

## City Planning Department



## Memo

To: Cranston City Plan Commission  
From: Doug McLean, AICP - Principal Planner / Administrative Officer  
Date: December 3, 2020  
Re: **Special Use Permit Application for Medical Marijuana Dispensary; The Winding Rhode Compassion Center**

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**Owners:** MTM Development Corp.  
**Applicant:** The Winding Rhode Compassion Center  
**Location:** 100 Glen Road; AP 10, Lot 778  
**Zone:** M-2 (General industry)  
**FLU:** Industrial

### **SPECIAL USE PERMIT REQUEST:**

**To develop a Medical Marijuana Dispensary in a new 4,800 ft<sup>2</sup> building on a property located at 100 Glen Road. Such a use is only allowed through a Special Use Permit process per Zoning Ordinance Sec. 17.24.040 – Medical Marijuana Dispensary (full language enclosed following this memo).**

The Plan Commission is charged with making an advisory recommendation on the application to the Zoning Board of Review.

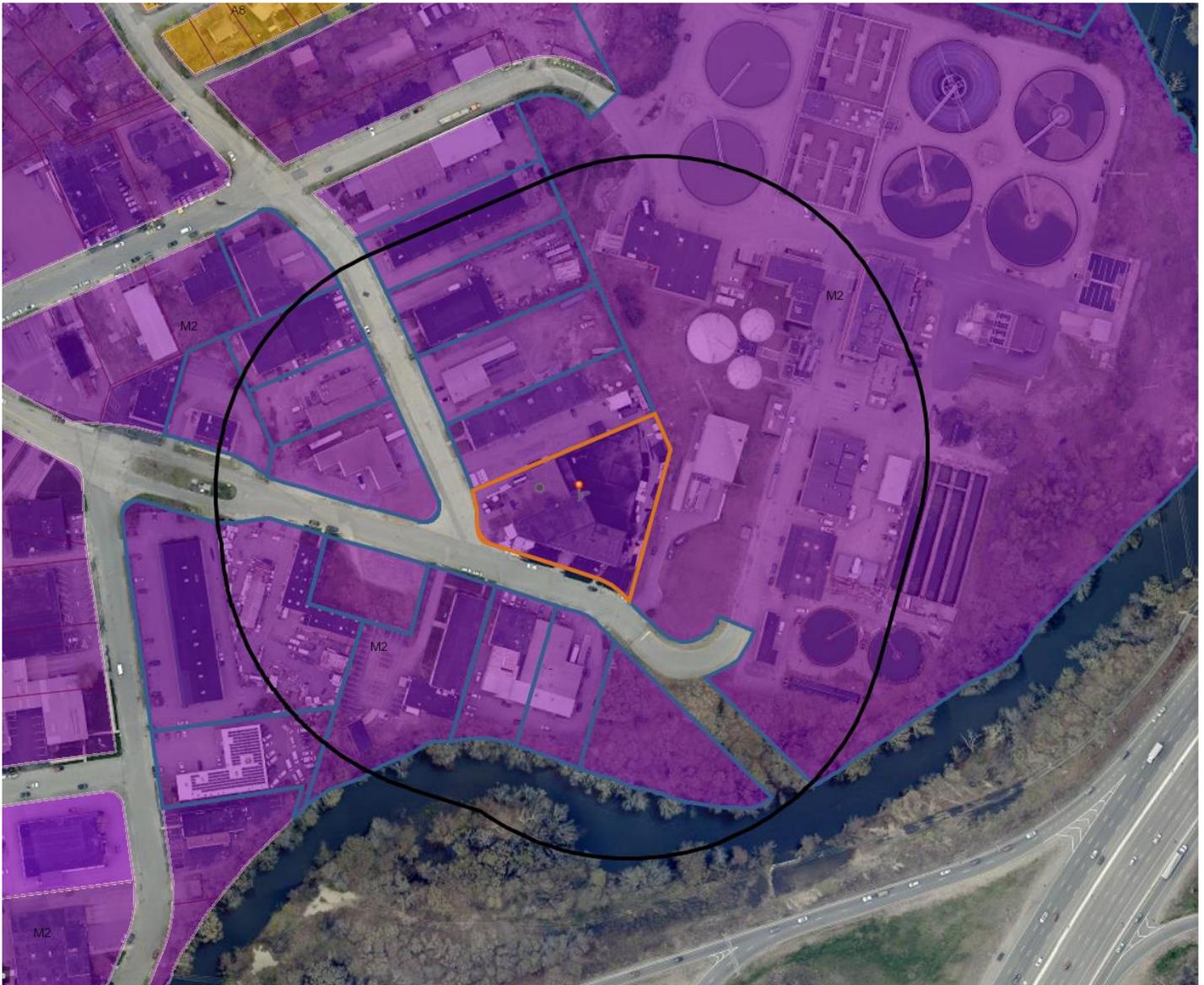
**AERIAL VIEW  
(400 foot radius in black)**



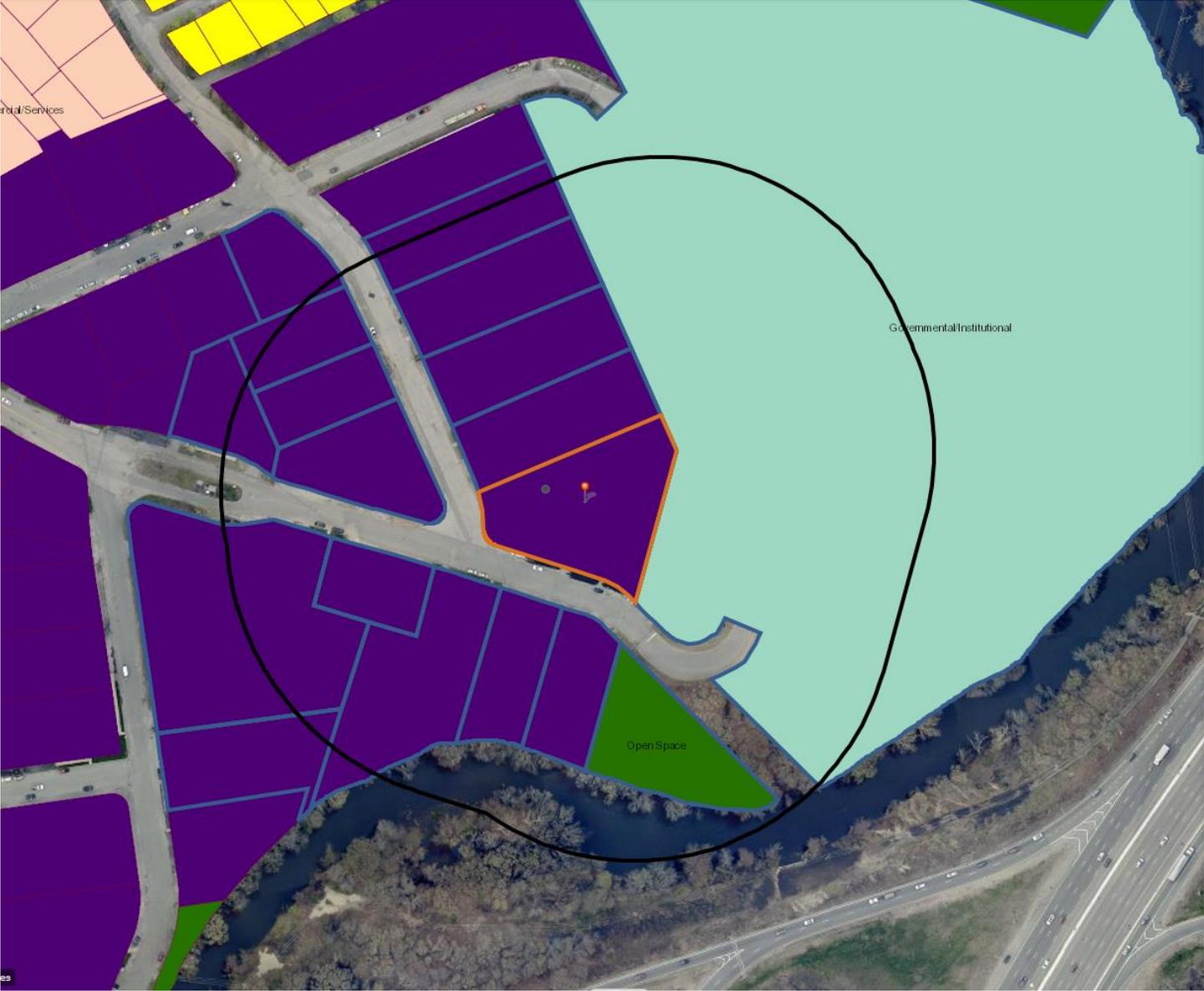
# AERIAL VIEW (close up)



# ZONING MAP



# FUTURE LAND USE MAP



# 3-D AERIAL VIEW



## STREET VIEW (from Pettaconsett Ave)



## STREET VIEW (from Glen Road)





# LANDSCAPE PLAN



## **FINDINGS OF FACT:**

1. The proposal is to develop a Medical Marijuana Dispensary in a new 4,800 ft<sup>2</sup> building at 100 Glen Road located in M-2 zone.
2. The M-2 and M-1 zones is the only zoning districts in the Cranston Zoning Code in which a Medical Marijuana Dispensary use is allowed to be located. Such a use is only allowed via Special Use Permit which requires a decision from the Zoning Board of Review. Full language of Zoning Ordinance Sec. 17.24.040 entitled Medical Marijuana Dispensary is enclosed.
3. Staff finds that the application is consistent with all required standards of Zoning Ordinance Sec. 17.24.040.
4. The site is currently occupied by a non-conforming building that will be removed and the proposed site layout will be brought into compliance with all dimensional requirements.
5. The project received conditional preliminary plan approval from the Cranston Development Plan Review Committee on 11/18/20
6. With regard to the Special Use Permit standards of review (Zoning Sec. 17.92.020), the applicant must demonstrate the proposal meets the following requirements:
  - a. It shall be compatible with its surroundings;
  - b. It shall not be injurious, obnoxious or offensive to the neighborhood;
  - c. It shall not hinder the future development of the city;
  - d. It shall promote the general welfare of the city; and
  - e. It shall be in conformance with the purposes and intent of the comprehensive plan.
7. The applicant has provided a Land Use Report prepared by Ed Pimentel of Pimentel Consulting, Inc. that addresses the issues of neighborhood compatibility, as well as compliance with the Zoning Code and Comprehensive Plan. Staff has reviewed this report and finds it to be well-conceived and provides positive evidence in support of the proposal as it relates to the Special Use Permit criteria. The land use report is enclosed to this memo as back-up.
8. The applicant has provided a Traffic Safety Assessment prepared by Paul Bannon of BETA Group, Inc. Staff has reviewed this assessment and finds it to be comprehensive and technically sound in terms of demonstrating that the site is capable of hosting a medical marijuana dispensary without detrimental traffic impacts to the surrounding street network. The traffic assessment is enclosed to this memo as back-up.

## **PLANNING ANALYSIS:**

This is the first application the City has received for the use of a Medical Marijuana Dispensary. Based on the City's regulatory framework, there are limited opportunities for such a use given that it is only permitted as a Special Use Permit in a M-1 or M-2 zone (industrial districts), and there are the many non-conforming buildings and properties. Additionally, as codified in Zoning Sec 17.24.040 (Medical Marijuana Dispensary), a compassion center must be a minimum distance from a list of sensitive land uses (e.g., residential, education, youth centers, etc.). Based on all of

the above factors, locating a property that is both properly zoned and distanced appropriately can be a challenging task.

Staff is of the view that the subject application has met the required zoning standards and, is well-situated with regard vehicle access and related traffic impacts, to the greatest extent expected within a M-1 or M-2 zone. Further, in comparison to the existing use of the site which is passive industrial storage of materials and limited industrial activity, staff finds that the proposed Medical Marijuana Dispensary will generate greater tax revenue and secondary economic impacts. In comparison to the existing condition of the property, the proposed redevelopment of the site will provide a more environmentally compliant design with regard to stormwater infrastructure, impervious surface coverage, and landscaping. The economic and environmental factors discussed herein provide positive findings with regard to several policies within the City's Comprehensive Plan.

The use does trigger additional licensing and regulatory requirements from the State Department of Business Regulation with regard to on-site activity and security. As noted within the enclosed land use report: "The proposed 4,800 square foot, one-story dispensary facility, will be situated towards the front of the Property, oriented towards Glen Road. The facility will realize full dimensional compliance, and designed in such a manner as to provide appropriate direct access to customers and employees alike. Given the unique security needs of a dispensary operation, necessitating specialized customer handling and product control measures, facility access must be properly considered. All points of facility access will be physically separated for security purposes, and to ensure operational efficiency. Employee access will be handled via a singular point of ingress and egress, referenced point to be located mid-point along the northerly side of the facility. Secured internal off-street loading will be handled within the front, northwesterly corner of the dispensary facility, in close proximity to the employee entrance for obvious reasons. Although off-street loading is purely by van-sized vehicles and in limited weekly visits, it will nevertheless be regulated to after operational hours to mitigate vehicular conflicts. Finally, and most importantly, is the coordinated customer access resulting in the introduction of two (2) physical points in order to assure an orderly transactional process. Customers will enter the facility from the rear-side in direct coordination with the parking lot, and then be internally, physically queued in an orderly manner exiting out through a secondary point at the southeasterly corner. Such an arrangement will ensure maintenance of appropriate security protocol, as well as visually screening the operation from most vantage points. The same is true of the accessory off-street parking. Present parking conditions are woefully deficient and haphazardly distributed. Proposed parking will be furnished in more than sufficient quantities and placed behind the dispensary to realize appropriate screening; the new facility being the visual focal point. Internal circulation will similarly be greatly improved over existing conditions, with a singular point of ingress off of Glen Road and a singular point of egress onto Pettaconsett Avenue. This will avert points of conflict on either roadway; particularly along Pettaconsett Avenue."

