

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

GUIDELINES

SIGNALIZATION, STREET FURNITURE, TRAFFIC CIRCULATION, OVERHEAD UTILITIES AND AESTHETIC CONCERNS IN THE KEY WEST HISTORIC DISTRICT

Prepared by the
SIGNALIZATION TRAFFIC ADVISORY PANEL
(STAP)

JULY 21, 1988

PROPOSED MASTER PLAN
FOR
LONG-RANGE TRAFFIC CIRCULATION PLAN
AND
GUIDELINES FOR SIGNALIZATION, STREET FURNITURE,
OVERHEAD UTILITIES, AND SIGNAGE

I. Statement from the Signalization Traffic Advisory Panel (STAP)

The Signalizational Traffic Advisory Panel was appointed by the City Commission to recommend guidelines for a comprehensive signalization program sensitive to the aesthetics of the Historic District and to complete a "Historic District Signalization and Signage Element" for inclusion in the Historic District Traffic Circulation Plan.

Panel members are Sharon Wells, Chairman; Dennis Beebe; Bob Ealy; Dan McClure; and Hugh Papy; Commission Liason is Harry Powell. Assistant City Planner Tom Wilson and Secretary Rosemary Vogeney provided valuable staff support. STAP has met weekly for a period of four months to review a wide range of plans, policies and possibilities for creating a long-range program where none has existed before.

The Panel has concluded unanimously that the City should review for consideration and adoption a broad Master Plan that includes a comprehensive policy governing traffic circulation, signalization, street furniture, overhead utilities and signage in the Historic District. It has become apparent to the Panel members that the newly installed signalization devices are not an isolated issue, but linked to other traffic circulation issues. The present critical situation requires major remedies that address, on a broader scope, traffic and all its attendant problems.

Key West, a major site of urban tourism, has a distinct image and is itself the attraction. Tourism ought to improve the liveability and economic vitality of our town. Careful planning with an eye to the future ten to twenty years from now is essential to maintain the increasingly fragile attraction of the city. Paramount to all planning efforts, is the recognition that Key West is a very small island, where the plans and standards for more metropolitan areas and standard U. S. highways simply cannot and do not apply and may be counter-productive.

The Panel's recommendations endorse a coordinated City Master Plan which will provide for a Long Range Traffic Circulation Plan with guidelines for signalization, roadway improvements, street furniture and signage that are compatible with the Historic District of Old Town. This overall Master Plan would represent a compilation of recommendations, approved by the City Commission, contained in the reports of STAP and the Traffic Circulation Committee.

STAP encourages the City of Key West to adopt a Traffic Circulation Plan.

After thorough discussions and study, the members of STAP wish to underline their commitment to encouraging a traffic circulation plan based upon the philosophy of reducing the flow of traffic on city streets. Such a premise is counter the the FDOT's philosophy of increasing the flow and volume of traffic along Key West streets.

Such a Circulation Plan would incorporate the following factors:

- De-emphasize standard metropolitan "highway" standards on Truman and Whitehead**
- Emphasize safety and historic significance of Key West downtown**
- Reduce traffic volume, or at least hold to current volumes**
- Reduce automobile cruising**
- Reduce automobile speed**
- Encourage convenient Park-and-Ride facilities**
- Reduce quantity of street furniture**
- Upgrade quality of street furniture**
- Encourage bicycle lanes**
- Encourage implementation of Old Town one-way loop, one-way streets and malls**
- Minimize traffic pattern changes from existing**
- Request FDOT maintain responsibility of Old Town loop**
 - Major one-way traffic routes to be north of Truman Avenue**

Most important is the need for the City to facilitate widespread public awareness of the public benefits such a Master Plan would provide.

Such benefits include, but are not limited to:

- Greater safety for all motorists
- Increased parking for residents and tourists
- Diminished appearance of high speed highway
- Reduced flow of traffic through downtown
- Fewer large trucks in downtown
- Focus on pedestrian scale of island
- Compatible design elements that fit with scale and character of historic district

II> FDOT Involvement with Traffic Circulation Planning in Key West

FDOT made a strong commitment to planning assistance for the City of Key West on December 14, 1983, when the Urban Planning Bureau Chief responded to the City's request for assistance and set forth a plan for a two-phase traffic circulation study.

Phase I was implemented immediately, and it took a year to complete. It involved accumulating data on existing traffic conditions, and developing forecasts for a ten-year period. From this, an immediate action plan was prepared for basic intersection improvements, resurfacing streets, and restriping. Some one-way pairs were also recommended.

