

Chapter 9 – Downtown Shoreline

This chapter defines the land uses, development standards and design standards and guidelines for the Downtown Shoreline area. This chapter is organized as follows:

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 - 9.1 Purpose and Process
 - 9.2 Uses
 - 9.5 Development Standards
 - 9.6 Design Standards and Guidelines

9.1 PURPOSE

The intent of the Downtown Shoreline area is to provide for a variety of residential uses in an environment that is transitioning from industrial to residential uses. This area serves as a transition area between the urbanized portion of the Downtown and the open space of the Martinez Regional Shoreline to the north. The standards and guidelines for this area are intended to protect and enhance the environmentally sensitive areas of the Shoreline, and contribute to the economic revitalization of Downtown, by permitting a sufficient intensity of development to provide an economic incentive for industrial uses to relocate.

Note: this section not adopted; reserved for possible future action and/or amendment

9.1.1 North Shoreline District

The intent of the North Shoreline District (Opportunity Sites #1 and 2) is to provide for a range of possible future uses such as a community center, parking, open space, mixed use area and residential uses. The current Light Industrial zoning shall remain in place.

Neither site will be rezoned from its existing zoning until the Planning Commission has reviewed and approved a development proposal for that site containing the following (in addition to the normal application requirements):

- An emergency response/secondary access plan as specified in the Final EIR
- A noise and vibration study showing that the proposal meets City standards as specified in the Final EIR
- A soils report and engineered foundation plan, peer reviewed by the City’s consultants, showing that the proposed housing units can withstand the potential seismic shaking and liquefaction hazards as specified in the Final EIR

- A site specific study showing that the proposal meets the requirements specified in the Final EIR for protection of the existing wildlife habitat in the adjacent Martinez Regional Shoreline

9.2 USES

The uses in the Shoreline area shall be those allowed in the new Downtown Shoreline zone district, and shall generally consist of the uses allowed in the City’s existing multiple residential zones.

9.5 DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

9.5.1 General

All new development shall be in accordance with the standards of the new Downtown Shoreline District All new multiple residential development in this District shall be processed concurrently with a subdivision map, so that individual units can be offered for sale, and shall meet the requirements for new condominium units as contained in Chapter 21.54 of the Municipal Code.

Note: this section not adopted; reserved for future action and/or amendment

9.5.2 North Downtown Shoreline District

Because of the area’s proximity to environmentally sensitive areas and protected species habitat in the Martinez Regional Shoreline, the following additional requirements apply to all development in the North Downtown Shoreline District:

- 1) No construction, development, structure, street, alley or landscaping is permitted within 100 feet of any marshlands or creeks within the Martinez Regional Shoreline. This marshland setback area shall be undisturbed and used as a vegetative buffer to the marshland. Marshland setbacks will be necessary along the north, west and the upper eastern property lines of Opportunity Sites 1 and 2 where the property is adjacent to property containing marshlands and other aquatic habitats. The setbacks are to be to the nearest marsh area and if the nearest marsh area is more than 100 feet from the property line then no set back is necessary.
- 2) Fencing is required along the landward edge of the marshland setbacks or the property boundary of Opportunity Sites 1 and 2 (where the property is more than 100 feet from a wetland edge) to prevent unrestricted access by people, pets, and pest species to the Regional Shoreline. Fencing is necessary along the north and west boundary of Opportunity Site 1 and north, east and west boundaries of Opportunity Site 2. Design of this

fence, and planting in its vicinity, should be carefully coordinated with the East Bay Regional Park District. One fence design shown to be effective against predatory animals includes tight weave wire mesh walls, an inward curved top, and an underground woven mesh skirt extending 4 feet outwards from the base to prevent burrowing underneath. This type of fence or another design proven equal or better shall be installed in the areas described above.

- 3) Exterior lighting located adjacent to the Martinez Regional Shoreline within Opportunity Sites 1 and 2 must be shielded to prevent the spill of light onto marshlands and other natural habitats.

9.5.3 Maximum Height

The maximum building height in the Downtown Shoreline area shall be 40 feet, or three stories, for development approved at an R-1.25 density, and 30' or two stories, for development approved at a R-2.5 density. In some areas, such as transition areas near existing single family residential areas, a two-story maximum height may be determined to be appropriate by the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission may approve taller buildings by use permit.

9.5.4 Density

The basic allowable density shall be 17 units per acre, equivalent to R-2.5 density. The Planning Commission may approve a higher density, up to a maximum of 35 units per acre, by use permit.

