



## 2.2 COASTAL-DEPENDENT & RELATED DEVELOPMENT

PHOTO: SANTA BARBARA HARBOR

### **Coastal Act policies related to Coastal-Dependent & Related Development that are relevant to Santa Barbara include the following:**

**Section 30222.5.** Oceanfront land that is suitable for coastal dependent aquaculture shall be protected for that use, and proposals for aquaculture facilities located on those sites shall be given priority, except over other coastal dependent developments or uses.

**Section 30224.** Increased recreational boating use of coastal waters shall be encouraged, in accordance with this division, by developing dry storage areas, increasing public launching facilities, providing additional berthing space in existing harbors, limiting non-water-dependent land uses that congest access corridors and preclude boating support facilities, providing harbors of refuge, and by providing for new boating facilities in natural harbors, new protected water areas, and in areas dredged from dry land.

**Section 30234.** Facilities serving the commercial fishing and recreational boating industries shall be protected and, where feasible, upgraded. Existing commercial fishing and recreational boating harbor space shall not be reduced unless the demand for those facilities no longer exists or adequate substitute space has been provided. Proposed recreational boating facilities shall, where feasible, be designed and located in such a fashion as not to interfere with the needs of the commercial fishing industry.

**Section 30234.5.** The economic, commercial, and recreational importance of fishing activities shall be recognized and protected.

**Section 30255.** Coastal-dependent developments shall have priority over other developments on or near the shoreline. Except as provided elsewhere in this division, coastal-dependent developments shall not be sited in a wetland. When appropriate, coastal-related developments should be accommodated within reasonable proximity to the coastal-dependent uses they support.

**Section 30260.** Coastal-dependent industrial facilities shall be encouraged to locate or expand within existing sites and shall be permitted reasonable long-term growth where consistent with this division. However, where new or expanded coastal-dependent industrial facilities cannot feasibly be accommodated consistent with other policies of this division, they may nonetheless be permitted in accordance with this section and Sections 30261 and 30262 if (1) alternative locations are infeasible or more environmentally damaging; (2) to do otherwise would adversely affect the public welfare; and (3) adverse environmental effects are mitigated to the maximum extent feasible.

## INTRODUCTION

The Coastal Act defines coastal-dependent development or use as any development or use that requires a site on or adjacent to the sea to be able to function at all. Coastal-related development means any use that is dependent on a coastal-dependent development or use. This chapter focuses mainly on the Harbor and Stearns Wharf as the



KAYAKS ALONG THE BREAKWATER

City's primary commercial- and recreational-oriented coastal-dependent and coastal-related development and use areas. Other critical coastal-dependent uses in the City, such as the El Estero Wastewater Treatment Plant and the Charles E. Meyer Desalination Plant, which rely on proximity to the coast for ocean intake and outfall purposes, are discussed in Chapter 6.1 *Public Works & Energy Facilities*.

The Harbor and Stearns Wharf area is managed by the City's Waterfront Department, whose mission is to provide the community with a quality waterfront for recreation and commercial use, along with mooring and

landside services for boating, consistent with Coastal Act policies encouraging and protecting commercial fishing and recreational boating. Approximately 252 acres of tidelands and submerged lands are managed by the Waterfront Department via the Tidelands Grant, as detailed below.

### Tidelands Grant

The City of Santa Barbara first received title to the Tidelands Area that encompasses Stearns Wharf and part of the Harbor in 1925 via the Tidelands Grant (Chapter 78, Statutes of 1925), which included some submerged lands offshore of the City from the mean high tide line to approximately ½ mile offshore (as it existed in 1925). With the Tidelands Grant, the City has the responsibility to hold, manage, use, and preserve the tidelands "in trust" for the general public. The grant also requires that any revenue raised in the Tidelands Area can only be spent in the same area. The tidelands and submerged lands comprising the Tidelands Grant are managed by the City's Waterfront Department. The Waterfront Department's Enterprise Fund operates from revenues generated from the Tidelands Area. Tenant rents, boat slip fees, parking fees, and other sources of

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revenue are put back into improvements and services, such as preventative maintenance, capital improvements, parking services, staffing, public safety, dock repairs, special events, and public education.

