

# Memo

**To:** Cranston Planning Commission  
**From:** Doug McLean, AICP - Principal Planner  
**Date:** 5/1/23  
**Re:** “Knights Corner Development”, AP 8/2, Lots 203 & 2739  
**Ordinance #3-23-05: Zone Change from M-1 to “C-2 with conditions”**

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## I. Proposal

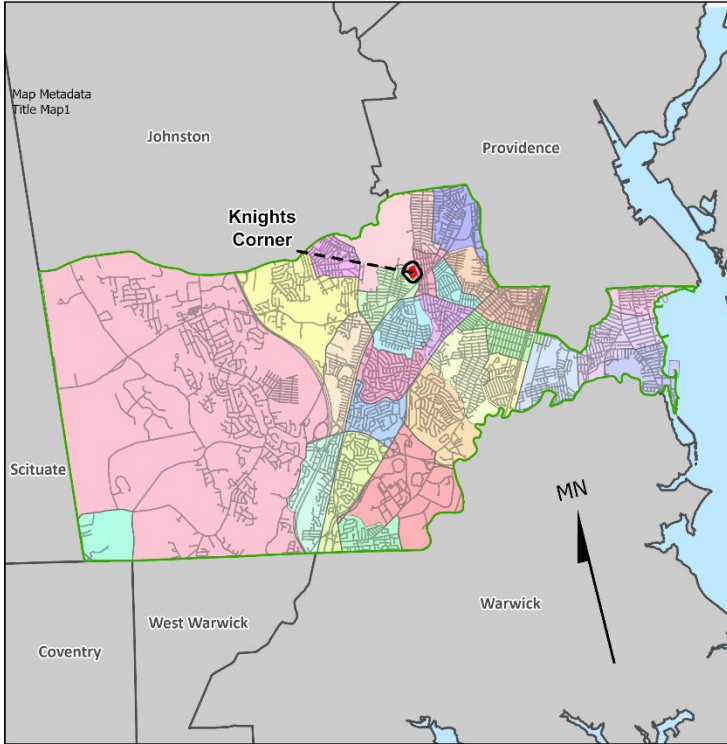
This memo contains background information, staff analysis, findings, and the recommendation for Ordinance #3-23-05. The applicant is seeking to redevelop the above noted property, which currently consists of an abandoned church building, vacant asphalt, and undeveloped land, into a mixed-use development consisting of a restaurant and up to 160 multi-family housing units. The proposal includes the redevelopment of the existing church building, and the new construction of four (4) large-scale apartment buildings, as well as associated parking, landscaping, and accessory recreational amenities.

In order to facilitate the proposed development, the project requires a Change of Zone from M-1 to “C-2 with Conditions”. The specific “conditions” associated with this zone change are that the subject property shall be allowed a density bonus of up to 160 dwelling units, building up to 75 feet, off-street parking requirements reduced to 1.25 spaces per unit, and minor signages allowances. Additionally, the zone change includes a requirement that 15% of the residential units be deed restricted for affordable housing. The inclusion of affordable housing as part of this zone change has been requested by the Planning Department to assist in fulfilling the City’s affordable housing goals. It should be noted that multi-family dwellings are an allowed use within the C-2 zoning district. The City Plan Commission is charged with reviewing the staff findings and recommendation and providing a formal recommendation on Ordinance #3-23-05 to the City Council. The actual language and format of the ordinance is attached at the close of this memo for reference.

This staff report is intended to cover the Zone Change ordinance only. A separate memo will be issued with background analysis and the staff recommendation on the Master Plan application. All materials for this project, including both staff memos, can be found on the planning webpage here: <https://www.cranstonri.gov/plan-commission-5.2.23/>.

