



AGENDA
HARBOR CRA ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2024
5:30 PM
DESTIN CITY HALL ANNEX COUNCIL CHAMBERS

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. ROLL CALL/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - A) June 12, 2024 Minutes**
- 4. NEW BUSINESS**
 - A) Development Projects and City Projects Update – October 2024**
 - B) Draft Harbor CRA Master Plan**
- 5. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS/QUESTIONS**
 - A) Jim Green**
 - B) Sandy Trammell- Mayor's Request**
 - C) Mike Buckingham**
 - D) Christian Meyers**
 - E) Casey Jones**
 - F) Guy Tadlock**
 - G) Ian Blaise**
- 6. PUBLIC COMMENTS**
- 7. NEXT MEETING DATE: December 11, 2024**

Any person requiring a special accommodation at this hearing because of a disability or physical impairment should contact the City Clerk at (850) 837-4242 at least 48 hours prior to the hearing. If a person decides to appeal any decision made with respect to any matter considered at such meeting, such person will need a record of the proceeding and for such purpose may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceeding is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. (Sec. 286.0105, Florida Statutes)

**MINUTES
HARBOR COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT
AGENCY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
JUNE 12, 2024 - 5:30 PM
DESTIN CITY HALL BOARDROOM**

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Green called the meeting order at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, June 12, 2024, in the Destin City Hall Council Chambers.

2. ROLL CALL & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

<u>Present</u>	<u>Members Absent</u>	<u>Staff Present</u>
James Green	Mike Buckingham	Kim Montgomery Deputy City Clerk
Sandy Trammell		Steven O'Connor Principal Planner
Christian Myers		Kimberly Kopp City Attorney
Casey Jones		Troy Williams, Code Compliance Director
Guy Tadlock		
Ian Blaise		

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: December 13, 2023, Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2023, minutes was made by Committee member Trammell with Committee member Tadlock providing the second providing the second. The motion passed 4-0.

4. OLD BUSINESS:

➤ **Long Term Financials**

The Finance Director, Krystal Strickland informed the members that the Harbor CRA sunsets in 2043 and the Harbor CRA has to repay the debt for the One Harbor Blvd. property as well as the commitment to fund the undergrounding of the utilities in the district. The city is receiving more franchise fees than anticipated therefore she was able to decrease the commitment from the Harbor CRA, and the current projections are, considering taking median maintenance inhouse, which will have an overall cost savings to the city comparable to what the city has contracted in past years. Additionally, the bottom line in 2044 column, there is \$7.6M to be able to consider for programing in accordance with the Master Plan after those two are paid off.

➤ **Livery Definition**

Mr. O'Connor briefed the members on how the Council discussed wanting a definition of what Bare Boat Charters are and asked this to be brought before this committee for conversation input and a recommendation.

Lt. Josh French of the Coast Guard explained his background experience regarding illegal charter investigations and how his office covers the area from Biloxi to Panama City. He explained they do not regulate Bare Boats and explained the term is very old the Coast Guard does not use, and it refers to Admiralty and Maritime Laws.

The Chairman opened the hearing to the public.

Mr. Mike Abadie, 530 Harbor Blvd. spoke of errors of definitions and errors in the agenda item that defines and spoke of how the US Coast Guard has three categories for anyone that wants to be in the boating business on the waters of the United States. Two fall under the Charter for Hire category:

- uninspected vessels – 6 passenger allowed
- Inspected vessels – Whatever amount is deemed allowable for the vessel size
- Bare Boat Charters/Livery Vessel – means renting a boat from an owner without a captain or crew.

In his opinion, if the city would consider all Bare Boats as Charters, that would solve a lot of the problems and would not conflict with the US Coast Guard, the State of Florida/FWC, and recommends to the City Council to define that all Bare Boat Charters are Livery Vessels.

Capt. Gary Jarvis, 805 Mars Street agrees with Mr. Abadie and spoke of how he spelled it out clearly and concisely to help staff prepare an ordinance that is easy for everyone to understand. He explained how the moratorium was created to reduce capacity in the harbor from the standpoint of businesses that did not have the appropriate parking, docking facilities, and the dereliction of how they were operating their business.

Mr. Gary Troup stated he does not agree with Capt. Jarvis and feels that the moratorium should not be in place. His boats are boarded and inspected, and he has all the proper license and insurance to run his business. Committee member Myers asked Mr. Troup if his boat has a COI, and Mr. Troup stated that it does.

Mr. Juda Barbee agrees that the moratorium should be kept in place and should also be enforced on all boating businesses in the harbor, including charter fishing vessels because of oversaturation.

Chuck Hyers spoke of being agreeable with the fishing industry being included in the moratorium and spoke of how there are some livery businesses that their available for sale, similarly to the Federal Fishing License, where they have to be bought from someone that already has one. He added that he doesn't agree with expansion of the livery business when there are some out there that can be purchased and feels that everyone should play by the same rules.

Capt. Kyle Low agrees with Mr. Abadie and Mr. Jarvis and stated that he has a 6-pack

vessel and talked of how no one is going to relinquish control of their expensive vessel to just anyone for rent as a bare boat charter, and he agrees that the harbor is vastly oversaturated.

Matt Condon who owns Destin Private Yachts which is a luxury yacht business spoke of how bare boat charters are regulated by Federal Law since 1993. In terms of livery vessel moratorium, he commented that he doesn't think that yachts were even factored in or prohibiting yachts from operating under bare boat charter rules. He continued that he suggests the city highly consider the ramifications of banning private yachts in Destin.

Board member Tadlock asked Mr. Condon if the ordinance would limit the fishing charter for the various fishing tournaments held yearly. According to Mr. Condon he feels as long as they stick to the six-pack rule, they will not, in his opinion.

Chairman Green clarified that no one is banning yachts, and the discussion is how to define a bare boat charter, and if operated as a livery vessel, and what the City Council deemed to be, it's not banning yachts, just limiting rental vessels in an area. According to Mr. Condon, it would still have the capacity to ban them, and all private yachts would cease to operate in the Destin harbor.

Committee member Trammell asked Mr. Condon if his boats are inspected. According to Mr. Condon, he owns an inspected vessel but the privately owned yachts, he helps book charters for those which operate as bare boat charters and are uninspected.

The Chairman clarified that they are uninspected because they are not a COI vessel. Meaning when they carry over six passengers, and deemed so by the Coast Guard, that's what they are calling an inspected vessel, a vessel with a COI. A bare boat allows them to carry up to thirteen with the renter, without having an inspection. However, the caveat is the owner has to relinquish complete control to the renter, without crew, and the renter has to engage, hire the crew and man it separately.

Sheri Andrews spoke of the fifteen "medallions" that are currently available and suggests that the bare boats should have go through the same requirements of livery do and require the same land use regulations tied to them for parking and bathrooms and ADA Compliance.

The Land Use Attorney provided the members of the committee how and why, behind the reasoning, the bare boat definition came about. Additionally, Mr. O'Connor explained how liveries and charters parking requirements are not the same. A six pack charter is two plus one for the crew, a twelve pack/livery vessel requires one space for four passengers or 3 parking spaces. She also briefly explained the process for those people wanting to get out of the livery business and those wanting to start a business and how the process works to obtain those.

Board member inquired with staff what the numbers currently are for livery decals and the number of vessels operating. According to Mr. O'Connor, 2024 there are 18 livery operators with

468 active decals, in 2019 there were 20 operators with 474.

Chairman Green closed the public portion of the hearing.

The Chairman called Lt. Josh French of the Coast Guard back up. According to Lt. French, the Coast Guard does not officially use the term bare boat and from the CG perspective, bare boats are not required to have a licensed captain and of course it is the city's perspective if they want to add that to their definition. Chairman Green spoke of how he has spoken to many people in the industry, and staff, about this subject and for the most part, most feel that it would be disingenuous to have an exemption. He spoke of the stringent process that he and others in the same business have to go through for a six-pack. He then spoke of the inspection process for a COI vessel and the inspection process for a repair and how the bare boat process doesn't compare to the COI vessel, but that is just his personal opinion.

Motion by Committee member Trammell that the Harbor CRA recommends to the CRA Board/ City Council adopt the definition of livery as proposed and presented, with Committee member Blaise providing the second. The motion passed 4-2, with Committee members Jones and Tadlock dissenting.

Committee member Myers stated if the original intent of the moratorium was to limit the number of rental vessels in the harbor, specifically rental boats, and bare boats are rentals, it doesn't seem to make a lot of sense to be making ways and conceptions for people to get around the moratorium whose purpose was to limit the number of boats in a restricted waterway.

Committee member Tadlock feels that the bare boat charter that are now in business should be grandfathered until such a time they can obtain medallions. Additionally, to figure out a way that this business module can work in the city that provides a place for charter boats and livery vessels, and six pack boats, and the larger inspected vessels that provides all the safety issues discussed, that the bare boat charters have to be under control at all times by a coastguard licensed captain. He stated that he's not sure if there needs to be a moratorium on such businesses because the cost of entry is significant, and the availability of docks could be an issue.

Committee member Blaise questioned how this would be enforced. According to Mr. O'Connor, staff is looking for guidance because currently, there is no clarity in the code, and this recommendation would provide the clarity that staff can enforce, if Council adopts it.

According to the City Attorney, right now, staff has the ability to enforce the moratorium and Code Compliance had the ability to enforce it through the registration process, and this discussion is clarifying the enforceability of bare boats.

Motion by Tadlock that the Harbor CRA-AC recommends to the City Council that if the businesses being affected by their decision that those businesses be grandfathered in to

continue their operation. Committee member Jones provided the second and amended the motion to add, if the businesses have been in operation since January 2023.

Committee member Trammell asked if he meant the current ones that are in business. According to the Chairman, the intent is to include the ones that are already in business and not include newcomers that are rushing in to try to get in before any action is taken. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Motion by Myers for City Council to consider a time limit for businesses to have time to enter into compliance instead of giving them special status, with Committee member Trammell providing the second.

For clarity, the City Attorney noted for the record that so far, they have motioned to recommend to the City Council to clarify the definition of bare boats and livery/rental vessels and they are to be included into the moratorium. Additionally, if a business is affected by their decision, as of 2023 and the business was operating, their recommendation to the City Council is to allow them to keep operating. The last motion is for them to have a time period to be able to obtain a medallion. **With no further discussion, Chairman Green called for the vote and the motion passed 6-0.**

➤ **SRS Survey Results**

Mr. O'Connor explained the purpose of the item is to determine if they concur with the results of the survey. Additionally, there is another workshop scheduled with SRS in the near future, once the date is determined, staff will inform the members.

➤ **Harbor CRA Master Plan Draft**

Mr., O'Connor informed the members that staff has received the draft language for the master plan and once their review is finalized and comments made it will be sent back for implementation to the final and will be brought to them for their review and recommendation.

Committee member Trammell spoke of the architectural style that was mentioned and how the city was developed more of a mismatch and wanted to ensure that there is verbiage in the document to refer to the Old Florida Style as an architectural style to shoot for, instead of the heritage way that was mentioned.

According to Mr. O'Connor, Article 4 of the Land Development Code and the Design Manual is actually where that would reside, and the Old Florida Style theme that is present now in the Harbor District is what is the goal is, and currently there is not any design standards for staff to encourage to builder

Motion by Committee member Trammell, seconded by Committee member Blaise to develop standards to be incorporated into the Design Manual. The motion passed 6-0.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Capt. Jarvis spoke of how the Harbor District view corridor is about to be changed with the future endeavors of undergrounding the utilities and suggests keeping that in mind how they want the Destin Harbor District to be perceived and to make the signage look less Las Vegas and more high-end standards, even though his sign he currently has does not fit what he has in mind.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

Having no further business at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 6:55 PM.

Adopted and approved this _____ day of _____ 2024.

Capt. Jim Green, Chairman

Kim Montgomery, Deputy City Clerk

CITY OF DESTIN – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



AGENDA ITEM

MEETING DATE: November 13, 2024

BOARD/COMMITTEE: Harbor Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Committee

TYPE OF AGENDA ITEM: Presentation

OUTLINE NUMBER: 4.A.

TO: Harbor Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Committee

THRU: Tina Deater, Community Development Director
Kimberly Kopp, City Attorney
Daniel Butler, Principal Planner

FROM: Jesse Hernandez, Planner

DATE: November 4, 2024

SUBJECT: Development Projects and City Projects Update – October 2024

I. BACKGROUND: This report includes updates on the Development Projects in the Harbor Community Redevelopment Area and active City Projects. Provided is the list of projects which are approved or currently under review.

II. DISCUSSION: I. Development Projects

- None

New Development Projects

- None

Projects Under Review

Alice Destin (DEV-001408-2024)

- **Development Proposal:** Construct Phase I parking lot to support existing Heron's Nest Development and Marina. Additionally, construct Phase I & II stormwater retention area.
- **Application Date:** April 30, 2024
- **Project Location:** 104 Calhoun Ave. & 105 Sibert Ave. Parcel ID: 00-2S-22-0630-

0000-1240, 00-2S-22-0310-000D-0020, 00-2S-22-0310-000D-002A.

- **Project Status:** Under Staff & TRC review:
 - Completeness Review finalized October 4, 2024
 - Project sent to TRC for review on October 4, 2024.
 - Comments due October 25, 2024.

Just Chute Me Parking Lot (DEV-001427-2024)

- **Development Proposal:** Proposed improvements to the parking lot including removing an existing building, paving and striping.
- **Application Date:** June 6, 2024
- **Project Location:** 513 Harbor Blvd. Parcel ID: 00-2S-22-0310-000J-0000
- **Project Status:** Under Staff & TRC review:
 - Deemed complete on June 27, 2024
 - Project sent to TRC for review on June 27, 2024. Comments due July 18, 2024.
 - Corrections report was sent on July 24, 2024
 - Extension request granted to October 8, 2024 for resubmittal
 - Resubmittal sent to TRC for review on October 24, 2024. Comments due on November 8, 2024.

Cross Town Connector (DEV-001449-2024) & (SUB-001448-2024)

Development Proposal: Completion of the final leg of the Destin Cross Town Connector which include two park parcels and the ROW.

- **Application Date:** July 11, 2024
- **Project Location:** 209 Beach Drive Parcel ID: 00-2S-22-0000-0009-0000
- **Project Status:** Awaiting resubmittal
 - Incomplete application - requires resubmit (August 1, 2024)
 - Corrections Report was sent on October 17, 2024

Completed Projects

- None

II. City Projects

- **Cross-Town Connector (Beach to Benning)**
- **Status:** Under Design/Permitting

This is the final segment of the overall Cross-Town Connector to provide a secondary East-West corridor through the City of Destin and provide pedestrian pathway connectivity between the east and west sides of the City.

- **City of Destin Zerbe/Calhoun Pedestrian Boardwalk Project Phase II (Boardwalk Under the Bridge) & Stahlman Avenue Project Development and**

Environmental (PD&E) Study

- **Status:** Working on a new contract with Baskerville Donovan, Inc.

A.K.A., Boardwalk Under the Bridge, this project will provide pedestrian crossing of US Highway 98 under Marler Bridge for safe pedestrian access between the Harbor Boardwalk and City parking.

- **Clement Taylor Park Improvements.**
- **Project Location:** 131 Calhoun Ave
- **Status:** Under Construction.

This project will include new restrooms, parking lot improvements and enhanced pedestrian access improvements.

- **Sibert Ave Parking Lot Improvements.**
- **Project Location:** 108 Sibert Ave
- **Status:** Suspended due to Town Center study.

Parking Lot Improvements on the parcel. Approximately 35 parking spaces added to the parking lot.

- **Hwy 98 at Stahlman Ave Signalization Project**
- **Status:** On FDOT's 5 Year PD&E Plan

This project will focus on safety of the intersection for both vehicles and pedestrians alike.

- **Hwy 98 Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) Study** – Airport Rd to Marler Bridge.
- **Status:** On FDOT's 5-year PD&E Plan

The PD&E Study will look at FDOT's role in congestion mitigation of US Highway 98 between Airport Road and the Marler Bridge.

- **Hwy 98 Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) Study** – Marler Bridge and approaches.
- **Status:** On FDOT's 5-year PD&E Plan

The PD&E Study will look at FDOT's role in the replacement of the Marler Bridge.

- **CTC Wayside Trail** – Could span from Benning Dr East to Beach Dr
- **Status:** Under design / permitting.

This project will provide workout nodes, playgrounds, and dog parks throughout the span of the park. As the Development Projects and City Projects are under review, Staff will continue to provide updates to the Harbor CRA at their monthly meetings.

- A. **Link to Strategic Goals / Objectives:** N/A
- B. **Effect on Budget (EOB):** N/A
- C. **Level of Service (LOS):** N/A
- D. **Legislative Sponsor:**

III. CONCLUSION: This is an informational item.

IV. RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Attachments:

1. City Projects October 2024
2. Development Projects October 2024



City Projects October 2024

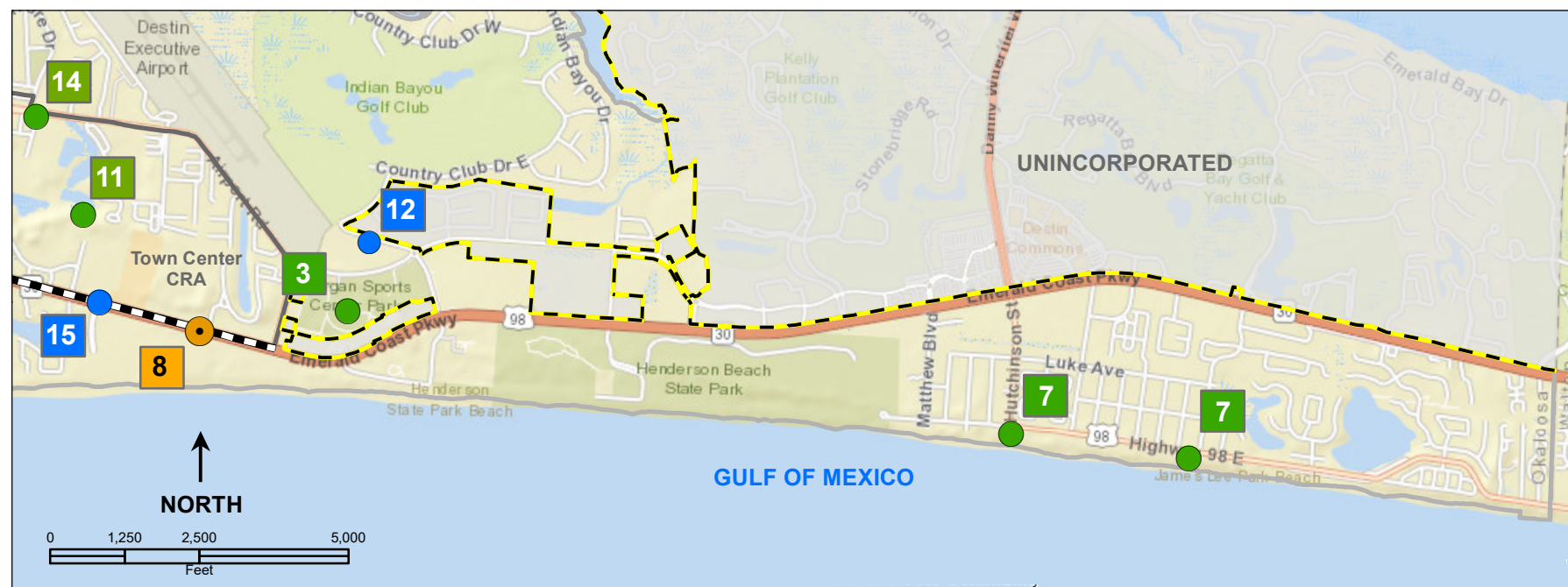
LEGEND

- Under Design/Permitting
- Other Projects
- Under Construction
- (PD&E) Study Hwy. 98 Airport Rd. to include the Marler Bridge.
- City Limit Line



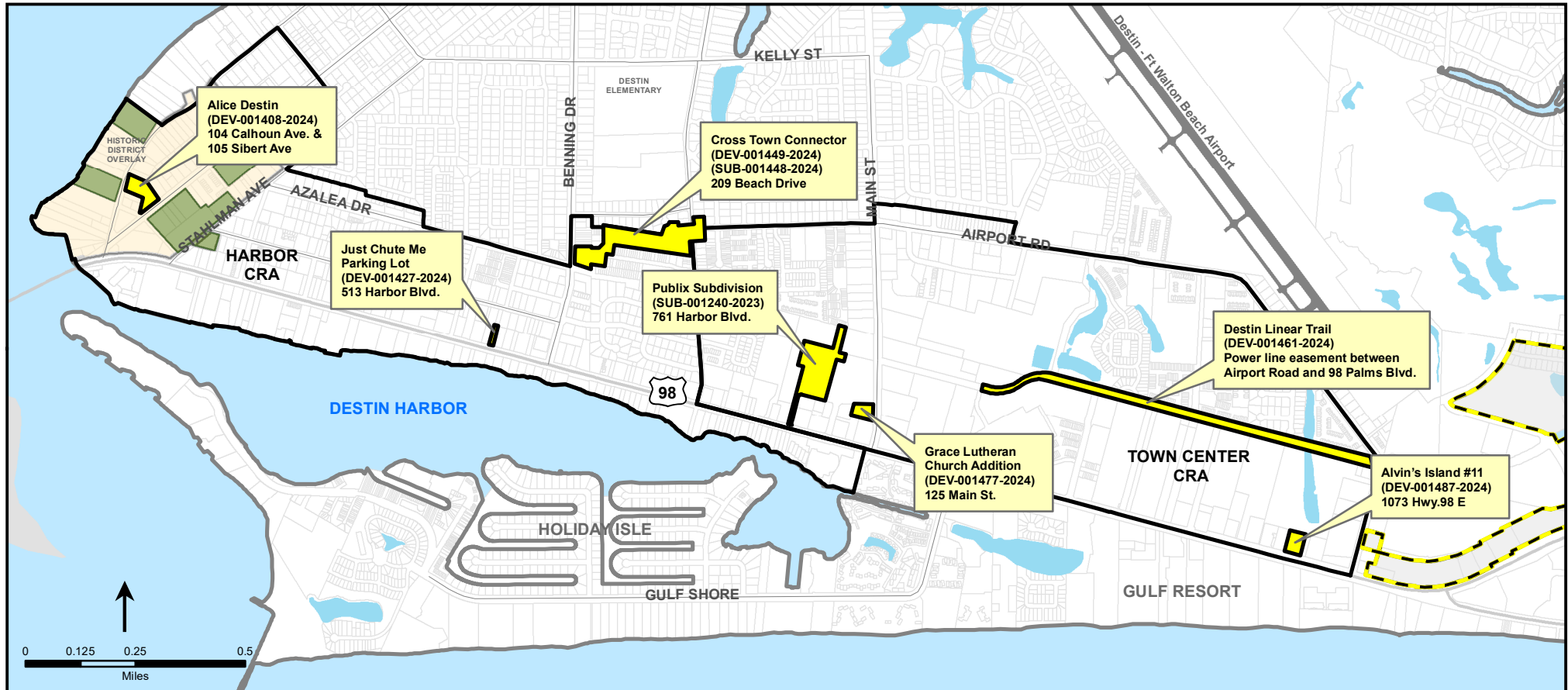
▲ West Destin

▼ East Destin



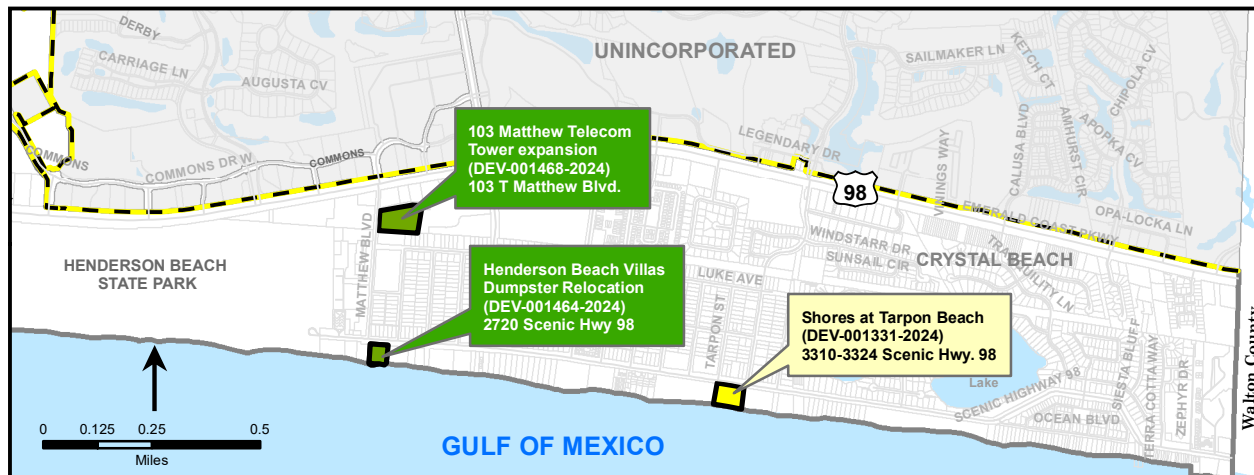
1. Crosstown Connector (Beach to Benning).
2. Zerbe/Calhoun Pedestrian Project Phase II (Boardwalk under the Bridge).
3. Morgan Sports Center – Bathroom and Maintenance Facility Expansion.
4. Clement Taylor Park Improvements, 131 Calhoun Ave.
5. Sibert Ave Parking Lot Improvements, 108 Sibert Ave
6. Hwy 98 at Stahlman Ave Signalization Project.
7. Crystal Beach Parking lot additions. (The Shore at Crystal Beach and Tarpon Street)
8. Hwy 98 Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) Study Hwy 98 – Airport Rd to include the Marler Bridge.
9. Mattie M. Kelly Park (FDEP).
10. CTC Wayside Trail.
11. Linear Park.
12. Pickleball.
13. Norriego Point Park/Gulf Shore Drive Extension.
14. Airport Road/Industrial Park Road Median Improvements.
15. Utility Undergrounding (Marler Bridge to Airport Road).
16. Channel Maintenance Dredging.

October 2024 City Wide Development Projects



▲ West Destin

▼ East Destin



LEGEND

- City Limit Line
- Development Projects Under Review
- Development Orders Issued/ Applications Approved
- Zerbe-Calhoun Historic District Overlay
- Existing Municipal Facilities

CITY OF DESTIN – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



AGENDA ITEM

MEETING DATE: November 13, 2024

BOARD/COMMITTEE: Harbor Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Committee

TYPE OF AGENDA ITEM: Action Item

OUTLINE NUMBER: 4.B.

TO: Harbor Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Committee

THRU: Tina Deater, Community Development Director
Kimberly Kopp, City Attorney

FROM: Steve O'Connor, Deputy Community Development Director

DATE: September 17, 2024

SUBJECT: Draft Harbor CRA Master Plan

I. BACKGROUND: At the September 19, 2022, City Council meeting, the Council approved the funding to update the Harbor and Town Center Community Redevelopment Areas Master Plans. Based on experience and existing knowledge of the City, 3TP Ventures, Inc. was selected and approved by the Council as the consultant to assist Staff and the CRA Committees in carrying out both updates.

II. DISCUSSION: The update of the CRA Master Plans consists of **Three Phases**.

1. PHASE 1: EXISTING CONDITIONS AND REGULATIONS - **COMPLETE**
2. PHASE 2: ANALYSIS AND PLAN UPDATE RECOMMENDATIONS - **COMPLETE**
3. PHASE 3: COMPILATION OF FINAL DRAFT - **COMPLETE**

Tonight's meeting is one of the last remaining steps to complete the adoption of the Harbor CRA Master Plan. Staff previously provided the Draft Destin Harbor Community Development Area Master Plan, and tonight, Staff will ask the Committee to: 1) provide feedback on any changes or suggestions and/or 2) make a recommendation to the CRA Board for their consideration and adoption.

Staff will update and complete any substantive comments provided by the committee members that are approved by the committee. Once the approved changes are completed, Staff will present the Master Plan to the CRA Board.

The Final Draft presented is the culmination of the committee's, 3TP Ventures, LLC, and

Staff's effort to update and provide the highest quality analysis, recommendations, and direction for the continued redevelopment of the Harbor area. Through open and continuing engagement, the plan was developed by listening to the Committee's, the public's, and other stakeholders' concerns and recommendations. The public engagement also included the Mobility Plan, as the two plans will complement each other to implement the objectives and priorities of, not just the Harbor CRA (HCRA), but the surrounding areas of the City as well.

The new plan clearly and concisely:

1. Identifies the existing conditions and deficiencies of the HCRA;
2. Explicitly calls out the priorities and projects; and
3. Provides a logical and legal foundation that will help shape decision-making now and in the future.

If adopted, all committee decisions and recommendations will now be based on the foundation provided by the Master Plan.

Comprehensive Plan Compliance

If adopted, the Draft Master Plan will satisfy many objectives of the adopted Comprehensive Plan, specifically the Goals, Objectives, and Policies of Chapter 10—Economic Development. But its impact is not limited to just Chapter 10; it also helps develop and implement Chapter 4—Public Facilities and Chapter 7—*Recreation and Open Space*.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS: This is the final step before the findings are compiled and integrated into the **Updated Master Plan Final Draft**. This is the Committee's opportunity to affirm or address any deficiencies in the provided updates. Staff will have any recommended changes integrated into the draft before bringing the **Updated Master Plan Final Draft** for a formal recommendation to the CRA Board (City Council).

IV. RECOMMENDED MOTION: I move to recommend approval of the **Harbor CRA Master Plan Final Draft** to the CRA Board for their consideration.

ALTERNATIVE MOTIONS:

I move to recommend approval of the **HarborCRA Master Plan Final Draft** to the CRA Board for their consideration with modifications.

I move to recommend denial of the **Harbor CRA Master Plan Final Draft** to the CRA Board for their consideration.

Attachments:

1. Harbor CRA PlanDRAFT - Reduced

DESTIN HARBOR CRA PLAN - DRAFT

July 2024



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CITY COUNCIL

Mayor Bobby Wagner
Councilman John Stephens
Councilman Torey Geile
Councilman Dewey Destin
Councilman Jim Bagby
Councilwoman Terésa Hebert
Councilman Johnny King
Councilman Kevin Schmidt

CITY STAFF

Louis Zunguze, MURP, AICP, City Manager
Community Development Director
Steve O'Connor, Principal Planner
Daniel Butler, Senior Planner
Tina Deater, AICP, Planner
Ryan Scott, City Engineer
Joe Bodi, Engineering Assistant
Dinah Kertz, Engineering Assistant

HARBOR CRA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Capt. Jim Green, Chairman
Sandy Trammell, Vice Chairwoman
Mike Buckingham
Christian Meyers
Casey Jones
Guy Tadlock
Ian Blaise

CONSULTING TEAM

3TP Ventures





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....2

Introduction.....6

District Existing Conditions Analysis.....10

Strategic Approach to the Harbor District.....19

 Issues and Opportunities.....19

 Strategies.....20

Investment in the Harbor District.....23

 Prioritization.....23

 Projects.....25

Implementation Plan.....35

Financial Plan.....40

Legal and Regulatory Issues.....45

Appendices.....48

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Harbor CRA Plan is the Community Redevelopment Plan for the Harbor district of the City. The Harbor district contains 397.3 acres of land which is primarily privately owned. The district includes several civic buildings, parks, the Zerbe-Calhoun Historic District and the Destin Harbor Boardwalk. This district is generally bounded by Choctawhatchee Bay on the west, Destin Harbor to the south, Beach Drive on the east and Azalea and Pine Streets on the north. The CRA Board originally adopted the Harbor CRA Plan in 2003, and this 2024 Plan Update is the first since the plan's adoption. The City's goals for the Harbor district are to provide better access, safety, and connectivity for locals and tourists alike to visit the Destin Harbor and support the businesses in the district.

The Harbor CRA Plan also fulfills the requirements of Florida Statutes 163.360 for CRA plans. As such, the intent of the Plan is to address "blight" and utilize property taxes collected within the district boundary for public improvements and redevelopment specifically within the district. All funds used for the CRA must support the implementation of public improvements and strategies within the adopted Plan for the CRA district. The required Finding of Necessity Report prepared when the CRA District was established identified several infrastructure issues, including an inadequate street layout and unsanitary or unsafe conditions, as contributing to the "blight" condition. These issues continue to hinder the City's goals for the Harbor district.

The 2024 Harbor CRA Plan Update focused on evaluating the existing condition of the Harbor CRA and reviewing the public projects that have been completed since 2003. The plan's update identifies three primary issues that the City faces in the Harbor district:

1. **Getting to the Harbor District** – Congestion on U.S. 98 for east-west traffic with few alternative routes, public parking space shortages.
2. **Getting Across Harbor Boulevard/U.S. 98** – Insufficient safe and convenient routes across U.S. Highway 98 for pedestrians and non-vehicular modes of transportation.
3. **Getting to the Harbor Boardwalk** – Public access to the Harbor Boardwalk is difficult to locate and largely unmarked.

To strengthen the connection between the north side of Harbor Boulevard where many of the Harbor support facilities, such as parking, are located, and the Destin Harbor, the 2024 Plan update identifies near-term (0-2 years), mid-term (2-5 years) and long-term (5+ years) strategies for the CRA Board to pursue. These





strategies vary from beautification and wayfinding enhancements to the construction of a parking garage in the Harbor district.

The Harbor CRA Advisory Committee (HCRAAC) identified eight key projects in the Harbor CRA district in the next 20 years. The HCRAAC then reviewed and ranked the key projects in terms of priority as well as funding contribution. The top priority is the design and construction of a parking garage in the location of the current Marler public parking lot. This property is strategically located on the north side of Harbor Boulevard, about 0.2 miles from the newly completed Captain Royal Melvin Heritage Park on the Harbor, and near the heart of commercial activity in the Harbor district.

The second ranked project is the completion of the Cross Town Connector, a new east-west collector roadway north of Harbor Boulevard. This will provide a much-needed alternate east-west route through the City to help alleviate congestion on U.S. Highway 98 (Harbor Blvd.).

The third ranked project is the land acquisition and design related to Phase II of the Harbor Boardwalk. This segment of boardwalk is proposed to continue west around the point of Destin, north up to Clement Taylor Park. The City recently acquired the waterfront property located at 1 Calhoun Avenue, which will serve as a gateway into the Harbor district given its location at the western point of the City. It's important to note that while all of the key projects are important, they may be implemented using a variety of funding mechanisms rather than just CRA revenue, such as a future mobility fee.

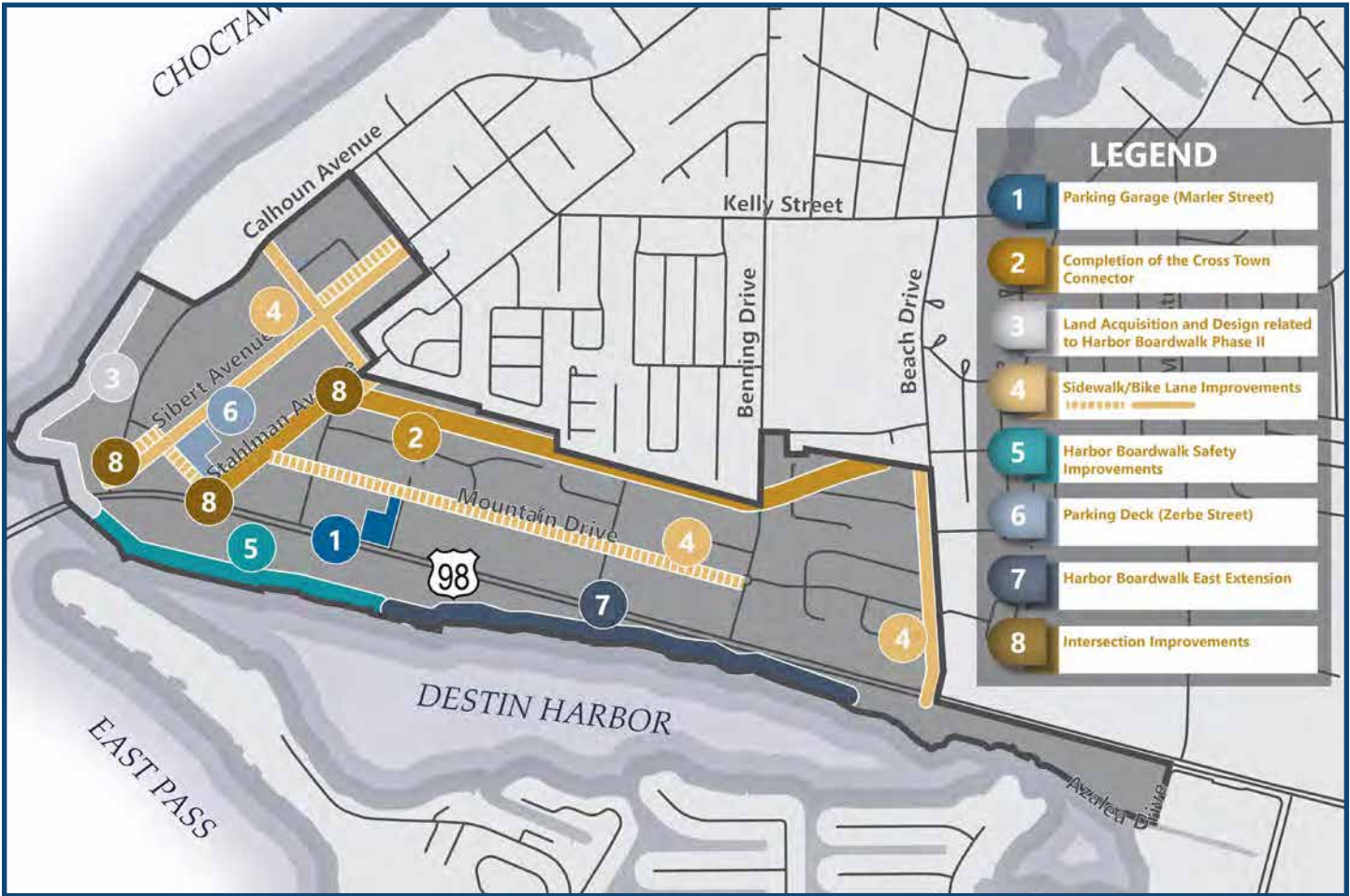


Figure 1 - Projects for Harbor CRA

The following pages present the Harbor CRA Plan through four primary sections. The first section provides an analysis of the existing conditions of the district for land use, transportation, parking, and stormwater management. The second section includes a discussion of the overarching issues and goals for the Harbor District. The third section provides a detailed list of key projects, their recommended prioritization, and planning-level cost estimates. The last section includes details related to the implementation of the Plan and a detailed breakdown of the finances of the CRA, including encumbered and forecasted revenue through the duration of the Harbor CRA, which is set to expire in 2043.



INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The City in 2003 identified the Harbor district as a redevelopment area in Destin. The Harbor district at that time was envisioned as the principal tourist and business corridor within the City. That vision has become reality, and the district continues to be viewed that way today. Throughout the revitalization process, which began when the Harbor CRA district was established, the City and community have shown their commitment to addressing and/or mitigating the constraints or conditions associated with site and/or structure deterioration, economic decline, inadequate street layout, harbor and bay access, transportation and parking facilities, functional deterioration or obsolescence and other conditions of “blight” as described in the Harbor Finding of Necessity Report. The 2024 Plan update entailed an evaluation of the existing plan; physical conditions of the district; and a refresh of the goals, projects and strategies needed to maintain this vision of the Harbor.

The City’s approach to the Harbor CRA Plan update is to focus on a foundation of public engagement and current data. Based on that information, the Harbor CRA Advisory Committee identified public projects and initiatives which would then help foster the goals for the Harbor district, while simultaneously encouraging participation from the private sector. These projects and initiatives may be funded through tax increment revenues derived from the Harbor district, other City-revenue sources such as a future

mobility fee, public-private partnerships, as well as State and Federal funding opportunities, which are explained further in the Implementation and Financial Plans.

While the original vision of the Harbor becoming the economic center of the City has been realized since the CRA district’s establishment, the increase in development and commercial activity over the last 21 years welcomes new challenges related to the Harbor district. The Harbor CRA Advisory Committee updated their original vision with new direction for investment in the Harbor CRA district. All new investments in the district with CRA dollars should support one of the following goals: getting to and traveling within the Harbor district, getting safely across U.S. Highway 98, and getting down to the Harbor Boardwalk.

The 2024 Plan update focuses on the existing conditions of the Harbor district and updated public improvement projects designed to implement the three new goals mentioned above. For the plan to adequately address the needs of the district, the issues of vehicular, non-vehicular and pedestrian transportation, parking, and waterfront accessibility are explored further throughout this document.

FINDING OF NECESSITY OVERVIEW

The Finding of Necessity Report dated May 23, 2003 studied the physical, economic and regulatory conditions of the Harbor district for potential causes of “blight” which would demonstrate the need for a Community Redevelopment Area to be established. If conditions of blight were found to be present, that would allow the City to utilize tax increment financing to fund projects that specifically are aimed at eradicating the blight described in the Finding of Necessity Report.

At the time of this report, a two-step process was used to determine if blight was present. First, the study area must contain “a substantial number of deteriorated, or deteriorating structures, in which conditions, as indicated by government-maintained statistics or other studies are leading to economic distress or endanger life or property.” The report confirmed that a large portion of commercial buildings were “functionally deteriorated, rendered obsolete by the constraints of site, structure placement, access, residential platting adapted to commercial use, and insufficient parking.” Due to those conditions observed on commercial properties, the first criterion of establishing blight was met.

The second step required that two or more of the fourteen factors which contribute to blight listed in the Florida Statutes be present in the study area. After an analysis of the district, six of the fourteen factors were found to be present in the Harbor area. The following list includes the factors found to contribute to blight in the Harbor CRA district, and a brief explanation for each one.

1. **Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout.** At the time of this study, the primary concerns related to this subject were lack of internal street connections to redirect traffic off of U.S. Hwy 98, localized ponding within certain local roadways, absence of continuous sidewalks, queuing onto U.S. Hwy 98 due to insufficient parking on private properties, vehicular stacking at intersections along U.S. Hwy 98.
2. **Faulty layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility and usefulness.** Commercial lots in the Harbor were found to be inadequate specifically in relation to their size. Due to the dimensional restrictions of the lots, an excessive number of access points along major roadways in the Harbor area was required. Additionally, the size of the lots put limitations on the on-site amenities required for development, such as parking, and landscaping. Finally, there were a significant number of properties observed south of Harbor Blvd and west of Calhoun Avenue that did not have access to the Destin Harbor or Choctawhatchee Bay, and therefore also properties that did not have access to the main roadways.

3. **Unsanitary or unsafe conditions.** The two primary contributors to this factor were found to be insufficient sidewalks throughout the Harbor area, and lack of connectivity between subareas of the Harbor, which forces traffic onto the major roadways to travel locally.
4. **Deterioration off site or other improvements.** The combination of lack of sidewalks and pedestrian oriented amenities, perceived traffic stacking, lack of adequate public parking, and insufficient stormwater improvements, has resulted in a deterioration of public infrastructure and sustainability. Additionally, many of the existing commercial improvements are functionally deteriorated, specifically parking and access points.
5. **Inadequate and outdated building patterns.** The following deficiencies demonstrate the inadequate and outdated building patterns in the Harbor at the time of the study: planned intensity relative to the size and adequacy of platted lots, absence or deterioration of infrastructure, poor connectivity among neighborhoods prompting the use of regional arterials for local travel, no sidewalks, no designated public spaces, unrestricted and divided ingress and egress among numerous commercial properties, commercial intrusion into residential areas stemming from inadequate lot depth, poor design controls, and the absence of transitional zones that preclude opportunities to insert buffering, and no view corridors.
6. **Diversity of Ownership.** The study identified the district's diverse ownership as one of its most pressing problems. Due to the quantity of different owners, the non-resident status for a large portion of owners, and patterns of small lots, it will be a challenge for future developers or investors to acquire sufficient property in the Harbor to change the established development patterns and use.

