

Public Feedback Summary

Date:	November 14, 2024
Subject:	Causeway Boulevard and Periwinkle Way Intersection Study
Kimley-Horn Workshop Attendees:	Bill Waddill Ian Rairden Cydnie Jones David Ervin

Below is a summary of the public input collected to date regarding Sanibel traffic and intersection improvements at Causeway Boulevard and Periwinkle Way. A series of 5 public workshops and stakeholder meetings were held October 23rd, 2024 to share the recommended design solution. These workshops consisted of two general public workshops and three stakeholder meetings (Chamber of Commerce, City Departments, and Non-Profit Groups). A summary of the first round of public workshops is included as Appendix A.

Approximately 1,400 touchpoints have been recorded through public meetings, survey responses, and email correspondence. Of those touchpoints, approximately 20% specifically shared their opinion about roundabouts, of which those in favor outnumbered those against by approximately 2:1. A summary of specific feedback gathered has been synthesized below.

I. General Traffic Feedback

- The majority of the public is ready to see an improvement made at this intersection to reduce their daily commute.
- Continued concern from residents over the existing bridge conditions (active construction, 20 MPH speed limit, need for second lane off island). It was noted by Eric Jackson that the expansion of the Causeway Bridge is not part of Lee County's 25-year Long Range Transportation Plan. There were questions regarding when the county will present a plan for the spoil islands. Potentially November 2024?
- Of the 554 respondents that completed the free-response portion of the traffic survey, just under 10% of people mentioned the Causeway as a traffic issue.
- Residents have learned to somewhat adapt to traffic and plan around peak times.

- As with many cities there will be traffic coming into the city in the morning and leaving in the afternoon. No design improvement will completely alleviate traffic.
- Traffic officers must take shelter during thunderstorms, leaving no one to operate the intersection during peak times.
- Although day trippers and tourists increase traffic, they are going to be “the salvation of our business community”.
- It is dangerous to cross at this intersection, as traffic may not / does not yield for crossing pedestrians.
- Most of the residents would not like to see a traffic signal at this intersection.
- There are opportunities for roundabouts or other improvements at additional problematic intersections along Periwinkle, such as Casa Ybel Road.

II. Intersection Study Process Input

- Concerns were expressed over improvements not being made beyond this intersection, but there is an understanding that this improvement is one part of a multifaceted approach to reducing peak travel times. Some attendees noted that during the worst traffic, queues can back up to Tarpon Bay or Rabbit Road.
- Ensure that the roundabout is designed using pre-lan peak season traffic volumes.
- Pedestrian counts and crossings should be taken into account as they impact the smooth flow of traffic. Counts from the past year do not represent typical norms.
- A majority of attendees expressed a general enthusiasm that an improvement is progressing, and that the feedback from the July workshops was analyzed and incorporated where possible.

III. Roundabout (RAB) Design Feedback

- A majority of attendees expressed agreement on the design philosophy of reducing peak wait times, but also prioritizing quality of life improvements and RAB functionality for residents at non-peak times.
- Traffic on Lindgren will have a difficult time entering the RAB if there is a constant flow of EB Periwinkle traffic moving through the RAB.
- A majority of attendees agreed with one lane off island through the RAB, with the ability for a future second lane expansion if desired (balancing the ability for cars on Lindgren and WB Periwinkle to get off island along with main EB flow).
- If the RAB often backs up due to traffic on the bridge it may cause unwanted congestion similar to what is currently occurring.

- Pedestrian and bike safety is a top priority, generally in favor of pedestrian warning signs, lighting, and improved crossing locations and geometry. Over 45% of survey respondents listed safety as their top design priority, finishing a close second to the desire to decrease wait times due to congestion.
- Ensure tractor trailers and large trucks can easily navigate the RAB.
- Support for sculpture or gateway feature in the center of the RAB.
- Lighting, stormwater, and other additional improvements related to the roundabout will need to be refined as design progresses.
- There was discussion about the cost comparison between installing a traffic light vs. installing the proposed roundabout, along with their differences in capital investment and ongoing maintenance costs.
- Ensure that the design addresses any impacts to existing valves and utilities, and that ease of maintenance is kept in mind.
- Appreciation for proposed design fitting within existing ROW if possible.
- Ensure that the installed landscaping maintains appropriate lines of sight to pedestrians and vehicles in the RAB.

IV. Roundabout Implementation Feedback

- Consensus on building with potential future improvements in mind (adding conduit for signals, leaving spaces for additional crosswalks or lane additions).
- Wayfinding needs to be clear as RABs can be confusing for tourists and older populations.
- How will construction impact traffic flows? Construction and design timeline will be important to successful build out.
- The majority of construction should take place in the off-season, after Easter - before Thanksgiving where feasible.
- Discussion regarding the next steps for design approval, funding, and construction.

V. Alternatives and Additional Feedback

- In favor of keeping existing right turn merge on to WB Periwinkle (Alternative B) as well as extending the merge onto NB Causeway (Alternative A).
- The addition of two more pedestrian crossings (Alternative C) was generally not supported. Many people saw merit in maintaining smooth traffic flow and keeping pedestrians out of the main traffic movement. Currently not much demand for these additional movements. Improvements could be made to the crossing just west of Bailey Rd, rather than adding an additional crossing at this intersection.

