



City of Newport, Rhode Island  
Department of Planning & Development

## Green & Complete Streets Policy 2025 Annual Report

The City of Newport's Green and Complete Streets Policy, effective since 2022, strives to ensure that every transportation project in the city serves all road users, modes of transportation, and abutting properties, and also enhances the natural environment. The Policy allotted City departments a period of 3 years to incorporate green and complete streets principles into appropriate plans, regulations, and processes.

This year being the third year of the Policy's implementation, the City administration made significant strides and renewed efforts to integrate green and complete streets practices into City processes, to implement the Policy through related ongoing planning efforts, and to establish and trial the public input and exception procedures called for in the Policy.

### Establishing Formal Processes for Incorporating Public Input & Granting Exceptions to the Policy

Per the Policy, *“Major design decisions regarding roadways, trails, bus stops, and sidewalks must include public outreach, including at minimum, a public meeting subject to the Rhode Island Open Meetings Act . . . The public process for major design decision shall incorporate input from the Tree and Open Space Commission (TOSC), Energy and Environment Commission (EEC), and Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC), when relevant to the focus areas of the respective commissions.”*

The Policy also states that exceptions from the green & complete standards for street projects may apply under three specified conditions:

1. For limited-access pedestrian paths and highways that prohibit certain users,
2. For roadways with narrow right-of-ways or natural features that prevent establishing green and complete street facilities, and
3. Where *“The cost of establishing green and complete street facilities would be excessively disproportionate to the need”*.

The decision to grant an exception *“shall be supported by data/evidence,”* and *“A formal exception process is needed to ensure adherence to the Green & Complete Streets Policy to the greatest extent possible.”* While the first two exception scenarios are relatively objective, the latter scenario is more subjective and necessitates a particularly thorough evaluation and exception process in order to ensure adherence.

To comply with these standards, Planning Department staff have developed a Roadway Project Evaluation and Exceptions Application tool to assess the existing and proposed conditions of a roadway project, and have formed a public process that incorporates input from applicable commissions in designing roadways and in granting exceptions.




**City of Newport, Rhode Island**  
Department of Planning & Development

When a road is proposed to be improved or constructed, City staff (or the developer in the infrequent case of road extension/improvement being part of a private development application) shall complete the right-pictured evaluation form and indicate if they are seeking an exception. The form inventories conditions affecting roadway users and design, such as the roadway type, the width of the total and paved right-of-way, the existence and conditions of sidewalks and bicycle facilities, accident data, roadway hazards, stormwater management concerns, and the condition of the tree canopy. These existing conditions are then compared to the City's vision for that roadway across all relevant City transportation plans, documenting the needs of all roadway users and environmental management concerns in that area.

To guide the applicant through this data collection, the following reference maps are integrated in the evaluation form:

- Network Implementation Plan (right) and Pedestrian, Bike, & Transit Network maps from the *Keep Newport Moving: Transportation Master Plan (2023)*
- Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress from the *Ride Island Bike Plan (2023)*
- Fatal & Injury Crash Hot Spots and High-Injury Network maps from the *Safe Streets For All: Safety Action Plan (2025)*
- Existing Tree Canopy, Potential Planting Area, & 10-Year Neighborhood Tree Canopy Goals from the *Newport Tree Canopy Analysis (2025)*
- Flood Hazard Areas and Storm Surge w/Sea Level Rise scenarios maps from the *Transportation Master Plan (2023)*



**Green and Complete Streets  
Roadway Project Evaluation and  
Application for Waiver**

Green and complete streets are streets designed and operated to safely and comfortably accommodate all street users of all ages and abilities, and to improve environmental quality, including reducing, accommodating, and slowing stormwater runoff as part of a comprehensive stormwater management system

This evaluation tool is to be used to identify and incorporate Green & Complete Streets Policy (2022) best design principles into scheduled or potential roadway improvement projects, or to determine if an exemption is warranted.

Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Roadway: \_\_\_\_\_

Length and location of the proposed work (include map and photograph):  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

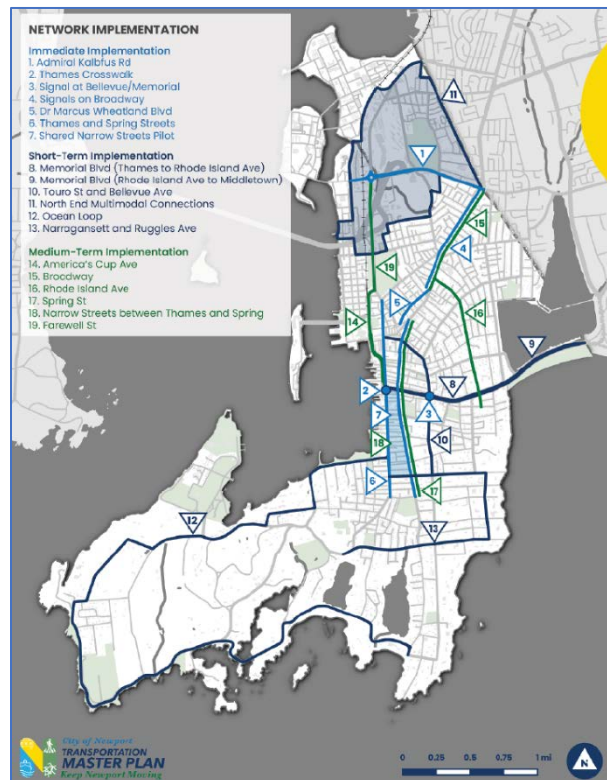
Is the roadway identified as a network implementation project in the Transportation Master Plan? (*Network Implementation Maps, attached*)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please check if you are seeking an exemption:

Yes, I am seeking an exemption from the Green & Complete Streets Policy design standards

**Safety**

1. Has there been a high volume of collisions or accidents on this roadway in the last 5 years? Is the street identified on the High-Injury Network Map for Vulnerable Road Users? (*see the attached 2025 Newport Safety -Action Plan maps*)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_





**City of Newport, Rhode Island**  
Department of Planning & Development

If an exception from the Policy is requested, the below rubric utilizing the information gathered is used to “score” the road out of a total of 35 possible points. A higher score indicates a greater need for green and complete streets design improvements, while a lower score demonstrates that “*The cost of establishing green and complete street facilities would be excessively disproportionate to the need*” and an exception may be warranted.

**Point system for proving an exemption if “The cost of establishing such facilities would be excessively disproportionate to the need”:**

Proving there is a greater need:

- A. Project is listed in the Network Implementation section of the Transportation Master Plan, and/or is listed as a priority area on the Pedestrian or Bicycle Network maps. (\_\_\_/10 pts)
- B. Road is an Arterial or Collector road (\_\_\_/5 pts)
- C. High volume of accidents and/or identified as part of the high-injury network for vulnerable road users per the 2025 Safety Action Plan (\_\_\_/5 pts)
- D. There are obstructions within the ROW that present hazards to roadway users or that render existing pedestrian amenities inaccessible per ADA standards (\_\_\_/5 pts)
- E. Road segment experiences significant flooding events (\_\_\_/5 pts)
- F. Roadway segment does not meet neighborhood tree canopy goals AND there is adequate potential planting area (PPA) identified within the ROW (\_\_\_/5 pts)

There is a lesser need if:

- Road is a Local road (not identified as an Arterial or Collector) whose primary function is accessing residential properties abutting that road
- Little to no accidents and/or not identified as being part of the high-injury network
- Total ROW width (not just the paved width) is narrow with little to no excess space to provide features beyond a single travel lane in each direction (or one travel lane for a one-way street)

A project does **NOT** qualify for an exemption if it scores **20 pts or greater**.

- A. \_\_\_/10 pts
- B. \_\_\_/5 pts
- C. \_\_\_/5 pts
- D. \_\_\_/5 pts
- E. \_\_\_/5 pts
- F. \_\_\_/5 pts

TOTAL POINTS: \_\_\_\_\_/35 pts

The evaluation tool prioritizes improving roadways with projects identified in the Transportation Master Plan, major roads, and roads with high volumes of accidents or obstructions. The scoring system can be used to assess whether an individual roadway project warrants an exception, or, in the case of the City’s regular roadway improvement program where a large volume of roads must be considered for improvements at once, the scores can be used to compare and prioritize projects, and allocate resources. In trialing the scoring system with the 2026 roadway improvement program candidates, it was found that most roadways in need of “major design” improvements scored 20



## City of Newport, Rhode Island Department of Planning & Development

points or higher. It is recommended that an exception not be issued to a roadway scoring 20+ points. Roadways scoring less than 20 points may qualify for an exception.

To incorporate public input early on in the roadway improvement and project selection process, City staff will seek an advisory opinion from the Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission (BPAC), as their mission is central to all roadway projects, and will request that the proposed roadway project or roadway improvement program be placed on a BPAC agenda for their review. BPAC will vote on if they believe an exception from the Policy for that roadway is warranted, and can additionally rank multiple proposed City roadway improvement projects by importance.

