W.P.

Department of Natural Resources

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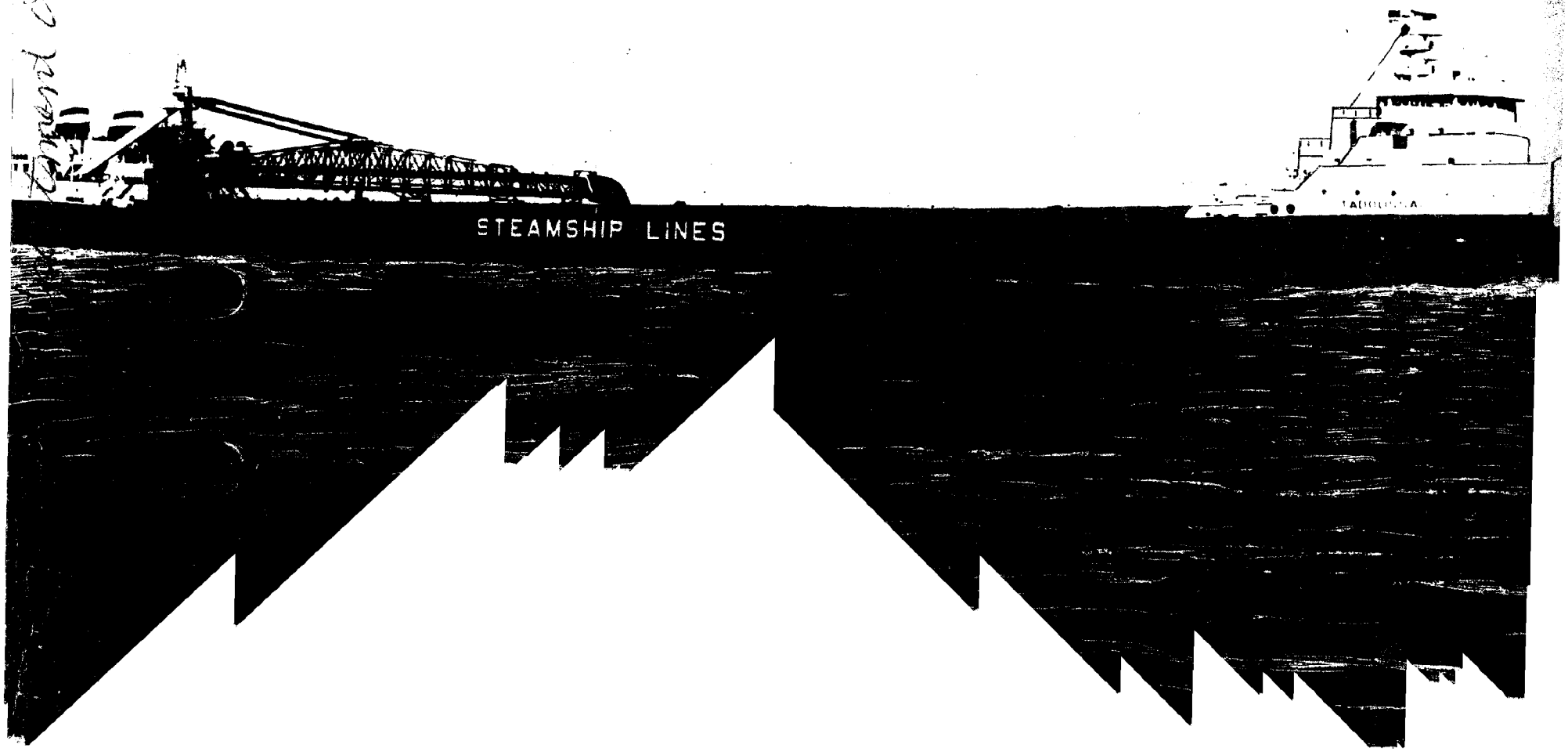
MICHIGAN
OCZM GRANT #NA-80-AA-H-CZ157
SUBTASK 3D-1.6

MARINE CITY
nautical mile master plan

A Coastal Area Development Plan



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Michigan, Department of Natural Resources
TC 423 .S25 C58 1981

MARINE CITY
Coastal Area Development Plan

July 1981

Prepared for:

City Commission
City Planning Commission
Marine City, Michigan

Prepared by:

Ayres, Lewis, Norris & May, Inc.
Engineers - Architects - Planners

Administered by:

Division of Land Resource Programs
Michigan Department of Natural Resources

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The Many Concerned Citizens of Marine City, Michigan

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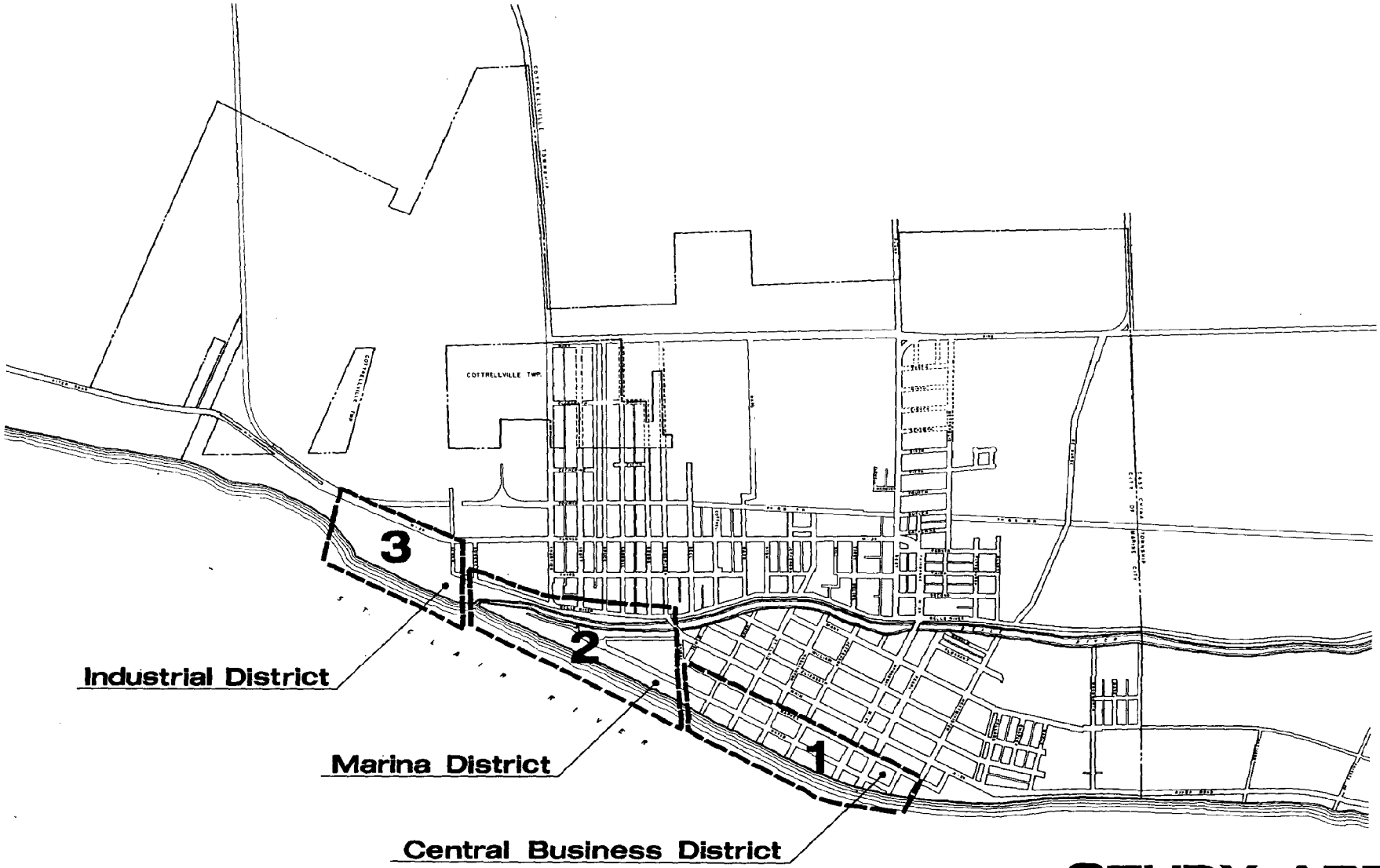
INTRODUCTION

Purpose

In 1980, Marine City sought and received funds from the Michigan Coastal Zone Management Program to prepare a plan for the City's waterfront area. The purpose of the Coastal Area Management Plan is to analyze the coastal area resources, identify problems and opportunities, seek public input, and recommend specific measures for economic redevelopment, improved public access, and enhanced recreational opportunity. An overall coastal area master plan, specific site designs, cost estimates, and an implementation program are presented.

Coastal Area

A striking feature of Marine City is the extensive amount of shoreline along the Belle and St. Clair Rivers within the City limits. To focus study efforts, the coastal area was divided into three study areas, illustrated on page 2, each with distinctive features: the Central Business District includes the downtown and frontage along the St. Clair River; the Marina District includes the area on both sides of the Belle River up to the new bridge; and, the Industrial District includes the area from McLouth Yard to the DNR boat launch site.



STUDY AREAS

MARINE CITY, MICHIGAN

Ayres, Lewis, Norris & May, Inc.
engineers · architects · planners

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Study Process

The development of the plan was conducted in three major phases. The first phase involved the inventory and analysis of background data regarding the coastal area and the identification of coastal problems and issues. The second phase included the development of alternative solutions to problems and issues identified in the first phase. The final phase involved preparation of the recommended plan.

The involvement of the community was actively sought during all phases of the study. A series of public workshops, as well as individual interviews, were conducted by the consultants to gain input and community reaction to various aspects of the plan. Public input was instrumental in arriving at acceptable alternatives leading to a final recommended plan.

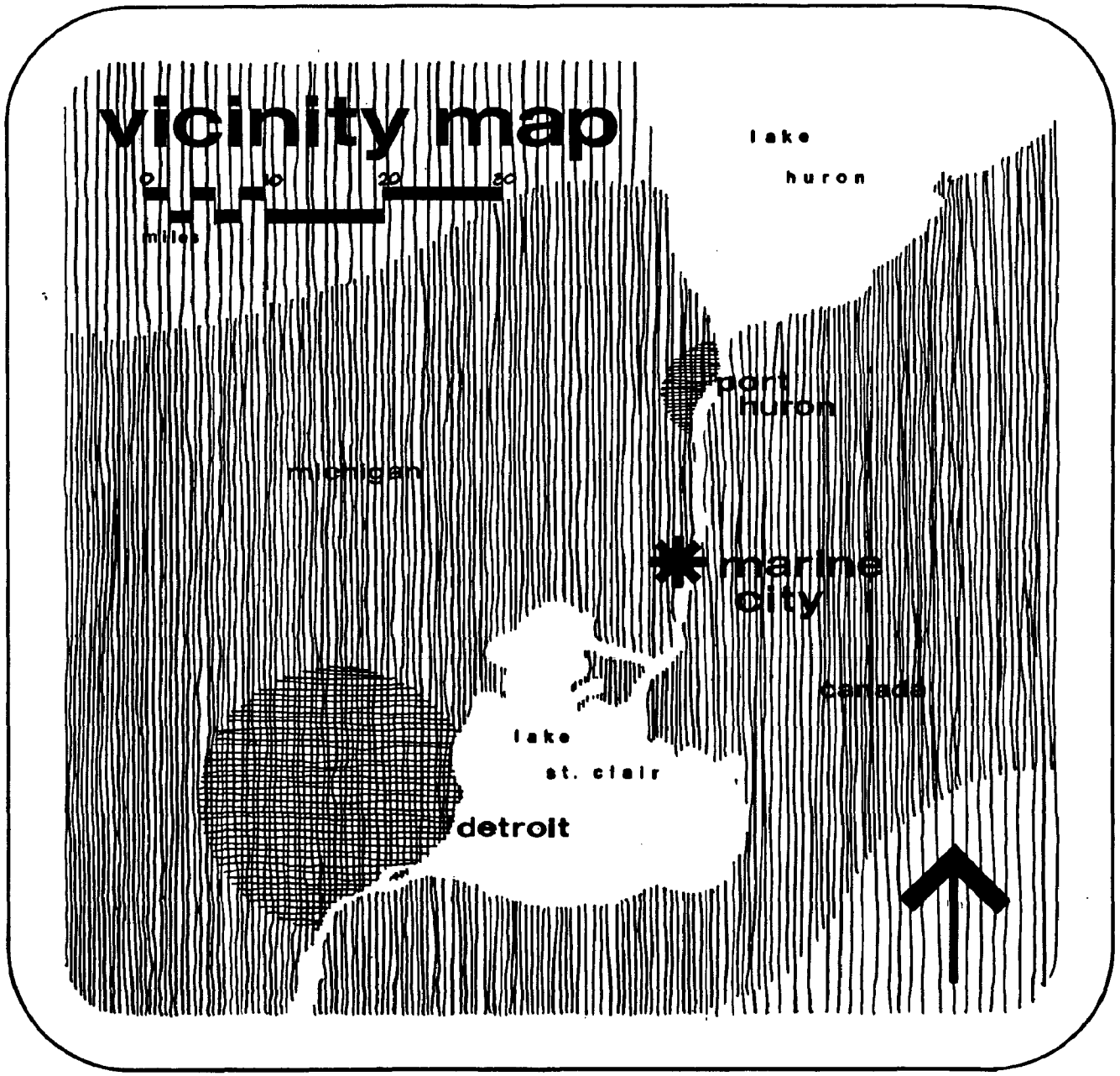
COASTAL PROFILE

Location

Located 20 miles south of Port Huron and 50 miles north of Detroit, Marine City is accessible by both land and water. The significance of the City's location is its proximity to the several million people of Southeast Michigan and Southern Ontario. Marine City has an opportunity to capitalize on its location and become an important link in the chain of St. Clair River communities which provide waterfront recreational, tourism, and commercial opportunities.

