



Providence Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Jorge O. Elorza, Mayor

Staff Report: Capital Improvement Program Contract 1 Conceptual Review – Mount Pleasant, Elmhurst, Wanskuck, Charles – Wards 4, 5, 12, 14 (For Action)

Presented at March 22, 2018 BPAC meeting

Project Background

The City of Providence Department of Public Works seeks comments from the BPAC regarding the conceptual plans for Contract 1 of the City’s Capital Improvement Program. Contract 1 includes portions of Chad Brown St, Charles St, Chatham St, Danforth St, De Pinedo St, Douglas Ave, Eaton St, Gentian Ave, Gillen St, Home Ave, Oakland Ave, Oregon St, Orms St, Rialto St, Salter St, Santomarco Dr, Veazie St, and Whitford Ave.

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





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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:

- Eaton Street
 - Eaton St between Douglas Ave and Wyndham St should be restriped to fit two 10 ft travel lanes and two 5 ft bike lanes against the curb, each separated by a 2 ft buffer as pictured below.

Current:



Proposed:



Between Wyndham St and River Ave, a similar configuration should be restriped, but due to the narrower width, the buffers should be omitted (5 ft bike lane, 10 ft travel lane, 10 ft travel lane, 5 ft bike lane).

- Intersection of Orms Street and Charles Street

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- As one of the top 20 intersections in the city for crashes involving bicyclists, special attention should be paid to bicycle safety at this intersection.
- The scope of work should be expanded to include Charles Street south of Orms Street for 100-200 ft and this area should be restriped to eliminate one vehicular travel lane and install separated bike lanes on each side, as pictured below:



- Charles Street between Orms St and the northern end of 125 Charles St should be restriped to eliminate one vehicular travel lane and install separated bike lanes on each side. In addition, the southbound-to-westbound slip lane should be narrowed, with a separated bike lane on its right-hand side, as pictured below:



- Orms St from Charles St to 100 ft to the west (the project boundaries for Capital Improvement Program work) should be restriped to eliminate one vehicular travel lane and install separated bike lanes on each side, as pictured below:



The above recommendation regarding the intersection of Orms St & Charles St may be unfeasible for inclusion in the Capital Improvement Program due to the Rhode Island

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Department of Transportation owning the traffic signals at the intersection and requiring consultation, not to mention the elimination of a lane potentially triggering a traffic study, both of which are precluded by the program's accelerated timeframe. Road diets of this type need not always require costly and months-long traffic studies to be implemented, and the City is working to develop more agile project delivery processes. In this case, though, the Commission should understand that the above recommendation faces these challenges.

- Whitford Avenue
 - Whitford Ave between Mt Pleasant Ave and Home St 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.