Staff Report: North Main Street intersection with Doyle Ave – Mount Hope – Ward 3 (For Action)
Presented at August 21, 2019 BPAC meeting

Project Background
The City of Providence Department of Planning and Development seeks comments from the BPAC regarding 90% plans from RIDOT for work at the intersection of North Main Street and Doyle Ave. This will be a design level review of the project and will be the second of two reviews before the Commission. The RIDOT plans are attached to this document.

These two intersections are both among the 20 locations in the city with the most pedestrian collisions since 2009. North Main St as a whole is one of the 20 highest-crash corridors for both bicycling and walking.

At the March 2019 meeting of the Commission, a number of recommendations were made related to general bicycle and pedestrian safety concerns on this section of North Main Street. Some of these recommendations have been included in the design plans currently under review:

1. The crossing of North Main St at the southern edge of the project limits should be realigned to the south side of the median cut-thru. The current configuration puts pedestrians crossing the northbound direction of vehicular traffic in conflict with low-visibility turning movements from the cut-thru as well as from the shopping plaza parking lot, and recently a pedestrian was seriously injured because of this. Aligning on the southern side of the cut-thru would eliminate the conflicts with turning traffic. **INCLUDED**

2. The curb radius at the southeast corner of Doyle Ave & North Main St should be reduced. **NOT INCLUDED**

3. The walkway across the median at the southern end of the project limits should be widened to 10 feet. **NOT INCLUDED**

4. The crossing distance at the intersection of Hewes St & North Main St should be reduced by narrowing the opening of Hewes St and making it perpendicular to North Main St. If this preferred approach is not feasible, a pedestrian refuge island should be added in the middle of the existing crosswalk. **INCLUDED**

5. Improvements should be added to median pedestrian space on North Main St, especially on the north side of Randall St, to make the space more comfortable for pedestrians, potentially including benches, sculpture, or shrubbery. **NOT INCLUDED**

6. The number and width of northbound vehicular travel lanes on North Main St should be reduced to further decrease crossing distances for pedestrians, and extra space should be used
to install protected bicycle lanes. The same should be considered for the southbound direction, as well as potentially removing on-street parking to achieve these safety goals. NOT INCLUDED

7. The State and City should consider working with the owner of the University Heights shopping plaza to add pedestrian access from the crosswalk across North Main from Randall St, utilizing stairs and/or an ADA switchback ramp. NOT INCLUDED

8. The Randall St approach to North Main St should be reconfigured to align all vehicular traffic through the middle opening. NOT INCLUDED

9. The northbound right-turn lane on North Main Street approaching Doyle Ave should be shortened significantly. NOT INCLUDED

Project Map (see right)

Staff Recommendations

- Recommendations above that were not incorporated into these plans should still be considered by RIDOT, especially those numbered 3, 5, and 9, which could potentially still be incorporated without significant delay at this stage of design.

Respectfully submitted by Alex Ellis.