

4. Road Maintenance and Improvements

The State has jurisdiction over 21.6 miles of the Island's roads; the municipality owns 56 miles for a total of 77.6 total miles of state and municipal roads. Private roadways are not included in these figures. Generally, state roads in Jamestown are in good condition. Local municipal roads are basically in fair condition and are being upgraded by the schedule described in the Department of Public Works Pavement Management Plan. The Town is responsible for paving local roads.

Road maintenance includes brush cutting and pruning along roadsides. Both the DOT and the Town Public Works accomplish this on a regular schedule. Recent complaints regarding the poor method of pruning and cutting has led the town staff to request that DOT use different methods besides the machine with the long arm that cuts and rips vegetation at the same height. In addition, the Planning Commission has recommended that money be budgeted for Department of Public Works training in the proper methods of pruning.

a. State Roads

The Division of Planning and the Department of Administration initiate state road improvements under the Transportation Improvement Program for the State of Rhode Island (TIP). The TIP is prepared with public input and requests by local municipal officials.

The State of Rhode Island maintains state roads, including: The John Eldred Parkway, North Road, East Shore Road, Narragansett Avenue, Southwest Avenue and Beavertail Road. DOT has completed the upgrade of Southwest Avenue, including resurfacing Beavertail Road. Along Southwest Avenue the construction project included drainage repair, curbing and stonewall construction. Mackerel Cove was also reconstructed; the parking lot was overhauled, fencing was added and the beach and dunes were landscaped. Sidewalks were added to the Sheffield Cove side of the road and drainage was installed on Beavertail Road from Battery Lane to the beach.

The Town has used TIP to gain funding for transportation projects in Jamestown. Funding was received in 1997, with 500,000 dollars targeted for streetscape improvements to the eastern most part of Narragansett Avenue. The preliminary design was completed in 1999 and construction is targeted for completion in 2003.

b. Local Roads

Local road improvements are made under the Town's Pavement Management Program (PMP). PMP was mandated by the State of RI in 1989 and requires communities to prepare a pavement evaluation program utilizing a computer software program designed for this purpose. Under the program, all town roads were

inventoried, including surface, function, condition, right-of-way width and length, date of construction and last inspection. Based upon twelve variables, the road condition is then rated from 0 (gravel - non-functioning) to 100 (excellent). The Town is responsible for the plowing of local, minor subdivision and gravel based roads. All state roads are plowed by the State.

Review of Pavement Management Plan shows that Jamestown contains 77.6 miles of roads. PMP ranks the local roads as Primary ("P"), Secondary ("S"), Tertiary (gravel) ("T") and Private ("X") for maintenance and repair purposes. Gravel roads are defined as all roads that have a gravel surface regardless of use. Private roads are roads for which the Town accepts no repair responsibility. Secondary roads primarily serve residents of the street and have a hard surface pavement. Primary roads collect neighborhood streets and have a hard surface pavement. Roads are further categorized as either chipped seal ("ST"), asphalt concrete ("AC") or gravel ("GR"). The PMP ranks the local roads on a condition scale from gravel through excellent to designate necessary repairs and maintenance. The Town's Highway Department personnel perform road maintenance of local roads on an as-needed basis.

Each year, the Public Works Department prepares a Road and Drainage Improvement Program. Roads are prioritized according to needed improvements. Special consideration is given to problem roads and high usage roads. Coordination of the construction of new subdivision roads and existing road improvements are also a consideration in road improvement planning. Roadway improvements are made in different sections of the Town and in accordance with the annual prescribed budget. Maintenance is performed on private roads used by the general public, although private individuals or organizations usually provide the cost of materials.

Rehabilitation and maintenance of the local roads is achieved by the use of town tax money and existing personnel and equipment. The community has historically utilized this "pay as you go" method. No local bond issue has ever been issued for improvements to the local road system. Heavy equipment necessary for road construction work is owned by the Town and periodically replaced as needed. Recently, the Town acquired new paving equipment. Local roads that the Town is not capable of resurfacing are put out to contract.

The level of service for roads provided to Islanders will not substantially change without a major reallocation of funds for road improvements. The 2001 budget allocates almost \$7,200 for cold patch and \$28,000 for paving. Jamestown residents have accepted this level of funding and its corresponding level of service. Spending on road improvements may increase with the demand for well-maintained roads.

