

Introduction to the Circulation Element

The Circulation Element is instrumental in achieving several Comprehensive Plan goals:

- Access is needed to utilize land;
- Good circulation is needed to ease mobility and improve safety;
- Good access and circulation result in flexible land use options and improved quality of life.

However, given all the options to improve access and circulation and with limited funds, the challenge for the City is to decide where and how transportation dollars are best invested.

Key Challenges

The City is faced with some critical issues, regarding City streets and highways. The options to address these issues can be framed in a series of questions:

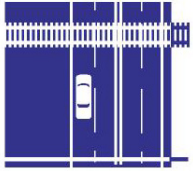
- Should traffic calming measures be installed on residential streets used for “cut-through” traffic?
- If smart growth, mixed use zoning is adopted, should off street parking requirements be modified in the districts to encourage the use of mass transit?
- Would a new commuter rail or transit/shuttle station in the AMTRAK Corridor improve conditions in Cranston?

- Can cross-city (i.e., east-west) traffic congestion be alleviated?
- Could RIPTA bus service expand to reduce traffic, and would people take it if available?
- How do we best manage the conflicts between pedestrian and vehicular traffic and what areas should pedestrian traffic be a priority? Do Cranston’s roads provide adequate and safe access?

Key Strategies

To maintain efficient circulation and improve safety as the City grows:

- Make It Safe - Reduce accidents with reconstruction, signs, lights, enforcement and other actions;
- Make It Safer - Install traffic calming in residential neighborhoods;
- Reduce Traffic - Promote use of alternate modes of transportation rather than driving;
- Improve Safety and Efficiency - Redesign arterial roads as transportation corridors and improve their safety and efficiency.



Part I. Summary and Accomplishments of the 1992 Plan

Introduction

The Circulation element of the 1992 Comprehensive Plan focused on identifying general traffic operations and specific problem and development issues. Recommendations mainly revolved around traffic congestion on east/west arterials, increase in traffic accidents, through traffic in residential neighborhoods, alternative transportation modes, proliferation of curb cuts on arterial routes, inadequacy and overspill of parking, and the western Cranston roadway network.

1992 Circulation Conditions

Cranston's major travel network orientation is north-south, dominated by I-95 and I-295. Despite the presence of Interstate highways, north-south arterial roadways, particularly Pontiac and Reservoir Avenues, become severely congested as relievers for I-95 and Route 10.

East-west travel on the network in the City is more difficult. Route 12 (Park Avenue) is the only route that completely traverses the City in an east-west direction, consisting of Park Avenue, part of Phenix Avenue, and Scituate Avenue. As a result, many drivers use neighborhood streets to travel in an east-west direction. Park Avenue in the east, however, is sluggish due to its two-lane configuration, numerous intersections, sporadic signaled intersections, and provision for continuous on-street parking.

Limited access highway Rt. 37 in the south provides a partial east-west movement in the eastern section of the City. Rt. 37, however, only connects to major north-south freeways and arterials (Routes I-295, I-95 and Pontiac and Reservoir Avenues); there are no local connections. Hope Road/Wilbur Avenue in the southwest and Route 14 (Plainfield Pike) in the north also provide partial east-west travel. Motorists with knowledge of local streets travel across the City by using primarily residential side streets, which have limited capacity.

Use of these streets by trucks connecting between arterials is an enforcement and signage problem.

In the 1992 Plan, strategies were developed to improve traffic operations and safety in each of the following areas of concern:

General Operation of Traffic

- Traffic Congestion on East-West Arterials – This two-part strategy included improvements to existing routes and development of alternative east-west routes.
- Increase in Traffic Accidents – In response to the increase in the number of traffic accidents, this strategy involved prioritizing locations and developing remedial measures for arterial corridors and intersections with high accident rates. The City, however, has not focused its efforts to resolve this issue. City police occasionally position a speed readout board on some arterials and heavily traveled residential streets.
- Develop Alternative Transportation Modes – As a means to relieve the burden on the roadway system, this strategy involved exploring alternative strategies, such as the use of abandoned rail lines and designation of bicycle routes.
- The Cranston Bike Path has been developed since 1992 on the former Washington Secondary Railroad corridor, roughly between Oaklawn Avenue and Cranston Street. This bike path begins in Cranston near the Amtrak corridor and the former Narragansett Brewery site, proceeds into Knightsville crossing Park Avenue and continues southwesterly through the City and beyond. Also, some streets have been designated as bike path routes with signs. Another bicycle route, the Cranston Bicycle Network, initially called the Cross

City Bicycle Corridor, was also developed over the past ten years. The route travels on streets across Cranston in basically two east/west routes that connect and loop in several points. It also connects riders to other parts of the state's bicycle routes. Most of it is signed for bicycles. Signs displaying "Cranston Bicycle Network" are displayed along its entire route. This route essentially links many other areas in Cranston that allow users to enjoy a wide range of recreational opportunities throughout Cranston and beyond into Warwick, West Warwick, and Coventry.

