

# Ruston Way Plan

City of Tacoma, Washington

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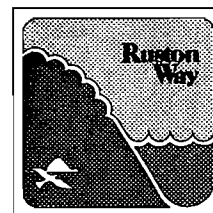
# Ruston Way Plan

Design and Development Guidelines for Ruston Way Waterfront Revitalization  
City of Tacoma, Washington

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City Planning Department  
Tacoma, Washington  
June, 1981



The preparation of this report was financially aided through a grant from the Washington State Department of Ecology with funds obtained from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and appropriated for Section 306 of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972.

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## Ruston Way Plan

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The Ruston Way Plan, an element of the City's long range, comprehensive LAND USE MANAGEMENT PLAN and MASTER PROGRAM FOR SHORELINE DEVELOPMENT, is accomplished pursuant to the authority conferred by the Washington State Constitution and Title 13 of the City's Charter and General Ordinances, which established the LAND USE MANAGEMENT PLAN and elements thereof.



## Planning Department Staff

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The project staff wishes to acknowledge the numerous individuals who participated and contributed their valuable assistance in the production of this document.



February 2, 1981

Honorable Mayor and Members  
of the Tacoma City Council

The Planning Commission is pleased to transmit the RUSTON WAY PLAN to you. Waterfront areas across the nation are being rediscovered for their potential as people-oriented places. Ruston Way, with its magnificent setting, panoramic views, wooded slopes and close proximity to city neighborhoods, is one of Tacoma's greatest assets.

The RUSTON WAY PLAN sets forth intents, policies and design recommendations that will assist the private and public sector in developing a highly desirable urban waterfront area for Tacoma.

Future public and private development will enhance the area, provide optimum public access to the water, maintain viewing opportunities, satisfy some of the water-oriented recreation needs of Tacoma's citizens and create a unique waterfront attraction.

The Commission has met over the past year to discuss the content and direction of the Plan. An environmental impact statement was also prepared and circulated according to State guidelines. Involvement of citizens, property owners, neighborhood groups, state and federal agencies and others was extremely important to the Plan's formulation and review. A public hearing was held on December 15, 1980, providing an additional opportunity for citizen review and comment.

The Planning Commission is confident the use of this Plan will fulfill the City's intent to foster the realization of the full economic, aesthetic and recreation potential of the Ruston Way shoreline.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Michael J. Wheeler'.

MICHAEL J. WHEELER  
Chairman  
Tacoma Planning Commission

MJW:DK:cs



## **Resolution No. 27024**

WHEREAS the City of Tacoma Planning Commission has developed a draft of the Ruston Way Plan with the aid of citizen participation, and has recommended it to the City Council for adoption as an element of the Land Use Management Plan and the Master Program for Shoreline Development, and

WHEREAS such plan is intended to foster coordination and continuity in order to establish a unified character along the shoreline, will be used in reviewing shoreline permits for proposed development projects, and will form the basis for City improvements concerning public development in that area, and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the Official Code of the City of Tacoma, the City Council at its regular meeting of April 21, 1981, held a public hearing on such plan and recommended its adoption, with certain amendments as reflected on Exhibit "A" attached hereto and forming part hereof; Now, Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TACOMA:

That the Ruston Way Plan, as amended, be and the same is hereby adopted as an element of Tacoma's Land Use Management Plan and the Master Program for Shoreline Development.

Adopted June 30, 1981

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Parker".

MIKE PARKER  
Mayor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H. B. Bond".

Attest: H. B. BOND  
City Clerk

F/jec

## **Background**

The Ruston Way shoreline is a two mile stretch of urban waterfront located along the southern border of Commencement Bay. Tacoma's earliest industrial area was located along this shoreline. Space limitations, changing technology and the growth of the Port of Tacoma as the city's industrial center led to the closure or relocation of most of the industrial and commercial operations located there. As industry abandoned the Ruston Way waterfront, the area began to deteriorate. The scenic and recreation potential was very apparent and in the mid 1960's, the City, recognizing this potential, acquired nearly one-half of the shoreside properties for future public use and enjoyment. Early planning efforts spoke of a vision of developing a quality people-oriented waterfront area of public and private development. In 1976, Tacoma's MASTER PROGRAM FOR SHORELINE DEVELOPMENT was adopted, which designated the Ruston Way shoreline area for "mixed public and private" development. New industrial development was prohibited.

## **Concept and Usage**

Because of the sensitive nature of this shoreline area and the extensive redevelopment potential, the RUSTON WAY PLAN was adopted. The Plan reaffirms the intent for mixed public and private development. It provides further guidance for decisions and the shoreline permit process.

It is intended that the Ruston Way shoreline be developed as a unified urban waterfront. Design is a strong emphasis of the plan document. Policies encourage the use of same or similar landscaping, signs, lighting, materials and other design details to create visual continuity and a Pacific Northwest marine character. Design recommendations and illustrations are also included which provide further clarification and express how individual policies can be achieved.

The Plan places strong emphasis on three large public properties, each being distinct yet compatible with the overall area. Development concepts for these three major areas are shown. The first area, the Commencement Park and Old Town Dock complex is located near the Old Town community. The Park has areas for fishing, sunbathing, picnicking and other recreational activities. The central area is the location of a major public fishing pier and adjacent marine park and small beach. The third site lies toward the northwesterly end of the shoreline. This site is envisioned as a park with beach improvements and small boat access.

The Plan also discusses the residential character of the Waterview Street area, a relatively isolated neighborhood located at the base of the slopes at the northwesterly end of Ruston Way. The residential area is intended to remain low intensity but some duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, condominiums and small garden-court apartments may be permitted. The desirability of trail development in the slope and gulch areas to facilitate pedestrian travel and provide linkages from the upland residential areas to the waterfront is also discussed.

## **Recommendations**

The Plan contains recommendations for implementing the proposals in the document such as improving the regulatory process, soliciting community support, acquiring funding and making public capital expenditures. Preliminary cost estimates are included for major public projects.

**Plan Development and Adoption Process**

The draft document, prepared under the direction of the Planning Commission, was reviewed at various stages. The draft Plan together with the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) were circulated to various agencies, citizen groups, local organizations and the general public for comment. Formal public hearing(s) before the Commission provided additional opportunity for public comment. The Planning Commission reviewed all information and recommended appropriate modifications to the Plan document.

The City Council also reviewed the document and conducted public hearings. Further modification as appropriate was made to the draft document prior to its adoption on June 30, 1981.



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## Preface

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The waterfront areas of cities across the nation are again being recognized as valued resources. But this time not for their potential for industrial development but rather as places for people to go and enjoy the water. Decaying urban waterfronts are being revitalized to provide recreational opportunities for city dwellers. They are being transformed into active, vital areas with new commercial and recreational developments that open up the waterfront to people.

Although Tacoma has 16 miles of shoreline, much of it is inaccessible because of steep cliffs or industrial facilities. However, the Ruston Way shoreline is easily reached making it a prime area for revitalization. Once a thriving industrial district, changing technological and economic considerations left the area virtually abandoned. Slowly, it is being rebuilt as private developers and public officials alike take advantage of its magnificent setting, panoramic views, wooded slopes and close proximity to city neighborhoods.

The Ruston Way shoreline has the potential to become a unique urban waterfront attraction and people-oriented area.

The need for close-in urban recreation areas is increasingly important as energy supplies diminish and the cost of traveling to more distant park areas soars. Many people drive several hours to enjoy water-oriented recreation because no or limited opportunities are available close to home even though their city is located near the waterfront.

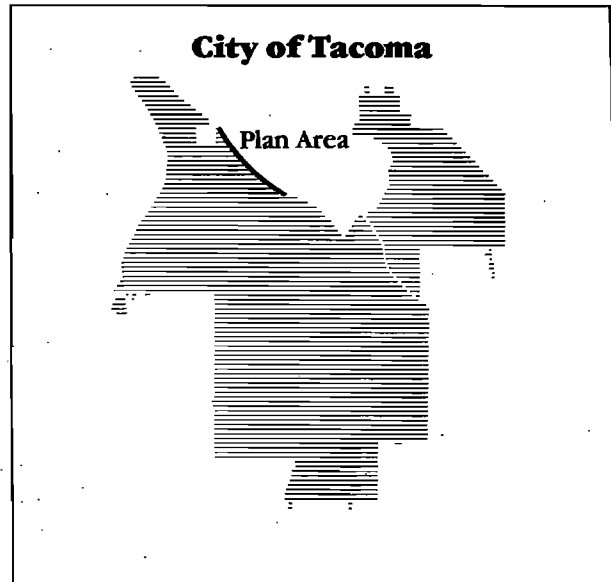
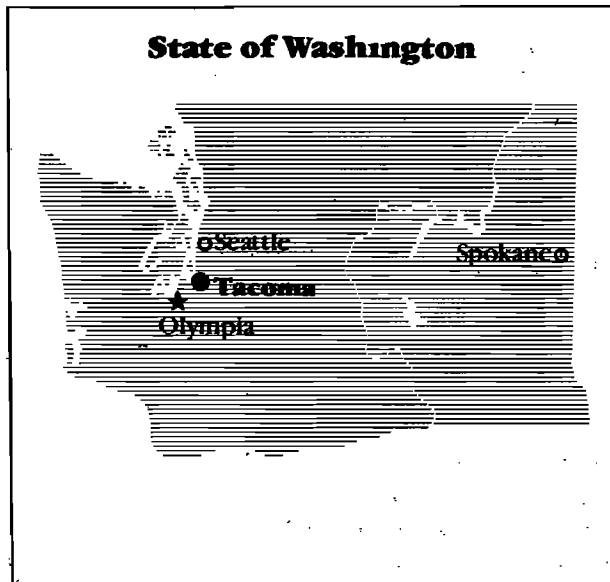
The Ruston Way waterfront of Tacoma is a public resource that can satisfy the water-oriented recreational needs of citizens and improve the livability of the city. The public developments proposed in this plan for the Ruston Way shoreline area will enhance the natural areas, strengthen the historical significance, provide optimum public access to the water, maintain views and create opportunities for outdoor recreation and social interaction.

## Introduction

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## Plan Area

The plan area is an approximately two-mile stretch of shoreline bordering on Commencement Bay and located between the Old Town community and the Town of Ruston. With exception of the Waterview Street area, the area considered in this Plan lies between the railroad tracks and the outer harbor line. However, consideration of the nearby slopes and gulches and access to nearby residential areas is also a part of this document.



## Purpose and Intent

Public officials and private citizens have long expressed concern for the use of the Ruston Way waterfront. A bond proposal was on the ballot to reconstruct the Ruston Way roadway after a storm severely damaged it in 1950. The bond proposal would have transformed the roadway into a scenic parkway complete with extensive landscaping and stairs to the beach for pedestrian access. Although the bond issue failed, public efforts and support continued. In 1965, the TACOMA RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE PLAN was adopted. This plan recommended mixed public and private development along the Ruston Way waterfront and provided the impetus for the City to acquire property along the shoreline for public use and enjoyment. Presently, the City owns about half of the Ruston Way shoreline properties.

In 1976, after extensive citizen participation, the MASTER PROGRAM FOR SHORELINE DEVELOPMENT was adopted and reaffirmed the previous recommendation to develop the Ruston Way shoreline as an area of mixed public and private uses. In 1978, a grant was secured from the National Endowment for the Arts, Architecture and Environmental Arts. This grant provided funding for the RUSTON WAY DESIGN AND HUMAN SCALE STUDY which provided the foundation for this plan document.

The Ruston Way Plan will discuss opportunities for private and public development and will assist these developments by setting forth intents, policies, design recommendations and common design elements. These common elements will unify diverse developments and foster continuity along the Ruston Way shoreline. Accordingly, the Ruston Way Plan will:

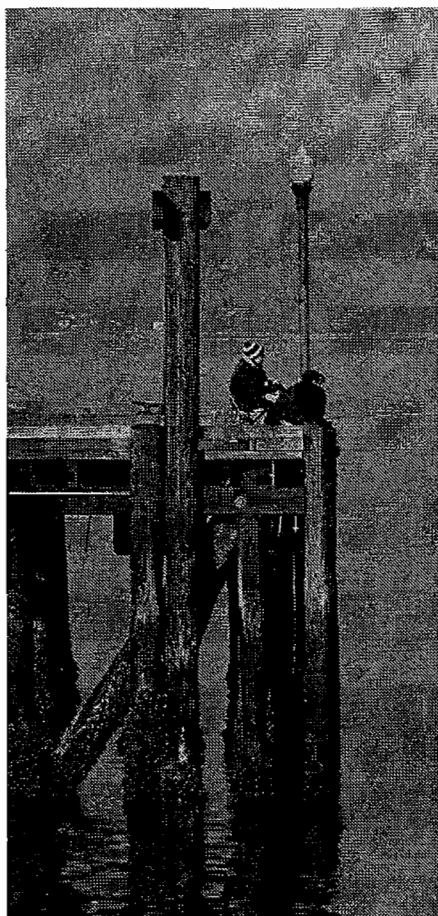
- Encourage a sense of continuity and consistency along the shoreline through the use of design policies.
- Establish guidelines and criteria to achieve the desired character of the Ruston Way waterfront.
- Aid the development of recreational facilities that encourage interaction with the water and the nearby steep slope and gulch areas.
- Recommend methods of implementing the intents, policies and development proposals.
- Assist the realization of the full economic, aesthetic and recreational potential of the Ruston Way shoreline.
- Create a fitting urban waterfront setting that reflects the history and marine character of the Ruston Way area.
- Encourage public and private development that will satisfy the water-related recreational needs of city residents.
- Encourage optimum public access to the waterfront.

### **Description of the Area**

The Ruston Way shoreline forms the southwest boundary of Commencement Bay. The area is characterized by distinct physical features including gulches, steep slopes, intertidal beaches and a salt water bay. Slopes rise steeply from sea level to a height of approximately 250 feet. These slopes form a physical and visual barrier between the shoreline area and the residential neighborhoods located on the flat land at the top of the slopes. The slopes and gulches are mostly forested and support a variety of birds and small animals.

Although the steep slopes physically separate and isolate the Ruston Way area, they offer spectacular views of the water and mountains for the residents living near their crest. Railroad track right-of-way runs near the base of the slopes occupying a considerable portion of the available land between the slopes and the water. Both mainline and spur tracks are present. These tracks are slightly higher in elevation than the adjacent flat land of the roadway and shoreline.

Running parallel to the tracks is Ruston Way, a city street. The southeasterly end of the street connects to Schuster Parkway providing a direct link to downtown and areas beyond. Vehicular movement is restricted at the northwesterly end near the Town of Ruston because of a tunnel, railroad crossing and a large industrial facility.

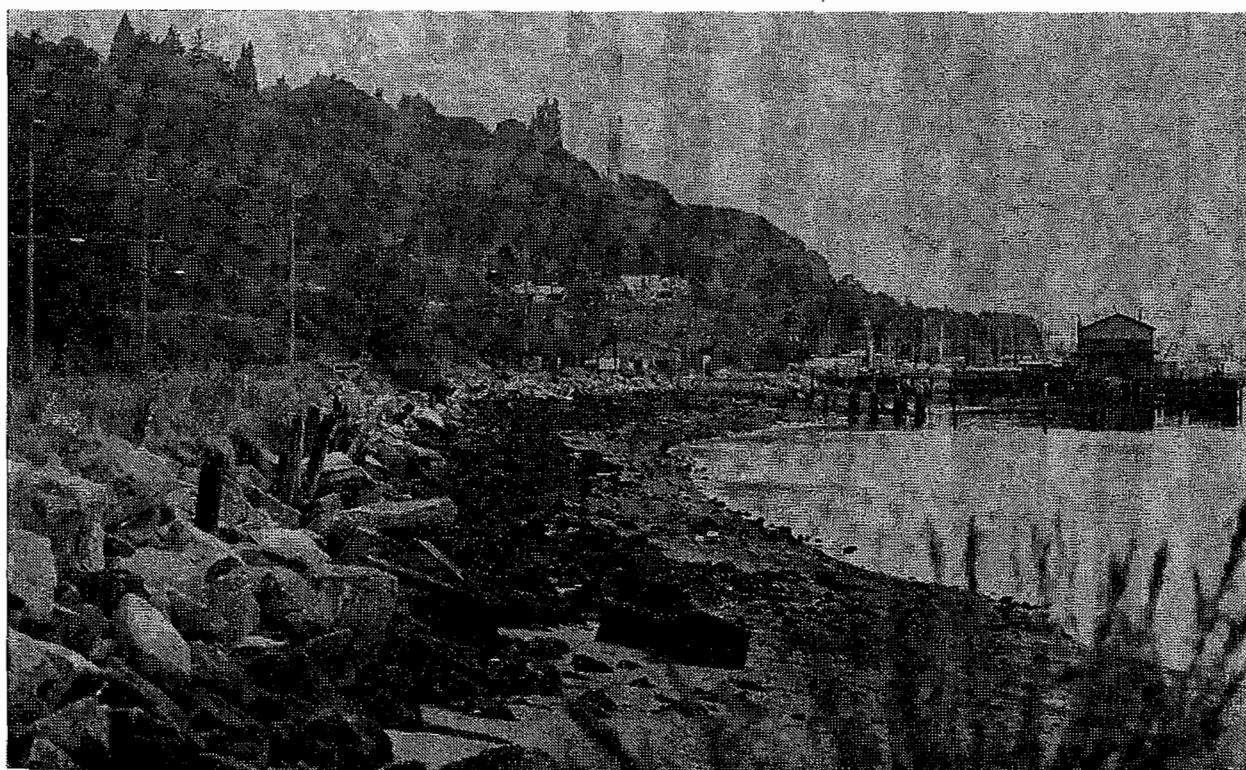


Commencement Bay is one of a few naturally deep salt water harbors in the nation. Formed by the melting and receding of huge glaciers, the Bay reaches depths of as much as 500 feet. The Bay is also an important migratory route for several species of salmon, as well as steelhead and cutthroat trout.

The Waterview area is a residential neighborhood located near the northwesterly end of the Ruston Way area above the railroad tracks at the base of the steep slopes. Approximately 30 single-family homes front on Waterview Street, a narrow roadway running parallel to Ruston Way for about one mile.

The shoreline area is developed with a mixture of public and private uses including industrial development, restaurants, offices, public recreation areas and vacant properties. Existing buildings are scattered along the shoreline, and most of the older buildings are in a declining condition. Much of the vacant, undeveloped properties show signs of past industrial use and indiscriminate dumping.

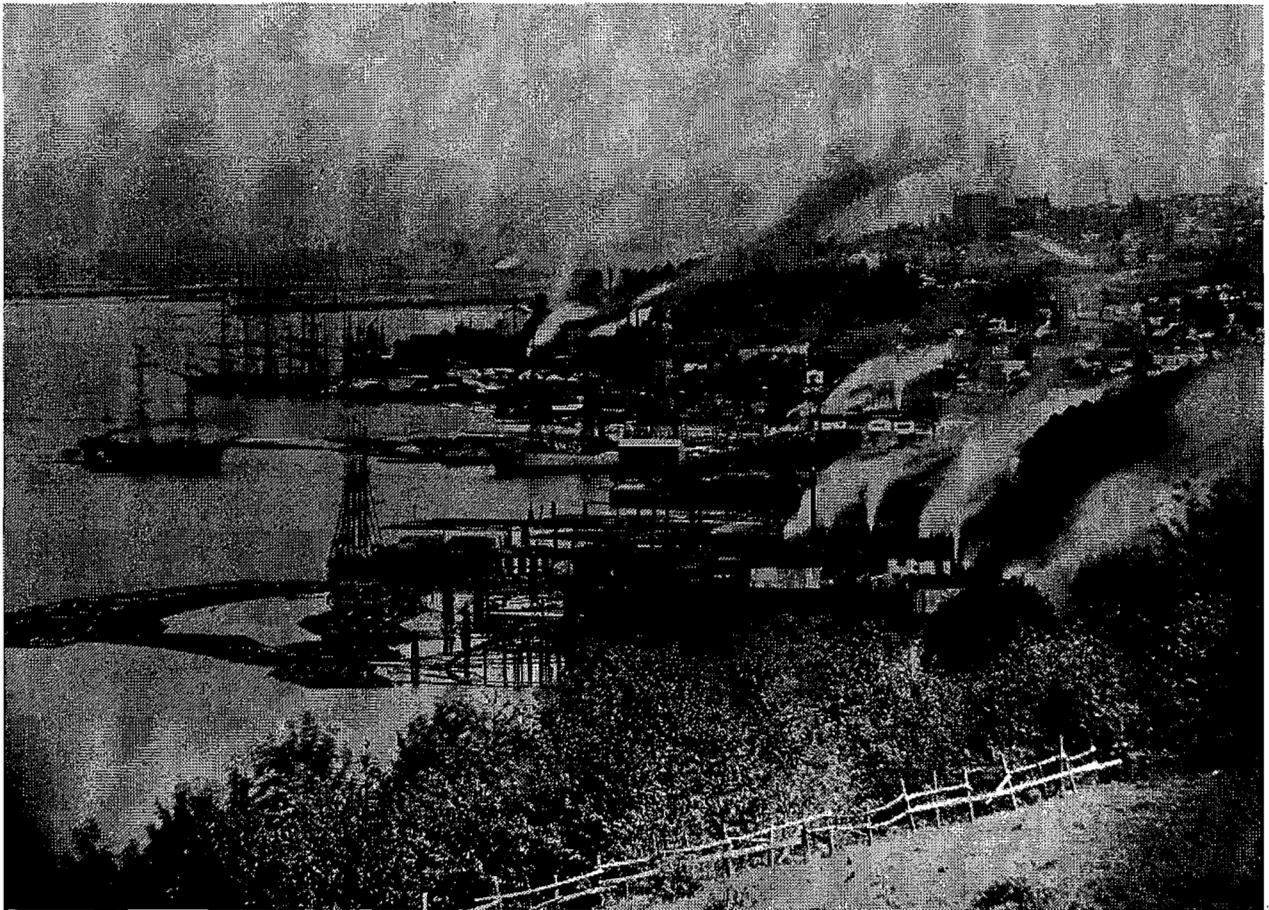
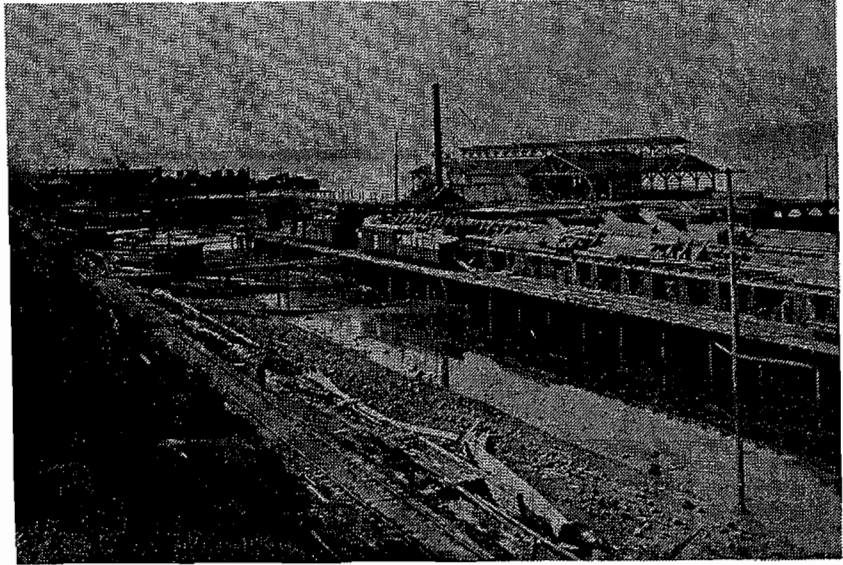
The Ruston Way shoreline area is designated in the GENERALIZED LAND USE PLAN as medium and low intensity. The Old Town waterfront area and the private ownerships in the central area where moderate levels of activity are expected are designated as medium intensity. The remainder of shoreline including the majority of the public properties are designated as low intensity. Intensities of land use relate to the degree of activity and impact associated with development factors that determine the intensity level include size, bulk, scale and usage.



