BEYOND THE PIER
GRAND HAVEN WATERFRONT MASTER PLAN
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

GRAND HAVEN WATERFRONT COMMITTEE
- Todd Anthes – Grand Haven Main Street DDA
- Ryan Cummins – City Council
- Mike Dora – City Council
- Jay Gash – The Chamber of Commerce Grand Haven, Spring Lake, Ferrysburg
- Cara Galtman – Grand Haven Main Street DDA
- Andrea Hendrick – Resident
- Holly Johnson – Frey Foundation
- Ryan Kilpatrick – Housing Next
- Dana Kellwehr – Michigan Economic Development Corporation
- Kelly Larson – Local Business Owner
- Kevin McLaughlin – Planning Commission
- Hadley Streng – Grand Haven Area Community Foundation
- Jeremy Swellboy – Grand Haven Main Street DDA

GRAND HAVEN CITY STAFF
- Pat McGreevy, City Manager
- Jennifer Hoekland, AICP, Community Development Manager
- Ashley Letsch, Assistant to the City Manager
- Char Ocejo-Sease, Community Affairs Manager

PROJECT MANAGEMENT & CONSULTANT TEAM
- Nate Scramlin – Michigan Economic Development Corporation
- Melissa Milton-Pung – Michigan Municipal League
- Malakah Rakestaw – Williams & Works
- Andy Moone, AICP – Williams & Works
- Brad Kintla – Williams & Works
- Whitney Newbury – Williams & Works
- Nathan Mehmed, AICP – Williams & Works

DOCUMENT REFERENCE
Many past planning documents created by the City of Grand Haven have been incorporated into this Waterfront Master Plan, including elements of the 2005 Waterfront Strategic Plan, the 2009 Chinook Pier Area Land Use Plan, the 2017 Downtown Parking Study, the 2017 Building Coastal Resiliency in Grand Haven Report, the 2018 Economic Development Strategic Plan, 2018 Parking Ramp Report, and others.

Portions of the 2005 Waterfront Strategic and 2009 Chinook Pier Area Land Use Plans have been carried over or built upon for this updated 2020 Waterfront Master Plan.
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Beyond the Pier Waterfront Master Plan

It is no secret that Grand Haven is rich in natural beauty and has built a waterfront that attracts visitors from near and far. The City of Grand Haven has invested in the waterfront over many years, whether that be through the construction of popular public amenities, such as the Waterfront Stadium or Splash Pad, or through supporting local business growth downtown or at the Farmers Market. We are fortunate to see the fruits of this investment and are now tasked with continuing these improvements throughout the downtown.

This plan dreams Beyond the Pier, envisioning downtown and the waterfront as one place to live, work, and play. It seeks to improve equitable waterfront access, invest in the retention and expansion of local businesses, enhance our public spaces, protect our natural features, and support economic development efforts in Downtown and along the Riverfront. Its goal is to create a community-based vision to guide the right type of growth and continue to support the activity and people who make this community special. It’s a collection of the dreams and visions of Grand Haven’s business leaders, residents, and visitors.
1.1 WATERFRONT PLANNING CONTEXT

Planning isn’t new to Grand Haven

In 1835, the first plat was created for present-day Grand Haven. By 1912, many of today’s roads were established. Since then, the landscape has continued to be shaped by trends in transportation, industry, housing, and recreation. The waterfront has seen significant change over many years, including the removal of the rail line from Chinook Pier, reclaiming of Bicentennial Park from private to public lands, and business investment along Washington Avenue. These efforts to transform the waterfront from an industrial setting into a combination of parkland, historic building preservation, and active business centers were championed by the Loutit Foundation and concerned citizens in the 1960s and 1970s.

2005 Waterfront Strategic Plan

While many influential planning efforts have been completed to guide the growth of downtown and the waterfront, the 2005 Waterfront Strategic Plan provided a foundation for a new Waterfront Master Plan that is sensitive to the conditions and priorities of today.

Purpose. A long-range plan for the waterfront, based on the Downtown Vision Plan (2004), to help guide development and decision-making for public lands along the Grand River and recommend policy enhancements that inspire private investment.
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1.1 Waterfront Planning Context

Study Area. The area of study for the 2005 Waterfront Strategic Plan included both Chinook Pier and Bicentennial Park, as well as multiple properties between Harbor Drive and First Street. It is important to note that the area of study varies between the 2005 Waterfront Strategic Plan and the Beyond the Pier Waterfront Master Plan.

Vision statements. Public planning activities produced the following statements:

The east side of Harbor Drive will be considered the “front porch” of the community and new building designs will gracefully embody the transition from private neighborhoods to the public “front yard” overlooking the Grand River. Throughout the central waterfront area, the community will foster the perpetual improvement of the established ribbon of green and open space that adorns the water’s edge. For generations to come, the waterfront will be an inviting respite, a place for celebration, and a constant fixture for citizens of all ages to view and appreciate the impressive panorama of Michigan’s grandest river. Over time, this public open space will increasingly reflect our local civic spirit and symbolize our commitment to environmental and community stewardship.

Public and private investment. Collaboration between public and private sectors was considered important to accomplish the strategic plan’s goals. Policies requiring public leadership and action include zoning/rezoning, design guidelines, and encouraging/enabling the private sector were all identified. The Waterfront Strategic Plan showed major long-term enhancement opportunities including key potential public facilities, improved pedestrian movement along the Grand River and Harbor Drive, re-designed Stadium area, new Waterfront Center, new Transportation Museum, additional public art, and access to the waterfront, new/relocated public parking. Private development projects were mostly located east of Harbor Drive and included new retail, dining, lodging, and selective office facilities.

2009 Chinook Pier Area Land Use Plan

A more targeted document, the 2009 Chinook Pier Area Land Use Plan provided design recommendations for Chinook Pier and the Covenant Life Parking lot. The impetus behind this study was the interest expressed by the Chamber of Commerce in relocating their offices from their current space at One South Harbor Drive to the Chinook Pier buildings. Three distinct areas were identified in this plan: the ferry landing at the southern end of the pier, open space along Harbor Drive, and the built uses area at the northern end of the pier. Quick studies were completed to show multiple design alternatives.

This plan placed more intense uses at the north end of the site and assumed that the Chinook Pier Shops would remain in their current location. The recent removal of these buildings has opened up new possibilities for what could occur at Chinook Pier.
People and places naturally change. Therefore, planning must balance strategy and flexibility, providing ideas that are both robust and responsible. Area-specific plans, such as Beyond the Pier, are written to consider these factors in a specific geographic context and provide recommendations that best suit the needs of the community.

What is Beyond the Pier?
Beyond the Pier is a planning document intended to guide development along Chinook Pier and beyond, connecting the downtown and riverfront areas. This plan will identify strategies to support local businesses, improve waterfront access, steward natural resources, and enhance economic development opportunities.

What properties does it involve?
The City of Grand Haven identified several public properties that may support redevelopment. These are highlighted in pink.
Why do we need this plan?
Recent land use changes, like the removal of the Chinook Pier Shops, have provided opportunities for redevelopment on public property. Through Beyond the Pier, the City will create redevelopment strategies while seeking to balance the interests of those who live, visit, and work in Grand Haven. This plan will encourage new investments that complement existing uses and promote the long-term viability of the community as a whole.

Site Considerations

Properties. Several key properties are being examined for Beyond the Pier, including Chinook Pier and the location of the former Chinook Pier Shops, the public parking lots downtown, vacant properties such as the Stanco Property, or underutilized waterfront properties like the Covenant Life parking lot.

Natural Features. Grand Haven’s waterfront is a unique mix of sensitive natural features and urban fabric. Key views to the critical dunes (Dewey Hill), the Grand River, and Linear Park are important factors to highlight. The high water table in this area and the potential for flooding will require a sensitive design that avoids potential conflict between the water and built environment.

Transportation. The downtown offers complete streets that create a walkable system throughout the study area. Streets and sidewalks are the most complete networks for travel, but the bike routes that do exist provide direct links to the waterfront both on the street and along the multi-modal trail. The trolley provides seasonal public transportation to much of the study area.

Area Zoning. The study area is a mix of zoning districts including Waterfront, Central Business, Old Town, and Key Streets. This mix of uses creates an interesting combination of districts for civic space, living, working, and playing.

The Waterfront district is intended to provide for open space along the shorelines with the intent of preserving and maintaining natural characteristics of those areas. Overall, this district is intended to support water-related development and to provide ample opportunities for public access with a balance of recreational and retail opportunities along the waterfront.

The Central Business district will serve as the primary identity for the City of Grand Haven and will be a pedestrian oriented place with active street life, healthy retail, and common space for community gatherings and waterfront activities.

The Old Town district serves as a gateway to the City’s Central Business district. With a mix of land uses, the Old Town district will provide residential uses, as well as service-oriented commercial business along primary transit routes.

Future Land Use. The Future Land Use Map, as defined in the City’s Master Plan, designates the majority of the study area as the Downtown District. This is described as the urban core where activities such as shopping, entertainment, professional services, living, and civic space use occur. As quoted from the City of Grand Haven Master Plan “The area will be characterized by an urban form that is scaled for convenient and safe pedestrian access and designed to take advantage of outdoor informal gathering places.”
1.1 Waterfront Planning Context

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NATURAL FEATURES
- Floodway (AD)
- 1% Annual Flood Hazard (AE)
- 0.2% Annual Flood Hazard (X)
- Critical Zone and Hazard (C)
- Critical Dune Area
- Public Parcels

TRANSPORTATION
- Multi-use trail
- Bike lane
- Sidewalks
- Trolley route
- Road alignment
- Public right-of-way
- Public Parcels

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1.1 Waterfront Planning Context

AREA ZONING (UNOFFICIAL)

FUTURE LAND USE

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Technical Assistance Program

The City of Grand Haven is certified as a Redevelopment Ready Community (RRC). This certification is provided by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation’s RRC program and demonstrates the City’s conformance to practices that promote effective redevelopment strategies. This designation as a Redevelopment Ready Community opens up a multitude of opportunities for the City, including RRC Technical Assistance (RRC TA) match funding. The Beyond the Pier Master Plan is being completed as an RRC TA project, with MEDC and the Michigan Municipal League providing pre-development technical assistance for this Waterfront Master Plan and the creation of a site-specific Request for Qualifications (RFQ).

Waterfront Steering Committee

The Grand Haven Waterfront Committee (GHWC) is a steering committee created for Beyond the Pier comprised of active Grand Haven residents, business owners, City Council members, Planning Commission members, and others. The GHWC has provided valuable knowledge and insight regarding the history and unique conditions of the study area, instruction in community input methods, review of plan documents, and direction on schematic designs. Their guidance has ensured that this waterfront master plan stays consistent with City and community goals and realities.

Community Input

Community feedback was central to the planning process for Beyond the Pier. From June through September of 2020, multiple community engagement options were offered, including a community-wide digital survey, four virtual focus group meetings, four pop-up engagement events, two virtual workshops, and an outdoor design charrette. Results of the engagement campaign have been detailed in a Community Input Report, which can be found in Appendix A.
This robust public engagement effort generated a large amount of data that provided a foundation for design and redevelopment goals. From this outreach campaign, it is clear that the people of Grand Haven are passionate about their City and desire a waterfront that is active, accessible, and provides a meaningful connection to the outdoors. The effective manifestation of these desires into policies, strategies, and designs requires a balancing act between not only form and function; but also feasibility and sustainability.