Two years later, the plan was implemented. Some of the improvements met with strong resistance because they required removal of needed parking spaces, and because of their radical aesthetic impact on the city's historic district. This latter situation apparently evolved because the planning was done before FDOT reached agreement with the State Historic Preservation Office concerning the nature of road improvements in historic districts.

Phase II was actually a continuation and expansion of Phase I. The Quick Response traffic circulation model developed by City and FDOT planners was updated and used to test the impacts of various long-range, major improvements. A Traffic Circulation Committee (TCC), with representatives from various sectors of the community, was convened. The TCC met with FDOT approximately ten times between July, 1986 and December, 1987, and thrashed through numerous alternative scenarios before publication of a final report during the last month of the TCC's tenure.

The long-range plan went to public hearing in February, 1988. The hearing produced considerable public comment, leading the Commission to abandon or reconsider several recommendations. The Planning Department is currently reviewing other optional plans with the support and cooperation of the FDOT Urban Planning Bureau.

The creation of STAP in February, 1988, is the latest initiative in the development of sound traffic circulation planning for the City. STAP will provide a level of planning necessary to flesh out the FDOT/TCC plan and make it viable in the Historic District.

III> RECOMMENDATIONS OF STAP

I. COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN FOR TRAFFIC CIRCULATION

>>The City should adopt a comprehensive Master Plan for Traffic Circulation with Guidelines for Signalization, Roadways , Overhead Utilities and Signage.

1. Coordination of all governmental work in Historic District

The City's Historic Architectural Review Commission (HARC) shall approve the proposed Master Plan.

The HARC review shall apply to public agency as well as private sector projects in the Historic District.

All local, state and federal agencies must have approvals from the proper authorities for work within the Historic District. All work must comply with the city's adopted **Master Plan for Long-Range Traffic Circulation** with its attendant Guidelines.

2. Park and Ride w/ Shuttle System

Implement Park and Ride facility at corner of Jose Marti Drive. Such a facility is the cornerstone for successfully planning for traffic circulation in the future. The underlying concept of the Park and Ride system is to intercept tourist vehicles as they enter Old Town and direct them to a specific facility.

For a Park and Ride facility to work effectively, a continual shuttle that provides timely service that moves visitors to beaches and downtown sites must be successfully implemented.

It is essential to provide motorists with adequate knowledge of and directions to the Park and Ride facility. Adequate signage throughout the Florida Keys beginning in Key Largo and continuing to Stock Island and thence along U.S. 1/ South Roosevelt Boulevard in Key West is necessary. All Welcome Stations would be a prime target for visitor information about the Park and Ride system.

3. Bicycle Routes

Encourage bicycle traffic throughout Old Town by providing for additional marked bicycle paths along streets.

4. Break of Bulk System

Implement a "break of bulk" system which would provide for off-loading from large trucks to smaller ones prior to entry into Old Town.
page 6/

Consider limited delivery hours for delivery trucks in Old Town.

5. Parking Permit Program

Implement a residential sticker system by which residents could obtain a permit for a nominal fee to reserve residential parking areas.

Limit parking by those without a parking sticker to a limited period. The city of Charleston, S.C. implemented a two-hour limit in the downtown historic district. Provide for effective enforcement of time limit.

6. Prohibit Parking of Recreational Vehicles in Historic District

In the long-term, the City provide public parking spaces/shuttle service for RV vehicles outside city limits.

II. New Policies Recommended

1. Request Waiver from Federal Highway standards

The City Planning Department has requested the assistance of FDOT to seek a waiver from the Federal Highway standards which apply to U.S. 1, or Truman Avenue and Whitehead Streets. These standards require dual signals for each intersection. The City is requesting that the standard for dual indicators be relaxed, and that corner poles rather than overhead signals be allowed. The city should seek support for this request from all available governmental representatives. The city should communicate directly with the Federal Highway staff and seek a final status of a waiver.

2. Model Intersection Concept--Two Target Intersections

STAP endorses the concept of providing a model intersection at the corner of Whitehead and Fleming Streets. That historic intersection is the end of U.S. 1 and the terminus of the FCAA pipeline. All efforts should be made to implement and coordinate sensitive design elements at this location. In terms of priority, the second target for implementing the Model Intersection program is the corner of Southard and Whitehead streets.

The Model Intersection program would encompass the installation of all those components of street furniture that are most compatible with the on each corner, as necessary, to provide signals. Overhead signals would be removed.

The long range plan would extend the model intersection concept throughout sections of Old Town

III. Street Furniture Design

The antique style and pedestrian scale in the Historic District should be maintained by introducing fixtures that maintain harmony with existing antique-style light fixtures in the city's Historic District.

