



PLANNING COMMISSION
October 14, 2026

The public may view the public meeting at:
www.youtube.com/user/cityofisleofpalms

Public Comment: Citizens may provide public comment here:
<https://www.isleofpalms.gov/public-comment-form>

AGENDA

The Isle of Palms Planning Commission will hold its regular meeting on Wednesday, October 14, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. in Council Chambers of City Hall, 1207 Palm Boulevard.

- A. Call to order and acknowledgment that the press and the public were duly notified in accordance with state law.
- B. Approval of minutes- September 9, 2026
- C. Review of Council request for discussion of commercial district parking requirements
- D. Miscellaneous business
- E. Adjourn



**Planning Commission Meeting
4:00pm, Wednesday, September 9, 2026
1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, SC and
broadcasted live on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/cityofisleofpalms>**

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Present: Ron Denton, Bill Laughlin, Sandy Stone, Tim Ahmuty, Sue Nagelski, Jeffrey Rubin

Absent: Rich Steinert

Staff present: Administrator Kerr

2. Approval of minutes

MOTION: Mr. Stone made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 12, 2026 meeting. Mr. Laughlin seconded the motion.

Ms. Nagelski noted that she was present via Zoom at the August 12 meeting.

VOTE: A vote was taken on the minutes as amended with all in favor.

3. Discussion of commercial district parking requirements

Administrator Kerr reminded the Commissioners of the impetus for the discussion regarding commercial district parking requirements. He offered some options for their consideration: "One would be a very tailored approach, kind of looking at what they are requesting, making the smallest adjustment that is practical to give them what they are asking for. That would be one way to do it if you chose to do that. Another option would be to kind of assume a blank slate and make recommendations based on what you think fits the district best blind to their particular situation."

Mr. Simons further elaborated on his intentions for the new building, including dry storage underneath, no live music, and closing by 10pm.

After some discussion, Mr. Laughlin offered a motion supporting Administrator Kerr's first scenario.

MOTION: Mr. Laughlin made a motion to rezone the entire block to GC-2 and reduce the parking requirement by 25%, specifying the TMS numbers to be included in that change. Mr. Stone seconded the motion.

Administrator Kerr pointed out that with those changes in mind, it would be easier administratively to adjust the text of the zoning ordinance to make that change than to actually change the zoning.

Mr. Laughlin withdrew his motion, and Mr. Stone withdrew his second.

MOTION: Mr. Denton made a motion to leave the GC-3 district intact, change the front yard setbacks from 25' to 0', and allow for a 25% reduction in the parking requirements for restaurants located in the district. Dr. Rubin seconded the motion.

Administrator Kerr said the reduction in the parking requirements will not help the restaurant during construction, but they will work with the City on an agreement to use the nearby municipal lot.

VOTE: A vote was taken as follows:

Ayes: Stone, Ahmuty, Denton, Rubin

Nays: Laughlin, Nagelski

The motion passed 4-2.

4. Discussion of IOP Mobility Study by BCD Council of Governments

Administrator Kerr reported that City Council has received the study from BCDCOG and would like the Planning Commission to prioritize the projects by cost, identifying five priority projects within each of the low-, medium-, and high-cost categories.

Commissioners were asked to review the study over the next month and bring their suggestions to the October meeting.

5. Miscellaneous

The next meeting of the Planning Commission will be Wednesday, October 14, 2026 at 4:00pm.

6. Adjournment

Mr. Stone made a motion to adjourn, and Dr. Rubin seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:18pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nicole DeNeane
City Clerk

CITY OF ISLE OF PALMS

South Carolina



MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

C: members of the Planning Commission

FROM: Douglas Kerr, City Administrator 

RE: Ordinance 2026-10 – Planning Commission Recommendation Regarding GC-3 District

DATE: September 16, 2026

City Council previously referred to the Planning Commission a request associated with the proposed reconstruction of Acme Lowcountry Kitchen. The Planning Commission discussed the request at its August 12 and September 9, 2026 meetings and ultimately recommended limited amendments to the GC-3 zoning regulations. Those recommendations are incorporated into Ordinance 2026-10 (see attached).