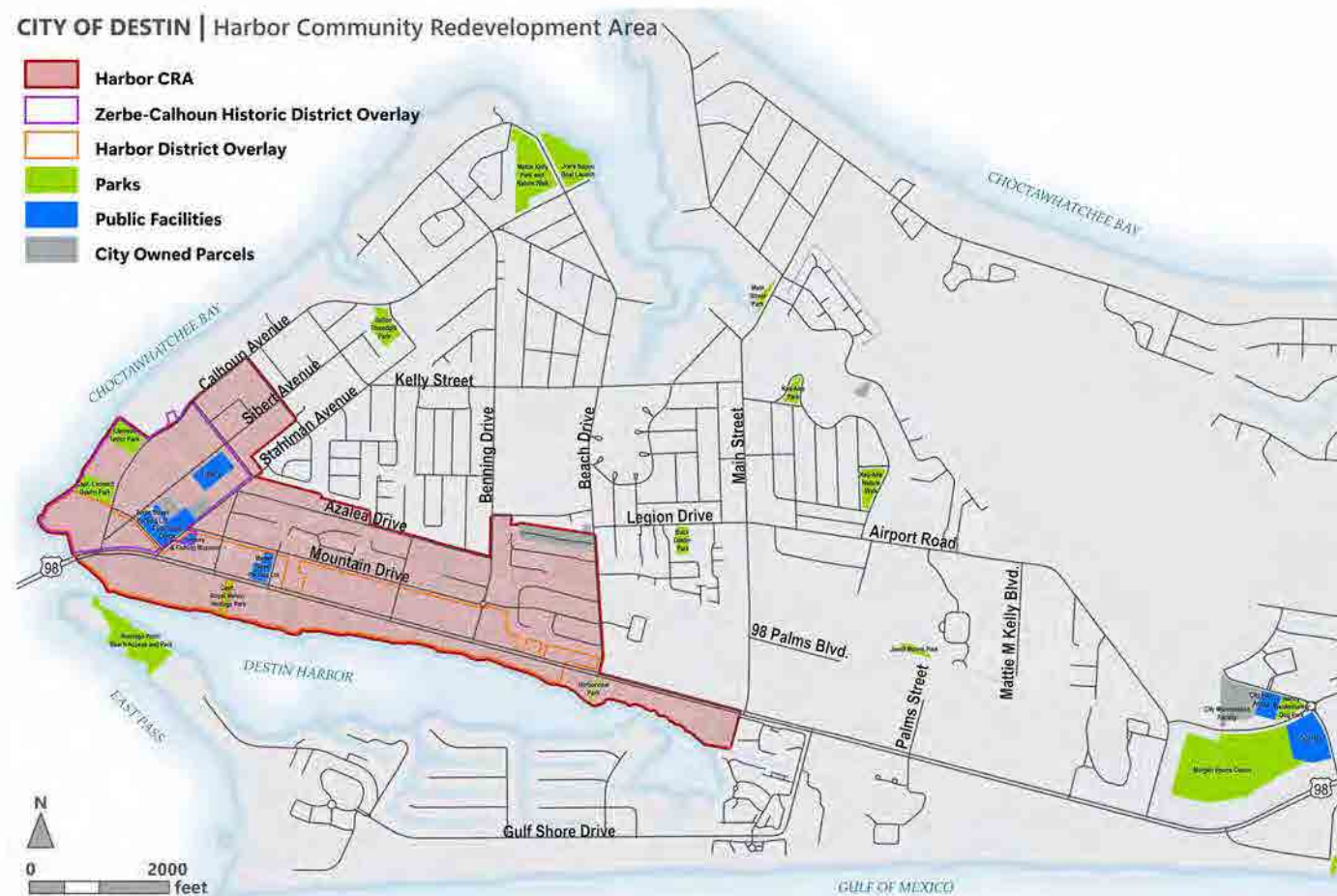


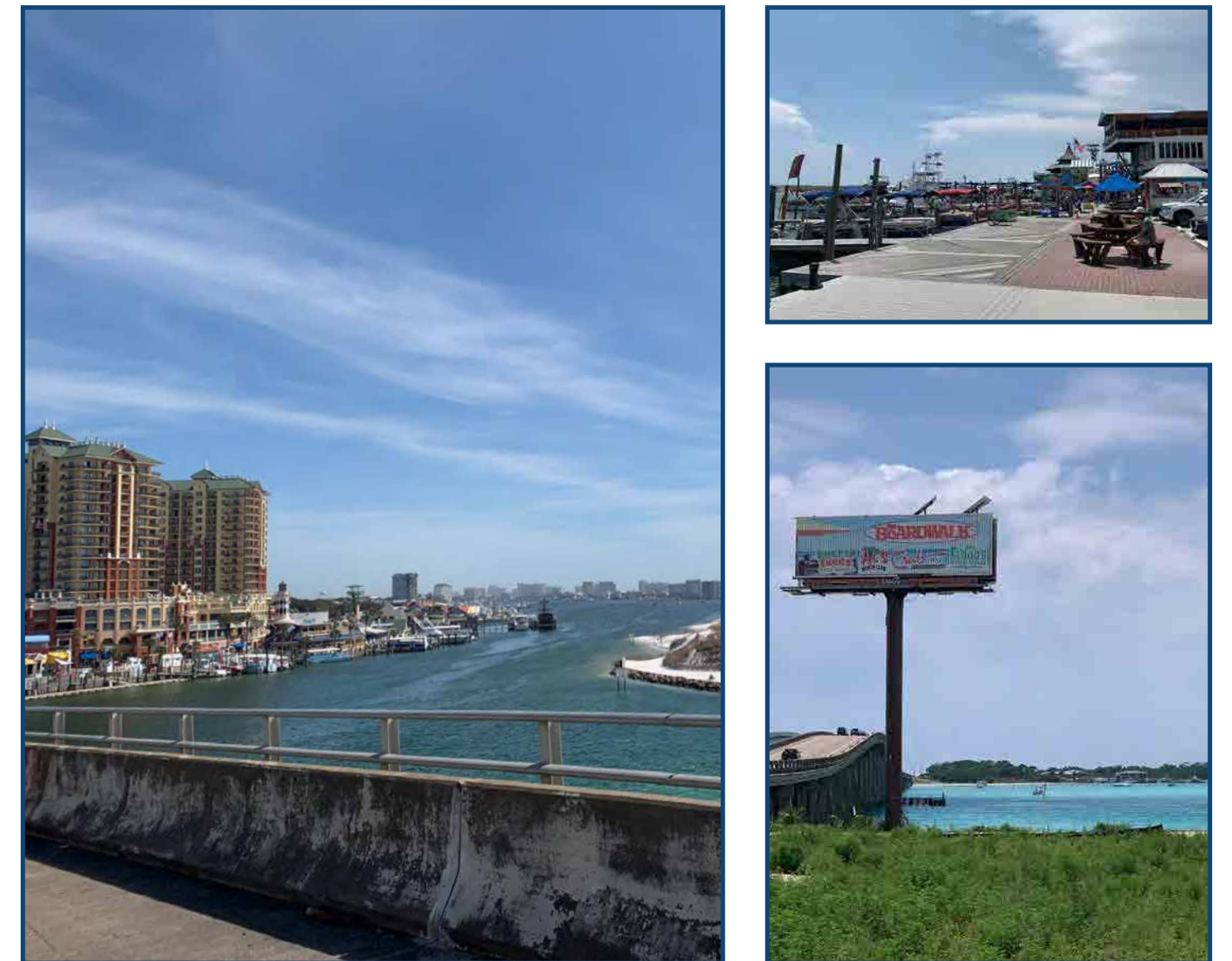
Figure 2 - Boundary Map of Harbor CRA

INTENT OF THE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

The intent of this Plan update is to serve as a framework for guiding development and redevelopment of the Harbor Community Redevelopment Area through the lifetime of the CRA, which expires in 2043. This Plan identifies redevelopment objectives, programs, and capital projects to be undertaken to reverse blighting trends within the Harbor Redevelopment Area. This Plan addresses financing and implementation strategies as well as management and administration opportunities. These strategies will continue to be refined as they are implemented. While based on the most accurate data available, the various strategies and costs identified in this Plan update will require additional review and action by the CRA Board as specific projects are initiated, refined, and implemented.

The Plan's focus is mitigation or correction of various transportation, parking, waterfront access and safety issues documented in the Harbor Finding of Necessity Report.

The Harbor Community Redevelopment Plan describes objectives, initiatives, and a financial plan to mitigate or correct blight factors and concludes with a demonstration of how this Plan is consistent and complementary with the City of Destin's Comprehensive Plan and other studies done for the Harbor District.



DISTRICT EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

LAND USE

The Harbor CRA contains 397.3 acres of land, most of which is privately owned except for public right of way, city-owned parcels, and parks. The district also includes the Zerbe-Calhoun Historic District, which is north of U.S. 98 and west of Stahlman Avenue. This district is home to several civic buildings and parks including Clement Taylor Park, Captain Leonard Destin Park, Destin Community Center, and Destin Library. Land uses are primarily commercial in nature along U.S. 98 and the Harbor. The highest intensity land uses are concentrated along the Harbor and U.S. 98. The intensity of development tapers moving northward from U.S. 98. Lower density residential uses become more common along and north of Azalea Drive and within the Zerbe-Calhoun Historic District on the west side of the Harbor CRA.

Table 1 below shows the number of acres by land use type in the Harbor CRA. This is based on the future land use for each parcel as of January of 2023. Some parcels are vacant or undeveloped despite being designated for a specific use. There are about 31 undeveloped acres within the CRA and the average vacant parcel size is 0.36 acres.

Table 1 - Land Uses in the Harbor CRA District

Land Use	Acres	Percent
Residential - Low Density	48.0	12%
Residential - Medium Density	31.0	8%
Residential - High Density	11.6	3%
Mixed Use	148.4	37%
Commercial	41.2	10%
Industrial	0.0	0%
Residential, Office, and Institutional	12.3	3%
Institutional	23.0	6%
Recreational	7.9	2%
Public Right-of-Way	73.9	19%
Total	397.3	100%

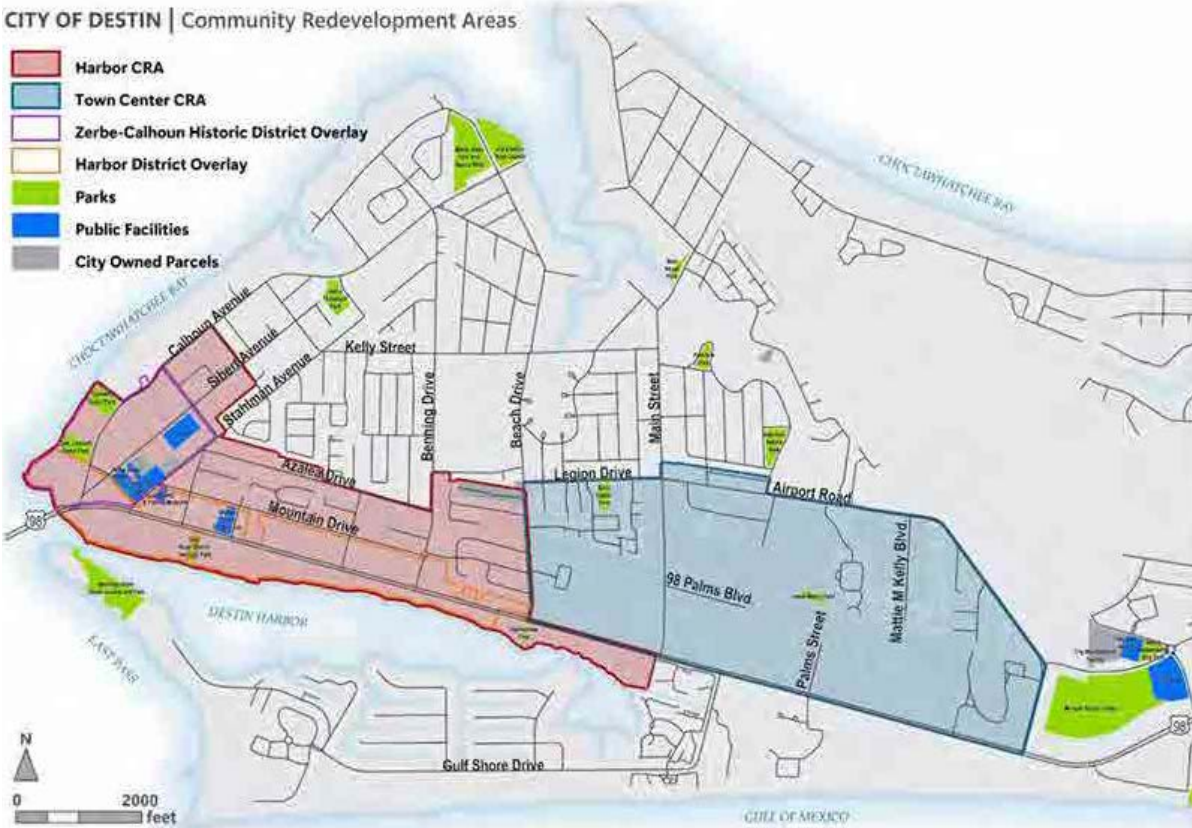


Figure 3 - CRA District Boundaries

The Future Land Use Map and table below provides more detail on where these uses are allowed within the Harbor CRA and what each designation’s limitations are for density, height, floor area ratio, and open space.



Figure 4 - Future Land Use Map for the Harbor CRA as of March 2022

Table 2 - Land Uses Limitations in the Harbor CRA District

Land Use	Acre-age	Use Type	Max. Density (units/acre)	Max. Height	Max. Nonresidential Floor Area Ratio	Min. Open Space (%)
Bay Estates	6.23	Single-Family Residential	2.90	35'/3 stories	N/A	25
Low Density Residential	41.80	Single-Family Residential	5.81	35'/3 stories	N/A	25
Medium Density Residential	31.02	Single-Family Residential	5.81	35'/3 stories	N/A	25
		Multi-Family Residential	9.90	35'/3 stories	N/A	
High Density Residential	11.64	Single-Family Residential	9.90	30'/3 stories	N/A	30
		Multi-Family Residential	16.90	50'/4 stories	N/A	25
Residential, Office, Institutional	12.34	Single-Family Residential	9.90	35'/3 stories	N/A	25
		Multi-Family Residential	12.00	50'/4 stories	N/A	
		All other permitted nonresidential uses	N/A	35'/3 stories	0.5	
Institutional	23.00	Institutional uses permitted	N/A	35'/3 stories	0.5	25
Calhoun Mixed Use	5.93	Single-Family Residential	6.00	35'/3 stories	N/A	25
		Multi-Family Residential	12.00	50'/4 stories	N/A	
		All other permitted nonresidential uses	N/A	50'/4 stories	0.5	
Calhoun Mixed Use - Village	17.76	Single-Family Residential	9.00	35'/3 stories	N/A	25
		Multi-Family Residential	12.00	50'/4 stories	N/A	
		All other permitted nonresidential uses	N/A	50'/4 stories	0.5	
North Harbor Mixed Use	56.91	Single-Family Residential	9.00	35'/3 stories	N/A	25
		Multi-Family Residential	24.00	50'/4 stories	N/A	
		All other permitted nonresidential uses	N/A	75'/6 stories	1.5	
South Harbor Mixed Use	67.74	Single-Family Residential	9.00	30'/3 stories	N/A	25
		Multi-Family Residential	24.00	50'/4 stories	N/A	
		All other permitted nonresidential uses	N/A	75'/6 stories	1.5	
Recreation	7.86	Recreation Uses	N/A	35'/3 stories	0.2	25
Commercial Trades and Services	41.22	Nonresidential except for custodian or night-watchman residence	1.00 per development	35'/3 stories	1.30	25



TRANSPORTATION

The HarborCRA district has a fairly well-connected street network, which is good for all modes of travel. However, there are some key gaps, particularly in the pedestrian and bicycle network, and a few strategic connections would provide for better east-west connectivity, which could help alleviate congestion on U.S. 98. This section summarizes the key issues, pulling from information the City collected and analyzed during the development of a Mobility Plan in 2023 and 2024.

Among the key transportation issues within the Harbor CRA district are missing sidewalks and bicycle facilities. Figure 5 below depicts missing sidewalk segments within the Harbor CRA district on Azalea Drive, Mountain Drive, Calhoun Avenue, Sibert Avenue, Stahlman Avenue, and Benning Drive. Collector streets with bicycle facility gaps include Stahlman Avenue, Sibert Avenue, and Azalea Drive. Correcting these deficiencies is a focus of the City’s Mobility Plan and are also important for addressing the original “blight” condition of inadequate street layout and unsafe conditions, both of which contributed to the finding of necessity for the CRA district.

Vehicular congestion is another significant issue, which is also connected to defective or inadequate street layout. The 2003 Harbor Community Redevelopment Plan stated that “the absence of satisfactory internal connections forces local traffic onto US 98, which adds unnecessary and potentially dangerous trips to this arterial road.” While FDOT and the City have made transportation improvements to address this issue, the layout of streets pushes much of the vehicular traffic onto U.S. 98. The Crosstown Connector project, which is a priority of the City, would create a more seamless and consistent connection among Azalea Drive, Legion Drive, and Airport Road to create a viable alternative to U.S. 98 for east-west trips.

KEY ISSUES

- Missing sidewalk segments on Azalea Dr, Mountain Dr, Calhoun Ave, Sibert Ave, Stahlman Ave, and Benning Dr
- Missing bicycle facilities on Stahlman Ave, Sibert Ave, and Azalea Dr
- Vehicular congestion



Figure 5 - Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Gap

The table below lists traffic volumes for the PM peak hour and recent changes to volumes for arterial and collector roadways within the Harbor CRA district.

Table 3 - Traffic volumes for arterial and collector roadways

Roadway	From	To	2021	2017	% Change
U.S. 98	Marler Bridge	Stahlman Ave	3,282	3,075	7%
	Stahlman Ave	Benning Dr	2,909	2,505	16%
	Benning Dr	Beach Dr	3,255	2,815	16%
	Beach Dr	Main St	3,279	2,841	15%
Azalea Drive	Stahlman Ave	Benning Dr	587	524	12%
Benning Drive	U.S. 98	Kelly St	398	269	48%
Calhoun Avenue	U.S. 98	Kelly St	501	351	43%
Legion Drive	Benning Dr	Beach Dr	609	509	20%
	Beach Dr	Main St	1,098	1,226	-10%
Mountain Drive	Stahlman Ave	Benning Dr	592	536	10%
	Benning Dr	Beach Dr	466	633	-26%
Sibert Avenue	Calhoun Ave	Kelly St	580	324	79%
Stahlman Avenue	U.S. 98	Kelly St	762	714	7%

Level of service is a quantitative measure of how well vehicle traffic flows on a roadway segment. The LOS describes roadways using a letter from A to F to describe performance, with A indicating the best performance and F the worst. It is important to note that the A to F letters do not necessarily indicate desired performance. A LOS of A is often not feasible, cost effective, or even desirable given other competing transportation or societal goals. As FDOT states in its Quality/Level of Service Handbook, “transportation professionals widely consider LOS D for the automobile mode an acceptable condition, and this threshold is often used as a design condition in urbanized areas.” Therefore, LOS D is the standard for performance of the state-maintained U.S. 98/Harbor Boulevard.

The vehicular level of service for an arterial roadway segment is based on the volume-to-capacity (v/c) ratio. The v/c ratios for 2011, 2016, and 2021 on Destin’s only arterial roadway (U.S. 98) are shown in the table below. These tables are color coded to show how each segment has performed over time. A v/c ratio under 1.0 indicates this segment is meeting the LOS D standard. A v/c ratio of more than 1.0 indicates the segment is not meeting this standard. Green is meeting the standards, yellow is near the standard limit, and red is failing (does not meet the standards).

Table 4 - Level of Service for US Hwy 98

US 98 Segments - Volume to Capacity	LOS	2021	2016	2011
US Hwy 98 between Marler Bridge and Stahlman Avenue	E	1.03	0.92	0.91
US Hwy 98 between Stahlman Avenue and Benning Drive	D	0.97	0.88	1.00
US Hwy 98 between Benning Drive and Beach Drive	E	1.00	0.93	1.05
US Hwy 98 between Beach Drive and Main Street	E	1.01	0.95	1.03

None of the City’s collector roadways fall beneath the LOS D standard, as shown in the map below.



Figure 6 - Level of Service for Arterial and Collector Roadways

¹ Florida DOT 2020 Quality/Level of Service Handbook.

While vehicular LOS is an important measure of each street's congestion, Destin's streets do much more than move vehicles. They are an important part of the public realm and it is vital that they are safe and inviting for all users. Streets within the Harbor CRA are also evaluated against LOS standards for pedestrian, bike, and transit modes. New development within designated multimodal transportation districts (MMTDs) are required to contribute towards achieving the adopted multimodal level of service (MMLOS) standards for collector roadways, which is LOS C for both bicycle and pedestrian modes. The Harbor CRA is within an MMTD, so this standard applies for its collector roadways.

PARKING

Parking is needed to support Destin's economy. Tourists and people that travel to Destin for work each day depend on parking. However, parking also brings negative effects that the City should work to minimize. Large expanses of pavement contribute to stormwater runoff and flooding, and dedicating extensive land to surface parking reduces land that could otherwise be used for shops, restaurants, parks and open space, or other compatible uses for the area that make Destin a desirable place. Parking should be provided efficiently so that it does not degrade the quality of place and quality of life that people in Destin value. This section outlines key parking issues and solutions.

The City in 2016 studied the supply and demand for parking spaces in the Harbor CRA district. This study yielded an inventory of spaces – private and public – within the district and found there were 5,959 parking spaces with 2,846 spaces (48 percent) located on the north side of Harbor Boulevard and 3,113 spaces (52 percent) located on the south side. There were 722 parking spaces (13 percent) serving residential uses and 5,187 parking spaces serving non-residential land uses (87 percent) at the time. The majority, 94 percent, of the parking spaces were within privately owned lots.

The study compared the supply of parking with parking demand, which was estimated using existing land use data and the parking requirements outlined in the City of Destin Land Development Code (LDC). This analysis found a significant surplus of parking north of U.S. 98, but a shortage of non-residential parking south of U.S. 98 of up to 420 spaces. While the destinations on the south side of U.S. 98, such as the Harbor Boardwalk, are close to parking on the north side, the width of U.S. 98 and speed of vehicles traveling along the highway make it challenging for people to cross on foot or any other non-vehicular mode of travel.

There are four designated pedestrian crosswalks along U.S. 98 in the Harbor District that serve to help pedestrians travel from parking lots to destinations on the south side of the road. These are located at Melvin Street, the Marler Street Parking Lot, Palmetto Street, and Stahlman Avenue. However, the wait time to cross at these locations can be long, which hinders the City's efforts to encourage people to park on the north side of U.S. 98 and walk to final destinations. Among the strategies identified by the City in 2017 for addressing the parking supply and spatial mismatch issues were the following:

1. Increase total number of available public parking spaces for residents and visitors within the Harbor CRA District.
2. Create better functioning parking lots and access drives that minimize pedestrian-vehicle conflicts and reduce traffic congestion by reducing recirculation traffic seeking parking spaces.
3. Once sufficient parking is increased north of Harbor Blvd, decrease number of parking spaces necessary south of Harbor Blvd to allow for highest and best use of harbor front properties.
4. Enhance wayfinding to public parking destinations.
5. Connect the Boardwalk to the north side of Harbor Blvd. to safely access additional public parking.



There are four public parking lots in the Harbor CRA:

- Marler Street: This lot sits between U.S. 98 and Mountain Drive. It has 146 spaces.
- Destin Community Center: This lot serves the Community Center at the intersection of Zerbe Street and Stahlman Avenue. It has 86 spaces.
- Zerbe Street: This lot is at the corner of Zerbe Street and Sibert Avenue. It has 51 spaces.
- Destin Library: This lot serves the library on Sibert Avenue. It has 64 spaces. However, these spaces are only available after library hours.

The City has identified both supply and demand solutions to the parking challenges of the Harbor CRA District. On the demand side the City in 2019 increased the cost of parking from \$1 for the first hour and 50 cents for every additional hour to a flat rate of \$5 for 24 hours. Prior to 2017 there was no cost to park in the public lots. The pay-to-park policy has helped optimize parking, making it easier for visitors to find a space. The City also identified opportunities to expand the supply of public parking spaces in the Harbor CRA District. Destin added spaces on Sibert Avenue behind the Community Center and is considering a project to convert surface spaces in either the Marler Street or Zerbe Street surface parking lots into a multi-level parking structure.

There are additional opportunities to reduce demand for vehicular parking. These strategies would include services such as a circulator shuttle, new shared-use paths and crosswalks, and shared parking among adjacent properties with different peak parking demand. These strategies can help shift people from driving to other modes, and to make the most efficient use of existing surface parking.

STORMWATER FACILITIES

The Harbor CRA has extensive impervious surfaces, which increase stormwater runoff volumes and affect water quality. Stormwater runoff is the leading cause of localized flooding and water quality concerns. The solutions for addressing stormwater include infrastructure such as pipes, culverts, and conveyances, which help manage surface runoff to protect property and prevent pollution.

The City’s Comprehensive Plan recognizes the effects of stormwater runoff on the Harbor and calls for improving water quality by implementing stormwater best management practices to remove suspended solids and nutrients from runoff entering the Harbor and other receiving water bodies (objective 4-4.1). The City’s 2021 Stormwater Master Plan Update looked at the Harbor in detail to identify projects that can help address runoff and improve water quality. A pair of issues and associated improvement projects are listed below.

- Erosion and flooding issues in the vicinity of the Zerbe Street and Sibert Avenue intersection. The recommended improvement is a new culvert along Sibert and Zerbe to collect and treat stormwater in this area at an estimated cost of about \$73,000.
- Flooding along Reddin Brunson Road and adjacent roadways due to a lack of roadside swales and stormwater conveyance. The recommended improvement is purchasing a property along Reddin Brunson Road for construction of a detention pond at an estimated cost of \$410,000.

The Stormwater Master Plan also recommended the City adopt a stormwater utility fee, which would provide funding to replace aging stormwater infrastructure. The system is aging and in need of frequent and costly repairs. These repairs are the City’s responsibility, and the fee would provide a steady source of funding for upgrades and repairs to existing stormwater facilities.

STRATEGIC APPROACH TO THE HARBOR DISTRICT

The existing conditions of the Harbor district discussed above point to key issues and opportunities that exist within the district. This section describes those issues and opportunities identified in detail, as well as strategies to achieve the overall goal outlined in the original Harbor CRA plan, which states “to be redeveloped as an easily accessible, economically sustainable and attractive waterfront-oriented district that provides safe transportation, pedestrian and recreation facilities in a manner that promotes a favorable identity for the City of Destin.” This section expands this goal further, by indicating the areas that should be strengthened by redevelopment initiatives, financial incentives, and public improvements. Additionally, the projects included in this plan, and other investments in the Harbor district, can work together to achieve the City’s goals.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Conditions in the Harbor district have improved during the last 20 years, and is viewed today as the economic heart of the City. Additionally, the Harbor Boardwalk has become a popular and cherished destination for locals and tourists alike. Building on the success of the Boardwalk is an effective way for the City to achieve its goals for the Harbor.

A key need for the Harbor CRA district is better access to the Boardwalk. There are a few distinct issues that affect access, which are summarized below.

1. **Getting to the Harbor District** – U.S. 98 is the City’s most congested transportation facility. This congestion at times is a deterrent to locals and tourists traveling to the Harbor district. The City has few alternatives to U.S. 98 for east-west through traffic. As such, this traffic blends with local traffic that is using U.S. 98 to access destinations in the Harbor district.
2. **Getting Across U.S. 98** – Pedestrian access and safety are key issues in the Harbor district. The multi-lane roadway is wide and vehicles often travel at a high rate of speed, which makes crossing the roadway difficult on foot, bike, or using a mobility device such as a wheelchair. Florida DOT has installed signalized pedestrian crossings of U.S. 98 within the Harbor district, which helps address the need. Yet pedestrians can face long waits to cross at these locations, and along much of U.S. 98 the sidewalks and streetscape are not designed for pedestrian comfort.
3. **Getting to the Harbor Boardwalk** - Once across to the south side of U.S. 98 people still face some challenges accessing the Harbor Boardwalk. Access is provided largely through parking lots and businesses on private properties. However, the new Royal Melvin Heritage Park marks a significant improvement, providing an inviting and central public access point to the Harbor. Yet visibility of the Harbor Boardwalk from U.S. 98 is obstructed in many places by buildings, slopes, and vegetation. Signage directing people to the Harbor Boardwalk is lacking in many areas. And the sidewalks on parts of U.S. 98 are narrow and lack significant buffers to the fast-moving traffic on U.S. 98. These issues underscore the importance of creating a stronger physical and visual connection from U.S. 98 to the water.

By improving access to the Harbor district and the Harbor Boardwalk the City can increase the economic and recreational value of this unique asset while enhancing pedestrian safety on U.S. 98. There are several strategies for the CRA to consider, some of which are already included as projects in the Plan, while others merit consideration for implementing through other avenues, such as the City’s draft Mobility Plan (adoption is anticipated in Fall 2024).



STRATEGIES

In March of 2023, the Committee identified the two primary themes of the Harbor CRA’s overall vision for improvement as connectivity and safety. These themes apply to all the issues and opportunities already discussed including vehicular and pedestrian travel and access, and the improvements and continuation of the Harbor Boardwalk.

Throughout the process of the 2024 Plan Update, the Harbor Advisory Committee further defined these themes into three main goals related to the Harbor district that CRA funds should be used to achieve. The goals were centered around the Destin Harbor and explained above. First, make it easier to get into and park in the Harbor district. Second, make it easier for pedestrians to get from the north side of U.S. Highway 98 to the south side of U.S. Highway 98. Third, make it easier to get to and enjoy the Destin Harbor and Harbor Boardwalk. Taking these refreshed goals from the Advisory Committee, the consulting team identified key projects which would provide necessary access, safety and connectivity for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians in the district.

The CRA Plan contains several projects to address the issues described above. The projects are described here as near, medium-, and long-term strategies. The strategies emphasize better connectivity within the Harbor district, better parking options, better walkability, and improved access to and within the district via the Cross Town Connector. Implementation of these strategies will create more opportunities for people to enjoy the Harbor, increase foot traffic in the area to support businesses, and create opportunities for additional businesses and restaurants along the Boardwalk.

Access to the Harbor Boardwalk can be improved in several ways including an extension to the west, an extension to the

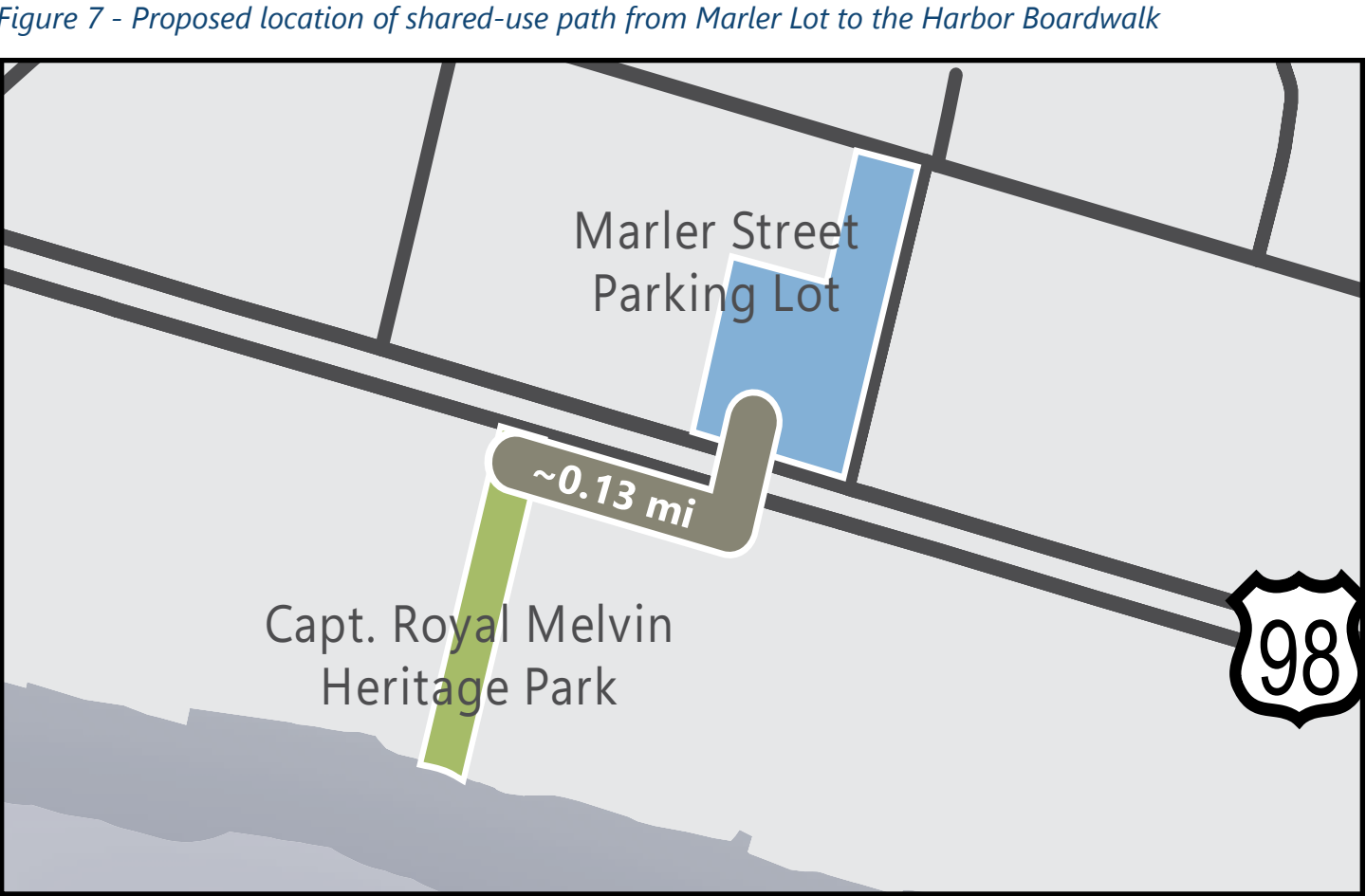
east, and new and improved access for pedestrians coming to the Boardwalk from the north. The recent completion of Royal Melvin Heritage Park is a significant milestone that provides an instant boost to Boardwalk access. However, there is additional infrastructure that can help make this new gateway a popular and well used access point. These strategies can be considered as near-term, mid-term, and long-term investments.

Near-Term Strategies (Less Than 2 Years)

- **Beautification:** The CRA Advisory Committee raised concerns that some roadways in the Harbor district lack sufficient landscaping. The Cross Town Connector is an opportunity to beautify a key roadway, create a special feel for travelers as they enter the Harbor district, and provide more inviting conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- **Crosswalk Enhancements:** The City should work with the Florida DOT to consider ways to reduce pedestrian delay at the existing signalized crosswalks of U.S. 98. Long waits can discourage walking and encourage people to cross at areas that lack signals and pedestrian refuge islands. A better crossing experience for pedestrians can also help encourage more people to park at the Marler Lot and use the new Melvin Royal Heritage Park to access attractions along the Harbor Boardwalk.
- **Wayfinding Signage Enhancements:** Clear and inviting wayfinding signage can improve access by directing people to the most accessible and interesting pathways for accessing the Harbor Boardwalk. It can also let more people passing by on U.S. 98 know about this great attraction.

Medium-Term Strategies (2 to 5 Years)

- **Shared-Use Path from Marler Lot to the Harbor Boardwalk:** The Marler Parking Lot is centrally located and is served by a nearby pedestrian crosswalk with a pedestrian actuated signal that stops traffic in both directions of U.S. 98. As such its potential as a central parking facility for the City is



MAIN GOALS

1. Make it easier to get into and park in the Harbor District
2. Make it easier for pedestrians to get from the north side of U.S. Highway 98 to the south side of U.S. Highway 98
3. Make it easier to get to and enjoy the Destin Harbor and Harbor Boardwalk

high, but its present utilization is typically low. There are two strategies the City should consider to make this a more popular parking location where people can park once and explore on foot all the Harbor Boardwalk has to offer. First, the physical and visual connection from the Marler Lot to the Harbor Boardwalk is lacking. The City can tackle this issue by installing wayfinding for pedestrians and bicyclists that directs them to the best route to the Boardwalk, which is the new Royal Melvin Heritage Park. Additionally, the City can invest in a wider shared use path that would run from the U.S. 98 crosswalk (across from the Marler Lot) to Royal Melvin Heritage Park, which is a distance of just less than 300 feet. The total walking distance from the Marler Lot to the Harbor Boardwalk via the Royal Melvin Heritage Park is about 0.2 miles, well within walking distance. More people will likely use this option if there is clear wayfinding and a much wider and safer feeling path alongside U.S. 98. Additionally, the pedestrian signal of U.S. 98 requires pedestrians to wait too long after pressing the push button before they are given permission to cross. The City may be able to work with FDOT to adjust the signal timing, giving more priority to pedestrians crossing here. This is also described as a near-term strategy in the section above.

- **Intersection Enhancements:** The City should also look to implement quick fix solutions at intersections in the district so that traffic flows better, safety is enhanced, and people feel more comfortable on foot or bike. These improvements will enhance access to the Harbor for all modes of transportation. The City is in the process of creating a Mobility Plan that identifies a range of potential intersection enhancements to reduce delay and enhance pedestrians safety.

Long-Term Strategies (More than 5 Years)

- **Harbor Boardwalk West Extension:** Extending the Boardwalk to the west would both improve Harbor access and enhance pedestrian safety on U.S. 98. FDOT’s plans for replacing the Marler Bridge make this project challenging in the near term. Initially this extension could take the form of a path that connects the existing western terminus of the Boardwalk up to Calhoun Street. Then as the Marler Bridge is reconstructed the extension could be upgraded to have a more consistent design to the existing Harbor Boardwalk. The westward extension could eventually also improve access to the City’s recently completed Captain Leonard Destin Park and Clement Taylor Park. These parks are popular destinations that provide exceptional views of the Bay. The City also recently acquired 1 Calhoun Avenue, which regardless of development type, will be a prominent property at the western edge of the City and support the western extension of the Harbor Boardwalk.
- **Marler Parking Garage:** The Harbor district depends on parking near its most popular destinations. While studies have demonstrated that the district has ample parking in the aggregate, there still exist parking challenges where public parking availability is insufficient close to the most popular destinations. As use of the Marler Lot increases the City should look at building a parking garage at this location. In addition to providing more parking for the Harbor Boardwalk, restaurants, and businesses on the south side of U.S. 98, a parking garage would reduce the footprint now dedicated to surface parking, opening land for new development. The Marler Lot is a central and accessible location that would be ideal for several civic and private uses.

INVESTMENT IN THE HARBOR DISTRICT

Due to the changes in the Harbor district that have taken place since the Harbor CRA’s establishment, the main goal of the 2024 Plan Update is to update the prioritize public improvements for the district in the coming years, consistent with Section 163.362 of the Florida Statutes. These projects were recommended based on the analysis of the existing condition of the district and the goals related to the Harbor district voiced through engagement with the Harbor CRA Advisory Committee. This section identifies the key projects with their recommended prioritization, cost estimate, and other pertinent details.



PRIORITIZATION

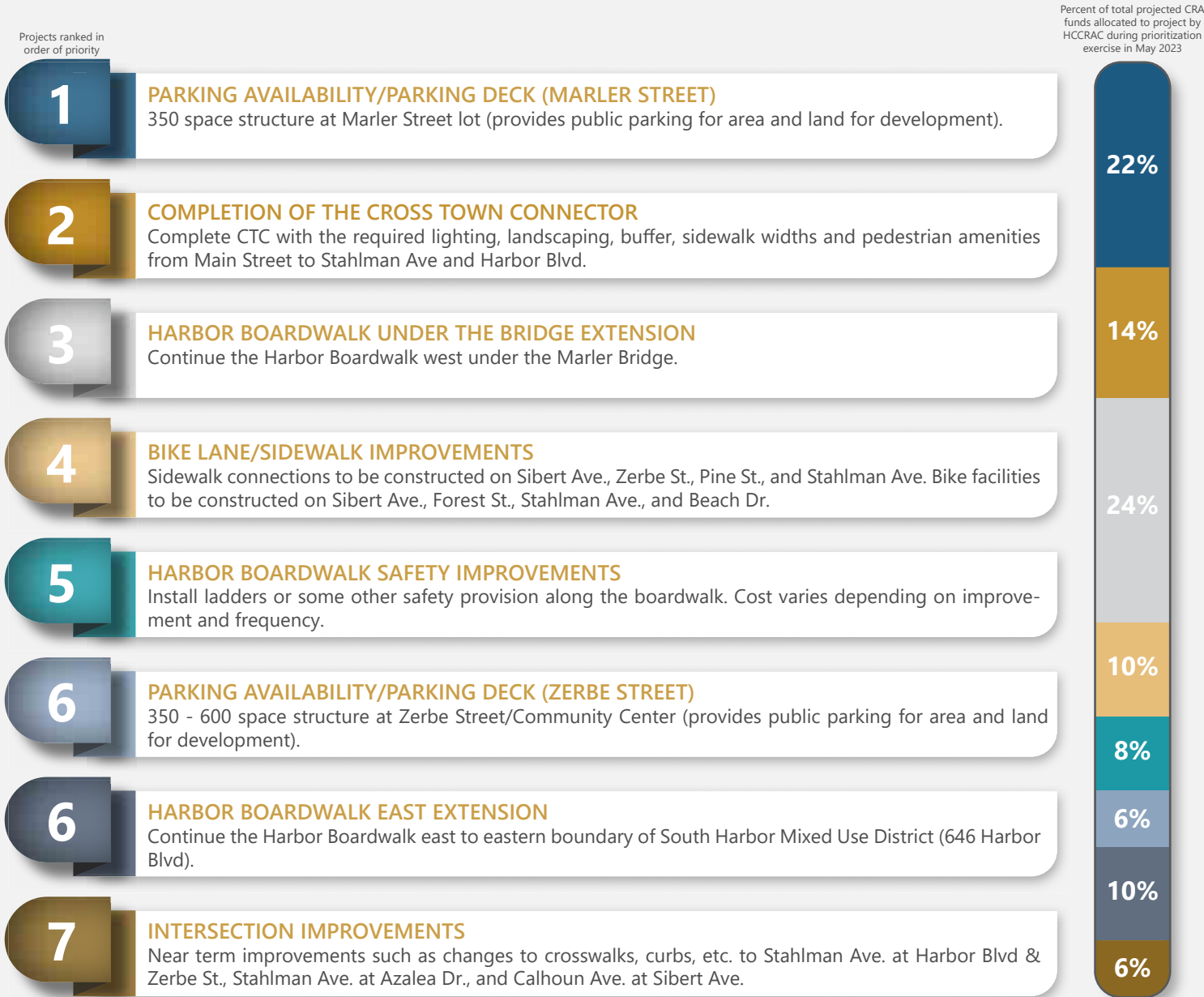


Early in the process of the 2024 Plan Update, the Harbor Advisory Committee identified the themes of connectivity and safety, and refined those into the goals of vehicular and pedestrian transportation and access to and within the Harbor District. Additionally, the goals focused on the Destin Harbor, as the main attraction and resource within the district. Taking these refreshed goals from the Advisory Committee, the consulting team identified key projects which would provide necessary access, safety and connectivity for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians in the district.