As the population increases in Jamestown, so does the traffic on residential streets. The issue of speeding on residential streets is brought up on a case by case basis to the Town Council as the need arises or if the neighborhood issue heightens. However, there have been many more complaints of speeding within the last ten years as a result of

the John Eldred Parkway upgrade. Much progress has been made throughout the country on reducing speeds within residential neighborhoods through innovative transportation planning methods called “traffic calming” and “traffic softening features”. Locally, increased police enforcement and ticketing within targeted areas throughout the community have reduced the incidents of speeding in some areas.

c. Private Roads

Approximately three miles of private roads are located within the Town. Residents or private associations maintain most private roads. The Town maintains some private roads by contract if they are in areas that are accessible to the general public.

5. Traffic Signals

Jamestown has one flashing traffic light signal at the intersection of Narragansett Avenue, South West Avenue and North Main Road. This flashing light is very effective and allows traffic to move swiftly through the intersection on a rotating basis at the heaviest times in the morning and late afternoon. Additional traffic control is provided by the placement of stop signs at intersections. There is not currently a need for any additional traffic light signals in Jamestown. Prior to any future placement, alternative methods of traffic control should be tested. According to the Jamestown Police Department, the Town has not had any intersections with greater than ten accidents per year.

6. Street Lighting

Street lighting in Jamestown is primarily at intersections and is also provided on major streets and neighborhood streets in the downtown and some newer subdivision streets. The Town's Subdivision Regulations do not require the provision of street lights, but if they are provided, all utility lines must be placed underground.

It does not appear to be necessary to increase the street lighting system in any areas in Town except for some possible renovation in the Commercial Downtown area along Narragansett Avenue. The lighting system currently in place along Narragansett Avenue is being redesigned as part of the downtown improvements through a cooperative program with DOT that is funded by the Federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act. With this funding, incandescent lights will be installed to replace the existing pole mounted lights.

7. Parking

A major concern of local businesses and residents has been the lack of parking during the peak summer season. Local businesses state that there is significant competition between employees, tourists, boaters, and residents for the limited number of parking spaces during these peak times. This parking problem is a

historic condition brought about by the existence of commercial structures dating back to the 1800s when there were no requirements for parking. In the past 10 years a number of events, all focused on the East Ferry “Center of Town” have brought about awareness of possible parking problems in this area. These events include the increase in Jamestown’s population, the success of the East Ferry marina, restaurants and businesses, coupled with an increase in special event activities. Although the parking problem is generally during the summer season, it is widely felt that parking is close to being a problem the rest of the year and will be a problem in future years.

The Town Zoning Ordinance sets parking standards for commercial businesses. The Zoning Ordinance parking requirements are based upon the type of use. Although the ordinance has set standards for all new construction, buildings which pre-date the adoption of the Zoning Ordinance are not required to adhere to the standards unless their use is changed. The Harbor Management Ordinance has parking requirements for marinas and moorings that applies to all new and existing commercial marina operations. Private moorings have no parking requirements.

Currently, there are approximately 370 parking spaces available in Commercial Downtown. Of these, 234 are public on-street parking and public parking lot spaces, and 136 are privately owned. Commercial district employees currently utilize approximately 115 of the total parking spaces. This leaves a remainder of approximately 255 spaces in general circulation for daily customer parking downtown. During the summer peak season, the Town enforces time-limited parking for all on-street public parking spaces.

An analysis of the existing parking spaces and utilization indicates that there presently exists additional opportunities to alleviate the parking problem without new construction of parking areas. This could include using town-owned facilities within the village after business hours on weekdays and anytime on weekends and holidays when town business is closed.

The greatest immediate opportunities lie in the increased utilization of parking spaces near the Town Hall on Narragansett Avenue, west of the Fire Station. These two areas offer approximately 69 public parking spaces that could be used for patrons of downtown businesses during peak weekend hours. The Town Hall could also be used for weekend boat trailer parking, offering approximately 10 boat trailer spaces. Encouragement for use of these areas could easily be accomplished by the placement of signage indicated public parking areas. This signage should be in keeping with the village character of the downtown and should clearly identify time and days during which public parking is allowed.

Other Town facilities that have ample available parking are the Town Hall and the Town Offices. Both are located within one-half mile of the western border of the Downtown Commercial District and are underutilized during the summer weekends. Appropriate signage could encourage use of these areas by tourists in the future if the

need arises. This option should only be used if all local (within walking distance) spaces become filled on a regular basis. This may not happen for several years.

