Board of Commissioner's Presentation

Beaufort Harbor & Waterways Advisory Committee

Master Plan Recommendations

Sept. 26, 2022

Harbor & Waterways Committee

Doug Townsend -- Chairperson

Doug Doubleday -- Vice Chairperson

Steve Bishop

Becky Bowler

Tipper Davis

Vic Fasolino

Susan Sanders

Miriam Sutton

Charles Oliver, Board of Commissioners' Liaison

COMMITTEE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Make recommendations to the Board of Commissioners
- BOC prioritizes activities
- Recommendations of Committee will be fact-based, supported by credible, non-partisan research

Established by the BOC in September 2021

COMMITTEE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

- Check personal opinions/biases in the closet
- There are no sacred cows
- Think what is best for Beaufort and its tax-paying residents
- Think for future generations who will have to live with our work
- Strong/popular docks = Strong/popular Beaufort

IMPORTANT BASELINE FACTS

Current lease expires 12.31.24 (Two years, three months away)

At expiration, 46.3 total years under lease: (9.28.78)

Current Lease Rate

- Base Lease on Docks -- $118,336
- Annual Dredge Fund -- $ 60,000

Total Annual Pay

$178,336

At expiration, all dock assets and improvements convey to the Town

Town owns the bulkhead, boardwalk, parking property and riparian rights

Docks are for transient boaters only (No long-term dockage)

Diesel fuel resides on the Finz/Geer property and piped to docks via contract

Dockside and dockmaster station privately owned/do not convey

Expectations for quality bathhouse increase with revenue-generating moorings

Abundant capital in the market for State and Federal grants

WHAT YOU WILL SEE:

- AN ASPIRATIONAL PLAN
- PLAN THAT LOOKS FORWARD TO THE NEXT 50 YEARS.
- CONTRASTS BETWEEN WHAT WE ARE AND WHAT WE COULD BE
- PLAN THAT STRONGLY VALUES THE TOWN CITIZEN FEEDBACK

WHAT YOU WON'T SEE:

- Hard designs
- Elevations of proposed structures
- Recommendations on construction planning
- Recommendation on Town managed or concessionaire managed

KEY FINDINGS

1. Bulkhead, boardwalk and floating docks are at the end of their useful life and need to be replaced.
2. As the volume of visitor traffic increases to Beaufort's waterfront, our public restroom facilities are outdated and inadequate.
3. Our bathhouse facility is outdated and structurally questionable for the long term.

Aged Waterfront Infrastructure

KEY FINDINGS CONTINUED

4. Western entrance to docks is an eyesore with dated bathrooms, smelly pump station and dilapidated bathhouse all blocking viewing vistas.

5. Fuel storage is housed in outdated technology and is a threat to the Castle Hayne aquifer and if Finz transacts, docks could lose fuel source.

6. Crowded Taylor's Creek causing increased need for secure anchoring/mooring.

7. The increasing size of new-boat berths is straining the supply of usable slips.

Western Entrance, Fuel Threat, Crowding in Taylor's Creek

Community Engagement

Community Meetings:

Nov. 2021 – 98 attendees

June 2022 – 54 attendees

Monthly Committee Meetings

2 Surveys

Survey 1: Focused on identification of issues & priorities

- **172 Participants**
- Main activities on the waterfront are dining **(90%)**, walking **(83%)** and shopping **(76%)**.
- **47%** indicated "A welcoming harbor" was considered the value most important.

Survey 2: Focused on reviewing the initial planning alternatives for waterfront improvement projects

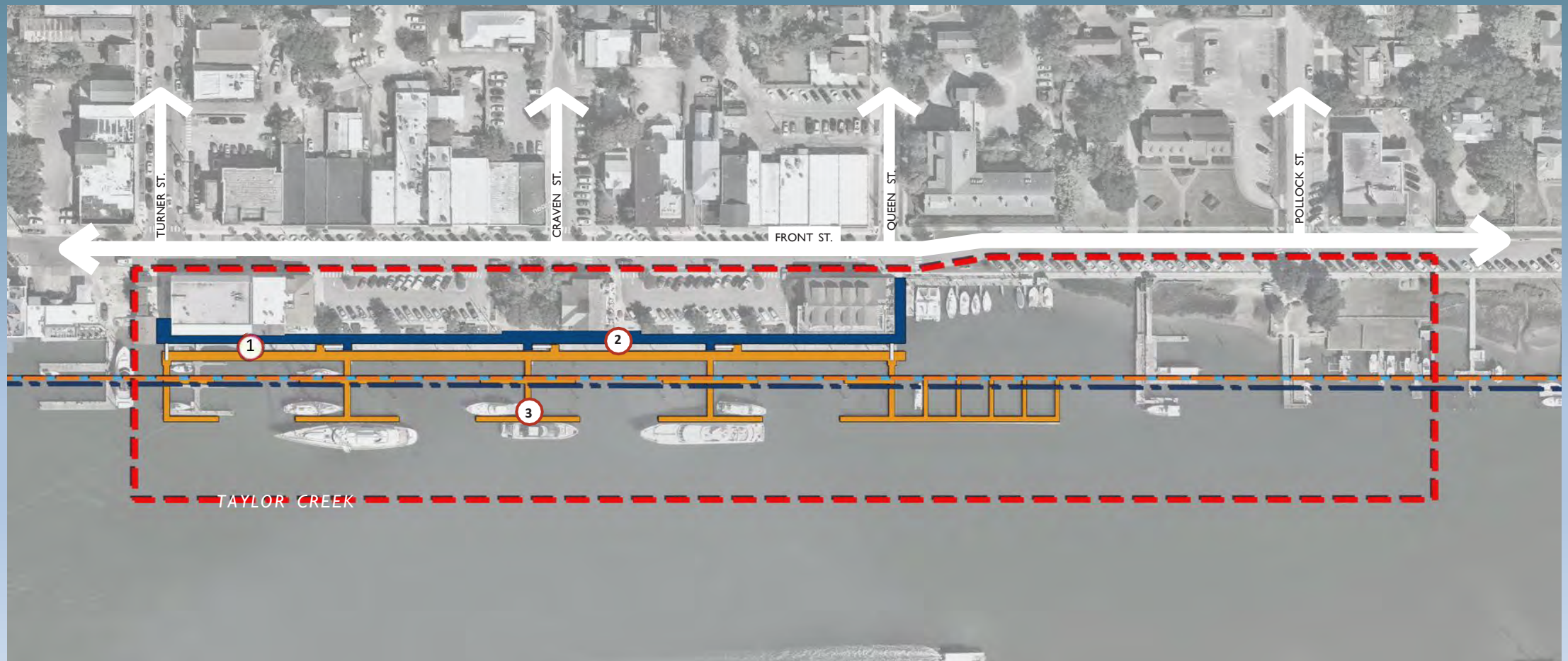
- **333 Participants**
- **91%** indicated they were supportive of making necessary waterfront upgrades
- **64%** indicated the Town should pay for the improvements via dockage fees, concessionaire payments & grants

Additional survey results included in the Master Plan.