The Harbor CRA Advisory Committee in May 2023 provided input on its project priorities, which resulted in the prioritized list presented in this section. The results of the priority exercise with the Advisory Committee shown below indicate generally how the projects were ranked, and the average percentage of CRA funding that the Committee would allocate to each project. Where projects have the same ranking number, there was a tie for priority. The priority order does not imply they will be implemented in that order. The City may advance a lower priority project faster if an opportunity arises, such as a grant or a large development that comes along. Some lower priority projects may also advance faster because they have a non-CRA funding source, such as a future citywide Mobility Fee for some of the transportation improvements. However, prioritization is helpful for the City and CRA to guide the investment of CRA funds over time to implement this plan.



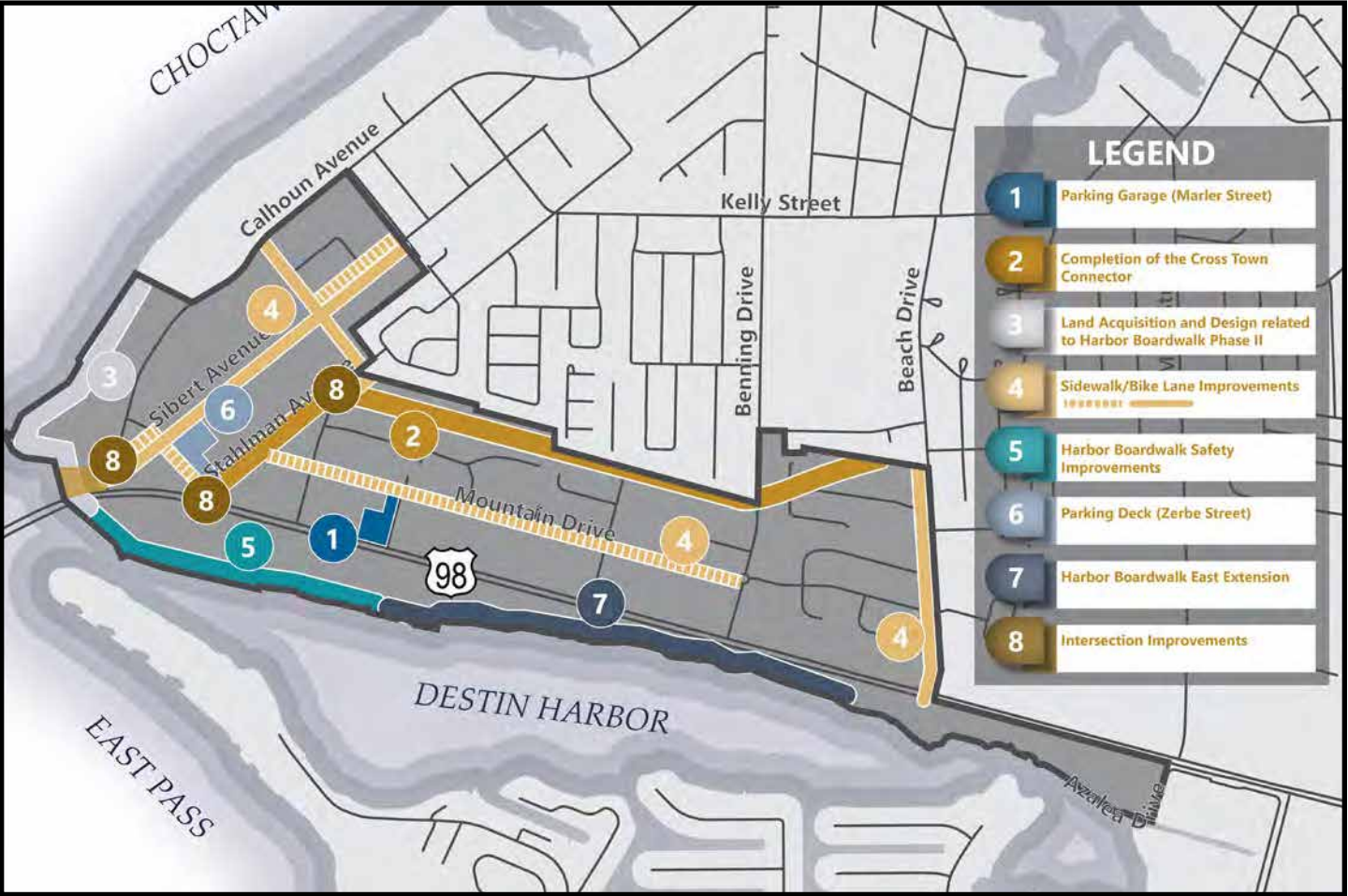
HARBOR CRA PROJECT LIST & CRA FUND UTILIZATION BREAKDOWN



PROJECTS

The project map below identifies all unfunded key projects that were identified during the Plan Update process, with the numbers indicating the order of priority.

Harbor CRA Project Map



The projects identified in the above map are further described in their descriptions below. Each project includes summary information about the project, the cost estimate, the source of the cost estimate, and where the project or initiative is described in the Comprehensive Plan or another plan, such as the Pathway Plan or draft Mobility Plan.

For those projects that originate from other sources, such as the draft Mobility Plan, further details may be found within the source plan document. The utility undergrounding project is included in the list of key projects, however, was not included in the prioritization as CRA funds have already been allocated and approved by the CRA Board.

Parking Garage (Marler Street)



Description

Per the Mobility Plan, this would be a 350 space parking deck on Marler Street at Mountain Drive and Harbor Boulevard. The proposed parking garage would not utilize the entire lot, creating an opportunity for additional uses of the site.

Cost Estimate

\$20,799,450

Priority



1

Source

Mobility Plan

Reference

Comp Plan Policies 1-3.3.4(3); 2-1.3.17; 2-1.3.19

Completion of the Cross Town Connector



Description

- Harbor CRA includes the following portions of the Cross Town Connector:
- CC-1: Stahlman Avenue from Harbor Boulevard to Mountain Drive (add buffer, street trees, widen sidewalk (east side))
 - CC-2: Stahlman Avenue from Mountain Drive to Azalea Drive (reconstruct with parking (west side), buffer and street trees (east side), multi-use path)
 - CC-3: Azalea Drive from Stahlman Avenue to Benning Drive (reconstruct with street trees, lighting, multi-use path)
 - CC-4: Azalea Drive Extension from Benning Drive to Beach Drive (new segment of road with two lanes, buffer, multi-use path)

Cost Estimate

\$20,962,989

Priority



2

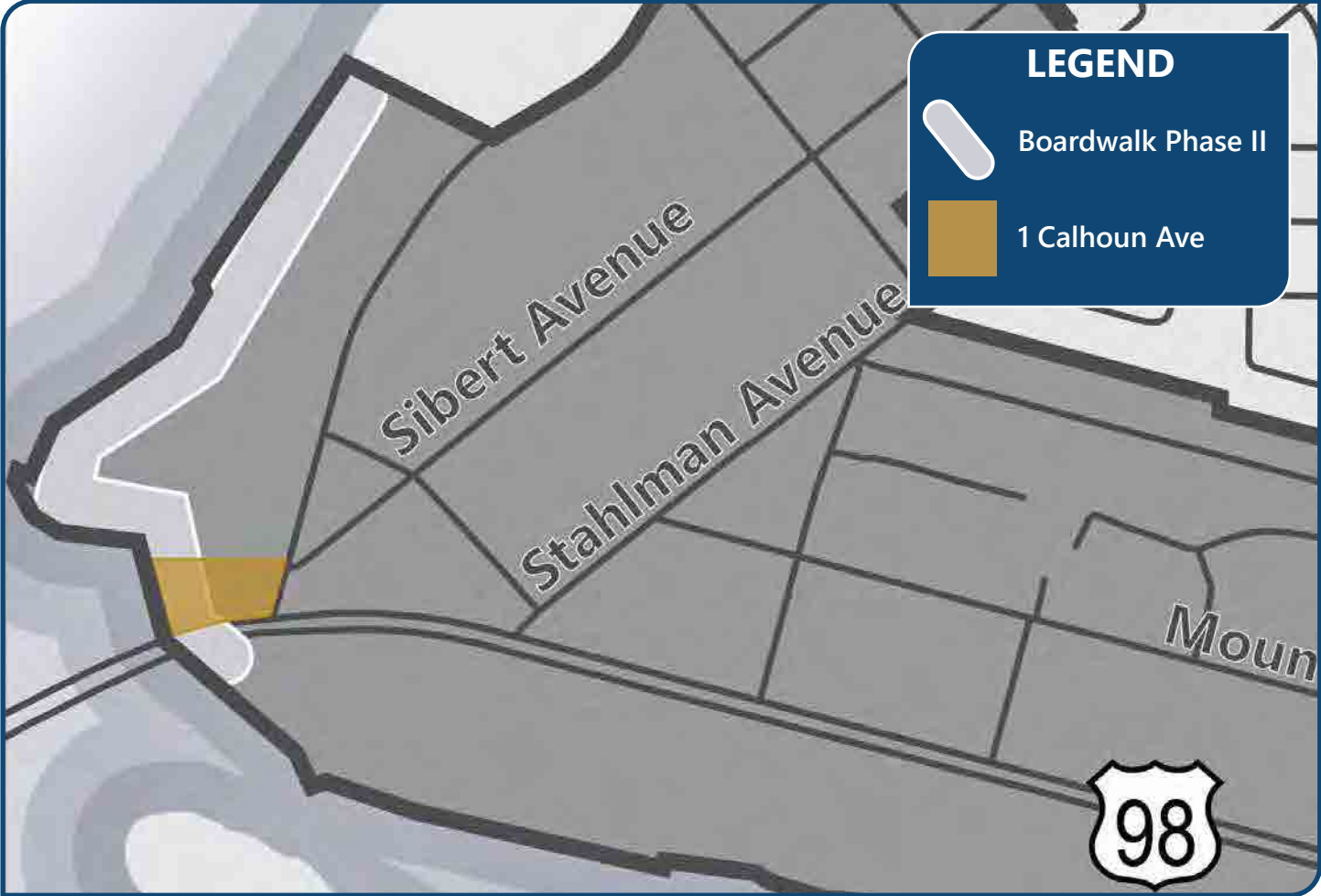
Source

Mobility Plan

Reference

Comp Plan Policy 2-1.1.3

Land Acquisition and Design related to Harbor Boardwalk Phase II (under Marler Bridge)



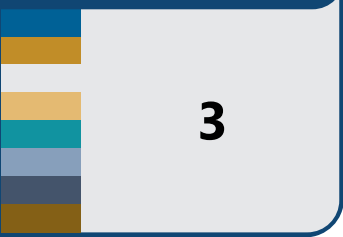
Description

The extension of Harbor Boardwalk to the west and north, under Marler Bridge to Clement Taylor Park, which is the northern of the two parks off of Calhoun Ave. This project includes acquisition of 1 Calhoun Avenue, which will improve access to the Harbor Boardwalk and enable the Phase II extension.

Cost Estimate

\$14,850,000

Priority



Source

Provided by City
(Finance and
Engineering)

Reference

Comp Plan Policy
1-3.3.4(4)

Sidewalk/Bike Lane Improvements



Description

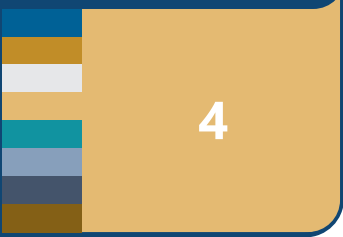
Harbor CRA includes the following sidewalk and bike lane improvement projects:

- SW-1: Sibert Avenue Sidewalk
- SW-2: Sibert Avenue Sidewalk
- SW-4: Zerbe Street Sidewalk
- SW-11: Mountain Drive Sidewalk
- BL-1: Sibert Avenue Bicycle Lanes
- BL-2: Forest Street Bicycle Lanes
- BL-3: Stahlman Avenue Bicycle Lanes
- BL-4: Beach Drive Bicycle Lanes

Cost Estimate

\$1,826,361

Priority



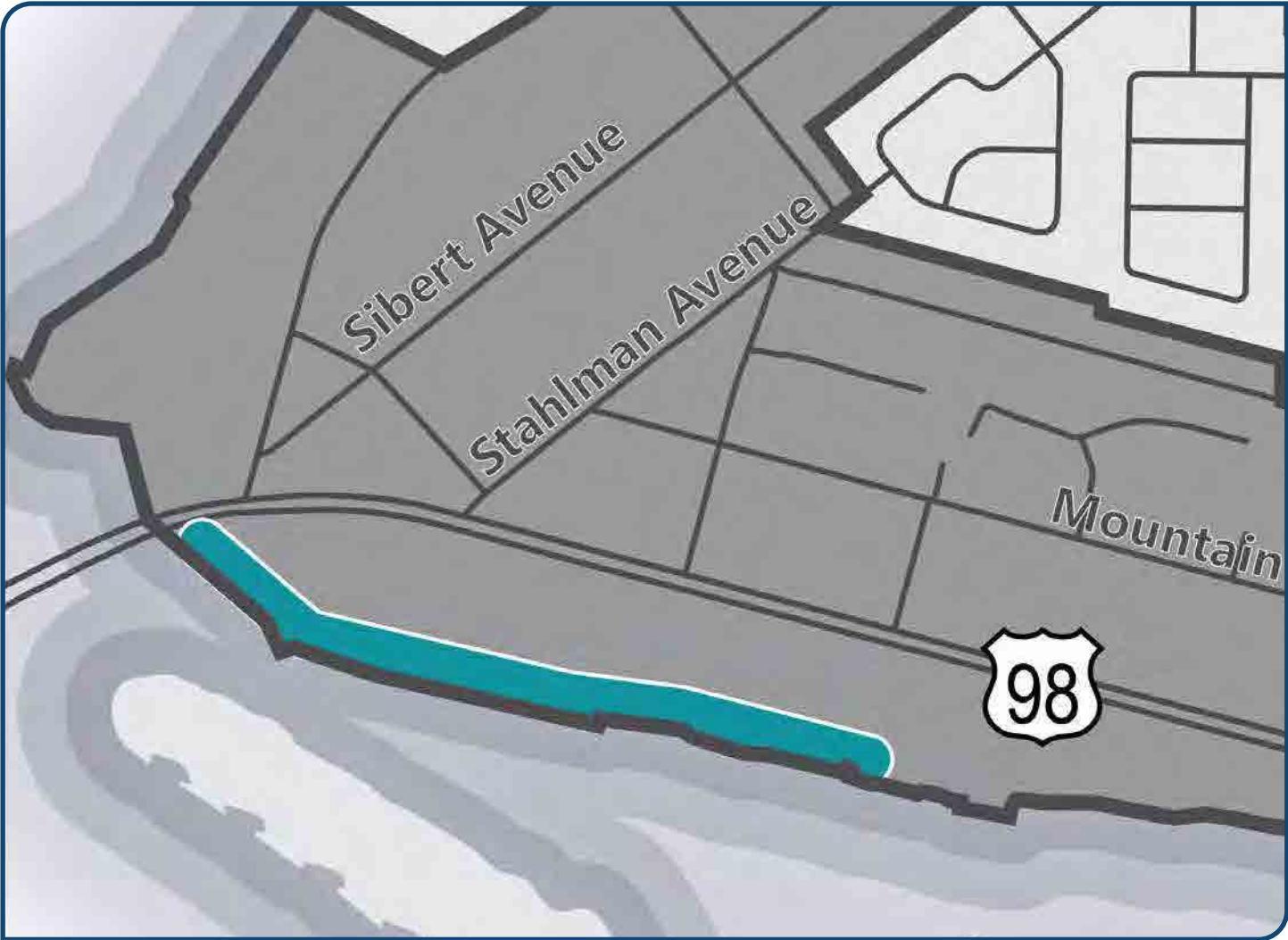
Source

Mobility Plan

Reference

Comp Plan Map
2-2; Pathways Plan

Harbor Boardwalk Safety Improvements



Description

Safety improvements for the boardwalk include emergency egress ladders and life rings every 175 feet, plus railing.

Cost Estimate

\$225,261

Priority



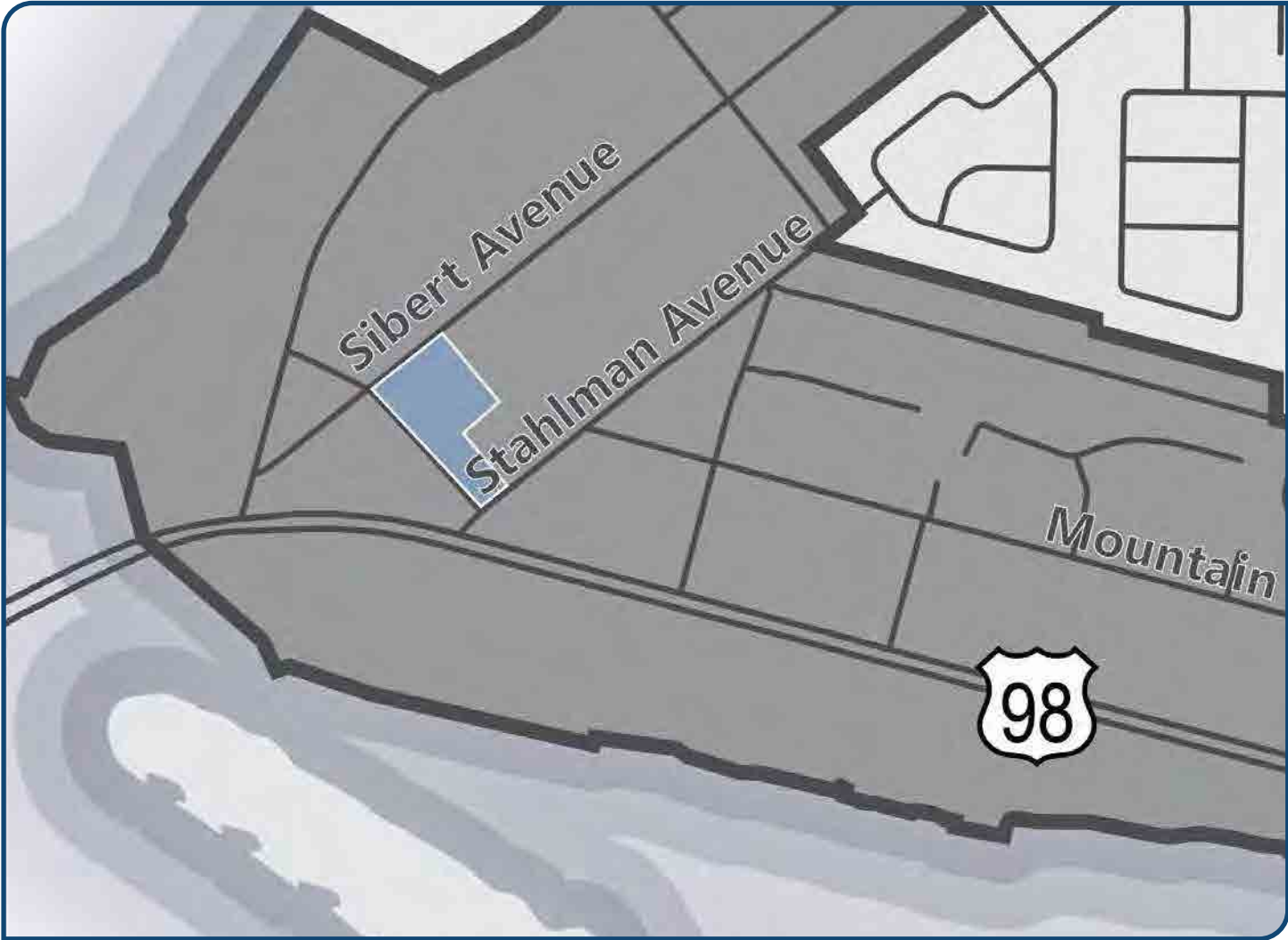
Source

FDOT & Unified Facilities Criteria

Reference

Comp Plan Policy 1-3.3.4(4)

Parking Deck (Zerbe Street)



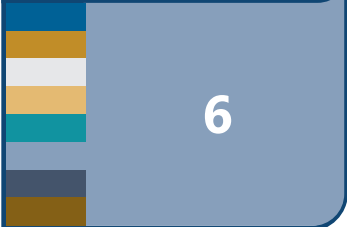
Description

Per the Mobility Plan, this would be a 625 space parking deck on Zerbe Street at Sibert Avenue.

Cost Estimate

\$37,141,875

Priority



Source

Mobility Plan

Reference

Comp Plan Policies 1-3.3.4(3); 2-1.3.17; 2-1.3.19

Harbor Boardwalk East Extension



Description

Per the LDC, as each property is developed/redeveloped in the SHMU zoning district, the developer must construct their portion of the Harbor Boardwalk and provide a pedestrian easement to the boardwalk. This ends between 646 and 654 Harbor Blvd.

Cost Estimate

N/A

Priority



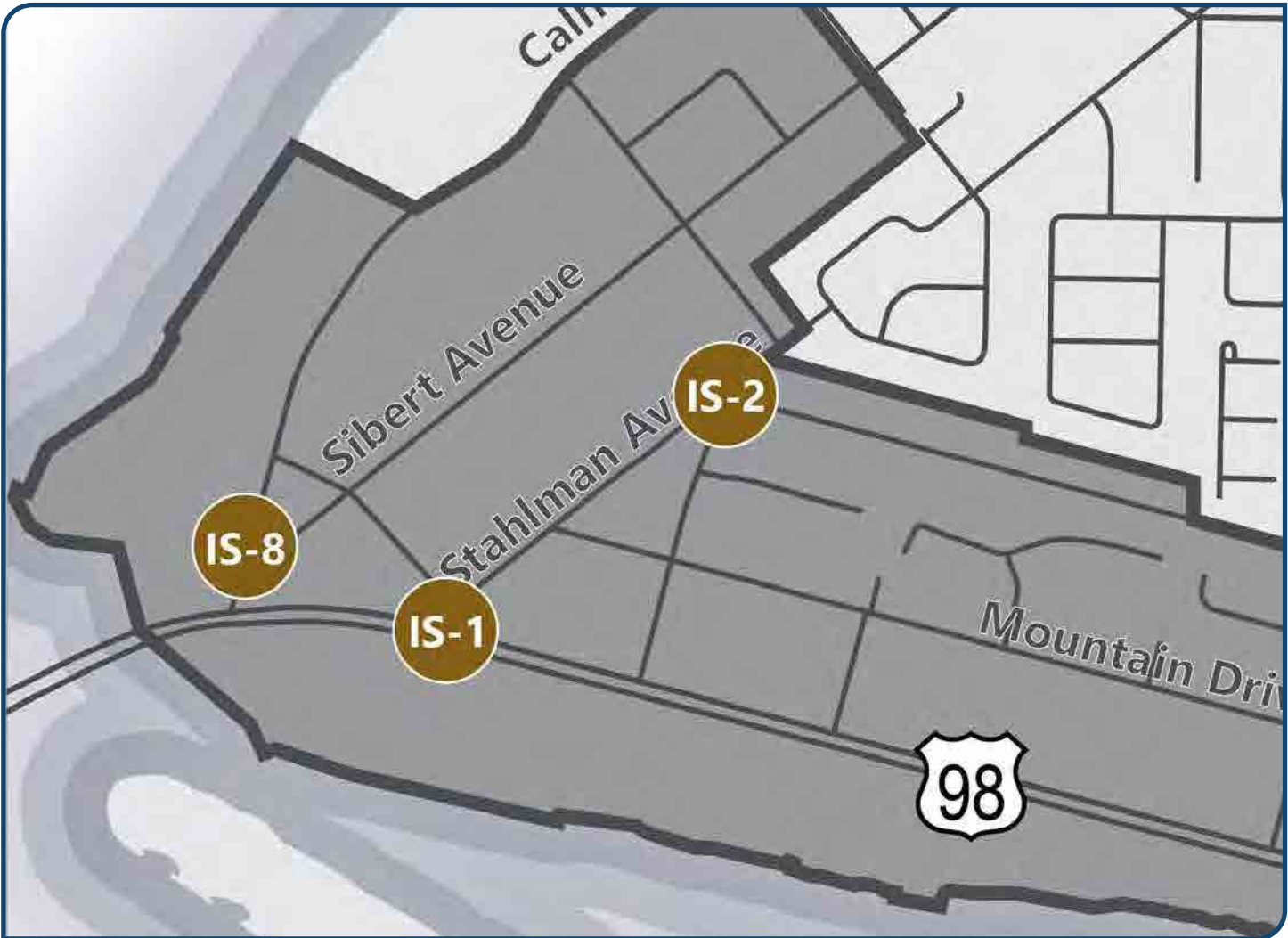
Source

LDC Section 8.09.03.A.9

Reference

Comp Plan Policy 1-3.3.4(4)

Intersection Improvements



Description

- Harbor CRA includes the following intersection improvement projects:
- IS-1: Stahlman Avenue at Harbor Boulevard & Zerbe Street (add pedestrian refuge, increase visibility, reduce curb cuts, extend central medians)
 - IS-2: Stahlman Avenue at Azalea Drive (close Palmetto Street at intersection, add crosswalks, move Azalea Dr stop line up to Stahlman Ave)
 - IS-8: Calhoun Avenue at Sibert Avenue (enhance multimodal access between public parking and planned boardwalk under the bridge)

Cost Estimate

\$278,386

Priority



Source

Mobility Plan

Reference

Comp Plan Policy 1-3.3.4(5)

Utility Undergrounding



Description

In partnership with Florida Power and Light, the City has initiated the project of undergrounding all utilities in the City beginning with the most high-priority areas. The project will be completed in seven phases.

Cost Estimate

\$4,500,000

Source

**City Finance
Department**

Reference

**Comp Plan Policy
1-1.7.3**

IMPLEMENTATION

TOP PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

The subsections below further expand upon the top three ranked priorities for the Harbor CRA district and outline implementation steps. While these projects may not be entirely implemented with CRA revenue, or implemented in the recommended order, it should be noted that the Advisory Committee viewed these public projects as key catalysts of improvement for the Harbor District.

Marler Street Parking Garage

Ineffective quantity and layout of public parking in the Harbor district has long been a known issue. This project would supply a 350-space parking garage at the Marler Street public parking lot at the corner of Highway 98 and Marler Street. By constructing this large addition of public parking, the second through fifth blight factors would be reduced, as a key part of the parking issue in the Harbor district is related to the commercial properties on the Harbor. Many of these businesses have a high parking demand, and also have existing nonconforming parking lot layouts and space counts. This issue, paired with lack of public parking and accessibility to these businesses, create unsafe conditions for both vehicles and pedestrians. Additionally, this project is sourced from the draft Mobility Plan, and therefore there are multiple revenue sources that may be used to fund design and construction.

Cross Town Connector

The completion of the Cross Town Connector (CTC) is an integral part of addressing the first and third factors of blight - defective or inadequate street layout and unsafe conditions. The primary east-west corridor traveling throughout Destin is Highway 98. As a result, this is the main stream for thru-traffic traveling to the cities on either side of Destin, tourists traveling to the main tourist destinations located along the water, and also local traffic traveling between points within the City limits. The CTC will provide a secondary east-west corridor with consistent transitions for vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians. This will remove some traffic from Highway 98 and help reduce vehicle congestion and points of conflict between vehicles and non-vehicles. Similar to the Marler Street Parking Garage, this project is sourced from the draft Mobility Plan. As such multiple revenue sources are available to fund construction.

Land Acquisition and Design Related to Harbor Boardwalk Phase II

The acquisition of 1 Calhoun Avenue, and design and construction costs related to Harbor Boardwalk Phase II assist in addressing the second and sixth factors of blight by extending the boardwalk through



contiguous properties to the west, and providing an alternate opportunity for pedestrians to access all properties along the Harbor without needing to park directly at one specific property. As identified in the Opportunities & Issues section above, accessing the Harbor Boardwalk is one of the key challenges of the Harbor district. By increasing the length of the Boardwalk and adding access points in lower traffic areas further away from Highway 98, this issue may be adequately addressed through this project. While there is no specific plan at this time for the land recently acquired at 1 Calhoun Avenue, there are several public uses that may be appropriate for this site, such as a gateway park to the Boardwalk, or other accessory uses.

Due to the estimated costs of all three key projects and the revenue projections for the Harbor CRA, it is unlikely that the revenue funds by themselves will provide the opportunity for the City to complete many more of the identified key projects in its priority list. However, it is worth noting that some of the remaining unfunded projects are included in the draft Mobility Plan, providing an alternate source of funding for those projects (a proposed Mobility Fee to be considered by the City in 2024). Additionally, there may be other opportunities such as grants available to pursue all or partial funding for the remaining projects, such as the safety improvements for the Harbor Boardwalk. Finally, it is important to keep in mind that the CRA revenue coming into the City may increase beyond the projected rates due to successful development projects. For these reasons, all projects should be kept for consideration over the duration of the Harbor CRA.

ANNUAL REVIEW

The City, in participation with the Harbor CRA Advisory Committee and CRA Board, shall conduct an annual review of the status of the Harbor CRA. The review shall include at a minimum a review of incoming CRA revenue, use of CRA revenue for public infrastructure, public/private partnerships, changes to the City’s Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code that may impact the CRA Plan, and updates to all applicable Florida Statute sections concerning CRAs and CRA Plan content.

NON-CRA
PLANNING OR
REGULATORY
COMPLEMENTARY
PROJECTS

There are other City projects currently in progress which will support the City’s goals and objectives for the Harbor

CRA. Some of these projects, such as the Mobility Plan can supplement CRA funding for transportation related projects. Other projects, such as the update of the Land Development Code, will support the Harbor District by strengthening the regulatory framework for project types and zoning districts within the CRA. The following includes ongoing City projects that could aid the success of the CRA Plan:

- **Citywide Mobility Plan and Fee**
The Mobility Plan includes more than 60 transportation improvements that include projects such as sidewalk and bike path connections, intersection improvements, and new road construction. The estimated cost of the complete list of projects is approximately \$150 million. The projects identified within the Harbor CRA district boundary are listed in the updated CRA Plan, and therefore both proposed mobility fee dollars and CRA revenue collected may be utilized for construction costs. The anticipated adoption of the Mobility Plan and proposed fee is in 2024.
- **Land Development Code Update**
The Land Development Code (LDC) is in the process of being updated to adequately implement all development related policies in the Comprehensive Plan. This includes all policies related to the Harbor CRA and zoning districts in the Harbor CRA boundaries. Aside from this update being a major improvement for the City, and users of the Code, this will also strengthen the regulatory framework for all future development in the Harbor CRA District. The anticipated completion of the LDC update is in 2024.
- **Town Center CRA Plan Update**
The Town Center CRA Plan is currently being updated as well. Similar to the Harbor Plan, this update includes refreshed financial forecasts, updated key projects and prioritization, and an overall strategic plan to guide future development. This is significant to the Harbor CRA as the two districts share the boundary of Beach Drive, and the Harbor district encompasses land directly south of the Town Center CRA district as well. As such, improvements implemented in the Town Center CRA may have impacts on the Harbor CRA as well.



MANAGEMENT PLAN

Implementation of the Plan will require both human and financial resources. The City must assess its person-power needs and internal funding sources to promote and market the area, review development plans, create new regulatory frameworks, leverage investment, assist small businesses, provide for special events, maintain financial integrity and, in general, provide day-to-day management and review. Two key areas are highlighted for work under the management plan:

1. Responsibility for project administration.
2. Target funds for project implementation, creating marketing materials, new development codes, and public and private project review.

MARKETING AND PROMOTION

The effectiveness of the Plan will largely depend on the perception of the Plan by the public, prospective developers, and financial backers. Colorful illustrative materials are necessary throughout plan implementation, such as informational materials for CRA projects which include project renderings and illustrations. A strong citizen involvement and public information program can only aid in the success of the entire plan. The Harbor CRA should utilize the City social media websites to advertise and promote progress of projects within the Harbor district, as well as involve the community in the development of the district by sponsoring programs and events to keep locals and tourists involved.

FINANCIAL INCENTIVES, GRANTS AND LOANS

Financial incentives may be considered to stimulate the location of new/expanding business opportunities. These would include:

1. Public partnership with private development wherein the public sector installs roads, water, sewer and other infrastructure necessary to make the project feasible.
2. Establishing a Community Development District, Foreign Trade Zone, Community Development Corporation, etc.
3. Grants and loans to businesses/property owners.

The City may offer, through the Harbor CRA, restricted matching grants and low-interest loans to owners of business property in the Harbor CRA district. The purpose of this financial aid is to encourage frontage improvements and major economic development projects. The basic concepts are outlined as follows:

- **Grants:** Exterior beautification of private property is the initial purpose of a grant program, which would provide funds only if they are available. The focus is on frontage improvements, especially landscaping on private property facing and along the public rights-of-way. A grant would not exceed 50% of the approved project cost, with the property owner paying the remainder (50% or more) of the cost. The maximum amount of a grant will depend upon a determined formula. Grant applications would be evaluated and prioritized. Highest ranking applications would be funded first.
- **Loans:** Economic development is the purpose of the loan program, which would make low-interest loans only to the extent that funds are available for that purpose. Initially, economic development loans may be made to businesses for projects meeting certain minimum criteria, e.g. the project must be approved by the Harbor CRA; the business must pay a significant portion of the project costs; the project must involve construction of a new building on vacant land; the new building must be for a new business or expansion of an existing business; and a significant number of new permanent full-time jobs must be created by the new business or expansion. Loan applications would be evaluated and prioritized, with highest ranking applications to be funded first – prioritization criteria may include such factors as: number of new jobs created and amount of value added to the tax base.





FUNDING EXAMPLES

- The City
- Non-ad valorem assessments
- Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)
- Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO)
- Northwest Florida Water Management District
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection
- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- Economic Development Administration

FINANCIAL PLAN

Among the most powerful tools associated with Part III Section 163, Florida Statutes, is the availability of tax increment financing to support a wide range of redevelopment initiatives. While tax increment is the single source of revenue enabled through the legislation, it is anticipated in most cases that a variety of revenue sources will be strategically assembled to meet the overall redevelopment objectives of this plan. When used in conjunction with these other means of funding or financing, tax increment, in effect, leverages the dollars that might otherwise be available.

This section of the plan update provides an overview of Harbor CRA funds already encumbered from capital projects (completed or in progress), and forecasted annual revenue to be collected throughout the life cycle of the CRA. This money will become available to support or further the program framework generally described in this Plan. This section also describes the funding and financing arrangements that are the most prudent means to support redevelopment activities.

TAX INCREMENT REVENUE FORECASTS

Estimates of prospective tax increment revenue to be generated in the Harbor CRA district, were completed by the City of Destin’s Finance Director with support from the consultant team. The stream of prospective revenue is dependent on several factors, including the pace of development which occurs in the Harbor Redevelopment Area, the content of that development, its assessed and taxable value, the millage levied against the taxable base and the rate of appreciation in the existing tax base and the level of public intervention. Together, these many variables suggest a wide range of outcomes, all possible depending on the specific conditions imputed into the analysis. The following sections include both the encumbered revenue due to revenue already earmarked for projects within the CRA district, and forecasted revenue. It should be noted that the revenue forecasts

do not consider any future potential development, and therefore the actual revenue amounts may be more or less than the amounts listed in the tables. As further explained in the Implementation Plan, these forecasts should be updated on an annual basis for a better understanding of the financial status of the Harbor CRA district.

ENCUMBERED REVENUE

The following table outlines the CRA funds already encumbered by previously issued revenue notes. The City issued a revenue note in 2009 for \$8 million. However, in 2010 the City refunded \$2 million due to a downturn in Harbor property values. The remaining balance assisted in the funding and construction of several capital improvements in the Harbor CRA District. Looking forward, the City will initiate a utility undergrounding project in 2024 and earmarked \$4.5 million dollars of Harbor CRA funds for this improvement to be paid over the remaining duration of the CRA. Additionally, the City in 2023 entered into a purchase agreement for the acquisition of 1 Calhoun Avenue, for a purchase price of \$9 million dollars (\$14.7 million with debt service), to be paid through 2043.

Table 5 - Harbor CRA Encumbered Revenue

 CITY OF DESTIN FLORIDA Harbor CRA Encumbered Revenue			
Year Initiated/Beginning Principal Balance	Projects	Annual Payments (avg)	Completion
2010/\$5,919,000	Mountain Drive roadway improvements, Melvin Street drainage, Harbor Boardwalk promenade, Marler Street Parking Lot, Harbor Boardwalk under Marler Bridge	\$480,000	2029
2024/\$4,500,000	Utility Undergrounding	\$346,154	2043
2024/\$14,764,636	Land Acquisition of 1 Calhoun Avenue	\$738,232	2043

FORECASTED REVENUE

The table below outlines the annual projected CRA revenue, operating budget, debt transfer and ending account balance for the Harbor CRA each year through the duration of the CRA. Based on the projections, the Harbor CRA is estimated to have approximately \$3.4 million in funds at the end of 2042. That remaining fund balance is allocated to Phase II Harbor Boardwalk construction in 2043, which zeroes the account balance by the expiration of the CRA in 2043. It is important to note that these numbers are estimates, and are subject to change depending on several variables including property values, new project commitments, refinancing opportunities, etc.

Table 6 - Harbor CRA Forecasted Revenue

CITY OF DESTIN FLORIDA Harbor CRA Forecasted Revenue											
	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31	FY32	FY33
CRA REVENUE	820,992	983,860	1,013,350	1,043,730	1,075,020	1,107,250	1,140,440	1,174,630	1,209,850	1,246,130	1,283,490
OPERATING BUDGET	(121,761)	(9,100,000) ¹	(89,980)	(92,490)	(95,090)	(97,760)	(100,500)	(103,340)	(106,250)	(109,250)	(112,330)
TOTAL DEBT TRANSFER	(479,995)	7,878,933	(1,191,986)	(951,239)	(979,931)	(1,009,490)	(979,029)	(738,232)	(788,232)	(888,323)	(888,232)
TOTAL BALANCE	688,355	318,616	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	110,910	443,969	759,337	1,007,985	1,290,913
	FY34	FY35	FY36	FY37	FY38	FY39	FY40	FY41	FY42	FY43	
CRA REVENUE	1,321,970	1,361,610	1,402,440	1,444,490	1,487,810	1,532,420	1,578,370	1,625,700	1,674,450	1,724,660	
OPERATING BUDGET	(115,530)	(118,810)	(122,190)	(125,680)	(129,270)	(132,960)	(136,770)	(140,690)	(144,730)	(3,745,885) ²	
TOTAL DEBT TRANSFER	(938,232)	(988,232)	(1,038,232)	(1,138,232)	(1,188,232)	(1,188,232)	(1,238,232)	(1,238,232)	(1,238,232)	(1,338,232)	
TOTAL BALANCE	1,559,121	1,813,690	2,055,708	2,236,286	2,406,594	2,617,822	2,821,191	3,067,969	3,359,457	0	

¹ \$9,100,000 included in the FY 2024 operating budget for the purchase of 1 Calhoun Avenue.
² \$3,596,995 included in the FY 2043 operating budget for the construction of Harbor Boardwalk Phase II project.

FUNDING SOURCES

To supplement and leverage the funds available through tax increment revenues, the following sources can provide financial support for the implementation of the Harbor Community Redevelopment Plan. Use of the funds and application are a function of specific project initiatives.

- The City is an appropriate source of funds for redevelopment planning support through its staff and consultants. These costs could be recovered from the CRA.
- Non-ad valorem assessments could be developed and imposed to fund the construction and maintenance of specific public improvements and essential services. Non-ad valorem assessments can facilitate the underlying credit for issuance of bonds or other financial instruments for anticipated capital improvement programs. A substantial portion of the tax increment revenues can be earmarked to offset or buy down such special assessments.
- The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has a number of programs that could contribute funding for redevelopment efforts involving state highways. These programs are administered through the Department’s new grant management system Grant Application Process or “GAP”.
- The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) sponsors grant programs providing financial assistance to local governments through Community Services Block Grants (CSBG).
- The Northwest Florida Water Management District may provide technical assistance in the design of stormwater improvements.
- The Florida Department of Environmental Protection has a number of sources that may be used in the acquisition and development of recreation and open space facilities.
- The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Urban and Community Forestry Matching Grant program offers financial support for tree planting and urban forestry programs.
- The Economic Development Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce provides funding for public work works projects that create permanent jobs or construction jobs through the Grants and Loans for Public Works and Development Facilities Program through the Public Works Impact Projects Program.

Many of the sources listed also provide technical support for redevelopment initiatives. In addition to these State and Federal sources, there are also other City funding sources that may be utilized in conjunction with CRA funds, such as development impact fees, and the forthcoming mobility fee (anticipated adoption 2024).

APPLICATION OF SOURCES

Tax increment revenue by itself will be insufficient to fund or support the range of initiatives identified as project priorities in this Plan update. The projected revenues available point to the need to secure and to apply other sources of money(ies) if all program goals are to be achieved. The most likely scenario is a combination of increment and special assessments targeted to properties and structures most benefited by planned improvements. The use of funds unrelated to tax increment or assessments would be applied to projects or activities for which specific dollars may be available.

Some projects are more suited to the use of tax increment revenue than others. Generally, these revenues should be preserved to leverage other dollars, that they be applied to truly public facilities or services, that they be used for assemblages, and/or that they comprise a source of incentives for projects deemed most commensurate and supportive of the overall plan. Within these broad categories might be considered the acquisition of substandard or well-located parcels that might fulfill some stated purpose, the financial support of parking or like facilities, and the direct support of as yet specified private projects if needed or desired.

THE REDEVELOPMENT TRUST FUND

Once the Harbor Redevelopment Plan was adopted by resolution 03-07, the City of Destin established a Redevelopment Trust Fund through Ordinance 03-01. The trust fund receives all tax increment money, grants, gifts, or profits generated by redevelopment activities in the Harbor CRA.

The annual funding of the redevelopment trust fund will result from additional incremental taxes collected in the Redevelopment Area by Okaloosa County and the City. Such increment will be determined annually in an amount equal to 95 percent of the difference between:

- 1. The amount of ad valorem taxes levied each year by the County, exclusive of any amount from any debt service millage, on taxable real property contained within the geographic boundaries of a community redevelopment area; and
- 2. The amount of ad valorem taxes which would have been produced by the rate upon which the tax is levied each year by or for the City and County, exclusive of any debt service millage, upon the total of the assessed value of the taxable real property in the community redevelopment area as shown upon the most recent assessment roll used in connection with the taxation of such property by the City and County prior to the effective date of the ordinance providing for the funding of the trust fund.



LEGAL AND REGULATORY ISSUES

REDEVELOPMENT POWERS

The City of Destin Resolution 98-09 established the Destin Community Redevelopment Agency, pursuant to Section 163.356, Florida Statutes. The Community Redevelopment Agency is authorized to exercise all of the powers conferred by Section 163, Part III, Florida Statutes, which are necessary and convenient to carry out and effectuate the purposes of the Harbor Community Redevelopment Plan. The Community Redevelopment Agency appointed a Harbor CRA Advisory Committee through Resolution 03-14 to assist the Agency in evaluating redevelopment initiatives and carrying out redevelopment activities in the Harbor CRA.

