

TOWN COUNCIL



STAFF REPORT Department of Growth Management

MEETING DATE:	February 9, 2016
PROJECT:	Consideration of a Resolution Approving The Calhoun Street and Adjacent Area Study
PROJECT MANAGER:	Kendra Lelie, AICP Director, Growth Management Department

REQUEST: Town Council consideration of a Resolution approving the Calhoun Street and Adjacent Area Study.

BACKGROUND: Adopted in 2006 by the Town of Bluffton Town Council, the Old Town Master Plan presents a comprehensive set of guiding design principles and urban design directives. It further provides policy guidance for the Bluffton Historic District. In this regard, the Old Town Master Plan advises that the Town create walkable streets, enhance the tree canopy, and manage stormwater runoff by mimicking natural stormwater systems. It provides that the Town and community craft unique projects with the intent of preserving and enhancing the Bluffton character.

In early 2014, the Town of Bluffton entered into a contract with Thomas & Hutton Engineering Co. to establish a public infrastructure master plan and policy guidelines as part of the Calhoun Street and Adjacent Area Study. Elements addressed include street design, parking, streetscape amenities, sidewalks, crosswalks, stormwater management, tree canopy, lighting, signage and utilities.

Since the project kick-off meeting in February 2014, Town Staff has coordinated several public meetings to obtain community input on project area design alternatives and policy solutions. The public meetings held include:

1. June 2014: 2-day Open House and Workshop at the First Baptist Church;
2. December 2014: Presentation of findings at Town Council;
3. October 2015: Presentation of findings and request for feedback on the draft Calhoun Street and Adjacent Area Study at the Town Council Quarterly Workshop;
4. November 2015: Presentation of various immediate action steps (T-striping, bike racks, signage, lighting and the facilitation of shared parking agreements) including restricted parking and no parking in the Calhoun Street Study area; and
5. January 13, 2016: Presentation of the schematic streetscape design at the Town Council Workshop.

During previous workshop meetings, a concern related to pedestrian safety surfaced. In response, the Urban Design concept plan provided several alternatives for addressing pedestrian safety including the provision of bulb-outs. At the January 13, 2016 Town Council Workshop, there was discussion regarding the proposed bulb-outs at the intersection of May River Road and Calhoun Street and their impact on the flow of traffic along May River Road. There was concern from Town Council that these bulb-outs would restrict traffic flow. At the time of final engineering design for the Calhoun Street and adjacent area improvements, Staff will not entertain bulb-outs at the May River Road and Calhoun Street location and will work with the consultant to implement other pedestrian safety elements.

Below is a table indicating the specific immediate action items Staff is working on and the status of each item:

Immediate Action Items	Public	Other	Status
On-Street Time Restricted Parking	✓		In Progress ¹
Parking Delineation & Bike Racks	✓		Scheduled February 2016
Private Shared Parking Lot Agreements		✓	In Progress ²
Private Parking/Shuttle		✓	In Progress
Public Information Parking Map	✓		In Progress
Sign Implementation	✓		Scheduled February 2016
Additional Lighting	✓	✓	Scheduled February 2016

Notes:

¹ Time restricted parking is contingent on the successful facilitation of shared parking agreements between the Calhoun Street businesses and available lots for overflow parking.

² Staff has been in contact with representatives from Cornerstone Church and they have indicated a willingness to participate in shared parking agreements with the Calhoun Street businesses. Staff has contacted representatives of Carson Cottages and the Old Town Merchant's Society to discuss the opportunity. Staff is waiting for a response.

INTRODUCTION: The Calhoun Street and Adjacent Area Study is compilation of several elements that led ultimately to a final urban design plan for the Calhoun Street corridor. This Study will serve as a guide in directing Capital Improvement Projects and applicable policy decisions. The Calhoun Street and Adjacent Area Study includes:

1. Public Preference Survey

A public preference survey exercise was conducted in June 2014 during a two-day public input workshop. The survey was designed to gather information from the public on desired land use, street design, parking options, environmental issues, street lighting, public safety and signage. The summarized results of the survey were incorporated into the design process.

2. Traffic and Parking Analysis

The consultant and Town Staff conducted a traffic and parking assessment which included an evaluation of intersections to understand need for improvements, existing traffic flow, existing parking conditions, future parking conditions at build-out and a summary of policy and design recommendations.

