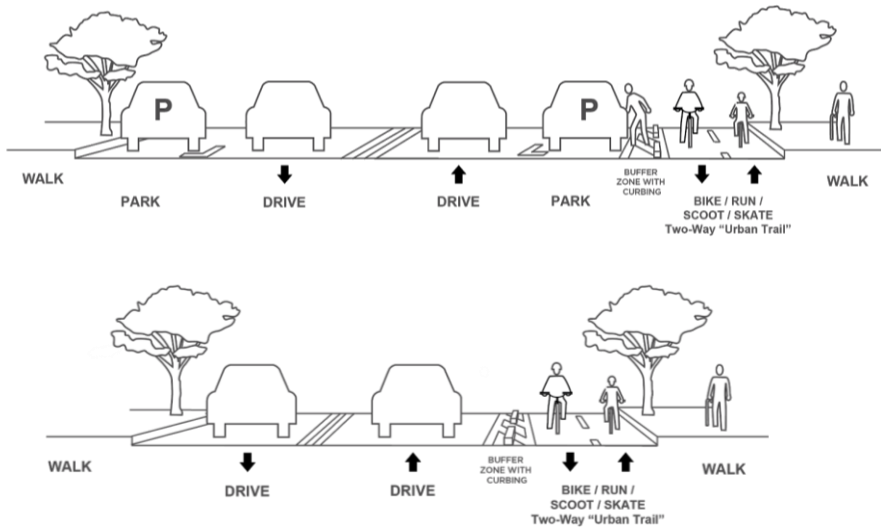




MAYOR JORGE O. ELORZA
CITY OF PROVIDENCE

Improvements are coming to Chestnut and Empire streets (between Fountain and Clifford) to make it safer for people walking and riding bicycles.

A public information session has been scheduled for Tuesday, February 25th, 2020 from 6:00 to 7:30 PM at 444 Westminster Street where community members can ask questions and learn more about this important investment. You can also learn more below or by contacting Alex Ellis in the City of Providence Department of Planning and Development at 401-680-8400 or aellis@providenceri.gov.



Proposed Empire Street layout (Fountain to Broad):

One car lane each direction; keep on-street parking on both sides of the street; urban trail on southwest side

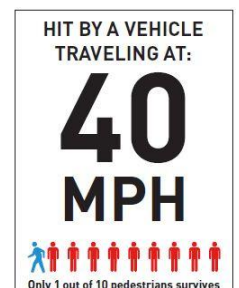
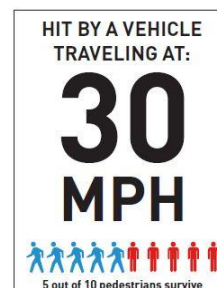
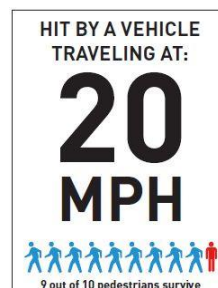
Proposed Chestnut Street layout (Broad to Clifford):

One car lane each direction; no on-street parking; urban trail on southwest side (between Weybosset and Pine, the street will remain one-way for cars as it is today)

What changes will there be? Activities will include a new two-way bike lane as part of the City's **urban trail network*** on the southwest side of Empire and Chestnut streets between Fountain and Clifford streets to connect the new City Walk improvements on Clifford Street to the Broadway and Fountain Street bike lanes. **No changes are proposed on Chestnut Street south of Clifford Street.** Safety improvements for people walking will be made to the intersection of Chestnut and Pine streets. On Empire Street, the bus stops near Westminster Street will be improved with a bus island, curb extension, and shorter crosswalk. (*See definitions on the next page for more information.)

What is the construction schedule for this project? Construction is expected to begin in Summer 2020 and last through Fall 2020. Temporary construction signage and traffic controls will be in place during the construction period. More details will be available closer to construction.

How will this project reduce speeding and improve safety for people walking? Slowing cars down and improving safety are important parts of this investment. **Just in the past 3 years, this short stretch of Empire and Chestnut streets has seen 99 crashes, 2 of which caused injuries.** Improvements to the traffic lights at Washington, Westminster, Weybosset, and Pine streets, shorter crosswalk



distances, dedicated space for people riding bicycles, and narrower vehicular travel lanes will improve safety for people walking and slow cars down.

What is the Providence Urban Trail Network? How will this segment fit into the larger citywide network?