DURATION OF THE PLAN

The redevelopment initiatives and work program described in the Harbor Community Redevelopment Plan funded through tax increment revenues must occur within 40 years after the fiscal year in which this plan is approved or adopted, which is the time certain for completing all redevelopment financed by increment revenues. The Harbor CRA Plan was originally adopted on June 2, 2003 through Resolution 03-07 for a period of 40 years. As the Harbor CRA Trust Fund was established through Ordinance 03-01-CRA on June 16, 2003, all redevelopment initiatives and projects financed by CRA revenue must be completed by June 16, 2043.

PLAN MODIFICATION

The Harbor Community Redevelopment Plan may be modified in a manner consistent with Florida Statutes 163.361. If the City of Destin Community Redevelopment Agency deems that the Harbor Community Redevelopment Plan be amended, it shall make a recommendation to the City Council. All future amendments shall follow the notice and public hearing requirements listed in Florida Statutes 163.361.



SEVERABILITY

If any provision of the Harbor Community Redevelopment Plan is held to be unconstitutional or otherwise legally infirm, such provisions shall not affect the remaining portions of the Harbor Community Redevelopment Plan.

SAFEGUARDS, CONTROLS, RESTRICTIONS, OR COVENANTS

All redevelopment activities undertaken in the Harbor Redevelopment Area must be consistent with this Plan, the City's Comprehensive Plan and applicable land development regulations; all redevelopment plans will undergo review by the City.

Issues concerning restrictions on any property acquired for redevelopment purposes and then returned to use by the private sector will be addressed on a case-by-case basis to ensure that all activities necessary to perpetuate the redevelopment initiative are advanced in a manner consistent with this Plan and any amendment thereto. Throughout the redevelopment process for the Harbor CRA district, any restrictions or covenants shall run with the land regardless of transfer of ownership or private use for the period of time the City deems necessary.

RESIDENTIAL USE ELEMENT

As there are currently residential uses in the Harbor CRA district, but no moderate- or low- income housing units, an element of residential use is required per F.S. 163.362(8). Previously, a Neighborhood Impact Statement (NIS) was included in the CRA plan, however State regulations now only require an

NIS if moderate- or low-income housing is present in a redevelopment area. As required by the Comprehensive Plan (Policies 3-1.1.1 – 3-1.1.3), the City is currently in the process of incorporating strategies into the Land Development Code which incentivize the development of moderate- and low-income housing units when a planned unit development is proposed. This strategy will support the City's overall goal of providing an adequate ratio of housing units for residents and workers that support the local economy. The City will coordinate with the State Departments of Health and Children and Family Services, the West Florida Regional Planning Council, and the Fort Walton Beach Housing Authority as well as other appropriate agencies to improve the overall affordable housing stock regionally, but specifically within the Harbor CRA.

The intent of the Harbor Community Redevelopment Plan centers on the revitalization of the tourist commercial area, enhancing the safety within the corridor and providing public access to the harbor. The redevelopment envisions substantial capital improvements relating to the right-of-way, harbor access, parking and recreational facilities. There is limited permanent residential use within the Redevelopment Area. The displacement of permanent residents is not foreseen; however, the City shall assist any person who is required to relocate from their property due to City acquisition of property for public purposes by locating other housing facilities available as replacement dwellings, as required by Comprehensive Plan Policy 3-1.7.2. The City shall assess the degree of displacement which may occur when planning future land acquisition and shall not be responsible for displacement because of county, state or federal actions. The CRA shall follow the relocation policies and procedures established by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development when Federal dollars are involved.

Existing residential properties may be temporarily impacted during the construction of any improvements. Impacts may include construction detours, noise and dust. Impacts are expected to be minimal while the benefits of redevelopment activities will be of long duration, adding greatly to the quality of life by providing a safe and attractive area that has adequate waterfront access, sidewalks, recreation, parking and other needed infrastructure improvements.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONSISTENCY

The 2024 Plan Update is determined to be consistent and comply with the City's adopted Comprehensive Plan, including the Future Land Use Map (FLUM), and the goals, objectives and policies of all the elements. Any amendments to the Comprehensive Plan which will impact the Harbor CRA Plan should result in an update to the Plan as well, consistent with Florida Statutes 163.361. A detailed table outlining the existing Comprehensive Plan policies directly related to the Harbor CRA and their implementation in the updated plan is included in the Appendix.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: LEGAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION OF CRA

A parcel of land lying and being in unsectionalized township 2 South, range 22 West, City of Destin, Okaloosa County, Florida, being more particularly described as follows:

Commence at the Southeast Corner of Sandpiper Cove Phase I as recorded in Plat Book 1 Page 146 of the Public Records of Okaloosa County, Florida, thence proceed along the approximate mean high water line of Destin Harbor N-78°46'39"-W, 420 feet to the Point Of Beginning (POB). Thence N-13°49'-E, 493 feet to the South Right Of Way (ROW) of U.S. Highway 98 East, thence westerly along U.S. Highway 98 East to the intersection of Beach Drive, thence Northerly along Beach Drive to the Southeast corner of Sea Hills Third Addition as recorded in Plat Book 5 Page 104 of the Public Records of Okaloosa County, Florida, thence follow the South boundary of Sea Hills Third Addition, N-82°10'54"-W, 1048.41 feet, thence South, 24.88 feet, thence West, 139.75 feet, thence North, 130.4 feet to the South ROW of Legion Drive, thence Westerly along Legion Drive to the South intersection of the centerline of Benning Drive, thence Southerly to the North extension of the ROW line at the intersection with Azalea Drive, thence Northwest along the North ROW to the Southwest corner of Etretat Subdivision as recorded in Plat Book 10 Page 6 of the Public Records of Okaloosa County, Florida, thence North, 114.49 feet to the Southeast corner of Gulf Manor First Addition as recorded in Plat Book 8 Page 9 of the Public Records of Okaloosa County, Florida, thence N-76°9'22"-W, 720.19 feet, thence N-0°05'50"-W, 51.44 feet, to the Southeast corner of Ridge Wood Manor as recorded in Plat Book 12 Page 69 of the Public Records of Okaloosa County, Florida, thence N-76°07'54"-W, 955 feet, thence N-50°23'11"-E, 124.12 feet, thence N-39°41'11"-W, 307.92 feet, thence N-50°20'52"-E, 800 feet to the South ROW of Pine Street, thence Northwesterly along the South ROW of Pine Street to the West ROW of Calhoun Avenue, thence Southwesterly along the West ROW of Calhoun Avenue to the Northwest corner of lot 14, Moreno Point Military Reservation as recorded in Plat Book 26 Page 172 of the Public Records of Okaloosa County, Florida, thence N-59°05'37"-W, 468.3 feet to the approximate high water line of Choctawhatchee Bay, thence Southwesterly along the approximate high water line to Destin Harbor thence easterly along the approximate high water line to the POB; said parcel contains 397.34 acres more or less.*

*Note: Acreage will vary depending on actual mean high water level and shoreline conditions at time of survey.

APPENDIX B: FINDING OF NECESSITY REPORT (2003)

Determining if blight conditions exist within a Redevelopment Area is the first step in ascertaining an area's appropriateness as a community redevelopment area. The Harbor Finding of Necessity Report describes the various physical, economic, and regulatory conditions within the Harbor Redevelopment Area that potentially are associated with blight or its causes and discusses the need for a community redevelopment area. Based on this analysis, there is a conclusion that there are blighted conditions within the Redevelopment Area, and that the repair, rehabilitation, and/or redevelopment of such areas is in the interest of public health, safety, and welfare.

A resolution adopted by the local governing body finding that such conditions exist is the required first legal step in initiating the full redevelopment regime envisioned under Section 163 Florida Statutes. Subsequent actions consist of the preparation of a community redevelopment plan for the area designated in the finding of necessity resolution. This community redevelopment plan provides physical information on the Redevelopment Area, identifies potential project types that can diminish or eradicate blighted conditions, and establishes a legal framework for a series of specific programmatic and policy actions that advance these projects.

Section 163.340 (8) Florida Statutes identifies fourteen criteria associated with blight or blighting conditions. The Finding of Necessity Report documents a minimum of six conditions present in the Harbor Redevelopment Area that are retarding its immediate and longer term social, economic and physical development. The legal tests described in Section 163 and pertinent to the City of Destin require that at least two of these criteria be satisfied. These criteria and their related conditions include the following.

Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout

(Section 163.340 (8) (a) Florida Statutes). The totality of the Harbor Redevelopment Area is comprised of a road grid that functions below current standards and requires substantial budgetary commitment to maintain and/or upgrade over time.

The absence of satisfactory internal connections forces local traffic onto US 98, which adds unnecessary and potentially dangerous trips to this arterial road. US 98 is not yet at capacity year-round but the level of service does not consider how conditions might change should the area be developed to its allowable intensity. Though improvements are being discussed conceptually for US 98, the funds have not been committed to budgets or plans.

Localized ponding is known to occur in certain neighborhoods within the Redevelopment Area. It remains unclear if this occurs as the result of inadequate controls or poor execution. Regardless of its origin, periodic ponding is in need of correction and such intervention is frequently through some kind of public action or vehicle. Such drainage solutions usually occur in conjunction with road (re) construction.

The absence of sidewalks is deemed to be not only a safety issue but also further evidence of inadequate transportation. The condition of the existing road grid precludes the provision of sidewalks without costly reconstruction.

There is a documented parking deficiency in excess of 400 spaces. As a result, the City has observed that most visitors simply park where they can find space on private business property, whether they are patrons or not, and walk around the harbor area. The fact that there is no public parking visible from US

98 is an issue. Motorists that park their vehicles on the north side of US 98 must cross this busy corridor and/or parking lots with speeding motorists.

The observed traffic patterns during the busy tourist seasons in Destin, clearly, contributes much to circulation and to the safety conditions within the Harbor Redevelopment Area. Vehicular stacking remains a problem within the Harbor Redevelopment Area. This is especially true on the intersection of US 98 and Stahlman Avenue, near the East Pass Bridge. The stacking that occurs in this area is very problematic because of the aforementioned proximity to the bridge. The East Pass Bridge serves as the major conduit for commuters between the Destin area and the Fort Walton Beach area. The abrupt start and stop motion, typically present in a stacking situation, can easily lead to numerous vehicular accidents.

Faulty layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, and usefulness

(Section 163.340 (8) (c) Florida Statutes). The commercial lots suffer from inadequacies as a result of their size, a condition partially reflected in the number of vacant or underutilized parcels. Where properties are, in fact, developed, depth and width limitations that force an increased number of ingress and egress points on major roads are observed. The typical lot dimensions, in conjunction with immediate proximity to residential areas, preclude adequate space for landscaping or other treatments that might buffer these residential zones. In today’s competitive environment, contemporary development practices favor larger sites to vary and mix uses and activities. Although each non-residential site may be buildable, in the aggregate the commercial lots are largely economically dysfunctional or deteriorated because they simply do not meet contemporary design and investor requirements. It is highly likely that only aggressive actions to assemble lots can solve some of these site deficiencies.

There are numerous properties along the south side of US 98, as well as the west side of Calhoun Avenue that restrict access to the harbor and Choctawhatchee Bay, respectively. A visual inspection of property lines in the aforementioned areas reveal that certain properties exist that preclude other properties from being accessed from the main roads. Private easements or agreements between property owners are most likely the form in which specific property owners can access their properties through other people’s properties.

An analysis of land value, relative to total taxable value, suggests that many real estate assets are not adequately utilized. Individually and collectively, properties with such characteristics may be neither adequate, accessible nor useful.

Unsanitary or unsafe conditions

(Section 163.340 (8) (d) Florida Statutes). Insufficient sidewalks pose an immediately identifiable problem within all the neighborhoods that comprise the Redevelopment Area and along US 98. While accidents will occur, whatever safeguards are put in place, clearly having sidewalks for pedestrians on which to walk and a visible pedestrian-designated space wherein motorists are alert and vigilant, will diminish the number of accidents involving pedestrians. Left unchecked, the frequency of accidents will most likely continue to escalate.

Because parts of the sub-areas are not connected, the existing grid forces local traffic onto the perimeter arterials. Not only is capacity diminished, the unnecessary loading for local travel subjects more cars to the potential of accidents. Today’s contemporary planning approaches recognize the need to capture internal trips as a means of achieving neighborhood safety.

Deterioration of site or other improvements

(Section 163.340 (8) (e) Florida Statutes). As noted in the “Findings”, most buildings within the Redevelopment Area are physically sound overall. The primary concern is deterioration in context and setting, which will discourage long-term sustainability and lead to a reduction in useful life more rapidly than will be the case in a stable residential and commercial environment

The context and setting are defined in large part by the quality of the public infrastructure. Among the most noticeable deficiencies are the lack of sidewalks and other pedestrian-oriented amenities, the perceived traffic stacking, the lack of adequate public parking, and the inability of the current stormwater system to prevent localized flooding. Individually, these conditions appear to be somewhat innocuous, but collectively they present a real challenge to redevelopment within the Harbor Redevelopment Area.

As for many of the commercial improvements, many simply do not meet current demands of the marketplace. Although they may not be deteriorated from a physical standpoint, many are nearing, or have reached, the end of their useful economic life and are functionally deteriorated. Parking and access conditions are clearly deficient.

Inadequate and outdated building patterns.

(Section 163.340 (8) (f) Florida Statutes). Conditions of inadequate and outdated building patterns are literally self-evident based on the most casual inspection of the Redevelopment Area. Many contemporary designs or regulatory practices are violated by conditions in the Harbor Redevelopment Area. Among the deficiencies that speak to inadequate and outdated building patterns are the following:

- Planned intensity relative to the size and adequacy of platted lots
- Absence or deterioration of infrastructure
- Poor connectivity among neighborhoods prompting the use of regional arterials for local travel
- No sidewalks
- No designed public spaces
- Unrestricted and divided ingress and egress among numerous commercial properties
- Commercial intrusion into residential areas stemming from inadequate lot depth, poor design controls, and the absence of transitional zones that preclude opportunities to insert buffering
- No view corridors

Diversity of ownership

(Section 163.340 (8) (m) Florida Statutes). Arguably, the Redevelopment Area’s diverse ownership is among its most onerous and fractious problems. Given the number of owners, the non-resident status of these owners, the pattern of small lots, and the demands of contemporary market or building requirements, it will be difficult for private interests to acquire sufficient property to alter the established patterns of development and use. Aggressive intervention will be needed to assemble parcels or holdings adequate in size such that the larger community is evidently committed to changing the Redevelopment Area’s social, physical and economic character.

APPENDIX C: COMPLETED PROJECTS INVENTORY (2023)

PLANNED PROJECTS IN H-CRA PLAN (2023)	PUBLIC PROJECTS IN H-CRA DISTRICT TO IMPLEMENT CRA PLAN (2008 – present)	COMPLETE (Y/N)
Roadway Projects		
US HWY 98	RRR remedial reconstruction and rehabilitation US Highway 98 from Marler Bridge to Airport Road	Y
	FDOT US Highway 98 East, landscaping project currently under construction; Marler bridge to Airport	N
	FDOT US Highway 98 East, lighting project added approximately 60 street lights; Marler bridge to Indian Bayou Trail	Y
Stahlman Avenue	None	
Mountain Drive	Mountain Drive Reconstruction - from Stahlman Avenue to Benning Drive, two lane roadway added 10 ft wide sidewalk to south side of road and provided stormwater facilities for the Mountain Drive watershed.	Y
Benning Drive	None	
New Secondary Streets	Destin Crosstown Connector (Azalea Drive Extension) - currently under design, add approximately 2000 linear feet of two lane divided roadway between Beach Drive to Benning Drive, 10 ft sidewalks on both sides of road and stormwater retention for the watershed	N
Pedestrian Sidewalks/Crosswalks		
Harbor Boulevard	Pedestrian crosswalk signalization at 116 Harbor Blvd	Y
	Pedestrian crosswalk signalization at 210 Harbor Blvd	Y
*Melvin Street	Pedestrian crosswalk signalization at Melvin St	Y
*Azalea Drive	Azalea Drive Sidewalk - added 10 ft wide sidewalks on North side of road from Stahlman Avenue to Snapper Drive and on South side of road from Snapper Drive to Benning Drive.	Y
	Harbor Place T/H Project - added 10 ft wide sidewalks on North side of Azalea Drive from Snapper Drive to Melvin Street on west side of Melvin St from Azalea Drive to Mountain Drive	Y
* Zerbe Street *Calhoun Avenue	Zerbe Calhoun Pedestrian Project - constructed approximately 2,000 linear feet of 10 ft wide sidewalk from intersection of Zerbe and Sibert St. west on Zerbe Street and North on Calhoun avenue to Clement Taylor Park	Y

PLANNED PROJECTS IN H-CRA PLAN (2023)	PUBLIC PROJECTS IN H-CRA DISTRICT TO IMPLEMENT CRA PLAN (2008 – present)	COMPLETE (Y/N)
Harbor Boardwalk	Harbor Boardwalk - constructed continuous boardwalk on north side of the harbor shoreline from 10 Harbor Blvd to 316 Harbor Blvd.	Y
Bayside Boardwalk Extension	None	
Stormwater and Utilities		
*Melvin Street	Provide storm water retention for the watershed between Harbor Boulevard and Mountain Drive	Y
*Utility Undergrounding	Utility undergrounding is in progress. US 98 will take place in Phase 1, the rest of district will take place in Phase 4.	N
*Stormwater Master Plan Update	Stormwater Master Plan was updated in 2021. There are two projects in the updated plan identified for the Harbor CRA district.	Y
Parking		
Marler Street Lot	Provides 147 parking spaces and multimodal transit stop	Y
Sibert Avenue Lot	Provides 42 parking spaces	Y
Open Space/Recreation		
Clement Taylor Park	Currently under design to provide 30 designated parking spaces and pavilion and demo/ reconstruct restrooms	N
*Capt. Leonard Destin Park	Added approximately 37 parking spaces	Y
*Capt. Royal Melvin Heritage Park	Currently under construction at restrooms and picnic areas also the gateway to the Harbor Boardwalk.	N
Visitor Center	None	

**Projects were not specifically identified in Harbor CRA Plan*

APPENDIX D: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICY REVIEW

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICY REVIEW		
POLICY NO.	POLICY DESCRIPTION	PLAN UPDATE IMPLEMENTATION
1-3.3.4	Harbor CRA Redevelopment, Infrastructure, and Design Enhancements. Continue implementation of the Harbor CRA plan, established in 2003 and encompassing 397 acres in the southwest portion of the City north of the Destin Harbor, including the following components:	The Harbor CRA Plan is being updated to continue the implementation of the original vision of the Harbor CRA district.
1-3.3.4(1)	Harbor Boulevard is a major gateway to the city. The City will work together with the private sector and the Florida Department of Transportation to pursue changes to Harbor Boulevard that would improve landscaping, appearance, multimodal safety and performance. Such enhancement shall include application of community appearance criteria that reinforce good principles of design as well as preserving unique characteristics and open space for scenic vistas. The gateway improvements shall also address the implementation of streetscape amenities, enhanced signage, and intersection improvements.	FDOT has completed two major projects on Harbor Boulevard in the Harbor CRA district, which assisted in the implementation of this policy: (1) RRR remedial reconstruction and rehabilitation of Hwy 98 from Marler Bridge to Airport Road, and (2) the addition of approximately 60 streetlights between Marler Bridge and Airport Road. Additionally, landscaping of Hwy 98 between Marler Bridge and Airport Road is currently under construction. The Plan Update identifies multiple key projects that will positively impact the condition of Harbor Boulevard/ Highway 98: the acquisition of 1 Calhoun Avenue; intersection improvements at Stahlman Avenue/Harbor Boulevard/Zerbe Street; utility undergrounding along Harbor Boulevard. Additionally, there are several near-term strategies identified in the Update which would further implement this policy such as beautification, and crosswalk and wayfinding enhancements.
1-3.3.4(2)	Develop the Capt. Royal Melvin Heritage Park and Plaza (Heritage Park). In 2008 the City acquired land for Heritage Park along the north side of Harbor that will provide sustainable public access to the Harbor waterfront. As of late 2009, a broad variety of planning,	Captain Royal Melvin Heritage Park was completed and opened in July of 2023. As a part of the strategic approach outlined in the Plan Update, a medium-term

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICY REVIEW		
POLICY NO.	POLICY DESCRIPTION	PLAN UPDATE IMPLEMENTATION
	technical, design and engineering surveys and studies have been completed. As funds become available, Heritage Park should be completed to serve as a focal point and harbor front destination for pedestrian activity in the immediate vicinity.	strategy identified is a shared-use path from the Marler Lot to this park. This would provide a physical and visual connection for pedestrians from parking to the Harbor Boardwalk that is currently lacking.
1-3.3.4(3)	Continue land acquisition/construction of off-site parking facilities. Purchase or enter into joint public/private partnerships to acquire land for two or three public parking facilities on the north side of Harbor Blvd. Utilize land for surface level parking until development and economics justifies the cost effectiveness of structured parking. If opportunities arise in the interim, accept public parking spaces as part of private development projects.	The Plan Update includes two parking garages as key projects where the public lots at Marler Street and Zerbe Street are currently located. The parking garage at Marler Street was identified as the first priority for the HCRAAC. The proposed garage included in the Plan Update includes 350 spaces, and would not utilize the entire site, allowing for additional uses on the property.
1-3.3.4(4)	Continue implementation of the Harbor and Bay Boardwalks. A framework design plan has been completed for the boardwalk fronting the Harbor, extending under the Marler Bridge and extending to Clement Taylor Park. Phase I of the Harbor Boardwalk was completed in 2012. As private redevelopment occurs, construction of contiguous sections of the remaining Harbor Boardwalk and related components shall be completed in accordance with the adopted framework design plan. Related components include, but are not limited to, broad, pedestrian friendly north/south pedestrian connections to the Harbor Blvd. frontage and pedestrian system. The "boardwalk under the bridge" shall be completed by the City at such time as there are significant sections of Harbor Boardwalk completed on both the north and south sides of Harbor Blvd.	The Plan Update includes three key projects related to the Harbor Boardwalk: Land acquisition and design related to Harbor Boardwalk Phase II (under the bridge), Harbor Boardwalk safety improvements, and Harbor boardwalk east extension. Additionally, the strategic approach included in the Plan Update is primarily focused on helping visitors and locals access the Destin Harbor safely. Near-, medium- and long-term strategies are identified in support of this overall goal for the district.
1-3.3.4(5)	Continue to implement neighborhood and pedestrian enhancements. Neighborhood street, intersection, and drainage improvements shall be implemented per the Phase II Implementation Plan within the Harbor CRA. As private redevelopment progresses along Harbor Blvd., strongly consider implementation of enhanced, safe crossings which could be implemented through a combination of	Prior to the plan update, Pedestrian crosswalk signalizations were installed by FDOT at 116 Harbor Blvd., 210 Harbor Blvd, and Melvin St. In the Plan Update, completion of the Cross Town Connector throughout the district, bike lane

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICY REVIEW		
POLICY NO.	POLICY DESCRIPTION	PLAN UPDATE IMPLEMENTATION
	overhead connections, traffic calming, improved lighting, and enhanced and/or controlled at-grade crosswalks. Cost of construction of such facilities should be shared by the private developer, the City, and the State.	and sidewalk improvements, and intersection improvements are identified as key projects. Additionally, the Plan Update recommends beautification and crosswalk enhancements specifically across Harbor Boulevard as near-term strategies the City may pursue.
1-3.3.5	Provide for Redevelopment Initiatives Through CRA Tax Increment Financing and Other Plan Implementation Initiatives. The success or failure of adopted Town Center and Harbor CRA Redevelopment Plans (collectively referred to as "Plans") hinges on the ability of the City to stimulate re-investment, to undertake public improvement projects, and to engender community support. The City has taken its first steps by identifying needs, evaluating alternatives, and preparing Plans to guide efforts for the next several decades. The City shall become the facilitator for the Plans' implementation. The City's responsibilities shall include serving as the catalyst for stimulating, marketing, and encouraging both public support and private participation as elaborated in the following Policies. As part of its responsibilities for maintaining and improving the CRA tax increment financing program, the City shall monitor CRA property values. These responsibilities shall include annual review, update, and evaluation of the effectiveness of the tax increment financing program including the timely processing of information by the City and County to ensure that the best interests of the City are carried forth.	The Plan Update includes sections regarding the successful implementation and financial planning. These sections include information on the required annual review, funding sources, financial incentives, etc.
1-3.3.5(1)	CRA Management Plan. The CRA shall assess CRA manpower needs and internal funding sources to promote and market the area, review development plans, create new regulatory frameworks, leverage investment, assist small businesses, provide for special events, maintain financial integrity and, in general, provide day-to-day management and review. The City shall commit resources to the two key areas of the management plan: (a) Responsibility for project administration (b) Target funds for project implementation, creating marketing materials, new development codes, and public and private project review.	There is a section specifically for the City's management plan within the Implementation section of the Plan Update.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICY REVIEW		
POLICY NO.	POLICY DESCRIPTION	PLAN UPDATE IMPLEMENTATION
1-3.3.5(2)	Comprehensive CRA Funding Sources. The City shall commit resources to planning for the income and expenditures within the CRA as an integral part of CRA Redevelopment Plan implementation. The City shall manage the CRA financial plan and yearly budget estimates, project cost estimates and monitor progress in meeting proposed time frames. A variety of funding sources shall be considered, such as the following: (a) Tax increment trust fund, (b) Special assessments, (c) General obligation bonds, (d) Special revenue bonds, (e) Grants and loans to the CRA, (f) Public and private grants and loans using CDBG funds, Community Reinvestment Act funds, historic preservation funds, Small Business Administration loans, and small business facility rehabilitation loan programs, as well as other similar programs, (g) Fees and charges.	In addition to the annual review of CRA revenue, expenditures and key project statuses which is outlined in the Implementation Plan and detailed in the Financial Plan sections, the Plan Update includes a subsection within the Financial Plan that lists several funding sources available including those listed in the referenced policy.
1-3.3.5(3)	CRA Financial Incentives. Financial incentives may be considered as the Trust Fund gains dollars to stimulate location of new/expanding business opportunities. These alternatives shall include: (a) Public partnership with private development wherein the public sector installs roads, water, sewer and other infrastructure necessary to make the project feasible. (b) Establishing a Community Development District, Foreign Trade Zone, Community Development Corporation, or other similar programs. (c) Grants and loans to businesses/property owners.	The Plan Update discusses financial incentives, grants and loans as a part of the Implementation section.
1-3.3.5(4)	CRA Marketing and Promotion. The effectiveness of the CRA Redevelopment Plan will largely depend on the perception of the plan by the public, prospective developers and financial backers. Colorful illustrative materials are necessary throughout plan implementation. A strong citizen involvement and public information program can only aid in the success of the entire plan. The CRA shall establish a community theme or slogan for use on City articles, or sponsor a contest for logo submittals, publish "CRA News" to residents/businesses to keep them informed, and prepare and manage an on-going "events program" to stimulate and maintain the public interest. Finally, utilize "success stories" as they develop to show that Destin is on the move.	There is a marketing and promotion portion of the Implementation section in the updated plan.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICY REVIEW		
POLICY NO.	POLICY DESCRIPTION	PLAN UPDATE IMPLEMENTATION
1-3.4.4	Initiate Public and Private Sector Partnerships. The City shall coordinate redevelopment issues with the private sector in promoting mobilization of public and private resources necessary to effectively carry out redevelopment efforts, especially along the Harbor and in the Town Center CRA area.	Public and private partnerships are discussed in the Financial Incentives, Grants and Loans section of the Implementation Plan.
2-1.3.11	Create Safe Pedestrian and Cycling Roadway Crossings. The City shall create, safe crossings on Harbor Boulevard/Emerald Coast Parkway between the Marler Bridge and the eastern edge of the Town Center CRA, with particular emphasis on strengthening the connection between the Town Center and the Harbor. Crossings shall be evaluated and designed to provide maximum pedestrian visibility, safety, and convenience, consistent with all applicable standards, guidelines, and best current practices. The City shall coordinate with FDOT to ensure adequate crossings are planned and constructed along Harbor Boulevard/Emerald Coast Parkway for safe crossing of that facility.	Prior to this Plan Update, three pedestrian crosswalk signalizations were installed on Highway 98/Harbor Blvd at 116 Harbor Blvd., 210 Harbor Blvd, and at Melvin St. Additionally, the Plan Update recommends further crosswalk enhancements at those crosswalk locations that reduce long waits and encourage the use of the public parking lots and crosswalks.
2-1.3.21	Prioritize Projects. As revenues become available from the Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) tax increments, the City shall prioritize projects that help support the goals of the MMTD.	Throughout the update process with the Harbor CRA Advisory Committee, the key projects were ranked and given a priority level which is included in the Plan Update. As a part of the annual review of the Plan, the City will review the project and priority status of identified key projects.

APPENDIX E - FLORIDA STATUTES CRA PLAN CONTENT REVIEW

FLORIDA STATUTES SECTION	REQUIREMENT	PLAN UPDATE IMPLEMENTATION
163.360.2.a	Conform to the comprehensive plan for the county or municipality as prepared by the local planning agency under the Community Planning Act.	All applicable sections of the current Comprehensive Plan have been implemented. This is demonstrated through the "Comprehensive Plan Consistency" subsection, as well as the detailed policy review in the Appendix.
163.360.2.b	Be sufficiently complete to indicate such land acquisition, demolition and removal of structures, redevelopment, improvements, and rehabilitation as may be proposed to be carried out in the community redevelopment area; zoning and planning changes, if any; land uses; maximum densities; and building requirements.	The "Land Use Review" section outlines the existing zoning, land uses, densities and building requirements for the Harbor CRA district. All planned public improvements which may include land acquisition, demolition, redevelopment, and public projects proposed in the Harbor CRA are included in the "Key Projects" subsection.
163.360.2.c	Provide for the development of affordable housing in the area, or state the reasons for not addressing in the plan the development of affordable housing in the area. The county, municipality, or community redevelopment agency shall coordinate with each housing authority or other affordable housing entities functioning within the geographic boundaries of the redevelopment area, concerning the development of affordable housing in the area.	The "Residential Use Element" of the Plan Update describes the current changes that are being incorporated into the Land Development Code supporting the development of affordable housing and discusses the coordination of local, regional and state agencies to increase the affordable housing stock in the area.
163.362.1	Contain a legal description of the boundaries of the community redevelopment area and the reasons for establishing such boundaries shown in the plan.	The Finding of Necessity Overview section of the Plan Update describes the reasons the Harbor CRA district was determined "blighted" and targeted for redevelopment in the City. A specific legal description of the district is included in the appendix.

FLORIDA STATUTES SECTION	REQUIREMENT	PLAN UPDATE IMPLEMENTATION
163.362.2.a	Show by diagram and in general terms the approximate amount of open space to be provided and the street layout.	The Land Use and Transportation Reviews describe the minimum amount of open space required for each zoning district within the Harbor CRA District, and the existing street layout. The Key Projects show all planned projects including new streets and open space.
163.362.2.b	Show by diagram and in general terms limitations on the type, size, height, number and proposed use of buildings.	The Land Use Review in the Plan Update describes the limitations on building type, size, height, number and use that are implemented through the Future Land Use Designations and zoning districts in the City's Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code.
163.362.2.c	Show by diagram and in general terms the approximate number of dwelling units.	The Land Use Review in the Plan Update describes the number of existing dwelling units, as well as the limitations on building type, size, and density that are implemented through the Future Land Use Designations and zoning districts in the City's Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code.
163.362.2.d	Show by diagram and in general terms such property as intended for use as public parks, recreation areas, streets, public utilities, and public improvements of any nature.	The Key projects section of the Plan Update describes all future public facilities planned for the CRA district. This includes public facilities, new streets, and all other public improvements planned at this time.
163.362.3	If the redevelopment area contains low or moderate income housing, contain a neighborhood impact element which describes in detail the impact of the redevelopment upon the residents of the redevelopment area and the surrounding areas in terms of relocation, traffic circulation, environmental quality, availability of community	As there is currently no low or moderate income housing in the Harbor CRA district, the existing Neighborhood Impact Assessment was replaced with a Residential Use Element (163.362.8).

FLORIDA STATUTES SECTION	REQUIREMENT	PLAN UPDATE IMPLEMENTATION
	facilities and services, effect on school population, and other matters affecting the physical and social quality of the neighborhood.	
163.362.4	Identify specifically any publicly funded capital projects to be undertaken within the community redevelopment area.	A list of publicly funded key projects to be undertaken in the Harbor CRA district is included in the "Investment in the Harbor District" section of the Plan.
163.362.5	Contain adequate safeguards that the work of redevelopment will be carried out pursuant to the plan.	The Plan includes adequate safeguards through the Implementation Plan, Financial Plan and Safeguards, Controls, Restrictions or Covenants sections of the Plan Update.
163.362.6	Provide for the retention of controls and the establishment of any restrictions or covenants running with land sold or leased for private use for such periods of time and under such conditions as the governing body deems necessary to effectuate the purposes of this part.	This section is implemented through the Safeguards, Controls, Restrictions or Covenants section of the Plan Update.
163.362.7	Provide assurances that there will be replacement housing for the relocation of persons temporarily or permanently displaced from housing facilities within the community redevelopment area.	The Residential Use Element includes language describing the City's policies on replacement housing due to redevelopment activity.
163.362.8	Provide an element of residential use in the redevelopment area if such use exists in the area prior to the adoption of the plan or if the plan is intended to remedy a shortage of housing affordable to residents of low or moderate income, including the elderly, or if the plan is not intended to remedy such shortage, the reasons therefore.	The Residential Use Element in the updated Plan includes the proposed changes to the Land Development Code which incentivizes the developer to include a percentage of affordable housing in new planned unit developments.
163.362.9	Contain a detailed statement of the projected costs of the redevelopment, including the amount to be expended on publicly funded capital projects in the community redevelopment area and any indebtedness of the community redevelopment agency, the county, or the municipality proposed to be incurred for such redevelopment if such	In the Financial Plan section, there are multiple tables which outline the encumbered revenue for the Harbor CRA, the projected revenue, operating budget, total debt transfer, and balance from FY 23 through the

FLORIDA STATUTES SECTION	REQUIREMENT	PLAN UPDATE IMPLEMENTATION
	indebtedness is to be repaid with increment revenues.	duration of the CRA (FY43). Additionally, each key project includes a planning cost estimate for the project.
163.362.10	Provide a time certain for completing all redevelopment financed by increment revenues. Such time certain shall occur no later than 30 years after the fiscal year in which the plan is approved, adopted, or amended pursuant to s. 163.361(1). However, for any agency created after July 1, 2002, the time certain for completing all redevelopment financed by increment revenues must occur within 40 years after the fiscal year in which the plan is approved or adopted.	The Plan Duration section of the updated plan states that all projects and redevelopment funded by CRA revenue shall be completed no later than June 16, 2043.

APPENDIX F - HARBOR REDEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES (2003)

The Harbor Redevelopment Area is to be redeveloped as an easily accessible, economically sustainable and attractive waterfront-oriented district that provides safe transportation, pedestrian and recreation facilities in a manner that promotes a favorable identity for the City of Destin.

REDEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

In partnership with the private sector and other governmental entities, the Harbor redevelopment initiative will reverse the observed blighting conditions within the Harbor Area over a 40-year period by leveraging public assets to improve the overall economic condition and the physical condition of the Redevelopment Area. Strategic initiatives are to be identified and placed into action to address and remove blighting conditions that might forestall the achievement of these redevelopment objectives. Ultimately, the Harbor Area will be revitalized to benefit residents, businesses, property owners and visitors.

The objectives and redevelopment initiatives contained in this section address blight conditions within the Redevelopment Area as identified in the Finding of Necessity Report. These objectives are supported by the City’s recently amended Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code in addition to past studies performed for and by the City of Destin. The objectives shall be viewed as sound planning steps in the realization of the redevelopment initiative.

Objective 1 - Transportation and Pedestrian Safety

The transportation condition of US 98 and the lack of safe pedestrian facilities are among the identifiable blighting conditions within the Harbor Redevelopment Area. Its condition shall be seen as a priority in the implementation of this Plan. To address this priority an enhanced and interconnected network of right-of-way and other infrastructure projects that focuses on improving pedestrian movement, shall be planned. To spotlight and establish the area as an attractive and competitive destination in the larger regional framework, existing transportation, and access points shall be enhanced. Ingress/egress and evacuation routes along US 98 and its major connectors throughout the year and during periods of peak visitations or periods of emergency or distress shall be realized.

Objective 2 – Parking Improvements

Parking shall be made available to support development and access points throughout the Harbor Redevelopment Area and the US 98 corridor in particular.

Objective 3 – Harbor Access, Open Space and Recreation

The waterfront is one of Destin’s premier assets; yet the public access, open space and recreation opportunities within the Harbor Redevelopment Area are limited. Redevelopment initiatives shall be implemented that promote access to the Harbor and provide adequate open space and recreation facilities to meet citizen and visitor demand.

Objective 4 – Urban Design and Infrastructure

The first impression of the “quality of life” in the Harbor Redevelopment Area is expressed through the overall visual characteristic of the Harbor Redevelopment Area’s built environment. There are numerous

properties that limit the ability to redevelop in an orderly and integrated fashion due to their condition, size and orientation. The City, through redevelopment initiatives, shall encourage owners of private properties to improve their sites. Public rights-of-way and property shall be improved in order to create a sense of place for the Harbor Redevelopment Area while enhancing basic infrastructure, specifically sidewalks, stormwater and utilities.

Objective 5 – Funding, Financing, Management and Promotion

The funding and financing portion of this objective calls for a creative, efficient, practical and equitable funding and financing mechanism to properly implement this Plan. It is perceived that these will be tied to the expected flow of tax increment dollars at the very least. The CRA shall implement programs that provide proper management of the redevelopment initiatives and promotion of the Harbor Redevelopment Area.

The remainder of this section identifies redevelopment programs and capital projects that when implemented support the redevelopment objectives as presented in this Plan. The capital and program costs of implementing the redevelop initiatives are addressed in Section 4.2 of this Plan.

TRANSPORTATION AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY REDEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

Improving transportation and pedestrian safety will positively transform the visual and general perception of the Harbor Redevelopment Area. The following initiatives shall be considered in improving transportation and pedestrian safety within the Redevelopment Area. Each of these initiatives will be amplified in an annual work program undertaken by the City of Destin and the CRA.

Transportation and Pedestrian Safety Program Initiatives

The following provides descriptions of potential programs that shall encourage improving transportation and pedestrian safety in the Harbor Redevelopment Area. Many of these programs are time sensitive while others are ongoing in nature. Programs such as the transportation study referenced in 3.2.1.2 will result in the identification of specific capital projects that shall be undertaken to realize redevelopment results.

Transportation and Pedestrian Safety Design Guidelines

The CRA shall establish design guidelines and/or standards that contain the following.

- Establish driveway spacing to prevent a motorist from encountering more than one conflict at a time.
- Address corner clearance and wherever practical control distance between driveways and the corner of an intersection.
- Develop driveway designs to allow vehicles to quickly exit the through lane.
- For wider driveways, the use of a driveway median shall be encouraged to provide a safe space for pedestrians, help to provide positive guidance to motorists and allow beautification and signing opportunities.
- Use medians and other innovative design methods to reduce the turning movements across lanes as well as provide a safe haven for pedestrians crossing the roadway.
- Develop and incorporate lighting and landscape standards to design a safe and inviting environment.

These guidelines/standards shall be drafted in coordination with the urban design standards referenced later in this Plan.

Transportation Enhancement Study

The CRA shall complete a transportation study to determine the most effective manner in which to control traffic, access and safety on US 98 and its major connectors. The transportation study shall include pedestrian, bicycle and other multi-modal transportation elements in addition to identifying ways to enhance emergency evacuation. The transportation study shall consider past transportation studies and recommendations in addition to evaluating other innovative methods to accomplish this objective.

Access Management Program Initiatives

Investigate alternative or innovative access management solutions for transportation problems. Pursue agreements allowing joint access, cross access, or other innovative uses between adjacent property owners to help control the number of access points on the road network.

TRANSPORTATION AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Roadway Improvements

As indicated in the study referenced in 3.2.1.2, the CRA shall, in partnership with other agencies as deemed appropriate, implement the roadway improvement recommendations contained in the transportation study. Roadway improvements may include improvements on US 98, Stahlman Avenue, Mountain Drive, Benning Drive, and Beach Ridge Drive.

Multimodal Transportation Improvements

To provide safe and easy access for bicyclists and pedestrians, as well as motorists, traveling through the Redevelopment Area the CRA shall, in partnership with other government agencies as deemed appropriate, implement the multi-modal transportation improvement recommendations contained in the transportation study referenced in 3.2.1.2. Multimodal transportation improvements will include bike paths and other multimodal access improvements concurrent with roadway improvements.

Pedestrian Sidewalks and Crosswalks

An enhanced and interconnected network or right-of-way and other infrastructure projects that focus on improving pedestrian movement, parking, ingress/egress and evacuation routes along US 98 and its major connectors shall be realized. The CRA shall, in partnership with other government agencies as deemed appropriate, implement the sidewalk and crosswalk improvement recommendations contained in the transportation study referenced in 3.2.1.2. Projects will also include Bluff Ridge Walk, and Harbor Walk.

Evacuation Improvements

The CRA shall, in partnership with other government agencies as deemed appropriate, implement the emergency evacuation improvement recommendations contained in the transportation study referenced in 3.2.1.2.

Parking Redevelopment Initiatives

Parking concerns addressed comprehensively will improve the function, appearance and safety of the

Harbor Redevelopment Area. Furthermore, it is expected that any additional parking provided will increase property utilization in the area, substantially increase the number of spaces available and encourage cooperative public/private partnerships. Each of these initiatives will be amplified in an annual work program undertaken by the City of Destin and the CRA.

Parking Program Initiatives

The following provides descriptions of programs that shall improve parking in the Harbor Redevelopment Area. Many of these programs are time sensitive while others are on-going in nature. Programs such as the parking study referenced below will result in the identification of specific capital projects that shall be undertaken to realize redevelopment results.

Parking Study

The City of Destin has performed several assessments identifying parking deficiencies within the Harbor Redevelopment Area, specifically the US 98 corridor. The City shall prepare a parking implementation plan. In drafting the implementation plan the City shall review past studies, update the deficiencies based on this review and current conditions and then prepare an action plan that specifies capital improvements, programs and other methods to eliminate parking problems and promote redevelopment within the Harbor Redevelopment Area. The parking study shall include the identification of locations where shared parking will work, an evaluation of the City’s parking codes and the need to provide public parking and perhaps even the construction of parking garages or structures to increase capacity in critical areas.

PARKING CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Parking Improvements

As indicated in the study referenced in 3.3.1.1, the CRA shall, in partnership with other government agencies, organizations or individuals as deemed appropriate, implement the parking improvement recommendations contained in the parking study. Parking improvements will include on-street parking concurrent with roadway improvements, and public parking garages and lots.

Harbor Access, Open Space, and Recreation

The opportunity exists for the Harbor Redevelopment Area to provide prime recreation programs and facilities within the general community, specifically along the waterfront. Open space areas shall be present throughout the redevelopment area on both private and public lands. The design and placement of open space will provide the opportunity to intertwine pedestrian facilities throughout the corridor creating an environment that is walkable. Each of these initiatives will be amplified in an annual work program undertaken by the City of Destin and the CRA.

HARBOR ACCESS, OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PROGRAM INITIATIVES

Recreational Programs and Special Events

The CRA shall support holding recreational programs and special events within the Harbor Redevelopment Area to promote Destin as a destination in addition to meeting local recreational needs.