Since 1925, the Tidelands Grant was amended several times to: (1) expand the area and permit public parks, parkways, highways, or playgrounds; (2) allow the United States Government to use existing structures as a naval reserve armory; and (3) allow more expanded use categories consistent with tidelands grants to other coastal cities. The Waterfront Department is now primarily responsible for the area that lies seaward of Cabrillo Boulevard between East Beach and Leadbetter Beach (also referred to as the Waterfront). However, there are facilities within this area that are managed by other departments.

## History of the Harbor

In the 1920s, Max Fleischmann, a local philanthropist, offered the City \$200,000 towards construction of a harbor if the City would match the amount. A subsequent bond measure funded construction of a detached breakwater using rock quarried on Santa Cruz Island. Mr. Fleischmann contributed additional funds to complete the project in 1928. Sand began immediately accreting in the Harbor once the breakwater was constructed and subsequently, the breakwater was extended to shore to help solve the problem. Over the following years, Leadbetter Beach, West Beach, and the current Harbor Commercial area were created through sand accretion. Since its inception, dredging of the Harbor is crucial for Harbor users and for the replenishment of the downcoast beaches. The Harbor channel is typically dredged twice a year by the Corps of Engineers as authorized by the Rivers and Harbors Act, to provide safe and navigable waters.<sup>1</sup>



BOATS MOORED AT THE HARBOR

Since the late 1950s, Marinas 1 through 4 and a launch ramp were constructed, slips have been added, and other projects were completed to improve and expand Harbor operations. In the 1990s, the Naval Reserve Center<sup>2</sup> was sold back to the City of Santa Barbara and renamed the Waterfront Center. Subsequently, the Outdoors Santa Barbara

<sup>1</sup> Since 1972, the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) conducts maintenance dredging of the Federal Channel under the Rivers and Harbors Act at the Corps' sole expense. The City is responsible for dredging outside the Federal Channel.

<sup>2</sup> The building is part of a Naval Section Base at the Harbor that was built for the Navy by the Works Project Administration in the late 1930 – 1940s. The City deeded the site to the Navy and it was used during World War II for port security and other uses.



Visitor Center, the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum, and two restaurants opened in the Waterfront Center.

Today, maintaining the existing working nature of the Harbor is of primary importance, balanced with recreational use. Most planned improvements to the Harbor are complete, and new development in this area is anticipated to mainly encompass replacement or redevelopment of outdated facilities.

### History of Stearns Wharf

In 1872, construction was completed on what had just become the longest deep-water pier between Los Angeles and San Francisco. Named for its builder, local lumberman John



CONSTRUCTION ON STEARNS WHARF

P. Stearns, Stearns Wharf served the passenger and freight shipping needs of California's South Coast for over a quarter century. Later, a 1,450 foot wye was built onto the Wharf to carry a railroad spur. The wye proved too expensive to maintain, and after being battered by storms, it was abandoned. A small portion of the wye remains, housing the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History's Sea Center.