- RIPTA has installed passenger shelters at key boarding locations throughout the City as part of a system-wide deployment. Service has been reduced on the Elmwood–Auburn Route 20, which operates cross-town on Park Avenue between Rolfe Square and Wellington Avenue, a distance of less than one mile. Cross-town bus service is otherwise limited. Service is provided for the Garden City Shopping Center on the Washington/Arctic Route 13, but it terminates in the early evening and does not operate on Sunday or holidays. RIPTA considers Garden City to be a "park and ride" commuter location, but there is no formally designated parking site. Service on Route 22 Pontiac Avenue / Reservoir Avenue has been extended beyond its former Eden Park terminus to the CCRI campus in Warwick. This extension appears to have resulted in deterioration in schedule adherence during peak periods. Also, Route 22 experiences chronic overcrowding due to heavy passenger loads associated with the State Institutions/Howard Complex/Pastore Center. The City does not post "no parking" signs at bus stops, often forcing passengers to board/alight in the middle of the street.
- Rail Access – Planning by RIDOT for the proposed Providence-Westerly commuter rail service envisions use of the Amtrak main line passing through Cranston. RIDOT has initiated a commuter rail study which includes Cranston.

Development Control

- Proliferation of Curb Cuts on Arterial Routes – This strategy addresses traffic conflicts resulting from an excessive number of curb cuts for existing development on arterial routes.

- Inadequacy and Overspill of Parking – This strategy focuses on addressing the parking problems caused by commercial and other developments with inadequate on site parking, which lead to overspill to on-street parking. No viable strategy has been developed. Merchants want parking, including on street, as near to their premises as possible. The City has a long-standing policy that bans overnight parking on residential streets. Ticketing often prompts complaints from residents who lack off street parking, particularly in densely developed neighborhoods.
- There is a need to resolve the parking issue at the City Hall lot, which has limited parking spaces for both the adjacent East High School and several city departments. Possible solutions include reducing parking demand through ride sharing or adding a structure.
- Development Permitting Processes – This strategy is aimed at improving the effectiveness of zoning and site plan review to control the traffic and parking impacts of development. In response to the 1992 Plan, a site plan review ordinance has been enacted.

Inadequacies in the Transportation Network

- Western Cranston Roadway Network – This strategy addressed concerns with the roadway network in Western Cranston to meet existing and future traffic operations and safety needs. The 1992 Plan noted that substantial residential expansion was expected in this area.
- General deterioration in condition of City streets. The City has not provided sufficient funding to keep up with roadway resurfacing and crack sealing problems.

Specific Problems and Development Issues

- Specific Roadway Problems – This strategy identified a number of roadways with specific operational and safety issues. These included Park Avenue west of Reservoir Avenue; the Route 10 /Reservoir Avenue intersection (this intersection was reconfigured by RIDOT as part of the reconstruction of Reservoir Avenue); Bateman Avenue; Park Avenue/Park View Boulevard intersection (signal and lane striping changes were made at this location); Park

Avenue/Elmwood Avenue intersection (nothing done here); and others. RIDOT incorporated improvements to Route 10 / Park Avenue intersection as part of the reconstruction of this portion of Route 10. The project included landscaping at the terminus and along a portion of Route 10. The issues identified included general safety and operations as well as specific concerns, such as the need for traffic signals, turning lanes, poor sight lines, roadway striping, and roadway geometry.

- Access to Major Development Projects – This strategy focused on three development projects and their site access. The projects included the reuse of the Narragansett Brewery site, which provided a new access roadway system, including a connection to Route 10, when it was developed as a shopping and business center. The “Cornfields” site and the old Boys Training School were other project focuses, the latter featured improvements to Sockanosset Crossroad and New London Avenue.