BPAC's opinion will be advisory to City staff in the case of City roadway projects, and advisory to the Planning Board or Technical Review Committee (TRC) in the case that a roadway is part of an application for private development, such as a subdivision or Development Plan Review application. Roadway projects that are not issued an exception from the Policy, are then subject to further public review if the improvements to be constructed involve "major design" changes to the roadway.

### Summarized Evaluation/Exception Process for a City-Owned Road:

City staff will complete the evaluation/exception form and give a preliminary score & recommendation.

BPAC will review the roadway project and will vote on if an exception is warranted. *(This opinion is advisory to City Staff for improving public roads and is advisory to the Planning Board/TRC in the case of a private development application.)*

In the case of the City's large roadway improvement program list, BPAC can use the evaluation scores to rank the projects by importance and vote on which streets need major improvements/redesign.

The City will construct improvements in alignment with the priority rankings voted on by BPAC, as funding allows.

If a project requires advanced redesign/alters traffic patterns, preliminary design drawings will be presented to BPAC, TOSC, & EEC for public comment, once available. Their comments will inform the decisions of the City Council.



City of Newport, Rhode Island  
Department of Planning & Development

Public Input Process for Major Design Decisions:

Per the Policy, incorporating input from the BPAC, TOSC, & EEC solicited at a public meeting in “Major design decisions regarding roadways” is required “when relevant to the focus areas of the respective commissions.” City staff considers “major design” to mean installing roadway improvements that would alter existing traffic patterns for any roadway user. Examples of “major design” changes would include:

- New road construction or extension
- Altering the number or direction of automobile travel lanes
- Installing a new bike lane or multi-use pathway
- Installing new sidewalks
- Constructing multiple sidewalk bump-outs

Examples of “simple” projects that staff would not consider to be “major design decisions” necessitating a public input process would be repaving a roadway while maintaining the same traffic patterns, replacing an existing inaccessible sidewalk in-kind with ADA compliant sidewalks, and adding simple pavement markings, such as sharrows or a crosswalk.

Proposed roadway improvement projects that did not warrant an exception and involve “major design decisions” will be reviewed by the applicable advisory commissions. When preliminary design drawings are available, City staff will request that review of the design be placed on the commission’s regular meeting agenda, which is advertised through the RI Secretary of State website. Depending on the type and location of the proposed improvements, staff will ask the commissions for the following input:



Bicycle & Pedestrian Commission will be asked for input on roadway design projects impacting pedestrians & bicyclists (i.e. all road projects).



Tree & Open Space Commission will be asked for input on all projects involving planting, removing, or disturbing the area within the dripline of existing street trees.



Energy & Environment Commission will be asked for input on roadway projects in areas that experience inundation and stormwater management issues.

The commissions’ commentary will be advisory to City staff and the City Council in making major design changes to City-owned roads, and will be advisory to the Planning Board/TRC in the case of proposed roadways that are part of an application for private development.



**City of Newport, Rhode Island**  
Department of Planning & Development

**Evaluating the 2026 Roadway Improvement Program Candidates**

During the fall of 2025, City staff from the Planning Department and the Engineering Division trialed the above-proposed evaluation/exception process with roads that were identified as candidates for Public Services’ 2026 Roadway Improvement Program. Engineering Staff determined that 70 road segments whose pavement conditions were found to be “poor” or “very poor” per a 2023 BETA Engineering pavement assessment were candidates for improvements. Planning Staff then used the new evaluation form to assess, score, and provide a suggested priority ranking for all 70 road segments.

In addition to recommending whether or not a roadway warranted an exception from the Policy, Planning Staff also recommended specific design improvements to address identified existing issues or to implement the Transportation Master Plan. The proposed improvements were categorized as either “simple projects” or “advanced/major design projects” (see above definitions) to better estimate the resources and process necessary to fully implement the Green & Complete Streets Policy, and to inform decision making.

Assistant Planner Hayden McDermott and Planning Director Patricia Reynolds attended the November 18, 2025 BPAC meeting to present the green & complete streets evaluations of and the proposed design solutions for the 2026 Roadway Improvement Candidates. In advance of the meeting, commission members were provided with a spreadsheet containing the existing conditions information, evaluation score, recommendations to construct “advanced/major”, “simple”, or no design improvements, and a description of those proposed improvements for each of the 70 road segments. Where no design improvements were proposed for a street, it was recommended that the street be granted an exception from the Policy.

