

PORTSMOUTH COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN

ELEMENT 10 -TRANSPORTATION

10.1 TRANSPORTATION VISION

PORTSMOUTH WILL ENJOY A SAFE, EFFICIENT AND WELL-MAINTAINED MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION NETWORK THAT INCREASES MOBILITY FOR ALL RESIDENTS, SUPPORTS THE GROWTH OF BUSINESS ACTIVITY, REDUCES NEGATIVE IMPACTS ON THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, AND ENHANCES THE CHARACTER AND QUALITY OF LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY.

10.2 INTRODUCTION

The term transportation refers to the movement of people and goods from place to place. To accomplish this movement, the State, its municipalities and private enterprise have developed and maintain a network of facilities and infrastructure that accommodates multiple modes of travel, including streets and roadways, sidewalks, bike paths and travel lanes, bus stops and route corridors, ferry lines and rail service, all at a scale appropriate to each community. Maintaining safe and efficient access to this transportation network by all parties and at all levels is essential to the economic vitality and quality of life of Portsmouth.

The Town's transportation element focuses on:

- Aligning transportation goals with other aspects of the plan such as land use, economic development and housing.
- Considering the varying transportation needs of all community members.
- Mitigating the public health and safety impacts of our current and future transportation network.

We accomplish this using three general approaches:

- Effective management and maintenance of our town-owned roadway network. (See Transportation Goal 1.)
- Coordination and cooperation with the State in the management and maintenance of their roadway network within our community. (See Transportation Goal 2.)
- Establishing a well-balanced multi-modal transportation network for the varying needs of all our residents. (See Transportation Goal 3.)

Portsmouth's current Comprehensive Plan makes several points with regard to transportation that are as valid today as when the plan was revised and adopted in 2002.

First, automobile transportation is the dominant form of travel in our community and is likely to remain so in the foreseeable future. This is because of:

- Our dispersed rural/suburban geography.
- Our lack of a dense town center.
- The dominance of two north-south state highways as principal arterials with minimal shoulders along most of the route.
- Sidewalks being almost nonexistent throughout the Portsmouth.
- Mass transit being confined to the two state highways.

As such, addressing excessive traffic volumes, traffic safety and vehicular congestion and other impacts must be key components of Portsmouth's transportation planning.

Second, most transportation planning in Portsmouth is seen as something out of the Town's control. RIDOT controls the placement, design, construction and maintenance of all State roads in town. With nearly 23% of all the roadway surface in Portsmouth under state control, coordination and cooperation with the State is essential. Developing opportunities to present local needs to RIDOT must be an integral part of Portsmouth's transportation planning.

Third, despite the dominance of automobile transportation, a community that chooses to ignore the promotion of efficient mass transit puts citizens without ready access to an automobile at risk and degrades overall quality of life and economic vitality. The support and promotion of mass transit and alternate forms of transportation must be integrated into overall transportation planning.

And lastly, movement of people and goods throughout Portsmouth does not exist in a vacuum. Vehicle traffic accessing two of the three bridges on and off Aquidneck Island must by necessity move through Portsmouth. In particular, seasonal through traffic moving to and from the beaches and other tourist destinations to our south creates on-going congestion problems. In addition, due to the geographic position of Aquidneck Island in relation to the regional highway system, traffic that crosses the island's bridges may not have an origin or destination in Portsmouth (or on Aquidneck Island) yet contributes to congestion on our roadways. Communities of the East Bay region (along with our State and Federal partners) must work together to define and solve common transportation problems.

This element of the Comprehensive Plan will catalog existing conditions and planned improvements to our transportation network, discuss challenges and opportunities in developing well-balanced transportation systems in Portsmouth, reference in detail both the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and the recommendations of the 2011 Aquidneck Island Transportation Study and set forth goals, policies and implementation actions in order to fulfill Portsmouth's vision for transportation in our community.

10.4 THE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK – EXISTING CONDITIONS

10.4.1 THE ROADWAY NETWORK

Most north-south traffic in Portsmouth is borne by two **Principal Arterials**: West Main Road (Route 114) and East Main Road (Route 138).

East Main Road (Route 138) is the major local artery servicing most of the retail/service business and adjacent to most of the residential areas. It runs from the Middletown Town Line to a ramp leading onto Route 24 North at its intersection with Boyd's Lane. East Main Road has eight signalized intersections.

