



WILDWOOD CONNECTION



COMMISSIONER'S CORNER: JOE ELLIOTT

This month we talk with Wildwood Commissioner Joe Elliott to learn more about him and his role as an elected official.

How long have you lived in Wildwood?

I have been in Wildwood since 2015, after moving to the area from Virginia in 2009.

How long have you served on the city commission?

I was first elected in 2016, and sworn in the following January. I ran unopposed for a second term in 2020, and am running for my third term on the commission this year.

Did you serve as an elected official elsewhere before coming to Wildwood?

My career with the federal government stipulated that I could not serve as an elected official, but I did get involved with my community when and where I could.

After moving to the The Villages®, I took a Community Development District class that sparked my interest in serving. I served most of two terms as a Community Development District 8 supervisor before I ran for Wildwood's commission.

What unique experience and perspective do you bring to the commission?

I have been married to my wife Barbara for 54 years and was molded by my family and love and respect for God. After living in 10 different states, I have seen how different communities and cultures operate.

My six years in the U.S. Army, serving in both Vietnam and Germany, along with a 30-year career at NASA, provided insight from extraordinary minds and work that has shaped my approach to seeking first to understand, then to being understood.

How are your views of an item and/or your decision-making informed by the different experience and/or perspective of other commission members?

Florida's sunshine laws prohibit meetings outside the public forum, so we have no private conversations about items the commission considers. Those discussions are limited to scheduled meetings and workshops, which are open to the public. Certainly more discussion within those constraints leads to a better understanding and hence better governance.

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Wildwood uses a commission-manager form of government. How does that work, and how does it affect your role as a commissioner?

This is the form of government used by the majority of municipalities with a population of 10,000 or more. The city manager runs the day-to-day affairs and administration of the city, while the commission decides policy and creates ordinances. Wildwood's mayor, elected by the voters, presides over commission meetings and has a vote equal to other commissioners on items brought before the commission for action.

It is my humble opinion that we have one of the best city managers in the state. He is very smart and runs a great organization. He is of course assisted by a great team whose strengths complement his. Because we are not limited to hiring only those residing within city limits, we have a broader and deeper pool of candidates—the ability to employ the best talent available.

What leaders have served as role models or inspiration in your life, and how do you draw from that in your work?

There are many, starting with my family, including my parents and my in-laws. Our country's greatest presidents, such as George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, John Adams, and John F. Kennedy, are certainly part of the mix, as is Frederick Douglass and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

More current additions must include other locally elected leaders and business owners and residents. I also draw inspiration from our city manager, department heads, and employees who serve as examples of "Job Well Done."

Is there one accomplishment in your role as a Wildwood commissioner that stands out as your most fulfilling?

While it is not mine alone, I take pride in the opportunity we afford all individuals to weigh in before the commission takes action. We insist on a public comment session and ensure everyone has a chance to speak before decisions are made.

What do you see as the city's single greatest challenge, and how are its leaders working to overcome it?

It is a challenge we are all facing and need to resolve. We need to repair the family unit. There was a time when families were the building blocks of our nation. Forces have eroded that and two-parent households are no longer the norm. That affects us all as a society, as a country, and as a community.

What current projects do you believe are most important to Wildwood's community, and why?

Our downtown master plan, along with all its sub-components, is poised to transform the face of our city and infuse it with new vitality. We gathered a great deal of public input in creating the plan, which helps ensure it is a vision shared by our citizens as well as leaders.

As part of Wildwood's growth and revitalization, I would love to see a small civic center for events and public participation, and a satellite office center for city partners to allow for more streamlined operations and service.

What personal or professional "bucket list" item do you want to achieve or experience in the next year?

Two are the exploration of a civic center project and the rebirth of the nuclear family: Mom, Dad, and their kids.

What is your favorite piece of advice or wisdom to share with new residents of Wildwood?

It is threefold. First, we will not change the past; it is actions we take today that provide for our future. Second, a personal approach to problem solving that has served me well—seek first to understand and then be understood. Finally, the words of Red Skelton: May God Bless!



