

CHAPTER 10: Marina District Element

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

VISION STATEMENT FOR THE DOWNTOWN MARINA DISTRICT

The Marina District – the Downtown, Marina, and Beach Park – is the historic and cultural center for Des Moines. A revitalized Downtown with a small-town charm reflecting the City's rich history invites new businesses, development, shoppers, and residents. A quality mix of services in the District encourages residents to shop locally and creates a destination for visitors. Improved pedestrian access to and from the Marina and Beach Park and pedestrian amenities along South 223rd Street and South 227th Street enhance the image of Des Moines as a special Puget Sound waterfront community. The Marina District Design Guidelines encourage private participation and public art to reflect and celebrate the City's unique location and maritime heritage.

Des Moines Marina District is located along the shoreline of Puget Sound. This waterfront location provides a unique geographic setting for the City's primary commercial district. This area is one of few low-bank shoreline areas between Seattle and Tacoma. The Des Moines Marina occupies much of the shoreline within the neighborhood. The Marina currently provides limited recreational opportunities for non-boaters.

The Marina District is generally bounded by Puget Sound on the west, the City of Normandy Park and South 216th Street to the north, 8th Avenue South and Kent-Des Moines Road to the east, and South 230th Street to the south (Figure 1-1). Single family residential neighborhoods are adjacent to the Marina District to the north, south, and east. As the topography of the area generally slopes down from east to west, many properties within and near the Marina District currently have views of Puget Sound and the Olympic Mountains.

The Marina District is developed with a variety of land uses, including commercial, professional office, single family, multifamily, mixed-use, and recreational uses. Some buildings in the neighborhood are in a state of disrepair. Several properties are vacant or have minimal physical improvements, such as those properties fenced for boat storage.

The Land Use Map (Figure 2-1) shows the current uses planned for the Marina District neighborhood. Other policies within the adopted Land Use Element that relate to the Marina District include:

1. Multiple family dwellings should also be encouraged in conjunction with commercial developments within the Downtown Commercial Zone (D-C Zone), provided that such dwellings are designed to provide a quality residential environment while enhancing the appearance and commercial function of the business district.
2. Promote new development and redevelopment within the commercial district to reflect and enhance its ties to the waterfront, pedestrian orientation, and role in serving local shopping and service requirements.

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3. Within the Des Moines Marina property, allow commercial uses that are water dependent or related, serve marina users or promote public access to the shoreline.

The following recent projects enhanced the marina, and benefit the district:

- The North Bulkhead & Restroom Replacement project involved the replacement of 900 feet of Marina North bulkheads and improved urban design features, landscaping and pedestrian facilities at the site; the \$13.7M project leveraged \$3.9M in Washington State Grants
- The Quarterdeck, a waterfront gathering space featuring a wine and coffee bar, has become a popular community hub at the Marina. By activating the waterfront with outdoor seating, events, and locally focused retail, it strengthens the Marina District as a vibrant destination.
- The city rebuilt the Redondo Boardwalk in 2016. Following a destructive storm event in late 2014, the City partnered with legislative representatives and state, federal and local agencies, to receive significant resources to rebuild the boardwalk which was a \$4 Million project.
- Boarding Float upgrades at the Redondo Boat Ramp and restroom facilities (this project included funding from the State Recreation and Conservation Office)
- The historic picnic shelter & restroom renovation project at Beach Park (this project included funding from the State Recreation and Conservation Office)

GOALS

Goal MD 1 Ensure that Marina District will be:

1. The civic and cultural center for the City.
2. A revitalized and safe neighborhood with a small-town charm that reflects the City's rich history and invites new businesses, development shoppers, and residents.
3. Characterized by a quality mix of businesses that encourages residents to shop locally and creates a destination for visitors.
4. Aesthetically pleasing with design standards and public art to reflect and celebrate the City's unique location and maritime heritage.
5. Pedestrian-friendly with improved access to and from the Marina and Beach Park and pedestrian amenities along South 223rd Street and South 227th Street.
6. A residential as well as commercial neighborhood.
7. A neighborhood that takes advantage of its waterfront location.
8. A neighborhood with numerous opportunities for passive outdoor recreation.
9. An area with views of Puget Sound and the Olympic Mountains.
10. A neighborhood where redevelopment and the introduction of new businesses is encouraged when such activities compliment and implement adopted goals and policies.

Goal MD 2 Strengthen community sustainability, pedestrian accessibility, livability, and downtown business vitality.

POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Land Use

MD 1.1 **Encourage a variety of commercial and retail uses that will enliven the Marina District, including:**

- 1) Specialty retail and restaurants;**
- 2) Professional offices;**
- 3) Innovative design and mixed-use development opportunities;**
- 4) Varied housing opportunities;**
- 5) Pedestrian oriented design; and**
- 6) Civic, community service, community gathering, and recreational areas.**

MD 1.1.1 Develop standards allowing dwellings above street-level commercial uses as a permitted use when specific conditions can be satisfied.

