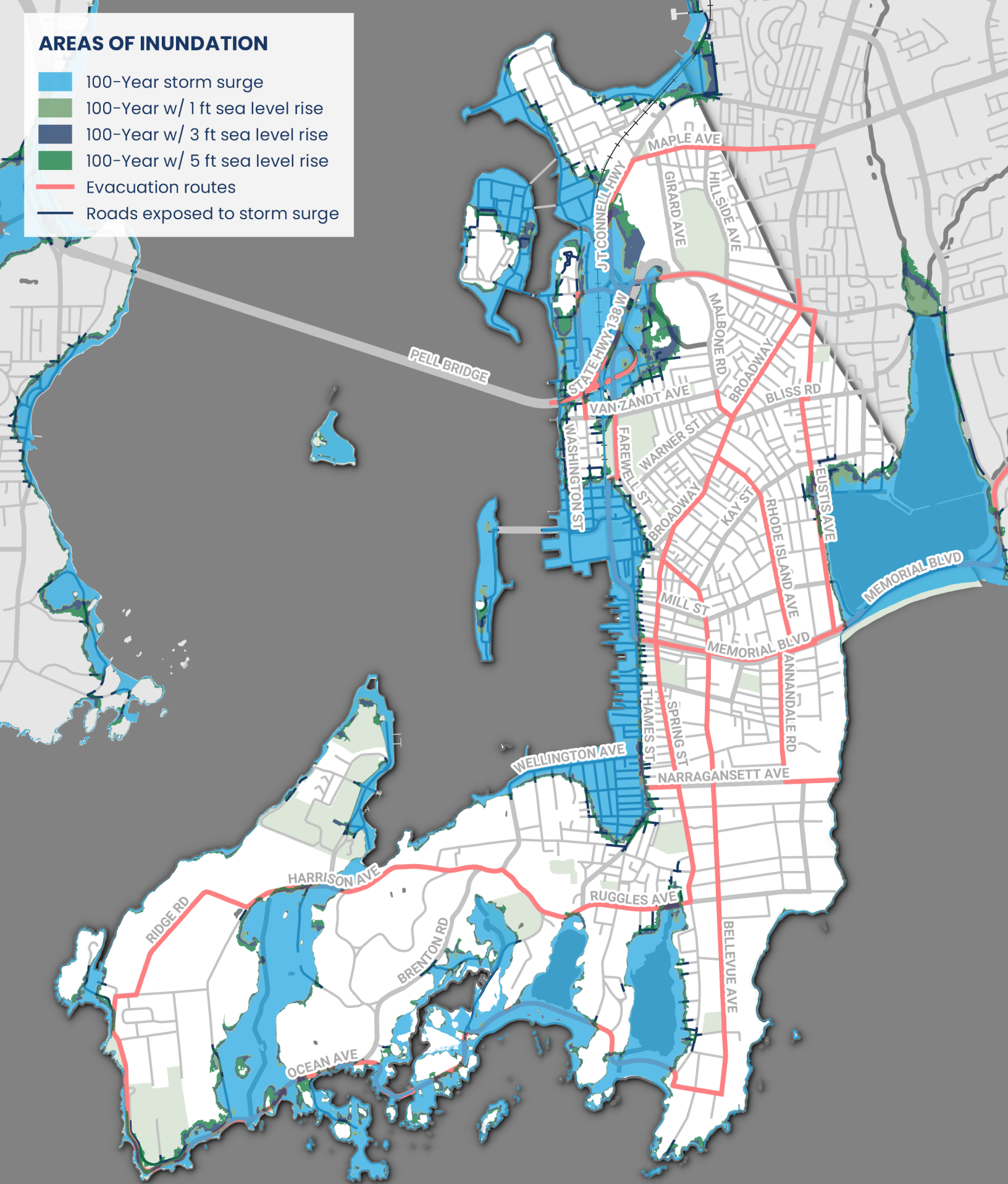
These areas were noted by the public and stakeholders as having flooding concerns, likely caused by some combination of sea level rise, higher tides, and heavier rainstorms.

- The Bliss Road neighborhood
- The Pell School area on Dexter Street
- Wellington Avenue around Spencer Park
- The Point area and northern end of Third Street.
- Along Halsey, Garfield, Prescott Hall, exacerbated by Hurricane Ida
- The Downtown area

**Figure 8: Areas of Inundation for 100-Year Flood with 1-, 3-, and 5-Foot Sea Level Rise by 2100 (dataset created in 2016).**

# AREAS OF INUNDATION

- 100-Year storm surge
- 100-Year w/ 1 ft sea level rise
- 100-Year w/ 3 ft sea level rise
- 100-Year w/ 5 ft sea level rise
- Evacuation routes
- Roads exposed to storm surge



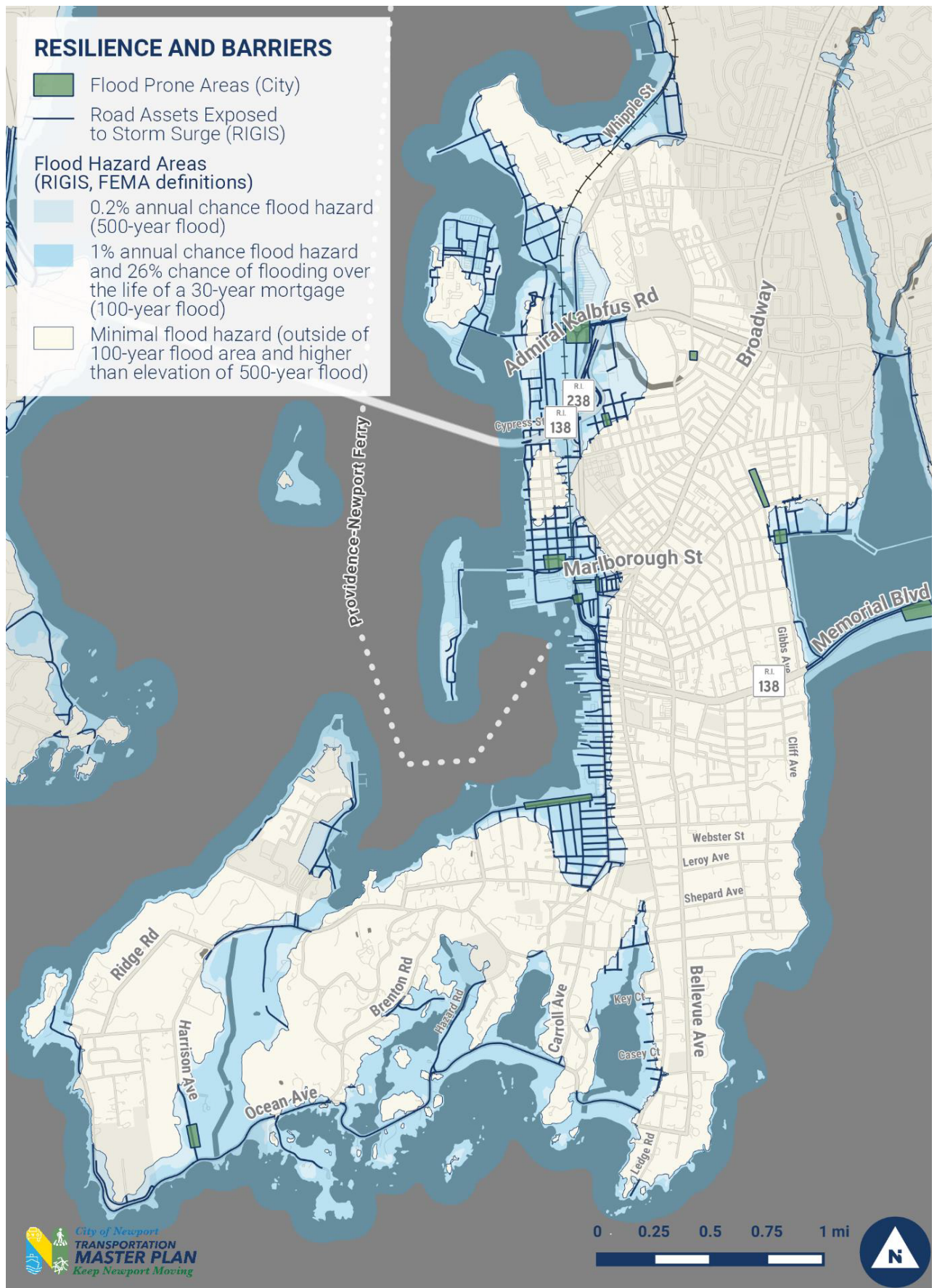


Figure 9: Flood Prone Areas, 2021, and FEMA Flood Hazard Areas, 2022









# Mobility for the Next Generation

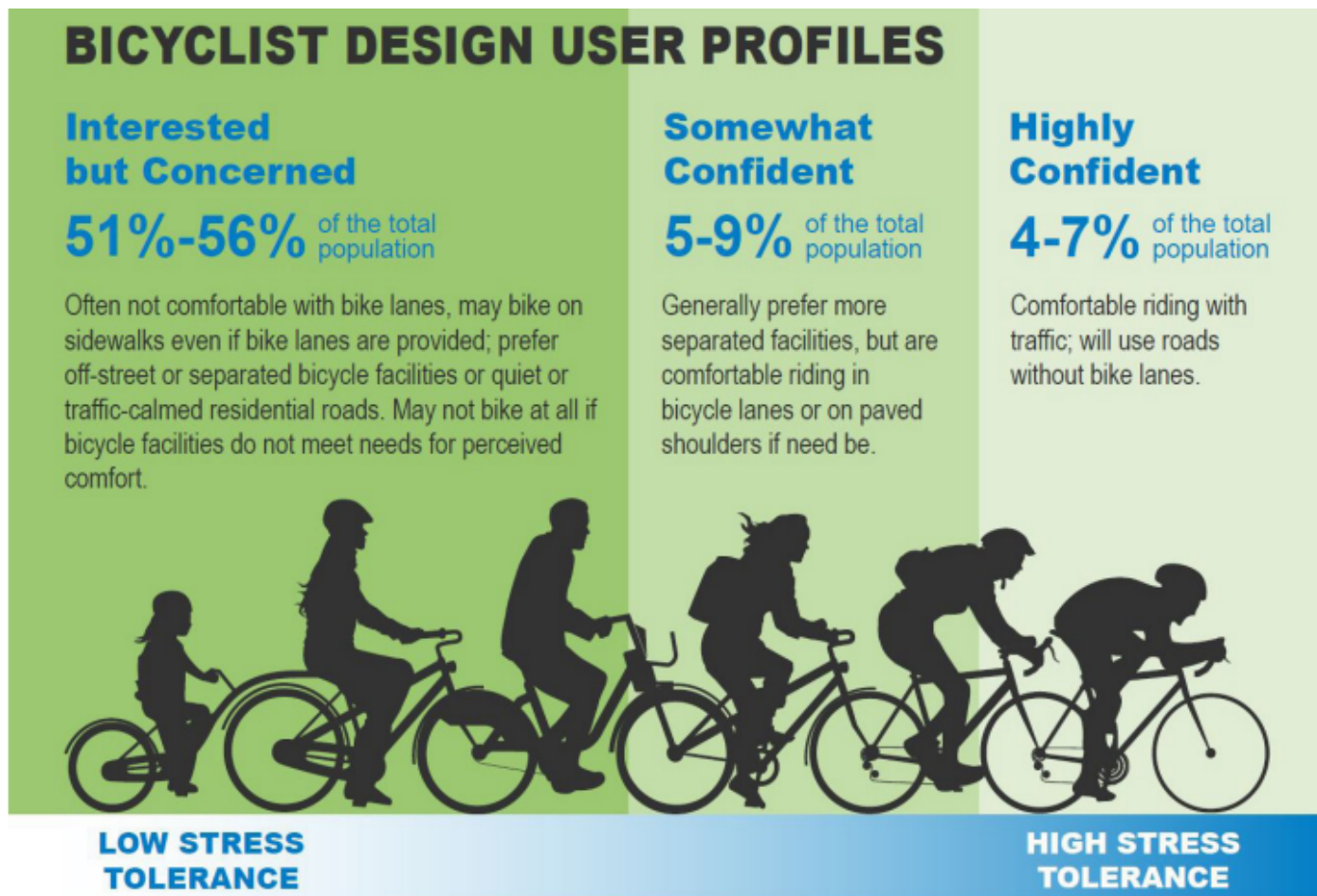
Keep Newport Moving will help more Newport residents and visitors choose walking, biking, and taking public transit when making transportation decisions. Together, the recommendations in this section can move Newport towards a safer, more equitable mobility system for all roadway users. This work will not happen overnight. This section lays out the vision for a full, dense multimodal network and a course for achieving the goals of this Plan.

Implementing this Plan requires a holistic approach to investment and community involvement. To advance the Plan goals (equity, mode shift, access, environment), the City of Newport is committed to growing the number and diversity of people involved in transportation decision making. This section describes on-street project recommendations as well as policy and program recommendations. The latter are just as important and are complementary to the on-the-ground work. The priority policy and program recommendations focus on establishing a broader multimodal culture and supportive systems, which are necessary for implementation.

Recommendations in this section reflect global changes in approaches to design and thinking.

Two major changes in the way we design streets are: 1) implementing an All Ages and Abilities approach to bikeway design and 2) adopting the Vision Zero framework for improving traffic safety.

**All Ages and Abilities:** Keep Newport Moving is about all modes of travel, but a lot of the recommendations are bike-related. This is because Newport currently lacks a connected network of bikeways that meet current design standards. Today's approach to bikeway design acknowledges that to achieve growth in bicycling, bikeway design needs to meet the needs of a broader set of potential bicyclists. Many existing bicycle facility designs exclude people who might ride but do not currently feel safe. Constructed bikeways in Newport favor very confident riders. New bikeways need to be high-comfort facilities that enable all ages and abilities to feel safe on Newport roads.



Credit: FHWA Bikeway Selection Guide

**Vision Zero:** At the core of Vision Zero is a belief that people should not be killed or seriously injured as a result of traveling on Newport streets. Part of what makes Vision Zero different from the traditional approach is the recognition that humans make mistakes, and streets should be designed to minimize the impacts of those mistakes. This acknowledgment is a fundamental change from a traditional traffic safety approach. It means that designers of streets have a responsibility to improve the roadway environment to lessen the severity of crashes. Another major departure from past safety efforts is that Vision Zero is a multidisciplinary effort. It recognizes that many factors contribute to safe mobility, including roadway design, travel speeds, individual behaviors, technology, and policy. An acknowledgement of Vision Zero is part of Newport's Complete and Green Streets Policy and this Plan recommends continuing this work through the creation of a Vision Zero Action Plan.

**Pedestrians crossing at uncontrolled crosswalk on America's Cup Avenue**



Traditional Approach	Vision Zero Approach
Traffic deaths are INEVITABLE	Traffic deaths are PREVENTABLE
PERFECT human behavior	Integrate HUMAN FAILING into approach
Prevent COLLISIONS	Prevent FATAL AND SEVERE CRASHES
INDIVIDUAL responsibility	SYSTEMS approach
Saving lives is EXPENSIVE	Saving lives is NOT EXPENSIVE

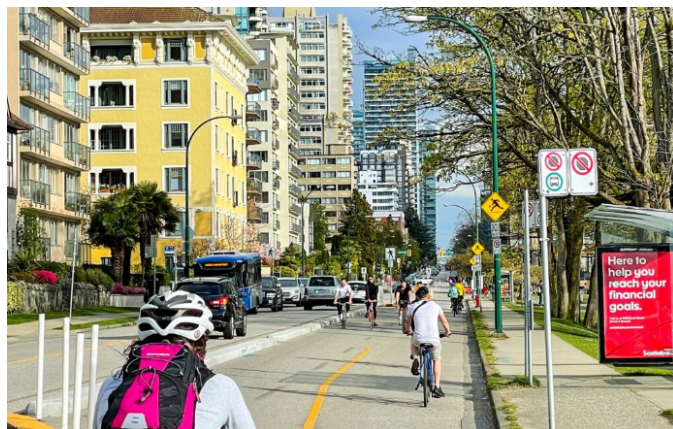
*Credit: Vision Zero Network*

## Communities Moving the Needle

With a significant portion of auto trips within downtown Newport being less than two miles, shifting some of these short trips to walking, biking, or transit is key to alleviating traffic congestion and safety issues. Newport’s pedestrian network, while weak in some spots, allows for walking throughout much of the city, including most of the popular destinations. Newport’s bicycle network is sparse and incomplete. Building out this network will allow bicycling to become a more common way to travel around town. Newport can learn from other communities who have made real progress in reducing traffic congestion. By investing in infrastructure that promotes walking, bicycling, and taking transit, these communities have provided attractive alternatives to driving.

## Multimodal Waterfront Access

Newport’s Harbor and Easton’s Beach are iconic destinations. Providing infrastructure that allows easy biking to the beach is one way to equitably increase access to an outstanding experience for all residents and visitors. There is much to be learned from how other cities have increase multimodal access to waterfront destinations. For example, Beach Avenue in Vancouver is a major thoroughfare that connects downtown with English Bay Beach and Stanley Park. The City reconfigured Beach Avenue to have one vehicle lane in each direction and separated two-way bicycle lanes along the waterfront. This change has increased the capacity of the street to move people, and enabled much more equitable access to parks and the beach, which have limited vehicle parking capacity.



Credit: Before conditions: Google Street View; After conditions: City of Vancouver



### Vehicle Intercept Parking and Public Transit

Newport has a significant population shift between summer and winter months, with tourists, seasonal residents, and seasonal workers all contributing to the summer surge. The concept of vehicle intercept parking, where people leave their cars at a parking facility and use other modes to reach their final destination, has long been discussed in Newport. Community outreach indicated strong support for this idea. The Pell Bridge ramp reconfiguration project will offer vehicle parking near the bridge landing, with a shared use path connecting visitors or commuters to Newport's center. This development can essentially be the first phase of intercept parking program. For this concept to work, however, it will require significant multimodal investments to ensure that transit, biking, walking, or other micromobility options make it convenient for people to travel around the city without a car within Newport.

Vehicle intercept parking has aided other tourist destinations. Since 2000, the National Park Service (NPS) has operated an intercept parking and shuttle hop-on/hop-off service at Zion National Park in Utah. Visitor vehicles are intercepted at the Zion Visitor Center parking lot and at secondary lots in the abutting town of Springdale. Tourist travel and sightseeing continues on two free shuttle system services that carry more than 6.3 million riders

annually. The shuttles operate in peak season and private vehicles are prohibited on Zion Canyon Scenic Drive during this time.