It was recognized by many participants that the City of Grand Haven has done an excellent job of preserving the waterfront. The concept of public waterfront access was a consistent topic of discussion throughout the engagement process. Although public access to the waterfront is key in supporting community desires, this does not preclude development from the study area. There is a strong desire for the promotion of food-based businesses, the creation of an enhanced, multi-use market space, and the perpendicular expansion of downtown beyond Washington Avenue. While these types of developments may be achieved through entirely private means or a public-private partnership, they must be open to the public and have a perceived accessibility that will be appealing to the community.

Public infrastructure and improvement projects were identified through this engagement process to support desired private investment and public enjoyment. Street enhancements were regularly discussed, such as providing more and safer crossings along Harbor Drive, creating additional on-street parking near Chinook Pier, and having better bike infrastructure throughout downtown. Maintaining green space for passive recreation and the enjoyment of the outdoors was also considered very important. Many participants favored programming these green spaces with affordable and family-friendly entertainment options, temporary food vendors, art, games, and winter comforts or activities.

Many responses to the online survey offered suggestions for ideal locations for growth, with Chinook Pier receiving the most attention. During the design workshops and charrette, participants regularly illustrated more intense land uses to the north end of Chinook Pier that would steadily decrease in intensity moving south along the riverfront. Key considerations when exploring development will be the context-sensitive placement of structures that complement existing uses and the preservation or creation of viewsheds to the waterfront.

Based on the community's feedback and the input from the City of Grand Haven and Waterfront Steering Committee multiple conceptual designs of the study area were created. Further refinement with the Committee resulted in a schematic design that provides recommended future improvements for Chinook Pier and Downtown.

A space where people can gather, play, shop or even a space to expand the farmers market. That’s a valuable space to draw people and should be used wisely.

Keeping the waterfront simple will be setting up the City for success. At Chinook Pier there is an incredible opportunity for open space and grass area that we didn’t have a few months ago.

My ideal would be a few waterfront dining options that are smaller in size with few indoor tables along with a dozen or so pop-up shops.

An appealing restaurant in the Chinook Pier location can offer outdoor seating during the summer to encourage folks to linger near the water and would still bring folks downtown during the winter.

I am really hoping the Chinook Pier area will become something that everyone in Grand Haven and beyond can enjoy and benefit from with their families and not housing.

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1.2 THE VISION

Past Waterfront Strategic Plan Goals
In 2005, public planning activities produced the following eleven principles and goals:

- Revitalize the entire waterfront area
- Enhance public, green, and open space
- Promote recreation and health
- Expand year-round capacity and appeal
- Strengthen the economic mix
- Protect and strengthen connections to the water
- Strengthen the appeal to people of all ages
- Protect Dewey Hill
- Express the history, heritage, and ecology
- Develop appropriate public infrastructure and facilities

New Goals
Community engagement in 2020 and thoughtful direction from the City and the Grand Haven Waterfront Committee revealed a need for the additional following goals:

- Create places in Grand Haven for the people of Grand Haven
- Enhance physical and visual connections between downtown and the waterfront
- Promote flexible and multi-use spaces at Chinook Pier
- Maintain the family-friendly and affordable nature of the waterfront
- Enable private investment as a tax-generating activity to create viable revenue streams for future waterfront investment and infrastructure

Established goals for the waterfront have influenced recent growth and public improvements. As our communities grow and evolve, so do our desires for the future. Foundational principles provide tools for long-term decision making, but without reassessment of these principles, new desires for the future may be overlooked. The 2005 Waterfront Strategic Plan outlined eleven principles and goals which are still relevant today. Building on these foundational principles, five new goals have been established to address modern values, needs, and desires.
The schematic design is a guide that conceptually depicts the locations, connections, and recommendations for investment within the study area. It shows the vision for Chinook Pier and downtown grounded by realities such as scale, implementation, and property restrictions. As opportunities arise, this schematic design should be used as a reference to assess the potential for furthering the goals of this waterfront master plan. It is important to reiterate that this plan is a guide and the conceptual nature of the schematic design also allows for flexibility in future improvements consistent with the waterfront goals and principles.

This schematic design builds on the concept of bringing elements of the river and downtown into Chinook Pier, either through built form or land use. In this design, the northern portion of Chinook Pier becomes a gateway to the riverfront. Consistent with community input, the intensity of development decreases within Chinook Pier as the design moves south toward the Waterfront Stadium and blends into the vast green space of Bicentennial Park.

Flowing pathways and illuminated open greens are shaped by curvilinear trails that line the edge of the river. These ripples create a cadence within the landscape, providing spaces for both passive recreation and nodes of activity. In the location of the former Chinook Pier shops, green is expanded to provide a tranquil place for visitors to experience and appreciate the water.

Overlooking the Grand River, a proposed market provides a destination for locals and visitors. Connections to all seasons are made through the partially enclosed multi-use market, warming huts, and fire pits that populate the nearby green spaces. The relocation of the mini-golf course and expanded playground near the Lynne Sherwood Waterfront Stadium creates a cohesive flow of civic space that lends itself well to activation during both the summer and winter months.

View from the river of Chinook Pier, with the Coal Tipple shown on the left through to the multi-use market on the right.

LEGEND

- Existing Building or Structure
- Proposed Buildings
- Proposed Outdoor Feature
- Festive Lighting
- New or Modified Parking
- Deck or Elevated Boardwalk
- Bike Lane
- Enhanced Crosswalk
- Multi-use market
- Passives greens
- Eat, shop, play development opportunity
- The decks public flow and wet spaces
- Incubator businesses mini-shops and food truck park
- Civic space extension
- Waterfront stadium
- Franklin Avenue streetscape improvements and business activation
- 1st & 3rd Streets streetscape improvements and business activation
- New or Modified Parking
- Deck or Elevated Boardwalk
- Bike Lane
- Enhanced Crosswalk
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- Incubator businesses mini-shops and food truck park
- Civic space extension
- Waterfront stadium
- Franklin Avenue streetscape improvements and business activation
- 1st & 3rd Streets streetscape improvements and business activation
- Note: All improvements shown on private properties are only conceptual recommendations and are dependent on private landowner interest and coordination.

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SCHEMATIC DESIGN

1.2 The Vision

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1.2 The Vision

Building on the 2009 Chinook Pier Land Use Plan and the anticipated growth at the Stanco Property, the northern end of the Pier was identified to be most suited for development. This allowed the decrease in intensity of use moving south to the Lynne Sherwood Waterfront Stadium.

Harbor Gateway & Jackson

Transition area between 3rd and 1st Streets offers a unique opportunity for gateway building.

Chinook Pier

Building upon the existing activity of Washington Avenue to the waterfront will occur through continued improvements to the civic spaces at Chinook Pier.

Washington Activity

Building upon the existing activity of the northsouth artery of 3rd Street will create a more inviting, walkable corridor. Enhancing 3rd Street will continue to support the bicycle corridor and bolster business activity in Old Town.

Franklin Ave Conversion

Two-way conversion of Franklin Avenue will create a more navigable street for pedestrians and bicyclists. Creating more complete frontages along this street would help complete this corridor.

Enhanced crosswalks and pedestrian-activated signals placed at specified intersections along Harbor Drive and Jackson Avenue will create a sense of safety and provide greater access to the waterfront from downtown. Coupled with artistic gateway elements between 3rd and 1st Streets, this will establish a feeling of arrival to the business district and the waterfront, complementing the active atmosphere generated by the local shops, eateries, marinas, and civic space anchors.

It is recommended that multiple modes of transportation, such as walking, biking, driving, and the trolley service be further supported by improvements to the roadway and multi-use trail. New street parking along Harbor Drive in conjunction with the boulevard will continue to calm traffic, enhance public safety, and provide additional public parking for direct access to the waterfront.

Harbor Drive & Jackson Avenue

Tree-lined boulevards and streets define Harbor Drive and Jackson Avenue as the main vehicular artery for waterfront travel. Cars are slowed by the curved roadway and boulevard, but further traffic calming techniques are recommended. With the constant flow of seasonal traffic and the skewed view of subtle pedestrian crossings, this corridor has long since been a division between Chinook Pier and the downtown.

Enhanced crosswalks and pedestrian-activated signals placed at specified intersections along Harbor Drive and Jackson Avenue will create a sense of safety and provide greater access to the waterfront from downtown. Coupled with artistic gateway elements between 3rd and 1st Streets, this will establish a feeling of arrival to the business district and the waterfront, complementing the active atmosphere generated by the local shops, eateries, marinas, and civic space anchors.

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Harbor Drive & Jackson Avenue Design Recommendations:

- Maintain parkways along both sides of Harbor Drive and Jackson Avenue and the existing tree-lined boulevard along Harbor Drive to transfer the green from the waterfront to downtown.

- When possible, green infrastructure elements, such as bioswales and rain gardens, should be implemented in the parkways and within the boulevard to maximize stormwater runoff capture and treatment.

- Harbor Drive should become a landscaped boulevard with one traffic lane in each direction. The west side of Harbor Drive should have on-street parking to allow for more direct access to the waterfront.

- Plant street trees 25-30’ on center on the east side of Harbor Drive and fill in gaps as needed along Jackson Avenue.

- Consider more robust pedestrian crossings at each intersection of Harbor Drive and Jackson Avenue with highly-visible crosswalks that have a physical material change, such as those already in place at the corner of Washington and Harbor Drive.

- New traffic signals consistent with those used at the intersection of Washington and Harbor Drive could be installed at 3rd Street and Jackson Avenue, pending a traffic analysis and impact study to verify need. Smaller scale, coordinating pedestrian-activated signals could be considered for key crossings as well.

- Encourage the use of snowmelt where appropriate, such as at key crossings at major anchors like the multi-use market.

- Provide pedestrian-scale, public street lamps along both sides of Harbor Drive and Jackson Avenue.

- Place all utility and power lines underground along Harbor Drive and Jackson Avenue.

- Provide alternative routes and modes of transportation to and through the waterfront park area, including more direct access from the street level to the boardwalk and enhancement of the multi-use trail with lighting, art, and wayfinding signage.

- Integrate on-street bicycle lanes on the east side of Harbor Drive and Jackson Avenue, taking riders from the beach up to the Waterfront Trail at 3rd Street. It is recommended that on-street bike lanes be provided on the west side of Jackson Avenue from 3rd Street to 2nd Street, and then a diversion from the road to the multi-use trail to move cyclists down to the waterfront and minimize conflict with proposed on-street parking facilities.

Eat, Shop, Play

The new development at the northern portion of Chinook Pier offers opportunities for riverfront dining, entertainment, and retail, bringing back activity and revenue generation lost after the removal of the Chinook Pier Shops. Integrated with the historic landscape of the coal tipple and train components, this is an ideal location for a sizable anchor restaurant and several retail spaces to service the local community and provide space for displaced Chinook Pier Shop businesses.