Staff finds that the subject application has provided a substantial level of detail within the submitted materials to demonstrate compliance with all related zoning code and regulatory issues.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Due to the fact that the application is consistent with the Cranston Comprehensive Plan, and due to the fact that the applicant has demonstrated compliance with all required sections of zoning, including the Special Use Permit criteria, staff recommends the Plan Commission forward a **positive recommendation** to the Zoning Board of Review.

CITY OF CRANSTON

ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL
IN AMENDMENT OF SECTION 17.24 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF
CRANSTON, 2005, ENTITLED "ZONING -PERFORMANCE
STANDARDS GENERALLY"
(MEDICAL MARIJUANA DISPENSARIES)

No.

Passed:

Michael J Farina, Council President

Approved:

Allan W. Fung, Mayor

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

Section 1: The Purpose of this Code Amendment is to regulate the establishment of Medical Marijuana Dispensaries in order to promote the safety and welfare of the residents of the City of Cranston and in conformity with Rhode Island General Laws sec. 21-28.6-12 and attendant regulations which specify industrial/light manufacturing as an appropriate zoning classification for a Medical Marijuana Dispensary as defined therein. The goals of this section are to provide clear and objective standards for the placement and operations of a Medical Marijuana Dispensary and to:

- 1. Minimize conflict with other legally permitted uses;
2. Protect resources identified in the City of Cranston Comprehensive Plan; and
3. Protect the public health, safety, and general welfare of the inhabitants of the City of Cranston.

Section 2: Title 17.24 of the Code of the City of Cranston, entitled "Performance Standards-Generally" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following new section:

17.24.040 Medical Marijuana Dispensary

A. Definitions.

- 1. The following terms shall have the definitions as set forth in this code:

- Commercial Day Care
Education Institution
Library

44 Municipal Park/Playground  
 45 Outdoor Sports Field  
 46 Place of Religious Worship

47

48 2. The following terms are hereby defined by this ordinance:

49

50 Medical Marijuana Dispensary  
 51 Youth Center  
 52 Halfway House  
 53 Substance Abuse Treatment Facility  
 54 Athletic and recreational facility

55

56 “Medical Marijuana Dispensary” means a not-for-profit corporation, subject to the  
 57 provisions of chapter 6 of title 7, and registered under § 21-28.6-12, that dispenses  
 58 marijuana, and/or related supplies and educational materials, to patient cardholders  
 59 and/or their registered caregiver cardholder or authorized purchaser. Retail sale for  
 60 recreational use is not allowed.

61

62 “Youth Center” means a managed building and associated outdoor space where young  
 63 people can meet to participate in a variety of leisure, athletic, educational, religious,  
 64 and cultural or other activities.

65

66 “Halfway House” means a licensed facility that offers services to formerly  
 67 institutionalized individuals to adjust to life in society.

68

69 “Substance Abuse Treatment Facility” means a licensed facility that offers recovery  
 70 services for substance abuse.

71

72 “Athletic and recreational facility” means any athletic or recreational  
 73 facility including, but not limited to, any playing field, ballfield, basketball court,  
 74 tennis court, soccer field, or playground.

75

76 B. Licensing.

77 A Medical Marijuana Dispensary shall be licensed by the State of Rhode Island and shall  
 78 be at all times in compliance with the laws of Rhode Island, regulations duly  
 79 promulgated thereunder, and the provisions of this code.

80

81 C. Proximity to Other Land Uses.

82 No Medical Marijuana Dispensary shall be located within one thousand (1,000) feet\*  
 83 from an Educational Institution.

84

85 No Medical Marijuana Dispensary shall be located within five hundred (500) feet\* from  
 86 the land uses listed below:

87

- 88 1. Commercial Day Care
- 89 2. Library
- 90 3. Municipal Park/Playground
- 91 4. Outdoor Sports Field
- 92 5. Substance Abuse Treatment Facility
- 93 6. Halfway House
- 94 7. Youth Center
- 95 8. Athletic and Recreational Facility
- 96 9. Place of Religious Worship

97

98 No Medical Marijuana Dispensary shall be located within four hundred (400) feet\*  
 99 from a residential zoning district or a property with a residential use.

100

101 \*Distances shall be calculated by direct measurement from the nearest property line of  
 102 the land uses listed above to the nearest portion of the building being used for a Medical  
 103 Marijuana Dispensary. Distances shall be verified by the applicant and confirmed by the  
 104 Inspector of Buildings.

105

106

D. Restrictions.

107

108 1. A Medical Marijuana Dispensary shall be prohibited within any zoning  
 109 district other than M-1 Restricted Industry and M-2 General Industry zoning  
 110 districts and shall be permitted only by the granting of a Special Use Permit  
 111 by the Zoning Board of Review.

112

113 2. No activities associated with a Medical Marijuana Dispensary shall be  
 114 permitted as a home business.

115

116 3. Medical Marijuana Dispensary sales shall only be located within a building.

117

118 4. Medical Marijuana Dispensary waste shall be stored in secured waste  
 119 receptacles in the possession of and under control of the Medical Marijuana  
 120 Dispensary or other person responsible for the site. Medical Marijuana  
 121 Dispensary Waste shall be managed in accordance with applicable state  
 122 laws, including but not limited to rules promulgated by the Rhode Island  
 123 Department of Health, Business Regulation, and Environmental Management  
 124 in effect and as amended from time to time hereinafter.

125

126 5. A Medical Marijuana Dispensary shall provide adequate security on the  
 127 premises which meets the minimum security requirements according to the  
 128 rules and regulations promulgated by the Rhode Island Department of  
 129 Business Regulation, Rhode Island State Police, or other state agency in effect  
 130 and as amended from time to time hereinafter.

131

132 6. Light cast by exterior lighting fixtures (e.g., security lights, driveway lights)  
 133 shall be downcast, shielded and hooded, and not spill onto adjacent lots.

- 134 7. No equipment or process shall be used that creates noise, dust, vibration,  
 135 glare, or electrical interference detectable to the normal senses beyond the  
 136 property boundary. The building shall be equipped with an effective odor  
 137 control system which shall at all times prevent unreasonable interference of  
 138 neighbors' use and enjoyment of their property.  
 139
- 140 8. Storage and disposal of waste or any other hazardous chemical associated  
 141 with the activities of a Medical Marijuana Dispensary shall comply with local,  
 142 state, and federal laws. An application for review of any use by a Medical  
 143 Marijuana Dispensary shall include a floor plan showing the location of the  
 144 storage of such chemicals and shall be subject to review and approval by the  
 145 local Fire Marshall.  
 146
- 147 9. An annual inspection of Medical Marijuana Dispensary may be conducted by  
 148 the Inspector of Buildings and any other municipal regulatory agency with  
 149 jurisdiction.  
 150
- 151 10. Outdoor display of merchandise shall be prohibited.  
 152
- 153 11. The hours of operation shall be between 1000 AM - 700 PM.  
 154
- 155 12. The minimum lot area shall be 6,000 sq. ft.  
 156
- 157 13. Off-street parking requirements shall be determined by the Zoning Board of  
 158 Review through the Special Permit process.  
 159
- 160 14. Signage requirements for building and free standing signs shall be consistent  
 161 with the C-3 zoning district. Billboards are prohibited.  
 162
- 163 E. Annual Reporting. An annual report may be required by the Inspector of Buildings  
 164 which includes a fully executed Consent to Inspect Premises form and documentation  
 165 demonstrating compliance with the following:  
 166 1. Land use and decisions and permits;  
 167 2. Fire, health, safety, waste water, and building codes.  
 168 3. State of Rhode Island licensing requirements.  
 169

170 **Section 3:** This Ordinance shall take effect upon its final adoption.  
 171

172 Positive Endorsement

Negative Endorsement (attach reasons)

173  
 174  
 175 \_\_\_\_\_  
 176 City Solicitor                      Date

\_\_\_\_\_

City Solicitor                      Date

177  
 178 Sponsored by Mayor Fung  
 179 Referred to Ordinance Committee February 18, 2020

**Compassion Center Redevelopment Proposal  
Development Plan Review and Special Use Permit Analysis**

**100 Glen Road, Cranston, RI  
Assessor's Plat 10-2; Lot 778**

Prepared For: The Winding Rhode Compassion Center, Inc.

Prepared By: Pimentel Consulting, Inc.

28 November 2020

## **INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT**

The Winding Rhode Compassion Center, Inc. ("Applicant") has retained my professional land use planning and zoning consulting services ("Consultant"), in order to evaluate the appropriateness of entirely redeveloping an industrial property for purposes of introducing a compassion center. A compassion center is permitted by Special Use Permit ("SUP"), otherwise defined as a 'conditionally permissible' land use pursuant to both Rhode Island General Law ("RIGL") and case law. The proposed commercial redevelopment will realize full dimensional compliance. This is a major improvement over existing conditions, which has numerous associated nonconformities.

Considering there is limited appropriately zoned properties, namely those located within the 'M-1 Restricted Industry District' ("M-1 District") and 'M-2 General Industry District' ("M-2 District"), and that a compassion center must be distanced from a variety of dissimilar land uses (e.g., educational institution), locating a property that is both properly zoned and distanced should be well supported. Finally, the proposed redevelopment necessitates Development Plan Review ("DPR"); the referenced review is to proceed initially through the Technical Review Committee ("TRC"), prior to being presented to the Planning Commission ("PC"). The proposed compassion center not only is an appropriate reuse of the subject property but also will also generate a much-needed, new tax generating revenue stream, as the property has been well under-utilized for some period of time. Once again, the referenced redevelopment will both foster economic development in furtherance of the goals and objectives of the Town's Comprehensive Plan, as well as revive an industrial property that presently fails to meet any of the current development design regulations; safety, drainage and landscaping.

In light of the stated redevelopment proposal, I have thoroughly reviewed all submission materials (to include associated site plans), as well as the following regulatory documents:

- o City of Cranston Comprehensive Plan - June 2012 Amendment ("Comprehensive Plan");
- o Land Development and Subdivision Regulations ("Development Regulations");
- o Zoning Ordinance, inclusive of the 'Compassion Center Amendment', dated June 2007 ("Ordinance"); and
- o Pertinent state statutes and case law.

In addition, I conducted site and neighborhood inspections and reviewed VisionAppraisal Data for land use assessment purposes.

The purpose for the subject analysis is two-fold: documenting the appropriateness of the proposed redevelopment in light of the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan; as well as addressing the respective standards for the granting of the SUP.

**Comprehensive Plan [Page 3]**

*"The heart of a Comprehensive Plan is the program of land use choices and decisions. However, as suggested, the full implementation of the Plan will require many different actions by many different people and entities. This Plan shows ways to achieve its goals and objectives."*

*"This Comprehensive Plan Update continues this tradition of planning. As Cranston approaches the build-out of its residential, commercial and industrial-zoned land, it becomes more critical to identify ways of successfully developing and redeveloping the City's economic resources, while protecting its natural and cultural resources, maintaining quality public services and facilities, and ensuring the long-term affordability of its housing stock. These are some of the more important issues that guided the Comprehensive Plan process."*

**PRESENT PROPERTY CONDITIONS**

The property that is the focus of the subject redevelopment proposal is addressed 100 Glen Road, further identified as Assessor's Plat 102, Lot 778, and containing approximately 58,416 square feet of total land area ("Property"). The Property has been improved with a sizable industrial facility since minimally 1958; referenced facility having an approximate building footprint of 30,500 square feet, or 52.2% building lot coverage. Furthermore, the Property is woefully lacking in landscaping, being upwards of 98% covered with impervious surface, inclusive of all building coverage. There does not appear to be any off-setting drainage improvements. The Property is uniquely situated at the intersection of Glen Road and Pettaconsett Avenue, directly abutting the Cranston's Sewage Treatment Plant. Pettaconsett Avenue is actually a dead-end with the Property situated at its northern terminus.

