7. TRANSPORTATION

As is the case in most Texas cities, transportation in Corpus Christi is by private automobile using public streets and highways and parking facilities provided at the destinations whether by the public, by institutions, or by commercial entities. To a limited extent a public bus system supplements this private system. The University has a well designed bus drop off at the north end of the spine on the south side of Ocean Drive.

There are only two entrances to the campus from Ocean Drive—the first or west entrance (Island Boulevard) on approaching from the City is the actual main entrance. The second or east entrance (Sand Dollar Drive) is an entrance only from the City, as well, due to the east end of the east bridge being the Naval Air Station with no through traffic. General access onto an off of the Island through the Naval Air Station is not likely in the foreseeable future. There is a contingency plan being developed to allow traffic off of the Island through the Aie Station in the event of an emergency. Refer to Illustration No. 7.1 ACCESS THROUGH THE NAVAL AIR STATION.

Illustration No. 7.1 ACCESS THROUGH THE NAVAL AIR STATION

It is assumed for the purposes of this report that the access to the campus will continue to be vehicular and overwhelmingly by private automobile. It is also assumed that the ratio between enrollment and parking inventory remains constant at approximately 2.0 students per parking space. Refer to 8. PARKING AND PEDESTRIAN LINKAGE. Refer, also, to Appendix C, Letter Report on Campus Traffic and Parking Resources
EXISTING VEHICULAR TRAFFIC AUTOMOBILE

Refer to Illustration No. 7.2 MAP OF MAJOR THOROUGHFARES IN GENERAL AREA to see the existing vehicular access to the Island from the City.

Illustration No. 7.2 MAP OF MAJOR THOROUGHFARES IN GENERAL AREA

SOUTH PADRE ISLAND DRIVE
The major freeway closest to the Island is South Padre Island Drive (or “S.P.I.D.”). Its official State designation is Texas Highway 358. S.P.I.D. features four lanes in both directions and three lanes of service road in both directions.

ENNIS JOSLIN ROAD
The Texas Department of Transportation recently completed a major expansion and improvement of Ennis Joslin Road also known by its State designation of Texas Spur 3. It has two lanes in both directions; it originates at S.P.I.D. and intersects Ocean Drive at its north end. It is intended to be extended southward from S.P.I.D. when the vacant land in that area is developed.

OCEAN DRIVE
Ocean Drive is a four lanes major thoroughfare that runs along the edge of Corpus Christi Bay from the University to the central business district or downtown. It includes a four lane bridge over the tidal flats at the west end of the Island. It is assumed that traffic to and from the Naval Air Station on Ocean Drive will remain episodic (exiting at about 2:30 PM) and of consistent volume.

ISLAND BOULEVARD
Island Boulevard is the entrance of choice because it is the first one encountered after crossing the bridge. It connects to two campus streets (Surf Lane and Oso Lane) and provides access to parking in four major lots and two significant lots between the Harte Research Institute and the
Natural Resources Center, as well as to several small special purpose lots. This parking associated with Island Boulevard totals approximately 2,126 spaces or 44 percent of the total available parking stock. Refer to section 8. PARKING AND PEDESTRIAN LINKAGE.

**SAND DOLLAR DRIVE**
Sand Dollar Drive connects to two campus streets (Wave Crest Drive and Curlew Drive) and provides parking in four major parking areas and a few specialized locations. Additionally, it provides access to four major parking lots directly associated with the student housing. This parking totals approximately 2,666 spaces or 56 percent of the total available parking stock. Refer to section 8. PARKING AND PEDESTRIAN LINKAGE.

**BUS**
Bus access is provided by Corpus Christi Regional Transit Authority. Both line haul bus routes and a specialized circulator bus route serve the campus. The line haul routes are these:

- **5 ALAMEDA/NAS.** This route connects to the downtown and to the Naval Air Station by way of the Island.
- **37 CROSSTOWN.** This route serves the downtown by way of Ennis-Joslin Road and a southerly route paralleling Texas 358 (S.P.I.D.). It terminates on the Island.
- **51 GREGORY PARK ‘N’ RIDE.** This route connects the Naval Air Station to the town of Gregory across the bridge by way of the Island.
- **63 THE WAVE.** This route serves the area bounded by Texas 357 and 358 by way of Ennis Joslin Road. It terminates on the Island.

The route referred to as “The Wave” serves as a circulator bus route for the apartments catering to students along Ennis Joslin Road.

It is highly likely that in the future that there will be need for a circulator bus system that connects the immediate mainland area with the Island. A bus transit stop already exists on Ocean Drive just to the north end of the axis of the campus core. This transit stop can be expanded and improved and physically tied in to the axis with walks, signage, and landscaping in a way that features it.

