

PLANNING COMMISSION
August 10, 2022

The public may view the public meeting at:
www.youtube.com/user/cityofisleofpalms

Public Comment: Citizens may provide public comment here:
<https://www.iop.net/public-comment-form>

AGENDA

The Isle of Palms Planning Commission will hold its regular meeting on Wednesday, August 10, 2022, at **4:30 p.m.** in Council Chambers of City Hall, 1207 Palm Boulevard.

- A. Call to order and acknowledgment that the press and the public were duly notified in accordance with state law
- B. Approval of minutes July 13, 2022
- C. Old business Discuss Transportation Element of
Comprehensive Plan update –Meet with
Chiefs Cornett and Oliverius

Update on short term rental
recommendations of implementing cap
- D. Miscellaneous business
- E. Adjourn



**Planning Commission Meeting
4:30pm, Wednesday, July 13, 2022
1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, SC and
broadcasted live on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/cityofisleofpalms>**

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Present: Steve Corney, Ron Denton, David Cohen, Sue Nagelski, Sandy Stone, Jeffrey Rubin, and Douglas Kerr, Director of Planning

Absent: Marty Brown

2. Approval of minutes

Mr. Stone made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 8, 2022 regular meeting. Mr. Corney seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5. New Business -- none

6. Old Business

A. Discuss Transportation Element of Comprehensive Plan Update

Director Kerr reviewed the work done by the Planning Commission on this element to date, including the work of discerning options provided by Stantech to help alleviate some traffic concerns across the island.

He also referred to the redline draft included in the meeting packet and reviewed the proposed changes. In addition to the presentation from Stantech, the Transportation Element will also include the City's Beach Management Plan, the City's agreement to work with SCDOT on the study of the IOP Connector and Hwy17 Corridor, and updated traffic counts specific to the traffic on the Connector.

After some discussion of the formation of a traffic issues-related work group, the Planning Commission determined this to be an issue they will continue to study, discern, and provide options and feedback to City Council. Commissioners would like this work to be in collaboration with SCDOT.

The Planning Commission would also like to see funding added to FY24 for a comprehensive traffic study and to implement some of the ideas from Stantech identified by the Commission to be most feasible.

Director Kerr said the Beach Management Plan is in the review process now. Its updated version will be included in the Transportation Element.

In addition to the above, Commissioners felt it was important to stress the need for funding to solve the identified traffic issues. They would also like to hear more from the Fire and Police Departments regarding their views and concerns about island traffic. Director Kerr stated that Chief Cornett has indicated that the restriping of the Connector has not been the source of any safety-related concerns to date. He will ask members of both departments to attend the August Planning Commission meeting to give an assessment of the current state of traffic affairs.

The Transportation Element will be discussed again at the August meeting.

B. Update on short-term rental recommendations and implementing a cap

Director Kerr reported that City Council heard from Dr. Brumby McLeod from the College of Charleston at their July 13 workshop. He discussed trends related to short-term rentals across the country as well as his recommendations regarding the implementation of a cap.

Director Kerr said he is unsure how quickly City Council will take up this issue for further discernment and action. He noted that they are seeing a significant uptick in the number of short-term rental licenses being issued, many of them in Zone 2.

Discussion ensued about how short-term rental tracking is handled by City staff and whether or not it is necessary to zone the island. They discussed the idea of placing a cap across the entire island and allowing the market to determine where the rentals are. Discussion also ensued about the efficacy and unintended consequences of implementing caps in zones.

7. Miscellaneous Business

Director Kerr will add a briefing and discussion of the Code of Conduct to the legal briefing the Commissioners receive at the beginning of the year.

