

## CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT



# Memorandum

**To:** City Plan Commission  
**From:** Jonas U. Bruggemann, MSCRP | Senior Planner  
**Date:** May 28, 2025  
**RE:** 538 Main Street – Assessors Plat 30, Lots 83, 84, 85 & 258  
“Vaughn Lane” – Residential Planned District: Master Plan

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### I. Applicant | Property | Proposal

The Applicants and Owners are 777 Main Street LLC.

The subject property is located on public roads, Vaughn Lane and Wini Street, identified as Assessor's Plat 30, Lots 83, 84, 85, and 258.

Lot 83 is zoned A-20 (single-family, 20,000SF minimum lot size). Lots 84, 85, and 258 are zoned A-80 (single-family, 80,000SF minimum lot size). The subject property is not located in any municipal overlay district.

The Proposal is the extension of public roadways, Wini Street and Vaughn Lane, to create 44 lots for single-family residential use on 30.47+/- acres and preserve 55.95+/- acres through a conservation easement. The total land area of the property contains 91.59+/- acres.

### III. Documents Submitted for This Application

1. Major Land Development Plan entitled “Vaughn Lane” prepared by DiPrete Engineering; latest revision dated May 2, 2025.
2. Major Subdivision – Master Plan Application & Checklist, signed by owner/applicant representative Jotham W Coe; dated January 6, 2025.
3. Master Plan Narrative; prepared by Jenna Shea of DiPrete Engineering; dated May 2, 2025.
4. Pre-Application Filing Fee for \$980.00; dated February 5, 2025
5. Master Plan Filing Fee for \$3,800.00; dated February 5, 2025
6. Sewer Letter of Availability – Letter of Findings by James J. Geremia & Associates, dated May 13, 2025
7. Water Letter of Availability by Kent County Water, dated May 5, 2025
8. RIDEM Natural Heritage Report; dated January 14, 2025.
9. Map 200' Abutters.
10. List of 200' Abutters.
11. Municipal Lean Certificate; dated January 3, 2025.
12. Notarized Affidavit of Notice of Compliance for Abutter Notices; signed by Applicant Legal Representative Tanessa H. Azar, Esq.; dated May 21, 2025.

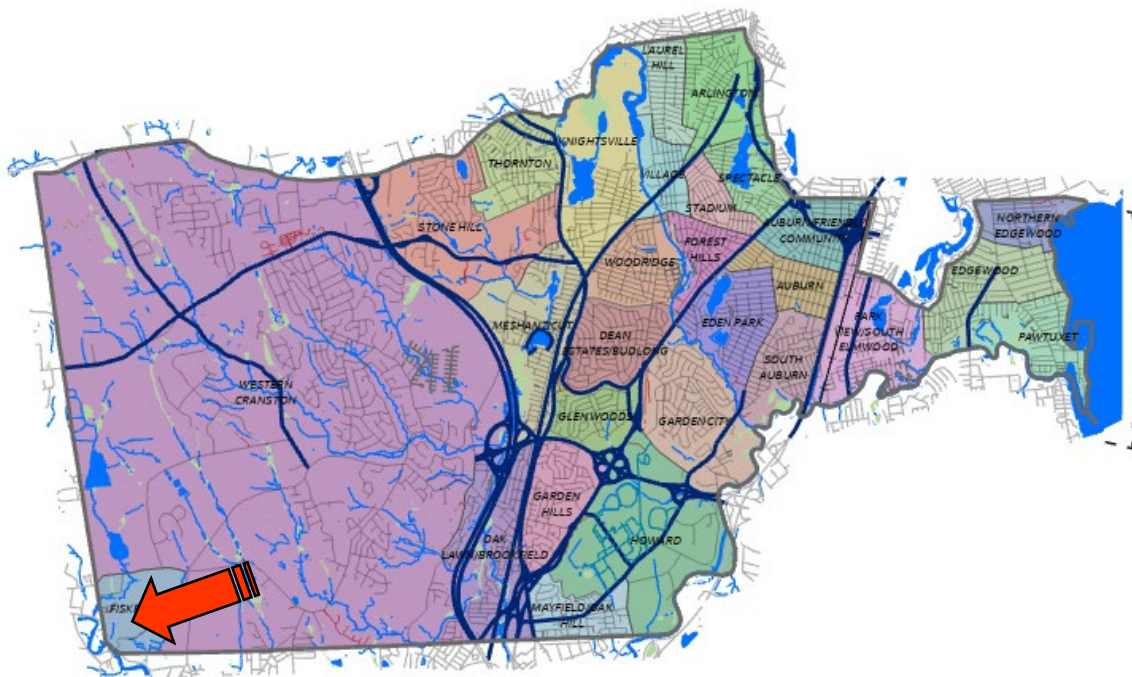
### IV. Surrounding Land Use & Context

Analysis using the Cranston Geographic Information System, the FEMA Flood Map Service Center, and applicant supplied materials indicates that:

1. The subject parcel is in the Fiskeville neighborhood of Cranston, situated on Vaughn Lane and Wini Street.

2. The surrounding neighborhood is a mix of A-20, A-80, C-4, and M-2. Uses surrounding the subject property include residential (single-, two-, and multifamily), open space (forested with streams and wetlands), two and multi-family residential, neighborhood commercial, light industrial, and government uses. The property abuts the Arkwright Mill Complex which is zoned for industrial uses. The abutting building is currently vacant but the building on the south side of Main Street is being actively used for manufacturing. An historic cemetery is also present on the abutting mill property.
3. The subject property borders the Town of Coventry and is less than 1,000 feet from the border with the Town of Scituate.
4. The subject property is on an intermittent southward slope with elevations as high as 250' along the northwestern side of the property and decreasing to around 130' towards the south and southwester side. Steep slopes are most prominent on the eastern areas of the site, east of 99 Vaughn Lane.
5. There is a stretch of flagged wetlands along the southern and eastern portions of the site with an isolated wetland flagged in the western portion of the site. The wetland and river edge were delineated by DiPrete Engineering on January 17, 2023.
6. The subject property is outside of any identified historic / cultural districts under jurisdiction of the Local Historic District Commission, State Historical Preservation Commission, State, or National Registers of Historic Places.
7. The subject site is located in FEMA Flood Zone X (unshaded) on FEMA Flood Map Panels 44007C0406H and 44003C0106H. Zone X are areas where there is minimal flooding.

