



## AGENDA

**WORKSHOP MEETING FOR CITY COMMISSION, COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING & ZONING BOARD, AND SUSTAINABILITY & ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2022, AT 5:30 P.M.**

**CITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE BEACH, 2200 A1A South, St. Augustine Beach, FL 32080**

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### NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

*THE CITY COMMISSION HAS ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURE: PERSONS WISHING TO SPEAK ABOUT TOPICS THAT ARE ON THE AGENDA MUST FILL OUT A SPEAKER CARD IN ADVANCE AND GIVE IT TO THE RECORDING SECRETARY. THE CARDS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE BACK OF THE MEETING ROOM. THIS PROCEDURE DOES NOT APPLY TO PERSONS WHO WANT TO SPEAK TO THE COMMISSION UNDER "PUBLIC COMMENTS."*

### RULES OF CIVILITY FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

1. The goal of Commission meetings is to accomplish the public's business in an environment that encourages a fair discussion and exchange of ideas without fear of personal attacks.
2. Anger, rudeness, ridicule, impatience, and lack of respect for others is unacceptable behavior. Demonstrations to support or oppose a speaker or idea, such as clapping, cheering, booing, hissing, or the use of intimidating body language are not permitted.
3. When persons refuse to abide by reasonable rules of civility and decorum or ignore repeated requests by the Mayor to finish their remarks within the time limit adopted by the City Commission, and/or who make threats of physical violence shall be removed from the meeting room by law enforcement officers, either at the Mayor's request or by an affirmative vote of a majority of the sitting Commissioners.

**"Politeness costs so little." – ABRAHAM LINCOLN**

- I. CALL TO ORDER
- II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- III. ROLL CALL
- IV. PROPOSED VISION PLAN
  - A. Review of Plan Prepared by Commissioner England
  - B. Guidance to Staff Concerning the Next Step(s)
- V. ADJOURNMENT

### NOTICES TO THE PUBLIC

1. **NATIONAL NIGHT OUT.** It will be held on Tuesday, October 4, 2022, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at pier park. The hosts are area first responders (law enforcement and fire/rescue).

2. **SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE.** It will hold its monthly meeting on Thursday, October 6, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. in the Commission Meeting Room at City Hall.
3. **COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD.** It will hold its monthly meeting on Tuesday, October 18, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. in the Commission meeting room: Topics on the agenda may include: a) request for a variance to encroach five feet into a 15-foot vegetative buffer for the construction of an inground swimming pool at 103 Whispering Oaks Circle; and b) request for a variance to reduce the side setback from 15 feet to 12 feet three inches for the construction of a new staircase and landing at 201 B Street
4. **EARLY VOTING.** Early voting will begin on Wednesday, October 26, 2022, and will end on Saturday, November 5, 2022. Voting hours: 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Location of polling site for City residents: the Commission meeting room at City Hall, 2200 A1A South.
5. **ELECTION DAY.** It will be Tuesday, November 8, 2022. Voting hours: 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Location of the polling site is City Hall, 2200 A1A South.

**NOTE:**


*The agenda material containing background information for this meeting is available on the City's website in pdf format or on a CD, for a \$5 fee, upon request at the City Manager's office.*

**NOTICES:** In accordance with Florida Statute 286.0105: "If any person decides to appeal any decision made by the City Commission with respect to any matter considered at this scheduled meeting or hearing, the person will need a record of the proceedings, and for such purpose the person may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities act, persons needing a special accommodation to participate in this proceeding should contact the City Manager's Office not later than seven days prior to the proceeding at the address provided, or telephone 904-471-2122, or email [sabadmin@cityofsab.org](mailto:sabadmin@cityofsab.org).

## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Mayor Samora and Commissioners  
Members of Comprehensive Planning and Zoning Board  
Members of Sustainability and Environmental Planning Committee

**FROM:** Max Royle, City Manager  mk

**DATE:** September 27, 2022

**SUBJECT:** Workshop Concerning the Proposed Vision Plan

### **INTRODUCTION**

Commissioner England completed a draft of the proposed Vision Plan in 2021 and early 2022. She presented a draft of it to the Commission at its May 2, 2022, meeting. The Commission asked that the Plan be forwarded to members of the Planning Board and SEPAC for their comments. The Plan and the comments received were reviewed by the Commission at its September 12, 2022, meeting, when the Commission scheduled a workshop with the Planning Board and SEPAC on Wednesday, October 5, 2022.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attached for your review is the following:

- a. Pages 1-2, comments from SEPAC's Chair, Lana Bandy.
- b. Pages 3-4, comments from Planning Board member, R. Conner Dowling.
- c. Pages 5-6, comment from Planning Board member, Gary Smith.
- d. Page 7, a memo from Ms. Bonnie Miller, the City's Senior Planner, in which she provides comments from the Planning Board when it reviewed the Vision Plan at its July 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- e. Pages 8-16, the Vision Plan.

