



# City of Sanibel

800 Dunlop Road  
Sanibel, FL 33957

## Meeting Minutes - Draft Sanibel Plan Update Steering Committee

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Wednesday, April 15, 2026

9:00 AM

MacKenzie Hall - 800 Dunlop Road

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### 1. Call To Order

The meeting convened at 9 A.M.

### 2. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Johnson led the pledge of allegiance.

### 3. Roll Call

**Present:** 6 - Larry Schopp, James Evans, Nicole Decker-McHale, Bob Moore, Calli Johnson and Jeffrey Muddell

**Absent:** 1 - Eric Pfeifer

#### a. Motion to excuse absent member(s): Eric Pfeifer

**Committee Member Evans moved, seconded by Committee Member Decker-McHale to excuse Committee Member Pfeifer. The motion carried.**

**Excused:** 1 - Committeemember Eric Pfeifer

### 4. Consent Agenda

#### a. Adoption of the March 18, 2026, Meeting Minutes

Committee Member Evans made notations for the record to public comment agenda item 5.

**Committee Member Moore moved, seconded by Committee Member Decker-McHale to adopt the March 18, 2026, meeting minutes with corrected scrivener errors. The motion carried.**

**Excused:** 1 - Committeemember Eric Pfeifer

### 5. Public Comment

No public comment at this time.

### 6. Old Business

#### a. Steering Committee Tentative Schedule of Topics

Planning director Paula McMichael provided an update on public outreach and

engagement efforts, noting that several components are still to be determined as planning continues.

**b.** The Sanibel Vision Statement

**c.** Sanibel Survey Report Final Draft

Planning Director Paula McMichael introduced consultants Jim Hickey from CGA and Bill Muddell from Kim Horton, noting their roles in supporting additional workshops and expanding opportunities for public feedback.

Committee Member Moore discussed challenges associated with reviewing the Comprehensive Plan without updated materials. Discussion ensued regarding future outreach efforts, opportunities for public input, and the review process for the final draft, noting that multiple meetings would be required.

Mr. Hickey, representing CGA, provided a Powerpoint presentation on community engagement efforts. He reviewed the February 19th public workshop, including an overview of attendance and general outcomes.

Discussion ensued regarding survey design, including concerns that certain questions may not fully address key issues. The Committee discussed the ability to distinguish and analyze responses from residents versus non-residents, and considerations regarding the intended audience for the analysis.

Planning Direction MCMichael noted the importance of including input from individuals who work on the island or have other ties to the community, such as families with children in local schools. Discussion continued regarding how survey responses should be evaluated and incorporated.

The Committee discussed resiliency priorities reflected in survey data included interest in business diversity and potential incentives. Additional discussion addressed commercial properties and maintaining flexibility within the Comprehensive Plan.

Planning Director McMichael provided comments regarding upcoming workshops.

**d.** Discussion of Future Community Outreach Efforts

Planning Director Paula McMichael introduced Bill Muddell, the consultant with Kim Horton.

Mr. Muddell referenced a previous workshop conducted with the City and provided an overview of goals for upcoming workshops related to the Comprehensive Plan

Update. He also spoke to a document included in the agenda materials.

Discussion ensued regarding the structure of a Public Meeting Series, including potential for hybrid and virtual formats, as well as the inclusion of key stakeholder meetings. Mr. Muddell referenced prior stakeholder engagement efforts he has facilitated for the City. The Committee discussed ideas for meeting formats and approaches.

The Committee discussed recommendations for public and stakeholder meetings, including the advantages and disadvantages of various formats. Discussion also included implementation considerations and the potential need for policy direction related to permitting processes.

The Committee inquired about how other municipalities approach comprehensive planning and the level of community engagement involved. The consultants provided insight based on their experience, including observations on best practices and challenges. Recommendations were discussed regarding areas of focus for the Comprehensive Plan.

Discussion ensued regarding Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs), including whether additional provisions should be included in the Comprehensive Plan or addressed within the Land Development Code (LDC). It was noted that implementation of TDR program would likely require a Charter amendment.

The Committee expressed general consensus to conduct a series of roundtable style meetings focused on high level topics, with draft concepts to be brought back for Committee review and feedback. Discussion included scheduling considerations for meetings, with daytime and evening options, and sequencing stakeholder meetings between public meetings.

The Committee discussed outreach strategies, including targeting young families and working families to encourage participation, while emphasizing that all residents should have the opportunity to provide input regardless of affiliation.

Discussion continued regarding meeting formats, including the potential addition of a fourth meeting, use of a question and answer format, and refinement of later meetings based on input from earlier sessions. The Committee also discussed survey timing, grant considerations, and the potential need to extend the consultant contract.

Discussion ensued regarding future Sanibel Plan Update Steering Committee agendas and continued element review.

It was noted that additional details and specifics for the workshop would be

presented at the May 20th meeting.

## 7. New Business

### a. Transportation Element

Planning Director Paula McMichael introduced the objectives of the policies with the Transportation Element.

