

INTRODUCTION

Newton's transportation systems connects the city's residents, businesses and visitors to each other and to jobs, schools, goods and services, and recreational and cultural opportunities in Newton and throughout the greater Boston region. Even while the city's population grows only modestly, traffic and tripmaking are steadily increasing. Transportation-related issues are among the most pressing quality-of-life issues cited by Newton residents. In order to address these critical issues, in July 2010 Mayor Mayor Setti D. Warren convened the Transportation Advisory Committee in order to undertake a wide-ranging review of transportation issues in Newton and asked that I chair the TAC.

This document represents hundreds of hours of work by a dedicated group of Newton citizens, working in collaboration with City staff from the Planning & Development, Engineering, Public Works, Police and other departments and with the input of the general public. I believe that the TAC has indeed fulfilled the charge that was set out, which was to "Recommend an overall framework that can shape a longer-term transformation of Newton's transportation systems, while also providing short- and mid-term recommendations to begin implementing that framework right away."

In order to both define a long-term vision for a transportation system and ensure that actions are taken right away to implement that vision, this report includes recommendations for:

- An overarching set of citywide transportation goals to guide the decision-making of all city departments and staff whenever they are making transportation, planning, land use or other decisions that may affect the City's transportation system;
- Creation of a new system of coordinating and implementing transportation decision-making including a permanent Transportation Advisory Group, bicycle and pedestrian coordinators and the eventual evolution of the new interdepartmental Transportation Team and Transportation Division in the Department of Public Works into a true Transportation Department;
- A series of executive orders and planning efforts, issued according to specific timetables, to create a new transportation policy and planning framework for Newton, including a Complete Streets policy, bicycle master plan, urban fabric master plan and parking management plan; and
- A host of specific recommendations, large and small, on issues ranging from safety to urban fabric and address the needs of youth, seniors and everyone in between – everyone who travels in Newton whether they drive, use transit, walk or bike.

I thank my fellow TAC members for their enthusiasm and hard work and look forward to a future in which Newton's transportation planning, policies and systems help make Newton an even more wonderful place to live.



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TAC Chair

Members of the Transportation Advisory Committee and Subcommittees

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Table of Contents

Citywide Transportation GoalsPage 6

Governance

Bicycle and Pedestrian CoordinationPage 8

Citywide Policy AdoptionPage 10

Traffic CouncilPage 11

Transportation Advisory GroupPage 13

Transportation DepartmentPage 14

Outreach and Engagement Subcommittee

Street Smart Safety CampaignPage 16

Safety

Overall Safety Recommendation and Goal (submitted 9/27/10)Page 18

Safety SummitsPage 23

Transportation Planning and Complete Streets Subcommittee

Bicycle AccommodationsPage 24

Complete StreetsPage 26

Design ClassificationPage 28

TransitPage 30

Youth and Senior Travel

Pedestrian Safety FeaturesPage 32

Pedestrian WalkwaysPage 34

Reduce Traffic Near SchoolsPage 36

Senior TravelPage 38

Parking

Bicycle lane priority where parking demand is lowPage 40

Parking management plan and managerPage 41

In-lieu feesPage 42

Parking in structuresPage 43

Pilot market-based meter pricingPage 45

Pilot a multi-user parking programPage 46

Pilot on-street bicycle parkingPage 47

Rationalize parking standardsPage 48

Reevaluate Community Parking ProgramPage 49

Reevaluate resident-only parking districtsPage 50

Urban Fabric

Master Plan for TransportationPage 51

Outlaw Future Cul-de-SacsPage 53

Roundabout Master PlanPage 54

Other Recommendations

Increase Car Share OpportunitiesPage 56

Appendix

Additional references.....Page 57

Subcommittee/Topic: Citywide Transportation Goals

Recommendation:

The TAC recommends that the Mayor issue an Executive Order providing for the adoption of the following set of Transportation Goals which shall guide the decision-making of all city departments and executive staff whenever making transportation, planning, land use or other decisions that may affect the City's transportation system. These goals shall also guide the participation of Newton representatives when advocating for regional and statewide transportation policies and investments.

- 1. Real Options:** Newton's transportation system will provide Newton residents and visitors with a variety of options for getting to work, school, shopping, recreation and other destinations. Newton's transportation system will provide real options for everyone, including those too young or too old to drive, those having disabilities that preclude or limit driving and those who choose not to drive for budgetary, health or environmental reasons.
- 2. Quality of Life:** Newton's transportation system and policies will support and advance a broader vision for the Newton that we all want to live in, maintaining the quality of life in our neighborhoods and village centers and reducing the negative impacts of traffic and congestion on those neighborhoods and village centers.
- 3. Reducing Driving and Strengthening Alternatives:** Transportation policies, investments and decision-making will focus on reducing motor vehicle travel, particularly cut-through traffic and solo driving. While driving will remain an important option for many trips, the City will work to strengthen alternatives including walking, biking, and public transportation and to capture more of the costs of motor vehicle travel from those who drive.
- 4. Safety:** Safe travel will be a top priority and transportation policies, investments and enforcement strategies will be based on the principle of "safety first" so that everyone (from children to seniors and including pedestrians, bicyclists and scooter riders) feels safe and so that motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians alike practice safe travel behavior.
- 5. Balance:** Transportation policies, investments and decision-making will be designed to address and improve performance across all modes of travel and balance the needs of all users of the transportation system (including drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists) rather than focusing solely on a single transportation mode or element of the problem (for example, traffic congestion).
- 6. Smart Growth:** Creating real transportation choices and reducing driving will require changes to Newton's development patterns and therefore all transportation, planning and land use decisions will support walkable, mixed-use and higher density development (particularly where transit is or will be available) in order to enable more walking, biking and use of public transportation.
- 7. Consistency:** Transportation policies, investments and decision-making will also be consistent with and support the City of Newton's goals and policies with respect to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and promoting healthy lifestyles for all residents.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

In addition to the specific recommendations made by the TAC, it is important for the mayor to adopt an overall set of goals to govern all of the transportation and related decision-making in Newton. The objective of these goals is for Newton to have a balanced, well performing transportation network. Because the current system is so imbalanced in favor of cars, the goals focus on reducing driving and increasing use of alternatives. Even a small reduction in driving in Newton should help improve traffic flow, so reducing the number of cars on the road is good for everyone in Newton, including drivers.

Action Required:

Adoption of an Executive Order.

Recommended Timeline:

Within 30 days after presentation of final TAC recommendations to the Mayor.

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

None.

Cost implications:

None.

Subcommittee/Topic: Governance/Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordination

Recommendation:

The Mayor should designate a Bicycle Coordinator and a separate Pedestrian Coordinator in order to coordinate issues relating to biking and walking, respectively, across all city departments and to facilitate the adoption of policies and the implementation of projects to serve cyclists and pedestrians. The Mayor should also create and appoint the members of an official City of Newton Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee to provide broad-based citizen input, and assist in the work of, the Bicycle Coordinator and Pedestrian Coordinator.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

In its September 2010 safety-related recommendations, the TAC recommended as follows:

“The Mayor should immediately designate a Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator to address all pedestrian and bicycle pedestrian issues, including safety issues, across all city departments. The coordinator should oversee internal coordination across all city departments to expedite consideration and implementation of all bicycle and pedestrian-related issues”

This recommendation builds on that prior recommendation. After additional consideration, the TAC has concluded that the work to be done (including that recommended elsewhere in these recommendations) on both bicycle and pedestrian issues requires two separate coordinator positions. A dedicated Bicycle Coordinator is also helpful in order for Newton to win certification as a Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists.

The TAC also recommends the creation of an official City of Newton Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, which could either be a freestanding committee or a subcommittee of the Transportation Advisory Group (see related recommendation). The City of Newton is blessed with three citizen groups actively working on bicycle and pedestrian issues: the Bicycle/Pedestrian Task Force (a citizen group which works to increase bicycle and pedestrian awareness and facilitation), Bike Newton (a non-profit organization working to make Newton bicycle-friendly) and the Newton Safe Routes Task Force (a task force comprised of parents and city employees committed to encouraging more walking, cycling and bus use and to reducing congestion and pollution from the front of Newton schools). The City itself, however, has no official body for receiving citizen input on bicycle and pedestrian issues and the TAC believes that such a body is needed to ensure the timely implementation of the TAC’s recommendations with respect to biking and walkability.

Action Required:

The Mayor should designate separate Bicycle and Pedestrian coordinators and create and appoint the members of a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

Recommended Timeline:

Coordinators should be named and the advisory committee designated and functioning by no later than December 1, 2011.

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

If current staffing and budgetary constraints preclude the designation of city staff as Bicycle Coordinator and Pedestrian Coordinator, then the positions could be filled by volunteers supported by existing staff from the Planning and Development Department.