ROUNDABOUT REFRESHER AND REMINDERS

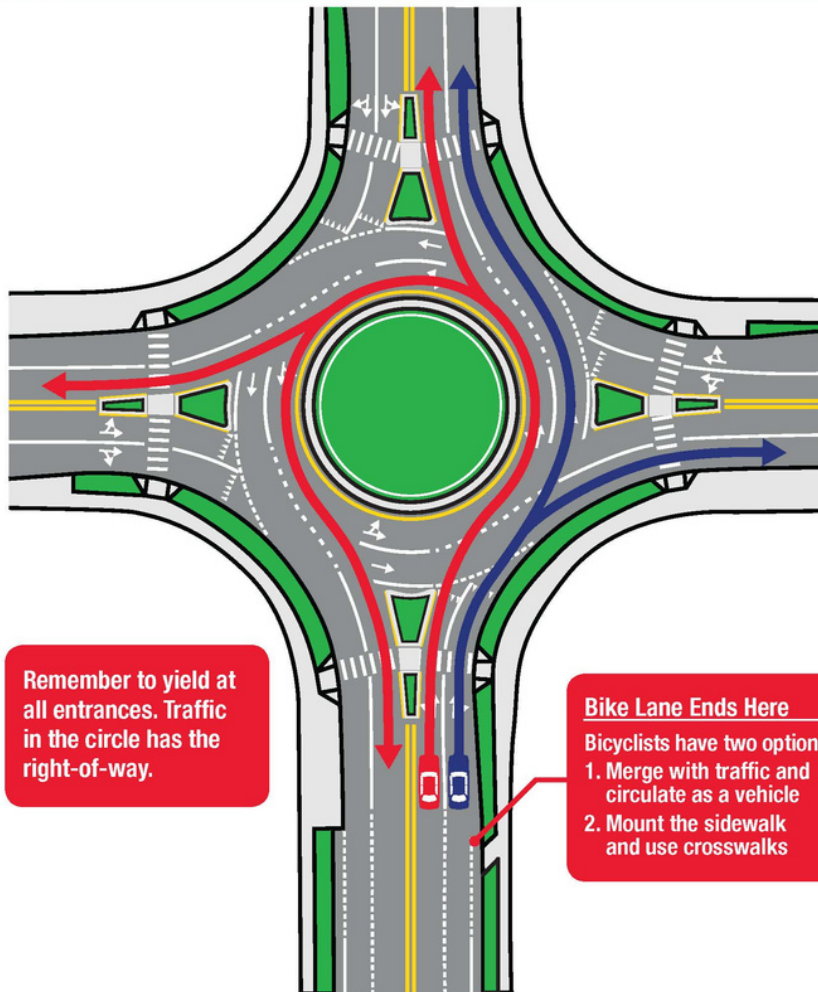
Roundabouts abound in The Villages® sections of Wildwood. For those unaccustomed to these traffic control features, they can present questions and uncertainty until their reasons and rules are more familiar.

Among the many benefits of roundabouts cited by the Federal Highway Safety Administration and the Florida Department of Transportation are the following:

- Fewer crashes, 90% fewer fatalities, and 75% fewer injuries
- Fewer severe crashes
- Reduction in pedestrian/bicycle crashes of 10 to 40%
- Safer for beginner and elderly drivers
- Increases of 30 to 50% in intersection traffic capacity; less of a delay waiting at stops and signals
- Reduced pollution (from cars not waiting at traffic signals), reduced noise, reduced fuel consumption
- No cost for traffic signals and yearly signal maintenance
- Fully operational during power outages; no need for police to direct traffic
- Can be landscaped with native plants and trees
- Generally take less land than traditional intersections as they don't require turning lanes

Even when the reasons and benefits are clear, navigating roundabouts may be confusing at first, particularly when they contain multiple traffic lanes. The graphic below from alerttodayflorida.com provides a visual key to traffic flow along with helpful tips for motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Remember to yield to all traffic, including the inside lane, when entering a roundabout.