Table 8-1 Accomplishments of the 1992 Comprehensive Plan

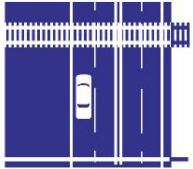
Action	1992 Actions	Accomplishments and Changes
General Traffic Operations: Traffic Congestion on East – West Arterials		
C-1	Investigate proposals to improve safety and the flow of traffic on arterials.	This action was accomplished at the intersections of Sockanosset Cross Road and New London Turnpike, Park and Reservoir, Park and Rolfe and Pontiac, and along Furnace Hill. Improvements at Sockanosset Cross and Pontiac are under design.
C-2	Reduce or eliminate on-street parking on arterial roadways to improve roadway capacity.	On-street parking was reduced or eliminated at Rolfe Street and Park Avenue intersection, and in Pawtuxet Village through the Traffic Calming Project. Additional improvements are needed at other arterial intersections.
C-3	Enforce on-street parking restrictions.	The Police Department conducts code enforcement program through 4-hour police details to ticket illegal overnight parking on public streets. An area of particular concern is Edgewood near Johnson and Wales University where students park overnight on the streets. Police details have recently been substantially reduced and are no longer regularly scheduled because of fiscal issues.
C-4	Provide left turn lanes to reduce conflicts at intersections.	Left turn lanes were provided at Park and Reservoir, Sockanosset Crossroad and New London, and at Park and Rolfe. Other arterial intersections need to be identified for left turn lanes.
C-5	Identify and designate east-west routes for through traffic.	This action was not accomplished.
C-6	Prioritize problems at intersections and investigate improvements.	Intersections at Cranston and Garfield, Park and Reservoir, and at Park and Elmwood were prioritized.
C-7	Establish a program of intersection improvements.	Although this action was not accomplished as a program, improvements were made at Pontiac and Rolfe, Park and Rolfe, Park and Reservoir, and Sockanosset Crossroad and New London.
Increase in Traffic Accidents		
C-8	Prioritize accident problem locations and establish program of remedial measures.	Accident problem locations were prioritized through the RIDOT TIP at Park and Reservoir Avenues as well as at Natick and Furnace Hill.

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C-9	Give priority to pedestrian safety improvements at key locations.	Priority was given for pedestrian safety improvements along the roads of Sockanosset, Cranston, Park and Rolfe, Garfield extension, and at Pawtuxet Village.
Through Traffic in Residential Neighborhoods		
C-10	Conduct analysis of local street sign controls in conjunction with east/west access studies.	This action was not accomplished.
C-11	Consider peak period restrictions on particular short cut routes.	This action was not accomplished
Alternative Transportation Modes		
C-12	Promote and support fixed-route bus services.	Bus stops were incorporated at two major developments at Cranston Parkade and Chapel View.
C-13	Make information on public transportation widely available.	This action was not accomplished.
C-14	Secure and preserve railroad rights-of-way for future transportation corridors.	RIDOT funded the Washington Secondary Track in 1993. The bike path was constructed in 1998. The Pontiac Secondary Track was purchased by RIDOT in 1990s. A bike path feasibility study was also performed.
C-15	Incorporate bicycle access in planning major developments.	Cranston Parkade development incorporates an internal bicycle path that connects to the Washington Secondary Bike Path. The City of Cranston established the Cross City Bicycle Corridor in 2001.
Proliferation of Curb Cuts on Arterial Route		
C-16	Restrict access to new development from major arterials.	Several developments in the past 12 years have been approved with fewer curb cuts than requested by the applicant and include Mulligan's Island, Texas Roadhouse, FW Webb, and Coastway Credit Union.
C-17	Regulate curb cuts through design standards.	This action has been partially regulated through the Site Plan Review process.
C-18	Provide left-turn lanes on arterial roadways where curb cuts to new development are unavoidable.	RIDOT has upgraded left turn lanes at several intersections including Park and Reservoir, New London and Sockanosset, Phenix and Atwood, Garfield and Cranston Parkade, Sockanosset at Chapel View, Reservoir from Park to Providence city line, and Rolfe and Park.
C-19	Encourage collector driveways to limit the number of access points.	Collector driveways were used at Chapel Hill, Natick Hill, and the Phenix Rising developments.
Inadequacy and Overspill of Parking		
C-20	Require compliance with parking standards in Zoning Ordinance and discourage on-street parking.	This is being addressed through Site Plan Review and zoning review.
C-21	Encourage off-street parking at existing developments.	This action was never accomplished.

