



Providence Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Jorge O. Elorza, Mayor

Staff Report: North Main Street intersection with Doyle Ave – Mount Hope – Ward 3 (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 RIDOT for work at the intersection of North Main Street and Doyle Ave. This will be a conceptual level review of the project and will be the first of two reviews before the Commission.

“There are two intersections included as part of this task encompassing an 800 foot section of North Main Street between Doyle Avenue and a median cut-thru immediately south of Hewes Street. Improvements include curbing and sidewalk modifications to reduce pedestrian crossing distances and better control traffic flow through the junctions. The median cut-thru will be revised to limit it to one-way (southbound to northbound) U-turn movements. Installation of advance warning signs and RRFB's at the crosswalks, Pedestrian Countdown Timers, installation of Accessible Pedestrian Signals and ADA compliant wheelchair ramps will be completed as part of the safety improvements at this junction.”

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.

Project Map (see right)





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Staff Recommendations

- The crossing of N 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.
- The curb radius at the southeast corner of Doyle Ave & N Main St should be reduced.
- The walkway across the median at the southern end of the project limits should be widened to 10 feet.
- The crossing distance at the intersection of Hewes St & N Main St should be reduced by narrowing the opening of Hewes St and making it perpendicular to N Main St. If this preferred approach is not feasible, a pedestrian refuge island should be added in the middle of the existing crosswalk.
- Improvements should be added to median pedestrian space on N Main St, especially on the north side of Randall St, to make the space more comfortable for pedestrians, potentially including benches, sculpture, or shrubbery.
- 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.
- The State and City should consider working with the owner of the University Heights shopping plaza to add pedestrian access from the crosswalk across N Main from Randall St, utilizing stairs and/or an ADA switchback ramp.
- The Randall St approach to N Main St should be reconfigured to align all vehicular traffic through the middle opening.

Respectfully submitted by Alex Ellis.