In 2016, to address worsening vehicle parking conditions and traffic congestion, Banff in Alberta, Canada considered intercept parking and shuttle service as a traffic management strategy.<sup>1</sup> A new 500-stall intercept parking lot with free, public vehicle parking within a ten-minute walking distance from the downtown has recently opened at the Banff Train Station. The lot is managed by the town and a free shuttle from the lot runs every 15 minutes and connects with all in-town attractions. According to a town 2021 parking report, intercept parking, in combination with other traffic management initiatives, "proved effective in relocating visitors from residential streets; between 2019 and 2021 ... approximately 150 vehicles were displaced to intercept parking or other areas."<sup>2</sup>

1 Banff Long Term Transportation Study, Stantec, July 2016, pgs. 18-24 and b) Town of Banff, Banff Train station Intercept Parking: <https://banff.ca/1028/Banff-Train-Station-Intercept-Parking>

2 Ibid - <https://banff.ca/1233/Parking-Data>

## How Newport Can Achieve Mode Shift

Shifting towards reduced reliance on private automobiles is essential to ensure a vibrant economy, safety, environmental stewardship, and resilience while confronting a changing climate. Newport needs a different approach to planning for how people get around. This is particularly important for the tourist season, which brings a surge of visitors, especially during the city's renowned music festivals. Industry trends point to tourists being increasingly concerned about the environment and climate change. They are more interested in sustainability in their travel patterns. Younger generations are much more open to transit and less wedded to personal automobile travel. If Newport prepares itself for multimodal travel, the generational preferences will reinforce the shift to walking, biking, and transit as preferred modes. The key factor in becoming a multimodal city is understanding that many different measures must work in tandem to point people toward non-auto travel. These measures include vehicle parking pricing and policy reform, dedicating space for safe and enjoyable travel by bicycle or other micromobility options, convenient affordable transit with easy-to-navigate routes, and other elements as detailed in this Plan.

### Peer Communities from which Newport can learn:

- Provincetown, MA (street closures, parking)
- Tahoe, CA (TDM seasonal programs)
- Hilton Head, SC (benefits of a connected bike network)
- Banff, Canada (vehicle intercept parking)
- Williamsburg, VA (parking ambassadors)





# Policy and Programs

Newport must address barriers that are holding people back from moving around Newport without a private automobile and must fully address the needs of those who lack access to an automobile. Policies and programs must go hand in hand with the build out of other recommendations. Achieving this Plan’s goals will require policies and programs that influence both street design and people’s transportation decision making. The policies and programs must create a supportive environment where people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds can choose walking, biking, and taking public transportation. Based on a thorough review of international best practices from cities that have successfully moved the needle towards multimodal goals, a series of top-priority policies and programs have been identified for Newport. These initiatives will be implemented over the next fifteen years.

## Reduce Reliance on Automobiles

The City of Newport has a sufficient supply of public vehicle parking which generates sustainable revenues. Yet the demand for vehicle parking grows, particularly in the downtown from May through October. Dense land uses on narrow colonial-era streets exacerbate demand, which is further influenced by state highways that enable unimpeded vehicular access into the downtown via gateways such as the Newport Pell Bridge. These factors—tourism, concentrated land uses, narrow streets, and direct regional access—result in parking demands that exceed supply in peak season.

The capacity of downtown streets is finite, travel into the area is mostly via personal vehicle, and the severity of congestion is increasing. These factors warrant a strategy that enables circulation and access without increasing the number of vehicles downtown.

In addition, many of the 1.3 million annual visitors to Newport are unfamiliar with its street network. There is limited information on vehicle parking locations, availability, and pricing. In peak season, this causes general confusion and results in circulating traffic searching for a space, as well as illegal and unsafe vehicle parking behaviors. The Newport Police Department is responsible for vehicle parking monitoring and enforcement but, given the intensity of the peak season, the task is overwhelming.

Vehicle parking strategies – which focus on increasing parking restrictions, providing more information to people parking, enforcement strategies, updating parking regulations, providing designated truck areas, and providing more mobility options in higher density and destination areas. These vehicle parking strategies are summarized below. Find a deeper dive into these parking strategies in the Appendix.

### Policy and Programs Legend

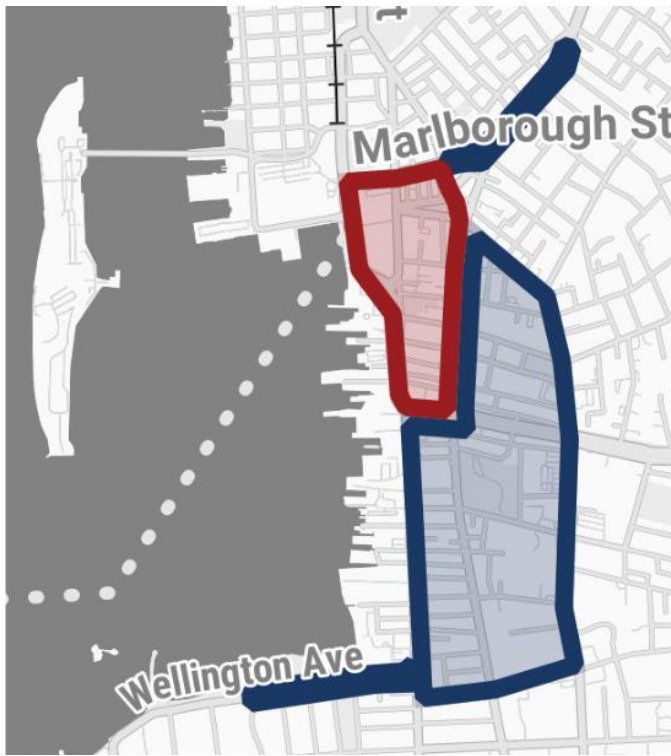
**P:** Parking

**D:** Design

**PS:** Public Space

**PM:** Program Management

Policy priorities is shown in the next section "Changes to Streets" starting on page 58.



**PI: Downtown Vehicle Parking Zones:** Evaluate vehicle parking pricing and create two vehicle parking zones:

-Downtown Core Zone (red) bounded by Marlborough Street (west), America's Cup Avenue / Thames Street-East (south), Dixon Street (East) and Spring Street (north). The zone would include public parking at the Gateway Center, Mary Street lot, and the public Long Wharf lot. The current rate is \$1.25/hour. Higher rates – as much as double or more – for on-street and off-street public parking would be charged in the zone.

-Outside Downtown Core (blue) – within a 15-minute walk distance from the downtown core bounded by Bellevue Avenue (north), Touro Street (west), Spring Street (south), and Dixon Street (east). Zone would include Broadway from Everett Street to Touro Street and the Wellington Avenue corridor from Haildon Avenue to Thames Street - East. The current rate of \$1.25/hour could be maintained or increased but would always be less than parking in the Downtown Core Zone.

Parking revenue generated in the zones would be managed and controlled by the City of Newport and follow current revenue collection procedures. Fees to park would only be from May to October.

*Implementation partners:* Public Services, Planning and Economic Development

**P2: Start a vehicle intercept parking program** with connecting bus service as a strategy to reduce the number of vehicles entering and circulating downtown. The service must be frequent (every 15 minutes) and free or affordable. The City should work with RIPTA to determine how best to meet these needs.

- Designate land within the Pell Bridge ramp realignment area for construction of an intercept parking lot for approximately 200 vehicle parking spaces that operates during the peak season. Explore vertical parking options at this location.
- Provide seasonal intercept parking lots (or mobility hubs, see below) at secondary locations on the city's north perimeter and further north on Aquidneck Island. Recommended locations are:
  - At the West Main Road/ Broadway/ Admiral Kalbfus intersection on the north border of the city.
  - At the convergence of State Routes 114 and 24 on the north end of Aquidneck Island.
- Explore better use of Gateway Center and Mary Street parking lots residents year-round. Conduct parking studies of these two existing parking lots to better understand utilization and how to optimize the available space, including the possibility of vertical parking expansion.

*Implementation partners:* Public Services, Planning and Economic Development, RIDOT, RIPTA

**P3: Implement a Vehicle Parking Ambassador Program.** Hire and train civilians to provide parking enforcement support to municipal police departments during the peak summer months. They provide boots-on-the-ground and perform public-facing functions such as educating the public on vehicle parking rules, pricing, availability, and location. Other important functions include assisting police with traffic control and circulation, aiding with wayfinding and visitor questions, monitoring parking conditions, and issuing parking citations.

*Implementation partners:* Public Services, Planning and Economic Development, RIDOT, Police Department

**P4: Update vehicle parking regulations.** Revise and update City of Newport Ordinance Title 10 – Vehicles

and Traffic (Parking) and Ordinance Title 17 – Zoning, Section 104 – Parking and Loading Standards..

The revisions should focus on future residential and commercial development areas and large employment sites. Rather than parking minimums,

consider parking maximums that cap the number of vehicle parking spaces across an area or for a proposed project. Ordinance revisions should also address:

- **Shared vehicle parking:** Encourage shared vehicle parking between developments. Parking is minimized when shared by developments with different peak hours.

In Lieu of Fees (ILF): When feasible, allow developers to pay into a City fund that provides for public vehicle parking instead of constructing private parking on-site. ILF facilitates infill development and shifts parking resources from isolated facilities to a shared pool of spaces.



**Figure 10: TDM Options**

Transportation Demand Management (TDM): TDM programs maximize traveler choices. In the City development approval process, require developers to present a TDM plan that mitigates their transportation impacts. RIPTA’s Commuter Resource RI program staff can assist with this process.

- **Affordable housing vehicle parking reduction:** Reduce parking mandates for

affordable housing. Because of lower-than-average vehicle parking demand and the price-sensitivity of low-income households, affordable housing differs from other residential uses. When this is not acknowledged, more parking than needed is often built, resulting in higher construction cost and less housing supply.

*Implementation partners:* Planning and Economic Development, City Council, RIPTA, Commuter Resource RI

**P5: Improve vehicle parking information and technology.**

Modernize Newport’s vehicle parking management and information program. Make parking information accessible and useful by communicating the parking options and real-time supply. Better parking management will reduce fuel consumption, emissions, and congestion especially in busy retail areas. It will also reduce the stress a person feels around parking and visiting Newport. Key pieces of this program are:

- **Dynamic parking signs** installed at common automobile entrances to the city and at parking facilities. Display real-time information such as the number and price of open spots at parking locations. They influence parking decision-making when installed on the edge of town. Their data may be used in City websites and third-party mobile apps.
- **Smart meters** on city streets accept coin and credit card payments, provide real-time reporting on space occupancy, and may be programmed for dynamic pricing.
- **Smart parking lots and garages** control entry and exit, dispense tickets, accept payments, and track the number of occupied and free spaces.
- **License Plate Recognition (LPR) technology** captures images of parked vehicle license plates. It reduces the staffing and patrolling and increases parking revenue through improved monitoring, surveillance, and ticketing.
- Install a **Coordinated System Management** software that manages parking data from numerous sources in a centralized database.

*Implementation partners:* Public Services, Planning and Economic Development, RIDOT

**P6: Implement a truck staging area.** The City of Newport should designate a truck staging area outside the city center. Truck staging areas are locations for truck drivers to coordinate their pick-ups, deliveries, and route schedules. Designate, sign, and publicize an eight-space truck staging area within the Pell Bridge realignment area with a maximum parking duration of eight hours.

*Implementation Partners:* Rhode Island Trucking Association (RITA), Public Services, RIDOT

**P7: Install mobility hubs.** Develop a regulatory avenue for installing mobility hubs in Newport and manage their implementation. These are places where several different modes of transportation come together, allowing for easy transfers between modes. They can vary in scale based on need and the amount of space available. *Transit Forward RI 2040*, Rhode Island’s Transit Master Plan, recommends a network of mobility hubs that will improve connections throughout Rhode Island. Mobility hubs are sites where multimodal transportation options, information resources, placemaking features, and traveler amenities are brought together in a well-designed, publicly accessible space to support a variety of different types of trips. A regional mobility hub at the Newport Visitors Center is recommended, as well as a local mobility hub in every community. These mobility hubs will be a first point of entry into the regional public transportation network for many travelers and connecting points for others.

### Potential elements of a mobility hub:

- Transit stops with real-time information and enhanced amenities
- Bicycle rentals
- Bikeshare and/or scooter share
- Bicycle parking
- Restrooms
- Ride-hailing pick-up/drop-off
- Vehicle parking
- Electric vehicle charging

The City of Newport should develop the regulatory framework and program guiding the installation of mobility hubs and partner with RIPTA, on-demand ride hailing companies, taxis, and micromobility companies on the permitting, installation, and management.

As a first step, expand the mobility options available at the Gateway Center. This location already serves as a transfer point for bus riders and people parking and walking. With the close proximity of ferry service, the Gateway Center can become a mobility hub by offering additional modal connections, which may include bicycle or scooter rentals. Develop a program for additional smaller mobility hubs in other parts of the city at key tourist destinations and transit stops, including the future Pell Bridge Park and Ride, Thames Street, Salve Regina, Queen Anne Square, or the Cliff Walk access. With Newport’s walkable scale, providing safe and comfortable walking access to all mobility hubs will ensure their success.

*Implementation partners:* Public Services, Planning and Economic Development, RIPTA

Truck turning on Thames Street



## Invest in Multimodal Public Space

**PS1: Create an ADA transition plan.** A transition plan is a requirement of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). An ADA transition plan provides an evaluation of streets and walkways to identify all physical obstacles to access for people with disabilities. The plan will help to systematically bring all sidewalks, curb ramps, crosswalks, bus stops, and traffic and pedestrian



**MicroHUBs in Boston bring together multiple transportation modes in one location, to make the exchange between them more seamless.**

signals up to compliance with ADA standards. RIDOT has an ADA transition plan from September 2016 that provides a plan for updating all state-owned facilities and state-owned streets, including RIDOT rail transit stations, RIDOT park and ride lots, RIPTA bus stops along RIDOT facilities, and RIDOT signalized intersections. The state-owned roadways in Newport include America’s Cup Avenue, Memorial Boulevard, JT Connell Highway, Admiral Kalbfus Road, and the Pell Bridge ramp, as well as a portion of Farewell Street. *Implementation partners:* Public Services, Planning and Economic Development, RIPTA

**PS2: Invest in sidewalk construction and repairs.**

Many of the ambitions in this plan rely on a connected sidewalk network. Inventory Newport’s existing sidewalk network to identify gaps and prioritize the construction of new sidewalks based on the pedestrian priority areas outlined in this Plan. Develop an annual sidewalk construction and maintenance plan and pursue dedicated funding for implementation.

*Implementation partners:* City Council, Public Services, Planning and Economic Development, Building, Zoning & Inspections

**PS3: Invest in bike parking.** As a multimodal shift occurs, Newport will need to increase the number of bicycle parking spaces, particularly in or near the most popular tourist destinations. Just as vehicle parking is required for any automobile trip, bicycle parking is essential to a successful and functional bicycle network. Expand the availability of secure bike parking and end-of-trip facilities at transit stops and job centers.

*Implementation Partners:* Planning and Economic

Development, Public Services, developers, Bike Newport, City Council, Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce, RIPTA

**PS4: Install electric vehicle infrastructure.** With significant threats from sea level rise, Newport can play a role in decreasing its contribution to regional greenhouse gas emissions. Electric vehicles (EV) can be free of carbon emissions, depending on the electric power supply, and they also offer protection to vehicle owners against volatile fuel prices, making transportation costs lower and more predictable. In any scenario in which Newport works toward becoming carbon neutral, significant growth in EVs is essential. Transportation made up 27% (the largest share) of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions in 2020 and greenhouse gas emissions from transportation primarily come from burning fossil fuel for cars, trucks, ships, trains, and planes. There is much work needed to ensure that we have an electric grid with sufficient capacity for large-scale electric vehicle charging, and it is also important to have charging stations available to all potential EV owners.

The existing network of EV charging stations regionally is shown on the next page (Graphic: EV charging station map)

Of particular concern is that, while homeowners can install EV charging equipment at their home and take advantage of the cost savings and price stability of EVs, renters generally do not have this option. The City of Newport can support the deployment of EV charging stations, located strategically to serve a variety of purposes. Types of

location that can include level II EV charging include:

- Remote vehicle parking areas/mobility hubs
- Municipal vehicle parking areas
- Newport Housing Authority vehicle parking areas
- Publicly owned vehicle parking such as schools and libraries
- Employee vehicle parking at large employers

*Implementation Partners:* RIDOT, RI Office of Energy Resources, Rhode Island Energy, Planning and Economic Development, Public Services, developers, utilities, Building, Zoning, and Inspections, Housing Authority, City Council, RI Office of Energy Resources

**PS5: Create a traffic calming program.** Lower speeds reduce the likelihood of serious injuries and fatalities in the event of a crash. This is especially true for vulnerable road users like pedestrians or bicyclists. Create a city-wide traffic calming program including an application process and designate an existing advisory committee to lead efforts. Consider the Interdepartmental Traffic Committee, which currently responds to Concerned Citizen Requests and may be a good fit. The advisory committee will receive, prioritize, and coordinate the response to community requests and demonstrated needs for traffic calming measures, as well as evaluate the outcomes of street changes. Pilot the program on Ruggles Avenue and Wickham Road, which already has a traffic calming request and borders William Rogers High School.

*Implementation partners:* Public Services, Planning and Economic Development, RIDOT, RIPTA, Police

**PS6: Trail Wayfinding, Signage, and Lighting.**

Embrace the Ride to the Beach and other multimodal paths for economic development. Leverage the existing and proposed multimodal paths in Newport by installing wayfinding signage directing people to and from the trails to commercial areas. Encourage trail use at all hours of the day by ensuring that existing and new trails are accessible 24 hours a day. This can be done through changes in legislation as well as the addition of lighting and other security measures.

*Implementation partners:* Planning and Economic Development, Public Services, City Council

## Type of EV Charging Equipment

- **Level 1** charging is simply plugging an EV into a conventional 110- or 120-volt outlet. This is also called a “trickle charge.” The slow rate of charging makes it impractical for regular use.
- **Level 2** charging requires an outlet providing 208- to 240-volt, as well as special charging equipment. It can deliver power to the EV at about four times the rate of Level 1 charging. This is suitable, for example, for overnight charging of a larger EV battery. Level 2 charging is also ideal for an EV owner to charge while dining, shopping, or working.
- **Level 3** DC Fast Charge is the fastest type of charging, where a large capacity EV battery can be recharged in about an hour. This requires the electric grid to be able deliver high wattage power – ranging in output from 50 kW to 350 kW. Due to the potentially high cost and limited locations where the power can be delivered, use is typically limited to drivers who are “on the road” and need a charge to reach their final destination.

**PS7: Build on the Vision Zero commitment in the Newport Complete and Green Streets Policy.**

Create a Vision Zero Action Plan to systematically eliminate traffic deaths and serious injuries. Use the crash analysis in this Plan to further prioritize projects.