Cost implications:

Staffing costs if the coordinator positions are filled by city staff; none if the positions are filled by volunteers

Subcommittee/Topic: Governance/Citywide Policy Adoption

Recommendation:

Whenever possible, the executive departments with responsibility for transportation projects and transportation-related land use decisions should act pursuant to written policies rather than on a case-by-case basis. In order to move to such a policy-based approach the Transportation Team, working with the new Transportation Advisory Group, should develop a complete list of policies needed to implement all TAC recommendations and then prioritize the development of such policies.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

Many transportation and land use decisions in Newton are made on a case-by-case basis rather than pursuant to overarching policies designed to guide decisions with respect to specific projects. Even when policies have been put in place, many are informal, without public input into their development and sometimes not even reduced to writing. In order to implement the Transportation Goals recommended by the TAC and achieve more consistent and progressive transportation policies and projects, the City of Newton should seek to develop a set of written policies to guide decision making on specific projects by the Planning and Development, Public Works and School departments as well as by the Traffic Council. The TAC recommendations already include numerous recommendations with respect to specific policies (e.g. context sensitive design, Complete Streets, transportation elements in special permits). The TAC therefore recommends that the Transportation Team, working with the new Transportation Advisory Group, develop a complete list of policies needed to implement the TAC recommendations and then prioritize the development of such policies. Development of these new policies should involve input from appropriate staff across all relevant executive departments, from the Board of Alderman where appropriate and from the public. All policies, once finalized, should be in writing. Once a relevant policy has been developed, subsequent decisions on specific projects and decisions by both executive departments and the Traffic Council should be based on those policies.

Action Required:

Policies that govern executive agencies can be developed and adopted by those agencies or through an Executive Order. Policies that govern the decisions of Traffic Council would also have to be adopted by Traffic Council.

Recommended Timeline:

Develop a prioritized list of needed policies by Spring 2012, with a goal of completing all policies needed to fully implement all TAC recommendations by December 31, 2012.

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

While staff resources will be needed to research, develop and write policies, this approach could ultimately save staff resources because the additional investment of staff time to develop policies should reduce the time spent on specific decisions and projects as those policies are applied.

Cost implications:

Staffing costs only

Subcommittee/Topic: Governance/Traffic Council

Recommendation:

Decisions on specific transportation projects by the Traffic Council should be consistent with the recommendations of this Transportation Advisory Committee and should whenever possible be made by applying written policies, developed through a public process, to the facts and context of specific projects. The ordinance creating the Traffic Council should be reviewed and, if appropriate, amended in order to ensure that the Traffic Council's jurisdiction is limited to those situations in which decision making by such a public body is necessary and appropriate (as opposed to those projects where professional staff can appropriately make the decision). In addition, the appeals process should be changed to require the filing of an appeal by three or more members of the Board of Alderman (including at least one from outside the ward within which a transportation/traffic matter is being considered).

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

Many transportation-related decisions that are made by the professional staff of Transportation and Planning departments in Massachusetts and throughout the United States are, in Newton, made by the Traffic Council. While this approach has important benefits by involving the public in such decisions, it can often slow down the process of making decisions about important transportation projects. As the Council's web page currently notes "Due to the volume of petitions received, there is approximately a 3 to 6 month wait for requests to be heard." The TAC therefore makes two recommendations to streamline the work of Traffic Council: that a review be conducted to see if any decisions currently within the jurisdiction of the Traffic Council should be removed (and transferred to professional staff) and that the Traffic Council increasingly seek to act through the application of generally applicable written policies rather than on a case-by-case basis. The Council itself has begun to implement such a policy-based approach through the adoption of policies such as one on requests for handicap parking spaces and the TAC believes that these efforts should be expanded and institutionalized. In addition, the TAC believes that the current appeals process – under which a single member of the Board of Alderman can appeal a decision of the Traffic Council to the full Board of Alderman – is time-consuming and works against the goal of greater policy-based decision making and therefore recommends changes to limit the number of appeals.

Action Required:

An ordinance change is required to change the appeals process and make any changes in jurisdiction identified in the recommended review of Traffic Council jurisdiction. The Traffic Council already has the authority to develop and adopt written policies to guide its decision making.

Recommended Timeline:

The review of Traffic Council jurisdiction should be completed by June 2012 so that any recommended changes, along with the TAC's recommended changes to the appeals process, can be docketed as an ordinance change in July 2012.

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

Unknown amount of staff time

Cost implications:

None

Subcommittee/Topic: Governance/Transportation Advisory Group

Recommendation:

The Mayor should create a Transportation Advisory Group as an advisory body to the Mayor's Office. While the TAC believes that the City of Newton would benefit from the establishment of such a Group, at a minimum a Transportation Advisory Group is needed for the next two to three years to advise the executive departments on the implementation of this TAC's recommendations.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

The work of this Transportation Advisory Committee has demonstrated the breadth, complexity and importance of transportation issues facing the City of Newton. Even as the work of the TAC is completed, there remains much to be done to implement our many recommendations. The TAC believes that the work of implementation should continue to be informed by citizen input and therefore recommends (consistent with prior recommendations by the League of Women Voters and others) that the Mayor create a Transportation Advisory Group. While this body would be advisory in nature, it would help ensure broad-based citizen input into the ongoing process of setting transportation policy and making decisions on transportation projects in Newton. Because of the cross-departmental nature of transportation issues, the TAC recommends that this Group be advisory to the Mayor (rather than the Planning and Development department), at least until such time as a Transportation Department is created (see related recommendation).

Action Required:

If possible, the Mayor should issue an Executive Order creating a Transportation Advisory Group (rather than docketing an ordinance to create such a group).

Recommended Timeline:

The new TAG should be created and functioning by January 2012 so that it can begin working with the Transportation Team and department staff to begin implementation of these TAC recommendations as soon as possible.

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

Existing staff would support the new TAG, as they have supported this TAC.

Cost implications:

None other than continued staffing

Subcommittee/Topic: Governance/Transportation Department

Recommendation:

The City of Newton should continue and enhance coordination across the many executive departments responsible for different aspects of transportation, building on the relatively new “Transportation Team” and newly-created Transportation Division in the Department of Public Works and ensuring that each has clear mandates, roles and responsibilities. Ultimately, to fully implement the TAC’s proposed goals and recommendations, the City of Newton should create a Transportation Department which would work in close coordination with an enhanced transportation group within the Planning and Development Department.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

The Mayor’s charge to the TAC included a request that our recommendations address “how the city can better organize and coordinate its transportation decision making across departments.” Currently transportation functions are spread across a wide range of city departments including Engineering, Planning and Development, Police, Public Works, Schools, Senior Services (which includes the Senior Transportation system) and Treasury (which includes the Parking Department). The TAC supports two policy initiatives recently undertaken by the Mayor to promote more cross-department coordination on transportation issues. First, since November, a “Transportation Team” has been meeting weekly, bringing together representatives from many of the traffic/transportation entities in the City (Public Works, Planning, Engineering, Police) to address common issues and streamline the process of planning, design, construction, and enforcement of transportation infrastructure and/or policy. In addition, the Mayor’s budget for fiscal year 2012 creates a Transportation Division within the Department of Public Works.

The Mayor should continue to maximize coordination both within DPW through the new Transportation Division and across departments with the Transportation Team. These entities should play an increasingly more prominent and public role in addressing transportation issues, applying the goals and developing the policies recommended by the TAC. The Transportation Team should be expanded to include at least periodic participation by the school department, senior services and the parking department.

Ultimately, however, Newton needs a department with jurisdiction over all issues relating to transportation, including traffic and parking, which would require consolidating the parking department currently in Treasury and the various transportation-related pieces of Public Works and Engineering. Transportation planning responsibilities could, however, continue to remain within Planning and Development, which would benefit from the creation of an intra-departmental transportation coordination group so that the transportation planner (or planners, in the future) coordinate more closely with others in the department with transportation-related responsibilities (e.g. in permitting, zoning and land use contexts) as well as to coordinate with the Transportation Team and ultimately Transportation Department. The creation of a Transportation Department responsible for all aspects of transportation, traffic and parking other than planning and development would parallel the structure used successfully in other Massachusetts cities, such as Cambridge (which has a Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department as well as an

Environmental and Transportation Division within the Department of Community Development) and Somerville.

Action Required:

An ordinance change would be required to create a Transportation Department. Until then, the executive should continue to support and enhance the Transportation Team as well as to provide for better staff coordination on transportation issues within both the Department of Public Works (e.g. the new Transportation Division) and Planning and Development (e.g. between the transportation planner position and the many other staff with at least some transportation-related responsibilities).

Recommended Timeline:

Docket an ordinance to create a Transportation Department as soon as possible in order to implement the new departmental structure in the fiscal year 2013 budget.

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

While this recommendation could be implemented by moving existing staff to the new Transportation Department, additional staff positions (when budgetary constraints allow) would enhance the ability of both the Transportation Department and the transportation group within Planning and Development to carry out the many recommendations of the TAC.

