



**CITY OF BEAUFORT
WATERFRONT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA
1911 Boundary Street, Planning Conference Room, Beaufort, SC 29902
June 2, 2025 at 5:00 pm**

Meeting will be live streamed on the City of Beaufort's Facebook Page

STATEMENT OF MEDIA NOTIFICATION

In accordance with South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976, Section 30-4-80(d), as amended, all local media was duly notified of the time, date, place, and agenda of this meeting.

Please click the link below to join the Webinar

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84784247079?pwd=LQhF3V7TEAeH8uawLJg2vkAV1qbpne.1>

Passcode:855113 +13126266799 Webinar ID: 847 8424 7079

- I. Call to Order and Introductions – City Manager, Scott Marshall**
- II. Election of Officers – City Manager**
 - A. Chair**
 - B. Vice Chair**
 - C. Other positions deemed necessary by Committee**
- III. Administrative Considerations**
 - A. Establish Meeting Schedule**
 - B. Record Keeping**
 - C. Other items as identified by the Committee**
- IV. Roles, Responsibilities, and Issues Overview – Deputy City Manager, JJ Sauvé**
- V. Executive Session**
 - A. Pursuant to Title 30, Chapter 4, Section (70)(a)(2) of the South Carolina Code of Law:
Discussion regarding active litigation and contract negotiations**
- VI. Adjourn**

Part I: Formation and Purpose of the Waterfront Park Advisory Committee

Welcome to the inaugural briefing of the Waterfront Park Advisory Committee for the City of Beaufort, South Carolina. This presentation will provide an overview of the committee's formation, purpose, and the strategic importance of the Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park to our community.

As we embark on this important journey together, we look forward to collaborative efforts that will ensure the park remains a vibrant centerpiece of Beaufort for generations to come.



Introduction to Waterfront Park

Community Hub

The Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park serves as Beaufort's central gathering place, hosting numerous festivals, concerts, and community events throughout the year. This iconic space attracts both locals and tourists, contributing significantly to the city's cultural identity.

The WAC represents a commitment to ensuring that this treasured public space continues to thrive while maintaining its historic character and meeting the evolving needs of our community.

Strategic Oversight

Recognizing the park's critical importance to Beaufort's social and economic fabric, the City has established the Waterfront Advisory Committee (WAC). This committee will provide dedicated guidance on development initiatives, maintenance priorities, and enhancement opportunities.

Background and Rationale



Request for Qualifications

In July 2024, the City issued an RFQ for consultant services to address platform issues at the park, marking the beginning of a formal assessment process. This step highlighted the need for expert guidance on structural concerns.



Community Engagement

Subsequent public forums and community surveys revealed strong interest in having citizen voices included in decisions affecting the park's future. Residents expressed desire for transparency and involvement.



City Leadership Response

City leadership acknowledged the importance of incorporating citizen perspectives in shaping the park's trajectory, leading to the decision to form a dedicated advisory committee with diverse representation.

Additional information can be found at cityofbeaufort.org, where meeting minutes and survey results are publicly available.



Committee Formation Process

Initial Call for Applications

In January 2025, City Council opened applications for the WAC, inviting qualified residents to contribute their expertise. The announcement generated significant interest, with over 30 applications received from citizens passionate about the park's future.

The detailed selection process ensured that committee members bring complementary skills and represent diverse community interests.

Interview Process

February and March 2025 saw a thorough two-round interview process. The first round focused on experience and qualifications, while the second emphasized diversity of perspective and specific expertise relevant to the park's needs.

Final Selection

By April 2025, after careful deliberation, the City Council finalized the committee membership, creating a balanced team with varied backgrounds, expertise, and connections to different stakeholder groups.