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C-22	Encourage shared parking.	Shared parking was implemented for Chapel View, Coastway office building, CVS, and for the Post Office at Rolfe Street.
C-23	Require provision of landscaping to delineate parking areas and provide buffers.	This action was implemented through the Site Plan Review Ordinance that was passed in 1998. Over 100 applications were reviewed in 6 years.
C-24	Review and update parking standards in Zoning Ordinances.	This action was not accomplished.
C-25	Restrict on-street parking where feasible.	The Park Avenue and Rolfe Street intersection reconstruction restricted on-street parking. It was also restricted at Pawtuxet Village.
Western Cranston Roadway Network		
C-26	Investigate appropriate improvements to eliminate safety and operational problems.	A right-turn lane was added at the intersection of Comstock Parkway and Scituate Avenue. The Phenix Avenue and Natick Road intersection was reconstructed. The bend on Hope Road at the Briggs Farm Recreational Field was reconstructed.
C-27	Investigate improvements to roadway links to support increase in development without encouraging additional development. Focus should be on: (1) existing deficiencies on Scituate Avenue (Route 12); and (2) link to Route 37 corridor.	A right-turn lane was added at the intersection of Comstock Parkway and Scituate Avenue. The Phenix Avenue and Natick Road intersection was reconstructed.
C-28	Undertake detailed study and program of improvements for Pippin Orchard Road/ Hope Road / Phenix Avenue / Wilbur Avenue / Natick Avenue corridor.	A detailed study of Phenix Avenue (east of Hope Road intersection) and Natick Avenue was partially completed.
C-29	Encourage additional roadway links between Olney Arnold Road and Pippin Orchard Road, and between Natick Avenue and Phenix Avenue.	Two residential developments, Orchard Estates and Birchwood Estates, were approved with road stubs for future connections.
C-30	Plan access to new development to limit access points to collector and arterial roadways. Restrict local streets connections to collector roads where possible.	This action was implemented in two subdivisions: Natick Hill and Phenix Rising.
C-31	Establish a program of improvements to specific roadway segments and intersections based on identified problems.	A new intersection was constructed at Phenix and Natick roads. Reconstructed Olney Arnold Road. Reconstructed the curve on Hope Road at the Briggs Farm Recreational Field.



Part II. Current Conditions and Issues

Introduction

Despite the intersection improvements implemented since 1992, the major transportation issues identified in the 1992 Comprehensive Plan still persist. Neither the roadway network nor the bus transit routes and service have changed significantly.

The lack of east-west cross-town routes still causes congestion on Park Avenue and promotes cut through traffic in residential neighborhoods. Although alternate east-west routes recommended in the 1992 Plan have not been implemented, residents would likely resist any attempts to route traffic through local neighborhood streets. Park Avenue to Scituate Avenue continues to serve as the only east-west roadway link that traverses the entire city. Methods to improve traffic flow on Park Avenue, such as removing on-street parking and providing off-street parking, have continually been resisted by merchants. They believe that business would be hurt if customers could not park on the street in front of, or near, their businesses. Accidents continue to occur on Park Avenue, particularly at the intersections with Reservoir Avenue, Elmwood Avenue, and Rolfe Square.

The number of traffic accidents along Park Avenue is significant and increasing. Between January 1, 2002 and December 31, 2004, there were 1,772 accidents on Park Avenue, according to Police Department records. Of those 1,181 accidents (or 67 percent) were at intersections. The highest incidences were at Reservoir Avenue (211) and Elmwood Avenue (113). Moreover, the number of accident increased 34 percent from 762 during the period January 1, 2002 to March 31, 2003 to 1,021 between April 1, 2003 and December 31, 2004.

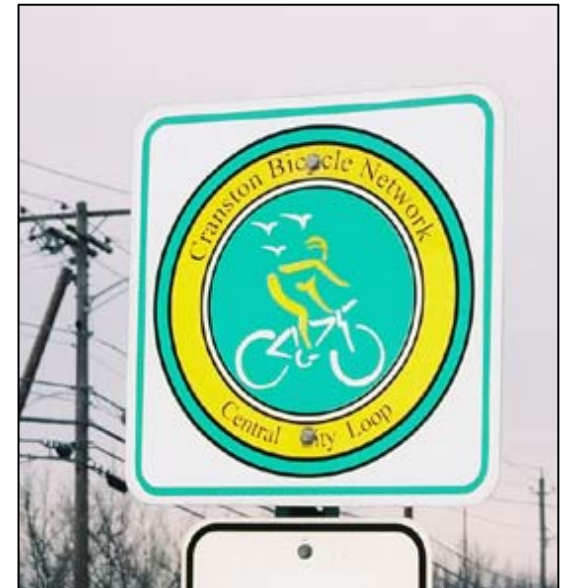
The major cause of these traffic accidents is poor driving habits rather than intersection design and signal timing, according to the Police Department. For example, many drivers do not stop at State

road intersections, such as Reservoir Avenue, where right turn on red is allowed. On many City streets, right turn on red is not allowed and signed accordingly. In addition many drivers try to “beat the light” when making left turns. A major driver education program is needed, according to the Police Department. Greater traffic enforcement of moving violations would also help reduce accidents.