*Implementation partners:* Public Services, Police, Planning and Economic Development, RIPTA

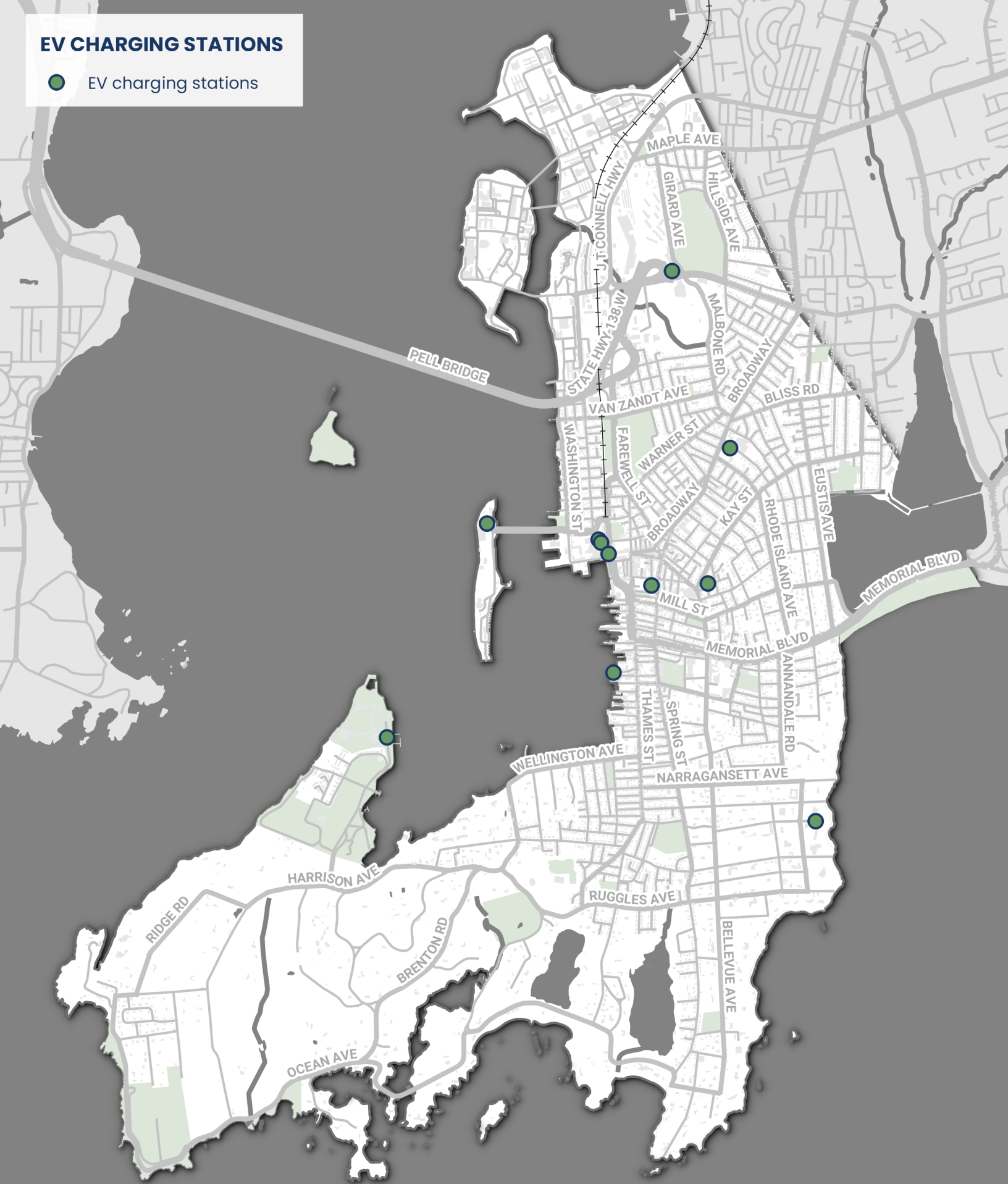
**PS8: Work towards a continuous Harbor Walk.**

Support the existing elements of the Harbor Walk by allocating yearly funds for its maintenance and repair. Identify expansion opportunities when land is developed or redeveloped and work with developers or applicants to expand the Harbor Walk through public easement or land dedication. Create standards for new construction to ensure adequate width, consistency and design.

*Implementation partners:* Public Services, Planning and Economic Development

# EV CHARGING STATIONS

● EV charging stations



## Design

### **D1: Standardize signal phasing and design.**

Work with RIDOT to develop a local signal policy that addresses signal modifications that favor pedestrians and bicyclists and traffic signal prioritization for transit. As a default (except in locations with traffic signal priority for transit), standardize the use of automatic recall for pedestrian signals, which eliminates the need for a pedestrian to push a button to call the WALK signal. The timing and sequence of signal phases may change depending on time of day and volume. Phases may be skipped when there are no vehicles in order to reduce delay.

*Implementation partners:* Public Services, RIDOT

### **D2: Restructure the project delivery process.**

Incorporate the Complete and Green Street Policy more formally into the Project Delivery process by creating process changes such as:

- A new Complete and Green Street Checklist to be completed at the beginning of every project. This would identify project-specific elements to include, or justify an exception.
- A Complete and Green Street staff review at key milestones
- The publication of Complete and Green Street design guidelines

Most importantly, ensure there is a clear process for obtaining and approving exceptions.

*Implementation Partners:* Planning and Economic Development, Public Services, developers, utilities, Building, Zoning, and Inspections, City Council

**D3: Adopt multimodal design standards.** Formally adopt multimodal street design standards and train internal staff on how to use them, including the FHWA Bikeway Selection Guide, FHWA accessible shared streets, AASHTO guides, RI Bus Stop Design Guide Book.

*Implementation Partners:* Public Services, RIDOT

## Programs that Support a Multimodal Culture

**PM1: Expand who is involved in transportation decision making.** Seek and amplify the voices of historically underrepresented groups. Engage and support individuals or organizations in building a

bike culture for women, people of color, immigrants, people with disabilities, LGBTQ communities, low-income people, seniors, and children. Dedicate staff time and funding to this effort within each project's outreach and in governing committees and leadership groups.

*Implementation partners:* Bike Newport, Planning and Economic Development, RIPTA Accessible Transportation Advisory Committee, RI Transit Riders, RI Human Services Transportation Coordinating Council

**PM2: Partner in the planning and construction of a regional bikeway system.** Partner with adjacent jurisdictions to develop a regional bicycle system.

*Implementation partners:* Bike Newport, Planning and Economic Development, RIDOT, Town of Middletown, Town of Portsmouth

**PM3: Regularly meet with and collaborate with RIPTA** to maximize co-benefits to transit, walking, and biking. Partner with RIPTA to audit high priority bus routes and identify barriers at the bus stop. These may include sidewalk accessibility, bus stop amenities, and pedestrian crossing opportunities. Partner with RIPTA to identify priorities and to collaboratively improve bus stop access through accessibility upgrades to sidewalks, the installation of bus shelters and other amenities, and sidewalk and intersection design improvements.

*Implementation partners:* Public Services, Planning and Economic Development, RIPTA

**PM4: Work with schools.** Transportation habits are developed at a young age. Continue partnering with schools and allied organizations to increase walking, biking, and public transit use. Work with at least one school a year to identify a tangible project such as installing bike racks or an improved crossing.

*Implementation partners:* Newport School District, Bike Newport, Commuter Resource RI

**PM5: Pilot seasonal car-free streets.** Pilot another weekend summer event that dedicates a high-activity street to biking, walking, and community programming by closing it to vehicles (such as Broadway Street Fair). Events of this kind help residents see their streets as more than places for driving and build support for better biking and walking infrastructure. Consider moving this event around to cater to areas of tourism as well as





neighborhood-led events. Coordinate with RIPTA to ensure continuity and accessibility of transit services.

*Implementation partners:* Public Services, Bike Newport, Police, Parks, City Council, RIPTA, Planning and Economic Development, Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce

**PM6: Fund and encourage community-led multimodal projects.** Award micro-grants for mobility programs such as learn to ride programs, bike ride planning, walking groups, and transit encouragement programs. Prioritize ideas that focus on engaging traditionally underserved groups.. In the marketing materials, encourage creative ideas that increase the enjoyment of riding the bus, biking, and walking.

*Implementation partners:* Bike Newport, Innovate Newport, City Council, RIPTA, Commuter Resource RI

**PM7: Regularly maintain bikeways and sidewalks.** Establish a maintenance schedule that sweeps and cleans bikeways and sidewalks as part of street cleaning.

*Implementation partners:* Public Services, Planning and Economic Development, RIDOT, RIPTA

**PM8: Keep track of progress.** As the City works towards a shift in how people get around Newport, it is important to continually collect data and learn from experience about what is working and what needs to change. A number of strategies can be employed to ensure that the City is aware of progress, including:

- Dedicated staff and funding for data collection and analysis
- Dashboard(s) to show status and progress of initiatives
- Encouraging use of “Report it! Newport” to ensure the City is aware of issues like signal operations that make pedestrians feel unsafe, lack of transit amenities, or inadequate bike parking
- Biannual travel survey to measure attitude and behavior change

*Implementation Partners:* Planning and Economic Development, RIDOT

**PM9: Incorporate Keep Newport Moving into yearly maintenance program.** Immediately following publication of this Plan, incorporate the listed projects into Newport’s existing pavement and sidewalk maintenance programs.

*Implementation partners:* Public Services, Planning and Economic Development

**PM10: Improve access to water transportation.** Explore expanding RIPTA ferry service including increasing frequency, adding stops, and a longer service year. Study opportunities for adding stops in Narragansett Bay including Quonset Point and Mount Hope Bay. Explore expanding private shuttle services with stops on the Navy land north of Pell Bridge. Connect water transportation stops with mobility hubs and multimodal facilities. In the near-term, install wayfinding signage directing people arriving at Perotti Park to the transportation hubs.










# Changes to Streets

Project recommendations in this section will guide Newport to implement both large-scale and smaller, incremental changes towards completing a comfortable walking, biking, and public transit network. Many recommendations include changes that can be implemented immediately, as well as more intense, long-term changes to the street. Near-term recommendations build on recent work to complete a spine of high-quality, enjoyable bikeways in the middle of Newport. Pedestrian recommendations prioritize high-crash locations and improve access to transit. Recommendations extend over the next 15 years and will result in a network of high-comfort bikeways and walking improvements. The following sections include a high-level approach for walking, biking, and transit improvements, including current, applicable design guidelines. The Implementation section includes a detailed list of all projects.



## PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

Pedestrian access is important in every corner of Newport. Changes can't happen all at once and this map shows prioritized improvements that decrease pedestrian crashes, rebuild a sparse pedestrian network, reduce automobile trips, and provide sidewalks to school and transit.

-  Schools
-  Intersection improvements
-  Pedestrian priority area
-  Shared streets pilot
-  Pedestrian priority signal updates
-  Multi-use path - proposed
-  Proposed road extension
-  Multi-use path - under construction
-  Sidewalk improvements

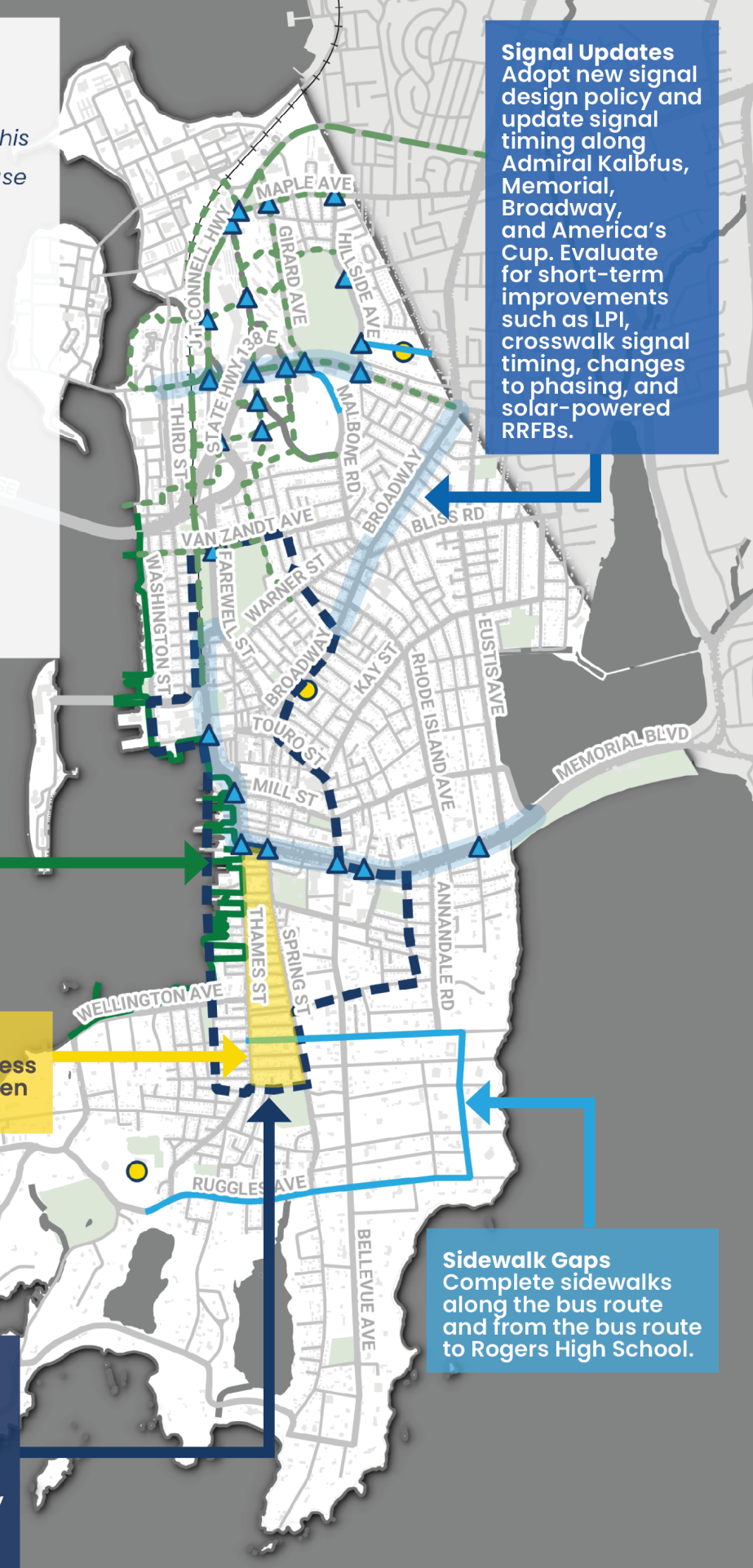
**Signal Updates**  
Adopt new signal design policy and update signal timing along Admiral Kalbfus, Memorial, Broadway, and America's Cup. Evaluate for short-term improvements such as LPI, crosswalk signal timing, changes to phasing, and solar-powered RRFBs.

**Continuous Harbor Walk**  
Support the existing elements of the Harbor Walk by allocating yearly funds for its maintenance and repair. Identify expansion opportunities when land is developed or redeveloped.

**Pedestrian Access**  
Prioritize pedestrian access on narrow streets between Thames and Spring.

**Sidewalk Gaps**  
Complete sidewalks along the bus route and from the bus route to Rogers High School.

**Pedestrian Priority Areas**  
Reduce the amount of short automobile trips made in Newport by ensuring an intuitive, accessible, and pleasant sidewalk experience. Prioritize closing sidewalk gaps, upgrading crosswalks, repairing and widening sidewalks, and installing ADA-compliant ramps in the Kerry Hill, Broadway, Downtown, Historic Hill, Spring-Thames, and South of Memorial neighborhoods.



## Walking

With a dense network of streets and destinations, Newport is a great walking city. However, auto-oriented design decisions over the last half-century have resulted in narrow sidewalks, streets with numerous lanes that are difficult to cross, and an incomplete sidewalk network. Investments in pedestrian and accessibility improvements will have multiplying benefits. Pedestrian recommendations include both city-wide policies and programs, as well as recommendations in specific areas.

### Build on the North End Urban Plan

The North End Redevelopment Area does not currently have substantial pedestrian activity, but it has great potential to be a walkable, bikeable area where businesses grow and affordable housing is stable. New connections proposed in the [North End Urban Plan](#) repair auto-oriented development patterns. It will be important for new developments to follow the guidelines to achieve the desired walkable, transit-ready, and bikeable environment.

### Encourage walking in the downtown core.

Make walking in core neighborhoods intuitive, accessible, and pleasant. These neighborhoods are experiencing the highest amount of congestion and short trips and therefore, present the highest potential for mode shift. Prioritize closing sidewalk gaps, completing the Harbor Walk, upgrading crosswalks, repairing and widening sidewalks, and installing ADA ramps in the following neighborhoods.

- **Downtown/Historic Hill** - With the Gateway Center, bus depot, vehicle parking garage, and ferry docks, the downtown/Historic Hill neighborhood is where many visitors to Newport first arrive. They often arrive by ferry, bus, or car, and then walk to the nearby historic core. The goal of improvements in this zone is to encourage people to arrive by bus, foot, or bike—or, if they do drive, to encourage them to park once and then access the area via other

modes.

- **South of Memorial** - The area south of Memorial Boulevard has many important destinations for both residents and visitors, including supermarkets, pharmacy, parks, museums, tennis center, and historic mansions. Particularly near the shopping centers, pedestrian accessibility and comfort should be improved.
- **Spring-Thames** - Thames Street is a hub of walking activity and should have the highest quality walking environment. The entire area is made up of small blocks and interesting frontages that make walking the preferred way to get around. However, the presence of traffic and parked cars prevent walking enjoyment. Because Thames and Spring are one-way streets, vehicles often must travel on the narrow perpendicular streets to circulate, resulting in conflicts with people walking and parked cars in the area. However, crash data shows that bicycle crashes are more frequent than pedestrian crashes in the area.
- **Harbor Walk** - Complete and improve public access to Newport's waterfront. A continuous Harbor Walk will be a major tourist attraction and provide additional pedestrian space outside of Spring and Thames Street.

