



Providence Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Jorge O. Elorza, Mayor

Staff Report: Capital Improvement Program Contracts 2 & 3 Conceptual Review – Hope, Mount Hope, Blackstone, Wayland, College Hill, Fox Point, Downtown, Federal Hill, West End – Wards 1, 2, 3, 8, 11, 13 (For Action)

Presented at March 28, 2018 BPAC meeting

Project Background

The City of Providence Department of Public Works seeks comments from the BPAC regarding the conceptual plans for Contracts 2 & 3 of the City’s Capital Improvement Program. Contracts 2 & 3 include portions of Benefit St, Blackstone Blvd, Bonanza Way, Carrington Ave, Cypress St, Hope St, Hopkins St, Memorial Blvd, Pitman St, Rochambeau Ave, Steeple St, Waterman St, Wayland Ave, Almy St, Barker St, Barton St, Bell St, Chestnut St, Courtland St, Cromwell St, Daboll St, Federal St, Kenwood St, Linwood St, Mawney St, Messer St, Myrtle St, Oak St, Parsonage St, Peace St, Richmond St, Snow St, South St, Sycamore St, Tobey St, Waverly St, Westfield St, Wilson St, Wood St.

Streets were selected by Public Works with consideration of functional classification, pavement quality, planned utility, State and City projects and geographic equity. Curb work is limited to installing wheelchair ramps where they are currently missing or non-compliant. All other curb alterations are outside of the scope of the repaving work. The schedule for the work is accelerated, and consequently improvements that require further study before implementation may not be feasible to integrate.

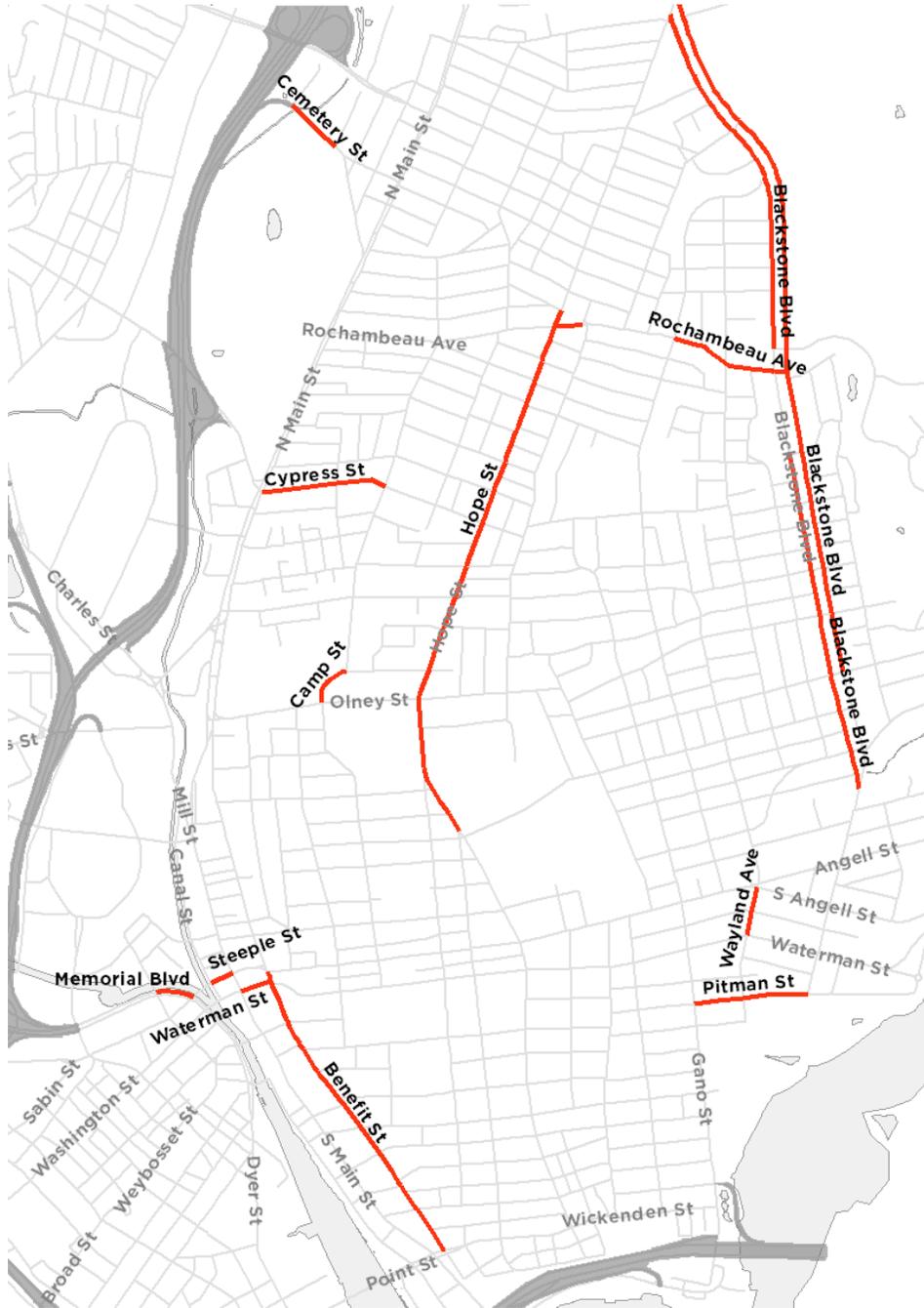
Road resurfacing projects are a very cost-effective time to integrate bicycle facilities, as restriping is already planned. In these situations, there is a minor additional cost to restripe with bike facilities (with associated signage) compared to replacing the striping in-kind, presuming there is adequate space in the roadway.