Historical Perspective

The relationship of Marine City to the waterfront predominates in all historical accounts. From early settlements known as Yankee Point, Newport, and La Belle Riviere, a thriving community located at the confluence of the St. Clair and Belle Rivers grew to be incorporated as Marine City on March 21, 1865. Shipbuilding, shipping, saw mills, and salt mining formed the economic backbone of the community.


vicinity map
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10
20
30
miles
lake
huron
port
huron
michigan
marine
city
canada
lake
st. clair
detroit

The first shipyard was located at the Pearl and Broadway Streets along the St. Clair River. Four other shipyards followed at various locations on the St. Clair and Belle Rivers. By the accounts of Frank McElroy, first mayor of Marine City, approximately 250 ships were built in Marine City.

In addition to shipbuilding, other shipping-related activities provided income to the majority of Marine City residents as reported by an 1890 edition of the Marine City Magnet:

> "Sailors constitute a large percentage of our citizens and it is probable that no city on the chain of lakes turns out as large a percentage of sailors as may be found from Marine City. Of the three hundred and fifty men in this area and earning their living on the lakes, over two-third are officers and many of them own an interest in the boats they sail, fifty-two boats laying up in winter quarters here."

Just as the dominant form of commerce was waterborne in the early years, the primary mode of transportation was by water. Steamers provided passenger service between ports along the St. Clair River and Lake Huron. Transportation over land was by unpaved roads and pathways. By 1900, Marine City was a connecting link between Detroit and Port Huron on the interurban electric railway. Regular ferry service to Sombra, Ontario, provided a strong relationship between Marine City and its Canadian neighbors.

Increased reliance on rail and automobiles and changing economic needs caused a shift away from water transportation by the 1920s and 30s. With this shift, came a decline in the relationship between Marine City and its waterfront. However, with today's demand for water-based recreation and tourism opportunities, Marine City can once again capitalize on its historical heritage as a center of waterborne commerce.

Today, the current city limits contain over five miles of frontage on the St. Clair and Belle Rivers. While this is impressive, the City does not have as strong a relationship to the waterfront as it once had. Plans for future development should tap the current unrealized potential of the coastal area to meet today's economic, social, and recreational needs.

Population and Economy

Over the past decade, population growth in St. Clair County has generally been minimal within the cities and more substantial within the townships. Marine City has conformed to countywide trends with a decline of 3% in population from 1970 to a 1980 population of 4414.

The loss of population has been more a function of decreased household size, rather than an

indication of any general decline in the community. In fact, the total number of housing units increased by 15% since 1970. A major addition to the housing stock, Newport Manor Apartments, is located within the coastal area along Water Street.

The overall tax base of Marine City has been declining relative to the remainder of the county. While other communities have added commercial and industrial tax base, Marine City has remained primarily a residential community. A major portion of the commercial base is located within the coastal area with the Central Business District along Water Street. Other commercially-assessed properties are located in the Marina District along the Belle River. There are only two industrial properties in the coastal area, McLouth Yard and the Fisher-Insley plant.

There have been few additions to the community's tax base within the coastal area. Decline in commercial and industrial businesses along with public land acquisitions have reduced the contribution of the coastal area to the total tax base.

Study Area Analysis

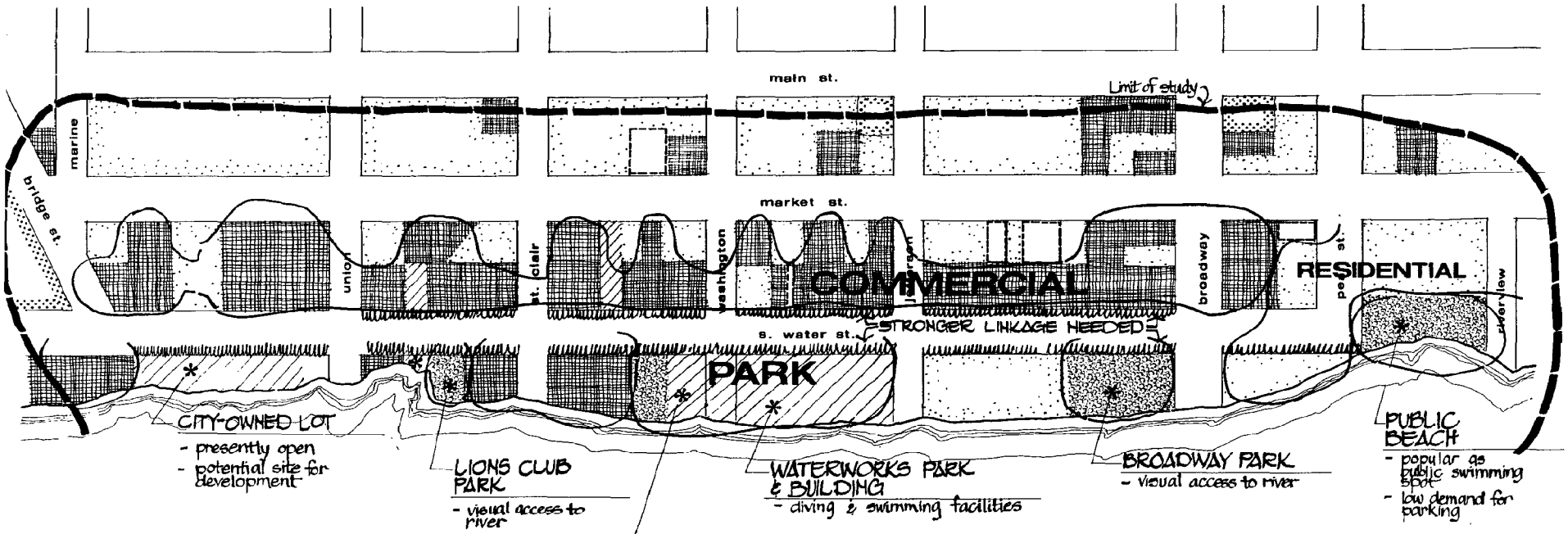
Each study area was analyzed in terms of land use and zoning, natural and physical features,

and problems and opportunities. Site analyses are discussed below and illustrated graphically on pages 10 through 12.

Central Business District

The most striking feature of the Central Business District is the 2700 feet of shoreline along the St. Clair River. The City has pursued a policy of acquiring land along the waterfront and provides six separate public park areas along Water Street and the River. The remainder of the area contains a concentration of commercial land use with retail businesses and service establishments along Water Street. Residential use is located off Water Street along other streets.

The Business District is zoned primarily Central Business District (B-1) and Waterfront Recreation and Marina District (W-M). B-1 allows a variety of retail, office, and personal service establishments, while W-M permits waterfront-related commercial and recreational activities. With the exception of a few isolated residences, most activities conform to use requirements of the zoning ordinance.



Central Business District
area 1
PROBLEMS & OPPORTUNITIES

- need for linkage of CBD & shoreline features is strong
- parking shortage in CBD.
- increased competition from regional shopping centers.
- M-29 bypasses CBD.
- CBD is currently inaccessible to boaters.
- public waterfront parcels lack linkage.
- existing traffic patterns disrupt shopping activities, pedestrian safety & use of the waterfront.
- high public accessibility to water at separated points
- dramatic views of passing ships possible from CBD.

COASTAL ZONE LAND USE
Legend

- RESIDENTIAL
- PUBLIC-OWNED
- CHURCH/INSTITUTIONAL
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK/RECREATION
- VACANT
- PARKING
- * SPECIAL SITE FEATURE

Study Area 1

SITE ANALYSIS

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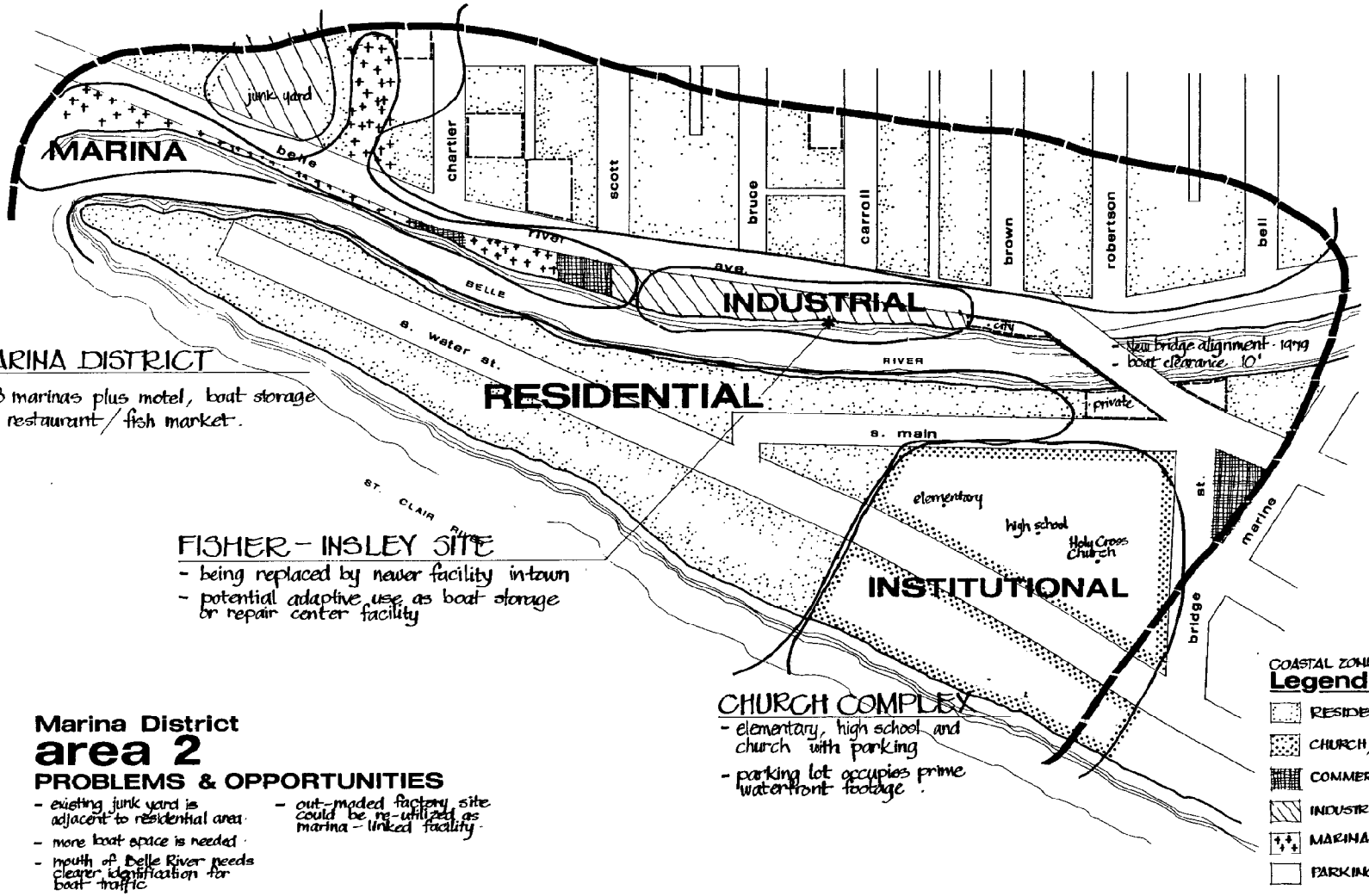

MARINA DISTRICT

- 3 marinas plus motel, boat storage & restaurant / fish market.

FISHER - INSLEY SITE

- being replaced by newer facility in-town
- potential adaptive use as boat storage or repair center facility

CHURCH COMPLEX

- elementary, high school and church with parking
- parking lot occupies prime waterfront footage.

COASTAL ZONE LAND USE
Legend

- RESIDENTIAL
- CHURCH / INSTITUTIONAL
- COMMERCIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- MARINA
- PARKING

Study Area 2

Marina District
area 2
PROBLEMS & OPPORTUNITIES

- existing junk yard is adjacent to residential area
- more boat space is needed
- mouth of Belle River needs clearer identification for boat traffic
- potential impacts of marina and industrial uses upon neighboring residents
- out-moded factory site could be re-utilized as marina - linked facility

SITE ANALYSIS

MARINE CITY, MICHIGAN

Ayres, Lewis, Norris & May, Inc.
engineers · architects · planners

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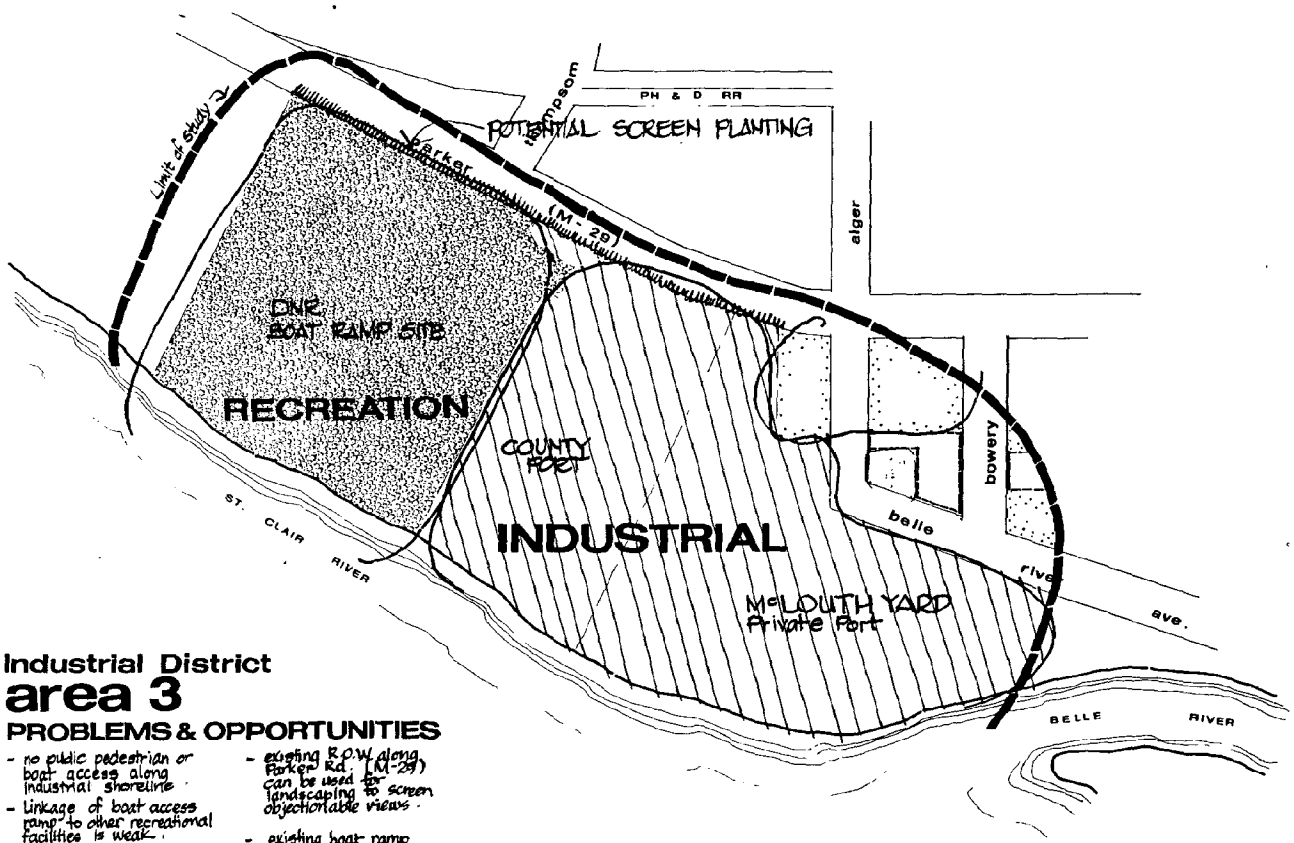