## WASHINGTON STREET

- ▶ Transportation Master Plan Goals:
  - ▶ Support & Maintain a Continuous Harbor Walk
  - ▶ Supporting Bike Network Street

Note: Needs gas line work. Construction is dependent on Rhode Island Energy’s schedule.





From	To	Priority Ranking	Project Complexity	Design Recommendation
Sycamore St	Bridge St	<b>27</b>	<b>Potentially Advanced</b>	Sharrows Full sidewalk replacement on west. Install more crosswalks & stormwater BMPs at coastal access points. Could consider new sidewalk construction on east.
Bridge St	Marsh St	<b>23</b>	Simple	Sharrows Replace existing eastern sidewalk.
Marsh St	Long Wharf	<b>16</b>	Simple	Sharrows Install crosswalks at Gladys Carr Bolhouse Rd intersection



**City of Newport, Rhode Island**  
Department of Planning & Development

At the meeting, staff presented slides overviewing the new exception and public input processes under the Policy, and focused discussion on the 9 road segments with proposed “advanced/major” design solutions (see slide example above). BPAC was asked to vote on if they agreed with staff’s recommendations regarding if a roadway was in need of advanced, simple, or no green and complete streets design improvements. Staff additionally asked BPAC to provide a priority ranking for the street projects recommended for advanced design improvements, to guide staff’s implementation efforts.

BPAC voted to agree with the project and exception recommendations. Of the 70 roadway improvement candidates:

- **9** road segments were voted to pursue “**advanced**” green & complete street design improvements
- **28** road segments were voted to pursue “**simple**” green & complete street design improvements
- **33** road segments were granted an **exception**, with **no** green & complete street design improvements recommended

For the 9 streets with **advanced** design project recommendations, BPAC voted on the following priority rankings:

Priority Ranking	Street	G&CS Evaluation Score (X/35)	Proposed Project Summary
<b>High</b>	Narragansett Ave	25	Construct southern sidewalk & bike lanes.
<b>High</b>	Ochre Point Ave	23	Construct western sidewalk & sharrows.
<b>High</b>	Hillside Ave	25	Improve pedestrian visibility at 4 intersections, particularly the crosswalk from Dexter St to Miantonomi Park.
<b>Medium</b>	Kay St	25	Add sharrows. Extend sidewalk to Braga Park.
<b>Medium</b>	Lee Ave	16	Shared Streets Pilot using temporary materials at first.
<b>Medium</b>	Pelham St	19	Study if changing the street circulation would improve safety. Replace segments of southern sidewalk.
<b>Medium</b>	Mann Ave	14	Install bike lane or sharrow markings. Address sidewalk obstructions.
<b>Low</b>	Washington St	27	Replace western sidewalk & add sharrows. Remove double yellow centerline to improve bike safety. Manage stormwater runoff into the Harbor at the driftways.
<b>Low</b>	Marchant St	13	Install green stormwater management features along Spencer Park. Replace some sidewalk segments.

BPAC voted that constructing improvements at Narragansett Ave and Ochre Point Ave are their top priorities due funding having been set aside in the City budget to improve Narragansett, and the importance of completing the pedestrian and bike network in this area due to the high foot traffic.



## City of Newport, Rhode Island

### Department of Planning & Development

BPAC also voted that improving pedestrian crossings on Hillside Ave is a high priority due to residents having recently reached out to the commission to express feeling increasingly unsafe walking in this area, due to an increase in vehicular traffic.

BPAC voted that constructing improvements on Washington St and Marchant St were lower priorities due to the gas lines under these roads being in need of improvements from Rhode Island Energy. To improve a road, Public Services’ paving schedule must also align with the repair schedule of utility companies, so that new road infrastructure is not constructed above old utilities infrastructure that then must be disturbed. Improving these two roads can be a higher priority if the gas infrastructure is scheduled to be improved.