After careful consideration of a number of alternatives, the Panel recommends a traffic signal pole compatible with street furniture which has been documented through historical evidence, such as photographs, be placed in Key West's Historic District. A single, fluted pole, twenty feet in height, with a street light on top, placed at each of the corners of an intersection where a signal is necessary, would be appropriate. The pole, characterized by a "nostalgia" design, should be painted antique dark green. The signal head should be attached to the top of the pole and extend toward the street. Street signs and small pedestrian signal boxes, where necessary, can be attached to the pole. Such a pole, (see Appendix for specifications), was installed on streets in historic downtown Charleston, S. C. and is an element which contributes very positively to the historic flavor of the town.

Corner placement of signal poles would allow for a lower height for the signal device. Mast arm signals or signals strung on cables through an intersection necessitate a higher placement of the signal than necessary in order to allow for clearance by large vehicles.

In conjunction with the installation of new traffic poles, STAP recommends the following:

- Implement maximum pole heights
- Set standard height for signals
- Eliminate all the control boxes recently installed and attach new, smaller control boxes on new poles, where necessary
- Eliminate pedestrian crossing signal boxes
- Stripe all crosswalks in an attractive manner
- Remove all excess poles from the intersections

- Standardize the signs and reduce where possible; i.e., at the intersection of Southard and Whitehead streets there are 3 ONE WAY / DO NOT ENTER signs. Minimally, one could be eliminated.

A second option, which is less compatible with the historic district, is a similarly designed fluted pole, painted antique green, with cantilevered mast arms, measuring 4 inches in diameter, for signals, street lights and small pedestrian signal boxes, where necessary.

Existing historic features such as curbstones, bricking and compatible street lamps are contributing elements of the Historic District and should be maintained. In Key West there are a number of existing street lamps on Whitehead and Duval Streets which provide a compatible historic design with the proposed signal devices. Existing historic granite curbstones should be used and/or restored where necessary. A set of design standards relating to aesthetics for the Old Town Historic District(HARC approved and regulated) are important for retaining and enhancing the historic qualities of the island.

4. Additional Street Furniture

Place bus benches, without advertising, where necessary and if the sidewalks can safely accomodate them. As with all additions to the Historic District, design approval by the Historic Architectural Review Commission (HARC) is required. One example of compatible street furniture in the Historic District is the recent introduction of public telephones, which incorporate an historic design motif, in the downtown area.

Introduce historic style and scale street furniture at this intersection of Truman and Eisenhower Drive.

Eliminate and/or control the number and placement of all the newspaper racks and other miscellaneous sidewalk obstructions.

IV. Traffic Circulation One-Way Loop System

After carefully considering a number of plans and concepts, the Panelists, all long-time residents of Key West who have a keen knowledge of the existing conditions locally, recommend an approach which offers a viable route for alternatives to the existing traffic problems. Our thesis is to slow down traffic, to intercept vehicles at the outskirts of the Historic District and provide shuttle service, to route traffic more

effectively. The Panel's underlying precept is to offer recommendations that call for minimal alteration to existing conditions. The Panel recognizes, however, that change from existing circumstances must often accompany planning efforts for future policies.

STAP studied **one** prototype of a one-way loop pattern for traffic circulation in downtown Key West. (See the Appendix for this system.) We wish to emphasize that it is only one example of a traffic loop system, but we strongly urge that the **concept** of a loop should be explored by the city.

Thus, STAP highly recommends for further review the concept of a one-way loop route around the perimeter of the downtown district in Old Town as a means to (1) reduce the speed and flow of traffic through the downtown area, (2) facilitate the flow into and out of the downtown area, (3) maintain existing narrow streets with existing lanes, and (4) help solve the current and future congestion on downtown streets, be considered. The primary purpose of this proposal is to implement a safe and controlled flow of traffic through the historic downtown area.

STAP urges that the city establish a Feasibility Study Team with representatives from the Planning Department, Engineering Department, Police and Fire Departments, the County, and a Historic Preservation representative, and other traffic planning expertise as required to study the feasibility of implementing a loop system for Key West. A demonstration model should be conceived and implemented on a Quick Response computer level to ascertain all possibilities for implementation. Funding from grant sources (State funds, NEA funds, for example) could be used to seek support for the necessary planning and engineering expertise. Adequate public knowledge and public input into all proposed changes to the existing traffic circulation is very important. Public relations expertise should be utilized to plan a campaign that would inform the public of benefits to the community.

V. Intersection Improvements

Truman and Eisenhower: This is the entrance to Old Town's Historic District. Signalization and street furniture that has compatible design elements sympathetic to the historic flavor should be used here to help underline the street which defines the Historic District boundary and serves as the entry to the park and Ride.