A copy of the above material along with this memo has been provided to the members of both boards before the workshop. Paper copies will be available at the workshop.

### **ROOM ARRANGEMENT FOR THE WORKSHOP**

You've had workshops in the past with the participants seated along tables. That arrangement has caused two difficulties. The first is that the cameras videotaping the meetings cannot "see"

some of the participants. The second is the arrangement makes it difficult for what some speakers say to be heard and recorded.

To remedy these difficulties, the room will be arranged as follows: the Commission seated at the dais with chairs for members of the two boards arranged in a semi-circle in front of the Commission. There will be hand-held microphones for members of the two boards to pass to each other when they want to speak, or a member can use the microphone at the podium.

#### PROCEDURE FOR THE MEETING

We suggest the following:

- Commissioner England explains her reasons for suggesting the Vision Plan and what she would like the workshop to accomplish.
- The City Manager then uses the projectors to display the Vision Plan, beginning with the first page. Commissioners and board members review the Plan section by section and provide comments for changes. For some sections, there may be no suggestions for changes.
- The Commission concludes the workshop with guidance to the staff as to the next steps the Commission wants done for the final draft of the Vision Plan, which the City Clerk, Ms. Fitzgerald, will prepare based on the changes proposed by the Commission and board members.

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for giving SEPAC members the opportunity to review the Vision Plan draft. I am glad to know the City is planning for the future and soliciting feedback on the document. I hope this will continue and you will involve residents as well. I've learned from their attendance at Commission and SEPAC meetings that our residents love the City and have strong thoughts about its future. I hope the final Vision Plan reflects that the City is doing what is best for its residents.

The Vision Plan has some great phrases and goals: "provide more green space in the City" (page 10); "ensure an exceptional quality of life for residents" (page 2); "preserving its natural resources" (page 2); and "reducing waste and consumption" (page 18).

However, the Plan does not make clear how these things will happen. In fact, the **only consistent theme I see in the Vision Plan is more parking, which is in absolute opposition to the three goals above**. The Plan calls for removing much of the City's green space for additional parking – at the pier, all along A1A Beach Boulevard in our parkettes, on the side streets east of A1A, at Ocean Hammock Park, and on the currently undeveloped Hammock Dunes land. This plan is proposing new parking in a huge portion of our City, which is just 2.5 square miles.

I understand that during Spring Break and on Summer weekends, our street parking areas are full. However, the other 300 days of the year, I see many empty parking spaces. We also allow driving and parking on the beach, which means we already have thousands of parking spaces.

I do not understand why we would convert the green space on the public parkettes to parking lots. The residents of the City of St. Augustine Beach have made it very clear that they want green space and do not want more parking: at the standing-room-only Commission meeting during COVID; at our most recent SEPAC meetings; and through the recently American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) survey the City conducted. (Note "improved" parking does not equal "more" parking.) A resident who attended SEPAC's March meeting said that she thought the City had dropped the idea of increasing parking due to public outcry. I'm certain residents will not be happy when they see its emphasis in this Plan.

Residents also do not feel it is fair to use their tax dollars to pay for parking that will be used mainly by tourists and out-of-towners. The question was noted in your January 8, 2018 Commission book: "Should the City's taxpayers pay the costs related to parking that's primarily used by non-City residents, or, more appropriately, should the visitors pay the costs?"

Your thought may be that these visitors will be spending money in St. Augustine Beach, thus helping our businesses. I imagine the average group is spending very little; they are here for the beach, then they return home or to the Old Town for the remainder of the day. You may also think that if we build more parking, tourists will stop parking on A1A Beach near Pope Road and right outside residents' homes. I believe there's an easier way to stop this: put up "no parking" signs and enforce them. The City could actually make money by issuing tickets and/or towing illegally parked vehicles.