## Design References

- [NACTO Urban Street Design Guide](#)
- [Boston Complete Streets Guide](#)
- Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares – A Context Sensitive Approach
- [FHWA's Safe Transportation for Every Pedestrian \(STEP\) program](#)
- [FHWA Improving Intersections for Bicycles and Pedestrians](#)
- AASHTO: A Guide for Achieving Flexibility in Highway Design

# BIKE NETWORK (44.7 miles)

- High Priority
- Ocean Loop
- Supporting streets
- - - Multi-use path - under construction
- · · Multi-use path - proposed
- - - Proposed road extension
- Schools

## High Priority Bike Network (13.7 mi)

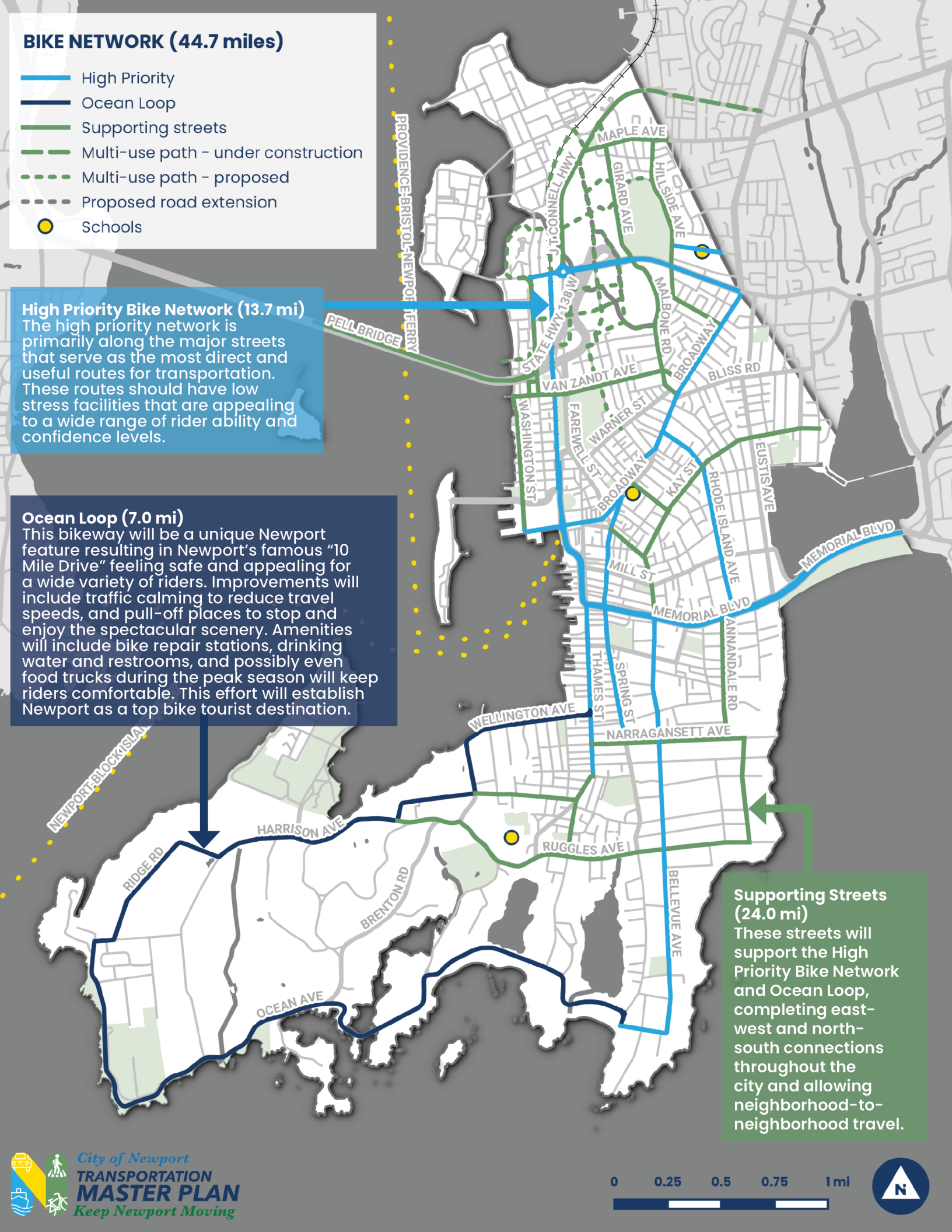
The high priority network is primarily along the major streets that serve as the most direct and useful routes for transportation. These routes should have low stress facilities that are appealing to a wide range of rider ability and confidence levels.

## Ocean Loop (7.0 mi)

This bikeway will be a unique Newport feature resulting in Newport's famous "10 Mile Drive" feeling safe and appealing for a wide variety of riders. Improvements will include traffic calming to reduce travel speeds, and pull-off places to stop and enjoy the spectacular scenery. Amenities will include bike repair stations, drinking water and restrooms, and possibly even food trucks during the peak season will keep riders comfortable. This effort will establish Newport as a top bike tourist destination.

## Supporting Streets (24.0 mi)

These streets will support the High Priority Bike Network and Ocean Loop, completing east-west and north-south connections throughout the city and allowing neighborhood-to-neighborhood travel.



## Biking

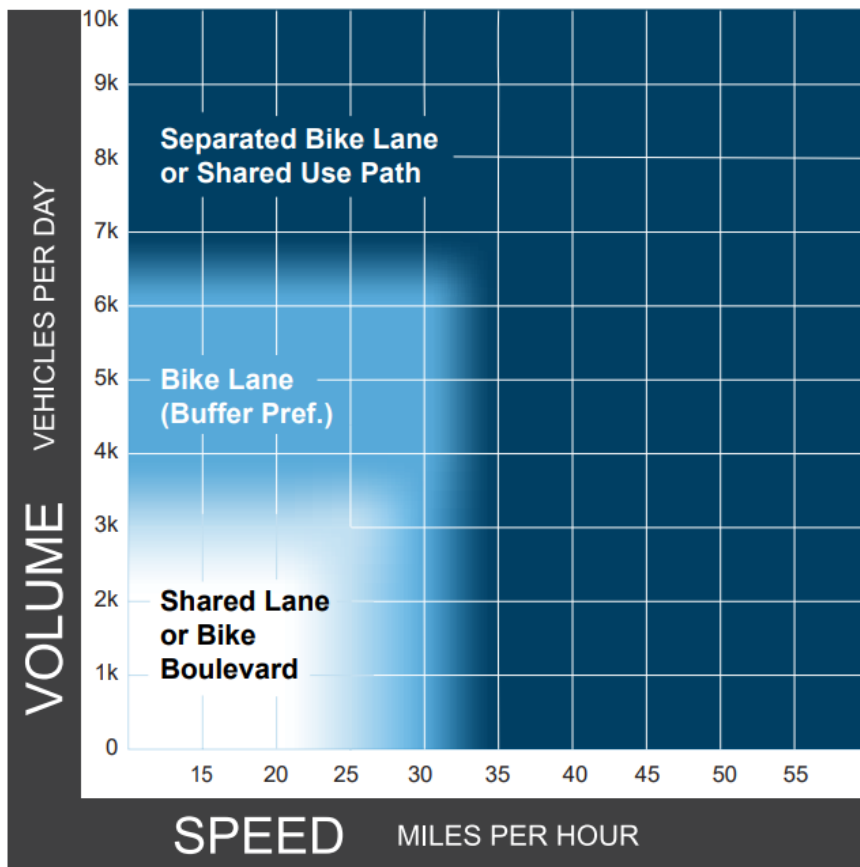
Building a connected, high-comfort bikeway network will take time. The complete network will put residents and businesses in most areas of Newport within a quarter mile, or 5-minute walk, of a safe and comfortable bicycle facility. The priority network, shown in the map, should be installed over the next ten years and provides the backbone of a bikeway network. The network of supporting streets should be installed over time, and the City should look for opportunities to install these through repaving and development projects.

Although bikeways may not be for everyone, this Plan is. Even those who don't choose to bike can benefit from a connected bikeway network. More people biking can reduce the number of people driving and looking for vehicle parking in Newport's busiest areas, reduce chaos on Newport's streets, and result in improved air quality.

## Design References

Adopt published local and national standards for choosing and designing the appropriate type of bikeway for each street in the network. Facility selection should be contextual and should serve people of all ages and abilities. The higher the speed and volume of a road, the more protective the bikeway should be. Shared lanes or bike boulevards are recommended for the lowest speeds and volumes, bike lanes for low speeds and low-to-moderate volumes, and separated bike lanes or shared use paths for moderate-to-high speeds and high volumes.

- [FHWA Bikeway Selection Guide \(Bikeway selection chart below\)](#)
- [FHWA Improving Intersections for Bicycles and Pedestrians](#)
- [NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide](#)



### Notes

- 1 Chart assumes operating speeds are similar to posted speeds. If they differ, use operating speed rather than posted speed.
- 2 Advisory bike lanes may be an option where traffic volume is <3K ADT.
- 3 See page 32 for a discussion of alternatives if the preferred bikeway type is not feasible.

# TRANSIT NETWORK

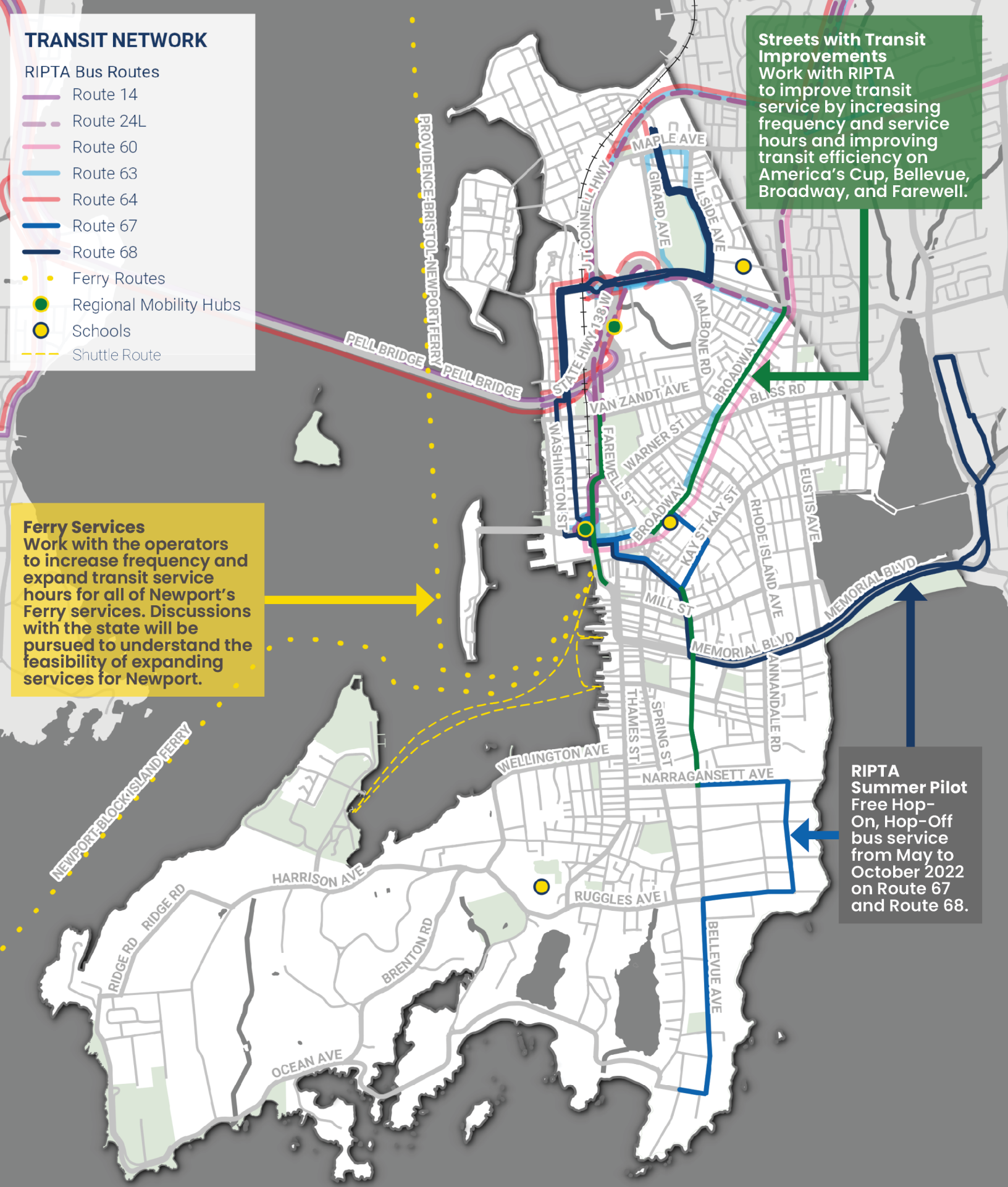
## RIPTA Bus Routes

- Route 14
- Route 24L
- Route 60
- Route 63
- Route 64
- Route 67
- Route 68
- Ferry Routes
- Regional Mobility Hubs
- Schools
- - - Shuttle Route

**Streets with Transit Improvements**  
 Work with RIPTA to improve transit service by increasing frequency and service hours and improving transit efficiency on America's Cup, Bellevue, Broadway, and Farewell.

**Ferry Services**  
 Work with the operators to increase frequency and expand transit service hours for all of Newport's Ferry services. Discussions with the state will be pursued to understand the feasibility of expanding services for Newport.

**RIPTA Summer Pilot**  
 Free Hop-On, Hop-Off bus service from May to October 2022 on Route 67 and Route 68.





## Taking Transit

Support of public transit is a central element to this Plan. Recommendations include improvements to bus reliability, frequency, travel time, bus stop amenities, and connections to other transportation services. Ensuring safe and efficient transit will enhance the experience of today's riders and gain new riders in the future. Recommendations fall into the four categories below.

**Tourism-oriented transit:** To reduce vehicle traffic, congestion, and parking headaches during peak tourism season, the City will need to encourage visitors to use public transit. To this end, Discover Newport and the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island have partnered with RIPTA to pilot free hop-on/hop-off bus service from May to October 2022. This pilot coincides with the addition of RIPTA's new Route 68 service connecting the North End neighborhood with Easton's Beach. Future improvements include linking transit service with mobility hubs and park-and-ride locations during peak tourism season.

**Operational improvements:** RIPTA is currently prioritizing bus movements on East and West Main Roads to improve Route 60's speed and reliability. This Plan recommends a similar approach to improve service on Broadway, Bellevue Avenue, and America's Cup Avenue. Improvements include queue jump lanes (where buses have their own lane to get around traffic queues at congested intersections), and floating bus stops (which allow quicker and safer boarding and alighting for transit riders).

**Regional connections:** Stakeholder input during this Plan's development and during development of the *Transit Forward RI 2040* plan strongly supports the desire for better service to regional transport hubs such as TF Green Airport, Wickford Junction, and Kingston Station. RIPTA is planning improvements to Routes 14 and 64 that are designed to strengthen these important connections and has instituted a regional service to Providence via Fall River, the 24L, that provides limited-stopping service between two major areas of the state and adds better connectivity to Massachusetts' South Coast communities serviced by neighboring operator, Southeastern Regional Transit Authority (SRTA). *Transit Forward RI 2040* also recommended the

introduction of new service in the City, Route 28, connecting the city's North End with downtown, Easton's Beach, and the Aquidneck Island Business Park in neighboring Middletown.

**Local connections:** Even with the improvements described above, transit service cannot provide complete access for everyone in Newport *and* provide timely and frequent service. The "last half mile" or "final mile" of a transit trip will require walking, riding a bike, driving a car and parking near the transit stop, using a shared scooter, or hailing a ride. Expanding the number of people who are served by Newport's transit system can partly be accomplished by expanding the micromobility options.

## Water Transportation

RIPTA provides ferry service to Providence and private ferries bring residents and visitors to neighboring municipalities and destinations along the Newport waterfront. These services are an essential part of Newport's mass transportation system and support the Newport's mode shift goals by allowing people to get to and from Newport without a vehicle.

In line with other transit recommendations, Newport's water transportation system must support tourism, operate reliably, and connect to Newport's non-motorized transportation network. Many recommendations in this Plan - reducing the reliance on automobiles through parking strategies, increasing the safety and comfort of walking and bicycling, and the transit recommendations - complement water transportation. Improvements in non-motorized connectivity and safety will make ferries a more viable transportation option. The area surrounding Newport's ferry stop must be walkable, bikeable, and seamlessly connected on-land transportation options, such as on-demand micromobility, buses, and trains.

Specific improvements to water transportation are outlined in PM10, in the programs and policy section of this Plan. On-street recommendations that will provide the most support to the water transportation system include:

- Mobility Hubs (P7)- once people exit a ferry at the harbor, centralized hubs where transit, micromobility, and on-demand vehicles convene

at one location will connect people around Newport without the need for a personal automobile.

- Completing the Harbor Walk (PS8): Completing a continuous Harbor Walk will expand pedestrian access between the waterfront and Downtown destinations. Thames and Spring Streets are over crowded in the high tourism season and the Harbor Walk will expand capacity making it more pleasant to access the ferry terminal.
- Ride to the Beach (S8, S9, S14): When people arrive by ferry, the availability of on-demand micromobility, such as bike shares and scooters, along with a connected, low-stress bikeway through the heart of Newport will enable more people arriving by water to move around Newport. The facility will be designed to accommodate many types of lightweight wheeled vehicles such as traditional bicycles, cargo bikes, electric bikes, and scooters.
- Ocean Loop (S12): Improvements to the Ocean Loop will allow more people to bike along Newport's iconic Ocean front and connect between docks at Fort Adams, Downtown Newport and future docks.

In addition to working directly with ferry providers and implementing on-street improvements that make ferry stops more accessible, Newport must support neighboring municipalities in their efforts to connect water transportation to regional transit and local destinations. For example, improvements to the link between the Providence ferry stop and the Providence Amtrak stop will expand Newport's reach.

## Design Criteria and References

- [RIPTA Bus Stop Design Guide](#)
- [NACTO Urban Transit Street Design Guide](#)

## Incorporate Resiliency

Newport's future, along with our nation and planet, will face effects of climate change that can range from coastal flooding and erosion to instability in fuel supplies and prices. All of the City's investments in transportation and other infrastructure must include the intent to improve Newport's resiliency. Resiliency means both being resistant to foreseeable weather and climate conditions and being able to recover quickly in the event of a disaster. Resiliency spans both civil and social infrastructure, to ensure people get the help they need in an emergency. Improving resiliency also means taking responsibility for our actions which may exacerbate weather and climate changes, specifically with the intent to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from all City systems. This Plan will be an important step in addressing resiliency in Newport, as its aim is to support non-GHG emitting forms of transportation.

Many of the street projects described in the following pages can be designed in a way that will address some of the most critical issues related to resiliency and flooding. Among the design techniques that can be used include:

- Green gutters
- Street tree planting swales
- Stormwater bioretention gardens

These measures have numerous co-benefits. For example, streets trees can help absorb stormwater; provide shade in a warming climate; and, when planted on the street edge, improve safety by reducing traffic speeds.

