



Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning

Planning for the Challenges Ahead



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Director

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**MARINA DEL REY VISION STATEMENT; PROJECT NO. R2013-02577-(4);
ADVANCE PLANNING NO. 201300008; SEPTEMBER 17, 2014 – AGENDA ITEM #7;
DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION**

The Marina del Rey Vision Statement presented for your comment and consideration is the result of a year-and-a-half effort to gather thoughts, ideas, concerns, and recommendations for the future direction of development in Marina del Rey (Marina). Staff met with over 350 individuals during the visioning process, many more than once, and heard from dozens more via email, telephone, and during meetings of your Commission, the Design Control Board, and the Small Craft Harbor Commission. Staff worked closely with the Department of Beaches and Harbors to develop the Vision Statement, and also spent many hours with the Department of Public Works.

This Staff Report provides background information on the visioning effort and briefly summarizes the Vision Statement.

BACKGROUND

In September 2009, subsequent to an agreement with the California Coastal Commission, the Board of Supervisors directed the Departments of Regional Planning (DRP) and Beaches and Harbors to undertake the Roadmap for the Marina, which consisted of the following actions: 1) Responding to the California Coastal Commission's periodic review of the Marina del Rey Local Coastal Program (LCP); 2) Submitting to the Coastal Commission a compound amendment comprised of all known Marina projects requiring LCP amendments; and 3) Undertaking a visioning process to chart a direction for future development in the Marina. The first two actions were completed in 2010 and 2012, respectively. Completion of the Vision Statement will mark the completion of the Roadmap.

PURPOSE OF MARINA DEL REY VISION STATEMENT

The Marina del Rey Vision Statement establishes a framework to guide future decision-making on development, policies, and development standards in the Marina as land use opportunities, economic/market conditions, special needs, and other opportunities arise. This framework includes recommendations and proposed implementation actions, and identifies County departments expected to be responsible for implementation. The County will use the recommendations and proposed implementation actions in the Vision Statement to achieve several goals for the Marina, including improving mobility to, from and within the Marina, revitalizing retail and visitor-serving facilities, supporting and expanding boating and other water-oriented activities, and enhancing the Marina's image. The Vision Statement identifies the following goals for the Marina:

- Create a vibrant destination for all Los Angeles County residents and visitors.
- Support boating and other water-oriented activities.
- Promote environmental and sustainability goals shared with the California Coastal Commission.
- Provide low-cost access to the Marina's waterfront and amenities.
- Provide a desirable place to recreate and live.
- Achieve County goals for economic development and revenue-generation by encouraging reinvestment in properties.

VISIONING PROCESS

DRP developed the Vision Statement's recommendations and proposed implementation actions in conjunction with the Department of Beaches and Harbors, through discussions with the Department of Public Works, with extensive input from the public, and informed by the analyses of consultants contracted by DRP for the visioning effort.

Outreach and Public Participation

Over 16 months, from April 2013 through August 2014, and with the assistance of a consultant, DRP met with residents, visitors, neighbors, advisory bodies, merchants, lessees, County departments, and other stakeholders interested in the future of the Marina to gather input and ideas about what type of community the Marina should be in the future and the types of amenities that should be provided.

Staff conducted or attended more than 35 meetings where public and other stakeholder input was provided; and staff received numerous emails, telephone calls, and letters related to the visioning. Some of these meetings were intended to gather focused input from specialized sectors of the community on specific areas of concern, such as non-

motorized boaters and lessees engaged in hospitality activities. Other meetings were requested by individual members of the public, neighboring entities, or other stakeholders. DRP also established an online town hall to provide individuals who may not live near the Marina or who might not be able to attend meetings with an additional way to participate in the visioning process and provide input (see Appendices A and B).

Members of the public and other stakeholders were informed of the initial April 2013 visioning process kick-off meeting through a community-wide and courtesy list mailing, email blasts, Twitter feeds, flyers, website posting, and announcement at advisory body meetings. Subsequent meetings and the online town hall were advertised through email blasts, Twitter feeds, flyers, website posting, newspaper articles, and announcements at the initial April 2013 meeting and at advisory body meetings.

Comments Provided

The participants in the visioning process and the advisory bodies provided a wide variety of comments, concerns, and suggestions regarding the user experience and visions for the future of the Marina. Comments ranged from specific ideas about uses within geographical areas of the Marina to those regarding Countywide and regional matters. Summaries of the comments received at outreach events, the town hall-style website, and meetings with advisory bodies are contained in Appendices A and B.

The comments provided covered a range of topics, including:

- Improve the Marina's identity as a destination for leisure and recreation activities.
- Expand open space and recreational opportunities.
- Update the Marina's infrastructure and the appearance and location of some of the uses.
- Improve directional signage and other guides to make reaching a destination in the Marina easier and more direct.
- Make it easier for people to enter the Marina and access its facilities.
- Improve the ability of visitors, pedestrians, residents, bicyclists, vehicles, boaters, and other users to move around the Marina easily, efficiently, and safely.
- Enhance people's ability to enjoy themselves in the Marina through opportunities such as dining, shopping, and boating.
- Improve and expand the main walking path along the water's edge in the Marina.
- Improve views of the water.
- Orient uses and activities in the Marina toward the area of land closest to the water's edge to take advantage of views of the water and activities taking place upon it.
- Improve the level of comfort people feel while in the Marina.

