Unlocking Economic and Community Benefits Through Transportation Planning

Power of Place Summit
May 11, 2012

Aquidneck Island Planning Commission
Opening Remarks/Project Background

Tina Dolen, Executive Director
Aquidneck Island Planning Commission
### Study Team

**Study Proponent:** Aquidneck Island Planning Commission  
**Study Consultant:** VHB/Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (Providence, RI)  

**Technical Steering Committee:**

- Aquidneck Island Planning Commission  
- Federal Highway Administration  
- Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program  
- Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM)  
- Naval Station Newport  
- Newport County Convention and Visitor’s Bureau  
- Newport, Middletown, and Portsmouth  
- Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT)  
- Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA)  
- Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority (RITBA)  
- Newport County Chamber of Commerce  
- Sierra Club RI
Study Purpose

To develop a balanced, comprehensive Multi-Modal Transportation Master Plan for Aquidneck Island that will guide the investment of future funds into its transportation system. The Plan will include:

- Short, medium and long-range transportation improvements suitable for inclusion into municipal and statewide capital improvement plans; as well as
- Recommended strategies, policies and actions to improve the transportation system on Aquidneck Island consistent with community values.
Study Goals and Objectives

- Inclusive of all modes of transportation.
- Seek modal enhancements and connections.
- Preserve, maintain and improve the efficiency of our existing transportation facilities and services in consideration of both current and future travel demands.
- Increase mobility, modal choice, accessibility and safety for all residents, businesses, employees and visitors while decreasing traffic congestion and its negative impacts on our environment, economy and quality of life.
Study Area

Encompasses all of Aquidneck Island and includes the following roadways:

• Route 114 (West Main Road/Bristol Ferry Road)
• Route 138 (East Main Road)
• Turnpike Avenue
• Burma Road/Defense Highway/Stringham Road
• America’s Cup Avenue
• Memorial Boulevard
• Coddington Highway/JT Connell Highway
• Admiral Kalbfus Road
• Route 138A (Aquidneck Avenue)
• Route 214 (Valley Road)
Panelists

Corey Bobba, Project Delivery Team Leader
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Rhode Island Division Office

Bill Ashworth, Principal/RI Office Manager
Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB)

Chris Witt, Director of Planning and Communications
Aquidneck Island Planning Commission (AIPC)
Study Process - Collaboration and Public Outreach

Corey Bobba, Program Delivery Team Leader
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Rhode Island Division Office
### Stakeholder Interviews

- Newport, Middletown, and Portsmouth Planning, DPW, and Police Departments
- Newport Department of Economic Development
- Portsmouth Economic Development Committee
- Naval Station Newport
- State Police
- Old Colony & Newport Railway
- Grow Smart RI
- Sierra Club
- Newport County Chamber of Commerce
- RI Association of Railroad Passengers
- Conservation Law Foundation (CLF)
- Newport County Convention and Visitor’s Bureau
- Newport Dinner Train
- AIPC Council Liaison, Middletown
- Raytheon
- Naval Undersea Warfare Center (NUWC)
- Newport Accessibility Advisory Group
- Edward King House Senior Center
- Peter Pan Bus Lines
- Viking Tours of Newport
- AARP Rhode Island
- Coalition for Transportation Choices (CTC)
Public Outreach
Public Outreach

• Variety of tools

Online surveys

Project logo/buttons

Project website: http://www.vhb.com/aquidneck

e-newsletters
Public Input

• Public Meetings (over 600 comments noted)
• Online Survey/Comments (approx. 300 responses)
• Origin-Destination Postcard Surveys – Auto & Bus (over 1,700 returned)
• Evaluation Criteria Survey (260 responses)
• Dot Voting of Preferences (over 750 total “votes”)
• More than 3,000 responses/comments in total
Study Process – Screening & Evaluating Alternatives

- Public and Stakeholder Input
- Matrix of Everything Heard and Potential Improvements
- Vetted by Technical Steering Committee
- Refined by Study Team
- Improvement Options by Transportation Mode
- Evaluation Criteria Summary
Evaluation Criteria

• Six main categories used to evaluate potential Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) projects:
  - Mobility benefits
  - Cost-effectiveness
  - Economic development impact
  - Environmental impact
  - Degree of support of local and state goals and plans
  - Safety, security, and technology

• Developed 28 different evaluation criteria within the 6 main categories

• Led to study recommendations that were vetted by Steering Committee
Study Recommendations – Expanding Transportation Choices

Bill Ashworth, Principal/RI Office Manager
Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB)
Recommendations

- Broken down by transportation mode
- Preliminary costs
- Implementation timeframes (pending available funding)
- Final Report at: [www.vhb.com/aquidneck](http://www.vhb.com/aquidneck)
Recommended Transit Improvements

1. Encourage Transit Oriented Development
2. Provide Additional Bus Service
3. Establish Newport Jitney Service
4. Implement Rapid Bus Service
5. Strengthen and Expand Island-wide Multimodal Centers
6. Maintain Active Newport Secondary Rail Corridor
7. Enhance the Transit Experience
8. Encourage Island Employers to Institute Transit Programs for Employees
9. Create Park & Ride Opportunities
10. Enhance Ferry Service
**Recommended Bicycle/Pedestrian Improvements**

