



Providence Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Jorge O. Elorza, Mayor

Staff Report: Mount Pleasant Avenue traffic calming – Mount Pleasant – Ward 5 (For Action)

Presented at March 20, 2019 BPAC meeting

Project Background

The City of Providence Department of Planning and Development seeks comments from the BPAC regarding conceptual plans from the Rhode Island Department of Transportation for a traffic calming project on Mount Pleasant Ave. This will be a conceptual level review of the project and will be the first of two reviews before the Commission.

“Mount Pleasant Avenue included in this project extends between Smith Street and Chalkstone Avenue. It is a two lane urban road servicing a high school (Mouth Pleasant) and college (RI College). The intent of the project is to improve safety through traffic calming measures (lane width reductions, bump outs, raised crosswalks, active warning signs, etc). This is a high public visibility project due to recent ‘safety enforcement measures’ implemented by the city including Speed Cameras. As a result of the recent city measures, this task will be advanced to a 30% stage to allow proper coordination with the community and stakeholder along the road prior to advancing to construction drawings.”

The intersection of Mt Pleasant Ave with Chalkstone Ave is one of the 20 intersections in the city with the highest number of pedestrian collisions. The northern portions of Mt Pleasant are related to concerns in the neighborhood to its east (especially Cathedral Ave) about cut-through traffic.

This section of Mt Pleasant Ave is 40 ft between curbs, typically with 4 ft sidewalks separated from vehicular traffic by a 4 ft grassy buffer.

Project Map (see right)



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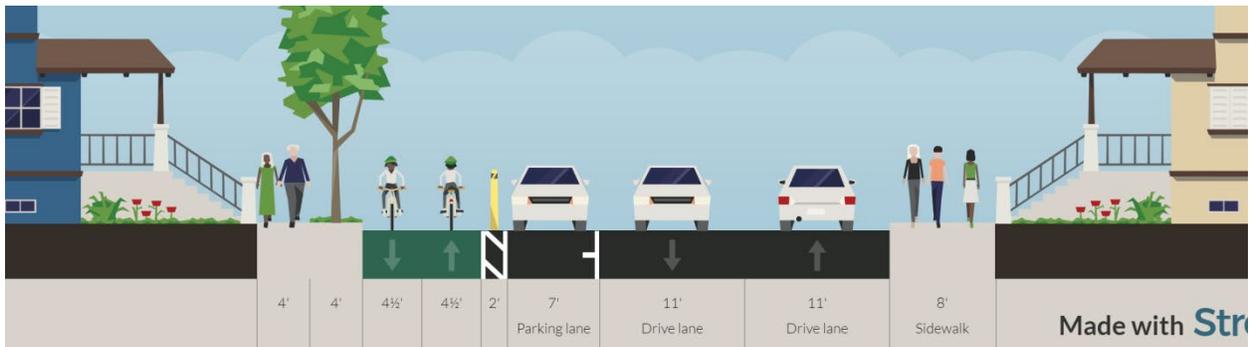
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Cross sections of Mount Pleasant Ave

Current:



Possible:

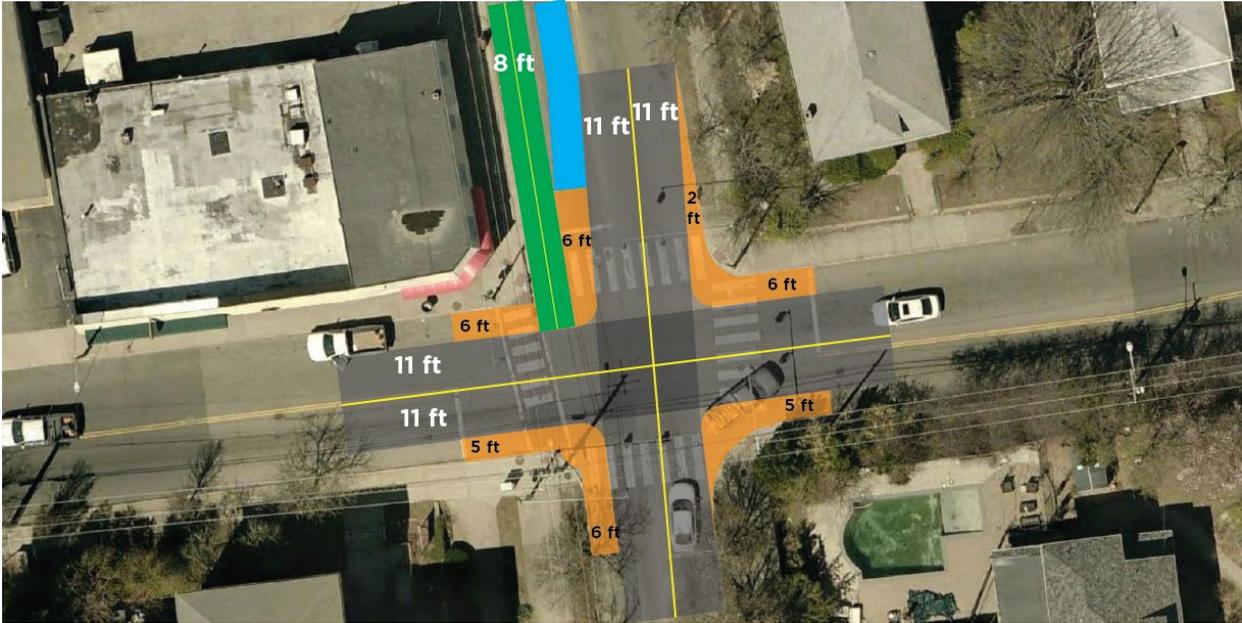


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Intersection possibilities

Mt Pleasant Ave & Chalkstone Ave



Mt Pleasant Ave & College Rd:





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Staff Recommendations

- Mt Pleasant Ave should be narrowed to two 11 ft vehicular travel lanes and one 7 ft parking lane on the west side of the travel lanes. The remaining space between curbs should be allocated to a two-way urban trail on the west side of the street, separated from the parking lane by a precast curb buffer.
- Within 20 ft of each intersection on Mt Pleasant Ave between Chalkstone Ave and Smith St, as well as at existing mid-block crosswalks, the parking lane should be replaced by a pedestrian refuge island, to improve corner sight-lines, allow crossing pedestrians a place to wait between the urban trail and vehicular travel lanes, and to narrow the crossing distance. It is especially important at these points that travel lanes be kept as narrow as possible, which on a bus route such as Mt Pleasant Ave is 11 ft.
- Crosswalks across Mt Pleasant Ave should especially be added at the intersection with Bolton Ave.
- At the intersection with Cathedral Ave, the neighborhood's request to close the entrance of Cathedral Ave at Mt Pleasant Ave should be taken into account in a way that clarifies that something different is happening at the intersection from what people may be used to, but does not make the experiment difficult to reverse if it is unsuccessful. Options could include a raised crosswalk across the mouth of Cathedral Ave, upon which planters could be placed.
- The urban trail should be set up to continue west when it reaches College Rd, toward Rhode Island College, as pictured in the intersection concept above. The trail should eventually be continued to the main portion of RIC's campus off the road if possible.

Respectfully submitted by Alex Ellis.