Parking lots cost many thousands of dollars – in fact, I was shocked to see that hiring a consultant to devise a plan for improving the parking at Jack's BBQ is \$30,000+. This is *just for a consultant to devise a plan* to improve the current dirt parking area, *not for the actual work* to be done. I can only imagine what the cost would be for the plans and the development of new parking up and down A1A Beach Boulevard and in the parks as well as moving the fire station and beach volleyball courts at the pier.

I should note that SEPAC has been investigating green infrastructure – systems that work with nature to solve flooding and other neighborhood problems that arise from storms and climate issues – for years. We want to hire a consultant to help us come up with solutions to these complicated issues, but the Commission has told us

numerous times that you do not want us to spend a few thousand dollars to tackle the issue. Again, I do not understand prioritizing parking for guests vs. tackling flooding in our streets.

That 2018 Commission book also noted that “A total of \$1,279,189 has been spent on parking improvements since 2004, when the City bought the land north of 10<sup>th</sup> Street for parking and restrooms. Deducting the \$226,500 provided by the County and private business owners for parking improvements and restrooms for beach visitors, the City’s taxpayers have spent \$1,052,689.”

Now this Vision Plan calls for spending millions more. It seems as though the City could use those funds much more wisely.

In addition to more parking, the plan calls paving over other green space to make way for roads, or “connections between A1A Beach Boulevard and State Road A1A on the south end of the City” (page 6). Again, I’m not sure why this would be needed; citizens certainly have not been complaining about a lack of connections between our main roads. The area you have targeted for this – Hammock Dunes – is the last remaining native land in the City, and it is home to numerous animal species.

As you know, once we lose our green space, it is gone for good. The trees, plants, flowers, and animals will never return. This is detrimental to our health and well-being. Numerous studies have shown how crucial nature is to humans—especially children. A recent study found that “growing up deprived of green space is associated with an up to 55% higher risk of mental illness” (World Economic Forum).

In addition, with a lessened tree canopy, the City will significantly increase its chance of severe wind, hurricane, and flooding damage.

Nature is what people love about the City of St. Augustine Beach. By adding more parking, we’re adding more people and more destruction of nature. We will have even more plastic and other trash on the beach, along the boardwalks, and in the ocean, even more dune erosion, and even more noise. Like in the rest of St. Johns County, the fastest-growing county in the state, the gopher tortoises, Anastasia Island Beach mouse, deer, snakes, and other native animals will lose their habitats.

Consider two of our neighbors with distinctly different personalities – Ponte Vedra Beach and Daytona Beach. Do we want to be a quiet, beautiful area like our sister city to the north or a busy, overcrowded tourist destination like the one to our south? With more parking, more people, and more business comes more waste and consumption—also in opposition to the catchphrase in the Vision Plan. It appears that the “pristine beach” that “creates a paradise-like atmosphere for residents” (page 8) is going to be a thing of the past. The Vision Plan notes on the first page that “the City’s character is largely residential;” it seems that this Plan calls to change that.

Thank you for taking this first step in updating the City’s Vision Plan. The Plan has a lot of good ideas like “create a plan to develop the unimproved parkettes with examples of native plants or rain gardens to educate the public about sustainable gardens” (page 7). This is a great starting point. However, I hope that you strongly reconsider paving our green spaces and instead plan for the future sustainability of the City of St. Augustine Beach. The volunteers serving on the Sustainability and Environmental Planning Advisory Committee are dedicated to this and would love to work closely with you in finalizing a Vision Plan that emphasizes the important stated goals of providing more green space in the City, ensuring an exceptional quality of life for residents, and reducing waste and consumption.

Sincerely,

Lana Bandy  
SEPAC Chair

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for your efforts in updating and promoting a Vision plan for our city. I appreciate the time and effort by everyone involved in drafting the document but also keeping the ball rolling with this important topic.

As an architect I see this vision plan as a series of 'master plans' that overlay on one another, each piece providing a more cohesive whole.

From the Draft Vision Plan I've broken out the elements into:

- Transportation (pedestrian, bicycle, car, parking)
- Parkette plan and Green Space (parkettes, and major parks)
- Mixed Use and Commercial (mixed use zoning district, etc)
- Pier Park (all current and future issues associated with and around Pier Park)

The current vision plan mostly refers to A1A Beach blvd, which deserves the most attention, but it would be worth including State Road A1A and State Rd 312 to address the subjects listed above.