1. Shoreline Bikeway (Burma Rd) Shared Use Path
2. Connect Missing Links Between Suitable Roads for Bicycles
3. Provide Island-wide Destination Signing for Bicycles
4. East Main Road Shared Use Path
5. West Main Rd Shared Use Path
6. General Upgrades of Pedestrian Accommodations
Summary – Island-wide Bicycle Network

• Provides a designated Island-wide bicycle network made up of a combination of the following:
  ➢ Existing “most-suitable” and “suitable” roadways
  ➢ Proposed shared roadways
  ➢ Proposed wide shoulders/bike lanes along roadways
  ➢ Proposed shared use paths

• Bike Network provides access to:
  ➢ Existing and proposed multimodal centers
    (Gateway Center, Pell Bridge, Melville)
  ➢ Large facilities such as Raytheon, Navy, CCRI, etc.
  ➢ Proposed Newport Jitney
  ➢ Proposed transit-oriented developments

• Recommending expanding bicycle network on local roads in each Island community
**Recommended Roadway Improvements**

1. Pell Bridge Access Improvements
2. Traffic Signal Optimization
3. Two Mile Corner Improvements
4. Localized Intersection Safety/Capacity Improvements
5. Corys Lane/Hedley Street Realignment
6. West Main Road Left-Turn Lanes
7. Burma Road Improvements
8. East Main Road Roundabouts
9. Broadway Streetscape & Traffic Calming Improvements
Recommended Policies

• **Transportation pricing** (tolling, parking, transit fares, vehicle registration fees, fueling, VMT fees, etc.) could have a more significant impact on future conditions

• **Promote safety as a top priority** within transportation planning and in the delivery of all infrastructure projects (including requiring Road Safety Assessments where appropriate), and target educational activities to current and future travelers to improve safety for all transportation modes

• Continue to **develop land use policies/ Zoning Ordinances that support transit oriented development** with housing, retail, and jobs collocated with each other near transit

• Ensure that the Island community Comprehensive Plans and Zoning Ordinances **reflect goals, objectives, and policies that support safety and access management** where appropriate, and incorporate the AITS policies
Recommended Policies

• Develop city-wide strategic parking plan for Newport
• Establish TDM program requirements in Zoning Ordinances for new, large projects; for projects over certain thresholds, consider traffic monitoring requirements and financial penalties
• Develop a bicycle parking/sidewalk Zoning Ordinance that includes bicycle parking and sidewalk requirements into site plan review
• Establish better communication and coordination between state and local agencies during development site plan reviews
• Develop a motorcoach parking plan that regulates where tourist buses can drop-off, pick-up, park, and stage when idle
• Promote a Complete Streets approach to design and renovation of infrastructure that ensures safety and mobility for all users are considered
Recommended Policies

• **Promote livable and sustainable communities** through “green” initiatives and coordinated transportation/land use/environmental strategies (including GHG reductions and reduced dependence on automobiles)

• **Promote the “park once” concept in Newport** with alternate transportation modes (i.e. car sharing, bike sharing, pedicabs, etc.)

• **Establish an Island-wide strategic transportation committee** that would oversee the implementation of the recommended actions and policies from this study and discuss important policy issues mentioned in the plan but beyond the scope of the study

• **Expand the Island-wide bicycle network** through bicycle suitability studies for local roads and the development of bicycle plans for each Island municipality to increase the number of suitable roads for bicycles linking key destinations
Implementation