The Commission considered several approaches, including options considerably broader than the amendments now before Council, but they ultimately recommended a limited approach. They recommend:

Leave the existing GC-3 zoning district intact;
Reduce the GC-3 front-yard setback from 25 feet to zero feet; and
Reduce the required off-street parking for restaurants in GC-3 by 25 percent.

Importantly, Ordinance 2026-10 does not resolve Acme's parking needs during construction. The Commission was specifically advised that the 25 percent permanent reduction would not solve the temporary construction-parking issue and that Acme would need to work separately with the City regarding use of the nearby municipal parking lot.

Sec. 5-4-36. GC-1 and GC-3 general commercial districts.

(a) In addition to all other applicable requirements of this chapter and other City ordinances, the requirements for the GC-1 district are as follows:

- (1) *Purpose.* The purpose of the GC-1 general commercial district is:
 - a. To encourage the development of a less densely constructed, economically healthy business environment with family-oriented businesses directed primarily to island residents in buildings designed and sited to accommodate automobile and pedestrian traffic.
 - b. To discourage uses which generate noise, vibration, glare, dust and odor or are offensive to the health, safety and morals of a residential, family-oriented community.
- (2) *Permitted uses.* See section 5-4-38 for uses permitted in the GC-1 general commercial district.
- (3) *Minimum yard requirements.* Minimum yard requirements in the GC-1 general commercial district are as follows:
 - a. *Front yard:* Zero feet (0').
 - b. *Side yard:* Ten feet (10').
 - c. *Rear yard:* Fifteen feet (15').
 - d. *Lot frontage:* Twenty feet (20') on a public or private street.Vehicle access to the lot from a public or private street shall be provided within the required lot frontage.
- (4) *Maximum height.* The maximum height in the GC-1 general commercial district shall be forty feet (40').
- (5) *Additional development requirements.* Refuse containers shall be screened from public view with materials compatible with principal structure or landscaping.

(b) In addition to all other applicable requirements of this chapter and other City ordinances, the requirements for the GC-3 district are as follows:

- (1) *Purpose.* The purpose of the GC-3 general commercial district is:
 - a. To encourage the development of a less densely constructed, economically healthy business environment with family-oriented businesses directed primarily to island residents in buildings designed and sited to accommodate automobile and pedestrian traffic, and to allow development of single-family dwellings subject to certain restrictions.
 - b. To discourage uses which generate noise, vibration, glare, dust and odor or are offensive to the health, safety and morals of a residential, family-oriented community.
- (2) *Permitted uses.* See section 5-4-38 for uses permitted in the GC-3 general commercial district.
- (3) *Minimum yard requirements.* Minimum yard requirements in the GC-3 general commercial district are as follows:
 - a. *Front yard:* ~~Zero~~ **Twenty-five** feet (**025'**).
 - b. *Side yard:* Ten feet (10').
 - c. *Rear yard:* Fifteen feet (15').
 - d. *Lot frontage:* Twenty feet (20') on a public or private street.

Vehicle access to the lot from a public or private street shall be provided within the required lot frontage.

- (4) *Maximum height.* The maximum height in the GC-3 general commercial district shall be forty feet (40').
- (5) *Additional development requirements.* Additional development requirements in the GC-3 general commercial district are as follows:
- a. Refuse containers shall be screened from public view with materials compatible with principal structure or landscaping.
 - b. See section 5-4-38(12) for additional regulations regarding single-family dwellings.

(Ord. No. 2015-15, § 1, 2-23-2016)

ARTICLE 6. PARKING AND LOADING

Sec. 5-4-111. Purpose of requirements.

Unless otherwise stated in this chapter, areas suitable for parking or storing automobiles in off-street locations shall be required in all zoning districts at the time of the initial construction of any principal building; or when a structural alteration or other change in a principal building results in an increase in dwelling units, guestrooms, floor area, seating or bed capacity, or which changes the use so as to require more parking to serve such use, or when a change in use occurs. Such off-street parking area shall have direct access to a street or alley, and shall be landscaped in accordance with a plan as approved by the Zoning Administrator.

(Code 1994, § 5-4-111)

Sec. 5-4-112. Required parking spaces.