For the portion of the Downtown Shoreline District south of the railroad tracks (Opportunity Sites #3, 4 and 5), in order to approve a density above the lower end of the density range, the Planning Commission would need to find that in addition to meeting the above minimum requirements, the proposal is superior in terms of two or more of the following criteria:

- Assembling all or most of the contiguous parcels into one project, and designing the project as a new neighborhood
- Design and appearance
- Minimizing impacts on adjacent public lands
- Providing onsite amenities for the future residents
- Preserving or creating view corridors from public streets such as Talbart, Buckley, Marina Vista, Carquinez Scenic Drive, Castro and Berrellesa.

- Utilizing green building practices to the maximum extent possible
- Providing a variety of housing types, including detached single family residential, where feasible, as a transition in areas near existing single family neighborhoods.
- Providing a new public street system that improves access to the Regional Shoreline and Alhambra Creek, potentially by extending Alhambra Avenue along the creek, and vacating Berrellesa.

In order to approve a density at or near the upper end of the density range, the Planning Commission would need to find that the proposal is superior in terms of all or almost all of the above criteria.

Note: this section not adopted; reserved for future action and/or amendment.

For the North Downtown Shoreline District (Opportunity Sites #1 and 2), in order to approve a residential density above the lower end of the density range, the Planning Commission would need to find that in addition to meeting the above minimum requirements, the proposal is superior in terms of:

- Design and appearance
- Minimizing impacts on adjacent public lands
- Providing onsite amenities for the future residents
- Preserving or creating view corridors from public streets such as Estudillo, Castro and Berrellesa.
- Utilizing green building practices to the maximum extent possible

9.6 DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

These standards are in addition to the standards for new development contained in Chapter 10 of this Plan.

9.6.1 Character Defining Statement

The character of the Downtown Shoreline area is defined by its proximity to Downtown residential neighborhoods to the south and the Martinez Regional Shoreline to the north. This is primarily a district for residential uses, including semi- and/or fully-attached single-family homes, live-work uses, and small multifamily structures. New development should be planned to create views of the Shoreline from Downtown where possible.

Large industrial uses are encouraged to relocate out of the District, but smaller, self-contained service commercial uses may coexist with existing and new residential uses.

9.6.2 Site Planning

Building Orientation

- a) Buildings should have a traditional residential orientation to the street.
- b) In new buildings, the first floor building levels should be set slightly above the sidewalk level (up to four feet above grade) to create a sense of transition from the public space to the private realm. Accessible routes may be provided from rear alleys.
- c) Privacy between residences should be preserved by offsetting windows from windows in adjacent buildings.
- d) New streets should be oriented where possible to provide views into the waterfront.

9.6.3 Architecture

Style

- a) New buildings should have a traditional residential style, reminiscent of existing residences in the adjacent Downtown Neighborhood District.
- b) A consistent architectural style should be used for a building and the elements that relate to it, such as trellises, carports, roof forms, windows and detailing. While specific architectural styles are not dictated, several styles predominate in the Downtown Neighborhood District and the other residential parts of Downtown Martinez and should provide inspiration to help maintain Martinez' unique character. Styles need not be replicated literally, but should be clearly reflected in a proposed project.
- c) For buildings with more than six residential units, or projects with more than two residential buildings, design shall be varied, not uniform or monotonous.

Scale

- a) New buildings should respect the overall massing scale of the neighborhood.
- b) Long blank walls should be avoided.

Roof Design

The typical roof in this area should be of a pitched design reflective of nearby residences.

Windows

All windows on a building should be related in operating type, proportion and trim. Unifying elements such as common headers and sills are encouraged.

Colors and Materials

- a) The predominant materials should be stucco, wood siding, shingle roofing, and wood framed windows and doors.
- b) Colors should be appropriate to the style of the building. For example, Craftsman styles use muted earth tones, while Victorian styles use brighter, more contrasting colors.

9.6.4 Landscaping

Plant Types

- a) Plant types should be typical of residential plantings, with foundation shrubbery and limited use of small-scale trees as accents.

Scale

Pedestrian scale plantings should predominate, with larger plantings used as accents.

Relationship to Development

- a) Plantings should be arranged to frame the architecture, provide a green carpet between the street and the building, and soften the view of the building foundation.
- b) The public parkway along the street should be landscaped and maintained.
- c) Pathways, pergolas and trellises that are in character with the architectural style of the building to add shade and interest are encouraged.
- d) Landscaped areas should be regularly maintained to prevent deterioration of the property.

Hardscape

- a) Paving should be on a small scale and limited to walkways, driveways, and rear yard parking areas.
- b) Varied paving textures and/or elevation changes should be used to define entrances, pedestrian areas, and crosswalks.