Building off of the residential growth at the former Stanco Property, the development area on Chinook Pier mirrors the intensity of use on the other side of Harbor Drive, further strengthening the gateway into town. Additionally, this development will be supported by new downtown residents, making businesses that provide food and essentials just a short walk away.

The Decks

Following the flow of the river and curvilinear sidewalks of Chinook Pier, a river viewing platform and large-scale deck become extensions of the landscape. Lit with festive lighting and staged with movable seating, these flexible civic spaces create additional areas for pier patrons to dine outdoors, watch the boats, and take in views of Linear Park. These spaces are meant to be spontaneous nodes of interest for those experiencing the riverfront. There is the potential for retail and restaurant activities from the new Chinook Pier businesses to spill out onto the trails and deck, contributing to the lively and dynamic nature of the boardwalk.
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1.2 The Vision

Multi-Use Market

Flexibility is a key component of this waterfront plan. Grand Haven experiences great changes in population each year and this variability means that business and civic spaces need to be adaptable. A proposed multi-use market would build on the flexibility of established features within Chinook Pier, like the waterfront stadium or open greens.

In its current state, the existing farm market lacks basic amenities and has design flaws that have made its relocation and upgrade a high priority for the waterfront. A new facility would meet the needs of the people and vendors by providing modern market features, such as electricity, water, wi-fi, and heat. Other amenities to consider include a commercial kitchen for local food vendors to prepare goods, a small permanent grocery store for produce purchases on off days, or indoor space available to community members for event rental.

The market should be designed to include both indoor and outdoor space, and be suitable for year-round use. This would allow for not only the summer farmers market but also a fall and winter market, attracting locals and visitors to the waterfront in the off-season. Unused portions of the market during the winter could be programmed with art or food events, both of which were desired by the public.

Providing a variety of amenities and programs within the market opens this structure to more frequent and steady year-round use, contributing to its viable operation and the potential for reliable revenue generation.
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1.2 The Vision

Passive Greens

Unprogrammed Lawns

Open greens flank the multi-use market, providing clear views to the riverfront and passive places to relax, gather, and enjoy the water. Permanent features, such as benches, lights, and art decorate the landscape and help connect Chinook Pier to Bicentennial Park. Additional amenities, such as yard games and fire pits, could enhance this experience and provide people and overnight boaters with additional entertainment.

Along the Boardwalk

Flowing pathways connect to the existing boardwalk, encircling a spacious riverfront green that complements the multi-use market. Like the riverfront deck and overlook, this open landscape allows for activity from the market to spill into this space with framed views to the riverfront highlighting the natural landscape. Whimsical features like centenary lighting and seasonal art installations create ambiance on the water’s edge.
Incubator Businesses

Mini-shops along the water’s edge offer additional opportunities for small-scale retail. Built to house seasonal business, these incubator spaces would allow entrepreneurs to test their investment downtown before deciding to move into a permanent space. When unused for the winter, the mini-shops could be converted to warming huts or holiday display spaces.

The Covenant Life parking lot has been identified as an area for opportunity in past planning documents and is still recognized today as a prime property for activation. An existing deed restriction limits the use on this property for parking and a height restriction of any structures to a maximum of twelve (12) feet. Ideally, this property would be developed with multi-story buildings that would hold the edge of Harbor Drive and carry the feel of downtown further north. This may be feasible in the future if the deed restriction was lifted, but today we recognize this limitation and begin to imagine other possibilities that may be more readily available. The Covenant Life parking lot could serve a dual purpose: utilized for shared public parking and as a seasonal food truck park.

Civic Space Extension

Building on the activity of downtown, civic connections to Central Park and the stadium are created through the relocation of the mini-golf and playground areas as a terminal vista at the end of Columbus. In its current location and condition, the existing playground near the Coal Tipple is hidden and aging. The creation of a new playground and mini-golf course near the Lynne Sherwood Waterfront Stadium would build off of the activity of the stadium and provide nearby play space for children and young adults to explore during family outings to downtown. With the reduction of the nearby parking area often used for event staging, vendor storage, and portable bathrooms, space adjacent to the play area will need to be preserved for event functions and the depot building will be utilized for event support.

The Lynne Sherwood Waterfront Stadium is a beacon to the waterfront and flexible performance space for Chinook Pier. This recent improvement to the waterfront has dramatically changed the character of Chinook Pier and created a significant connection from the Grand River to downtown. A catalyst for change, the stadium offers further opportunities for year-round activation and attraction to the riverfront. In addition to the successful events already hosted at the stadium, such as Big Band Dances, Worship On The Waterfront, and regular viewing of the Musical Fountain, this space can provide additional programming with the investment in flexible equipment. Movies on the pier and ice skating in the winter could activate the stadium year-round if seasonal investments were made into movable screens, windbreaks, or an ice rink.

Artistic rendering of seasonal winter infrastructure.

Ice skating rink

warming huts

performed & winter programming

movable planters as wind breaks
custom seating or art as wind shelters
temporary fire pits
1.2 The Vision

1st & 3rd Streets

1st and 3rd Streets have the capacity to become unique north-south connectors between downtown and the waterfront. With 1st Street’s clear views from downtown to Chinook Pier, it is a natural route to encourage pedestrian movement. Similar to improvements made along Washington Avenue, enhancing 1st Street will create a more inviting, walkable corridor.

The intersection of 3rd Street and Jackson Avenue houses more significant elements than many may realize. Located in Old Town, this intersection represents the transition from a historic neighborhood to a downtown mixed-use development pattern. It is an intersection of two well-traveled streets for those navigating downtown by car and is a direct link to the north leg of the Grand Haven Riverfront Trail, providing bicycle access to Ferrysburg and Spring Lake. Therefore, 3rd Street is an ideal intersection to establish a gateway to the waterfront. Establishing a light at this intersection may bring prominence to the street and help vehicular traffic pause before entering the waterfront district. Development along and streetscape improvements to 3rd Street will promote this corridor’s use as a bicycle connector, a walkable neighborhood, and bolster business activity in Old Town.

Franklin Avenue

Franklin Avenue is a quick-moving local street that terminates at the waterfront. It is a transitional corridor, home to local shops and eateries, municipal offices, several busy public lots, and local residents. As the only one-way street remaining downtown, the two-way conversion of Franklin Avenue and the addition of dedicated bike lanes will slow traffic and create a more navigable street for pedestrians and bicyclists. Conversion from a one-way street will also foster more predictable travel routes for drivers and create the feeling of narrower lanes, thus slowing vehicular traffic and improving safety for everyone.

Franklin currently has many public and private parking lots that front the street on both sides, creating an emptiness along the street and a divide between the downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. Consideration should be given to closing these gaps and creating a more complete street frontage. Any future development along this corridor should be carefully evaluated for compatibility with the adjacent Southside neighborhood.
1.3 WATERFRONT BUSINESS STRATEGIES

The vibrant and attractive downtown will be the key to successful business growth in Grand Haven. Walkable, healthy, and safe communities with exciting dining, shopping, and entertainment options attract residents who are seeking quality of life in a live-work-play urban atmosphere. This chapter highlights strategies for increasing the success and longevity of businesses while continuing to make the study area a desirable place for businesses to locate. Recommendations in this section are broad and apply generally throughout the study area. These improvements may be implemented individually or in coordination with other priority projects. While areas of special interest are discussed in the previous section, the following recommendations provide strategies for achieving the intent of this plan.
Character Architecture

Building architecture and form have a significant impact on how appealing the street is perceived to be. An identifiable and consistent design creates a sense of place that people recognize and with which they become familiar. Grand Haven is blessed with several corridors that contain historic and unique architecture that contributes to this sense of place and community. These corridors include the Washington Avenue corridor and form the heart of Grand Haven’s downtown, attracting the most pedestrians. This is not a coincidence; these streets are aesthetically attractive and were originally designed with people in mind. People are drawn to these corridors because they provide a historic setting, safety, and comfort. There are inviting options for restaurants and shops. While these buildings are over 125 years old, they are some of the most sought-after real estate in the city.

The Grand Haven Michigan Mainstreet Design Guidelines articulate the desired architectural elements downtown. The City’s Zoning Ordinance also contains form-based regulations that guide new building design in a way that enhances the downtown environment and ties into the existing architecture. During the outreach process for this plan, the public often expressed a desire to incorporate architecture similar to Grand Haven’s downtown, creating harmony between old and new. This community’s focus and awareness of building design and the impact suggests that the City’s design guidelines should be reviewed to ensure consistency with public feedback. All streetscapes should work toward creating a human-scaled environment, and business licensing and regulatory requirements should be reviewed to ensure that they are clear, fair, and broadly understood.

Urban Living

Downtown shopping and dining become more viable when there is a core density of residents in the market area to serve. Further, a densely populated downtown can support retail shops that stay open year-round; a varied base of businesses becomes more viable when there exists a consistent base of residents in the immediate area, and the neighborhood is human-scaled with appropriate infrastructure.

This plan is cognizant of the fact that the public did not indicate a strong desire for more residential condominium developments. However, there was some support for mixed-use development. Urban living in Grand Haven may be more acceptable in a mixed use setting, with ground floor commercial uses and upper stories reserved for office or residential. Encouraging residential uses in the study area will also help achieve the stated goal of this plan to encourage businesses that serve Grand Haven residents. This strategy could be coupled with a marketing campaign directed towards residents and potential residents, highlighting the benefits of living in or near downtown.
Downtown Growth

Strategic infill in the study area will expand the downtown beyond Washington Avenue. This connection between the waterfront can be strengthened through the growth of activity both on Chinook Pier and in the adjacent business district.

Initial drafts of the schematic plan illustrated potential locations for downtown infill on public and private parking lots. Although infill was generally supported by the Grand Haven Waterfront Committee, the Downtown Development Authority, and the Planning Commission, the prescriptive nature of the conceptual infill led to a robust public discussion about its purpose within this plan. Results of the community survey showed strong support for development at the location of the former Chinook Pier Shops, while infill of the public parking lots downtown was not generally favored. Through the planning process, it was determined that the schematic plan would focus on the waterfront and connections through the street rights-of-way. The City’s zoning ordinance allows for a variety of uses, building forms, and height capabilities in the Central Business District. The zoning ordinance and Downtown Design Guidelines will continue to guide the form and placement of development within the study area. Further considerations for future growth downtown include the following:

- **Complete Frontages.** In walkable business districts, it is important to have near continuous activity along the street edge to provide both physical and visual excitement. This entices people to explore, drawing them down the street and encouraging them to shop, eat, and linger. Vacant parcels or large parking lots along the street edge create gaps and areas of inactivity that interrupt the rhythm of the street. Future downtown infill should aim to create active frontages, filling in these gaps to form a complete frontage of stimulating elements, such as attractive building facades, window displays, café spaces, or greens.

- **Terminated Views.** A terminated view is a focal feature that stands at the end of a street. These views are important because they tend to be highly visible from a distance and often act as a landmark for the area. Infill on parcels perpendicular to terminating streets have the opportunity to create framed views or iconic vistas through building architecture, height, sculpture, lighting, or landscape. Considerations should be given to how architectural or landscape elements may highlight the river or downtown, by either framing a view to the water or by providing a central focal feature that complements the riverfront.