Navigating a Modern Roundabout



1. Slow to 10-15 mph on approach to a roundabout
2. In multi-lane roundabouts, follow signs and markings to determine the lane(s) that will serve your destination
3. Yield right-of-way to bicyclists merging into the entry lane before the bike lane ends
4. Yield right-of-way to pedestrians crossing the entry lane
5. Yield right-of-way to motorists already in the circulatory roadway when it is safe to do so
6. Turn right onto the circulatory roadway when it is safe to do so
7. When you approach your destination street, use your right-turn signal and exit the roundabout
8. Yield right-of-way to pedestrians crossing the exit lane

Roundabout User Tips



Motorists

- Determine which way you want to go in advance of the roundabout
- Keep right at the splitter island and slow to 10-15 mph
- Watch for bicyclists and allow them to merge into the entry lane
- Watch for pedestrians crossing the entry roadway and yield right-of-way
- Yield right-of-way to vehicles within the circulatory roadway
- Turn right onto the circulatory roadway when it is safe to do so
- When you approach your street, use your right-turn signal and exit the roundabout
- Watch for pedestrians crossing the exit roadway and yield right-of-way



Pedestrians

- Stay on the walkways and cross at designated crosswalks
- Do not enter the central island
- Watch for motorists and bicyclists
- Cross to the splitter island and stop there if traffic requires



Bicyclists

- Merge with traffic on the entry lane or use the ramp to the sidewalk
- If riding with traffic, signal your intended path
- If using the sidewalks, yield right-of-way to pedestrians and walk your bicycle at crosswalks

All roundabouts have these features:

Yield-at-entry

- Traffic entering the circle yields to traffic already in the circle.

Traffic deflection

- Pavement markings and raised islands direct traffic into a one-way counterclockwise flow.

Geometric curvature

- The radius of the circular road and the angles of entry can be designed to slow the speed of vehicles.

PAVEMENT REJUVENATION BEGINS

As part of the City of Wildwood’s overall pavement program, city-managed streets are evaluated regularly and scheduled for a variety of treatments to maintain high-quality surface and subsurface materials while extending the lifespan of the street. This approach reduces the need for costly premature reconstruction.

According to Public Works Director Jeremy Hockenbury, caring for asphalt is in some ways analogous to caring for skin—keeping it adequately moisturized prevents drying and cracking of the surface, enhancing elasticity and health. In the case of pavement, the goal is to keep water out, reducing erosion and degradation to the aggregate, subsurface, and base.

The streets listed below are scheduled for rejuvenation treatments this spring. As the city’s contractor determines scheduling for each geographic area, residents will be notified directly before work begins.

Check <https://www.wildwood-fl.gov/publicworks/page/street-repaving-information> for details and follow [facebook.com/WildwoodFlorida](https://www.facebook.com/WildwoodFlorida) for information on a variety of city happenings.

- Allen Ave.
- Alyssa Ln.
- Atkinson Ln.
- Barley Path
- Braman Pl.
- Broaderick Ct.
- Burger Ct.
- Callihan Ct.
- Caputo Ct.
- Carmalt Ln.
- Casteel Ave.
- Citrus Grove
- Coffman Loop
- Collopy Pl.
- Conley Ct.
- Constance Ct.
- Corder Run
- Danielson Loop
- Delong Pl.
- Dijulio Ter.
- Dingman Way
- Ebling Loop
- Eury Rd.
- Flaxmayer Rd.
- Fortuna Ter.
- Goldberg St.
- Guy Ter.
- Houdek Ave.
- James Rd.
- Jameson Loop
- Jeffers Ter.
- Judith Ln.
- Justin Ln.
- Kaolin Path
- Kayla Ct.
- Kincaid Pl.
- Klamut Ct.
- Lapsins Path
- Laveigne Rd.
- Lawler Loop
- Lebeau Ln.
- Logan St.
- Maisto Pl.
- Marja St.
- Marusek Ave.
- Mattson Loop
- Mccullough Ln.
- McDonald Ct.
- Merhotten Loop
- Methvin St.
- Milagros Ct.
- Morrison Pl.
- Mulligan Run
- Nicksic Ct.
- Pelchat Pl.
- Priscilla Loop
- Rees Pl.
- Ritch Rd.
- Rodriguez Ln.
- Rosenow Rd.
- Scardino St.
- Schaeffer Ter.
- Seth Run
- Sherell St.
- Singh Ln.
- Siverson Ter.
- Skinner St.
- Susan Ave.
- Tompkins St.
- Totten St.
- Trabucco Ter.
- Tripp Ter.
- Vandemark St.
- Windham Way
- Zingale Ln.