#### LOCATION MAP



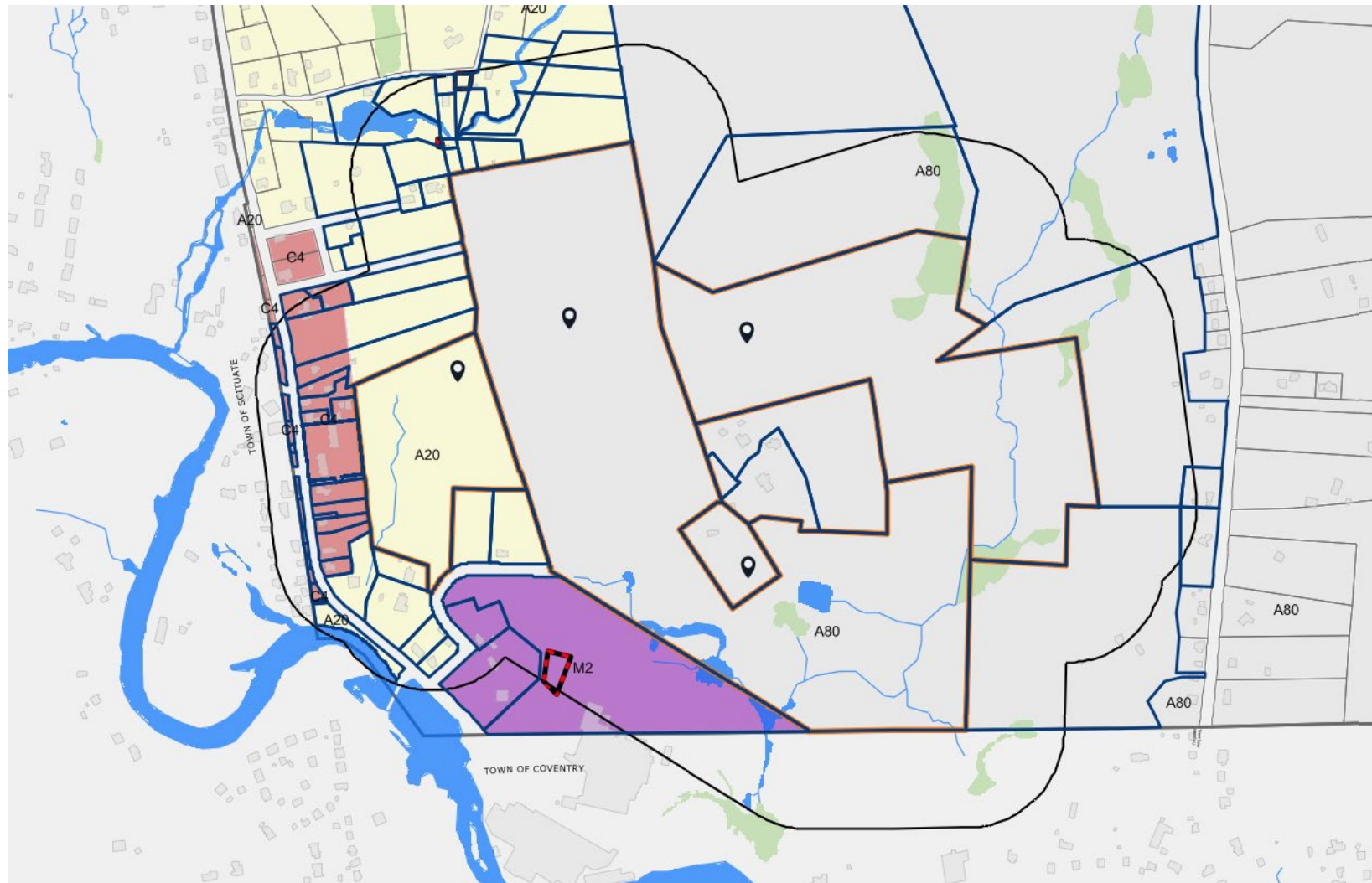


## Aerial View

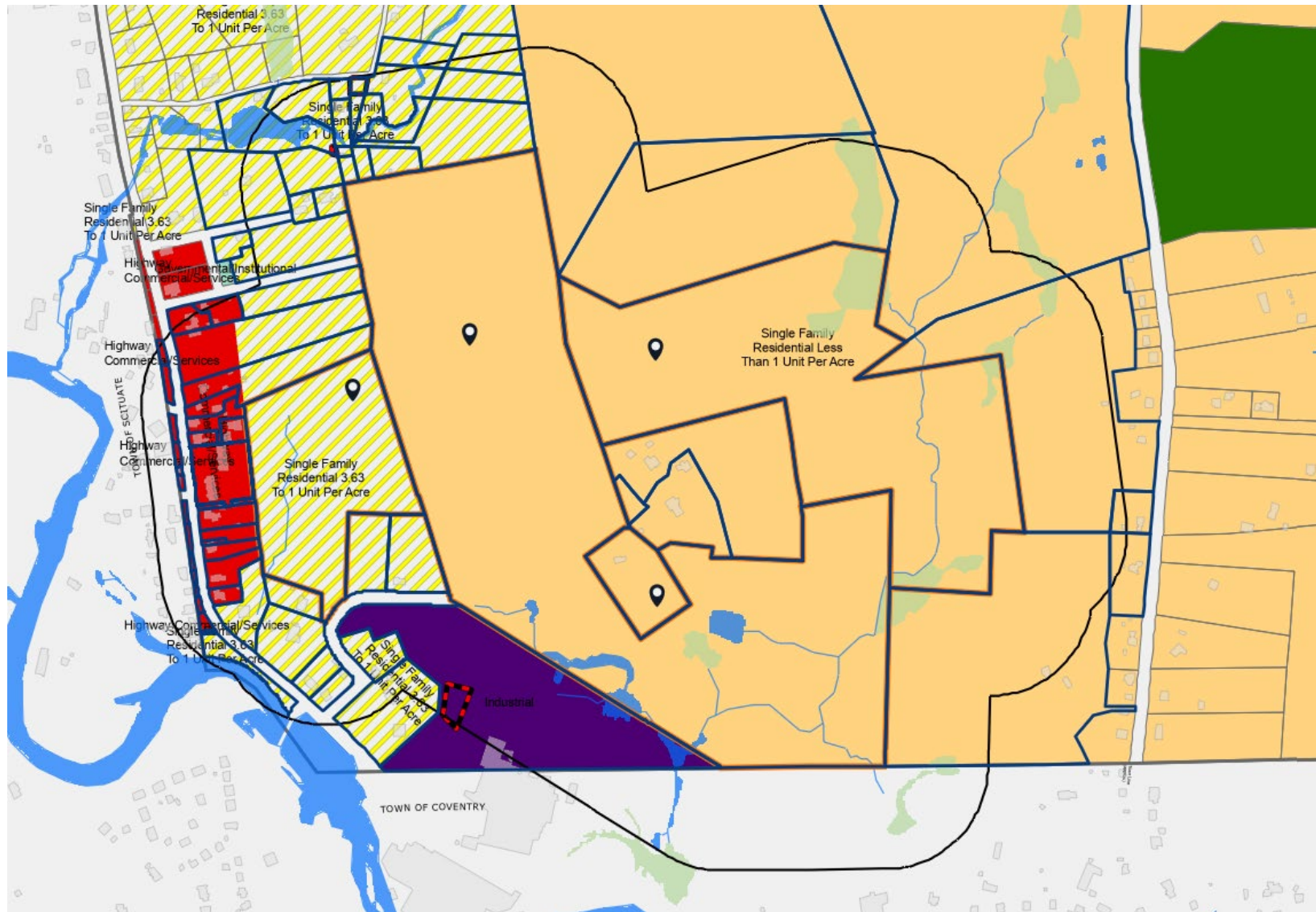




## Zoning Map



## Future Land Use Map



**538 Main Street – “Vaughn Lane”**



## 3D Aerials



Google Maps





(RIGIS, March 2024)