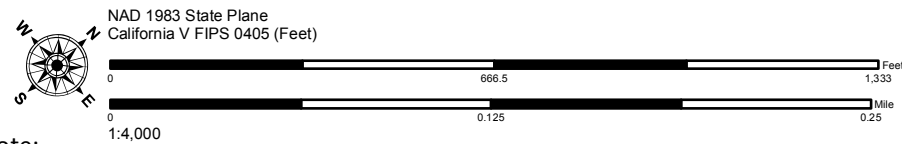
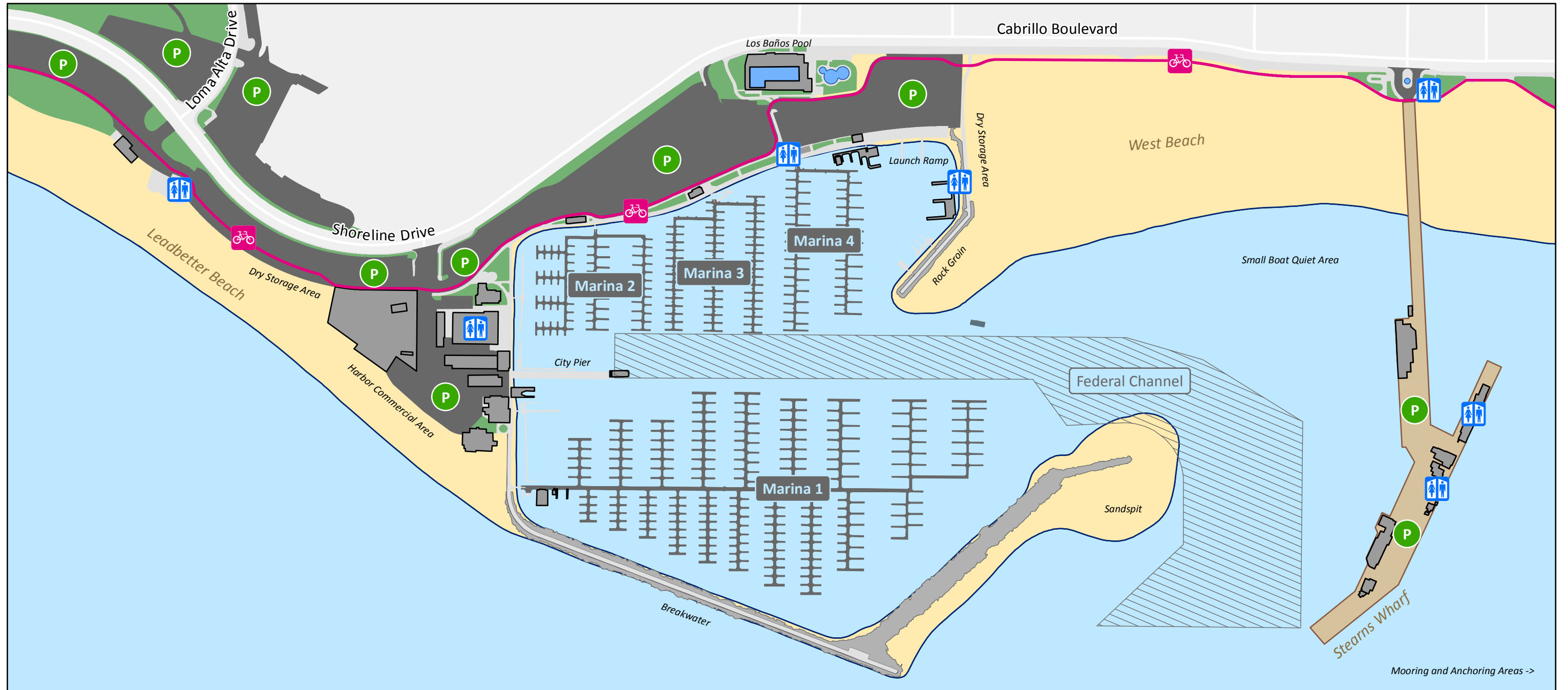
In the 1940s, the Harbor Restaurant was built on the Wharf, marking an end to the use of the Wharf primarily for transportation, shipping, and service to oil platforms. Now, small scale, low-intensity commercial development and

maintaining public open space and recreation is the primary goal. A serious fire on the Wharf in 1973 and subsequent litigation resulted in its closure until 1981. Since then, several large storms and fires have caused temporary closures and rebuilding. Currently, new development on the Wharf is primarily minor additions and alterations to the originally approved buildings.

### History of West Beach

As noted above, West Beach was created when the Harbor breakwater was constructed and extended in the 1920s. Since then, dredging and storm activity has modified its width. In the 1980s, West Beach was dredged back to half its previous width. As sand continues to accrete, West Beach was again dredged back about halfway in the 1990s to replenish downcoast beaches and provide what is known as the "Small Boat Quiet Water Area" for recreational boating. This quiet water area is important to maintain as it keeps small, non-motorized craft a safe distance from the federal navigation channel.

# FIGURE 2.2-1 HARBOR AND STEARNS WHARF AREA



Note:  
-All representations are approximate and intended for illustrative purposes only.

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## HARBOR USES & FACILITIES

Figure 2.2-1 *Harbor and Stearns Wharf Area* shows the location of the main coastal-dependent, coastal-related, and other area facilities discussed below. To ensure the Harbor remains a working harbor, the extent and nature of the uses in the Harbor Commercial (HC) Zone are reviewed by the City's Harbor Commission and Planning Commission every five years. Coastal-dependent uses in support of the working nature of the Harbor include boat slips and moorings, boatyard repair facility, and a marine fuel dock.

### Harbor Coastal-Dependent Uses

#### *Slips*

The Harbor contains four marinas with 1,143 slips. Of those, 42 slips are exclusively designated for commercial fishing. There are also 44 side and end ties (Table 2.2-1 *Harbor Slip Sizes & Facilities*). Each slip space is provided with a storage box, hose spigot, and an electrical outlet. Boat owners, slip permittees, and their guests have access to the marinas and restrooms with gate access cards. Due to high demand, typically the Harbor slips are fully occupied. The Waterfront Department handles slip permit transfers and waiting lists for new slip permittees.