### **Historic Perspective**

Tacoma's earliest industrial district extended along the shoreline from the boundary of Point Defiance Park to today's City Waterway. At the turn of the century this shoreline was an unbroken linear industrial complex of sawmills, granaries, boat building and shipping firms. The deep waters provided a natural harbor that encouraged industrial development. At that time, the water's edge skirted the base of the steep slopes. As industry developed, the shallower waters were filled in. More fill was added for the construction of the railroad and later for a city street (Ruston Way) until the area developed its present appearance. The process of erosion and irregular filling produced the existing meandering shoreline edge.

Space limitations, changing technology and competition with the newer Port Industrial area eventually forced the demise of most of the industrial and commercial operations along the Ruston Way shoreline.



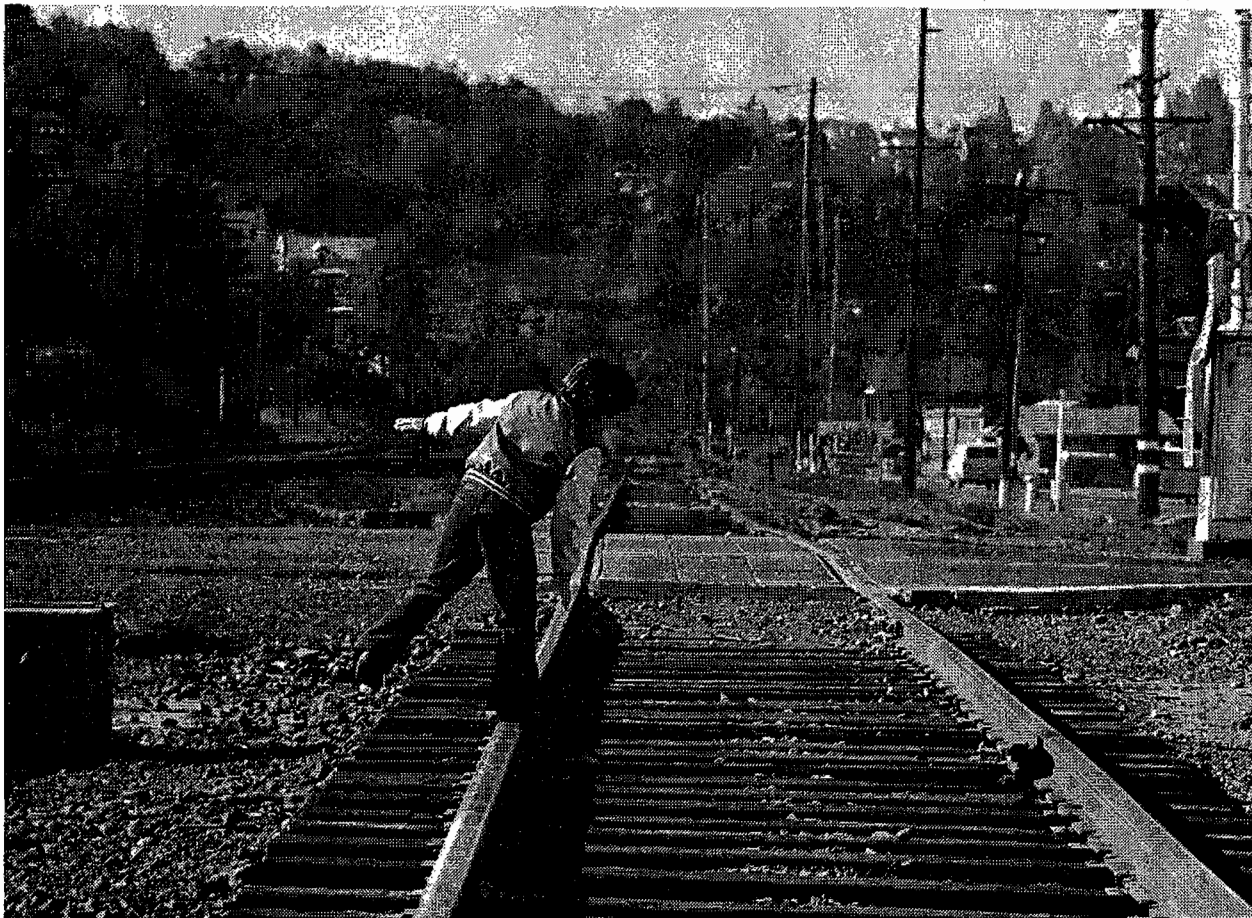


### **Development Potential**

Very little remains to indicate the once thriving industrial area. The last sawmill ceased operation in 1977 and was destroyed by fire a little over a year later. Today, the Ruston Way shoreline is a relatively undeveloped strip of urban waterfront with an impressive untapped potential for development. Such development will require substantial capital investment from both the public and private sector. Cooperation between these sectors is essential to accomplish the desired development of the Ruston Way waterfront. Public monies alone are inadequate to fund the necessary improvements.

Several private developments have been recently constructed along the Ruston Way waterfront. Several others have been proposed. These projects will have a significant impact on the present Ruston Way waterfront. Three public projects have also been completed or are in progress including the completion of Commencement Park, the construction of a new fireboat/harbor service craft facility and the development of a public fishing pier and adjacent park. These public developments represent a considerable investment and indicate the strong commitment of the City to redeveloping the Ruston Way shoreline.

The Ruston Way waterfront has always been a focal point in Tacoma's urban landscape. In its present state, the shoreline is an interesting place to visit with views of water, trees and waterfront activities but its potential for redevelopment as a people-oriented waterfront recreational attraction is just beginning to be achieved. The revitalization efforts will be faced with difficult problems that will affect project design and development. Some of these major problem areas are:



### **Vehicle Access**

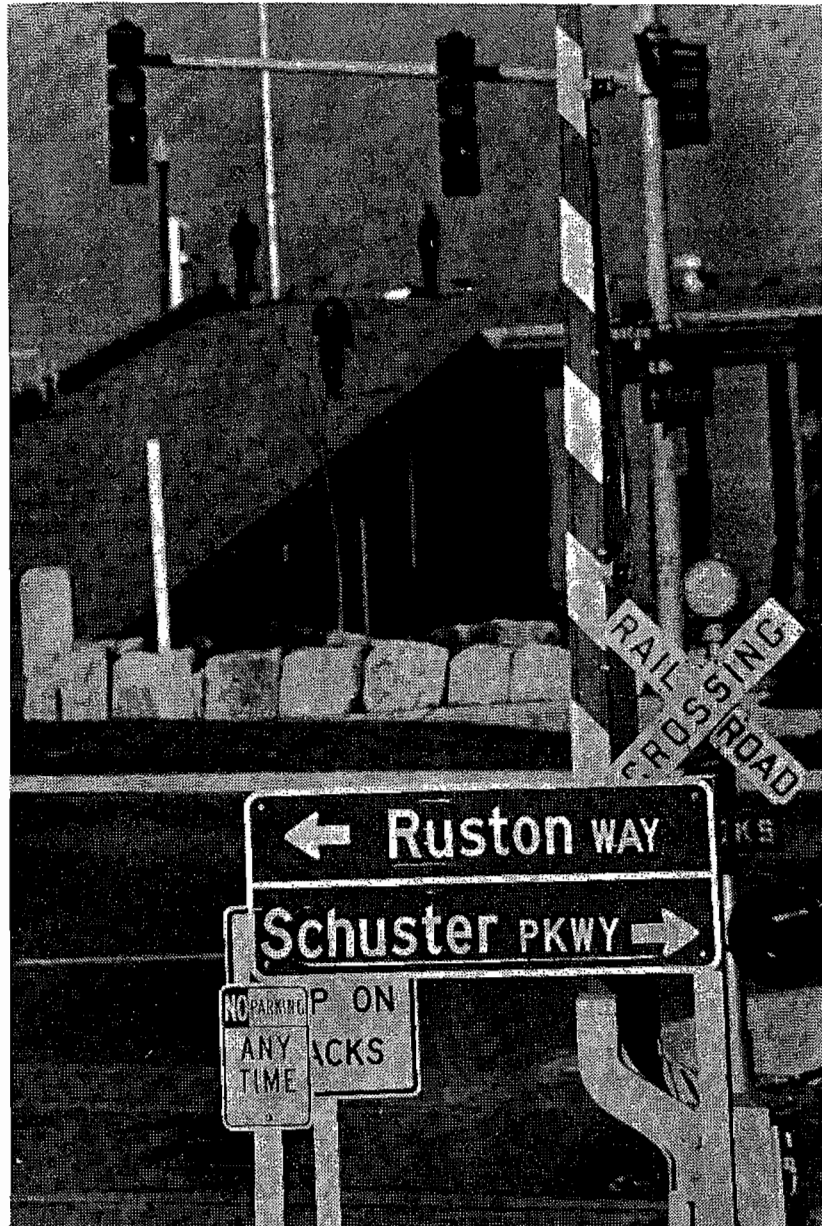
Ruston Way is a two-lane roadway that is heavily traveled by the commuter going to and from downtown and the north end of Tacoma. The roadway edge on the water-side is poorly defined creating traffic and safety hazards. An off-street bicycle path is adjacent to the roadway edge. The path is often used as a lane of travel by smaller vehicles. Parking also occurs on the path conflicting with pedestrian and bicycling use.

### **Railroad**

Mainline and spur railroad tracks parallel the Ruston Way shoreline. These tracks consume large amounts of land and hinder pedestrian and vehicular access. While railroading activity is interesting to some people, enjoyment of the waterfront by others is affected by the noise of railroad operations.

### **Pedestrian Access**

Pedestrian use of the beaches and water is difficult because of large rubble in some beach areas. Pedestrian travel along the shoreline occurs mainly on the street right-of-way or the present bicycle path. Access to the upper residential areas is also very limited. Existing trails are not regularly maintained and the entrances are not easy to find. The railroad tracks also impede pedestrian travel.





**Shoreline Condition**

For the most part, the shoreline edge was created by random dumping of various materials.

Storm and wave action have severely deteriorated the existing edge. Repair is necessary to prevent further damage and may be needed in the future. Major reconstruction may be required in some areas.

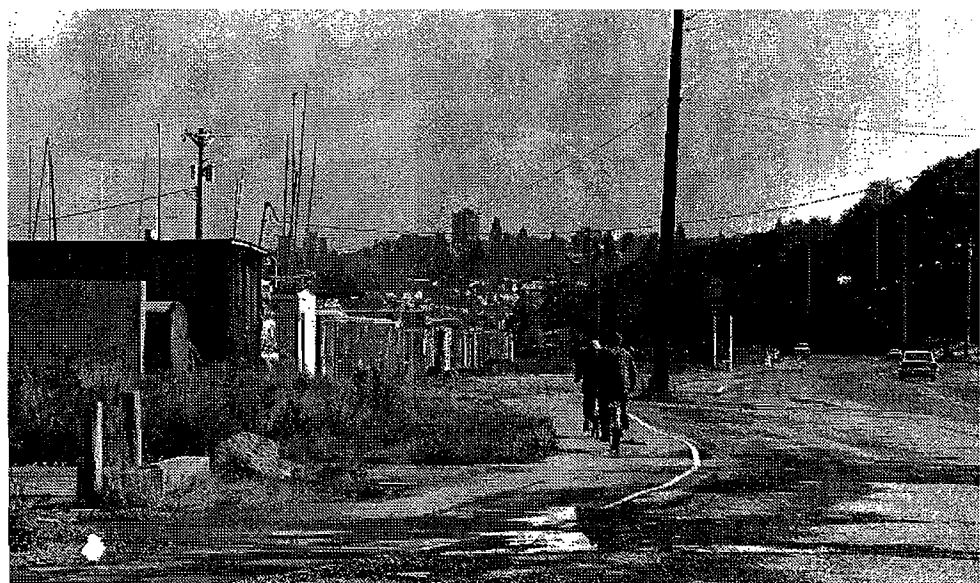
**General Appearance**

The Ruston Way area is perceived by many people as a neglected urban waterfront. Its appearance reflects past and present commercial and industrial use and abuse. Many of the older buildings are in need of repair. Litter and dumping is prevalent. Overhead utility wiring visually blights the area and is costly to replace.



**Competing Needs**

Diverse competing needs on the Ruston Way shoreline resource are difficult to satisfy with the limited land available. Planning for the optimal use of the scarce shoreline properties will take cooperation between the private and public sector. Recreational, economic, physical, social, aesthetic and environmental concerns need to be considered.



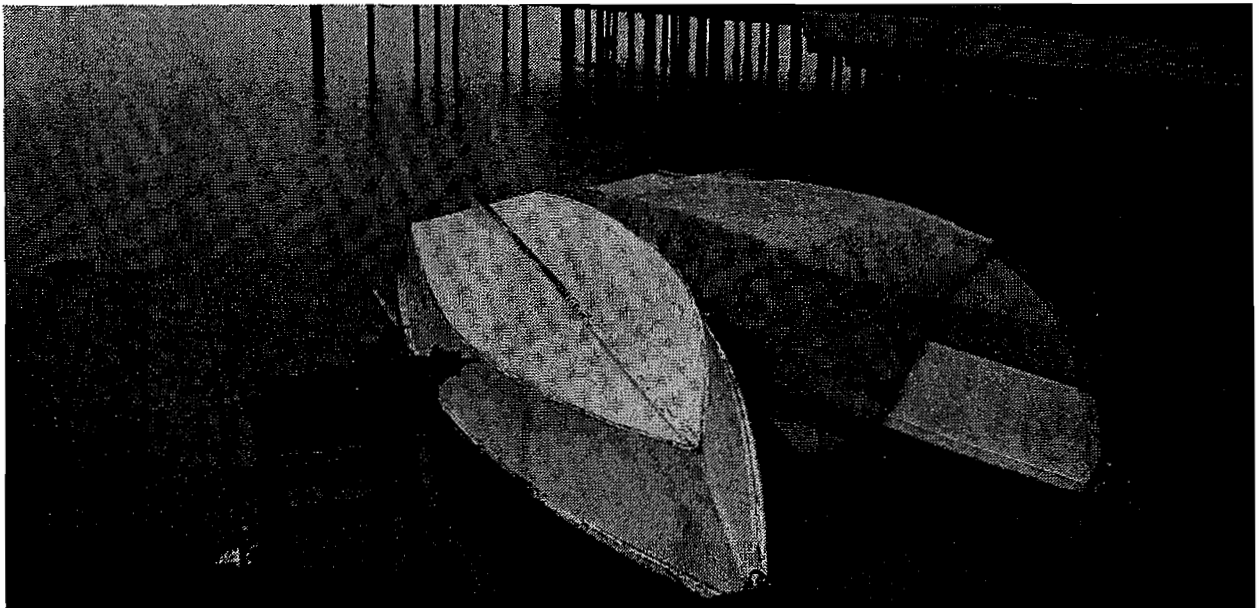
### **Limited Land Area**

The area between the base of the slopes and the water's edge is very narrow and is used for railroad tracks and the roadway. Very little land area is available near the shoreline, and most of this land is part of the 100 foot wide street right-of-way. The narrow land area affects the amount and type of developments and creates difficult design problems which require understanding and cooperation between all those involved in order that development may occur.



### **Regulatory Requirements**

Shoreline development is subject to the provisions of Tacoma's MASTER PROGRAM FOR SHORELINE DEVELOPMENT and the State Shoreline Management Act. In addition, development over or within the water must comply with federal regulations and permits. Considerable planning and time is necessary to comply with all requirements and review prior to actual construction. A discussion of the required permits and regulatory process can be found in the appendix of this document. Investment by the private and public sector has been and will continue to be affected by these requirements.



# Plan Concept Framework

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## **Assumptions**

After evaluating the development pattern, trends and physical and regulatory limitations, certain assumptions can be made about the Ruston Way area. These assumptions provide the foundation for the policies, and design recommendations that follow.

### **Master Program for Shoreline Development**

The adopted MASTER PROGRAM FOR SHORELINE DEVELOPMENT will continue to govern uses along the Ruston Way shoreline segment. The MASTER PROGRAM designates the Ruston Way area for "mixed public and private water-dependent or water-related activities." Shoreline regulations and physical limitations affect the number of water-dependent activities possible; therefore, considerable pressure for the development of water-oriented uses will be exerted in order for shoreline owners to realize the full economic productivity of their properties.

### **Intergovernmental Coordination**

Proposed developments will continue to require considerable coordination and planning because of the number of local, state and federal permits and governmental review necessary for shoreline development projects. Understanding and cooperation between agencies will become increasingly important as regulations become more complex and intertwined.

### **Shoreline Configuration**

The small amount of dry land will continue to affect development in the Ruston Way area. Selective fill, cut and dredgings may be necessary in conjunction with the placement of riprapping for shoreline protection and erosion control to improve the existing shoreline condition and to increase opportunities for public and private development. Modifications to the shoreline associated with development projects will be carefully controlled and subject to applicable local, state and federal regulations to protect the water quality, public access and the biological environment of the shoreline. It is anticipated that some of the public developments may alter the shoreline configuration through beach nourishment and beach enhancement projects.

### **Steep Slopes and Gulches**

Steep slope and gulch areas will remain largely undeveloped. These areas provide a continuous greenbelt which is visually pleasing and environmentally significant.

Although a rather large percentage of the slope and gulch areas are in public ownership, some privately-owned property could be developed for residential purposes. Proper measures will be necessary to ensure safety and minimal impact on the environment. Considerable pressure to develop these properties is likely because of their close-in location and commanding view of the water. Limited public recreational development, such as nature trails, may be provided to allow pedestrian access to the waterfront and to provide for recreational hiking where possible. It is anticipated that public acquisition of desirable properties will occur as funding becomes available and as property owners are willing to cooperate for the development of trail facilities.

### **Commercial**

Private investment and commercial activity will play a major role in the development and growth of the Ruston Way area. Continued pressure for non water-dependent commercial activity can be expected because of the small number of water-dependent uses that are economically and physically feasible

along the shoreline. Consequently, pressure for more water-related uses will increase. In order to satisfy parking requirements, pressure for limited fill and over-water parking in connection with development activities can be expected.

### **Industrial**

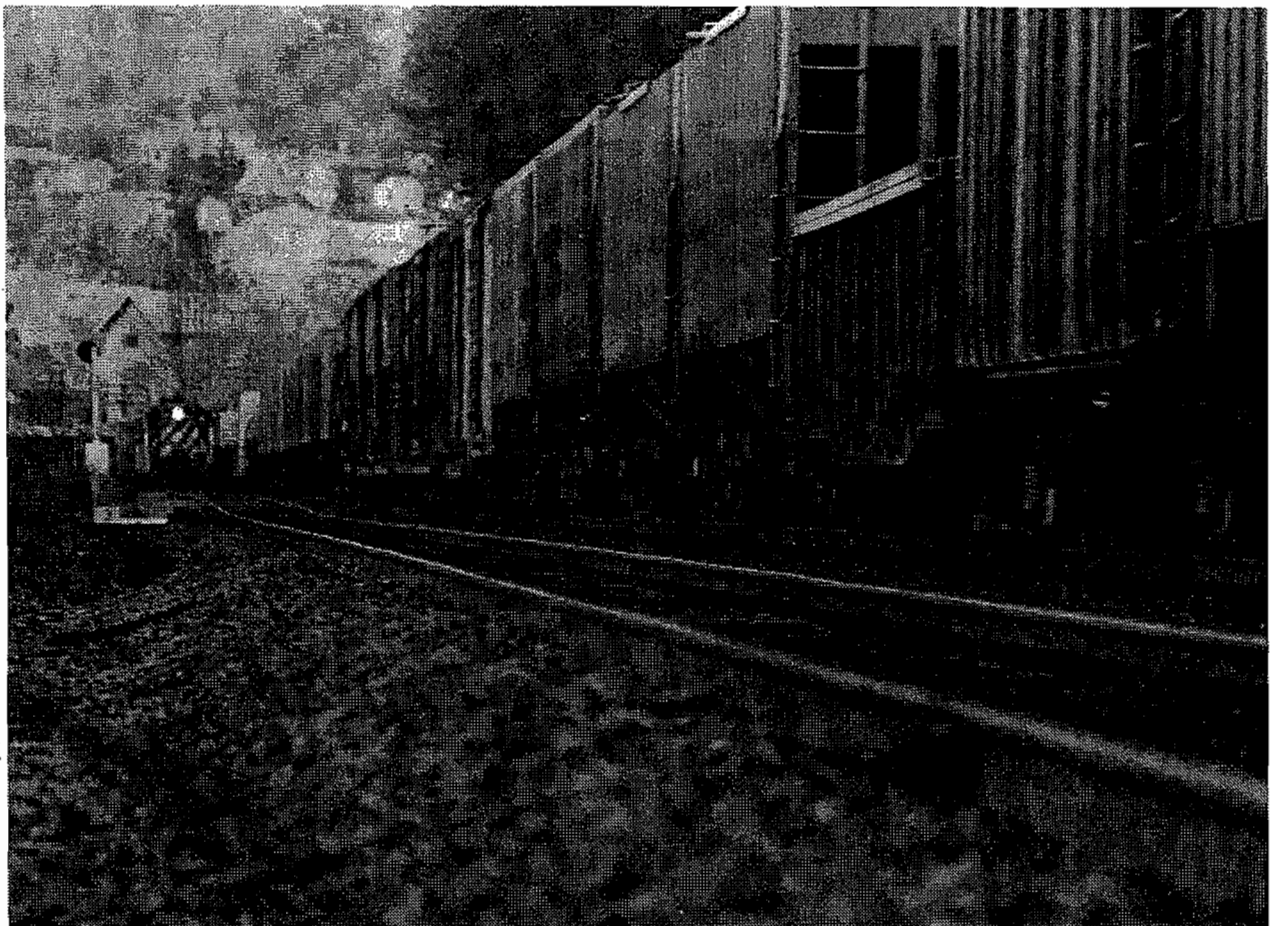
The MASTER PROGRAM FOR SHORELINE DEVELOPMENT prohibits new industrial development along Ruston Way. However, existing industrial development may expand within certain limitations. It is anticipated that eventually industrial uses may be replaced or redeveloped with other uses.

