

## **Newport Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC)**

### **Annual Report – 2025**

#### **Reporting Period: March–November**

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#### **Executive Summary**

The Newport Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC) reestablished active operations in March 2025 with the goal of advising the City of Newport on policies, plans, and projects that improve safety, accessibility, and connectivity for pedestrians and bicyclists. During this reporting period, the Commission focused on organizational formation, relationship-building with City staff and partners, and early policy and project advocacy aligned with Newport’s Transportation Master Plan and Vision Zero goals. Key accomplishments during this period include the formal seating of officers, engagement with City Council and City departments, support for bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly resolutions, and active advocacy for street safety improvements. Notably, the Commission advocated for Newport’s first officially funded Transportation Master Plan infrastructure project—a sidewalk and bike lane on Narragansett Avenue scheduled for construction in Spring 2026.

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#### **Commission Membership & Attendance**

The BPAC is a ten-member commission. During 2025, one initially appointed member was unable to participate and was formally replaced at the December 10, 2025, City Council meeting, positioning the Commission with a full roster entering 2026.

#### **Commission Members (2025)**

- Tara Zambrotta (Chair)
- Liz Davis (Vice Chair)
- Jacob Wojciechowski (Secretary)
- Rachel Schmitt
- Christopher Daly
- Jo Ann Smith
- Kyle Kossak
- Jim Fry
- Elizabeth Peterson

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## Attendance Summary

### March 18, 2025

#### Commission Members Present

Tara Zambrotta; Christopher Daly; Liz Davis; Jo Ann Smith; Kyle Kossak; Jim Fry; Rachel Schmitt

#### Community Members Present

Chris Burich; Jacob Wojciechowski; Elizabeth Peterson

#### City Staff / Officials Present

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### April 15, 2025

#### Commission Members Present

Tara Zambrotta; Christopher Daly; Kyle Kossak; Jim Fry; Jo Ann Smith; Liz Davis; Rachel Schmitt

#### Community Members Present

Chris Burich; Jacob Wojciechowski; Paul Marshall

#### City Staff / Officials Present

Rebeccah Trefethen (City Planner)

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### May 20, 2025

#### Commission Members Present

Tara Zambrotta; Christopher Daly; Kyle Kossak; Jim Fry; Jo Ann Smith; Liz Davis; Rachel Schmitt

#### Community Members Present

Chris Burich; Paul Marshall; Nate Fast; Bari Freeman

#### City Staff / Officials Present

Chief Ryan Duffy; Sergeant Jason Head (Newport Police Department)

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### June 17, 2025

#### Commission Members Present

Tara Zambrotta; Jim Fry; Liz Davis; Christopher Daly; Rachel Schmitt; Jo Ann Smith

#### Community Members Present

Chris Burich; Jacob Wojciechowski; Elizabeth Peterson

**City Staff / Officials Present**

Patricia Reynolds (Director of Planning & Economic Development)

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**July 15, 2025**

**Commission Members Present**

Tara Zambrotta; Jim Fry; Liz Davis; Rachel Schmitt; Jacob Wojciechowski; Jo Ann Smith;  
Kyle Kossak

**Community Members Present**

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**City Staff / Officials Present**

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**August 19, 2025**

**Commission Members Present**

Tara Zambrotta; Jim Fry; Liz Davis; Christopher Daly; Jacob Wojciechowski; Jo Ann Smith;  
Elizabeth Peterson

**Community Members Present**

Mike Armenia; Chris Burich

**City Staff / Officials Present**

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**September 16, 2025**

**Commission Members Present**

Tara Zambrotta; Jim Fry; Liz Davis; Christopher Daly; Jacob Wojciechowski; Jo Ann Smith;  
Kyle Kossak; Rachel Schmitt

**Community Members Present**

Chris Burich; Traci Galpin; Ben Galpin

**City Staff / Officials Present**

Haden McDermott (City Assistant Planner)

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**October 21, 2025**

**Commission Members Present**

Tara Zambrotta; Elizabeth Peterson; Jim Fry; Liz Davis; Christopher Daly; Jacob  
Wojciechowski; Jo Ann Smith; Kyle Kossak; Rachel Schmitt

**Community Members Present**

Bari Freeman (Bike Newport); Chris Burich (Bike Newport); Traci Galpin; Ben Galpin

## **City Staff / Officials Present**

Haden McDermott (City Assistant Planner)

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## **November 18, 2025**

### **Commission Members Present**

Tara Zambrotta; Elizabeth Peterson; Jim Fry; Jacob Wojciechowski; Jo Ann Smith; Rachel Schmitt; Kyle Kossak; Liz Davis