Programs and Activities Supporting Commercial Access to the Harbor

The Destin area was founded as a fishing village and many of its residents want to preserve and protect the commercial fishing industry. The CRA shall evaluate measures to support the economic stability of the commercial and sport fishing industries

Harbor Access, Open Space and Recreation Capital Improvements

The following open space and recreational improvements have been derived through conversations with community leaders and from past studies performed for and by the City of Destin for the Harbor Redevelopment Area.

Harbor Boardwalk

The City of Destin has undertaken numerous planning initiatives to improve the functionality, aesthetics and long-term prosperity of the City. During these planning exercises one of the highest ranked projects is the development of a boardwalk along the north shore of the Destin Harbor. The City of Destin has created a committee comprised of property owners along the north shore of the Destin Harbor, formally called the North Shore Landowners Committee. Their sole mission was to draft a proposal to the City that will result in the voluntary conveyance of public easement along the water’s edge in order to construct a continuous boardwalk. The CRA shall support the initiatives of the North Shore Landowners Committee as they complete the planning process. The committee is currently completing Phase I of the Harbor Boardwalk Proposal. Phase II will be to complete an economic and parking demand analysis of the boardwalk project. The parking assessment can be completed as part of the parking study referred to previously. Phase III will be the actual engineering and construction of the boardwalk. The completion of the boardwalk area will enhance the provision of access to the waterfront, provide recreation opportunities and serve as an economic stimulator.

Other Water Access Improvements

The CRA shall consider other physical improvements that will advance access to the Harbor for not only the general public but the commercial industries dependent on the Destin Harbor for their livelihood. Such improvements will include marinas, boat ramps, fishing piers and supporting infrastructure such as parking and utilities.

Special Events Area

Create a special events area that serves to unify existing civic facilities at Stahlman Avenue and US 98. This space will serve as an area for special events and programs to provide recreation and promote the Harbor Redevelopment Area as a destination point of interest.

Other Open Space and Recreation Improvements

Improvements to Taylor Park shall be planned and implemented in addition to the creation of a new harbor side park with access from US 98. Open space can be provided and enhanced through the establishment of landscape promenade to serve the US 98 corridor and Harbor. Other improvements include a Visitor Center.

Urban Design and Infrastructure

The aesthetic or design framework of an urban area is a composite of its various visual and planning elements. Each of these elements may have a different visual character or use when perceived separately.

When viewed together, these discrete elements can determine the overall visual character or “image” of an urban area. The individual elements that help to define the character of an urban area may include major roadways, streetscape, public rights-of-way, buildings, landmarks, signage, greenspace, recreational areas, conservation areas and the edges of separate distinct areas.

The Finding of Necessity Report documented that the majority of commercial development is functionally obsolescent throughout the Redevelopment Area. The current proliferation of private signage and lack of uniform landscaping creates a visual blight that detracts from the area’s aesthetic environment.

In general, the urban design initiatives presented in this Plan will abide by the overall goals, objectives and policies, including type, size, density, massing and building height, as outlined in the City of Destin’s Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code. The following emphasizes urban design and infrastructure strategies that can greatly enhance the aesthetic and infrastructure conditions within the Harbor Redevelopment Area. Each of these initiatives will be amplified in an annual work program undertaken by the City of Destin and the CRA.

URBAN DESIGN AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMS

Evaluation of the Urban Design Framework

The Destin Harbor Area Master Plan addresses the Harbor Redevelopment Area’s urban design framework. The framework initiated by the Master Plan, shall be evaluated to ensure that the urban design framework correctly captures the desired enhancements for gateways, roadways, streetscape, right-of-way, parking, building and site components, location of open space and recreational areas, waterfront access, land uses and zoning. The urban design framework is a planning tool that establishes the foundation and tone for all planned improvements within the Harbor Redevelopment Area. The urban design framework evaluation shall result in a base plan that will guide the redevelopment as it relates to aesthetics in addition to function. The City of Destin’s Land Development Code, which is expected to be adopted by the end of 2003, shall also address the redevelopment area’s urban design framework.

Design Standards

The City shall encourage improved appearance and design of public and private projects as a means of encouraging more investment throughout the Harbor Redevelopment Area. The City shall prepare a document that presents the development regulations and design standards in a simple design manual format for public use. The design manual shall address streetscape, architectural, site, landscape, signage, public art and open space to provide visual continuity and a positive environment throughout the Redevelopment Area. Design standards establish a harmonious design vocabulary throughout an area for both new and existing facilities. The City’s Comprehensive Plan discusses development intensities, densities, maximum height, and buffers. This shall be considered when developing design standards for the Harbor Area. The City’s anticipated land development code shall be tested to ensure that they do the following.

- Create an environment that is attractive and safe for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists.
- Promote the use of proper construction materials that impart a sense of quality and permanence.
- Balance aesthetic values with function and economic realities.

Beautification Programs

Beautification programs such as Adopt-A- Median or Adopt-A-Right-of-Way can assist in the

implementation and maintenance of landscaped areas within the Redevelopment Area. City sponsored beautification will be provided through the implementation of streetscape and gateway improvements. The beautification program will also include the preservation and enhancement of existing open spaces and natural features within the Redevelopment area.

Incentives for Site and Structure Improvements

The City through the CRA initiative will encourage private properties to improve their sites and structures. The City can provide non-monetary incentives such as code waivers and special exemptions to private parties to upgrade and maintain their properties. The CRA can also provide assistance in identifying and pursuing CDB Grants (Community Development Block Grants) and other funding sources to assist private property improvements.

URBAN DESIGN AND INFRASTRUCTURE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Streetscape Improvements

Incorporate streetscape strategic planning in all projects to improve access, pedestrian and bicycle facilities and overall beautification for US 98 and other major roads within the Redevelopment Area. Streetscape planning shall provide a typical section for each roadway using consistent design guidelines throughout the Redevelopment Area. Any roadway and streetscape planning must include a phasing/ prioritization plan to construct the recommended improvements. Streetscape improvements may include improvements on US 98, Stahlman Avenue, Mountain Drive, Benning Drive, and Beach Ridge Drive.

Gateway/Signage/Wayfinding System

Promote the location of important destinations in the Redevelopment Area through a gateway/signage/ wayfinding system. Such a visual directional system, besides giving the Harbor Redevelopment Area an identity, is particularly important in its relationship to neighborhoods that are predominately residential and wish to enhance their security and integrity.

Stormwater and Utilities Improvements

All new development is required to provide adequate on-site stormwater and utility upgrades for the required development. The City of Destin’s City-wide Stormwater Management Plan will include the Harbor redevelopment area and address stormwater issues. This plan is anticipated to be completed by the end of the year 2003. Specific projects will be reviewed as part of an annual work program that will be undertaken by the City of Destin and the CRA.

General Strategy for Funding, Financing, Management, and Promotion Programs

The following programs and activities address the funding, financing, management and promotion of the Harbor Redevelopment Area. Detailed funding, financing, and management strategies will be provided in the annual work program that will describe the timing and components of the activities or improvements to be supported by the City and CRA.

Identification and Securing Equitable Funding and Financing Mechanisms

Identify and secure all feasible sources of funding to support the redevelopment initiatives described

in this Plan. Such mechanisms can include, but are not limited to, tax increment revenues, ad valorem revenue, non-ad valorem assessment revenue, taxable or non-taxable bonds, other public instruments, grants and public/private partnerships.

Property Assembly Program

The intent of the property assembly program is to provide suitable sites for parking and associated commercial development by aggregating specially targeted or adjacent substandard lots to create larger parcels. Parcel aggregation is an expensive proposition, especially in the case of waterfront property. Nonetheless, the City of Destin and CRA must develop an acquisition approach. Decisions to aggregate must substantially support the vision, objectives and initiatives as indicated in this Plan and public money allocated for aggregation shall be returned at resale when feasible. Because of the high cost of land acquisition and limited tax increment financing capabilities, the City shall have a multi-faceted approach to acquiring properties for redevelopment. When feasible, encourage acquisition and subsequent redevelopment by the private market; second, explore land acquisition by either the CRA or the City for the Redevelopment Area properties. Other programs include:

- Identify and inventory all relevant substandard properties.
- Document and analyze over all parking demands and constraints throughout the Redevelopment Area.
- Document site criteria for modern commercial developments by business type to facilitate the understanding of contemporary developer site and parking requirements.
- Map and index all commercial properties in the Redevelopment Area to provide detailed information on parcel boundaries, sizes, and ownership.
- The City shall facilitate aggregation and redevelopment of “problem” or constrained parcels or groups of parcels.
- The CRA and City shall assist in the purchase, sale, negotiation and coordination of land assembly.
- To assure the City’s and CRA’s success, public resources must be dedicated to fund the mapping and indexing of all properties in the Redevelopment Area; funding to research or otherwise obtain contemporary site development requirements; provision of City resources and staff time to negotiate acquisitions and public/private partnerships with potential developers; and, funding to finance land acquisitions by either the City or the CRA (some of which will be recovered or rolled over as properties are resold).

Branding and Promotion

Create a logo and identify package that can be used to identify the Harbor Redevelopment Area on literature, banners, gateways and promotional campaigns.

Comprehensive Plan, Land Use and Zoning Changes

As redevelopment initiatives are implemented, the CRA shall evaluate the impact of such initiatives on the City’s comprehensive plan, existing/future land use and zoning.

Programs that Encourage Public-Private Partnerships

The CRA shall develop programs and identify opportunities for public-private partnerships in the redevelopment of the Harbor Redevelopment Area. The establishment and maintenance of partnerships will serve not only to leverage the tax increment and other revenue sources but also stimulate community interest and support. Partnerships may take several forms from financial partnering to technical support to the promotion of the area. Each partnership opportunity shall be evaluated on a case-by-case basis

for its overall value and impacts.

An interesting opportunity public-private partnership opportunity is identified in the Comprehensive Plan Policy 2-1.3.6: Promote Destin Harbor Water Taxi Service. The City shall coordinate with the private sector to encourage the development of a water taxi service within the Destin Harbor. The intent is to encourage the development of water taxi service as an alternate mode of transportation.

PROGRAMS THAT MAINTAIN A SAFE AND CLEAN ENVIRONMENT

The CRA shall consider programs that enhance the safety or perception of safety within the Redevelopment Area. The following are a few recommended programs.

Community Policing

The Florida Community Redevelopment Act encourages “community policing innovation. ” This is defined as policing techniques or strategies designed to reduce crime by reducing opportunities for, and increasing the perceived risks of engaging in, criminal activity through visible presence of law enforcement in the community, including, but not limited to, community mobilization, neighborhood block watch, citizen patrol, foot patrol, storefront police stations or intensified motorized patrol. The intent of these programs will be to improve the actual and perceived security, building safety and appearance of the Redevelopment Area. The following principles, based upon the experience of other communities, shall be established to guide these programs, they include: addressing environmental problems which cause or encourage criminal activity; involve local citizens in the campaign against crime; make the police force approachable and trusted and foster an image of the community as a safe place to live, work and do business. To realize the full intent of the community-policing, the following initiatives shall be undertaken.

- Law enforcement officers will circulate throughout the Redevelopment Area on a regular basis to meet visitors, residents and business owners, listen to their security concerns and ask for their ideas to solve crime problems. Whenever possible, officers shall attend community meetings and special events.
- Periodically analyze the crime “blotter” to assess the numbers and types of law enforcement responses within the Redevelopment Area. This analysis can be used to identify problems and trends.
- Create a special patrol or “beat” for the Redevelopment Area to provide a stronger law enforcement presence, additional door checks, bicycle patrols and like alternatives.
- Develop innovative techniques to address special needs of visitors.
- Develop and implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) standards to correct any security problems related to site improvements such as lighting and vegetation. These standards can be printed and distributed throughout the Redevelopment Area. The CPTED standards can be developed as part of the design guidelines for the Redevelopment Area.

Code Enforcement

In addition to community policing, the City shall evaluate the potential of more aggressive code enforcement activities both within, and near, the Redevelopment Area. This will be undertaken to assist in elimination of substandard zoning, building, landscaping and signs. It is important to assure the surrounding and adjacent properties are treated in the same manner. The following are implementation strategies for code enforcement activities.

- The City can evaluate existing and proposed codes for the Redevelopment Area and develop a more focused code enforcement program in order to respond to the specific needs of this area.
- To accomplish these strategies the City will need to develop and refine a code enforcement

program and use code enforcement staff as required. The City in developing and enhancing the code enforcement program within the Redevelopment Area may use redevelopment funds.

Maintenance of Redevelopment Area Database

Creating and maintaining a public database will encourage businesses to remain, relocate or start-up within the Redevelopment Area. The creation and maintenance of such a database will consist of compiling and regularly updating a database of available land and commercial building space to provide prospective recruits with detailed location information. The database shall include the address and parcel identification number, total square footage, proposed projects, available square footage and price for each available housing, retail, office and industrial property in the Redevelopment Area. It shall also include information on property contacts and a brief property description. The database shall also include prospective tenants, owners and developers as a complement to the available space database described. This database can help identify potential recruits who fit the profiles shown in the market analysis and the spaces shown in the available database. Among the information to be compiled will be the sites, location and price range criteria of potential recruits.

DESTIN HARBOR CRA PLAN - DRAFT

July 2024



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CITY COUNCIL

Mayor Bobby Wagner
Councilman John Stephens
Councilman Torey Geile
Councilman Dewey Destin
Councilman Jim Bagby
Councilwoman Terésa Hebert
Councilman Johnny King
Councilman Kevin Schmidt

CITY STAFF

Louis Zunguze, MURP, AICP, City Manager
Community Development Director
Steve O'Connor, Principal Planner
Daniel Butler, Senior Planner
Tina Deater, AICP, Planner
Ryan Scott, City Engineer
Joe Bodi, Engineering Assistant
Dinah Kertz, Engineering Assistant

HARBOR CRA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Capt. Jim Green, Chairman
Sandy Trammell, Vice Chairwoman
Mike Buckingham
Christian Meyers
Casey Jones
Guy Tadlock
Ian Blaise

CONSULTING TEAM

3TP Ventures





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....2

Introduction.....6

District Existing Conditions Analysis.....10

Strategic Approach to the Harbor District.....19

 Issues and Opportunities.....19

 Strategies.....20

Investment in the Harbor District.....23

 Prioritization.....23

 Projects.....25

Implementation Plan.....35

Financial Plan.....40

Legal and Regulatory Issues.....45

Appendices.....48

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Harbor CRA Plan is the Community Redevelopment Plan for the Harbor district of the City. The Harbor district contains 397.3 acres of land which is primarily privately owned. The district includes several civic buildings, parks, the Zerbe-Calhoun Historic District and the Destin Harbor Boardwalk. This district is generally bounded by Choctawhatchee Bay on the west, Destin Harbor to the south, Beach Drive on the east and Azalea and Pine Streets on the north. The CRA Board originally adopted the Harbor CRA Plan in 2003, and this 2024 Plan Update is the first since the plan's adoption. The City's goals for the Harbor district are to provide better access, safety, and connectivity for locals and tourists alike to visit the Destin Harbor and support the businesses in the district.

The Harbor CRA Plan also fulfills the requirements of Florida Statutes 163.360 for CRA plans. As such, the intent of the Plan is to address "blight" and utilize property taxes collected within the district boundary for public improvements and redevelopment specifically within the district. All funds used for the CRA must support the implementation of public improvements and strategies within the adopted Plan for the CRA district. The required Finding of Necessity Report prepared when the CRA District was established identified several infrastructure issues, including an inadequate street layout and unsanitary or unsafe conditions, as contributing to the "blight" condition. These issues continue to hinder the City's goals for the Harbor district.

The 2024 Harbor CRA Plan Update focused on evaluating the existing condition of the Harbor CRA and reviewing the public projects that have been completed since 2003. The plan's update identifies three primary issues that the City faces in the Harbor district:

1. **Getting to the Harbor District** – Congestion on U.S. 98 for east-west traffic with few alternative routes, public parking space shortages.
2. **Getting Across Harbor Boulevard/U.S. 98** – Insufficient safe and convenient routes across U.S. Highway 98 for pedestrians and non-vehicular modes of transportation.
3. **Getting to the Harbor Boardwalk** – Public access to the Harbor Boardwalk is difficult to locate and largely unmarked.

To strengthen the connection between the north side of Harbor Boulevard where many of the Harbor support facilities, such as parking, are located, and the Destin Harbor, the 2024 Plan update identifies near-term (0-2 years), mid-term (2-5 years) and long-term (5+ years) strategies for the CRA Board to pursue. These





strategies vary from beautification and wayfinding enhancements to the construction of a parking garage in the Harbor district.

The Harbor CRA Advisory Committee (HCRAAC) identified eight key projects in the Harbor CRA district in the next 20 years. The HCRAAC then reviewed and ranked the key projects in terms of priority as well as funding contribution. The top priority is the design and construction of a parking garage in the location of the current Marler public parking lot. This property is strategically located on the north side of Harbor Boulevard, about 0.2 miles from the newly completed Captain Royal Melvin Heritage Park on the Harbor, and near the heart of commercial activity in the Harbor district.

The second ranked project is the completion of the Cross Town Connector, a new east-west collector roadway north of Harbor Boulevard. This will provide a much-needed alternate east-west route through the City to help alleviate congestion on U.S. Highway 98 (Harbor Blvd.).

The third ranked project is the land acquisition and design related to Phase II of the Harbor Boardwalk. This segment of boardwalk is proposed to continue west around the point of Destin, north up to Clement Taylor Park. The City recently acquired the waterfront property located at 1 Calhoun Avenue, which will serve as a gateway into the Harbor district given its location at the western point of the City. It's important to note that while all of the key projects are important, they may be implemented using a variety of funding mechanisms rather than just CRA revenue, such as a future mobility fee.

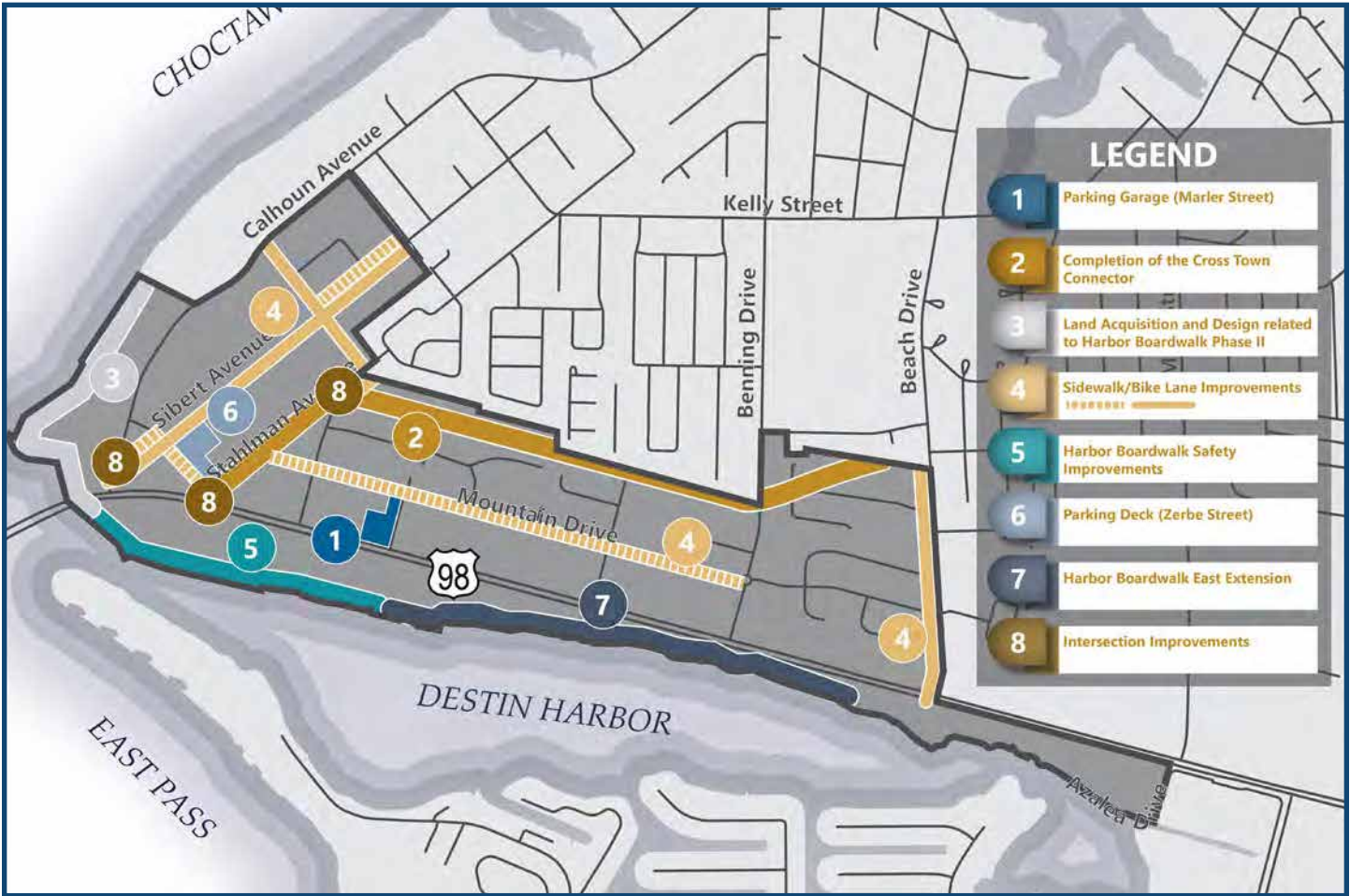


Figure 1 - Projects for Harbor CRA

The following pages present the Harbor CRA Plan through four primary sections. The first section provides an analysis of the existing conditions of the district for land use, transportation, parking, and stormwater management. The second section includes a discussion of the overarching issues and goals for the Harbor District. The third section provides a detailed list of key projects, their recommended prioritization, and planning-level cost estimates. The last section includes details related to the implementation of the Plan and a detailed breakdown of the finances of the CRA, including encumbered and forecasted revenue through the duration of the Harbor CRA, which is set to expire in 2043.



INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The City in 2003 identified the Harbor district as a redevelopment area in Destin. The Harbor district at that time was envisioned as the principal tourist and business corridor within the City. That vision has become reality, and the district continues to be viewed that way today. Throughout the revitalization process, which began when the Harbor CRA district was established, the City and community have shown their commitment to addressing and/or mitigating the constraints or conditions associated with site and/or structure deterioration, economic decline, inadequate street layout, harbor and bay access, transportation and parking facilities, functional deterioration or obsolescence and other conditions of “blight” as described in the Harbor Finding of Necessity Report. The 2024 Plan update entailed an evaluation of the existing plan; physical conditions of the district; and a refresh of the goals, projects and strategies needed to maintain this vision of the Harbor.

The City’s approach to the Harbor CRA Plan update is to focus on a foundation of public engagement and current data. Based on that information, the Harbor CRA Advisory Committee identified public projects and initiatives which would then help foster the goals for the Harbor district, while simultaneously encouraging participation from the private sector. These projects and initiatives may be funded through tax increment revenues derived from the Harbor district, other City-revenue sources such as a future

mobility fee, public-private partnerships, as well as State and Federal funding opportunities, which are explained further in the Implementation and Financial Plans.

While the original vision of the Harbor becoming the economic center of the City has been realized since the CRA district’s establishment, the increase in development and commercial activity over the last 21 years welcomes new challenges related to the Harbor district. The Harbor CRA Advisory Committee updated their original vision with new direction for investment in the Harbor CRA district. All new investments in the district with CRA dollars should support one of the following goals: getting to and traveling within the Harbor district, getting safely across U.S. Highway 98, and getting down to the Harbor Boardwalk.

The 2024 Plan update focuses on the existing conditions of the Harbor district and updated public improvement projects designed to implement the three new goals mentioned above. For the plan to adequately address the needs of the district, the issues of vehicular, non-vehicular and pedestrian transportation, parking, and waterfront accessibility are explored further throughout this document.

FINDING OF NECESSITY OVERVIEW

The Finding of Necessity Report dated May 23, 2003 studied the physical, economic and regulatory conditions of the Harbor district for potential causes of “blight” which would demonstrate the need for a Community Redevelopment Area to be established. If conditions of blight were found to be present, that would allow the City to utilize tax increment financing to fund projects that specifically are aimed at eradicating the blight described in the Finding of Necessity Report.

At the time of this report, a two-step process was used to determine if blight was present. First, the study area must contain “a substantial number of deteriorated, or deteriorating structures, in which conditions, as indicated by government-maintained statistics or other studies are leading to economic distress or endanger life or property.” The report confirmed that a large portion of commercial buildings were “functionally deteriorated, rendered obsolete by the constraints of site, structure placement, access, residential platting adapted to commercial use, and insufficient parking.” Due to those conditions observed on commercial properties, the first criterion of establishing blight was met.

The second step required that two or more of the fourteen factors which contribute to blight listed in the Florida Statutes be present in the study area. After an analysis of the district, six of the fourteen factors were found to be present in the Harbor area. The following list includes the factors found to contribute to blight in the Harbor CRA district, and a brief explanation for each one.

1. **Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout.** At the time of this study, the primary concerns related to this subject were lack of internal street connections to redirect traffic off of U.S. Hwy 98, localized ponding within certain local roadways, absence of continuous sidewalks, queuing onto U.S. Hwy 98 due to insufficient parking on private properties, vehicular stacking at intersections along U.S. Hwy 98.
2. **Faulty layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility and usefulness.** Commercial lots in the Harbor were found to be inadequate specifically in relation to their size. Due to the dimensional restrictions of the lots, an excessive number of access points along major roadways in the Harbor area was required. Additionally, the size of the lots put limitations on the on-site amenities required for development, such as parking, and landscaping. Finally, there were a significant number of properties observed south of Harbor Blvd and west of Calhoun Avenue that did not have access to the Destin Harbor or Choctawhatchee Bay, and therefore also properties that did not have access to the main roadways.

3. **Unsanitary or unsafe conditions.** The two primary contributors to this factor were found to be insufficient sidewalks throughout the Harbor area, and lack of connectivity between subareas of the Harbor, which forces traffic onto the major roadways to travel locally.
4. **Deterioration off site or other improvements.** The combination of lack of sidewalks and pedestrian oriented amenities, perceived traffic stacking, lack of adequate public parking, and insufficient stormwater improvements, has resulted in a deterioration of public infrastructure and sustainability. Additionally, many of the existing commercial improvements are functionally deteriorated, specifically parking and access points.
5. **Inadequate and outdated building patterns.** The following deficiencies demonstrate the inadequate and outdated building patterns in the Harbor at the time of the study: planned intensity relative to the size and adequacy of platted lots, absence or deterioration of infrastructure, poor connectivity among neighborhoods prompting the use of regional arterials for local travel, no sidewalks, no designated public spaces, unrestricted and divided ingress and egress among numerous commercial properties, commercial intrusion into residential areas stemming from inadequate lot depth, poor design controls, and the absence of transitional zones that preclude opportunities to insert buffering, and no view corridors.
6. **Diversity of Ownership.** The study identified the district's diverse ownership as one of its most pressing problems. Due to the quantity of different owners, the non-resident status for a large portion of owners, and patterns of small lots, it will be a challenge for future developers or investors to acquire sufficient property in the Harbor to change the established development patterns and use.

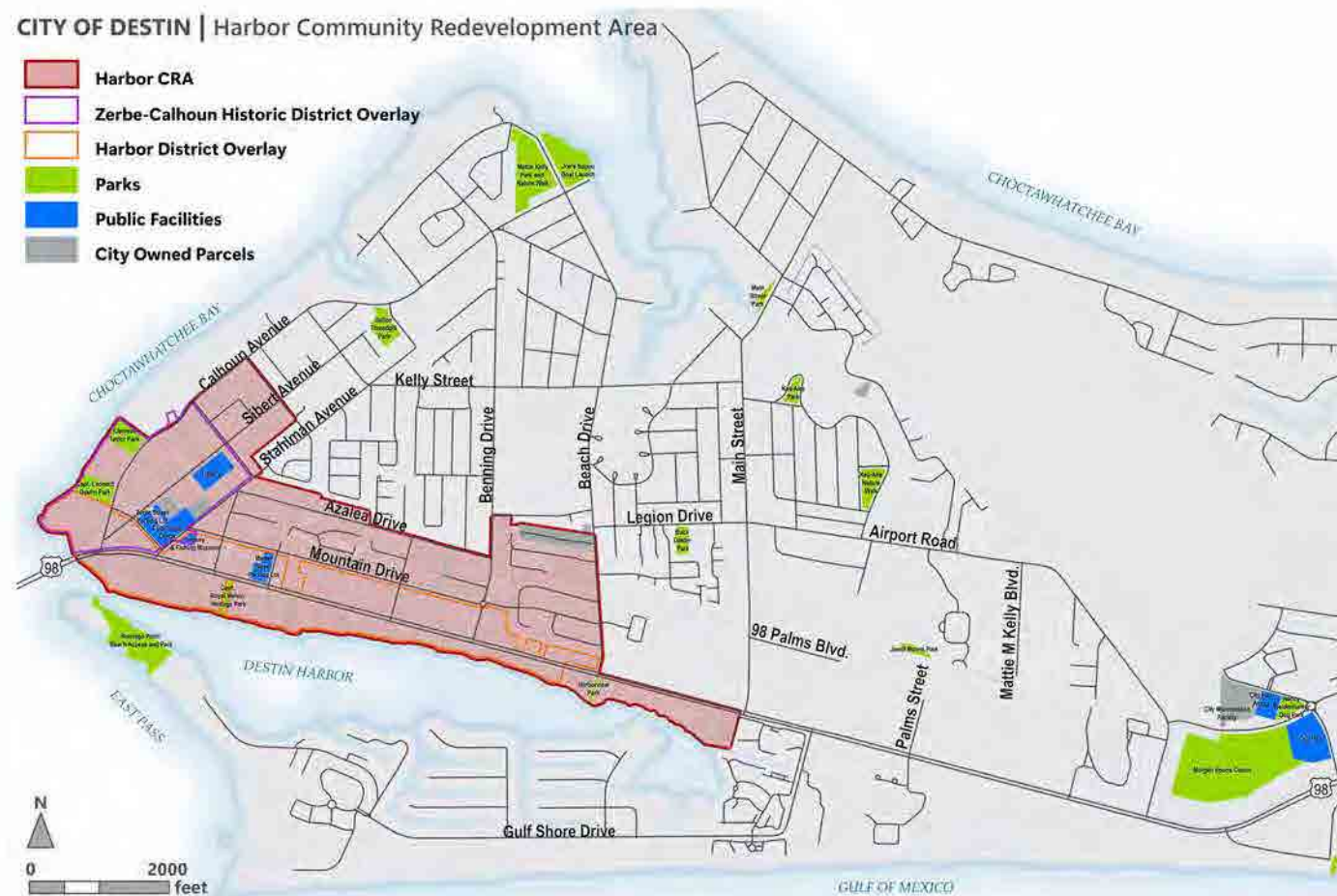


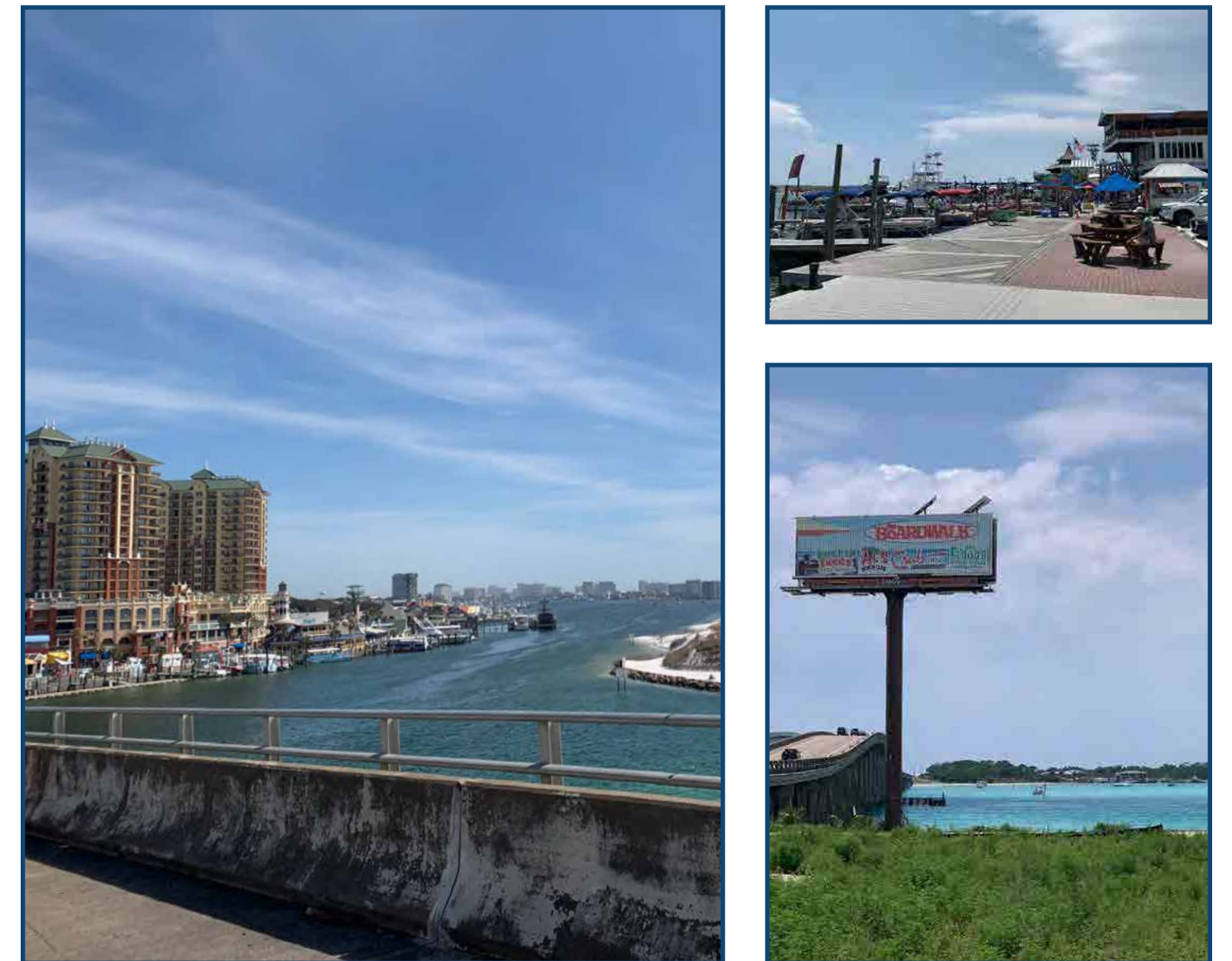
Figure 2 - Boundary Map of Harbor CRA

INTENT OF THE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

The intent of this Plan update is to serve as a framework for guiding development and redevelopment of the Harbor Community Redevelopment Area through the lifetime of the CRA, which expires in 2043. This Plan identifies redevelopment objectives, programs, and capital projects to be undertaken to reverse blighting trends within the Harbor Redevelopment Area. This Plan addresses financing and implementation strategies as well as management and administration opportunities. These strategies will continue to be refined as they are implemented. While based on the most accurate data available, the various strategies and costs identified in this Plan update will require additional review and action by the CRA Board as specific projects are initiated, refined, and implemented.

The Plan's focus is mitigation or correction of various transportation, parking, waterfront access and safety issues documented in the Harbor Finding of Necessity Report.

The Harbor Community Redevelopment Plan describes objectives, initiatives, and a financial plan to mitigate or correct blight factors and concludes with a demonstration of how this Plan is consistent and complementary with the City of Destin's Comprehensive Plan and other studies done for the Harbor District.



DISTRICT EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

LAND USE

The Harbor CRA contains 397.3 acres of land, most of which is privately owned except for public right of way, city-owned parcels, and parks. The district also includes the Zerbe-Calhoun Historic District, which is north of U.S. 98 and west of Stahlman Avenue. This district is home to several civic buildings and parks including Clement Taylor Park, Captain Leonard Destin Park, Destin Community Center, and Destin Library. Land uses are primarily commercial in nature along U.S. 98 and the Harbor. The highest intensity land uses are concentrated along the Harbor and U.S. 98. The intensity of development tapers moving northward from U.S. 98. Lower density residential uses become more common along and north of Azalea Drive and within the Zerbe-Calhoun Historic District on the west side of the Harbor CRA.

Table 1 below shows the number of acres by land use type in the Harbor CRA. This is based on the future land use for each parcel as of January of 2023. Some parcels are vacant or undeveloped despite being designated for a specific use. There are about 31 undeveloped acres within the CRA and the average vacant parcel size is 0.36 acres.

Table 1 - Land Uses in the Harbor CRA District

Land Use	Acres	Percent
Residential - Low Density	48.0	12%
Residential - Medium Density	31.0	8%
Residential - High Density	11.6	3%
Mixed Use	148.4	37%
Commercial	41.2	10%
Industrial	0.0	0%
Residential, Office, and Institutional	12.3	3%
Institutional	23.0	6%
Recreational	7.9	2%
Public Right-of-Way	73.9	19%
Total	397.3	100%

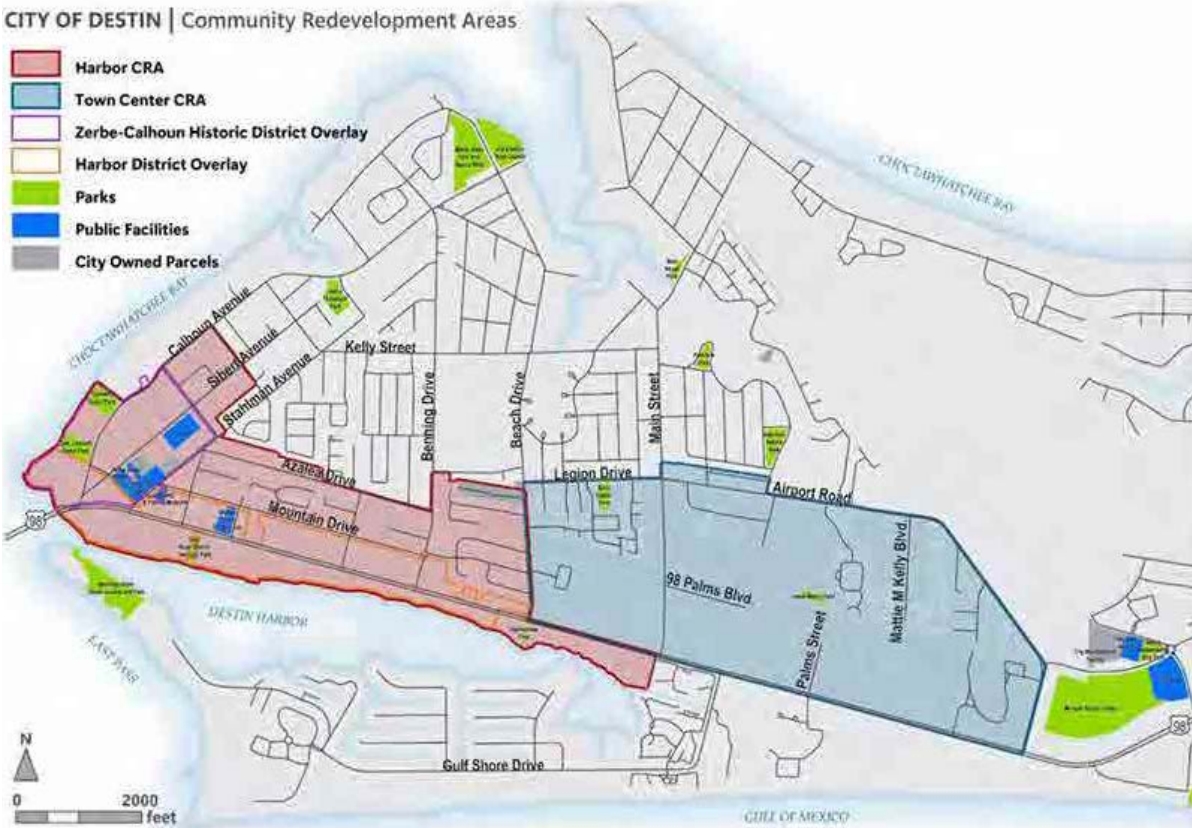


Figure 3 - CRA District Boundaries

The Future Land Use Map and table below provides more detail on where these uses are allowed within the Harbor CRA and what each designation’s limitations are for density, height, floor area ratio, and open space.



Figure 4 - Future Land Use Map for the Harbor CRA as of March 2022

Table 2 - Land Uses Limitations in the Harbor CRA District

Land Use	Acre-age	Use Type	Max. Density (units/acre)	Max. Height	Max. Nonresidential Floor Area Ratio	Min. Open Space (%)
Bay Estates	6.23	Single-Family Residential	2.90	35'/3 stories	N/A	25
Low Density Residential	41.80	Single-Family Residential	5.81	35'/3 stories	N/A	25
Medium Density Residential	31.02	Single-Family Residential	5.81	35'/3 stories	N/A	25
		Multi-Family Residential	9.90	35'/3 stories	N/A	
High Density Residential	11.64	Single-Family Residential	9.90	30'/3 stories	N/A	30
		Multi-Family Residential	16.90	50'/4 stories	N/A	25
Residential, Office, Institutional	12.34	Single-Family Residential	9.90	35'/3 stories	N/A	25
		Multi-Family Residential	12.00	50'/4 stories	N/A	
		All other permitted nonresidential uses	N/A	35'/3 stories	0.5	
Institutional	23.00	Institutional uses permitted	N/A	35'/3 stories	0.5	25
Calhoun Mixed Use	5.93	Single-Family Residential	6.00	35'/3 stories	N/A	25
		Multi-Family Residential	12.00	50'/4 stories	N/A	
		All other permitted nonresidential uses	N/A	50'/4 stories	0.5	
Calhoun Mixed Use - Village	17.76	Single-Family Residential	9.00	35'/3 stories	N/A	25
		Multi-Family Residential	12.00	50'/4 stories	N/A	
		All other permitted nonresidential uses	N/A	50'/4 stories	0.5	
North Harbor Mixed Use	56.91	Single-Family Residential	9.00	35'/3 stories	N/A	25
		Multi-Family Residential	24.00	50'/4 stories	N/A	
		All other permitted nonresidential uses	N/A	75'/6 stories	1.5	
South Harbor Mixed Use	67.74	Single-Family Residential	9.00	30'/3 stories	N/A	25
		Multi-Family Residential	24.00	50'/4 stories	N/A	
		All other permitted nonresidential uses	N/A	75'/6 stories	1.5	
Recreation	7.86	Recreation Uses	N/A	35'/3 stories	0.2	25
Commercial Trades and Services	41.22	Nonresidential except for custodian or night-watchman residence	1.00 per development	35'/3 stories	1.30	25



TRANSPORTATION

The HarborCRA district has a fairly well-connected street network, which is good for all modes of travel. However, there are some key gaps, particularly in the pedestrian and bicycle network, and a few strategic connections would provide for better east-west connectivity, which could help alleviate congestion on U.S. 98. This section summarizes the key issues, pulling from information the City collected and analyzed during the development of a Mobility Plan in 2023 and 2024.

Among the key transportation issues within the Harbor CRA district are missing sidewalks and bicycle facilities. Figure 5 below depicts missing sidewalk segments within the Harbor CRA district on Azalea Drive, Mountain Drive, Calhoun Avenue, Sibert Avenue, Stahlman Avenue, and Benning Drive. Collector streets with bicycle facility gaps include Stahlman Avenue, Sibert Avenue, and Azalea Drive. Correcting these deficiencies is a focus of the City’s Mobility Plan and are also important for addressing the original “blight” condition of inadequate street layout and unsafe conditions, both of which contributed to the finding of necessity for the CRA district.

