STATE PLANNING COUNCIL
TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
July 24, 2014 at 6:30 p.m.
Department of Administration
APPROVED MINUTES

I. ATTENDANCE

1. Members Present

Ms. Fran Shocket, Chair	Public Member
Mr. Everett Stuart, Vice Chair	RI Association of Railroad Passengers
Mr. Lloyd Albert	AAA Southern New England
Ms. Sue Barker	RI Bicycle Coalition
Mr. Michael Bliss	Representing Dinalyn Spears, Narragansett Indian Tribe
Ms. Meredith Brady	RI Department of Transportation
Ms. Joelle Kanter	Representing Mr. Dan Baudouin, Providence Foundation
Ms. Eliza Lawson	RI Department of Health
Mr. George Monaghan	RI Consulting Engineers (RICE)
Mr. Daniel Porter	RI Airport Corporation
Mr. Barry Schiller	RI Sierra Club
Ms. Pam Sherrill	RI Chapter, APA
Mr. Michael Wood	Town of Burrillville / RI League of Cities and Towns

2. Members Absent

Mr. Alan Brodd	Town of Woonsocket
Mr. Michael Cassidy	Public Member
Mr. Richard Crenca	City of Warwick
Mr. Albert Dahlberg	Public Member
Dr. Judith Drew	Governor's Commission on Disabilities
Mr. David Everett	City of Providence
Mr. Ronald Gagnon	RI Department of Environmental Management
Ms. Lillian Picchione	RI Public Transit Authority
Mr. Michael Walker	RI Commerce Corporation

3. Statewide Planning Staff Present

Mr. Benjamin Jacobs	Principal Planner
Mr. Jared Rhodes	Chief
Ms. Dawn Vittorioso	Executive Assistant
Mr. Chris Witt	Principal Planner

4. <u>Guests Present</u>

Mr. Corey Bobba	Federal Highway Administration
Mr. Gary Bowen	RI Department of Transportation
Mr. David Capalbo	RI Department of Transportation
Ms. Daniella DiPaola	Federal Highway Administration
Mr. Peter Kozey	Federal Highway Administration
Ms. Eugenia Marks	Audubon Society; Coalition of Transportation Choices
Ms. Julie L. Oakley	RI Department of Transportation
Mr. Vincent Palumbo	RI Department of Transportation
Ms. Lisa Primiano	RI Department of Environmental Management
Ms. Margherita Pryor	RI Bicycle Coalition
Mr. Thomas J. Queenan	RI Department of Transportation
Ms. Jennifer Walsh	RI Bicycle Coalition
Mr. Christos Xenophontos	RI Department of Transportation

II. AGENDA ITEMS

1. Call to Order

Ms. Shocket called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

2. Approval of June 26, 2014 Minutes – *for action*

Ms. Shocket asked for a motion to approve the June 26, 2014 meeting minutes as presented. Ms. Brady moved and Mr. Monaghan seconded the approval of the June 26, 2014 meeting minutes as submitted. There was no further discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

3. Public Comment on Agenda Items

Ms. Jennifer Walsh expressed her support to add or enhance existing roadways to accommodate bicycles and noted that she believes that RI is behind other states in promoting bicycle usage and infrastructure.

Ms. Margherita Pryor and Ms. Eugenia Marks deferred their comments and indicated that they would do so when agenda item seven is introduced.

4. Highway Functional Classification Comprehensive Review and Update

- **Technical Paper 155: Highway Functional Classification for the State of Rhode Island 2014 – 2025 – *for action***
- **2014 Highway Functional Classification / NHS Reclassified Roadways – *for action***

Mr. Witt briefly summarized the purpose of the functional classification and indicated that Statewide Planning and the Rhode Island Department of Transportation have revised the state's draft highway

functional classification system that Linsey Callaghan presented to the TAC at its June 26, 2014 meeting. He then asked for the TAC's review and approval of two items:

1. Technical Paper 155: Rhode Island Highway Functional Classification 2014, which describes the purpose of functional classification, the method used by Statewide Planning and RIDOT in the update, and a list of the proposed changes. It also includes a summary of each comment on the draft functional classification system received from the state's municipalities, the TAC, and members of the public as well as Statewide Planning's and RIDOT's responses.