The present industrial facility has been under-utilized for some period of time, as evidenced by the unsightly usage of the respective front-yards for apparently abandoned piping material. There does not appear to be any coordinated off-street parking or off-street loading; interior traffic circulating in a clock-wise manner with the primary means of ingress and egress being off of Glen Road. The only other pertinent site feature is the shared driveway arrangement with the abutting industrial operation to the north; an arrangement that cannot be encumbered, lest it result in vehicular conflicts. The surrounding neighborhood is entirely comprised of a combination of heavy commercial and light industrial operations. Furthermore, as previously noted, the Cranston Sewage Treatment Plant directly abuts the Property to the east, containing in excess of 22-acres of overall land area and buffering the Property from the Pawtuxet River. The Property is only a short distance from Pontiac Avenue, which in turn has direct access to both Interstate 295 and 95, providing direct vehicular access without any residential

neighborhood interference. A final point is in regard to perceived traffic conflicts at the Pontiac Avenue and Pettaconsett Avenue intersection. The Applicant's traffic engineer has prepared an in-depth report that addresses not only the minimal impact resulting from the proposed compassion center operation, but also how soon-to-be implemented Department of Transportation improvements in the general area will greatly alleviate traffic flow, averting previously experienced delays. All of the referenced Property and surrounding area characteristics are illustrated below and on the following page, as excerpted from the City's Geographical Information System ("GIS") and Google Earth, respectively.

**Property Aerial View [Credit: GIS]**



**Property View from Glen Road - Looking in an Easterly Direction [Credit: Google Earth]**



**Property View from Pettaconsett Avenue - Looking in an North-Easterly Direction**  
**[Credit: Google Earth]**



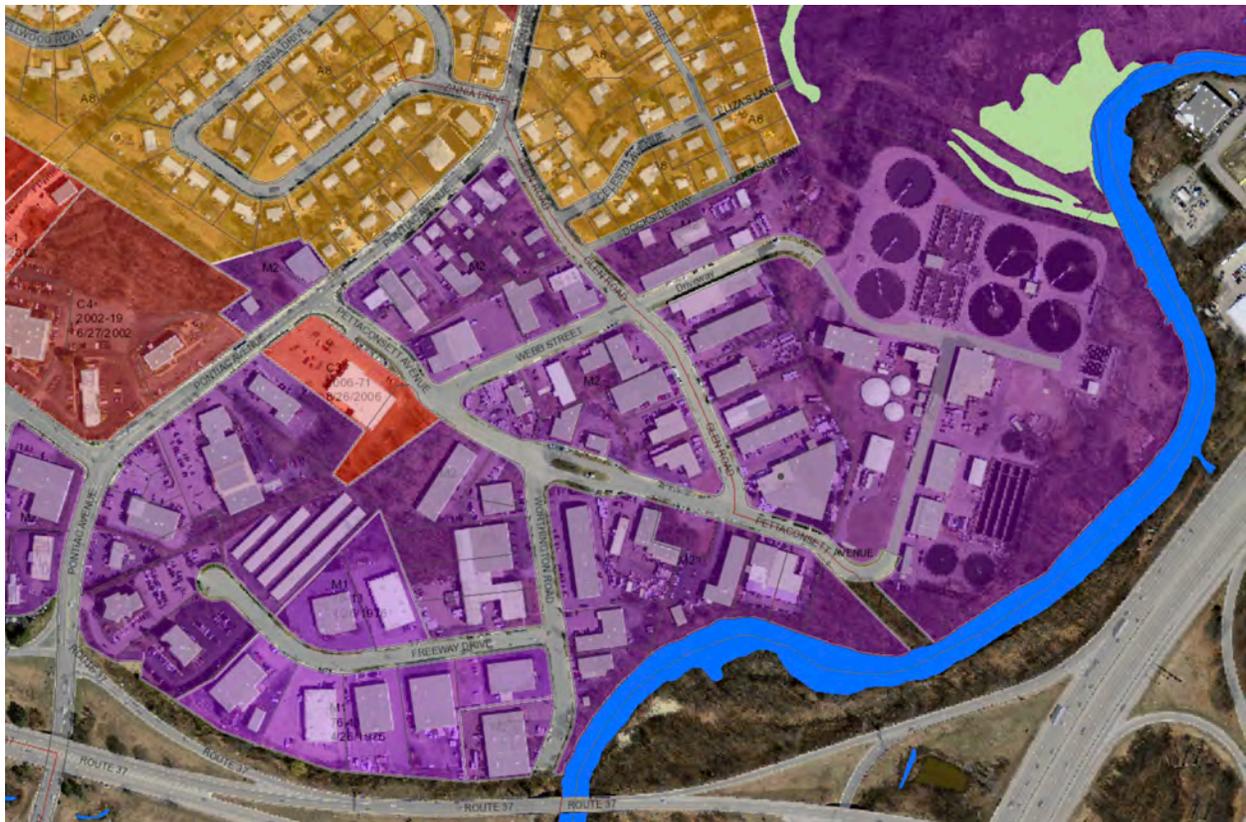
**General Area - Aerial View [Credit: GIS]**



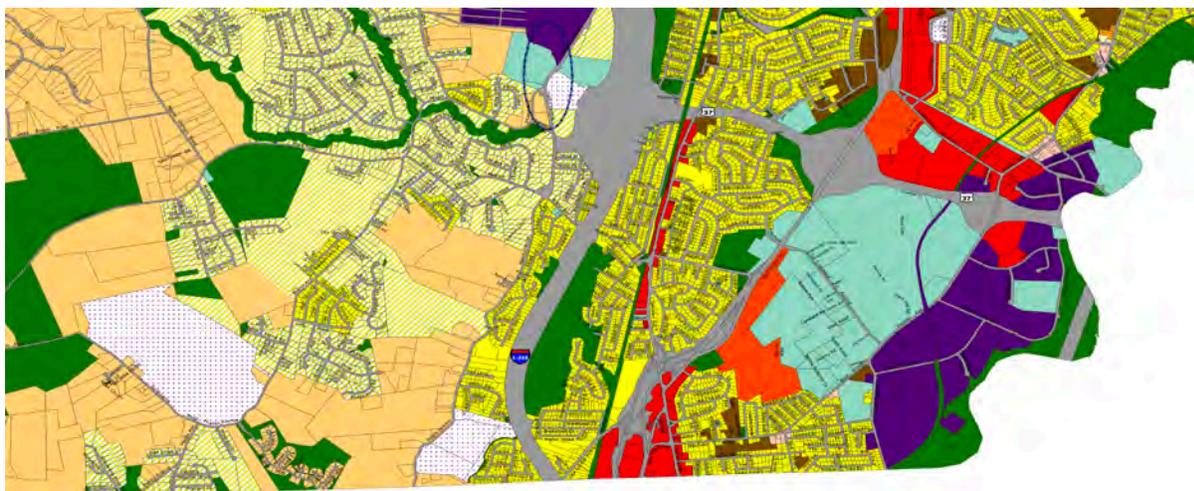
The Property is presently zoned 'M-2 District,' and is appropriately consistently classified 'Industrial,' pursuant to the Comprehensive Plan - Future Land Use Map ("FLUM"). The proposed redevelopment will cure numerous regulatory deficiencies; however, the most important is affording neighborhood consistency. Existing zoning and land use classification conditions are illustrated below, as excerpted from the City's GIS and Comprehensive Plan,

respectively. As detailed below, the entire area is both zoned and classified in a similar industrial manner, with the nearest residential neighborhood situated more than a block to the north; numerous commercial and industrial entities situated in-between. This is a vitally important point because of the joint fact that there are few properly zoned properties and even fewer that are appropriately distanced from specified dissimilar land uses.

**Property and Area: Zoning Designations - Detailing the large swath of industrially zoned properties, and great separation from the residential neighborhood to the north.**



**Property and Area: Land Use Classifications**

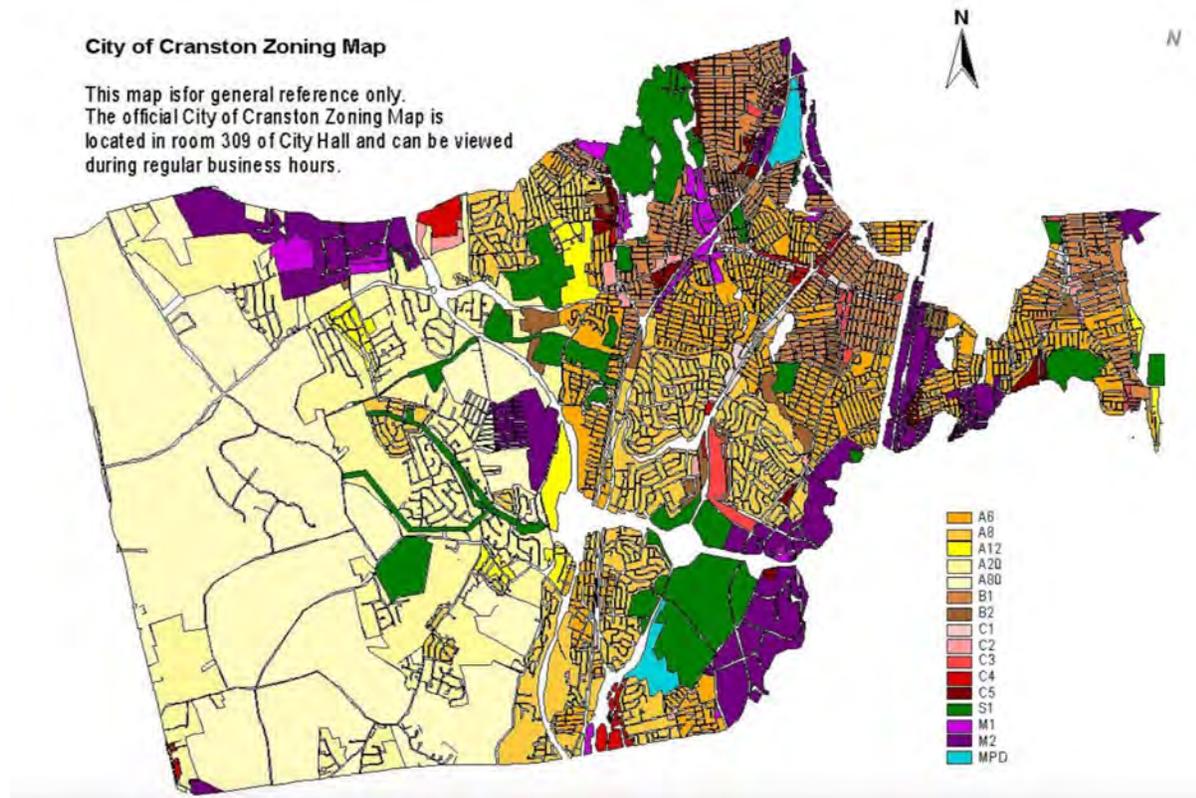


**Legend**

Parcels (12/31/2008)	Future Land Use	Mixed Plan Development	Residential Less Than 10.39 Units Per Acre	Single Family Residential Less Than 1 Unit Per Acre
Future Village Centers	Governmental/Institutional	Multifamily	Right Of Way	Single/Two Family Residential Less Than 10.89 Units Per Acre
	Highway Commercial/Services	Neighborhood Commercial/Services	Single Family Residential 3.63 To 1 Unit Per Acre	Special Redevelopment Area
	Industrial	Open Space	Single Family Residential 7.26 To 3.64 Unit Per Acre	Water

0  
Data Src.  
City of Cr

The below zoning map clearly acknowledges how few city-wide properties would be otherwise appropriate for a compassion center, given the proximity to residentially zoned areas.



This land use consultant has concluded that the community will be supportive of compassion centers, provided neighborhood compatibility is maintained. Clearly, the heavy presence of commercial and highway entities, and non-presence of residences, renders redevelopment of the Property for the intended purpose most appropriate. This Consultant's professional opinion is corroborated by the Comprehensive Plan, as evidenced by the following:

**Growth Management** - "Development in the City can be redirected to improve the local businesses and neighborhoods. Connecting new public policy goals with tailored, specific development will position the City as sustainable for future generations." [Page 2]

#### **Land Use Goals (LUG) AND Policies (LUP) [Page 8]**

**LUP-2.6:** "Implement policies that protect residential neighborhoods from commercial encroachment through regulation, appropriate buffers, development design standards, traffic planning, and site plan review."

**LUG-4:** "Ensure that sufficient land is properly zoned and provided with adequate infrastructure to provide for the City's future industrial development needs."

**LUG-5:** *“Ensure that redevelopment of major sites for economic development incorporates the protection of environment and neighborhood character.”*

### **PROPOSED COMMERCIAL REDEVELOPMENT**

The present proposal is to raze the existing building and redevelop the entire property, realizing almost complete development design compliance. The Property is presently devoid of any green-space, being almost 100% covered with impervious surface. Furthermore, given the overall size of the industrial facility in comparison to the property, there is little to no opportunity to realize any semblance of landscaping, or off-setting drainage improvements. Finally, appropriate and safe internal traffic circulation and requisite off-street parking and loading are vastly deficient, due to disproportionate facility massing and scale as well as pre-existing placement. Redevelopment is the only reasonable means of realizing appropriate land usage, while also addressing such numerous site design deficiencies. Once again, this is in direct accord with the Comprehensive Plan [Page 12], which acknowledges that given limited city-wide land area deficiencies and associated individual site constraints, reuse and redevelopment may very well be the only viable means of realizing successful property development.