Vehicular congestion is another significant issue, which is also connected to defective or inadequate street layout. The 2003 Harbor Community Redevelopment Plan stated that “the absence of satisfactory internal connections forces local traffic onto US 98, which adds unnecessary and potentially dangerous trips to this arterial road.” While FDOT and the City have made transportation improvements to address this issue, the layout of streets pushes much of the vehicular traffic onto U.S. 98. The Crosstown Connector project, which is a priority of the City, would create a more seamless and consistent connection among Azalea Drive, Legion Drive, and Airport Road to create a viable alternative to U.S. 98 for east-west trips.

KEY ISSUES

- Missing sidewalk segments on Azalea Dr, Mountain Dr, Calhoun Ave, Sibert Ave, Stahlman Ave, and Benning Dr
- Missing bicycle facilities on Stahlman Ave, Sibert Ave, and Azalea Dr
- Vehicular congestion



Figure 5 - Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Gap

The table below lists traffic volumes for the PM peak hour and recent changes to volumes for arterial and collector roadways within the Harbor CRA district.

Table 3 - Traffic volumes for arterial and collector roadways

Roadway	From	To	2021	2017	% Change
U.S. 98	Marler Bridge	Stahlman Ave	3,282	3,075	7%
	Stahlman Ave	Benning Dr	2,909	2,505	16%
	Benning Dr	Beach Dr	3,255	2,815	16%
	Beach Dr	Main St	3,279	2,841	15%
Azalea Drive	Stahlman Ave	Benning Dr	587	524	12%
Benning Drive	U.S. 98	Kelly St	398	269	48%
Calhoun Avenue	U.S. 98	Kelly St	501	351	43%
Legion Drive	Benning Dr	Beach Dr	609	509	20%
	Beach Dr	Main St	1,098	1,226	-10%
Mountain Drive	Stahlman Ave	Benning Dr	592	536	10%
	Benning Dr	Beach Dr	466	633	-26%
Sibert Avenue	Calhoun Ave	Kelly St	580	324	79%
Stahlman Avenue	U.S. 98	Kelly St	762	714	7%

Level of service is a quantitative measure of how well vehicle traffic flows on a roadway segment. The LOS describes roadways using a letter from A to F to describe performance, with A indicating the best performance and F the worst. It is important to note that the A to F letters do not necessarily indicate desired performance. A LOS of A is often not feasible, cost effective, or even desirable given other competing transportation or societal goals. As FDOT states in its Quality/Level of Service Handbook, “transportation professionals widely consider LOS D for the automobile mode an acceptable condition, and this threshold is often used as a design condition in urbanized areas.” Therefore, LOS D is the standard for performance of the state-maintained U.S. 98/Harbor Boulevard.

The vehicular level of service for an arterial roadway segment is based on the volume-to-capacity (v/c) ratio. The v/c ratios for 2011, 2016, and 2021 on Destin’s only arterial roadway (U.S. 98) are shown in the table below. These tables are color coded to show how each segment has performed over time. A v/c ratio under 1.0 indicates this segment is meeting the LOS D standard. A v/c ratio of more than 1.0 indicates the segment is not meeting this standard. Green is meeting the standards, yellow is near the standard limit, and red is failing (does not meet the standards).

Table 4 - Level of Service for US Hwy 98

US 98 Segments - Volume to Capacity	LOS	2021	2016	2011
US Hwy 98 between Marler Bridge and Stahlman Avenue	E	1.03	0.92	0.91
US Hwy 98 between Stahlman Avenue and Benning Drive	D	0.97	0.88	1.00
US Hwy 98 between Benning Drive and Beach Drive	E	1.00	0.93	1.05
US Hwy 98 between Beach Drive and Main Street	E	1.01	0.95	1.03

None of the City’s collector roadways fall beneath the LOS D standard, as shown in the map below.



Figure 6 - Level of Service for Arterial and Collector Roadways

¹ Florida DOT 2020 Quality/Level of Service Handbook.

While vehicular LOS is an important measure of each street's congestion, Destin's streets do much more than move vehicles. They are an important part of the public realm and it is vital that they are safe and inviting for all users. Streets within the Harbor CRA are also evaluated against LOS standards for pedestrian, bike, and transit modes. New development within designated multimodal transportation districts (MMTDs) are required to contribute towards achieving the adopted multimodal level of service (MMLOS) standards for collector roadways, which is LOS C for both bicycle and pedestrian modes. The Harbor CRA is within an MMTD, so this standard applies for its collector roadways.

PARKING

Parking is needed to support Destin's economy. Tourists and people that travel to Destin for work each day depend on parking. However, parking also brings negative effects that the City should work to minimize. Large expanses of pavement contribute to stormwater runoff and flooding, and dedicating extensive land to surface parking reduces land that could otherwise be used for shops, restaurants, parks and open space, or other compatible uses for the area that make Destin a desirable place. Parking should be provided efficiently so that it does not degrade the quality of place and quality of life that people in Destin value. This section outlines key parking issues and solutions.

The City in 2016 studied the supply and demand for parking spaces in the Harbor CRA district. This study yielded an inventory of spaces – private and public – within the district and found there were 5,959 parking spaces with 2,846 spaces (48 percent) located on the north side of Harbor Boulevard and 3,113 spaces (52 percent) located on the south side. There were 722 parking spaces (13 percent) serving residential uses and 5,187 parking spaces serving non-residential land uses (87 percent) at the time. The majority, 94 percent, of the parking spaces were within privately owned lots.

The study compared the supply of parking with parking demand, which was estimated using existing land use data and the parking requirements outlined in the City of Destin Land Development Code (LDC). This analysis found a significant surplus of parking north of U.S. 98, but a shortage of non-residential parking south of U.S. 98 of up to 420 spaces. While the destinations on the south side of U.S. 98, such as the Harbor Boardwalk, are close to parking on the north side, the width of U.S. 98 and speed of vehicles traveling along the highway make it challenging for people to cross on foot or any other non-vehicular mode of travel.

There are four designated pedestrian crosswalks along U.S. 98 in the Harbor District that serve to help pedestrians travel from parking lots to destinations on the south side of the road. These are located at Melvin Street, the Marler Street Parking Lot, Palmetto Street, and Stahlman Avenue. However, the wait time to cross at these locations can be long, which hinders the City's efforts to encourage people to park on the north side of U.S. 98 and walk to final destinations. Among the strategies identified by the City in 2017 for addressing the parking supply and spatial mismatch issues were the following:

1. Increase total number of available public parking spaces for residents and visitors within the Harbor CRA District.
2. Create better functioning parking lots and access drives that minimize pedestrian-vehicle conflicts and reduce traffic congestion by reducing recirculation traffic seeking parking spaces.
3. Once sufficient parking is increased north of Harbor Blvd, decrease number of parking spaces necessary south of Harbor Blvd to allow for highest and best use of harbor front properties.
4. Enhance wayfinding to public parking destinations.
5. Connect the Boardwalk to the north side of Harbor Blvd. to safely access additional public parking.



There are four public parking lots in the Harbor CRA:

- Marler Street: This lot sits between U.S. 98 and Mountain Drive. It has 146 spaces.
- Destin Community Center: This lot serves the Community Center at the intersection of Zerbe Street and Stahlman Avenue. It has 86 spaces.
- Zerbe Street: This lot is at the corner of Zerbe Street and Sibert Avenue. It has 51 spaces.
- Destin Library: This lot serves the library on Sibert Avenue. It has 64 spaces. However, these spaces are only available after library hours.

The City has identified both supply and demand solutions to the parking challenges of the Harbor CRA District. On the demand side the City in 2019 increased the cost of parking from \$1 for the first hour and 50 cents for every additional hour to a flat rate of \$5 for 24 hours. Prior to 2017 there was no cost to park in the public lots. The pay-to-park policy has helped optimize parking, making it easier for visitors to find a space. The City also identified opportunities to expand the supply of public parking spaces in the Harbor CRA District. Destin added spaces on Sibert Avenue behind the Community Center and is considering a project to convert surface spaces in either the Marler Street or Zerbe Street surface parking lots into a multi-level parking structure.

There are additional opportunities to reduce demand for vehicular parking. These strategies would include services such as a circulator shuttle, new shared-use paths and crosswalks, and shared parking among adjacent properties with different peak parking demand. These strategies can help shift people from driving to other modes, and to make the most efficient use of existing surface parking.

STORMWATER FACILITIES

The Harbor CRA has extensive impervious surfaces, which increase stormwater runoff volumes and affect water quality. Stormwater runoff is the leading cause of localized flooding and water quality concerns. The solutions for addressing stormwater include infrastructure such as pipes, culverts, and conveyances, which help manage surface runoff to protect property and prevent pollution.

The City’s Comprehensive Plan recognizes the effects of stormwater runoff on the Harbor and calls for improving water quality by implementing stormwater best management practices to remove suspended solids and nutrients from runoff entering the Harbor and other receiving water bodies (objective 4-4.1). The City’s 2021 Stormwater Master Plan Update looked at the Harbor in detail to identify projects that can help address runoff and improve water quality. A pair of issues and associated improvement projects are listed below.

- Erosion and flooding issues in the vicinity of the Zerbe Street and Sibert Avenue intersection. The recommended improvement is a new culvert along Sibert and Zerbe to collect and treat stormwater in this area at an estimated cost of about \$73,000.
- Flooding along Reddin Brunson Road and adjacent roadways due to a lack of roadside swales and stormwater conveyance. The recommended improvement is purchasing a property along Reddin Brunson Road for construction of a detention pond at an estimated cost of \$410,000.

The Stormwater Master Plan also recommended the City adopt a stormwater utility fee, which would provide funding to replace aging stormwater infrastructure. The system is aging and in need of frequent and costly repairs. These repairs are the City’s responsibility, and the fee would provide a steady source of funding for upgrades and repairs to existing stormwater facilities.

STRATEGIC APPROACH TO THE HARBOR DISTRICT

The existing conditions of the Harbor district discussed above point to key issues and opportunities that exist within the district. This section describes those issues and opportunities identified in detail, as well as strategies to achieve the overall goal outlined in the original Harbor CRA plan, which states “to be redeveloped as an easily accessible, economically sustainable and attractive waterfront-oriented district that provides safe transportation, pedestrian and recreation facilities in a manner that promotes a favorable identity for the City of Destin.” This section expands this goal further, by indicating the areas that should be strengthened by redevelopment initiatives, financial incentives, and public improvements. Additionally, the projects included in this plan, and other investments in the Harbor district, can work together to achieve the City’s goals.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Conditions in the Harbor district have improved during the last 20 years, and is viewed today as the economic heart of the City. Additionally, the Harbor Boardwalk has become a popular and cherished destination for locals and tourists alike. Building on the success of the Boardwalk is an effective way for the City to achieve its goals for the Harbor.

A key need for the Harbor CRA district is better access to the Boardwalk. There are a few distinct issues that affect access, which are summarized below.

1. **Getting to the Harbor District** – U.S. 98 is the City’s most congested transportation facility. This congestion at times is a deterrent to locals and tourists traveling to the Harbor district. The City has few alternatives to U.S. 98 for east-west through traffic. As such, this traffic blends with local traffic that is using U.S. 98 to access destinations in the Harbor district.
2. **Getting Across U.S. 98** – Pedestrian access and safety are key issues in the Harbor district. The multi-lane roadway is wide and vehicles often travel at a high rate of speed, which makes crossing the roadway difficult on foot, bike, or using a mobility device such as a wheelchair. Florida DOT has installed signalized pedestrian crossings of U.S. 98 within the Harbor district, which helps address the need. Yet pedestrians can face long waits to cross at these locations, and along much of U.S. 98 the sidewalks and streetscape are not designed for pedestrian comfort.
3. **Getting to the Harbor Boardwalk** - Once across to the south side of U.S. 98 people still face some challenges accessing the Harbor Boardwalk. Access is provided largely through parking lots and businesses on private properties. However, the new Royal Melvin Heritage Park marks a significant improvement, providing an inviting and central public access point to the Harbor. Yet visibility of the Harbor Boardwalk from U.S. 98 is obstructed in many places by buildings, slopes, and vegetation. Signage directing people to the Harbor Boardwalk is lacking in many areas. And the sidewalks on parts of U.S. 98 are narrow and lack significant buffers to the fast-moving traffic on U.S. 98. These issues underscore the importance of creating a stronger physical and visual connection from U.S. 98 to the water.

By improving access to the Harbor district and the Harbor Boardwalk the City can increase the economic and recreational value of this unique asset while enhancing pedestrian safety on U.S. 98. There are several strategies for the CRA to consider, some of which are already included as projects in the Plan, while others merit consideration for implementing through other avenues, such as the City’s draft Mobility Plan (adoption is anticipated in Fall 2024).



STRATEGIES

In March of 2023, the Committee identified the two primary themes of the Harbor CRA’s overall vision for improvement as connectivity and safety. These themes apply to all the issues and opportunities already discussed including vehicular and pedestrian travel and access, and the improvements and continuation of the Harbor Boardwalk.

Throughout the process of the 2024 Plan Update, the Harbor Advisory Committee further defined these themes into three main goals related to the Harbor district that CRA funds should be used to achieve. The goals were centered around the Destin Harbor and explained above. First, make it easier to get into and park in the Harbor district. Second, make it easier for pedestrians to get from the north side of U.S. Highway 98 to the south side of U.S. Highway 98. Third, make it easier to get to and enjoy the Destin Harbor and Harbor Boardwalk. Taking these refreshed goals from the Advisory Committee, the consulting team identified key projects which would provide necessary access, safety and connectivity for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians in the district.

The CRA Plan contains several projects to address the issues described above. The projects are described here as near, medium-, and long-term strategies. The strategies emphasize better connectivity within the Harbor district, better parking options, better walkability, and improved access to and within the district via the Cross Town Connector. Implementation of these strategies will create more opportunities for people to enjoy the Harbor, increase foot traffic in the area to support businesses, and create opportunities for additional businesses and restaurants along the Boardwalk.

Access to the Harbor Boardwalk can be improved in several ways including an extension to the west, an extension to the

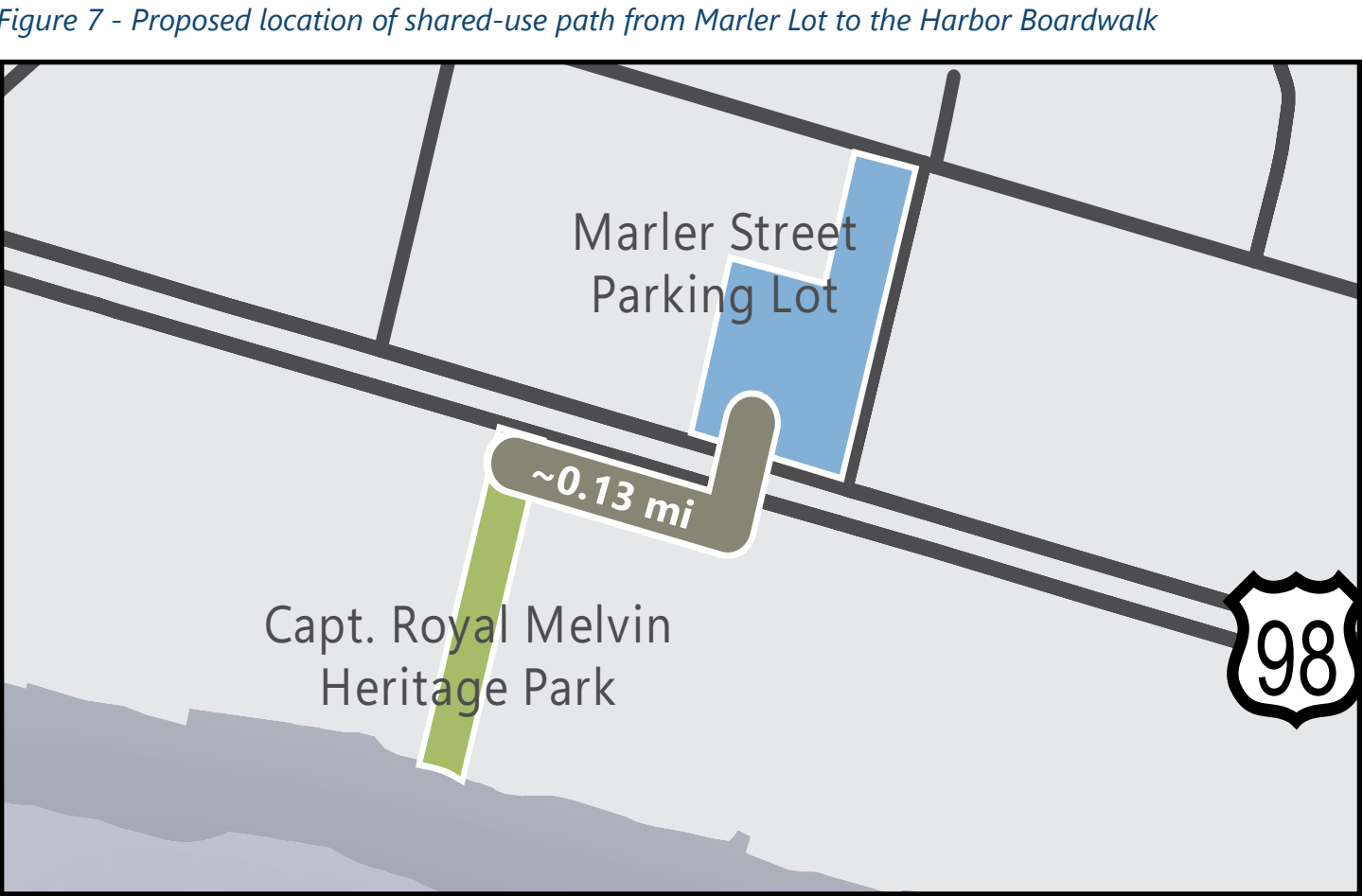
east, and new and improved access for pedestrians coming to the Boardwalk from the north. The recent completion of Royal Melvin Heritage Park is a significant milestone that provides an instant boost to Boardwalk access. However, there is additional infrastructure that can help make this new gateway a popular and well used access point. These strategies can be considered as near-term, mid-term, and long-term investments.

Near-Term Strategies (Less Than 2 Years)

- **Beautification:** The CRA Advisory Committee raised concerns that some roadways in the Harbor district lack sufficient landscaping. The Cross Town Connector is an opportunity to beautify a key roadway, create a special feel for travelers as they enter the Harbor district, and provide more inviting conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- **Crosswalk Enhancements:** The City should work with the Florida DOT to consider ways to reduce pedestrian delay at the existing signalized crosswalks of U.S. 98. Long waits can discourage walking and encourage people to cross at areas that lack signals and pedestrian refuge islands. A better crossing experience for pedestrians can also help encourage more people to park at the Marler Lot and use the new Melvin Royal Heritage Park to access attractions along the Harbor Boardwalk.
- **Wayfinding Signage Enhancements:** Clear and inviting wayfinding signage can improve access by directing people to the most accessible and interesting pathways for accessing the Harbor Boardwalk. It can also let more people passing by on U.S. 98 know about this great attraction.

Medium-Term Strategies (2 to 5 Years)

- **Shared-Use Path from Marler Lot to the Harbor Boardwalk:** The Marler Parking Lot is centrally located and is served by a nearby pedestrian crosswalk with a pedestrian actuated signal that stops traffic in both directions of U.S. 98. As such its potential as a central parking facility for the City is



MAIN GOALS

1. Make it easier to get into and park in the Harbor District
2. Make it easier for pedestrians to get from the north side of U.S. Highway 98 to the south side of U.S. Highway 98
3. Make it easier to get to and enjoy the Destin Harbor and Harbor Boardwalk

high, but its present utilization is typically low. There are two strategies the City should consider to make this a more popular parking location where people can park once and explore on foot all the Harbor Boardwalk has to offer. First, the physical and visual connection from the Marler Lot to the Harbor Boardwalk is lacking. The City can tackle this issue by installing wayfinding for pedestrians and bicyclists that directs them to the best route to the Boardwalk, which is the new Royal Melvin Heritage Park. Additionally, the City can invest in a wider shared use path that would run from the U.S. 98 crosswalk (across from the Marler Lot) to Royal Melvin Heritage Park, which is a distance of just less than 300 feet. The total walking distance from the Marler Lot to the Harbor Boardwalk via the Royal Melvin Heritage Park is about 0.2 miles, well within walking distance. More people will likely use this option if there is clear wayfinding and a much wider and safer feeling path alongside U.S. 98. Additionally, the pedestrian signal of U.S. 98 requires pedestrians to wait too long after pressing the push button before they are given permission to cross. The City may be able to work with FDOT to adjust the signal timing, giving more priority to pedestrians crossing here. This is also described as a near-term strategy in the section above.

- **Intersection Enhancements:** The City should also look to implement quick fix solutions at intersections in the district so that traffic flows better, safety is enhanced, and people feel more comfortable on foot or bike. These improvements will enhance access to the Harbor for all modes of transportation. The City is in the process of creating a Mobility Plan that identifies a range of potential intersection enhancements to reduce delay and enhance pedestrians safety.

Long-Term Strategies (More than 5 Years)

- **Harbor Boardwalk West Extension:** Extending the Boardwalk to the west would both improve Harbor access and enhance pedestrian safety on U.S. 98. FDOT’s plans for replacing the Marler Bridge make this project challenging in the near term. Initially this extension could take the form of a path that connects the existing western terminus of the Boardwalk up to Calhoun Street. Then as the Marler Bridge is reconstructed the extension could be upgraded to have a more consistent design to the existing Harbor Boardwalk. The westward extension could eventually also improve access to the City’s recently completed Captain Leonard Destin Park and Clement Taylor Park. These parks are popular destinations that provide exceptional views of the Bay. The City also recently acquired 1 Calhoun Avenue, which regardless of development type, will be a prominent property at the western edge of the City and support the western extension of the Harbor Boardwalk.
- **Marler Parking Garage:** The Harbor district depends on parking near its most popular destinations. While studies have demonstrated that the district has ample parking in the aggregate, there still exist parking challenges where public parking availability is insufficient close to the most popular destinations. As use of the Marler Lot increases the City should look at building a parking garage at this location. In addition to providing more parking for the Harbor Boardwalk, restaurants, and businesses on the south side of U.S. 98, a parking garage would reduce the footprint now dedicated to surface parking, opening land for new development. The Marler Lot is a central and accessible location that would be ideal for several civic and private uses.

INVESTMENT IN THE HARBOR DISTRICT

Due to the changes in the Harbor district that have taken place since the Harbor CRA’s establishment, the main goal of the 2024 Plan Update is to update the prioritize public improvements for the district in the coming years, consistent with Section 163.362 of the Florida Statutes. These projects were recommended based on the analysis of the existing condition of the district and the goals related to the Harbor district voiced through engagement with the Harbor CRA Advisory Committee. This section identifies the key projects with their recommended prioritization, cost estimate, and other pertinent details.



PRIORITIZATION

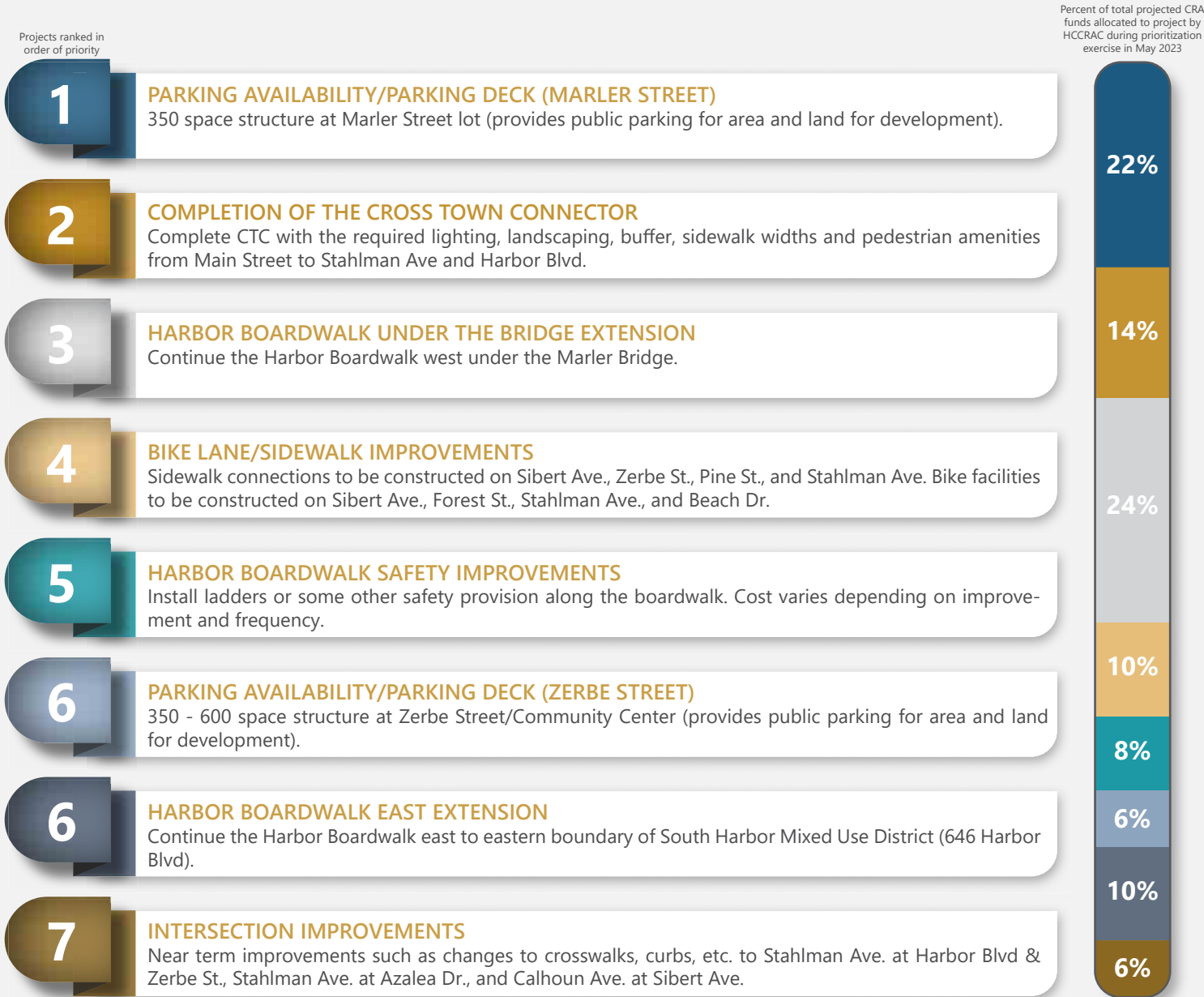


Early in the process of the 2024 Plan Update, the Harbor Advisory Committee identified the themes of connectivity and safety, and refined those into the goals of vehicular and pedestrian transportation and access to and within the Harbor District. Additionally, the goals focused on the Destin Harbor, as the main attraction and resource within the district. Taking these refreshed goals from the Advisory Committee, the consulting team identified key projects which would provide necessary access, safety and connectivity for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians in the district.

The Harbor CRA Advisory Committee in May 2023 provided input on its project priorities, which resulted in the prioritized list presented in this section. The results of the priority exercise with the Advisory Committee shown below indicate generally how the projects were ranked, and the average percentage of CRA funding that the Committee would allocate to each project. Where projects have the same ranking number, there was a tie for priority. The priority order does not imply they will be implemented in that order. The City may advance a lower priority project faster if an opportunity arises, such as a grant or a large development that comes along. Some lower priority projects may also advance faster because they have a non-CRA funding source, such as a future citywide Mobility Fee for some of the transportation improvements. However, prioritization is helpful for the City and CRA to guide the investment of CRA funds over time to implement this plan.



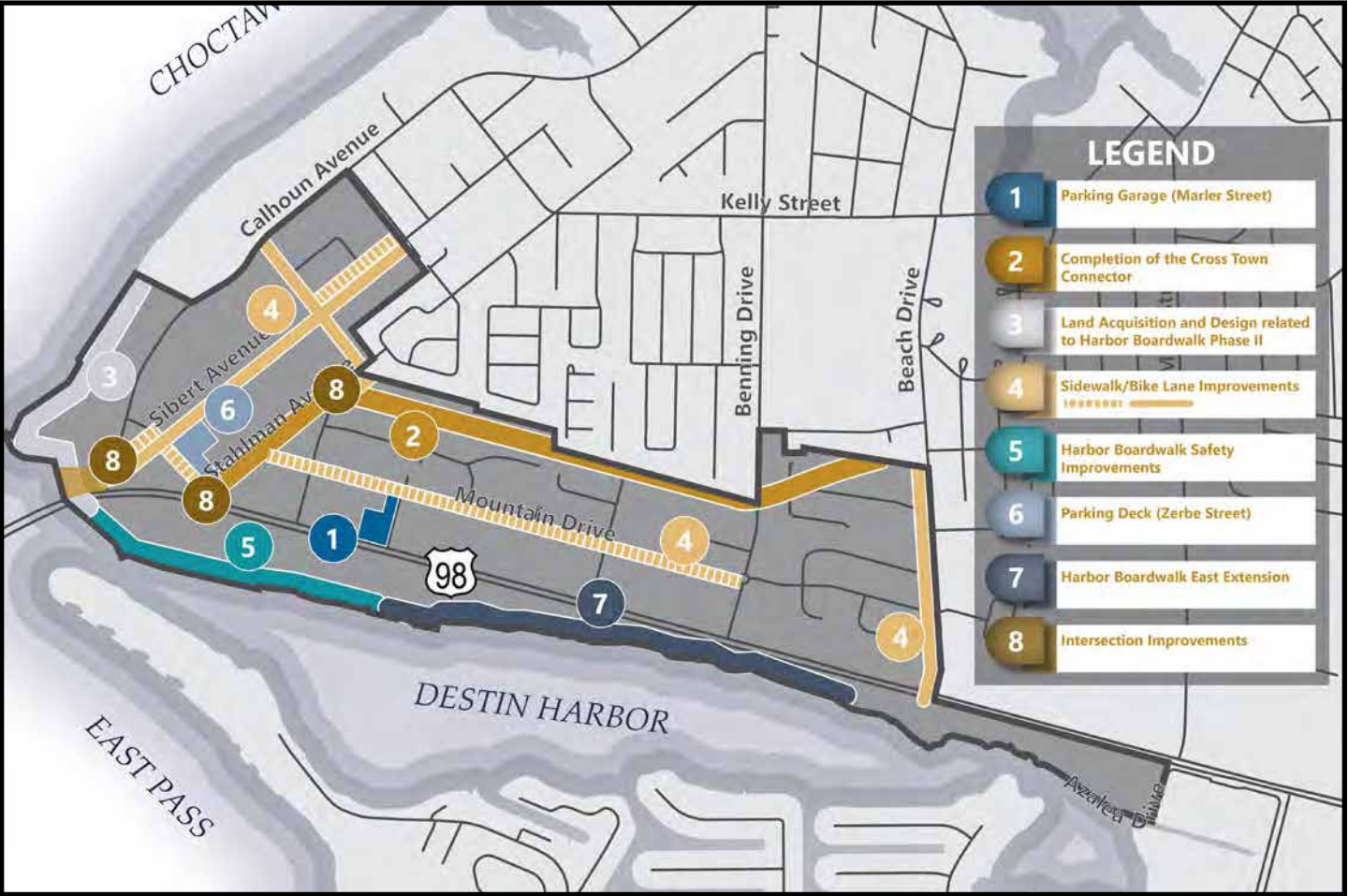
HARBOR CRA PROJECT LIST & CRA FUND UTILIZATION BREAKDOWN



PROJECTS

The project map below identifies all unfunded key projects that were identified during the Plan Update process, with the numbers indicating the order of priority.

Harbor CRA Project Map



The projects identified in the above map are further described in their descriptions below. Each project includes summary information about the project, the cost estimate, the source of the cost estimate, and where the project or initiative is described in the Comprehensive Plan or another plan, such as the Pathway Plan or draft Mobility Plan.

For those projects that originate from other sources, such as the draft Mobility Plan, further details may be found within the source plan document. The utility undergrounding project is included in the list of key projects, however, was not included in the prioritization as CRA funds have already been allocated and approved by the CRA Board.

Parking Garage (Marler Street)



Description

Per the Mobility Plan, this would be a 350 space parking deck on Marler Street at Mountain Drive and Harbor Boulevard. The proposed parking garage would not utilize the entire lot, creating an opportunity for additional uses of the site.

Cost Estimate

\$20,799,450

Priority



1

Source

Mobility Plan

Reference

Comp Plan Policies 1-3.3.4(3); 2-1.3.17; 2-1.3.19

Completion of the Cross Town Connector



Description

- Harbor CRA includes the following portions of the Cross Town Connector:
- CC-1: Stahlman Avenue from Harbor Boulevard to Mountain Drive (add buffer, street trees, widen sidewalk (east side))
 - CC-2: Stahlman Avenue from Mountain Drive to Azalea Drive (reconstruct with parking (west side), buffer and street trees (east side), multi-use path)
 - CC-3: Azalea Drive from Stahlman Avenue to Benning Drive (reconstruct with street trees, lighting, multi-use path)
 - CC-4: Azalea Drive Extension from Benning Drive to Beach Drive (new segment of road with two lanes, buffer, multi-use path)

Cost Estimate

\$20,962,989

Priority



2

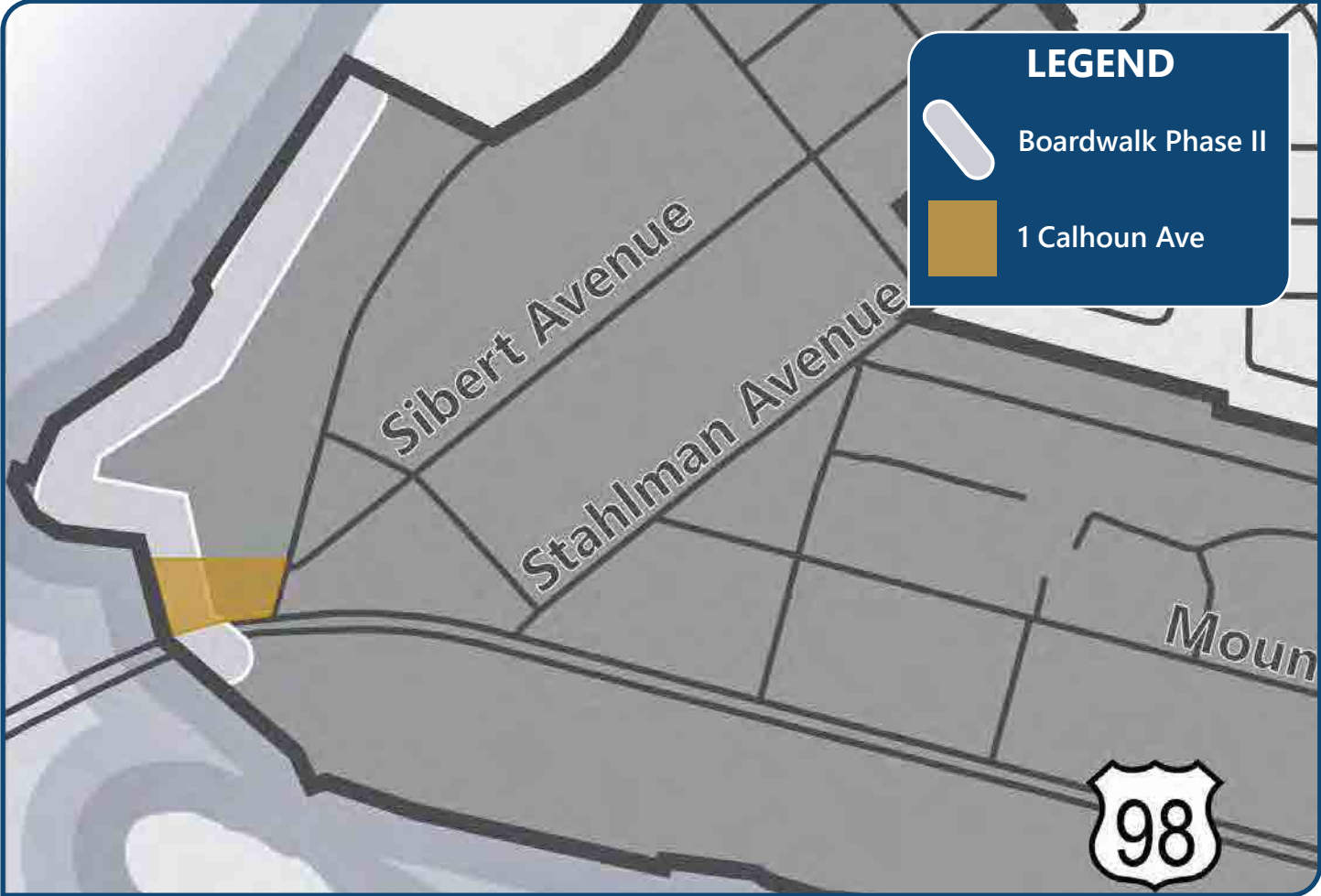
Source

Mobility Plan

Reference

Comp Plan Policy 2-1.1.3

Land Acquisition and Design related to Harbor Boardwalk Phase II (under Marler Bridge)



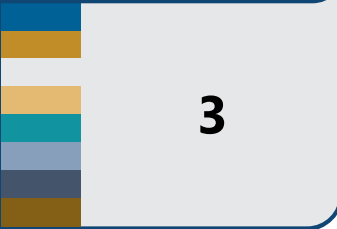
Description

The extension of Harbor Boardwalk to the west and north, under Marler Bridge to Clement Taylor Park, which is the northern of the two parks off of Calhoun Ave. This project includes acquisition of 1 Calhoun Avenue, which will improve access to the Harbor Boardwalk and enable the Phase II extension.

Cost Estimate

\$14,850,000

Priority



Source

Provided by City
(Finance and Engineering)

Reference

Comp Plan Policy
1-3.3.4(4)

Sidewalk/Bike Lane Improvements



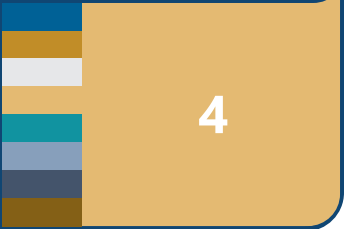
Description

- Harbor CRA includes the following sidewalk and bike lane improvement projects:
- SW-1: Sibert Avenue Sidewalk
 - SW-2: Sibert Avenue Sidewalk
 - SW-4: Zerbe Street Sidewalk
 - SW-11: Mountain Drive Sidewalk
 - BL-1: Sibert Avenue Bicycle Lanes
 - BL-2: Forest Street Bicycle Lanes
 - BL-3: Stahlman Avenue Bicycle Lanes
 - BL-4: Beach Drive Bicycle Lanes

Cost Estimate

\$1,826,361

Priority



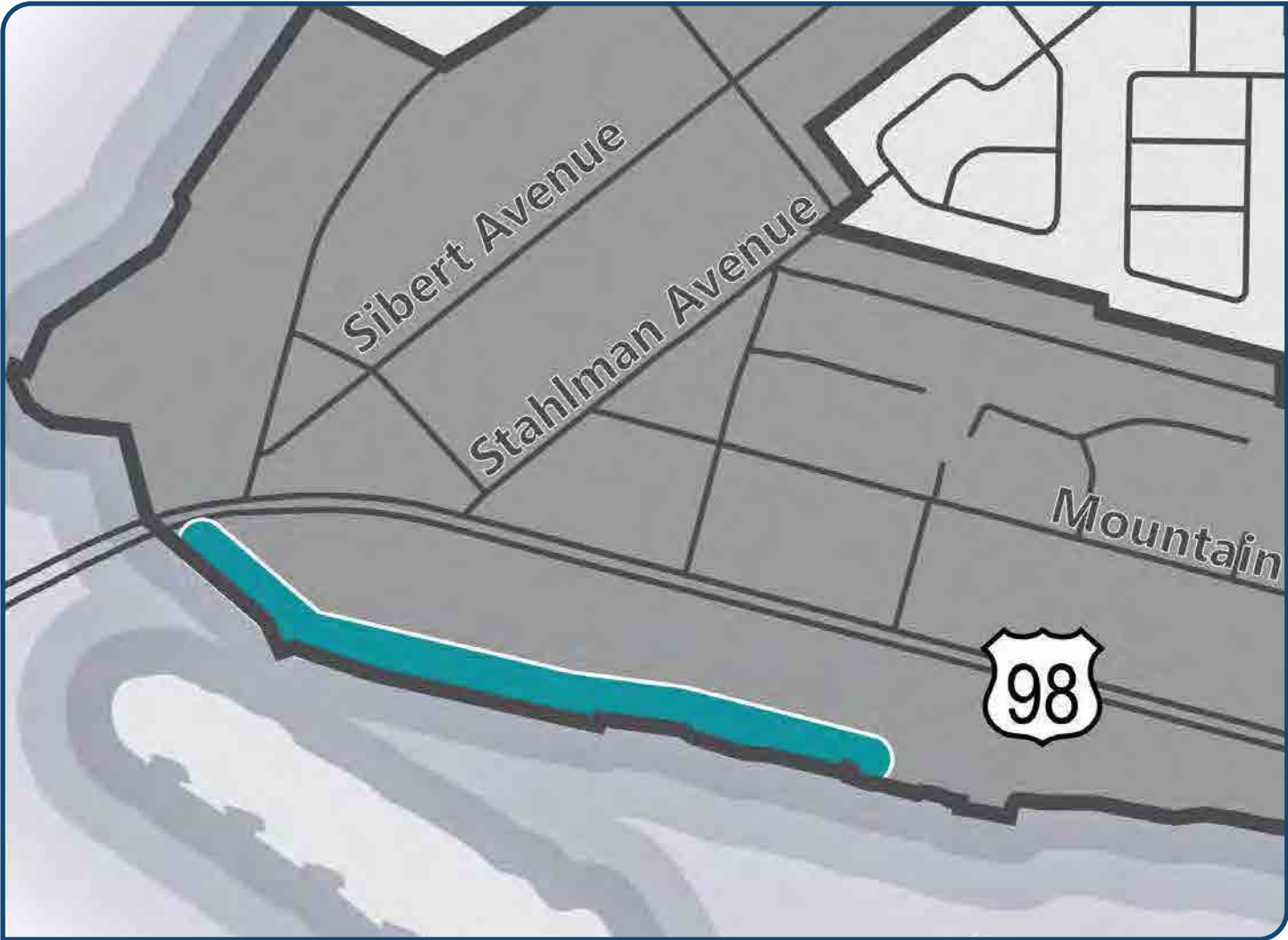
Source

Mobility Plan

Reference

Comp Plan Map
2-2; Pathways Plan

Harbor Boardwalk Safety Improvements



Description

Safety improvements for the boardwalk include emergency egress ladders and life rings every 175 feet, plus railing.