Cost implications:

Dependent on whether new staffing is provided

Subcommittee/Topic: Outreach and Engagement Subcommittee/“Street Smart” Newton Safety Campaign

Recommendation:

The Outreach and Engagement Subcommittee is recommending a citywide safety campaign to be endorsed by the Mayor and his office. This is not a change of policy, but a public relations initiative in response to the fatalities and accidents in Newton from the previous year.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

This campaign is to deepen the awareness created in the City in response to the fatalities and accidents in Newton in 2009 and 2010. The campaign is designed to assist citizens of Newton to be a resource for all ages on how to operate a motor vehicle, ride bicycles and pedestrian safety. Other cities in the US have launched safety campaigns to provide the public resources, announcements and messages from City officials regarding safety. Our subcommittee designed a website that is virtually maintenance free for this campaign, and is currently being hosted by NNHS. This website can be utilized as a online portal for other TAC subcommittees, the school system and other organizations in the City to provide transportation related information.

The first step to a safety campaign is branding. We recommend “Street Smart” as a universal brand for Newton’s safety campaign. Our recommendation is to make this brand very usable and recognizable throughout the city.

The first phase of the campaign will be introduced via the City of Newton’s existing website as a link. The second phase of the campaign can be introduced via print. A budget is needed for this. The cost of print is dependent of what scale the City wants this campaign to be. Scalability can be managed to different modes of advertising, and this will depend on strategy.

Action Required:

- We recommend that the Mayor approve the website launch
- City takes over hosting the website from NNSH
- The homepage offers the Mayor an opportunity to issue a statement that is posted on the homepage
- The Mayor assigns a staff member to manage content if needed. If edit is required, this person will involve IT to make edits on the website
- The Mayor issues a press release regarding the campaign or hold a press release to launch the campaign
- If funding is available, a print campaign can be created, posted and made available to senior centers, public buildings, places of worship, schools and local businesses.

Recommended Timeline:

- Website completed October, 2011
- Launch the website publicly November, 2011

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

- The website is designed and virtually maintenance free for at least two years. If desired the City can assign an existing IT resource to manage the site.

Cost implications:

- Students at NNHS spent this semester working with our subcommittee in designing this website free of charge.
- If a print campaign is decided, NSHS has volunteered their time.

Executive Summary for Proposed Recommendation:

Our subcommittee strongly recommends that the TAC fully support this campaign. This will provide the City of Newton and its citizens a great resource of information that is useful to day-to-day life. It can prevent future accidents and most of all, save lives.

Subcommittee: Safety Subcommittee (Submitted to Mayor Setti D. Warren on September 27, 2010)

Overall Recommendation and Goal:

The recent spate of transportation-related fatalities in Newton is unacceptable in a city that values the life and well-being of every resident and visitor. Too many Newton residents, especially pedestrians and cyclists, feel that the city's streets (including crosswalks and intersections) are not safe and this lack of safety limits our transportation options. The Newton Transportation Advisory Committee believes that making travel safer in Newton requires widespread changes to create a culture of "safety first" where everyone (including children and seniors, bicyclists and pedestrians) feels safe and safe travel behavior is practiced by motorists, motorcycle and scooter riders, bicyclists and pedestrians alike. The TAC therefore recommends that you immediately launch a comprehensive effort to make Newton safe for all travelers, with a specific goal of eliminating transportation-related fatalities in the city in 2011.

Creating a culture and practice of travel safety in Newton will require a combination of:

- **New policies** to support transportation safety;
- **Infrastructure** that promotes safety;
- **Education and outreach** to Newton residents about safe travel behavior; and
- **Enforcement** of existing laws and ordinances designed to ensure safety.

The recommendations that follow are accordingly organized into these four categories.

These recommendations were initially developed by the Safety Subcommittee of the TAC in a series of four meetings held since the group was convened in July and adopted by consensus at the September 20 meeting of the TAC. They represent a wide-ranging but preliminary set of recommendations in response to your request for an initial set of safety-related recommendations by September 30. The TAC will continue to focus on safety as a critical issue as it develops its broader recommendations and to solicit additional safety-related ideas from the public through the ongoing TAC public outreach and engagement process.

We ask that you provide the TAC with feedback as to which of these recommendations you will accept, which require items to be docketed with the Board of Aldermen and which will not be implemented. If there are recommendations requiring clarification, we ask that you send them back to the TAC for clarification, more specific recommendations or further study.

We emphasize that this represents only a first round of recommendations and that we will be providing you with many additional recommendations, including additional recommendations on topics such as governance and Complete Streets that are included in this set of recommendations.

Recommended New Policies and Programs:

The City should adopt proactive policies to support transportation safety, rather than simply reacting to individual incidents and citizen requests, organize the work of its departments to ensure both internal coordination and excellent communication with the public on issues of transportation safety and enhance the collection and analysis of safety-related data.

Policies

Even before the TAC provides more complete recommendations on the specifics of a “Complete Streets” design principles and processes to ensure that all streets are designed and maintained so as to accommodate all users of all ages and abilities, the City should prioritize the implementation of the following policy changes:

- A policy on roadway markings (a “painting policy”) that specifies policies regarding the use of roadway marking (striped shoulders, crosswalks, etc.) to maximize safety by separating pedestrians and cyclists from moving traffic; this policy should be applied to all repaving and maintenance projects beginning this fall.
- In order to ensure that pedestrians have year-round access to all sidewalks and crosswalks, the Mayor should work with the Alderman and civic groups to expedite the introduction and passage of a sidewalk snow clearance ordinance that would take effect this winter.
- A policy directive to ensure that all city employees serve as models of safe driving/travel behavior.

Governance

- The City should create a user-friendly, transparent process for citizen complaints on transportation-safety related issues that provides the complainant with feedback on the resolution of the complaint.
- Pending further recommendations from the TAC on issues of governance, the Mayor should immediately designate a Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator to address all the pedestrian and bicycle issues, including safety issues, across all city departments. The coordinator should overs internal coordinator across all city departments to expedite consideration and implementation of all bicycle and pedestrian-related issues, particularly those relating to safety.

Data Collection

- The City should adopt new procedures for the collection of information about all traffic incidents to which public safety personnel respond, including those involving cyclists and pedestrians in addition to motorists.
- The City should create a web-based system to allow reporting of information by the public regarding safety-related incidents in which no public safety personnel are involved.
- All of this information should be available to the public and data about specific incidents as well as the entire body of information should be analyzed by staff across all relevant city

departments and used proactively to inform public outreach efforts, policymaking and the establishment of priorities for infrastructure spending.

Infrastructure for Safe Travel:

The design and operation of streets, sidewalks, crosswalks and signs can enhance travel safety and even before the TAC provides more complete recommendations on the specifics of “Complete Streets” design principles and processes, the City should immediately begin to implement Complete Streets design principles in order to ensure that Newton’s streets are safer and accommodate the needs of all users.

- The City should implement a “fix it first” approach to infrastructure improvements, prioritizing safety-related work both when undertaking maintenance (e.g. repainting crosswalks) and in establishing capital priorities.
- The City should, this fall, implement a series of pilot projects designed to separate bikes from moving traffic; a working group should continue to work toward consensus on pilot projects for six stretches of roadway that have been under discussion for some time (Langley between Centre and Beacon, Beacon Street between Walnut and Beethoven, Chestnut Street between Beacon and Commonwealth, Hammond St. south of Beacon, College between Beacon and Commonwealth, Hammond St. between Commonwealth and Beacon)
- Because traffic lights are a crucial piece of safety infrastructure, the City should prioritize safety (over congestion relief/traffic flow) in implementing the just-launched effort to retime traffic lights across the City.
- The City should create an online project tracking system for all repaving, maintenance and roadway reconstruction projects, as well as establishing a public process to be consistent with “Complete Street” design principles to ensure early and effective public input into the design of all such projects.
- The City should create a program that allows and encourages small businesses and residences to “adopt” sidewalks and crosswalks in order to ensure that they are properly maintained year-round.

Education and Outreach:

The City should launch a comprehensive outreach and education effort to promote both an overall citywide culture of “safety first” where everyone (including children and seniors, bicyclists and

pedestrians) feels safe, as well as specific safe travel practices and behaviors by motorists, motorcycle and scooter riders, bicyclists and pedestrians alike. The need for this campaign is urgent and it should be undertaken immediately in order to capitalize on growing awareness of the importance of transportation safety.

