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MEMORANDUM

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To: Hoboken City Council

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From: Ryan Sharp, Director, Department of Transportation and Parking

Subject: Grand Street Pilot Project Background and Update

This memorandum summarizes the background, design, construction, stakeholder coordination, operational adjustments, and ongoing evaluation of the Grand Street Redesign Pilot Project between Third Street and Eighth Street.

Project Background

In April 2023, the City awarded a contract to J. Fletcher Creamer & Son, Inc. to replace water mains on multiple streets throughout Hoboken as part of the Water Infrastructure Upgrades (WIU) Phase II project. The scope of work included Grand Street between Third Street and Eighth Street. Construction of the Grand Street water main replacements began during the summer of 2023 and was completed in the spring of 2024. In total, the City replaced more than 2,300 linear feet of aging water mains along the corridor to improve service reliability and reduce the risk of future water main breaks. The broader infrastructure work also included two manufactured treatment devices to improve stormwater management and water quality, together with other green infrastructure upgrades supporting Hoboken's climate action goals.

Project Design

Because the water main work required opening the roadway, the City initiated a surface restoration project that also presented an opportunity to implement Complete Streets, Vision Zero, accessibility, and curbside management improvements. In March 2024, the City awarded ENGenuity Infrastructure a contract to design the roadway surface restoration and related safety improvements for Grand Street between Third Street and Eighth Street.

The design process applied the City's *Street Design Guide* and other national best practices for multimodal roadway design, including the NACTO Urban Street Design Guide, the *NJDOT Complete Streets Design Guide*, the *FHWA Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide*, and the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MUTCD). The Grand Street project was also viewed by the Department

of Transportation and Parking as an opportunity to pilot multiple new design treatments which had been published as policy goals in a whitepaper that had recently been authored by Third Ward Councilman Michael Russo, including individually striped parking stalls, a parking protected bicycle lane on an interior street, and bike parking within corner clear zones. ENGenuity's design incorporated each of these features, as well as concrete curb extensions on the west side of Grand Street and at-grade, painted curb extensions with flexible delineator posts for the bicycle lane and curb extensions on the east side. This approach allowed the City to test and modify the pilot without demolishing concrete curbs, incurring substantial reconstruction costs, or creating avoidable drainage impacts. The use of adaptable materials is consistent with nationally recognized practices for pilot roadway safety projects. The project also provided an opportunity to pilot the suspension of street cleaning regulations on the east side of Grand Street. Because the street sweeper could now use the bicycle lane to access and clean the curb zone, vehicles would no longer need to be moved each week solely to accommodate street cleaning operations.

During the summer of 2024, the project team shared draft plans with Councilman Russo. The plans included a parking protected bicycle lane, individually striped parking stalls, bicycle parking within corner clear zones, and other safety and accessibility improvements. The project team did not receive any explicitly negative feedback about the proposed parking-protected bike lane at that time. The final design was completed in the fall of 2024, after which the project proceeded to bidding.

Project Construction

In April 2025, the City Council awarded a construction contract to Your Way Construction, Inc. for roadway surface restoration and related safety and accessibility improvements on all street segments included in the Water Infrastructure Upgrades Phase II program, including Grand Street between Third Street and Eighth Street. The City also retained ENGenuity to provide construction administration and inspection services and subsequently authorized the use of New Jersey Infrastructure Bank financing for construction.

After completing restoration work on other WIU Phase II blocks, Your Way mobilized to Grand Street in the fall of 2025. Before the new traffic pattern was striped, then-Director of Transportation and Parking Steven Weber briefed multiple councilmembers on the scope of the improvements, including Third Ward Councilman Russo and members of the City Council Transportation and Parking Subcommittee at its October 22, 2025 meeting.

Construction was completed in two primary phases to accommodate the limited paving and striping season in the late fall. During October and November 2025, the contractor constructed concrete curb extensions, milled and paved the corridor, installed thermoplastic striping for the parking stalls and the bicycle lane, outlined the painted curb extensions, and installed flexible delineators within the bicycle lane buffer, daylighting areas, and driveway openings. Most paving and striping work was completed by early November, immediately before temperatures became unsuitable for completing the remaining punch list items.