## Street View



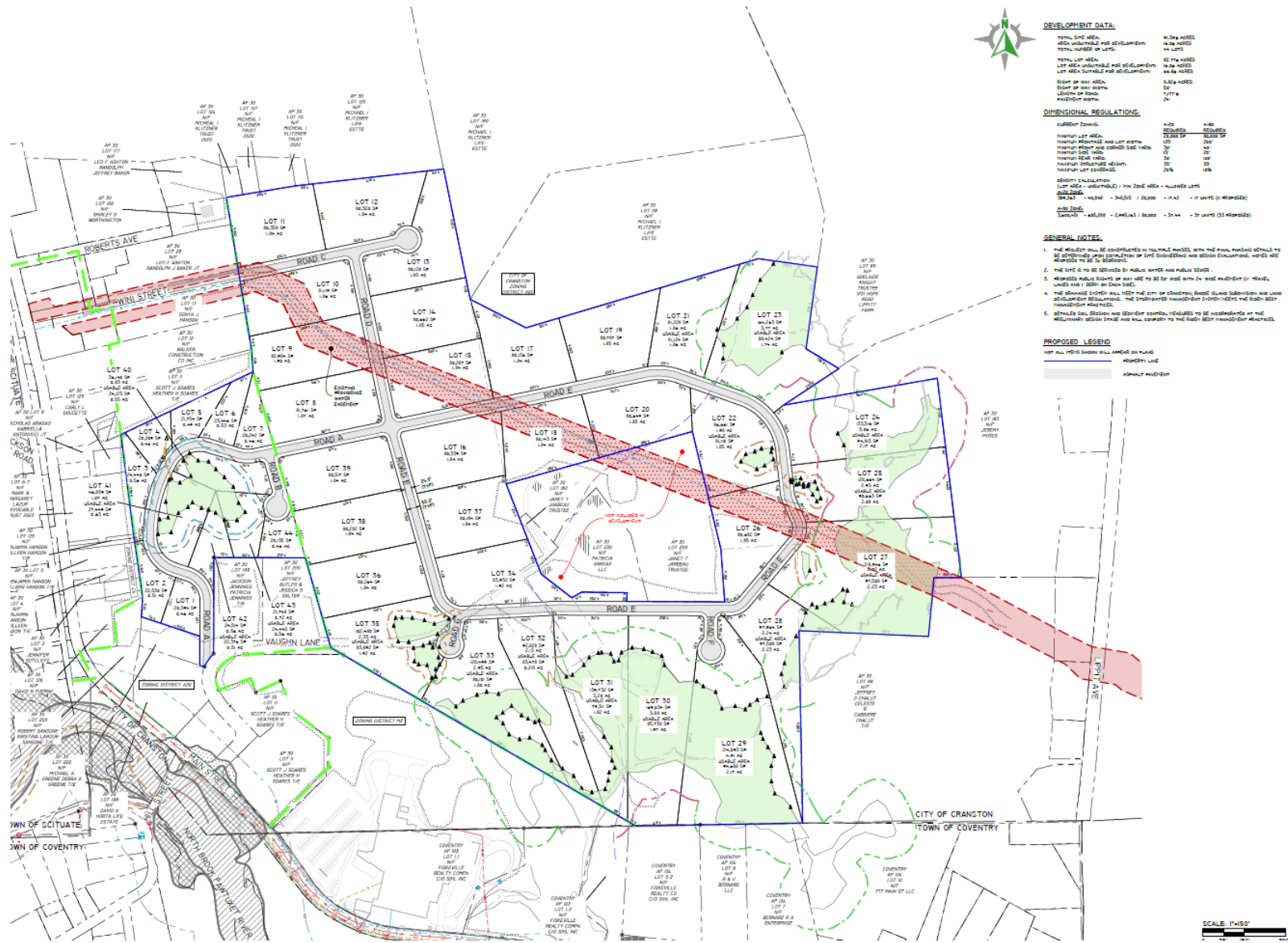
*Entrance to Vaughn Lane (Google Maps, September 2019)*