Cost Estimate

\$225,261

Priority



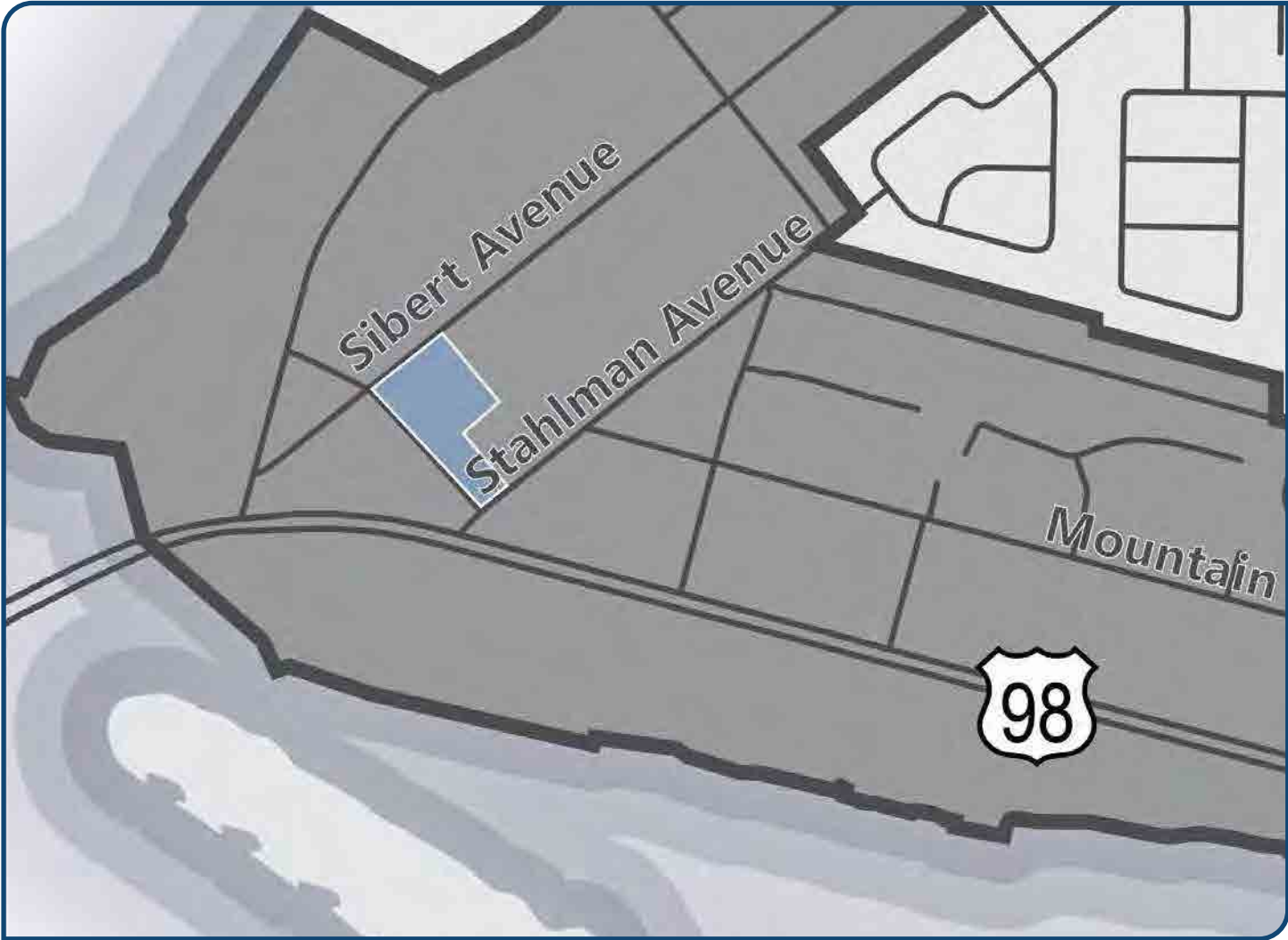
Source

FDOT & Unified Facilities Criteria

Reference

Comp Plan Policy 1-3.3.4(4)

Parking Deck (Zerbe Street)



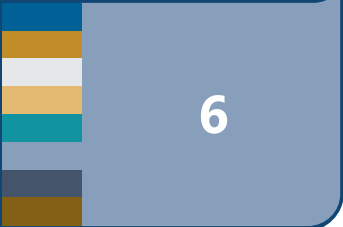
Description

Per the Mobility Plan, this would be a 625 space parking deck on Zerbe Street at Sibert Avenue.

Cost Estimate

\$37,141,875

Priority



Source

Mobility Plan

Reference

Comp Plan Policies 1-3.3.4(3); 2-1.3.17; 2-1.3.19

Harbor Boardwalk East Extension



Description

Per the LDC, as each property is developed/redeveloped in the SHMU zoning district, the developer must construct their portion of the Harbor Boardwalk and provide a pedestrian easement to the boardwalk. This ends between 646 and 654 Harbor Blvd.

Cost Estimate

N/A

Priority



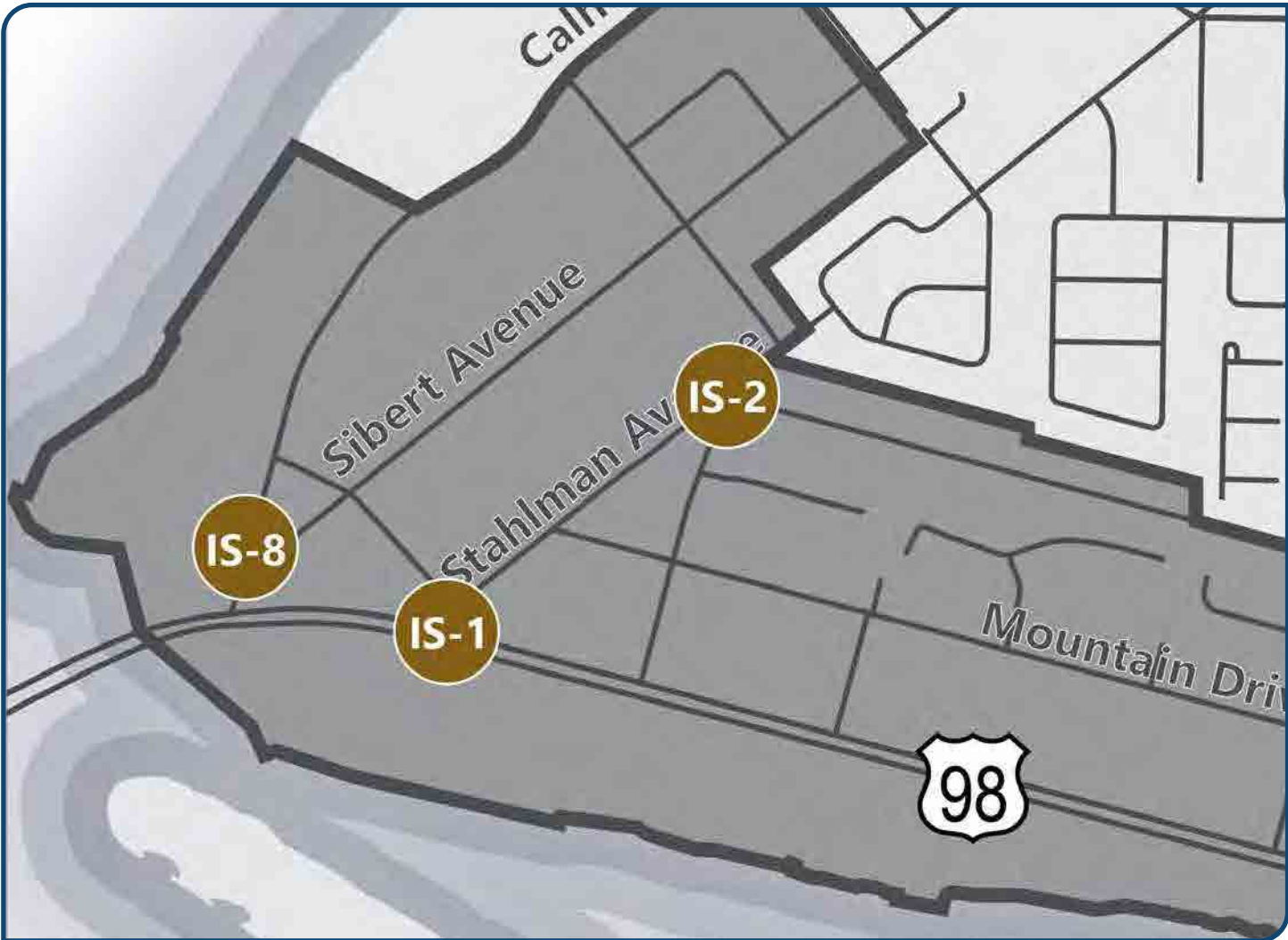
Source

LDC Section 8.09.03.A.9

Reference

Comp Plan Policy 1-3.3.4(4)

Intersection Improvements



Description

- Harbor CRA includes the following intersection improvement projects:
- IS-1: Stahlman Avenue at Harbor Boulevard & Zerbe Street (add pedestrian refuge, increase visibility, reduce curb cuts, extend central medians)
 - IS-2: Stahlman Avenue at Azalea Drive (close Palmetto Street at intersection, add crosswalks, move Azalea Dr stop line up to Stahlman Ave)
 - IS-8: Calhoun Avenue at Sibert Avenue (enhance multimodal access between public parking and planned boardwalk under the bridge)

Cost Estimate

\$278,386

Priority



Source

Mobility Plan

Reference

Comp Plan Policy 1-3.3.4(5)

Utility Undergrounding



Description

In partnership with Florida Power and Light, the City has initiated the project of undergrounding all utilities in the City beginning with the most high-priority areas. The project will be completed in seven phases.

Cost Estimate

\$4,500,000

Source

**City Finance
Department**

Reference

**Comp Plan Policy
1-1.7.3**

IMPLEMENTATION

TOP PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS

The subsections below further expand upon the top three ranked priorities for the Harbor CRA district and outline implementation steps. While these projects may not be entirely implemented with CRA revenue, or implemented in the recommended order, it should be noted that the Advisory Committee viewed these public projects as key catalysts of improvement for the Harbor District.

Marler Street Parking Garage

Ineffective quantity and layout of public parking in the Harbor district has long been a known issue. This project would supply a 350-space parking garage at the Marler Street public parking lot at the corner of Highway 98 and Marler Street. By constructing this large addition of public parking, the second through fifth blight factors would be reduced, as a key part of the parking issue in the Harbor district is related to the commercial properties on the Harbor. Many of these businesses have a high parking demand, and also have existing nonconforming parking lot layouts and space counts. This issue, paired with lack of public parking and accessibility to these businesses, create unsafe conditions for both vehicles and pedestrians. Additionally, this project is sourced from the draft Mobility Plan, and therefore there are multiple revenue sources that may be used to fund design and construction.

Cross Town Connector

The completion of the Cross Town Connector (CTC) is an integral part of addressing the first and third factors of blight - defective or inadequate street layout and unsafe conditions. The primary east-west corridor traveling throughout Destin is Highway 98. As a result, this is the main stream for thru-traffic traveling to the cities on either side of Destin, tourists traveling to the main tourist destinations located along the water, and also local traffic traveling between points within the City limits. The CTC will provide a secondary east-west corridor with consistent transitions for vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians. This will remove some traffic from Highway 98 and help reduce vehicle congestion and points of conflict between vehicles and non-vehicles. Similar to the Marler Street Parking Garage, this project is sourced from the draft Mobility Plan. As such multiple revenue sources are available to fund construction.

Land Acquisition and Design Related to Harbor Boardwalk Phase II

The acquisition of 1 Calhoun Avenue, and design and construction costs related to Harbor Boardwalk Phase II assist in addressing the second and sixth factors of blight by extending the boardwalk through



contiguous properties to the west, and providing an alternate opportunity for pedestrians to access all properties along the Harbor without needing to park directly at one specific property. As identified in the Opportunities & Issues section above, accessing the Harbor Boardwalk is one of the key challenges of the Harbor district. By increasing the length of the Boardwalk and adding access points in lower traffic areas further away from Highway 98, this issue may be adequately addressed through this project. While there is no specific plan at this time for the land recently acquired at 1 Calhoun Avenue, there are several public uses that may be appropriate for this site, such as a gateway park to the Boardwalk, or other accessory uses.

Due to the estimated costs of all three key projects and the revenue projections for the Harbor CRA, it is unlikely that the revenue funds by themselves will provide the opportunity for the City to complete many more of the identified key projects in its priority list. However, it is worth noting that some of the remaining unfunded projects are included in the draft Mobility Plan, providing an alternate source of funding for those projects (a proposed Mobility Fee to be considered by the City in 2024). Additionally, there may be other opportunities such as grants available to pursue all or partial funding for the remaining projects, such as the safety improvements for the Harbor Boardwalk. Finally, it is important to keep in mind that the CRA revenue coming into the City may increase beyond the projected rates due to successful development projects. For these reasons, all projects should be kept for consideration over the duration of the Harbor CRA.

ANNUAL REVIEW

The City, in participation with the Harbor CRA Advisory Committee and CRA Board, shall conduct an annual review of the status of the Harbor CRA. The review shall include at a minimum a review of incoming CRA revenue, use of CRA revenue for public infrastructure, public/private partnerships, changes to the City’s Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code that may impact the CRA Plan, and updates to all applicable Florida Statute sections concerning CRAs and CRA Plan content.

NON-CRA
PLANNING OR
REGULATORY
COMPLEMENTARY
PROJECTS

There are other City projects currently in progress which will support the City’s goals and objectives for the Harbor

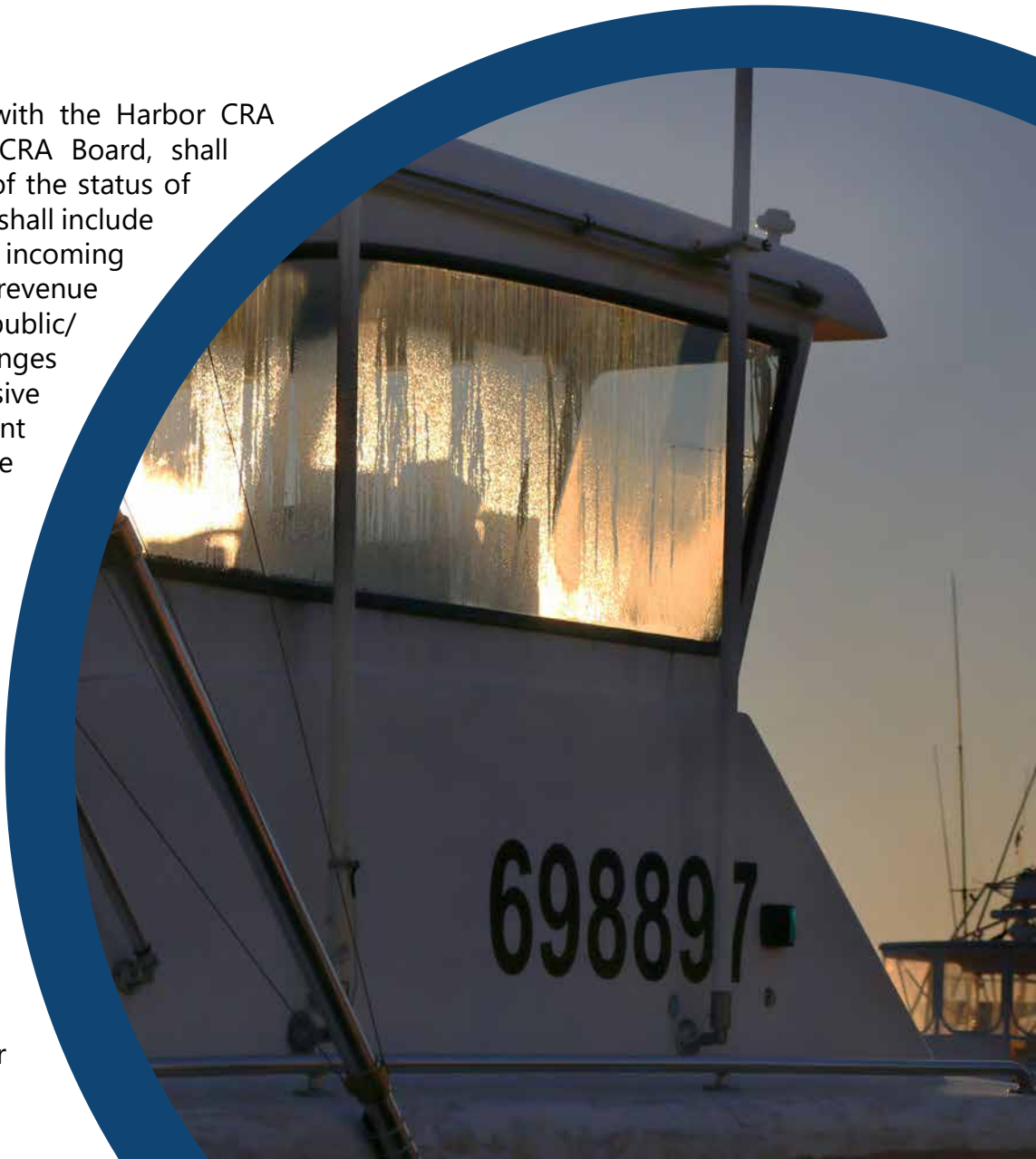
CRA. Some of these projects, such as the Mobility Plan can supplement CRA funding for transportation related projects. Other projects, such as the update of the Land Development Code, will support the Harbor District by strengthening the regulatory framework for project types and zoning districts within the CRA. The following includes ongoing City projects that could aid the success of the CRA Plan:

- **Citywide Mobility Plan and Fee**
The Mobility Plan includes more than 60 transportation improvements that include projects such as sidewalk and bike path connections, intersection improvements, and new road construction. The estimated cost of the complete list of projects is approximately \$150 million. The projects identified within the Harbor CRA district boundary are listed in the updated CRA Plan, and therefore both proposed mobility fee dollars and CRA revenue collected may be utilized for construction costs. The anticipated adoption of the Mobility Plan and proposed fee is in 2024.
- **Land Development Code Update**
The Land Development Code (LDC) is in the process of being updated to adequately implement all development related policies in the Comprehensive Plan. This includes all policies related to the Harbor CRA and zoning districts in the Harbor CRA boundaries. Aside from this update being a major improvement for the City, and users of the Code, this will also strengthen the regulatory framework for all future development in the Harbor CRA District. The anticipated completion of the LDC update is in 2024.
- **Town Center CRA Plan Update**
The Town Center CRA Plan is currently being updated as well. Similar to the Harbor Plan, this update includes refreshed financial forecasts, updated key projects and prioritization, and an overall strategic plan to guide future development. This is significant to the Harbor CRA as the two districts share the boundary of Beach Drive, and the Harbor district encompasses land directly south of the Town Center CRA district as well. As such, improvements implemented in the Town Center CRA may have impacts on the Harbor CRA as well.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

Implementation of the Plan will require both human and financial resources. The City must assess its person-power needs and internal funding sources to promote and market the area, review development plans, create new regulatory frameworks, leverage investment, assist small businesses, provide for special events, maintain financial integrity and, in general, provide day-to-day management and review. Two key areas are highlighted for work under the management plan:

1. Responsibility for project administration.
2. Target funds for project implementation, creating marketing materials, new development codes, and public and private project review.



MARKETING AND PROMOTION

The effectiveness of the Plan will largely depend on the perception of the Plan by the public, prospective developers, and financial backers. Colorful illustrative materials are necessary throughout plan implementation, such as informational materials for CRA projects which include project renderings and illustrations. A strong citizen involvement and public information program can only aid in the success of the entire plan. The Harbor CRA should utilize the City social media websites to advertise and promote progress of projects within the Harbor district, as well as involve the community in the development of the district by sponsoring programs and events to keep locals and tourists involved.

FINANCIAL INCENTIVES, GRANTS AND LOANS

Financial incentives may be considered to stimulate the location of new/expanding business opportunities. These would include:

1. Public partnership with private development wherein the public sector installs roads, water, sewer and other infrastructure necessary to make the project feasible.
2. Establishing a Community Development District, Foreign Trade Zone, Community Development Corporation, etc.
3. Grants and loans to businesses/property owners.

The City may offer, through the Harbor CRA, restricted matching grants and low-interest loans to owners of business property in the Harbor CRA district. The purpose of this financial aid is to encourage frontage improvements and major economic development projects. The basic concepts are outlined as follows:

- **Grants:** Exterior beautification of private property is the initial purpose of a grant program, which would provide funds only if they are available. The focus is on frontage improvements, especially landscaping on private property facing and along the public rights-of-way. A grant would not exceed 50% of the approved project cost, with the property owner paying the remainder (50% or more) of the cost. The maximum amount of a grant will depend upon a determined formula. Grant applications would be evaluated and prioritized. Highest ranking applications would be funded first.
- **Loans:** Economic development is the purpose of the loan program, which would make low-interest loans only to the extent that funds are available for that purpose. Initially, economic development loans may be made to businesses for projects meeting certain minimum criteria, e.g. the project must be approved by the Harbor CRA; the business must pay a significant portion of the project costs; the project must involve construction of a new building on vacant land; the new building must be for a new business or expansion of an existing business; and a significant number of new permanent full-time jobs must be created by the new business or expansion. Loan applications would be evaluated and prioritized, with highest ranking applications to be funded first – prioritization criteria may include such factors as: number of new jobs created and amount of value added to the tax base.





FUNDING EXAMPLES

- The City
- Non-ad valorem assessments
- Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)
- Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO)
- Northwest Florida Water Management District
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection
- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- Economic Development Administration

FINANCIAL PLAN

Among the most powerful tools associated with Part III Section 163, Florida Statutes, is the availability of tax increment financing to support a wide range of redevelopment initiatives. While tax increment is the single source of revenue enabled through the legislation, it is anticipated in most cases that a variety of revenue sources will be strategically assembled to meet the overall redevelopment objectives of this plan. When used in conjunction with these other means of funding or financing, tax increment, in effect, leverages the dollars that might otherwise be available.

This section of the plan update provides an overview of Harbor CRA funds already encumbered from capital projects (completed or in progress), and forecasted annual revenue to be collected throughout the life cycle of the CRA. This money will become available to support or further the program framework generally described in this Plan. This section also describes the funding and financing arrangements that are the most prudent means to support redevelopment activities.

TAX INCREMENT REVENUE FORECASTS

Estimates of prospective tax increment revenue to be generated in the Harbor CRA district, were completed by the City of Destin’s Finance Director with support from the consultant team. The stream of prospective revenue is dependent on several factors, including the pace of development which occurs in the Harbor Redevelopment Area, the content of that development, its assessed and taxable value, the millage levied against the taxable base and the rate of appreciation in the existing tax base and the level of public intervention. Together, these many variables suggest a wide range of outcomes, all possible depending on the specific conditions imputed into the analysis. The following sections include both the encumbered revenue due to revenue already earmarked for projects within the CRA district, and forecasted revenue. It should be noted that the revenue forecasts

do not consider any future potential development, and therefore the actual revenue amounts may be more or less than the amounts listed in the tables. As further explained in the Implementation Plan, these forecasts should be updated on an annual basis for a better understanding of the financial status of the Harbor CRA district.

ENCUMBERED REVENUE

The following table outlines the CRA funds already encumbered by previously issued revenue notes. The City issued a revenue note in 2009 for \$8 million. However, in 2010 the City refunded \$2 million due to a downturn in Harbor property values. The remaining balance assisted in the funding and construction of several capital improvements in the Harbor CRA District. Looking forward, the City will initiate a utility undergrounding project in 2024 and earmarked \$4.5 million dollars of Harbor CRA funds for this improvement to be paid over the remaining duration of the CRA. Additionally, the City in 2023 entered into a purchase agreement for the acquisition of 1 Calhoun Avenue, for a purchase price of \$9 million dollars (\$14.7 million with debt service), to be paid through 2043.

Table 5 - Harbor CRA Encumbered Revenue

 CITY OF DESTIN FLORIDA Harbor CRA Encumbered Revenue			
Year Initiated/Beginning Principal Balance	Projects	Annual Payments (avg)	Completion
2010/\$5,919,000	Mountain Drive roadway improvements, Melvin Street drainage, Harbor Boardwalk promenade, Marler Street Parking Lot, Harbor Boardwalk under Marler Bridge	\$480,000	2029
2024/\$4,500,000	Utility Undergrounding	\$346,154	2043
2024/\$14,764,636	Land Acquisition of 1 Calhoun Avenue	\$738,232	2043

FORECASTED REVENUE

The table below outlines the annual projected CRA revenue, operating budget, debt transfer and ending account balance for the Harbor CRA each year through the duration of the CRA. Based on the projections, the Harbor CRA is estimated to have approximately \$3.4 million in funds at the end of 2042. That remaining fund balance is allocated to Phase II Harbor Boardwalk construction in 2043, which zeroes the account balance by the expiration of the CRA in 2043. It is important to note that these numbers are estimates, and are subject to change depending on several variables including property values, new project commitments, refinancing opportunities, etc.

Table 6 - Harbor CRA Forecasted Revenue

 CITY OF DESTIN FLORIDA Harbor CRA Forecasted Revenue											
	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31	FY32	FY33
CRA REVENUE	820,992	983,860	1,013,350	1,043,730	1,075,020	1,107,250	1,140,440	1,174,630	1,209,850	1,246,130	1,283,490
OPERATING BUDGET	(121,761)	(9,100,000) ¹	(89,980)	(92,490)	(95,090)	(97,760)	(100,500)	(103,340)	(106,250)	(109,250)	(112,330)
TOTAL DEBT TRANSFER	(479,995)	7,878,933	(1,191,986)	(951,239)	(979,931)	(1,009,490)	(979,029)	(738,232)	(788,232)	(888,323)	(888,232)
TOTAL BALANCE	688,355	318,616	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	110,910	443,969	759,337	1,007,985	1,290,913
	FY34	FY35	FY36	FY37	FY38	FY39	FY40	FY41	FY42	FY43	
CRA REVENUE	1,321,970	1,361,610	1,402,440	1,444,490	1,487,810	1,532,420	1,578,370	1,625,700	1,674,450	1,724,660	
OPERATING BUDGET	(115,530)	(118,810)	(122,190)	(125,680)	(129,270)	(132,960)	(136,770)	(140,690)	(144,730)	(3,745,885) ²	
TOTAL DEBT TRANSFER	(938,232)	(988,232)	(1,038,232)	(1,138,232)	(1,188,232)	(1,188,232)	(1,238,232)	(1,238,232)	(1,238,232)	(1,338,232)	
TOTAL BALANCE	1,559,121	1,813,690	2,055,708	2,236,286	2,406,594	2,617,822	2,821,191	3,067,969	3,359,457	0	

¹ \$9,100,000 included in the FY 2024 operating budget for the purchase of 1 Calhoun Avenue.
² \$3,596,995 included in the FY 2043 operating budget for the construction of Harbor Boardwalk Phase II project.

FUNDING SOURCES

To supplement and leverage the funds available through tax increment revenues, the following sources can provide financial support for the implementation of the Harbor Community Redevelopment Plan. Use of the funds and application are a function of specific project initiatives.

- The City is an appropriate source of funds for redevelopment planning support through its staff and consultants. These costs could be recovered from the CRA.
- Non-ad valorem assessments could be developed and imposed to fund the construction and maintenance of specific public improvements and essential services. Non-ad valorem assessments can facilitate the underlying credit for issuance of bonds or other financial instruments for anticipated capital improvement programs. A substantial portion of the tax increment revenues can be earmarked to offset or buy down such special assessments.
- The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has a number of programs that could contribute funding for redevelopment efforts involving state highways. These programs are administered through the Department’s new grant management system Grant Application Process or “GAP”.
- The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) sponsors grant programs providing financial assistance to local governments through Community Services Block Grants (CSBG).
- The Northwest Florida Water Management District may provide technical assistance in the design of stormwater improvements.
- The Florida Department of Environmental Protection has a number of sources that may be used in the acquisition and development of recreation and open space facilities.
- The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Urban and Community Forestry Matching Grant program offers financial support for tree planting and urban forestry programs.
- The Economic Development Administration of the U.S. Department of Commerce provides funding for public work works projects that create permanent jobs or construction jobs through the Grants and Loans for Public Works and Development Facilities Program through the Public Works Impact Projects Program.

Many of the sources listed also provide technical support for redevelopment initiatives. In addition to these State and Federal sources, there are also other City funding sources that may be utilized in conjunction with CRA funds, such as development impact fees, and the forthcoming mobility fee (anticipated adoption 2024).

APPLICATION OF SOURCES

Tax increment revenue by itself will be insufficient to fund or support the range of initiatives identified as project priorities in this Plan update. The projected revenues available point to the need to secure and to apply other sources of money(ies) if all program goals are to be achieved. The most likely scenario is a combination of increment and special assessments targeted to properties and structures most benefited by planned improvements. The use of funds unrelated to tax increment or assessments would be applied to projects or activities for which specific dollars may be available.

Some projects are more suited to the use of tax increment revenue than others. Generally, these revenues should be preserved to leverage other dollars, that they be applied to truly public facilities or services, that they be used for assemblages, and/or that they comprise a source of incentives for projects deemed most commensurate and supportive of the overall plan. Within these broad categories might be considered the acquisition of substandard or well-located parcels that might fulfill some stated purpose, the financial support of parking or like facilities, and the direct support of as yet specified private projects if needed or desired.

THE REDEVELOPMENT TRUST FUND

Once the Harbor Redevelopment Plan was adopted by resolution 03-07, the City of Destin established a Redevelopment Trust Fund through Ordinance 03-01. The trust fund receives all tax increment money, grants, gifts, or profits generated by redevelopment activities in the Harbor CRA.

The annual funding of the redevelopment trust fund will result from additional incremental taxes collected in the Redevelopment Area by Okaloosa County and the City. Such increment will be determined annually in an amount equal to 95 percent of the difference between:

- 1. The amount of ad valorem taxes levied each year by the County, exclusive of any amount from any debt service millage, on taxable real property contained within the geographic boundaries of a community redevelopment area; and
- 2. The amount of ad valorem taxes which would have been produced by the rate upon which the tax is levied each year by or for the City and County, exclusive of any debt service millage, upon the total of the assessed value of the taxable real property in the community redevelopment area as shown upon the most recent assessment roll used in connection with the taxation of such property by the City and County prior to the effective date of the ordinance providing for the funding of the trust fund.



LEGAL AND REGULATORY ISSUES

REDEVELOPMENT POWERS

The City of Destin Resolution 98-09 established the Destin Community Redevelopment Agency, pursuant to Section 163.356, Florida Statutes. The Community Redevelopment Agency is authorized to exercise all of the powers conferred by Section 163, Part III, Florida Statutes, which are necessary and convenient to carry out and effectuate the purposes of the Harbor Community Redevelopment Plan. The Community Redevelopment Agency appointed a Harbor CRA Advisory Committee through Resolution 03-14 to assist the Agency in evaluating redevelopment initiatives and carrying out redevelopment activities in the Harbor CRA.

DURATION OF THE PLAN

The redevelopment initiatives and work program described in the Harbor Community Redevelopment Plan funded through tax increment revenues must occur within 40 years after the fiscal year in which this plan is approved or adopted, which is the time certain for completing all redevelopment financed by increment revenues. The Harbor CRA Plan was originally adopted on June 2, 2003 through Resolution 03-07 for a period of 40 years. As the Harbor CRA Trust Fund was established through Ordinance 03-01-CRA on June 16, 2003, all redevelopment initiatives and projects financed by CRA revenue must be completed by June 16, 2043.

PLAN MODIFICATION

The Harbor Community Redevelopment Plan may be modified in a manner consistent with Florida Statutes 163.361. If the City of Destin Community Redevelopment Agency deems that the Harbor Community Redevelopment Plan be amended, it shall make a recommendation to the City Council. All future amendments shall follow the notice and public hearing requirements listed in Florida Statutes 163.361.



SEVERABILITY

If any provision of the Harbor Community Redevelopment Plan is held to be unconstitutional or otherwise legally infirm, such provisions shall not affect the remaining portions of the Harbor Community Redevelopment Plan.

SAFEGUARDS, CONTROLS, RESTRICTIONS, OR COVENANTS

All redevelopment activities undertaken in the Harbor Redevelopment Area must be consistent with this Plan, the City's Comprehensive Plan and applicable land development regulations; all redevelopment plans will undergo review by the City.

Issues concerning restrictions on any property acquired for redevelopment purposes and then returned to use by the private sector will be addressed on a case-by-case basis to ensure that all activities necessary to perpetuate the redevelopment initiative are advanced in a manner consistent with this Plan and any amendment thereto. Throughout the redevelopment process for the Harbor CRA district, any restrictions or covenants shall run with the land regardless of transfer of ownership or private use for the period of time the City deems necessary.

RESIDENTIAL USE ELEMENT

As there are currently residential uses in the Harbor CRA district, but no moderate- or low- income housing units, an element of residential use is required per F.S. 163.362(8). Previously, a Neighborhood Impact Statement (NIS) was included in the CRA plan, however State regulations now only require an

NIS if moderate- or low-income housing is present in a redevelopment area. As required by the Comprehensive Plan (Policies 3-1.1.1 – 3-1.1.3), the City is currently in the process of incorporating strategies into the Land Development Code which incentivize the development of moderate- and low-income housing units when a planned unit development is proposed. This strategy will support the City's overall goal of providing an adequate ratio of housing units for residents and workers that support the local economy. The City will coordinate with the State Departments of Health and Children and Family Services, the West Florida Regional Planning Council, and the Fort Walton Beach Housing Authority as well as other appropriate agencies to improve the overall affordable housing stock regionally, but specifically within the Harbor CRA.

The intent of the Harbor Community Redevelopment Plan centers on the revitalization of the tourist commercial area, enhancing the safety within the corridor and providing public access to the harbor. The redevelopment envisions substantial capital improvements relating to the right-of-way, harbor access, parking and recreational facilities. There is limited permanent residential use within the Redevelopment Area. The displacement of permanent residents is not foreseen; however, the City shall assist any person who is required to relocate from their property due to City acquisition of property for public purposes by locating other housing facilities available as replacement dwellings, as required by Comprehensive Plan Policy 3-1.7.2. The City shall assess the degree of displacement which may occur when planning future land acquisition and shall not be responsible for displacement because of county, state or federal actions. The CRA shall follow the relocation policies and procedures established by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development when Federal dollars are involved.

Existing residential properties may be temporarily impacted during the construction of any improvements. Impacts may include construction detours, noise and dust. Impacts are expected to be minimal while the benefits of redevelopment activities will be of long duration, adding greatly to the quality of life by providing a safe and attractive area that has adequate waterfront access, sidewalks, recreation, parking and other needed infrastructure improvements.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONSISTENCY

The 2024 Plan Update is determined to be consistent and comply with the City's adopted Comprehensive Plan, including the Future Land Use Map (FLUM), and the goals, objectives and policies of all the elements. Any amendments to the Comprehensive Plan which will impact the Harbor CRA Plan should result in an update to the Plan as well, consistent with Florida Statutes 163.361. A detailed table outlining the existing Comprehensive Plan policies directly related to the Harbor CRA and their implementation in the updated plan is included in the Appendix.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: LEGAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION OF CRA

A parcel of land lying and being in unsectionalized township 2 South, range 22 West, City of Destin, Okaloosa County, Florida, being more particularly described as follows:

Commence at the Southeast Corner of Sandpiper Cove Phase I as recorded in Plat Book 1 Page 146 of the Public Records of Okaloosa County, Florida, thence proceed along the approximate mean high water line of Destin Harbor N-78°46'39"-W, 420 feet to the Point Of Beginning (POB). Thence N-13°49'-E, 493 feet to the South Right Of Way (ROW) of U.S. Highway 98 East, thence westerly along U.S. Highway 98 East to the intersection of Beach Drive, thence Northerly along Beach Drive to the Southeast corner of Sea Hills Third Addition as recorded in Plat Book 5 Page 104 of the Public Records of Okaloosa County, Florida, thence follow the South boundary of Sea Hills Third Addition, N-82°10'54"-W, 1048.41 feet, thence South, 24.88 feet, thence West, 139.75 feet, thence North, 130.4 feet to the South ROW of Legion Drive, thence Westerly along Legion Drive to the South intersection of the centerline of Benning Drive, thence Southerly to the North extension of the ROW line at the intersection with Azalea Drive, thence Northwest along the North ROW to the Southwest corner of Etretat Subdivision as recorded in Plat Book 10 Page 6 of the Public Records of Okaloosa County, Florida, thence North, 114.49 feet to the Southeast corner of Gulf Manor First Addition as recorded in Plat Book 8 Page 9 of the Public Records of Okaloosa County, Florida, thence N-76°9'22"-W, 720.19 feet, thence N-0°05'50"-W, 51.44 feet, to the Southeast corner of Ridge Wood Manor as recorded in Plat Book 12 Page 69 of the Public Records of Okaloosa County, Florida, thence N-76°07'54"-W, 955 feet, thence N-50°23'11"-E, 124.12 feet, thence N-39°41'11"-W, 307.92 feet, thence N-50°20'52"-E, 800 feet to the South ROW of Pine Street, thence Northwesterly along the South ROW of Pine Street to the West ROW of Calhoun Avenue, thence Southwesterly along the West ROW of Calhoun Avenue to the Northwest corner of lot 14, Moreno Point Military Reservation as recorded in Plat Book 26 Page 172 of the Public Records of Okaloosa County, Florida, thence N-59°05'37"-W, 468.3 feet to the approximate high water line of Choctawhatchee Bay, thence Southwesterly along the approximate high water line to Destin Harbor thence easterly along the approximate high water line to the POB; said parcel contains 397.34 acres more or less.*

*Note: Acreage will vary depending on actual mean high water level and shoreline conditions at time of survey.

APPENDIX B: FINDING OF NECESSITY REPORT (2003)

Determining if blight conditions exist within a Redevelopment Area is the first step in ascertaining an area's appropriateness as a community redevelopment area. The Harbor Finding of Necessity Report describes the various physical, economic, and regulatory conditions within the Harbor Redevelopment Area that potentially are associated with blight or its causes and discusses the need for a community redevelopment area. Based on this analysis, there is a conclusion that there are blighted conditions within the Redevelopment Area, and that the repair, rehabilitation, and/or redevelopment of such areas is in the interest of public health, safety, and welfare.

A resolution adopted by the local governing body finding that such conditions exist is the required first legal step in initiating the full redevelopment regime envisioned under Section 163 Florida Statutes. Subsequent actions consist of the preparation of a community redevelopment plan for the area designated in the finding of necessity resolution. This community redevelopment plan provides physical information on the Redevelopment Area, identifies potential project types that can diminish or eradicate blighted conditions, and establishes a legal framework for a series of specific programmatic and policy actions that advance these projects.

Section 163.340 (8) Florida Statutes identifies fourteen criteria associated with blight or blighting conditions. The Finding of Necessity Report documents a minimum of six conditions present in the Harbor Redevelopment Area that are retarding its immediate and longer term social, economic and physical development. The legal tests described in Section 163 and pertinent to the City of Destin require that at least two of these criteria be satisfied. These criteria and their related conditions include the following.

Predominance of defective or inadequate street layout

(Section 163.340 (8) (a) Florida Statutes). The totality of the Harbor Redevelopment Area is comprised of a road grid that functions below current standards and requires substantial budgetary commitment to maintain and/or upgrade over time.

The absence of satisfactory internal connections forces local traffic onto US 98, which adds unnecessary and potentially dangerous trips to this arterial road. US 98 is not yet at capacity year-round but the level of service does not consider how conditions might change should the area be developed to its allowable intensity. Though improvements are being discussed conceptually for US 98, the funds have not been committed to budgets or plans.

Localized ponding is known to occur in certain neighborhoods within the Redevelopment Area. It remains unclear if this occurs as the result of inadequate controls or poor execution. Regardless of its origin, periodic ponding is in need of correction and such intervention is frequently through some kind of public action or vehicle. Such drainage solutions usually occur in conjunction with road (re) construction.

The absence of sidewalks is deemed to be not only a safety issue but also further evidence of inadequate transportation. The condition of the existing road grid precludes the provision of sidewalks without costly reconstruction.

There is a documented parking deficiency in excess of 400 spaces. As a result, the City has observed that most visitors simply park where they can find space on private business property, whether they are patrons or not, and walk around the harbor area. The fact that there is no public parking visible from US

98 is an issue. Motorists that park their vehicles on the north side of US 98 must cross this busy corridor and/or parking lots with speeding motorists.

The observed traffic patterns during the busy tourist seasons in Destin, clearly, contributes much to circulation and to the safety conditions within the Harbor Redevelopment Area. Vehicular stacking remains a problem within the Harbor Redevelopment Area. This is especially true on the intersection of US 98 and Stahlman Avenue, near the East Pass Bridge. The stacking that occurs in this area is very problematic because of the aforementioned proximity to the bridge. The East Pass Bridge serves as the major conduit for commuters between the Destin area and the Fort Walton Beach area. The abrupt start and stop motion, typically present in a stacking situation, can easily lead to numerous vehicular accidents.

Faulty layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, and usefulness

(Section 163.340 (8) (c) Florida Statutes). The commercial lots suffer from inadequacies as a result of their size, a condition partially reflected in the number of vacant or underutilized parcels. Where properties are, in fact, developed, depth and width limitations that force an increased number of ingress and egress points on major roads are observed. The typical lot dimensions, in conjunction with immediate proximity to residential areas, preclude adequate space for landscaping or other treatments that might buffer these residential zones. In today’s competitive environment, contemporary development practices favor larger sites to vary and mix uses and activities. Although each non-residential site may be buildable, in the aggregate the commercial lots are largely economically dysfunctional or deteriorated because they simply do not meet contemporary design and investor requirements. It is highly likely that only aggressive actions to assemble lots can solve some of these site deficiencies.

There are numerous properties along the south side of US 98, as well as the west side of Calhoun Avenue that restrict access to the harbor and Choctawhatchee Bay, respectively. A visual inspection of property lines in the aforementioned areas reveal that certain properties exist that preclude other properties from being accessed from the main roads. Private easements or agreements between property owners are most likely the form in which specific property owners can access their properties through other people’s properties.

An analysis of land value, relative to total taxable value, suggests that many real estate assets are not adequately utilized. Individually and collectively, properties with such characteristics may be neither adequate, accessible nor useful.

Unsanitary or unsafe conditions

(Section 163.340 (8) (d) Florida Statutes). Insufficient sidewalks pose an immediately identifiable problem within all the neighborhoods that comprise the Redevelopment Area and along US 98. While accidents will occur, whatever safeguards are put in place, clearly having sidewalks for pedestrians on which to walk and a visible pedestrian-designated space wherein motorists are alert and vigilant, will diminish the number of accidents involving pedestrians. Left unchecked, the frequency of accidents will most likely continue to escalate.

Because parts of the sub-areas are not connected, the existing grid forces local traffic onto the perimeter arterials. Not only is capacity diminished, the unnecessary loading for local travel subjects more cars to the potential of accidents. Today’s contemporary planning approaches recognize the need to capture internal trips as a means of achieving neighborhood safety.

Deterioration of site or other improvements

(Section 163.340 (8) (e) Florida Statutes). As noted in the “Findings”, most buildings within the Redevelopment Area are physically sound overall. The primary concern is deterioration in context and setting, which will discourage long-term sustainability and lead to a reduction in useful life more rapidly than will be the case in a stable residential and commercial environment

The context and setting are defined in large part by the quality of the public infrastructure. Among the most noticeable deficiencies are the lack of sidewalks and other pedestrian-oriented amenities, the perceived traffic stacking, the lack of adequate public parking, and the inability of the current stormwater system to prevent localized flooding. Individually, these conditions appear to be somewhat innocuous, but collectively they present a real challenge to redevelopment within the Harbor Redevelopment Area.

As for many of the commercial improvements, many simply do not meet current demands of the marketplace. Although they may not be deteriorated from a physical standpoint, many are nearing, or have reached, the end of their useful economic life and are functionally deteriorated. Parking and access conditions are clearly deficient.