- **Hold the Corner.** Buildings placed at street intersections provide a sense of enclosure and completeness at the street level. This in turn makes the street feel narrower and encourages more cautious traffic movements. Additionally, key intersections are places where building up creates a sense of grandeur. Holding street corners with structures or active features also forms a more defined and attractive street, providing multiple facades for corner viewing and encouraging further use of the area.

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**Plan view diagram showing buildings or active uses lining the street frontage**

**Plan view diagram showing a focal feature at the end of a street**

**Plan view diagram showing buildings or active uses at each street corner**
Walkable Places

Streets are the bones on which our cities are built. Improvements within and along our streets can provide safe, effective, and enjoyable transportation for everyone. Walk Score is a service that provides insight into the ease of pedestrian movement around any given city, neighborhood, or address. The score awarded is intended to determine the ability for any person to easily perform daily tasks, such as visiting a store, post office, or bakery. The Walk Score for downtown Grand Haven is 64 points (on a scale of 0 – 100), which indicates that residents or visitors are provided with a moderate ability to shop for and receive personal services easily. It recognizes that an automobile is needed to complete most daily errands.

Creating an accessible environment is paramount to a successful downtown and the vitality of its businesses. This includes both natural and built features. Built infrastructure may include wide sidewalks and pedestrian-activated signals at crossings to bolster connectivity. Visually identifiable and safely maneuverable features like well-defined, colored crosswalks, smoothly transitioning on-street and off-street bicycle and multi-modal trails, and wide, organized, and consistent sidewalks provide residents, workers, and visitors with a safe, efficient, and barrier-free way to get around town, regardless of age or ability.

Built infrastructure also involves traffic calming devices to improve pedestrian and bike safety in active street corridors. Landscaping such as street trees, planters, bioswales, and native vegetation can encourage pedestrian travel, enrich biodiversity, and preserve a sense of connection to nature. Attractive streetscapes should be designed to prioritize pedestrian safety and mobility, decreasing motorized traffic, and increasing non-motorized traffic. Complete streets attract more foot traffic and are critical in growing local business success in a downtown environment. Creating attractive, visually appealing, and safe sidewalks with activated storefronts and clearly-delineated pedestrian travel zones within and beyond Washington Avenue will provide the entire study area with the opportunity for both commercial and residential development and redevelopment.

Biking in Grand Haven

A common thread among many successful downtowns is that they accommodate many forms of transportation. In Grand Haven, biking is popular during the warmer months, especially as an alternative form of transportation for seasonal visitors. As bike rentals and regular cyclists become a more common sight in the city, its bicycle infrastructure should increase commensurately. Designing streets to accommodate bicycle traffic is important either through shared lanes, dedicated bicycle lanes, or divided on-street travel lanes. It helps both cyclists and motorists minimize accidents and conflicts.

Grand Haven has two distinct types of primary bike infrastructure: on-street bike lanes and multi-modal trails. This plan recommends building upon these two uses to complement existing community dynamics. As a small lakeshore community with only a handful of dedicated bike lanes, many residents and visitors are not well-educated about on-street cycling. Bicycling is a mode of travel done for both entertainment and necessity, so it is important that the city accommodate cyclists of all abilities. Education about biking in Grand Haven should be a continual effort, as the downtown and the waterfront will always need to accommodate multiple modes of travel. Bicycle traffic downtown should always be accommodated either on-street or off-street in dedicated travel lanes. To avoid conflict with pedestrians on the busy sidewalks downtown, cyclists in this area should always use bike lanes when they are marked. The City’s zoning ordnance encourages businesses to accommodate bicycle facilities and infrastructure. Clearly marked bicycle lanes and parking stalls should be prevalent and conveniently-located throughout the downtown.

Alternatively, the waterfront offers wide multi-modal trails for use by both pedestrians and cyclists. To improve cyclist safety and promote enjoyment of the Grand River, the existing riverfront trail should be utilized on the west side of Harbor Drive. Pavement markings and wayfinding signage can be used to direct cyclists to the trail route in order to fully experience Chinook Pier.
Part I. The Plan - BEYOND THE PIER

1.3 Business Strategy

While vehicle accommodations are often necessary, designing for automobiles instead of people results in wide streets, faster speeds, and a less safe environment for pedestrians and cyclists. Additionally, auto-centric planning can also result in a surplus of parking spaces where there should be productive buildings and uses. This plan recognizes that Grand Haven has a unique seasonal influx of people, many of whom travel by car. This creates an impression of scarcity in parking during the summer and an overabundance of parking in the winter. This dramatic fluctuation in parking demand may always exist to some degree, but its effects can be mitigated if multiple modes of transportation are viable to balance out the seasonal use of downtown.

The trolley helps to diversify the transportation options in Grand Haven. It fills a demand for seasonal transportation along the waterfront and shares a charming part of Grand Haven’s history with the community. It is recommended that the trolley continue to service the downtown and waterfront, with regular stops and a route expansion that would continue Northeast along Harbor Drive and Jackson Avenue to 3rd Street, turning on 3rd to tie back into the existing route at Washington Avenue. This would further connect the downtown, bolster economic activity on 3rd Street, and reinforce the gateway along Harbor Drive and Jackson Avenue.

Active and Passive Public Space

The study area benefits from passive and active spaces in natural and built settings. Integration of passive and active elements should be preserved and balanced throughout the study area to enhance experiences for a variety of ages and abilities. Passive activities may include outdoor restaurant seating, benches, and picnic tables, and open green space. Active activities may include festivals or parades, concerts, ice skating, shopping areas, and the farmers market.

Multi-Use Destinations

Multi-use public destinations provide residents and visitors alike with year-round opportunities. This can be seen in the success of the flexible space at the Lynne Sherwood Waterfront Stadium. The existing Grand Haven farmers market, for example, attracts hundreds of visitors who travel specifically to the market on Saturdays and Wednesdays from May to October. However, many of these visitors also visit other locations on Chinook Pier and downtown. Developing a year-round multi-use market, with indoor options similar to the markets in Grand Rapids or Flint would provide local vendors space to incubate their up-and-coming businesses and provide a week-long, year-round destination. Restaurants, coffee houses, etc. also make great additions to indoor/outdoor markets, because they encourage shoppers and diners to spend more time in the market.

Pop-Up Retail

Many cities coordinate with property owners to offer vacant storefront space on a short-term basis to small retailers for rolling out new ideas or products to shoppers. This low-risk method allows emerging entrepreneurs the opportunity to showcase their products without having to provide a large capital outlay for retail space. Contracts are often negotiated on a very short-term basis, such as weekly or monthly, and it provides a win-win scenario for both the property owner and the entrepreneur. Pop-up space also works to provide temporary spaces for entertainment or cultural displays such as pop-up art galleries, small-scale theater spaces, or local historical displays.

Grand Haven’s zoning ordinance was updated in 2021 and it provides for pop-up shops, incubator spaces, and similar non-traditional arrangements. Flexibility and a willingness to adapt to a rapid-changing environment should continue to be a key component of city policy.
Part I. The Plan - BEYOND THE PIER

1.3 Business Strategy

Year-Round Programming

A full program of year-round activities brings awareness and foot traffic to downtown. A four-season schedule of events at downtown shops, restaurants, cultural centers, parks, and the riverfront promotes the downtown to the surrounding West Michigan region throughout the year. The farmers market, as mentioned above, is one such event that brings hundreds of people to the Chinook Pier site on a regular weekly basis. In the winter months, winter and holiday-themed festivals and outdoor entertainment and dining options can activate the streets. In Grand Haven, seasonal opportunities may be created by converting spaces into appropriate seasonal destinations, such as adding an ice skating rink and windbreaks to the Lynne Sherwood Waterfront Stadium from November through March. Temporary installations to accommodate widely variable weather conditions will be necessary to ensure that the City’s open spaces remain inviting and accommodating.

Public/private partnerships will also be critically important to maximize the utilization and effective programming of waterfront spaces and facilities that are recommended in this plan. These include the Coast Guard Festival as well as dozens of other large and smaller events and celebrations that occur within the study area. With the proposed changes in this plan, the Grand River Waterfront is expected to attract even greater use – both planned and unplanned – by residents and visitors to Grand Haven. Year-round programming in these efforts will be coordinated between the City, Chamber of Commerce, Convention and Visitors Bureau, Coast Guard Festival, and many other local organizations and individuals.

Unique Dining, Shopping, Cultural, and Entertainment Opportunities

There are three types of places that people determine are important in their lives. The first type, the home, is often considered to be the most intimate and cherished place a person has. The second type is the workplace. While not as intimate as home, it is familiar because of the many hours each week people spend in these spaces. The workplace is often where people make personal connections with coworkers and develop friendships. The third type are places that hold importance because of personal connections or experiences unique to that location. For many, downtowns provide experiences that people remember all their lives.

Interesting and unique experiences need to take place in the downtown to provide visitors and residents with opportunities that they cannot find anywhere else in the city. While it is simplest to plan for a place visually, a place is experienced and defined by all five senses. Unique restaurants that offer new tastes and exciting atmospheres that franchise dining experiences don’t provide and draw patrons from all over the region. Retailers that offer products that cannot be found anywhere else in the city provide destination opportunities for both local and out-of-town shoppers to visit and experience. Chinook Pier provides an attractive and visible setting to develop unique dining, outdoor event, and retail spaces. Thus, unique opportunities arrive when consideration is given to multiple interactions in an area to create places in which people want to live, work, and play. In the study area, placemaking efforts may be bolstered and influenced through the following features:

- **Sight.** Quaint building design, historic structures, viewsheds of the Grand River, boats, wayfinding signage, art, lighting and ambiance, and streetscape design.
- **Sound.** Music, concerts in the Waterfront Stadium, musical fountain, interpretive or educational programs, wind in boat sails, movement of water, laughter, and outdoor gatherings.
- **Touch.** Splash fountains, play equipment, lawns and vegetation, seating, market produce, and heat from lamps/firepits.
- **Smell.** Food vendors, fresh water, and air.
- **Taste.** Food trucks and restaurants, ice cream shops, fresh market produce.
Wayfinding
Wayfinding allows people to orient themselves in a space and navigate to different locations. This can be accomplished through the use of signage, maps, mobile apps, speakers, road markings, and other features. The City of Grand Haven should consider the development of a comprehensive wayfinding plan to identify key sites to improve wayfinding and enhance connectivity between Chinook Pier and downtown.

Wayfinding inherently involves connectivity, as it identifies a path between different locations. It also involves different scales based on the target audience. Therefore, wayfinding design should involve the identification of civic destinations along key corridors at an appropriate scale that provides points of orientation for visitors and residents. This plan recommends highlighting 1st Street, 3rd Street, and Fulton Avenue as connectors between downtown and the waterfront. Additional wayfinding improvements to the existing multi-modal trail will bring a greater understanding to users of the connectivity between Lake Michigan, the Grand River, and the tri-cities area.