MD 1.1.2 Develop standards allowing light manufacturing uses in the commercial zones when:

1. Products are sold on site at retail; and
2. Manufacturing activities will not adversely impact surrounding properties.

MD 1.1.3 Development standards should continue to allow residential uses in the areas west and south of the business district. Ensure that new development at the edge of the D-C Downtown Commercial Zone has minimal impact upon nearby residences.

MD 1.1.4 Development standards should allow automobile service and maritime uses as well as outdoor storage of product inventory where a pedestrian-friendly environment can be maintained or enhanced.

MD 1.1.5 Support the growth of small, flexible commercial spaces, including pop-up retail, food vendors, and seasonal market opportunities that enhance the Marina District's economic vitality.

MD 1.2 **Optimize Des Moines' prime waterfront location and City views through the enhancement of cultural opportunities and experiences.**

MD 1.2.1 Provide for civic, community service, community gathering, and recreational areas.

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MD 1.2.2 Encourage partnerships with local entrepreneurs, arts organizations, and maritime businesses to create unique commercial experiences along the waterfront.

MD 1.2.3 Expand low-barrier water recreation opportunities, such as kayak launches, paddleboard rentals, and eco-tourism programs, to strengthen the Marina District as a recreational destination, where feasible.

Design

MD 2.1 Encourage the development of gateway features and focal points that contribute to the identity of the Marina District of Des Moines.

MD 2.1.1 Investigate the possibility of creating specific subarea plans for the Marina District.

MD 2.1.2 Develop public art, wayfinding signage, and cultural markers to highlight the Marina District's maritime identity and create a stronger connection between downtown and the waterfront, where feasible.

MD 2.2 Building height should not adversely impact the adjacent street environment or nearby land uses.

MD 2.2.1 Encourage new construction at pedestrian scales to incorporate design elements that provide view corridors and visual interest.

MD 2.2.2 Develop standards for terracing and modulation of upper floors of buildings.

MD 2.3 Encourage new development to include public benefit features such as water fountains, bicycle racks, public rest rooms, outdoor seating, art, etc.

MD 2.3.1 Follow developed standards so that new development or redevelopment in the Marina District exhibits design excellence by paying particular attention to site design, building form, architecture, and public space as described in the *Marina District Design Guidelines* and other required development standards.

Transportation

MD 2.4 Enhance the relationship between the commercial district and the shoreline through improved access to the Marina and Puget Sound.

MD 2.4.1 Attract people to and through the Marina District with attractive signage and wayfinding programs, where feasible.

MD 2.5 Promote a pedestrian-friendly sidewalk environment throughout the Marina District. Within the commercial zones, the sidewalk environment may include storefronts near the sidewalk, minimal interruption by vehicular driveways, awnings for weather protection, public open spaces, attractive landscaping, and integrated signs and lighting.

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MD 2.5.1 Ensure that street trees are planted throughout the Marina District.

MD 2.5.2 Encourage the use of shared driveways in order to minimize the number of locations where the sidewalk is interrupted by vehicular traffic.

MD 2.6 Maintain 8th Avenue South as a local access street, as feasible.

MD 2.6.1 Discourage commercial traffic from using 8th Avenue South through project design and roadway improvements, as feasible.

MD 2.7 Encourage use of alternative modes of transportation, including walking, bicycling, carpooling, and use of mass transit.

MD 2.7.1 Create an integrated transportation system that includes a comprehensive parking strategy, pedestrian and bicycle network, and streetscape improvements, when feasible. Explore pedestrian and micro-mobility solutions (e-bikes, shuttles, etc.) to improve connections between the Marina District, downtown, and nearby transit hubs.

MD 2.7.2 Continue to allow uses and facilities that promote transit ridership, such as bus stop shelters, ticket offices, transit information kiosks, etc.

MD 2.7.3 Encourage employers in the Marina District to sponsor, co-sponsor, or provide shuttles to enhance connectivity with the Sound Transit Angle Lake LINK Light Rail station at S. 200th Street and transit facilities on Pacific Highway S., as well as routes that would circulate through Des Moines to bring people to and from the Marina District. The City will advocate with King County Metro to provide such services.

MD 2.8 Ensure that off-street parking regulations reflect anticipated future demand.

MD 2.8.1 Allow shared and off-site parking when no adverse parking impacts will result, per development standards.

MD 2.8.2 Require new uses meet the required off-site parking standard at the time the use are authorized.

Economic Development

MD 2.9 Establish a Marina District Economic Development Plan that incorporates all development elements and objectives to help guide development patterns, as feasible.

MD 2.9.1 Elements of the Plan can include the following design elements, infrastructure improvements, landscaping, recreation, parking, land use and zoning that will define and distinguish the Downtown/Marina area.