8. Adjournment

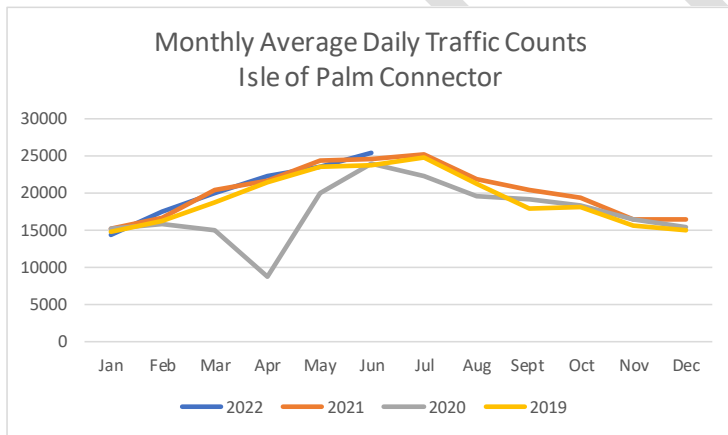
Mr. Corney made a motion to adjourn, and Mr. Cohen seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:06pm.

Respectfully submitted,

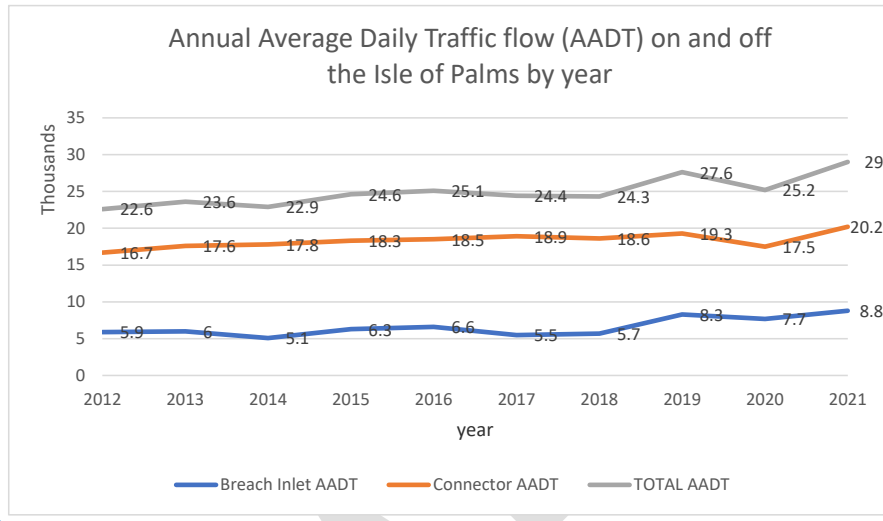
Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk

TRANSPORTATION

The Isle of Palms is accessible by two routes. First, SC 703 connects the island to Sullivan’s Island by way of the Breach Inlet bridge as well as Sullivan’s Island to Mount Pleasant by way of the Ben Sawyer Intracoastal Waterway bridge. Second the Clyde M. Dangerfield Highway SC 517 (Isle of Palms Connector) provides a fixed span, direct connection to Mount Pleasant. The illustration below is based on the traffic counts coming on and off the island on the Connector from ~~from~~ the years of 2019 to 2022. As expected, the traffic increases dramatically in the summer months as a result of seasonal visitors (additional traffic counts are available in Appendix C-1).



Field Code Changed



Field Code Changed

The total length of roads on the island is estimated to be 35 miles. Most roads outside Wild Dunes are under the jurisdiction of the SCDOT. The total miles of state roads on the island is estimated to be 21.75 miles. A few roads or sections of roads have been accepted by the City. Some roads, however, have never been formally accepted by any government jurisdiction. Roads within the Wild Dunes gates total 12 miles and are privately owned and maintained.

Maintenance for roads within the State system is provided through an agreement between Charleston County and the SCDOT. The City is responsible for Ocean Boulevard between 10th and 14th Avenues, 18th Avenue, part of Hartnett Boulevard, most of Forest Trail, the cul-de-sac on Pavilion Boulevard, and 27th, 28th, and 29th Avenues between Hartnett and Waterway Boulevards.

Currently, bikeways and sidewalks are provided in only a few areas outside Wild Dunes. These existing bikeway/sidewalk facilities are not interconnected and some are in need of repair. There is a recognized need to fund bikeways and sidewalks to facilitate non-vehicular traffic on the island to reduce vehicular/pedestrian/bike conflicts. Various projects have recently been undertaken ~~are underway~~ in the Charleston area including the Battery-

to-Beach a bike route that ~~will~~ connects the Isle of Palms to downtown Charleston and ultimately Folly Beach.