3. Opportunities and Constraints Report and Mapping

The data gathered in the previous phases of the Study was utilized in the development of a parking summary which included options for increasing public parking opportunities, traffic calming and pedestrian safety alternatives and vehicular and pedestrian connectivity alternatives.

4. Visualization Exercises

- a) Artists Renderings

Artists sketches were provided during a charrette session with Staff to help visualize proposed urban design alternatives.

- b) 3-D Design Considerations

A 3-D visualization of the Calhoun Street corridor was provided at the October 20, 2015 Town Council Workshop meeting and provided a street view of proposed streetscape improvements. The feedback received from this visualization exercise was utilized in the final urban design plan. While a few still shots of the 3-D visualization are included in the Study, access to the full visualization exercise is available through the website <https://round.me/tour/12796/view/31306/>.

5. Urban Design Plan for the Calhoun Street Study Corridor

The Urban Design Plan depicts proposed improvements for vehicular and pedestrian circulation, parking opportunities, sidewalks, street amenities, street trees and lighting, stormwater management, signage and utilities. This plan will be utilized as

RESOLUTION

APPROVING THE CALHOUN STREET AND ADJACENT AREA STUDY

WHEREAS, the Town of Bluffton Town Council (the “Town Council”) adopted the Old Town Master Plan on July 12, 2006 through Ordinance 2006-17 which presents a comprehensive set of guiding design principles and urban design directives and further provides policy and Capital Improvement Project guidance for the Bluffton Historic District; and

WHEREAS, the Old Town Master Plan advises that the Town create walkable streets, enhance the tree canopy, and manage stormwater runoff by mimicking natural stormwater systems as well as providing that the Town and community craft unique projects with the intent of preserving and enhancing the Bluffton character; and

WHEREAS, in January 2014, the Town of Bluffton entered into a contract with Thomas & Hutton Engineering to develop a Calhoun Street and Adjacent Area Study to establish a public infrastructure master plan and policy guidelines; and

WHEREAS, since the project kick-off meeting in February 2014, Town Staff has coordinated several public meetings to obtain community input on project area design alternatives and policy solutions; and

WHEREAS, the Calhoun Street and Adjacent Area Study contains several elements including a Public Preference Survey, a Traffic and Parking Analysis, an Opportunities and Constraints Report and Mapping, Visualization Exercises including artists renderings and 3-D Design Considerations, Urban Design Plan for the Calhoun Street Study Corridor and Cost Opinion to guide future efforts in the study area; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council desires to formally adopt the Calhoun Street and Adjacent Area Study.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN OF BLUFFTON TOWN COUNCIL AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Approve the Calhoun Street and Adjacent Area Study which is attached and incorporated as Exhibit A.

THIS RESOLUTION SHALL BE EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY UPON ADOPTION, SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED AS OF THIS _____ DAY OF ___, 2016.

Lisa Sulka, Mayor
Town of Bluffton, South Carolina

ATTEST:

Sandra Lunceford, Town Clerk
Town of Bluffton, South Carolina

the guiding document for subsequent engineered plans for future Capital Improvement Projects.

6. Cost Opinions

Probable cost opinions from the consultant were provided based on the final Urban Design Plan for Calhoun Street, Bridge Street and Dr. Mellichamp Drive.

NEXT STEP: Recommendations to Town Council of Capital Improvement Projects and subsequent FY2017 Capital Project Program budget requests at the FY2017 Town Council Strategic Planning and Budget workshops – First / Second Quarter 2016.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution
2. Calhoun Street and Adjacent Area Study

CALHOUN STREET AND ADJACENT AREA STUDY

JANUARY 2016



 THOMAS & HUTTON

CALHOUN STREET AND ADJACENT AREA STUDY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PUBLIC PREFERENCE SURVEY

TRAFFIC ANALYSIS

PARKING ANALYSIS

PARKING ANALYSIS SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

VIZUALIZATION EXERCISES

URBAN DESIGN

COST OPINIONS

TRAFFIC ANALYSIS APPENDIX

JANUARY 29, 2016

CALHOUN STREET – BLUFFTON, SOUTH CAROLINA