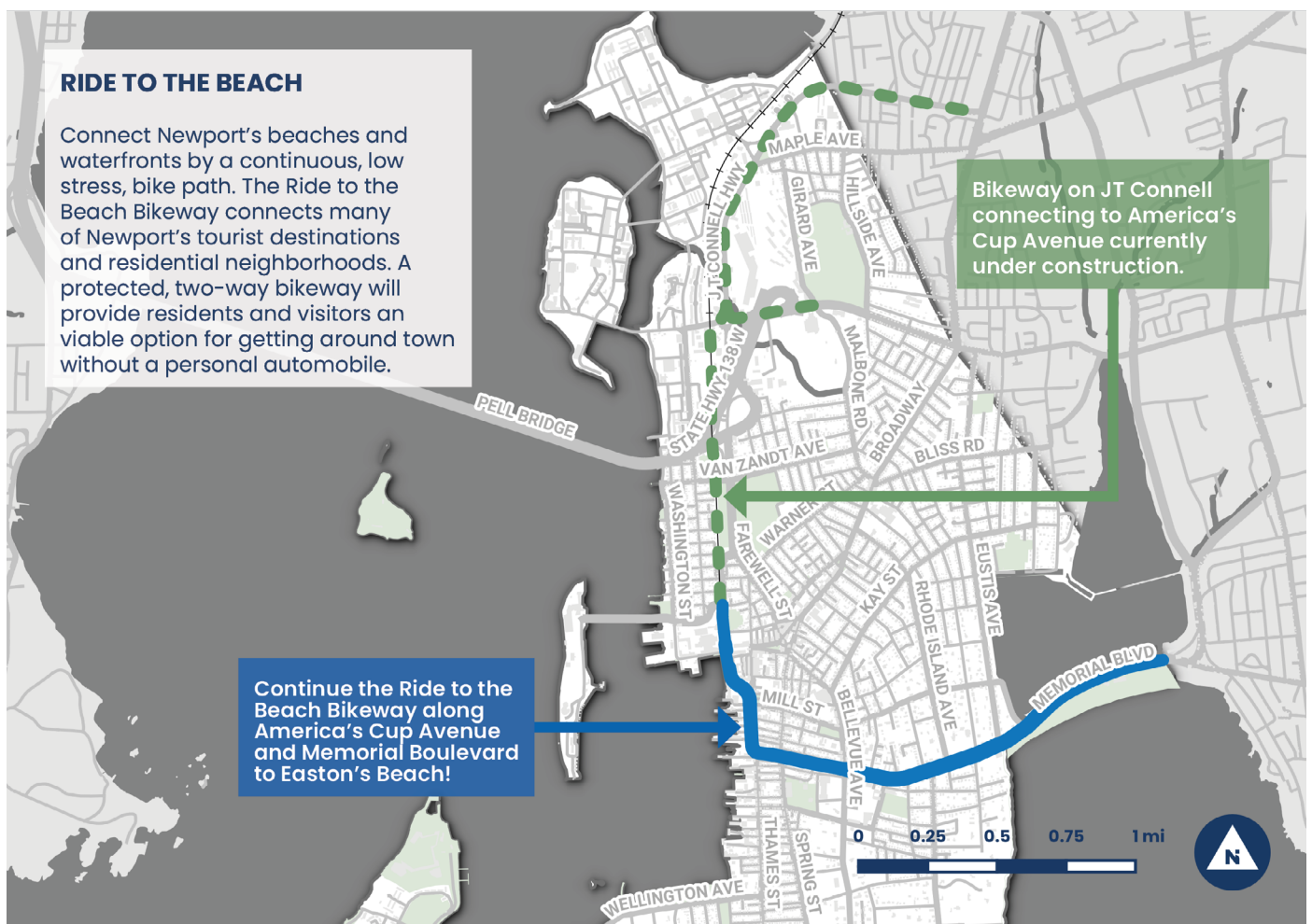
## Design References and Criteria

- [EPA Green Streets Handbook](#)
- [Rhode Island Low Impact Development Site Planning and Design Guidance Manual](#)
- [NACTO Urban Street Stormwater Guide](#)
- [Vermont Green Streets Planning and Design Guide](#)

## Ride to the Beach

The concept of a multimodal waterfront street is inspired by communities across North America and around the world, who have transformed waterfront thoroughfares to be focused on public access and enjoyment, by any mode of travel. Common elements include a generous pedestrian (or shared use) promenade, high-comfort bicycle infrastructure that allows people to access the beach without needing a car, and a travel lane design that encourages slower but steady flows for vehicles.

Newport will see the first phase of a high-quality bicycle route to Easton's Beach as RIDOT completes construction of a shared use path between the Pell Bridge and Bridge Street. This route can be extended over time to form a continuous high-comfort bicycle route to Easton's Beach, a distance of about 2.5 miles. By reconfiguring America's Cup Avenue and Memorial Boulevard to have one vehicle lane in each direction, there will be space available for separated bicycle lanes, as well as a much safer pedestrian environment. This can be done in phases and can also address the safety and operational issues at the intersections of Thames and Bellevue.



## Managing Traffic and Congestion in Newport

Newport's safety and congestion issues stem from too many vehicles trying to drive into Newport and park. This overabundance of vehicles creates traffic congestion, and conflicts with the experience for people exploring Newport on foot or on a bike. This Plan needs to both provide appealing, safe, comfortable options for using other modes of travel, and manage traffic volumes and congestion at key bottlenecks. One of the most transformational recommendations in this Plan is the reconfiguration of America's Cup Avenue to be a complete and green street that serves people traveling by all modes, as well as creating a memorable place to enjoy Newport's waterfront.

Experience in numerous cities and towns that are coping with traffic congestion demonstrates that adding capacity does not cure congestion, but rather attracts more traffic so that congestion resumes. The most effective way to reduce congestion is to reduce the amount of traffic entering the city, and providing safe, comfortable, and convenient alternatives. Looking at Newport's street network, each of its major corridors entering the city's core has one through travel lane in each direction: Broadway, Farewell, Memorial Drive, and Coddington Highway. America's Cup Avenue expands to have two through lanes in each direction, through the city's core, and these excess travel lanes increase the traffic congestion at key bottleneck intersections by bringing more traffic than the network can handle.

By reducing America's Cup and Memorial Boulevard to have one lane in each direction, combined with efficient operations at key bottleneck intersections, traffic congestion will be reduced. Further, the recommended street transformation will provide for safe and enjoyable walking and bicycling for short trips around Newport.

People have described Newport as being congested with traffic since automobiles first came into widespread use. The streets are narrow, and there is simply not an option to increase vehicular capacity as a solution to traffic congestion. Rather than using

conventional vehicular-centric measures to evaluate the performance of Newport's busy streets, it is time to shift toward people-centric measures that consider how many people can move safely along (or across) a street.

### Human-scale

America's Cup Avenue did not exist until an urban renewal project in the 1960s. The project was intended to reduce traffic congestion on Thames Street, but it had many unintended consequences, including bringing more vehicles into the center of Newport and exacerbating congestion. As the only corridor in Newport with more than one travel lane in each direction, speeding is common during off-peak hours, creating a threatening situation at the mid-block crossings to popular waterfront destinations. The reconfiguration proposed for the Ride to the Beach plan will reduce the width of the corridor that carries vehicular traffic, which will in turn reduce speeds and increase safety for everyone traveling through.

Memorial Boulevard has already been reduced to have one through lane in each direction at several key locations, which demonstrates that as long as signal operations are efficient and the conflicting crosswalk movements at Thames/America's Cup/Memorial are addressed, all vehicular traffic on this corridor can be served by a single lane of traffic.

### Safety

The proposed changes to create the Ride to the Beach route, along America's Cup Avenue and Memorial Boulevard, will address several high crash locations and reduce the hazardous "multiple threat" crossings (where a driver stops for a pedestrian in one lane and reduces visibility for the driver in the adjacent lane) over America's Cup to the waterfront. This corridor currently sees thirteen percent of all injury crashes in the city, and the changes will significantly reduce safety risks for pedestrians.

### Design Criteria and References

In order for Ride to the Beach to achieve the transportation network of converting a portion of short vehicle trips around Newport from vehicle to bicycle, this route must be a low stress, high comfort bike

route that appeals to “8 to 80” riders. This will require separation from moving traffic, and clearly marked or signaled crossings where needed. Design resources to consider when developing this route include:

- [NACTO Urban Street Design Guide](#)
- AASHTO forthcoming bikeway design guide
- Massachusetts DOT Separated Bicycle Lane Design Guide
- AASHTO Achieving Flexibility in Design

## NETWORK IMPLEMENTATION

### Immediate Implementation

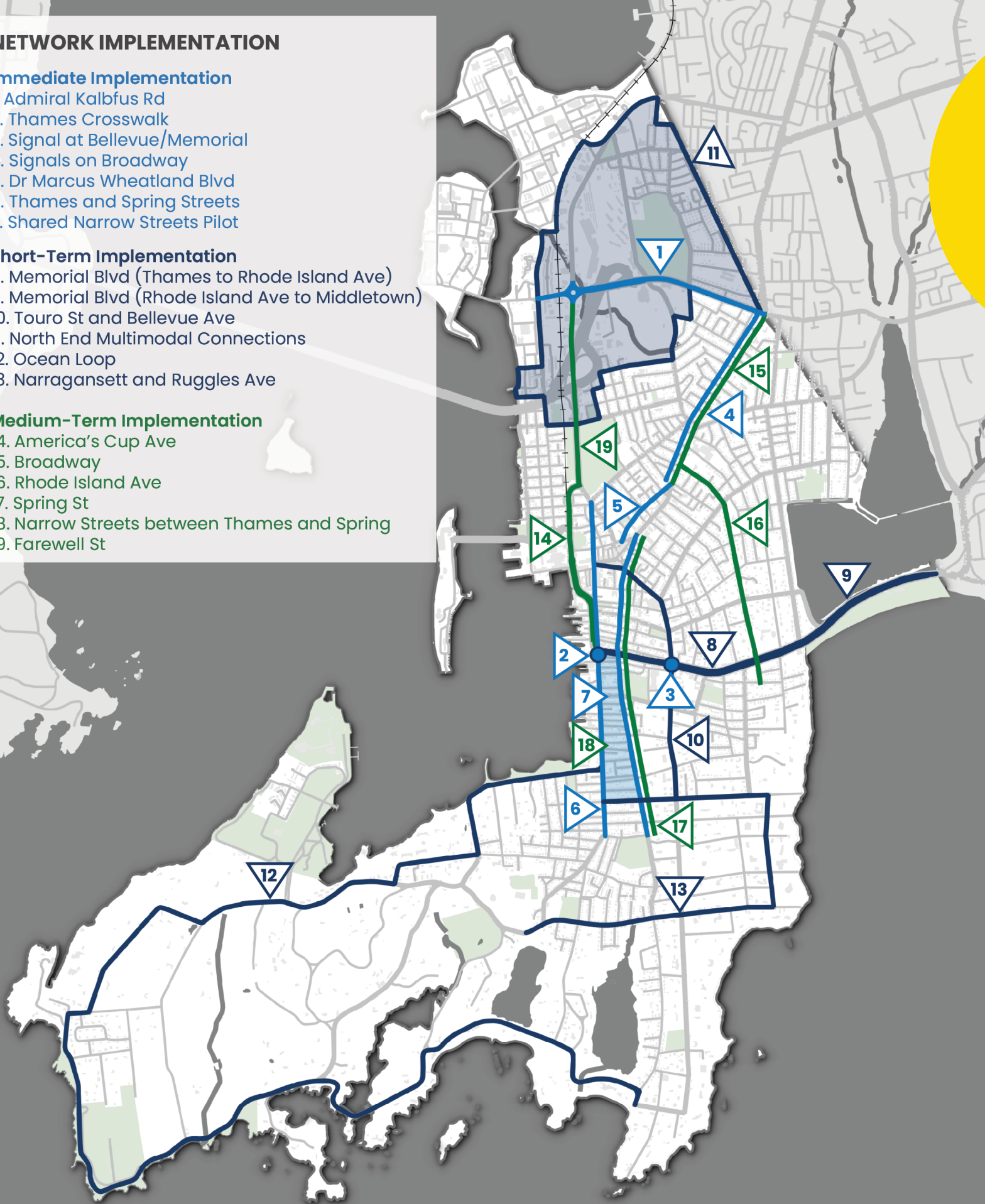
1. Admiral Kalbfus Rd
2. Thames Crosswalk
3. Signal at Bellevue/Memorial
4. Signals on Broadway
5. Dr Marcus Wheatland Blvd
6. Thames and Spring Streets
7. Shared Narrow Streets Pilot

### Short-Term Implementation

8. Memorial Blvd (Thames to Rhode Island Ave)
9. Memorial Blvd (Rhode Island Ave to Middletown)
10. Touro St and Bellevue Ave
11. North End Multimodal Connections
12. Ocean Loop
13. Narragansett and Ruggles Ave

### Medium-Term Implementation

14. America's Cup Ave
15. Broadway
16. Rhode Island Ave
17. Spring St
18. Narrow Streets between Thames and Spring
19. Farewell St



# Implementation

Transforming Newport's streets into the vision expressed through this Plan will be a multi-year process. Projects will need to be phased in over the next ten to fifteen years. This Plan lays out a phased approach for the proposed projects. Projects are prioritized for implementation according to the following factors:

- **High crash history:** Projects on the small number of Newport's streets that are responsible for a high number of the crashes in the city
- **Complete network:** Streets that build on existing projects and make a connection between other high-priority projects, creating a complete network
- **Mode shift:** Projects that are in areas with a high number of existing short trips by vehicles and have high potential to reduce congestion
- **Opportunities:** Projects that present a unique opportunity, such as a scheduled street resurfacing project, an adjacent development, currently low traffic volumes, or an easy project with a big impact



# Network Implementation

The projects recommended in this plan will be installed over the next decade. Achieving this will require close collaboration with Newport's partners, sufficient staffing, and a detailed understanding of available funding.

## Partners

The City of Newport is responsible for most of the work described in this section. However, other agencies and partners will contribute to project implementation as well:

- City of Newport
  - Planning and Economic Development
  - Public Services
  - Building, Zoning, and Inspections
  - City Council
- Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA)
- Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT)
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission
- Bike Newport
- Housing Authority
- Utility companies
- Private developers and investments
- Discover Newport
- Newport Community
  - U.S. Navy
  - Newport Public Schools
  - Newport Public Library
  - Edward King House
  - Conexión Latina Newport
  - Preservation Society
  - Newport Tourism Office
  - Newport Hospital
  - Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce

## Funding Landscape

The City of Newport employs a variety of funding sources for implementing mobility projects. Each type of funding has distinct requirements for allocation, utilization, and reporting. The three most common sources of funding are:

- **City of Newport Capital Budget** - Every year, the City of Newport publishes a local budget forecasting the next three years. This guides the City's staffing, maintenance, and infrastructure spending. Small mobility projects, such as sidewalk building or quick-build bike lanes, can be funded locally. However, local funds can be leveraged to implement larger projects as a match for regional, state, or federal grant programs.
- **Federal, State, and County Grants** - The federal funding landscape has changed during the development of this plan. With the passage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law - Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) - existing and new competitive grants are available to local communities to improve and modernize their transportation infrastructure. Eligible Newport Transportation Master Plan projects and programs identified for each funding source are outlined in the Funding Strategy Appendix.
- **Philanthropic or Private Partnerships** - Local non-profits, foundations, or private organizations play a role in public space. They can fund creative projects, such as a painted intersection or a free-ride transit zone, that might not have a clear place in the transportation funding landscape. These projects and partnerships can support cities to pilot innovative projects or move a project along faster than the typical public funding cycle.





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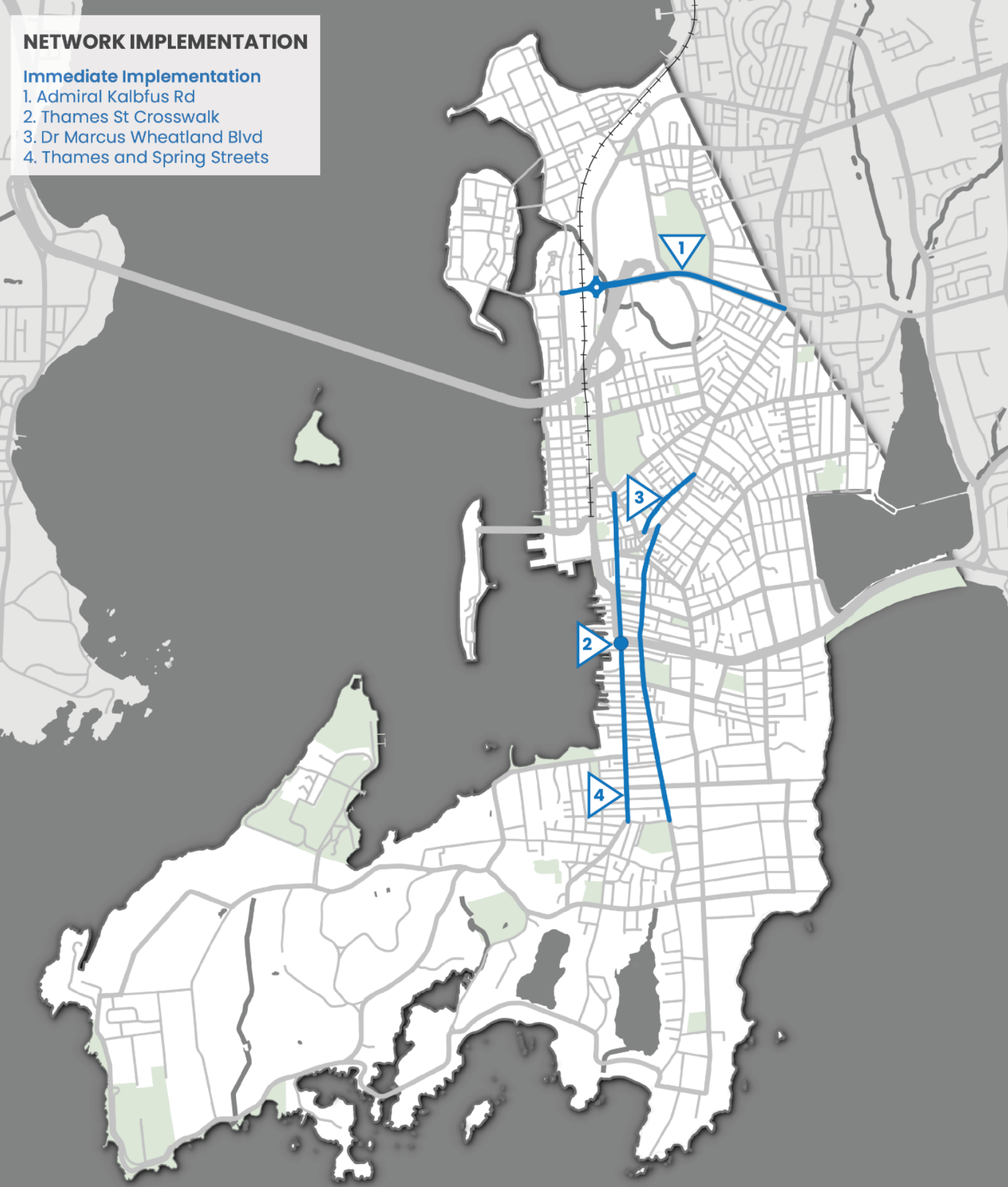
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# NETWORK IMPLEMENTATION

## Immediate Implementation

- 1. Admiral Kalbfus Rd
- 2. Thames St Crosswalk
- 3. Dr Marcus Wheatland Blvd
- 4. Thames and Spring Streets



# Immediate Implementation

Projects selected for immediate implementation should be installed within the first two years of publishing this Plan. Projects selected for this category are impactful, but also simple enough to be designed quickly. In addition, these items set the City up for successful future projects. For instance, for the Vehicle Intercept Parking program to be successful, parking on Thames and Spring Streets must be regulated and priced appropriately. The following programs and policies should be implemented alongside the immediate implementation projects:

Immediate Implementation Plans, Policies, and Programs		
P	2	Vehicle Intercept Lots
P	3	Vehicle Parking Ambassador Program
P	4	Update Vehicle Parking Regulations
P	5	Vehicle Parking Technologies
P	6	Truck Staging Area
PS	1	ADA Transition Plan
PS	3	Invest in Bike Parking
PS	4	Invest in Electric Vehicle Infrastructure
PS	5	Traffic Calming
PS	7	Vision Zero
PS	8	Work towards a continuous Harbaor Walk
D	1	Standardize Signal Phasing and Design
D	3	Adopt Multimodal Design Standards
PM	1	Expand Outreach
PM	5	Pilot Seasonal Car-free Streets
PM	9	Build Multimodal Projects Through Regular Maintenance

## S1: Admiral Kalbfus Road (Third Street to Broadway)

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### Action

Reduce width of travel lanes and eliminate shoulders to reduce speeds. Construct a shared use path for pedestrians and bicyclists. Create safer intersections that promote slower speeds. At the same time, incorporate landscaping, trees, and green gutters to increase climate resiliency and make walking and biking more enjoyable.