*Entrance to Wini Street (Google Maps, June 2019)*

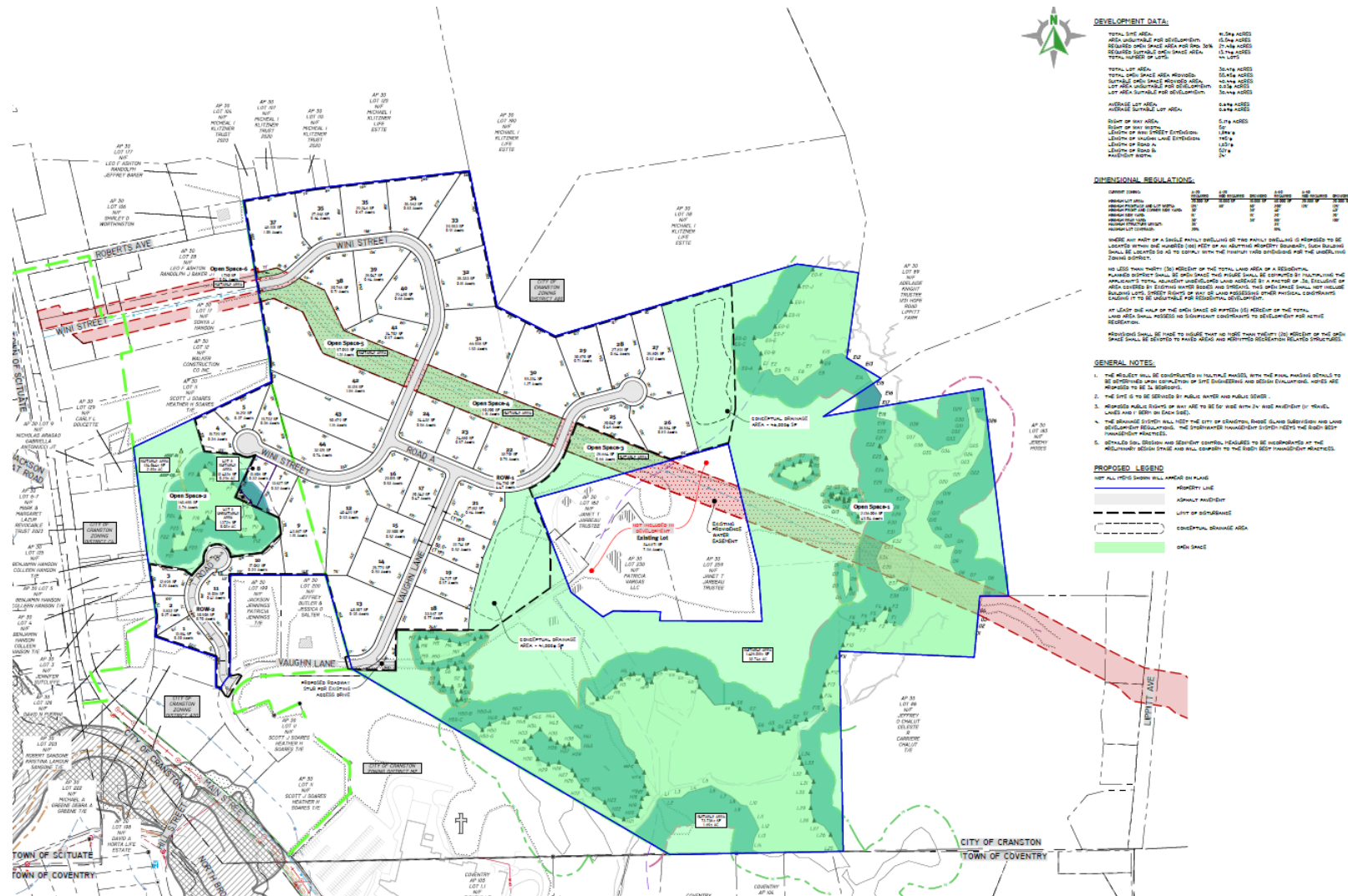


# Traditional Development Demonstration Plan





## Proposed Cluster Development





## V. Municipal Review

Pursuant to RIGL §45-23-37, these plans and submitted documents were distributed for comment to the following agencies. In addition to individual reviews, the Technical Review Committee (TRC) held a public informational meeting on May 21, 2025 to review the Master Plan for comment, as per RIGL § 45-23-39. Comments are as follows:

### 1. Department of Public Works

- a. Engineering Division: Mr. Frank Corrao, P.E., Public Works Director, had the following comments:
  - i. Improvements will need to be made to Wini Street and Vaughn Lane as the paved width of both streets is too narrow for emergency vehicles to access the site.
  - ii. Curbing should be installed along all proposed roadways to curtail drainage and runoff issues that have been witnessed in other areas with roadways with berms.
  - iii. In response to concerns from abutters that vibrations from construction could damage their properties, Corrao agreed with Stanley Pikul on the recommendation that the applicant should conduct pre-construction and post-construction surveys of the abutting properties if deemed necessary by the results of the engineering plan.
- b. Traffic Safety Division: Mr. Steven Mulcahy: no comments provided.
- c. Sewer Division: Sewer Service is not provided through Veolia Water.
  - i. A Letter of Sewer Availability was provided stating that the sewer service capacity at the West Warwick Wastewater Treatment Facility is available for the proposed project. A complete design application is required for a determination.
- d. Kent County Water Supply Board: Received a letter of water availability from KCWA stating that water service capacity will be made available to the proposed project contingent on the ability of the system to meet demand created by the proposed project. A complete design application is required for a determination.

### 2. Department of Building Inspection & Zoning Enforcement

- a. Mr. David Rodio, Building Official: no comments provided.
- b. Mr. Stanley Pikul, Alt. Building Official, commented that the applicant should provide building envelopes and determine primary frontage on the site plans for each lot.

### 3. Fire Department: Mr. Armand Niquette, Fire Marshal: no comments provided.

## VI. Interests of Others

During the May 21, 2025 Technical Review Committee meeting reviewing Vaughn Lane, public comment was heard. The attending members of the public are residents of properties abutting the proposed subdivision. The draft minutes of the May 21, 2025 Development Plan Review Committee meeting summarize the discussion with more details. Comments made during the meeting are summarized below.

- There are concerns that the widening of the roadway will require the removal of privately-owned structures such as sheds and stone walls.
  - It was mentioned that the public right-of-way is wider than the existing roadway and therefore all structures near the existing paved roadways are likely encroaching on the public right-of-way.
- Information was requested about how the development would impact the high-water table in the area and existing drainage issues among surrounding properties and roadways.



- There are concerns about how effects from construction such as vibration from digging could impact surrounding properties. Abutters mentioned that the area consists of bedrock and previous construction of the Providence Water aqueduct has caused damage to their homes.
- A request was made for the development to provide affordable housing.

Other public comments submitted to staff:

- 277 Main Street is a five-family home built in 1900. Tenants have been parking on Wini Street since before the current owner acquired the property in 1995. The owner requested that the redesign of Wini Street allow for on-street parking to continue.
  - The property owner was informed that overnight parking on City streets is not permitted.

## VII. Planning Analysis

### Consistency with the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision & Land Development Regulations

Staff find that the Application is generally consistent with the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations.

- The Zoning Map designates the subject property as split between “A-20” and “A-80” residential.
  - The proposed use (residential planned district) is permitted in all residential zoning districts.
  - Lot sizes and frontages conform with the standards of the Residential Planned District standards in 17.104.020 of the Zoning Ordinance.
    - The required 25% open space area (22.90 acres) is exceeded by more than double at 55.95 acres. Other open space requirements are also exceeded.
- Lot and road design standards conform with the Subdivision Regulations.