Conanicut Marina presently has 50 parking spaces at their Taylor Point Boat Storage Facility behind the Police Station, accommodating customers that require extended or overnight marina parking. The Zoning Board recently denied a proposal by Conanicut Marina for 178 additional parking spaces at Taylor Point. These spaces were proposed to accommodate Conanicut Marina customers during the summer months. The Zoning Board denied the application in October 2000 for a variety of reasons.

According to Jamestown's 1998 Community Survey Response, 28.3 percent of residents feel that there is a parking problem in the downtown area and an additional 52.5 percent feel that the problem exists only in the summer season. 42 percent feel that parking is a problem in the downtown area and that the Town should develop another municipal lot, while 19 percent feel that an additional municipal lot is unnecessary. 60 percent did not respond to whether the additional lot should be free to all, while 25 percent felt that it should be free. 56 percent of residents did not respond to whether the additional lot should be a pay-for-park lot while 22 percent felt it should be pay-for-park. The three most common suggestions for a new municipal lot were: free for residents, resident sticker parking and 24-hour time limit. Please refer to the five following graphs.

The Planning Department conducted a parking survey during one week each month from July through September 2000. While looking at the number of vacant parking spaces along Narragansett Avenue, Conanicus Avenue, the town parking lot and the town square, it was noted that generally, the spaces closest to the town square were usually full and that the spaces from the fire station and west were 90 percent vacant. It was determined that the Town has ample parking spaces for daily automobile parking users, which are all within a short walking distance from shops and the waterfront (2000 feet maximum). The village does have, however, a lack of overnight parking. Using the municipal parking lot at the Town Hall may mitigate this deficiency. Using other municipal facilities, outside of the downtown area such as the Town Offices may be an option in the future if the need arises and shuttle service is feasible.

To more accurately assess the present parking problem in Jamestown, a more comprehensive survey needs to be conducted that accounts for private lot usage. The sample needs parallel days and dates each month and a variety of special events. Special events such as the Art Association Show at the Recreation Center, the Memorial Day Parade, Fourth of July weekend, and Ferry Days at Veterans' Memorial Square have increased since the last Comprehensive Plan and should be reflected in such a study.

In January 2001, the Jamestown Parking Committee recommended that the Town Council purchase or negotiate to lease a piece of property in the commercial

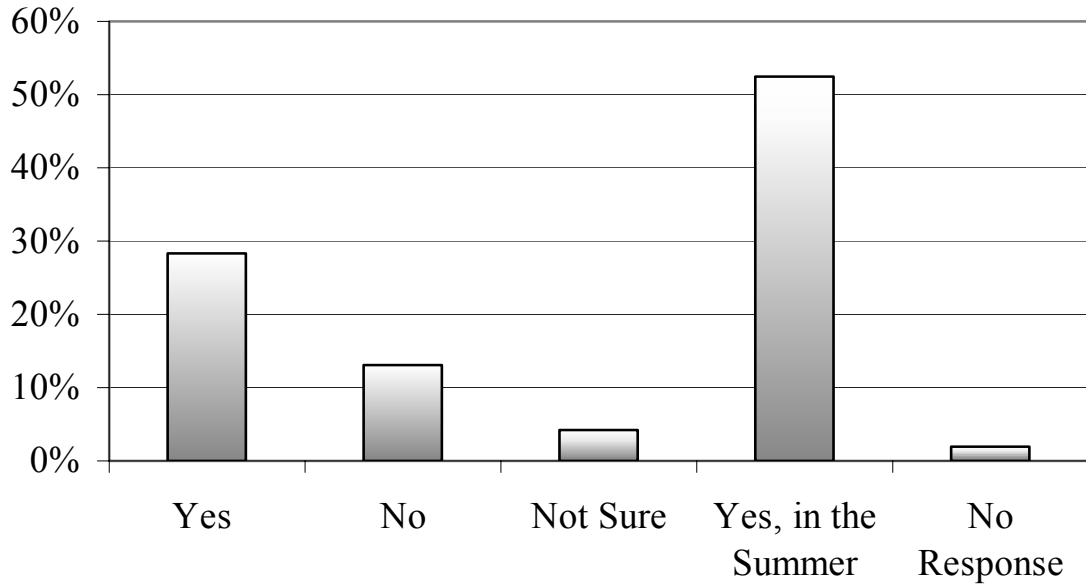
downtown while there are still several available lots. The Planning Commission endorsed this action.