- The City should ensure that, this fall, every student in grades K-12 receives a minimum of one hour of in-school, grade-appropriate pedestrian/bicycle/driving safety education as a “down payment” on establishing a comprehensive program of in-school safety education.
- The Mayor should work with the Superintendent and the School Department to develop a set of developmentally-appropriate goals for student travel that focuses on getting to and from school as safely and independently as possible in as few cars as possible; the School Department and each school should then review all existing policies on drop-off/pick-up, walking and biking to school, student parking and all transportation-related subsidies and costs to conform to this policy.
- The City should create and implement an outreach and education campaign about the new Safe Driving Law which becomes effective in Massachusetts on September 30 and bans text-messaging for all Massachusetts drivers and prohibits junior operators from using cell phones, with particular attention to educating teens about new texting/cell phone restrictions.
- The City should create and implement a citywide outreach and education campaign designed to promote a citywide culture of “safety first” and should seek state and philanthropic resources to support implementation of such a campaign.
- The City should continue and expand the “Safe Routes to School” program, including reinstating a citywide coordination function.
- The City should create a working group to develop changes to the driver’s education curriculum designed to promote safe driving, including safe driving near bicyclists and pedestrians.
- The City should regularly deploy its “speed boards” to help educate and slow-down motorists in priority locations.
- The Mayor should convene members of the Board of Alderman, city employees and members of the public at a “Safety Summit” to kick off the citywide “safety first” effort and to develop additional ideas and strategies for eliminating transportation-related fatalities in Newton in 2011.

Enforcement:

The City should enhance and intensify enforcement of traffic and parking laws and ordinances as one component of a broader effort to promote safe travel behavior in Newton.

- The City should institute a program of targeted, high visibility enforcement efforts in specific locations around the city focusing on moving violations most likely to create unsafe conditions (e.g. running red lights, blocking the box and not stopping for pedestrians at crosswalks) and most likely to be reduced by enforcement efforts.
- The City should prioritize parking enforcement that addresses safety issues (e.g. parked cars that block line of sight or curb cuts or crosswalks).
- The City should work with the Police Department, School Department, other city departments and interested organizations and members of the public to develop an enforcement strategy for the new Safe Driving Law which becomes effective in Massachusetts on September 30 and bans text-messaging for all Massachusetts drivers and prohibits junior operators from using cell phones.
- The City should issue a training memorandum to police officers that clarifies “reasonable and prudent” expectation for driver behavior and bicyclist safe operation, in order to inform their enforcement of traffic laws and ordinances.

Subcommittee/Topic: Safety Summits

Recommendation:

The Mayor should hold regular safety forums to highlight the accomplishments, challenges and educational opportunities around safety.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

It is important to emphasize safety at all times and to make safety a recurring message. Safety Forums have been shown to improve communication between officials and citizens and to promote meaningful behavior change in cities where they have been held, including Boston. Citizens should be encouraged to share personal experiences and to interact with city staff, including the Police Department representatives. We especially want young people to share their experiences on the road.

Action Required:

The Mayor should direct his staff to plan and participate in regular Safety Forums.

Recommended Timeline:

This should occur in the fall and spring of each school year. It is important to emphasize safety at all times and to make safety a recurring message.

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

Representatives from the Newton Police Department, Engineering, Planning, elected officials (members of the Board of Aldermen and especially Public Safety Committee), the Mayor and representatives from the Mayor's office

Cost implications:

None

Subcommittee/Topic: Planning and Complete Streets - Bicycle Accommodations

Recommendation:

The City of Newton will develop and implement a Bicycle Master Plan.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

Newton's Comprehensive Plan recognizes that bicycle travel constitutes a valuable component for providing mobility and access throughout the city. Lack of a bicycle plan has been pointed out as a reason that Newton lags behind some other cities in terms of providing safe, comfortable, and useful bicycle accommodations. The Transportation Advisory Committee has an opportunity to change this.

Action Required:

- 1) That the city completes a planning process by April 30, 2012 that results in a Bicycle Master Plan for Newton.
- 2) That the city will develop new bicycle accommodations on Newton's roads, at least 20 miles in the next 5 years, based on the recommendations of the Bicycle Master Plan.
- 3) That the city allocates at least 5% of its Chapter 90 transportation budget annually to implement the Bicycle Master Plan and other bicycle-friendly improvements.
- 4) That the city appoints a Bicycle Coordinator, whose job it will be to implement the Bicycle Master Plan.

Recommended Timeline:

At least 3 miles of bicycle lanes or other specific roadway accommodations to be implemented in 2011 and at least 20 miles of bicycle lanes or other specific roadway accommodations to be implemented by 2015

Allocation of 5% of Chapter 90 budget for bicycle enhancements to be presented by Mayor with next budget cycle, effective no later than October 1, 2012

Bicycle Master Plan adopted after public process, no later than April 30, 2012.

Bicycle Coordinator appointed by city no later than December 1, 2011.

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

Establishment of "transportation website" on City webpage explaining city's bicycle plan and policies

Significant allocation of time and effort of city planning staff to conduct meetings and to coordinate public process for developing Newton's Master Bicycle Plan

Significant allocation of time and effort by Department of Public Works staff in implementing Bicycle Plan

Cost implications:

Annual reallocation of 5% of Chapter 90 budget per year, or about \$100,000 per year to implementing Bicycle Plan recommendations

No additional costs: Bicycle Plan recommendations are a revenue neutral proposal.

Bicycle coordinator may be paid or volunteer position, depending on budget.

Executive Summary for Recommendation:

Improving bicycle access in Newton will increase safety and utilization of this mode of travel and may bring economic benefits. Although there have been a number of efforts to create a uniform bicycle plan in Newton, there is currently no officially sanctioned plan. This proposal will lead to the development, adoption, and implementation of a Bicycle Plan in Newton that will shape policy for a rational approach to improving access by bicycling in our city.

Subcommittee/Topic: Planning and Complete Streets – Complete Streets

Recommendation:

Newton will implement a Complete Streets policy and utilize Context Sensitive Design for its roadways.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

The intent of Complete Streets begins with a premise that all people, not just car users, must be taken into consideration of street design. Therefore, the system must be appropriately concerned with accommodating all types of users and creating a desirable balance. Context sensitive design considers adjacent land uses and community intent in the design of roadways.

Action Required:

- 1) That the Mayor adopts a Complete Streets policy, one that equitably considers the needs of multiple modes of travel (car, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian).
- 2) That the city follows a public participation process in the initiation, review, approval, and implementation of certain roadway projects.
- 3) That the city utilizes Context Sensitive Design in its roadway planning process such that roadway design is consistent and adaptable to community values.
- 4) That the city implements Complete Streets and Context Sensitive Design policies based on flexible approaches to existing roadway engineering standards. Examples include setting maximum 25 mph design speeds, allowing narrow lane widths, considering level of service of intersections based on pedestrian needs, and others.

Recommended Timeline:

Adoption by Mayor by Executive order as city-wide policy by January 1, 2012

Complete Streets policy and process methods implemented by Planning and Public Works departments by March 1, 2012.

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

Establishment of “transportation website” on City webpage explaining Complete Streets policy

Significant allocation of time and effort of city planning and public works department staff to follow public process requirements of implementing policy

Cost implications:

No immediate costs, but as projects move forward there may be costs associated with street improvements that are not typically paid for by state or federal funding

Examples include: undergrounding of utilities, street furniture, traffic calming efforts, etc.

Executive Summary for Recommendation:

Roadway projects must serve to improve and not degrade access for all users whenever possible, including auto drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users. The *Comprehensive Plan* calls for the design of our roadways to avoid, to the extent feasible, the inducement of more auto traffic passing over Newton's local streets. As such, implementing a Complete Streets policy and using Context Sensitive Design for our roadways will fulfill the goals of maintaining excellent transportation resources for our city.

Subcommittee/Topic: Planning and Complete Streets – Design Classification

Recommendation:

Newton will develop and implement a new Design Classification system for its roadways.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

Updating the design classification system of roadways, along with corollary guidance on street design characteristics, will allow for more predictability in evaluating whether proposals for streetscape changes are consistent with the City's intentions for the design and character of its roadways.

Action Required:

- 1) Revise the Design Classification system currently in the Comprehensive Plan to include existing design types not incorporated into the prior classification: highways, arterials, private roads, alleys, and paths.
- 2) Categorize arterial roads in Newton as either "Regional Routes" or "Urban Major Streets" and define these categories.
- 3) Expand the concept of "Village Center Roads" by expanding the utilization of this design type to certain non-village areas and rename these as having a "Main Streets" design.
- 4) Prioritize design under the new Design Classification System to follow the concepts of Complete Streets and also make design decisions contingent upon following the tenets of Context Sensitive Design, so that roadway segments are of a type and scale that matches the land use and place making intentions of the community.

Recommended Timeline:

Adoption by Mayor by Executive order as city-wide policy by December 1, 2011

Docket of Design Classification amendment to Comprehensive Plan with Board of Aldermen by January 1, 2012

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

Education effort for city staff and departments, followed by community outreach

Establishment of "transportation website" on City webpage explaining policy

Significant allocation of time and effort of city Planning and Public Works Departments staff to develop design classification maps and plans

Cost implications:

Internal effort by existing city staff, no additional cost expected. Consultants not necessary

Executive Summary for Recommendation:

Newton's Comprehensive Plan describes the existing transportation network in the city based on Functional Classification and Design Type Classification systems. The city's network of roadways faces continued demand from motorists while needing substantial enhancement in its pedestrian, bicycle, and public transport options. Classification can help guide decisions about design and priorities for street reconstruction, maintenance, bicycle use, and pedestrian accommodations.