The number of off-street parking spaces shall be calculated on the basis of the use of the land or principal building on a lot, according to requirements indicated in columns 2 and 3:

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3
Use or Use Category	Parking Spaces Required	Additional Requirements
Residential uses:		
One-family dwelling	One (1) space (does not have to be paved)	
Two-family dwelling	Two (2) spaces (same as above)	
Multifamily dwelling townhouse/condominium	Two (2) spaces per dwelling unit	
Boardinghouse/roominghouse	One (1) space per each sleeping room	Plus one (1) space per employee
Group dwelling	One space per each two (2) bedrooms	
Public and semipublic uses:		
Medical and dental office and outpatient clinic	One (1) space per each two hundred (200) square feet of gross floorspace (minimum of four (4) spaces)	

	Church or other places of worship	One (1) space per five (5) fixed seats in main assembly hall	Or five (5) spaces per classroom, whichever is greater
	Places of public assembly or recreation containing main assembly room	One (1) space per each one hundred (100) square feet of gross floor area in the main assembly room	
	Country club or golf club	One (1) space per each five (5) members	Plus one (1) space/two (2) employees
	Library, museum, art gallery or similar building	Ten (10) spaces	Plus one (1) space per each five hundred (500) square feet of floor area
	Club, fraternity, sorority or lodge	One (1) space per sleeping room or suite	Or one (1) space/five (5) members, whichever is greater, one (1) space per each three (3) employees
Commercial uses:			
	Office buildings	One (1) space per three hundred (300) feet of gross floor area (four (4) spaces minimum)	
	Bank, savings and loan or similar lending establishment	One (1) space per each two hundred (200) square feet of gross floorspace	
	Service or repair establishments	One (1) space per each two hundred fifty (250) square feet of gross floor area not used for storage	
	Retail business not otherwise specifically mentioned	One (1) space per each two hundred fifty (250) square feet of gross retail floorspace not used for storage (three (3) spaces minimum)	Plus one (1) space per employee
	Theater, nightclub, bar and similar places of assembly	Two (2) spaces per each four (4) seating accommodations	Plus one (1) space per each three (3) employees on shift of greatest employment.
	Automobile service station	One (1) space per employee but in all cases, a minimum of five (5) spaces	Plus one (1) space per each grease rack or wash rack
	Motel, hotel and tourist court	One (1) space per sleeping room or suite	Plus one (1) space per each three (3) employees
	Furniture, home furnishings, appliance, machinery, equipment, automotive farm and boat sales and service	One (1) space per three hundred (300) square feet of retail floor area (three (3) spaces minimum)	Except that automobile sales and service must have ten (10) spaces minimum
	Shopping center	Five and one-half (5½) spaces per one thousand (1,000) square feet of gross leaseable area	
	Restaurant	One (1) space per each four (4) seats	Plus one (1) space per each three (3) employees on shift of greatest employment

	Drive-in restaurant	One (1) space per each thirty-five (35) square feet of gross building area	Plus one (1) space per each three (3) employees on shift of greatest employment
	Take-out restaurant	One (1) space per each one hundred (100) square feet of gross building area	Plus one (1) space per each three (3) employees on shift of greatest employment

(Code 1994, § 5-4-112)

Sec. 5-4-113. Application of parking requirements.

