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## COTI Acts To Help Improve Traffic Situation

COTI Members & Friends:

As you know, our organization has been working on the Sanibel traffic issue. We have received input from dozens of COTI Members and Friends. We have actively contributed to the two Traffic Workshops lead by Mayor Kevin Ruane. Via email, Facebook and Twitter, COTI continued to encourage Sanibel citizens to get involved and let their voice be heard. You can read more: [Click Here to read the COTI Traffic Workshop Report.](#)

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### Letter to City Council

*In September we sent the following letter to City Council:*

COTI again thanks Council for its efforts on the traffic congestion issue.

In terms of future Council action, both immediate and long-term, COTI suggests that emphasis be placed on those actions that offer the promise of

changing behavior of casual day visitors  
- of creating an environment that, when traffic volumes on the Island are high, some of those potential visitors will be persuaded to come on a different day, or better yet, a different month.

We propose the following:

- **Vehicle counts and other data be collected at all beach parking areas for the purpose of determining the extent to which each lot is filled.** This information could be periodically disseminated during the morning hours using digital "apps," websites and off-island signage. Knowledge of the unavailability of beach parking will dissuade some from coming.
- **We suggest that the City work with LeeWay to obtain similar realtime information for the number of vehicles entering the causeway, and to obtain LeeWay's commitment to publish such data at various times during the morning hours.** Using this raw data and making comparisons to historical data, forecasts could be made and disseminated as to the degree of traffic congestion expected later that day.
- **Seasonal pricing for both beach parking and causeway tolls should be pursued.** We appreciate the rationale for the pending increase in beach parking rates, and we understand the practical difficulty of changing causeway tolls. Nevertheless, the combination of higher tolls for, say, January through April, for un-discounted tolls, combined with higher beach parking rates during that same time period, will send the message that visitors to our island are welcome, but visiting during the non-season months is more economical. > Note: The Sanibel Council has acted on an increase in beach parking fees which will be in force soon.
- **Sanibel residents were very excited when, in 2012, the travel guru Arthur Frommer ranked Sanibel first among his 10 favorite places to visit -- in the world.** Since then, Sanibel has received many accolades and is now nationally recognized. This publicity, along with extensive commercial advertising, created last spring the worst traffic congestion we have experienced for many years. We can reasonably expect congestion will get worse. In response, we suggest that the City run a proactive public relations campaign in Lee County, in consultation with the Sanibel-Captiva Chamber of Commerce, CASI, COTI and others, welcoming visitors to Sanibel along with a recommendation to select their arrival time carefully. Run this campaign January through April with support from the latest data and pictures on congestion. This may deter some visitors. It will at least provide forewarning of delays, and should moderate negative attitudes about Sanibel.



We don't have to dissuade all day visitors from coming - just some of them. Thanks again for your efforts in dealing with traffic congestion on Sanibel. COTI is always willing to assist.

Mike Miller, Chair

COTI Traffic Committee

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## Follow Up Actions

Since sending the letter, COTI board members have met with representatives of CASI, the Chamber of Commerce, Ding Darling Wildlife Society, SCCF and some Council members individually. We've discussed COTI's suggestions, and the reactions have generally been very supportive.



Stay tuned and please pass this message to your friends and neighbors. Thank you.

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***To learn more about this important Sanibel traffic issue and other news:***  
***[CLICK HERE](#)***

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***We welcome your comments, suggestions or personal involvement  
in the COTI mission.***

***Please write to us at [coti@coti.org](mailto:coti@coti.org)***

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