Consultant Analyses

Consultants analyzed market conditions, mobility conditions, and land use conditions in the Marina, and suggested improvements intended to address areas of concern raised by the County and the public. The technical memoranda from these consultants may be found in Appendices D, E and F, and provided guidance in the development of staff's recommendations for the Vision Statement; County staff synthesized the recommendations received and prepared a final set of recommendations that are included in the Vision Statement.

Below is a summary of the topics studied by the consultants.

Market Analysis

The market analysis determined that the Marina market could support potential additional retail development of 206,000 square feet. This figure includes approximately 154,000 square feet of building materials/general merchandise retail (e.g., Lowe's, Home Depot, Costco, Target, Wal-Mart). However, projects of this scale and type are not compatible with the Marina's character and are unlikely to be approved. Other market-supported opportunities identified in the analysis include less-traditional creative-use office space and from 610 to 940 additional hotel rooms. Both creative-use office space and hotel rooms are consistent with the Marina's character. Specific establishment types for which there appears to be demand include men's clothing, jewelry, hobby/game stores, and office supply stores, which are also consistent with the Marina's character.

Mobility Analysis

Traffic in Marina del Rey emerged as an area of concern for many people. Cut-through traffic does result in some impacts to Marina roadways, and existing parking lots and driveways are at times difficult to find. The safety of pedestrians and bicyclists is also a concern, particularly where these recreational activities or modes of transportation intersect with vehicles. Facilities for pedestrians and bicycles were found to be in need of improvement in many areas, mainly the sidewalks and the Promenade.

Urban Design Analysis

During the visioning process, participants voiced concerns about the Marina's dated image, the importance of retaining and enhancing water-oriented activities, the desire to see a wider variety of visitor-and-resident-serving retail uses, the need for more public gathering spaces, the absence of a complete Promenade along the Marina's waterfront, and the necessity of making it easier to move around in the Marina. The urban design

analysis determined that dated infrastructure, the quality and style of some new development, and obstructed views of the harbor from Via Marina and Admiralty Way detract from the ambience of the Marina. It was also found that there is a lack of unifying landscape elements throughout the Marina.

Themes

From public and consultant input, staff noted several themes which are discussed and addressed in the Vision Statement's recommendations:

- Create activity districts: to cluster similar uses, develop sense of place, and simplify the provision of services and amenities.
- Improve mobility and directional signage: to improve the ability of residents and visitors to move around the Marina and to find their destinations.
- Enhance the image of the Marina and its built environment: focus on the waterfront, develop unique gateways at all Marina entrances, and revitalize the Marina as a world-class facility.
- Enhance recreation opportunities: for non-motorized and motorized boaters, wildlife viewing, and for landside activities, particularly at Marina Beach and Chace Park.
- Provide public gathering spaces: expand and enhance the Promenade, and install street furniture and lighting along the Promenade and at public gathering spaces.

VISION STATEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

A renewed focus on the water, enhancements to existing facilities, updated infrastructure, and expanded public gathering spaces are some of the ideas addressed in the Vision Statement's recommendations. Land use recommendations include:

- Group land uses into four districts: Residential, Marina Beach, Visitor's Row, and Boater's Way.
- Retain existing boat services and enhance boating and non-motorized boating amenities throughout the Marina.
- Create a civic center to co-locate visitor's information, harbor administration offices, and the Lloyd Taber-Marina del Rey Library.
- Retain height restrictions on waterfront parcels.
- Develop urban design guidelines to apply to all redevelopment projects.

As traffic level of service in the Marina generally operates at an acceptable level, and because the Marina del Rey Local Coastal Program caps traffic generation and requires mitigation for traffic impacts generated by a proposed project, mobility recommendations focus on improving mobility for people once they are in the Marina. Mobility recommendations include:

- Develop multi-modal mobility hubs to serve park-once districts.
- Improve directional signage both waterside and landside.
- Install unique gateway signage at the Marina's main access points.
- Enhance bicycle and pedestrian paths and the overall walkability of the Marina.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

Implementing the Vision Statement's recommendations can be achieved through a number of methods, including enhancements to existing development and by use of urban design guidelines that will be developed by the County.

Implementation will occur in both the short-term and long-term, as staff and resources become available and as land use opportunities arise. Short-term implementation actions identified in the Vision Statement include:

- Develop urban design guidelines.
- Designate mobility hub locations.
- Construct waterfront promenade where safety and lease conditions allow.
- Install bicycle path improvements and safety enhancements.

Long-term implementation actions identified in the Vision Statement include:

- Construct short-term/visitor docks at visitor- and-resident-serving uses and public facilities.
- Expand operation of waterborne and landside public transportation services.
- Consolidate civic facilities into a single location.
- Construct public boathouse facilities.
- Implement Chace Park Master Plan upgrades.

CONCLUSION

The Vision Statement sets forth the concerns and ideas for improvement voiced by Marina residents, business people, visitors, neighbors, recreation users, and other stakeholders over the past 16 months, and proposes recommendations intended to create a vibrant community and revitalized visitor-serving destination in the Marina.

County departments will refer to the Vision Statement to guide decisions on individual projects, lease negotiations, department work programs, and policy changes regarding the Marina del Rey Local Coastal Program, providing a consistent reference document for both the public and the County.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Regional Planning Commission recommend that the Board of Supervisors hold a meeting to discuss and approve the Marina del Rey Vision Statement.

SUGGESTED MOTION

I MOVE THAT THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMEND THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HOLD A MEETING TO DISCUSS AND APPROVE THE MARINA DEL REY VISION STATEMENT.

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Attachments: Marina del Rey Vision Statement
Marina del Rey Vision Statement Appendices
Marina del Rey locator map