

PARC Comments on the Sanibel Shared Use Path Master Plan Draft

Submitted to: Sanibel Planning Commission

Submitted by: Sanibel Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PARC)

PARC Committee Representative: Angi Semler Welch

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The Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PARC) would like to submit for consideration the following comments on the draft of the Shared Used Path Master Plan:

Crosswalk Safety Enhancements

- 1) The committee recommends adding three crosswalks to the list for suggested safety enhancements. These crosswalks have a higher number of incidents and a higher volume of pedestrian/bicycle traffic (Section 4-30, pages 53-60 and Section 8-10, page 100):
 - Casa Ybel and Periwinkle
 - Periwinkle and Tarpon Bay
 - West Gulf and Tarpon Bay

RESPONSE:

Safety along the pathways is a key consideration for the Master Plan. Along Periwinkle, the proposed recommendation is to consider adding a Path along the north side of the roadway (see recommendation #4 and #10 on page 101) in order to increase capacity, and provide access to businesses on the north side of Periwinkle thereby reducing the number of roadway crossings.

At the West Gulf/Tarpon location, a high number of incidents were recorded rather than safety concerns (see figure 4-19 and 4-21). At this location, the incidents don't indicate crashes with vehicles associated with street crossings. However, like other locations the safety opportunities listed in Section 8 should be referenced in determining future projects and enhancements to the shared use paths. Specifically, the evaluation of locations to improve crossing locations consistent with the City's Crosswalk Policy.

- 2) In addition, the committee recommends adding safety enhancements to two crosswalks that are not mentioned in the plan:
 - Dixie Beach Blvd and Periwinkle
 - Donax and Periwinkle

RESPONSE:

Acknowledged. City Council may choose to accept the recommendation of PARC and Planning Commission that these crosswalks be evaluated for safety enhancements at a future time.

- 3) The committee supports the recommendations to test additional safety enhancements, such as in-pavement puck lighting or similar, to increase the visibility of island crosswalks.

RESPONSE:

Thank you. Continuing to balance the Goals of the Sanibel Plan with safety of the pathway users was a key consideration in developing the recommendations.

Path Extensions

- 1) The committee fully supports and agrees with the recommendation to widen the shared use path wherever feasible, particularly along Periwinkle, East Gulf and Middle Gulf.
- The report suggests a minimum width of 8 feet for new additions or extensions (Section 8-2, page 92), but it also acknowledges the current standard of 10 feet. The committee proposes adopting a 10-foot minimum, except where 8 feet is the only viable choice.

RESPONSE:

Section 7 includes a more detailed description of design considerations for the shared use path. Page 7-2 addresses the path width with a recommended minimum width of 10-feet. The 8-foot minimum noted on Page 92 is specifically as a consideration in areas where environmental impacts would exist.

- The committee recommends a stone/gravel path alongside the paved path in areas where widening is required but pavement is impractical due to cost or aesthetic concerns. This gravel path would serve pedestrians and joggers.

RESPONSE:

This is a good option for consideration that can be explored at individual locations when specific extensions are being evaluated. In many cases, the constraints to path-widening include the horizontal clearance between the pathway and vegetation and a gravel path would face the same constraints.

- 2) The committee believes the most important extension options are (Table 8-2, pages 101-102):
- 9 - Along the north side of Periwinkle from Dunlop to Bailey Road. (Although there may be significant right of way challenges due to space constraints.)
 - 4 - Periwinkle Way, Tarpon Bay Rd to Palm Ridge Road
 - 5 - Palm Ridge Road, Periwinkle Way to Tarpon Bay Road

RESPONSE:

Thank you providing input on priority projects for the city to consider. For developing the Master Plan, considerations of feasibility (ease of implementation) and priority were not considered. The purpose of the Master Plan was to identify current conditions and future needs while developing a series of recommendations. Importance, cost, and ease of implementation will be factors for the city to consider when determining future projects.

- 3) The committee agrees with and recommends further consideration for these extensions:
- 11 - Extend the path along Bailey Road to the bayside parking lot.
 - There may be an option to use some of the existing berm to create a dedicated path, even if it is gravel short term or long term.

RESPONSE:

Thank you. The Bailey Road Extension is listed at number 12 on Table 8-2 and Figure 8-2. This extension would connect with the existing shared use path, where it terminates, south of Bay

Drive and extend to the parking area at Bayshore Drive. Further study of this extension would need to be conducted in order to determine constructability and pavement surface.