2. Rhode Island Highway Functional Classification 2014 - the final functional classification proposed by Statewide Planning and RIDOT. If the TAC approves the updated system, Statewide Planning will transmit a spatial file of the new system to the FHWA Rhode Island Division Office and a separate spatial file of the National Highway System only to FHWA Headquarters in Washington DC.

Mr. Schiller asked about implications for biking along Gano Street, Promenade Street, Kennedy Plaza and the Henderson Bridge in Providence will be and asked if changes will be necessary to accommodate higher speeds. In response, Mr. Witt said that the Highway Functional Classification will not have an impact; its intention is to identify the roadways' current use.

There being no further questions or comments, Ms. Shocket asked for a motion to approve Technical Paper 155: Rhode Island Highway Functional Classification 2014, which describes the purpose of functional classification, the method used by Statewide Planning and RIDOT in the update, and a list of the proposed changes. It also includes a summary of each comment on the draft functional classification system received from the state's municipalities, the TAC, and members of the public as well as Statewide Planning's and RIDOT's responses. Mr. Wood moved and Ms. Sherrill seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

Next, Ms. Shocket asked for a motion to approve Rhode Island Highway Functional Classification 2014 - the final functional classification proposed by Statewide Planning and RIDOT. If the TAC approves the updated system, Statewide Planning will transmit a spatial file of the new system to the FHWA Rhode Island Division Office and a separate spatial file of the National Highway System only to FHWA Headquarters in Washington DC. Ms. Brady moved and Ms. Sherrill seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

5. MAP-21 Educational Series – Transportation Alternatives Program

- **RIDOT/RIDEM Staff Presentation - *for information***

Mr. Queenan and Ms. Primiano presented the MAP-21 Educational Series – Transportation Alternative Program as distributed with the Committee's packets as shown in (attachment 1). Highlights of those items in which the Transportation Advisory Committee engaged in discussion are as follows:

Mr. Wood asked if federal requirements for the Safe Routes to School Program have changed and noted that he felt that the Program was geared more towards urban communities as opposed to rural communities. In response, Mr. Queenan and Mr. Rhodes indicated that they did not readily have an answer but indicated that they would look into the program requirements.

Ms. Barker commented on the importance of having safe alternatives to the automobile as a means of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving public health. In addition, Ms. Barker commented that small grants are important and do a lot for local organizations.

Mr. Stuart queried how the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) relates to the Transportation Alternative Program (TAP). Mr. Xenophontos indicated that the programs and efforts are separate and noted that a presentation will be shared at a future meeting.

Mr. Schiller commended RIDEM for efforts being made to hiking trails and to RIDOT for maintaining the TAP Program. He then noted the following concerns:

1. $3 million is an insufficient amount to sustain the program at the state level.
2. RI needs to be cognizant of the efforts being made at the federal level to eliminate the program all together.
3. Additional focus should be on publicizing transit connections that exist in RI.
4. Control on outdoor advertising; RIDOT and the Providence Zoning Board should collaborate to eliminate signage variances along the I95 right-a-way for beautification purposes.
5. Continue focusing on development.

Ms. Lawson asked how the Recreational Trails Program is promoted to community based organizations. Ms. Primiano indicated that promotions are usually communicated through a mass mailing when larger grants are available; otherwise, smaller grants are communicated through word of mouth. Ms. Barker added that communications are promoted through the Trails newsletter.

There being no further questions or comments, Ms. Shocket thanked Mr. Queenan and Ms. Primiano for their presentation and moved to the next agenda item.

6. Staff Report

Mr. Rhodes addressed the following items under the Staff report:

- Ms. Callaghan began maternity leave. Mr. Witt will assume the role as the Supervising Transportation Planner;
- Karen Scott will return from maternity leave in early September;
- The next meeting is scheduled for August 28th.