Subcommittee/Topic: Planning and Complete Streets: Transit

Recommendation:

The Mayor and all city departments will promote regional and local efforts to improve and expand rail and bus capacity and access in Newton.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

Newton benefits from having multiple public transit options that provide service to various neighborhoods of the city. However, our public transit system can be improved so that it collectively serves all segments of the city throughout the day and provides increasingly viable alternatives to residents' use of private vehicles.

Action Required:

1) Maintenance: Provide strong municipal support to the MBTA's plan to maintain, repair, and upgrade its existing public transit infrastructure, and advocate for certain specific enhancements to the existing infrastructure located within Newton.

2) Capacity and Access: Advocate for efforts to improve capacity to existing transit lines. Rationalize parking policies around rail transit stations to improve access, and work to improve pedestrian and bicycle connections. Develop policies to increase transit usage among city residents and municipal employees. Undertake efforts to provide transit access to currently underserved areas of the city.

3) Expansion: Identify certain bus and rail routes as projects for feasibility analysis to determine whether the extension of these routes is feasible and cost-effective. Specifically, light rail extension to the Needham Street corridor and upgrades to the commuter rail system should be pursued. Transit-related policies that will lead to increased job growth and economic expansion should be pursued.

4) Urban density: Promote transit use as part of the permitting process for businesses and for new growth and development. Require public transit use to be incorporated into proposals for any new development or redevelopment within Newton and institute transit-friendly policies to encourage existing Newton businesses and institutions to adopt them. Support regional policies that promote "infill" projects

Recommended Timeline:

Adoption by Mayor by Executive order as citywide policy by February 1, 2012

Meetings with relevant state and regional agencies to inform about Newton's transit needs to be conducted by December 1, 2011.

Municipal policies on transit use to be implemented by March 1, 2012.

Zoning amendment regarding transit accessibility to be docketed for Board of Aldermen by March 1, 2012

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

Establishment of “transportation website” on City webpage explaining city’s transit policies, plans and intentions

Significant allocation of time and effort of city planning staff to develop policy positions and to conduct meetings at state and regional levels advocating for Newton’s transit policies

Feasibility studies for transit extensions will likely require outside consultants.

Cost implications:

Feasibility studies may incur a cost that will be determined based on public bid requirements and the extent of the work.

Grants (federal, state, regional) and collaborative efforts with surrounding communities, MAPC, MPO, and MBTA may help share some of these costs.

Executive Summary for Recommendation:

It is important that we ensure that the City’s policies, plans, investments, and actions on transportation enhance the quality of life in Newton’s neighborhoods and village centers. The way we shape our transportation resources will be vital in promoting economic development in Newton. As such, it is crucial that we work to develop an overall framework within Newton to address our transit infrastructure. Also, it will be important to advocate for regional and statewide policies and investments that support our vision of Newton’s system of bus and rail transit routes.

Subcommittee/Topic: Youth and Senior Travel/Pedestrian Safety Features

Recommendation:

Improve pedestrian safety features such crosswalks, lights, etc. focusing initially on high volume crossings and crossings frequently used by children, seniors or people with disabilities.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation: Make safer for all users especially for our most vulnerable population (children, senior, people with disabilities). Our recommendation supports the Transportation and Mobility Goals of Newton's Comprehensive Plan: "To Enhance and Promote Equity in Mobility" and "To Maintain City Character and Quality of Life".

Action Required:

Determine Design Standards Specific to Areas with Vulnerable Populations (seniors, children and people with disabilities) including crosswalk striping (hatching or solid colors improves visibility for cars and attracts pedestrians to use), roadway markings, road design signage, elevated crosswalks, longer signal lengths and countdown walk signals, traffic islands. These standards would be focused primarily on improving pedestrian safety. (look to MAPC guidelines) *These standards may vary from already established citywide standards.*

Look to other communities for a best practices such as bolt down crosswalk stanchions that are in place year-round in Boston vs. Newton's moveable ones that are only in place April – November.

Review and revise Network Maintenance Schedule for crosswalk striping and other features, increasing the frequency of repainting, especially on busier streets. Review timing to maximize usefulness of newly painted lines.

Produce semi-annual reports for the Mayor and public on network completion and key pedestrian safety measures.

Support state and national efforts to improve pedestrian safety and mobility.

Charge a City Employee or Commission with the authority to direct actions

Recommended Timeline:

Establish standards by May, 2012. Begin implementation as soon as possible thereafter.

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

Input and agreement from Planning and Development staff on Prioritization Criteria. Staff time to support and/or create bi-annual reports.

Cost implications:

Dedicated annual expense for network completion, maintenance, improvements, monitoring and reporting

Subcommittee/Topic: Youth and Senior Travel/Pedestrian Walkways

Recommendation:

Provide comfortable, convenient, and safe pedestrian walkways throughout the city including a complete network of paved walkways, which are accessible to all users. Ensure walkways are well maintained.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

Make walking a viable transportation alternative in all neighborhoods for all users. Improve the safety for all people using the walkways, especially for our most vulnerable population (children, senior, people with disabilities). Our recommendation supports the Transportation and Mobility Goals of Newton's Comprehensive Plan: "To Enhance and Promote Equity in Mobility" and "To Maintain City Character and Quality of Life".

Action Required:

1. Determine **Prioritization Criteria** to facilitate an equitable, transparent process to complete the sidewalk network, **ensuring the most critical walkways are done first**. Criteria should include (but not limited to): proximity to major destinations, accident statistics, type of street, speed on street. The general public should have the opportunity to give input on the criteria. *This decouples walkways from the current waiting list and road upgrade process.*
2. Designate a **Dedicated Funding Stream** for network completion and a set percentage for on-going maintenance. Consider alternative funding sources such as: enabling residents to pay 100% if they so choose, requiring residents to complete sidewalk gaps prior to property transfer and/or associated with special permits, increase parking meter fees to support sidewalk enhancements.
3. **Incorporate pedestrian mobility planning during zoning review process for housing developments and other special permits**. This should be aimed at ensuring development is maximizing pedestrian mobility.
4. Produce **Semi-Annual Reports** for the Mayor and public on network completion and key pedestrian safety measures.
5. **Support state and national efforts** to improve pedestrian safety and mobility.
6. **Charge a City Employee or Commission** with the authority to direct actions

Recommended Timeline:

Complete network within 5 years (2016). Network maintenance and improvements would be on-going.

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

Input and agreement from Planning and Development staff on Prioritization Criteria. Staff time to support and/or create bi-annual reports.

Cost implications:

Dedicated annual expense for network completion, maintenance, improvements, monitoring and reporting

Subcommittee/Topic: Youth and Senior Travel/Reduce Traffic Near Schools

Recommendation:

Direct the School Department to work with the Planning and Development Department to address the critical traffic and safety issues present during arrival and dismissal periods at schools. The goal is to reduce car traffic overall especially near the schools, reduce gridlock/traffic issues en route to schools, keep children safe during these busier periods and support efforts to increase the number of children walking to school.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

Despite efforts to promote walking to school through The Newton Safe Routes to School Task Force, too many children continue to arrive at school by car. This car-centered school transportation has a big impact on the traffic and environmental conditions in Newton. Safe Routes promotes the 3 E's: education; engineering; and enforcement as all being critical. Efforts have been focused primarily on education (and this has been parent driven) and some efforts on enforcement (this is not consistent). The critical engineering piece has been directed at a few schools, but needs broader focus and to be applied to every school.

Action Required:

1. **Adopt hierarchy of how kids should be getting to school and home.** Walking/Biking/Busing are first, being driven should be last resort. Set school-by-school goals and measure against them.
2. **Engage School Department and Newton Police in the education effort,** including disseminating important arrival/dismissal/walking information to students and families. Information will hopefully be taken more seriously.
3. **Identify satellite drop-off areas** at each school to minimize traffic near schools– light blue zones.
4. **Complete a comprehensive review at schools** aimed at calming traffic flow at high volume periods. Start with problem **schools. Eventually review all schools.** Should be done at high volume “winter” months.
5. **Deliver “Safety Town” program** for children entering Kindergarten. Can be delivered in preschool programs and as summer fair option.
6. **Incorporate school transportation planning during zoning review process for special permits with significant housing.** This should be aimed at ensuring development that there is a safe, defined way to get to school for any children in this new housing.
7. **Review School Transportation.** Are there opportunities to increase bus ridership through route changes and/or additional buses? At what cost? What is the impact to the city of the increased traffic from parents driving?