Signage needs to be provided and improved in some areas, especially on the eastern portion of Narragansett Avenue. The study should also assess whether more eight-hour spaces and/or other timing changes need to be made.

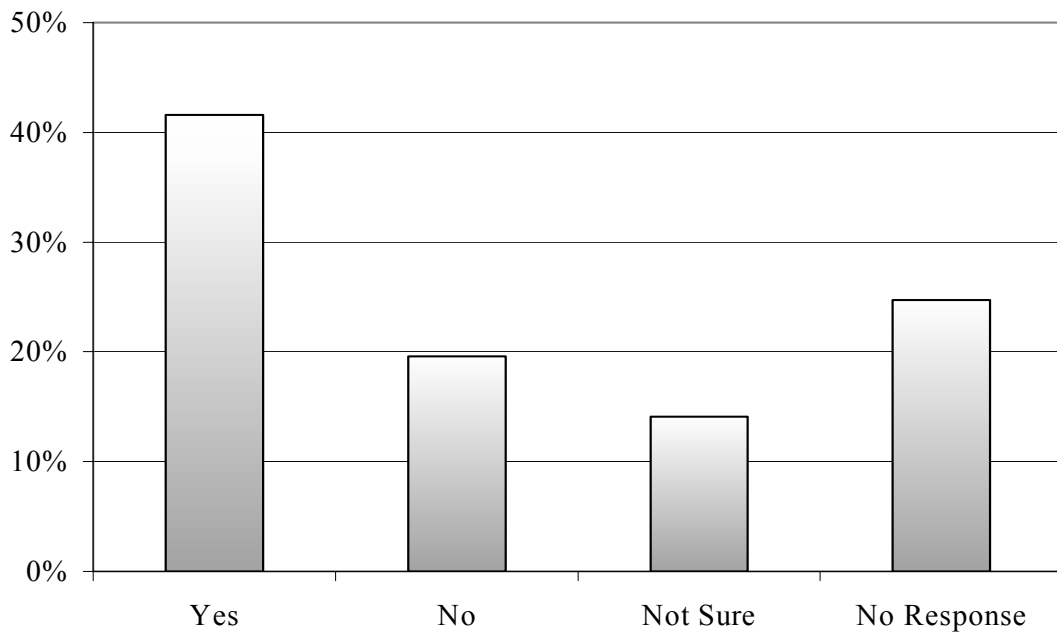
Numerous adjustments have been made to address parking in the downtown area. A former state repair shop for Ferry Service was removed on Narragansett Avenue to create a 16-vehicle municipal parking lot. The hours for parking were adjusted throughout the village square area and on Conanicus Avenue. Many of the 8-hour parking spaces were reduced to 2-hour and 1-hour to allow a greater turnover for local businesses and restaurants. This action prompted increased parking along southern Conanicus Avenue, which has unrestricted time limits. Concerned about safety, the Town asked the State in 1996 to enforce the no-overnight parking on that portion of Conanicus Avenue and eliminated parking on the west side of southern Conanicus.

In 1993 the Council passed a zoning amendment to allow seasonal off-site marina parking in Commercial Downtown (CD) and Commercial Limited (CL) by right and in R-20 and R-40 by special use permit. Fifty spaces were granted in the R-20 district to Conanicut Marine Services with conditions intended to minimize negative impacts upon residential abutters. After further studies a 1995 amendment provided for businesses to arrange for shared parking by legal agreement which has been used once, for a restaurant expansion. Since then, the marina has doubled in size as well as provided a base for two passenger ferryboats, kayak rental, sailboat charters and other businesses. Public debate continues and CD businesses still face a need for parking variances to meet zoning requirements.

Is There A Parking Problem in the Downtown Area?