7. Additional Public Comment

Ms. Pryor who represents RI Bicycle Coalition commented on the following:

- She does not support the usage of TAP funds for stormwater management and voiced that DOT should fund the project;
- In regards to connectivity – The Henderson Bridge represents “a bridge to nowhere” and should be focused on as a pedestrian and bicycle facility;
- TAP funds should be utilized for pedestrians, bicyclists, and the disabled. She noted that RI Bicycle Coalition could assist in the prioritization for TAP funds disbursement;

- RI should consider bicycling as a true transportation alternative. Ms. Pryor noted that encouraging bicycling for its cost-effective benefits such as reduced roadway construction costs, double capacity with movability to and from and then said additional construction for parking garages would save tax payer subsidy.

Ms. Shocket thanked Ms. Pryor for her comments and asked if anyone had any additional comments that they would like to add. Ms. Eugenia Marks who represents the Audubon Society and the Coalition of Transportation Choices made the following comments:

- Ms. Marks expressed importance of the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Program and the need to expand it, which will allow children to safely cross major roadways;
- She then noted that she opposes non-solicitation for additional projects for the next Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Ms. Marks made a specific reference to Route 108 intersection with Curtis Corner and Saugatucket Road in South Kingstown and noted that this was a project that was part of the TIP to create a left hand turn. However, sidewalks were not created. She pointed out the dangers for pedestrians walking along this route during inclement weather conditions.

8. Other Business – *For discussion*

Ms. Barker distributed the Bicycle Commuter Guide that was published by the RI Bicycle Coalition with funds from the Narragansett Bay Wheelmen & Greenways Alliance grant program. She encouraged Committee members to review the guide and provide feedback before it is publically published.

Mr. Wood questioned how the proposed federal funding extension scenario will affect RI. Ms. Brady indicated that there are $18 million in additional projects this year and $30 million projects next year will be able to be released. Mr. Wood then asked if RIDOT will propose a list of projects that they will be moving forward. Ms. Brady said yes.

Mr. Monaghan pointed out the existence of new Complete Street legislation.

Mr. Schiller began by thanking the Ms. Marks, Ms. Pryor and Ms. Walsh for attending the meeting and for their comments. He then expressed his support for bicycle usage and pointed out that bicycling makes good economic sense. In closing, Mr. Schiller referred to the Route 10/6 connector in Providence and pointed out the congestion problem. He noted that the route could be converted to a Boulevard design, which would allow more efficient connections to merge or change lanes and then encouraged all to think “out of the box”.

9. Adjournment

Upon motion of Ms. Brady, seconded by Ms. Porter, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Witt, TAC Secretary - Acting

Transportation Alternatives Program

Presentation to the Transportation Advisory Committee

July 24, 2014

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

MAP21 - Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century

- Transportation Bill
- TAP Under Section 1122
- 2% of Fed Aid to Highways
- Each Federal Fiscal Year
- Surface Transportation Activities

Plum Beach Lighthouse

Transportation Alternatives Background

- **MAP-21 Established A New Program for Alternative Transportation Projects**
- **No more Transportation Enhancement Program**
- **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)**
  - **Provides for a variety of alternative transportation projects**
  - **Many previously eligible under separately funded programs**

Transportation Alternatives Background

- **TAP consolidates pre-MAP21 programs, including:**
  - **Recreational Trails Program,**
  - **Safe Routes to School; and**
  - **Transportation Enhancements**

TAP Funding for Rhode Island

- Prior to MAP-21 - $5.6 Million/year for project activity
  - TE, RTP, SRTS
- Today: Under MAP-21 Only $3 Million
- 46% Funding Reduction
- Subject to Federal Approval
- STP Funds also Eligible
- 13 to 16 TIP Projects Continue

Warren Avenue,
East Providence

Overall Program Goals

- Strategic Investments
  - Safety
  - Accessibility
  - Mobility
- Expanding Travel Choices
- Strengthening Local Economies
- Improving Quality of Life
- Protecting the Environment

Customer Base

- Pedestrians
- Transit Users
- Bicyclists
- Other Non-Motorized Transportation Users

Transportation Alternatives Qualifying Activities

- On-Road & Off-Road Trail Facilities for:
  - Pedestrians
  - Bicyclists
  - Other Non-Motorized Forms of Transportation