*(Christopher Daly attended by call-in to listen only)*

### **Community Members Present**

Bari Freeman (Bike Newport); Chris Burich (Bike Newport); Pete Rice

### **City Staff / Officials Present**

Haden McDermott (City Assistant Planner); Patricia Reynolds (Director of Planning)

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## **Meetings Overview**

### **March–April 2025 – Reestablishment and Early Advocacy**

The Commission focused on reestablishing regular operations, electing officers, reviewing the Transportation Master Plan, engaging with Vision Zero initiatives, and identifying priority safety and infrastructure projects. Early discussions included Parker Avenue safety concerns and budget advocacy for pedestrian and bicycle improvements.

### **May 20, 2025 and June 17, 2025 – Safety Policy, Parker Avenue, and Bicycle Ordinances**

The Commission accepted prior meeting minutes and received updates on replacing inactive members to support a fully functioning commission. Members reviewed Transportation Master Plan priorities and discussed projects requiring continued advocacy. A significant portion of the meetings focused on the Parker Avenue Safety Proposal, including review of a draft support letter and discussion of roadway width and sidewalk constraints raised by City staff. Despite challenges, the Commission expressed clear support for traffic calming strategies and street narrowing and committed to continued advocacy.

Bike Newport presented the City’s application to advance from Bronze to Silver Bicycle Friendly Community status. The Commission unanimously agreed to support the application and committed to providing a formal letter of support.

Chief Ryan Duffy and Sergeant Jason Head presented proposed updates to bicycle-related ordinances developed through a multi-agency Bicycle Ordinance Review Committee. Members discussed best practices and the importance of public engagement prior to City Council consideration.

### **July 15, 2025 – Transportation Master Plan Funding and Infrastructure Coordination**

The Commission accepted the June meeting minutes and formally confirmed Jacob Wojciechowski as Secretary. Members received updates indicating that the Transportation Master Plan had begun receiving funding, with letters of support from BPAC and the Cliffwalk Commission cited as contributing encouragement.

The Commission discussed Narragansett Avenue infrastructure funding, ongoing and future engineering studies, and uncertainty regarding the inclusion of bicycle lanes. Members expressed interest in engaging directly with the City's Engineering Department to better understand timelines and opportunities for advocacy.

Additional discussion focused on traffic patterns along Narragansett Avenue and Ocean Drive, pedestrian safety on narrow streets, and short-term and long-term safety improvements, including road striping, sharrows, and potential future bike lanes on Spring Street. Members also discussed Green and Complete Streets reporting requirements and ongoing review of bicycle ordinance updates, identifying areas for further comment.

#### **August 19, 2025 – Ordinances, Signals, and Safety Advocacy**

The Commission reviewed bicycle and pedestrian ordinances with a focus on e-bike safety, enforcement gaps, and signal detection. The Commission unanimously voted to approve and send a letter supporting the Parker Avenue Safety Proposal and discussed Spring Street signal timing and pedestrian safety gaps.

#### **September 16, 2025 – ADA Access and Sidewalk Conditions**

Residents provided testimony regarding wheelchair accessibility challenges along Thames Street. Members discussed capital funding opportunities and engaged ward councilors by walking the entirety of the sidewalks along Thames Street with residents and City Councilor Dave Carlin to gather data. This effort resulted in a presentation delivered to City Council and added to the December 10 docket.

#### **October 21, 2025 – Infrastructure Planning and Spring Street Safety**

The Commission met with City staff to review infrastructure planning processes and funding constraints. Members reviewed Narragansett Avenue sidewalk and bike lane plans and voted to support a letter advocating for defined travel lanes on Spring Street.

#### **November 18, 2025 – Green and Complete Streets Implementation**

City staff presented a prioritization framework for Green and Complete Streets implementation. The Commission unanimously supported the framework and approved additional advocacy letters related to Spring Street and Transportation Master Plan implementation.

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### **Community Engagement**

BPAC meetings consistently included active participation from community members, City staff, and partner organizations, particularly Bike Newport.

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### **Priorities Moving Forward**

- Continued advocacy for Transportation Master Plan implementation
- Ongoing engagement with Vision Zero initiatives
- Support for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure projects
- Strengthened coordination with City Council, City departments, and regional partners

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### **Conclusion**

The March–November 2025 period marked a successful and productive reactivation of the Newport Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission. With consistent quorum, strong leadership, and early policy and infrastructure wins, the Commission is well-positioned to advance safer, more accessible transportation options for the Newport community in 2026 and beyond.