Wayfinding elements should be incorporated into any streetscape improvements that occur along these corridors. This may include pedestrian-scale signage or maps to orient people to nearby facilities and amenities, road markings for bike lanes, and larger-scale signage identifying locations for vehicle parking.

Working with Your Neighbors
Some of the principles and goals may be aided by cooperation and coordination with tri-cities neighbors. Water trails, walking, and biking trails, and marketing/promotional activities will require broad cooperation to fully realize. Growth and development of the tri-cities region outside of Grand Haven can act as a further catalyst for local economic development. Like any plan, this plan, along with related plans and ordinances, must be frequently consulted to ensure long-term success and sustainability.

Incentives
It is vital for a city to have an ongoing strategy for retaining and expanding businesses. Developers and entrepreneurs will not enter a market if they feel the area is unsure of its future. Strategies for attraction and financing options provide interested developers with incentives to move into the city and begin the transition into the result that was envisioned. Strategies for development include financing options such as Tax Increment Financing Authorities, Downtown Development Authorities, Corridor and Façade Improvement programs, and Brownfield Redevelopment Authorities. Each of these authorities or districts often have the opportunity to raise capital from certain regulated means or, at a minimum, are designed to champion a plan to stimulate the residents or other governmental authorities to support a collective vision.

The City of Grand Haven has greatly invested in its own economic development by taking the steps to become a Redevelopment Ready Community and by creating both a Tax Increment Financing and Downtown Development Authority (Grand Haven Main Street). These certifications and authorities open up incentives for development investment such as MEDC Community Revitalization grants and loans or brownfield development funding.

Other assurances for development can come in the form of land purchases or leases. The City of Grand Haven currently has a ten-year maximum land lease for available public properties. Governmental public land leasing options for long-term periods from ten to thirty years or more provide developers and businesses with the knowledge that the City is determined to invest in itself and desires quality development. Coordination through all of these means is important for a successful downtown; otherwise, it may be difficult to attract and or retain businesses.

Having a clear vision to communicate to the development community and promoting incentives that may be available to them is key to encouraging private investment in the study area. This waterfront plan and the other carefully-crafted planning documents generated by the City offer this information. To further provide clarity for the development community, it may be prudent for the City to archive previous versions of planning documents so an investor can easily identify relevant policies and plans. Highlights from updated planning efforts, such as the recent Zoning Ordinance update, should continue to be shared, as the updated procedural efficiencies and flexible site design requirements convey the City’s progressive measures to streamline the planning process.
This plan’s goals and strategies will help define future development, greenspace, and activities along the waterfront and downtown Grand Haven. To implement the ideas and strategies presented in this plan, the City of Grand Haven has identified several priority projects and actions. These actions are founded on the goals created in the 2005 Waterfront Master Plan and new goals supported by the Grand Haven Waterfront Committee. A concerted effort will be placed on projects that were prioritized by the community and that will promote connectivity between the Grand Haven waterfront and downtown.

NEXT STEPS

The priorities and actions recommended in this section are intended to provide a general outline of steps that the City of Grand Haven can take to implement the goals and strategies of this plan. The City should use these recommendations as a foundation for guiding future development and redevelopment downtown and along Chinook Pier.
GOAL ORGANIZATION

Goals established in this plan provide a basis for each recommended action step. The 2005 Waterfront Strategic Plan provided several principles and goals. Additionally, the Grand Haven Waterfront Committee supported several additional goals based on the community engagement results received in 2020. The goals created in 2005 and 2020 are listed in Section 1.2 - Vision and are categorized below and on the following page, according to their general intent.

Year-Round Viability
- Revitalize the entire waterfront area
- Expand year-round capacity and appeal
- Enhance physical and visual connections between downtown and the waterfront

Natural Setting & Recreation
- Enhance public, green, and open space
- Protect Dewey Hill
- Express the history, heritage, and ecology of the waterfront
- Protect and strengthen connections to the water
- Promote recreation and health

Community Development
- Strengthen the economic mix
- Develop appropriate building character and scale
- Strengthen the appeal to people of all ages
- Develop appropriate public infrastructure and facilities
- Create places in Grand Haven for the people of Grand Haven
- Promote flexible and multi-use spaces at Chinook Pier
- Maintain the family-friendly and affordable nature of the waterfront
- Enable private investment as a tax-generating activity to create viable revenue streams for future waterfront investment and infrastructure
Implementation of the goals and strategies of this plan will depend on several variables, including support of priorities, availability of funding, market conditions, and the cooperation of public and private entities. The following priorities have been established in consideration of current goals, expected duration of projects, and financial implications. Priorities have been identified chronologically for short, mid, and long-term actions. These actions have been selected due to their integral role in achieving the vision of this plan. However, this is not a comprehensive list and other actions may be appropriate given changes in market conditions, land availability, funding opportunities, or other factors.

**Short-Term Priorities (0-3 years)**

- **Chinook Pier Request for Qualifications (RFQ)**
  The multi-use market and Chinook Pier north development shown on the schematic plan illustrate an opportunity for a public-private partnership in the creation of a unique market, dining, and shopping area. An RFQ created within the scope of this waterfront master plan and its release to developers is recommended as a top priority. This will involve the subsequent selection of a development partner and contract for the site. In coordination with the RFQ, this plan recommends the extension of the City's land lease to 30 years to enhance business viability. The timeline for the design, development, and approval of this redevelopment will depend on partnership with the City, funding opportunities, developer interest, and initiative.

- **Multi-Use Market & Chinook Pier North Development Planning**
  The planning for a multi-use market, new shops, and dining opportunities at Chinook Pier are envisioned through a public-private partnership, guided by recommendations of this plan. An upgraded farmers market was highly desired by the public and considered to be a top priority by the Grand Haven Waterfront Committee. Due to the importance of the market to the Grand Haven community, it is recommended that the planning process for the new multi-use market space be included as a short-term priority. As engineered plans are developed and construction is anticipated, this priority may also involve the temporary movement of market vendors to a nearby location, such as the Covenant Life parking lot across Harbor Drive, through the use of pop-up tents, or the creation of a similar temporary situation for market vendors. During this priority, creative engineering solutions should also be given to stormwater and floodplain management in conjunction with the multi-use market site design.

- **Incubator Businesses & Food Trucks**
  Incubator businesses and food trucks offer the opportunity for small businesses to gain popularity and recognition without substantial overhead. In keeping with the history of Grand Haven, it is recommended that these businesses be architecturally compatible with the unique character and charm of Grand Haven. While these businesses may be seasonal in nature, the shops may be modified into winter warming huts or outfitted for holiday events to provide year-round activity. Similarly, this plan recommends the introduction of food trucks, which may be located at the multi-use market or across Harbor Drive in the Covenant Life parking lot. It is recommended that a program giving priority to existing downtown restaurants for food truck placement be explored. Together these small businesses can bolster economic activity near the waterfront, help activate the study area during winter months, and enable small business opportunities for local entrepreneurs.
1. Waterfront Amenities

Passive recreational opportunities and placemaking can be enhanced through certain pedestrian amenities along the waterfront. This plan recommends the installation of amenities such as picnic tables, benches, art, lighting installations, games, and fire pits within Chinook Pier to create areas for people to enjoy the waterfront, visit with friends or family, have a picnic, or relax in an open space area. First programming the former Chinook Pier site would be advised, moving these amenities to areas recommended to bolster pedestrian travel across Harbor Drive and Jackson Avenue. This plan also recommends the addition of angled public parking along Harbor Drive. Specific plans and feasibility of this parking should be further evaluated before installation. Because this task will involve the cooperation of several different entities, its timeframe is difficult to predict. However, this plan recommends that feasibility be assessed and engineering reviews begin during the short-term phase, followed by construction as appropriate.

2. Information and Programming

Year-round activation of the waterfront was noted as a common desire among the public. While many features may contribute to activating this space all year, the City may consider introducing more programs and events that can reinforce this theme. Although the waterfront is more active in the summer, year-round connections could be made to the downtown through activities such as temporary road closures for outdoor dining in the street, a holiday parade, art fairs, an ice festival, and other similar outdoor events. Lastly, this plan recommends that information regarding programs, amenities, and facilities be centralized and easily accessible to the public. This may involve website updates, an information kiosk, centralized information regarding development or business opportunities, and through aggressive marketing efforts.

3. Waterfront Improvements

Pedestrian travel between the pier and downtown should be safe and clearly defined. While the City has a strong sidewalk network, streetscape enhancements and improvements can improve safe and efficient travel. Additionally, the approval of residential development on the Stanco Property will increase the necessity of safe pedestrian crossings. The plan recommends that feasibility be assessed and engineering reviews begin during the short-term phase, followed by construction as appropriate.

4. Harbor Drive & Jackson Avenue Improvements

Multi-use market & Chinook Pier north development planning

This plan also recommends the addition of angled public parking along Harbor Drive. Specific plans and feasibility of this parking should be further evaluated before installation. Because this task will involve the cooperation of several different entities, its timeframe is difficult to predict. However, this plan recommends that feasibility be assessed and engineering reviews begin during the short-term phase, followed by construction as appropriate.

5. Public Meeting

Obtain engineered plans and necessary approvals for construction

Obtain the approval of residential development or relax in an open space area. First programming the former Chinook Pier site would be advised, moving these amenities to areas recommended to bolster pedestrian travel across Harbor Drive and Jackson Avenue. This plan also recommends the addition of angled public parking along Harbor Drive. Specific plans and feasibility of this parking should be further evaluated before installation. Because this task will involve the cooperation of several different entities, its timeframe is difficult to predict. However, this plan recommends that feasibility be assessed and engineering reviews begin during the short-term phase, followed by construction as appropriate.
Part I. The Plan

1.4 Action Plan

Mid-Term Priorities (4-7 years)

- **Multi-Use Market & Chinook Pier North Development Construction**
  Market improvements, dining, and retail development will require considerable cooperation between multiple entities, and may best be served by a public-private partnership. Following the creation of plans for the multi-use market and Chinook Pier north development, final permit approvals and construction are anticipated in the mid-term phase. Because of the elevated costs associated with new construction, rental rates for this commercial space will be higher than the former Chinook Pier Shops. It is recommended that the city explore options for incremental rent rates for former tenants to provide more affordable space over a period of several years. Through the market’s enhancement as an indoor/outdoor space, its versatility will be increased. Therefore, during the construction period, the City may also create informational and promotional material to inform the public of new opportunities at the market, such as community rentals and event space.

- **Wayfinding Program**
  To provide an effective wayfinding system throughout the study area, this plan recommends that a wayfinding program be created to access existing wayfinding signage and its effectiveness. Because wayfinding exists on different scales for different modes of transportation, this program should evaluate both pedestrian-scaled and vehicle-scaled signage. This program may include an inventory of existing conditions, identify locations of deficiencies, and address the coordination of designs between different areas and features for multiple modes of transportation.

- **Streetscape on 1st and 3rd Streets**
  1st and 3rd Streets provide integral northwest-southeast connections between the waterfront and downtown Grand Haven. New residences proposed on the Stanco Property may increase the need for safe and inviting pedestrian corridors in this area. Further, to accommodate downtown growth, appropriate pedestrian infrastructure such as bike lanes and sidewalks to facilitate travel between the business district and the waterfront will be needed. Streetscape improvements are expected to create a stronger sense of place in these areas by visually and physically connecting the buildings and streets with the waterfront.