- 12 - Extend the path from the Lighthouse Beach Park entrance to the Fishing Pier parking lot.
 - At Lighthouse Beach, there may be an option to use the existing roadside and berm to create a dedicated gravel path on one side of the road that is designated by a physical divider (such as wooden posts connected by rope like the city has at some of the beaches).

RESPONSE:

Thank you. The Lighthouse Park Extension is listed at number 13 on Table 8-2 and Figure 8-2. Further study of this extension would need to be conducted in order to determine constructability and pavement surface.

- 4) The committee recommends further exploring a path extension along Rabbit Road. We understand this request was made by residents to support safer passage to the beach. These residents do not have practical access to the existing path that runs parallel to Rabbit Road.

RESPONSE:

In addition to recommendations for path extensions, a series of supporting bicycle and pedestrian enhancements are included in Appendix I of the master plan. One of these recommendations is to include an on-street bicycle facility. One of the Considerations noted for Rabbit Road is the limited amount of existing right-of-way and pavement. Addition of a shared use path or bicycle lanes would include environmental and/or utility impacts. The Master Plan recommendation is to include a shared lane bicycle facility.

- 5) The committee recommends considering three new extensions:

- On Dixie Beach Road from the path's end to the parking lot. There is an existing berm on the west side of the road that could possibly be converted to suit this function.
- Along Wulfert Road starting at Wild Life Drive and continuing to The Sanctuary.
 - There is substantial vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle traffic along this stretch of road, as well as a number of semi trailers.
 - Alternatively, consider adding this to the list in Table 8-3 (page 104) for "Other Improvements for Bike Lanes" or consider adding a gravel path for pedestrians.
- Along Wild Life Drive from the Ding Darling exit to the path along Sanibel Captiva Road.
 - Alternatively, the committee recommends exploring other ways to increase the safety along this corridor.
 - It is worth noting that the Federal Highway Administration also recommended improving safety in this area in a January 2023 Road Safety Audit for Ding Darling (pages 19-20 and 32-33).

RESPONSE:

City Council may choose to accept the recommendation of PARC and Planning Commission that these extensions be evaluated for feasibility at a future time. A copy of the January 2023 JN Ding Darling National Wildlife Refuge Road Safety Audit is included as backup to this item for your reference. The report states:

Since there is a high bicycle use at the Refuge, it would be beneficial to its visitors to have trail connectivity from the Refuge to the existing shared path system so that they can travel safely, separated from motorized traffic. (page 20).

And goes on to recommend:

It is recommended that the shared-use path be extended from Sanibel Captiva Road to the Refuge exit and it be placed on the south side of the road to avoid the utility poles. Adding this path would require wetlands in field delineation. A preliminary desktop assessment estimates approximately 350 feet of the proposed shared-use path passes through wetlands (see memo in Appendix B). Similar to the path for the Tarpon Bay Road site, it is recommended that the portion of multi-use path within wetlands be constructed as a boardwalk. It is also recommended to refresh centerline pavement markings. To address speeding along this segment, it is recommended that speed humps be installed on both sides ahead of the horizontal curve. Lastly, tree trimming to minimize the tree canopy over the road which creates shadows on the vehicles and cyclists. (page 32-33)

Other Questions / Comments

- 1) The committee recommends adding signage at various points along the path where users can quickly and easily (e.g. by way of a QR code) access a map of the shared use path system, including all paths, bike lanes, rest areas, water fountains, restrooms, key points of interest, and heritage trail markers.

RESPONSE:

Section 9 includes several opportunities where more detailed specifics such as sign content and access (such as QR codes) can be included. Under the Quality of Service goal, implementing best practices for signage is listed as a consideration for the ongoing pathway maintenance program.

- 2) The committee recommends replacing/updating the Heritage Trail signs all along the path (Section 4-20, page 47). The existing signs are in poor condition. The committee understands that this is already being addressed by the Planning Department.

RESPONSE:

We acknowledge this comment and recognize the importance of maintaining high quality directional and interpretive signage, such as the Heritage Trail sign.

- 3) The committee supports recommendations that the city find ways to participate in Florida Bike Month and National Bike Month. Different bike-friendly events could be organized within the community and with community partners.

RESPONSE:

Acknowledged. The plan talks about participating in Bike Month as part of the implementation strategy.