The winter suspension was also necessary because the Endurablend treatment used for the painted curb extensions requires newly placed pavement to cure and residual oils to dissipate for approximately 30 days. Application further requires air temperatures above 50 degrees Fahrenheit for 24 consecutive hours, conditions that generally cannot be achieved during late fall and winter. Your Way therefore suspended operations during the colder months and remobilized in spring 2026 to

complete that aspect of the improvements. The project reached substantial completion in June 2026 following completion of the painted curb extensions, installation of bicycle corrals, and other outstanding work.

In summary, the Grand Street pilot included the following roadway, curbside, accessibility, and Vision Zero improvements:

- Curb-to-curb resurfacing of Grand Street between Third Street and Eighth Street
- 23 high-visibility crosswalks
- 11 new curb extensions to shorten pedestrian crossing distances and improve visibility
- Upgraded ADA curb ramps
- Hoboken's first parking protected bicycle lane on an interior north-south street
- 36 new bicycle parking spaces, including six bicycle corrals near intersections to reinforce daylighting and reduce reliance on flexible delineators
- Individually delineated on-street parking stalls
- All-way stop control at three intersections
- Flexible delineators for intersection daylighting, driveway protection, and bicycle lane separation. The delineators were removed during the winter and were not reinstalled in locations where subsequent monitoring indicated they were unnecessary.

Stakeholder Coordination

Third Ward Councilman Russo

Director Ryan Sharp and Greg Francese met with Councilman Russo in late July 2024 before the design was finalized. During implementation, then-Director Steven Weber separately briefed Councilman Russo before installation of the new traffic pattern. Councilman Russo and Acting Director Francese later worked together to address issues that emerged after implementation, including driveway access at Willie McBride's and nearby residential garages with tandem parking, as well as loading needs for businesses on the 500 block.

Public Safety Engagement

The project team coordinated with Hoboken's Public Safety Divisions throughout design and construction. The City reviewed and adjusted striping and delineator placement to ensure that the bicycle lane and parking configuration would not impede emergency access, including removing delineators in selected locations to preserve pullover space. The travel lanes exceed the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices* (MUTCD)'s 10-foot minimum and are wider than lanes on several other designated emergency routes. The City also striped hydrant markings within the travel lane to improve visibility for responding fire apparatus. Since making these changes, the Department of Transportation and Parking has no record of adverse emergency response impacts attributable to the new striping configuration.

During the initial months of the pilot, some residents expressed concern that an illegally stopped vehicle could obstruct emergency access. The project team reviewed that concern with Public Safety and explained that Hoboken emergency dispatch advises the Police Department, Fire Department, and Office of Emergency Management of street closures and directs responders to alternative blocks when necessary.

Community Engagement

The City established a dedicated email address through which residents and businesses could submit feedback and request design modifications. Feedback was relatively frequent during the initial adjustment period and was addressed on a case-by-case basis, but it has declined substantially over time. The project email account received approximately 30 messages through late 2025 and early 2026, and approximately three messages thereafter.

Post-Construction Iterations and Adjustments

The Administration recommends a minimum 12-month pilot period so the design could be evaluated under seasonal operating conditions, including snow removal and street sweeping, and to give the community sufficient time to experience the new traffic and parking configuration during a range of conditions.

Early in the pilot, the City modified striping, signage, loading arrangements, and delineator placement in response to community feedback. The City also temporarily relaxed enforcement of non-safety-related curbside regulations to provide residents and businesses time to adjust. These iterative modifications reflect the purpose of a pilot and do not indicate a failure of the underlying design.

Between November 2025 and March 2026, the City implemented the following principal modifications:

- Shortly after installation, two cyclists were involved in a collision in which one cyclist entered the crosswalk and struck the other. No injuries were reported. According to the Hoboken Police Department, the new bicycle lane configuration was not a contributing factor. Nevertheless, as a proactive safety measure, the City supplemented the existing MUTCD-compliant directional markings and signage with additional bicycle lane and one-way signs throughout the corridor.
- During the first week of the pilot, the City extended the no parking area at Grand Street and Eighth Street to accommodate 55-foot delivery trucks serving ACME. Repeated illegal parking subsequently led the City to install delineators in the area.
- The City directed Amazon to discontinue use of the loading zone in front of 15 Church Towers as an all-day Delivery-on-Foot Program distribution hub. After Amazon established more formal delivery hubs in locations with less constrained curb space, the operation did not return to Grand Street.
- Before Christmas, a temporary loading zone was installed in front of Otok Bakery on the 500 block as a stopgap during the bakery's busiest season.
- The City expanded the striped driveway opening and added a flexible delineator at Willie McBride's to provide additional space for the establishment's limousine to exit its surface parking lot.
- On March 11, 2026, the City Council adopted loading zone changes that expanded the hours and length of the loading zone serving Otok Bakery and the United States Postal Service. At Councilman Russo's request, the 18-foot expansion on the west side was paired with an 18-foot reduction in the loading zone across the street in front of 15 Church Towers.
- In early 2026, the City added a short no parking area in front of 518 Grand Street so residents of nearby buildings with tandem garages could rearrange vehicles without blocking the travel lane or sidewalk.

- The City worked with the board of 501 Adams Street, whose garage is accessed from Grand Street, to install “No Parking in Driveway” signs, mark the driveway edge with red paint, and increase enforcement of blocked driveway violations.

These examples are not exhaustive. They illustrate the targeted approach used to address specific constituent concerns while maintaining the pilot’s core safety and mobility functions. The project team also shared driveway-by-driveway turning analyses with a small number of residents who raised access concerns.

After the bicycle lane buffer delineators were removed in February 2026, Hoboken Parking Utility personnel monitored illegal parking through four daily enforcement runs along Grand Street for several weeks. They identified very few instances of vehicles blocking the bicycle lane. This observation suggested that delineators were not necessary in every location and reinforced the value of testing and refining the installation. The City also removed delineators elsewhere when doing so did not compromise safety or the intended street design.

Snow Operations

The City modified snow operations on Grand Street to ensure that the pilot would not impede vehicle passage. Public Works participated in the design process to plan snow removal between the travel lane and parking-protected bicycle lane. During the three snowstorms in the first winter of the pilot, the City posted temporary no parking signs on the bicycle lane side so full-size plows could push snow from the travel lane to the curb. Smaller equipment designed for sidewalks and bicycle lanes then cleared the protected lane.

Data Collection and Evaluation Criteria

Because the Grand Street improvements are being implemented as a pilot, the City is conducting a structured evaluation to determine how the new roadway configuration affects safety, mobility, curbside activity, and day-to-day operations. The project team is collecting before-and-after data so that conditions under the pilot can be compared with conditions that existed prior to implementation. This evaluation is intended to provide an objective basis for assessing the pilot’s performance, identifying any necessary adjustments, and informing decisions regarding the long-term configuration of the corridor.

The evaluation includes data in the following areas:

- Vehicle speeds
- Driver compliance stopping for pedestrians in crosswalks
- Double parking frequency and bicycle lane violations
- Street sweeping frequency and compliance
- Multimodal traffic counts
- Curbside turnover
- Public opinion collected through a survey.

Together, these measures will allow the City to evaluate whether the pilot is achieving its intended safety and mobility objectives while also identifying any operational issues affecting residents, businesses, emergency access, sanitation services, or curbside users. The City will publish the

evaluation data at the conclusion of the pilot period so that the findings can be reviewed transparently and considered as part of any future decision regarding the corridor.

Cost of Traffic Pattern Changes and the Impact of Early Termination of the Pilot

The Department of Transportation and Parking recommends a minimum one-year evaluation period for the Grand Street pilot. Ending the pilot before completion of the evaluation period would compromise data collection and undermine the reliability of any assessment of whether the project met its objectives.

If the City were to decide to make wholesale changes to the current pilot traffic configuration on Grand Street between 3rd Street and 8th Street, it is estimated to cost at least \$30,000 and would cause multiple weeks of disruption for residents and businesses. The Department of Transportation and Parking initially budgeted up to \$100,000 for contracted striping in 2026 to cover the potential restriping of Grand Street and maintenance of striping on other blocks, but the adopted reduced that amount to nearly zero. Consequently, restriping Grand Street would require budget transfers or additional capital outlays.