Truman and Grinnell: Aesthetic considerations for street furniture are important here. Signalization should be reduced to a blinking yellow light and the number of poles reduced. A more desirable option would be to implement a 4-way stop program of traffic control (using stop signs) and eliminate present poles.

Truman and Windsor Lane: Remove large commercial sign that obstructs motorists' view of traffic, retain signal and install bumps or Signal Ahead sign for traffic entering Old Town. This is a very dangerous intersection, where accidents occur on a regular basis.

Truman and Simonton: Aesthetic considerations are very important at this site in the heart of Old Town. All street furniture should be compatible with the Historic District.

Truman and Duval: Signalization improvements at this key intersection of the **main street** of Old Town, must be compatible with the historic flavor of Old Town. Duval Street, along which major preservation efforts have been focused, is the central corridor of the Historic District.

Truman and Whitehead: The aesthetic and historic impact here is enormous. The Key West Lighthouse is located at this intersection. All street furniture and signal devices must be compatible to the District.

Whitehead and Southard: Compatible signalization improvements are critical here. This intersection is one of the highest priority; the location for a Model Intersection to be introduced.

Whitehead and Fleming: Prime corner where new design elements are essential. The southern terminus of US 1, the FCAA pipeline end and key point of tourists' attention. Priority 1 for implementation of Model Intersection plan.

VI. Overhead Utility Lines, Signs and other Visual Intrusions

The City Electric System (CES) will provide a master plan of electric pole locations for inclusion with the City Master Plan.

Where replacement utility poles are necessary, wood utility poles are recommended as more compatible in the historic district than concrete ones.

Underground utility service is cost prohibitive and existing overhead wires are to be replaced by CES as necessary. CES should exercise all possible sensitivity with regard to the aesthetics of the Old Town area.

Regulatory signs for traffic circulation should be standardized and should be placed roadside for the best visibility to the motorist. Duplication of signs should be avoided.

VII. Other General Recommendations

The philosophy of the City should be to actively encourage pedestrian traffic as the most desirable.

Other amenities for consideration include:

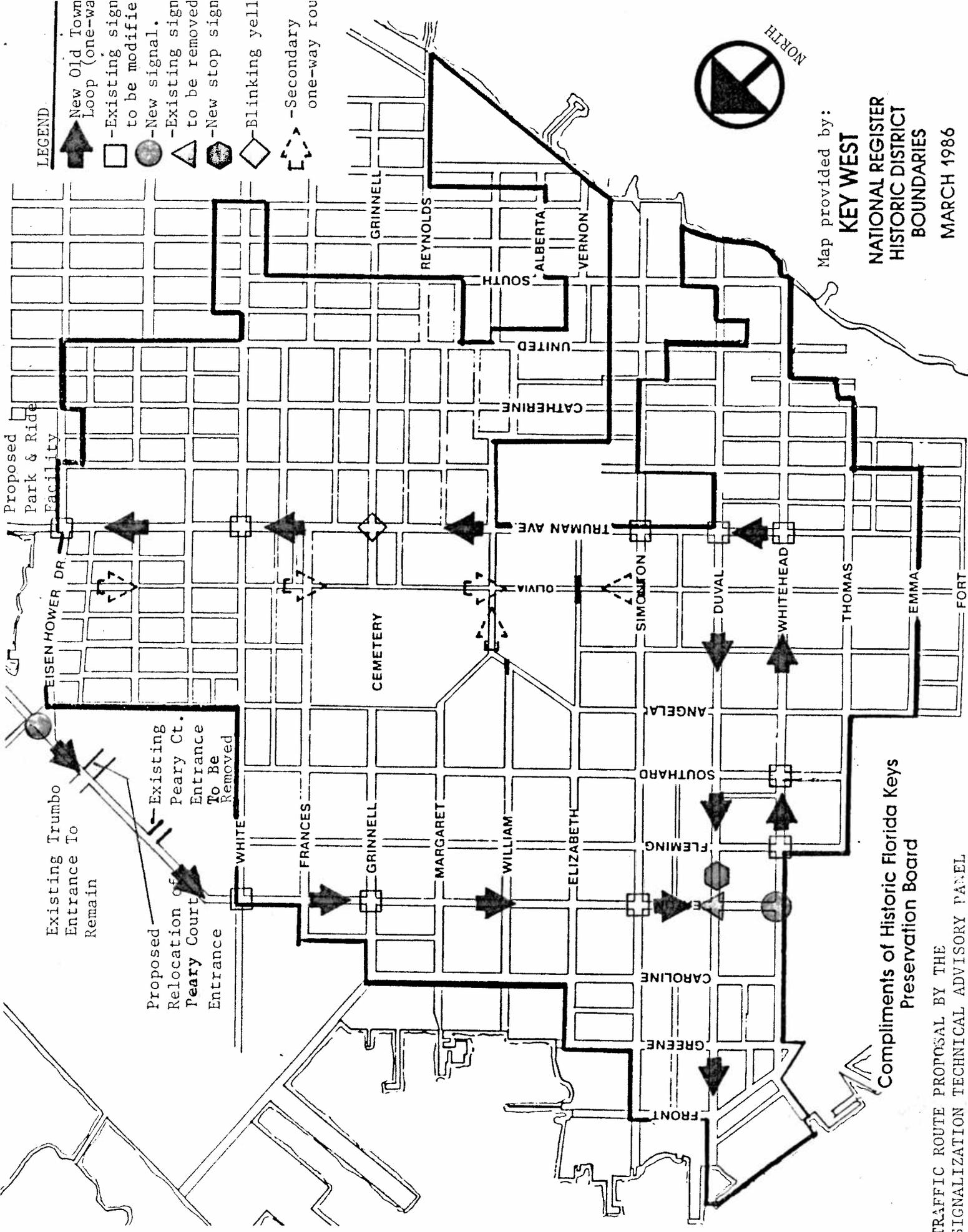
Install sign at entrance to Historic District at the intersection of Truman and Eisenhower Drive, the "gateway" to the Historic District.