Inadequate and outdated building patterns.

(Section 163.340 (8) (f) Florida Statutes). Conditions of inadequate and outdated building patterns are literally self-evident based on the most casual inspection of the Redevelopment Area. Many contemporary designs or regulatory practices are violated by conditions in the Harbor Redevelopment Area. Among the deficiencies that speak to inadequate and outdated building patterns are the following:

- Planned intensity relative to the size and adequacy of platted lots
- Absence or deterioration of infrastructure
- Poor connectivity among neighborhoods prompting the use of regional arterials for local travel
- No sidewalks
- No designed public spaces
- Unrestricted and divided ingress and egress among numerous commercial properties
- Commercial intrusion into residential areas stemming from inadequate lot depth, poor design controls, and the absence of transitional zones that preclude opportunities to insert buffering
- No view corridors

Diversity of ownership

(Section 163.340 (8) (m) Florida Statutes). Arguably, the Redevelopment Area’s diverse ownership is among its most onerous and fractious problems. Given the number of owners, the non-resident status of these owners, the pattern of small lots, and the demands of contemporary market or building requirements, it will be difficult for private interests to acquire sufficient property to alter the established patterns of development and use. Aggressive intervention will be needed to assemble parcels or holdings adequate in size such that the larger community is evidently committed to changing the Redevelopment Area’s social, physical and economic character.

APPENDIX C: COMPLETED PROJECTS INVENTORY (2023)

PLANNED PROJECTS IN H-CRA PLAN (2023)	PUBLIC PROJECTS IN H-CRA DISTRICT TO IMPLEMENT CRA PLAN (2008 – present)	COMPLETE (Y/N)
Roadway Projects		
US HWY 98	RRR remedial reconstruction and rehabilitation US Highway 98 from Marler Bridge to Airport Road	Y
	FDOT US Highway 98 East, landscaping project currently under construction; Marler bridge to Airport	N
	FDOT US Highway 98 East, lighting project added approximately 60 street lights; Marler bridge to Indian Bayou Trail	Y
Stahlman Avenue	None	
Mountain Drive	Mountain Drive Reconstruction - from Stahlman Avenue to Benning Drive, two lane roadway added 10 ft wide sidewalk to south side of road and provided stormwater facilities for the Mountain Drive watershed.	Y
Benning Drive	None	
New Secondary Streets	Destin Crosstown Connector (Azalea Drive Extension) - currently under design, add approximately 2000 linear feet of two lane divided roadway between Beach Drive to Benning Drive, 10 ft sidewalks on both sides of road and stormwater retention for the watershed	N
Pedestrian Sidewalks/Crosswalks		
Harbor Boulevard	Pedestrian crosswalk signalization at 116 Harbor Blvd	Y
	Pedestrian crosswalk signalization at 210 Harbor Blvd	Y
*Melvin Street	Pedestrian crosswalk signalization at Melvin St	Y
*Azalea Drive	Azalea Drive Sidewalk - added 10 ft wide sidewalks on North side of road from Stahlman Avenue to Snapper Drive and on South side of road from Snapper Drive to Benning Drive.	Y
	Harbor Place T/H Project - added 10 ft wide sidewalks on North side of Azalea Drive from Snapper Drive to Melvin Street on west side of Melvin St from Azalea Drive to Mountain Drive	Y
* Zerbe Street *Calhoun Avenue	Zerbe Calhoun Pedestrian Project - constructed approximately 2,000 linear feet of 10 ft wide sidewalk from intersection of Zerbe and Sibert St. west on Zerbe Street and North on Calhoun avenue to Clement Taylor Park	Y

PLANNED PROJECTS IN H-CRA PLAN (2023)	PUBLIC PROJECTS IN H-CRA DISTRICT TO IMPLEMENT CRA PLAN (2008 – present)	COMPLETE (Y/N)
Harbor Boardwalk	Harbor Boardwalk - constructed continuous boardwalk on north side of the harbor shoreline from 10 Harbor Blvd to 316 Harbor Blvd.	Y
Bayside Boardwalk Extension	None	
Stormwater and Utilities		
*Melvin Street	Provide storm water retention for the watershed between Harbor Boulevard and Mountain Drive	Y
*Utility Undergrounding	Utility undergrounding is in progress. US 98 will take place in Phase 1, the rest of district will take place in Phase 4.	N
*Stormwater Master Plan Update	Stormwater Master Plan was updated in 2021. There are two projects in the updated plan identified for the Harbor CRA district.	Y
Parking		
Marler Street Lot	Provides 147 parking spaces and multimodal transit stop	Y
Sibert Avenue Lot	Provides 42 parking spaces	Y
Open Space/Recreation		
Clement Taylor Park	Currently under design to provide 30 designated parking spaces and pavilion and demo/ reconstruct restrooms	N
*Capt. Leonard Destin Park	Added approximately 37 parking spaces	Y
*Capt. Royal Melvin Heritage Park	Currently under construction at restrooms and picnic areas also the gateway to the Harbor Boardwalk.	N
Visitor Center	None	

**Projects were not specifically identified in Harbor CRA Plan*

APPENDIX D: COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICY REVIEW

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICY REVIEW		
POLICY NO.	POLICY DESCRIPTION	PLAN UPDATE IMPLEMENTATION
1-3.3.4	Harbor CRA Redevelopment, Infrastructure, and Design Enhancements. Continue implementation of the Harbor CRA plan, established in 2003 and encompassing 397 acres in the southwest portion of the City north of the Destin Harbor, including the following components:	The Harbor CRA Plan is being updated to continue the implementation of the original vision of the Harbor CRA district.
1-3.3.4(1)	Harbor Boulevard is a major gateway to the city. The City will work together with the private sector and the Florida Department of Transportation to pursue changes to Harbor Boulevard that would improve landscaping, appearance, multimodal safety and performance. Such enhancement shall include application of community appearance criteria that reinforce good principles of design as well as preserving unique characteristics and open space for scenic vistas. The gateway improvements shall also address the implementation of streetscape amenities, enhanced signage, and intersection improvements.	FDOT has completed two major projects on Harbor Boulevard in the Harbor CRA district, which assisted in the implementation of this policy: (1) RRR remedial reconstruction and rehabilitation of Hwy 98 from Marler Bridge to Airport Road, and (2) the addition of approximately 60 streetlights between Marler Bridge and Airport Road. Additionally, landscaping of Hwy 98 between Marler Bridge and Airport Road is currently under construction. The Plan Update identifies multiple key projects that will positively impact the condition of Harbor Boulevard/ Highway 98: the acquisition of 1 Calhoun Avenue; intersection improvements at Stahlman Avenue/Harbor Boulevard/Zerbe Street; utility undergrounding along Harbor Boulevard. Additionally, there are several near-term strategies identified in the Update which would further implement this policy such as beautification, and crosswalk and wayfinding enhancements.
1-3.3.4(2)	Develop the Capt. Royal Melvin Heritage Park and Plaza (Heritage Park). In 2008 the City acquired land for Heritage Park along the north side of Harbor that will provide sustainable public access to the Harbor waterfront. As of late 2009, a broad variety of planning,	Captain Royal Melvin Heritage Park was completed and opened in July of 2023. As a part of the strategic approach outlined in the Plan Update, a medium-term

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICY REVIEW		
POLICY NO.	POLICY DESCRIPTION	PLAN UPDATE IMPLEMENTATION
	technical, design and engineering surveys and studies have been completed. As funds become available, Heritage Park should be completed to serve as a focal point and harbor front destination for pedestrian activity in the immediate vicinity.	strategy identified is a shared-use path from the Marler Lot to this park. This would provide a physical and visual connection for pedestrians from parking to the Harbor Boardwalk that is currently lacking.
1-3.3.4(3)	Continue land acquisition/construction of off-site parking facilities. Purchase or enter into joint public/private partnerships to acquire land for two or three public parking facilities on the north side of Harbor Blvd. Utilize land for surface level parking until development and economics justifies the cost effectiveness of structured parking. If opportunities arise in the interim, accept public parking spaces as part of private development projects.	The Plan Update includes two parking garages as key projects where the public lots at Marler Street and Zerbe Street are currently located. The parking garage at Marler Street was identified as the first priority for the HCRAAC. The proposed garage included in the Plan Update includes 350 spaces, and would not utilize the entire site, allowing for additional uses on the property.
1-3.3.4(4)	Continue implementation of the Harbor and Bay Boardwalks. A framework design plan has been completed for the boardwalk fronting the Harbor, extending under the Marler Bridge and extending to Clement Taylor Park. Phase I of the Harbor Boardwalk was completed in 2012. As private redevelopment occurs, construction of contiguous sections of the remaining Harbor Boardwalk and related components shall be completed in accordance with the adopted framework design plan. Related components include, but are not limited to, broad, pedestrian friendly north/south pedestrian connections to the Harbor Blvd. frontage and pedestrian system. The "boardwalk under the bridge" shall be completed by the City at such time as there are significant sections of Harbor Boardwalk completed on both the north and south sides of Harbor Blvd.	The Plan Update includes three key projects related to the Harbor Boardwalk: Land acquisition and design related to Harbor Boardwalk Phase II (under the bridge), Harbor Boardwalk safety improvements, and Harbor boardwalk east extension. Additionally, the strategic approach included in the Plan Update is primarily focused on helping visitors and locals access the Destin Harbor safely. Near-, medium- and long-term strategies are identified in support of this overall goal for the district.
1-3.3.4(5)	Continue to implement neighborhood and pedestrian enhancements. Neighborhood street, intersection, and drainage improvements shall be implemented per the Phase II Implementation Plan within the Harbor CRA. As private redevelopment progresses along Harbor Blvd., strongly consider implementation of enhanced, safe crossings which could be implemented through a combination of	Prior to the plan update, Pedestrian crosswalk signalizations were installed by FDOT at 116 Harbor Blvd., 210 Harbor Blvd, and Melvin St. In the Plan Update, completion of the Cross Town Connector throughout the district, bike lane

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICY REVIEW		
POLICY NO.	POLICY DESCRIPTION	PLAN UPDATE IMPLEMENTATION
	overhead connections, traffic calming, improved lighting, and enhanced and/or controlled at-grade crosswalks. Cost of construction of such facilities should be shared by the private developer, the City, and the State.	and sidewalk improvements, and intersection improvements are identified as key projects. Additionally, the Plan Update recommends beautification and crosswalk enhancements specifically across Harbor Boulevard as near-term strategies the City may pursue.
1-3.3.5	Provide for Redevelopment Initiatives Through CRA Tax Increment Financing and Other Plan Implementation Initiatives. The success or failure of adopted Town Center and Harbor CRA Redevelopment Plans (collectively referred to as “Plans”) hinges on the ability of the City to stimulate re-investment, to undertake public improvement projects, and to engender community support. The City has taken its first steps by identifying needs, evaluating alternatives, and preparing Plans to guide efforts for the next several decades. The City shall become the facilitator for the Plans’ implementation. The City’s responsibilities shall include serving as the catalyst for stimulating, marketing, and encouraging both public support and private participation as elaborated in the following Policies. As part of its responsibilities for maintaining and improving the CRA tax increment financing program, the City shall monitor CRA property values. These responsibilities shall include annual review, update, and evaluation of the effectiveness of the tax increment financing program including the timely processing of information by the City and County to ensure that the best interests of the City are carried forth.	The Plan Update includes sections regarding the successful implementation and financial planning. These sections include information on the required annual review, funding sources, financial incentives, etc.
1-3.3.5(1)	CRA Management Plan. The CRA shall assess CRA manpower needs and internal funding sources to promote and market the area, review development plans, create new regulatory frameworks, leverage investment, assist small businesses, provide for special events, maintain financial integrity and, in general, provide day-to-day management and review. The City shall commit resources to the two key areas of the management plan: (a) Responsibility for project administration (b) Target funds for project implementation, creating marketing materials, new development codes, and public and private project review.	There is a section specifically for the City’s management plan within the Implementation section of the Plan Update.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICY REVIEW		
POLICY NO.	POLICY DESCRIPTION	PLAN UPDATE IMPLEMENTATION
1-3.3.5(2)	Comprehensive CRA Funding Sources. The City shall commit resources to planning for the income and expenditures within the CRA as an integral part of CRA Redevelopment Plan implementation. The City shall manage the CRA financial plan and yearly budget estimates, project cost estimates and monitor progress in meeting proposed time frames. A variety of funding sources shall be considered, such as the following: (a) Tax increment trust fund, (b) Special assessments, (c) General obligation bonds, (d) Special revenue bonds, (e) Grants and loans to the CRA, (f) Public and private grants and loans using CDBG funds, Community Reinvestment Act funds, historic preservation funds, Small Business Administration loans, and small business facility rehabilitation loan programs, as well as other similar programs, (g) Fees and charges.	In addition to the annual review of CRA revenue, expenditures and key project statuses which is outlined in the Implementation Plan and detailed in the Financial Plan sections, the Plan Update includes a subsection within the Financial Plan that lists several funding sources available including those listed in the referenced policy.
1-3.3.5(3)	CRA Financial Incentives. Financial incentives may be considered as the Trust Fund gains dollars to stimulate location of new/expanding business opportunities. These alternatives shall include: (a) Public partnership with private development wherein the public sector installs roads, water, sewer and other infrastructure necessary to make the project feasible. (b) Establishing a Community Development District, Foreign Trade Zone, Community Development Corporation, or other similar programs. (c) Grants and loans to businesses/property owners.	The Plan Update discusses financial incentives, grants and loans as a part of the Implementation section.
1-3.3.5(4)	CRA Marketing and Promotion. The effectiveness of the CRA Redevelopment Plan will largely depend on the perception of the plan by the public, prospective developers and financial backers. Colorful illustrative materials are necessary throughout plan implementation. A strong citizen involvement and public information program can only aid in the success of the entire plan. The CRA shall establish a community theme or slogan for use on City articles, or sponsor a contest for logo submittals, publish “CRA News” to residents/businesses to keep them informed, and prepare and manage an on-going “events program” to stimulate and maintain the public interest. Finally, utilize “success stories” as they develop to show that Destin is on the move.	There is a marketing and promotion portion of the Implementation section in the updated plan.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICY REVIEW		
POLICY NO.	POLICY DESCRIPTION	PLAN UPDATE IMPLEMENTATION
1-3.4.4	Initiate Public and Private Sector Partnerships. The City shall coordinate redevelopment issues with the private sector in promoting mobilization of public and private resources necessary to effectively carry out redevelopment efforts, especially along the Harbor and in the Town Center CRA area.	Public and private partnerships are discussed in the Financial Incentives, Grants and Loans section of the Implementation Plan.
2-1.3.11	Create Safe Pedestrian and Cycling Roadway Crossings. The City shall create, safe crossings on Harbor Boulevard/Emerald Coast Parkway between the Marler Bridge and the eastern edge of the Town Center CRA, with particular emphasis on strengthening the connection between the Town Center and the Harbor. Crossings shall be evaluated and designed to provide maximum pedestrian visibility, safety, and convenience, consistent with all applicable standards, guidelines, and best current practices. The City shall coordinate with FDOT to ensure adequate crossings are planned and constructed along Harbor Boulevard/Emerald Coast Parkway for safe crossing of that facility.	Prior to this Plan Update, three pedestrian crosswalk signalizations were installed on Highway 98/Harbor Blvd at 116 Harbor Blvd., 210 Harbor Blvd, and at Melvin St. Additionally, the Plan Update recommends further crosswalk enhancements at those crosswalk locations that reduce long waits and encourage the use of the public parking lots and crosswalks.
2-1.3.21	Prioritize Projects. As revenues become available from the Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) tax increments, the City shall prioritize projects that help support the goals of the MMTD.	Throughout the update process with the Harbor CRA Advisory Committee, the key projects were ranked and given a priority level which is included in the Plan Update. As a part of the annual review of the Plan, the City will review the project and priority status of identified key projects.

APPENDIX E - FLORIDA STATUTES CRA PLAN CONTENT REVIEW

FLORIDA STATUTES SECTION	REQUIREMENT	PLAN UPDATE IMPLEMENTATION
163.360.2.a	Conform to the comprehensive plan for the county or municipality as prepared by the local planning agency under the Community Planning Act.	All applicable sections of the current Comprehensive Plan have been implemented. This is demonstrated through the "Comprehensive Plan Consistency" subsection, as well as the detailed policy review in the Appendix.
163.360.2.b	Be sufficiently complete to indicate such land acquisition, demolition and removal of structures, redevelopment, improvements, and rehabilitation as may be proposed to be carried out in the community redevelopment area; zoning and planning changes, if any; land uses; maximum densities; and building requirements.	The "Land Use Review" section outlines the existing zoning, land uses, densities and building requirements for the Harbor CRA district. All planned public improvements which may include land acquisition, demolition, redevelopment, and public projects proposed in the Harbor CRA are included in the "Key Projects" subsection.
163.360.2.c	Provide for the development of affordable housing in the area, or state the reasons for not addressing in the plan the development of affordable housing in the area. The county, municipality, or community redevelopment agency shall coordinate with each housing authority or other affordable housing entities functioning within the geographic boundaries of the redevelopment area, concerning the development of affordable housing in the area.	The "Residential Use Element" of the Plan Update describes the current changes that are being incorporated into the Land Development Code supporting the development of affordable housing and discusses the coordination of local, regional and state agencies to increase the affordable housing stock in the area.
163.362.1	Contain a legal description of the boundaries of the community redevelopment area and the reasons for establishing such boundaries shown in the plan.	The Finding of Necessity Overview section of the Plan Update describes the reasons the Harbor CRA district was determined "blighted" and targeted for redevelopment in the City. A specific legal description of the district is included in the appendix.

FLORIDA STATUTES SECTION	REQUIREMENT	PLAN UPDATE IMPLEMENTATION
163.362.2.a	Show by diagram and in general terms the approximate amount of open space to be provided and the street layout.	The Land Use and Transportation Reviews describe the minimum amount of open space required for each zoning district within the Harbor CRA District, and the existing street layout. The Key Projects show all planned projects including new streets and open space.
163.362.2.b	Show by diagram and in general terms limitations on the type, size, height, number and proposed use of buildings.	The Land Use Review in the Plan Update describes the limitations on building type, size, height, number and use that are implemented through the Future Land Use Designations and zoning districts in the City's Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code.
163.362.2.c	Show by diagram and in general terms the approximate number of dwelling units.	The Land Use Review in the Plan Update describes the number of existing dwelling units, as well as the limitations on building type, size, and density that are implemented through the Future Land Use Designations and zoning districts in the City's Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code.
163.362.2.d	Show by diagram and in general terms such property as intended for use as public parks, recreation areas, streets, public utilities, and public improvements of any nature.	The Key projects section of the Plan Update describes all future public facilities planned for the CRA district. This includes public facilities, new streets, and all other public improvements planned at this time.
163.362.3	If the redevelopment area contains low or moderate income housing, contain a neighborhood impact element which describes in detail the impact of the redevelopment upon the residents of the redevelopment area and the surrounding areas in terms of relocation, traffic circulation, environmental quality, availability of community	As there is currently no low or moderate income housing in the Harbor CRA district, the existing Neighborhood Impact Assessment was replaced with a Residential Use Element (163.362.8).

FLORIDA STATUTES SECTION	REQUIREMENT	PLAN UPDATE IMPLEMENTATION
	facilities and services, effect on school population, and other matters affecting the physical and social quality of the neighborhood.	
163.362.4	Identify specifically any publicly funded capital projects to be undertaken within the community redevelopment area.	A list of publicly funded key projects to be undertaken in the Harbor CRA district is included in the "Investment in the Harbor District" section of the Plan.
163.362.5	Contain adequate safeguards that the work of redevelopment will be carried out pursuant to the plan.	The Plan includes adequate safeguards through the Implementation Plan, Financial Plan and Safeguards, Controls, Restrictions or Covenants sections of the Plan Update.
163.362.6	Provide for the retention of controls and the establishment of any restrictions or covenants running with land sold or leased for private use for such periods of time and under such conditions as the governing body deems necessary to effectuate the purposes of this part.	This section is implemented through the Safeguards, Controls, Restrictions or Covenants section of the Plan Update.
163.362.7	Provide assurances that there will be replacement housing for the relocation of persons temporarily or permanently displaced from housing facilities within the community redevelopment area.	The Residential Use Element includes language describing the City's policies on replacement housing due to redevelopment activity.
163.362.8	Provide an element of residential use in the redevelopment area if such use exists in the area prior to the adoption of the plan or if the plan is intended to remedy a shortage of housing affordable to residents of low or moderate income, including the elderly, or if the plan is not intended to remedy such shortage, the reasons therefore.	The Residential Use Element in the updated Plan includes the proposed changes to the Land Development Code which incentivizes the developer to include a percentage of affordable housing in new planned unit developments.
163.362.9	Contain a detailed statement of the projected costs of the redevelopment, including the amount to be expended on publicly funded capital projects in the community redevelopment area and any indebtedness of the community redevelopment agency, the county, or the municipality proposed to be incurred for such redevelopment if such	In the Financial Plan section, there are multiple tables which outline the encumbered revenue for the Harbor CRA, the projected revenue, operating budget, total debt transfer, and balance from FY 23 through the

FLORIDA STATUTES SECTION	REQUIREMENT	PLAN UPDATE IMPLEMENTATION
	indebtedness is to be repaid with increment revenues.	duration of the CRA (FY43). Additionally, each key project includes a planning cost estimate for the project.
163.362.10	Provide a time certain for completing all redevelopment financed by increment revenues. Such time certain shall occur no later than 30 years after the fiscal year in which the plan is approved, adopted, or amended pursuant to s. 163.361(1). However, for any agency created after July 1, 2002, the time certain for completing all redevelopment financed by increment revenues must occur within 40 years after the fiscal year in which the plan is approved or adopted.	The Plan Duration section of the updated plan states that all projects and redevelopment funded by CRA revenue shall be completed no later than June 16, 2043.

APPENDIX F - HARBOR REDEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES (2003)

The Harbor Redevelopment Area is to be redeveloped as an easily accessible, economically sustainable and attractive waterfront-oriented district that provides safe transportation, pedestrian and recreation facilities in a manner that promotes a favorable identity for the City of Destin.

REDEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

In partnership with the private sector and other governmental entities, the Harbor redevelopment initiative will reverse the observed blighting conditions within the Harbor Area over a 40-year period by leveraging public assets to improve the overall economic condition and the physical condition of the Redevelopment Area. Strategic initiatives are to be identified and placed into action to address and remove blighting conditions that might forestall the achievement of these redevelopment objectives. Ultimately, the Harbor Area will be revitalized to benefit residents, businesses, property owners and visitors.

The objectives and redevelopment initiatives contained in this section address blight conditions within the Redevelopment Area as identified in the Finding of Necessity Report. These objectives are supported by the City’s recently amended Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code in addition to past studies performed for and by the City of Destin. The objectives shall be viewed as sound planning steps in the realization of the redevelopment initiative.

Objective 1 - Transportation and Pedestrian Safety

The transportation condition of US 98 and the lack of safe pedestrian facilities are among the identifiable blighting conditions within the Harbor Redevelopment Area. Its condition shall be seen as a priority in the implementation of this Plan. To address this priority an enhanced and interconnected network of right-of-way and other infrastructure projects that focuses on improving pedestrian movement, shall be planned. To spotlight and establish the area as an attractive and competitive destination in the larger regional framework, existing transportation, and access points shall be enhanced. Ingress/egress and evacuation routes along US 98 and its major connectors throughout the year and during periods of peak visitations or periods of emergency or distress shall be realized.

Objective 2 – Parking Improvements

Parking shall be made available to support development and access points throughout the Harbor Redevelopment Area and the US 98 corridor in particular.

Objective 3 – Harbor Access, Open Space and Recreation

The waterfront is one of Destin’s premier assets; yet the public access, open space and recreation opportunities within the Harbor Redevelopment Area are limited. Redevelopment initiatives shall be implemented that promote access to the Harbor and provide adequate open space and recreation facilities to meet citizen and visitor demand.

Objective 4 – Urban Design and Infrastructure

The first impression of the “quality of life” in the Harbor Redevelopment Area is expressed through the overall visual characteristic of the Harbor Redevelopment Area’s built environment. There are numerous

properties that limit the ability to redevelop in an orderly and integrated fashion due to their condition, size and orientation. The City, through redevelopment initiatives, shall encourage owners of private properties to improve their sites. Public rights-of-way and property shall be improved in order to create a sense of place for the Harbor Redevelopment Area while enhancing basic infrastructure, specifically sidewalks, stormwater and utilities.

Objective 5 – Funding, Financing, Management and Promotion

The funding and financing portion of this objective calls for a creative, efficient, practical and equitable funding and financing mechanism to properly implement this Plan. It is perceived that these will be tied to the expected flow of tax increment dollars at the very least. The CRA shall implement programs that provide proper management of the redevelopment initiatives and promotion of the Harbor Redevelopment Area.

The remainder of this section identifies redevelopment programs and capital projects that when implemented support the redevelopment objectives as presented in this Plan. The capital and program costs of implementing the redevelop initiatives are addressed in Section 4.2 of this Plan.

TRANSPORTATION AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY REDEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

Improving transportation and pedestrian safety will positively transform the visual and general perception of the Harbor Redevelopment Area. The following initiatives shall be considered in improving transportation and pedestrian safety within the Redevelopment Area. Each of these initiatives will be amplified in an annual work program undertaken by the City of Destin and the CRA.

Transportation and Pedestrian Safety Program Initiatives

The following provides descriptions of potential programs that shall encourage improving transportation and pedestrian safety in the Harbor Redevelopment Area. Many of these programs are time sensitive while others are ongoing in nature. Programs such as the transportation study referenced in 3.2.1.2 will result in the identification of specific capital projects that shall be undertaken to realize redevelopment results.

Transportation and Pedestrian Safety Design Guidelines

The CRA shall establish design guidelines and/or standards that contain the following.

- Establish driveway spacing to prevent a motorist from encountering more than one conflict at a time.
- Address corner clearance and wherever practical control distance between driveways and the corner of an intersection.
- Develop driveway designs to allow vehicles to quickly exit the through lane.
- For wider driveways, the use of a driveway median shall be encouraged to provide a safe space for pedestrians, help to provide positive guidance to motorists and allow beautification and signing opportunities.
- Use medians and other innovative design methods to reduce the turning movements across lanes as well as provide a safe haven for pedestrians crossing the roadway.
- Develop and incorporate lighting and landscape standards to design a safe and inviting environment.

These guidelines/standards shall be drafted in coordination with the urban design standards referenced later in this Plan.

Transportation Enhancement Study

The CRA shall complete a transportation study to determine the most effective manner in which to control traffic, access and safety on US 98 and its major connectors. The transportation study shall include pedestrian, bicycle and other multi-modal transportation elements in addition to identifying ways to enhance emergency evacuation. The transportation study shall consider past transportation studies and recommendations in addition to evaluating other innovative methods to accomplish this objective.

Access Management Program Initiatives

Investigate alternative or innovative access management solutions for transportation problems. Pursue agreements allowing joint access, cross access, or other innovative uses between adjacent property owners to help control the number of access points on the road network.

TRANSPORTATION AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS

Roadway Improvements

As indicated in the study referenced in 3.2.1.2, the CRA shall, in partnership with other agencies as deemed appropriate, implement the roadway improvement recommendations contained in the transportation study. Roadway improvements may include improvements on US 98, Stahlman Avenue, Mountain Drive, Benning Drive, and Beach Ridge Drive.

Multimodal Transportation Improvements

To provide safe and easy access for bicyclists and pedestrians, as well as motorists, traveling through the Redevelopment Area the CRA shall, in partnership with other government agencies as deemed appropriate, implement the multi-modal transportation improvement recommendations contained in the transportation study referenced in 3.2.1.2. Multimodal transportation improvements will include bike paths and other multimodal access improvements concurrent with roadway improvements.

Pedestrian Sidewalks and Crosswalks

An enhanced and interconnected network or right-of-way and other infrastructure projects that focus on improving pedestrian movement, parking, ingress/egress and evacuation routes along US 98 and its major connectors shall be realized. The CRA shall, in partnership with other government agencies as deemed appropriate, implement the sidewalk and crosswalk improvement recommendations contained in the transportation study referenced in 3.2.1.2. Projects will also include Bluff Ridge Walk, and Harbor Walk.

Evacuation Improvements

The CRA shall, in partnership with other government agencies as deemed appropriate, implement the emergency evacuation improvement recommendations contained in the transportation study referenced in 3.2.1.2.

Parking Redevelopment Initiatives

Parking concerns addressed comprehensively will improve the function, appearance and safety of the

Harbor Redevelopment Area. Furthermore, it is expected that any additional parking provided will increase property utilization in the area, substantially increase the number of spaces available and encourage cooperative public/private partnerships. Each of these initiatives will be amplified in an annual work program undertaken by the City of Destin and the CRA.

Parking Program Initiatives

The following provides descriptions of programs that shall improve parking in the Harbor Redevelopment Area. Many of these programs are time sensitive while others are on-going in nature. Programs such as the parking study referenced below will result in the identification of specific capital projects that shall be undertaken to realize redevelopment results.

Parking Study

The City of Destin has performed several assessments identifying parking deficiencies within the Harbor Redevelopment Area, specifically the US 98 corridor. The City shall prepare a parking implementation plan. In drafting the implementation plan the City shall review past studies, update the deficiencies based on this review and current conditions and then prepare an action plan that specifies capital improvements, programs and other methods to eliminate parking problems and promote redevelopment within the Harbor Redevelopment Area. The parking study shall include the identification of locations where shared parking will work, an evaluation of the City’s parking codes and the need to provide public parking and perhaps even the construction of parking garages or structures to increase capacity in critical areas.

PARKING CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Parking Improvements

As indicated in the study referenced in 3.3.1.1, the CRA shall, in partnership with other government agencies, organizations or individuals as deemed appropriate, implement the parking improvement recommendations contained in the parking study. Parking improvements will include on-street parking concurrent with roadway improvements, and public parking garages and lots.

Harbor Access, Open Space, and Recreation

The opportunity exists for the Harbor Redevelopment Area to provide prime recreation programs and facilities within the general community, specifically along the waterfront. Open space areas shall be present throughout the redevelopment area on both private and public lands. The design and placement of open space will provide the opportunity to intertwine pedestrian facilities throughout the corridor creating an environment that is walkable. Each of these initiatives will be amplified in an annual work program undertaken by the City of Destin and the CRA.

HARBOR ACCESS, OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PROGRAM INITIATIVES

Recreational Programs and Special Events

The CRA shall support holding recreational programs and special events within the Harbor Redevelopment Area to promote Destin as a destination in addition to meeting local recreational needs.

Programs and Activities Supporting Commercial Access to the Harbor

The Destin area was founded as a fishing village and many of its residents want to preserve and protect the commercial fishing industry. The CRA shall evaluate measures to support the economic stability of the commercial and sport fishing industries

Harbor Access, Open Space and Recreation Capital Improvements

The following open space and recreational improvements have been derived through conversations with community leaders and from past studies performed for and by the City of Destin for the Harbor Redevelopment Area.

Harbor Boardwalk

The City of Destin has undertaken numerous planning initiatives to improve the functionality, aesthetics and long-term prosperity of the City. During these planning exercises one of the highest ranked projects is the development of a boardwalk along the north shore of the Destin Harbor. The City of Destin has created a committee comprised of property owners along the north shore of the Destin Harbor, formally called the North Shore Landowners Committee. Their sole mission was to draft a proposal to the City that will result in the voluntary conveyance of public easement along the water’s edge in order to construct a continuous boardwalk. The CRA shall support the initiatives of the North Shore Landowners Committee as they complete the planning process. The committee is currently completing Phase I of the Harbor Boardwalk Proposal. Phase II will be to complete an economic and parking demand analysis of the boardwalk project. The parking assessment can be completed as part of the parking study referred to previously. Phase III will be the actual engineering and construction of the boardwalk. The completion of the boardwalk area will enhance the provision of access to the waterfront, provide recreation opportunities and serve as an economic stimulator.

Other Water Access Improvements

The CRA shall consider other physical improvements that will advance access to the Harbor for not only the general public but the commercial industries dependent on the Destin Harbor for their livelihood. Such improvements will include marinas, boat ramps, fishing piers and supporting infrastructure such as parking and utilities.

Special Events Area

Create a special events area that serves to unify existing civic facilities at Stahlman Avenue and US 98. This space will serve as an area for special events and programs to provide recreation and promote the Harbor Redevelopment Area as a destination point of interest.

Other Open Space and Recreation Improvements

Improvements to Taylor Park shall be planned and implemented in addition to the creation of a new harbor side park with access from US 98. Open space can be provided and enhanced through the establishment of landscape promenade to serve the US 98 corridor and Harbor. Other improvements include a Visitor Center.

Urban Design and Infrastructure

The aesthetic or design framework of an urban area is a composite of its various visual and planning elements. Each of these elements may have a different visual character or use when perceived separately.

When viewed together, these discrete elements can determine the overall visual character or “image” of an urban area. The individual elements that help to define the character of an urban area may include major roadways, streetscape, public rights-of-way, buildings, landmarks, signage, greenspace, recreational areas, conservation areas and the edges of separate distinct areas.

The Finding of Necessity Report documented that the majority of commercial development is functionally obsolescent throughout the Redevelopment Area. The current proliferation of private signage and lack of uniform landscaping creates a visual blight that detracts from the area’s aesthetic environment.

In general, the urban design initiatives presented in this Plan will abide by the overall goals, objectives and policies, including type, size, density, massing and building height, as outlined in the City of Destin’s Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code. The following emphasizes urban design and infrastructure strategies that can greatly enhance the aesthetic and infrastructure conditions within the Harbor Redevelopment Area. Each of these initiatives will be amplified in an annual work program undertaken by the City of Destin and the CRA.

URBAN DESIGN AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMS

Evaluation of the Urban Design Framework

The Destin Harbor Area Master Plan addresses the Harbor Redevelopment Area’s urban design framework. The framework initiated by the Master Plan, shall be evaluated to ensure that the urban design framework correctly captures the desired enhancements for gateways, roadways, streetscape, right-of-way, parking, building and site components, location of open space and recreational areas, waterfront access, land uses and zoning. The urban design framework is a planning tool that establishes the foundation and tone for all planned improvements within the Harbor Redevelopment Area. The urban design framework evaluation shall result in a base plan that will guide the redevelopment as it relates to aesthetics in addition to function. The City of Destin’s Land Development Code, which is expected to be adopted by the end of 2003, shall also address the redevelopment area’s urban design framework.

Design Standards

The City shall encourage improved appearance and design of public and private projects as a means of encouraging more investment throughout the Harbor Redevelopment Area. The City shall prepare a document that presents the development regulations and design standards in a simple design manual format for public use. The design manual shall address streetscape, architectural, site, landscape, signage, public art and open space to provide visual continuity and a positive environment throughout the Redevelopment Area. Design standards establish a harmonious design vocabulary throughout an area for both new and existing facilities. The City’s Comprehensive Plan discusses development intensities, densities, maximum height, and buffers. This shall be considered when developing design standards for the Harbor Area. The City’s anticipated land development code shall be tested to ensure that they do the following.

- Create an environment that is attractive and safe for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists.
- Promote the use of proper construction materials that impart a sense of quality and permanence.
- Balance aesthetic values with function and economic realities.

Beautification Programs

Beautification programs such as Adopt-A- Median or Adopt-A-Right-of-Way can assist in the

implementation and maintenance of landscaped areas within the Redevelopment Area. City sponsored beautification will be provided through the implementation of streetscape and gateway improvements. The beautification program will also include the preservation and enhancement of existing open spaces and natural features within the Redevelopment area.

Incentives for Site and Structure Improvements

The City through the CRA initiative will encourage private properties to improve their sites and structures. The City can provide non-monetary incentives such as code waivers and special exemptions to private parties to upgrade and maintain their properties. The CRA can also provide assistance in identifying and pursuing CDB Grants (Community Development Block Grants) and other funding sources to assist private property improvements.

URBAN DESIGN AND INFRASTRUCTURE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Streetscape Improvements

Incorporate streetscape strategic planning in all projects to improve access, pedestrian and bicycle facilities and overall beautification for US 98 and other major roads within the Redevelopment Area. Streetscape planning shall provide a typical section for each roadway using consistent design guidelines throughout the Redevelopment Area. Any roadway and streetscape planning must include a phasing/ prioritization plan to construct the recommended improvements. Streetscape improvements may include improvements on US 98, Stahlman Avenue, Mountain Drive, Benning Drive, and Beach Ridge Drive.

Gateway/Signage/Wayfinding System

Promote the location of important destinations in the Redevelopment Area through a gateway/signage/ wayfinding system. Such a visual directional system, besides giving the Harbor Redevelopment Area an identity, is particularly important in its relationship to neighborhoods that are predominately residential and wish to enhance their security and integrity.

Stormwater and Utilities Improvements

All new development is required to provide adequate on-site stormwater and utility upgrades for the required development. The City of Destin’s City-wide Stormwater Management Plan will include the Harbor redevelopment area and address stormwater issues. This plan is anticipated to be completed by the end of the year 2003. Specific projects will be reviewed as part of an annual work program that will be undertaken by the City of Destin and the CRA.

General Strategy for Funding, Financing, Management, and Promotion Programs

The following programs and activities address the funding, financing, management and promotion of the Harbor Redevelopment Area. Detailed funding, financing, and management strategies will be provided in the annual work program that will describe the timing and components of the activities or improvements to be supported by the City and CRA.

Identification and Securing Equitable Funding and Financing Mechanisms

Identify and secure all feasible sources of funding to support the redevelopment initiatives described

in this Plan. Such mechanisms can include, but are not limited to, tax increment revenues, ad valorem revenue, non-ad valorem assessment revenue, taxable or non-taxable bonds, other public instruments, grants and public/private partnerships.

Property Assembly Program

The intent of the property assembly program is to provide suitable sites for parking and associated commercial development by aggregating specially targeted or adjacent substandard lots to create larger parcels. Parcel aggregation is an expensive proposition, especially in the case of waterfront property. Nonetheless, the City of Destin and CRA must develop an acquisition approach. Decisions to aggregate must substantially support the vision, objectives and initiatives as indicated in this Plan and public money allocated for aggregation shall be returned at resale when feasible. Because of the high cost of land acquisition and limited tax increment financing capabilities, the City shall have a multi-faceted approach to acquiring properties for redevelopment. When feasible, encourage acquisition and subsequent redevelopment by the private market; second, explore land acquisition by either the CRA or the City for the Redevelopment Area properties. Other programs include:

- Identify and inventory all relevant substandard properties.
- Document and analyze over all parking demands and constraints throughout the Redevelopment Area.
- Document site criteria for modern commercial developments by business type to facilitate the understanding of contemporary developer site and parking requirements.
- Map and index all commercial properties in the Redevelopment Area to provide detailed information on parcel boundaries, sizes, and ownership.
- The City shall facilitate aggregation and redevelopment of “problem” or constrained parcels or groups of parcels.
- The CRA and City shall assist in the purchase, sale, negotiation and coordination of land assembly.
- To assure the City’s and CRA’s success, public resources must be dedicated to fund the mapping and indexing of all properties in the Redevelopment Area; funding to research or otherwise obtain contemporary site development requirements; provision of City resources and staff time to negotiate acquisitions and public/private partnerships with potential developers; and, funding to finance land acquisitions by either the City or the CRA (some of which will be recovered or rolled over as properties are resold).

Branding and Promotion

Create a logo and identify package that can be used to identify the Harbor Redevelopment Area on literature, banners, gateways and promotional campaigns.

Comprehensive Plan, Land Use and Zoning Changes

As redevelopment initiatives are implemented, the CRA shall evaluate the impact of such initiatives on the City’s comprehensive plan, existing/future land use and zoning.

Programs that Encourage Public-Private Partnerships

The CRA shall develop programs and identify opportunities for public-private partnerships in the redevelopment of the Harbor Redevelopment Area. The establishment and maintenance of partnerships will serve not only to leverage the tax increment and other revenue sources but also stimulate community interest and support. Partnerships may take several forms from financial partnering to technical support to the promotion of the area. Each partnership opportunity shall be evaluated on a case-by-case basis

for its overall value and impacts.

An interesting opportunity public-private partnership opportunity is identified in the Comprehensive Plan Policy 2-1.3.6: Promote Destin Harbor Water Taxi Service. The City shall coordinate with the private sector to encourage the development of a water taxi service within the Destin Harbor. The intent is to encourage the development of water taxi service as an alternate mode of transportation.

PROGRAMS THAT MAINTAIN A SAFE AND CLEAN ENVIRONMENT

The CRA shall consider programs that enhance the safety or perception of safety within the Redevelopment Area. The following are a few recommended programs.

Community Policing

The Florida Community Redevelopment Act encourages “community policing innovation. ” This is defined as policing techniques or strategies designed to reduce crime by reducing opportunities for, and increasing the perceived risks of engaging in, criminal activity through visible presence of law enforcement in the community, including, but not limited to, community mobilization, neighborhood block watch, citizen patrol, foot patrol, storefront police stations or intensified motorized patrol. The intent of these programs will be to improve the actual and perceived security, building safety and appearance of the Redevelopment Area. The following principles, based upon the experience of other communities, shall be established to guide these programs, they include: addressing environmental problems which cause or encourage criminal activity; involve local citizens in the campaign against crime; make the police force approachable and trusted and foster an image of the community as a safe place to live, work and do business. To realize the full intent of the community-policing, the following initiatives shall be undertaken.

- Law enforcement officers will circulate throughout the Redevelopment Area on a regular basis to meet visitors, residents and business owners, listen to their security concerns and ask for their ideas to solve crime problems. Whenever possible, officers shall attend community meetings and special events.
- Periodically analyze the crime “blotter” to assess the numbers and types of law enforcement responses within the Redevelopment Area. This analysis can be used to identify problems and trends.
- Create a special patrol or “beat” for the Redevelopment Area to provide a stronger law enforcement presence, additional door checks, bicycle patrols and like alternatives.
- Develop innovative techniques to address special needs of visitors.
- Develop and implement Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) standards to correct any security problems related to site improvements such as lighting and vegetation. These standards can be printed and distributed throughout the Redevelopment Area. The CPTED standards can be developed as part of the design guidelines for the Redevelopment Area.

Code Enforcement

In addition to community policing, the City shall evaluate the potential of more aggressive code enforcement activities both within, and near, the Redevelopment Area. This will be undertaken to assist in elimination of substandard zoning, building, landscaping and signs. It is important to assure the surrounding and adjacent properties are treated in the same manner. The following are implementation strategies for code enforcement activities.

- The City can evaluate existing and proposed codes for the Redevelopment Area and develop a more focused code enforcement program in order to respond to the specific needs of this area.
- To accomplish these strategies the City will need to develop and refine a code enforcement

program and use code enforcement staff as required. The City in developing and enhancing the code enforcement program within the Redevelopment Area may use redevelopment funds.

Maintenance of Redevelopment Area Database

Creating and maintaining a public database will encourage businesses to remain, relocate or start-up within the Redevelopment Area. The creation and maintenance of such a database will consist of compiling and regularly updating a database of available land and commercial building space to provide prospective recruits with detailed location information. The database shall include the address and parcel identification number, total square footage, proposed projects, available square footage and price for each available housing, retail, office and industrial property in the Redevelopment Area. It shall also include information on property contacts and a brief property description. The database shall also include prospective tenants, owners and developers as a complement to the available space database described. This database can help identify potential recruits who fit the profiles shown in the market analysis and the spaces shown in the available database. Among the information to be compiled will be the sites, location and price range criteria of potential recruits.