#### **Element 4: Economic Development Goals (EDG) and Policies (EDP)**

**EDG-3:** *“Add to the City’s taxable property base by constructing industrial and commercial structures which are properly designed and sited in keeping with environmental, planning and design considerations.”*

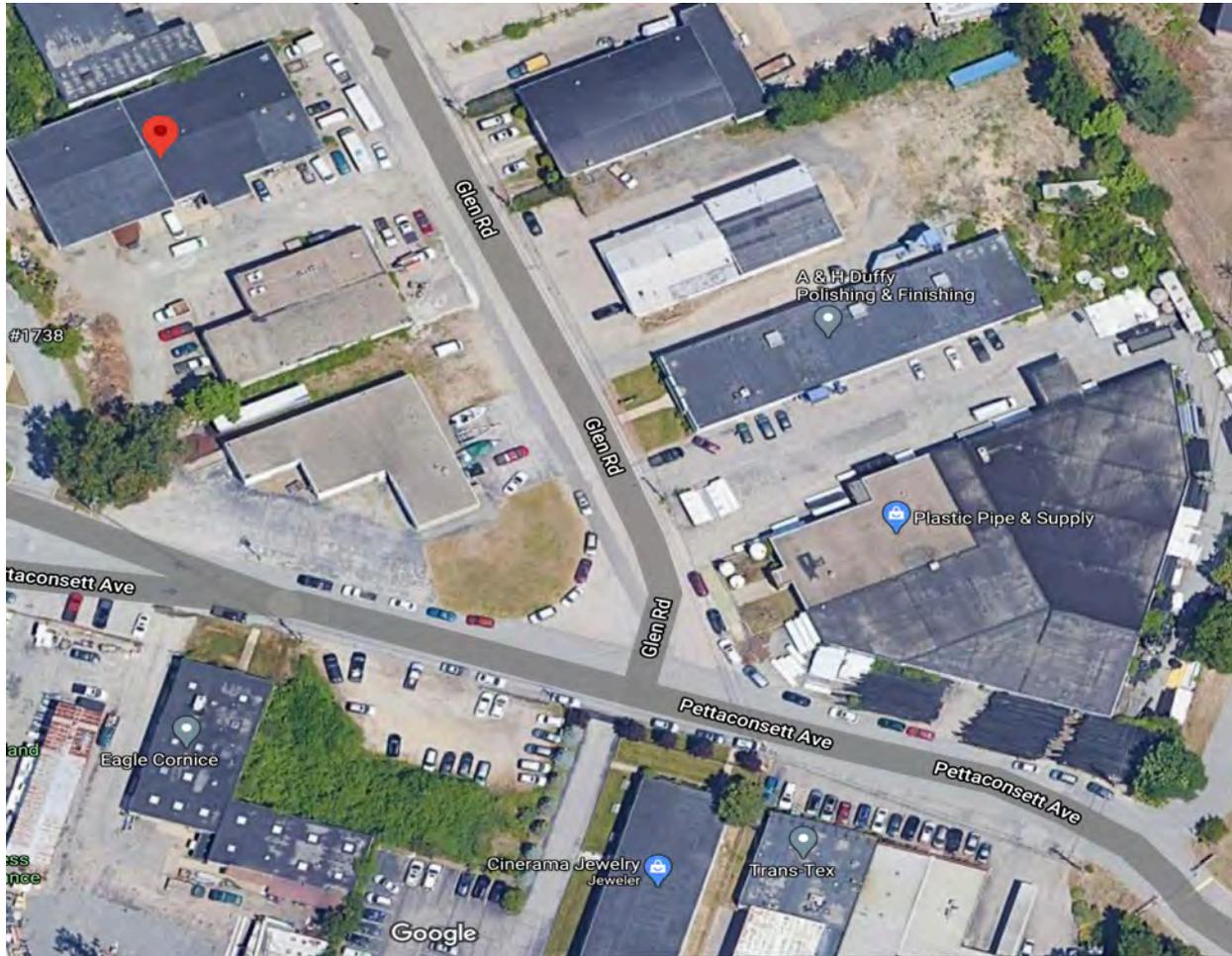
**EDP-3.1:** *“Strengthen the standards for industrially zoned land to prevent the erosion of the City’s supply of land suitable for these purposes.”*

**EDG-4** **“Revitalize underused areas of the City for uses that are in keeping with the needs and values of the community.”**

**EDP-4.1** **“Continue the City’s active role in seeking the redevelopment of major industrial and institutional sites for economic development.”**

The present facility will be demolished and a large portion of the present impervious surface removed as well. With the availability of such a blank slate, the property can be redeveloped to suit both the needs of the Applicant and community alike. The compassion center requires only a minute portion of the overall land area, a mere 8.21%. Once again, this needs to be compared to present conditions in which the industrial facility consumes 52.21% of the overall land resources. The subject proposal is less than one-fifth the size (15.74%) of the present industrial facility, thereby permitting appropriate redevelopment and ability to realize much-needed landscaping; a site feature that is in limited quantities throughout the general area,

especially along the respective lot frontages. The following illustration reiterates this very pertinent point [Credit: Google Earth].



The proposed 4,800 square foot, one-story dispensary facility, will be situated towards the front of the Property, oriented towards Glen Road. The facility will realize full dimensional compliance, and designed in such a manner as to provide appropriate direct access to customers and employees alike. Given the unique security needs of a dispensary operation, necessitating specialized customer handling and product control measures, facility access must be properly considered. All points of facility access will be physically separated for security purposes, and to ensure operational efficiency. Employee access will be handled via a singular point of ingress and egress, referenced point to be located mid-point along the northerly side of the facility. Secured internal off-street loading will be handled within the front, northwesterly corner of the dispensary facility, in close proximity to the employee entrance for obvious reasons. Although off-street loading is purely by van-sized vehicles and in limited weekly visits,

it will nevertheless be regulated to after operational hours to mitigate vehicular conflicts. Finally, and most importantly, is the coordinated customer access resulting in the introduction of two (2) physical points in order to assure an orderly transactional process. Customers will enter the facility from the rear-side in direct coordination with the parking lot, and then be internally ,physically queued in an orderly manner exiting out through a secondary point at the southeasterly corner. Such an arrangement will ensure maintenance of appropriate security protocol, as well as visually screening the operation from most vantage points. The same is true of the accessory off-street parking. Present parking conditions are woefully deficient and haphazardly distributed. Proposed parking will be furnished in more than sufficient quantities and placed behind the dispensary to realize appropriate screening; the new facility being the visual focal point. Internal circulation will similarly be greatly improved over existing conditions, with a singular point of ingress off of Glen Road and a singular point of egress onto Pettaconsett Avenue. This will avert points of conflict on either roadway; particularly along Pettaconsett Avenue.

**Element 8: Circulation Goals (CG) and Policies (CP)**

**CG-2:** "Provide sufficient off-street parking to serve the needs of businesses and residents." [Page 19]

**CP-2.4:** *"Require compliance with parking standards in the Zoning Ordinance and discourage on- street parking where appropriate."*

**CP-2.5:** *"Encourage off-street parking at existing developments."*

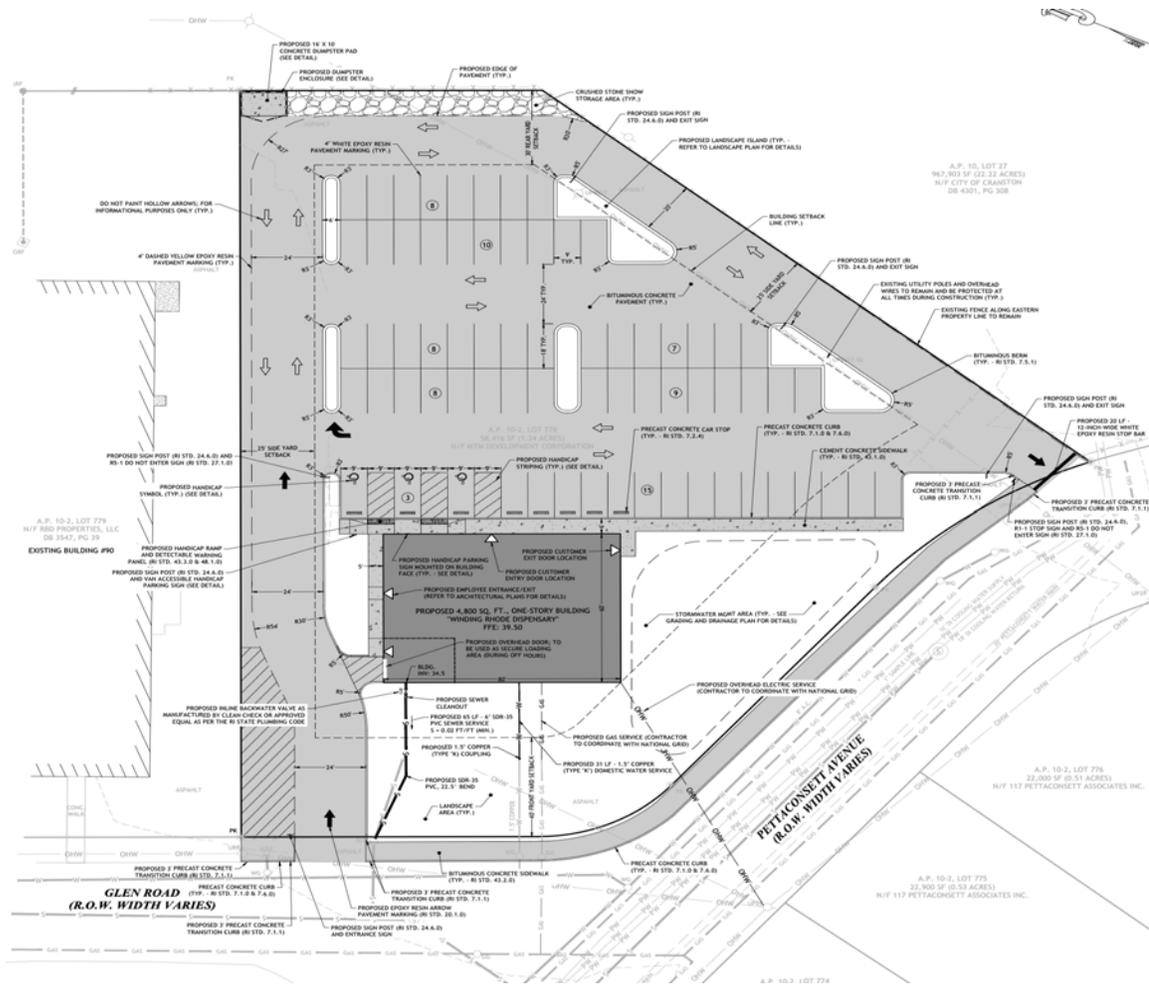
Throughout the Technical Review Process, the Applicant received reasonable commentary from community official(s) and public alike. Once such commentary was in regard to the terminus of Pettaconsett Avenue, in which vehicular movement associated with the Sewage Treatment Plant and adjacent business(es) come to a singular point of interaction. In order to minimize this conflict, the curb-cut opening located at the far southeasterly corner will be restricted to egress only. The stated design restriction will have the effect of minimizing the number of vehicles trips on Pettaconsett Avenue. The detailed site plan is illustrated on the following page, as excerpted from the Applicant's submission package [Credit: Joe Casali Engineering, Inc.].

**Element 8: Circulation Goals (CG) and Policies (CP) [Page 19]**

**CP-2.8** *"Restrict on-street parking where feasible to facilitate turning movements and traffic flow."*

**CG-3** *"Improve traffic flow along major roadways by reducing and consolidating the number of curb cuts".*

**CP-3.2** *"Regulate curb cuts through design standards."*



Finally, and perhaps the greatest improvement, will be the introduction of much-needed green-space and associated drainage improvements. First of all, there will be true curb appeal introduced throughout the lot frontage, along both Glen Road and Pettaconsett Avenue. The referenced landscaping will consist of both ground vegetation and a series of trees lining the property boundary. In addition, landscaped islands will be distributed throughout the parking area, both at the respective terminus of each individualized row, as well as at its mid-section. Landscaping does not solely soften an otherwise sea of asphalt, but provides some much-needed drainage control. The introduced landscaped islands captures area run-off, realizing both retention and treatment. The same is true of the large stormwater management area located at the front of the Property, which will also serve to collect the clean roof run-off and deter it from being deposited in the City's drainage system for unnecessary treatment.

**Table 8-2 Summary of the Proposed Actions and Responsibilities for this Plan - Parking [Page 172]**

**C-20** - "Require compliance with parking standards in Zoning Ordinance and discourage on-street parking."

**C-22 - "Require provision of landscaping to delineate parking areas and provide buffers."**

### **Natural Resources Action Program**

**NR-19 - "Adopt standards, such as Low Impact Development techniques, to better manage stormwater from roadways in new construction." [Page 51]**

- o "Reduce impervious surfaces in new developments such as with porous pavements and reduced travel lane widths." [Page 51]

**LUG-5 - "Ensure that redevelopment of major sites for economic development incorporates the protection of environment and neighborhood character." [Page 8]**

As is evidenced by the personally conducted general neighborhood investigation, the surrounding neighborhood character and general make-up (configuration and land use) are in harmony with the proposed change of use.

