

How we travel...

Introduction

Mobility and connectivity are integral to any community's quality of life. In order for its residents to have the ability to access the broader local and regional transportation networks, a Town's local network must be safe, efficient and serve various modes of transport. This element will survey and analyze the existing conditions of the Island's local transportation networks, transportation patterns and other key aspects that contribute to residents' movement within the Town and outside of it.

Transportation

Roads

As a barrier island, Sullivan's Island has two points of access by land. The first point of access to Sullivan's Island is through Mt. Pleasant via South Carolina Highway 703 (Coleman Boulevard/Ben Sawyer Boulevard) and the Ben Sawyer Bridge. The second point of access is through Isle of Palms across Breach Inlet on Jasper Boulevard.

Sullivan's Island's road system is comprised of a loose grid network of low-intensity streets typical of a beach community. The road network on Sullivan's Island follows a pattern set forth originally by trolley lines between Sullivan's Island, Isle of Palms, and Mount Pleasant and ferry docks in Mount Pleasant that provided access to downtown Charleston. All of the roads on Sullivan's Island are designed for short, low-speed trips across the island.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Bicycle

The Island is fortunate to be at the intersection of two major bicycle pathways, one regional and one national. The first major trail is the Battery 2 Beach (B2B) route. Created by local advocacy group Charleston Moves, the B2B route is approximately 32 miles of mixed-use paths, connecting three Charleston-area beaches (Folly Beach, Sullivan's Island, and Isle of Palms) and five local municipalities. The second major trail is the East Coast Greenway, which is a 2,600 mile long multi-use, urban spine trail system, extending from the northeast corner of Calais, Maine (Calais, Maine) to the southern Florida Keys. Local bicycle facilities include the Ben Sawyer Bikeway, which runs from Mt. Pleasant, over the causeway and into Sullivan's Island. Additionally, the Island's grid network lends itself to easy navigation for cyclists and pedestrians alike.



SOURCE: CHARLESTON MOVES

Pedestrian

As mentioned in the previous section, the Town has an extensive and efficient grid network of local roads that stretches from each end of the island. This grid allows for easy navigation, a diversity of routes to traverse the island, and fosters a human-scaled built environment. Low-speed local roads and sidewalks also add to the pedestrian network throughout the Island. Similar traits are reflected in the Town's commercial center located along Middle Street, from Station 22 ½ to Station 20. The proximity of businesses, parks, residences and recreational opportunities all increase walkability within the commercial district, as well as provide character to the area.

Public Transportation

The Island is not directly served by the Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority (CARTA) through regular route service, but residents have access to the "flex-route" call-ahead bus service, Tel-A-Ride. Tel-A-Ride was set up to meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) mandated service levels. There are no restrictions on trip purposes and riders must have a specific impairment which restricts their mobility.



SOURCE: CARTA

Mobility Management

The BCDCOG implemented a regional mobility management program to address the transportation needs of the community. Mobility Management is a strategic approach to designing and delivering transportation services that starts and ends with the customer. It begins with a community vision in which the entire transportation network - public transit, private operators, bicycling and walking - works together with customers, planners, and stakeholders to deliver the transportation options that best meet the community's needs.



As part of the regional mobility management program, the BCDCOG also launched the Lowcountry Go commuter services program with South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and employers and stakeholders in the Tri-County region. The program focuses on reducing traffic congestion and improving quality of life for the region by connecting people with mobility management solutions like carpools, vanpools, public transit, walking, biking, emergency ride home and many other programs that encourage behavior changes among commuters. In order to further this initiative, Lowcountry Go created a web application, Ride Low Go, which provides an interactive dashboard for commuters to identify an improved commute. More information can be found at the program's website: <http://www.lowcountrygo.com/>

Average Daily Traffic Volumes

As a coastal community, Sullivan's Island experiences higher traffic volumes in the summer months than any time of the year. Seasonal traffic volume data are no longer maintained, so Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT), collected by SCDOT, has been utilized. Sullivan's Island has four traffic counters which are depicted on the map and the subsequent on Figure 3.1.



Figure 3.1 shows that AADT is fairly constant between 2007 and 2016 on the Island. This does not take into account seasonal traffic congestion where peaks may vary vastly from off season times. Although it should be noted that seasonal traffic patterns are included in the annual numbers. Table 3.1 shows the numbers that were used to derive Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1 AADT Counts for Sullivan’s Island