Route 114, which includes Bristol Ferry Road and West Main Road, begins at the Mount Hope Bridge in Portsmouth and continues south to the Middletown Line. This segment of roadway is approximately 7.0 miles in length. The roadway allows four lanes for travel (two lanes northbound/two lanes southbound), with posted speed limits (excluding school zones) of 35 miles per hour (MPH) on Bristol Ferry Road and 45 MPH on West Main Road. Route 114 carries substantial traffic volumes, ranging from an AADT of approximately 8,000 to its terminus at Bristol Ferry Road to 33,000 at the Middletown/Portsmouth town line. It has eight (8) signalized intersections. Much of the land abutting this roadway is only moderately developed. Areas that are developed consist mainly of residential development with two major commercial/industrial developments, Raytheon Corp. and the Melville marine trade complex (via Stringham Road) along with isolated commercial development is several locations.

Burma Road, more formally identified by the Navy as Defense Highway, which runs along the west coast parallel to West Main Road, begins in Portsmouth at Stringham Road, and continues south into Middletown. This is a two-lane roadway, much of which was recently repaved. The Portsmouth portion is approximately 2.5 miles in length with a posted speed limit of 35 MPH. The majority of the land adjacent to the road is United States Navy property with limited development including former Navy tank farms. The developed areas include the commercial/industrial Melville marine trades area at the north end of Burma Road, and a Portsmouth-owned public boat launch one mile to the south.

The portion of Boyd's Lane from its intersection with Route 138 to its intersection with Route 114 at the base of the Mt. Hope Bridge is also classified as a Principal Arterial.

Minor Arterials in Portsmouth include Boyd's Lane, Sprague Street, and Union Street. They are characterized as:

- Forming the network or backbone of "cross-travel" within Portsmouth.
- Providing the role of feeding traffic from Collector roads into the Principal Arterials.
- Carrying the heaviest volume cross-traffic between two principal arterials that closely parallel each other.

In Portsmouth, **Collector** roads include Anthony Road, Bramans Lane, Burma Road, Hedley Street, Hummocks Avenue, McCorrie Lane, Middle Road, Mill Lane, Park Avenue/Point Road, Sandy Point Road, Stringham Road and Wapping Road. These roadways are characterized as:

- Spaced at intervals to collect traffic from local streets and channel it to the arterial system..
- Provide both land access service and traffic circulation to residential areas, as well as commercial and industrial areas.
- Almost always are fed by two or more local streets and may pass through neighborhoods.

All other roads in Portsmouth are classified as **Local**.

Jim – please footnote the above - State of Rhode Island Functional Classification 2014, Technical Paper #165.

Roadways along with associated storm water infrastructure in Portsmouth owned and maintained by RIDOT include East Main Road (Rt. 138), West Main Road (Rt. 114), Route 24, Chase Road, Turnpike Avenue, Union Street, Middle Road (from Schoolhouse Lane to Union Street), Schoolhouse Lane, Bristol Ferry Road, Boyd's Lane, Sprague Street, Park Avenue, Point Road, Riverside Avenue and Hummock Avenue. These State-owned roadways account for just over 38 miles or nearly 23% of all roadway surface in Portsmouth.

The Town owns and maintains 112 miles of roadway and associated storm water infrastructures. Portsmouth DPW employs a GIS-based Pavement Management Program which includes a rigorous, periodic inspection of all roadway surfaces with a focus on pavement attributes that change over time. Using this data, a Road Surface Rating (RSR) is generated for each road segment on a scale of 100 to zero, with 100 representing pavement in excellent condition and zero describing a road in extremely poor condition. Portsmouth's 2018 average Road Surface Rating for all town-owned roads was 72.6. By national standards this is considered satisfactory. Current and future budgeting for the Town's annual pavement program is designed to maintain a target average of 72 or above.

To complete Portsmouth roadway ownership totals, there are approximately 25 miles of private and 7 miles of Navy-owned roadways in Town. All of the roads on Prudence Island with the exception of Narragansett Avenue, Broadway Street and a few State-owned roads are considered paper roads or driftways and are not part of the above totals.