The COSAB acts as a gateway to the large southern end of Anastasia island if traveling south, as well as a gateway to downtown St. Augustine if traveling north. Although our community's jurisdiction is limited in size, the adjacent SJC properties will take cues from what COSAB implements from its Vision Plan. While state road A1A's character and use differs greatly from A1A beach blvd, I think it is important to include it when defining the Vision plan. These roads create what are the 'entry corridors' into the COSAB.

In the vision plan the issue of parking and the parkettes along A1A beach blvd are joined together in one category. (heading C, page 4) I would suggest the issue of parking and the parkettes should be looked at as two separate issues. A comprehensive plan and design for the parketts seems to be the best first step. If some or any of the parkettes would make sense as public parking within an overall design framework that should be studied with a design and publicly discussed.

The Vision plan mentions bicycling and bike paths in multiple places. I would suggest a comprehensive Bike plan that would include possible improvements to A1A beach blvd, State road A1A and secondary roads.

Pier Park and its future should be master planned in such a way that it compliments the other items on the Vision plan and vice versa. This is a major piece of the COSA that deserves attention. I agree with all the points made in section H with the exception of relocating the volleyball courts in order to provide more parking. Having recreation along A1A beach blvd keeps the area safer, as people use it in the evening after the beachgoers have left, as well as providing a for a sport meant to be close to the beach.

Lastly, I believe it would be important to include Art in public spaces within the process of planning the parkettes and other public spaces.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the future of the City of St. Augustine Beach. I believe the underlying goals of smart, sustainable livability for our city is the correct approach. We have a unique and beautiful place to promote and enhance for future generations. Whether you are visiting or living in St. Augustine beach, what makes our city special is the northeast Florida coast hammock and beach environments. The more we can plan to enhance the livability within that environment the better.

Sincerely,

R. Conner Dowling, AIA  
Planning and Zoning Board member



## Jennifer Thompson

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**From:** Bonnie Miller  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 05, 2022 2:13 PM  
**To:** Gary Smith  
**Cc:** Max Royle; Jennifer Thompson  
**Subject:** RE: vision plan 2022

Thanks Gary for your questions and comments. They will be included in the packet information for the PZB's July 19, 2022 meeting.

*Bonnie Miller, Senior Planner  
City of St. Augustine Beach  
Building & Zoning Department  
2200 State Road A1A South  
St. Augustine Beach, Florida 32080  
Telephone Number : 904-484-9145  
Email Address: [bmiller@cityofsab.org](mailto:bmiller@cityofsab.org)*

**PLEASE NOTE:** Under Florida law, most communications to and from the City are public records. Your emails, including your email address, may be subject to public disclosure.

Sent from Mail for Windows

**From:** Gary Smith  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 5, 2022 2:01 PM  
**To:** Bonnie Miller  
**Subject:** vision plan 2022

**CAUTION:** This message originated from outside of your organization. Clicking on any link or opening any attachment may be harmful to your computer or the City. If you do not recognize the sender or expect the email, please verify the email address and any attachments before opening. If you have any questions or concerns about the content, please contact IT staff at [IT@cityofsab.org](mailto:IT@cityofsab.org).

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Hello Bonnie,  
I would like to ask questions and add comment about the proposed vision plan 2022.  
Questions:  
What will the design look like for the proposed parking on Pope Rd.  
How will shared parking work for additional parking spaces on A1A Beach Blvd.  
How does this work in parking requirements in urban areas  
Comments:  
I would like to keep the paid parking option open due to advances in technology for payment and monitoring  
Against using tax dollars to restore beach erosion behind the Embassy Hotel  
Include A Street addressing public safety and major corridors  
Against using tax dollars for the "Wade ins Memorial"  
Our volleyball and bocce courts add a charming, picturesque, attractive, unique flavor to our beach side, instead of parking spaces

Moving the courts to the actual beach would be my second recommendation instead of losing its flavor at Ron Parker Park  
Devote less land for parking and more land for green space to preserve why we chose to live here on the island

I would like to thank Commissioner Margaret England, City Manager Max Royal and Mayor Don Samora for the time and hard work that is involved with the Vision 2022 Plan. This project is extremely important in preserving and advancing our city for the years ahead.

Thank you,  
Gary Smith  
Planning and Zoning Board

# MEMO

**To:** Max Royle, City Manager  
**From:** Bonnie Miller, Senior Planner  
**Subject:** 2022 City of St. Augustine Beach Vision Plan  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 20, 2022

Please be advised that at its regular monthly meeting held Tuesday, July 19, 2022, the City of St. Augustine Beach Comprehensive Planning and Zoning Board discussed and provided feedback to be forwarded to the City Commission regarding a proposed 2022 City of St. Augustine Beach Vision Plan.