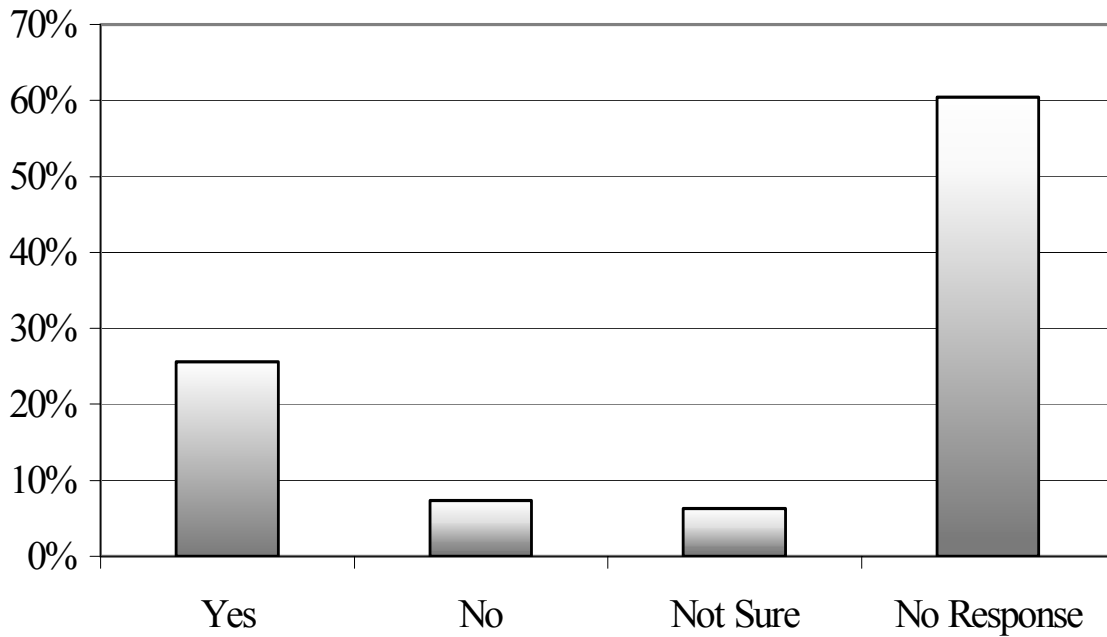


If Parking is a Problem in the Downtown Area Should the Town Develop Another Municipal Lot?

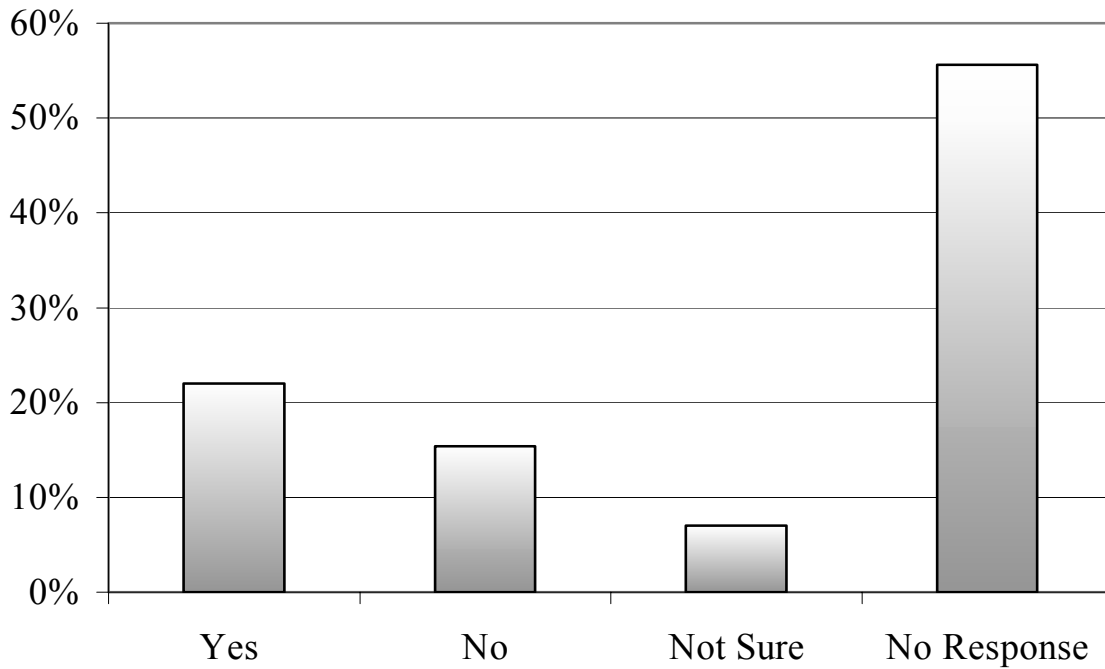


Source: 1998 Community Survey

Should the Additional Parking Lot Be Free to All?