North-south routes continue to provide good access between local and arterial streets to the Interstate Highway system, Providence, and points to the south.

Two major Interstate highways carry traffic through and to/from Cranston. In 2003, I-95 between Routes 10 and 37 carried 187,900 vehicles (Average 24-hour Daily Traffic, ADT) and I-295 between Routes 12 and 14 had 73,400 ADT. State Route 37, a relatively short east-west route in southern Cranston, links the two Interstates and had 41,400 ADT.

Since 1992, the Pastore Center/Garden City area experienced increased traffic due to its prime location near major roads and expansion of State facilities and commercial development. For example, State Route 2 (New London Avenue) provides access to



the Pastore Center and had 22,900 ADT in 2000. Farther north, Route 2 becomes Reservoir Avenue and provides access to Garden City; it carried 29,300 vehicles ADT in 2000. Increased traffic is expected due to redevelopment of the adjacent Boys Training School site into a mixed-use development called Chapel View. Garden City continues to attract shoppers from throughout Rhode Island due to its high quality merchandise and open air shopping experience.

Transportation services continue to be provided by the Rhode Island Department of Transportation, RIDOT (Interstate and State Highways), the Rhode Island Public Transportation Authority, RIPTA (bus transit), and the City of Cranston Department of Public Works, DPW (signs, signals and City street maintenance).

Circulation Issues

The primary circulation issues for the Comprehensive Plan follow:

- Should traffic calming be instituted on certain residential streets used as a “cut through?”
- How should cross-town (i.e., east-west) traffic congestion be alleviated?

If the village-center zoning district is adopted, should fewer cars be allowed to park in the district to increase the potential for transit use in higher density areas?

- Should Cranston study alternatives for a commuter rail or rail transit shuttle station in the AMTRAK Corridor?

Other Circulation issues include the following:

- Where pedestrian amenities should be provided?
- Does Cranston need more RIPTA bus service?
- Does Cranston’s roadway network provide adequate and safe access and mobility?
- What can be done to make Cranston’s arterial roads more aesthetically pleasing?

Improved access and mobility require a system of roadways including expressways, major and minor arterials, collector streets, and local streets. All roads except expressways provide both access

to property and travel mobility. A logical functional hierarchy of streets is needed: high mobility and low access for arterials, balanced mobility and access for collectors, and high access for local streets.

The Park Avenue Example

Park Avenue is considered an arterial street. It provides, along with the Scituate Avenue (State Route 12) connection, the City’s only east-west link. Park Avenue currently provides high access and low mobility, the reverse of its supposed function. On-street parking on Park Avenue impedes mobility, but provides access to merchants. Since Park Avenue functions better for access than mobility, should it be downgraded from an arterial to a special commercial street and become a candidate for major improvements for pedestrians? Or should on-street parking be removed and replaced with off-street parking lots to increase mobility?



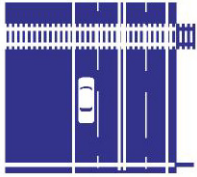
Reservoir Avenue

Key Management Issues

Cranston must compete for State and Federal transportation funds with other communities as part of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for State roadway improvements, bikeways and similar transportation needs. The TIP projects implemented in 2003-2004 for Cranston are shown in the Appendix.

In order to maximize TIP funding, several management issues will need to be addressed:

- What kind of a systematic process should be implemented to identify projects?
- What would the purpose and need be for each project and what criteria should be developed to establish a priority list that meets the circulation needs of the city?
- The City of Cranston has traditionally been short on funds for maintaining City streets, signs, sidewalks and signals. Should a separate maintenance budget be established which would allocate funds based on needs and priorities?



Part III. Strategies and Actions

This section identifies actions that will help resolve existing and potential future issues. Many of these actions, which are based on the 1992 Comprehensive Plan and have not been implemented, are still valid. New recommendations are also included such as determination of the primary function of a street (mobility or access), rail transit, and traffic calming. A summary of the proposed actions, time frames, and responsibilities for the Circulation element is provided at the end of this section.