Generally, visiting boat demand can be accommodated throughout the year. During peak periods, however, all available visitor slips are used. Additional demand is handled through an open water free anchorage east of Stearns Wharf.

**Table 2.2-1** Harbor Slip Sizes & Facilities

Slip Size	# of Facilities
20'	73
25'	243
28'	161
30'	131
35'	232
40'	87
43'	33
45'	22
50'	69
51'	19
60'	29
End ties	28
Side ties	16
Fish Float North and South	24

Source: City of Santa Barbara Waterfront Department 2014

#### *Mooring & Anchoring Areas*

Offshore of East Beach, the City provides 44 permanent mooring spaces for permitted vessels adhering to rules and regulations of the Mooring Permit Program. Moorings are secured to the sea floor, owned by individual permittees, and inspected annually by City-approved inspectors, with the cost borne by the permittees, who also pay annual permit renewal fees.

West of the permitted mooring area, visitors unable to find room in the Harbor, or not wishing to pay the Harbor's daily slip fees, can anchor in a seasonal anchoring area (April 1 to October 31) within 300 feet of Stearns Wharf. The seasonal anchoring area, which



EAST BEACH MOORING AREA

can handle up to 45 boats, is the most convenient place for visitors to anchor due to its proximity to Harbor facilities.

East of the permitted mooring area, year-round anchoring is allowed for permanent, temporary, or visiting vessels. Most boaters using the anchoring system use the seasonal anchorage during the summer and then move to the year-round anchorage during the winter.

#### *Dry Storage of Vessels*

Dry storage of vessels is on-land storage of vessels in open or enclosed rack structures, on trailers, cradles, boat stands, or by other means. Commercial dry storage facilities are provided at the Harbor and other locations. The City provides public dry storage areas at Leadbetter Beach and West Beach. From April to October, catamarans can be stored in a designated area of Leadbetter Beach. On West Beach, small vessels can be placed within a designated area. There are also renewable annual permits for West Beach storage racks for outrigger club activities and sailboats.

#### *Harbor Support Facilities*

Harbor support facilities are uses, equipment, and vessels that provide repair, maintenance, new construction, parts and supplies, fueling, waste removal, cleaning, and related services to vessels berthed in or visiting the Harbor. Harbor support facilities are considered essential to maintaining a working harbor.

The Harbor has approximately nine boat repair and marine supply businesses, including yacht sales, fuel supplies, and marine gear and supply. The Harbor Patrol has four patrol vessels and coordinates operations with the U.S. Coast Guard, Santa Barbara Police, Santa Barbara Fire, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the County Sheriff.

#### *Piers & Docks*

The Harbor supports several piers and docks as follows:

- The City Pier (formerly Navy Pier) has a fuel dock with space to fuel two vessels simultaneously, an Ice House providing hundreds of tons of ice every year for commercial fishing vessels and the fish market, and four hoists. A Coast Guard Cutter is docked at this pier. The majority of offloading from commercial fishing vessels also occurs at the City Pier.
- The Accommodation Dock, south of the City Pier, is where the Harbor Patrol boats are berthed. Boaters using the travel lift tie up at this dock to load and unload their boats, and visiting boats come here to the dock to check in with the Harbor Patrol before proceeding to their assigned visitor space or mooring.
- The Travel Lift Pier is a short pier used for launching and hauling out of boats. Boaters also tie up at this pier to load, unload, and rig their boats. The Santa Barbara Yacht Club's hoist, also used by Santa Barbara Sailing Club members, is located on this pier.

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- The Cabrillo Landing Dock is located in the northwestern corner of the Harbor near the Breakwater Restaurant. Commercial fishing boats are berthed on the north side of the dock, which is also used by Harbor cruise boats and other commercial boats.

#### *Breakwater*

The breakwater protects the marinas and other Harbor facilities and is also a public walkway that features flags representing prominent organizations in Santa Barbara. The wide walkway offers views of the Harbor and City and is used for recreational fishing. In 2005, a “Lost at Sea” memorial consisting of whale tail benches, dolphin statue, and compass rose was placed at the end of the breakwater. The area along the south side of the sandspit is a recognized surfing spot during occasional strong swells, and the sand spit is a popular spot to haul out kayaks.