The general comments and feedback the Board discussed included having more discussion with St. Johns County regarding beach grooming services, picking up trash and keeping the beach clean and trash-free; providing more pedestrian safety measures, such as putting in more crosswalks and utilizing ways to light and draw attention to crosswalks to slow down and stop vehicular traffic; pursuing beautification of the City's plazas and providing better signage to clearly identify public parking areas on City plazas; providing a conceptual master plan and vision for City plazas; and finding ways to strike a balance between maintaining the quality of life and meeting the needs of residents and providing additional parking and amenities for visitors and tourism. The Board agreed, by general oral consensus, to move forward with the development of the City's vision plan and the scheduling of a joint community workshop meeting of the City Commission, Planning and Zoning Board, Sustainability and Environmental Planning Advisory Committee (SEPAC), and members of the public, to further discuss how the City's vision plan should evolve and what it should entail.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The City of St. Augustine Beach is located five miles southeast of St. Augustine and is approximately 2.5 square miles in area. Its boundaries are Anastasia State Park (north), Atlantic Ocean (east), western boundary of State Road A1A, except for subdivisions and other properties west of that highway that have been annexed into the City; and the southern boundary of the Sandpiper Village subdivision. The City's main industry is tourism with numerous hotels, motels and restaurants along its main street, A1A Beach Boulevard. Though the beach and ocean are the magnets that attract thousands of overnight and day visitors from interior areas of Florida and many states for swimming, sunbathing, fishing and surfing, the City's character is largely residential with an estimated 2021 population of 6,888.

### **ILLUSTRATION #1**

## **II. VISION STATEMENT**

St. Augustine Beach is an ocean-front paradise committed to preserving its natural resources, inspiring a socially responsible and engaged citizenry by means of communication, transparency and accountability, and supporting a safe and exceptional quality of life for its residents and visitors.

## **III. MISSION STATEMENT**

To maintain and enhance standards and activities that will ensure an exceptional quality of life for residents and visitors through effective and efficient municipal services.

## **IV. PURPOSE OF THE 2006 VISION PLAN**

In 2006, the City Commission hired a consultant, Wallace, Roberts and Todd, to do the City's first vision plan. The Commission appointed a 14-member Vision Plan Steering Committee, to develop the plan with the consultant and the Planning Board. The 2006 Vision Plan had five basic purposes:

1. To establish a coherent long-term vision for the A1A Beach Boulevard corridor, both in the public and private realms, by identifying community aspirations and integrating prior initiatives.
2. To proactively manage the growing pressure for redevelopment and infill by determining a desirable mix of land uses, intensities, and visual character of development, and by modifying development standards and regulations accordingly.
3. To activate the corridor and create a sense of identity and community by identifying opportunities for nodes of mixed activity at key locations.
4. To maximize the utility of City-owned squares (plazas or parkettes) by identifying optimal uses and potential design prototypes, in line with the vision for the corridor.

5. To enhance the overall visual aspect and functionality of the corridor by creating pedestrian and bicycle linkages, providing amenities and enhancing parking opportunities.

## **V. RESULTS OF THE 2006 VISION PLAN**

The Vision Plan was focused on the City's "main street," A1A Beach Boulevard. Several of the actions/projects listed in the 2006 Plan have been implemented and several have not been accepted:

1. Building height limits strengthened.
2. Business sign regulations updated.
3. The mixed use district was enacted and applies to a section of Boulevard between Pope Road and F Street. However, certain recommended modifications to the Land Development Regulations were not done.
4. Some design guidelines for buildings along the Boulevard were included in mixed-use district regulations.
5. The Comprehensive Plan was amended in 2020 to incorporate a mixed-used district as a land-use type.
6. Initiatives Not Accepted or Created:
  - Activity center
  - A Street Town Center
  - One goal in the 2006 Plan was to investigate funding/grant opportunities for parking and open space/recreation improvements for the plazas/parkettes along the Boulevard. The grant sources listed were: Florida Communities Trust/Florida Forever program, Florida Land and Water Conservation Fund, Community Development Block Grant program, Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program, National Scenic Byways Program, Greenways and Recreational Trails Program, and Federal Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery Program. However, none of these applied to the very small (under a quarter acre) plazas/parkettes in the City. Rather, the City sought Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program grants for the much larger Ocean Hammock Park.
  - Initiate a dialogue with the County for possibly changing the name of A1A Beach Boulevard to Beach Boulevard was rejected.
  - Create logo for banners, signage and marketing material in conjunction with creating town centers at A Street and the City's north end. As the centers weren't created, the logo wasn't created.