## LOCATION

**THIS MAP IS TO BE USED FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY**



### Legend

- Knights Corner
  - 400' Buffer
  - City of Cranston
  - Municipal Boundary's
  - Road Network
- 
- ### Neighborhoods
- Arlington
  - Auburn
  - Auburn/Friendly Community
  - Budlong
  - Dean Estates/Woodridge
  - Eden Park
  - Edgewood
  - Fiskeville
  - Forest Hills
  - Garden City
  - Garden Hills
  - Glen Woods
  - Howard
  - Knightsville
  - Laurel Hill
  - Mayfield/Oak Hill
  - Meshanticut
  - Northern Edgewood
  - Oaklawn/Brookfield
  - Park View/South Elmwood
  - Pawtuxet
  - South Auburn
  - Spectacle
  - Stadium
  - Stone Hill
  - Thornton
  - Village
  - Western Cranston



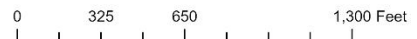
## AERIAL VIEW

**THIS MAP IS TO BE USED FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY**



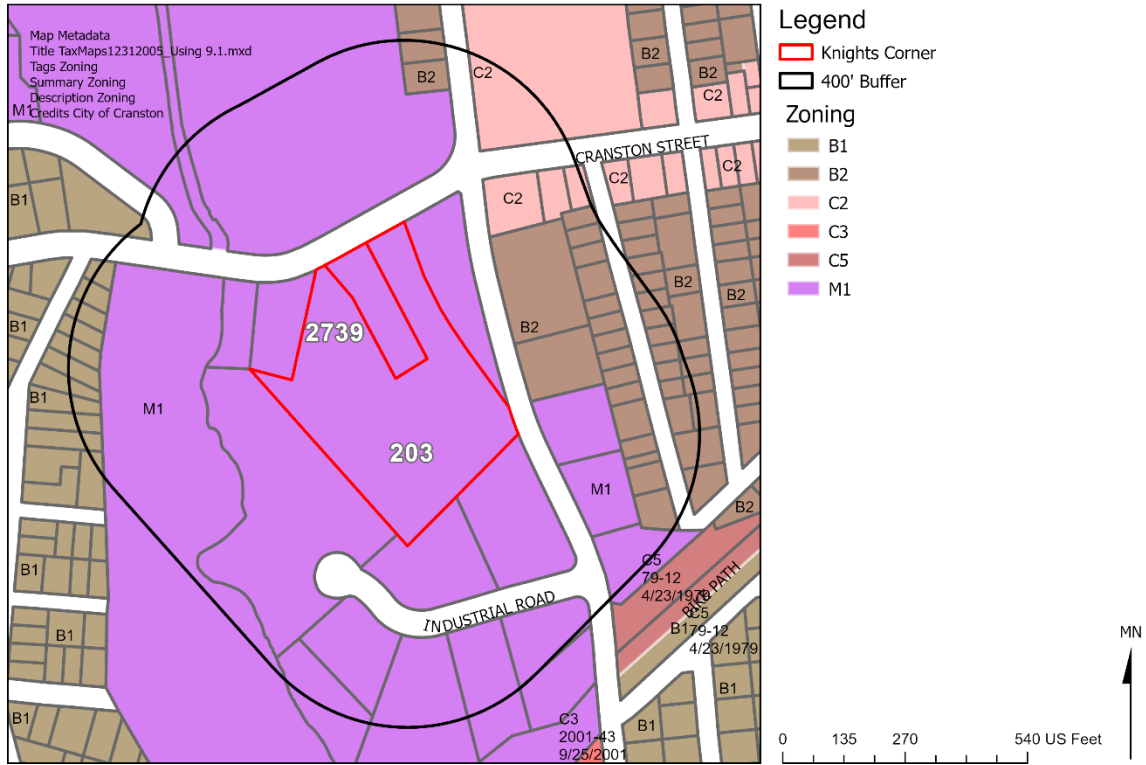
### Legend

- Knights Corner
- 400' Buffer



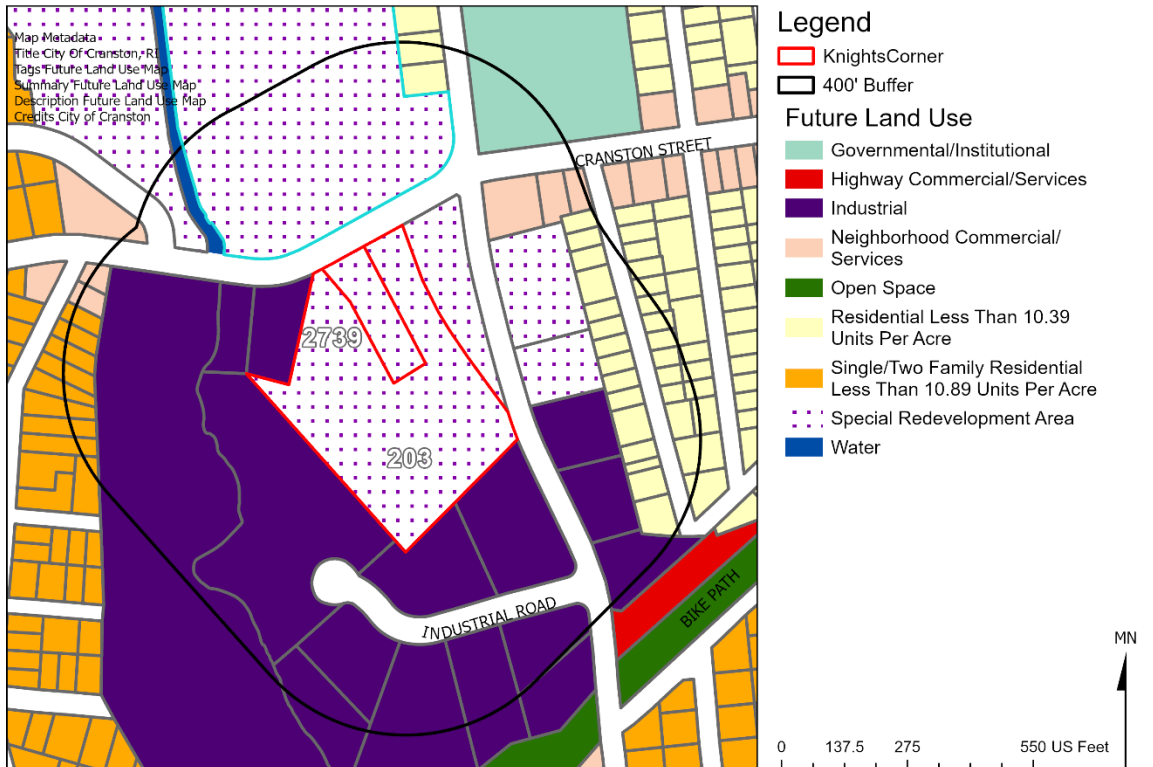
### ZONING

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### FUTURE LAND USE

THIS MAP IS TO BE USED FOR PLANNING PURPOSES ONLY



### 3-D AERIAL



### STREET VIEW FROM CRANSTON STREET



# SITE PLAN EXHIBIT

AP 8/2  
LOT 2740  
N/F  
THOR CONSON



## II. Planning Analysis

The proposal is for a mixed-use development consisting of a restaurant and up to 160 multi-family housing units. The corresponding zone change allows for up to 160 units, but the applicant is only seeking 156 units as part of the corresponding Master Plan application. The applicant will be re-using an abandoned church building for the restaurant and will be constructing four (4) new large-scale buildings for the multi-family residential units, as well as associated parking, landscaping, and accessory recreational amenities.

It should be noted that this application is accompanied by a number of “expert documents” related to the issues of engineering, traffic, and fiscal impact. These documents provide support for the application and are available for review at the planning website noted on page 1 of this memo.

Additional details regarding drainage, lighting, landscaping, state -permits, and final traffic reviews will be part of future Preliminary Plan stages of this application, if it should receive positive consideration at this Ordinance/Master Plan stage.

### *Consistency with the Surrounding Area*

The surrounding neighborhood is a mix of B-1, B-2, C-2, C-5, M-1 and S-1 (Open Space). Consisting of a mix of two-family homes, single family homes, multi-family buildings, and a mix of industrial, commercial, and municipal facilities. Based on the mix of zones and uses within the neighborhood, as well as the industrial uses within the immediate abutting parcels, staff finds that the project will not negatively impact that surrounding area as far as land use compatibility. Additionally, there is no residential density requirement in the Comprehensive Plans Future Land Use Map for Special Redevelopment Areas.