Chris Witt, Director of Planning & Communications
Aquidneck Island Planning Commission
# Implementation Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RECOMMENDATION</th>
<th>NEXT STEPS</th>
<th>RESPONSIBLE PARTY</th>
<th>IMMEDIATE-TERM (LESS THAN 1 YEAR)</th>
<th>SHORT-TERM (1-5 YEARS)</th>
<th>MID-TERM (5-10 YEARS)</th>
<th>LONG-TERM (GREATER THAN 10 YEARS)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Encourage Transit Oriented Development</td>
<td>Adopt policies to encourage TOD</td>
<td>Island Municipalities</td>
<td>Encourage development (location and type) that prioritizes transit use</td>
<td>Provide additional bus service</td>
<td>Design, construction, Establish service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide Additional Bus Service</td>
<td>Evaluate options to extend service</td>
<td>RIPTA</td>
<td>Provide additional bus service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Establish Newport Jetty Service</td>
<td>Finalize feasibility study/costs</td>
<td>Newport County Chamber of Commerce/Newport</td>
<td>Design, construction, Establish service</td>
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<td>Implement Rapid Bus Service</td>
<td>Advance Study &amp; Development</td>
<td>RIPTA</td>
<td>Design, construction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strengthen and Expand Island-wide Multi Modal Centers</td>
<td>Finalize needs assessment for Gateway Center</td>
<td>Newport</td>
<td>Construct Gateway Center improvements</td>
<td>Construct Melville multimodal facility</td>
<td>Construct Pell Bridge area multimodal facility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintain Active Newport Secondary Rail Corridor</td>
<td>Preserve rail corridor as continuous ROW</td>
<td>RDOT, Island Municipalities</td>
<td>Continued track maintenance</td>
<td>Eliminate existing and any future encroachments, increase passenger rail uses of corridor</td>
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<td>Enhance the Transit Experience</td>
<td>Advance development of enhancements</td>
<td>RIPTA</td>
<td>Design, construction</td>
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<td>Encourage Island Employers to Institute Transit Programs for Employees</td>
<td>Meet with major employers to discuss programs</td>
<td>RDOT, Island Municipalities</td>
<td>Construct improvements at major employers</td>
<td>Construct improvements at major employers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create Park &amp; Ride Opportunities</td>
<td>Identify potential sites and develop implementation plan</td>
<td>RDOT, RIPTA</td>
<td>Design, right-of-way actions, construction of additional facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enhance Ferry Service</td>
<td>Seek funding opportunities</td>
<td>RIPTA, Newport, A/PC</td>
<td>Implement additional Newport service</td>
<td>Implement ferry service to Melville</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shoreline Bikeway (Burma Road) Shared Use Path</td>
<td>Advance Study &amp; Development</td>
<td>RIOT/RIOT</td>
<td>Design, permitting, right-of-way actions</td>
<td>Design, permitting</td>
<td>Construction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connect Missing Links Between Suitable Roads for Bicycles</td>
<td>Restrripe roadways/Advance Study &amp; Development</td>
<td>RDOT</td>
<td>Road diets along Bristol Ferry &amp; West Main</td>
<td>Design, permitting for shared use path, right-of-way actions</td>
<td>Construction of shared use path</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide Island-wide Destination Signing for Bicycles</td>
<td>Prioritize routes for signing</td>
<td>RIOT, APC</td>
<td>Install signs</td>
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<td>East Main Road Shared Use Path</td>
<td>Pursue Study &amp; Development</td>
<td>RIOT, APC</td>
<td>Design, permitting, right-of-way actions</td>
<td>Construction</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Main Road Shared Use Path</td>
<td>Pursue Study &amp; Development</td>
<td>RIOT, APC</td>
<td>Design, permitting, right-of-way actions</td>
<td>Construction</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Upgrades of Pedestrian Accommodations</td>
<td>Prioritize improvements</td>
<td>RDOT</td>
<td>Design, construction of improvements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pel Bridge Access Improvements</td>
<td>Advance project to 30% Design</td>
<td>RDOT</td>
<td>Design, permitting, right-of-way actions</td>
<td>Phased Construction</td>
<td>Phased Construction</td>
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<td>Traffic Signal Optimization</td>
<td>Prioritize locations for optimization</td>
<td>RDOT</td>
<td>Fine-tune traffic signal timings</td>
<td>Maintain equipment, collect new counts, fine-tune traffic signal timings</td>
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<td>Two Mile Corner Improvements</td>
<td>Conduct traffic simulation/select alternative</td>
<td>RDOT, Middletown</td>
<td>Design, permitting, right-of-way actions, construction</td>
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<td>Localized Intersection Capacity/ Safety Improvements</td>
<td>Prioritize improvements</td>
<td>RDOT</td>
<td>Design, permitting, construction of short-term improvements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corvis Lane/Healey Street Realignment</td>
<td>Advance final design</td>
<td>Portsmouth, RDOT</td>
<td>Design, permitting, right-of-way actions, construction</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Main Road Left-turn Lanes</td>
<td>Prioritize improvements</td>
<td>RDOT</td>
<td>Design, permitting, construction for all</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burma Road Improvements</td>
<td>Acquire Burma Road from Navy</td>
<td>RDOT/PHWA</td>
<td>Navy coordination</td>
<td>Design &amp; permitting</td>
<td>Construction</td>
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<tr>
<td>East Main Road Roundabouts</td>
<td>Advance final design</td>
<td>Portsmouth/RDOT</td>
<td>Design, permitting, right-of-way actions</td>
<td>Construction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Broadway Streetscape &amp; Traffic Calming Improvements</td>
<td>Advance final design</td>
<td>Newport/RDOT</td>
<td>Finalize design</td>
<td>Construction</td>
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Study Implementation Progress Report

TRANSIT

• Encourage Transit Oriented Development
• Enhance Ferry Service

BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN

• RI*STARS Pedestrian and Roadway Upgrades
• Shoreline Bikeway (Burma Road) Shared Use Path
Study Implementation Progress Report

ROADWAY

• Regional Traffic Incident Management Plan
• Pell Bridge Access Improvements
• Two Mile Corner Improvements
• Traffic Signal Optimization
• Intersection Capacity/Safety Improvements
• Broadway Streetscape & Traffic Calming
Study Keys to Success

• Regional Approach

• Balanced, Integrated Transportation System

• Collaboration

• Public Involvement & Engagement

• Implementation