Major traffic generators outside of the boundaries of Portsmouth include the beaches and tourist attractions of Aquidneck Island to our south, Naval Station Newport and the Naval Underwater Warfare Center (NUIC). Within our boundaries, major traffic generators include the employment centers at Raytheon Corp and the Melville marine complex, the beaches, marinas and restaurants in the Island Park neighborhood, the Clements Market/Town Center

District, the medium and high-density residential neighborhoods along the east side and north end of Town, Glen Park and the Seveney Sports Complex and the Roger Williams University dorms/conference center on Anthony Road.

10.4.2 THE BICYCLE NETWORK^[RJ1]

Existing Network

With the exception of the dedicated bicycle lane across the new Sakonnet River Bridge, the current existing bicycle network in Portsmouth is all on roads shared with vehicle traffic. See Maps T-2 & 3. A potential off-road bike path down the railway corridor remains in the planning stages with completion many years away, if at all. As an alternative, RIDOT has designated an Interim Bike Path through Portsmouth using surface streets. Roads have been designated as Most Suitable or Suitable. It is possible to ride from the Sakonnet River Bridge south to the Middletown line on roads with these designations. Depending on the chosen route, there are however, three short sections designated as Difficult Connections requiring extreme caution. These are along East Main Road from the intersection at Turnpike Avenue south to Town Hall, along East Main Road from Union Street to Sandy Point Lane and a small area on West Main Road at the intersections of Mill Land and Stringham Road.

Projects in the current FFY 2018-2027 State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) impacting bicycle travel in Portsmouth include:

- Rt 138, East Main Road – This is the Town Center Project – Paving, road and intersection improvements (roundabouts) and sidewalks from Hedley Street down the hill to Turnpike Avenue. Project scheduled for FFY 2019 / 2020 / 2021 / 2022 / 2023. This project is partially intended to address one of the three difficult connections to the Interim Bike Path noted above.
- Aquidneck Island Bikeway-Melville Connector - This is a partial on-road/off-road bike path connecting old west Main Road near Cory's Lane through Melville Park to Strigham Road/ Burma Road. This project is intended to address another of the three difficult connections to the Interim Bike Path noted above. The project is scheduled for FFY 2024 but a recent withdrawn RIDOT amendment to the current STIP eliminated the project, so the future of the project is uncertain.
- Mt. Hope Bay Bicycle Improvements – striping, signage and other improvements to Anthony Road from Boyd's Land eastward to the Mt. Hope Bridge. Project scheduled for FFY 2023 but a recent withdrawn RIDOT amendment to the current STIP eliminated the project, so the future of the project is uncertain.
- East Main Road Shared Use Path – This project includes on-road bike path and signal improvements from Hedley Street in Portsmouth southward to Enterprise Drive in Middletown. This project is intended to address the third of the three difficult connections to the Interim Bike Path noted above. Project scheduled for FFY 2021 / 2022 but a recent withdrawn RIDOT amendment to the current STIP eliminated the project, so the future of the project is uncertain.

Recent & Planned Bicycle Network Improvements

Dating back to the West Side Master Plan’s support of the bike path recommendations of RIDOT’s Aquidneck Island Passenger Rail Study and AIPC’s FY06-07 regional TIP application for construction of a bike path along the Newport Secondary rail corridor, bicycle network planning within Portsmouth’s boundaries has originated from several sources and has lacked a comprehensive approach. A partial list of past and proposed efforts include:

- RIDOT’s Bike Map
- Bike Newport’s Newport County Bicycle Map
- Bicycle accommodations associated with road diet projects on State roads in Portsmouth
- VHB’s Aquidneck Island Bikeway Study to connect “gaps” in the contiguous Interim Bikeway
- The pedestrian/bicycle improvement recommendations in the Aquidneck Island Transportation Study
- AIPC’s STIP application for the “Melville Connector”
- RIDOT’s shared use signage & roadway stripping along Anthony Road & Boyd’s Lane
- AIPC’s Two-Bridges rail corridor bike path proposal

This Transportation Element proposes a local effort to review and coordinate the various projects and proposals in a consolidated fashion with the goal of providing better local input to all stakeholders.