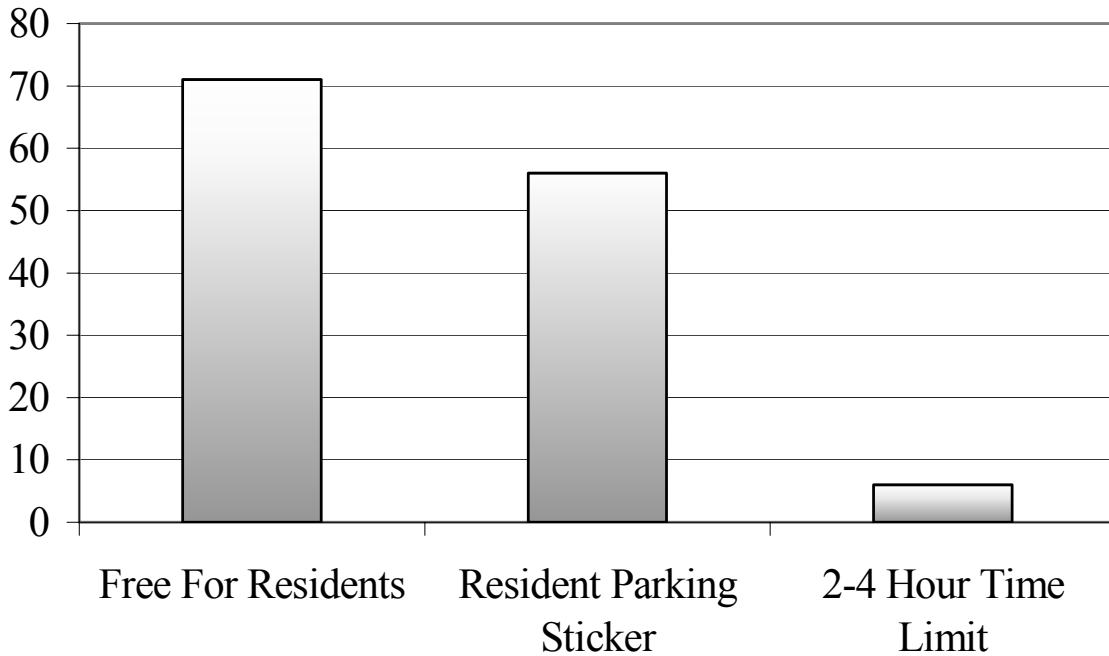


Should the Additional Parking Lot Be a Pay-For Park Lot?



Source: 1998 Community Survey

163 Respondents
Most Common Answers For the Municipal Lot Usage?



Source: 1998 Community Survey

8. Public Transportation

The Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) provides public transportation to and from Providence, Kingston/Wakefield and the Island and to and from Jamestown through Aquidneck Island to Bristol and, eventually, to Providence. According to the Planning Division of the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority, the total average weekday bus ridership in Jamestown is between 50 and 60 riders.

RIPTA buses stop at various locations along this route as needed by riders. The RIPTA line in Jamestown begins at the new bus shelter located at the Helm Street off-ramp of Route 138 at the Jamestown-Verrazzano Bridge. The route continues on North Road to Narragansett Avenue and the bus shelter located at the intersection of Narragansett Avenue and Conanicus Avenue. The RIDE bus route includes a loop by the senior housing at Pemberton Apartments.

RIPTA provides handicap transportation on a number of runs. Americans with Disabilities receive curb to curb service and pay \$2.50 per ride. RIDE improves access to transportation for qualifying seniors. Free bus service is also available for the Town's elderly and handicapped residents during off-peak hours and weekends. Additional service for the blind, handicapped and elderly is provided with paratransit transportation.

Through a private contract with the Jamestown Red Cross and the state Department of Elderly Affairs Paratransit transportation is provided for the elderly and disabled. Eligible individuals for state funded service include those residents 60 years of age or over and those low income individuals under the age of 60 who receive medical assistance. Transportation is provided to Adult Day Care, medical appointments and the Senior Lunch Program. A donation is requested based upon the length of trip although transportation to the Senior Lunch Program is provided free of charge. New Visions for Newport County, Inc., a non-profit public service agency also provides van transportation for elderly and handicapped residents to medical appointments twice weekly.