8. Be prepared to **adopt stronger snow shoveling ordinance so that walking students can safely walk year round**
9. **Ensure policies are consistent with goals.** For example, it should not be less expensive for a parking permit, than a bus pass.
10. **Create citywide position focused on pedestrian and bike access and safety.** Should oversee Safe Routes to School efforts, safety education for school children, and implementation of TAC recommendations, mobility manager for seniors.

Recommended Timeline:

Identify satellite drop-off areas by May 2012.

Complete review of schools by 2013. Implement all changes by 2014.

Deliver Safety Town program starting in summer 2012; full-scale launch 2013.

Review School Transportation by October 2012.

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

Utilize Planning Department, Newton Police Safety Officer, new Pedestrian and Bicycle Coordinator resources, Safe Routes to School Representatives from each school and School Principals

Cost implications:

Cost for Satellite drop-off areas is minimal. Cost for comprehensive review depends on engineering recommendations made as part of the review. Safety Town costs could be recouped via user fees or potential grants.

Subcommittee/Topic: Youth and Senior Travel/Senior Travel

Recommendation:

Focus on the specific needs of the elderly population as their transportation modes shift from driver to pedestrian and public transportation and ensure those who want to walk and bike have safe opportunities to do so.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

Senior residents face particular challenges. Their abilities to drive are reduced over time with significant reductions coming after 75. Utilizing public transportation options can seem daunting as the T system becomes more sophisticated (Charlie Cards) and route information is primarily online. There are also opportunities to increase the number of older residents biking, keeping them mobile (and healthy) for many additional years.

Action Required:

1. **Create a Safe Driving Law campaign**, focused on Senior Driving. Ensuring seniors know what the new Safe Driving law requires and that others know what they can do to ensure to address seniors that may pose a hazard.
 - If you're 75 years old or older, you must renew your driver's license in person at the Registry of Motor Vehicles.
 - If you're 75 years old or older, you have to take a vision test every five years when you renew your license.
 - A health care provider or police officer who feels an individual cannot mentally or physically operate a motor vehicle safely can request an evaluation of the person's ability to possess a license. Such a request, however, cannot be made solely based on a person's age.
2. **Provide assistance to seniors looking to navigate public transportation**, including route information and Charlie Card information.
3. **Promote a healthy senior lifestyle**. Create more senior friendly walking environment through creation of comfortable, convenient, and safe pedestrian walkways throughout the city (see related recommendation)
4. **Create more senior friendly biking environment** by:
 - Encourage more biking for seniors by offering instructional classes
 - Creating bicycle lanes on streets that are wide enough.
 - Mapping small neighborhood roads with minimal traffic.
 - Ensuring road surfaces are safe and smooth.
 - Placing signage on smaller roads entering major thoroughfares as far forward as possible so that drivers and bicyclists can see one another.
 - Painting signage on roads, such as "Stop Ahead", would warn cyclists looking down at road.

- Traffic lights should have lapsed time signs so that seniors may walk their bikes across complex and busy intersections with pedestrians.
 - Through roads, such as the Commonwealth Avenue carriage road, should be made as safe as possible for seniors, since when properly set up, it gives seniors the opportunity of a place to go where they know they can ride a good distance without being too concerned about automobile traffic.
5. **Create citywide position focused on pedestrian and bike access and safety.** Should oversee Safe Routes to School efforts, safety education for school children, and implementation of TAC recommendations, **mobility manager for seniors.**

Recommended Timeline:

1. Create Safe Driving Campaign by June 2012.
2. Launch pilot program fall 2012.
3. Ongoing.

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

1. Utilize any State DOT material. Input and agreement from Health Department and Mayor's Office. Staff time to support and/or create flyers.
2. Utilize intern to layout and document process. Utilize Planning, DPW and new Pedestrian and Bicycle Coordinator resources.

Cost implications:

Cost of flyers, promotional material

Subcommittee/Topic: Parking / Bicycle lane priority where parking demand is low

Recommendation:

The City of Newton formally adopt a policy that bicycle travel is a higher priority use of the shoulder than parking where space is insufficient for both parking and bike lanes and where the demand for parking is low.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

While sufficiently wide (4-5') striped shoulders provide a meaningful safety improvement for bicyclists, without full bike lane status, they fail to attract many riders of average skill and confidence – exactly the people who we want to encourage. On many city streets that would be good candidates for bike lanes, the biggest obstacle to painting “official” bike lanes is not actual parking need, but regulations that allow parking.

Note: it is not the purpose of this recommendation to suggest that the city instigate a general process of making parking illegal where demand is low. Rather, the recommendation is limited to making a policy statement that will act as a reference in those specific cases where parking demand is low and a conflict arises between bicycle accommodations and parking regulations. This recommendation does not preclude the creation of a bicycle lane by removing parking along an area with moderate or heavy parking usage.

Note also that this recommendation would not change the steps in the public process of reviewing development or regulation proposals.

Action Required:

Adopt by executive order a policy statement on the priority of bicycle accommodations and parking regulations in areas where actual parking demand is low

Recommended Timeline:

- By February 2, 2012, adopt a policy statement on the priority of bicycle accommodations and parking regulations in areas of low parking demand

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

- None

Cost implications:

- None

Subcommittee/Topic: Parking /**Create comprehensive parking management plan and designate a manager****Recommendation:**

Invest in a parking management plan, to manage both public and private spaces, and designate a parking program manager to implement it.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

Maximize the use of the City's resources, both in governance and in utilization of public and private parking spaces.

Action Required:

Creation of new position and/or shifting of responsibilities of existing personnel to focus on parking administration

Recommended Timeline:

Immediate

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

A plan would need to be prepared for the mayor's review. Some features could require Board action, such as addition of a staff position for this purpose.

Cost implications:

It is likely that the consolidation of responsibilities and improved management of parking placement, pricing, and oversight will result in efficiencies that will save money and produce additional revenue. Depending on program design, revenues from meters, permits and tickets can fully support this position.

Executive Summary:

Parking management responsibilities are currently divided among several individuals and committees for: collections, ticketing, deposits, planning, signage, zoning, parking waivers and meter repairs. Changes to existing parking are reviewed by the Traffic Council on a street-by-street basis, which doesn't always consider a larger parking scheme. Development of a comprehensive approach to managing parking will create order and equitable decision-making and implementation of parking through the City and will reduce traffic and congestion and produce revenues in the process.

Subcommittee/Topic: Parking / Implement in-lieu fees

Recommendation:

Consider parking in-lieu fees whenever parking waivers are requested.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

The Board of Aldermen frequently gives waivers for required parking where parking is unavailable or when the number of parking spaces required for a business cannot be met on-site.

Compensation for such waivers could be used to fund parking elsewhere or other transportation improvements to address long-term needs.

Action Required:

Requires adoption of a new ordinance, the language for which has been docketed for review by the Board of Aldermen

Recommended Timeline:

Review as soon as can be placed on a Board agenda.

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

Staff time required to prepare reports, attend meetings, prepare documents to implement program.

Cost implications:

Has the potential to increase funds for transportation-related improvements to village centers and mixed-use sites.

Executive Summary:

Adoption of an in-lieu fee would provide greater flexibility in meeting parking requirements, particularly where parking is constrained. It will also provide predictability and certainty to developers if the price is fixed. This should be considered as one of many options that could be allowed by right to make it easier for requirements to be met and reduce a barrier to new business development.

Subcommittee/Topic: Parking / Parking in structures only if justified

Recommendation:

Consider use of parking structures only if:

- supply, demand, and pricing studies in the context of a well-functioning parking management plan demonstrate it is the best means available for addressing parking needs, OR
- the investment in a parking structure can be justified in terms of urban design or similar planning goals.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

Parking Structures are a compact approach to providing parking that is often suited to urbanized areas and allows for available land that would otherwise be taken up by surface parking, to be put to a better use that would enhance village vitality.

Action Required:

Evaluate existing underutilized parking lots and assess parking supply and demand in village centers to determine need for parking structures.

Recommended Timeline:

As need warrants.

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

Construction of parking structure(s) will require staff to operate and maintain them. Through technological advances, it is possible to minimize demands for staff to operate the structures; however, routine cleaning and maintenance of equipment will be needed.

Cost implications:

The cost of parking in structures can vary from \$20,000 per parking space above grade to \$75,000 or more per space for underground designs. The cost varies depending on the complexity of design and the depth of the structure.

Executive Summary:

Parking in structures is an appropriate use of land, particularly in urban areas. Pricing of parking, not only within a proposed structure but in the immediate vicinity should be considered when

determining whether it will be well used. Parking structures should be self-funded whenever possible, but may be subsidized in order to achieve urban design goals.

Subcommittee/Topic: Parking/ Pilot market-based meter pricing

Recommendation:

Set meter prices according to demand. Start with a pilot in an area with a high level of parking demand.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

Meter pricing can be used to more efficiently allocate our limited resources, encouraging those who are willing and able to walk further to do so, helping match supply and demand.