10.4.3 THE PEDESTRIAN NETWORK^[RJ2]

Of the 182 miles of roadway in Portsmouth, only 6.9 miles (3.8%) have pedestrian sidewalks on one or both sides of the road. Apart from short sections here and there, the only town-owned roads with sidewalks are along both sides of Patriot Way and one side of Education Lane in the vicinity of Portsmouth High school and along one side of Jepson Lane from Union Street to the Middle School. The remaining sidewalks in Portsmouth are along State roads – both sides of Park Avenue from Teddy’s Beach to East Main Road, along Chase Road/East Main Road from Boyd’s Land to Turnpike Avenue and along Bristol Ferry Road/Turnpike Avenue/East Main Road from the Mt Hope Bridge to East Main Road with one side extending south up Quaker Hill to Quaker Hill Road. Additionally, there is asphalt sidewalk along the west side of West Main Road from Mail Coach Road south to the Middletown Line. The Navy-owned Stringham Road has sidewalks along one or both sides from West Main Road down to Melville. The 6.3 miles of State-owned roadway with sidewalks described herein have a total of 15 painted crosswalks, averaging one every 0.42 miles. The Town maintains painted crosswalks across town-owned roads in several locations around town..

The Town has identified a critical need for sidewalks on State roads in two locations, along Sprague Street to create a safe pedestrian connection between Turnpike Avenue, East Main Road and Education Lane leading up to the High School and in the Town Center area from Town Hall down Quaker Hill to the East Main Road/Turnpike avenue intersection. Both areas are programmed for road pavement improvements including sidewalks in RIDOT's Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), scheduled for completion by 2023/2024.

Portsmouth's Land Development and Subdivision Regulations, last amended in 2012, do not require sidewalks in new subdivision. The regulations state, "Under certain conditions the Planning Board may require the installation of sidewalks where pedestrian traffic is likely, such as near schools, playgrounds, shopping areas, or high traffic volume streets." There is little open land remaining in Portsmouth available for new residential subdivision which meets these criteria, so it is unlikely additional sidewalks along town-owned roads are forthcoming.

Recreational walking trails are maintained by the Aquidneck Land Trust in two locations in Portsmouth, the extensive Sakonnet Greenway Trail with a northern terminus at the Leonard Brown House and walking trails in Oakland Forest accessed at the end of Carriage Drive off Union Street. See the Recreation Element for a more complete description.

10.4.4 THE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) Public Bus Service

Public transportation service on Aquidneck Island is provided by the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA). RIPTA's principal bus route in Town is Bus 60 which has stops along East Main Road and West Main Road.

Paratransit services are available for individuals with disabilities who are unable to use regular bus service. RIPTA provides Paratransit Services through the Ride Program, which RIPTA coordinates and manages statewide. All Ride service is door-to-door, as needed.

Private Bus Service

Peter Pan offers private bus service from Portsmouth to regional destinations, predominantly for commuting purposes. Approximately 100 commuters each day use the Peter Pan Bus Lines to/from Aquidneck Island with the majority commuting to Boston (AITS). Peter Pan bus services includes a stop in Portsmouth on Boyd's Lane near the Route 24 overpass.

Air Transportation

The Newport State Airport in Middletown, operated by the Rhode Island Airport Corporation (RIAC), serves the general aviation needs of the area. The airport currently houses 40 aircraft and there are approximately 21,500 operations (takeoffs and landings) annually. The airport is located on 223 acres of land accessed from Forest Avenue.

A Master Plan was completed in 2008 and an Environmental Assessment (EA) was completed in 2009 to review environmental impacts to the area based on the completed Master Plan. The Plan specifies that no major expansion of the airport is planned. Current facilities will however, be upgraded and improved for safety and service. In addition to serving local general aviation traffic, Newport State Airport also serves the area's tourist destinations, corporate and local business aviation needs, and quick access to local harbors for both private boat owners and the ship building industry. T.F. Green Airport in Warwick, approximately 36 miles from Portsmouth, serves the commercial air transportation needs of residents and businesses.

Rail Infrastructure

The existing Newport Secondary Line is a single-track railroad owned by the State of Rhode Island. The line extends along the west side of the Island for approximately 13 miles from the Sakonnet River Bridge to Newport. The connection to the mainland was discontinued in the late 1980s when the rail bridge across the Sakonnet River was damaged and later demolished. The Sakonnet River is a navigable channel and, therefore, has to allow for the unimpeded movement of waterborne vessels; therefore, in order to re-establish a rail connection between the Island and the mainland, the bridge would need to be restored as a movable structure or provide the required vertical clearance for navigation. The construction of a new railroad bridge across the Sakonnet River would be a critical initial step toward restoring rail service between Aquidneck Island and the mainland.