- **Bike Lanes**
  Several new bike lanes are identified in the schematic design to create a more expansive and connected network for bicycles. Tactical urbanism, the method by which temporary and low-cost interventions are used to plan for effective long-term change, is recommended to define appropriate bike lanes within the existing streetscape. New bike lanes are proposed on 1st Street, 3rd Street, Franklin Avenue, Harbor Drive, and Jackson Avenue. This plan recommends the installation of new bike lanes along these corridors in coordination with streetscape improvements.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Action Options</th>
<th>Policies, Tools, &amp; Techniques for Implementation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Use Market Construction</td>
<td>- Obtain all applicable permits for construction - Promote new opportunities at the market, such as rental or event options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinook Pier North Development Construction</td>
<td>- Submit plans and receive all necessary approvals for development - Market business space for restaurants, retail, and essential goods that can support year-round use - Evaluate affordability program for former Chinook Pier Shop tenants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayfinding Program</td>
<td>- Inventory existing wayfinding conditions and identify deficiencies - Develop a strategy for the design and coordination of signage at different scales and different modes of transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streetscape on 1st and 3rd Streets</td>
<td>- Incorporate complete street policies to design these corridors for various types of transportation users - Identify appropriate areas for natural features that contribute to a vibrant streetscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike Lanes</td>
<td>- Explore tactical urbanism principles and implement pilot projects to determine effective bike paths - Coordinate bike paths with streetscape improvements and complete streets strategies</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Long-Term Priorities (8+ years)

- Promote Development Opportunities
  Strengthened business activity in the study area could enhance pedestrian services and contribute to a more connected downtown environment. Therefore, this plan recommends that infill development be promoted downtown, using the principles outlined in the Section 1.3 of this plan, to enhance pedestrian travel between the business district core, surrounding areas, and the waterfront. In areas where infill development is adjacent to neighborhoods, development should be carefully evaluated to ensure that buildings and uses are consistent with the neighborhood in terms building scale, design, and the intensity of land use.

  This plan also recommends that the City of Grand Haven continue conversations with private property owners to discuss properties that may provide continued support of this plan and with business owners regarding year-round viability.

- Multi-Use Trail Improvements
  Enhancements to the multi-use trail along the waterfront are encouraged. The scenic quality of this trail and connection to the Village of Spring Lake contribute to its popularity. Due to the extensive traffic on this trail, improvements such as signage and lighting are recommended. Although the trail offers a regional connection outside Grand Haven, few signs are present along the trail to indicate someone’s location, the trail distance, or the route. Periodic trail maps or signs could enhance user orientation and awareness of the route. Interpretative signage or monuments could also be installed to inform the public of the area’s culture, history, and ecology. Lastly, lighting and ambiance are recommended to enhance public safety and enjoyment of the waterfront during evening hours.

- Streetscape Improvements
  Streetscape improvements should continue to be evaluated for other corridors beyond 1st Street, 3rd Street, Franklin Avenue, Harbor Drive, and Jackson Avenue. While these corridors are considered secondary to those addressed above, specific improvements along ancillary corridors may continue to enhance pedestrian, bike, and vehicle mobility throughout the study area. This may also include the investigation of converting Franklin Avenue from a one-way to a two-way street.

- Wayfinding Implementation
  Wayfinding signage, maps, and road markings can bolster a sense of place in public areas. While specific wayfinding features have been recommended in other priorities, this plan also recommends that wayfinding be evaluated throughout the study area at different scales for different modes of transportation, building upon the wayfinding program mid-term priority. Using the inventory of wayfinding signage, strategy, and designs identified in the wayfinding program, implementation is recommended as a long-term priority. Specifically, pedestrian-scale maps at key intersections may help people navigate between downtown and different waterfront features. Gateway signage or art is also recommended to welcome people to the downtown area and identify it as a distinct place. This may address areas identified in the 2004 vision plan as key gateways, such as along Jackson Avenue at 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Streets. Gateway signage or art should indicate a sense of entrance and hospitality. Specifically, this could involve an arch or other identification sign after the bridge on North 3rd Street to provide a sense of entry to the downtown and waterfront.
Part I. The Plan - BEYOND THE PIER

1.4 Action Plan

• River Deck Construction

Natural areas within Chinook Pier were highly desired and considered the most important benefit of the waterfront by the public during community engagement efforts. While various natural space areas and landscaping would be located throughout the pier, the construction of river decks and overlooks identified on the schematic plan would provide a unique viewing opportunity for the public to enjoy the river. These decks would offer a passive recreational space for public enjoyment of natural water features. If interest, funding, or opportunities arise to construct these decks in an earlier timeframe, such as in coordination with the multi-use market, the timeline of this priority should be modified.

• Civic Space Extension

The existing Waterfront Stadium provides a flexible performance space along the pier and opportunities for civic events. As an extension of that space, the plan recommends that the play equipment and mini-golf space, currently located towards the north end of Chinook Pier, be moved adjacent to the stadium. This location is expected to make these facilities more visible to the public and create a natural extension of the active downtown space. The complementary nature of these uses is also expected to create a family-friendly atmosphere with options for people of all ages and abilities. The mini-golf and play equipment are intended to be independent of other amenities that may be developed in this area and should remain operational until movement to the new location is viable.

Key Action Options Policies, Tools, & Techniques for Implementation

Long-Term Priorities

**Promote Development Opportunities**

- Promote development opportunities on underutilized sites or vertical infill on established structures
- Maintain communications with private landowners regarding future development and year-round business viability
- Evaluate hurdles to development and pursue opportunities to make the process streamlined, understandable, and attainable for businesses

**Multi-Use Trail Improvements**

- Create wayfinding signage to orient trail users and install at key intersections for clarity
- Explore opportunities for interpretive signage or monuments along the waterfront which highlight areas of cultural, historic, and ecological significance
- Install lighting which enhances safety and scenery

**Streetscape Improvements**

- Implement, as necessary, tactical urbanism methods to enhance streetscapes
- Explore the feasibility and effectiveness of the conversion of Franklin Avenue from a one-way to a two-way street

**Wayfinding Implementation**

- Design gateway elements to identify a transition into the downtown area
- Install wayfinding signage at key intersections to orient the public between the downtown and waterfront

**River Deck Construction**

- Obtain all permits and approvals for construction in the floodplain
- Incorporate designs that enhance the natural river environment
- Evaluate play equipment for safety and ADA accessibility and upgrade as necessary

**Civic Space Extension**

- Relocate the mini-golf course and develop a new play space adjacent to the Waterfront Stadium, as represented in the schematic design
- Evaluate play equipment for safety and ADA accessibility and upgrade as necessary
Beyond the Pier Waterfront Master Plan

Effective planning must be supported by sound assumptions and analyses to ensure that the plan’s implementation is within reach. Part 2 of Beyond the Pier contains the supplemental research and assessment. This discussion is intended to demonstrate and predict the influence that the schematic design will have on the study area through the lens of a market analysis, parking impact, and the economic feasibility of development.
INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

The City of Grand Haven completed a Downtown Parking Study in 2017 that was an update to a parking study prepared by the City in 2003. The updated parking study accounted for changes to the parking network that had occurred since 2003 and the differences in contemporary challenges 14 years later. The boundary of the study was fairly large, extending beyond traditional Downtown Grand Haven to U.S. 31. The parking study included a parking inventory, parking occupancy, and parking demand.

The study also divided the study area into zones, including the Waterfront Zone and Downtown Retail Zone.

The Waterfront and Downtown zones are most applicable to the waterfront parking impact assessment; however, exact boundaries do not entirely align with the Beyond the Pier study area. As such, not all lots and spaces included in the Waterfront and Downtown Retail Zones were used for the total existing baseline analysis (Table 1). As part of this parking impact assessment, we have utilized the parking inventory outlined in the 2017 Study for public and private off-street lots and public on-street parking as a base. This parking impact assessment intentionally does not address reserved versus non-reserved spaces or delineate differences between parking restrictions such as time and day limits. The proposed reservation and restrictions at this point would be speculative, and would likely change. Therefore, a comparison would not be appropriate at this time.

PARKING ANALYSIS

Existing and Proposed Parking Analysis

The following tables outline the number of existing parking spaces impacted within the study area according to the 2017 Downtown Parking Study Inventory and known modifications since 2017. The existing space counts are compared to the number of proposed spaces at full buildout of the preferred schematic design. The lot and parking area identification scheme are borrowed from the 2017 Study for ease of comparison. A total summary of parking spaces within the Study Area are also provided for context. Total parking within the study area is proposed to increase by 185 spaces with full buildout of the preferred schematic design. Each lot or segment’s location within the 2017 Study’s ‘sub-area zones’ have also been identified for comparison.

2.1 PARKING IMPACT ASSESSMENT

BEYOND THE PIER: Part II. The Support

DRAFT 5.10.2021
### Table 1: Summary of Parking Spaces in Study Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>Total Existing Spaces</th>
<th>Total Proposed Spaces</th>
<th>Net Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Off-Street</td>
<td>762</td>
<td>721</td>
<td>-41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Off-Street</td>
<td>971</td>
<td>1,113</td>
<td>+142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public On-Street</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>+84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,179</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,364</strong></td>
<td><strong>+185</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2: Public Off-Street Parking Spaces (Impacted Lots Only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility (Parking Study Zone)</th>
<th>Existing Spaces</th>
<th>Proposed Spaces</th>
<th>Net Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lot A (Waterfront)*</td>
<td>76*</td>
<td>46*</td>
<td>-30*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lot B (Waterfront)**</td>
<td>82**</td>
<td>100**</td>
<td>+18**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lot C (Waterfront)</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>-53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Peerless Lot (Downtown)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>+24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>232</strong></td>
<td><strong>191</strong></td>
<td><strong>-41</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*To maintain consistency with the existing Chinook Pier parking, it has been assumed that the new Chinook Pier North development will also be served by public parking.