THE COMMITTEE UNANIMOUSLY REACHED CONSENSUS ON ALL 10 MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

1. NECESSARY IMPROVEMENTS (3)
2. DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS (7)

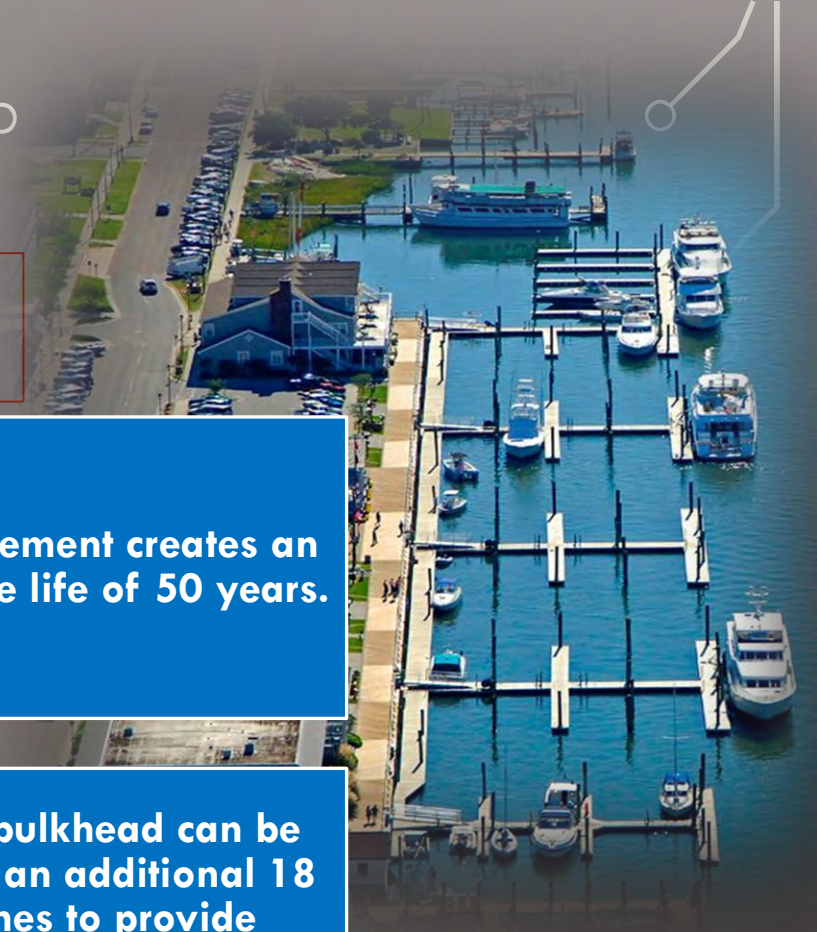
Necessary Improvements Concept Plan



RECOMMENDATION #1

NECESSARY IMPROVEMENTS

Replace bulkhead by building immediately in front of the existing structure. This will reduce the berth of bulkhead slips by approximately 5'.



Moffatt & Nichol's engineering assessment concluded the bulkhead was at the end of its useful life.

Replacement creates an average life of 50 years.

Cost decreases 54% per useful life year when replacing vs. repairing.

$190,000 to $87,924

New bulkhead can be raised an additional 18 inches to provide resilience to rising water levels.

91% of survey respondents indicated support for making necessary improvements.

RECOMMENDATION #2

NECESSARY IMPROVEMENTS

Replace the current boardwalk with premium materials.

Moffatt &Nichol's engineering assessment concluded the boardwalk was at the end of its useful life.

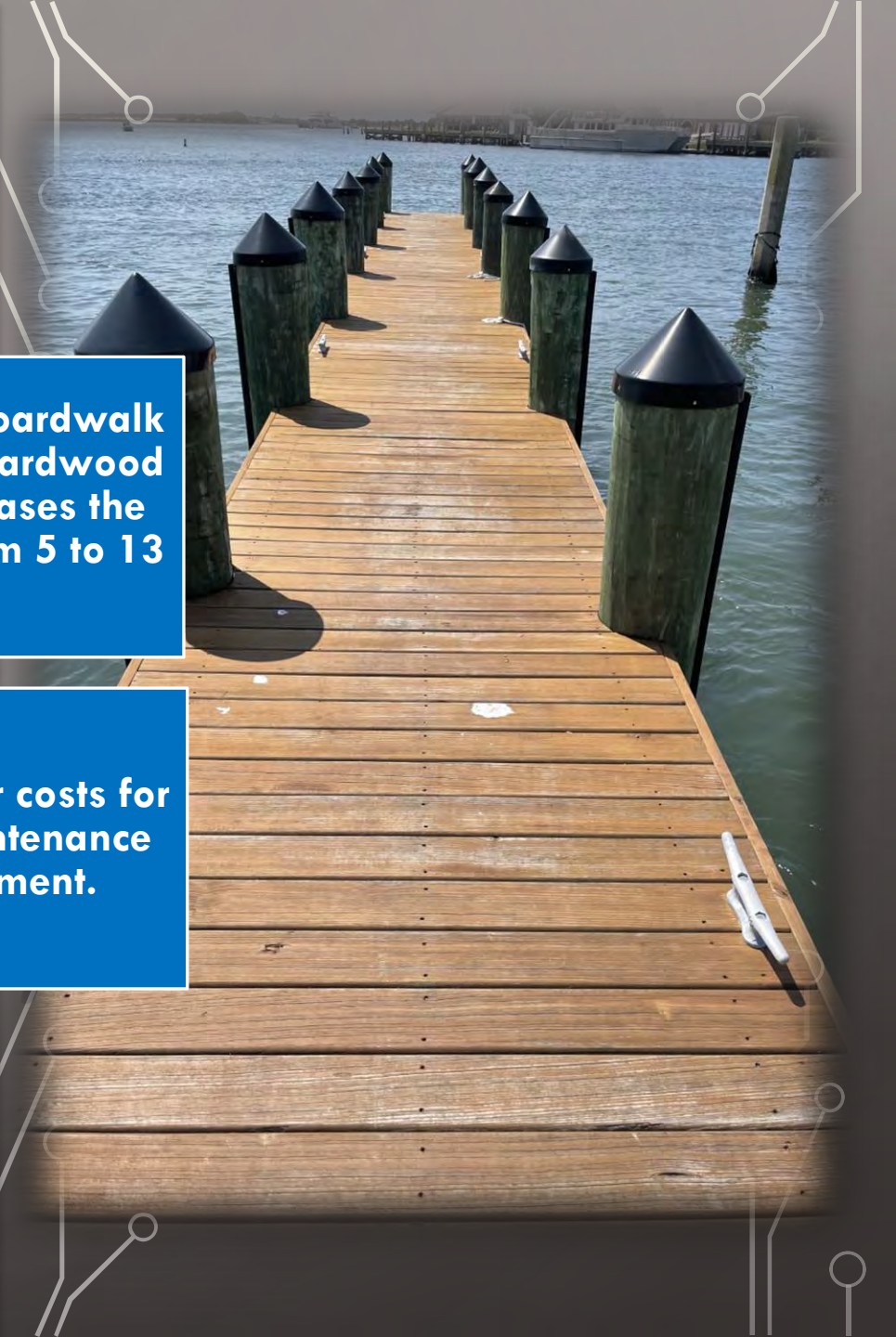
Replacing the boardwalk with premium hardwood materials increases the average life from 5 to 13 years.

Cost decreases 54% per useful life year by using premium materials.

$323,502 to $149,309

Decreased labor costs for long-term maintenance and replacement.