### **Transportation/Circulation**

Selective realignment and widening of the Ruston Way roadway at some locations may be necessary to alleviate traffic and safety hazards and to increase opportunities for the maximum utilization of the limited space. Ruston Way will remain a two-lane roadway with one lane of travel in each direction as set forth in the MASTER PROGRAM FOR SHORELINE DEVELOPMENT. However, turn lanes may be necessary at limited, concentrated high-use areas to accommodate traffic flow and ensure safety. Improved access at the northwesterly end of Ruston Way may become important in the future.

### **Railroad**

It is assumed that the use of both the mainline and spur tracks will continue as long as the need for the railroad exists. The spur line is primarily used by industries along the Ruston Way shoreline while the mainline track serves all other railroad traffic including passenger. It is assumed that should the spur line be abandoned, the City would seek to obtain the spur properties for public development.



## **Development Concept**

Past trends, existing conditions, development alternatives and assumptions about future activities along the Ruston Way shoreline were carefully reviewed to determine the development concept for the area. Perhaps the most significant factor affecting the concept for development of the Ruston Way shoreline area is the MASTER PROGRAM FOR SHORELINE DEVELOPMENT which designates the area for "mixed public and private water-dependent or water-related" uses.

A mixture of public and private development has been successful in redeveloping urban waterfronts in cities across the nation and has proven successful in Tacoma. The amount, emphasis and relationship of public and private uses differs with each community depending on varying situations and specific needs.

What has emerged from Tacoma's experience and of other cities' is that the private sector must be an active partner in order to strengthen the economic base, maximize public resources and broaden the responsibility for urban waterfront revitalization. Public funds are not sufficient to rebuild the Ruston Way waterfront. Dependence on these funds alone to revitalize the area will leave many resources and opportunities untapped.

Past public policy and actions including the acquisition of property and park development have affected and will continue to affect development of the Ruston Way waterfront area. The existing public ownerships with a few exceptions are clustered in three large parcels. Areas of private ownership fall between the public properties. This configuration of a mix of public and private property is desirable since each has different use requirements and degrees of development intensity.

Private developments are more likely to draw people to the waterfront for both day and night activities and during all seasons while public recreational developments are more dependent on daylight and "good" weather. Private developments, where economic considerations guide development, will likely result in more intensely developed sites with larger parking areas. Some present views of the water may be partially hidden and access to the water may be limited.

For the most part, public areas will be less intensely developed. They will be marine recreation-oriented with open viewing areas. Pedestrian use will be emphasized and access to the water and beaches will be provided at several points along the shoreline edge.

Public and private development while different and individual in character, will link together to form an image as a unified community which is easily identifiable by visitors and residents. The present ownership pattern and the philosophy of mixed private and public development for urban waterfront revitalization formed the basis for the DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT for the Ruston Way shoreline area, which will place strong emphasis on the three, large clusters of public recreation activity areas. Other smaller public properties and properties that may be acquired in the future will be developed to support and complement the three large public ownerships and the overall area.

The concept encourages each public activity area to be distinct yet compatible with the overall area. Private development activities will be coordinated with public developments and will incorporate unifying elements in their design in order to provide for continuity and a sense of place where people can relax, play and enjoy the surroundings.



Three major public recreational areas will be developed:

**Area 1**

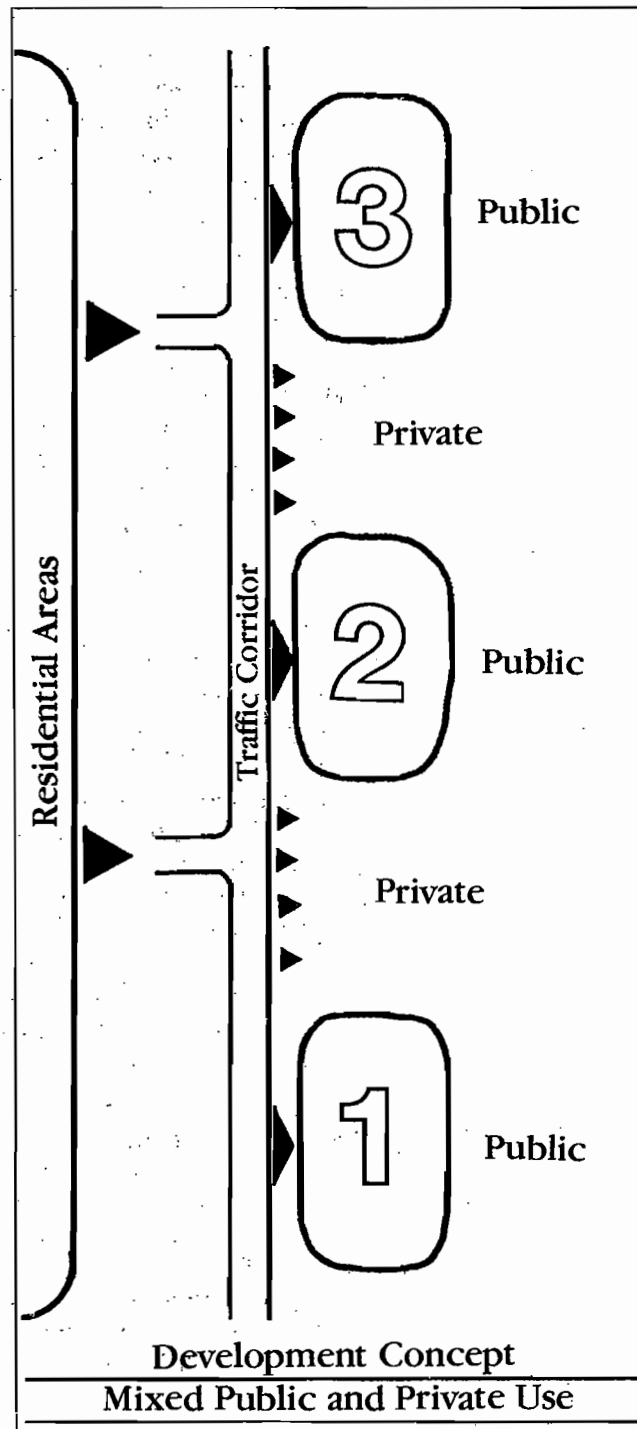
This recreational area encompasses Commencement Park and the Old Town dock complex. The area is a focal point on the Ruston Way waterfront and provides for a wide variety of recreational activities. The Commencement Park redevelopment is important to the overall shoreline area in that many of the design elements desired for public and private developments are being constructed and used in the site design and development. Area 1 is visually and physically linked to the Old Town community and is an important aspect of the history of this residential neighborhood. The overall activity pattern for this area will be moderate.

**Area 2**

This long stretch of public property is situated between two private commercial/recreational areas. A large public fishing pier and marine park will be constructed on this site. Emphasis in Area 2 will be on fishing activities, although some beach expansion and enhancement, where appropriate, will be integrated into the shoreside development to provide for limited sun bathing and swimming. The park will also include support facilities and some related recreational development. Although there will be moderate activity patterns at times, the overall activity level for Area 2 will be low.

**Area 3**

The third large parcel of public ownership lies at the northwesterly end of Ruston Way near a well-established copper smelter facility. Recreational activities planned for this area will include beach enhancement and small boat access and viewing opportunities. Further site analysis is necessary to determine the most appropriate public development for this area. The activity pattern for this area will be generally low to moderate.



### Other Public Areas

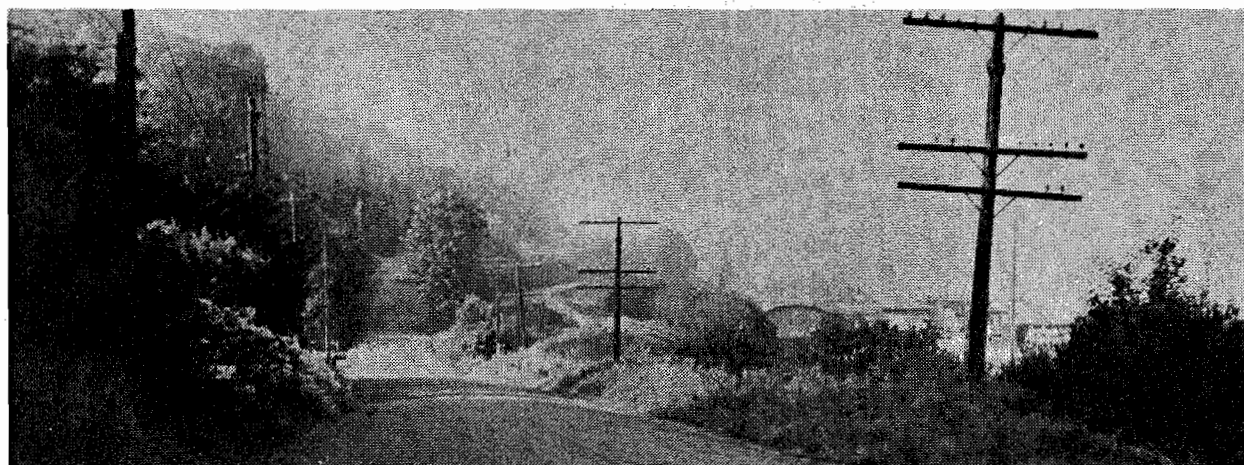
The City of Tacoma also owns other, smaller, isolated properties along the shoreline ranging in size from approximately 60 to 100 linear feet. Although the land area of these properties is small, they perform a valuable function of providing open space between private developments and public access to the water and viewing opportunities. The majority of these smaller properties are undeveloped street rights-of-way, of which there are five. Under Washington State law, street rights-of-way abutting the water cannot be vacated unless they lie within an industrial zone. The City Charter also states that publicly-owned waterfront properties may not be sold. Some of these smaller properties may be developed as funding becomes available with passive recreational activities such as sunbathing and picnicking, while some may function only as view corridors. These properties also may be important in providing access to private properties. In instances where a more effective use of these properties or where mutually beneficial circumstances prevail between the City and the adjacent private property owners, formal use agreements between the City and the adjacent private property owners should be encouraged, where appropriate. Other properties may be acquired as they become available and as funding permits if they are needed or desired for some public use.

### Waterview Area

The Waterview Street area is a shelf of single-family housing located at the base of the steep slopes at the northwesterly end of the Ruston Way shoreline. The Waterview area is designated "low intensity" in the GENERALIZED LAND USE PLAN and will continue to be a low intensity residential neighborhood. Some low intensity, multi-family, residential development such as duplexes, triplexes and small garden-court apartments may be possible. Existing public services and utilities may need to be upgraded to support such development. Some of the design elements planned for the shoreline may be used in the Waterview area to visually link it to the shoreline.

### Steep Slope and Gulch Areas

The steep slope and gulch areas are an important aspect of the Ruston Way shoreline. The natural hillside complements the wide views of the water. The landscaping along the waterfront will incorporate the existing vegetation found in the slopes and gulches to strengthen the ties between the hillside and the shoreline. Other compatible trees, shrubs and plants will also be used. A large percentage of the slope and gulch areas are publicly owned. Trails will be developed to facilitate pedestrian travel to and from the water.

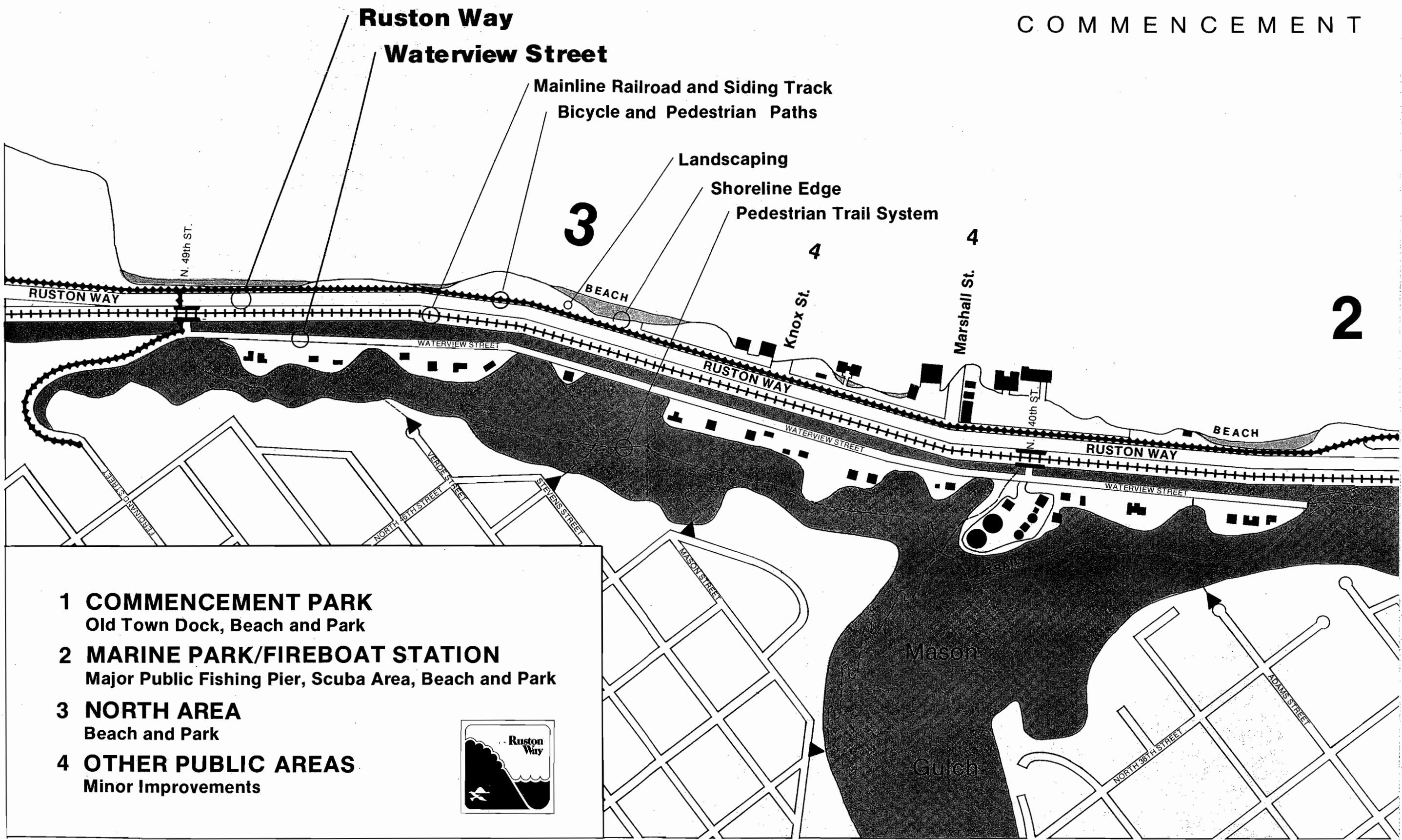


### Plan Concept Map

The motorist, cyclist and pedestrian traveling along Ruston Way will enjoy the experience of seeing panoramic water views and close-up views of waterfront activities. In addition to the driving, biking and walking experiences, several public developments will create places for people to come and visit the waterfront and pursue many recreational pastimes.

The Plan Concept Map is a graphic representation of the desired design and development approach for the overall Ruston Way shoreline area. The map depicts private properties, preferred development concepts for the three major public ownerships and several other elements important to the redevelopment of this shoreline area. These other elements include the circulation systems, the steep slopes and the gulch areas. The nature or extent of development of vacant, privately-held properties is not known and therefore is not shown on the map. However, the relationships of these properties to the overall area is easily seen.

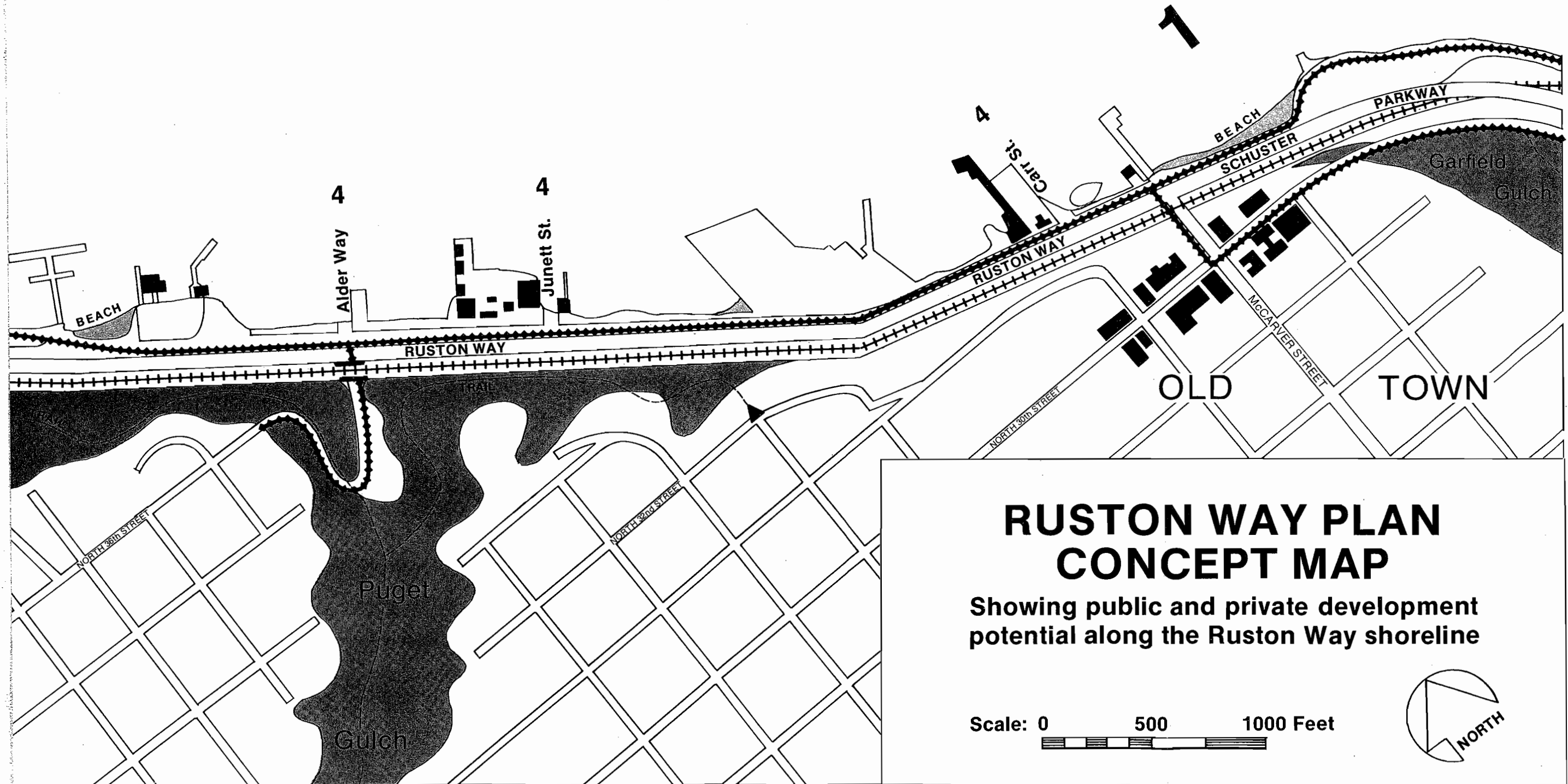
It is recognized that both public and private redevelopment will happen over an extended time period. The uses and developments depicted on the map will not occur in the immediate future. Project design and development according to the policies and guidelines of this Plan will create a diverse and active urban waterfront that is visually and physically unified and a place where people can relax, play and enjoy themselves.



- 1 COMMENCEMENT PARK**  
Old Town Dock, Beach and Park
- 2 MARINE PARK/FIREBOAT STATION**  
Major Public Fishing Pier, Scuba Area, Beach and Park
- 3 NORTH AREA**  
Beach and Park
- 4 OTHER PUBLIC AREAS**  
Minor Improvements



B A Y



# RUSTON WAY PLAN CONCEPT MAP

Showing public and private development potential along the Ruston Way shoreline

Scale: 0 500 1000 Feet



# Design and Development Policies

The Ruston Way Plan is a response to changing times, community recreation needs and a long-standing intent for mixed public and private development along the Ruston Way shoreline. To achieve the desired development, the following overall goal is set forth:

**TO DEVELOP AN ACTIVE AND ATTRACTIVE URBAN WATERFRONT OF MIXED PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT THAT MEETS COMMUNITY RECREATION NEEDS AND EMPHASIZES THE SHORELINE FOR PUBLIC USE.**

It is intended that the Ruston Way shoreline be developed as a unified urban waterfront of public and private uses. The use of the same or similar landscaping, lighting, signs, materials and other design details will provide visual continuity and a sense of place.