City Engineer Oisin Dolley provided an overview of ongoing transportation related efforts, including roadway classifications, right of way considerations, and progress on the second phase of the Shared Use Path Master Plan. He also referenced recent discussions at the last City Council meeting involving Johnson Engineering related to speed and passing zones.

Discussion ensued regarding stormwater management, with Mr. Dolley noting that it is not fully addressed within this element and referencing roadway elevations and funding considerations.

The Committee discussed roadway maintenance, including repaving efforts, and acknowledged constraints within the transportation network due to limited right of ways and the preservation of scenic character and vegetation. The committee recommended including language addressing physical limitations and constraints to roadway development in addition to scenic considerations.

Additional discussion included roadway conditions, including surface issues and contributing factors, as well as considerations related to vehicle weight.

Ned Baier, the consultants from Volkert and Associates, representing the Transportation Plan Master Plan Update, provided an overview of completed and upcoming work. Including recent and future workshops, current analysis efforts, and the process for developing recommendations.

The Committee discussed the importance of utilizing current and accurate data to inform transportation planning and noted that some existing data may be outdated. Mr. Baier referenced ongoing and planned studies, including implementation timelines, and Planning Director McMichael clarified the scope of the consultant's work. Discussion also addressed coordination between the two Steering Committees.

The Committee further discussed coordination with Lee County regarding traffic management and mitigation strategies, including intergovernmental coordination and considerations related to future land use and potential impact on density.

The Committee provided comments and recommendations for the Transportation Element, including:

- Consideration of beach care
- Beach parking capacity
- Increased incentivization strategies
- Evaluation of current traffic conditions and controls
- Enhancing engagement between visitors and local businesses
- Encouraging bicycle use on designated paths rather than roadways

Discussion ensued regarding potential widening of the Shared Use Path on Rabbit Road and the addition of signage improvements.

Planning Director McMichael addressed Level of Service standards and State concurrency requirements. Mr. Dolley reiterated limitations associated with right of way constraints.

The Chair inquired about consensus regarding Policy. Planning Director Paula McMichael opened the item for discussion. Committee Member Evans expressed concerns regarding the subjectivity of terms such as "attraction" Vs. "amenity" and the need for clearer standards with the Plan. Discussion followed regarding how such determinations are made, including considerations for visitors origin and demand.

The Chair inquired about reducing ambiguity in the future. Consultants suggested that revisions may be more appropriate within the Land Development Code (LDC), particularly within the conditional use process, rather than the Comprehensive Plan.

Discussion ensued regarding the LDC conditional use process, including staff determinations related to traffic impacts, as well as broader consideration of community values, quality of life, and implementation.

The Committee expressed general consensus that Policy contains subjective language.

Additional discussion addressed special events, including consideration of limitations during peak season.

**b. Potential "Electric Power" Section**

Planning Director Paula McMichael introduced Electric Power item for consideration, noting it could be added as a section within the Comprehensive Plan.

Committee Member Moore provided an overview of the rationale for presenting the item to the Committee. He discussed the importance of resiliency, the potential impacts of climate change, and referenced survey data reflecting community concerns

related to electricity and energy distribution.

Committee Member Moore further noted that the proposed section could be structured similarly to the Water Supply Element and read draft language for the Committee's consideration into the record.

The Committee discussed potential implications, including funding considerations, alignment with coastal resiliency efforts, eligibility for grant opportunities, and approaches to incentivize reduced energy consumption.

Planning Director Paula McMichael stated that the language should be drafted in a manner that would not create a mandate for the community.

Consultants provided input regarding plan structure, suggesting that electric power considerations could be incorporated into the existing Infrastructure Element to strengthen it, while noting that creating a standalone element would also be feasible.

Further discussion addressed the relationship of this topic to Sanibel 180 and the importance of addressing the issue in a manner consistent with State Law. The Committee also discussed applying resiliency focused criteria when considering future amendments.

Discussion ensued regarding collaboration with Lee County Electric Cooperative (LCEC) and potential revisions to draft language to reflect the coordination.

## 8. Next Meeting Date

- a. Wednesday, May 20, 2026 at MacKenzie Hall

## 9. Public Comment

Jason Halliburton, Sanibel resident, addressed the Committee regarding the importance of establishing long-term goals and direction. He encouraged the Committee to consider what it aims to achieve in the years ahead, identify current challenges, and develop a clear vision for addressing broader community issues. Mr. Halliburton suggested that each Committee member provide input based on their respective backgrounds and experiences, followed by discussion. He also referenced a recent article by Bob Brookes regarding traffic concerns and the use of technology as a potential tool.

Laura Gails, Sanibel resident, expressed appreciation to the Committee, staff, and consultants for their continued efforts. She noted the care and attention given to balancing the needs of the community, describing Sanibel as a complex environment.

Ms. Gails shared that she chose to raise her family on Sanibel due to its natural beauty and expressed her hope that the community will remain preserved and protected.

Discussion ensued regarding potential topics for the May meeting, including long-term planning objectives and community priorities.

## **10. Adjournment**

With there being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:25 A.M.