Existing intra-island rail services include excursion trains such as the Newport Dinner Train, the Islander Touring Train, and the Old Colony and Newport Railway. In the area where the existing excursion service operates, the track is in Class 1 condition which allows passenger trains to operate at 15 mph. North of the limits of the excursion train, the track is classified as in "excepted condition," which means that the track is not suitable for the operation of trains. The rail line would need significant rehabilitation before service could be restored. Discussions are currently underway to offer intra-island passenger rail services.

Regional rail services are provided by Amtrak with local stops at Providence, West Kingston, and Westerly, and the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) on the Providence/Stoughton Line connecting Providence to Boston. A new station and service to T.F. Green Airport in Warwick started in December of 2010 extending the MBTA line south of Providence. A commuter rail station with a large park and ride garage was added in 2012 with the opening of the Wickford Junction station in North Kingstown.

Ferry Service

A private ferry company provides service to and from Prudence Island on a daily, year-round basis with between 4 and 6 daily round-trips leaving from the Church Street dock in Bristol. A recently constructed dock, ticket house and parking lot provides easy on-off for Prudence Island residents and visitors on the Prudence Island side. Parking in

Bristol is limited with Prudence Island residents and the Town administrations of both Portsmouth and Bristol continuing to work together to develop solutions to the problem.

10.5 TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Traffic circulation and transportation present both challenges and opportunities for Portsmouth. Portsmouth is an automobile-centric community and, given the Town's suburban character, island location and road layout, will likely remain that way for the foreseeable future. Nevertheless, there are local households without access to private vehicles and a portion of the population which may prefer to commute by public transit or by alternative (e.g., walking, biking) means in the future. Portsmouth has an opportunity to enhance transportation options in a way that would better serve its residents but faces the following impediments:

- Many areas around the Town are perceived as generally unsafe for cyclists and pedestrians due to the intensity of vehicular traffic.
- Almost one quarter of the public roads in Portsmouth are under the jurisdiction of RIDOT or the US Navy. Existing intergovernmental coordination needs to be improved.
- Much of the traffic on the north-south routes, which represent the Town's main arteries, is through traffic. Management of the resulting congestion appears to be largely outside of the Town's control.
- Existing signalization and other traffic calming are inadequate for the current needs.
- Bus routes are confined to East and West Main roads, leaving many neighborhoods in Town without convenient access to public transportation.

10.6 THE STATE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (STIP)

The STIP is a list of transportation projects the State of Rhode Island intends to implement using United States Department of Transportation funds. For a transportation project to utilize federal funds it must be included in the STIP. Rhode Island prepares the STIP through a combination of data analysis and outreach efforts to municipalities, public interest groups, and citizens throughout the state.

Federal regulations require that the State Planning Council adopts a new STIP at a minimum of every four years. The STIP must present a four-year program, by year. The STIP must be fiscally constrained, meaning the list of projects in the STIP may not exceed the anticipated funding that is reasonably expected to be available over the four-year timeframe. In order to add projects to the STIP, sufficient revenues must be available. As a result, the STIP is not a wish list but a list of projects with anticipated, but not guaranteed, funding commitments during the timeframe.

Draft – 20191223 - Edits
For Draft Submission to Planning Board

A project's inclusion in the STIP is a critical step, but it does not represent an allocation of funds, obligation to fund, or grant of funds. The following is a list of recent State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) projects in Portsmouth. In 2018, RIDOT published a list of proposed changes to inclusion, budgets and scheduling for state-wide STIP projects, several of which effect projects on this list. While RIDOT almost immediately withdrew the list of proposed changes for further consideration, it is expected new proposed changes are forthcoming, so many of the scheduled dates and even inclusion on this list may change in the near future.