Industrial District
area 3
PROBLEMS & OPPORTUNITIES

- no public pedestrian or boat access along industrial shoreline.
- Linkage of boat access ramp to other recreational facilities is weak.
- M-29 (Parker Rd.) is major entry to the City. Viewers' first impressions are important – the viewer should be favorably impressed.
- existing R.O.W. along Parker Rd. (M-29) can be used for landscaping to screen objectionable views.
- existing boat ramp access point at DNR site.
- views of tankers unloading activities are possible from neighboring sites & the water.
- expansion of port area.

COASTAL ZONE LAND USE

Legend

- RESIDENTIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- PARK/RECREATION
- VACANT PROPERTY
- PARKING

Study Area 3

SITE ANALYSIS

MARINE CITY, MICHIGAN

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Because of its developed nature, the downtown area is largely devoid of natural features with the exception of the River itself. The condition of the shoreline is varied with a mixture of concrete seawall in good and deteriorating condition, steel sheetpiling, eroding natural shoreline, and unplanned rubble and riprap.

Flood boundary maps prepared for the National Flood Insurance Program indicate that the 100-year flood would rise to the 580-foot contour. In the Central Business District, a potential flood of the 100-year magnitude would only affect areas very near to the shoreline. While construction in this area would still be permitted, structures located here should be designed to be resistant to flood damages. However, most observers agree that ice buildup and potential damage is more of a problem along the St. Clair River than high water.

Current traffic patterns along Water Street are disruptive to pedestrian safety, shopping, and use of the waterfront. In addition, the location of ferry service to Canada requires large trucks and tankers to travel the length of Water Street to reach northbound M-29.

Although located adjacent to the River, the Central Business District bears little

relationship to the waterfront. There is a strong need for linkage between downtown businesses and shoreline features to offset competition from outlying shopping areas. There is further need to direct travellers from M-29 to the downtown area. The potential for creation of safe, pleasant, and exciting environment for shopping and recreation is tremendous.

Marina District

The Marina District contains a diversity of land uses. The point between the St. Clair and Belle Rivers has developed residentially. The Catholic Church and school complex occupies a substantial site. A new bridge connects the downtown with the Marina District and eventually M-29.

The sheltered atmosphere of the Belle River has historically been conducive to boat-related activities. Thus, three marinas, boat storage, and a fish market have clustered along the west side of the Belle. Further upstream is the Fisher-Insley site which is scheduled for eventual abandonment.

The Marina District is zoned One-Family Residential (R-1A) to the east of the Belle River

and General Business (B-2) and Light Industrial (I-1) to the west of the River. The B-2 District covers existing marina and waterfront commercial uses, but does not specifically permit such uses. It would seem that a more appropriate zoning classification would be Waterfront Recreation and Marina District (W-M). While the Fisher-Insley site is currently zoned I-1, the eventual conversion of this site to a marina or waterfront commercial use may be encouraged through rezoning to the W-M District.

The flood boundary maps indicate that the 100-year flood level would also rise to the 580-foot contour on the Belle River. Future construction should be so designed to be flood resistant. The condition of the Belle River shoreline is generally good. Most shoreline areas have been bulkheaded or sheetpiled.

The Marina District is significant because of the sheltered accessibility offered by the Belle River to the St. Clair River. The existing marina uses are a tremendous community asset while the Fisher-Insley plant offers great potential for conversion to a marina to address the need for additional boat space. The Catholic Church parking lot on the waterfront is a questionable use of such prime land. In addition, the existing junk yard along Belle River Avenue is unsightly and not an asset to this district.

Industrial District

The Industrial District contains only three major land uses. The McLouth Yard has been in continuous operation since the late 1800s, first as a shipbuilding yard and later a port. Today, McLouth Yard receives and stores bulk materials such as stone, sand, gravel, and coal. Another major use is the County Yard which also receives and stores materials. A final use is the DNR boat launch site.

The McLouth and County Yards are zoned as Heavy Industrial (I-2). The DNR boat launch site is zoned as Light Industrial (I-1) but would be more compatible as Waterfront Recreation and Marina District (W-M).

Problems with the Industrial District are primarily visual. As a major entrance to the City from M-29, the area does not impart a positive impression. The County Yard is particularly strewn with rubble and construction materials. Sufficient right-of-way exists along M-29 for landscaping and visual improvement.

CONCEPT PLANS

Alternative Concepts

The analysis of each study area illustrated certain problems and opportunities with coastal improvement. A variety of solutions to the problems and opportunities were explored and presented as alternative concept plans for each study area. Alternative concept plans, illustrated graphically on pages 18 and 19 were prepared primarily to gauge public reaction at public workshops discussed later in this chapter.

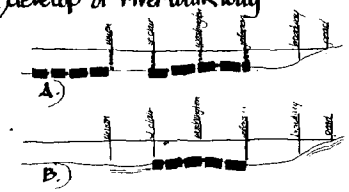
Central Business District

Many residents and merchants complain of the continual flow of traffic along Water Street especially during evening hours. The practice of circling through town by "running the bridges," while a popular recreational activity, has been detrimental to the atmosphere of downtown. In addition to strict enforcement of traffic laws, two physical design solutions

WEAK LINKAGE
BETWEEN EXISTING POINTS OF ACCESS

#1) maintain status quo (isolated points of access)

#2) develop a riverwalk way



#3) develop a program of municipal land acquisition for public access.

#4) develop common types of sidewalk and streetscape improvements throughout the CBD by:
- landscaping
- lights
- benches
- trash receptacles

#5) common theme w/in CBD - nautical / historical

#6) improve visual connection between M-29 and downtown areas by:
- improved signage
- landscaping in R.O.W. to screen views.

SPEEDING TRAFFIC
ON S. WATER ST.

#1) close off part of Water St; form a pedestrian mall.

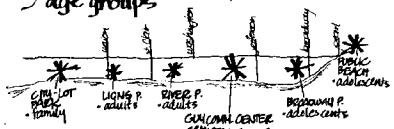
* cars cannot reach excessive speeds; "raceway" effect is diminished.

#2) maintain status quo.

#3) alter circulation w/in Water St. R.O.W.

AGE GROUP CONFLICTS
W/IN THE PARKS

#1) develop parks for specific age groups

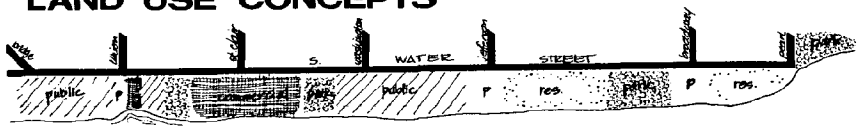


#2) encourage adolescents to use parks outside the CBD area; accomodate their needs elsewhere.

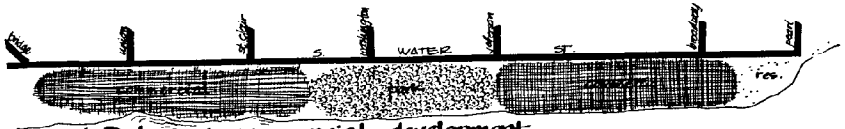
#3) maintain status quo.

#4) increase policing and maintenance of parks in CBD.

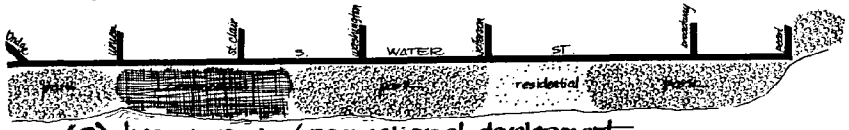
area 1
LAND USE CONCEPTS



#1) status quo · mixed use



#2) heavy commercial development



#3) heavy park / recreational development

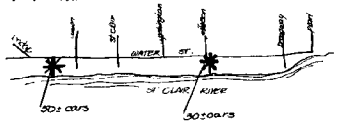
LACK OF PARKING

#1) maintain present number of parking spaces

#2) provide parking at Union & Jefferson streets; improve surface & add space at St. Clair & Jefferson.

#3) provide parking at existing City-owned lot.

POTENTIAL PARKING SITES:



area 1
CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT
ALTERNATIVE CONCEPT PLANS

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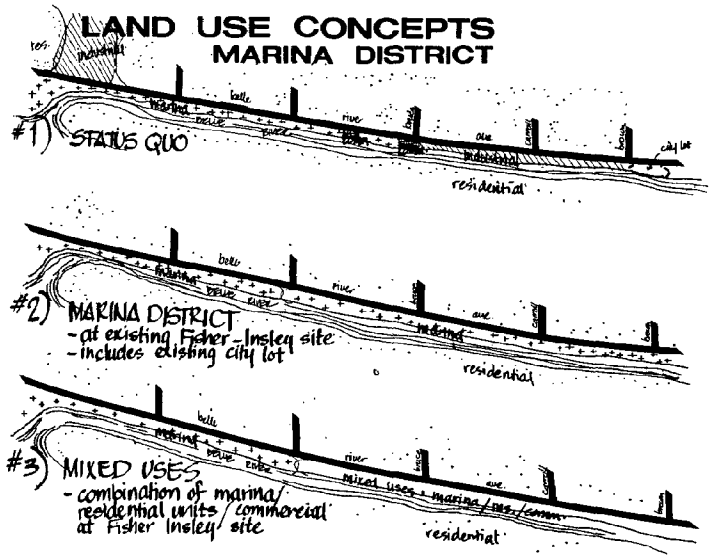
LAND USE CONCEPTS
MARINA DISTRICT

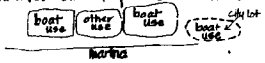


area 2

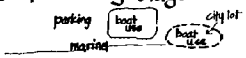
LACK OF SHORT-TERM & SEASONAL BOAT DOCK SPACE

#1) no build

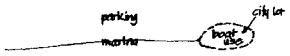
#2) convert Fisher-Insley site to marina use; preserve all bldgs.



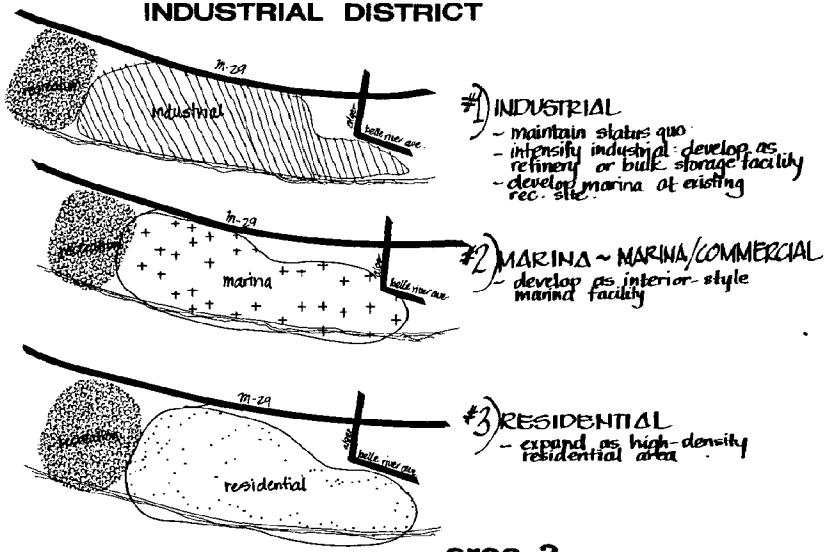
#3) convert Fisher-Insley site, removing some of existing bldgs.



#4) convert Fisher-Insley; remove all buildings from site.



LAND USE CONCEPTS
INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT



area 3

POOR VISUAL ENTRY SEQUENCE INTO MARINE CITY CBD

views off M-29 along industrial sites need to be improved

#1) maintain status quo

#2) provide street-side improvement:
- landscaping & screening
- signage

areas 2 & 3

MARINA & INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS
ALTERNATIVE CONCEPT PLANS

MARINE CITY, MICHIGAN

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were presented as alternative concepts. One concept involved closing off a portion of Water Street forming a pedestrian mall to diminish the raceway effect of Water Street. The mall would also break up the monotony of downtown with landscaping and visual improvement. The other concept provided for a partial mall with the selective extension of sidewalks. The partial mall would not have the same effect on traffic as closing off Water Street, but would provide visual improvement with landscaping and planter boxes.

A lack of parking in the downtown has been a key concern of merchants. Additional parking areas were presented at several different locations. The stub ends of Union, St. Clair, and Jefferson Streets were proposed as areas for additional parking (Note: as of the adoption of this plan, the City has paved these areas for parking). In addition, a portion of the City-owned lot next to the Riviera Restaurant was suggested for additional parking.