The following chapter provides guidelines specifically intended for the planning, design and development of public and private urban waterfront projects. These guidelines are stated in the form of intents, policies and design recommendations.

The INTENT statements are a general discussion of issues and concerns that are addressed more formally in the policies. The statement of intent provides an overall context that aids the interpretation of individual policies.

The POLICIES state guidelines to follow to achieve what is desired. Policies are designed to be flexible and applicable in a variety of situations.

The DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS provide further clarification of individual policies by expressing or illustrating how policies can be achieved.

An asterisk symbol \* identifies those design elements that will create the desired continuity and unified image for the Ruston Way area. The symbol identifies unifying design elements that will be used on public developments and are strongly encouraged for private developments, wherever appropriate.

The drawings are illustrative only. Actual construction may differ slightly. Further design details and specifications for those elements noted with the asterisk symbol are available at the Tacoma Planning Department office.

## **General Design and Development**

The Ruston Way area played a significant role in the early development of Tacoma. Little remains to indicate the once thriving industrial complex along the waterfront, but the impact of past industrial uses was substantial on the shoreline configuration, present land uses and the overall character of the area.

### **Intent**

It is intended that as the Ruston Way shoreline is redeveloped, its marine character and its role as a focal point in the city's image will be reestablished. New developments should recognize the marine setting and incorporate design details that are consistent with this Pacific Northwest waterfront. The historic nature of the shoreline, particularly in the Old Town waterfront area, should also be considered when designing redevelopment projects. The placement of historic objects, commemorative plaques or markers is appropriate.

It is important that the public and private sectors coordinate their redevelopment efforts in order to achieve well-designed, compatible developments and a sense of continuity along the entire Ruston Way shoreline. The repetition of certain design elements and the use of compatible materials will create a continuous physical and visual image and create the desired character.

It is not the intent to make every development on Ruston Way appear alike, but rather it is intended that all developments, both public and private, be compatible in design and character.

### **Policies**

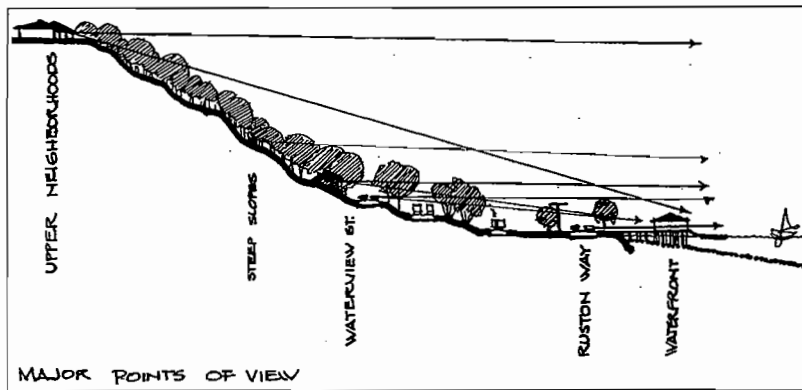
1. Strive to achieve continuity and compatibility along the waterfront area.
2. Recognize that the Ruston Way shoreline area is a redeveloping urban waterfront and use materials, forms and details that reflect a marine character.
3. Incorporate design elements that reflect the historic nature of the Ruston Way shoreline wherever possible and appropriate.
4. Recognize the historic significance of the Old Town waterfront area and its relationship to the Old Town community.
5. Encourage the placement of commemorative plaques, markers, or designated historic objects wherever appropriate.
6. Recognize the importance of the hillside to the aesthetic appearance and visual continuity of the Ruston Way shoreline.
7. Consider the special needs of the handicapped and disabled persons in design and development including barrier-free access wherever possible and appropriate.

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## **Views**

The Ruston Way area offers spectacular views of the water, mountains, steep slopes, waterfront activities, and the city skyline. These views are enjoyed by the residents of the nearby neighborhoods, the motoring public, the pedestrian, the cyclist and patrons of commercial facilities such as restaurants. It is recognized that these views play an important role in the quality of experience felt by the waterfront visitor and nearby residents.





**Intent**

It is the intent of this Plan to provide numerous viewing opportunities. Continuous, uninterrupted panoramic views along the Ruston Way shoreline will be maintained to the extent possible as development occurs.

Existing views are to be emphasized and integrated into proposed developments by the use of structure orientation and location, building design and the provision of large open spaces between buildings wherever possible.

The development of view points along the waterfront and possibly at selected locations in the nearby slope areas can create viewing opportunities that now do not exist. These viewing areas will become more important as development occurs.

Views from the water toward the shore should also be considered when designing and developing shoreline properties. The waterside of developments should be pleasing in design and regularly maintained.

**Policies**

1. Emphasize panoramic waterfront views from the roadway, slopes and shoreline areas.
2. Encourage the development of viewing areas wherever appropriate and feasible.
3. Locate paths, benches and picnic areas to take full advantage of marine views.
4. Locate, situate and orient structures and facilities in such a manner that existing views are maintained to the maximum extent possible.
5. Encourage view access in public and private building construction projects, wherever possible, and appropriate through the use of walkways, windows, decks or other means.
6. Buildings should be designed to provide maximum view opportunities from within.
7. Consider the residents' view from the upper neighborhoods when designing and locating new developments along the shoreline or the hillside.
8. Consider the view of the motorist when designing improvements, realignment or widening of the Ruston Way roadway in order to provide the passerby with views of the water.





### Structures

Structure design is extremely important along the Ruston Way shoreline. Since much of the area is undeveloped, new development, redevelopment, and remodeling will have considerable impact on the character of the waterfront. Some guidance is necessary in order to achieve the desired continuity for the overall area and a general northwest marine image.

#### Intent

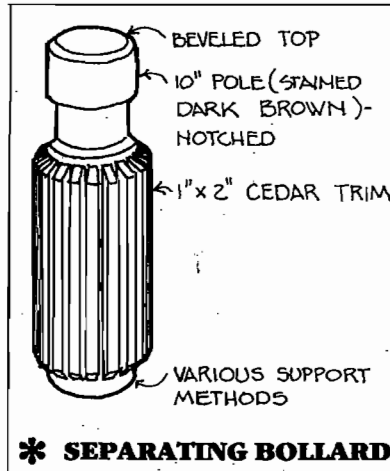
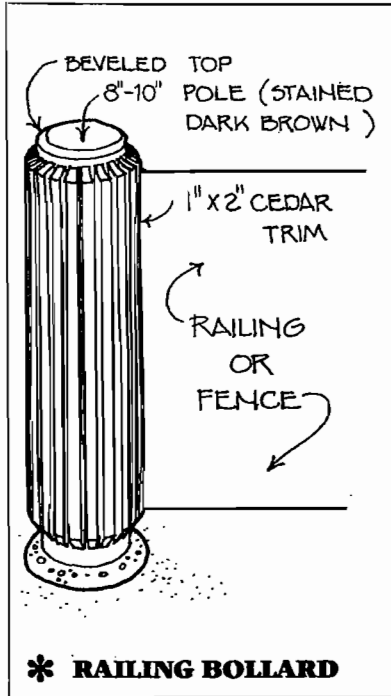
It is intended that there be a wide latitude for design flexibility for both public and private developments. However, design details such as form, scale, proportion, color, materials and texture are intended to be compatible. These design details are considered part of the effort to reestablish an overall character for the shoreline area. Developments should reflect the marine orientation by, among others, the choice of materials, organization of site and the provision of viewing areas. The incorporation of some design details that reflect the historic aspects of the shoreline area, especially in the Old Town waterfront area, such as the use of brick, cobblestone, pitched roofs and tongue and groove siding will help achieve the desired character. The use of wood will impart a marine character as well as pier construction methods.

- \* Pier construction methods for building development are generally preferred over the creation of new land with the use of fill. Usually, the amount of buildable land is small and the majority of the site is needed for parking, the construction of the bicycle/pedestrian path and landscaping. Depending on the situation, some fill may be the best solution to a particular difficult design/development problem.
- \* Views of the water are a primary and overriding consideration in the Ruston Way area. Structures, including buildings, piers, decks, fences, screens and railings, should incorporate a degree of transparency in their design in order to allow views through the structure to the water, whenever possible. Buildings should also be positioned on the site to provide view corridors, if possible.
- \* Views from above Ruston Way and from the water are also a concern. Roof surfaces should be designed and constructed with great care as these areas will be highly visible from the adjacent hillside, neighborhoods and from the water. Materials that cause glare should be avoided. Using building roof surfaces for open space and recreational purposes can maximize the use of limited space.
- \* It is intended that fences, screens and railings primarily utilize wood materials. Other materials such as pipe, chain or concrete may be appropriate used alone or in combination with wood. Fences, screens and railings should be transparent in design unless their purpose is to screen objectionable views such as parked cars, storage areas or large trash bins. Piers, decks and walkways will provide opportunities for fishing, viewing and strolling. Wood or a combination of wood and concrete are the preferred materials for decks and piers. The incorporation of wood details into a major concrete pier facility will assist in providing the desired continuity. It is intended that consideration of "human scale" occur in the design and construction of developments along the Ruston Way shoreline. Human scale refers to size, form, proportion, texture, activity and other details that are appropriate to the senses and proportions of people. The use of human scale details results in intimate spacing, eye-level signs and seating contoured to the human form. Human scale construction invites people use and allows the individual to feel comfortable with the surroundings.

The special needs of the handicapped should also be considered in design and development. Barrier-free access to buildings, walkways and piers should be provided.

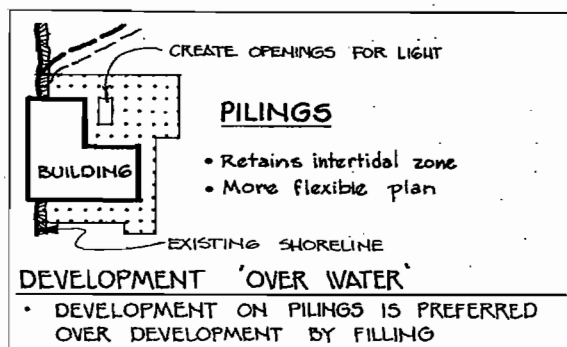
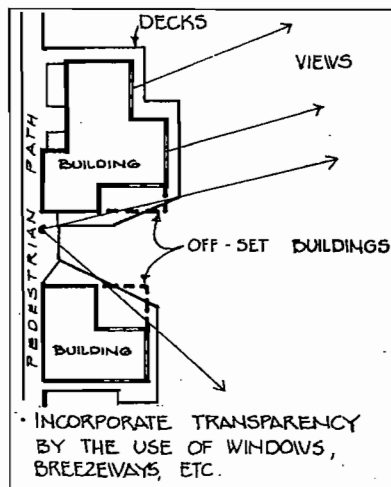
**Policies**

1. The design of new and the remodeling of existing structures should reflect form, scale, proportion, color, materials and texture compatible with the intended northwest marine character of the area.



**Design Recommendations**

- Wood construction is preferred; concrete, pipe, chain are acceptable
- Subdued tones of blues, browns, grays, greens are preferred
- Bright accent colors may be used for:  
Graphics  
Fascia Boards  
Joists and Beam Ends  
Trim



- \* 2. Encourage the use of wood in structure design including buildings, shelters, bollards, piers, decks, fences, screens and railings.

3. Incorporate design elements that reflect a historic nature, where appropriate.
4. Views of the water should be a primary and overriding consideration in structure design and development.
5. Design, situate, and orient structures to provide viewing opportunities of the water, both from the shoreside and within buildings.

**Design Recommendations**

- Off-set portions of buildings
  - Use decks; walkways
- Incorporate windows that allow scenic views of the bay

6. Use human scale in building construction and remodeling, whenever appropriate.
7. Encourage new building development to locate waterside of the shoreline edge, using pier construction methods where feasible.
8. Permit the use of limited fill for particular difficult design/development situations where such fill is in the best interests of the overall development of the Ruston Way shoreline and complies with all appropriate regulations.
9. Encourage public access to the beach and water in all developments, wherever possible and appropriate.
10. Encourage the development of piers, decks and walkways, wherever possible and appropriate.
11. Consider the use of roof top surfaces for open space and public recreational purposes.

### **Circulation**

The opportunity to move along the water is important to the development of the Ruston Way shoreline. Several transportation modes are present and will continue to be accommodated. Provisions for safe railroad, vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle and marine traffic will enhance the viability and future development potential of the waterfront.

### **Vehicular Circulation**

The Ruston Way roadway, a two-lane roadway rimmed with exceptional vistas, serves the daily commuter and weekend sightseer. In addition to being a convenient route from the north end of the city to the downtown area, the roadway also provides access to property along the shoreline.

Ruston Way is asphalt-paved and approximately 22 feet wide, although the actual street right-of-way is 100 feet. Concrete curbing is present on the landward side of the street only. Motorists may pull on or off the road at almost any point on the waterward side, causing a hazardous parking situation.

### **Intent**

It is the intent of the plan to develop Ruston Way as a two-lane, low speed, attractively landscaped scenic parkway. Scenic viewing is a popular recreational pastime and few places in the city offer such spectacular views as are found along this shoreline.

Ruston Way will remain a two-lane roadway in accordance with the City's shoreline ordinance and regulations. Roadway width will be approximately 28 feet. A left-turn lane may be necessary in some limited, high-use activity areas where development is concentrated and user demand is excessive and continuous. In these instances, roadway width will be 38-40 feet, depending on the location and need.

In order to create opportunities for waterfront activities and reduce potential safety hazards, the Ruston Way roadway may be selectively widened or realigned inland in some locations. The alignment or widening location (inland or waterward) may vary depending on individual circumstances and acquisition of various private properties.

Off-street parking is essential to public and private redevelopments. Parking area configurations need to be designed around the existing roadway but should be easily convertible to a layout compatible with future roadway alignment or widening. Parking requirements will need to be met with both conditions.

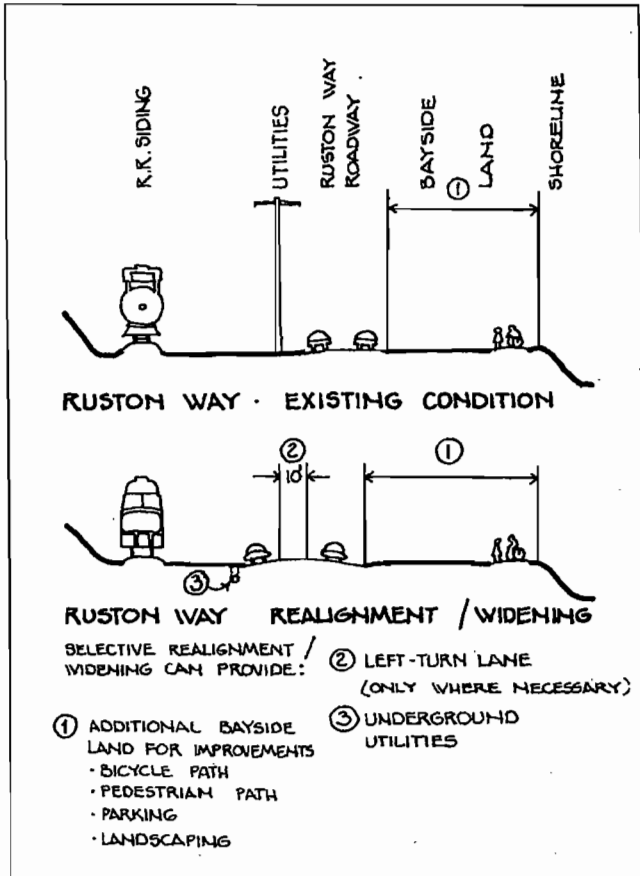
Parking areas located on the same side of the roadway as the development are preferred. Although it is recognized that this may not be possible in all situations because of space limitations. The design of parking areas will be very important. The maximum number of parking stalls will need to be provided within the limited space available. Shared parking areas with abutting developments can optimally use the limited land resource.

Although public properties, including street rights-of-way along the shoreline may not be sold, properties not needed for public use may possibly be used by abutting private property owners, in some limited instances, to accommodate difficult development problems and to achieve the best parking arrangement. Such use of publicly-owned property or street right-of-way would require either a lease or a permit to occupy street right-of-way. City-owned properties for which there is an intended public use are not to be used to meet parking requirements except in areas where the future roadway realignment will replace an equivalent number of parking stalls. Such property may possibly be used during the interim until it is needed for public purposes.

On-street parking is not to be incorporated into the roadway design except in some limited instances where there is no other alternative for public off-street parking. This parking as well as transit stop areas should develop as "pockets" so as to clearly delineate such areas.

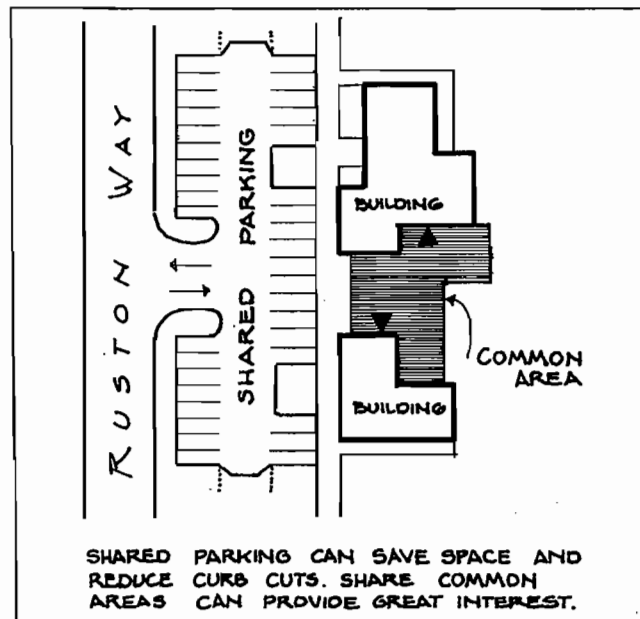
**Policies**

- \* 1. Emphasize the use of Ruston Way as a low speed, scenic urban parkway that provides access to shoreline properties, accommodates through traffic, and offers viewing opportunities for the motoring public.



**Design Recommendations**

- Ruston Way shall be a two-lane roadway with one traveling lane in each direction
- Roadway width will be approximately 28 feet
  - Use left turn lane in limited high use activity areas only. Roadway requires 38 to 40 feet in total width, depending on the situation in these areas



- 2. Consider views and safety concerns when planning and constructing circulation systems and parking areas.
- 3. Minimize the amount of land used for roadway purposes.
- 4. The area between the roadway and the shoreline should be utilized for public and private developments.
- 5. Realignment or widening of the Ruston Way roadway should occur only where necessary and appropriate.
- 6. In order to minimize pedestrian-vehicle conflicts, accommodate parking and consolidate properties near the water; roadway realignment or widening, where necessary, should be landward whenever possible.
- 7. Consider the acquisition of properties, as they become available and as funding permits, that will facilitate selective roadway realignment or widening, accommodate parking area development and optimally use the limited shoreside land.
- 8. Carefully design parking areas so that a minimum of the limited space available is used and a maximum number of stalls are provided.
- 9. Encourage the development of concentrated, shared parking areas to optimally use the limited land resource.
- 10. Consider allowing abutting property owners the use of unneeded public properties for required parking purposes.

## **Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation**

Informal paths and trails in the gulches and slopes permit pedestrian access to the waterfront from the nearby residential neighborhoods. Pedestrian travel along the shoreline occurs mainly on the unused 100 foot wide street right-of-way. Access to the beaches and water is limited to a few sites.

Part of the City's designated bikepath system runs along a portion of the waterward side of the Ruston Way roadway from Alder Street to Marshall Street.

### **Intent**

Improved pedestrian facilities along the shoreline and in the adjacent slope and gulch areas will provide a greater opportunity for a more intimate contact with the shoreline environment for more people. It is intended that an organized trail system will be developed in the slopes and gulches. Some informal paths are already present but are maintained on an irregular basis. A defined trail system would allow unhampered travel and enhance the walking and viewing experience for more people. A developed trail system would also serve the hiking public. Cooperation between the owners of property in the slopes and gulches and the City will be necessary for trail development. A linking of the various areas of the Ruston Way shoreline area by a system of paths will create a more continuous environment for pedestrians.

It is intended that the trails be developed in a manner that preserves the natural wooded setting of the hillsides as much as possible. Generally, the trails will follow the existing topography. Slope stability and safety will be primary concerns.

Signs, shelters, and seating are necessary to accommodate the needs of the trail user. The preferred material for these amenities is wood. The design should be compatible with the

shoreside area. The development of viewing areas may also occur in the slopes.

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities along the waterfront are an integral part of the proposed plan for the Ruston Way shoreline. Water is the focal point in the area and all activities revolve around its use. A pedestrian promenade along the water will provide a focus for the desired people-oriented atmosphere. Good access to the water from the shoreline edge is important and should be provided in many ways. A variety of shoreline edge treatments such as slopes, stairs and ramps will provide access to the water for all people. The needs of the handicapped should be considered when designing access points along the water's edge.

Ideally, separate paths should be provided for pedestrian and bicycle travel along the shoreline. However, because of the limited amount of available land on most properties along the waterfront, a combination bicycle/pedestrian path is more likely to occur. This combination path is to be of sufficient width to allow safe passage of both pedestrians and cyclists. It is intended that the combined bicycle/pedestrian path be located along the shoreline edge, wherever possible. The less preferred, but in some cases, necessary location would be between the roadway edge and newly developed parking areas. In areas where separate paths are considered feasible and practical, locating the pedestrian path near the water's



edge is most desirable. Cooperation between private property owners and the City in locating and developing the bicycle/pedestrian path will be necessary in order to achieve a continuous travelway.