- Repaving Rt. 24 from the Rte. 114 interchange (just north of the Industrial Park) to Hummocks Avenue. Project scheduled for FFY 2018 / 2019.
- Rte. 114, West Main Road – Paving and road improvements on West Main Road from John Kesson Lane in Middletown northward to Mill Lane (north of Stringham Road) in Portsmouth. Project scheduled for FFY 2022 / 2023.
- Rte. 114, West Main Road – Paving and road improvements on West Main Road from the Rte. 114 interchange (just north of the Industrial Park) northward over Lehigh Hill to Turnpike Avenue. Project scheduled for FFY 2023/ 2024 / 2025.
- Sprague Street – Paving and road improvements on Sprague Street from Turnpike Avenue up over the hill to East Main Road. Project scheduled for FFY 2023 / 2024.
- Rt. 138 - East Main Road 1R Improvements - Paving, sidewalks and intersection improvements on East Main Road from Turnpike Avenue north to Boyd's lane. Project scheduled for FFY 2018.
- Rt 138, East Main Road – This is the Town Center Project – Paving, road and intersection improvements (roundabouts) and sidewalks from Hedley Street down the hill to Turnpike Avenue. Project scheduled for FFY 2019 / 2020 / 2021 / 2022 / 2023.
- Rte. 138, East Main Road – Paving and road improvements on East Main Road from Hedley Street southward to the Middletown Town Line. Project scheduled for FFY 2021 / 2022.
- Aquidneck Island Bikeway-Melville Connector. Project scheduled for FFY 2024.
- Mt. Hope Bay Bicycle Improvements – Anthony Road from Boyd's Land eastward to the Mt. Hope Bridge. Project scheduled for FFY 2023.
- Sprague Street Sidewalks – sidewalks on at least one side of Sprague Street from Turnpike Avenue up over the hill past Education Lane down to East Main Road. Project scheduled for FFY 2018.
- Stone Bridge Rehabilitation Study. Project scheduled for FFY 2022.
- East Main Road Shared Use Path – on road bike path and signal improvements from Hedley Street in Portsmouth southward to Enterprise Drive in Middletown. Project scheduled for FFY 2021 / 2022.

10.7 THE AQUIDNECK ISLAND TRANSPORTATION STUDY (2011)

Led by the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission and guided by a Technical Steering Committee made up of traffic engineers and transportation professionals, the Aquidneck Island Transportation Study was a two-year coordinated planning effort of many Island-wide residents, business owners, elected officials, municipal officials and staff, advocacy groups and state and federal agency representatives. The study followed a well-established planning process of evaluating existing conditions, projecting future needs, creating and evaluating a list of projects and policies and finally prioritizing recommendations for the improvement of all modes of transportation on the island.

Final recommendations from the study along with reference to relevant Policies or Implementation Actions within this Transportation Element are as follows:

Policy recommendations include:

- Promote safety as a top priority within all infrastructure projects and target educational activities to current and future travelers to improve safety for all transportation modes (Policy T-1.3);
- Continue to develop land use policies/Zoning Ordinances that support transit-oriented development with housing, retail, and jobs collocated with each other near transit (Policy T-1.2);
- Establish better communication and coordination between state and local agencies during development site plan review (Policy T-2.1);
- Expand the Island-wide bicycle network through bicycle suitability studies for local roads and development of bicycle plans for each municipality to increase the number of roads designated as suitable for bicycles linking key destinations to improve mobility (Policy T-3.1).

Transit Recommendations include:

- Encourage transit-oriented development;
- Provide additional bus service particularly on East and West Main Roads including the reestablishment of Flex Service (Action T-2.2a);
- Maintain the active Newport Secondary Railway Corridor and preserve the corridor as a contiguous right-of-way (Action T-3.1c);
- Enhance the transit experience by providing real-time bus information, providing branded bus shelters and sidewalk/crosswalk enhancements (Actions T2.1g, T2.2d);
- Encourage island employers to institute transit programs for employees;
- Create additional Park & Ride opportunities (Action T2.2c); and,
- Enhance ferry service including consideration of a ferry service between Melville and Newport (Action T-2.2e).

Pedestrian / Bicycle Improvement recommendations include:

- Construct the ten-mile Shoreline Bikeway (Burma Road) Shared Use Path;
- Connect the missing links between “suitable/most suitable” roads for bicycle travel;
- Construct a 6-mile off-road shared use path along East Main Road from Turnpike Avenue to Middletown Hall;
- Construct a 4-mile shared use path along West Main Road from Corys Lane to Green Lane;
- Provide crosswalks with countdown timers at heavily crossed areas.