**To maintain consistency with the 2017 Parking Study, Chinook Pier parking has been classified as public.

### Table 3: Private Off-Street Parking Spaces (Impacted Lots Only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility (Parking Study Zone)</th>
<th>Existing Spaces</th>
<th>Proposed Spaces</th>
<th>Net Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lot 32 (Waterfront)</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lot 67 (Downtown)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>+150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lot 68 (Downtown)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>238</strong></td>
<td><strong>380</strong></td>
<td><strong>+142</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4: Public On-Street Parking (Impacted Segments Only)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility (Parking Study Zone)</th>
<th>Existing Spaces</th>
<th>Proposed Spaces</th>
<th>Net Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Segment 119 (Downtown)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>+11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segment 120 (Downtown)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segment 121 (Downtown)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segment 122 (Downtown)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>+11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segment 123 (Downtown)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>+6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segment 126 (Downtown)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>+13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segment 128 (Waterfront)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>+49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segment 163 (Downtown)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>+8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>49</strong></td>
<td><strong>133</strong></td>
<td><strong>+84</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part II. The Support - BEYOND THE PIER

2.2 Parking Impact

The following table outlines the parking demand of infill development or redevelopment within the Beyond the Pier study area. Identical to the 2017 Downtown Parking Study, the parking demand evaluation is based on two sources: 1) the City’s currently adopted off-street parking standards; and 2) Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) parking generation standards. These standards were then applied to the proposed redevelopment and infill building floor space and land use types within the study area. For proposed spaces that could house multiple retail, restaurant, or service establishments, the multi-tenant commercial establishment parking standard was used. Table 5 includes the uses identified in the preferred schematic design and the standards indicating their demand.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use Type</th>
<th>Parking Demand Per Unit of Measured (Based on City Zoning Standards)</th>
<th>Parking Demand Per Unit of Measured (Based on ITE Standards)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dwelling, multiple-family</td>
<td>2 spaces per unit</td>
<td>1.1 spaces per unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government building</td>
<td>1 space per 300 sq. ft. of gross floor space</td>
<td>4.15 spaces per 1,000 sq. ft. gross floor area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-tenant commercial establishment</td>
<td>1 space per 300 sq. ft. of gross floor area</td>
<td>3 spaces per 1,000 sq. ft. of gross floor area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail business</td>
<td>1 space per 250 sq. ft. of gross floor area</td>
<td>3 spaces per 1,000 sq. ft. of gross floor area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Parking Demand Standards Used for This Analysis

This parking impact analysis has also adopted the “consultant demand estimate” as explained in the 2017 Downtown Parking Study, as the approach is logical and necessary to a complete comparison. For reference, the 2017 Parking Study includes the following description and reasoning for the approach to the consultant demand estimate.

Further, the City’s recent 2021 Zoning Ordinance update allows up to 50% of on-street parking spaces to count toward off-street parking requirements, under certain circumstances. The consultant demand estimate described above also likely provides a more reasonable parking demand estimate considering this 50% standard.
Table 6 outlines the parking demand analysis of the proposed redevelopment and infill of the preferred schematic design. The table includes each redevelopment or infill site, the potential land uses, 2017 parking zone, and calculated parking demand using the standards and approached outlined above.

Table 6: Parking Demand Analysis of Proposed Redevelopment and Infill

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Redevelopment/Infill Building</th>
<th>Potential Land Use(s)</th>
<th>2017 Parking Study Zone</th>
<th>Parking Demand (Zoning)</th>
<th>Parking Demand (ITE)</th>
<th>*Consultant Demand Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chinook Pier North Development (Redevelopment)</td>
<td>Multi-tenant commercial establishment</td>
<td>Waterfront</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Use Market (Redevelopment)</td>
<td>Multi-tenant commercial establishment</td>
<td>Waterfront</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peerless Flats (Infill)</td>
<td>Multiple-family residential</td>
<td>Downtown</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micro Shop Units (Infill)</td>
<td>Retail business</td>
<td>Waterfront</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Marina Facilities Expansion (Infill)</td>
<td>Government building</td>
<td>Waterfront</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The Consultant Demand Estimate utilizes methodology from the 2017 Downtown Parking Study and is an average of the two demand estimates, less 25% to account for limitations, as described on page 75 of this plan.

Tables 7 and 8 outline the parking demand analysis by parking zone (Waterfront and Downtown Retail). Each table uses the base total parking demand and total parking available by zone in 2017 and compares it to the total parking demand and total parking available for the preferred schematic design.

Table 7: Parking Demand and Analysis Net Change: Waterfront Zone

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Parking Demand (2017)**</th>
<th>Parking Demand (Zoning)</th>
<th>Parking Demand (ITE)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,213**</td>
<td>1,013**</td>
<td>835**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Parking Demand of Preferred Schematic Design</td>
<td>1,290</td>
<td>1,084</td>
<td>891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Parking Demand Net Change of Preferred Schematic Design</td>
<td>+77</td>
<td>+71</td>
<td>+56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Parking Available (2017)</td>
<td>984</td>
<td>984</td>
<td>984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Parking Available at Full Build Out</td>
<td>960</td>
<td>960</td>
<td>960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Parking Available Net Change of Preferred Schematic Design</td>
<td>-77</td>
<td>-71</td>
<td>-56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surplus/Deficit (2017)</td>
<td>-229</td>
<td>-229</td>
<td>-149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surplus/Deficit at Full Build Out</td>
<td>-330</td>
<td>-124</td>
<td>+69</td>
</tr>
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** Figures reflect the 2017 base with the removal of the former Chinook Pier Shops and existing Farmers Market parking demand due to redevelopment. Parking demand calculation assumed to be multi-tenant commercial establishment.

Table 8: Parking Demand and Analysis Net Change: Downtown Retail Zone

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Parking Zone</th>
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Tables 7 and 8 outline the parking demand analysis by parking zone (Waterfront and Downtown Retail). Each table uses the base total parking demand and total parking available by zone in 2017 and compares it to the total parking demand and total parking available for the preferred schematic design.
The parking impact of the preferred schematic design will result in an increase of 185 total available parking spaces in the Waterfront and Downtown parking zones, and an increased parking demand of 211 spaces utilizing the consultant demand estimate. At full build-out of the preferred schematic design, this will result in a net deficit of 48 parking spaces if the existing deficit of 22 parking spaces in the same parking zones is accounted for from the 2017 Study. Comparatively, the 2017 Parking Study indicated a parking deficit of 22 parking spaces in the Waterfront and Downtown parking zones (after the parking demand for the former Chinook Pier Shops and Farmers Market was reduced).

The deficit outlined above comes primarily from added parking demand from increased building area and a reduction in the number public off-street parking spaces (-41). Private development, such as Peerless Flats infill on the former Stanco property, provide new private off-street parking. The loss in the number of public off-street spaces is made up for by the net increase in the number of off-street private spaces (142) and the addition of 84 on-street public spaces along Harbor Drive, 1st Street, 2nd Street, and Fulton Street.
2.2 FEASIBILITY

MARKET STUDY HIGHLIGHTS

A retail market analysis was conducted to investigate existing market conditions specific to the Beyond the Pier study area. The report examines consumer characteristics, market segmentation, retail leakage (gaps in current retail market), and retail business potential of Chinook Pier and downtown. The full market report can be found in Appendix B, but highlights from this analysis are discussed in this plan as they provide meaningful context for the plan’s implementation and feasibility.

Consumer Characteristics

The study area’s population has remained relatively stable since 2010; however, the population is projected to grow over the next five years. This growth may increase retail potential and demand, as population growth is typically a driver of increased goods and services. Indicative of this growth is the recent approval of the Peerless Flats 133-unit apartment complex, which could accommodate 182 additional residents in the study area (based on the average household size of 1.37 persons). This development alone could increase the study area’s population by 58%.

The majority of the City’s employees live elsewhere and commute into the City. This net influx of people may increase market demand for retail, especially near large employment centers. In the City of Grand Haven, an analysis of consumer behavior and spending patterns indicated a high market potential for those who are technologically inclined (often college-aged students), entertainment venues, and food-related businesses.

There is an apparent dichotomy between younger lower-wage and older affluent populations in the study area. Approximately 31% of the study area’s population earns more than $100,000, while about a quarter of the population earns less than $35,000 per year. Young professionals seem to leave by the age of 35, while residents in early retirement relocate downtown. The concentration of a relatively young age group, along with affluent retirees, indicates strong market potential for retailers that target these cohorts. This may include technologically-driven amenities and affordable services, along with niche market opportunities for more expensive and culturally exclusive options.
In 2020, the number of rental housing units exceeded owner-occupied units in the study area. The study area includes a portion of the Old Town district, which contains an older housing stock of mostly single-family dwellings. Other areas contain multi-family or mixed-use structures, with the greatest concentration of multi-family housing in the Harbourfront Condominiums. These typically cost over $400,000 and accommodate a population earning almost seven times the study area’s median household income. Low-to-moderate income housing and senior housing options have the greatest demand and could be absorbed at a higher rate than condominiums due to lack of other options in the area.

314
Population

3.7%
Projected 5-Year Population Growth

162
New Residents in Peerless Flats
(finding 1.37 average person per household in the study area times 133 new DU)

$57,326
Median House Income

87%
Employees Commuting into the City

37.4
Median Age

Market Segmentation
This aspect of the market study analyzed the population by grouping households with similar consumer characteristics. In the study area, almost three-quarters of the population was classified in a category designated “Set to Impress.” This was followed by about a category designated “In Style,” and lastly “Bright Young Professionals.” These groups can help inform the types of services and amenities desired in the study area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Popular Housing</th>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Enjoy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set to Impress (73.1%)</td>
<td>Multi-unit apartments</td>
<td>Many in college and often aged 20-34 years</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>• Local music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Quick meals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Mobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Close relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Good deals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Style (15.7%)</td>
<td>Mix of single-family, townhomes, &amp; apartments</td>
<td>Professional couples or single households without children</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>• Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Mobile technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Good deals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bright Young Professionals (11.1%)</td>
<td>More renters than homeowners</td>
<td>Young, educated, working professionals</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>• Physical activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Environmentally conscious decisions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Retail Leakage Analysis

The retail leakage analysis identified gaps in the retail market where demand for goods and services is not being satisfied. In the study area, there was a net retail surplus of $60 million in 2020. However, most of this surplus caters to residents outside the study area and not all retail/restaurant sectors are oversupplied. Nearly 95% of residential retail spending occurs outside the study area. Many retail needs appear to be satisfied by businesses within a 15-minute drive of the study area. Retail leakage in grocery stores is by far the largest amount spent outside the study area by residents, reaching over $1.3 million. While large retail grocery stores are not typically found in downtown centers, successful neighborhood-scale grocers have become more popular in recent years. Residents in the study area also travel to other areas for auto dealers, furniture stores, and department stores.

Market Potential

Retail

Downtown Grand Haven is the primary location for tourism-related businesses and cultural features. The study area encompasses small retail and office space that often experiences high turnover rates, but space tends to be continually leased out with low vacancy. The hospitality, eating and drinking, and general retail industries comprise a large share of downtown employment opportunities. Typically, communities with a large seasonal or visitor populations experience strong market potential for restaurants (mid to low-end fare), coffee shops, bars and clubs, brewpubs, and entertainment venues. However, the demand for everyday goods and services such as personal care and groceries, as well as some specialty retail, is needed downtown and may be encouraged by future demand.

The study area's strength as a dining destination provides a foundation for future business growth. New dining and entertainment businesses can be mutually beneficial by enhancing the downtown identity as an entertainment and dining destination, attracting new people into the City. Restaurants and entertainment establishments can also tap into the two major market segments in the town: the young and less affluent, but looking for downtown living; and affluent (and generally older) households looking to downsize their home. Potential opportunities in this category include businesses like wine bars, microbreweries and brewpubs, live entertainment venues, and additional restaurants that offer unique experiences or cuisine.

Local agents have mentioned that foot-traffic in the downtown area has declined in recent years which has frozen the rent prices. Quality retail spaces that offer larger, more attractive locations in the heart of downtown are also lacking. Local market agents noted that these types of locations were primarily located outside of the downtown, especially along the US-31 corridor. Although turnover at many downtown locations is high, vacancy usually stays low because tenants often desire space in the tourism market.