### *Status of Traffic Review*

The City has requested that a 3<sup>rd</sup> party peer reviewer (Pare Corporation) conduct a review of the applicant’s traffic study as part of the Master Plan stage of this application. The applicants’ traffic study was submitted on 4/11. Pare Corporation completed their peer review and submitted their written comments on 4/26. The applicant has stated they will provide a response to the peer review comments on 5/1. When the applicant’s traffic response is provided it will be added to the planning website noted on page 1 of this memo.

Final reviews and comments by the 3<sup>rd</sup> party peer reviewed and the City Traffic Safety Manager will be provided and addressed prior to the Preliminary Plan submission and staff have added a condition of approval to the enclosed Master Plan decision as such.

### *Off-Street Parking*

There are 262 parking spaces proposed on the site plan, 234 being allocated to the multi-family and 32 for the proposed restaurant. City Code Section 17.64 Off-Street Parking stipulates that multi-family uses provide 2 parking spaces per unit. The proposal does not meet that requirement with 2.00 (two) spaces per dwelling unit and instead is

seeking a reduction to this parking requirement as part of their zone change. The zone change reflects an allowance of 1.25 spaces per unit, but the applicant's Master Plan application is seeking 1.5 spaces per unit. Planning staff have no concerns with this aspect of the proposal based on a similar parking ratio for other large scale mixed-use proposals in the City, as well the evidence provided within the applicant's materials and traffic study. Staff would note the characteristics of this site are supportive of a relaxed parking ratio as compared to the base City standard, due to the location of the development based on the surrounding conditions (lack of residential abutters), and access to transit and sufficient multi-modal accommodations. Furthermore, the number of parking spaces allocated on the site plan exceeds the minimum number of parking spaces to be allocated as described in proposed ordinance #3-23-05. This inclusion shows a good faith effort made by the applicant to ensure that, if needed, parking on-site can be increased, if need be, to meet the demand of future renters of apartment units in the development.

### *Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan*

The Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map designation for this site is a Special Redevelopment Area which is defined as "Areas in which the City anticipates undertaking redevelopment through mixed-planned development ordinances such as the Elmwood/Wellington industrial corridor, the Cranston Printworks, and the site of the former Trolley Barn;". Note this site is on the opposite side of the street as the Cranston Print Works site and is considered part of the same neighborhood. Furthermore, this scale of development fits neatly under the Mixed-Use Planned Development (MUPD) – High Intensity category, which is described as "a mixed-use zone(which) would be suited for predominantly mixed commercial development, with live/work space or artists' lofts... It would also be suitable for encouraging significant redevelopment, and improved when it is adjacent to public transportation." in the Comprehensive Plan. Based on the above, staff finds that the proposed Major Land Development is consistent with the City of Cranston Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designation of Special Redevelopment Area.

Staff has reviewed the project in comparison the Comprehensive Plan's policy framework and finds that the proposal is consistent with the following Comprehensive Plan goals and policies:

*LUG-2 – Promote mixed use (commercial, industrial, and residential) development that will:*

- *Focus on a few key redevelopment sites;*
- *Improve the quality of new development;*
- *Incorporate 'smart growth' principles.*

*HA-3 – Encourage Housing that is mixed into commercial projects.*

*HG -3 – Achieve a balance between economic development and housing in the City.*

*HP-3.1 – Provide housing resources to support the range of jobs that reflects the City's economic base and encourage the development of housing at levels that are consistent with household purchasing power.*

*HP-3.2 – Maintain the stability of established neighborhoods in connection with*

*continued economic development and revitalization: in particular, protect neighborhoods abutting the City's major commercial corridors from adverse impacts arising from incompatible uses.*

*HP-4 – Promote housing opportunity for a wide range of household types and income levels.*

*HP-4.1 – Maintain a varied housing stock, with units of different age, size and type that are affordable to a wide range of incomes.*

*HP-4.2 – Identify potential sites for redevelopment options for future residential use, and mixed use.*

*HA-1: Increase affordable housing in new subdivisions and development projects as appropriate through incentives and bonuses.*

*HA-2: Require a proportion of units as affordable housing (as defined by State regulations) in each new housing project over ten units in size.*

*HA-10: Provide density bonuses for developments that incorporate a specified proportion of affordable housing.*

### **III. Findings**

#### **Cranston Comprehensive Plan 2010**

The proposed zone change from “M-1” to “C-2 with conditions” has been reviewed with respect to consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. As detailed within this staff memo, this petition is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan based on its consistency with the Future Land Use Map designations of Special Redevelopment Area. Additionally, the proposed zone change is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan’s policy framework with specific regard to the mixed-use component, the requested density bonus, and the inclusion of affordable housing that would be achieved through the proposed project.