Roadway Improvement Recommendations:

- Coordinate Island traffic signals along major corridors such as East and West Main Roads (Action T-2.1d);
- Develop a program to maintain traffic signal equipment, collect new traffic volume data and regularly fine-tune timings (Action T-2.1d);
- Reconfigure the Mt. Hope Bridge/Boyd’s Lane/Bristol Ferry Road intersection (Action T-2.1d);
- Implement sight distance improvements at the Linden Lane East Main Road intersection (Action T-2.1d);
- Realign Corys Lane with Hedley Street to eliminate one traffic signal, widen to provide left turn lanes (Action T-2.1d);
- Construct new Burma Road connections at the north and south ends (Action T-2.1e);
- Construct the traffic improvement project in Portsmouth locally known as the Town Center Project (Action T-2.1f).

10.8 GOALS, POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

GOAL T - 1

Deliver a cost-effective network of town-owned and maintained roadways that allows for the safe and efficient circulation of vehicular traffic throughout the Town.

Policy T - 1.1

Ensure the community has a safe and well-maintained street and roadway network with high standards for roadway design and a program of continuous improvement in roadway safety and capacity.

Action T - 1.1a – Provide a safe town-owned roadway network through maintenance of infrastructure, consistent road surface conditions, and plowing and sanding of roads during and after winter storms.

Action T - 1.1b – Establish and maintain well-defined crosswalk pavement markings and enforce regulations for motorists to STOP for pedestrians in crosswalks on all town roads.

Action T - 1.1c – Institute a Pavement Management Program and continue to fund annual paving budgets in order to maintain an average Road Surface Rating (RSR) of 72.

Action T - 1.1d – Adopt a Mapped Streets Ordinance to establish ownership and roadway maintenance jurisdiction for all roads in Portsmouth.

~~Action T - 1.1e – Review traffic control device (e.g. stop signs, traffic calming devices, and pavement markings) placement and design policies to determine whether the town is in compliance with state and federal standards.~~

Action T - 1.1f – Continuously evaluate road salt and sand operations to minimize damage to the environment.

Action T - 1.1g – Undertake a program of roadway / drainage redesign and construction in critical areas of Portsmouth, particularly areas subject to storm water contamination, coastal flooding, and potential sea level rise.

Action T - 1.1h – In coordination with our fellow island municipalities and RIDOT, implement the recommendations of the Aquidneck Island Transportation Study where feasible and appropriate.

Policy T - 1.2

Advance land use regulations that improve vehicular traffic circulation, promote transportation safety and encourage alternative transportation options.

Action T - 1.2a – Review and update all Zoning Ordinance, Land Use and Subdivision regulations and Design Review Guidelines having to do with roadway design for procedural and regulatory consistency.

~~Action T - 1.2b – Amend Land Development & Subdivision regulations to require developers to cover the costs of a traffic study for projects that require more than 20 off-street parking spaces. (Vehicle trips rather than parking spaces?)~~

Action T - 1.2c – Review and if necessary, update the Traffic Sensitive Overlay District provisions in the Portsmouth Zoning Ordinance.

~~Action T - 1.2d – Inventory all intersections and vehicle access points on town-owned roads for compliance with clear view setback requirements in the zoning ordinance and land development regulations.~~

Action T - 1.2e – Amend Land Development & Subdivision regulations to prohibit new residential subdivisions having access off substandard private rights-of-way.

Action T - 1.2f – Amend Land Development & Subdivision regulations to require dual emergency access to all new residential subdivisions where feasible and to require the extension of all proposed dead-end streets to connect with existing streets where feasible.

~~Action T – 1.2g – Amend Land Development & Subdivision regulations to require sidewalks in all new residential subdivisions requiring the construction of or extension of a street, unless infeasibility can be demonstrated.~~

Policy T- 1.3

Declare public safety to be the top priority in all matters having to do with transportation and circulation in Portsmouth.

~~Action T – 1.3a – Identify town road intersections and other areas with high vehicular accident frequency and consider design changes or improvements to mitigate and improve safety.~~

~~Action T - 1.3b – Establish and maintain additional well-defined crosswalk pavement markings as need is demonstrated and enforce regulations for motorists to STOP for pedestrians in crosswalks on all town roadways.~~

~~Action T – 1.3c – Work with RIDOT to improve pedestrian safety with special emphasis on crosswalks and pedestrian controlled traffic lights and lighting on all state roads in Portsmouth.~~

~~Action T – 1.3d – Collaborate with the State Police and RIDOT to implement an educational program in high schools to improve safety on both state highways and town-owned roadways.~~

GOAL T - 2

Reach a high level of coordination and cooperation with RIDOT to improve the safety and efficiency of regional and local traffic circulation on State-owned roads within the borders of Portsmouth.