	RAILROAD	VEHICULAR	BICYCLE	PEDESTRIAN	MARINE
RAILROAD	●				
VEHICULAR	●	●			
BICYCLE	●	◐	◐		
PEDESTRIAN	●	◐	◐	○	
MARINE	○	○	○	○	◐

COMPATIBILITY :  
DEGREE OF HAZARD

- HAZARDOUS  
SEVERE CONFLICT, STRICT CONTROLS
- ◐ SOME HAZARD  
SIGNIFICANT CONFLICT, CONTROLS
- NO HAZARD  
SELF ADJUSTING

Landscaping of the combination path would help define the path's edge. Human scale lighting, seating fixtures, drinking fountains, trash receptacles and occasional sheltered areas that protect from winds and rain will be provided to satisfy human comfort needs.

Walk surfaces can have different textures, imparting different meanings to the pedestrian. Wood pathways should be confined to the shoreline crest, either laid on joists or pilings over the riprap.

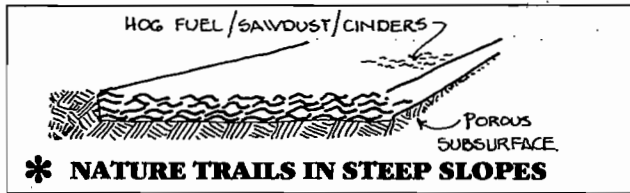
Wood should also be used for decking and piers.

Asphalt is more adaptable and is used in intensely developed areas. Asphalt is the preferred material for the bicycle/pedestrian path.

Safety is a primary consideration in designing and locating pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular facilities. The various modes of circulation present along the shoreline have conflicting needs and pose potential hazards. Where hazardous conditions occur, improvements may be necessary to ensure the safety of the pedestrian, cyclist and motoring public.

**Policies**

- \* 1. Develop a system of nature trails in the steep slope and gulch areas that has connections with existing trails, residential areas, and developments along the waterfront.

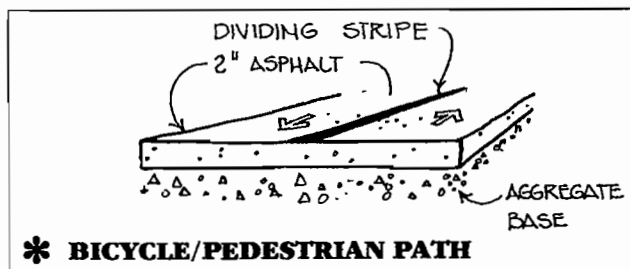


**Design Recommendations**

- Use packed cinder, wood fiber or hogged fuel
- Width will vary from 2 to 10 feet
- Locate trails so as to minimize damage and to avoid erosion of the steep slopes

- 2. Seek the acquisition or easement of properties in the slope and gulch areas to develop a continuous trail system.
- 3. Carefully design and locate trails to preserve the natural wooded setting, maintain soil stability and minimize erosion.
- 4. Provide shelters and seating along the nature trails for user comfort and convenience.
- 5. Design and locate informational and directional signs for the trail areas that are compatible with the waterfront.

- \* 6. Encourage the development of continuous bicycle and pedestrian paths along the waterfront.



**Design Recommendations**

- Design speed should accommodate recreational bicycling at 18 m.p.h.
- Radius of curvature should be a minimum of 50'
- Minimum 10' width
- Place no obstructions in traveling lanes
- Surface material should be of smooth asphaltic concrete composition

7. Consider safety needs when designing and locating bicycle and pedestrian paths.

8. Separate pedestrian paths from bikeway routes wherever possible and feasible to ensure the greatest amount of safety for both.

9. Where separate paths are not possible, combined bicycle/pedestrian paths should be of sufficient width to allow safe passage of both pedestrians and cyclists.

10. Landscape the bicycle/pedestrian path to define the path's edge.

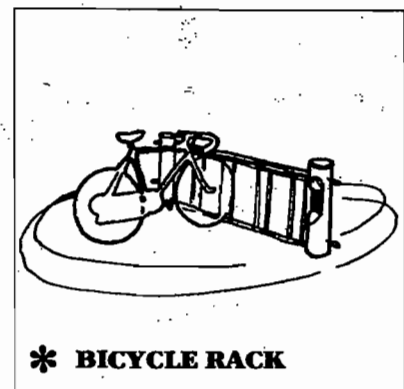
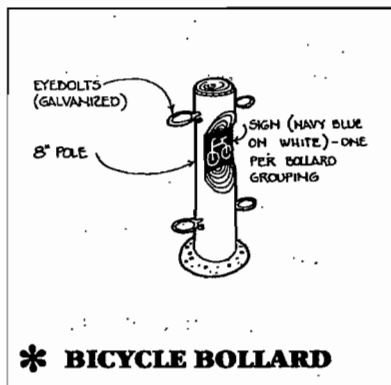
11. Provide adequate lighting along pedestrian and bicycle paths wherever appropriate to ensure safety.

\* 12. Encourage the placement of bicycle racks at both public and private developments.

13. Encourage amenities such as human scale lighting, seating fixtures, drinking fountains, restrooms and occasional sheltered areas along the pedestrian/bicycle path to satisfy human comfort needs.

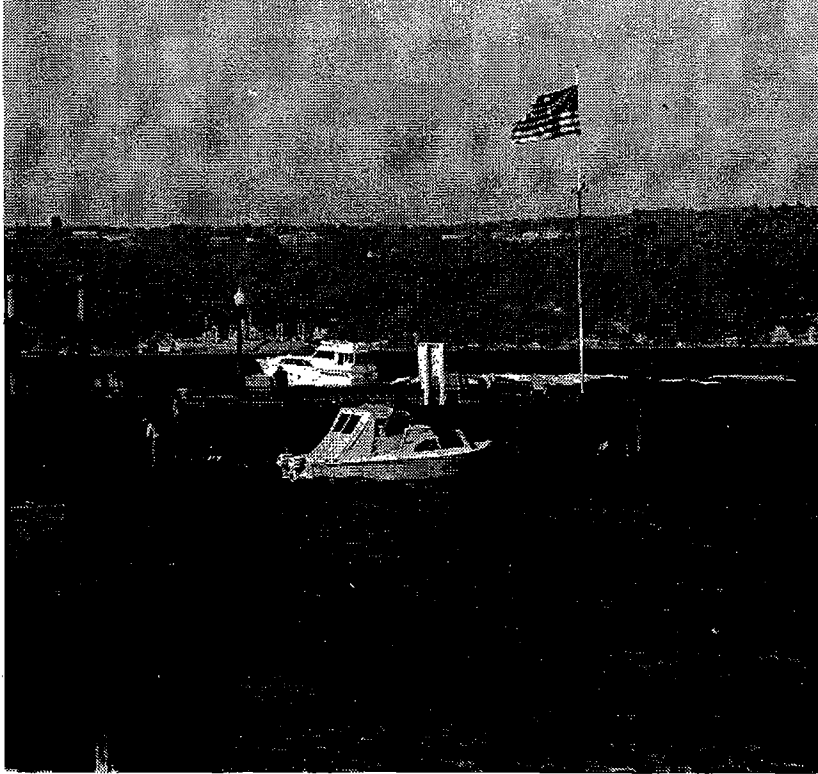
14. Provide barrier-free access to accommodate the needs of the handicapped wherever possible and appropriate.

\* 15. Encourage a variety of access methods to the water, including stairs, ramps and slopes.



## Marine Circulation

Commencement Bay is an important water recreation resource. Puget Sound residents extensively use the bay for pleasure boating and fishing. The waters are also traversed daily by commercial vessels engaged in international trade, fishing and shipping.



### Intent

Boating is a major recreational pastime on the waters of Commencement Bay. It is important that provisions for access from the water to the shore be included in future developments. Temporary boat moorage at public and private developments would facilitate use of the shoreline by the fishing and boating public and would increase the opportunity for public use and enjoyment.

Dry boat storage would also complement activities planned for the shoreline area.

Boat launch and marina facilities are difficult development projects. Breakwaters, either fixed or floating, appear to be not economically justifiable or feasible as wave periods, wave heights, and excessive water depths are greater than those considered practical for

breakwater development. Boat launch facilities require substantial dry land area for car and trailers, further complicating this type of development. The public marine transportation and recreation development potential will continue to be explored for the Ruston Way shoreline.

### Policies

1. Encourage the development of pleasure boat-related facilities along the Ruston Way waterfront to fully realize the marine transportation and recreation potential of Commencement Bay.
2. Investigate fully the feasibility of boat launch facilities along the Ruston Way waterfront.
3. Encourage the provision of transient boat moorages and access ramps, wherever appropriate, to serve the boating public.



## Shoreline Edge

The present irregular shoreline edge configuration is the result of years of erosion and past development activities. Repair and replacement of the shoreline edge is necessary to clean up the existing unsightly condition, prevent further deterioration, straighten irregularities and allow more flexibility in the use of waterfront properties.

Any modification to the shoreline must be consistent with the MASTER PROGRAM FOR SHORELINE DEVELOPMENT and other appropriate state and federal regulations. Shoreline permits, local and federal, will also be necessary as well as cooperation and understanding between all involved agencies concerning shoreline modifications.

### Intent

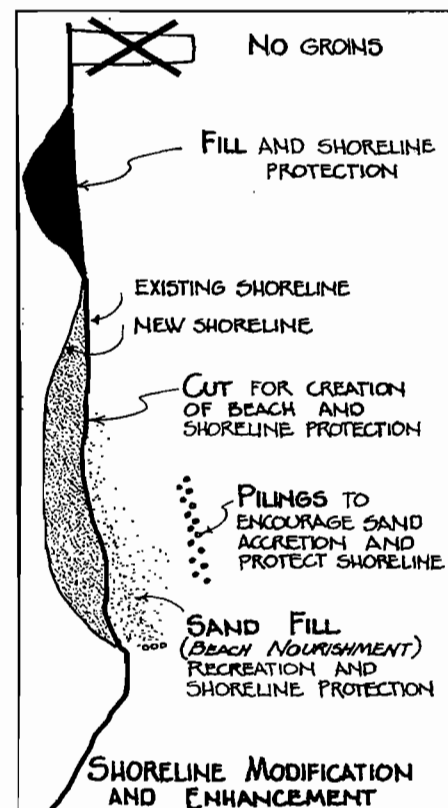
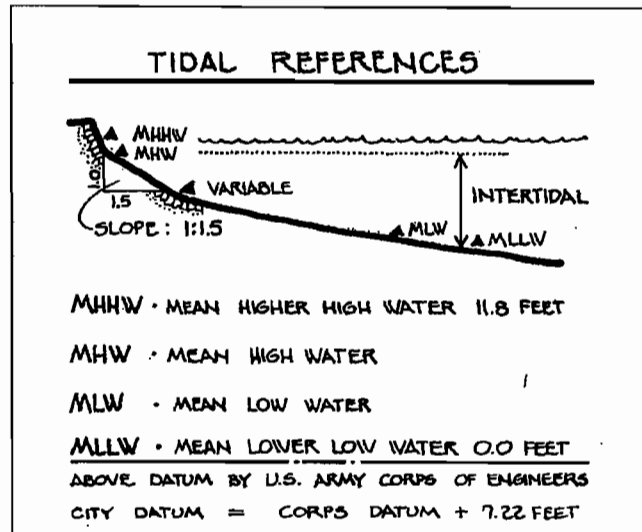
It is intended that the shoreline edge be replaced or reconstructed with permanent materials in order to protect the upland areas from erosion and provide for better public access and use. The biological water resource will need to be considered for any shoreline modification. Improvement and protection is necessary because wave and water current conditions are eroding the edge. Investigations have determined that maximum wave heights range from 2.8 to 4.7 feet at times. Erosion of the shoreline edge has been a continuous problem and at times emergency repairs are required to protect the Ruston Way roadway.

Shoreline protection methods should be evaluated according to their effectiveness, associated impacts, compliance with local, state and federal regulations, compatibility with the Ruston Way area and general appearance from the water as well as from the land.

Shoreline protection methods can vary depending on the particular site and needs of the development. Some methods are the use of bulkheads, seawalls, revetments (riprap) and beach nourishment. For open, visible shoreline areas, riprap is the preferred shoreline edge treatment. It is intended that the material used for riprapping be compatible and blend with abutting properties. Bulkheads, combined with riprapping, may be appropriate in some areas. The combination method would most likely occur in areas of high use or where it may be desirable for particular design or development difficulties. Bulkheads are designed to keep the land in place and are usually constructed of wood or concrete. For visible areas, a concrete bulkhead and riprapping combination is preferred to achieve the desired continuity.

Riprapping is designed to protect the shoreline edge from waves and currents. Typically, rocks are laid directly on the bluff like a blanket. This method is usually lower in cost than bulkheads and its sloping surface is more compatible with marine life.

Another method of shoreline protection is the placing of sand or gravel to help maintain a beach. This method is called beach



nourishment. Beaches are very effective in dissipating wave energy, the basic cause of erosion. When conditions are favorable, stretches of shore can be protected at a relatively low initial cost; however, the beach will need to be maintained regularly with additional sand or gravel. Although not practical in some areas, beach nourishment has the advantage of providing recreational beaches while protecting the shoreline edge from storm and wave damage.

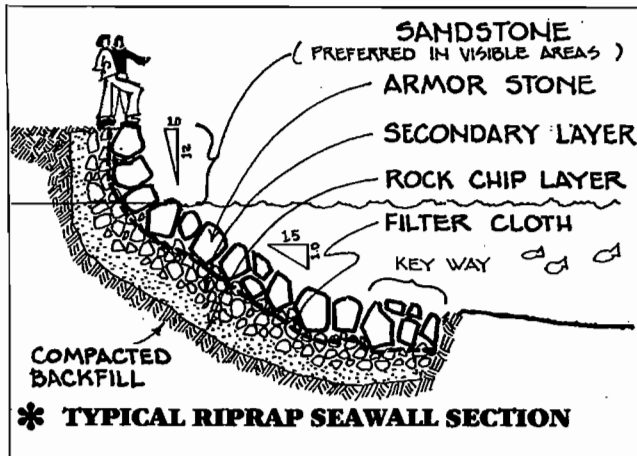
Care should be taken to provide pedestrian access to the water by means of stairs, ramps and other methods when making modifications to the shoreline edge.

Appropriate and necessary shoreline modifications are intended to alleviate difficult conditions. Shoreline modifications consist of filling, dredging and cutting. In some cases selective fill may be required for public and private developments since very little dry land exists. Protection of the biologic water resource should be considered for any shoreline modification.

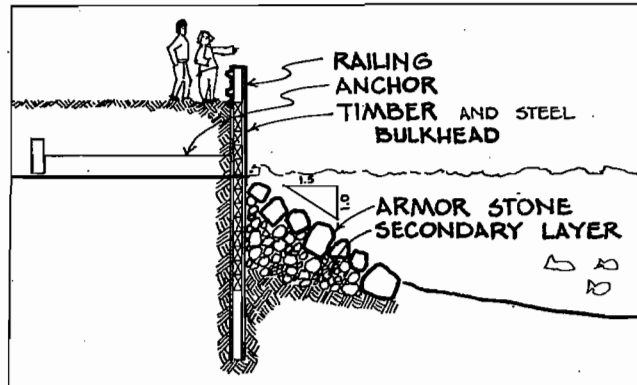
**Policies**

1. Encourage the use of compatible materials for shoreline edge treatments in order to provide for continuity along the water's edge.
2. Encourage the clean-up, maintenance and repair of the existing shoreline edge.
3. Edge treatment should be accomplished in conjunction with public and private development of the waterfront area.

\* 4. Encourage the use of riprap in open, visible areas along the Ruston Way waterfront.



- Design Recommendations**
- Use broken, irregular sandstone or other basaltic rocks for riprap—approximately 3 feet deep and 1½ - 2 feet high, 3 - 4 feet long
  - Use concrete or wood bulkheads combined with riprap in visible areas
  - Use Wilkeson sandstone in public areas, where possible and appropriate
  - Slopes at 1.5 horizontal to 1.0 vertical
  - Interlocking stair stepped design with steps not less than 1 foot wide



5. Permit the use of bulkheads combined with riprapping where appropriate.

- Design Recommendations**
- Face bulkhead with riprap below elevation 9.4 tide level

6. Investigate the use of beach nourishment along the Ruston Way waterfront where appropriate and feasible.

7. Provide pedestrian access to the water wherever possible and appropriate.

8. Permit shoreline modifications including limited land fill, provided the aquatic resource is thoroughly considered in order to improve unsightly conditions, prevent deterioration, straighten irregularities and allow more flexibility in the use of waterfront properties.

## Landscaping and Vegetation

Landscaping is a strong design element that can unify the appearance of varying developments and provide pleasing color and variety to surroundings. Along the Ruston Way shoreline, landscaping will integrate the waterfront developments with the nearby vegetated slopes and gulches while maximizing view potentials.

### Intent

It is intended that the landscaping of public and private developments be coordinated as much as possible. The predominate use of a selected tree will help achieve a sense of identity for the Ruston Way shoreline. The selected tree will be incorporated and used in individual landscaping designs, wherever appropriate. The use of recommended plants as identified in this document will also help achieve the desired continuity. Other plant species may also be used if they are compatible with the policies and recommendations of this plan.

A "natural type" landscape design is preferred along the shoreline. Plant materials that reflect and incorporate the existing vegetation of the slope and gulch areas are desirable. The use of trees, shrubs and ground cover that are predominately native, including some evergreen species, will help achieve the desired effect.

View considerations will limit the placement of trees along the waterside of the roadway to areas primarily near buildings. Maintaining existing panoramic vistas to the extent possible is encouraged.

Consideration should be given to salt tolerance and growth characteristics, particularly the ultimate size of trees and shrubs for possible interference with views, signs, sidewalks, paths and the roadway. The protection and maintenance requirements of plants should also be considered when selecting species for public improvements.

### Policies

1. Use landscaping to enhance views and vistas and to screen undesirable features.
2. Coordinate public and private landscaping improvements to create a unified visual character and appearance.
- \* 3. Use a variety of plant materials native to the region in order to obtain the desired natural appearance along the waterfront.

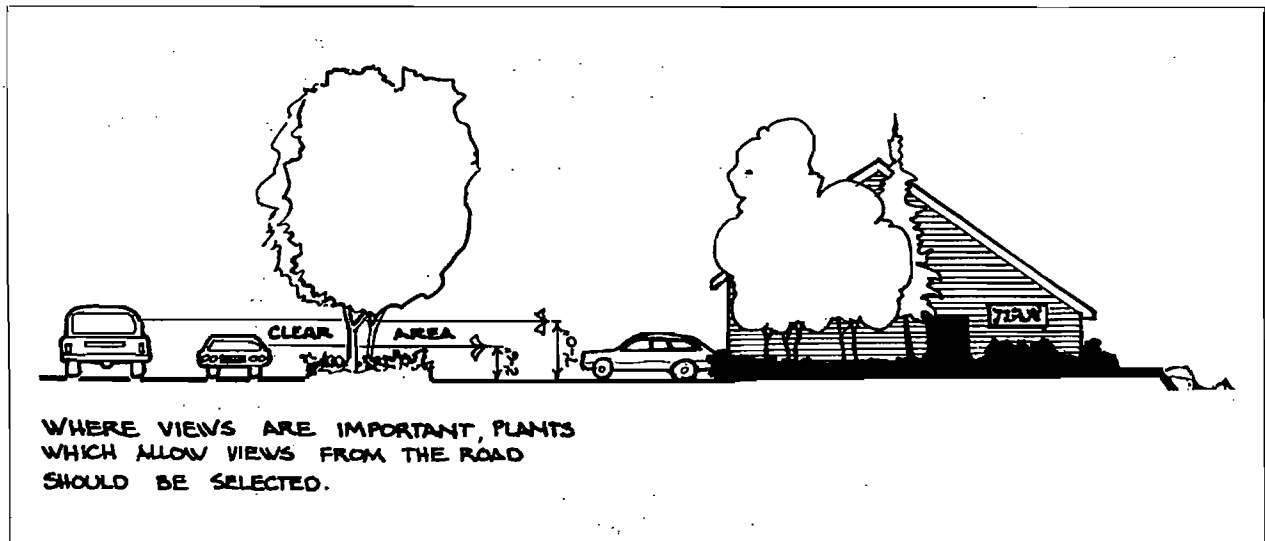
<b>TREES</b>		
Acer sp.	Maple	Cytisus sp.
Alnus sp.	Alder	Elaeagnus sp.
Arbutus menziesii	Pacific Madrone	Escallonia sp. Escallonia
Chamaecyparis sp.	Cypress	Euonymus japonica
Cornus sp.	Dogwood	Gaultheria shallon Salal
Crataegus sp.	Hawthorne	Genista sp.
Pinus sp.	Pine	Juniperus sp. Juniper
Pseudotsuga taxifolia	Douglas Fir	Lonicera nitida, pileata Box, Privet Honeysuckle
Thuja plicata	Western Red Cedar	Mahonia sp.
Tsuga sp.	Hemlock	Myrica sp. Myrtle
<b>SHRUBS AND GROUND COVERS</b>		Polystichum munitum Western Sword Fern
Arbutus unedo	Strawberry Madrone	Rhododendron sp. Rhododendron, Azalea
Artostaphylos uva-ursi	Kinnikinnick	Rosemarinus sp. Rosemary
Ceanothus sp.	Ceanothus	Vaccinium sp.
Cistus sp.	Rockrose	Viburnum sp. Viburnum
Cotoneaster sp.	Cotoneaster	
<b>* RECOMMENDED PLANTS</b>		This list is recommended but not comprehensive and other species may be considered. Care must be made for each situation to select plants which can tolerate the specific conditions present on the site.

4. Select plant varieties that require little maintenance for public improvements.
5. Strongly encourage landscaping the Ruston Way roadway, where appropriate, to create a parkway imagery.
6. Buffer parking areas from adjacent properties, the roadway, and the bicycle/pedestrian path with landscaped separators, where possible.
7. Encourage the use of plant materials within parking areas, provided views are not blocked.
- \*8. Encourage the planting of a selected tree that will serve to create a continuous effect along the Ruston Way roadway.