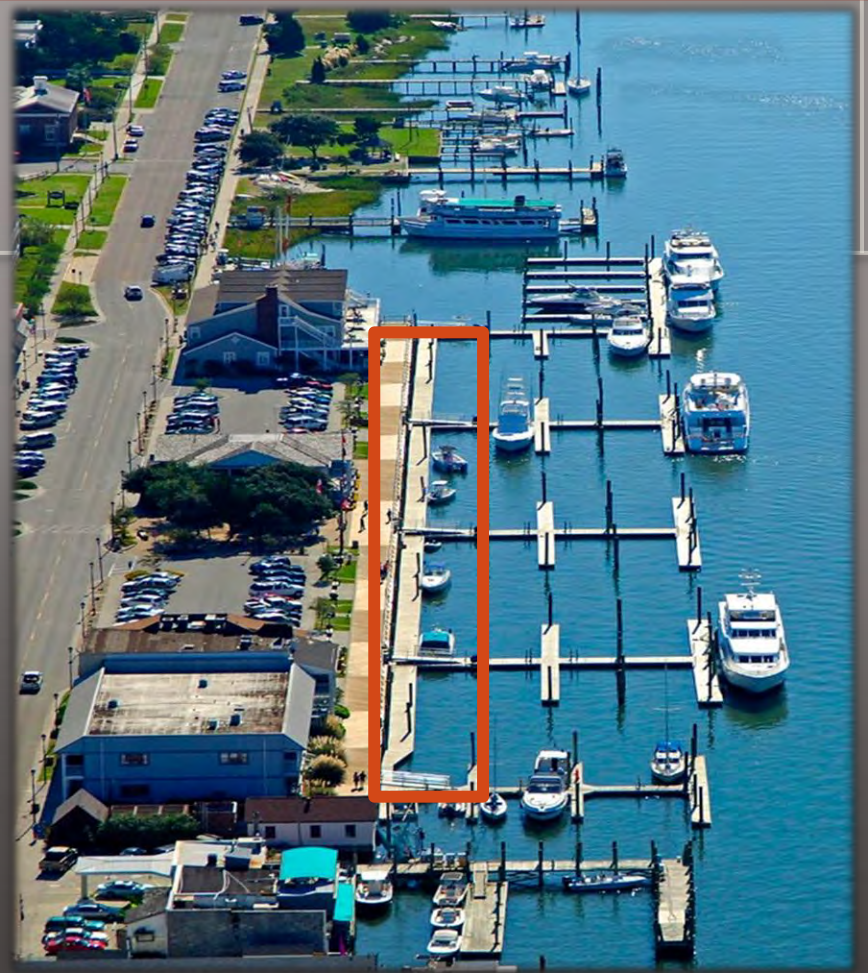
90% of survey respondents indicated support for making necessary improvements.



RECOMMENDATION #3

NECESSARY IMPROVEMENTS

Modify the layout of primary docks to facilitate rerouting of marine utilities, improve slip access and meet industry guidelines WITHOUT taking any additional Public Trust Waters. Current bulkhead slips to be reduced by 5' from 18' to 13' should be offered to day boaters only.



Material increase in number of slips available for day boaters

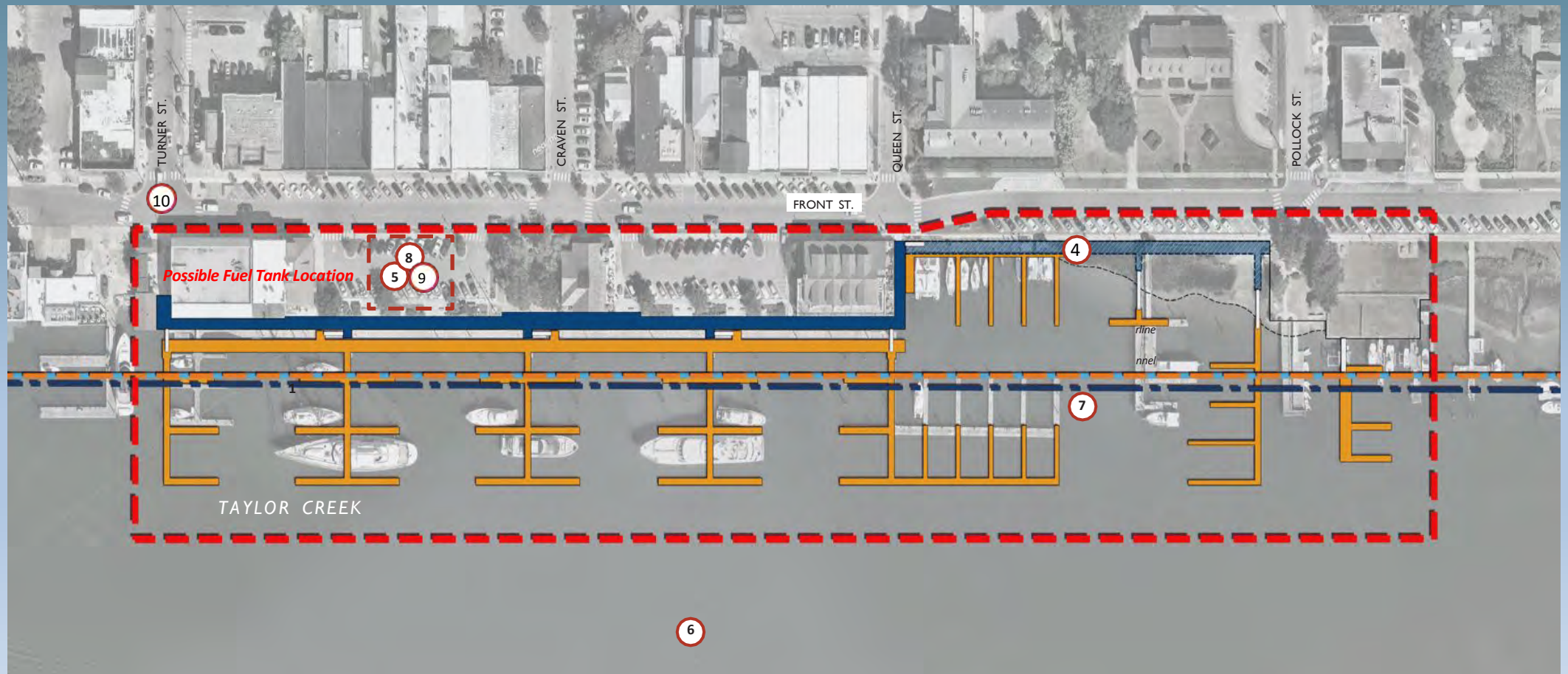
There is 100% certainty that day boaters will frequent town businesses

32% of respondents were <u>against</u> increasing the number of slips

NECESSARY IMPROVEMENTS COST SUMMARY

Bulkhead Replacement	$4,400,000
Boardwalk Replacement	$1,940,000
Dock Infrastructure Replacement	$3,500,000
Subtotal of Necessary Improvements:	$9,840,000

Desired Improvements Concept Plan



RECOMMENDATION #4

DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS

Extend the current boardwalk east to Grayden Paul Park.

Diverts foot traffic off the public sidewalk on Front Street and onto the boardwalk.

Allow visitors to traverse the entirety of the Beaufort Docks' waterfront.