### **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS**

As mandated by both the Ordinance and Rhode Island General Law, pursuant to the requisite standards for the granting of the DPR and SUP, a thorough analysis of the Comprehensive Plan has been completed for purposes of evidencing Comprehensive Plan 'Consistency.' The results of the subject analysis are well detailed below. The Comprehensive Plan documents not only the community's support for the type of development proposed but also the proximate location.

**Provide Opportunities in Eastern Cranston - "Underutilized properties and infill development sites could be improved to address current and future land use, transportation, and economic needs in the eastern part of the City." [Page 22]**

**Existing Conditions and Issues - "The Land Use Element considers the varied conditions and issues that need to be addressed through the actions of this and the other elements in the Comprehensive Plan. Many issues were discussed during the planning process and are explained below, along with existing land use conditions. They reflect the trends in land use, changes since the previous plan, and issues that need to be addressed." [Page 31]**

**Land Use Patterns in Cranston: "The City is faced with a distinct east/west split in land use patterns: residential development and preservation of open space in western Cranston vs. redevelopment and improvement of existing neighborhood and commercial centers in eastern Cranston." [Page 31]**

The area in question is appropriately suited for the intended land usage, considering the litany of even more intensive land uses that would otherwise be permitted as a matter-of-right. The property is situated amidst heavy commercial and light industrial operations, and is only one of a handful of appropriately zoned parcels capable of accommodating a compassion center. The community has already concluded that a compassion center is conditionally permitted within the respective zone, provided it comports with the respective standards of approval (individually

addressed below) and realizes consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. Reinvigorating an industrial asset, and in a manner that meets respective development design standards, is such a rarity that it most assuredly realizes Comprehensive Plan consistency.

**Element 4: Economic Development Goals (EDG) and Policies (EDP) [Page 11]**

**Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning and Land Use Regulation Act Goal:** - *“To promote an economic climate which increases quality job opportunities and overall economic well-being of each municipality and the state.”*

**EDG-6** - *“Target development sites for Smart Growth projects.”* [Page 12]

**Key Strategies** - *“The City of Cranston can address all of these issues through four different levels of actions from broad-scale marketing down to person-to-person approaches.”* [Page 74]

- o *“High-end business growth – Target markets that could improve both tax and job bases.”*

Another equally important consideration is evidencing the economic benefit to be garnered. It was previously evidenced, pursuant to the Comprehensive Plan, that the primary objective going forward is to realize economic success through in-fill development / redevelopment, rather than exhausting limited green-space.

Land Use *“Underutilized properties and infill development sites could be improved to address current and future land use, transportation, and economic needs in the eastern part of the City.”* [Page 22]

The Comprehensive Plan [Page 1] acknowledges that over 13% of all land resources are occupied by non-profit oriented land uses. Furthermore, there is too heavy a reliance on residential property taxes and, therefore, the community welcomes new commercial ‘revenue’ sources. The referenced redevelopment will provide a new revenue stream and one which complements the surrounding land uses.

**Economic Development** - *“As Cranston moves forward, it still needs to address the traditional economic development goals.”* [Page 73]

- o *“Increase the tax base with new private investment in commercial and industrial properties.”*
- o *“Create new and better jobs with consummate wage increases for all levels of employment.”*

And finally, is the following general textual language evidencing support for the proposed redevelopment.

**Reinvigorating Neighborhood Centers** - *“This Comprehensive Plan Update continues this tradition of planning. As Cranston approaches the build-out of its residential, commercial and industrial-zoned land, it becomes more critical to identify ways of successfully developing and redeveloping the City’s economic resources, while protecting its natural and cultural resources, maintaining quality public services and facilities, and ensuring the long-term*

*affordability of its housing stock. These are some of the more important issues that guided the Comprehensive Plan process.” [Page 3]*

**Overall Themes and Changes** - *“This Comprehensive Plan Update has proposed certain actions that are new or modified from the 1992 Comprehensive Plan. The major changes are in the following areas.” [Page 6]*

### **Land Use**

- o *“Adoption of Smart Growth policies to guide development projects.”*

### **Economic Development**

- o *“Targeting key redevelopment projects in other sites spread throughout the City.”*

### **Economic Development Action Program**

**ED-24** - *“Develop design guidelines for site development.” [Page 50]*

- o *“Address different conditions and smart growth goals.”*

### **Commercial Development**

**LU-12** - *“Establish design standards.” [Page 54]*

- o *“Continue to improve site design standards to increase the quality of new development and use new ‘smart growth’ zoning techniques to assist these approaches.”*
- o *“Adopt architectural design standards to increase the aesthetic quality of new commercial development or redevelopment.”*

## **ZONING ORDINANCE CONSISTENCY ANALYSIS**

The following, and final portion of this report, addresses the requisite zoning ordinance regulatory standards. The first section addresses the general ‘Development Plan Review’ standards, followed by those specifically pertaining to ‘compassion center’ oriented businesses.

### **Development Plan Review Analysis**

#### **Chapter 17.84 Development Plan Review**

**Section 17.84.060 - General standards for approval** - *“An approval shall be granted if the DPRC finds a development meets the following standards:”*

**A.** *“A Development complies with zoning and other city codes and regulations and is consistent with the comprehensive plan.”*

The proposed redevelopment is clearly consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, as evidenced throughout this report, and will fully comport with all dimensional criteria. It will necessitate the review and approval of the Zoning Board of Review because a ‘compassion

center' is solely permitted by SUP in the M-1 and M-2 Districts; the requisite standards are addressed individually below.

**B.** *"Erosion is controlled in accordance with Chapter 15.28 "soil erosion and sedimentation control" of the city code so that erosion shall not impact abutting properties or public streets."*

To be addressed by respective expert(s) in both written and testimonial form. However, this Consultant can attest to compliance from a land use perspective. The Property is being entirely redeveloped to address seriously deficient design standards, most notably those that are environmentally oriented.

**C.** *"Storm water runoff is treated using best management practices so that there shall be no increased runoff from a development. (All developments shall meet the standards set in the Rhode Island Stormwater Design and Installation Standards Manual as most recently amended.)"*

To be addressed by respective expert(s) in both written and testimonial form. However, this Consultant can attest to compliance from a land use perspective. There is presently no on-site drainage control measures. Redevelopment will incorporate stormwater management control measures that regulate quantity and quality, averting improper off-site runoff and unnecessary costly treatment.

**D.** *"Vehicular and pedestrian movement within and access to and egress from a development are safe and efficient and provisions are made for snow removal."*

The Property is purposefully being redesigned to address these very issues. This was a point of concern expressed by community officials and public alike. The points of ingress and egress will be restricted to assure safe circulation, both internally and externally. Whereas, there was limited snow removal area previously, large swaths of open area will now be viable for such purposes.

**E.** *"Site improvements, utilities, infrastructure, streets, sidewalks, and parking areas will be constructed in compliance with the applicable city regulations and standards."*

The compassion center will furnish more than sufficient off-street parking and in a manner that comports with all design criteria. Whereas the Property presently lacks requisite infrastructure, most notably stormwater management and landscaping improvements, redevelopment will realize almost complete site design compliance.

F. *"The location, arrangement, appearance and quantity of off-street parking and loading are adequate to serve the development and comply with zoning."*

To reiterate, the redevelopment will furnish more than sufficient off-street parking, appropriately placed throughout the property. It will also be furnished secured van-sized off-street loading in a manner that comports with the requisite regulations.

### **Compassion Center Analysis**

#### **Section 17.24-040 - Compassion Center.**

**C. Proximity to other land uses** - *"No Compassion Center shall be located within one thousand (1,000) feet from an Educational Institution. Distances shall be calculated by direct measurement from the nearest property line of the land uses listed above to the nearest portion of the building being used for a Compassion Center. Distances shall be verified by the applicant and confirmed by the Inspector of Buildings."*

No such entity located with the specified distance.

**C. Proximity to other land uses** - *"No Compassion Center shall be located within five hundred (500) feet from the land uses listed below. Distances shall be calculated by direct measurement from the nearest property line of the land uses listed above to the nearest portion of the building being used for a Compassion Center. Distances shall be verified by the applicant and confirmed by the Inspector of Buildings."*

- 1. Commercial Day Care**
- 2. Library**
- 3. Municipal Park/Playground**
- 4. Outdoor Sports Field**
- 5. Substance Abuse Treatment Facility**

No such entity located with the specified distance.

#### **D. Restrictions.**

1. *"A Compassion Center shall be prohibited within any zoning district other than M-1 Restricted Industry and M-2 General Industry zoning districts and shall be permitted only by the granting of a Special Use Permit by the Zoning Board of Review."*

Requisite standards of approval individually addressed below.

2. *"No activities associated with a Compassion Center shall be permitted as a home business or accessory use."*

The Property is being entirely redeveloped to accommodate a compassion center as the sole principal usage of property.

3. *"Compassion Center sales shall only be located within a building."*

A new facility is being constructed to accommodate the compassion center where sales shall take place only within the building.

4. *"Compassion Center waste shall be stored in secured waste receptacles in the possession of and under control of the Compassion Center or other person responsible for the site. Compassion Center Waste shall be managed in accordance with applicable state laws, including but not limited to rules promulgated by the Rhode Island Department of Health, Business Regulation, and Environmental Management in effect and as amended from time to time hereinafter."*

Trash storage area will be provided along the northeasterly corner of the Property for general refuse; otherwise all other waste will be removed in accordance with all statutory requirements.

5. *"A Compassion Center shall provide adequate security on the premises which meets the minimum security requirements according to the rules and regulations promulgated by the Rhode Island Department of Business Regulation, Rhode Island State Police, or other state agency in effect and as amended from time to time hereinafter."*

Will realize full compliance, as evidenced by the detailed security protocols submitted by the Applicant.

6. *"Light cast by light fixtures (i.e., artificial lighting) inside any structure or building used by a Compassion Center shall not be visible from outside. Light cast by exterior lighting fixtures (e.g., security lights, driveway lights) shall be downcast, shielded and hooded, and not spill onto adjacent lots."*

Light as required to assure appropriate security of the operation, and the safety of customers and employees, will be instituted. This element of the operation was well discussed throughout the TRC process and deemed acceptable.

7. *"Storage and disposal of waste or any other hazardous chemical associated with the activities of a Compassion Center shall comply with local, state, and federal laws. An application for review of any use by a Compassion Center shall include a floor plan showing the location of the storage of such chemicals and shall be subject to review and approval by the local Fire Marshall."*

There is no hazardous waste associated with a compassion center operation. As for waste disposal, this Consultant reiterates that a Trash storage area will be provided along the northeasterly corner of the Property for general refuse and otherwise all other waste will be removed in accordance with statutory requirements.

8. *"An annual inspection of Compassion Center may be conducted by the Inspector of Buildings and any other municipal regulatory agency with jurisdiction."*

Applicant will comply.

9. *"Outdoor display of merchandise shall be prohibited."*

No outdoor display is either proposed now or in the future.

10. *"Compliance with respective hours of operation."*

The Applicant would like to operate in accordance with the full hours of operation provided in the City Ordinance for Medical Marijuana Dispensaries, namely "between 10:00 AM - 7:00 PM".

11. *"The minimum lot area shall be 6,000 sq. ft."*

The Property exceeds 58,000 square feet in overall size.

12. *"Off- street parking requirements shall be a minimum of one space per 300 square feet of gross floor area."*

The proposed facility will be 4,800 square feet of overall gross floor area, necessitating a minimum of 16-spaces. A total of 68-spaces are being proposed to ensure there is no on-street parking spillage; a concern that was raised throughout the TRC process.

13. *"Signage requirements for building and free standing signs shall be consistent with the C-3 zoning district."*

Minimal signage proposed. Will realize compliance.

### **Special Use Permit**

It has already been determined that the proposed 'compassion center' is permitted by means of a special use permit, otherwise deemed a conditionally permitted land use. In other words, pursuant to Rhode Island Case Law, a use deemed a conditionally permitted land use is in fact a permitted land use that may be restricted by the local regulating authority via the imposition of reasonable 'conditions', should they be necessary to ensure protection of the proximate neighborhood.

#### **Section 017.92.020 – Special Use Permit**

A. **Applicability.** *'The zoning board of review may grant a special use permit in accordance with the procedures and standards of this chapter for the following:'*

1. *"Any use or structure designated as requiring a special use permit in Section 17.28.030 (Schedule of uses) or elsewhere in this chapter, subject to the following affirmative findings."*

Pursuant to Section 017.24.040 'Compassion Centers' are expressly permitted by Special Use Permit in the M-1 and M-2 Districts only.

a. *"Within a residential district, that the proposed use is consistent with the residential use of the district."*

Not applicable.

b. *"Within an industrial district, that the factual evidence has demonstrated that the proposed use will predominantly serve the employees and visitors to the existing industrial uses within the district."*

Once again, compassion centers are restricted to industrial districts. It will most assuredly serve the needs of the facility's customers, who will have the requisite license/card to purchase the product sold in order to address a variety of existing medical issues.

c. *"Within a commercial district that the proposed use will substantially conform to the scale and context of the surrounding developments."*

Not applicable.

d. *"Within an open space district, that the building and uses of land will be so designed and located in relation to the property as to preserve an open or natural character in the district."*

Not applicable.