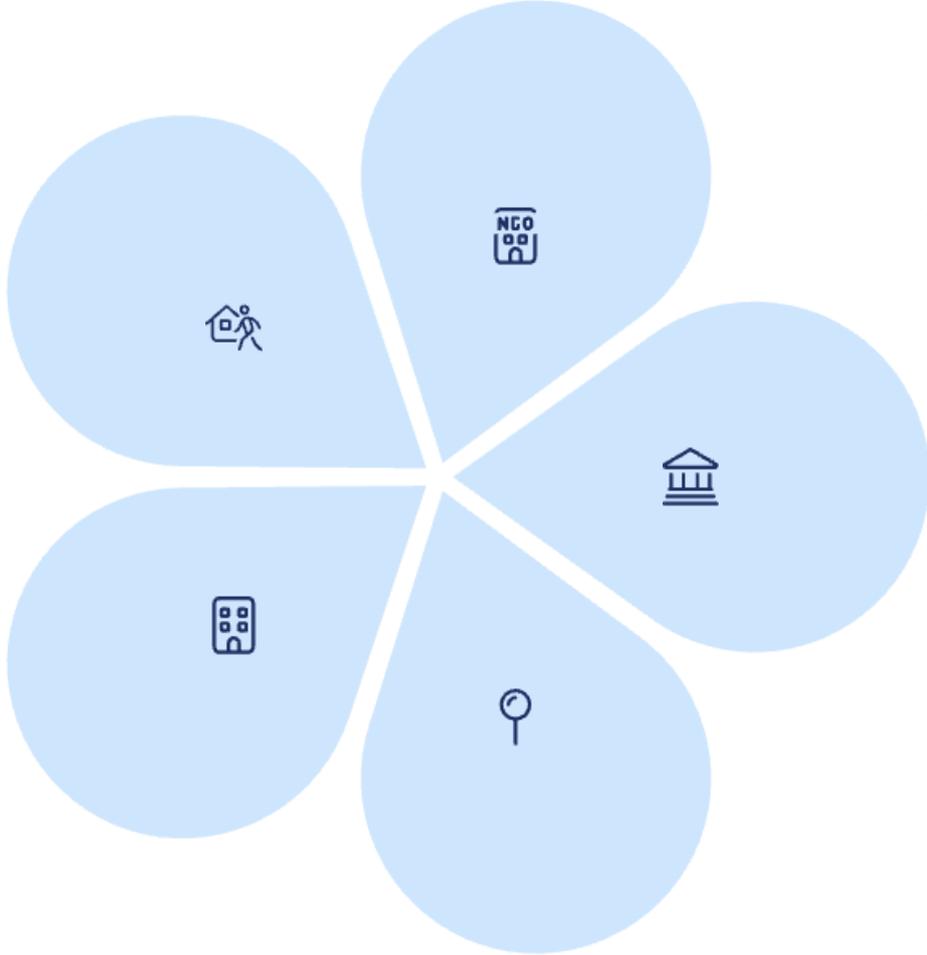
Committee Composition

Resident Representatives

Three full-time residents of Beaufort bring local perspective and community insights to the committee. These members were selected for their deep community connections and commitment to public service.

County Council

A Beaufort County Council member provides regional perspective and coordinates county-level resources and initiatives.



City Council Member

One City Council member serves as a direct liaison between the WPAC and City Council, ensuring alignment with broader municipal priorities and facilitating efficient communication.

Historic District Review

A member from the Historic District Review Board contributes expertise on preservation considerations and maintaining the park's historic character.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission representative ensures coordination with city-wide development initiatives and comprehensive planning efforts.

This balanced composition ensures diverse viewpoints while maintaining manageable committee size.

Purpose and Responsibilities



Strategic Advisory Role

The committee will provide informed recommendations to City Council on pivotal decisions impacting Waterfront Park, serving as a dedicated think tank focused exclusively on the park's needs and opportunities.



Information Gathering

Members will collect and analyze data on current and prospective uses of the Downtown Marina and park facilities, including user demographics, maintenance requirements, and emerging opportunities.



Sustainability Focus

The WAC will prioritize recommendations that ensure the park's long-term viability, balancing immediate needs with preservation of this essential resource for future generations of Beaufort residents.