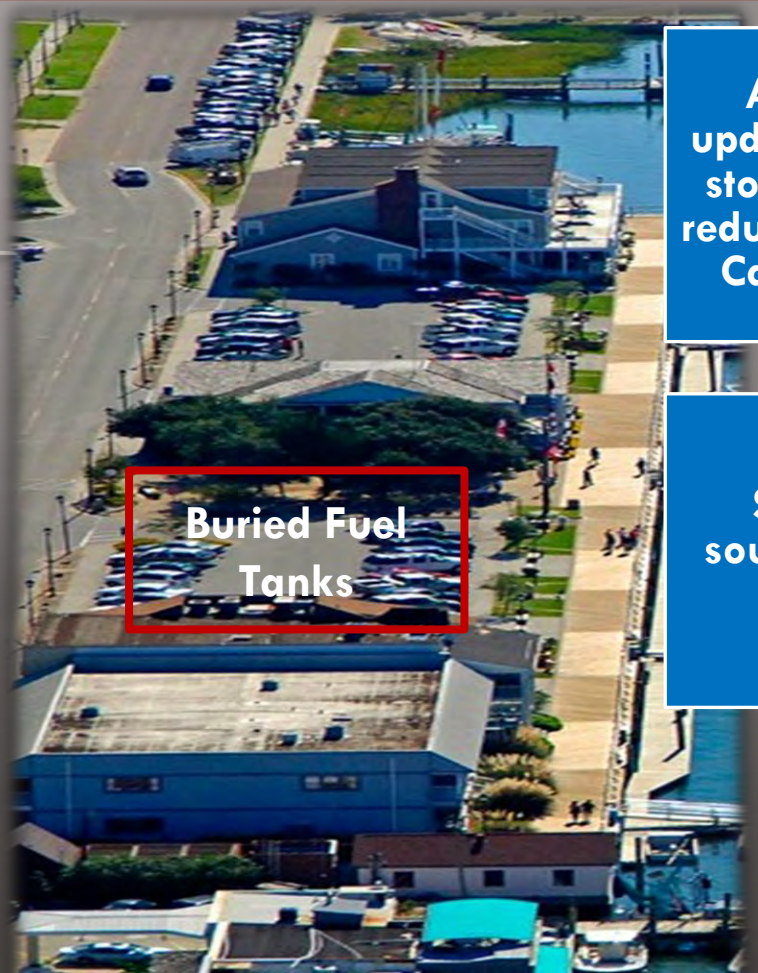
Potential to allow for concessionaire ticketing to face the boardwalk and clear queuing traffic off the public sidewalks.

27% of survey respondents indicated support for extending the boardwalk (2nd highest).

RECOMMENDATION #5

DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS

Build new fuel storage facility under the west parking lot on Front Street with loading zones. The docks should continue to offer in-slip diesel fueling.



Allows the Town to update 40+ year old fuel storage technology and reduce seepage risk to the Castle Hayne Aquifer.

Mitigates the risk to the Beaufort Docks enterprise of potential discontinuation of the current fuel storage on privately owned property.

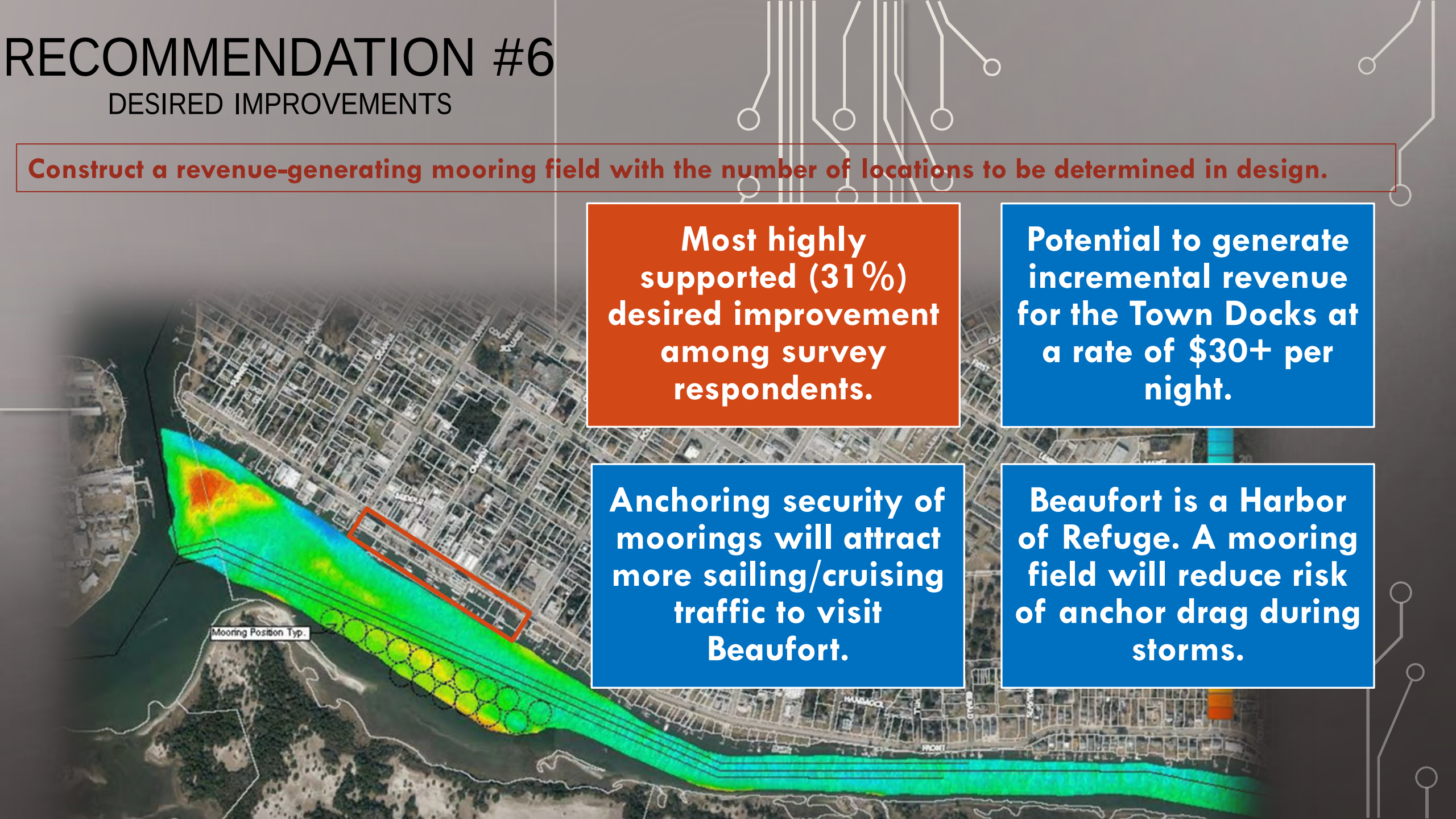
Secures future fuel sources for the Beaufort Docks.

Fuel sales are an important economic variable in the overall financial performance of the Beaufort Docks.

RECOMMENDATION #6

DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS

Construct a revenue-generating mooring field with the number of locations to be determined in design.



Most highly supported (31%) desired improvement among survey respondents.

Potential to generate incremental revenue for the Town Docks at a rate of $30+ per night.