Another problem identified is the lack of linkage both to the waterfront from other areas in town, specifically M-29, and along the waterfront between points of public access. A riverfront walkway was proposed to link public parks and other points of interest along the water. To attract travellers from M-29 who otherwise might miss the waterfront and downtown, directional signage at key intersections was proposed. A central design theme and common sidewalks and landscaping were additional alternatives presented.

A final problem is a feeling of conflict among younger and older age groups using waterfront parks. Possible solutions included the development of specific parks for specific age groups, the accommodation of recreational needs of adolescent recreational needs outside of the Central Business District, and increased policing and maintenance of parks.

Alternative land use concepts were devised to determine the public desire regarding the overall character of the Central Business District in the future. The alternative concepts ranged from heavy commercial development of the waterfront to heavy park and recreational development, as well as maintenance of the status quo with mixed use development.

Marina District

The need for additional boating facilities, such as dock space and launch sites, is a major problem along the Belle River. Existing private marinas are filled to capacity. In addition, there is no location for launching small craft, such as canoes. Various alternatives for converting the Fisher-Insley site to marina use were proposed, ranging from total demolition to complete preservation of existing buildings on the site. The existing city-owned lot next to the new bridge is a possible launch site.

In addition to maintaining the status quo, two other alternative land use concepts were presented. One concept involved the promotion of marina-related uses along the entire western side of the Belle River. The other concept called for a mixture of uses including marina, residential, and commercial development.

Industrial District

Problems within the Industrial District are minimal. The visual entrance to the City along M-29 is not attractive. The DNR boat launch site is programmed for landscaping, but presently appears to be nothing more than a parking lot on the waterfront. The County Yard needs to be cleaned up and buffered from the highway and the boat launch site. Improved visual entry to the City through landscaping, signage, and screening was proposed within the M-29 right-of-way. Alternative land use concepts included maintaining current land uses or converting existing uses to either marina use or residential uses.

Public Workshop Results

Alternative concept plans were discussed at a series of five public workshops held from

January to May, 1981. In addition to general discussion, surveys were distributed to solicit public preferences for the various alternaitves. The following are the results of the public workshops and surveys:

Central Business District

Within the Central Business District there was overwhelming support from workshop attendees for heavy park and recreational development on the waterfront and closing off Water Street to form a pedestrian mall. Most people supported developing common types of sidewalk and streetscape improvements, as well as a common theme in the downtown. There was also quite a bit of support for a river walkway.

Most participants agreed that parks should be developed for specific age groups and additional facilities should be developed for youth elsewhere. There was also preference for increased policing and maintenance of parks. Lack of parking was also a big concern. Preferences were for increased parking at Union, Jefferson, and St. Clair Streets, as well as the addition of parking at the City-owned lot next to the Riviera.

Marina District

The majority of workshop participants agreed that the Marina District should be enhanced with conversion of the Fisher-Insley site and the City-owned lot to boating-related use.

Industrial District

Preferences were shown by attendees for either an industrial or marina/commercial use of this site. It was noted that the Industrial District offers the least amount of flexibility because it is currently a privately-owned, economically viable enterprise. Everyone at the workshops agreed that the entry to the City from M-29 required improvement.

COASTAL AREA DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Coastal Area Development Plan is designed to provide a direction for the community to follow in the revitalization of the coastal area so that it once again becomes a valuable economic, social, and recreational resource. The recommended plan consists of four elements: Coastal Area Goals, Nautical Mile Master Plan, Area Design Plans, and Implementation Program.

Coastal Area Goals

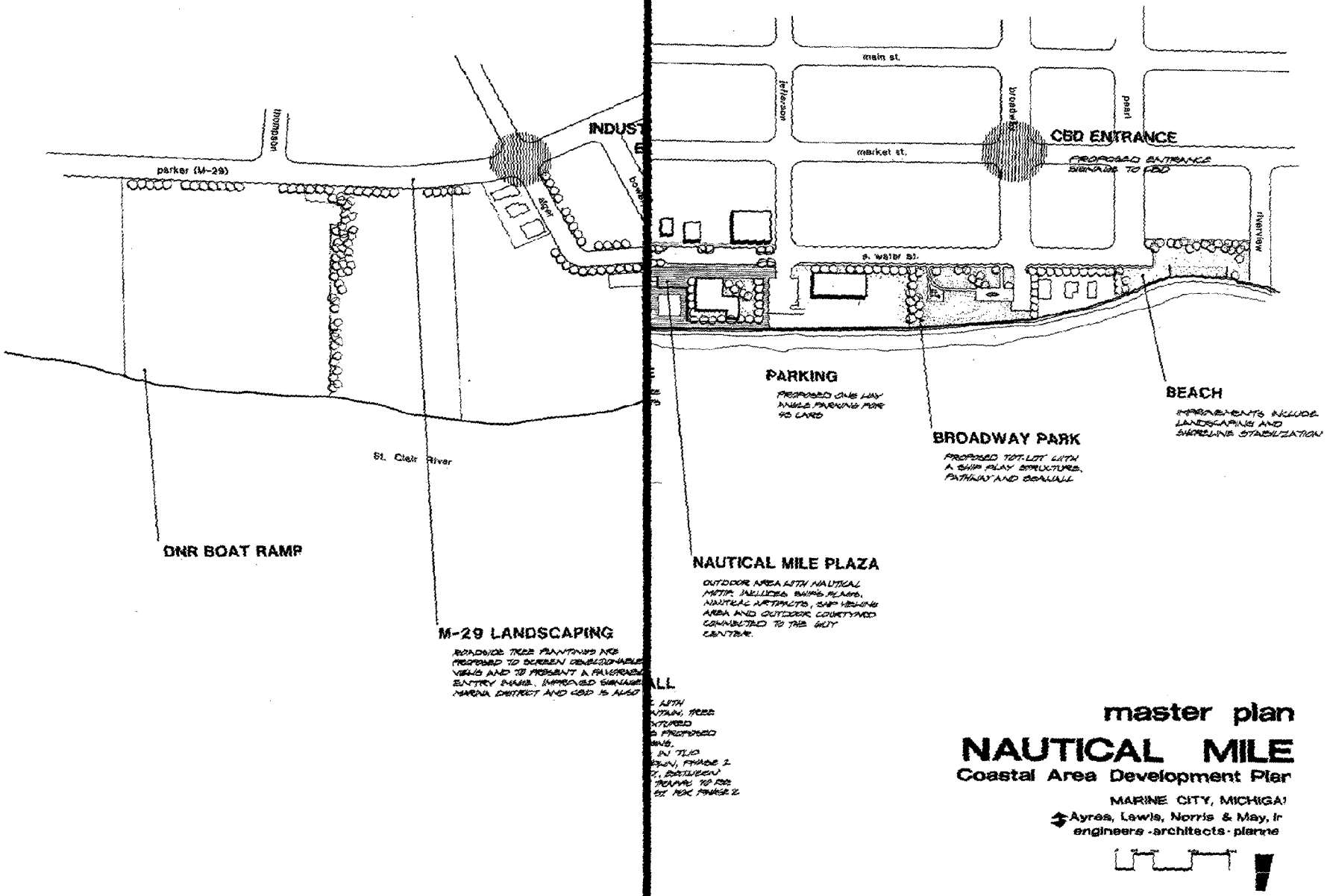
The desired results of the Plan are represented by goals. The following goals were developed with input from the various groups involved in the Plan:

- Recognize the unique and irreplaceable economic, social, and recreational value of the coastal area
- Create a safe and secure environment for people of all ages
- Improve visual and physical access to the water

- Provide for linkage of various waterfront public lands and features
- Strengthen relationship between downtown and waterfront
- Improve economic vitality of downtown
- Improve vehicular and pedestrian circulation to and within coastal area
- Strengthen accessibility to coastal area from M-29
- Maintain diversity of land uses and existing viable commercial, industrial, and recreational land uses
- Preserve and highlight historical heritage through design themes and interpretive displays
- Provide recreational facilities for groups of all ages
- Expand boating and marina facilities
- Encourage multiple use of scarce waterfront lands

Nautical Mile Master Plan

The Nautical Mile Master Plan, shown on the following page, presents the overall concept in a coordinated fashion for the coastal area. The intent of the Master Plan is to redirect the community focus back to the waterfront through a concentration of activities within each of



master plan
NAUTICAL MILE
Coastal Area Development Plan

MARINE CITY, MICHIGAN

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the three study areas. The relationship between study areas is strengthened by directing vehicular and pedestrian movement between areas and promoting the common bond of the Nautical Mile theme.

The Nautical Mile theme, fostered by the Nautical Mile Committee and Community Pride and Heritage groups, can be instrumental in tying the entire coastal area together. The Nautical Mile Master Plan attempts to integrate the theme throughout the coastal area by designating such improvements as the Nautical Mile Park, Nautical Mile Center, and the Nautical Mile Riverwalk. A nautical motif is incorporated in the design of improvements. It is further recommended that the logo adopted by the Nautical Mile Committee be included with proposed identification signs and promotional literature. The Nautical Mile Committee has also prepared a number of excellent recommendations for promoting the Nautical Mile theme which are listed on the following pages.

In the formulation of the Coastal Area Development Plan, it has been recognized that the Central Business, Marina and Industrial Districts all have unique characteristics and functions. The Nautical Master Plan is designed to promote and enhance those unique characteristics and functions of each District. In other words, the Central Business District

Nautical Mile Committee
Suggested List of Ideas for Promoting Nautical Mile

The Marine City Nautical Mile Committee welcomes all ideas from citizens, in order to demonstrate our pride in our nautical heritage. The following ideas are submitted as a stepping stone to assist in the development of the nautical theme.

Adopt A Boat:	Under this idea each building/business along the Nautical Mile would adopt a locally built boat and would post, inside or out, such memorabilia as pictures of the boat and a plaque with information about that ship (date built, final disposition, tonnage, power plant, notable captains, etc.).
Nautical Motif:	The use of ring buoys, nets, flags, spiles, murals, ship lamps, anchors, etc., to decorate public and private buildings, inside and out, along South Water Street (the Nautical Mile).
Enlarge Photos of Old Marine City	To be hung in the various establishments to show the history of Marine City and the shipbuilding heritage.
Remodeling:	When remodeling existing buildings, integrate the nautical theme.
Nautical Mile Insignia:	A standard insignia has been proposed, to be displayed on the outside of all buildings; a porthole insignia with perhaps a picture of that building's adopted boat in the center.

Trash Can and Flower Containers:	Decorate outside of such containers with the emblems of ship stacks.
Poster Art Contest:	A contest in the schools, with prizes presented the persons submitting winning posters. The posters would relate to the City's nautical heritage and tradition.
Ask All Citizens:	Ask citizens to dig out of attics, garages, and basements, artifacts to display that have to do with ship building.
Bumper Stickers:	with theme "Nautical Mile."
Name the Parks:	Name the parks along the waterfront. Various groups could adopt and pay for the historical markers.
Create A Seamen's Registery:	Create a seamen's registery and identify a person to be the Marine City Historian.

Logo adopted by the Nautical Mile Committee

is the central commercial and waterfront recreational core of the City and every effort should be made to strengthen that role. The Marina District contains a concentration of boating-related facilities and is an ideal area for expansion of such activities. The Industrial District functions effectively as an area of waterfront commercial and recreational activity and should continue as such on into the future.

Physical improvements and policies are planned within each District to enhance the specific function of that District and focus community attention toward the waterfront. For example, a riverfront walkway is programmed for the Central Business District to link various waterfront park features, while attracting people to the downtown and waterfront area for shopping and recreation. The purpose of each improvement is discussed more fully in the Design Plans.

Signs and landscaping are recommended for major entrances to the coastal area at M-29 and Alger, M-29 and Chartier, and Broadway and Market. Signs should identify Marina City and direct visitors toward the Nautical Mile and its various districts. Vehicular and pedestrian travellers are channelled to the Nautical Mile through a landscaped corridor consisting of Belle River Avenue and Bridge Streets. Such a corridor will link the three districts and provide pleasant pathway for visitors to reach the various points of interest in the Nautical Mile.

Specific design recommendations for the Central Business District, Marina District, and Industrial District are discussed under Design Plans on the following pages.

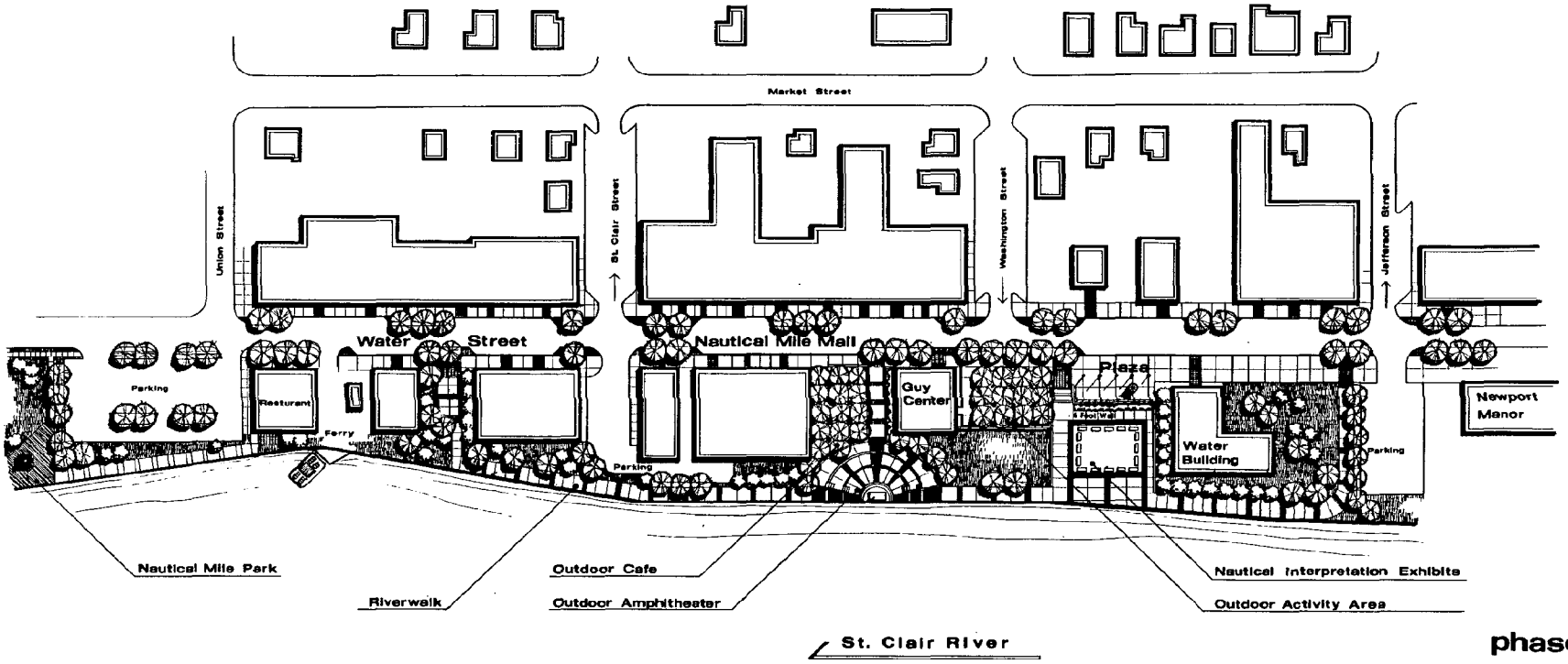
Central Business District Design Plan

The Nautical Mile Master Plan focuses a great deal of activity in the Central Business District because of the importance of this area to commerce and community recreation. Improvements to the shopping environment, parking and traffic circulation, waterfront recreation, and public accessibility are the focus of the Design Plan. A stronger relationship between the downtown and the waterfront is fostered by providing common design themes, landscaping, building materials, and signage, and through linkage of the two areas with a plaza and sidewalk paving surfaces.

