

TOWN COUNCIL

STAFF REPORT



MEETING DATE:	August 11, 2026
PROJECT:	Consideration of an Ordinance to Amend the Town of Bluffton's Municipal Code of Ordinances, Chapter 13 – Public Property, Article II. Public Park, Dock and Boat Landing Rules to include Dock Rules for the New Riverside Trail
PROJECT MANAGER:	Heather Colin, AICP, Assistant Town Manager

REQUEST: Request Town Council's approval of first reading of an Ordinance amending the Town's Code of Ordinances to include the dock at the New Riverside Trail and to amend general dock and park rules.

BACKGROUND: Improvements to the New Riverside Trail have been supported in the Town's Comprehensive Plan in 2014 and later in Blueprint Bluffton 2020. The trail is a multipurpose 3 mile pathway that originates on the banks of the New River, extends northward along an abandoned railway and powerlines to Sun City.

The project was initially included as a new action agenda item in FY2022 which included improvements to the parking lot, the addition of a restroom and paving the trail to improve accessibility to all citizens.

With changes in technology and trends, the Town has experienced damage to public property with the use of E-bikes and other motorized mobility vehicles both in bathrooms and on grounds. The proposed ordinance changes are intended to both educate users and allow clear enforcement.

Other damage and potential injury is being addressed with general amendments from people using the dock and structures not as intended, which can either damage public property or endanger the users. The amendments are intended to educate users and allow for clear enforcement.

SUMMARY: The proposed amendments are intended to educate the users and the public for structures located in our parks as well as docks and dock structures. It will also allow law enforcement to enforcement the rules to protect the community.

CONSIDERATIONS:

- Approve First Reading of the Proposed Ordinance
- Approve First Reading with Modifications of the Proposed Ordinance
- Deny First Reading of the Proposed Ordinance

NEXT STEPS: If Town Council approves first reading of this Ordinance, the following actions will occur:

- Second and Final Reading – October 14, 2025
- Staff will meet with South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) and Beaufort County to establish the associated procedures.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Proposed Ordinance
2. Proposed Motion