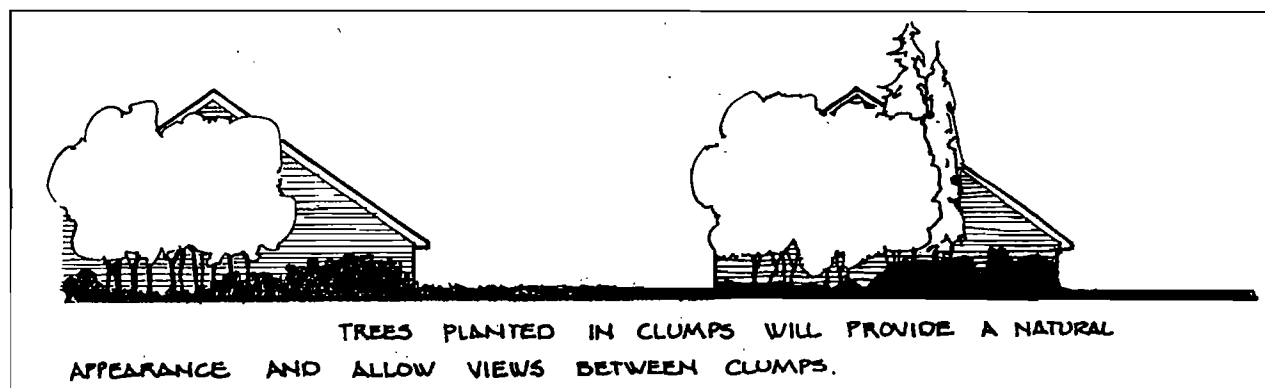
**Design Recommendations**

- Use *Acer Pseudoplatanus* (Sycamore Maple) as the selected tree

9. Encourage the use of low-lying plant material in open areas to retain views of the water.
10. Trees should be selectively utilized and carefully located along the waterfront in both public and private developments in order to maintain existing views as much as possible.



11. Concentrate plantings near buildings to provide view corridors.



## Lighting

Lighting along the Ruston Way shoreline will not only serve as a function of safety and human comfort, but will also provide a strong element of the unifying design. Nighttime use of the shoreline can be greatly enhanced with appropriate lighting.

### Intent

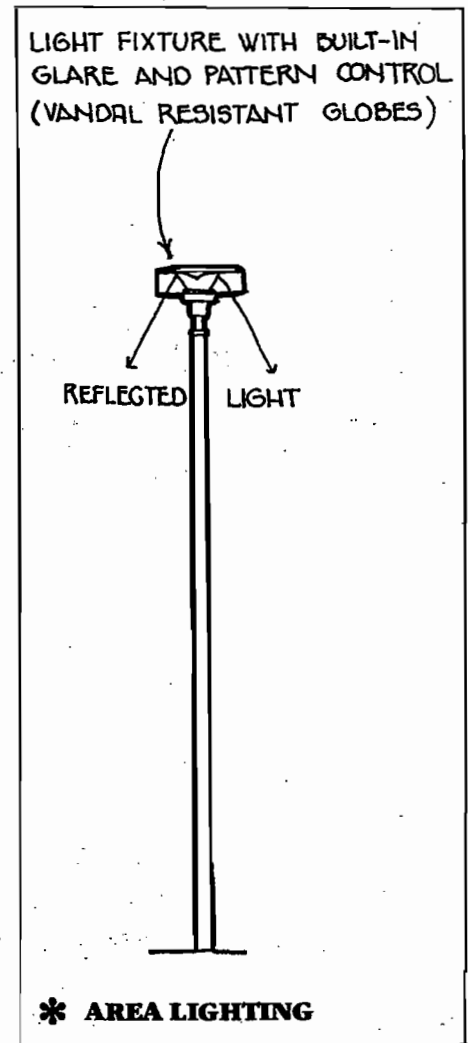
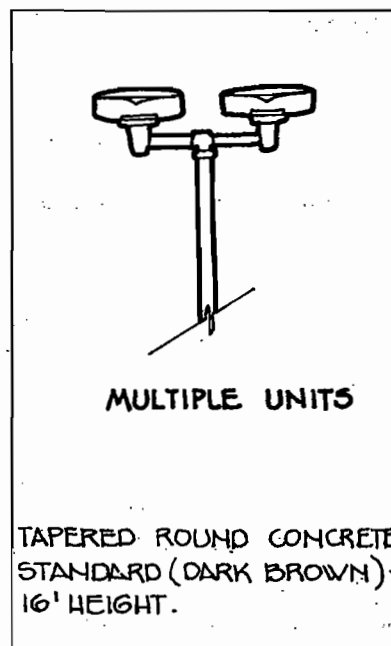
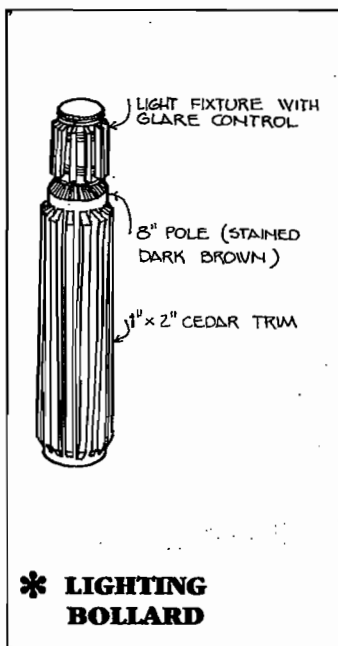
Several types of lighting standards, including street lighting, parking area lights and ground lighting are necessary along the Ruston Way shoreline. It is intended that these lighting standards be compatibly designed in order to achieve the desired continuity of shoreline developments.

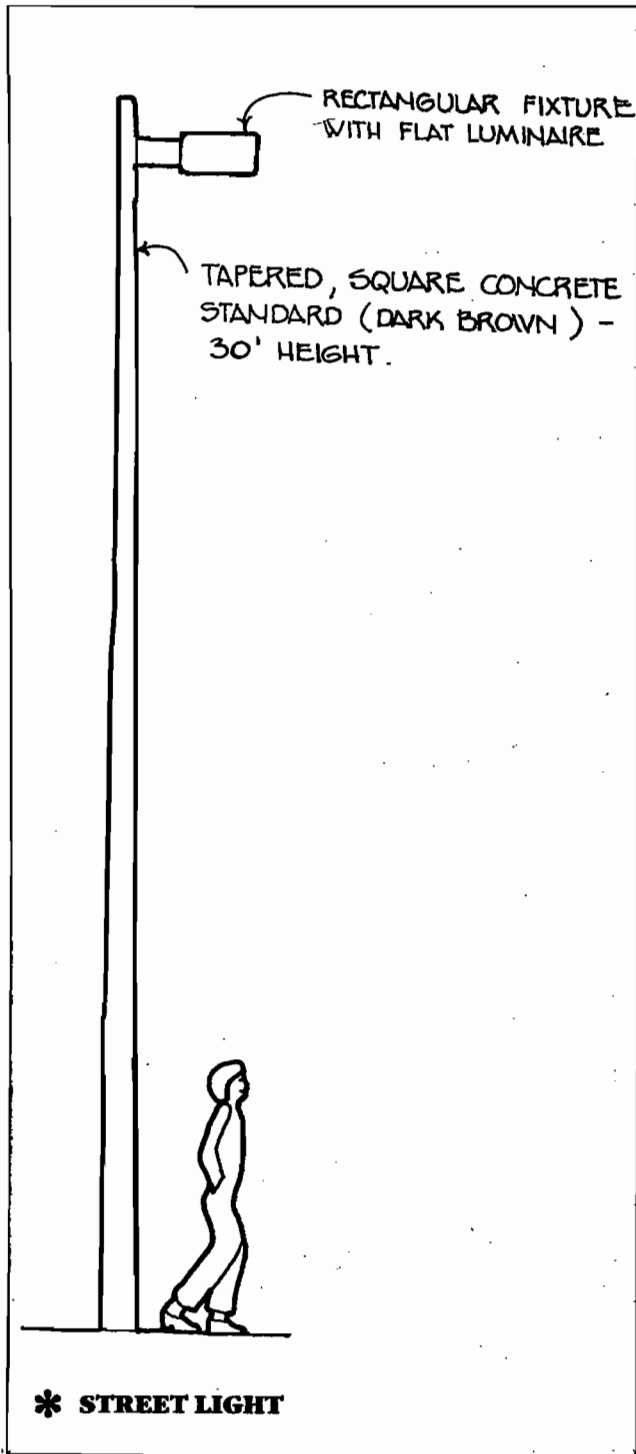
A distinctive street standard used the entire length of Ruston Way will unify the area and impart a waterfront character. Lighting standards for activity areas, parking areas and private developments should be compatible with the selected street standard and the overall waterfront area. A bollard-type light is compatible with the waterfront and with the other planned design elements in the area. Wood materials are generally preferred for lighting methods; however, other materials such as concrete may be appropriate, depending on the need, function and location.

Lighting close to the water should minimize glare. Too intense lighting may decrease views at night and adversely affect the migration of salmon. The use of standards with flat luminaries or shielding may be necessary to direct light away from the water.

### Policies

1. Encourage the use of lighting standards that are compatible with the waterfront character and that will serve to unify the Ruston Way shoreline area.
2. Coordinate public and private lighting standards to achieve a unified effect.
3. Parking areas and pedestrian walkways should be illuminated to ensure user safety.
- \* 4. Develop a distinctive light standard for use on public properties to help achieve the desired continuity.





- \* 5. Encourage the use of a distinctive street light standard along the Ruston Way shoreline area.
- 6. Avoid direct lighting of the water's surface which can decrease nighttime views and may adversely affect fish migration.
- 7. Encourage the use of energy-saving lighting methods.
- 8. Strongly encourage the undergrounding of utility wires, service lines and communication wires to preserve views and enhance the appearance of the Ruston Way shoreline area.

## Signs

Signs relay information needed for direction, location and identification. Used sensitively, they can be a visual, unifying design element. All signs along the waterfront must be consistent with the regulations of the MASTER PROGRAM FOR SHORELINE DEVELOPMENT.

### Intent

It is intended that signs for both public and private developments be compatible in order to create the desired unified effect. Signs along the Ruston Way shoreline should use materials and colors compatible with the natural slope and marine environment. The preferred material is wood although other materials may be used. The use of sign symbols is also encouraged.

Common signs for public developments will assist the creation of a unified image and distinguish public areas for the shoreline visitor. Public signs will identify park areas, indicate points of interest and depict types of activities possible at specific locations.

Use of a distinct logo for the Ruston Way waterfront will tie diverse activities of the shoreline together and will help people identify the area as a unified, continuous shoreline. The logo will be primarily used on public developments but can be easily utilized and incorporated by the private sector.

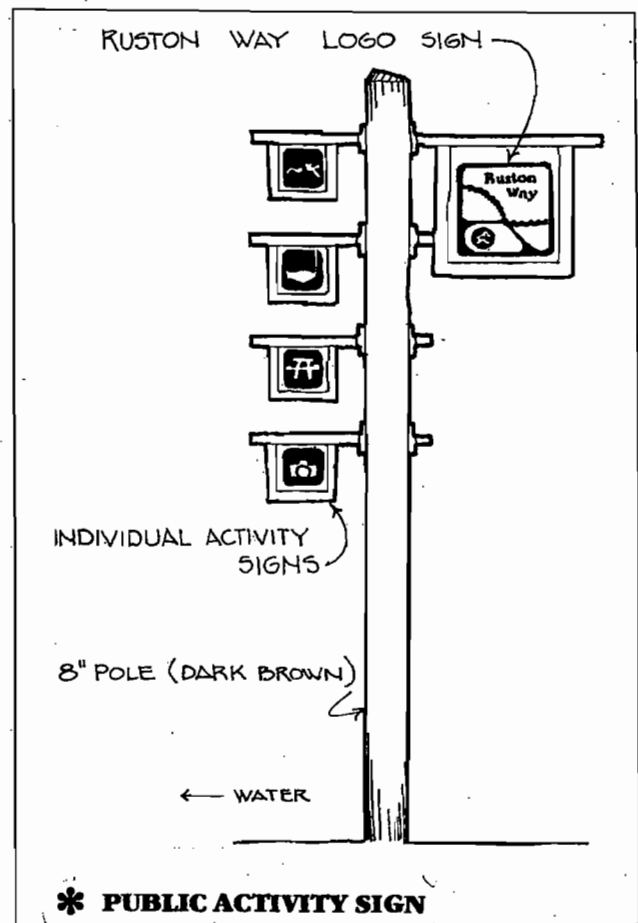
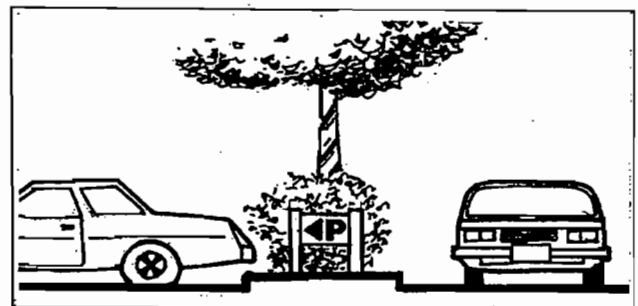
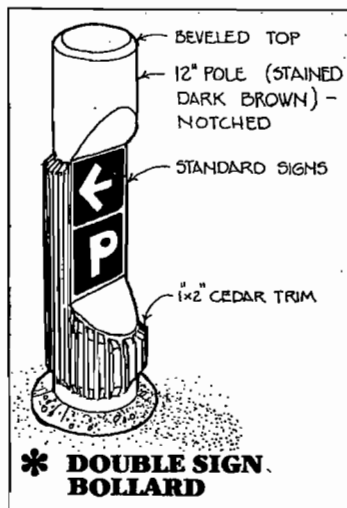
### Policies

1. Coordinate the placement of signs with other design elements to create a unified effect.
2. Directional, descriptive and identification signs should be made from materials and colors that are compatible with the waterfront and hillside environment.

#### Design Recommendations

- Use wood as the preferred sign material
- Subdued tones of blues, browns, grays and greens are preferred
- Limit the use of bright colors for accent

\* 3. Public activity, identification and directional signs should be of common design for the waterfront area.



- 4. Signs on private property should be compatible with those on public properties.
- \* 5. Encourage the use of a distinct logo and sign symbols for the Ruston Way shoreline area.

**\* USE THE FOLLOWING SIGN SYMBOLS FOR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT**

	<b>VIEWING AREA</b>		<b>HIKING TRAIL</b>		<b>GROCERY STORE</b>
	<b>FISHING</b>		<b>TRAIL SHELTER</b>		<b>FOOD SERVICE</b>
	<b>SCUBA DIVING</b>		<b>ROW BOATING</b>		<b>PICNIC AREA</b>
	<b>SAIL-BOATING</b>		<b>MOTOR-BOATING</b>		<b>TELEPHONE</b>
	<b>BICYCLE TRAIL</b>		<b>MARINA</b>		<b>HANDICAPPED</b>
	<b>RESTROOMS</b>		<b>PARKING</b>		<b>INTERPRETIVE TRAIL</b>

**⊗ FEDERAL RECREATION SYMBOLS**

- 6. Locate directional signs so that they are easily visible from the roadway.



### **Amenities**

The RUSTON WAY PLAN is concerned with establishing a sense of continuity along the waterfront by the use of design elements. These elements, by being repetitious, create a unified waterfront community. However, these elements in themselves will not develop the desired people-oriented waterfront image. The introduction of human comfort amenities where they are useful and appealing will invite the feeling intended for the Ruston Way shoreline. These amenities include, among others, such elements as litter receptacles, shelters and seating.

### **Intent**

The public and private developments proposed for the Ruston Way shoreline will attract a wide range of people throughout the year. In order to enhance the experience of visiting and using this shoreline area, special human comfort amenities are necessary.

Protection from the disagreeable elements of the weather and environment is important and can provide comfort for the waterfront visitor. Protection from the wind, sun, rain and salt spray may be provided in a variety of ways, such as transparent wind screens, enclosed and open shelters and canopies to shade the summer sun.

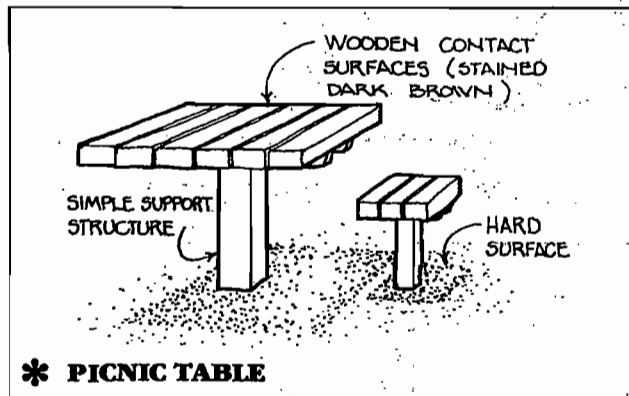
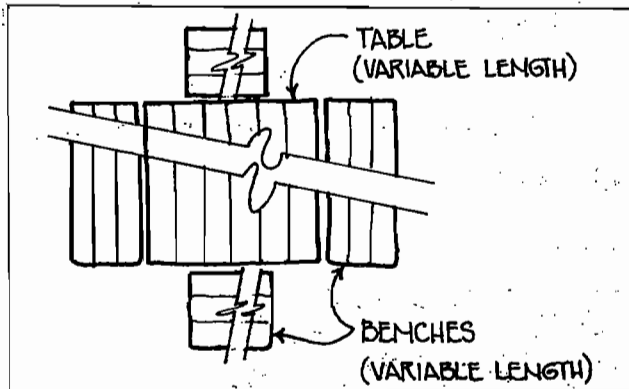
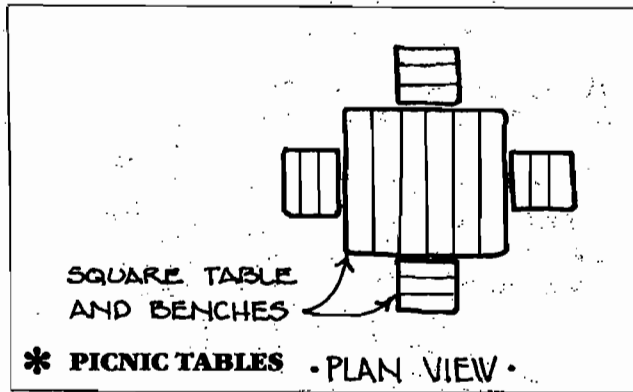
Seating areas should be provided along the waterfront to allow the pedestrian the opportunity to rest, relax and enjoy the surroundings. The bollard historically is related to dockside operations and can be adapted to the waterfront and adjacent areas for seating purposes. Benches may also be used.

Other street furniture including tables, fountains, and trash containers should also be provided. It is intended that street furniture will be a strong design element along the Ruston Way shoreline. Compatibly designed, these amenities will enhance and unify diverse activities and developments. As with other design elements along the Ruston Way shoreline, the preferred material for these furnishings is wood. These furnishings should be designed to human scale for maximum benefit and should accommodate the needs of the handicapped, where appropriate.

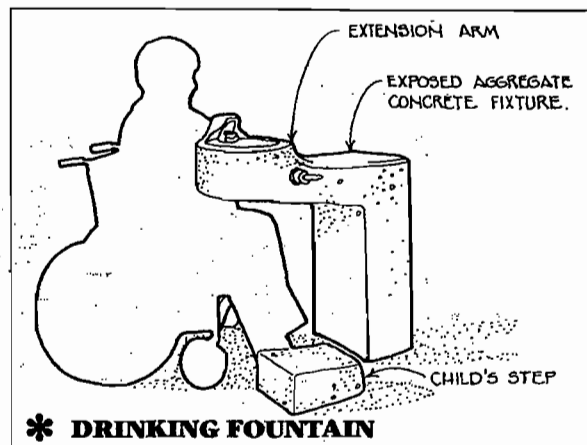
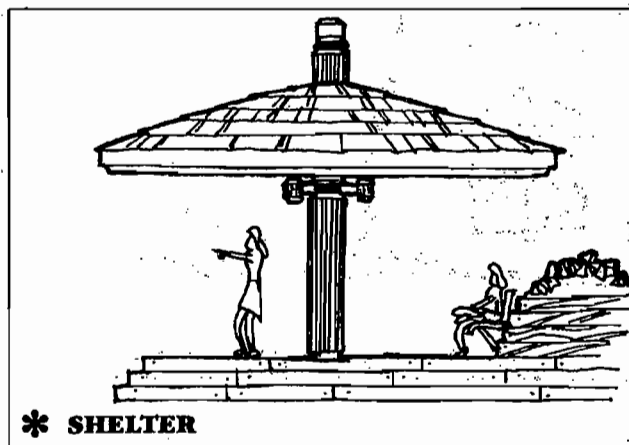
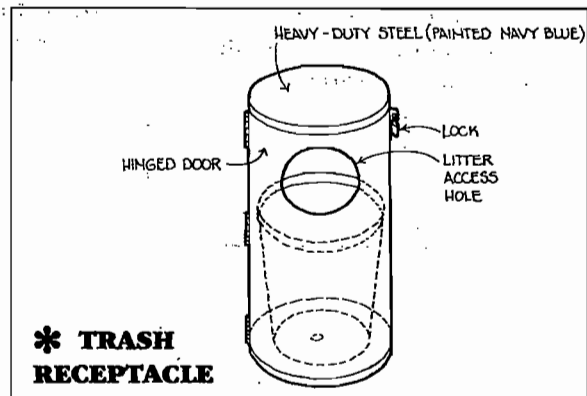
Interpretive centers placed at various points along the shoreline will provide additional interest. These centers can focus on different aspects of the shoreline, providing historic, environmental and cultural information.

**Policies**

1. Encourage the use of amenities for both public and private developments to enhance the waterfront area.
2. The design of amenities should reflect form, material and color that is compatible with the intended marine environment.
- \* 3. Amenities for public improvements should be of common design to unify the shoreline area.