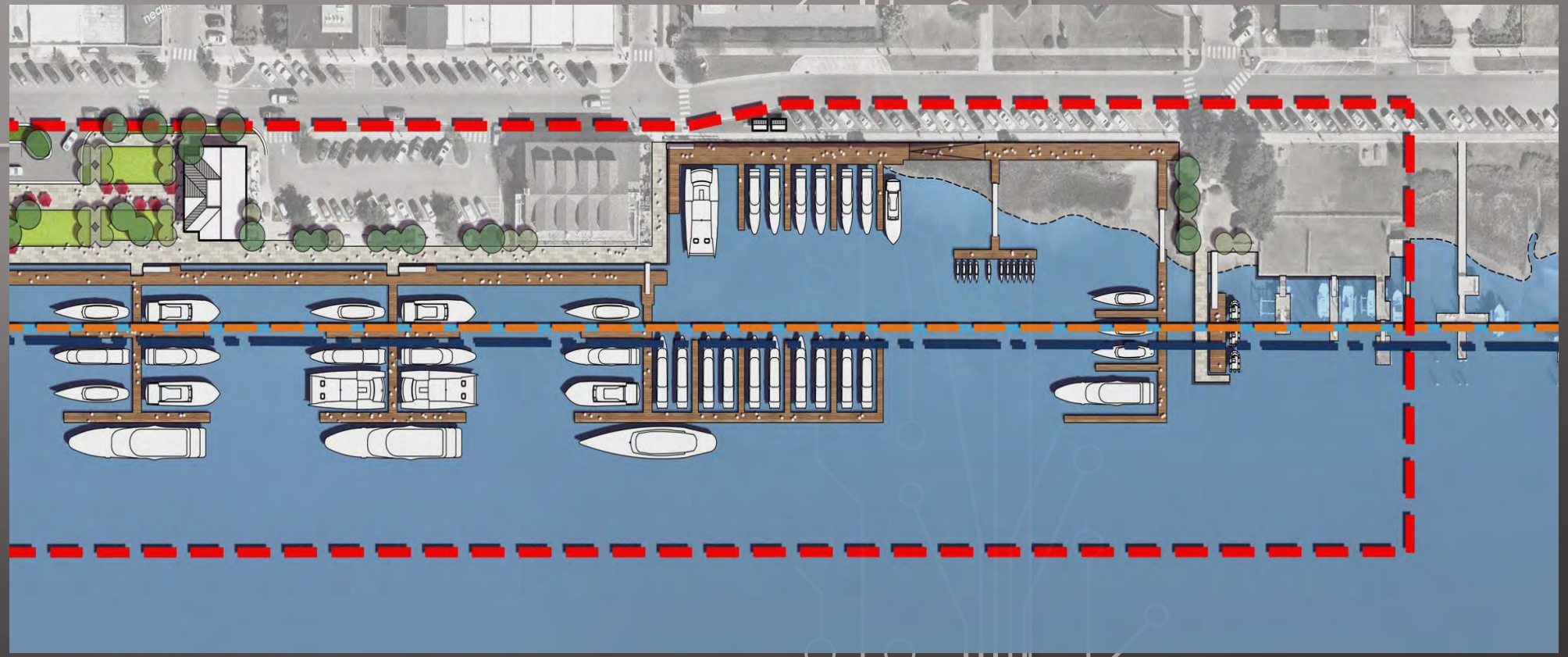
Anchoring security of moorings will attract more sailing/cruising traffic to visit Beaufort.

Beaufort is a Harbor of Refuge. A mooring field will reduce risk of anchor drag during storms.

RECOMMENDATION #7

DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS

Reconfigure East Basin to create dinghy dock capacity for mooring field, improve hand-powered watercraft access and floating dock access for watercraft services.
If the Town elects not to renew its lease with the National Park Service, then increased dock space should be allocated to additional day and transient boating.



RECOMMENDATION #7 CONTINUED

DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS

Increases capacity and creates a welcoming environment for day boaters. Potential to increase the amount of foot traffic in Town and create revenue for Town merchants.

If a mooring field is built, the demand for easy access to town from dingy docks will increase.

The survey showed many residents (14%) desire increased and better access to the waterfront. The proposed reconfiguration will enhance public access.

RECOMMENDATION #8

DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS

Design and construct a new Harbor Center to provide improved capacity of public restrooms, showers, laundromat and to house a necessary dock master station.

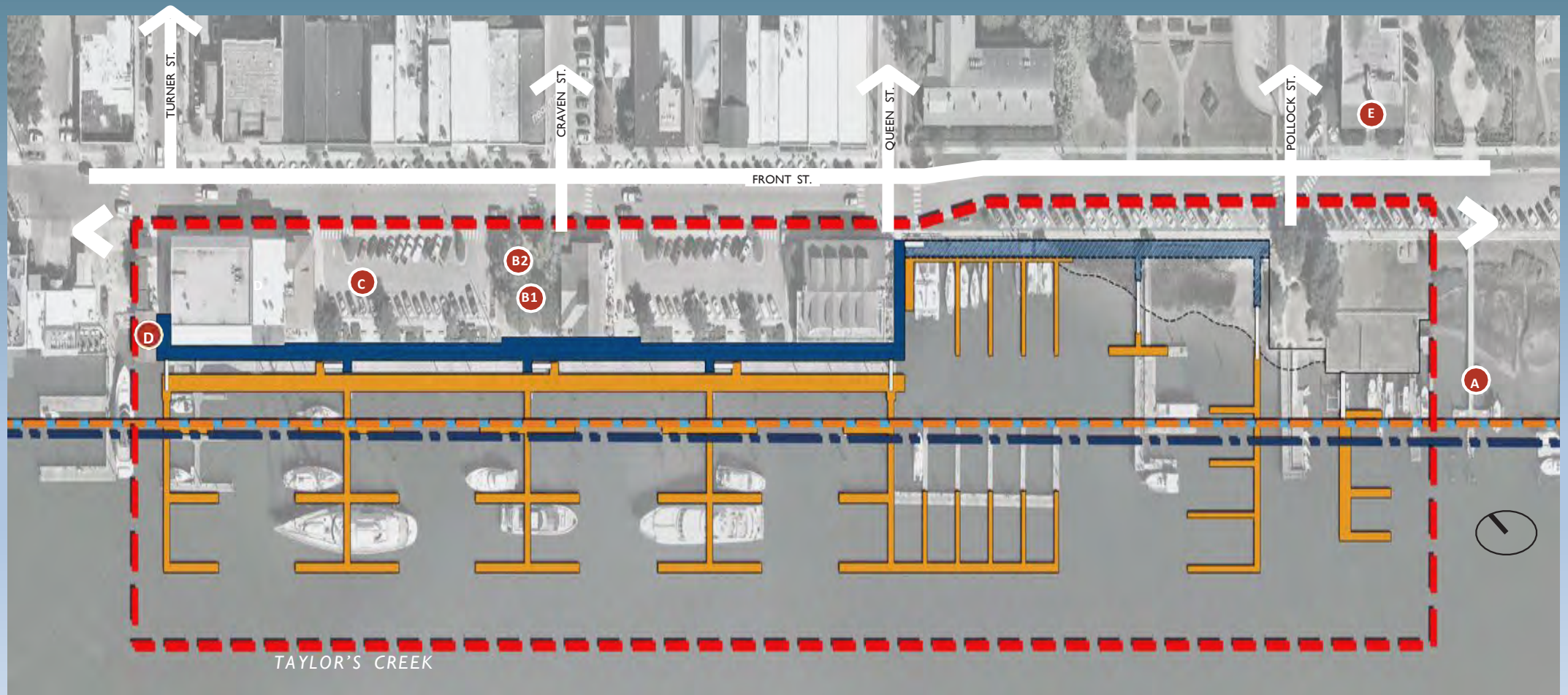
Visitation is increasing annually; the four existing public restroom facilities are inundated. To remain an attractive destination, this public facility capacity must be increased.