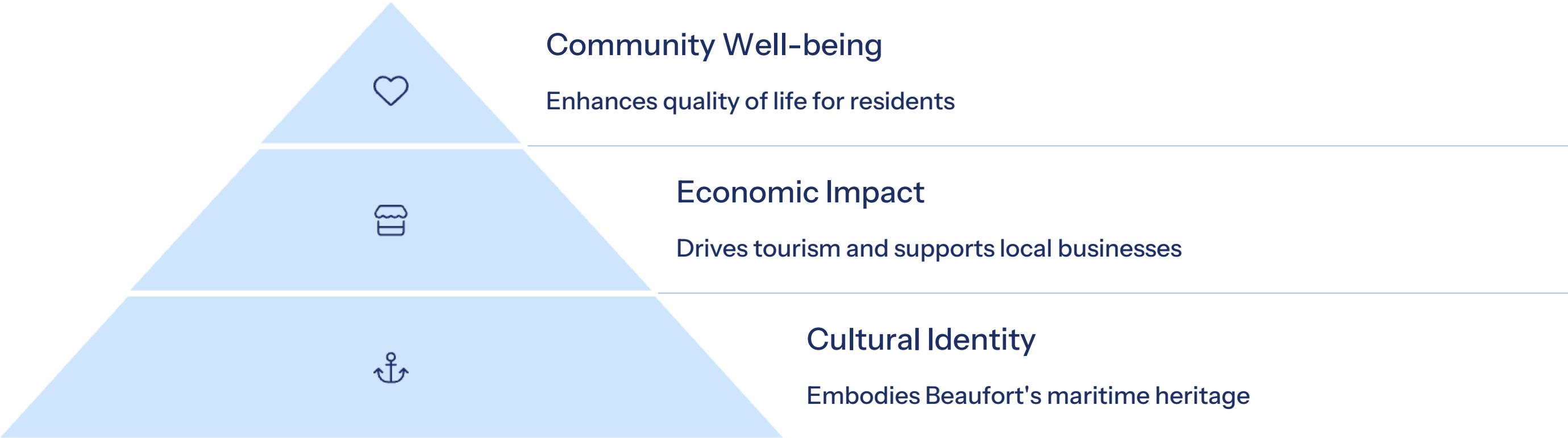


Community Liaison

Committee members will serve as conduits for community input, maintaining open channels of communication between citizens, businesses, and city government regarding park-related matters.

The committee's work will be guided by transparency and accessibility.

Strategic Importance



The Henry C. Chambers Waterfront Park represents far more than just a public space—it's a cornerstone of Beaufort's identity and economy. Local businesses report up to 40% increases in revenue during park events, while property values near the waterfront have appreciated at twice the city average over the past decade.

The park's signature events draw thousands of visitors annually, generating substantial hospitality tax revenue that benefits the entire community. The WAC's guidance will be instrumental in maximizing these economic and cultural benefits while preserving the park's unique character.



Part II: Waterfront Park Marina Infrastructure Assessment & History

This presentation provides an overview of the structural assessment, engineering proposals, and advisory committee considerations for the Waterfront Park Marina infrastructure.