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Project Map

Contract 2





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Staff recommendations

For all projects that contain or abut arterials or collectors, restriping should incorporate crosswalks painted in the continental style, with 2 ft wide stripes and 2 ft wide gaps. This style of crosswalk should be adopted as the citywide standard.

Where appropriate and within project boundaries at crosswalk locations, lanes of arterials and collectors should be narrowed to 1 ft narrower than their regular width, with extra space being devoted to bulb-outs of striped side-lines. While granite curb extensions are outside the budget of this project, this measure will decrease vehicular speeds, reduce pedestrian crossing distances, and make crosswalks more visible.

Bike infrastructure recommendations focus on a subset of streets on the repaving list:

- Blackstone Blvd
 - Relevance to city's bike network: Blackstone Blvd is one of the city's highest-visibility existing bike lanes, but it is not an all-ages-and-abilities facility.
 - Blackstone Blvd should be restriped on both the northbound and southbound sides with the bike lane on the left and parking on the right. The bike lane should be 6 ft wide, with excess space between curbs allocated to a buffer between the vehicular travel lanes and the bike lane.



- If feasible within the budget of the Capital Improvement Program, the buffer space between the bike lane and the vehicular travel lane should be depaved to provide greater separation and greater stormwater capture potential.
 - At side street crossings, bike lane extensions should be striped with the “green ladder” treatment to make the bike lane more visible.
- Hope St
 - Relevance to city's bike network: at a September 2017 community meeting, Hope Street was identified as one of the highest neighborhood priorities for improved bike infrastructure. While the commercial district north of Rochambeau Ave and the area

P

Providence Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Jorge O. Elorza, Mayor

around Brown University are more constrained in terms of width and parking demand, the area in between is the focus of this project and is less constrained.

- For the section of Hope St within the scope of the Capital Improvement Program, between Lloyd Ave and Rochambeau Ave, the space between curb faces should be restriped to incorporate two vehicular travel lanes of 11 ft each, one parking lane of 7 ft, and a two-way separated bike lane on the west (southbound) side of the street.



- Chestnut St & Richmond St
 - Relevance to the city's bike network: BPAC has discussed bike routes through the 195 district at previous meetings but has not made formal recommendations. These two routes would connect to bike infrastructure on Empire Street proposed by BPAC in June 2016 and being studied in 2018, which would then also connect to the Fountain Street and Broadway existing bike lanes. Chestnut and Richmond streets could also connect to the existing bike lanes on Allens Ave and those discussed at the May 2017 BPAC meeting connected to the Downtown Transit Connector.
 - Public Works should resurface Chestnut St and Richmond St and then delay restriping until the Complete Streets project to analyze alternatives for these streets incorporating bicycle infrastructure is complete.
- Waterman St
 - Relevance to the city's bike network: Waterman St is another neighborhood and citywide priority for improved bike infrastructure, potentially as a one-way pair with Angell St. BPAC has not discussed this specific block before, but the eastern terminus of Waterman St was discussed in May 2016.

P

Providence Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Jorge O. Elorza, Mayor

- For the section of Waterman St within the scope of the Capital Improvement Program, between North Main St and Benefit St, the space between curb faces should be modified slightly from existing conditions to widen to 6' and add bike lane markings to the right-hand buffer. This configuration is also possible with in-kind replacement of existing striping with the addition of bike lane markings in the right-hand shoulder.