9. Traffic Volume and Accidents

The Island's traffic pattern is significantly impacted by the seasonal influx of tourists. Between May and September, a notable increase in traffic volume occurs from tourists traveling to Newport and South County. The Jamestown Police Accident Report states that since January of 1990 until March 28, 2000 there have been a total of 1,664 accidents in Jamestown. A review of the State's accident statistics indicates that no particular intersection appears to be of significant danger. The majority of accidents occur on the main arteries, namely, North Road, the John Eldred Parkway, Narragansett Avenue, Conanicus Avenue and the Jamestown - Verrazzano Bridge.

The John Eldred Parkway, East Shore Road and North Main Road are Jamestown's most heavily traveled roads as determined by the automatic traffic volume counts conducted by DOT. Traffic volume increases significantly on these roadways during the summer tourist season.

10. Alternative Modes of Transportation

Alternatives to vehicular transportation are becoming more popular and important to our society due to growing scarcity of natural resources needed to produce petroleum, increased awareness of pollution created by automobiles, and associated health benefits. Alternative modes of transportation include biking, walking and marine transportation.

a. Bicycling

Cycling is a popular recreational activity in Jamestown throughout most of the year. Although there are no formal bike paths, bicyclists utilize existing roadways and shoulders. A shoulder of a minimum of four feet is considered standard for a bicycle lane. Most of Jamestown's roadways do not provide this minimum and many do not have any shoulders at all. Although adult cyclists commonly use the travel lane, this creates a safety hazard for youths as well as adults.

The recent upgrading of Southwest Avenue and a portion of Beavertail Road has increased the Island's bicycle tolerant roads. Upgrading included the construction of roadway shoulders with a three-foot minimum. Existing bicycle tolerant roadways include Hamilton Avenue, Howland Avenue, Southwest Avenue and a portion of Beavertail Road from the Town Beach to Battery Lane, which provide connections from the downtown area to the recreational areas of Fort Getty and Fort Wetherill.

The Jamestown-Verrazzano Bridge provides a very narrow, separated pedestrian access on the bridge. Bicyclists are currently allowed to cross the bridge but no accommodations are provided which allow safe crossing. Currently there is no viable approach to the bridge from either side of the bay. The raised walkway suspends the bicyclist over the railing and is approximately 3 feet wide, accommodating only the most experienced of bicyclists. The only other option for bicyclists is utilizing the breakdown lane on the main bridge surface. The Newport Bridge does not allow people to ride or walk bicycles across the Bridge. However, at certain times bicycles are allowed on RIPTA buses in Jamestown traveling to Newport. Currently DOT is looking into different scenarios to provide better access across the west passage of Narragansett Bay.

A plan should be developed, involving public input, to safely accommodate bicycle and pedestrian transportation throughout the island. Where bicycle lanes and bicycle paths are located along roads, concept designs should be developed that retain roads with rural character and are compatible with the neighborhood. As a plan is developed, funding for design and construction of such bicycle and pedestrian ways should be sought, and they should be incorporated into future road construction and upgrades whenever possible.

b. Walking

Pedestrian pathways or greenways exist at several public areas throughout the Island. Two of the longest trail systems are at the Conanicut Island Sanctuary and Beavertail State Park. The path at Beavertail runs along the eastern edge of the waterfront and is approximately 3,000 linear feet long. The trail at the Conanicut Island Sanctuary is a double loop trail system of approximately one-mile designed to introduce one to the various types of plant species at the area. Lesser public paths on Jamestown are located on the western shore at Fort Getty and on town property where the Water Treatment Plant is located.

Pedestrian access is also provided at public shoreline access areas located along the Island coast. Pedestrian access along the shore is continuous through fifteen public water access points along either shore of the Island, and all shoreline below the mean high tide water line. This is an increase of nine access points since the 1991 Community Plan. Greenways and pedestrian connections are further discussed in the Conservation and Open Space Element of this plan.

c. Marine Transportation

Conanicut Island's location in Narragansett Bay allows access by boat by way of the East and West Passages. Boating facilities in Jamestown are located at East and West Ferry, Clark Boat Yard, Conanicut Marine Services, Dutch Harbor Boat Yard and Jamestown Boat Yard. Most of these marinas maintain transient moorings available to visitors.

Accessing Jamestown with public or private marine transportation creates an ideal opportunity to shift some of the focus of travel away from automobiles and reduce the parking burden in the downtown area during the summer season. Public docking is available at East Ferry and West Ferry in Jamestown.