### Consistency with the Surrounding Area

Development in Fiskeville largely predates the current zoning regulations and therefore has a quite diverse development pattern more in line with historic villages. The area features single-family lots with well over an acre, two-families with less than 7,000 square feet, and multifamily developments upwards of twelve units on varying lot sizes. Uses, frontages, and lot sizes of parcels in the area largely do not in conform with the Zoning Code. Provided that the proposal consists largely of low-density single-family residential development in a primarily residential area with development of varying density, the Proposal can be considered generally consistent with the area when accounting for use and density.

### Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

- The Comprehensive Plan’s Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designates Lot 83 as “*Single Family Residential 3.63 To 1 Unit Per Acre*” and Lots 84, 85, and 258 as “*Single Family Residential Less Than 1 Unit Per Acre.*”
  - The proposed uses are exclusively single-family residential.
  - The proposed density is of the entire development is 0.57 units per acre when only accounting for land suitable for development.
  - Therefore, Staff finds that the Application is consistent with the FLUM designation.
- The Comprehensive Plan outlines goals, policies, and action items pertaining to this Proposal which Staff find support the approval of this Application, specifically:
  - Goal NR-1: Protect and enhance Cranston’s natural environment and resources.
  - Goal NR-2: Establish a balance between natural resource protection and growth-related needs.

- Policy NR-4: Preserve and protect critical fish and wildlife habitat areas and areas containing rare and endangered species.
- Goal H-1: Ensure that future residential development in western Cranston is consistent with the capacity of the area's natural resources and infrastructure, and preserves community character.
- Goal H-4: Promote housing opportunity for a wide range of household types and income levels.
- Goal H-5: Conserve resources in new subdivisions.
- Policy H-1: Maintain zoning densities that reflect planned municipal service levels and natural resource constraints.
- Policy H-6: Maintain a varied housing stock, with units of different age, size and type that are affordable to a wide range of incomes
- Goal SF-2: Expand municipal sewerage to areas where service is essential for existing and planned development, while at the same time protecting the system from excessive demands.
- Policy SF-19: Use sewer and water line connections in western Cranston to promote open space and agricultural preservation
- Policy LU-1: Promote residential land use patterns that concentrate and compact development and maintain significant percentage of open space.
- Policy LU-2: Preserve, in significant tracts, 20 per cent of the remaining open space in western Cranston, or 500 acres (exclusive of wetlands), through restrictions associated with clustering of future development or through purchase.
- Policy LU-4: Preserve and enhance the quality of existing valuable resources including wetlands, surface water, ground water, wildlife habitats and migration corridors, historic sites, scenic views and unique cultural resources
- Policy LU-12: Protect and stabilize existing residential neighborhoods by increasing open space, improving roadway conditions, and making the zoning conform to existing uses.
- Policy LU-18: Preserve the existing density of established neighborhoods.

### Conservation Development

The following Goals, Policies, and Action Items of the Comprehensive Plan promote the use of conservation development in the City, with Action LU-2 recommending that the City mandate conservation subdivision standards in western Cranston. While the regulations have not changed to match the Comprehensive Plan, this location is one of the last few areas in western Cranston where large scale development is possible. Conservation subdivision methods would mean decreasing dimensional standards such as lot sizes and frontages for parcels to increase the amount of conserved open space. In exchange, the development would decrease the total length of new roadways and utilities which would reduce impervious surface, decrease construction cost, and in the long term also decrease maintenance costs for the City and utility providers. Another benefit is that development could be concentrated away from wetlands and abutting properties.

- Goal NR-5: Require improved environmental design standards in new development.
- Action NR-6: Amend the cluster development regulations to reflect conservation design standards (i.e. conservation subdivisions) and use programs that facilitate the preservation of significant areas of open space and environmentally sensitive areas. Require Conservation Subdivisions as the preferred form of land development.
- Policy H-13: Require conservation-type subdivisions on remaining undeveloped land to conserve natural resources, protect public resources, improve property values, and improve accessibility.
- Action H-5: Require conservation-type subdivisions that apply to remaining undeveloped land



to conserve natural resources, protect public resources, improve property values, and improve accessibility.

- Goal SF-10: Water and sewer service policies in Western Cranston should support conservation in addition to promoting human health and safety. Maintain restrictions against development that would impact valuable natural resources.
- Policy SF-3: Enact regulations to prevent secondary growth impacts from sewer trunk line extensions and to support land use policies of conservation development and open space preservation.
- Policy SF-10 Use sewer and water line connections in western Cranston to promote open space and agricultural preservation by limiting said connections only for the creation of conservation subdivision development when it is determined that on-site wells and wastewater disposal systems would not be feasible. Use connections to water and sewer lines to reduce lot sizes within conservation subdivisions.
- Action LU-1: Revise existing cluster (Residential Planned District) regulations to require the use of conservation development.
- Action LU-2: Mandate that new residential development in western Cranston conforms to conservation subdivision standards.
- Action LU-3: Use conservation development in concert with conservation easements and tax assessments tools to preserve valuable natural and historic resources.
- Action LU-7: Continue to identify areas that have special natural resources for protection through conservation design subdivisions, in order to ensure the preservation of major contiguous parcels and corridors.
- Action LU-27: Reduce minimum lot size required for open space zoning so that smaller parcels can be protected.