The Central Business District Design Plan and Details are shown on pages 33 and 34 and consist of the following facilities and improvements.

Nautical Mile Center

The central element of the Plan is the creation of a center consisting of a mall, plaza,



phase I

NAUTICAL MILE CENTER

Coastal Area Development Plan

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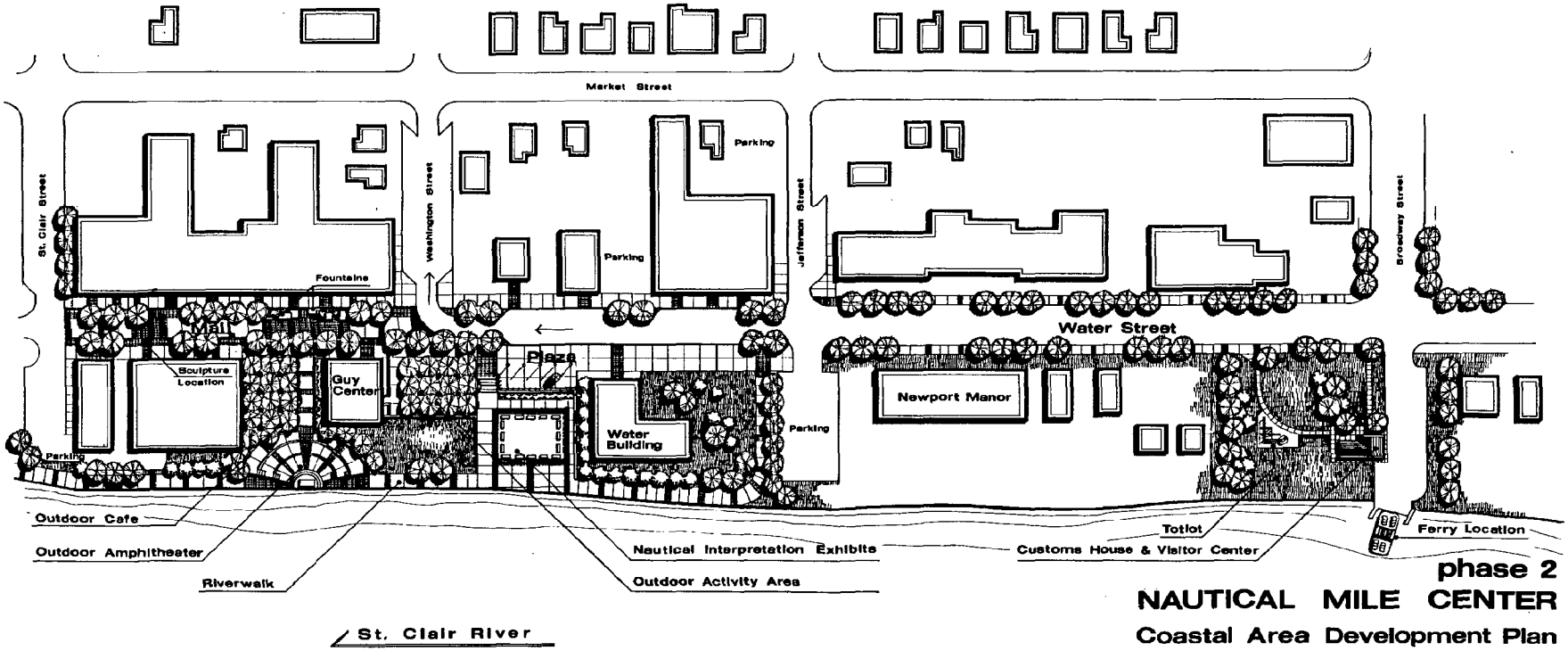

phase 2

NAUTICAL MILE CENTER

Coastal Area Development Plan

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amphitheater, and riverwalk. A nautical design theme is promoted throughout the Nautical Mile Center to build upon ongoing community efforts.

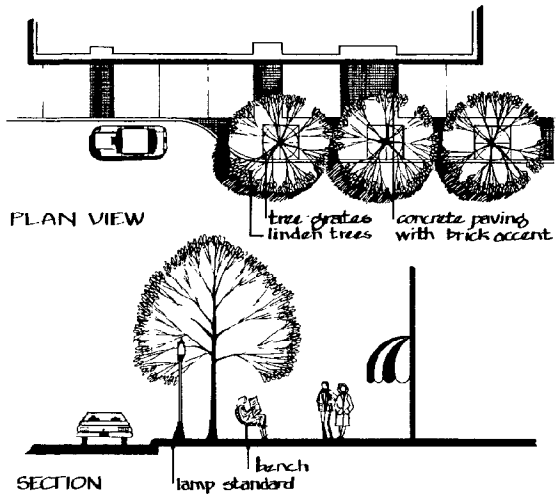
The Nautical Mile Mall is designed to create a pleasant pedestrian environment for shopping and recreation in the downtown area. During public workshops conducted for the Coastal Area Development Plan, a great deal of interest was shown in visually improving downtown and slowing traffic flow on Water Street. It was concluded that creating some type of mall atmosphere would be a tremendous improvement.

The mall is planned in two phases to accommodate possible relocation of ferry service. The current location of ferry service has an adverse effect on the downtown because of the amount and type of truck traffic which travels the length of Water Street to reach M-29. Alternative routing of ferry traffic was explored along St. Clair, Market, and Main Streets, but it was determined that these streets could not accommodate the weight and turning radius of much of the truck traffic using the ferry. Therefore, complete closure of Water Street for a pedestrian mall would not be possible until the ferry is located elsewhere.

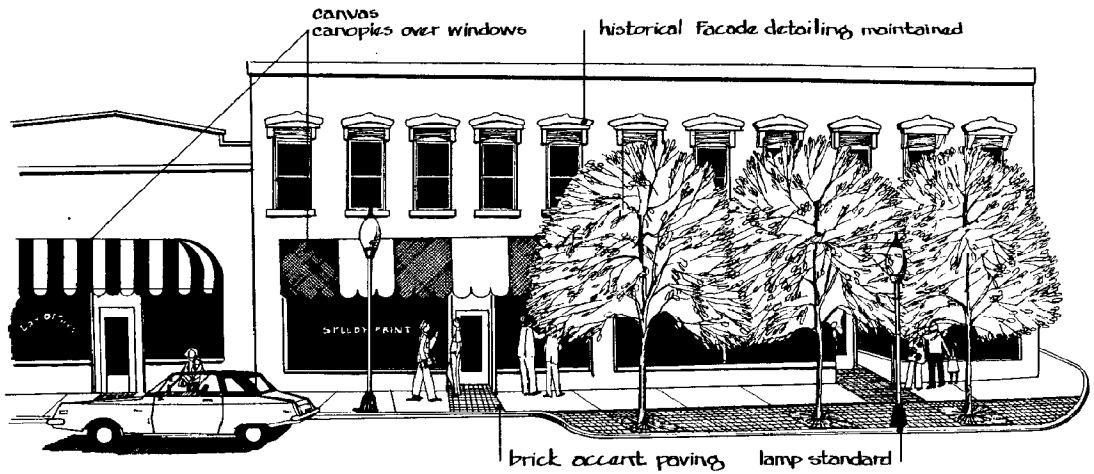
Phase I would involve extension of portions of the sidewalk to allow placement of trees, benches, and street furniture. Phase 2 would involve complete closure of Water Street between Washington and St. Clair Streets. However, Phase 2 is contingent upon relocation of ferry service from its present location because trucks cannot be rerouted away from Water Street under current conditions. Although a new ferry location is illustrated at the end of Broadway Street, the City should exhaust all possible options, including relocation of the ferry completely outside of the developed portions of Marine City.

Design details for the Nautical Mile Mall are shown on pages 37 and 38. The development of either the partial or full mall under Phases I and 2 calls for the improvement of sidewalk surfaces with brick accent paving. Street trees are recommended to provide shade and a contrast to the concrete and brick of the downtown. Little Leaf Linden (Tilia Cordata) are especially tolerant of developed environments and are recommended for the Nautical Mile Mall.

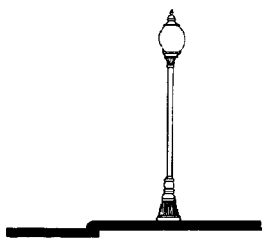
Historical reproduction post lights add a historical flair to downtown improvement. Store-owners are encouraged to maintain historical facade detailing rather than covering facades with materials incompatible with the historical period of the structures. Canvas rather than



PHASE 1 MALL DETAILS

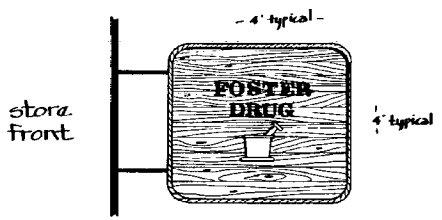


PROPOSED ARCHITECTURAL FACADES



historical reproduction
post lights for Riverwalk,
Water Street & Parks

POST LIGHTS



wood signs with gilded
raised wood lettering
on dark wood backing

SIGNS

sheet one

DESIGN DETAILS

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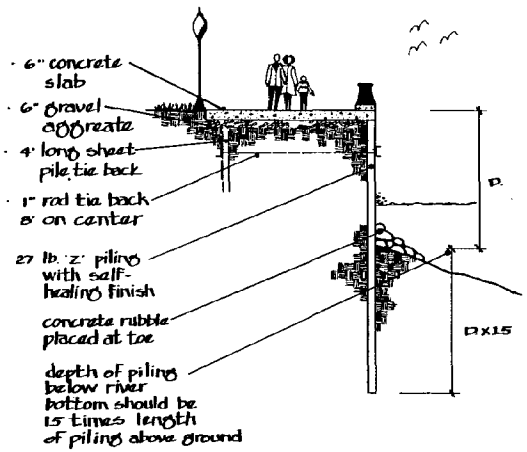
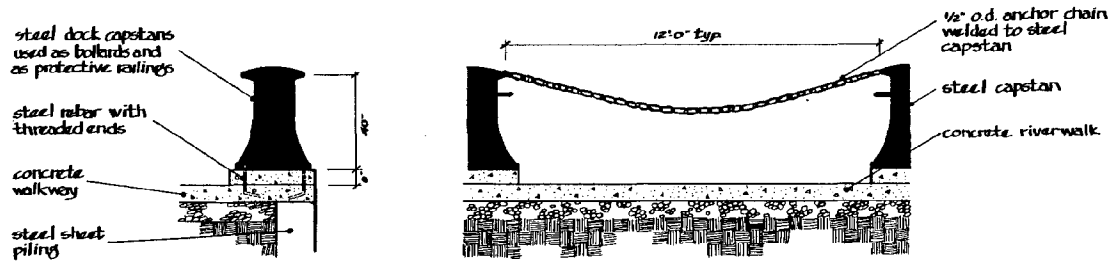
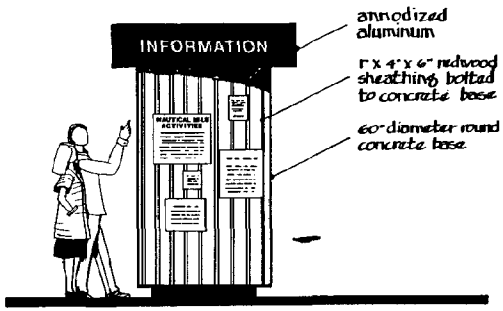


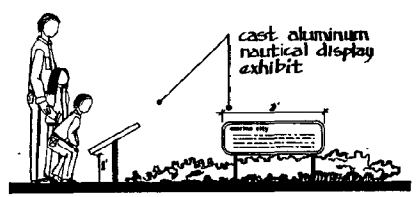
RIVERWALK BULKHEAD SYSTEM



PLAZA BOLLARDS AND RIVERWALK RAILING



INFORMATION KIOSK



NAUTICAL INTERPRETIVE EXHIBITS

sheet two

DESIGN DETAILS

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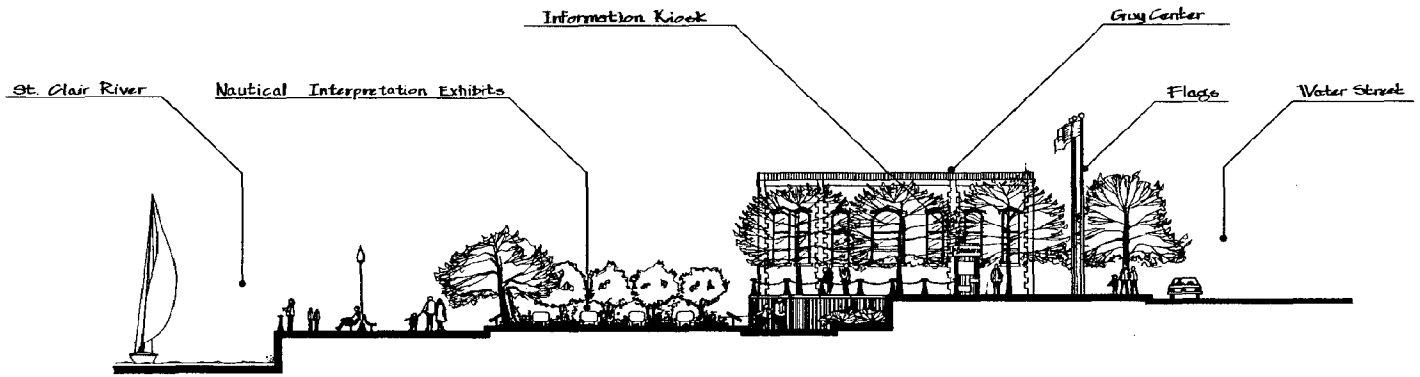
aluminum canopies are recommended. Design detail sheets illustrate proposed architectural facades. Merchants are also encouraged to use tasteful signage such as wood signs with gilded raised wood lettering.