**EXISTING PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC**

**SIDEWALKS**
All sidewalks lead to and from the parking lots and to and from the academic core with a few exceptions. The most important exception is the east to west walk that connects the spine to the west campus (i.e. west of Island Boulevard) where science and research are housed.

**SECOND LEVEL CONNECTORS**
An important concept was put into use when the Center for Instruction was constructed. This building, which is “L” shaped, has bridge connections at the second level at both ends. It connects to the Faculty Center on the north and to the Center for Sciences on the west. This concept of connection among the buildings should be continued with the design of future buildings and with retrofit connectors among existing buildings.

**PARKING LOTS**
The drives in the parking lots are used as sidewalks, as well as secondary streets, in some locations. Every effort should be made to attract people to sidewalks as soon as possible on leaving their automobile in a parking lot.

**JOGGING TRAIL**
The jogging trail around the south side of the Island is presently used for recreation and fitness.
FUTURE VEHICULAR TRAFFIC

AUTOMOBILE
There is a limit to how much vehicular traffic the bridge to the Island can carry. Refer to Appendix C, Letter Report on Campus Traffic and Parking Resources. When this limit has been reached, there will be an addition of bus traffic that replaces the excess automobile demand by connecting apartments and parking lots on the immediate mainland with the Island.

Required modifications at the Ocean Drive and Ennis Joslin Road intersection will allow for maximization of the bridge’s capacity. Refer to Appendix C, Letter Report on Campus Traffic and Parking Resources.

BUS
Bus utilization is a must for the future. It will enable the evolution of the future pedestrian campus. Additional transit stops on the east and west sides of the campus core in addition to expansion and improvement of the one on Ocean Drive would greatly enhance this system.

It would be desirable in the near future to create additional bus transit stops on Ocean Drive near Island Drive on the west side of the Campus and near Sand Dollar Drive on the east side. The east side stop would make the City system easily useable by those who reside in the student housing on the east side.

The possibility of the City bus system providing the shuttle system should be examined when the time comes for off-Island parking.

LIGHT RAIL
After peak oil is realized there may well be a sudden golden age of light rail systems in the United States (the “return of the trolley”). The University and the Naval Air Station site could be destinations at the end of the starter system from downtown. The University should be certain that it is at the table if such planning begins to be discussed. Few university campuses could benefit from light rail to the degree that TAMU-CC could.

The two most likely routes for the starter system would be Ocean Drive and South Alameda Street. The latter is by far the best route, if not the most scenic, due to the potential ridership and destinations along each side of it.

Such a system of transportation could encourage and enhance the restricted automobile situation of an island campus, both by making additional housing available to the students, and by making amenities of the City readily available to the students at the University whether on the island or the mainland.

FUTURE PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC

SIDEWALKS
There will continue to be a need for additional sidewalks, especially for expanding the axis to the evolving grid, for connecting the parking facilities to the campus core, and for connecting the campus core with the research zone on the west side of the Island. Shade, breeze, and landscaping will help make them a favored means of transportation.

SECOND LEVEL CONNECTORS
Second level connectors should be included in the design program for all new buildings. Connection to the existing campus core could be accomplished by connecting to the Center for instruction, the Center for the Sciences, and the Faculty Center which are already connected.

JOGGING TRAIL
The jogging trail around the south side of the Island should eventually serve as pedestrian and bicycle access in the future, especially as parking becomes more limited. If connected to a
pedestrian bridge across the Oso del Cayo, pedestrian and bicycle traffic from mainland locations would be greatly encouraged.

SUMMARY
Transportation in the future is a known situation. The limit of the bridge (and the size of the Island) sets the limit of what is possible. The existing culture of driving and parking on the Island can be increased by some fifty percent. But this is only true if adequate structured parking is constructed. It is estimated that these structures would have to provide some 2,000 additional spaces.

Beyond this limitation the culture must change and become one of off island parking with shuttle bus access. It may eventually be that only upper classmen, the faculty and administration, and the residents of the Island will be able to park on the Island.

Recommendations:
1. Begin a years long indoctrination of the limitations of the Island and the need for a different culture relative to access to the island.
2. Continue to monitor the City of Corpus Christi and the Texas Department of Transportation on the improvement of the Ocean Drive and Ennis Joslin Road intersection and resulting traffic patterns.
3. Develop transportation improvements for the Island in close relation to parking and pedestrian improvements.
4. Plan for major bus service improvements with the Corpus Christi Regional Transit Authority.
5. Monitor and provide input to the City of Corpus Christi concerning the concepts for a future light rail system.