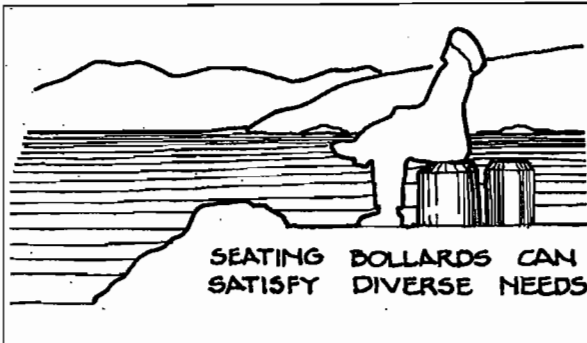


- Design Recommendations**
- Common design amenities include:
    - Benches
    - Tables
    - Bollards
    - Light standards
    - Riprap
    - Trash receptacles
    - Signs
    - Drinking fountains
    - Shelters
    - Bicycle racks



4. Consider human comfort needs in the design and development of shoreline and hillside properties.

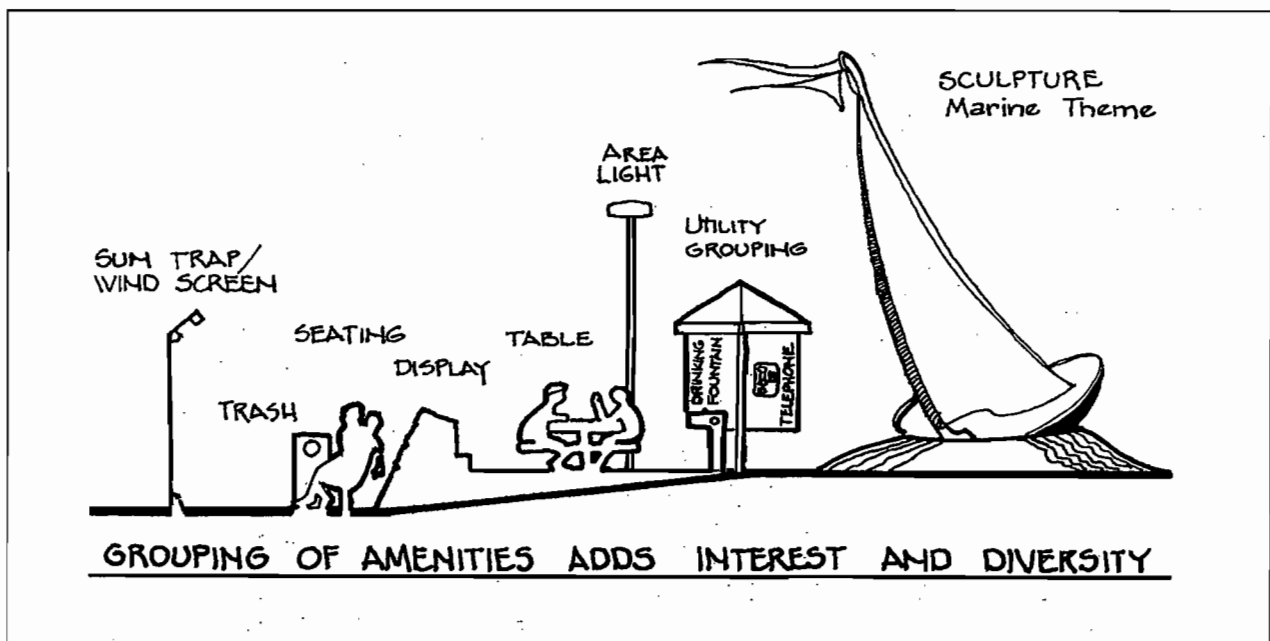
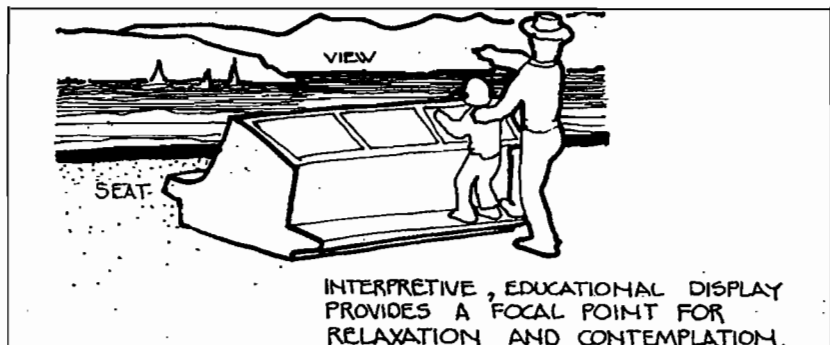
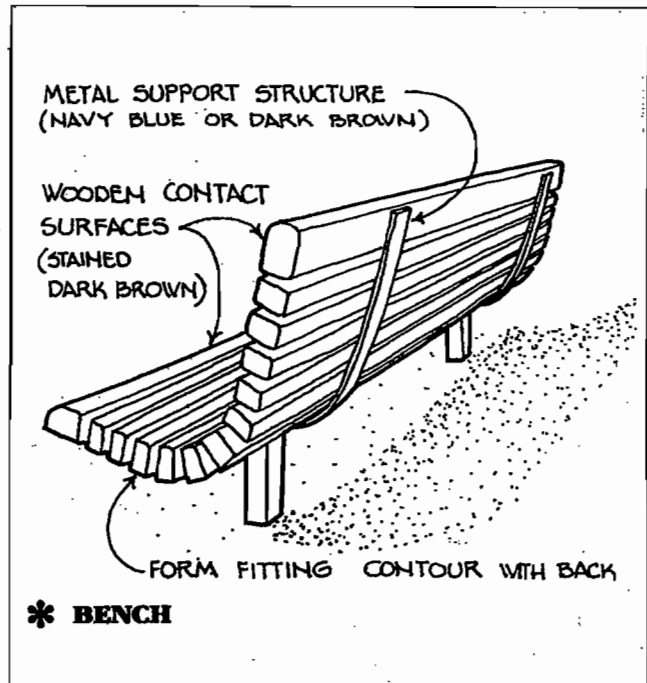
5. Provide seating of various types along the waterfront.



6. Encourage the construction of shelters, canopies, covered walkways, windscreens and other weather protection methods, where appropriate and necessary.

7. Encourage the development of interpretive centers along the shoreline.

8. Support the placement of art that reflects the marine environment or the history of the area along the waterfront.



# Public Shoreline Development

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The Ruston Way area is nearly two miles long. Over the last few years the City has acquired several major parcels and now owns about one-half of the shoreline properties. The majority of these public properties form three large clusters, one at each end of the shoreline segment and one in the central area. The remainder of the public properties are isolated street rights-of-way.

A substantial amount of recreational development is anticipated. The smaller parcels represent a minor percentage of the public ownerships and the areas considered important to the overall design and development concept for the Ruston Way area. These smaller public properties will not be considered individually in this document.

Public properties are intended to provide beach and water access, viewing areas, interpretive experiences and varying degrees of recreational opportunities depending on the respective site.

The development of public properties as set forth in this Plan is based on the recreational needs of Tacoma citizens and the unique characteristics of the proposed site. Consideration has been given to a variety of active and passive recreational activities that best utilize a particular location as well as enhance the continuity of the shoreline area.

Some additional public property acquisitions may be appropriate to increase the opportunity for recreational use. However, further acquisitions should be analyzed very carefully as to their potential for public use and the affect on the desired mix of private and public developments.

The following discussions describe possible use and development of public shoreline properties. The design concepts are intended to provide guidance for future development, funding applications and design considerations.

### **Old Town Dock/Commencement Park Area**

The Old Town area is the original site of the City of Tacoma. The waterfront area developed with sawmills, boat building firms and granaries. It was there that a wharf was built by Morton Matthew McCarver, Tacoma's founder, to increase the chances of the Old Town area being selected as the terminus for the Northern Pacific Railroad. The attempt failed as the railroad chose a site two miles to the southeast at the head of Commencement Bay. Nevertheless, the McCarver Street Wharf Company was a successful endeavor and by the late 1880's it was possible to purchase shingles, wood, hay, oats, flour, meal and farm produce from the mercantile store located on the wharf. A lumber yard and a boat rental facility were also successful businesses located on the wharf. The wharf, a forerunner of the Old Town dock, was a major stopping point for Puget Sound steamers and provided anchorage for early purse seiner fishing boats.

The City of Tacoma acquired the Old Town Dock before World War I. The original dock was condemned in the late 1940's and was rebuilt to its present configuration and reopened in 1953. The City has made several improvements to the dock over the years including railings, benches, lighting, a restroom facility, a shelter and the installation of an artificial reef in front of the dock.

The Ruston Way shoreline's first public redevelopment, Commencement Park, is linked to the Old Town fishing dock. The redevelopment of this area into an urban parkland with pedestrian promenade, viewing areas, picnic facilities, beach areas, interpretative center, landscaped lawn, parking area development and temporary boat moorage will indicate the City's strong interest in providing waterfront recreation areas and public redevelopment along the remainder of the shoreline. A variety of experiences, from fishing to strolling, are possible in the park.

The small commercial area northwesterly of the dock is well established and provides a strong character to the area. Development along the waterfront near the Old Town community should reflect to some degree the history and character of this neighborhood and its once bustling waterfront. Designs using wood and natural colors will help to tie the waterfront to the adjacent Old Town neighborhood.



### Marine Park/Fireboat Station Area

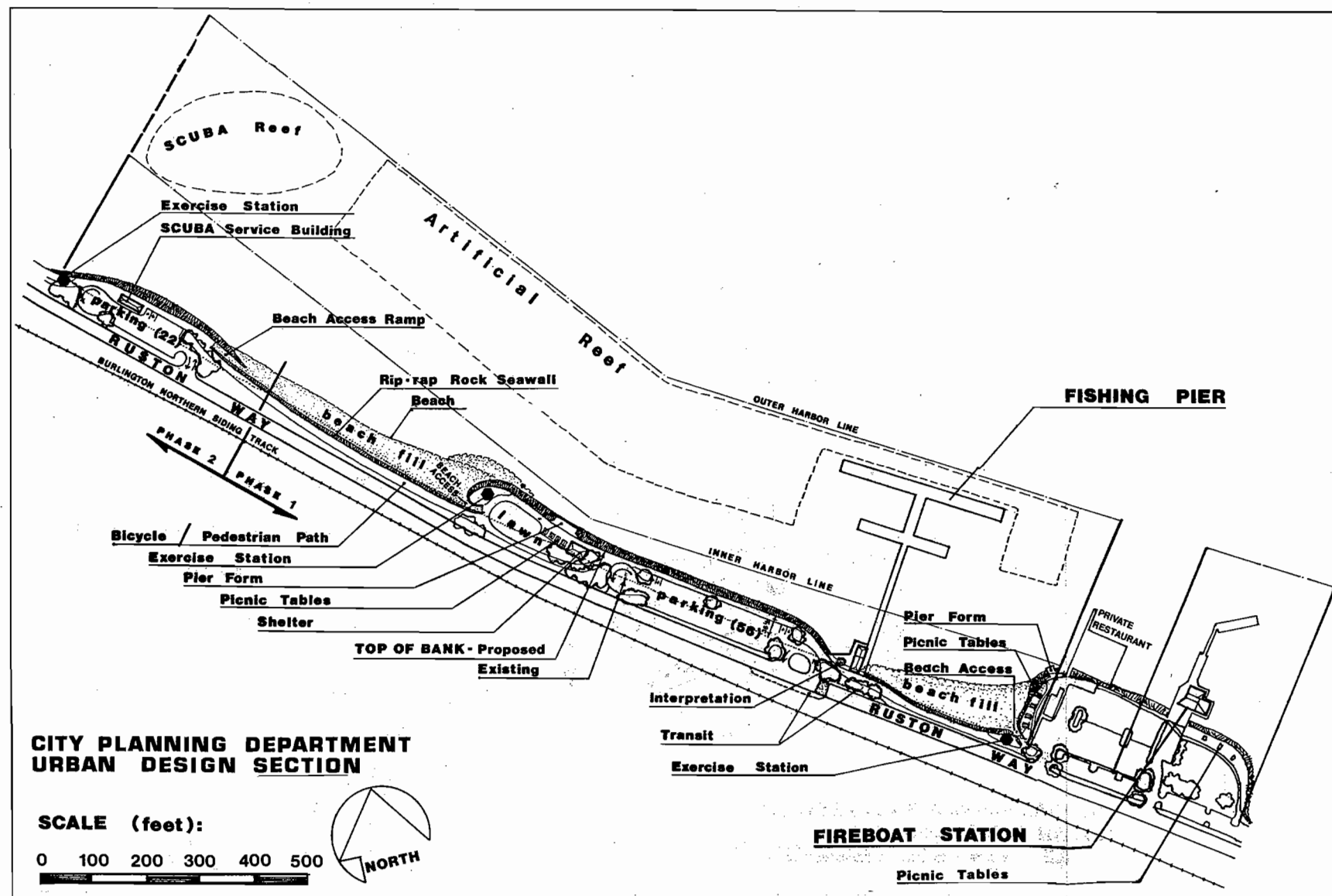
The central public area cluster, a 2,000 foot stretch of shoreline, is located in the vicinity of the intersection of Alder Street and Ruston Way. Intended public development for this area includes a major public fishing pier and support facilities. To the southwest along the waterfront is the location of Tacoma's fireboat/harbor service craft facility. A park setting, view area and public display that explains how the new harbor service craft works will provide interest at the site. Located in between the fishing pier site and the fireboat facility is the location of a newer private restaurant development.

The fishing pier is a joint project between the City of Tacoma and the State Department of Fisheries. The State will build the pier and the City will maintain and operate the facility and construct all land-side development.

The landside development is intended to be a marine recreation park oriented towards the fishing pier and related marine activities. An interpretive center will be located in the park development to provide information on the fish and marine plant life and other areas of interest.

The park development will include picnic facilities, extensive landscaping, pedestrian/bicycle path, jogging trail, exercise stations, scuba change shelter, artificial reef, parking area development and beach expansion and enhancement. Riprapping of the shoreline edge is also necessary.

Funding, construction constraints and environmental considerations were factors considered when developing the proposal shown below. This proposal will require substantial modifications to the existing shoreline and adjacent areas. The proposal shown is conceptual and actual development may differ.



**North Area**

This public cluster is about 1,000 feet long and is located near a well-established copper smelter facility. Between the smelter and the public property is a vacant parcel owned by the smelter facility. The north public cluster is characterized by vacant land and rubble.

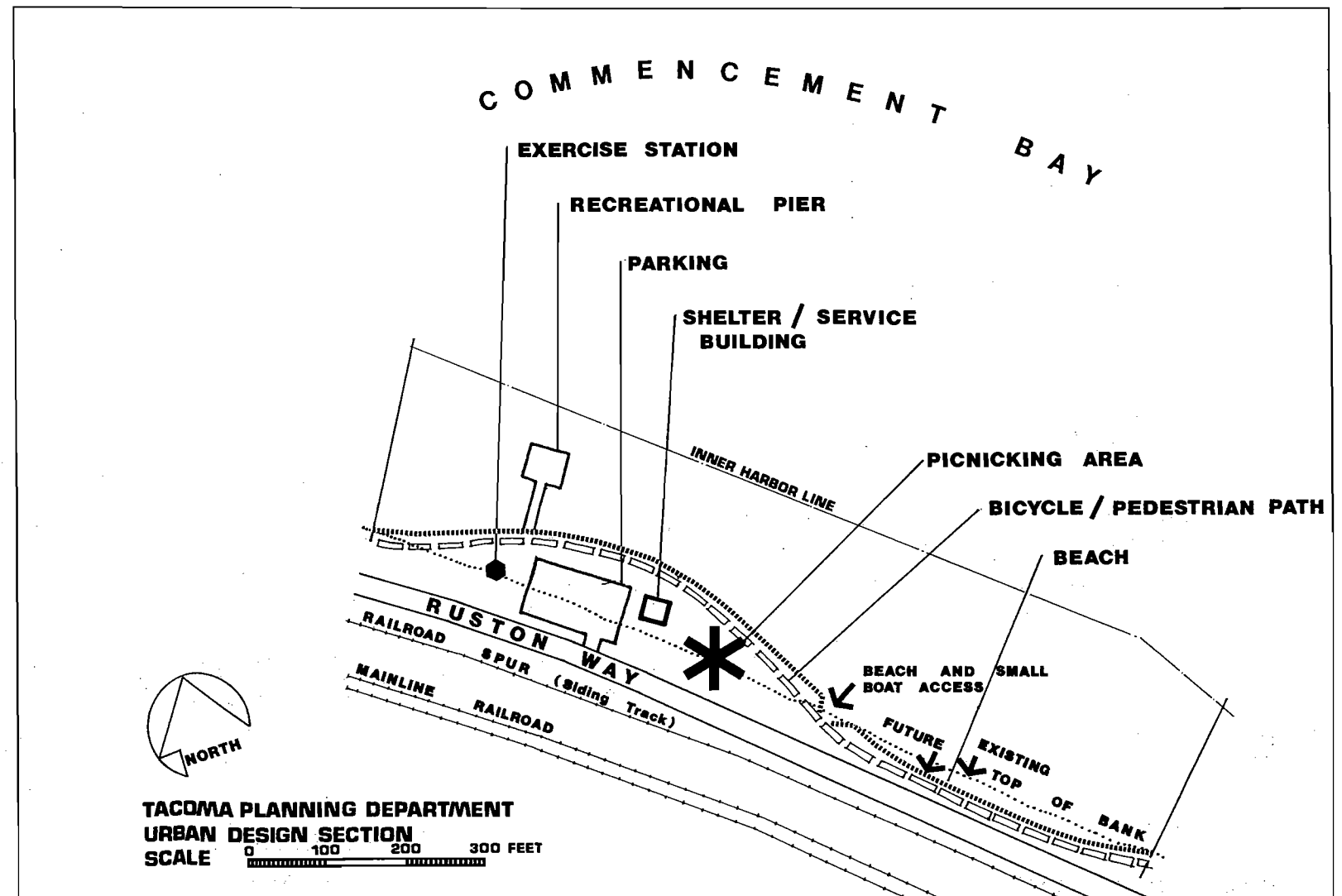
A pedestrian/bicycle path, extensive landscaping, parking area development, beach enhancement, viewing opportunities and public access to the water are integral components of the development concept shown for this area. An interpretive center will also be located here. The theme for this center may be oriented toward the boating public or another marine-related theme.

Recreational development envisioned for this area may include a small boat access and other support facilities. Further site analysis is necessary to determine the most appropriate public development for this area.

The potential design concept will require some fill to accommodate parking areas and other public activities. Riprapping of the shoreline edge will also be necessary.

Feasibility, funding, construction constraints and environmental considerations are important factors to be considered for any development of this area. The design details and actual development may vary from the concept shown.

	<b>SAIL - BOATING</b>
	<b>MOTOR - BOATING</b>
	<b>PICNIC AREA</b>
	<b>VIEWING AREA</b>
	<b>BICYCLE TRAIL</b>
	<b>PARKING</b>
	<b>FISHING</b>
	<b>HANDICAPPED</b>
	<b>TELEPHONE</b>
	<b>RESTROOMS</b>
	<b>FEDERAL RECREATION SYMBOLS</b>





### Other Public Areas

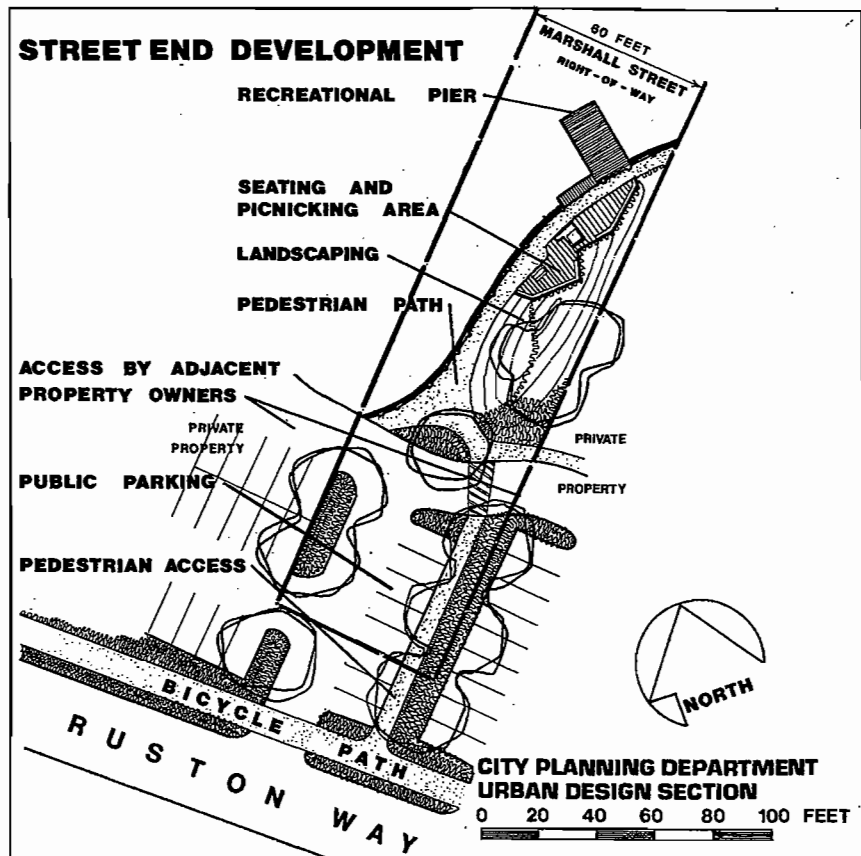
In addition to the three large clusters, the City owns other smaller properties along the waterfront ranging in size from approximately 60 to 100 linear feet. The majority of these properties are undeveloped street rights-of-way of which there are five. Although these properties do not offer the recreation potential of the larger clusters, they are, nevertheless, a vital part of the plan to revitalize the Ruston Way waterfront. These parcels provide open space, view opportunities, and beach access. As development occurs, these small parcels will become more important for their view potential. These properties also may be important in providing access to private properties. In instances where a more effective use of these properties or where mutually beneficial circumstances prevail between the City and adjacent private property owners, formal use agreements between the City and the adjacent private property owners should be encouraged, where appropriate.

It is envisioned that some of these parcels may be extensively developed for public recreation use while others will remain in their present state, except for general clean-up. Because of their small size, such projects could be accomplished with limited funds. Improvements could include landscaping, viewing areas, picnic facilities, interpretive centers and improved beach access. Clean-up and repair and/or replacement of the shoreline edge is necessary at all sites.