#### **Findings Under §17.04.010 City Code**

Sec. 17.120.030 requires that the City Plan Commission as part of its recommendation to the City Council “Include a demonstration of recognition and consideration of each of the applicable purposes of zoning as presented in Section 17.04.010 of this title.” Section 17.04.010 set forth the General Purpose for Title 17 (Zoning Ordinance) of the City Code. To the extent that any development of the subject property will be required to comply with all aspects of the Zoning Ordinance, including Development Plan Review, and will be required to comply with City of Cranston Subdivision and Land Development Regulations, staff finds that the proposed rezone will adequately address the appropriate purposes detailed in §17.04.010.



#### **IV. Recommendation**

##### **Ordinance #3-23-05**

Based on the findings that Ordinance #3-23-05 is consistent with City's Comprehensive Plan and adequately addresses the appropriate purposes detailed in §17.04.010, and based on the fact that the proposal is seeking a development that is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood, and based on the fact that the proposed development includes 15% affordable housing to further the City's stated affordable housing goals, staff recommends that the Plan Commission send a **positive recommendation** on this application to the City Council.

THE CITY OF CRANSTON

**ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

**IN AMENDMENT OF CHAPTER 17 OF THE CODE OF  
THE CITY OF CRANSTON, 2005, ENTITLED 'ZONING'  
(CHANGE OF ZONE – 1388 & 1390 Cranston Street)  
(Knights Corner Development Project)**

*No.*

*Passed:*

*Jessica M. Marino, Council President*

*Approved:*

*Kenneth J. Hopkins, Mayor*

*It is ordained by the City Council of the City of Cranston as follows:*

**Preamble**

A. The City of Cranston recognizes that the property at 1388-1390 Cranston Street, including the church building constructed circa 1825 (the “Knights Corner Development Property”) presents a valuable and great potential for reuse and redevelopment, including housing and commercial opportunities.

B. The City of Cranston finds that it is in the best interest of the city’s economic welfare and community interest to support the redevelopment, revitalization and growth of the Knights Corner Development Property in order that it can again make a significant contribution to the revitalization of this largely vacant industrial acreage to add to the city’s commercial tax revenue base.

C. The City of Cranston finds that the uniqueness of this approximate five-acre tract of land and existing church building, warrants its own zoning development regulations within the zoning code of the City of Cranston.

D. The City of Cranston finds that the current zoning of the Knights Corner Development Property with its principal zoning designation of M-1 industrial business is no longer appropriate but that certain accommodations for the Knights Corner Development Project should be created to allow for expansion and redevelopment including multi-family dwelling units.

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**Section 1.** That the Zoning Map accompanying and made a part of Chapter 17 of the Code of the City of Cranston, Rhode Island, 2005, entitled, "Zoning", as adopted January 24, 1966, as amended, is hereby further amended by deleting therefrom the following:

(By deleting from a M-1 Zoning District, Lot Nos. 203 and 2739 on Assessor's Plat No. 8, located at 1388-1390 Cranston Street, Cranston, Rhode Island).

And by adding thereto the following:

**C-2 Zoning District with conditions as set forth below, Lot Nos. 203 and 2739 on Assessor's Plat No. 8, located at 1388-1390 Cranston Street, Cranston, Rhode Island.**

Referenced conditions incorporated herein and made part of this ordinance shall include:

1. Permissible Uses.

- a. All uses (including multi-family dwelling units and related amenities) established in the City Code in the Schedule of Uses established in Section 17.20.030 for the C-2 neighborhood business zone as a matter of right or by special use permit as of the effective date of this ordinance shall also apply to the Knights Corner Development Project..

2. Density. In addition to the permitted uses in the existing church building, a maximum of one hundred sixty (160) dwelling units shall be permitted, Lot area and density requirements prescribed in Code Section 17.20.090 entitled "Specific Requirements" shall not apply.