- (a) Location of off-street parking areas. Except as provided in section 5-4-113~~(ih)~~ and section 5-4-115, all parking spaces required herein shall be located on the same lot with the principal building or use or uses served.
- (b) *Mixed uses.* Where more than one (1) principal or accessory use, whether with the same or different parking requirements, occupy the same building or premises or in the case of joint use of a building or premises, by more than one (1) use having the same parking requirements, the parking spaces required shall equal the sum of the requirements of the various uses computed separately.
- (c) *Change in use, alteration of use, or extension of use.* Off-street parking spaces shall be provided in accordance with these regulations whenever a building or use is changed, altered, or enlarged in floor area, number of employees, number of dwelling units, seating capacity or otherwise.
- (d) *Requirements for uses not specifically listed.* The parking space requirements for a use not specifically listed in section 5-4-112 shall be the same as for a listed use of similar characteristics of parking demand, as determined by the Zoning Administrator.
- (e) *Compilation of total employment.* Except as otherwise provided, the number of employees shall determined based on the maximum number of employees at the premises at any one time on an average day or average night, whichever number is greater. Seasonal variations in employment may be considered in determining an average day.
- (f) *Fractional computation.* Where fractional spaces result, the parking spaces required shall be construed to be the next higher whole number.
- (g) *Requirements for GC-2 district.* Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter to the contrary, off-street parking is permitted within the GC-2 district on any lot which contains at least one hundred twenty feet (120') of frontage on a public street. Any automobile parking pursuant to this section shall comply with the provisions of section 5-4-12(n) and (o). There shall be no off-street parking permitted for any lot within the GC-2 district which contains less than one hundred twenty feet (120') of frontage on a public street.
- ~~(h)~~ *Requirements for restaurants in the GC-3 district.* Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter to the contrary, the total number of off-street parking spaces required by Section 5-4-112 shall be reduced by 25% for restaurants within the GC-3 district.
- ~~(ih)~~ *Parking spaces in public right-of-way in commercial districts.* Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter to the contrary, the calculation of the number of parking spaces required in the commercial districts pursuant to section 5-4-112 may include any parking spaces in the public right-of-way that are located on the same side of the street and contiguous to the lot with the principal building or use or uses served.

(Code 1994, § 5-4-113; Ord. No. 2015-11, § 3, 9-29-2015)

Sec. 5-4-114. Area and paving required for parking spaces.

Excluding aisles, maneuvering space, turnaround space, and drives, each required off-street parking area, lot, or other facility shall contain a minimum of one hundred eighty (180) square feet, nine feet (9') in width and twenty feet (20') in length for each automobile to be accommodated. Off-street parking spaces are not required to be paved. A scale drawing or layout of all required parking areas showing the location, size, and arrangement of the individual parking spaces, loading spaces, drives, lighting diagram and landscaped areas and the type of surface material used in the parking and drive areas shall be submitted to the Zoning Administrator for his approval.

(Code 1994, § 5-4-114; Ord. No. 2015-11, § 4, 9-29-2015)

Sec. 5-4-115. Joint use of off-street parking areas.

Two (2) or more principal uses may utilize a common area in order to comply with off-street parking requirements, provided that the total number of individual parking spaces available in such common area is not less than the sum of the parking spaces required for the individual uses as separately computed in accordance with the provisions of this section, and provided that where such space is not located on the same lot as the principal use or uses, the owner of such space relinquishes through a covenant agreement with the City his development rights over the property until such time as parking space is provided elsewhere or on the same premises as the principal use.

(Code 1994, § 5-4-115)

Sec. 5-4-116. Off-street loading area required.

Areas suitable for loading and unloading motor vehicles in off-street locations and specifically designated for such purpose, shall hereafter be required at the time of the initial construction or alteration or conversion of any building or structure used or arranged to be used for commercial, industrial, governmental, or multifamily residential purposes. Such off-street areas shall have access to a public alley or street and shall be provided and maintained in accordance with the following requirements, the computation of which shall not be included in the off-street parking requirements.

(Code 1994, § 5-4-116)

Sec. 5-4-117. Number of off-street loading spaces required.

The number of off-street loading spaces shall be calculated on the basis of the use of the land or principal building on a lot, according to the requirements indicated in this section.

Type of Use	Square Feet in Total Floor Area (in square feet)	Spaces Required
Retail and personal service establishments	0—1,999	None
	2,000—24,999	1
	For each additional 25,000	1 additional
Wholesale, manufacturing, governmental and institutional (incl. places of public assembly), educational institution, recreation,	0—24,000	None
	25,000—49,999	1
	50,000—99,000	2
	100,000—249,000	3
	250,000—999,000	4

business, service, terminal and similar business uses	1,000,000 or more	5
Offices or office buildings	0—4,999	None
	5,000—9,999	1
	10,000—20,000	2
	For each additional 50,000	1 additional
Multifamily dwelling project, mobile home development, hotel motel, tourist home, or similar establishment	0—9 units	None
	10—20 units	1
	For each additional 10 units	1 additional

(Code 1994, § 5-4-117)

Sec. 5-4-118. Amount of area required for each loading space.