Action Required:

Identify a pilot area, working with the Board of Aldermen. The pilot area should be one of very high demand. Docket an ordinance, for review by Public Safety and Transportation Committee of the Board of Aldermen, establishing the area and the authority for some City representative(s) to monitor parking demand, and to set and publicize parking rates.

Recommended Timeline:

Pilot area could be identified with 10 hours of staff time, depending on Aldermanic interest. Timing for passage of docket item is difficult to estimate.

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

10 hours of staff time (?) to get started + on-going staff time to administer the pilot

Cost implications:

In a high-demand area, meter rates and revenues would be higher than they are now. The surplus should be dedicated to costs to administer the program. It is likely, however, that the additional revenue would not cover all pilot-program costs. On the other hand, increased turnover should result in improved economic activity in the affected area. If the approach is adopted broadly, beyond the pilot, *it should pay for itself*.

Subcommittee/Topic: Parking / Pilot a multi-user parking program

Recommendation:

Ensure residential streets near village centers accommodate all types of users, without overburdening residents. These streets marked with 2-hour or similar parking restrictions would also accommodate all-day parking by residents, local workers, and commuters, through the sale of permits. Start with a pilot program in one neighborhood or village center.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

- Make best use of limited public parking spaces
- Increase equity & consistency in the way we provide and pay for parking
- Ensure that parking management is self-funded

Residential streets near village centers have a patchwork of different parking restrictions designed to prevent them from being overwhelmed by commuters, workers and other long-term parkers. The result is that some on-street parking spaces remain vacant even where parking demand is high, because of poorly designed restrictions. It is possible to accommodate all users with more careful management.

Action Required:

Identify the pilot area. Docket an item for review by the Public Safety & Transportation Committee of the Board of Aldermen establishing the pilot area and the authority for some City representative(s)/staff to administer the program.

Recommended Timeline:

Could start immediately. Pilot area could be identified with 10-20 hours of staff/volunteer time. Docket item preparation & passage time is difficult to estimate. Pilot should last for a year.

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

Will require administration, including creation, marketing and distribution of passes, collection of fees, and enforcement following implementation.

Cost implications:

The steady costs of administering the program would be covered by the sale of permits.

Executive Summary:

In one parking catchment area of the city, accommodate all sorts of users on nearly every street. Mark all unmetered streets with two-hour parking limits (or find another approach to ensure turnover). Offer residents, transit commuters, and village employees the option to purchase permits allowing them to park all day. To accommodate short-term visitors, limit the number of permits so as to leave a large fraction of the street parking available for two-hour parking. Set the commuter/employee permit price to pay for all enforcement and administration, and charge residents very little or nothing for their permits.

Subcommittee/topic: Parking / Pilot on-street bicycle parking

Recommendation:

Promote bicycling by piloting on-street bicycle parking in one existing auto parking spot in a village business district.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

Make best use of limited public parking spaces

Action Required:

Identify one specific on-street parking space within one of the Villages and convert it to a bicycle parking corral. Seek support of affected business owner/operator. Install bicycle racks and roadway protection. Docket item for Traffic Council and public consideration.

Recommended Timeline:

Immediate. Action recommended for implementation during fall 2011 construction season. Once approved could be installed in one day.

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

Minimal staff time. One-day installation.

Cost implications:

Corrals must provide traffic protection for users and bicycle safety and snow plows. This requires minimal material and installation cost of corral boundaries; includes combination of line painting, rolled asphalt curbing and/or stanchion posts. Lost meter revenue could be partly replaced by user donations at meters. Could yield positive tax revenues from increased business activity.

Executive Summary:

A well-sited bicycle corral provides secure convenient bike parking, enhances pedestrian streetscape by removing obstructive bicycles locked to meters, trees and sign poles and increases potential customer activity at local businesses. Bicycle corrals accommodate 12 bicycles at the expense of only a single vehicle space. Bicycle corrals can be part of a larger Complete Street program to enhance Village qualities. Used in conjunction with other bicycle and pedestrian accommodations including bicycle lanes and curb extensions, these reclaimed areas providing safer pedestrian crossing as well as vibrant, roadway buffered space for outdoor seating, planters, and street performers. Additional bicycle corrals may be considered in other villages as warranted.

Subcommittee/Topic: Parking / Rationalize parking standards

Recommendation:

Foster parking standards that take into consideration actual demand, potential for shared parking, and ease of access to alternative modes of transportation. Also, allow the standards to be satisfied by managing parking demand or in lieu fees, which the applicant pays the City to manage parking demand.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

Parking requirements should better reflect actual needs, to improve equity and predictability. Parking requirements should be able to be satisfied by means other than constructing parking to improve flexibility and economic efficiency.

Action Required:

Ordinance change. An item combining more accurate and reasonable parking requirements with new options for meeting those requirements has already been docketed for review by the Board of Aldermen.

Recommended Timeline:

Review as soon as can be placed on a Board agenda.

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

Staff time required to prepare reports, attend meetings, prepare documents to implement program

Cost implications:

Has the potential to accelerate private investment and increase the tax base.

Executive Summary:

Current City parking standards are independent of location within the City, which forces businesses where transportation alternatives are available to provide more parking than they need. Furthermore, the standards are based on data from outside Newton. The standards should fit the context. Also, offering flexibility in meeting the standard, as by having applicants pay in lieu fees to have the City manage parking rather than building parking, allows businesses to leverage existing and potential opportunities for transportation demand management.

Subcommittee/Topic: Parking / Reevaluate Community Parking Program

Recommendation:

Re-evaluate both the community permit program, wherein spots at 12-hour meters are rented on an annual basis, and establish a moratorium during evaluation*.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

- Make best use of limited public parking spaces
- Increase equity and consistency in the way we provide parking

Reserved spaces are sometimes left empty even while the rest of the lot is full, which is a waste of valuable parking. It also creates resentment and impressions of unfairness and incompetence.

Action Required:

Submit request for review of existing program to Board of Aldermen. Will require collection of data on the turnover and occupancy of existing reserved spaces to compare to that elsewhere in the activity center to determine if spaces are underutilized.

Recommended Timeline:

Should begin immediately. Moratorium could be established informally at the next available meeting of Traffic Council or of the new Transportation Team, and institutionalized through the Board of Aldermen in two months or fewer. Re-evaluation study could be completed with 20-40 hours of staff/volunteer time.

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

Staff or volunteer resources required to conduct review of the program

Cost implications:

Depends on outcome of analysis. A revised program could generate more or less revenue. (See our other recommendation, Multi-user Parking Permit Program, for a self-funding alternative that would leave metered spaces free for shoppers.)

Executive Summary:

Reserving or dedicating parking guarantees that spaces are sometimes unused and, therefore, wasted. Permit programs should ensure that spaces can be used to their fullest potential, by different users at different times and not left empty when those who have reserved them are not using them.

*Since this recommendation was drafted, the Board of Aldermen voted to end the Community Permit Parking program, rendering our suggested moratorium moot. We have preserved it here to document our concern about the program.

Subcommittee/Topic: Parking / Re-evaluate resident-only parking districts

Recommendation:

Re-evaluate resident-only parking districts and enact a moratorium during evaluation.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

- Make best use of limited public parking resources
- Increase equity & consistency in the way we provide parking

City streets belong to everyone and should be shared in a way that makes the best use of this limited resource while respecting the needs of all affected.

Action Required:

For informal moratorium: transmit guidance to Traffic Council.

For formal moratorium: Change of Ordinance to revise text regarding residential permit programs; must be docketed for review by Public Safety and Transportation Committee of the Board of Aldermen. For re-evaluation: task the Planning & Development Department to design & conduct a study.

Recommended Timeline:

Should begin immediately. Moratorium could be established informally in one month, at the next Traffic Council meeting. It could be institutionalized through the Board of Aldermen in maybe 2-3 months. Re-evaluation study could be completed with 20-40 hours of staff/volunteer time.

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

Staff resources required to conduct short review of the program

Cost implications:

None, except that an alternative approach for managing parking on affected residential streets would have to be adopted. (See our other recommendation, Multi-user Parking Program, for a self-funding alternative.)

Executive Summary:

When streets are restricted to use by residents only, those who might be able to park on the streets when spaces are not in demand cannot do so. However, residential streets in some areas would be and are currently overwhelmed with nonresident parking where no permit program exists. We believe that there are more effective ways to achieve the goals of the current policy.

Subcommittee/Topic: Urban Fabric/Master Plan for Transportation

Recommendation:

Create a Master Plan for Transportation to foster a number of initiatives that will reconnect the City's urban fabric, which is a complex network of transportation routes and modes that relate to land uses throughout the City.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

Transportation routes are an integral part of the City's urban fabric and consist of streets, structures, parks and waterways. The strategy of knitting them together with various infrastructure improvements will generally improve access and mobility in and around the City, as well as enhance the travel experiences of visitors and residents alike. Consistent with the City's *Comprehensive Plan*, contemporary Smart Growth policies and TAC recommendations, the Urban Fabric subcommittee's recommendations encourage safe and orderly travel by a variety of modes of transportation that are fairly selected and distributed across the City. In addition, these recommendations contribute to the social, economic, environmental and aesthetic value of the City.

