

MIDDLETOWN LEADS

WHAT IS MIDDLETOWN LEADS?

Middletown Leads is a weekly newsletter intended to connect the Middletown community by providing information about the civic undertakings of the Town.

COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLANS – THE CHALLENGES OF CHANGE & TIME

The State of RI requires that each community review and revise its Comprehensive Community Plan every 10 years. It recognizes that change is inevitable with the passage of time. Thus it requires a progress review every 5 years and allows as many as 4 amendments per year.

MIDDLETOWN'S COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNITY PLAN

The current Community Comprehensive Plan was approved by The Middletown Planning Board on September 10, 2014; it was adopted by the Middletown Town Council On March 2, 2015.

MIDDLETOWN'S PLAN – THE OVERALL VISION

Middletown will preserve its *quality of life* for all generations as a *safe and friendly* community with a *distinctive heritage*, *extraordinary cultural and natural resources*, a *strong local economy* and *fiscally sound government*.

In this and future newsletters, we will explore the various areas addressed by the Comprehensive Plan to see how it addresses the values it has defined as equally important to the community's character:

1. Cultural & Historic Resources
2. Natural & Ecological Resources
3. Recreation, Conservation, & Open Space
4. Economic Development
5. Transportation
6. Housing
7. Facilities & Services
8. Land Use

AREA # 5 – TRANSPORTATION

The guiding principles of this area of the Comprehensive Plan include:

1. Transportation has a profound influence on residents' quality of life.
2. There exists a fundamental relationship between transportation and land use.
3. Regional and island transportation patterns affect the local transportation system and local decisions will have regional impacts.

TRANSPORTATION – GOALS, POLICIES, & ACTION ITEMS

1. Promote safety as a top priority with all transportation strategies, infrastructure projects, and programs
2. Provide a street network that allows for safe and efficient movement of vehicular traffic throughout the town
3. Provide for and promote the use of alternative modes of transportation
4. Promote the use and expansion of public transit to reduce traffic congestion and to improve air and water quality for the citizens of Middletown and Aquidneck Ave.
5. Maintain, preserve and extend the life and vitality of prior investments in the transportation system
6. Make transportation decisions and policies that promote energy conservation, foster healthy communities, and protect environmental quality

CHALLENGES RELATED TO TRANSPORTATION

Major challenges include split responsibility (Town/RIDOT) for roadways, two-lane arterial roadways, a lack of consistent pedestrian access, no provisions for bicycle transportation, and seasonal travel that can double traffic volume.

AQUIDNECK ISLAND TRANSPORTATION STUDY - MIDDLETOWN

A two-year Aquidneck Island Transportation Study (completed in 2011) culminated in the development of a Comprehensive Multi-Modal Transportation Master Plan for Aquidneck Island. Following are the recommendations that applied to Middletown at that time:

1. Optimize traffic signals
2. Reconstruct the Two Mile Corner intersection
3. Make localized intersection safety/capacity improvements realigning Aquidneck Ave./Purgatory Rd intersection to eliminate the slip lane
4. Widen West Main Rd to provide left turn lanes at Oliphant Lane and Forest Avenue
5. Extend existing left turn lanes at Gate 17 Access Road and Valley Road
6. Construct new Burma Road connections to the north and south

Transit improvements focused on making transit options more attractive, available, and efficient:

1. Encourage Transit Oriented Development
2. Provide additional bus service
3. Establish Newport Jitney Service (access to Middletown Beaches/Atlantic Beach District)
4. Implement Rapid Bus Service
5. Maintain Active Newport Secondary Rail Corridor
6. Enhance Transit Users' Experience
7. Encourage employers to institute Transit Programs for Employees
8. Create Park and Ride Opportunities
9. Enhance Ferry Service

NEXT WEEK -

The February 9, 2019 newsletter will pause and address adjustments to some sections of Middletown's Comprehensive Community Plan due to unanticipated conditions and the passage of time.