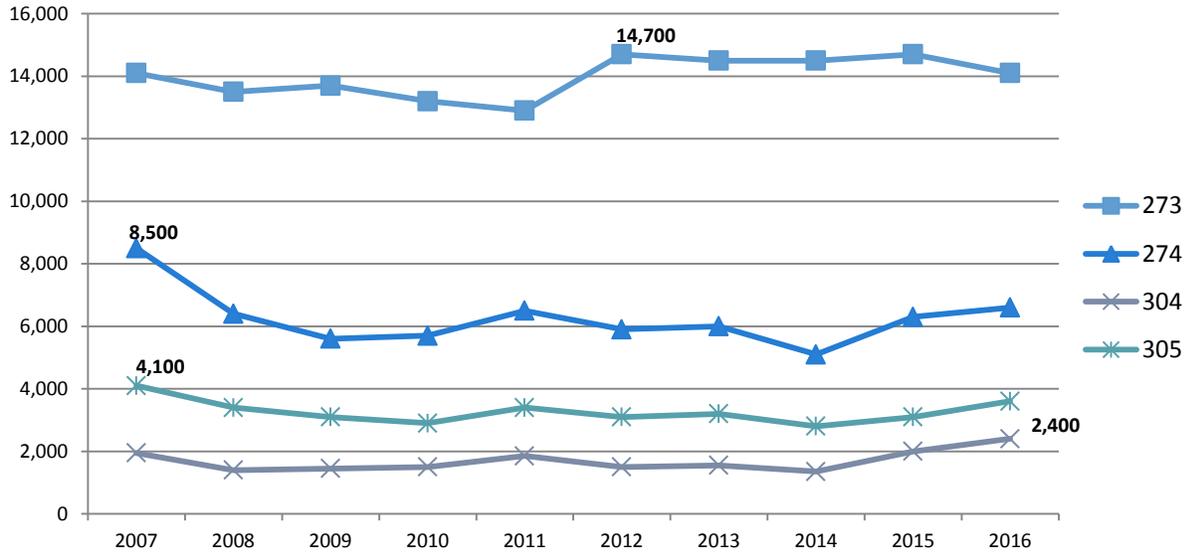


Table 3.1: Average Annual Daily Traffic Counts

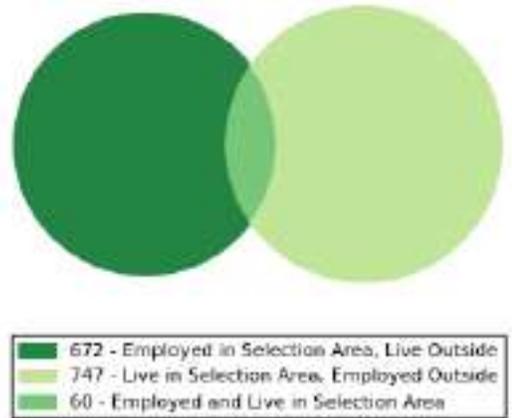
Traffic Counter #	Location	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
273	Before Ben Sawyer Bridge (Mt. P side)	14,100	13,500	13,700	13,200	12,900	14,700	14,500	14,500	14,700	14,100
274	Before Breach Inlet (SI Side)	8,500	6,400	5,600	5,700	6,500	5,900	6,000	5,100	6,300	6,600
304	Middle St - East of Commercial Area	1,950	1,400	1,450	1,500	1,850	1,500	1,550	1,350	2,000	2,400
305	Middle St - Near Commercial District	4,100	3,400	3,100	2,900	3,400	3,100	3,200	2,800	3,100	3,600

Sullivan’s Island Resident’s Transportation Patterns

Where Residents Live and Work

According to Census On The Map, an estimated 747 workers who live on the Island commute out of the Town to their place of work. 672 workers commute to Sullivan’s Island daily for their jobs and only 60 workers live and are employed in the Town.