## **VI. EXISTING CONDITIONS**

- A. As part of the foundation for the development of the 2022 Vision Plan, the following are existing features or characteristics that are beneficial to the City:

1. Public beach accesses: over twenty-five (25) beach access points.
2. Five (5) public parks.
3. Three (3) major pedestrian walkways.

4. Over one thousand hotel/motel rooms available to visitors, in addition to private bed-and-breakfasts and short-term rentals.
5. Two hundred twenty (220) small businesses, including four banks, and chain and non-chain restaurants and stores.
6. Fifty-two (52) public parkettes.
7. St. Augustine Beach Hotel and Beachfront received U.S. National Park Service "National Register of Historic Places," January 2022.

#### **ILLUSTRATION #2**

- B. The following are existing features in the City that are unlikely to change and thus will not be addressed in the Plan:

1. **Road network:** If no new subdivisions are created, there'll likely be no addition to the existing road network. Nearly all of the existing roads have been paved. Comprehensive network of paved roads, including arterial highways (SR A1A) and A1A Beach Boulevard, plus County-owned collector streets and City-owned residential streets that provide access to all residential subdivisions.
2. **New subdivisions:** It is unlikely that there will be any significant new subdivisions because there are no large tracts in the City nor are there any large, vacant tracts adjacent to the City that could be annexed and developed as new subdivisions.
3. **Water and sewer systems:** Except for upgrades, it is unlikely that the County-owned potable water system currently in place throughout the City will be changed. There is only one small area without a connection to the County-owned sewer system.
4. **Major commercial development:** Only one large commercial tract remains between 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> streets, west of A1A Beach Boulevard. However, renovation is possible in other buildings or buildings destroyed by fire or flood.
5. **Parkland:** Within its limits, the City already has five City- and County-owned parks, which are sufficient for the City's population of about 7000 residents. Also, because of the high level of the City's current long-term debt, the City is unlikely to incur additional debt in order to buy more parkland for recreation/open space purposes, or to provide a match for a grant to buy additional parkland.

#### **VII. PURPOSE OF THE 2022 VISION PLAN**

Since 2006, cities have emphasized the use of technology and data to become more efficient and to prioritize planning to meet such new challenges as sustainability and climate change. Many cities now collect and make optimal use of all the interconnected data, information and communication technologies to address the issues and challenges with the goal of achieving efficient and sustainable infrastructure. Use of such technologies has created the phrase "Smart City," the goals of which are to improve the quality of life for City residents by:

- -Enhancing performance
- -Optimizing resources
- -Reducing waste and consumption

## **VIII. SMART CITY PROJECTS**

To meet the goals listed above, the following are suggested projects for the 2022 Smart City Vision Plan:

### **A. Zoning and Land Use Ordinances**

The City shall remain proactive in the maintenance and upkeep of its land use ordinances and Comprehensive Plan. Suggested improvements include:

1. Encourage desired commercial and mixed-use development and redevelopment by means of a thorough review of parking and shared parking ideas, thoughtful and realistic buffers between land uses, and continued efforts to explore the use of flexible setbacks in commercial areas.
2. Develop architectural design features and restrictions for buildings along A1A Beach Boulevard, both commercial and those allowed for residential use by conditional use permits, in order to maintain the City's beach culture and character. Guidelines should be created to address the following:
  - rooflines
  - uninterrupted planes or walls
  - allowance for architectural features, such as cupolas
  - setbacks
  - parking
  - landscaping

### **B. Safe and Complete Streets**

The City is committed to providing safe and walkable streets, public parking, as well as easy access to the beach. Initiatives include:

1. Identify additional thru streets or sidewalks between F Street and the shopping center to increase the City's walkability by providing connections between A1A Beach Boulevard and State Road A1A on the south end of the City.
2. Identify streets where sidewalks are needed and budget for repair of existing sidewalks.
3. Underground utilities wherever street construction is done.
4. Provide additional and improved streetlighting.
5. Participate with St. Augustine on studies to increase mobility between the two cities.
6. Provide speed calming devices in certain high-traffic streets, such as Pope Road and A Street.
7. Work with the County on providing measures for safety of pedestrians using the crosswalks on A1A Beach Boulevard and other County Roads in the City.
8. Actively participate in the proposed River-to-Sea Loop.