**2. Special Permit Power.** *'The zoning board of review shall have the power in appropriate cases and subject to appropriate conditions and safeguards to issue special permits as authorized by this chapter in harmony with its general purpose and intent. In issuing such permits, the board shall determine that the use meets the following requirements:'*

a. *"It shall be compatible with its surroundings."*

b. *"It shall not be injurious, obnoxious or offensive to the neighborhood."*

The extensive neighborhood analysis affirms neighborhood compatibility. Furthermore, razing the existing archaic industrial facility and redeveloping the Property in its entirety permits site design features that benefit the Property and neighborhood alike (e.g., traffic and drainage control measures).

c. *"It shall not hinder the future development of the city."*

d. *"It shall promote the general welfare of the city."*

e. *"It shall be in conformance with the purposes and intent of the comprehensive plan."*

The Ordinance specifically permits compassion centers by means of a special use permit, and solely within few city-wide industrially zoned properties. Locating a property that is properly zoned and distanced from a variety of regulated land uses (and

residences), further limits appropriate site selection. The Applicant has not only discovered such a site but assured the redevelopment realizes consistency with the respective goals and objectives of both the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance. This is evidenced by the fact that the Applicant is going to great expense to raze all existing improvements and redevelop the Property in its entirety.

### **CONCLUSION**

In summary, this Consultant professionally believes that both the Planning Commission and Cranston Zoning Board of Review should not have any reservations in approving the subject redevelopment proposal. This report has affirmed compliance with the joint standards for the granting of the DPR and SUP, respectively. Selecting an appropriate site is quite difficult, especially one that will ultimately realize almost full site design compliance.



November 6, 2020

Mr. Patrick J. Casey, President  
Twin Oak Management, LLC  
72 Pine Street, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Re: Proposed Land Development Project  
*The Winding Rhode Compassion Center*  
Assessors Plat 10-2, Lot 778  
Cranston, Rhode Island

Dear Mr. Casey:

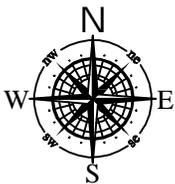
BETA Group, Inc., in accordance with our scope of services, has completed a planning level traffic assessment to determine if a proposed compassion center development project on Glen Road within an industrial park has adequate and safe access to the immediate local servicing roadways in Cranston, Rhode Island. The project site is located on the northeast corner of the intersection of Pettaconsett Avenue with Glen Road which is fully developed with a plastic piping supply business. This study was completed for submission to the city as part of the local planning approval process and provides a summary of existing roadway and traffic conditions and an estimate of future conditions if the project was to be approved and constructed.

Based upon our discussions and a review of the site development plan prepared by *Joe Casali Engineering, Inc.*, it is our understanding that the current proposal includes razing an existing 30,000 square foot commercial building to allow construction of a 4,800 square foot building with an associated 71 space parking lot to accommodate a medical marijuana business, *The Winding Rhode Compassion Center*. Access and egress to the site will be provided from single driveways on Pettaconsett Avenue and Glen Road. Figure 1 on the following page depicts the general vicinity of the project in the City of Cranston. The following is a summary of our investigation of the potential impacts and recommendations to provide safe and adequate access to the subject property.

## **Traffic Safety Assessment**

### **Project Approach**

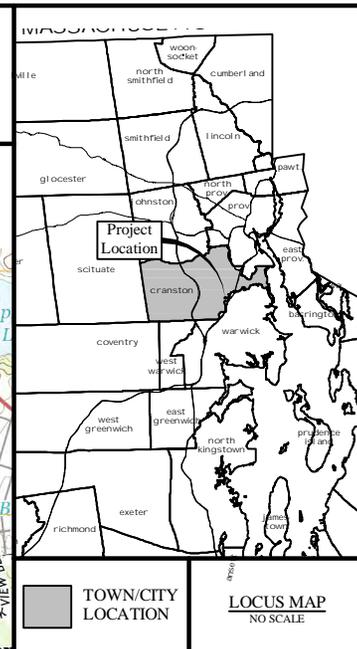
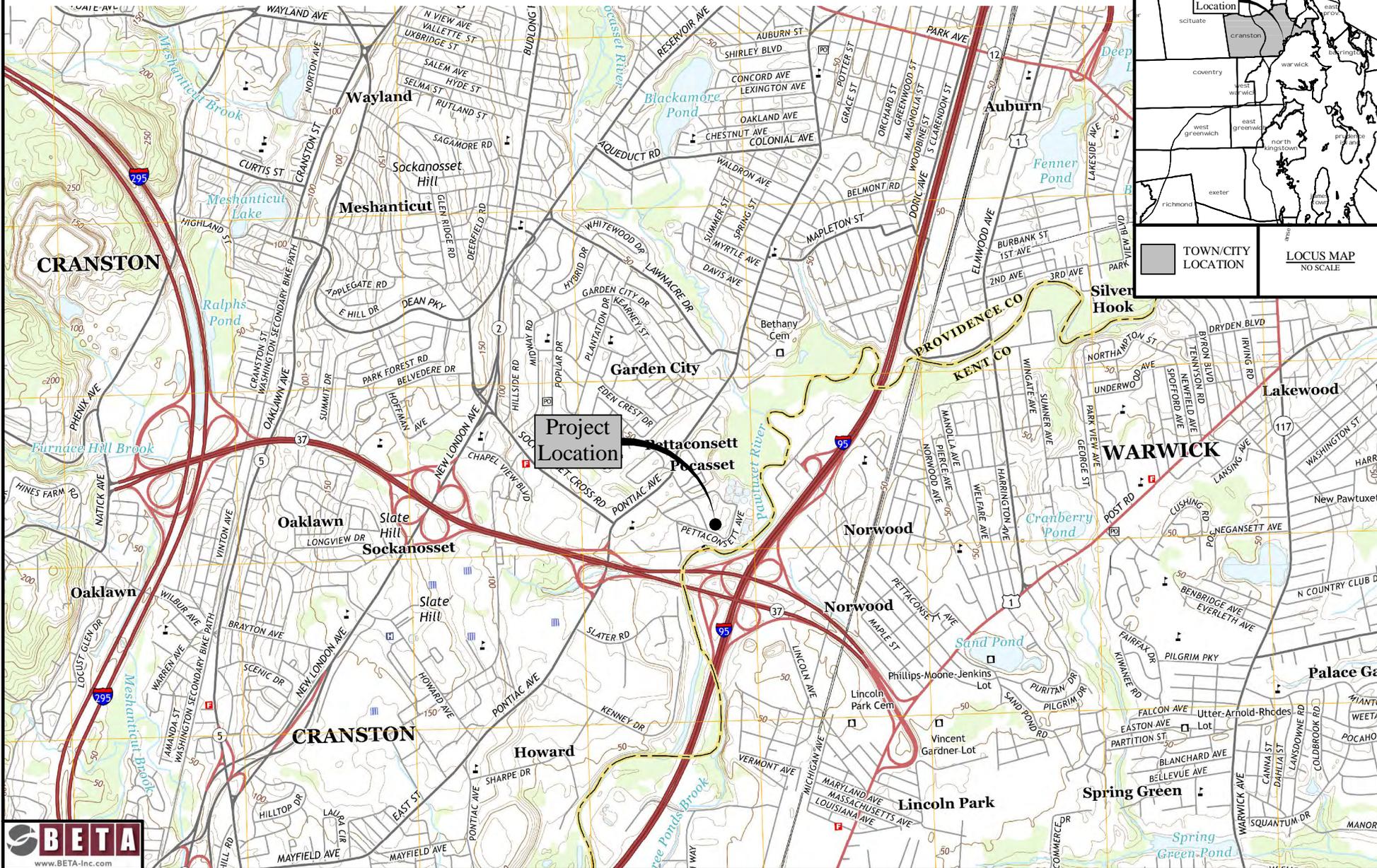
The objective of this study is to define existing and potential future operational and/or safety concerns along the servicing roadways to the proposed medical prescription marijuana facility. A review of the existing roadway features was completed to determine if any potential deficiencies presently warrant mitigation. In addition to the existing conditions analysis, the study also included the assessment of potential impacts resulting from the traffic generated by the new business within the industrial park.



# Winding Rhode Compassion Center

CRANSTON, RHODE ISLAND

## Figure 1 - Project Vicinity Map



The study focused on these issues and made recommendations for improvements if determined necessary, based upon the findings of the data collection and analysis phases of the study.

*In order to conduct our analysis, the following scope of work was completed for the project:*

- An inventory of the physical roadway characteristics of Pettaconsett Avenue and Glen Road including roadway alignment, pavement width, signage, and traffic control to determine the adequacy of the existing roadway geometric features relating to access, safety, and operations.
- Field investigations including evaluation of sight distances along Pettaconsett Avenue and Glen Road.
- Accident data obtained from the City of Cranston Police Department was reviewed to determine if there are any safety concerns relative to the frequency, severity, or pattern of crashes in the project area.
- A Site Plan for the proposed development project prepared by *Joe Casali Engineering, Inc.* was reviewed to define future roadway conditions at the site driveway intersections with both Pettaconsett Avenue and Glen Road.
- Analysis of the data collected, evaluation of the proposed design, and development of recommendations to provide a safe and efficient access to the new business.

## **Project Area**

As previously noted, the proposed commercial redevelopment project will be situated on a parcel of land on the northeast corner of the intersection of Pettaconsett Avenue with Glen Road. The parcel is defined by Assessor's Plat 10-2, Lot 778 which contains approximately 1.34 acres of fully developed land. The property currently has a single 30,000 square foot building utilized for a plastic pipe distribution business that will be razed to accommodate the medical prescription marijuana facility. Access/egress to the medical marijuana facility will be provided from single driveways on Pettaconsett Avenue and Glen Road.

Land use within the business park serviced by Pettaconsett Avenue and Glen Road can be defined as predominantly industrial/manufacturing in nature with more than thirty businesses, and on the northerly end of Glen Road near Pontiac Avenue there are several residential properties. Immediately abutting the site to the north and east is the Cranston Wastewater Treatment Facility. To the south are industrial businesses including *Cinerama Jewelry* and *Trans-Tex Inc.* On the westerly side of Glen Road opposite the site, is a lot with a vacant building.

Beyond the business park to the north along Pontiac Avenue there are predominantly medium density residential properties with some commercial businesses. Further south along Pontiac Avenue are predominantly commercial properties including car dealerships, banks, gas stations, restaurants, and small commercial plazas. In addition, the Pastore Center campus is located south of the site along Howard Avenue that comprises multiple State government agencies, notably, the Department of Corrections, Department of Motor Vehicles, Department of Labor & Training, the Eleanor Slater Hospital, etc.

Pettaconsett Avenue and Glen Road will serve as the primary access routes to the medical marijuana facility. Based upon the good operating characteristics of these roadways in the immediate area, and the

estimated volume and type of traffic associated with the commercial dispensary business, a study impact area was defined for this project. The limits of our analysis focused on the roadways servicing the business park including Pettaconsett Avenue and Glen Road between Pontiac Avenue and their intersection adjacent to the subject property. Refer to Figure 2 on the following page depicting the subject property and the general project area.

## Roadways

### Pettaconsett Avenue

Pettaconsett Avenue is a short, 3,500 foot long local road that runs generally in an east/west direction extending from Pontiac Avenue to the northwest and terminating at the entrance to the City of Cranston Wasterwater Treatment facility to the east which is gated. The local roadway services mostly industrial and manufacturing businesses though a Knights of Columbus hall is located along its length.

Pettaconsett Avenue is approximately 40 feet wide consisting of a 20-foot travel lane in each direction that is divided for a short section by a grassed island containing a small utility structure west of Worthington Road. This can be seen in the adjacent photograph looking north along Pettaconsett Avenue with the subject parcel in the lower right corner. There are double yellow pavement markings delineating the lanes of travel but no white shoulder lines for a parking lane where parking permitted along the road. This is indicative of low volume streets within business parks in the city.



The pavement surface can be classified as being in fair condition with visible fatigue and longitudinal cracking. Sporadic curbing is provided along the road with no sidewalks. Cobra head light fixtures on utility poles are provided along the roadway for nighttime illumination. There is no observed posted speed limit in the site vicinity and was assumed to be 25 MPH due to the urban industrial nature of the area and its short length.

### Glen Road

Glen Road is a short, 1,200 foot long local road servicing the business park that runs generally in a north/south direction extending from Pontiac Avenue in the north to Pettaconsett Avenue in the south. Glen Road is approximately 36 feet wide south of Eddy Street to Pettaconsett Avenue where it services commercial properties. In its northern section, the road narrows to approximately 26 feet wide where it services residential properties. The road contains one travel lane in each direction seperated by double yellow centerline pavement markings. Due to the combination of residential and industrial properties



along Glen Road, a truck exclusion sign (No Trucks) is provided along Glen Road between Webb Street and Pontiac Avenue.

The pavement surface can be classified as being in fair condition with visible fatigue and lateral cracking. There are no sidewalks or curbing provided along the road where many of the businesses have uncontrolled access to paved parking spaces adjacent to the existing buildings.