### Partners

Planning and Economic Development, Public Services, City Council, RIPTA, Parks, Trees and Open Space Commission

### Funding

Capital Improvement Program or Federal and State Grants (CRP,CMAQ, HISP, RAISE, SS4A, STBG)

## S2: Relocate and Signalize Thames Crosswalk (Thames, South of America's Cup)

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### Action

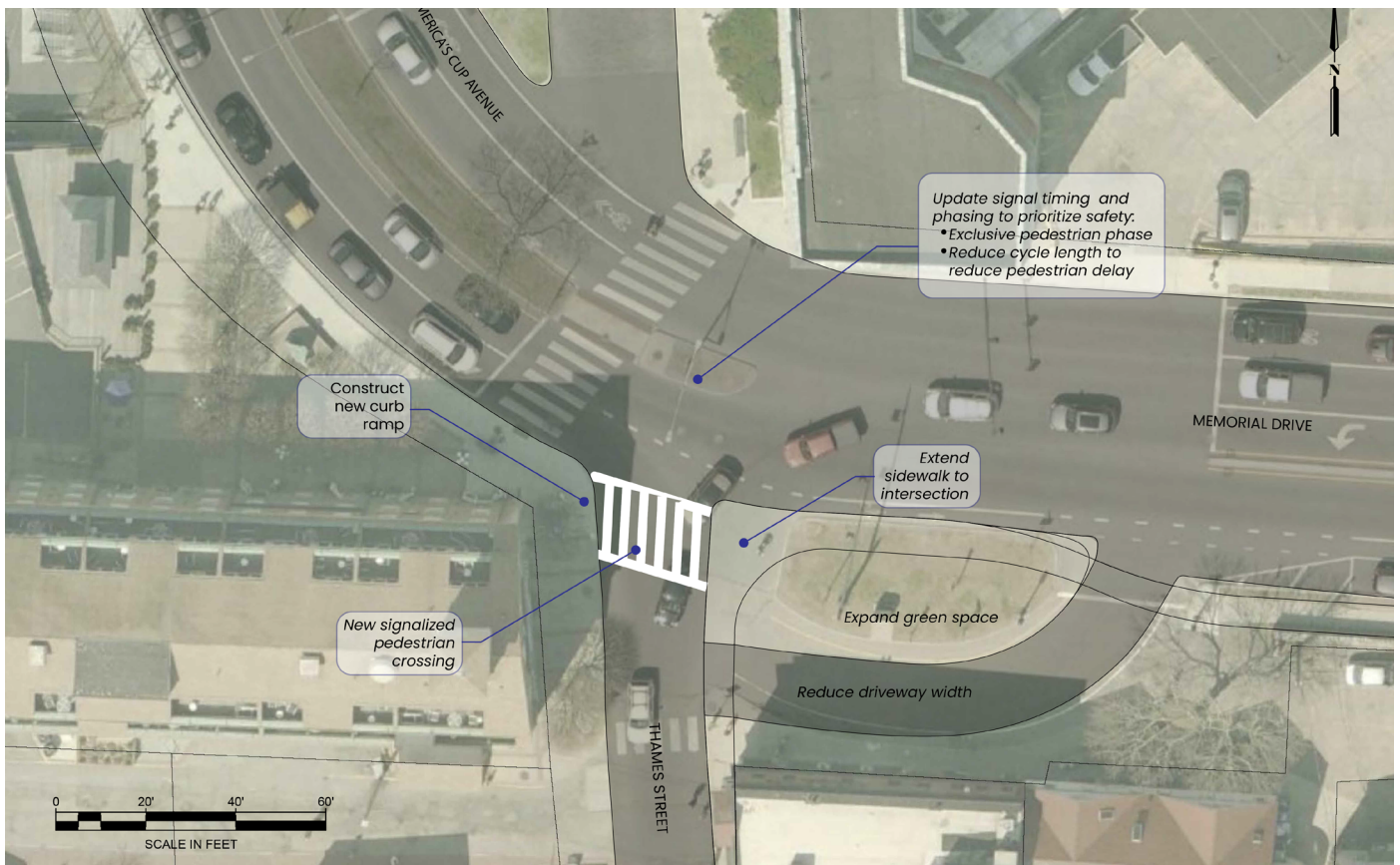
The crosswalk on Thames Street just south of America's Cup Avenue, near the Red Parrot and Midtown Oyster Bar, is highly problematic for several reasons. It is very close to the major signalized intersection, but not controlled by the signal, which exposes pedestrians to turning vehicular traffic. Because it sees frequent pedestrian crossings, vehicular traffic often must yield, which quickly spills back into the intersection, causing further safety and operational problems. In fact, this intersection is the most significant source of traffic congestion in the region, caused by the uncontrolled pedestrian crossing. This change has considerable potential to ease traffic congestion in Newport. The crosswalk should be relocated north and be signalized to reduce the potential for conflicts. This will require the construction of several short sections of sidewalk, but it is overall a modest sized project that should be undertaken by the City with funds from the capital budget.

### Partners

Planning and Economic Development, Public Services, City Council, Discover Newport, Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce, RIDOT

### Funding

Capital Improvement Program or RIDOT SMART Grant Program



S2: Thames St and America's Cup Avenue Concept

## S3: Signal Timing and Phasing Changes at Bellevue/Memorial



### Action

This project will implement changes to the intersection's signal timing and phasing which currently require very long delays for pedestrians crossing Memorial, which leads to confusion about whether or not the equipment is working, and non-compliance with crossing signals. In addition, a number of the short term recommendations from the Memorial Boulevard Pedestrian and Bicycle Road Safety Assessment will be considered for implementation, including lane reassignment and bike lane markings.

### Partners

Planning and Economic Development, Public Services, City Council, RIDOT

### Funding

Capital Improvement Program or RIDOT SMART Grant Program

## S4: Signal Timing and Phasing Changes on Broadway

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### Action

The Broadway corridor has a concentration of pedestrian crashes, mostly at intersections. The traffic signals along the corridor should be evaluated for short term improvements that can be done using the existing equipment or minor upgrades. Each signal should be evaluated for the following items:

- Multimodal traffic data collected to determine the potential conflicts between people walking, biking, and driving at crosswalks
- Evaluate the existing pedestrian phasing, and consider change such as leading pedestrian intervals
- Adjusting crossing times and clearance times

- Changing phasing from exclusive to concurrent, or vice versa

A set of signal plans will be developed and implemented by the City and signal contractor.

### Partners

Planning and Economic Development, Public Services, City Council, RIDOT

### Funding

Capital Improvement Program

## S5: Dr Marcus Wheatland Boulevard/Equality Park W (Gould Street to Marlborough Street)

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### Action

Calm traffic and accommodate a shared lane bikeway on Dr Marcus Wheatland Boulevard / Equality Park W. Reduce vehicle speeds by narrowing travel lanes and installing speed humps and pedestrian crossing islands. Ensure bicycle riders can easily access the bikeway by installing a wide crossing island at the north and south end of the connection. Install shared lane markings.

### Partners

Planning and Economic Development, Public Services, City Council

### Funding

Capital Improvement Program

## S6: Thames and Spring Streets



### Action

Reduce the conflicts between people driving, vehicle parking, loading, and walking on Thames Street, especially during peak season. Pilot innovative and intensive approaches to vehicle parking and loading and communicate the strategies to the public. Hire vehicle parking ambassadors to be a physical presence on Thames during peak season and communicate the City's vision for a more organized approach to curbside management.

Reconfigure the streetscape on south Thames to remove permanent on-street vehicle parking and establish a "flexspace" that can accommodate a variety of uses depending on the need by day or time of day (such as parking, loading, or sidewalk use).. Expand the sidewalk and install mountable curbs to allow loading for specific times during the day, possibly parking during the winter, and pedestrian use at other times. Examples of this approach can

be found on Granville Road in Vancouver, BC, and on Tottenham Court, in London, UK.

Test these approaches next summer on a few blocks using temporary materials such as paint and temporary signs. Collect data and rely on parking ambassadors to communicate the goals of the project to the public. Use their feedback as well as collected data to inform permanent changes.

### Partners

Planning and Economic Development, Public Services, City Council, Discover Newport, Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce

### Funding

Capital Improvement Program



Mountable curbs and timed loading controls on Tottenham Court Road in London, England allow for loading and expanded sidewalk space, depending on the time of day CREDIT: Google Maps

## S7: Shared Narrow Streets Pilot

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### Action

Newport is known for its historic narrow streets that were laid out in an era well before any type of motorized vehicle. On these skinny streets that permit on-street vehicle parking, vehicles often park partially on the sidewalk in fear of being hit by an oncoming vehicle. This requires pedestrians to walk in the street on streets that are not designed for this type of shared use. While streets with these conditions are found throughout the historic core, the streets between Thames and Spring are particularly problematic due to high pedestrian traffic traveling between Thames and Bellevue destinations. This project will pilot a number of techniques including signage and traffic calming to create a safer environment for shared use. The streets to be selected should have a curb-to-curb width of between 15 and 18 feet wide. This project will inform the longer term project #S17, which will implement permanent changes.

### Partners

Planning and Economic Development, Public Services, City Council

### Funding

Capital Improvement Program



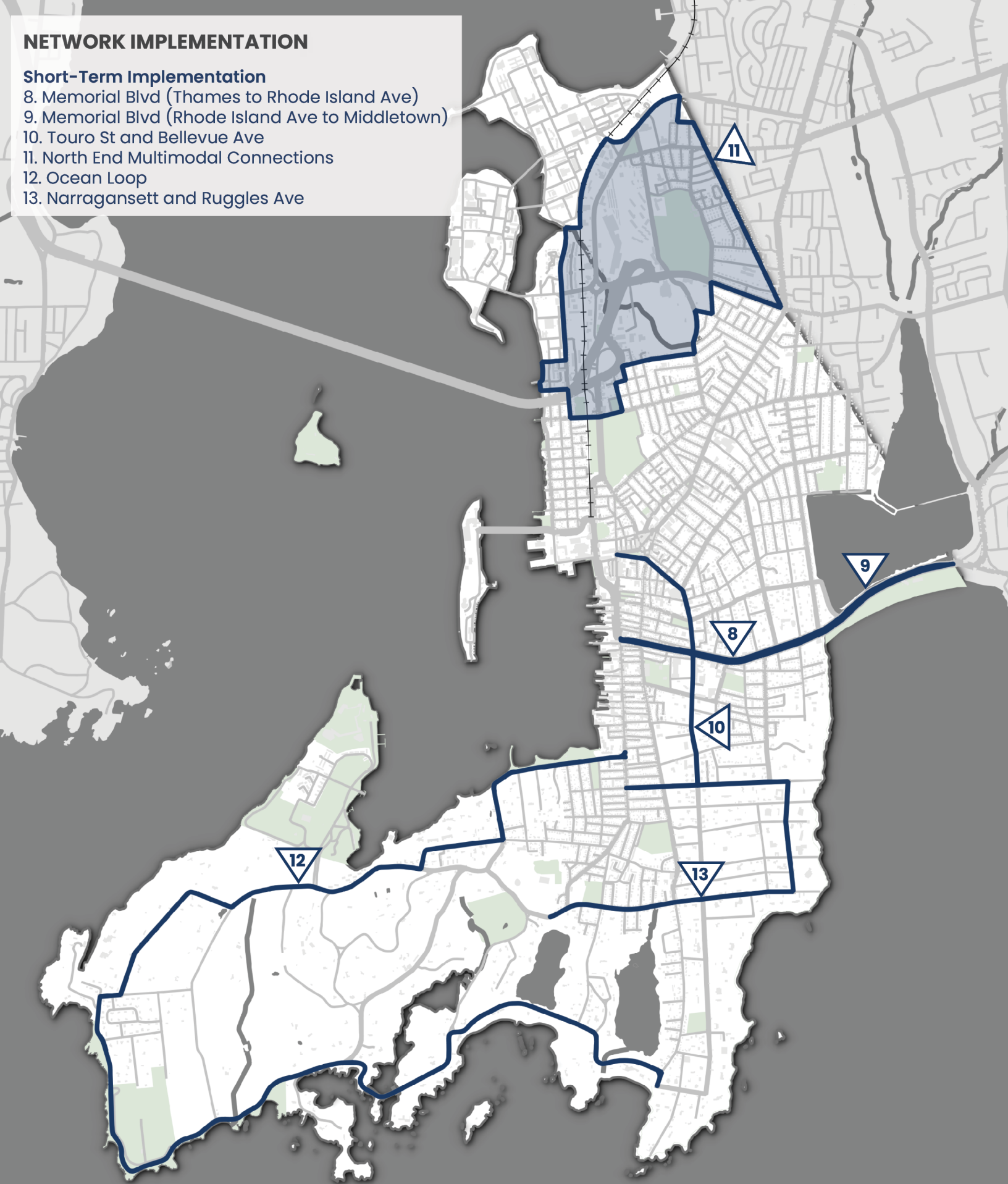


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## NETWORK IMPLEMENTATION

### Short-Term Implementation

- 8. Memorial Blvd (Thames to Rhode Island Ave)
- 9. Memorial Blvd (Rhode Island Ave to Middletown)
- 10. Touro St and Bellevue Ave
- 11. North End Multimodal Connections
- 12. Ocean Loop
- 13. Narragansett and Ruggles Ave



# Short Term Implementation

Projects identified for short-term implementation should be completed within 2-5 years of this Plan’s publication. These projects are impactful but require some complex design work and coordination that will likely take two years. Although the projects below should be installed in the short-term, work on them should begin immediately. The following programs and policies should be implemented alongside the short-term implementation projects:

Short Term Implementation Plans, Policies, and Programs		
P	7	Mobility Hubs
PS	2	Sidewalk Construction and Repair
PS	6	Trail Wayfinding, Signage, and Lighting
D	2	Restructure the Project Delivery Process
PM	6	Fund Community-led Projects

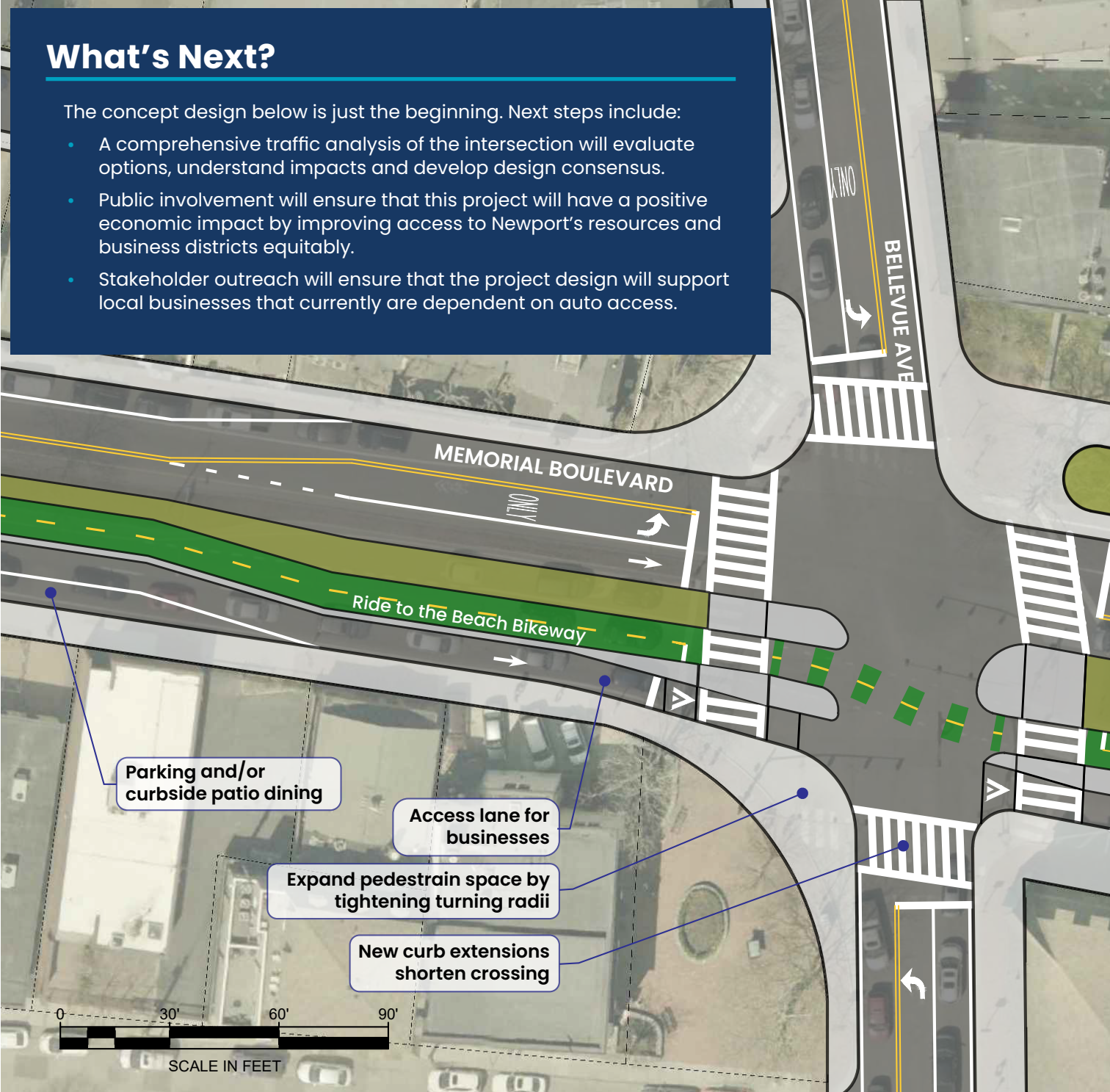
# S8: Memorial Boulevard (Thames Street to Rhode Island Avenue)