Rentals

Available rental units are generally limited in the study area. An estimated 38 single-family units appear to be renter-occupied in the study area with the remaining rental units being multi-family buildings or mixed-use locations. Since 2015, vacancy rates have remained below 6% and this rate is expected to remain steady in the future. It is estimated that 269 rental units could be safely absorbed within a half-mile radius of the downtown, based on an extrapolation from the Ottawa County Housing Needs Assessment (2017) to the study area. While 133 units are proposed at Peerless Flats, this would project an absorbency of 136 additional mixed-income units in the half-mile radius.
Part II. The Support - BEYOND THE PIER

2.1 Feasibility

Similar to the retail, many of the office buildings in the study area primarily consist of Class B and C spaces, with little to no Class A accommodations. While newer and larger buildings located outside the study area provide local competition for office space, there is a small group of clients that choose to locate downtown because of its niche market, accessibility, proximity to restaurants and shops, and walkable spaces. Local agents have indicated that there is less certain demand for office space downtown; however, recent developments suggest there may be support for purpose-built office buildings with Class A accommodations at a neighborhood scale.

Office

6,657 sq. ft.
Total Leasable Retail Space

$1,332.50
Monthly Rate for a 2-bed, 2-bath unit

55,000 sq. ft.
Available Office Space

$10 - $12
per sq. ft.
Triple-Net Retail Lease Price

$14 - $17
per sq. ft.
Triple-Net Office Lease Price

Total Leasable Retail Space

FEASIBILITY OVERVIEW

The feasibility overview looks at the Chinook Pier Redevelopment Area for development viability. This district includes the Chinook Pier North Development and the multi-use market, both of which have been highlighted in this study as important connections to enhance and develop commercial opportunities in the City. All market data and research has been performed specifically for this defined study area, unless otherwise noted.

Input was gathered from the public, visitors, the City, and many other stakeholders with the goal of identifying the most appropriate development for Chinook Pier and downtown. This is illustrated in the schematic design in Part I: The Plan. To test the feasibility of the schematic design, the Chinook Pier Redevelopment Area is the principal site for review in this feasibility overview.

Determining feasibility of the schematic design is an important first step in deciding how the City and future developers should structure their development packages to make projects successful. This feasibility overview utilized a sensitivity analysis for the best, most likely, and worst scenarios based on financing, development, and lease characteristics. The following figures are reported in the most likely scenario, but it is noted that this is not only the option anticipated. This feasibility overview primarily analyzes commercial/retail for the infill shown on the schematic design.
Chinook Pier Redevelopment

Chinook Pier North

The most likely scenario for the waterfront district includes approximately 10,900 square feet of mixed commercial/retail development space located at the site of the existing farmers market at an approximate development cost of $4,812,114. During the community outreach program, many options were chosen for potential uses for the riverfront space. One of the most requested uses was for a unique waterfront dining experience. This feasibility analysis proposes utilizing approximately 5,500 square feet of the mixed commercial/retail space along the riverfront to contain an anchor restaurant. This restaurant would provide an exciting riverfront dining location at an annual lease rate of $41/sf/yr. for a destination dining experience.

The remaining square footage of the commercial/retail space was divided into three 1,800 square foot large white box commercial bays. Utilizing the lease data for the present Grand Haven real estate market, the restaurant space can succeed at this location with an average annual NNN square footage rate of $26/sf per year. It should be recognized that the present retail market rates for retail in downtown Grand Haven presently only draw $12 to $15 NNN per square foot. However, this space is often over one hundred years old, offers little amenity options for tenants, is not located on the waterfront. The following feasibility analysis outlines the best, most likely, and worst-case scenarios for potential developments at the Chinook Pier North site (present farmers market location).

### Chinook Pier North

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Project Cost</th>
<th>Best Case</th>
<th>Most Likely Case</th>
<th>Worst Case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$3,368,404</td>
<td>$4,812,114</td>
<td>$7,324,249</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loan-to-Cost Ratio</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacancy Rate Factor</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Rate of Return (IRR)</td>
<td>10.40%</td>
<td>9.43%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash-on-Case Return (NNN)</td>
<td>14.76%</td>
<td>0.99%</td>
<td>-16.74 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Likely Rents:

- Restaurant: $41/sf/yr. NNN
- Retail Space: $26/sf/yr. NNN

### Cash Flow Analysis:

- Debt Service Coverage (DSCR): 1.71
- Net Operating Income (NOI) (T1): $240,597
- Free Cash Flow (FCF) (T1): $99,866
- Net Sale Proceeds (20 Years): $3,615,371
- Finance Rate (WSJ - January 15, 2021): 3.25% (prime)

### Other Key Figures:

- Net Operating Income (T1): $240,597
- Free Cash Flow (FCF) (T1): $99,866
- Net Sale Proceeds (20 Years): $3,615,371
- Finance Rate (WSJ - January 15, 2021): 3.25% (prime)

### Summary:

- **Total Project Cost**: Best Case - $3,368,404, Most Likely Case - $4,812,114, Worst Case - $7,324,249
- **Loan-to-Cost Ratio**: Best Case - 80%, Most Likely Case - 80%, Worst Case - 80%
- **Vacancy Rate Factor**: Best Case - 5.0%, Most Likely Case - 5.0%, Worst Case - 5.0%
- **Internal Rate of Return (IRR)**: Best Case - 10.40%, Most Likely Case - 9.43%, Worst Case - N/A
- **Cash-on-Case Return (NNN)**: Best Case - 14.76%, Most Likely Case - 0.99%, Worst Case - -16.74 %
- **Likely Rents**:
  - Restaurant: $41/sf/yr. NNN
  - Retail Space: $26/sf/yr. NNN

The Chinook Pier Redevelopment project offers a unique opportunity to revitalize the waterfront district with a diverse mix of commercial and retail spaces, including a destination restaurant, while leveraging the existing infrastructure and community support.
Multi-Use Market

The proposed multi-use market, located at the site of the former Chinook Pier Shops, will provide a year-round, shopping, eating, and drinking destination like markets found in Grand Rapids, Flint, Detroit, or Bay City. All these locations provide stall space for farmers to sell local produce weekly by offering indoor or indoor/outdoor bays. These markets also provide incubator spaces for small grocery retailers, such as meat and fish markets, wine and cheese shops, spice markets, etc., as well as offering space for food & drink vendors providing local or ethnic food options. The cost of construction for these types of market spaces varies based on scope and scale, but the following examples of local market investments provides context for the possibilities at Chinook Pier.

- Grand Rapids Downtown Market (2013), 130,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor space with a total cost of $21,000,000. This extravagant market is well known for its indoor retail space and eateries, co-working spaces, large greenhouse, demonstration spaces, and event rentals.

- Grand Rapids Fulton Street Market (2013), 2,000 square feet of indoor space and 118 covered open-air booths were created for the Fulton Street Market with a budget of $3,000,000. This market is well attended by Grand Rapidians, where many residents purchase their weekly groceries and produce.

- Grand Rapids Fulton Street Market (2013), 2,000 square feet of indoor space and 118 covered open-air booths were created for the Fulton Street Market with a budget of $3,000,000. This market is well attended by Grand Rapidians, where many residents purchase their weekly groceries and produce.

Smaller in scale than the above referenced markets, the new multi-use market proposed by this plan provides approximately 10,131 square feet of space. This market would contain 6,831 square feet of dedicated stall space for local farmers to utilize and 3,300 square feet of indoor small box retail, incubator retail, and food vendor spaces, with a most likely construction cost of $6,441,197. The small box retail (900 sf) provides an anchor to the market. The indoor incubator space (1,200 sf) and market food shop incubator space (1,200 sf) would be available in eight designated spaces on the market floor at rates of $750 per month. Lastly, there are six 225 square foot mini shops proposed just outside the farmers market. These spaces may not be able to be leased on a year-round basis, however, they would provide locations for pop-up retail for local entrepreneurs and craftspeople.

The average monthly rate would be approximately $253 per month and can be contracted on as little as a weekly basis. It noted, that because this is primarily a publicly owned building, the market will most likely not earn a profit. This is principally due to the small scale and limited space for rent generation. A 50:50 construction commitment from any future developer may contribute 50% of the costs of construction, but they would most likely need to receive some form of tax incentives. Fifty percent (or more) of the construction costs would have to be assumed by the City, and no property taxes would be generated on site. Some income could be generated from offering small-scale incubator spaces and 46 farmers market stalls. These would be rented by local farmers or craftsmen at least 26 Saturdays per year to generate a monthly income of $4,383.33. Therefore, all incomes generated should be concentrated to pay the monthly expenses, such as utility costs. The following feasibility analysis outlines the best, most likely, and worst-case scenarios for potential developments at the new Grand Haven multi-use market site (former Chinook Pier Shops location).

- Muskegon Farmers Market (2014), 40,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor space with a total cost of $4,000,000, this large-scale market offers 128 covered outdoor vendor stalls and 11 indoor stalls, a commercial kitchen, restroom facilities, and information center.
Grand Haven Farmers Market | Best Case | Most Likely Case | Worst Case
--- | --- | --- | ---
Total Project Cost | $4,807,936 | $6,441,197 | $10,021,427
Loan-to-Cost Ratio | 50% | 50% | 50%
Vacancy Rate Factor | 5.0% | 5.0% | 5.0%
Internal Rate of Return (IRR) | 1.58% | -5.17% | 0.00%
Cash-on-Case Return (MIN) | -0.71% | -3.09% | -6.53%

Likely Rents:
- Retail: $2.50/sf/mo.
- Indoor Incubator: $2.50/sf/mo.
- Outdoor Incubator: $2.50/sf/mo.
- Market Incubator Food Shops: $3.50/sf/mo.
- Market Stalls ($50 / stall / day): $4,983.33/mo.

Debt Service Coverage (DSCCR) | 0.90 | 0.58 | 0.19
Net Operating Income (NOI) (T1) | $146,816 | $140,395 | $111,704
Free Cash Flow (FCF) (T1) | -$16,806 | -$98,922 | -$293,469
Valuation (20 Years) | $2,907,224 | $2,004,052 | $588,160
Finance Rate (WSJ - January 15, 2021) | 3.25% (prime) | 4.25% | 5.25%

Land Use
The primary driver behind the development of this waterfront location is the costs of the land. The land is not available for purchase and would have to be negotiated for a long-term lease, preferably 30 years. Realistically, the length of the lease would be determined by the commitment of the developer. A land lease rate of approximately $1.00 to $1.50 per square foot would be ideal with the abatement of property taxes for the developer. An equal share of the development costs for the mixed-use market would most likely need to be invested by the City or another stakeholder organization, because of the small amount of total leasable space for this development project provides little return due to low lease rates and large amounts of public space that will not generate a return. Options to utilize all available development subsidies from organizations such as the MEDC are imperative to a successful project.
APPENDIX A

BEYOND THE PIER
COMMUNITY INPUT REPORT
APPENDIX B

BEYOND THE PIER

MARKET ANALYSIS