Transportation Alternatives Qualifying Activities

Projects Providing Safe Routes for Non-Drivers

- Children
- Older Adults
- Individuals w/ Disabilities
- Access to Daily Needs

Wickford Village

Hope St. - Bristol

King St. – East Greenwich

Transportation Alternatives Qualifying Activities

Community Improvement Activities

- Inventory, Control or Removal of Outdoor Advertising
- Historic Preservation & Rehabilitation of Historic Transportation Facilities
- Vegetation Management in Transportation ROW
  - To Improve Roadway Safety
  - Prevent Invasive Species
  - Provide Erosion Control
- Archaeological Activities
  - To Mitigate Impacts from a Transportation Project

Examples of Community Improvement Activities

Colt Park "Bull Gates"

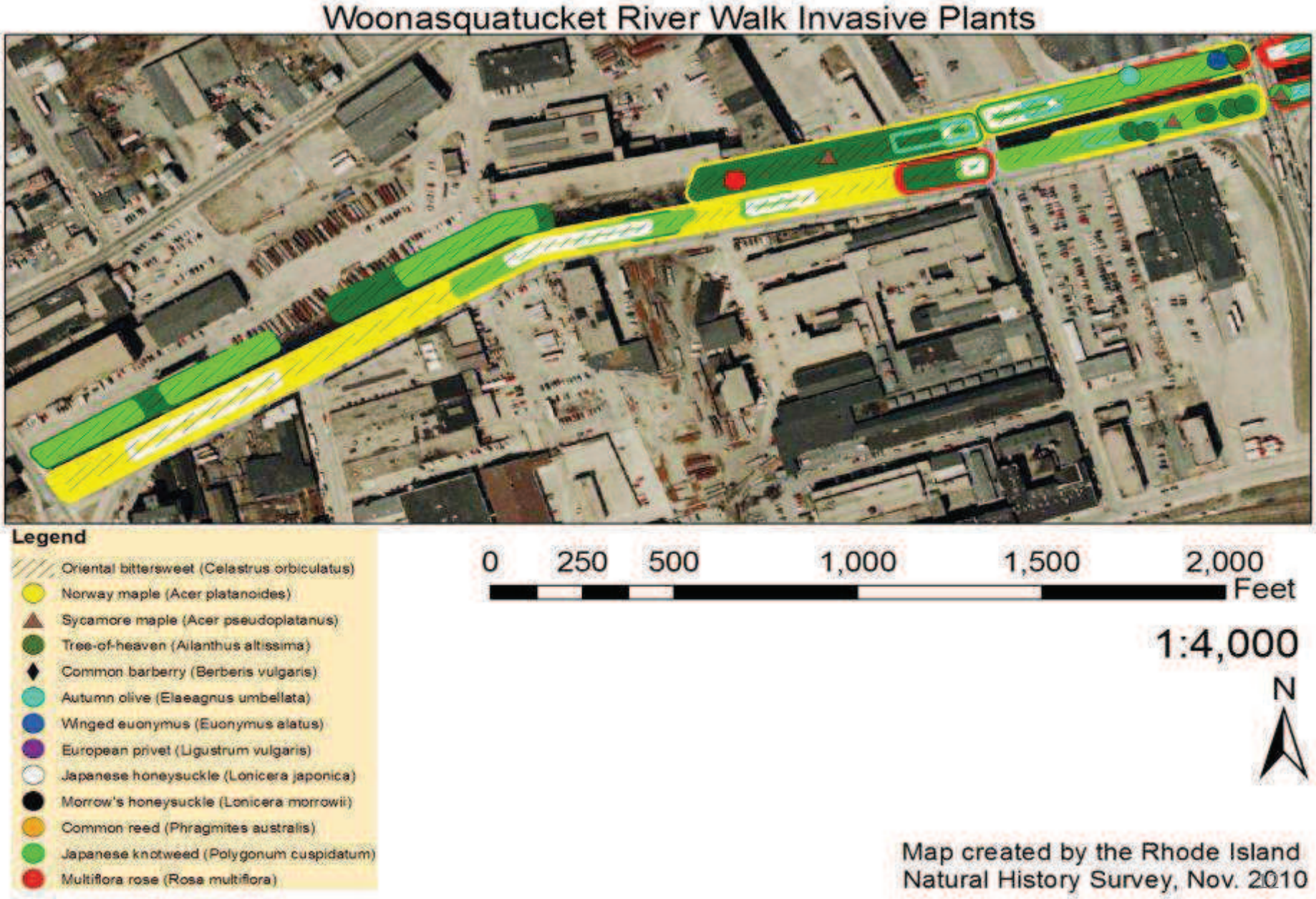
W3R

Rose Island Light

Archaeological Activities

Outdoor Advertising

Examples of Community Improvement Activities



Transportation Alternatives Qualifying Activities Continued

- Environment Mitigation Activities
  - To Address Storm-Water Management/Control
    - Water Pollution Prevention; or
    - Storm-Water Abatement Related to Highway Construction; or
    - Due To Highway Runoff
  - To Address Vehicle Caused Wildlife Mortality
    - Or Restore/Maintain Habitat Connectivity

Habitat Connectivity

Roadway Runoff

Additional Activities

- Recreational Trails Program
- Safe Routes To Schools
- Plan, design or construct boulevards in ROW of former Interstate routes or other divided highways.

"Conrad"
Bull Gates, Bristol

No Longer Eligible Under TAP

- Scenic Easements & Acquisition of Scenic or Historic Sites
- Tourist & Welcome Center Activities
- Landscaping/Scenic Beautification
- Transportation Museums

Recreational Trails Program

Recreational Trails Program