The Nautical Mile Plaza will create a two-tiered pedestrian plaza between Water Street and the river edge, as illustrated by elevation shown on page 40. The existing sloping topography is quite conducive to creating two tiers. The Plaza will be complementary to the Guy Center and will provide a gathering place for residents and tourists. The Plaza is designed along a nautical theme as a focus for community activity. The upper level would include nautical flags and an information kiosk, while the lower level would include nautical artifacts and exhibits. An outdoor courtyard adjacent to the Guy Center could be used for senior citizen activities, art fairs, and other outdoor activities.

Concrete paving is enhanced by brick accent paving. Trees and landscaping would be added. Design details for the kiosk and nautical interpretive exhibits are shown on page 38. The nautical interpretive exhibits should contain present and historical information regarding shipping and shipbuilding.

The Nautical Mile Amphitheater will provide public outdoor space for concerts, plays and



Elevation

NAUTICAL MILE PLAZA

Coastal Area Development Plan

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exhibits. With the backdrop of the River, the amphitheater will be an ideal waterfront feature utilizing the existing sloping topography for seating. Between the existing stores on Water Street and Guy Center, the creation of an outdoor cafe is encouraged. Such a cafe would provide an enjoyable setting.

The Nautical Mile Riverwalk will link various portions of the waterfront between Lion's Park and Jefferson Street, with a paved walkway along with bulkheading, lighting, and protective railings. Most of the current river frontage is publicly-owned, although agreement for use must be acquired for 260 feet of private frontage.

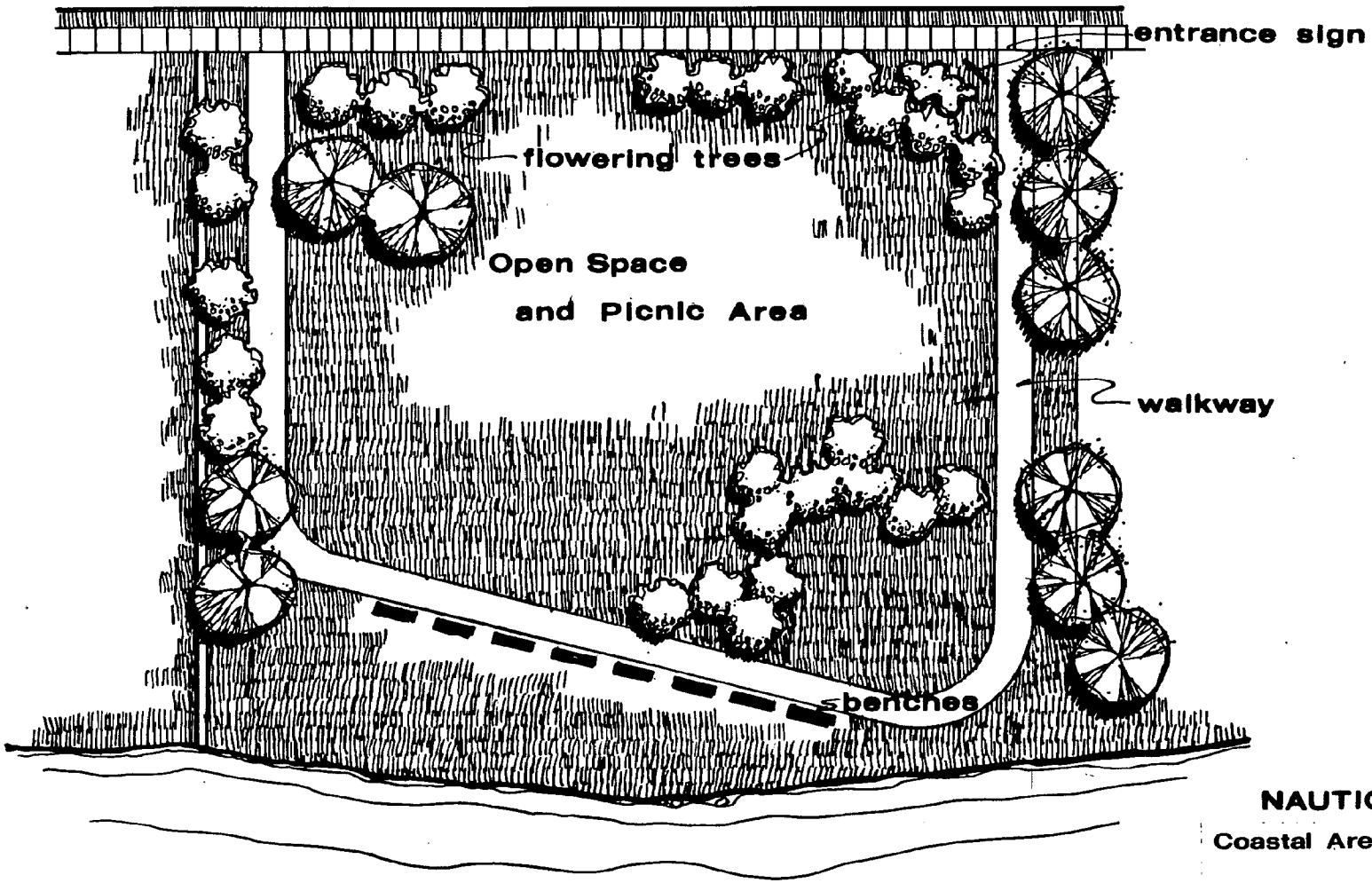
Design details for the riverwalk, bulkheads, and railing system are shown on page 38. Although quite costly, the ideal treatment of the river edge would be steel sheetpiling bulkheads. Portions of the waterfront are currently bulkheaded in various states of repair. It is estimated that approximately 330 feet of bulkheading needs to be constructed or replaced at a cost of $165,000. If it proves to be too expensive to construct all portions of the bulkheading, the City should not be discouraged from implementing the riverwalk. The riverwalk can be set back from the shoreline along areas of unimproved shoreline and

connected at the river's edge with improved portions of the shoreline. Protective railings are provided along the riverwalk by steel dock capstans used as bollards and connected with heavy anchor chain.

Nautical Mile Park

Located at the southerly limits of the Nautical Mile Center, the Nautical Mile Park is intended to be developed as a marina park for use by both visitors and local residents. Although the one-acre site is currently vacant and undeveloped, it offers great potential for quality waterfront park development with extensive frontage on the St. Clair River. Ultimate development shown as Phase 2 calls for construction of six transient boat moorings so that boaters using the St. Clair River can stop at Marine City to shop and stock supplies. During public workshop sessions, many people expressed the opinion that Marine City was unable to attract river traffic because no transient boat slips were available. A 24' x 24' marina center which would house an office, restrooms, and concession facilities is also planned.

Initial development of the park shown as Phase I calls for construction of an asphalt pathway looping from Water Street, along the waterfront, back to Water Street. Situated along the path on the waterfront would be benches. The site would be vegetated and landscaped with trees. A portion of the site should be used for additional parking to be coordinated with parking which has been constructed adjacent to the Riviera Restaurant.



phase 1

NAUTICAL MILE PARK

Coastal Area Development Plan

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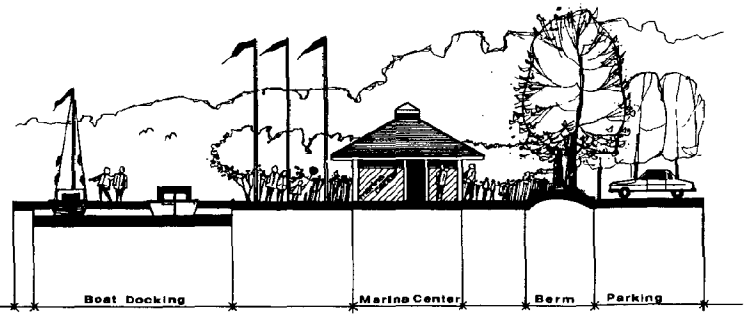
0 15 30



Section A-A

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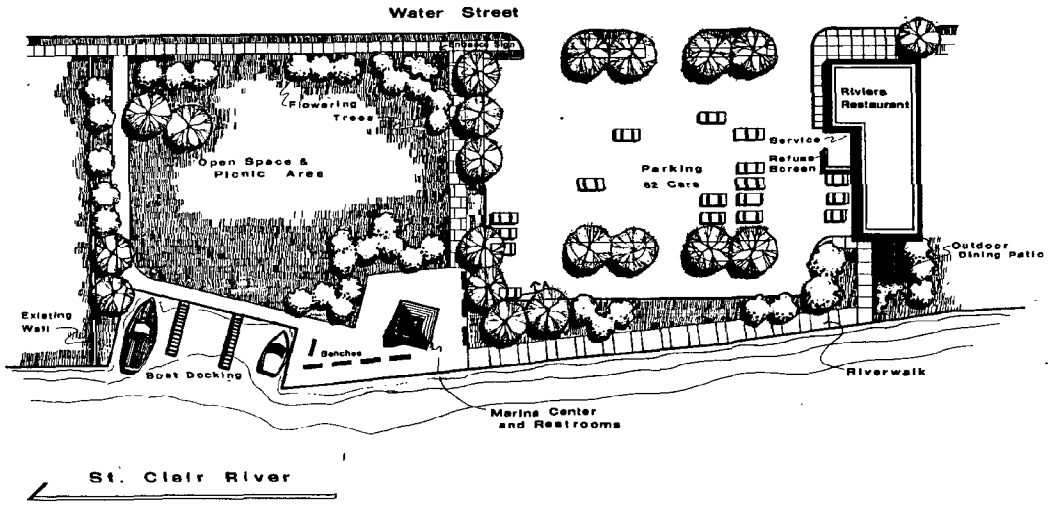

phase 2

NAUTICAL MILE PARK

Coastal Area Development Plan

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0 15 30 60 120

Parking and Circulation

The creation of the Mall would represent a major departure from current parking and traffic patterns. Phase I would allow current traffic circulation patterns but would have the effect of slowing traffic down. Changes in parking and traffic circulation on streets other than Water Street would not be required. Phase 2 would eliminate current patterns forcing rerouting traffic around Water Street onto Market Street. One-way patterns on Washington Street would be reversed. The result of both phases would be a safer and more pleasant shopping environment.

Under both phases of the Mall, there would be a loss of some on-street parking. Recently, the City and merchants have cooperated in constructing additional parking areas at the end of Union, St. Clair, and Jefferson Streets and on Market Street. The Plan calls for additional parking at the Nautical Mile Park. The combination of these efforts should more than compensate for any losses in parking. It is recommended that merchants discourage employees from parking in prime customer parking areas. In addition, it is recommended that the City acquire properties as they become available along Market Street to provide parking behind the Central Business District.

Other Improvements

As discussed earlier, the City should make every effort to seek the relocation of ferry service away from developed areas of Marine City. However, such a proposal might likely involve ferry facilities in Sombra, Ontario, thereby complicating or delaying relocation from the current location in Marine City.

The end of Broadway Street offers an alternative location for the development of ferry facilities. There is sufficient right-of-way and water frontage at the Broadway Street location and vehicles would have a direct route to M-29. However, location at Broadway Street would affect neighboring residences. Ferry relocation would require asphalt paving of the parking lot and access drive, bulkheading and construction of docking facilities, and construction of a visitors center and customs house.

Broadway Park should be improved as a play area for families and younger children. A pathway would connect Water Street with the water. A tot-lot with a play structure modeled after a ship would provide enjoyment to younger children. Further modifications to

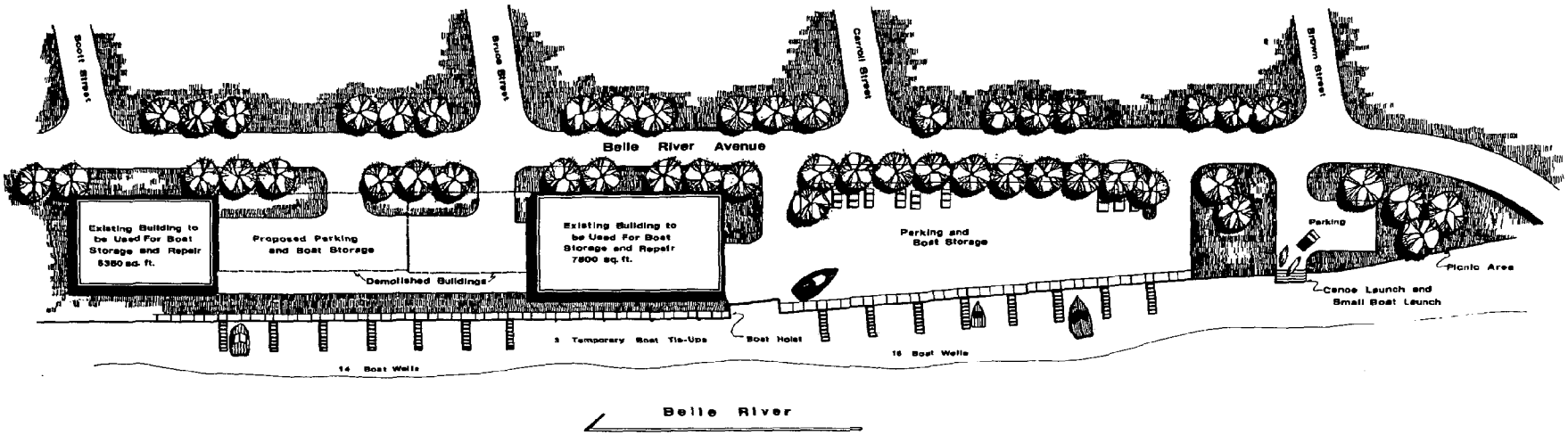
the Park may be necessary if the ferry is relocated to the end of Broadway. Other park improvements would involve landscaping general clean-up, and shoreline stabilization at the City beach.