If mooring field is constructed, the expectation for a high-quality shower & laundromat facility increases.

Of survey respondents (66%) indicated they were supportive of building a Harbor Center.

A dockmaster office is essential to running the Town Docks & a potential mooring field. A location must be secured prior to 12.31.24 unless the current lease is extended.

Locations Considered for Harbor Center



7. With everything you know today about Beaufort's waterfront, which location:

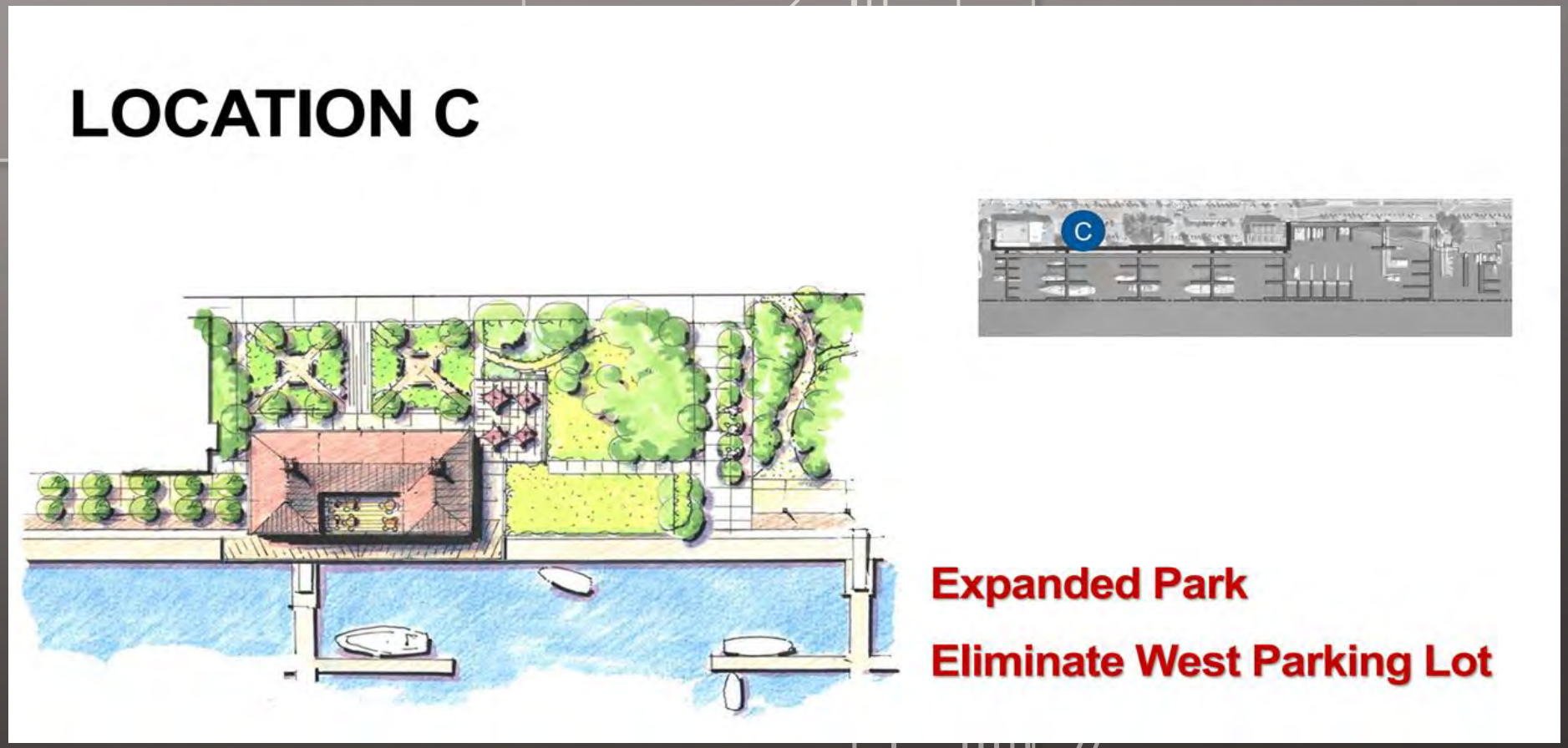
	A	B1	B2	C	D	A+D	E	No opinion
Affords the best access and reception area for boaters?	7% A	4% B1	11% B2	42% C	9% D	7% A+D	10% E	9% No opinion
Provides a location to allow for management of the waterfront and marina facilities?	4% A	7% B1	8% B2	41% C	12% D	7% A+D	11% E	9% No opinion
Presents the best opportunity to add value to surrounding uses?	9% A	3% B1	4% B2	42% C	10% D	5% A+D	12% E	15% No opinion
Minimizes impacts to downtown merchants and overall functions?	12% A	3% B1	3% B2	38% C	11% D	7% A+D	16% E	10% No opinion
Aligns closest with your vision for the waterfront?	7% A	4% B1	6% B2	43% C	10% D	8% A+D	11% E	10% No opinion