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

- Program provides funds to states to help develop/maintain trails and trail related facilities
- Rhode Island exception: due to small size, funds are not required for motorized trail use

Rhode Island Program

- Joint administration by DEM and DOT
  - DEM—program staffing, administration
  - DOT—Federal Highway link/program payments

- Operates under set regulations and guided by a Trails Advisory Committee (TAC)

- Committee consists of 18 members, meets quarterly, reviews grants & advisory to Director on trail matters

Rhode Island Program

- Eligible applicants include: state, local, tribal, nonprofit organizations
- Grants have 80%/20% funding, 20% match from local funds/in-kind
- Large grants rotated every other year between local and state projects

Types of Grants

- Large Grants (state and local rotation)
  - Local round - Call for projects
  - State round – Internal DEM decision
- Small Grants
  - Rolling applications, reviewed quarterly
  - Up to $3000
- Education Grants (safety, environmental, newsletters)
  - Up to $5000
  - One education grant per year per organization

Funding History: 2000 - 2014

- DEM – 50 projects at $2.8 M
- Large local – 91 projects at $1.4 M
- Education local – 19 projects at $55,000
- Small local – 160 projects at $223,000
  - RI is one few states that manage a small grants program

Whale Rock Trail

- Funding Requested: $8,340
- 0.4 miles of trail to be constructed to give access to Narragansett Bay and Beavertail Point
- 660 ft. of bog bridges create a clear, safe path

Harrisville – Pascoag Trail

- 1.2 miles of trail constructed
- Connects Harrisville to Pascoag via a formal right of way
  - Gives residents, visitors a safe route for exercise and walking access to various goods and services