A major entrance to the Nautical Mile would be provided on the City Hall grounds. An informational sign similar to the sign shown on page 52 enhanced by landscaping would welcome visitors to Marine City and the Nautical Mile Center.

Marina District Design Plan

Increased marina space, concentration of boating-related facilities, and beautification of the Belle River corridor are activities fostered by the Marina District Design Plan. Additional marina and boat launch facilities are proposed downstream of the new bridge. Improvements to Belle River Avenue are intended to upgrade the image of the Belle River corridor and link the Marina District with the Central Business District.

The Marina District Design Plan, illustrated on page 47, consists of the following facilities and improvements:



MARINA DISTRICT

Coastal Area Development Plan

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0' 15' 30' 60' 120'

Fisher-Insley Boat Facility Conversion

There has been a great deal of public interest expressed in the need for additional marina space on the Belle River. Fisher-Insley Manufacturing is constructing a new facility on King Road. It is anticipated that the Fisher-Insley site on the Belle River will eventually be vacated, thereby providing the opportunity for conversion of the facility to a full service marina. The current site has four buildings, a large parking area, and bulkheading in good condition along the Belle River.

The proposed design would call for: converting two existing buildings into boat repair and storage areas; demolishing two smaller buildings to make room for parking, outdoor storage, and access to boat wells; utilizing an existing storage yard for parking and outdoor storage; and, providing 30 new boat wells, three transient slips, and a boat hoist. Given the total cost of the project, it is recommended that the City encourage private development of the marina through tax incentives and possible seed money through Federal and State grant programs.

Small Boat Access

Access for canoes and other small craft is recommended at the existing City-owned lot at the foot of the new bridge on the Belle River. The site is only large enough to permit the launching of hand-carried craft. It is also possible that the site could be used as a pick-up site for expanded canoeing on the Belle River. Improvements to the site would be minimal with a small temporary parking area for loading and unloading boats, stepped bulkhead for launching crafts, and landscaping.

Belle River Parkway

Belle River Avenue serves as a major connector of the Industrial and Central Business Districts through the Marina District. Properties directly along the Belle River are well kept. However, some areas on the west side of Belle River avenue detract from the visual image of the Marina District and the City as a whole.

The City should consider paving Belle River Avenue south of Chartier to provide better access to the marinas. Other street improvements would include tree planting, directional

signage and general clean-up. Promoting a parkway atmosphere would provide a more favorable impression for auto traffic. Improved sidewalks are proposed from Carroll Street to Water Street to encourage pedestrian linkage between the Marina District and the Central Business District. Such pedestrian linkage would encourage boaters to walk downtown for shopping, eating, and services.

The existing junkyard on Belle River Avenue does not conform to the City's Zoning Ordinance and is an eyesore. Every effort should be made to enforce local codes to clean up the property. Possible future uses could include boat storage along Belle River Avenue and light industrial along M-29.

Industrial District Design Plan

The Industrial District contains only three major land uses, all of which should be maintained. McLouth Yard has been quite successful as a port and bulk storage facility and will likely continue into the future. Should the County Road Commission decide to abandon its yard, McLouth or some other concern should consider the site for port expansion. In the meantime, the County Yard can provide bank fishing access to the St. Clair River. The DNR boat launch site provides needed facilities and, upon full development, will be an asset to the District.

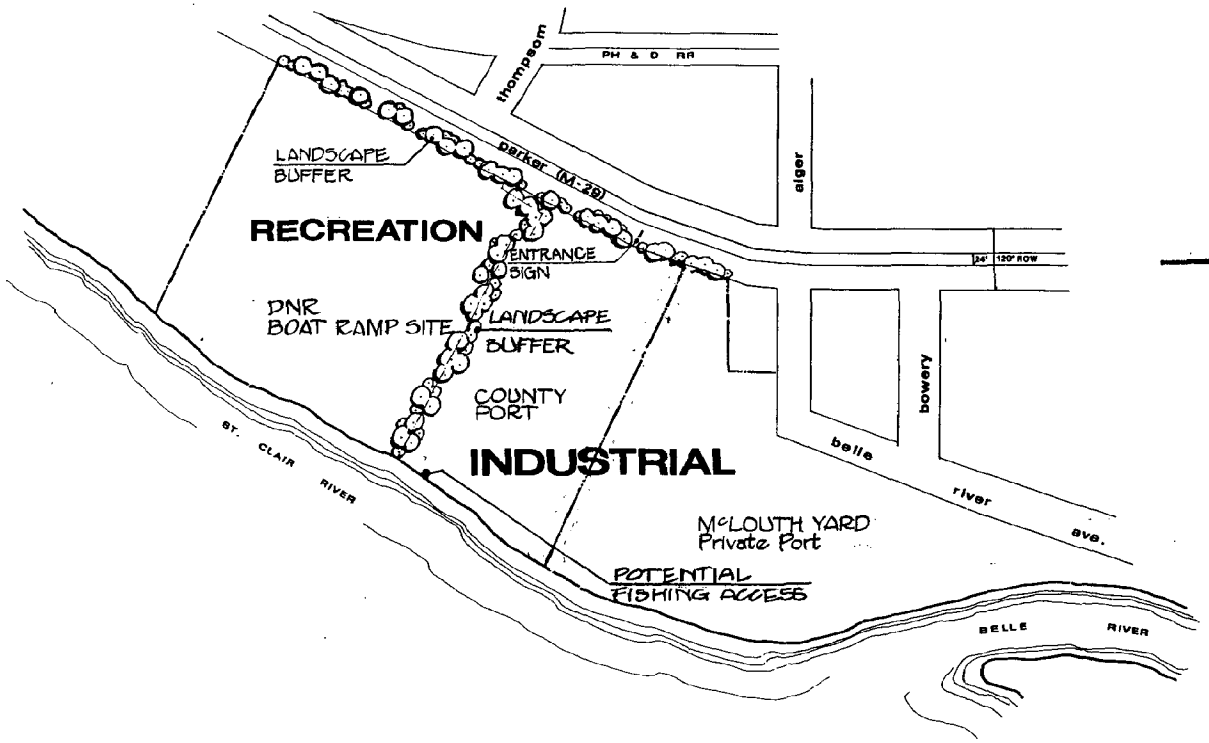
The Industrial District Design Plan, illustrated on page 52, consists of the following improvements:

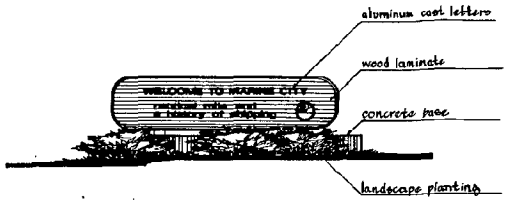
M-29 Entrance Landscaping

A major entrance to the City is located on M-29 near the DNR boat launch and County yard. Current images do not impart a favorable impression on visitors. Roadside plantings are proposed to screen objectionable views and to present a favorable entry image. The County Road Commission is encouraged to clean up and landscape their south property line next to the DNR boat launch. Although the boat launch currently appears rather stark, the site will be more attractive once it is landscaped and fully developed. Improved signage directing visitors to the Marina and Central Business District is recommended to be located in the M-29 right-of-way near the County Yard site. A recommended design of the entrance sign is provided on page 52.

Implementation Program

The Nautical Mile Master Plan and Area Design Plans graphically illustrate improvement proposals for the coastal area. However, the plan is incomplete without an implementation program to provide the City with direction toward full implementation of the Plan. The





PROPOSED ENTRANCE SIGN

INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT

Coastal Area Development Plan

MARINE CITY, MICHIGAN

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0' 50' 100' 200' 300'

Implementation Program consists of project costs and priorities, funding sources and mechanisms, development policies, State and Federal regulations, and responsible agencies. It is emphasized that the Plan presents a long range program which will require public and private resources and cooperation to fully implement.

Project Costs and Priorities

The full implementation of the Nautical Mile Master Plan is projected over a period of ten years. The chart on the following pages illustrates estimated costs, quantities/dimensions, and priorities of specific projects associated with the Area Design Plans. Project priorities are broken down by high (implemented within two years), medium (2-5 years), and low (5-10 years). Assignment of priorities is an indication of project importance as well as the potential for implementation within a given time frame. Costs are estimated as total project costs regardless if implemented by public agencies or private organizations.

The construction of Phase I of the Nautical Mile Mall, and portions of the Nautical Mile Park within the Central Business District should receive high priority. The Central Business District serves as the core of commercial and recreational activities in the community. A

MARINE CITY, MICHIGAN
COASTAL AREA DEVELOPMENT PLAN
IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

Planning Area	Project	Quantity/Dimension	Estimated Cost (1981 prices)	Implementation Priority
CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT				
1. Nautical Mile Mall Phase 1	1. Repair existing sidewalks and extend sidewalks in designated areas	4480 square feet	$ 8,496	high
	2. Brick accent paving for selected areas	6300 square feet	$ 25,200	high
	3. New curb and gutters	675 lineal feet	$ 4,050	high
	4. Street trees	45	$ 6,750	high
	5. Street tree grates	39	$ 4,875	high
	6. Benches	12	$ 4,500	high
	7. Street lights (historical replicas)	18	$ 17,550	high
		(Phase 1 Subtotal –	$ 71,421)	
2. Nautical Mile Mall Phase 2	1. Concrete paving, scoring and texturing	10,700 square feet	$ 14,980	low
	2. Brick accent paving	4,300 square feet	$ 17,200	low
	3. Subsurface drainage and utility access	---	$ 6,300	low
	4. Street trees	9	$ 1,350	low
	5. Tree grates	9	$ 1,125	low
	6. Benches	14	$ 5,250	low
	7. Fountain	1	$ 5,500	low
	8. Mall sculpture and street furniture	--	$ 3,800	low
		(Phase 2 Subtotal –	$ 55,505)	

(continued on next page)

COASTAL AREA DEVELOPMENT PLAN
IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM (continued)

Planning Area	Project	Quantity/Dimension	Estimated Cost (1981 prices)	Implementation Priority
3. **Ferry Relocation and Park Improvements**	1. Access drive and parking area - asphalt paving	800 square yards	$ 7,200	low
	2. Bulkheading and dock construction for ferry	50 feet bulkhead, piles and misc.	$ 38,000	low
	3. Visitor's center and custom house	40' x 26' building	$ 65,000	low
	4. Misc. landscaping and play equipment	---	$ 5,300	low
	5. Bulkheading and shoreline improvements	120 lineal feet	$ 60,000	low
		(Subtotal	$175,500)	
4. **Nautical Mile Plaza**	1. Concrete paving, scoring steps	14,400 square feet	$ 20,160	medium
	2. Brick accent paving	3,800 square feet	$ 15,200	medium
	3. Four foot high retaining wall	240 lineal feet	$ 4,800	medium
	4. Metal capstans and chain for protective railing	180 lineal feet	$ 4,200	medium
	5. Four flag poles	30 ft height	$ 3,400	medium
	6. Information kiosk	---	$ 2,400	medium
	7. Trees and landscaping	40 trees 52 shrubs	$ 6,000 $ 2,000	medium medium
	8. River bulkhead repair and replacement	120 lineal feet	$ 60,000	medium
			$118,160	

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COASTAL AREA DEVELOPMENT PLAN
IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM (continued)

Planning Area	Project	Quantity/Dimension	Estimated Cost (1981 prices)	Implementation Priority
5. **Nautical Mile Amphitheatre**	1. Concrete paving, scoring and steps	7,000 square feet	$ 9,800	medium
	2. Brick accent paving	2,800 square feet	$ 11,200	medium
	3. Perimeter retaining walls	90 lineal feet	$ 2,300	medium
	4. Landscaping	18 trees 38 shrubs	$ 2,700 $ 1,444	medium medium
	5. Elevated stage (concrete)	---	$ 4,200	medium
	6. River bulkhead repair	80 lineal feet	$ 40,000	medium
		(Subtotal	$ 71,644)	
6. **Nautical Mile Riverwalk**	1. Concrete paving and and scoring	14,800 square feet	$ 20,720	medium
	2. Brick accent paving	3,225 square feet	$ 12,900	medium
	3. Nautical capstans and anchor chain for protective railings	880 lineal feet	$ 20,240	medium
	4. Historical light poles	12	$ 11,400	medium
	5. Landscaping	14 trees 56 shrubs	$ 2,100 $ 2,128	medium medium
	6. River bulkhead repair and replacement	130 lineal feet	$ 65,000	
		(Subtotal	$134,488)	
7. **Nautical Mile Park**	1. Asphalt pathway	2,720 square feet	$ 5,200	high
	2. Park benches	8 benches	$ 3,600	high
	3. Grading and seeding	.5 acre	$ 8,200	high
	4. Landscaping	27 trees	$ 4,100	high

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COASTAL AREA DEVELOPMENT PLAN
IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM (continued)