236 respondents

RECOMMENDATION #9

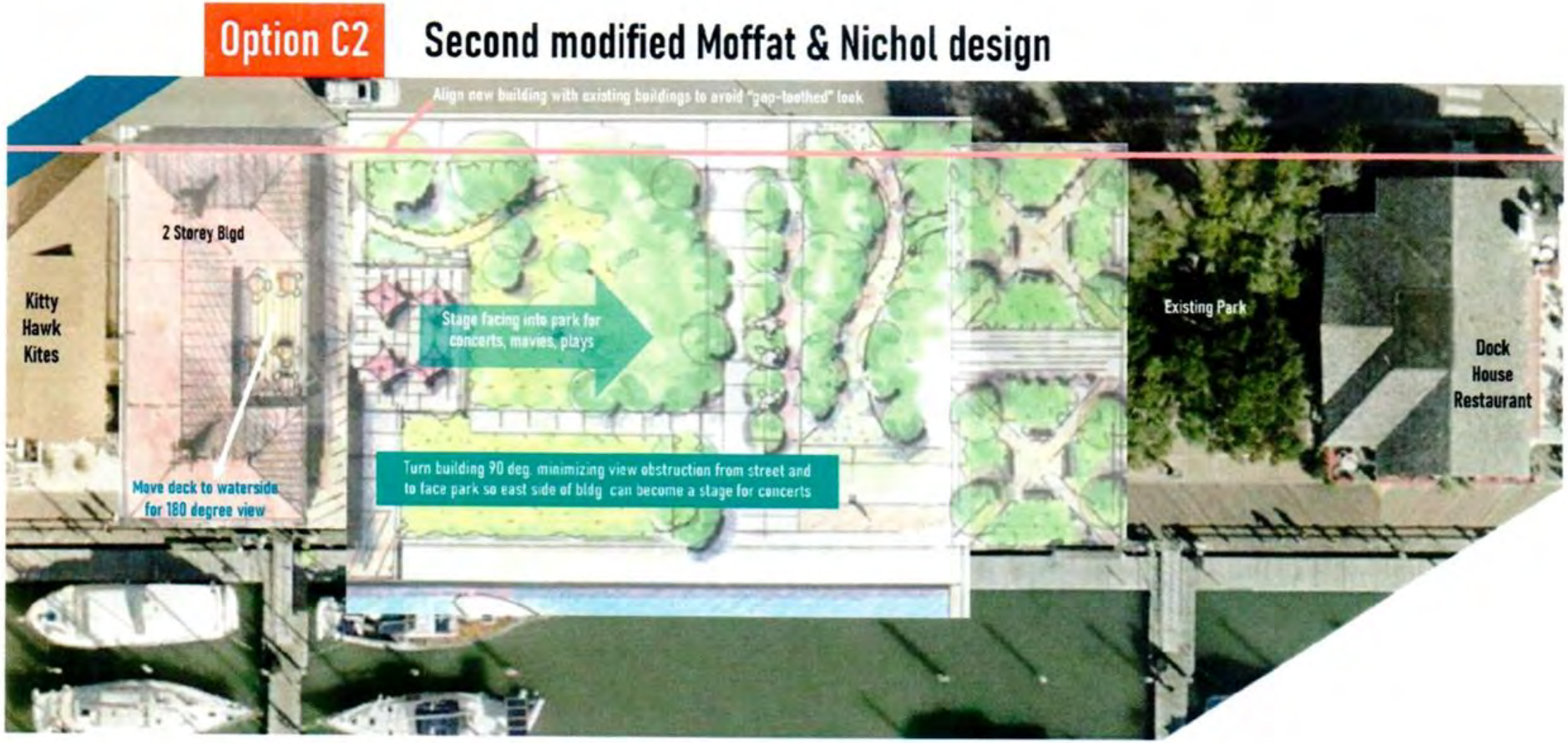
DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS

HWC recommends the west Front Street parking lot be converted into space to house Harbor Center. Sizable greenspace area on the east side of the parking lot can be seamlessly integrated with John Newton Park.



RECOMMENDATION #9 CONTINUED

DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS



RECOMMENDATION #9 CONTINUED

DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS

Dramatic increase in water-viewing vistas.

Centrally located with the Beaufort Docks footprint. Central location is important to the dockmaster.

Allows large greenspace to be built from the Harbor Center connecting to John Newton Park.

RECOMMENDATION #10

DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS

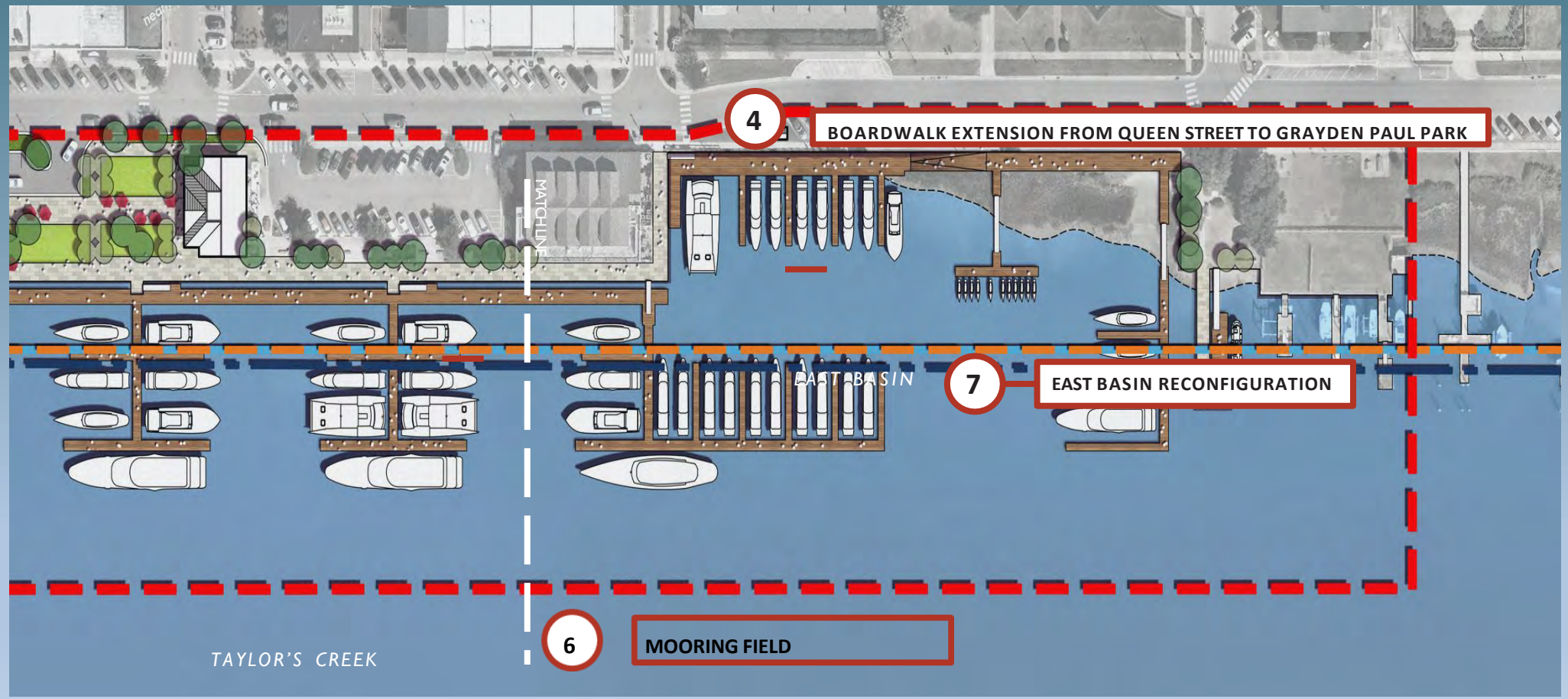
Redesign eyesore western dock entrance at the intersection of Turner and Front Streets

- **Tear down current bathrooms, bathhouse and storage facilities**
- **Mitigate sewer smell**
- **Design entrance overhang**
- **Create a water vista like Harborside Park**