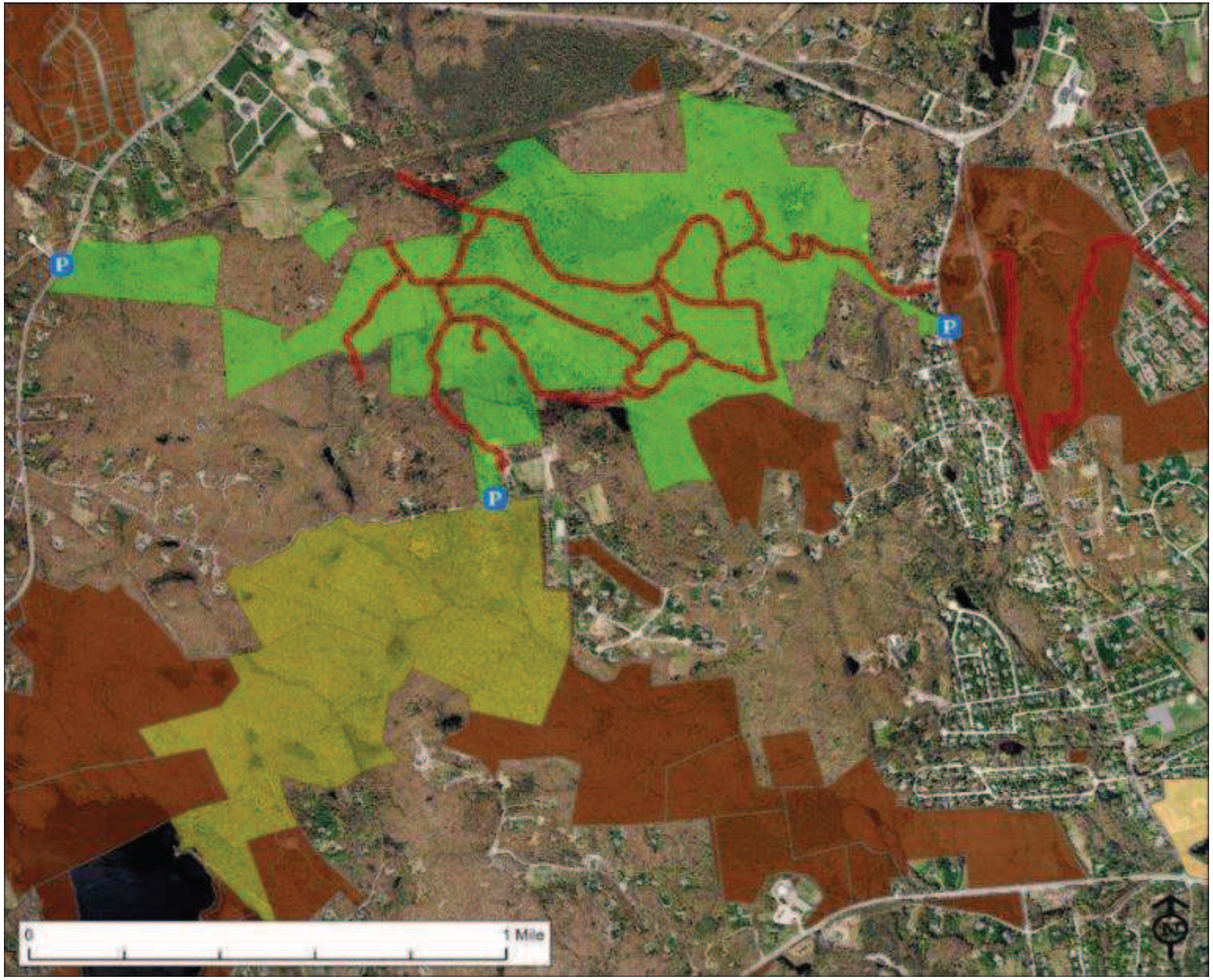
Neutaconkanut Trail, Providence

State Projects

- RTP also funds State projects (trail development, equipment purchases, material) every other year

- Match with State DEM funds or in-kind labor

Emerson Property



RI's Safe Routes to School Program

Background

- 2005: SAFETEA-LU establishes 100% Federal Funding to create/administer SRTS programs
- Late 2005: R.I. Statewide Planning chosen to manage SRTS
- 2007: Round 1 - $1.9 for 20+ schools in 7 municipalities
- 2010: Round 2 - $2.0 million for 16 schools in 10 municipalities

RI's Safe Routes to School Program

- Goals
  - Make walking/bicycling to schools safe and routine
  - K-8 schools are eligible
  - Encourage children & parents to walk/bike to school
  - Improve walking and bicycling routes
    - Safe
    - Accessible
- Why is it important?
  - Childhood obesity on the rise
  - Reduce vehicular trips
  - Even one severe injury to a child trying to walk/bike to/from school should be unacceptable

R.I.'s Safe Routes to School Program

Resources In Place

- Non-Infrastructure SRTS Coordinator
- Pre MAP21 Transportation Funding for Round 2 Design
- Pre-MAP21 Funding for Round 2 Grantees / Pending Projects Anticipated to be Sufficient

Why does success of this program matter?

- Encourages Walking
- Measure to Reverse Childhood Obesity

Safe Routes to School

Why Does TAP Matter to RI's Transportation System?

- Livability
- Enhances Growing Transit Systems
- Focus on Gaps and Links in Non-Motorized Transportation System
- Continue Locally Managed Project Approach
- Think Big in Small Spaces

Questions