Planning Area	Project	Quantity/Dimension	Estimated Cost (1981 prices)	Implementation Priority
7. Nautical Mile Park (continued)	5. Riverwalk bulkheading	260 lineal feet	$130,000	medium
	6. Boatwell bulkheading	200 lineal feet	$100,000	low
	7. Marina Center & restrooms	24' x 24'	$ 65,000	low
	8. Asphalt parking	62 cars total 25 car lot added to existing lot	$ 8,511	high
	9. Lighting	6 lights	$ 6,600	high
	10. Parking lot landscaping	21 trees	$ 3,150	high
		(Subtotal –	$334,361)	
MARINA DISTRICT				
8. **General Improvements**	1. Small boat ramp and canoe launch	– asphalt parking	$ 3,800	high
		– stepped bulkhead	$ 2,400	high
		– landscaping	$ 850	high
	2. Belle River Avenue improvements	street plantings between Brown Street and Chartier	$ 12,300	high
		pedestrian lighting along Belle River Avenue from Water Street to Carroll	$ 13,500	medium
		paved sidewalk improvements from Water St. to Carroll	$ 18,000	medium
		signage	$ 850	high
		Subtotal –	$ 51,700	

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COASTAL AREA DEVELOPMENT PLAN
IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM (continued)

Planning Area	Project	Quantity/Dimension	Estimated Cost (1981 prices)	Implementation Priority
9. **Fisher-Insley Boat Facility Conversion**	1. Building conversion for boat storage and repair	north building and south building	$ 16,000	medium
	2. Demolition of two smaller buildings	---	$ 48,000	medium
	3. Parking and outdoor storage lots	---	$ 12,000	medium
	4. Boat wells, tie ups and boat hoist	30 new wells 3 temporary tie ups 1 boat hoist	$ 32,000 $ 4,000 $ 8,000	medium medium medium
		(Subtotal –	$120,000)	
INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT				
10. **General Improvements**	1. Wood laminate entrance sign	---	$ 3,200	high
	2. Landscaping buffer along south side of M-29 to screen objectionable view	22 trees 18 shrubs	$ 3,300 $ 684	high high
		(Subtotal –	$ 7,184)	
11. **Entrance Areas**	1. Entrance sign on Broadway denoting the Central Business District	---	$ 450	high
	2. Entrance sign on Chartier denoting the Marina District	---	$ 450	high
		(Subtotal –	$ 900)	

*Note: Approximately 50% of total project cost is projected for low priority bulkheading.

Explanation of Terms:

Priorities

high	=	implement within 1 to 2 years
medium	=	implement within 2 to 5 years
low	=	implement within 5 to 10 years

Summary of Project Costs

High Priority Costs	=	$132,127
Medium Priority Costs	=	$618,092
Low Priority Costs	=	$396,005

concentrated effort is needed to enhance the vitality of downtown. Construction of the small boat ramp in the Marina District and M-29 entrance and landscaping improvements in the Industrial District also rate as a high priority. Both projects are high visibility, yet low-cost projects. Costs of high priority projects are estimated at $132,127.

The remainder of the projects are medium and low priority. Projects rated as medium and low priority are still very important to the overall success of the Nautical Mile Master Plan. However, it was felt that the community's limited resources should be devoted toward more visible projects in the early years of implementation. It should be noted that, while total costs appear to be substantial, approximately 50% of project costs are for low priority bulkheading. Bulkheading, although very desirable, rates a low priority due to its great expense.

Funding Sources and Mechanisms

Due to the cost of many projects, it is unrealistic to think that the entire Plan can be funded with local governmental funds. It is equally unrealistic to think that some local funds will not have to be raised. The value of the Plan is that it gives the City a tool to approach

private local groups and Federal and State agencies to form a partnership for implementation.

While the status of many Federal and State funding programs is unclear at this time, it is likely that some funding for local recreation, public works, and community development will continue. The City, with the help of its consultants, should monitor the funding situation and be prepared to act when funds become available. At the current time, a number of funding programs are still in place, although their long-term future is unknown. The following funding programs may continue to have funds available for the improvement projects proposed by this Plan:

- Coastal Zone Management Program - Michigan Dept. of Natural Resources
- Land and Water Conservation Fund - Michigan Dept. of Natural Resources
- Community Development Block Grants, Small Cities Program - U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
- Urban Development Action Grants - U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development

- Miscellaneous - In addition to the programs named above, the Dept. of Natural Resources and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers operate certain programs designed to meet specific recreational and navigational objectives

The potential availability of grant funds does not eliminate the necessity to finance all or portions of projects with local funds. It is the rule rather than the exception that Federal grants require the local unit of government to fund a portion of the project. Local funding can be raised through the general fund, revenue sharing, general obligation bonds, revenue bonds, special millage, special assessment, and private contributions.

It is clear, though, that the need for private funding will become increasingly important in the future. In addition to traditional sources of funding, State legislation allows municipalities to establish a variety of mechanisms to promote a public-private partnership for economic improvement. The Economic Corporation Act, the Commercial Redevelopment Districts Act, and the Downtown Development Authority Act are particularly applicable to Marine City. When and if these various incentive programs are used to promote development, the City should ensure that proposed projects conform to the basic objectives of the Nautical Mile Master Plan.

- The Downtown Development Authority, P.A. 197 of 1975, allows the creation of a non-profit Downtown Development Authority with revenue raising capabilities. The initial step in establishing a DDA is for a city to pass an ordinance creating a DDA and designating district boundaries. Once established, a DDA has authority to raise operating revenues through the solicitation of contributions or special assessment on properties within the district. With the approval of the governing body of the City, a DDA may arrange for capital financing through issuing revenue bonds, by requesting the city to issue tax anticipation notes or general obligation bonds, or by creating a tax increment financing plan. Tax increment financing is the most innovative tool available in that it allows a DDA to capture future increases in tax revenues generated within the development district to fund public improvements within the district. However, tax increment financing is also controversial since it means loss of increased revenues to various units of government with property taxing powers.

  Creation of a DDA within Marine City would provide the broadest mechanism currently available for implementing the Central Business District Design Plan and improving the downtown. The ability of a DDA to raise revenues, especially

through tax increment financing, to implement the various improvement projects provides the downtown area with an opportunity at "self help" while still receiving encouragement by and participation of the City. The City and downtown merchants should form a study committee to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of creating a DDA focussing on implementing the projects proposed by the Nautical Mile Master Plan.

- The Economic Development Corporations Act, P.A. 338 of 1974, permits the creation of public Economic Development Corporations (EDCs) to assist commercial and industrial businesses with economic improvement projects. An EDC may issue tax exempt revenue bonds at lower interest rates than available through conventional sources to assist private businesses with financing capital improvements such as the acquisition of land, buildings, and equipment.

  Marine City has used Act 338 in the past to assist local businesses with expansion plans. The EDC may also be used to provide financing of improvement projects in the Coastal Area wherever private enterprise is involved. For example, EDC

financing capability could be used to assist in the conversion of the Fisher-Insley site to marina use. The EDC may also be used to assist the expansion and improvement of downtown businesses. However, when the EDC is used in the coastal area, the City should ensure that the basic principles of the Nautical Master Plan are followed.

- The Commercial Redevelopment Districts Act, P.A. 255 of 1978, permits communities to encourage commercial redevelopment by granting tax benefits to companies which rehabilitate obsolete commercial facilities or build new commercial facilities. A city must first designate a Commercial Redevelopment District which must be composed of obsolete commercial facilities or vacant land within the boundaries of a Downtown Development Authority. Within the District, the city may permit substantial property tax exemptions to commercial development for capital improvements. Additional regulations apply to businesses given such a tax abatement.

P.A. 255 would seem to have limited application to Marine City. There is little

available vacant land and only a small area of obsolete commercial facilities, primarily along the north end of Water Street. However, P.A. 255 would be a useful tool to revitalize those portions of downtown which are not being utilized to the fullest extent.

Development Policies

In addition to funding and construction various improvement projects outlined in the Plan, the City should also consider various changes in its zoning ordinance to encourage development consistent with the basic objectives of the Nautical Mile Master Plan. The following changes are recommended:

1) Obsolete or incorrect zoning districts should be changed. The DNR boat launch is currently zoned I-1 Light Industrial and would be more appropriate as W-M Waterfront Recreation and Marina. In addition, the existing marinas on the Belle River are zoned, B-2 General Business making them non-conforming. The marina area should also be zoned W-M.

2) While not a panacea, zoning may also be used to encourage certain types of development. The Fisher-Insley site is currently zoned I-1 Light Industrial. Rezoning to W-M Waterfront Recreation and Marina might help remove obstacles to the redevelopment of the site for boating use.

3) The "Intent" sections of both B-1 Central Business District and W-M Waterfront Recreation and Marina District should be expanded to reflect the broad objectives of the Nautical Mile Master Plan dealing with economic improvement, improved public access and recreational opportunity, and preservation of historical heritage and promotion of a nautical design theme.

4) Provisions requiring site plan review should be added to the ordinance to ensure that development within the Coastal Area and the community as a whole is properly designed and meets the overall objectives of the zoning ordinance, Master Plan, and the Nautical Mile Master Plan. Site plan review will permit the City to exercise more control over the quality of land development by requiring approval of site plans by the Planning Commission and City Commission.

The site plan will illustrate the relationship of the development to neighboring areas, compliance with zoning district regulations, and special considerations, such as landscaping, parking, and preservation of historical and natural features. Within the Coastal Area, site plan review can be especially useful in ensuring that new development is properly set back from the river edge, public accessibility to waterfront is encouraged, and views of the water are maintained. General standards protecting the community at large and specific standards promoting the objectives of the Nautical Mile Master Plan can be incorporated in the site plan review process.

5) Traditional zoning is designed to segregate uses by districts and establish rigid standards for each district. In most cases, this approach is necessary and appropriate. However, creative land planning, unique natural conditions, and the social needs of residents are overlooked to meet the basic requirements of the ordinance.

To encourage more creative design, preservation of open space and views, and

mixed use of a site, a Planned Unit Development (PUD) provision should be incorporated in the zoning ordinance. A PUD option is intended to allow for integrated site design, flexible setbacks, clustered buildings, preservation of common open space, and mixed building types and land use (residential, commercial, and recreational). Clustered building sites allow for the preservation of open space and the reduction in site development and utility costs. The mixture of building types and land uses provides a more creative and interesting development. The PUD option might be useful to encourage the redevelopment of the Fisher-Insley site.

State and Federal Regulations

Coastal management and development in shoreline areas in Michigan involve consideration of a number of State and Federal statutes and possible application for one or more permits. The specific acts applicable to Marine City include the State Inland Lakes and Streams Act and the Federal River and Harbor, Water Pollution Control Amendments of 1972, and the Coastal Zone Management Acts.

The Inland Lakes and Streams Act, P.A. 346 of 1972, as amended, applies to the connecting

waters of the Great Lakes and the inland navigable waters. A permit would be required for any construction, dredging, filling, or alteration below the ordinary high water mark of the St. Clair and Belle Rivers. The construction, maintenance and operation of a marina also requires a 346 permit. The permit application is submitted to the Department of Natural Resources. The Department sends copies of the applications for review to local governments, appropriate agencies, and adjacent riparians. A public hearing on the permit application will be held whether specifically requested by the applicant, riparian owner, or governmental agency or at the discretion of the Department. The Department "must consider the possible effects of the proposed action upon the inland lake or stream and upon waters from which and into which waters flow and the uses of all such waters, including uses for recreation, fish and wildlife, aesthetics, local government, agriculture, commerce, and industry."

Federal permits that may potentially be required for coastal development are a result of Section 10 of the River and Harbor Act of 1899 and Section 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972. Both Section 10 and Section 404 are administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. A joint permit application for Act 346, Section 10 and Section 404 has been instituted by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Corps of Engineers, Detroit District.

The River and Harbor Act of 1899 was the first of the Federal regulatory statutes. Its basic thrust was to facilitate commerce on Federal navigable waters. Section 10 of this statute requires a permit from the Corps of Engineers for construction of structures such as piers, breakwaters, bulkheads, revetments, power transmission lines, and aids to navigation in navigable waters. Permits are also required for any dredging, channelization, or filling in navigable waters. Where any of these proposed projects is located in non-navigable waters but may affect navigability in navigable waters, a permit is required.

A Section 404 permit would be required if a proposed project would result in the discharge of dredged or fill material into any waters of the U.S. which are tied to interstate commerce. Such projects as repair, replacement and construction of seawalls and construction of marina facilities would likely require a permit under either Section 10, Section 404, or both.

A final Federal statute which would affect coastal development in Marine City is the Coastal Zone Management Act. The CZM Act requires that a non-Federal applicant for a Federal permit for a project affecting land or water uses in the State's coastal zone must have State certification that the project complies with the State's approved Coastal Zone

Management Program before a Federal permit may be issued. Michigan has an approved Coastal Management Program, so any proposed structures must comply with it before any Federal permit can be issued.

Responsibility

The key to the successful implementation of any community improvement program is leadership. Although the City Council has ultimate responsibility, the full implementation of the Plan will require a cooperative effort between the Council, existing Commissions, and community organizations. The Plan will allow the City to work with such groups as the Chamber of Commerce, Community Pride and Heritage, Women's Civic Club, Lions and other organizations to coordinate improvements within the coastal area.

To ensure that the proper attention can be devoted to the coordination and implementation of the Plan, the Council should designate one group with the responsibility of overseeing the Plan. The Village Council may consider designating responsibility to an existing commission or forming a new "Nautical Mile Commission" with broad representation from government, business, and the community.

Conclusions

Although the Coastal Area Development Plan represents long-term solutions to coastal area problems, the implementation of the Plan over the next ten years is a fairly short period. For the most part, the implementation of the Plan will be a step-by-step process. Therefore, it is necessary for the City to mobilize for action --- action intended to implement the Plan.

The Marine City Coastal Area has been an important feature of the community for over one hundred years. It will continue to be a valuable resource for both residents and visitors only if it is maintained and improved. The impetus for such an improvement program must come from within Marine City. The Plan is a blueprint for action --- the building blocks are in the hands of the public officials and private citizens of Marine City.

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