After a 24-year interlude with no ferry following the opening of the Newport Bridge in 1969, passenger ferry service resumed. The Jamestown/Newport Ferry Company has provided seasonal passenger ferry service to and from Newport since 1993. This resurgence of the Jamestown/Newport Ferry Company has provided a continuance of the oldest Ferry Service in the Country.

11. Circulation - Achievements Since 1991

This section lists, in ***bold italics***, the Circulation Goals, Policies, and Implementation Methods as stated in the 1991 Comprehensive Community Plan. The community achievements since 1991 follow the listing of each goal, policy, and implementation method and describe what results or actions have occurred on each particular item, and why it has or has not been implemented/successful.

a. Plan a five-year road and drainage improvement program at current funding level utilizing the Pavement Management Program. Re-evaluate the level of funding annually.

1) *Annually update the Pavement Management Program to establish priorities for road improvements.*

Utilizing the Pavement Management Program, a five year road and drainage improvement program was established. The Pavement Management Plan is updated annually to establish priorities for road improvements.

2) *Town should prepare an island wide Road Classification Plan which defines circulation needs and functions of each link within the network.*

An island-wide Road Classification Plan defining circulation needs and other areas within the network, deemed unnecessary, was not carried out.

3) *Public Works Director should prepare an improvement program based on priorities set by the Pavement Management Program including existing and future utilization and current condition of Town roads. Program should prioritize roads with first consideration given to those which will be impacted by the Rte. 138 connector road.*

The Public Works Director is presently preparing an improvement program based on priorities set by the PMP.

4) *Funding for improvements and road construction equipment should continue to be included in the Capital Development Program.*

5) *Funding methods should be evaluated annually.*

Annual funding for improvements and road construction equipment are included in the Capital Development Program; and are evaluated annually; and routine road maintenance is performed by the Highway Department personnel.

6) *Routine road maintenance should continue to be performed by the Highway Department personnel.*

7) *Increase annual routine road maintenance work according to available funds and labor.*

Annual road maintenance work is increased according to available funds and labor.

b. Continue to require a high level of road design and construction for all new development to assure safety and to reduce the future financial road maintenance burden for the community.

1) *Revise road construction standards of subdivision roads to meet current standards of the State of RI, Department of Public Works and local needs.*

Road construction standards of subdivision roads were revised to meet current RI Department of Public Works' standards and local needs.

c. Promote alternative methods of transportation where appropriate.

1) *Seek State and Federal aid in developing alternative travel solutions.*

The Town has attempted to seek state and federal aid in developing alternative travel solutions, but without much success. In 1998, the Town rejected DOT Ferry Discretionary funds due to the potential negative impacts on Jamestown.

2) *Review State and Local road upgrades/reconstruction projects for consideration of bicycle lanes and pedestrian access/walkways.*

The Town has also continuously applied for Transportation Improvement Program funds from the DOT, for support of development of alternative modes of transportation. Southwest Avenue and Beavertail Road have been reconstructed and repaired through the TIP process and Narragansett Avenue will see renovation in the next year through these funds. Both projects offer some upgrades to pedestrian facilities. Continuous state and local road upgrades and reconstruction projects include consideration of bicycle lanes and pedestrian walkways.

- 3) *Review proposed subdivisions to determine appropriate alternative circulation methods such as walkways/bikeways.*

Proposed subdivisions determining appropriate alternative circulation methods such as walkways and bikeways were reviewed.

- 4) *Develop an independent walkway/bikeway system as funding for planning and development becomes available.*

In 2000 the Town applied for, but did not receive DOT Transportation Improvement Program funding for the Conanicut Island greenway.

d. Coordinate local, state, and federal goals for all major road upgrades and specifically the Route 138 project to minimize impacts to the community.

- 1) *Review and monitor effect of new road construction on local circulation and plan local road improvements and traffic control accordingly.*
- 2) *Review and monitor environmental impact of all road construction projects to insure continued protection of watershed, wetlands, farmland, and other natural resources.*

To minimize the impacts to the community, two recommendations were followed via local, state, and federal goals for all major road upgrades and the John Eldred Parkway. Revision and monitoring of the effects of new road construction on local circulation is ongoing as well as the planning of local road improvements and traffic control. Revision and monitoring of environmental impacts of all road construction projects is done to insure continued protection of watershed, wetlands, farmland, and other natural resources.

Note: This shaded Section specifies how the Town has addressed the Goals, Policies and Implementation Methods stated in the 1991 Comprehensive Community Plan.