Provide for shade trees and/or hanging planters on proposed poles near intersections to create the feeling of greenspace.

Encourage use of signs with historic style and/or typeface.

Finally, the City must undertake a campaign to educate the community to the merits of a Comprehensive Plan which can help ease the near-crisis traffic situation that is enveloping the town at the present time.

Only through a total commitment to long-range planning can our efforts prove to be effective.



- LEGEND**
- New Old Town Loop (one-way)
 - Existing sign to be modified
 - New signal.
 - Existing sign to be removed
 - New stop sign
 - Blinking yell
 - Secondary one-way route

Map provided by:
KEY WEST
 NATIONAL REGISTER
 HISTORIC DISTRICT
 BOUNDARIES
 MARCH 1986

Existing Trumbo Entrance To Remain

Proposed Relocation of Peary Court Entrance To Be Removed

Proposed Park & Ride Facility

Compliments of Historic Florida Keys Preservation Board

TRAFFIC ROUTE PROPOSAL BY THE
 SIGNALIZATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY PANEL
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PROPOSED ONE-WAY LOOP STUDIED BY STAP:

The proposed plan would implement several paired one-way streets. In the recent past, certain downtown streets were one-way avenues, which have been changed in recent times to two-way routes. Duval Street, for instance, was a one-way street, which allowed for space for bicycles and parking.

The One Way Loop would implement the following changes from current patterns:

Palm Ave.:	One-way (northwest) between Eisenhower Drive and Eaton Street.
Eaton Street:	One-way (west) between Palm Avenue and Whitehead Street.
Duval Street:	One-way (north) between Truman Avenue and foot of Duval Street.
Whitehead Street:	One-way (south) between Front Street and Truman Avenue.
Truman Avenue:	One-way (east) between Whitehead Street and Eisenhower Drive.

Secondary route considerations:

Olivia St.:	One-way (west) between Eisenhower Drive and White Street (reverse existing).
Windsor Lane:	One-way (south) between Whitehead Street and Eisenhower Drive.

These route changes effect the following intersection modifications:

Palm Ave./Eisenhower Drive:	Signal to be added.
Eaton St./Simonton:	Signal to be upgraded by FDOT.
Eaton St./Duval St.	Existing signal to be removed, stop sign on Duval St. only, Eaton St. to be the thoroughfare.
Eaton/Whitehead:	Signal to be added.
Windsor Lane/Truman Avenue:	Desired traffic control undetermined. Options include: remove (1) a portion of present cactus hedge blocking view from Windsor and (2) large advertising sign along Truman. Install <u>Caution/Stop Ahead</u> sign if Truman is 2-way.
Grinnell/Truman Ave.:	Existing signal to be removed. New flashing signal to be controlled by Grinnell St. fire station.

Additionally, a one-way street East to Eisenhower Drive from the East end of the Perry Court Circle with a right turn only on Eisenhower Drive. This would allow Eastbound traffic from Trumbo Point to exit to the Perry Court Circle thence East to Eisenhower Drive--and then South to Truman Avenue (U.S. 1).

Existing signals to remain should be modified and reduced according to control needs.