3. Dimensional Regulations

The subject property shall comply with the intensity regulations set forth in Section 17.20.120 of this code entitled "Schedule of Intensity Regulations" for the C-2 zoning district with the exception of the maximum building height and maximum lot coverage restriction. The maximum building height shall be seventy-five (75) feet to include five (5) stories and any roof top, mechanical equipment including solar equipment. This height limitation shall not apply to the existing steeple on the church building on the premises, if applicable.

4. Off-Street Parking. Off-Street parking shall be provided at no less than a ratio of 1.25 spaces per dwelling unit. A restaurant use in the existing church building shall provide a minimum of one (1) off street parking spaces per each three seats. Off street parking spaces may be designed to be nine (9) feet by eighteen (18) feet consistent with acceptable parking design standards.

5. Signage. Identification or incidental signage such as directory or circulating signage, no parking, entrance, exit, loading zone, and other similar directives are permitted to include identification or the logo of the property owner. Internal incidental or directional signage within the

90 premises not visible to the public streets shall not be limited by the terms of this ordinance This  
 91 provision shall apply whether or not the incidental and directional signage is visible or legible from  
 92 a position from outside the subject property.

93  
 94 In lieu of Section 17.72.10 (4) – Signs. C-2 Neighborhood Business District, the following table  
 95 shall be utilized for each sign in the Cranston Print Works Project.  
 96

Sign Type	Maximum Area ****	Maximum Height	Minimum Setback	Minimum Vertical Clearance from Sidewalk	Minimum Vertical Clearance from Public Street
Monument	100 sf	8 ft	2 ft	N/A	N/A
Wall/Building Marker (front façade)	2 sf per for each lineal foot of the front façade	15 ft	N/A	N/A	N/A
Wall/Building Marker (side or rear of building)	2 sf per for each lineal foot of the building frontage on which the sign is located	15 ft	N/A	N/A	N/A
Canopy	40 sf	9 sf	N/A	9 ft	12 ft
Identification/Incidental	30 sf	8 ft	5 ft	N/A	N/A
Window	</=50% of window area	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Projecting (blade)	20 sf	N/A	N/A	9 ft	14 ft
Freestanding/Sign	150 sf	N/A	5 ft for Free Standing		
Roof, Integral	See definition				

97  
 98 \*\*\*\* Note that the maximum area for each sign within the district shall be per side of each sign.  
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100 6. Affordable Housing. A provision of fifteen percent (15%) of the overall residential units shall be  
 101 deemed affordable under guidelines of Rhode Island Housing for a period of no less than thirty (30)  
 102 years.  
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 105





# CITY OF CRANSTON

## APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF ZONE

RECEIVED  
CRANSTON  
CITY CLERK  
23 MAR 22 AM 10:56

Name(s) and address(es) of property owner(s): N.E. Development Fund 1 LLC  
200 Lincoln Street, Suite 302  
Boston, MA 02111

Zoning Plat Number: 8/2 Lot No.(s)\* 203 & 2739  
Street Address or Location on Street 1388 & 1390 Cranston Street

\*If only a portion of lot, please attach a full metes and bounds description.

Present Zoning: M-1 (REstricted Industrial)

Zoning Requested: C-2 (Neighborhood Business) with conditions

Property to be used for: Mixed Use (Multi-Family Dwellings and restaurant)

(listed use must be specific)

Date: 03/01/23

N.E. Development Fund 1 LLC  
By: Anne Brensley  
Owner (Print and Sign)

Owner (Print and Sign)  
333 Main Street LLC  
By: [Signature]  
Applicant (Print and Sign)

Attorney for Applicant  
Robert D. Murray, Esq.  
Taft & McSally LLP  
21 Garden City Drive  
Cranston, RI 02920  
(401) 946-3800  
rdmurray@taftmcsally.com

Applicant (Print and Sign)

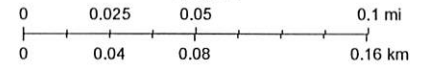
Reviewed and approved by the Planning Department: [Signature]

# 1388 Cranston St 400' Radius Plat 8 Lots 203, 2739



1/31/2023, 8:12:03 AM

1:2,211



City of Cranston