### **C. Parking and Use of Parkettes**

The City is unusually blessed with 52 parkettes, which can be used for mini-parks or landscaped areas to beautify A1A Beach Boulevard, or utilized as appropriate and necessary for public parking in commercial zones. Illustration 4 shows the locations of these parkettes: nine that are improved for parking, eight that are currently landscaped park areas, and 35 that are undeveloped.

The demand for more parking by out-of-town visitors, the need to encourage tourism and to stimulate the economy versus the desire of residents to maintain the laid-back and safe, pedestrian-oriented beach community creates a conflict for the use of these parkettes. However, the following guidelines may assist in the future development of the parkettes and improved parking:

1. Restrict the use of the parkettes for improved parking to commercial areas along A1A Beach Boulevard.
2. Review and update City parking requirements in commercial zoning district. Take into consideration pedestrian, bicycle traffic, recent trends in parking requirements for urban areas, shared parking, and need to encourage commercial and mixed use along A1A Beach Boulevard.
3. Designate by a numbering system the improved and unimproved parking spaces in the City and through the use of technology to enable visitors to find open or unused parking spaces.
4. Encourage St. Johns County to provide improved parking spaces along County-owned streets in the City, such as Pope Road. By letter dated August 26, 2021, the City officially requested additional public parking on Pope Road.
5. Keep paid parking as a viable option in conjunction with decisions by the County concerning having paid parking in areas it owns that are in the City's limits.
6. Investigate having possible parallel parking spaces along the side streets east of A1A Beach Boulevard.
7. Create a plan to develop the unimproved parkettes with examples of native plants or rain gardens to educate the public about sustainable gardens.

#### **D. Beach-Related Matters**

##### **ILLUSTRATION #3**

The pristine beach within the City is one of its most beautiful assets. It attracts tourists, contributes to the economy and creates a paradise-like atmosphere for residents. Therefore, it is imperative that the City give high priority to the following beach-related matters:

1. Work with County for periodic beach restoration projects to restore sand to eroded sections of the beach.
2. Provide more improved beach walkovers for public access to the beach.
3. Participate in sea oats planting projects to strengthen dunes that protect the beach from erosion.

##### **ILLUSTRATION #4**

#### **E. Sustainability and Resiliency**



Sustainability means the ability to withstand efficiently and economically a changing environment and climate. Resiliency indicates how quickly a city can recover from an unusual event, be it economic- or weather-related.

The City has obtained an up-to-date Vulnerability Study and is in the process of revising its Master Stormwater Drainage Plan. HAVE BILL ADD TO THIS SECTION, SUCH AS HOW OFTEN TO UPDATE THE PLAN AND HOW TO WORK WITH THE COUNTY.

The City shall pursue the following initiatives to protect and develop its sustainability:

1. Provide more green space in the City.
2. Purchase electric vehicles when their prices are reduced to make them competitive with fossil fuel-powered vehicles.
3. Retrofit City buildings to make them more energy efficient.

#### **F. Public Safety**

The City is characterized by a very active pedestrian and bicyclist community. There are several major pedestrian corridors, such as Mickler Boulevard, 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and A1A Beach Boulevard. These corridors shall be preserved. Protected and improved as much as possible for pedestrians, bicyclists and types of micro-mobility, as appropriate.

Other initiatives for Public Safety improvements include:

1. Improve crosswalks on A1A Beach Boulevard by means of technology, lights and audio.
2. Continually identify the need for, and location of, additional crosswalks.
3. Purchase body cameras for officers when the Sheriff's Office and St. Augustine mandate their use.

#### **ILLUSTRATION #5**

#### **G. Parks/Recreation**

There are five (5) parks in the City, either City- or County-owned:

1. Pier Park (County)
2. Ron Parker Park (County)
3. Lakeside Park (City)
4. Ocean Hammock Park (City)
5. Hammock Dunes Park (City)

Also, the beach could be considered a park because it offers areas for such recreation activities as swimming, fishing, volleyball, jogging, surfing and the numerous games, such as horseshoe throwing, that persons bring to the beach.