CITY COMMISSION APPROVES UPDATE TO LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

Wildwood’s city commission approved a text amendment to the city’s land development regulations at the commission’s March 11, 2024, meeting.

The unanimous vote followed a public hearing, during which no one from the public spoke.

The updates were proposed by city staff in collaboration with a consultant that provided extensive review and input to ensure the regulations were consistent and current with other local, state, and federal law.

Find the revised document at <https://www.wildwood-fl.gov/building/page/land-use-zoning-and-other-regulatory-documents>.

WILDWOOD COMMISSIONER JOE ELLIOTT NAMED FLC HOME RULE HERO

Wildwood Commissioner Joe Elliott has been recognized by the Florida League of Cities (FLC) with a 2024 Home Rule Hero award for his work and advocacy efforts during the Florida Legislature’s 2024 session.

In announcing the award, FLC noted Elliott “worked tirelessly throughout the session to promote local voices making local choices, protect the Home Rule powers of Florida’s municipalities and advance the League’s legislative agenda.”

According to FLC, Home Rule is the ability for a city to address local problems with local solutions with minimal state interference. Its Home Rule Hero awards honor local government officials who consistently responded to the League’s request to reach out to members of the legislature and help give a local perspective on an issue.

Reflecting on the award, Commissioner Elliott said, “Many municipal and county elected representatives and associated staff follow the legislative process very closely to ensure that those rights are preserved. It is indeed my pleasure to have worked on those efforts in 2023 and 2024.”

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION UNDERWAY

Shown below is construction of the city’s new Main St. parking garage, scheduled to open before year’s end. It will provide approximately 125 spaces to serve existing and future downtown businesses. (Photo by Shane Bellamy.)



WILDWOOD POLICE EST. 1877

Includes **FREE Lunch!**

SCAM FRAUD

WILDWOOD POLICE DEPARTMENT
presents another
"OUTSMARTING SCAMMERS"

SCAMS AND FRAUD PRESENTATION

Monday, April 1, 2024
9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Homestead Recreation Center in the Barnell Room
6227 Meggison Road, Wildwood, FL 34785

Register for this **FREE** event
(352) 910-6012

Free lunch provided by our partners at:

Wildwood Police, Jimmy Patronis, Seniors vs Crime, Citizens First Bank, CenterWell

"Together we can STOP crooks!"

WILDWOOD POLICE EST. 1877

FREE Community Event includes lunch

Reserve your seat today!

The Wildwood Police Department Jurisdiction

SAFETY COALITION
— MEETING —
Lunch 'n Learn series

Tuesday, April 16, 2024
10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Adamsville Baptist Church
4839 Warm Springs Avenue
Wildwood, FL 34785

To reserve your seat please email:
communityoutreach@wildwood-fl.gov

This is an ongoing Lunch 'n Learn series held bi-monthly at different locations and will include a different speaker and FREE Lunch.

Wildwood Police Department, 3939 County 462 East, Wildwood, FL 34785
(352) 330-1355

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

Find more activities and events on the city's community calendar at www.wildwood-fl.gov/calendar.

WILDWOOD POLICE EST. 1877

5K TIMED RUN RUN / WALK

For Jack and Allie, Inc.

racetimesports

WILDWOOD POLICE DEPARTMENT PRESENTS

OUR 5K AUTISM TIMED RUN/WALK

SATURDAY, 20 APRIL 2024

Starting Point: Wildwood City Hall (100 N. Main St, Wildwood, FL)

EVENT STARTS AT: 7:15 AM / RACE KICKS OFF 9:00 AM

Register start date: February 8, 2024 Ends: April 5, 2024

Register before March 1st and get a Wildwood PD Autism T-shirt

Price will change as we get closer to the date so register ASAP

HBC, THE VINES HOSPITAL, WEST FINANCIAL GROUP, GOOD NEIGHBOR PHARMACY, Village Discount PHARMACY, ROTARY Club of The Villages NOON

\$30 PER ADULT-18 & UP

\$10 PER CHILD-17 & DOWN

\$30/\$10 dollars *includes timer/BI/B

Top 3 runners receive medals for each division.