#### Affordable Housing

The following goals and policies encourage large developments such as in this Proposal to provide affordable housing options, either through deed restrictions or by constructing housing options that are lower cost than standard development. While there are no mandates requiring the applicant to provide affordable housing options, the Comprehensive Plan highly encourages new development to provide it.

- Goal H-2: Permit a variety of residential development types to achieve multiple community objectives.
- Goal H-4: Promote housing opportunity for a wide range of household types and income levels.
- Policy H-6: Maintain a varied housing stock, with units of different age, size and type that are affordable to a wide range of incomes.
- Policy H-7: Promote regulations that facilitate the development of affordable housing.
- Policy H-8: Require that long-term affordability be a component of City-supported affordable housing development.
- Policy H-9: Promote the development of new housing that is affordable to average first-time buyers living in the City.
- Policy H-12: Encourage inclusion of affordable housing in projects that meet the Smart Growth goals of this Comprehensive Plan and the State Affordable Housing goals.
- Action H-1: Enact inclusionary zoning to increase affordable housing in most new subdivisions and development projects, as appropriate, through incentives and bonuses.
- Action H-2: Require a proportion of units as affordable housing (as defined by State regulations) in each new housing project over ten units in size.
- Action H-3: Set a short-term, yearly goal of 30 new affordable housing units per year to produce 150 units during this next five-year period.
- Action H-20: Set attainable, short-term goals for new affordable housing units, including an annual goal of 30 new affordable housing units to produce 150 units over the next five-years. (See HG-8 and HP-8.1 from 2012 Comprehensive Plan)

- Action H-21: Require inclusionary housing regulations that require affordable housing for new housing projects. (See HG-9 and HP-9.2 from 2012 Comprehensive Plan)

Provided these Goals, Policies, and Actions of the Comprehensive Plan, Planning Department staff highly encourage the applicant to provide affordable housing and low-impact conservation style development pattern. In exchange, staff highly recommend that the City Plan Commission grant variances to permit the condensed development patterns and additional units. Staff recommend a density bonus of 25% (11 additional units) in exchange for 15% of units (8 units) being deed-restricted affordable. The density of a 55-unit development would still be less than 1 unit per acre (0.72 units/acre excluding land area unsuitable for development) and therefore would conform to the density standards of the FLUM. Additionally, we recommend that the City Plan Commission permit duplexes, townhouses, and cottage style units on smaller lots to achieve the condensed subdivision pattern, while reducing the amount of impervious surface needed to achieve the additional density.

#### Traffic Impacts and Access

- Vehicular access to the site will be achieved via the extension of two public city streets, Wini Street and Vaughn Lane. Both streets end at Main Street/State Road 115, a major collector road straddling the Cranston and Coventry line and connecting southbound to Coventry and West Warwick.
  - Main Street is owned and maintained by RIDOT between Jackson Flat Road and the Cranston-Coventry boundary. Main Street is owned and maintained by the City of Cranston north of Jackson Flat Road.
    - Wini Street has a 40ft public right of way that terminates at the subject property. Vaughn Lane has a 50ft right-of-way which terminates at the subject property.
    - The proposal includes a 50ft right-of-way with a 24ft paved roadway throughout the subdivision which conforms the requirements of Subdivision & Land Development Regulations.
    - The Director of Public Works recommended requiring the applicant to widen the existing roadways on Wini Street and Vaughn Lane as necessary to accommodate two-way traffic and emergency vehicle access to the development. Currently, Vaughn Lane is less than 20ft wide and features several encroachments. The exact extent of the encroachments is unknown as we do not have a recent roadway survey, but it is likely that trees and some encroaching private structures may need to be removed to accommodate widening. Staff recommend that a survey of the right-of-way is done to catalog all encroachments and create a plan that permits appropriate access to the development, while minimizing impacts to encroaching structures to the greatest extent possible.





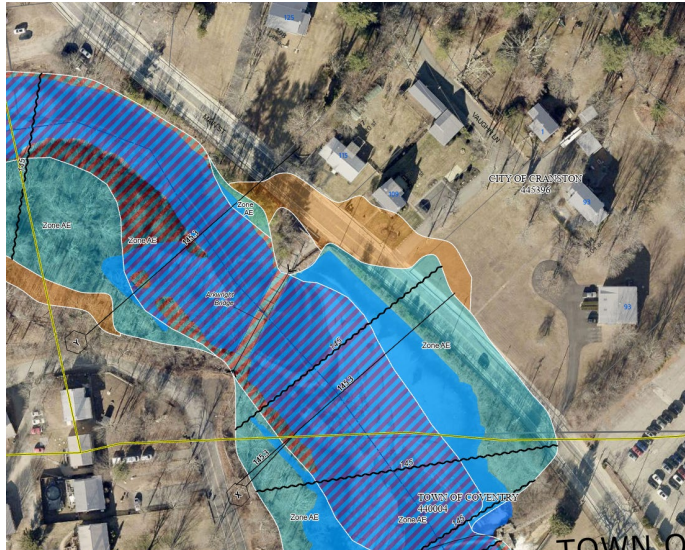
*Vaughn Lane and Main Street (March 2025, RIDOT)*



*Wini Street and Main Street (March 2025, RIDOT)*

- The subject site features a utility easement from Providence Water that runs along Wini Street and continues across the subject property. The applicant shall receive appropriate approvals from Providence Water prior to submission of the Final Plan to construct roadways on those easements.
  - Improvements to the intersection of Vaughn Lane and Main Street must be coordinated with RIDOT.
- The intersection of Vaughn Lane and Main Street is in the 1% and 0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard Areas (also known as 100-year and 500-year flood zones).