- Special attention should be paid to the design of the intersection of Waterman St with Benefit St, and to the safety of bicyclists in the new bike lane.
- Steeple St
 - Relevance to the city's bike network: Steeple St is an extension of Angell St and Exchange Ter, both of which have plans in some stage of development for bike infrastructure. BPAC briefly discussed the discomfort of biking on this block of Steeple St at its February 2017 discussion about Canal St.

P

Providence Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Jorge O. Elorza, Mayor

- For the section of Steeple St within the scope of the Capital Improvement Program, between Benefit St and Canal St, the space between curb faces should be reallocated to include two 10 ft vehicular travel lanes and one 6 ft bike lane.

Existing



Proposed



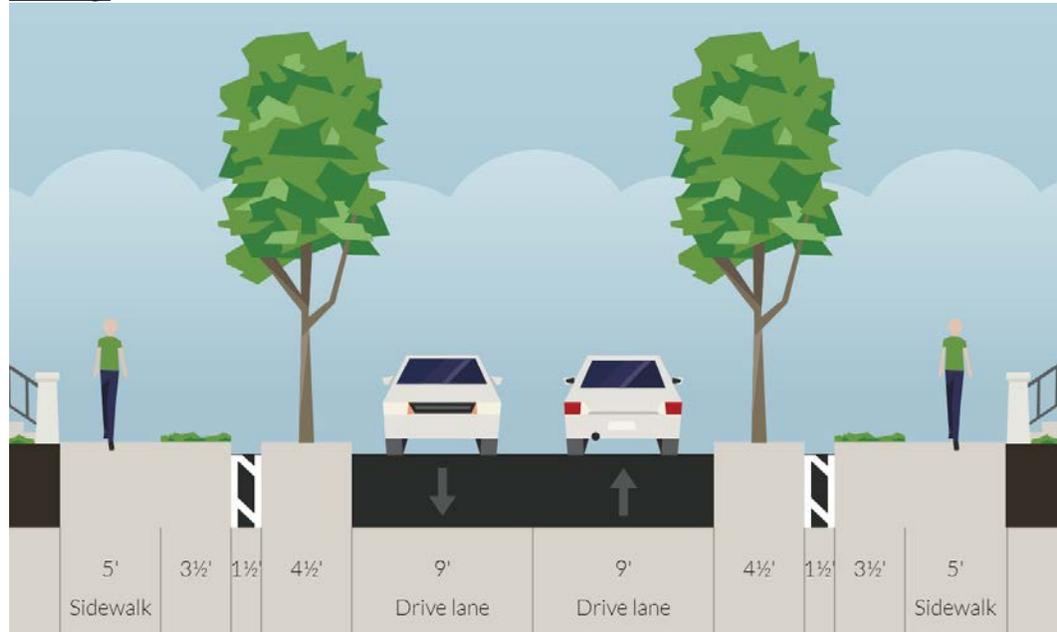
- Messer St
 - Relevance to the city's bike network: Overlapping partially with the East Coast Greenway, Messer St is a common bike route connecting Olneyville and Federal Hill to the West End and Elmwood neighborhoods.
 - Capital Improvement Program work on Messer Street should retain the existing floating tree planters, and supplement their traffic-calming effect with the addition of a double-yellow centerline, to improve safety for both pedestrians and bicyclists. The planters are not on their own succeeding at keeping speeds low. A centerline will provide visual narrowing for motorists even when oncoming traffic is not present.

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Providence Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Jorge O. Elorza, Mayor

Existing:



- If some or all tree plants are removed from Messer Street, vehicular travel should be reduced to one lane northbound (away from the fire station), with a two-way separated bike on the street's west side and on-street parking on its right. If planters are removed and two-way vehicular traffic is retained along with one parking lane, there would be no room for all-ages-and-abilities bicycle infrastructure and vehicular travel speeds would be too high to justify a shared-street configuration.

One-way Alternative with Separated Bike Lane



- On each cross street of Messer Street, continental-style crosswalks with 2 ft stripes and 2 ft gaps should be striped across each branch of every cross street.
- Benefit St

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Providence Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

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- Relevance to the city's bike network: In BPAC's multiple reviews of the now complete Olney St bike lanes, as well as BPAC's identification as N Main St as a priority corridor for bike improvements, Benefit St has been mentioned as an alternative to busier parallel streets, and one that could connect bicyclists safely to and from the Olney St bike lanes.
- Benefit Street should be designated a neighborhood bikeway by means of signage, pavement markings, and other traffic calming measures. On neighborhood bikeways, bicycle traffic has priority while sharing the street with low-speed and low-volume vehicular traffic. Shared-lane markings should be added to the street as part of the Capital Improvement Program work, preferably with a square of green paint behind them as pictured below:



Respectfully submitted by Alex Ellis.