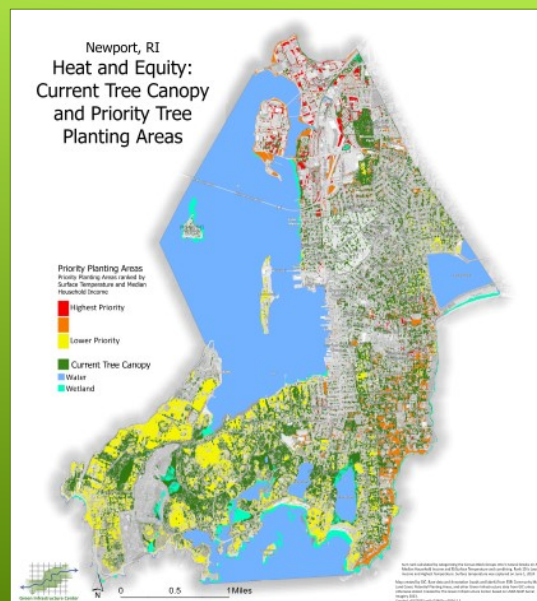
Knowing BPAC’s priorities, City staff will finalize the 2026 Road Improvement Program. About 10 to 20 roads are typically improved annually. Roads that were granted an exception or that were recommended for “simple” improvements can be included in the 2026 Road Improvement Program, with Public Services staff able to complete most simple improvements in-house. Staff will work to identify funding sources for the recommended “advanced” projects to be designed by engineering consultants and installed. When engineered conceptual plans are available for the advanced projects, staff will request that the applicable advisory commissions review and provide comment before City Council approval.

In addition to recommending improvements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities, Planning Staff noted opportunities to expand the tree canopy and improve stormwater management throughout the evaluation process. Utilizing the 2025 Newport Tree Canopy Analysis data, staff identified streets with potential pervious planting area within or adjacent to the right-of-way of the assessed roads.

## STREETS WITH ADJACENT PERVIOUS TREE PLANTING AREA

Street	Pervious Area Owner
Dana Street	City property
Bliss Mine Road	City property & Private property
Friends Drive	City property & Private property
Washington Street	City property & Private property
Bateman Avenue	Private property
Beacon Court	Private property
Faxon Green Road	Private property
Fenner Avenue	Private property
Gibson Park Place	Private property
Red Cross Avenue	Private property
Sunnyside Place	Private property
Taber Street	Private property
Vanderbilt Avenue	Private property
Wetmore Avenue	Private property
Chapel Street	Housing Authority property
Deblois Street	Housing Authority property
Hillside Ave	Housing Authority property
Shepard Avenue	Salve Regina property
Webster Street	Salve Regina property

The City can plant free or discounted trees up to 20 ft from the ROW into private property.





**City of Newport, Rhode Island**  
 Department of Planning & Development

All pervious areas identified in the study can support a tree whose canopy is 20 ft or greater in diameter at maturity. Public Services can use this list to conduct outreach to property owners to plant trees as a regular part of the Roadway Improvement Program.

In setting the 2026 Roadway Improvement Program, the Public Services Department collaborates with the Utilities Department to align the repaving and utility line improvement schedules. Throughout the green and complete streets evaluation process, Planning Staff identified streets with segments that experience inundation per FEMA data. The below listed roadway improvement candidates have segments in flood prone areas. When these roads are being repaved, City departments can collaborate to improve drainage in these areas.

## STREETS THAT EXPERIENCE FLOODING

<p><b>Almy Pond</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bateman Ave</li> <li>Vanderbilt Ave</li> </ul>	<p><b>Easton Pond</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kay St</li> <li>Kay Blvd</li> <li>Bliss Mine Rd</li> <li>Friends Dr</li> <li>Dana St</li> <li>Taber St</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fifth Ward</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marchant St</li> <li>McAllister St</li> <li>Narragansett Ave</li> <li>Sharon Ct</li> <li>Stockholm St</li> </ul>	<p><b>Washington Sq</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charles St</li> <li>Colonial St</li> <li>Duke St</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Prescott Hall</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brandt St</li> <li>Butler St</li> <li>Evarts St</li> <li>Hall Ave</li> <li>Halsey St</li> <li>Homer St</li> </ul>	<p><b>Thames St</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ann St</li> <li>Church St</li> <li>Lee Ave</li> <li>Pelham St</li> <li>Prospect Hill St</li> </ul>	<p><b>The Point</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bridge St</li> <li>Washington St</li> </ul>	<p>These identified roads will be brought to the Utilities Dept. to see where drainage capacity can be expanded.</p>	



**City of Newport, Rhode Island**  
 Department of Planning & Development

**Bicycle Friendly America Application & Bicycle Infrastructure Statistics**

In June 2025, the City of Newport submitted an application to The League of American Bicyclists to renew its Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) status, in partnership with Bike Newport. The League was founded in Newport in 1880 (now headquartered in Washington, D.C.) and was the first national bicycle organization in the United States intended to advocate for cyclists’ rights and better bicycling infrastructure. Their Bicycle Friendly America program is a tool guiding states, communities, businesses, and universities to make bicycling a viable transportation and recreation option for all people, and recognizes awarded communities as vibrant, bikeable destinations for residents and visitors.