- Staff contacted RIDOT and requested information on flooding at this intersection. RIDOT has no reports regarding flooding at this intersection. The applicant shall coordinate with RIDOT in case drainage improvements need to be made to that intersection.



- The preliminary plan review will require a traffic and truck turning radius plan to be reviewed by the Department of Public Works and the Fire Department to determine that the proposed roadways provide adequate access and circulation for private vehicles and emergency services.

#### Drainage and Environmental Impact

No significant environmental impacts are anticipated provided existing information on the site. The Proposal will be subject to all state and local regulations pertaining to environmental impacts and wetlands.

- RIDEM's Natural Heritage Map shows that there are known rare species located on the site. The applicant is required to work with RIDEM to avoid impacts to rare species locations.
- The property is largely uphill of many abutting parcels along Main Street and Vaughn Lane. There have been complaints of runoff from the subject property affecting abutting properties. The development is required to manage all runoff on site and thereby has the potential to decrease issues with runoff downhill of the development. Drainage plans will be presented at the Preliminary Plan stage of review.
- Proposed lots and roadways will be within or closely abutting wetland buffers. The applicant must provide appropriate wetland permits with RIDEM at Preliminary Plan stage of review.
- The Proposal seeks to extend public water and sewer to the proposed development. This would mitigate any issues regarding septic systems near wetlands.

#### **VIII. Additional Matters**

None at this time.

#### **IX. Waivers**

None Requested.

#### **X. Findings of Fact**

An orderly, thorough, and expeditious technical review of this Master Plan has been conducted. Property owners within a 200' radius have been notified via first class mail and the meeting agenda has been properly posted.



Staff has reviewed this Master Plan application for conformance and consistency with the required Findings of Fact in accordance with RIGL § 45-23-60 as well as the Subdivision & Land Development Regulations and finds as follows:

*RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(1) states, “The proposed development is consistent with the comprehensive plan and/or has satisfactorily addressed the issues where there may be inconsistencies.”*

- The Proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan’s Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designation of “Single Family Residential 3.63 To 1 Unit Per Acre” and “Single Family Residential Less Than 1 Unit Per Acre.”
- The Proposal is generally consistent with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

*RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(2) states, “The proposed development is in compliance with the standards and provisions of the municipality’s zoning ordinance.”*

- The Proposal is consistent with the Zoning Ordinance.
  - The proposed use (Residential Planned District) is a use by-right in the Zoning Ordinance.
  - The proposal conforms to all other standards of the Zoning Ordinance.

*RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(3) states, “There will be no significant negative environmental impacts from the proposed development as shown on the **final** plan, with all required conditions for approval.” (emphasis added)*

- While this finding is pertaining to the Final Plan submission, no significant environmental impacts are anticipated.
- The Proposal will be subject to all state and local regulations pertaining to environmental impacts, wetlands and erosion control.
- RIDEM’s Natural Heritage Map shows that there are known rare species located on the site. The applicant is required to seek proper state permits prior to final approval.

*RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(4) states, “The subdivision, as proposed, will not result in the creation of individual lots with any physical constraints to development that building on those lots according to pertinent regulations and building standards would be impracticable. (See definition of Buildable lot). Lots with physical constraints to development may be created only if identified as permanent open space or permanently reserved for a public purpose on the approved, recorded plans.”*

- The Proposal will not result in the creation of individual lots with such physical constraints to development that building on those lots according to pertinent regulations and building standards would be impracticable.
- The design and location of building lots, utilities, drainage, and other improvements will conform to local regulations for mitigation of flooding and soil erosion.

*RIGL § 45-23-60. Procedure – Required findings. (a)(5) states, “All proposed land developments and all subdivision lots have adequate and permanent physical access to a public street. Lot frontage on a public street without physical access shall not be considered in compliance with this requirement.”*

- The Proposal will have adequate and permanent physical access to public city streets.

## **XI. Recommendation**

Staff finds this Proposal generally consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, the Zoning Ordinance, and the standards for required Findings of Fact set forth in RIGL § 45-23-60.

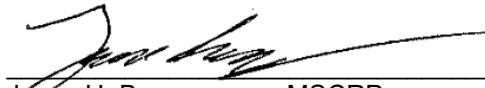
Staff therefore recommends that the City Plan Commission adopt the Findings of Fact documented above and **APPROVE** the Master Plan submittal subject to the conditions denoted below.

## **XII. Recommended Conditions of Approval**

The Master Plan submittal shall be subject to the following:

1. All outside approvals from relevant state and local agencies shall be provided.
2. The applicant shall meet with the Planning Department and Department of Public Works about the applicability of low-impact development standards for roadways and stormwater management prior to submission for Preliminary Plan.
3. Locations for snow storage shall be provided on site plan.
4. Provision of a plan to widen the existing portions of Wini Street and Vaughn Lane. This plan shall list all encroachments and list any encroachments that require removal to assure two-way vehicle travel and emergency vehicle access.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Jonas U. Bruggemann, MSCRP  
Senior Planner / Administrative Officer