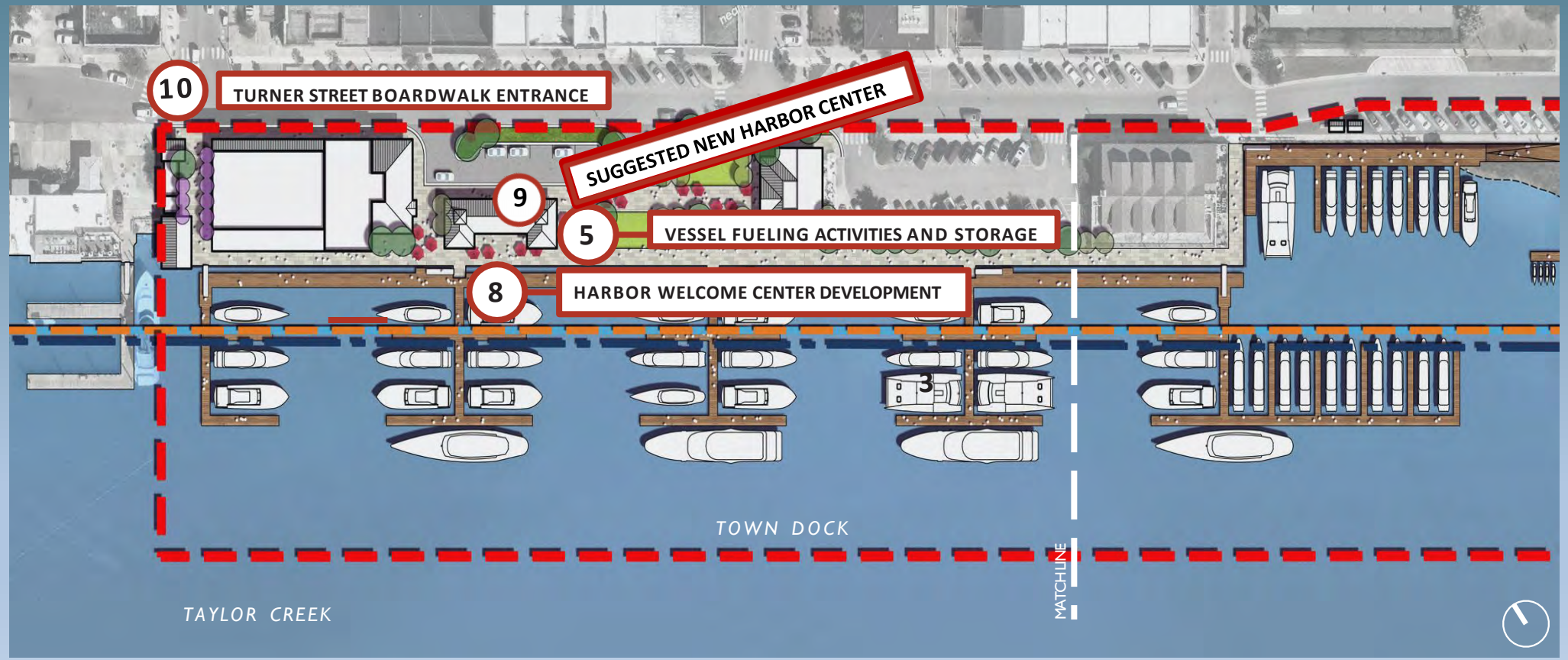
The western entrance is the first view of the Beaufort Waterfront visitors see as they approach the downtown district from Turner Street. It should be an inviting and open venue with impactful viewing vistas.

Photos above & below feature Southport, NC's entrance vista on Highway 211

Proposed Dock Design – East End

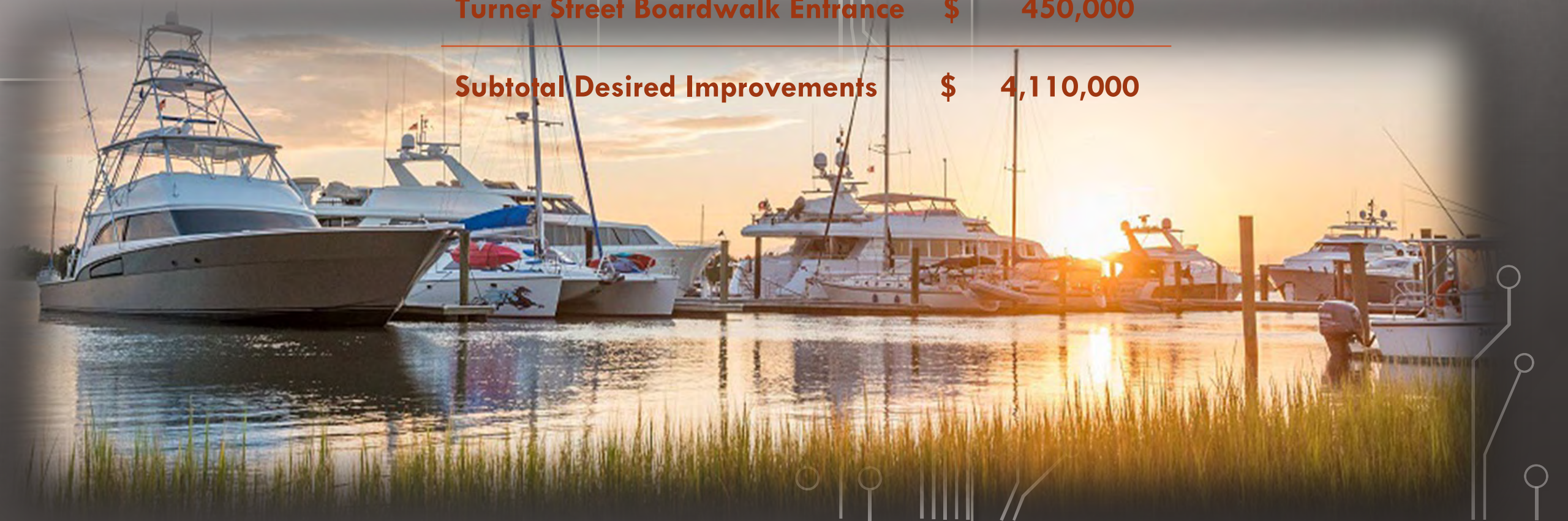


Proposed Dock Design – West End



DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS COST SUMMARY

Boardwalk Extension	$	650,000
East Basin Dock Reconfiguration	$	685,000
Vessel Fueling & Storage Tanks	$	575,000
Mooring Field	$	250,000
Harbor Center Construction	$	1,500,000
Turner Street Boardwalk Entrance	$	450,000
Subtotal Desired Improvements	$	4,110,000



TOTAL ALL-IN COST SUMMARY

Subtotal Necessary Improvement	$	9,840,000
Subtotal Desired Improvements	$	4,110,000
Soft Costs @15%	$	2,092,500
Contingency Reserve @ 30%	$	4,185,000
TOTAL ALL-IN COST	$	20,227,500

Financing/Dock Management

Option 1: Public Development

- Town seeks to finance Master Plan via federal/state grants AND private funding
- Grants likely cover 70% of cost ($14 million)
- Private funding (revenue bonds) cover 30% of cost ($6 million)
- Town needs to front 30% ($600,000) of architectural/engineering expense to submit applications
- Allows the Town to negotiate the highest annual lease rate OR optimize ongoing revenues from direct management
- No tax increase

Option 2: Private Public Partnership

- Town decides to lease docks
- Town stipulates in lease RFP that $20 million is to be spent to construct the Master Plan
- Ongoing annual lease is adjusted to account for this stipulation
- Stipulation will have a material impact on the annual lease rate.
- Town does not take on risk of soft costs to apply for funding.
- No tax increase.

Ongoing Projects

- Completion of annual linear footage counting project (February 2023)
- Development of financial proformas for dock operations to help determine market value on income basis
- Develop auction/RFP plan to determine market value of long-term Beaufort Docks lease (with and without stipulations)
- Research economic impacts of NPS lease
- Audit compliance with Navigable Waters Ordinance and recommend amendments

Questions