## What's Next?

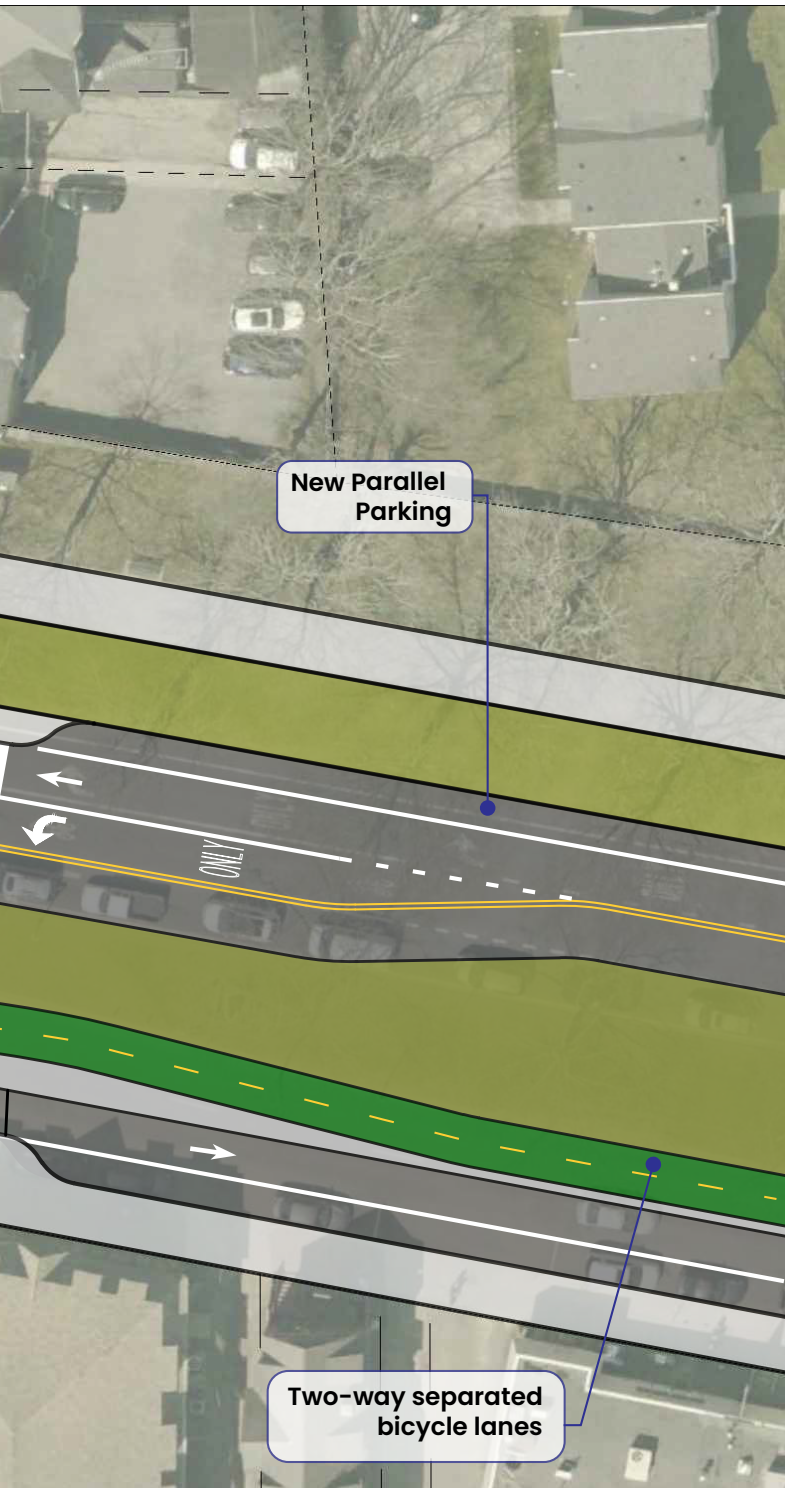
The concept design below is just the beginning. Next steps include:

- A comprehensive traffic analysis of the intersection will evaluate options, understand impacts and develop design consensus.
- Public involvement will ensure that this project will have a positive economic impact by improving access to Newport's resources and business districts equitably.
- Stakeholder outreach will ensure that the project design will support local businesses that currently are dependent on auto access.



## Action

Memorial Boulevard provides an important connection linking downtown Newport with the Bellevue Avenue business district, the Cliff Walk, Easton's Beach, and Newport's neighbor, Middletown. Today, Memorial Boulevard varies with bike lanes that start and stop, patchy vehicle parking areas, and a different number of travel lanes in each direction.



Complete this section of the Ride to the Beach by installing a quick-build, separated bike facility from Thames Street to Rhode Island Avenue using impermanent materials such as paint, planters, and plastic flexposts. House the amount of car traffic on Memorial Boulevard in fewer travel lanes and install a separated bikeway in the remaining space. Along with the bikeway, provide frequent, comfortable, and safer crossings for people walking or biking, and manage curbside conflicts through signage, pick-up/drop-off zones, and enforcement. The intersection of Bellevue Avenue and Memorial Boulevard is confusing and has a history of frequent crashes. With the installation of the bikeway, retime the traffic signal and make the intersection easier to cross.

In a future phase, upgrade this bikeway with permanent separation, such as raising the bikeway to the level of the sidewalk or installing curbs separating the bikeway from vehicle traffic, such as shown on the concept to the left. At this time, install trees, benches, and landscaping to create a welcoming corridor.

With these changes, tourism bus operations will not be affected.

From Old Beach Road to the parking lot entrance for Easton's Beach, create a "flexspace" that can accommodate a variety of uses depending on the need by day or time of day (uses may include overflow parking, bus stops, pick-up/drop-off, or food trucks).

The tree-lined median will be retained as tree preservation is one of Newport's top priorities.

## Partners

Planning and Economic Development, Public Services, Newport Recreation Department, City Council, Discover Newport, Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce, RIDOT

## Funding

Capital Improvement Program

**S8: Memorial Boulevard and Bellevue Avenue Intersection Concept**

# S9: Memorial Boulevard (Rhode Island Avenue to Middletown)



## What's Next?

The concept design below is just the beginning. Next steps include:

- A traffic and parking analysis of the beach access will provide insights for developing a design that will make access to the beach safe and equitable. A traffic signal at the parking entrance may be beneficial.
- Public Involvement will ensure that this project considers points of view of beach visitors and people passing between Newport and Middletown.
- Stakeholder outreach will ensure that the project design will protect the environment and increase the City's resiliency to flooding.
- A demonstration project can be planned to allow for testing and refinement of this concept to inform the design.





## Action

This segment is an opportunity for early implementation to create a signature, iconic trail completing this section of the Ride to the Beach. As there is only one through vehicle lane in each direction at both ends of this segment, it is readily adaptable to the future conditions along Memorial, with two travel lanes on the north side and fully separated bicycle lanes on the south side, particularly between Cliff/Gibbs Streets and Easton's Beach. The median can be traversed by vehicles at the Cliff/Gibbs intersection, with all vehicular travel on the north side of Memorial, while accommodating access from the The Chanler at Cliff Walk.

Similarly to Memorial Boulevard between Thames Street and Rhode Island Avenue, the tree-lined median along Memorial will be retained in accordance with Newport's climate resiliency goals.

## Partners

Planning and Economic Development, Public Services, RIPTA, City Council, Discover Newport, Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce

## Funding

Federal and State Grants (RAISE, SS4A, CRP, CMAQ, HISP, STBG), See Funding Strategy Appendix for details.

S9: Memorial Boulevard and Easton's Beach Concept

## S10: Touro Street and Bellevue Avenue (Thames Street to Narragansett Avenue)

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### Action

Touro Street and Bellevue Avenue are major roadways that pass through Newport’s historic core and serve all modes of travel.

To provide bicycle facilities on Bellevue Avenue, evaluate the need for on-street vehicle parking given nearby available off-street vehicle parking. South of East Bowery, reduce width of travel lanes to accommodate dedicated bike facilities. The intersection of Bellevue Avenue and Memorial Boulevard is confusing and has a history of frequent crashes. With the installation of the bikeway, retime the traffic signal and make the intersection easier to cross.

Work with RIPTA in their effort to enhance transit service along Broadway including increasing the

frequency of Route 67 during peak service hours. Install floating bus stops and shelters with real-time arrival information.

Continue the connection north on Touro Street by installing traffic calming elements and shared lane markings.

### Partners

Planning and Economic Development, Public Services, RIPTA, City Council, Discover Newport, Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce

### Funding

Capital Improvement Program

## S11: North End Multimodal Connections

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### Action

The North End is envisioned as a future walkable, bikeable area where housing and employment will strengthen Newport’s economy, providing a place for businesses to grow and to address housing affordability. The project and new street typologies proposed in the North End Urban Plan will result in a walkable environment as new developments are constructed. In partnership with these improvements, work with property owners to proactively build a strong east-west bicycle and

pedestrian connection through the RK Shopping Center to Miantonomi Park and the shoreline, through Rolling Green, Festival Field, and AHEPA.

### Partners

Planning and Economic Development, Public Services, Building, Zoning, and Inspections, City Council

### Funding

Private Partnership



## S12: Ocean Loop (Wellington Avenue, Halidon Avenue, Brenton Road, Beacon Hill Road, Harrison Avenue, Ridge Road, Castle Hill Avenue, Ocean Avenue)

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### Action

Create a scenic and iconic multimodal route along Newport's "Ten-Mile Drive" by adding traffic calming features throughout the route, shared lane markings, bike lanes, designated pull-offs and places to enjoy the scenery, bike repair stations, benches, drinking water, and restrooms. As the main entrance to Fort Adams, these streets have significant walking and biking activity without dedicated space. Measure speeds and monitor operations at key intersections and locations to understand specific speeding issues. Consider more intense bikeway treatments at major intersections

Also provide programming for this ride by making maps available, publishing the ride, and coordinating events at popular stops during peak season. This effort will add to the bike culture in Newport and establish Newport as a bike tourist destination.

### Partners

Planning and Economic Development, Public Services, City Council, Discover Newport, Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce, Bike Newport

### Funding

Federal and State Grants (RAISE, SS4A, CRP, CMAQ, HISP, STBG), See Funding Strategy Appendix for details.

## S13: Sidewalks – Narragansett and Ruggles

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### Action

Construct new sidewalk and close sidewalk gaps on Narragansett Avenue and Ruggles. Prioritize improvements along Narragansett Avenue between Spring Street and Ochre Point which leads to many tourist destinations, William S. Rogers High School, and bus route 67. Work with Salve Regina University to close sidewalk gaps on Ocre Point and work with the traffic calming pilot on Ruggles Avenue (PS5) to determine priority sidewalk gaps.

### Funding

Pavement Management Program, State or Federal Grant Program

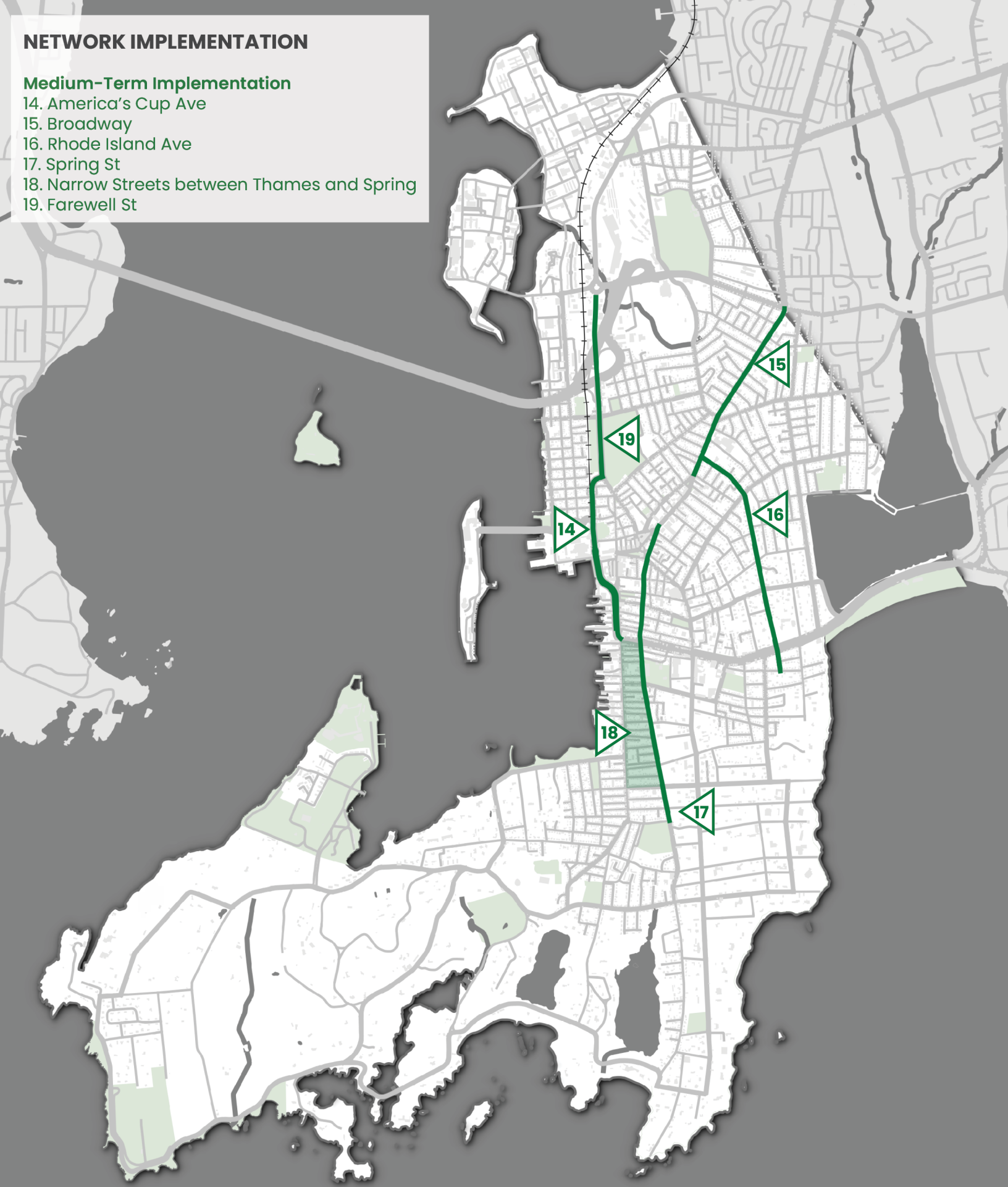
### Partners

Planning and Economic Development, Public Services, City Council

# NETWORK IMPLEMENTATION

## Medium-Term Implementation

- 14. America's Cup Ave
- 15. Broadway
- 16. Rhode Island Ave
- 17. Spring St
- 18. Narrow Streets between Thames and Spring
- 19. Farewell St



# Medium Term Implementation

Projects identified for medium-term implementation should be completed within 3-10 years of this Plan's publication. These projects include either highly impactful projects that involve significant complex design or coordination or projects that build on the network established in previous phases, or projects that are just not quite as high of a priority as those in previous phases. Although the projects below won't be installed for five years, early work on them should begin immediately. The following programs and policies should be implemented alongside the medium-term implementation projects:

PM	10	Improve Access to Water Transportation
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# S14: America's Cup Avenue (Farewell Street to Thames Street)

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## Action

America's Cup Avenue is currently a pedestrian barrier, with infrequent crossings, excessive width, and long signal cycle lengths. This barrier separates the multimodal access points from many of the major historic sites and streets. It also lacks street frontages that make a street appealing to walk. For these reasons, a walk along America's Cup feels very long, even with the presence of the waterfront and proximity to the historic core. Although there are currently two vehicle travel lanes in each direction, these are frequently blocked by loading and pick-ups/drop-offs.

House the amount of car traffic on America's Cup Avenue in fewer travel lanes and install a separated two-way bikeway along the Newport Harbor side of the street. Manage curbside conflicts through signage, pick-up/drop-off zones, and enforcement. Provide crossing improvements for pedestrians crossing America's Cup Avenue at Poplar Street and Elm Street.

Work with RIPTA in their effort to enhance transit service along America's Cup Avenue. Current plans include increasing the frequency of buses serving Route 14 and Route 60. With the bikeway installation, upgrade bus stops and provide floating bus islands with the bikeway routed behind the island to allow easy boarding, as well as real-time arrival information.

As parcels with vehicle parking areas along the street are redeveloped, consider the pedestrian experience of the street frontage.