#### *Boat Launch Ramp & Rock Groin*

The Boat Launch Ramp is in the northeast area of the Harbor, with eight launching lanes and three boarding floats. Two of the lanes and one boarding float are reserved for non-motorized boat use, and there is a pump-out and boat wash station and parking for trailers nearby. Adjacent to the Launch Ramp, commercial boat charters and rentals are available, including kayaks and stand-up paddle boards. The rock groin houses a commercial boat charter business and University of California Santa Barbara’s sailing facility. Cruise ship passengers disembark in this area.



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## Commercial Fishing

The Harbor is an important commercial fishing center in the south central coastal region of California. Approximately 87 commercial fishing vessels are permanently berthed at the Harbor, with an additional 20 transient vessels located here on a semi-permanent basis. Annually, catches of sea urchin, lobster, seabass, rock crab, sea cucumber, and other species totaling millions of pounds are unloaded. Revenue earned by fishermen from those and other species typically averages over 11 million dollars annually.

## Harbor Coastal-Related Uses

Coastal-related uses are considered secondary uses that aid in assuring the Harbor remains a working harbor, as well as providing a desirable environment for the public. Coastal-related uses in the Harbor include the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum, a retail dive gear shop, and coastal-related offices (i.e., Santa Barbara Fish Market headquarters). Boater amenities include mini-marts, postal services, restrooms, and showers.

## STEARNS WHARF

Stearns Wharf is Santa Barbara's most visited attraction and produces revenue for the Waterfront Department. Stearns Wharf typically attracts over one million pedestrian visitors and over 250,000 cars annually. Development on Stearns Wharf is governed by a Coastal Development Permit from 1980 that provides a comprehensive plan to rehabilitate the Wharf and limits the number and types of businesses and buildings to be constructed to establish an appropriate balance of public open space, coastal-dependent and related uses, recreation, and visitor-serving retail and restaurants.

The Wharf currently supports 17 businesses including restaurants, the Sea Center, gift and retail shops, a bait and tackle shop, and a water taxi service between the Harbor and the Wharf. Stearns Wharf is also a popular fishing destination, providing a low-cost recreational opportunity.

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# COASTAL-DEPENDENT & RELATED DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

## CITY PLANNING EFFORTS & PROGRAMS

### *Harbor*

- Policy 2.2-1** Harbor Development. The Harbor shall be a working harbor with priority given to coastal-dependent uses, such as commercial fishing and recreational boating, for all users and income groups. The Harbor shall be developed and maintained as a resource for residents and visitors.
- Policy 2.2-2** Harbor Operations. Continue to operate and maintain the Harbor in a manner that ensures the viability of coastal-dependent uses, coastal-related uses, and lower cost visitor-serving uses.
- Policy 2.2-3** Harbor Support Uses. Protect, and where feasible, enhance existing Harbor support uses serving the needs of existing Waterfront uses, recreational boaters, the boating community, and visiting vessels.
- Policy 2.2-4** Restrooms. Continue to provide restrooms at the Harbor and Stearns Wharf to serve slipholders and the public.
- Policy 2.2-5** Sandspit Surfing. Continue to provide and protect the existing surfing area located at the end of the Harbor breakwater adjacent to the sandspit.

### *Harbor Commercial Area*

- Policy 2.2-6** Harbor Commercial Area Uses. In the Harbor Commercial area, coastal-related and visitor-serving uses shall be subordinate to coastal-dependent uses but shall be provided in adequate amounts to serve visitors to the area. These uses should be evaluated during the Harbor Commission's five-year review of uses. Modest expansion of existing coastal-related and visitor-serving facilities and uses shall be encouraged in order to support coastal-dependent uses and activities.

**Policy 2.2-7** Harbor Commercial Area Policies. The following types of visitor-serving and coastal-related uses shall be provided and maintained in the Harbor Commercial area to the extent feasible:

- A. Public offices that relate to the Harbor and Wharf area;
- B. Public meeting room and small offices and storage areas for nonprofit marine related groups;
- C. Maritime museum/exhibits and gift shop;
- D. Laundromat for the use of slip holders and boaters visiting the Harbor;
- E. Maintenance facility;
- F. Visitor center;
- G. Mail service;
- H. Chandlery; and
- I. Other boating related services.