Each off-street loading and unloading space required by the provisions of this chapter shall be at least twelve feet (12') wide, forty feet (40') long and fourteen feet (14') high. Such space shall be clear and free of obstruction at all times.

(Code 1994, § 5-4-118)

Sec. 5-4-119. Location of off-street loading areas.

Required off-street loading and unloading areas must be located on the same lot or parcel of land as the structure they are intended to serve. In no case shall the required off-street loading space be considered as part of the area provided to comply with off-street parking requirements as stated herein.

(Code 1994, § 5-4-119)

Sec. 5-4-120. Loading area.

All uses, whether or not specified in this chapter, shall provide off-street loading areas. Loading areas shall be located so that no vehicle being loaded or unloaded in connection with normal operations shall obstruct or project into a public street, walk, alley or way.

(Code 1994, § 5-4-120)

Secs. 5-4-121—5-4-130. Reserved.

ORDINANCE 2026-10

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION 5-4-36 OF THE CITY OF ISLE OF PALMS CODE OF ORDINANCES TO MODIFY THE FRONT YARD REQUIREMENT IN THE GC-3 GENERAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT AND TO AMEND SECTION 5-4-113 TO REDUCE OFF-STREET PARKING REQUIREMENTS FOR RESTAURANTS IN THE GC-3 DISTRICT.

WHEREAS, the City of Isle of Palms Code of Ordinances establishes development standards for the GC-3 general commercial district, including minimum yard requirements and off-street parking requirements; and

WHEREAS, Section 5-4-36(b)(3) currently establishes the minimum front yard requirement applicable in the GC-3 general commercial district; and

WHEREAS, Section 5-4-112 establishes generally applicable off-street parking requirements, including requirements for restaurants, and Section 5-4-113 governs the application of those parking requirements; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has recommended amending the GC-3 district regulations to establish a zero-foot front yard requirement and to reduce the total number of required off-street parking spaces for restaurants in the GC-3 district by twenty-five percent (25%); and

WHEREAS, City Council desires to amend the City Code consistent with the Planning Commission recommendation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Isle of Palms, South Carolina, in duly assembled meeting, that the City Code is hereby amended as set forth herein.

SECTION 1. That Section 5-4-36(b)(3)a. of the City of Isle of Palms Code of Ordinances be amended to read as follows:

- a. Front yard: Zero feet (0').

SECTION 2. That Section 5-4-113(a) of the City of Isle of Palms Code of Ordinances be amended to conform the cross-reference to the redesignation of subsection (h) as subsection (i), to read as follows:

- (a) Location of off-street parking areas. Except as provided in section 5-4-113(i) and section 5-4-115, all parking spaces required herein shall be located on the same lot with the principal building or use or uses served.

SECTION 3. That Section 5-4-113 of the City of Isle of Palms Code of Ordinances be amended by adding a new subsection (h) and redesignating the existing subsection (h) as subsection (i), to read as follows:

- (h) Requirements for restaurants in the GC-3 district. Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter to the contrary, the total number of off-street parking spaces required by Section 5-4-112 shall be reduced by 25% for restaurants within the GC-3 district.

- (i) Parking spaces in public right-of-way in commercial districts. Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter to the contrary, the calculation of the number of parking spaces required in the commercial districts pursuant to section 5-4-112 may include any parking spaces in the public right-of-way that are located on the same side of the street and contiguous to the lot with the principal building or use or uses served.

SECTION 4. That should any part of this Ordinance be held invalid by a Court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining parts shall be severable therefrom and shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 5. That all ordinances or parts of ordinances conflicting with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed insofar as the same affect this Ordinance.

SECTION 6. That this Ordinance take effect and be in full force immediately.

**PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF ISLE OF PALMS, ON
THE _____ DAY OF _____, 2026.**

Phillip Pounds, Mayor (Seal)

Attest:

Nicole DeNeane, City Clerk

First Reading: _____

Public Hearing: _____

Second Reading: _____

Ratification: _____