Cobra head light fixtures on utility poles are provided sporadically along the roadway for nighttime illumination. There is no observed posted speed limit in the site vicinity and was assumed to be 25 MPH due to the urban commercial/residential nature of the area and its short length. The adjacent photograph depicts the typical characteristics of Glen Road looking northwest with the subject property on the bottom right.



## Intersections

### Pettaconsett Avenue at Glen Road

Glen Road intersects Pettaconsett Avenue to form an unsignalized, "T" type junction with *Stop* control on the minor Glenn Road southbound approach. The Pettaconsett Avenue approaches provide a shared left turn/thru southbound lane and a thru/right lane for the northbound approach. The Glenn Road southbound approach provides a shared left/right turn lane.

It is important to note that neither a *Stop* sign nor a stop line are provided on the Glen Road southbound approach to the intersection to define the traffic control at the junction. Though centerline pavement markings are present they could be upgraded to enhance visibility and provide improved directional flow in accordance with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). It is recommended that the City investigate options to install proper signing and striping at the intersection to



include a *Stop/Yield* sign and/or stop/yield line for this approach to define the traffic control. A figure showing the recommended condition is included in the Attachment. The above photograph depicts the physical characteristics of the intersection with the subject property on the right.

### Pontiac Avenue at Pettaconsett Avenue

Pettaconsett Avenue intersects Pontiac Avenue to form a 3-way, T-type signalized junction. The traffic signal provides safe and efficient left turn access from the business park and the *Aldi's Market* on the southeast corner to the busy Pontiac Avenue corridor. The Pontiac Avenue northbound approach provides a single shared thru/right turn lane. The Pontiac Avenue southbound approach includes a single shared left/thru lane. The Pettaconsett Avenue westbound approach provides a separate left turn lane, and a separate right turn lane. Marked crosswalks with curb ramps, though not ADA-compliant, are available across the southbound and westbound approaches to the intersection.

The adjacent photograph depicts the typical characteristics of the intersection looking south on Pontiac Avenue towards Route 37. The traffic signal system appears to be in fair condition being more than 25 years old though minor upgrades have been made in the last ten years. The layout of the equipment consists of mast arm mounted signal heads with in-road vehicle loop detection. Though



crosswalks are available as noted, no signal control including pedestrian signal heads or pedestrian push buttons, are present at the intersection to assist pedestrian crossing of the roadways.

The intersection was determined to operate in a fully actuated mode consisting of two phases. The Pontiac Avenue northbound and southbound movements are serviced in a single phase including through/right/left concurrent movements. The Pettaconsett Avenue westbound movements are serviced under the second phase including protected left/right turn movements. The intersection operates efficiently in isolation but its proximity to the Sockanosset Cross Road signal impacts the ability of vehicles to efficiently be serviced in the available green time. Recent reductions in base traffic conditions along Pontiac Avenue resulting from a major employer (*Citizens Bank*) relocating over 2,000 employees out of their Sockanosset Cross Road office building and other changes in business occupancy of existing buildings, has lessened this occurrence and afternoon peak hour congestion. During the daily afternoon peak, the southbound movement on Pontiac Avenue used to be backed up regularly to this intersection, impeding southbound traffic progression, but the extent of this condition has been diminished in length of queuing and duration.

It should also be noted that this intersection will be greatly affected by a construction project that was started this year by the RIDOT. The roadway project will substantially improve traffic flow along Pontiac Avenue in the immediate area by reducing traffic volumes, increasing intersection capacity and improving

traffic signal system efficiency at the major intersections associated with the Route 37 interchange and Sockanosset Cross Road. A plan showing these improvements is included in the Attachments for reference. A major improvement depicted in the plan includes the introduction of a second northbound left turn lane onto Sockanosset Cross Road that will increase capacity of this approach and reduce congestion just north of the interchange. Increasing the capacity of this approach will allow a redistribution of signal phase times by shifting additional green time to the conflicting southbound Pontiac Avenue approach which can back up to Pettaconsett Avenue and adversely affect that intersection as previously noted. In addition to adding capacity on Pontiac Avenue on this approach, traffic volumes should also be reduced with the introduction of a new frontage road along the northerly side of Route 37 from the interchange ramp intersection extending west to the former *Citizens Bank* property and the Chapel View development. These infrastructure improvements scheduled to be completed in 2021, should have a substantial positive impact on traffic conditions at these intersections and along both Sockanosset Cross Road and Pontiac Avenue including the Pettaconsett Avenue intersection.

## **Safety Analysis**

The geometry of Pettaconsett Avenue and Glenn Road in the project area was investigated to determine if there are any limiting factors affecting safety. These limiting factors would potentially include horizontal or vertical alignment changes or roadside obstructions that limit sight distances for vehicles traveling along the road or entering the road from a side street or driveway location. In this instance, the sight distance standard is necessary to permit turning vehicles to safely enter and exit the proposed site access driveways.

The vertical and horizontal alignment of Pettaconsett Avenue in the site vicinity can be described as generally level and relatively straight with a small "S" curve west of Webb Street. Based upon the existing roadway geometry as described, the available sight distance at the site driveway intersection is in excess of 300 to the west which is the applicable direction as the driveway will be located at the Pettaconsett Avenue easterly terminus adjacent to the sewage treatment facility gated access driveways. This value is in excess of AASHTO's recommended minimum sight distance of 155 feet based on the assumed speed limit of 25 mph. It should be noted that speeds are highly variable due to the short lengths of road and multiple intersections within the business park.

The vertical and horizontal alignment of Glen Road in the project area can be described as generally level and relatively straight with a gradual curve north of the site through Webb Street. Based upon the existing roadway geometry as described, the available sight distances at the proposed site driveway location on Glen Road are greater than 300 feet to the north and in excess of 160 feet through the stop controlled intersection with Pettaconsett Avenue to the south. These values are greater than AASHTO's recommended minimum sight distance of 155 feet based on the assumed speed limit of 25 mph and low travel speeds observed in this area.

Also, as part of our analysis, a review of crash statistics was completed. Data was reviewed from City of Cranston Police Department for the latest full three-year period (2017-2019) to determine if any location in the immediate vicinity of the development experienced a high frequency or pattern of crashes. A total of thirteen crashes (avg. 4 per year) occurred in the project area over the three-year study period, with no reported injuries. All thirteen recorded crashes occurred at the signalized intersection of Pontiac Avenue with Pettaconsett Avenue with no recorded crashes along the local street of Pettaconsett Avenue and Glen Road including at the junction of Pontiac Avenue with Glen Road.

Summarizing the data, seven of the crashes were rear end collisions, four were angle collisions, and two were sideswipe (same direction) collisions. This is typical of signalized junctions where the majority of crashes are rear end collisions due to the numerous starting and stopping movements required for the signal change intervals. The angle collisions are attributed to motorist running a red light and/or not yielding the right of way. The sideswipe (same direction) collisions are attributed to inattentive drivers.

Based upon the historical crash data obtained from the local police, and a review of existing roadway geometry, roadway or traffic related safety measures could be investigated to enhance safety at the signalized intersection of Pontiac Avenue with Pettaconsett Avenue and at the unsignalized intersection of Pettaconsett Avenue with Glen Road. The clearance intervals could be reviewed at the traffic signal as part of typical maintenance program to determine if they require adjustment in an effort to reduce the number of rear-end collisions. It is also recommended that a *Stop* sign and stop line be provided at the Glen Road southbound approach to the intersection with Pettaconsett Avenue to define the traffic control. A summary of the accident data depicting the number, type, and severity is provided in the Attachment.

### **Trip Generation and Analysis**

To understand the potential traffic impact of the new dispensary business, an estimate of anticipated traffic to be generated by the proposed land use has been calculated for reference. As previously discussed, the proposal consists of razing an existing 30,000 square foot commercial building to allow construction of a 4,800 square foot building to accommodate a medical marijuana compassion center business. Access and egress to the site will be provided from driveways on Pettaconsett Avenue and Glen Road to a parking lot containing approximately 71 parking spaces situated to the rear of the building. Figure 3 on the following page depicts the site layout and access plan, provided by *Joe Casali Engineering*.

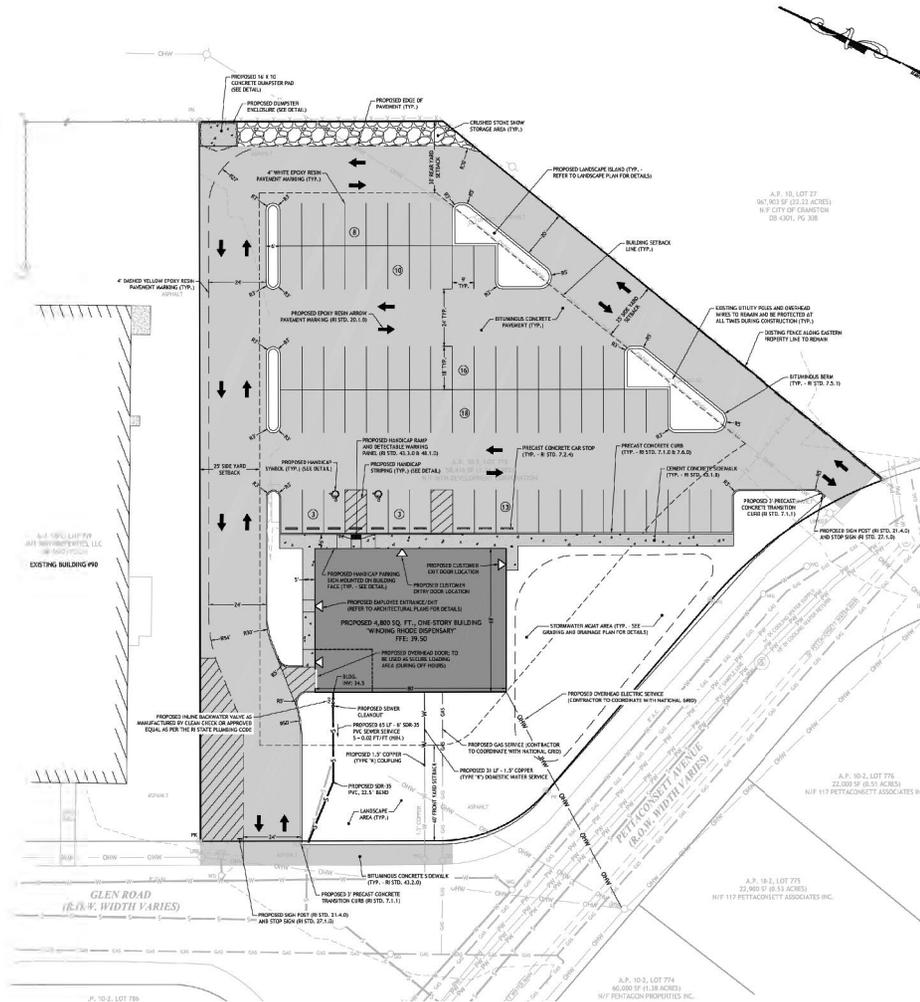
For this site, projected traffic volumes for the proposed *The Winding Rhode Compassion Center* were based on operational data provided by the owner and studies completed by BETA at all three existing compassion centers that currently operate in Rhode Island; *Greenleaf Compassion Center* in the Town of Portsmouth, *Summit Medical Compassion Center* in the City of Warwick, and the *Thomas C. Slater Compassion Center* in the City of Providence, and the use of trip generation factors. These factors are taken from the "Trip Generation" Manual, an informational report published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), a national professional organization for traffic and transportation engineers. The data provided in the ITE report are based on extensive traffic studies for various types of land uses (residential, commercial, industrial, etc.). This data has been found to be very reliable and provides a sound basis for estimating vehicle trips for new development projects.

The focus of *The Winding Rhode Compassion Center* business will be to provide medical marijuana to eligible prescription patients in the state of Rhode Island. Based on data provided by the facility operator, there will be an additional six (6) compassion centers licensed in Rhode Island starting in 2021 for a total of nine (9) facilities that will be geographically located in designated zones across the state to service the statewide demand for an estimated 22,000 patients with prescriptions by 2021. It is anticipated that all six (6) new licenses will open their medical prescription marijuana facility soon after being selected by the state in 2021, thus dividing the projected 22,000 patients between the new facilities and the existing facilities based on geographical locations. Several factors may impact the number of daily patients serviced at *The Winding Rhode Compassion Center*, which is anticipated to be less than 14% of the statewide projected patients based on a certain percentage of the population of the surrounding towns and location

# Winding Rhode Compassion Center

CRANSTON, RHODE ISLAND

## Figure 3 - Site Layout



Site Plan provided by Joe Casali Engineering, Inc.

of the subject site as it relates to other compassion centers, though to be conservative in our analysis, the full 14% was utilized.

The new business is anticipated to be open seven (7) days a week from 10 AM to 7 PM. As can be seen, it will not be open until late morning, therefore the morning commuter peak would not be impacted by the facility. The operating characteristics of this business are generally consistent where patient visits are typically low during the late morning and into the early afternoon hours. The busiest period occurs between 3:00 PM and closing where more than 60 percent of the customer base is serviced.