This project is part of Providence's Urban Trail Network, which will connect every neighborhood with high-quality places for people walking, running, riding bicycles, or using other micromobility choices, like scooters. This project will improve connectivity between the new City Walk improvements on Clifford Street (which connect to the East Bay Bike Path and Blackstone River Bikeway) and the Broadway and Fountain Street bike lanes (which will connect Kennedy Plaza to Olneyville and the Woonasquatucket River Greenway). **Urban Trails** are on- or off-street paths that are safe, comfortable, and easily accessible for people of all ages and abilities. In total, the Urban Trail Network includes 67 miles of new projects (43 miles of off-road paths and separated on-road Urban Trails, and 24 miles neighborhood greenways). The Urban Trail Network is an important part of Providence's **Great Streets Master Plan**, which includes improvements to make walking and riding bicycles safer and traffic calming improvements to reduce speeding and cut through traffic. The Great Streets Master Plan was shaped by community input gathered at public meetings held in Spring 2019 and from hundreds of comments received online via the project website. **Learn more at www.providenceri.gov/planning/great-streets/.**

What about parking? In total, this project will **increase on-street parking by approximately 45 spaces.**

Approximately 32 on-street parking spaces are proposed to be removed on Chestnut Street between Broad and Clifford streets. **No changes are proposed on Chestnut Street south of Clifford Street.** To offset that impact to public parking, this project will add approximately 6 new on-street parking spaces on Empire Street near Washington Street, 15 spaces on Claverick Street, and 55 spaces on Friendship Street.

Can I park or drive in the bike lanes or urban trail? Please do not park or drive vehicles in bike lanes. Doing so will endanger people and result in a ticket. Rideshare and delivery drivers are not allowed to park or stop in bike lanes.

What should I do if I see a car or truck parked in a bike lane? Call the police non-emergency line at 401-272-3121 and be as specific as possible about the exact location of the vehicle.

Why are both bike lanes planned for the same side of the road? Two-way bike lanes/urban trails allow people to ride bicycles (or scoot, skate, or run) in both directions on one side of the road and are more comfortable for people of all ages and abilities as they are more like off-road trails like the East Bay Bicycle Path. Because of the volume of people driving cars on this street, a physically-separated two-way facility is the appropriate way to create a safe and comfortable experience for people using the urban trail. The standard width of a two-way bicycle facility (or urban trail) is 8 to 12 feet wide. This width also allows space for snow plows and street sweepers. When next to vehicular traffic or parked cars, a "buffer" zone is installed with bollards, curbing, planters, or flexible posts to protect people using the trail from cars and provide space for snow in winter. **Two-way bike lanes like this are common in dozens of European cities and have become a standard in many US cities in recent years** including Austin, New Orleans, Cambridge, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Indianapolis, Seattle, New York City, and Washington DC.

Can't bikes and scooters just ride on the sidewalk or in the regular road? Although it is legal to ride bicycles and scooters on sidewalks and with the regular flow of traffic on streets in Providence, the safest and most comfortable way for people to ride bicycles or scooters is within their own dedicated space on the roadway. This makes our streets and sidewalks **safer and more predictable** for people walking and driving too. Protected bicycle lanes and separated urban trails physically protect people using the trail from cars and prevent people from driving or parking vehicles in the bicycle lane or urban trail. Physical protection is located within the striped "buffer zone" between the urban trail and vehicular travel or parking lane and may include flexible delineator posts, rubber or pre-cast concrete curbing, planters, bollards, cast in place concrete curbing, or landscaping.

Why build this if not many people ride bicycles there today? 60% of Providence residents would ride bicycles more often if there were physically-separated lanes for bicycles. Similarly to how difficult it would be to justify the need for a bridge by the number of people swimming across a river, the need for the urban trail network or bicycle

lanes cannot be measured by the number of people riding bicycles on a roadway. Without a network of urban trail investments like this, many people don't feel safe enough to ride on the street. Studies from other cities prove that ***protected bike lanes increase ridership because they improve safety and allow people of all ages and abilities to choose riding a bike.***

Are people running or riding scooters allowed to use the urban trail? We welcome people who run or ride scooters, skateboards, or bicycles to use the Urban Trail Network.

How is this project funded? Construction of this project is funded by the City of Providence's Capital Improvement Program.

If you would like to learn more, ask questions, or make suggestions for other improvements, please contact Alex Ellis, Principal Planner in the City of Providence Department of Planning and Development at 401-680-8400 or aellis@providenceri.gov.