Figure 3.2: Inflow/Outflow Job Counts in 2015

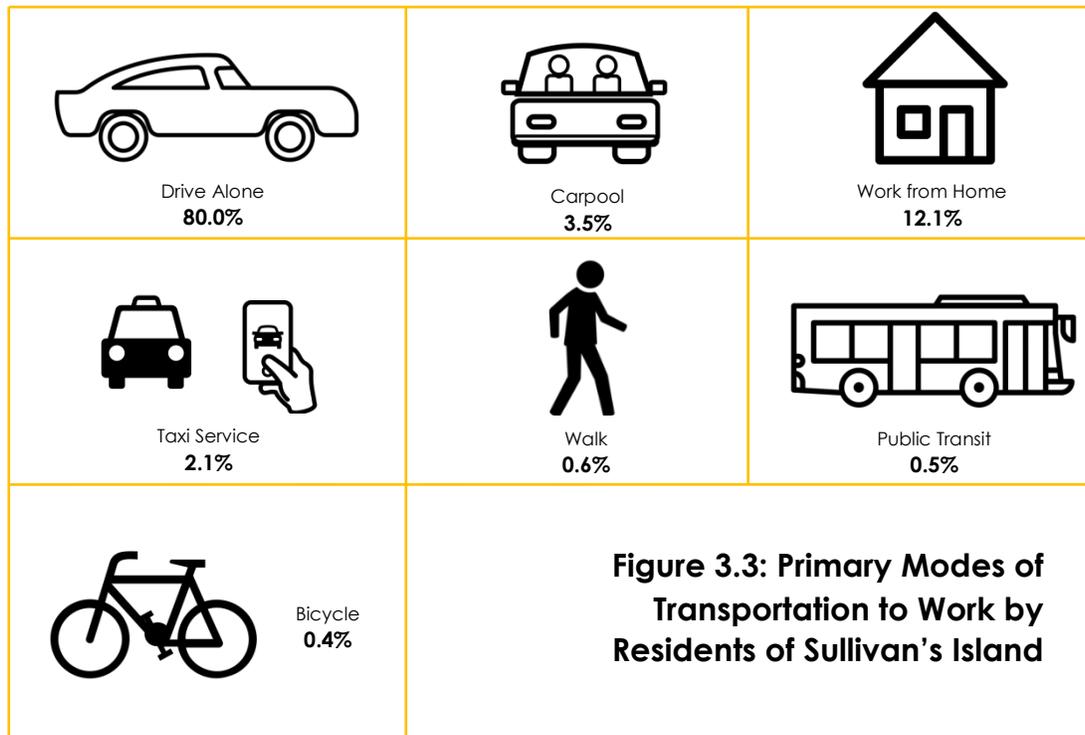


Transportation to Work

The primary mode of transportation for Sullivan’s Island residents is the automobile. This mode comprises 84.3% of the population. Of the residents who drive to work, 80% drive alone and 3.5% carpool. For workers 16 years or older, 15.2% of drivers have one (1) vehicle, 45.4% have two (2) vehicles and 39.4% have three (3) or more vehicles available.

SOURCE: CENSUS ON THE MAP

Concerning alternative modes of transportation, 0.5% of the Town’s population used public transportation, 0.6% walked, 0.4% rode their bicycles, 2.1% used taxi services and 12.1% worked from home.



Travel Time to Work

The mean commute time to work for residents is 22.2 minutes. The most common commute time for residents is 10 to 19 minutes. Only a small percentage of commuters travel an hour or more to work. Concerning when workers leave for their work destination, this greatly varies. The largest percentage of work commutes (31.7%) began in the range of 9:00 a.m. and 11:59 a.m., with the second largest time window (31.5%) being from 8:00 a.m. to 8:59 a.m.

Figure 3.4: Travel Time to Work

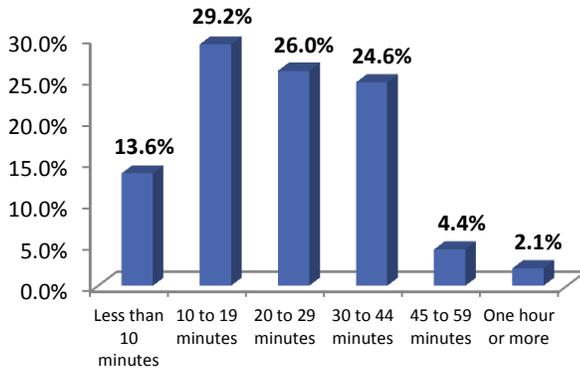
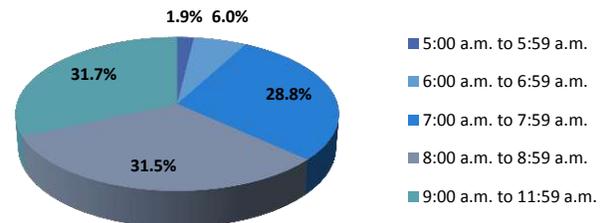


Figure 3.5: Time Leaving Home from Work



Parking Management

In April 2017, a new parking plan was put into effect and enforced in order to improve public safety throughout the Island. Even though 1,700 parking spots were eliminated, parking facilities still exceed demand during peak season.¹ The Town previously allowed day visitors to park on both sides of the street, but now, only one side will be available for parking in order to allow for emergency vehicles to easily access the beach or residences.



NEW "NO PARKING" SIGNS IMPLEMENTED IN THE TOWN. (SOURCE: GRACE BEAHM, POST & COURIER)

Additional sites in the commercial district should be identified as potential parking management projects. One such site includes parking along Middle Street from Station 22 to Town Hall. Both residents and visitors alike are currently parking in the parallel parking stalls for extended periods of time and occupying spaces, thus depleting the parking stall inventory during peak hours such as lunch or the summer season. Potential management for this would be an enforceable two-hour only free parking period. Similar management has been enforced along the Battery, adjacent to White Point Gardens in downtown Charleston.

¹ Findlay, Prentiss. 2017. "Sullivan's rolls out new parking rules for visitors." *The Post & Courier*. https://www.postandcourier.com/news/sullivan-s-rolls-out-new-parking-rules-for-visitors/article_8a60a3e8-fe8d-11e6-ae32-d35ca9fb78ca.html