Traffic count data was obtained at the existing *Greenleaf Compassion Center* on West Main Road in Portsmouth, the *Summit Medical Compassion Center* on Jefferson Boulevard in Warwick, and *Thomas C. Slater Compassion Center* on Corliss Street in Providence. Data was obtained during the peak afternoon periods at each of these facilities. This information was reviewed for a comparison of trip volumes for this particular medical marijuana land use in the local community. The ITE manual suggests that if a similar or like land use is available in the region of study, data could be obtained to confirm ITE rates, or to use the independent study rates if they are more appropriate. The ITE rates include recreational use dispensaries and would not be applicable to the limited medical use proposed. The trip estimate information is summarized in Table 1 where the projected volumes are based upon the trip rates calculated from the existing compassion centers in the state that service an existing number of medical license holders. The count data and trip rate calculations are included in the Attachment.

TABLE 1 – Trip Generation Estimate

<u>Description</u>		<u>Enter</u>	<u>Exit</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>PM Peak Hour</u>				
Independent Study	Winding Rhode Compassion Center	50	60	110

Based upon the low volume of daily and peak hour site trips (approximately 110 vehicles entering/exiting the site during afternoon peak period), resulting from the proposed small scale development, there should be no discernable impacts to traffic operations along both Pettaconsett Avenue and Glen Road and specifically at the study intersections including the signalized junction with Pontiac Avenue and the site driveways. There is very little hourly traffic adjacent to the proposed site driveways due to location at the end of both roadways. These low volume conditions on Pettaconsett Avenue and Glen Road will provide efficient and safe access/egress to the property at the proposed driveway locations. The sporadic and low volume of daily truck traffic entering the sewage treatment plant is typically serviced in under 30 seconds when arriving at the restricted entry gate, and would not conflict with the site driveway or impede either entering or exiting site related traffic.

In regard to access to the business park, as previously noted, there has been a substantial reduction in peak hour traffic in this immediate area of Pontiac Avenue and Sockanosset Cross Road over the last few years after *Citizens Bank* (2,000+ employees) relocated operations out of their office site on Sockanosset Cross Road. This recent reduction in traffic on Pontiac Avenue will be combined with differing future roadway conditions that will be in place when RIDOT completes their current construction project at the Route 37



interchange. The improvements will remove more traffic from Pontiac Avenue and Sockanosset Cross Road needing to access the former *Citizens* site and Chapel View property by creating a frontage road along Route 37 from the freeway interchange at Pontiac Ave. The frontage road will provide rear access to these sites along the northerly side of Route 37 that currently have primary access driveways on Sockanosset Cross Road, therefore reducing traffic demands along these corridors.

The traffic signal servicing the business park presently operates in an efficient manner that will be improved with the noted infrastructure improvements under construction, and the low hourly volume of traffic estimated for the proposed use should not adversely impact operations. The site driveways on both Pettaconsett Avenue and Glen Road will also operate efficiently with minimal delays during the daily afternoon peak condition due to the low volumes expected on the site driveways coupled with the low volume of traffic experienced along both servicing roadways during the daily peak hours.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

In summary, the study has shown that the proposed commercial redevelopment project access and circulation plan has been designed to maintain a desirable level of traffic safety and efficiency on the servicing roadway system. Based upon our analysis of the existing roadway conditions on Pettaconsett Avenue and Glen Road, there appear to be no traffic safety or operational issues that require mitigation other than the recommended clearance interval adjustment at the signalized junction of Pontiac Avenue with Pettaconsett Avenue, in an effort to reduce the number of rear-end collisions, and installation of a *Stop/Yield* sign and stop/yield line on the Glen Road southbound approach to the intersection with Pettaconsett Avenue to define the traffic control and proper movements through the junction.

In addition, the medical prescription marijuana business, *The Winding Rhode Compassion Center*, will add a minor volume of traffic during the daily afternoon peak hour as indicated. These new vehicles will not change or negatively affect the good operating conditions that presently exist along both Pettaconsett Avenue and Glen Road servicing the site. Therefore, based upon the data collection and analysis completed for this project, it can be concluded that the project will not have a detrimental impact on traffic safety and operations of the servicing roadways, and that adequate and safe access will be available at the proposed site access driveways on both Pettaconsett Avenue and Glen Road.

We trust that this letter sufficiently addresses the requirements of the City to obtain your local approvals. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Very truly yours,  
BETA Group, Inc.



Paul J. Bannon  
Associate

# ATTACHMENTS

- 
- A. Traffic Crash Data
  - B. Trip Generation
  - C. Off-Site Mitigation
  - D. RIDOT Improvements

# ATTACHMENT A – Traffic Crash Data

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**January 2017 through December 2019**

Pettaconsett Avenue

Glen Road

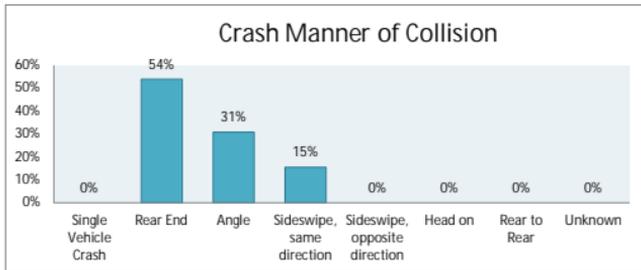
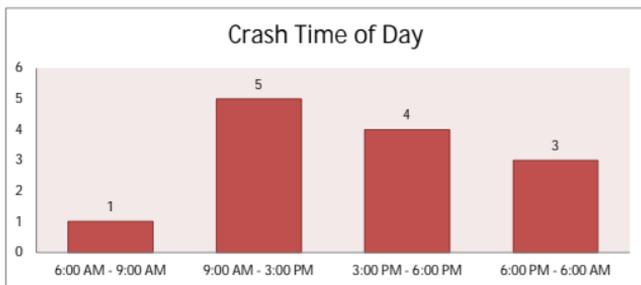
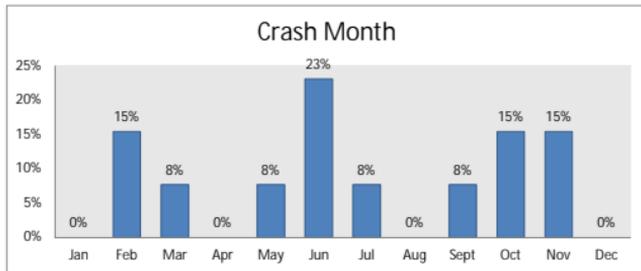
**Crash Data Summary**

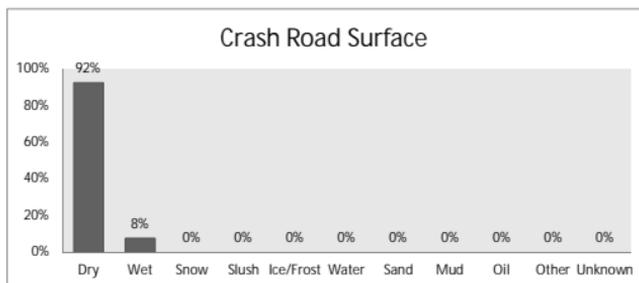
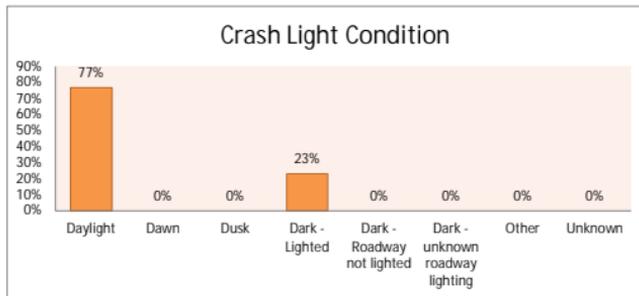
	Year			Total	Average per Year
	2017	2018	2019		
<b>Intersections</b>					
Pontiac Avenue at Pettaconsett Avenue	8	4	1	13	4
Pontiac Avenue at Glen Road	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Corridor</b>					
Pettaconsett Avenue - Pontiac Avenue to Glen Road	0	0	0	0	0
Glen Road - Pontiac Avenue to Pettaconsett Avenue	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>5</b>

**Pontiac Avenue at Pettaconsett Avenue**

	2017	2018	2019	Total	Percent
<b>Collision Type</b>					
Rear End	2	4	1	7	54%
Angle	4	0	0	4	31%
Head-On	0	0	0	0	0%
Pedestrian	0	0	0	0	0%
Sideswipe, Same Direction	2	0	0	2	15%
Sideswipe, Opposite Direction	0	0	0	0	0%
Collision with Object	0	0	0	0	0%
Collision with Deer	0	0	0	0	0%
Other	0	0	0	0	0%
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0%
<b>Crash Severity</b>					
Property	8	4	1	13	100%
Injury	0	0	0	0	0%
<b>Light Condition</b>					
Daylight	6	4	0	10	77%
Dawn	0	0	0	0	0%
Dusk	0	0	0	0	0%
Dark - Lighted	2	0	1	3	23%
Dark - Not Lighted	0	0	0	0	0%
Dark - Unknown Lighting	0	0	0	0	0%
<b>Road Condition</b>					
Dry	7	4	1	12	92%
Wet	1	0	0	1	8%
Snow	0	0	0	0	0%
Other	0	0	0	0	0%
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0%
<b>Hour of Day</b>					
6:00 AM - 9:00 AM	0	1	0	1	8%
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM	3	2	0	5	38%
3:00 PM - 6:00 PM	3	1	0	4	31%
6:00 PM - 6:00 AM	2	0	1	3	23%
<b>Total Crashes:</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>	

### Crash Data Summary Charts





# ATTACHMENT B – Trip Generation

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## Trip Generation Summary

## Trip Generation Summary

**Summary;**

	<u>Description</u>	<u>Enter</u>	<u>Exit</u>	<u>Total</u>
<i>PM Peak</i>				
Independent Study Rate	Winding Rhode Compassion Center	50	60	110

**Calculations;**

**Independent Study**

**Medical Marijuana Dispensary;**

- There are currently 3 medical marijuana (compassion centers) licenses issued with 6 additional new licenses offered by the State of Rhode Island.
  - Each new license application is assigned within a geographical area of zone of Rhode Island.
  - The applicable license for the Cranston location falls under Zone 4, which covers the Cities of Cranston and Warwick, and Towns of East Greenwich and North Kingstown and is designated to allow 2 medical marijuana dispensary licenses within this zone.
  - There is an existing license within Zone 4, *Summit Medical Compassion Center*, located in Warwick.
  - It is anticipated that all 6 new licenses (compassion centers) will be operational soon after the license has been granted.
  - There are approximately 20,000 patients serviced by the 3 existing compassion centers.
- Cranston facility is anticipated to operate daily between late morning and early evening similar to the Summit Medical Compassion Center facility (9 AM – 8 PM).
- Patients are typically serviced in less than 15 minutes.

**Trip Rate Calculations**

**Trip Rate was calculated utilizing population, trip data at the 3 existing compassion centers, and total number of patients;**

**Population;**

Assume the City of Cranston including 20% of the surrounding towns/cities population will be serviced at this location = 81,000 (Cranston) + 5,000 (Johnston) + 35,000 (Providence) + 16,000 (Warwick) + 5,000 (West Warwick) + 2,000 (Scituate) = 144,000  
**say = 145,000**

Rhode Island Population = 1,060,000

**Trips;**

<u>PM Peak Hour</u>	<u>ENTER</u>	<u>EXIT</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
<b>Greenleaf Compassion Center (Portsmouth, RI) – Zone 6</b>	65	70	<b>135</b>
<b>Summit Medical Compassion Center (Warwick, RI) – Zone 4</b>	110	125	<b>235</b>
<b>Thomas C. Slater Compassion Center (Providence, RI) – Zone 2</b>	170	180	<b>350</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	345	375	<b>720</b>

**Patients;**

Fiscal Year 2020 (July 2019 to June 2020) = 20,000 patients

**Vehicle Trips at West Greenwich Facility;**

- 1 additional license offered in Zone 4 with an existing license located in Warwick. Assumed that all patients within the City of Cranston including 20% of the surrounding towns/cities population will be serviced at the Cranston Facility (Winding Rhode Compassion Center)
- Rhode Island population has seen very little growth in the past 10 years
- To be conservative, total patients will increase by 10% to approximately 22,000 patients under future conditions

Total PM Peak Hour Trips under future conditions = 720 x 1.10 = 800 Trips

Rate = 800 Trips ÷ 1,060,000 Residents  
 = 0.76 Trips per 1,000 Residents

Projected area population to be serviced at the Cranston Compassion Center location = 145,000

Trips (T) = 0.76 x 145 = 110 Trips

Vehicle Distribution 45% Enter/55% Exit

Enter	50
Exit	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>110 trips</b>

# ATTACHMENT C – Off-Site Mitigation

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Pettaconsett Avenue/Glen Road Intersection

N:\72005\7278 - WINDING RHODE COMPASSION CENTER\CRANSTON\REPORT\FIGURES\CONCEPT FIGURE.DWG



**Pettaconsett Avenue at Glen Road**  
Cranston, RI

**Conceptual Mitigation Plan**

# ATTACHMENT D – RIDOT Improvements

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Pontiac Avenue Roadway Improvement Plan