This run helps raise funds for the Jack & Allie Foundation, a non profit through ABELS Learning Academy for Autism

REGISTER @ (RUNSIGNUP.COM)

ROBERTO'S, Any Questions contact Cacevedo@Wildwood-FL.Gov, WM WASTE MANAGEMENT

WILDWOOD FLORIDA PARKS & RECREATION

ARBOR DAY

FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 2024

10:00AM-11:00AM

Join us at Wildwood's Department of Public Works in the Municipal Services Complex as we plant trees in honor of Arbor Day!

Light refreshments and entertainment will be provided.

352-461-0134

WILDWOOD-FL.GOV

Wildwood Municipal Services Complex
Department of Public Works
743 Huey Street
Wildwood, FL 34785

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Code Compliance

April 2, 2024
1:00 p.m.

Local Planning Agency

April 2, 2024
2:00 p.m.

Planning and Zoning

April 2, 2024
2:15 p.m.

City Commission

April 8, 2024
9:00 a.m.

April 15, 2024 (workshop)
9:00 a.m.

April 22, 2024
7:00 p.m.

April 29, 2024 (workshop)
9:00 a.m.

Project Review Committee

April 9, 2024
10:00 a.m.

General Information

Unless otherwise specified, all meetings are held at City Hall, 100 N. Main St.

Agendas and minutes are posted on the city's website. Go to www.wildwood-fl.gov and click on [Agenda](#).

Meetings are open to the public. Attend in person or remotely by going to the city website and clicking on [Government > Attend a Meeting Virtually](#).

Anyone wishing to speak during Public Forum should submit a comment card before the meeting begins.



A LOOK AT WILDWOOD HISTORY

This photo from August 1988 shows the former Wildwood Community Center on Palmer Drive. The photographer is unknown.

ANNUAL HYDRANT FLUSHING COMPLETE

Sumter County's fire department has completed its annual hydrant maintenance and flushing work.

The City of Wildwood's Department of Utilities worked closely with the county's contractor throughout the project to minimize disruptions to the city's water customers.

City officials remind customers who experience any water issues that do not resolve quickly to call 352-330-1336 so a technician can be dispatched to investigate.

GROW WITH US: CITY CAREERS

Working for Wildwood is more than just a job. It is an opportunity to join a family of passionate people serving one of the fastest-growing cities in the country and learn valuable skills in a team-oriented environment.

To see current openings, visit www.wildwood-fl.gov/hr.

STAY UP TO DATE ON CITY HAPPENINGS

1. Check wildwood-fl.gov for general information.
2. Sign up for **notifications** at wildwood-fl.gov.
3. Follow us on **Facebook**:

- facebook.com/WildwoodFlorida
- facebook.com/WildwoodParksRecEvents
- facebook.com/WildwoodPoliceFL

CITY INFORMATION

Commission

Ed Wolf
Mayor
ewolf@wildwood-fl.gov

Pamala Harrison-Bivins
Mayor Pro Tem
pbivins@wildwood-fl.gov

Joe Elliott
Commissioner
jelliott@wildwood-fl.gov

Marcos Flores
Commissioner
mflores@wildwood-fl.gov

Julian Green
Commissioner
jgreen@wildwood-fl.gov

City Hall

100 N. Main St.
Wildwood, FL 34785
352-330-1330
www.wildwood-fl.gov
facebook.com/WildwoodFlorida

Directory

City Manager
Jason McHugh
352-330-1332
jmchugh@wildwood-fl.gov

Development Services
352-330-1334

Human Resources
352-330-1340

Parks and Recreation
352-461-0134

Police (Non-Emergency)
352-330-1355

Police (Emergency)
911

Public Works
352-330-1343

Utilities
352-330-1336