The BFC program runs on a four-year cycle. The City of Newport last reapplied for the BFC program in 2017 and was awarded Bronze status. The League assigns applicants either Bronze, Silver, Gold, or Platinum status, with Platinum being the highest recognition. Newport is among 460 communities recognized nationally as Bicycle Friendly Communities. The League conducted a survey and interviews with residents regarding their experiences bicycling in Newport from July through October of this year as part of the reapplication process. The City is expecting to hear the results of the reapplication in January 2026.

As a part of the 2025 BFC application, City staff inventoried the City’s existing network of bicycle facilities:

Newport’s Existing Bicycle Facilities as of 2025	Miles of Roadway Facilities	Percent of Total Roadway Network ( <i>Newport has 97 miles of roads</i> )
<b>Sharrow (Shared Lane) Markings</b>	9.27 mi	9.56%
<b>Bike Lanes</b>	1.89 mi	1.95%
<b>Physically Separated Shared Use Paths (running adjacent to a street)</b>	1.63 mi	1.68%
<b>Off-Street Shared Use Paths</b>	0.50 mi	n/a
<b><i>Total Facilities</i></b>	<b><i>13.29 mi</i></b>	<b><i>13.18%</i></b>

A significant portion of the 2025 BFC application questions emphasized the adoption of local policies, ordinances, and standards to promote the development of safe bicycle roadway and parking facilities. Notably, since Newport’s last 2017 BFC application, the City has adopted the Green & Complete Streets Policy (2021), the Keep Newport Moving: Transportation Master Plan (2023), the Ride Island Bike Plan (2023, officially endorsed by the City Council in 2025), and the Safe Streets For All: Safety Action Plan (2025). The City’s recent zoning ordinance amendments pertaining to the Innovation Hub and special use permit (SUP) criteria have also been instrumental in increasing the number of bicycle parking facilities included in development applications.



**City of Newport, Rhode Island**  
Department of Planning & Development

Bicycle Parking Facilities

Following the adoption of the North End Urban Plan (2021), the City implemented new zoning standards for the Innovation Hub (IH), including the following bicycle parking requirements applicable to all new projects in IH subdistricts:

Use	Short Term Spaces	Long Term Spaces
Residential Uses	1 space/20 units, 3 min	1 space/5 units (for projects with 10+ units only)
Retail Uses	1 space/5,000 sf GSF, 2 min	1 space/5,000 GSF, 2 min
Office Uses	1 space/10,000 sf of GSF, 2 min	1 space/5,000 GSF, 2 min
Industrial Uses	1 space/10,000 sf of GSF, 2 min	1 space/10,000 sf of GSF, 2 min

Short-term bicycle parking spaces are usually outdoor, visible but unmonitored bike racks intended for a couple hours of use. Long-term bicycle parking refers to weather-protected, secure storage, such as bike rooms or cages intended for the all-day or multiday use by residents, employees, or commuters.

To align with 2023 amendments to Rhode Island state land use enabling legislation, the City was required to adopt new “specific and objective criteria” in granting special use permits (SUP) to promote consistency in land use decisions. SUPs are required for uses that are permitted but not allowed by right in a given zoning district, such as for multi-family dwellings, guest houses, charitable institutions, and recreation centers. The City incorporated the following standards in its new SUP criteria to better implement the Green & Complete Streets Policy:

- For new construction and alterations exceeding 50% of any building dimension, provision of a minimum of two (or four for some uses) bicycle parking spaces located on site and within 100 feet of the entrance to the primary building.
- For new construction and alterations exceeding 50% of any building dimension, provision of sidewalks connecting the parking area(s) and building entrance(s), and sidewalks connecting with public sidewalks and bicycle and scooter parking within 100 feet of the property lines.

Due to these new bicycle parking standards, the following development projects that were granted preliminary or final approval this year were required to provide bicycle parking:

Projects Granted Preliminary or Final Approval in 2025	Number of Bicycle Parking Spaces
<b>The Bellevue Hotel</b>	10
<b>Waites Wharf Hotel</b>	8
<b>221 Third &amp; 186 Admiral Kalbfus Subdivision</b>	2
<b>525 Broadway LLC Multifamily Development</b>	12 + indoor storage lockers
<b>The Treadway Hotel</b>	32
<b>102-106 Girard Ave Multifamily Development</b>	2
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b>66</b>