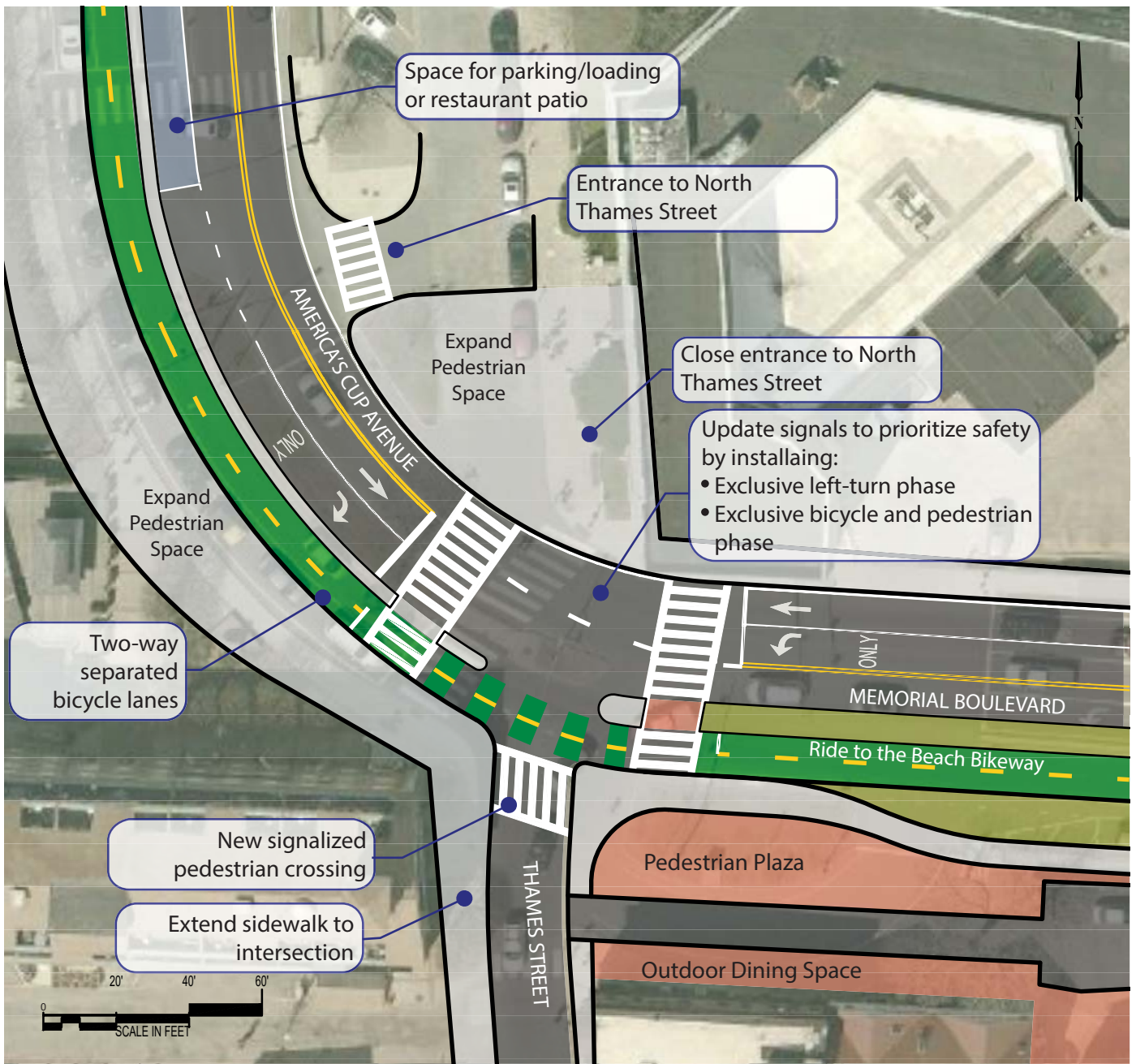
Retain the tree-lined median along America's Cup to preserve existing trees in alignment with Newport's climate resiliency goals.

## Partners

Planning and Economic Development, Public Services, RIPTA, City Council, Discover Newport, Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce

## Funding

Federal and State Grants (RAISE, SS4A, CRP, CMAQ, HISP, STBG), See Funding Strategy Appendix for details.

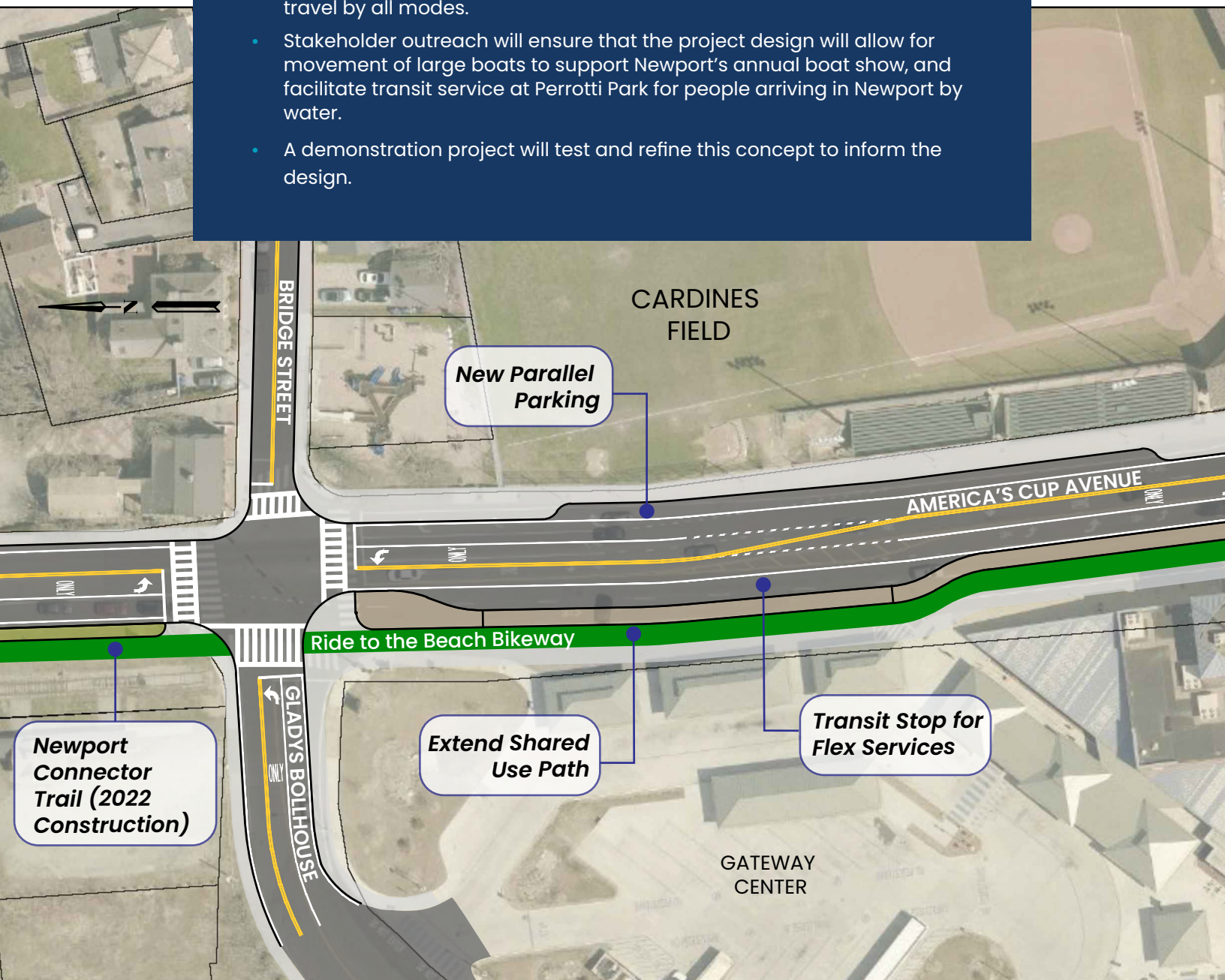


S14: Thames Street and America's Cup Avenue Concept Plan

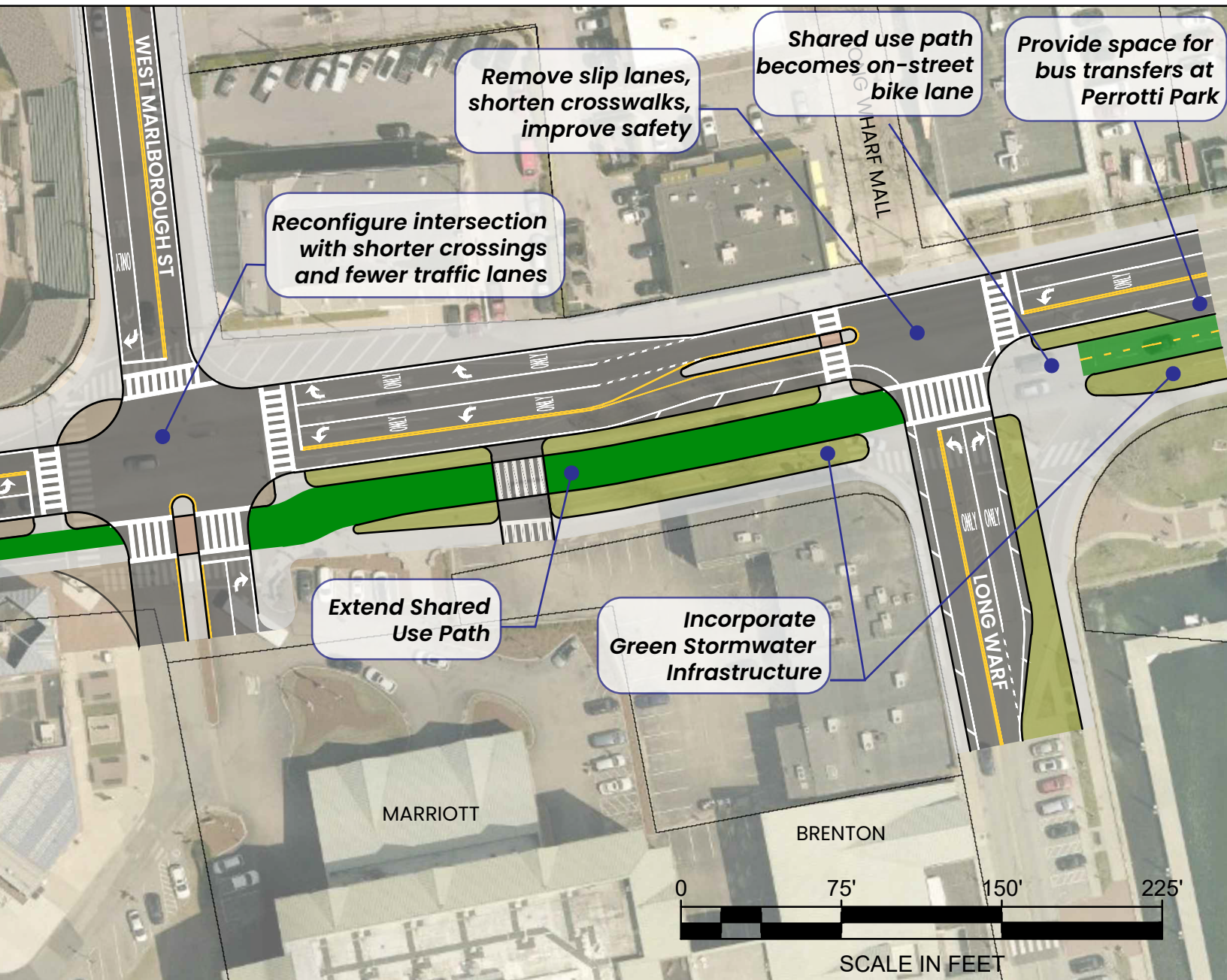
## What's Next?

The concept design below is just the beginning. Next steps include:

- A comprehensive traffic analysis of the America's Cup corridor will evaluate options.
- Public Involvement will ensure that this project equitably considers people travel by all modes.
- Stakeholder outreach will ensure that the project design will allow for movement of large boats to support Newport's annual boat show, and facilitate transit service at Perrotti Park for people arriving in Newport by water.
- A demonstration project will test and refine this concept to inform the design.



America's Cup Avenue Concept Plan



## S15: Broadway (Gould Street to Miantonomi Avenue)

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### Action

Broadway is a major roadway that passes through Newport's historic core and serves all modes of travel. The streets connected to this corridor are made up of small blocks and are highly walkable. In this wide section, install separated bike lanes and protected intersections. Align the bikeway with Broadway's transit service by installing floating bus stops and shelters with real-time arrival information. Prioritize pedestrian and bicycling safety in the intersection design and signal phasing.

Work with RIPTA in their effort to enhance transit service along Broadway, including increasing the frequency of Route 60 and Route 63 during peak service hours.

### Partners

Planning and Economic Development, Public Services, RIPTA, City Council, Discover Newport, Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce

### Funding

Federal and State Grants (RAISE, SS4A, CRP, CMAQ, HISP, STBG), See Funding Strategy Appendix for details.

## S16: Rhode Island Avenue (Memorial Boulevard to Broadway)

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### Action

Install streetscape enhancements to improve the experience for people biking with traffic calming, signage, and shared lane markings.

### Partners

Planning and Economic Development, Public Services, City Council, Discover Newport, Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce

### Funding

Federal and State Grants (RAISE, SS4A, CRP, CMAQ, HISP, STBG), See Funding Strategy Appendix for details.



## S17: Spring Street (Broadway to Narragansett Ave)

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### Action

Consider streetscape enhancements to improve the experience for people biking with traffic calming, signage, and shared lane markings. Improve intersection visibility and ease of crossing by physically enforcing vehicle parking setbacks with sidewalk extensions at busy side streets.

### Partners

Planning and Economic Development, Public Services, City Council, Discover Newport, Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce

### Funding

Capital Improvement Program

## S18: Narrow Streets between Thames and Spring Streets (Memorial Boulevard to Narragansett Avenue)

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### Action

Spring Street and Thames Street are one-way pairs and major tourist, shopping, and dining destinations. Circulation between the two destination streets occurs on very narrow side streets ranging from twelve to eighteen feet between the curbs. These streets have extremely narrow sidewalks, cars parked on the sidewalk, and little to no off-street vehicle parking. Vehicles parked on-street are often hit by drivers and walking on the narrow streets is uncomfortable and inaccessible.

Encourage walking throughout the dense core of Newport by making policy and design changes to the narrow streets connecting Spring and Thames Streets. As a first step, move obstructions from the sidewalks including signposts (by placing on buildings or consolidating), and improve vehicle parking enforcement. If removing all signage is not possible, elect to install signage on only one side of the street or construct a bump-out to house signage. Designate one side as an accessible route. Install gateway treatments on the entrance side of

each street (Thames Street for east-bound streets; Spring Street for west-bound streets) by raising the Thames or Spring Street crosswalk to sidewalk level and constructing a sidewalk extension, where vehicle parking exists. Along the streets, widen sidewalks for long stretches and “bump in” where parking is needed.

Select a small number of the narrow connector streets to fully reconstruct as a curbless shared street following the guidelines published in [FHWA Accessible Shared Streets](#).

### Partners

Planning and Economic Development, Public Services, City Council, Discover Newport, Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce

### Funding

Capital Improvement Program

## S19: Farewell Street (at America’s Cup Boulevard) to JT Connell Highway (at Admiral Kalbfus Rd)



### Action

Close the sidewalk gap that will exist between Van Zandt and America’s Cup Avenue once the Pell Bridge project is complete. Reduce the width of the travel lanes to the minimum dimensions necessary to accommodate transit, widen the existing sidewalk, and install a new sidewalk on the west side of the street. Install trees and green gutters to improve climate resiliency where possible.

### Partners

Planning and Economic Development, Public Services, RIPTA, City Council, Discover Newport, Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce

### Funding

Capital Improvement Program

## Ongoing projects

### Supporting Bikeways

Continue to build the bike network by completing the supporting bikeways on the following streets. Evaluate each street’s speeds and volumes to determine the appropriate bike facility and enhance locations where the supporting network ties into Newport’s priority bike network. If there are opportunities, such as a repaving or maintenance project, install bikeways within the supporting network ahead of schedule.

Project #	Street	From	To
S 19	Annandale Road	Memorial Boulevard	Narragansett Avenue
S 20	Bedlow Avenue	Malbone Road	Broadway
S 21	Carroll Avenue	Thames Street	Ruggles Avenue
S 22	Harrison Avenue	Brenton Road	Carroll Avenue
S 23	Hillside Avenue	Maple Avenue	Bedlow Avenue
S 24	Kay Street	Touro Street	Bliss Mine Road
S 25	Malbone Road	JT Connell Highway	Broadway
S 26	Mann Avenue	Broadway	Key Street
S 27	Maple Avenue	JT Connell Highway	Hillside Avenue
S 28	Narragansett Avenue	Thames Street	Ochre Point Avenue
S 29	Ochre Point Avenue	Ruggles Avenue	Narragansett Avenue

S	30	Ruggles Avenue / Wickham Road	Beacon Hill Rd	Ochre Point Avenue
S	31	Third Street	Admiral Kalbfus Road	Van Zandt Avenue
S	32	Van Zandt Avenue	Washington Street	Broadway
S	33	Washington Street	Van Zandt Avenue	Long Wharf
S	34	Bellevue Avenue South	Narragansett Avenue	Coggeshall Avenue

## North End Urban Plan

The North End Urban Plan is meant to be implemented over time, through private development. RIDOT and the City of Newport are spurring the neighborhood’s multimodal future through the Pell Bridge ramp removal and associated projects. Redevelopment in this area cannot happen all at once and current residents will live with the changing nature of the resulting public space. The City of Newport should look for opportunities to fill in gaps, install bicycle and pedestrian accommodations in a temporary manner, install projects ahead of schedule, and coordinate property owners so that the resulting public spaces are consistent and continuous. Installing a temporary bicycle or pedestrian link can make a big difference in residents’ daily lives. Continue the work of the North End Urban Plan through:

- Require and facilitate temporary bicycle and pedestrian accommodations in construction sites
- Fill in the gaps between multimodal connections when temporary gaps arise
- Lead coordination on challenging projects that involve multiple property owners/interests.

## Continuing the Work in this Plan

In addition, the following policies, programs, and procedures should be incorporated into Newport’s ongoing work.

Ongoing Plans, Policies, and Programs		
PM	2	Partner in a Regional Bikeway System
PM	3	Regularly Meet with and Collaborate with RIPTA
PM	4	Prioritize biking and walking to schools
PM	7	Bikeway Maintenance
OM	8	Keep Track of Progress
PM	9	Build Multimodal Projects through Regular Maintenance

# Conclusion

The City of Newport is committed to building streets that support the most-loved aspects of the city: waterfront access, historic architecture, quaint streets, and attractive destinations. Through strategic investments and policy changes, the City of Newport will realize the safe, multimodal, and connected streets that will define the future of Newport. This Plan represents a major first step in achieving this vision, but the hard work is ahead. The next steps are critical, and now is an important time for the City to build on all the community trust and implementation partnerships that have developed during the creation of Keep Newport Moving. The practical, innovative, and inspiring projects outlined in this Plan are within reach and will transform Newport into a place where mobility is safe, accessible for all, and enjoyable.

## Commitment to Engagement

Engagement will not end with the publication of this Plan. Going forward, the City will continue community engagement as Plan recommendations are implemented to ensure they reflect current community needs and priorities. The City of Newport will provide the opportunity for feedback and any necessary changes. Additionally, the City of Newport is committed to making engagement on transportation issues and upcoming changes accessible to a wide public. In addition to using online channels, the City will continue on-the-ground engagement to meet people where they are, as well as striving to reach marginalized and vulnerable populations such as Newport's Spanish-speaking population. Through this Plan's engagement process, the City of Newport has deepened its relationship with community leaders and organizations and will continue to build those relationships with organizations as well as community members. By staying committed to meaningful engagement throughout the implementation process, the City of Newport will ensure a safer, more equitable, and more resilient city envisioned by and for the many people who live, work, and play in Newport.