General Traffic Operations

Improve Mobility on Arterials

Cranston has a significant need to improve mobility, especially on east-west streets, since there are so few of them. Given the cost of construction of new streets, it is prudent for Cranston to maximize the utility of its roadway assets. Alternate candidates for east-west routes were identified in the 1992 Plan. These need to be revisited by the City to determine their primary function (mobility or access) and then determine if any should be implemented. The primary candidates for improvement remain Park Avenue and Scituate Avenue. These two roadways are designated State Route 12 beginning at U.S. Route 1A - State Route 117 in eastern Cranston and ending in the City at the Scituate town line. Accordingly, improvements to Route 12 are eligible for funding through RIDOT. A systematic mobility improvement program should include recommendations C-1 through C-7 in the table at the end of this section.

Implement an Accident Reduction Program

The City should implement the still valid recommendation in the 1992 Plan to “prioritize accident problem locations based on detailed

investigation of accident records”. The roadway corridors with the highest accidents in 1992 were State Routes 12, 2, and 5, and Pontiac Avenue. Accident mitigation programs would be eligible for State funding through RIDOT for the State routes. Intersections of major cross streets that need channelization and signalization improvements for vehicular traffic and pedestrian crossings are particularly important areas of concern. Dedicated left turn movements in the center of the wider commercial arterials and at major intersections are important. See the Recommendations C-4, C-8, and C-9 in the table following this section.

Implement Traffic Calming in Residential Neighborhoods.

Traffic calming is a set of physical and programmatic measures to mitigate the negative effects of vehicular travel and improve the environment for pedestrians and bicyclists. These measures can include police enforcement and education programs, but more commonly, the construction of speed bumps, narrowed travel lanes, and widened sidewalks, especially at intersections.

Objectives of traffic calming include the following:

- To encourage participation of the affected public in the traffic calming process;
- To reduce vehicular speeds;
- To create pleasant conditions for motorists and pedestrians;
- To improve the environment and livability of neighborhoods;
- To improve real and perceived safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- To discourage the use of residential streets as cut-through streets.

Traffic calming devices include a wide variety of measures: bike lanes, bump-outs, neck-downs and chokers (i.e., sidewalk extensions); center islands; chicanes/lateral shifts (e.g., widening sidewalks on alternating sides of the street creating a curved street); closures (cul de sacs); diverters (barriers to certain movements); education; forced turn lanes; median barriers; police enforcement; realigned intersections; roundabouts (small traffic circles); speed humps; speed tables, textured pavement and raised crossings; and traffic circles.

Individual traffic calming measures for specific residential streets have not been recommended in this Comprehensive Planning Update. Instead, a supplementary planning process is recommended to include the impacted neighborhoods. Traffic calming measures should only be implemented when the impacts of such measures on neighboring residential streets and arterial streets are fully recognized and accommodated. The function of the street, either mobility or access, should be the principal consideration for application of a measure.

For more information on traffic calming techniques, the reader may visit <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/tcalm/>. This Federal Highway Administration website provides a wealth of information about traffic calming, including the websites of cities throughout the U.S. that have successfully implemented such measures.

Promote Alternate Modes of Transportation

Alternate modes of transportation still are underutilized in Cranston despite large commuting and transit dependent populations. While the City is served by approximately seven north-south RIPTA bus routes, they are not heavily used for commuting. Commuting residents prefer driving rather than taking the bus. In 2000, nearly 85 percent of Cranston residents drove alone to work, according to U.S. Census data. Over half of the approximately 36,000 Cranston residents who commuted worked in Cranston or Providence. In addition, over 2,800 occupied housing units (approximately 9 percent) in Cranston did not have a vehicle available for transportation. This significant transit dependent population may not be served by existing bus routes. Transit use needs to be actively promoted by RIPTA and the City to reduce the dependence on the automobile.

The Cranston Bike Path has been built on an abandoned railroad right of way providing an alternate means of transport. This bike path, part of a longer bikeway that serves the West Bay area of Rhode Island, is largely used for recreation in Cranston, not commuting. It could be made more attractive for commuting if appropriate safe links to schools, shopping areas and employment concentrations were developed. Maintenance of the bike path is an ongoing problem and should be a line item in the recommended Maintenance Fund to be administered by the DPW (See Public Facilities and Services section).

Another option for alternative transportation is to study the feasibility of adding a rail station in the city along the AMTRAK corridor. There has been considerable interest by the State in using the AMTRAK corridor for regional rail transit as explained in the following studies.

RIDOT conducted the South County Commuter Rail Study in 1995 to determine the feasibility of extending the current MBTA train service between Boston and Providence to Westerly. Recommended were stations in adjacent Warwick at T.F. Green Airport and in North Kingstown at Wickford Junction, the latter projected to attract far more riders than all the other stations considered combined. A Cranston station was not considered in the study.