These parks provide sufficient park and recreation space for a city the size of St. Augustine Beach (2.5 square miles in area with about 7,000 residents). It is unlikely that any future parkland will be available, nor will the City take on additional debt to acquire more parkland. Therefore, it is advisable that the City adopt policies and pursues initiatives to develop the highest and best use of these properties.

3. Create a Civil Rights memorial to commemorate the "Wade Ins" which occurred on the segregated St. Augustine Beach during the summer of 1964.
4. Investigate the possibility of renovation of the second floor of the old city hall (St. Augustine Beach Hotel and Beachfront) and further preservation. Working with the St. Johns County Cultural Council explore available grants to preserve the property, improve its economic usefulness and highlight its historical significance.
5. Investigate and discuss in a public forum possible other uses of the property, such as a community center on A1A Beach Boulevard, a raised boardwalk or raise retail buildings with parking underneath and/or storage for the St. Augustine Beach Police Department, County Marine Rescue and vendors.

#### **IX. TIMETABLE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND ADOPTION OF 2022 PLAN**

The suggested schedule is:

- a. January-March 2022: Commissioner England, City Manager and City staff complete first draft and forward it to the City Commission.
- b. April 4, 2022: Commission reviews draft and forwards it to the Planning Board and SEPAC for review and recommendations for changes.
- c. May 2, 2022: Commission reviews proposed changes and schedules community workshop with residents and members of SEPAC and Planning Board to discuss the Plan.
- d. June 2022: Commission holds community workshop.
- e. July 2022: Commission discusses results of the community workshop and directs that changes be made to the Vision Plan.
- f. August 2022: Commission reviews revised Vision Plan and directs that it be provided to the Planning Board and SEPAC for their review and schedules date in October for a workshop with both boards.
- g. October 2022, Commission and board workshop held.
- h. November 2022, the Commission decides the details for a draft of the 2022 Vision Plan.
- i. December 2022, draft submitted to Commission, Planning Board and SEPAC for review and comment.
- j. January 2023, Commission schedules public hearing with Planning Board and SEPAC to decide final draft of 2022 Vision Plan.

1. **Pier Park (four acres):** Both the City and the County own parcels within this Park, which is a critical destination point for beach access, recreational activities and special events. The City is actively working with St. Johns County to maximize the Park's highest and best use. The County has agreed to move the fire station to another location near the City. This relocation will provide an opportunity to demolish outdated buildings to create more parking and to obtain grants to build a community center on the fire station site close to A1A Beach Boulevard. If sports facilities such as the volleyball and bocce courts are moved to Ron Parker Park, more space would be available at Pier Park for parking and special events.
2. **Ron Parker Park (four acres):** The City will work with the County to maintain existing sports-related facilities, such as paddle tennis courts, and to create new ones, such as moving the volleyball and bocce courts from Pier Park.
3. **Lakeside Park (one acre):** It is located on the north side of 11<sup>th</sup> Street adjacent to the City's Police Department. It currently contains a veterans' memorial, sculpture garden, walk/bicycle path, picnic area and a dock by the lake.
4. **Ocean Hammock Park (18 acres):** The City has obtained grants and having design and permitting work done for certain amenities, such as restrooms, trails and an overlook. Other grants will also be sought. The grants will enable the City to complete the management plan that it agreed to do as a condition of the grants from the Florida Communities Trust to purchase the property.
5. **Hammock Dunes Park (six acres):** It is located on the west side of A1A Beach Boulevard and north of the shopping center. It has no trails, walkways or other amenities for the public. Possible amenities are a walk trail through it, plus a parking area and restrooms. A long-range park use plan should be developed and then grant funding sought to construct the amenities that the residents and Commission decide the Park should have.

#### **H. Historic Preservation and Best Use of Pier Park**

Pier Park is a major destination for both residents and visitors to St. Augustine Beach. It provides beach access, a place for events, such as the weekly farmers' market, music-by-the-sea summer concerts, wedding and any more special and seasonal events. Some suggestions to improve this Park, preserve the historical civil rights significance and provide additional parking include but are not limited to the following:

#### **ILLUSTRATION #7**

1. Relocate the County fire station. The fire station is outdated and St. Johns County has listed its relocation (possibly to the Anastasia Mosquito Control District property) in its five-year capital improvements plan.
2. Relocate beach volleyball and bocce courts to Ron Parker Sports Park and/or provide access to volleyball on the actual beach. Moving these recreational activities to other equally accessible locations will provide more parking at a major destination.

k. February 6, 2023: Commission adopts the Vision Plan.