The design concept shown below is for the Marshall Street undeveloped right-of-way, one of the smaller public properties. The concept illustrates a potential development scheme for the area. Actual development may differ from the concept shown.

Funding, construction constraints and environmental considerations are important factors to be considered for any development of these properties.

-  PICNIC AREA
-  HANDI CAPPED
-  BICYCLE TRAIL
-  FISHING
-  VIEWING AREA
-  PARKING
-  FEDERAL RECREATION SYMBOLS



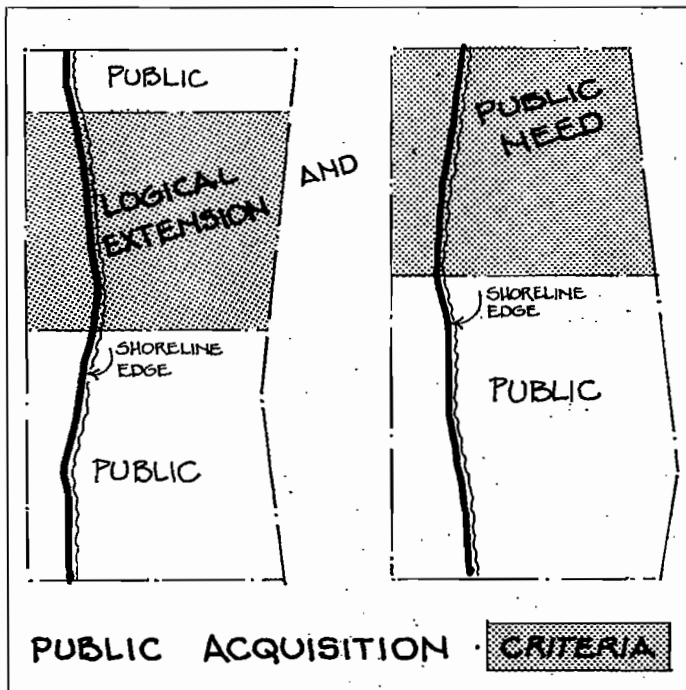
### Public Acquisition

In order to achieve the mixed public and private development intent and a people-oriented area, it is important that there be significant amounts of private ownership and development. A proper balance between public and private ownerships along the shoreline is necessary in order to encourage an interactive climate that stimulates people-oriented activities.

However, some additional properties may be considered for public acquisition. It is not the City's intent to acquire all available property along and near the waterfront. It may be desirable, however, to consider logical extensions of public ownership that offer the best potential for public recreation and enjoyment. Other properties that are not extensions of existing public properties may also be considered for acquisition. For instance, should the railroad spur be abandoned, removed or modified, the City should strongly consider the public use of these properties because of the valuable additional space that can be realized.

Acquisitions of private property should be consistent with City policies and be determined by the following criteria:

1. ownerships that are logical extensions of public properties
2. properties needed or desired for a public benefit
3. properties needed to preserve the natural shoreline, slope and gulch areas
4. property needed for roadway realignment, widening and/or parking area development



## Waterview Area

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### **Description**

The Waterview area is an isolated residential neighborhood situated at the base of the steep slopes along Waterview Street. Waterview Street is a 25 foot wide, oil mat street that runs parallel to Ruston Way for approximately one mile. Roadway width is restricted by the existing topography on the uphill side and mainline railroad tracks located just below the street on the downhill side. Approximately 30 single-family homes are located above the southwest side of the street.

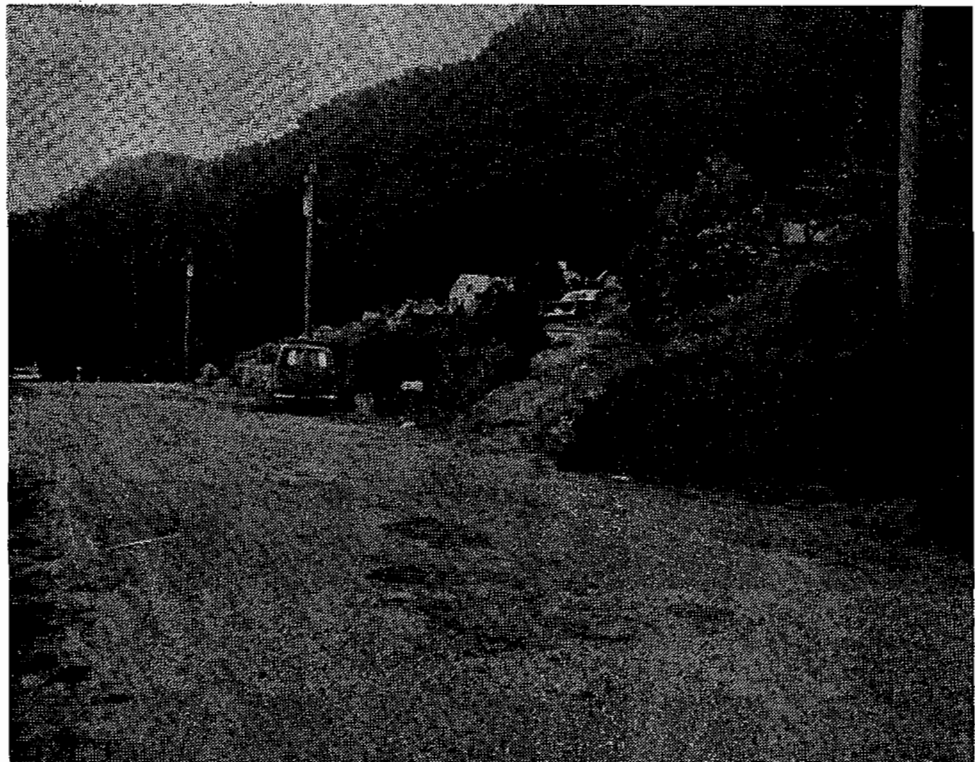
Existing utilities in the Waterview area may not be adequate to accommodate a moderate increase in growth. Water supply is limited and would need to be upgraded substantially to support additional housing. The electrical supply also needs to be upgraded. Street lights are not present and storm sewers are absent.

Very little new construction has occurred in recent years. Several various-sized vacant parcels are present with a total of approximately three acres of potentially developable land. Existing property depths are only about 80 feet which will encourage most new developments to be oriented in a lineal manner. Water, springs and soil conditions in the hillside may create some difficulty in stabilizing the foundation structures of new developments.

This small residential area, although in close proximity to Ruston Way, is relatively unaffected by what occurs along the Ruston Way shoreline. However, the area strongly identifies with the Ruston Way waterfront. The residents have panoramic views of the shoreline, Commencement Bay, Browns Point and Port of Tacoma.

These magnificent views make the area a very desirable place to live.

The area is accessible from Ruston Way by North 40th and North 49th Streets which pass under the railroad tracks.



## **Development Intent**

The Waterview area is designated in the GENERALIZED LAND USE PLAN as a low intensity area. Low intensity areas are characterized by single-family detached housing, but can include low intensity multi-family housing such as duplexes, triplexes and small garden-court apartments, as well as small neighborhood community facilities and commercial developments. After further review, the Ruston Way Plan reaffirms the low intensity designation and further intends that the Waterview area be residential in character.

It is recognized that there will be pressures for some additional low intensity residential development other than single-family on Waterview Street and possibly in the adjacent steep slope areas. The spectacular views and close-in location combine to make this area a desirable location for such development. Although single-family detached houses will remain predominate, duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, condominiums and small garden-court apartments may be possible. Specific policies within the GENERALIZED LAND USE PLAN guide low intensity residential development. These policies provide for limited density and development consistent with the physical limitations of the site and character of the area. Development proposals will be considered on an individual basis during the normal land use review process, particularly in regard to their effect on public utilities, facilities and services and the character of the area.

Development density within the area is now about six units per acre, and it is intended that it will remain at or near this overall density which is consistent with the policies in the GENERALIZED LAND USE PLAN. Overall density will be lower for residential development that may occur in the adjacent steep slope areas.

## **Policies**

- 1.** Permit low intensity residential development along Waterview Street and the slope areas provided the development is properly designed and does not adversely affect the character of the area.
- 2.** Encourage the upgrading of existing public services and facilities where appropriate to meet the expected demand.
- 3.** Strongly encourage that utility, service and communication wires be placed underground to better utilize the available land and enhance scenic views.

## Implementation and Recommendations

## Implementation

Implementing Ruston Way waterfront development projects, both public and private, and the intent and policies of this Plan will require a broad base of community support, cooperation between public and private property owners, financial assistance from federal, state and local sources and City staff resources.

Several factors will affect the development of these projects such as timing, development phasing, required permits and public commitment. Cooperation and understanding between private property owners and all levels of government are also necessary to overcome the unique physical situation and to adhere to the various regulations and safeguards to protect the environment.

Under this Plan, independent development opportunities exist such as private sector projects, small public projects, large public projects and construction of elements that may be part of larger public projects. The success of these projects will require the public and private sectors working together in a partnership manner. The private sector must be willing to actively support the revitalization of the area, make capital investments, and share the cost of public improvements. The public sector must continue and strengthen its intent to redevelop the shoreline area by actively seeking funds for improvements, providing coordination between private property owners and public officials concerning site planning and development and maintaining staff resources. Existing public commitment is clearly

identified below:

<b>Existing City Commitment</b>
Projects completed or underway
Sewer interception and resultant road improvement
Old Town Dock public restrooms
Major open space shoreline parcels acquired since 1965
Old Town Dock improvements
Bicycle path (portions)
Railroad surplus property acquisitions
Fireboat station and park
Commencement Park
Marine Park and public fishing pier

Substantial capital expenditures will be required to accomplish and complete the overall program for public improvements contemplated in this Plan. Additional acquisitions and development which may be desirable or necessary for public benefit will increase these expenditures. All improvements and developments identified in this Plan will not occur simultaneously. Smaller elements of larger projects may occur over a period of time and some projects may never occur. Certain elements, while highly desirable, are very costly, e.g., the undergrounding of utility wires and roadway improvements. Acceptance by City Council of projects is necessary prior to implementation through the contract award process.

Costs are affected by an annual inflation rate and are dependent on which alternative development proposals or variations are selected. More detailed analysis and cost estimates will be required to accurately reflect project costs. Costs of the projects identified below reflect overall general costs.

The availability of funds and from what source will impact the type of future projects; therefore, priorities have not been established. It is anticipated that waterfront park development and associated shoreline protection are most likely to have funding preference. Street improvements, landscaping and increased maintenance are necessary items that should be programmed when possible. Funding will be sought as monies may be available for individual projects and must be approved by the City Council.

### **Ancitipated Public Revitalization Projects**

Hillside Development (includes pathways/trails, shelters, access points and acquisition/easement)	317,000
Other Public Property Development and Shoreline Protection (includes shoreline protection, landscaping, parking and other amenities for small, isolated properties)	540,000
Marine Park, Phase II (includes landscaping, scuba change shelter, parking, beach improvement, scuba reef and shoreline protection)	600,000
North Area Improvements (includes parking, restroom/shelter, landfill, landscaping and shoreline protection)	1,100,000
Undergrounding Utility Wires (includes undergrounding distribution line along Ruston Way and Waterview Street and relocation of transmission line)	1,203,000
Roadway Improvements (includes right-of-way acquisition, selective realignment, landscaping, storm drainage, and continuous bicycle/pedestrian path)	\$5,019,000
<b>TOTAL*</b>	<b>\$8,779,000</b>

\* This figure does not include additional acquisition and development costs nor parking area development in the Ruston Way right-of-way.

The aggressive pursual of all available Federal, State and local financial assistance programs and the use of these programs to the maximum extent possible is necessary for successful implementation. These programs include:

#### **Federal**

- Community Development Block Grants provide funds for a broad range of projects. These monies have been used in the past for public projects along Ruston Way.
- The Department of Interior provides monies through the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service for various maritime preservation and restoration projects.
- The Office of Coastal Zone Management, a component of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, provides small planning grants for various waterfront studies. The RUSTON WAY PLAN document was funded using this source.
- The National Endowment for the Arts sponsors planning studies for waterfront projects. A small grant in 1977 funded the RUSTON WAY DESIGN AND HUMAN SCALE STUDY which provided the background for the RUSTON WAY PLAN.
- The Urban Waterfront Action Group was formed in 1978. This interagency's goal is to improve the delivery of federal assistance to waterfront redevelopment projects.

#### **State**

- The Interagency for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) is a source for shoreline property acquisition and development. Funds from this agency were instrumental in the development of Commencement Park. Additional funding from IAC will be used for the development of Marine Park.



- The Department of Fisheries is a funding source for projects involving fisheries enhancement. The proposed fishing pier and artificial reef are two projects funded through these monies.
- Other State agencies periodically provide funds for recreation related projects on a matching basis.

### **Local**

Several methods of generating funds locally may be available to finance public acquisition and improvement of Ruston Way properties.

- General obligation bonds—the issue and sale of these bonds require a vote of the people to increase property taxes.
- Limited tax levy—the City Council may authorize limited tax levies within limitations. The usefulness of this method is dependent on priorities, maximum indebtedness limits and City Council willingness to utilize the taxing authority for these purposes.
- Lease of public properties—revenue generated from the lease of public properties along Ruston Way can be deposited in a specially created fund to assist development projects.
- Vacated Street Right-of-Way Fund—all monies received from the vacation of streets throughout the city must be used for open space purposes. Monies from this source can be earmarked for the Ruston Way area.
  - Revenue Sharing Fund—five percent of revenue sharing funds annually received by the City are set aside for open space purposes. These monies can be earmarked for the Ruston Way area.
- General Fund—the City Council can appropriate money from the general budget for acquisition, development projects along the waterfront and staff resources.
- Local Improvement District (LID)—this method can be used for financing public improvements. It is initiated by petition of owners of abutting property and has a protest mechanism. Further analysis of the feasibility of this method may be required.

The City will also pursue and use any other existing, new or innovative financing programs to support both public and private developments along Ruston Way. These might include:

- Aggressive program to solicit gifts, donations, etc.
- Efforts to establish a non-profit corporation or foundation to assist in redevelopment efforts.
- Active pursuit of private monies including foundations.

### **Recommendations**

Success in realizing Ruston Way as envisioned in this Plan is directly proportional to public and private commitment. In addition, City support and involvement in related actions will further assist in achieving the revitalization of this important waterfront. Therefore it is recommended that the City:

- Prepare a financial plan for development of existing public properties and potential acquisition, development of additional properties as may be necessary to provide for community recreation needs and expanded public access to the shoreline
- Actively support federal and state legislation that provides funding sources for urban waterfront revitalization planning, design and construction
- Seek to resolve multi-jurisdictional conflicts and overlapping regulations concerning shoreline development
- Support and encourage efforts to streamline the permit process for shoreline development
- Pursue any potential funding source for public improvements and, if necessary, budget directly or apply for grant monies for design and engineering of roadway and other public improvements
- Identify funds for annual, complete and regular maintenance of all public facilities along the Ruston Way shoreline, including streets, parking areas, parks and picnic areas.
- Consider undergrounding of overhead utility wires to enhance the appearance of the shoreline area
- Recognizing that undergrounding of high voltage wires is very expensive and may not be possible, strongly urge the relocation of utility poles and wiring to be compatible with future roadway alignment and parking area development
- Solicit community support and involvement in waterfront planning and development

## Appendix

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## **Shoreline Regulations**

The Ruston Way shoreline lies within the "S-6 Shoreline District" as set forth in Chapter 13.10 of the Official Code of the City of Tacoma (Shoreline Ordinance).

This Ordinance provides for permitted use activities and for conditional use activities which are subject to approval of the State Department of Ecology. Any development within the "S-6 Shoreline District" is governed by the use regulations and permit procedures of the Shoreline Ordinance. For more detail, refer to the Ordinance.

It is the intent of the Shoreline Ordinance to carry out the MASTER PROGRAM FOR SHORELINE DEVELOPMENT. Both documents intend that future development along Ruston Way involve mixed public and private development of water-oriented land use, including a parkway, roadside areas, public fishing piers, picnic and boating facilities together with water-dependent and water-related private development.

## **Shoreline Permits**

The purpose of the State Shoreline Management Act passed in 1971 is to prevent the inherent harm associated with unrestricted and unplanned piecemeal development of the shorelines. Any new development within 200 feet landward of the ordinary high-water mark must conform to state shoreline policies and the policies and standards of the MASTER PROGRAM FOR SHORELINE DEVELOPMENT for the City of Tacoma.

A shoreline permit is the primary device used by local government to regulate development on the shoreline. A shoreline substantial development permit is needed (1) for any development where the total cost (or fair market value) exceeds \$1,000, or (2) for any development which materially interferes with the normal public use of the water or shorelines of the city.

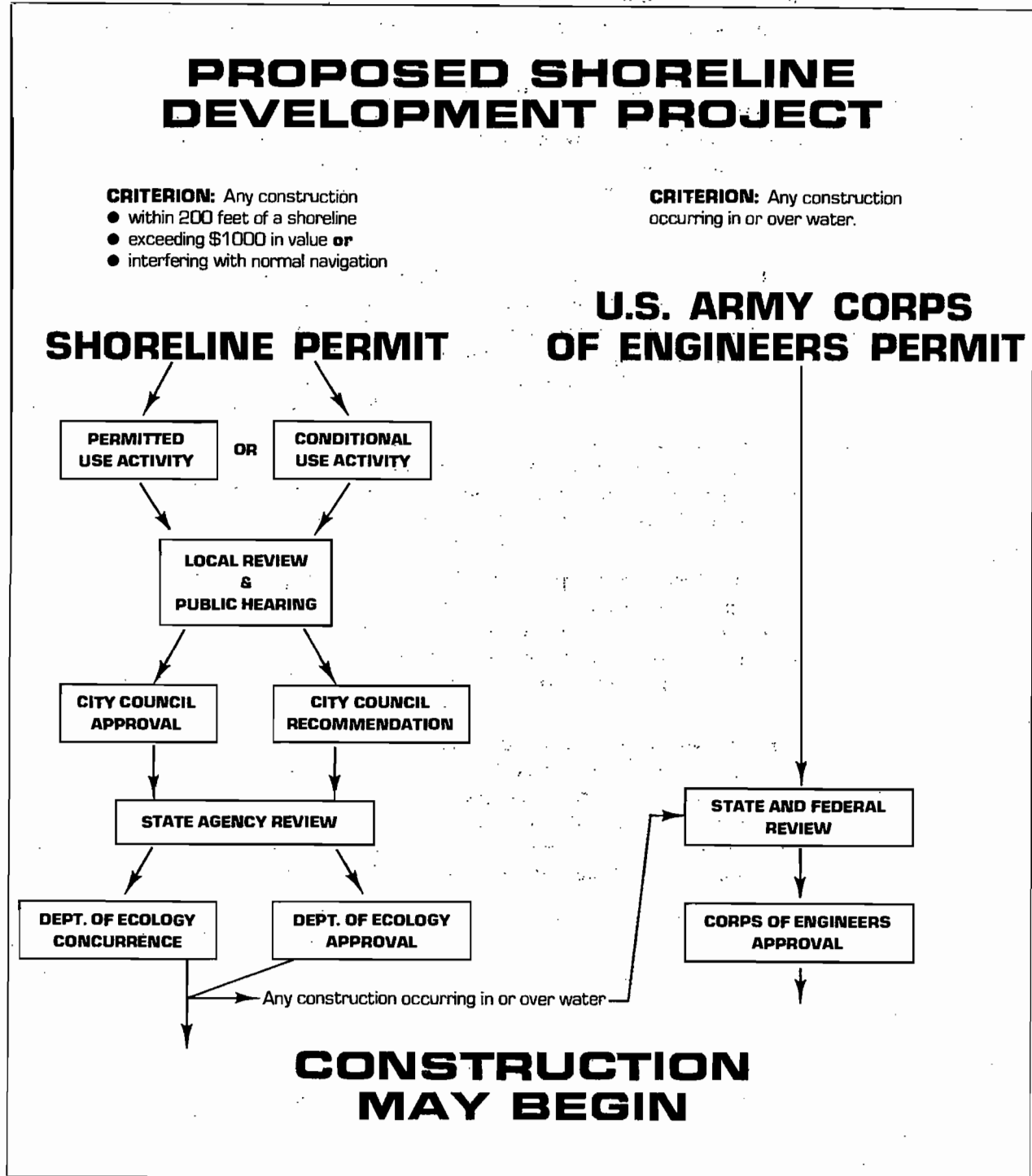
However, several types of development are exempt from the shoreline permit requirement. Among these are certain small piers and normal maintenance and repair of existing structures. The Director of Planning ultimately will determine whether a proposed development qualifies for an exemption. The shoreline permit does not take the place of other local, state or federal permits which may be required.

Projects which involve construction in or over water require a United States Army Corps of Engineers' permit. Activities that would require this permit include fill and the construction of piers. A separate application and review process is necessary to obtain a Corps of Engineers' permit. The application is transmitted for review to affected federal resource agencies and others as may be necessary. Approval of all affected agencies is required before issuance of the permit and beginning of construction.

Other permits may also be required such as:

- a City permit for building
- a State hydrology permit
- a State permit for water quality control
- a harbor area lease for developments that are located in designated harbor areas

The accompanying graph illustrates the process of review for shoreline development permits. The minimum time required for a development proposal with no conflicts would be approximately four months. The granting or denying of a shoreline substantial development permit may be appealed at the local level and finally to the State Shoreline Hearings Board.



## **Shoreline Enforcement**

The City of Tacoma has implemented an active shoreline inspection and enforcement program to insure proper adherence to the Shoreline Management Act of 1971 and the City's MASTER PROGRAM FOR SHORELINE DEVELOPMENT. This effort has largely been a result of funding from the Coastal Zone Management program. As part of this program, development sites which have a valid shoreline permit are inspected for compliance with approved plans, all conditions of approval, and the State and City shoreline regulations. General shoreline inspection and enforcement is also part of this program.

When violation or compliance problems occur, corrective measures are necessary to achieve compliance. In cases where compliance is not met, a regulatory order is issued requiring compliance. Non-compliance can lead to court action and civil penalties. Tacoma's inspection and enforcement program has proven to be an effective means of monitoring shoreline activities.