A Federal Environmental Assessment was prepared in the late 1990s for the Warwick Station, including a people mover connection between the station and the airport terminal. An option for a separate train shuttle between Warwick and Providence was also identified in the study.

In a separate study that was conducted in 1997 and updated in 2001, a commuter rail station in West Davisville was proposed in the Master Plan for Quonset Davisville Port and Commerce Park by the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation (RIEDC).

None of these projects have been advanced, however, due to the lack of continued political pressure to secure funding. The City should revive interest in using the untapped potential of the AMTRAK corridor for both local and regional travel. In his State of the State address in January 2005, the Governor promoted extending the commuter rail south of Providence to Westerly and to “break ground” for stations at the airport in Warwick and Wickford Junction in North Kingstown. The City should capitalize on this political support.

RIDOT should initiate a station feasibility study, in coordination with the City. Included should be a transit oriented development (TOD) planning effort to increase ridership potentials for a Cranston Station. A well-located station in Cranston could stimulate economic development near the station, if land is available, if market demand exists and if strong public policy promotes it. There are excellent examples throughout the country where TOD combined with transit stations yielded dramatic ridership and development results. Examples include:

- Arlington, VA (five stations along a Washington Area Metropolitan Transit Authority (WMATA) heavy rail line;
- Bethesda and Silver Spring, MD stations along a WMATA heavy rail line;
- Dallas, TX (Mockingbird Station on the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (light rail transit) line; and
- Portland, OR (many stations along Tri Met light rail transit lines. In Portland, TOD planning is integral to station siting.

Control Curb Cuts on Arterial Routes

Proliferation of curb cuts on major arterials is a safety issue because of the cumulative increase in turning movements in and out of through traffic lanes. Reservoir Avenue is a prime example of how adjacent commercial development access to and from an arterial has created traffic and safety issues. Often, there are too many curb cuts serving a single new development and access to new adjacent development should be restricted by consolidating curb cuts. The design of curb cuts can mitigate some negative aspects such as locating access points opposite a street intersection and consolidating ingress and egress into a single well-signed location. While a left turn lane need not be provided for every curb cut, left turn lanes from arterial streets should be provided to access properties where curb cuts are unavoidable. The construction of collector driveways or a service road will limit the number of access points. These design standards should be included in the City's Zoning Code, used in the City's commercial Site Plan Review process.

Parking

Parking continues to be an issue in eastern Cranston. The lack of off-street parking is evident in commercial areas like Park Avenue, especially near City Hall and Cranston High School East, as well as in residential areas such as the Edgewood neighborhood adjacent to Johnson and Wales University at Fields Point. Incentives are needed to create commercial parking lots. There needs to be a concerted effort to address these parking problems. For example, the Town of Brookline, Massachusetts developed public parking areas behind commercial areas such as Coolidge Corner (Brookline's downtown). Merchants located along Park Avenue should consider forming associations to provide shared off street parking. Shared parking behind several businesses can provide much needed spaces. In addition, the City should consider building a parking structure behind City Hall to serve government functions, Cranston High School East, the new Park Avenue entertainment complex and Rolfe Square area businesses. The idea of compact parking structures should also be considered in Knightsville.

Western Cranston Roadways

Western Cranston is a growth area where residential subdivisions and low density single-family housing predominate. The major roadway system is not well defined with Scituate Avenue (Route 12) and Plainfield Pike (Route 14) providing the major east-west travel corridors through the area. The Hope Road-Phenix Avenue link provides a southwest-northeast travel route and Pippin Orchard Road / Hope Road provides the only north-south route. The remainders of the roads serve residential subdivisions. The 1992 Comprehensive Plan indicated several possible extensions and connections but none have been constructed. The issue is how to provide for efficient travel in this area without stimulating growth.

Park Avenue Study

Park Avenue is the City's traditional commercial street, particularly between I-95 and Knightsville. It provides a great deal of access to adjacent businesses but does not provide adequate mobility. It has two lanes with two-way traffic, and circulation is constricted by on-only "Main Street", Park Avenue should be visually improved with signage controls, landscaping, new sidewalks, and decorative lighting.