In the summer months, traffic on the island increases significantly and causes congestion. Rainstorms on a weekend afternoon can cause hours of gridlock and raises concerns about response time for Emergency Medical Services and other essential public safety needs. While this is a longstanding issue for the community, the problem has become more acute with the increased population of the Charleston area. The problems are predictable, measurable, and should be able to be lessened with proper adjustments to the roadways.

In the summer months, the number of cars parking near the beach increases dramatically. In June of 2015, the SCDOT approved a beach parking management plan that the City developed through a collaborative effort between the City Council, the Isle of Palms community, traffic engineers, City staff, and SCDOT. The goal of the plan was to strike a balance between the concerns of residents and the needs of beach visitors. Modifications to the island's parking facilities were made pursuant to the plan including the creation of beach parking areas close to the beach and resident only parking areas in the remaining areas of the island.

The City and SCDOT agreed in 2022 to initiate studies of the Isle of Palms Connector bridge and the Connector's corridor to identify alternatives, including lane configurations, that would allow traffic to flow more efficiently and provide safer facilities for cyclist and pedestrians.

In 2022 the Planning Commission held a series of meetings with a traffic consultant for the purpose of studying traffic related issues and identifying key projects or programs that could improve traffic flow on the island. The final presentation of that effort is included in Appendix D of this plan and several Goals and Implementation Strategies below were identified during these meetings.

Beach visitors typically park at the Front Beach Area or on the edge of the road on Palm Boulevard or other rights of way near the beach. On the edge of the roadways, currently there is no system to manage where or how visitors park, which creates confusion and congestion for visitors and residents. However, the City has initiated efforts to address these issues

~~including making physical improvements, gathering public input and hiring a professional transportation firm to advise on the matter.~~

Key Issues

- Improvements in transportation facilities.
- Planning for a parking system that would balance the needs of visitors and residents.

Goals and Implementation Strategies

Goal 8.1: Improve traffic flow and reduce congestion on the roadways of the island.

Strategy 8.1.1: Include funding in the 2023-2024 budget to initiate a comprehensive traffic study for the island to improve traffic flow and reduce congestion. This study should be done in close collaboration with the SCDOT staff to ensure the solutions that are developed can be implemented within their network. (2023; Public Safety)

Strategy 8.1.2: Evaluate the lane configuration of the Isle of Palms Connector to identify more efficient and safer alternatives (See consideration 1 in Appendix D). (Ongoing; Public Safety)

Strategy 8.1.3: Evaluate the intersection of the Isle of Palms Connector and Palm Boulevard to determine in an alternative design and/or phasing could increase operational efficiency (See consideration 2 in Appendix D). (2023?; Public Safety)

Strategy 8.1.4: Evaluate the Charleston County Park and municipal parking lots traffic routing, payment, and ticketing to identify more efficient methods for ingress and egress (See consideration 3 in Appendix D). (2023?; Public Safety)

Strategy 8.1.5: Evaluate providing real-time beach parking space availability data to the public to improve efficiency for ingress and egress for beach visitors (See consideration 6 in Appendix D). (2023?; Public Safety)

Strategy 8.1.~~6~~: Continually assess stop sign locations on the island to determine proper and legal placement. (*Ongoing; Public Works*)

Strategy 8.1.~~7~~: Ensure an adequate number of speed limit signs on all streets to encourage compliance and improve safety. (*Ongoing; General Government and Police Department*)

Strategy 8.1.~~8~~: Develop a plan to improve alternate modes of transportation on the island including bikeways, golf carts and low speed vehicle facilities and sidewalks while improving pedestrian safety. (*2008; Building Department and Recreation Department*)

Strategy 8.1.4: — Develop a management plan to lessen the effects beach traffic has on the island's roadways. (2009; Building Department)

Goal 8.2: Discourage non-resident parking and traffic in residential neighborhoods.

Strategy 8.2.1: Encourage appropriate measures including signs, traffic restrictions and parking restrictions. (*Ongoing; Police Department and City Council*)

Goal 8.3: Improve accuracy of data collection related to traffic patterns.

Strategy 8.3.1: Encourage appropriate measures to collect accurate traffic counts including the installation of new hardware at the key points of ingress and egress of the island. (*Ongoing; Police Department and City Council*)