The Complete Streets program, also endorsed by the TAC, encourages roadway designs that facilitate travel for people of all ages and abilities by a variety of modes. Although many of the City's streets are not wide enough to accommodate *all* desired modes of transportation, the City's *Comprehensive Plan* notes that land uses should have a complementary relationship and it is important to assess the optimal relationship between land uses and road widths in designing future roadways.

Some aspects of the development of a Transportation Master Plan may require update of the City's *Comprehensive Plan*, which is a longer-term objective. Specifically, such an effort could include identification of opportunities to reconnect areas that have been severed by the construction of the Massachusetts Turnpike and to examine the potential to better connect each of the City's village centers and commercial corridors, including creating a vision for redesign and reconstruction of Route 9. By creating master plans for such areas, community members and property owners can develop a shared vision for integrated, ongoing development. With appropriate zoning, this holistic approach to weaving land use and transportation connections through a Transportation Master Plan can also help to spur economic development, which further weaves the City's urban fabric. While beyond the scope of the TAC's original mission, such objectives should be considered in the future for an integrated approach to planning for the vitality of the City.

In the near term, the Transportation Master Plan should emphasize the following features:

1. **Locations for Roundabouts.** Criteria should be created to identify viable locations for roundabouts at intersections throughout the City. Such locations should be mapped so as to encourage consideration of this traffic-calming tool when opportunities present themselves, e.g., when streets are reconstructed or when budgeting for signalization of intersections is considered.
2. **Connectivity.** By improving continuous routes for travel throughout the City, travel time and air pollution will be reduced and new relationships between uses will be created. A study should be undertaken to identify opportunities to mend broken connections and/or create new continuous routes, including rail trails, overpasses, and underpasses. Then, the locations should be mapped to identify infrastructure improvements that could be realized over time, such as when properties are redeveloped. Some connections will happen sooner than others, but the plan should not be limited by such timelines.
3. **Face the River Plan.** The Charles River is a natural resource and amenity that has been underutilized for recreation, tourism and transportation. The Transportation Master Plan for should include possible means to connect the river to other forms of transportation including pedestrian and bicycle routes. Again, the relationship between all modes to create multiple opportunities for mobility throughout the City is a key objective. Mapping the connections would likely be followed by installation of the connecting routes over a number of years.
4. **Snow removal.** Consistent with the recommendations of the Youth and Senior Travel Subcommittee, ensuring that our sidewalks and bike lanes are accessible during the winter is a priority (see related recommendation from the Youth and Senior Travel Subcommittee for details). Removal of snow should be considered where relocation fails to ensure clear walkways.
5. **Parking in structures.** While the TAC policies generally urge people to consider a variety of alternatives to vehicular travel, , those who choose to drive must park at their destinations. Parking structures make better use of land than parking lots in our village centers where land is a valuable resource. In addition, providing adequate parking in an accessible location will reduce congestion as motorists are less likely to drive around seeking a parking spot. As noted by the Parking Subcommittee, structures should be considered where demand warrants and where it can be shown that a structure is the best means for accommodating parking in a given situation.
6. **Reconsider Traffic Council structure.** The Mayor and the Directors of Planning, Engineering, and Public Works, along with the Board of Aldermen, should determine a better process to handle appeals to Traffic Council decisions. The details of this recommendation are addressed as one of the overarching Governance recommendations.

Recommended Timeline:

Complete Urban Fabric Master Plan by December 31, 2012

Subcommittee/Topic: Urban Fabric/ Outlaw future cul-de-sacs

Recommendation:

Outlaw Future cul-de-sacs

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

Cul-de-sacs severely limit pedestrian and especially children's mobility. Children who live within cul-de-sacs must use larger and busier streets to go to schools and shops instead of using safer secondary and tertiary streets. The large thoroughfares connecting cul-de-sacs suffer from traffic jams, high maintenance cost and the constant need of widening as population increases. Firefighters and ambulance drivers don't like cul-de-sacs because they increase the response time to emergencies. Cities like Northampton, MA and Belmont, NC outlawed the cul-de-sacs many years ago and recently the state of Virginia did the same.

Action required:

Petition the Board of Aldermen to amend Newton Zoning Ordinances to prohibit the construction of new cul-de-sacs. Ask the Planning Department and the Information Technology Department to provide educational materials and maps for public hearings.

Recommended Timetable:

4 months for ordinance amendment

Staffing and Other Resources needed:

Planning and Information Technology departments of Newton, community volunteers, civic initiators

Cost Implications:

The salaries of the above listed departments' staff, the aldermen's stipends and the cost of utilities

Executive summary:

There are more than 100 cul-de-sacs in Newton. This form of urban fabric is typical for relatively low-density exurbia and suburbia, not for increasingly urbanizing centers like Newton. While providing relative comfort to their residents cul-de-sacs increase traffic load on major urban streets, restrict pedestrian mobility, impede the flow of traffic and increase the cost of maintenance for the city at large. If Newton wants to preserve its parks and conservation areas, the construction of new cul-de-sacs must be prohibited.

Subcommittee/Topic: Urban Fabric/ Roundabout Master Plan

Recommendations:

Create and implement the Roundabout Master Plan of Newton.

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

One of the successful mitigation of traffic load is the installation of roundabouts in the intersection of major transportation routes. Currently, the existing rotaries in the United States and in Europe are being substituted with roundabouts. Unlike rotaries, roundabouts have smaller diameters and force drivers to slow down to 15-20 miles per hour which in turn reduces vehicular accidents and provides better safety for pedestrians and cyclists. Also, roundabouts can remove traffic signals, decrease environmental pollution and create aesthetically valuable intersections.

Action Required:

Design and install roundabouts at the intersections of Newton's major urban streets. We recommend to start with Newton Centre because two roundabouts were already proposed and designed by traffic engineers at the intersections of Beacon/Centre and Beacon/Langley streets. Three other roundabouts were proposed by the developers of Riverside Station project at the intersection of Grove Street and Route 128. Also, several roundabouts were proposed for a Needham Street reconstruction. These piecemeal proposals should be included in the proactive Roundabout Master Plan for the entire City of Newton.

Recommended Timetable:

The Master Plan – 1 year, the installation of Riverside and Needham Street roundabouts – 2 years, Newton Centre and other roundabouts – 3 to 5 years.

Staffing and Other Resources needed:

Planning, Engineering, Information Technology Departments of Newton, community volunteers, civic initiators and the teams of engineers, architects and developers

Cost Implications:

The salaries of the above listed departments' staff, fees for consulting specialists. The cost of construction materials and labor should be determined by the prevailing wage law and the market fluctuations. Business plans should determine the feasibility of every roundabout. The sources of financing should be sought from the state and federal grants.

Executive summary:

Many community members still don't understand the difference between rotaries and roundabouts. This was especially evident during the community meetings for the Riverside Station development. Therefore, we recommend that the City of Newton provide educational sessions within the available media sources and community meetings.

Subcommittee/Topic: None/ Increase Car-Share Opportunities

Provide additional car share locations in Newton

Brief Statement of Underlying Principle or Intent of Recommendation:

One objective of the Newton Comprehensive Plan is to strengthen alternative forms of transportation. Car sharing can help the City accomplish these goals by offering residents and employees an opportunity to reduce ownership and operation of automobiles by offering them the ability to use a car only when needed. Shared-car resources mean fewer cars on the road, which offers many benefits including less congestion, less pollution, less dependence on oil, and improved air quality.

Action Required:

Staff and elected officials will identify specific locations in City lots, or in private lots, and coordinate placement of shared cars. Items will be docketed for action by Traffic Council or other committees, if needed.

Recommended Timeline:

Winter 2011/2012 and beyond.

Staffing or Other Resources needed:

Use existing staff resources

Cost implications:

Shared cars are likely to be available at no cost to the City. If parking meters are to be removed, the City will likely request payment to compensate for lost parking meter revenue. Lost revenue may result from a reduction in excise tax if residents reduce the number of automobiles in their household.

Executive Summary:

Newton currently has two Zipcars permanently stationed at the Woodland MBTA parking garage and two more at the Riverside MBTA parking lot. The City recently signed a contract to add two Zipcars in the Langley ("Triangle") parking lot in Newton Centre for a one-year trial period. Over the year, a process that would review and expand the program will be developed.

APPENDIX

On the following pages are a presentation on Complete Streets and Planning, as well as some additional Urban Fabric recommendations. While not all of these ideas found their way into the final recommendations or were agreed upon by all members of the group, they are included here for informational purposes, as they represent a significant body of research that provided food for thought and healthy discussions about transportation, in general, that may inform future work.