Table 8-2 Summary of the Proposed Actions and Responsibilities for this Plan

	Actions	Responsibility
General Traffic Operations: Traffic Congestion on East – West Arterials		
C-1	Investigate proposals to improve safety and the flow of traffic on arterials.	DPW
C-2	Reduce or eliminate on-street parking on arterial roadways to improve roadway capacity.	DPW
C-3	Enforce on-street parking restrictions.	Police Department
C-4	Provide left turn lanes to reduce conflicts at intersections where appropriate	DPW
C-5	Identify potential east-west routes for through traffic.	Planning Department DPW
C-6	Prioritize problem intersections and investigate improvements	DPW
C-7	Establish a program of intersection improvements.	DPW
Traffic Accidents		
C-8	Identify high accident locations and establish program of remedial measures.	DPW Police Department
C-9	Give priority to pedestrian safety improvements at key locations.	Planning Department DPW
Through Traffic in Residential Neighborhoods		
C-10	Conduct analysis of local street sign controls in conjunction with east/west access studies.	DPW
C-11	Consider peak period restrictions on particular short cut routes.	Planning Department DPW
Alternative Transportation Modes		
C-12	Promote and support fixed-route bus services.	Planning Department
C-13	Make information on public transportation available.	Planning Department
C-14	Secure and preserve railroad rights-of-way for future transportation corridors.	Planning Department DPW
C-15	Incorporate bicycle access in major developments. <i>Related Action: LU-31</i>	Planning Department

8. CIRCULATION

Curb Cuts on Arterial Route		
C-16	Restrict access from new development to major arterials.	Planning Department
C-17	Regulate curb cuts through design standards.	Planning Department
C-18	Provide left-turn lanes on arterial roadways where curb cuts to new development are unavoidable.	Planning Department
C-19	Encourage collector driveways to limit the number of access points.	Planning Department Public Works Department
Parking		
C-20	Require compliance with parking standards in Zoning Ordinance and discourage on-street parking.	Planning Department Police Department
C-21	Encourage off-street parking at existing developments.	City Council Planning Department Police Department
C-22	Encourage shared parking.	Planning Department
C-23	Require provision of landscaping to delineate parking areas and provide buffers. <i>Related Action: LU-12, LU-13</i>	Planning Department
C-24	Review and update parking standards in Zoning Ordinances.	City Council Planning Commission Planning Department
C-25	Restrict on-street parking where feasible.	City Council Planning Department Public Works Department
Western Cranston Roadway Network		
C-26	Identify roadway improvements to eliminate safety and operational problems.	Planning Department Public Works Department
C-27	Identify improvements to roadway links to safely accommodate increased traffic volume. Focus should be on: (1) existing deficiencies on Scituate Avenue (Route 12), (2) link to Route 37 corridor)	Planning Department Public Works Department
C-28	Undertake detailed study and program of improvements for the Pippin Orchard Road/ Hope Road / Phenix Avenue / Wilbur Avenue / Natick Avenue corridor.	City Council Planning Commission Planning Department Public Works Department

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C-29	Encourage roadway links between the Hill Side Farm Neighborhood and Pippin Orchard Road.	City Council Planning Commission Planning Department Public Works Department
C-30	Limit access points from new development to collector and arterial roadways. Restrict local streets connections to collector roads where possible.	Planning Department Public Works Department
C-31	Establish a program of improvements for specific roadway segments and intersections based on identified problems.	City Council Planning Commission Planning Department Public Works Department
Park Avenue Study		
C-32	Investigate improvements to eliminate safety and operational problems.	Planning Department Police Department Public Works Department
C-33	Divide study into segments to reflect the differing traffic situations and adjacent land uses such as: Wellington Avenue to Pontiac Avenue (including Rolfe Square); Pontiac Ave. to Reservoir Avenue (including City Hall and East High School); Reservoir Ave. to Gansett Ave.; Gansett Ave. to Cranston Street; and Phenix Ave. to Atwood Ave. Some of these segments may be combined.	City Council Planning Commission Planning Department Public Works Department
C-34	Remove on-street parking where appropriate	City Council Planning Department Public Works Department
C-35	Identify locations for off street parking or shared parking arrangements between cooperating and abutting businesses that have off street parking.	Planning Department
C-36	Identify street beautification improvements such as sign design controls, street trees and other landscaping, public art, new sidewalks, trash receptacles, lighting and benches.	Planning Department Public Works Department
C-37	Create special Park Avenue Study Advisory Committee representing merchants, City Hall, Cranston High School East and other major affected parties to advise on recommendations and monitor implementation.	Planning Department
Actions Requiring Further Study		
C-38	Investigate a commuter rail station and support of a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) in the Elmwood/ Wellington Avenues area.	Planning Department