**Policy 2.2-8** Harbor Commercial (HC) Zone Area Uses Review. The extent and nature of uses in the Harbor and shoreline area of the Harbor Commercial (HC) Zone shall be reviewed by the Harbor Commission at least once every five years in order to ensure the Harbor remains a working harbor. The Harbor Commission shall prepare a report summarizing existing uses, lease changes, marina slip uses, commercial fishing, and other harbor area business uses. The Harbor Commission shall make a recommendation to the Planning Commission regarding the adequacy of coastal-dependent uses (Harbor primary uses) in relation to coastal-related and visitor-serving uses (Harbor secondary uses).

### *Boating & Fishing*

**Policy 2.2-9** Protection of Harbor Commercial Fishing and Recreational Boating Facilities. As outlined in Coastal Act Section 30234, facilities serving the commercial fishing and recreational boating industries shall be protected, and where feasible, upgraded. Existing berths and mooring sites shall not be reduced unless the demand for those facilities no longer exists, or adequate substitute space has been provided. Recreational boating facilities shall, where feasible, be designed and located in such a fashion as not to interfere with the needs of the commercial fishing industry.

**Policy 2.2-10** Services for Fishing Industry. Retain the informal fishing gear repair area near the boat launch ramp or in another appropriate location near the Harbor.

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- Policy 2.2-11** Services for Berthed and Visiting Vessels. Protect, and where feasible, enhance facilities and services for berthed and visiting vessels, including public mooring and docking facilities, guest docks, boat haul-out facilities, and pump-out stations. Continue to allow brief tie-ups at the Accommodation Dock for loading, unloading, and rigging of visiting vessels.
- Policy 2.2-12** Variety of Berthing Opportunities. Provide a variety of berthing opportunities reflecting state, regional, and local demand for a variety of slip sizes and affordability throughout the Harbor.
- Policy 2.2-13** Offshore Moorings and Anchorages. Continue to designate offshore mooring and anchorage areas as an important source of lower cost public access to the water and Harbor, consistent with the resource protection policies and provisions of the Coastal LUP.
- Policy 2.2-14** Operable Vessels. Continue to require moored and docked vessels to be operable.
- Policy 2.2-15** Dry Boat Storage. Maintain existing dry boat storage areas at West Beach, Leadbetter Beach, and in the Harbor Commercial area.
- Policy 2.2-16** Small Watercraft Protected Area. Continue to provide a quiet-water area for small, non-motorized watercraft between the Harbor and Stearns Wharf by periodically dredging West Beach (pursuant to a valid Coastal Development Permit) back to approximately the top of the boat launch ramp and maintaining that water area for recreational boating and other recreational use.

### *Stearns Wharf*

- Policy 2.2-17** Stearns Wharf Use. The primary use of Stearns Wharf shall be public open space for the public to recreate and to view the Harbor, ocean, and shoreline, and maintained as a resource for residents and visitors.

## DEVELOPMENT REVIEW POLICIES

### *Harbor*

- Policy 2.2-18** Harbor Area Policies. Development in the Harbor shall be found consistent with at least one of the following:
- A. Provide essential supplies and services to the boating public to include recreational boaters, commercial fishing, commercial shipping, enforcement, and rescue vessels;
  - B. Provide operation and maintenance of the Harbor;

- C. Provide recreational and visitor-serving opportunities for the enjoyment of the general public; and
- D. Provide an opportunity for marine-oriented nonprofit individuals, groups, and associations to benefit from use of the Harbor.

In any event, the following leases and uses shall be precluded: those which provide supplies or services tending towards a carnival atmosphere, non-marine sports, non-marine oriented business offices, or public services that can equally be served outside of the Tidelands Area.

### *Stearns Wharf*

**Policy 2.2-19** Stearns Wharf Development. Development on Stearns Wharf shall consist of a mixture of visitor-serving, coastal-dependent, and coastal-related uses. Recreational fishing shall be maintained in designated areas.

**Policy 2.2-20** Stearns Wharf Pedestrian Access. Stearns Wharf was designed to be and continues to be primarily a pedestrian environment, and vehicles on the Wharf shall be secondary to pedestrians. The protection and ease of pedestrian access shall be reviewed in all applications for new development and substantial redevelopment on the Wharf, and enhanced and improved, where feasible. The existing perimeter public walkway shall be maintained to provide maximum public viewing opportunities of the Harbor and shoreline, break up the massing of the structures on the Wharf, and to provide quiet and intimate settings for the public to move outside of the main flow of pedestrian traffic on the Wharf.

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