Policy T-2.1

Maintain a policy of coordination with RIDOT during all phases of planning, design, construction and maintenance on state transportation projects within the community.

~~Action T – 2.1a – Participate as an active partner in the development of the State’s Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for projects of local and regional significance.~~

~~Action T – 2.1b – Work with RIDOT to accelerate major road maintenance and improvement programs within Portsmouth, particularly the north-south through traffic routes of East and West Main Roads.~~

~~Action T – 2.1c – Establish better communication and coordination between RIDOT and the Town Planning Department during development site plan reviews and RIDOT physical alteration permitting processes.~~

~~Action T – 2.1d – Collaborate with RIDOT in the design of left-turn lanes, road diets and other traffic calming and safety measures on all state-owned principal and minor arterial roadways in Portsmouth.~~

Action T – 2.1e – Work with partners to consider enhancements to Defense Highway (Burma Road) to create as a viable alternative to East Main and West Main Roads north-south traffic flows.

Action T – 2.1f – Work closely with RIDOT and its design engineers on the redesign and construction of the Town Center traffic improvement project (East Main Road from Hedley Street to Turnpike Avenue).

Action T – 2.1g – Collaborate with RIDOT to prioritize enhanced roadway conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists in future transportation projects.

~~Action T – 2.1h – Provide recommendations to RIDOT regarding signage that will help to maintain adequate traffic flows through commercial areas in Portsmouth so as to support local economic activity.~~

Action T – 2.1i – Participate in all regional transportation planning efforts, including efforts by Statewide Planning, AIPC, RIDOT, RIPTA, RIBTA and others.

Policy T-2.2

Support the expansion of all aspects of state and local public transportation systems.

Action T – 2.2a – Pursue RIPTA to reinstate and promote its FLEX bus program of regularly scheduled local service in Portsmouth and the immediate surrounding area.

Action T – 2.2b – Investigate the feasibility of establishing a local bus/trolley system for underserved areas of town and populations.

Action T – 2.2c – Work with RIPTA and RIDOT to create and promote additional park-and-ride facilities in Portsmouth as need arises.

Action T – 2.2d – Work with RIPTA to install aesthetically compatible bus shelters at selected high usage locations in Portsmouth.

~~Action T – 2.2e – Participate with state and regional partners to establish regular ferry service with stops at selected locations in Portsmouth.~~

GOAL T - 3

Achieve a well-balanced multi-modal transportation system that reduces automobile dependency and is appropriately designed to produce safe and accessible facilities for all residents.

Policy T - 3.1

Encourage the use of alternate modes of travel.

Action T – 3.1a – Create a Town-wide pedestrian and bicycle Circulation Plan to serve as a basis for all multi-modal transportation system planning decisions.

~~Action T – 3.1b – Identify existing town-owned paper streets and assess their potential as pedestrian walkways and/or bicycle paths.~~

Action T – 3.1c – Work with state and regional partners to preserve the Newport Secondary railroad right-of-way for future public use.

Action T – 3.1d – Work with the RIDOT to prioritize improvements to existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities and to include such facilities as part of any upgrade to state-owned roads in Portsmouth.

Action T – 3.1e – Develop a program to establish a network of safe walking paths and/or sidewalks on all collector roads within 1-1/2 miles of the High School, 1 mile of the Middle School and one half mile of the elementary schools.

Action T – 3.1f – Work with RIDOT to provide sidewalks or a multi-mode path and crosswalks on East and West Main Roads where appropriate and feasible, with special attention to public transit stops.

Policy T-3.2

Ensure that reliable ferry service exists to and from Prudence Island on a year-round basis and seek ways to reestablish ferry service to Hog Island on a limited basis.

Action T – 3.2a – Work with the current ferry service provider and Prudence Island residents to address ridership concerns as they arise.

~~Action T – 3.2b – Investigate potential sites for a Prudence ferry landing on Aquidneck Island (Portsmouth).~~

Action T – 3.2c – Work with the Town of Bristol to ensure continued long-term access to Prudence Island ferry terminal facilities.

~~Action T – 3.2d – Work with our state and municipal partners to implement ferry service between Melville and Newport if it is determined to be economically viable.~~