- No major concerns regarding the land-swap within the Conservation District but need to study further if it is necessary and the feasibility of how the swap would be implemented.
- Improvements to the Causeway and the Causeway speed limit are necessary but are outside of this study.
- Some of the public suggested a flyover at this intersection, however it was noted that there is likely not enough ROW to accommodate this solution, and it does not align with the context outlined in the “Sanibel Plan.”
- There was a discussion that the 3D model shown was extremely helpful but may not perfectly reflect all the multimodal conditions that occur during peak times.
- There was some discussion regarding the possibility of utilizing a metered roundabout with small signals to halt traffic during a backup and allow the intersection to clear before allowing more cars to enter. The underground infrastructure for this can be installed with this design to accommodate potential future use.
- Of those respondents mentioning traffic signals in the public workshops, most opposed an overhead traffic signal at this location.
- There was a comment regarding whether traffic officers could use a whistle to aid in directing traffic.
- Consider studying how existing built RAB examples could influence future design and functionality of this roundabout.

VI. Key Takeaways

- There was an overall majority consensus from workshop attendees that the proposed roundabout solution makes sense and should proceed to further design and implementation.
- Of the 1,115 survey respondents, over 60% responded that an immediate improvement should be made at this intersection.
- While some residents are hesitant that a roundabout will significantly aid in alleviating traffic, approximately two-thirds of those who stated an opinion about roundabouts were in favor.
- Most attendees accepted that these improvements are part of a multi-faceted approach to alleviating congestion on the island to improve the quality of life for Sanibel residents.
- Balancing the maintenance of traffic, timeline, costs, and the overall Sanibel context will be critical to the successful construction and implementation of this roundabout.

APPENDIX A



Public Workshop Summary

Date: July 31, 2024

Subject: Causeway Boulevard and Periwinkle Way Intersection Study

Kimley-Horn Attendees: Bill Waddill
Ian Rairden
David Ervin

Below is a summary of input from the 6 public workshops and stakeholder meetings held 7/31/24 & 8/1/24 regarding Sanibel traffic and intersection improvements at Causeway Boulevard and Periwinkle Way. Two general public workshops were held along with stakeholder meetings with the Chamber of Commerce, Utilities Departments, Non-Profit Groups, and Bill Millar (Chair of COTI's Transportation Committee).

I. General Traffic Feedback

- Traffic will continue to get worse as condos open and more people come back to the island. Everyone is frustrated with the current situation.
- The past year has been an anomaly, with high volumes of construction trucks coming on and off island for recovery efforts, along with the work being done on the Causeway.
- Traffic is more tolerable when there is a consistent flow rather than long stops, resulting in multiple hours to get off the island.
- The plan that was implemented temporarily that pushed traffic through Periwinkle Way seemed to slightly reduce waits and kept traffic flowing. Vehicles coming out of cross streets in the afternoon slows down traffic flow.
- Traffic is not just an issue getting on and off the island, but also traveling along the island, particularly going from the East end to the West.
- Businesses are having difficulty retaining employees due to having to sit in traffic for multiple hours commuting to work on the island.
- Traffic reduces quality of life for residents and workers. Traffic often dictates life as doing activities on a whim is difficult with heavy traffic.

- The traffic significantly impacts vulnerable populations; children may be stuck on the school bus for hours at a time, seniors are unable to sit in a car for multiple hours or cannot reach their medical appointments.
- The traffic officers have varying skill levels, some are not trained enough to smoothly move traffic through the intersection. It can be dangerous for traffic officers to stand in traffic and in the heat for a prolonged period.
- Some suggested the bridge was one of the issues with traffic, including the current reduced speed, not enough lanes, tolls not being high enough for “passers through”, and the current construction on the causeway.

II. Intersection Study Process Input

- Concern over the study not focusing beyond this intersection. The public was notified that funding for an island wide traffic study was recently approved by City Council.
- There were questions about data only being collected from April 14-18, however historical traffic counts from the City of Sanibel and FDOT will also be used to ensure the project is evaluated with accurate volumes.
- How much will a roundabout or other improvement improve efficiency and flow, and are there case studies in Florida that show that improvement?
- More residents will be on the island and able to give feedback during peak season (November-March).
- Unlike the previous studies, the suggestions from this study should result in implementation of an improvement.

III. Implementation Ideas

- This intersection should have aesthetic improvements to be a gateway onto Sanibel.
- The design should match the character and uniqueness of the island. An overpass ramp would be too intensive of an improvement.
- Ensure that the design is for people that live on Sanibel, not just those traveling on and off the island.
- Reduce peak volumes by only allowing deliveries in the evening or early morning, and Island workers having flexible hours.
- Through traffic going West to Captiva or resort district could be rerouted off Periwinkle Way in the morning.
- Implementing a third center lane on the bridge that switches directions for peak traffic flows in the morning and afternoon should be evaluated.

- Biking or other forms of transportation improvements can be part a multifaceted plan to reduce traffic times. Expanding the trail network to run on both sides of Periwinkle Way and ensuring safe pedestrian and bicycle crossing at the intersection should be considered.
- The public may not be supportive of any ROW taking for the implementation of this intersection improvement.
- Some concern was expressed over elderly and visitors not being familiar with or having difficulty driving through a roundabout.
- Recommendations should be provided to the City to enable the police department to better manage traffic on a temporary basis.
- Interim improvements should be considered that can be built now while the multi-year final product is being designed and constructed.

IV. Key Takeaways

- Ensure the proposed design meets the uniqueness of context and character of the island. Periwinkle Way is Sanibel's "Main Steet".
- Look for innovative solutions and use this intersection improvement as part of a multipronged solution to alleviate travel times on the island.
- Most residents seem ready for an improvement to be implemented immediately, while others are hesitant that an improvement at this intersection would not significantly reduce travel times and other factors may play a large role in wait times.
- Any improvement in wait times would likely be very beneficial. Many residents and workers are frustrated with the traffic on the island and expect it to get worse. Wait times of up to one hour to get off the island would be tolerable compared to the current situation.