Timeline of Key Events





Structural Assessment Findings

Eastern Platform

570 piles inspected with extensive spalling and deterioration

Western Seawall

Multiple past repairs with varying success

Other Issues

Shoaling and inaccessible pile sections complicate assessment

Phase 1A Engineering Work



As-Built Survey

Complete hydrographic mapping of structures



Utility Location

Identify all subsurface utilities



Geotechnical Analysis

Soil borings to determine foundation conditions



Environmental Review

Cultural and environmental impact assessment



Engineering Recommendations



Marina Management Overview



Safe Harbor Operation

Lease agreement for marina management



Public Dockage

Daily, monthly, and long-term slip options

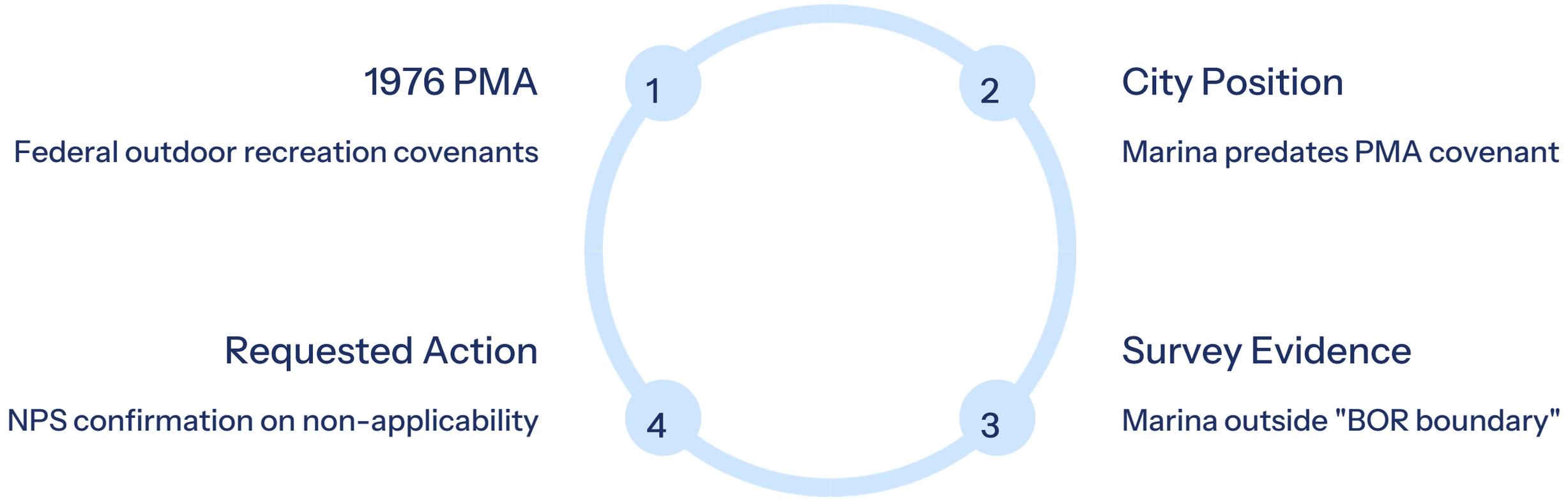


Community Access

Hosts expedition companies and community events



Federal Land Use Restrictions





Marina Fees & Public Access

Rate Comparison

Comparable or lower than similar marinas

Membership

No Safe Harbor membership required for slip rental

Public Activities

Kayaking, community events, boat ramp access

Compliance

Ongoing efforts to meet federal expectations

Committee Tasks Ahead

Review Engineering Options

Assess repair vs. replacement alternatives

Public Access Policies

Ensure continued community use of waterfront

Land Use Considerations

Evaluate programming changes if needed

Recommend Solutions

Provide Council with actionable guidance





Next Steps

1 Monitor Engineering Progress
Track Phase 1A completion milestones

2 NPS Confirmation
Await determination on PMA scope

3 Work Sessions
Convene to assess and discuss options

4 Recommendation Development
Target October 1 for final initial advisory report



Next Steps Cont.



Regular Meetings

The WAC will convene monthly or as needed to review ongoing projects, discuss emerging issues, and formulate recommendations. Special sessions may be called for time-sensitive matters requiring immediate attention.



Stakeholder Engagement

The committee will implement a comprehensive outreach strategy, including public forums, surveys, and targeted consultations with key stakeholders such as marina users, event organizers, and adjacent businesses.



Comprehensive Planning

The WAC will develop an integrated enhancement plan addressing infrastructure needs, programming opportunities, and potential sustainable funding mechanisms for the park's ongoing maintenance.

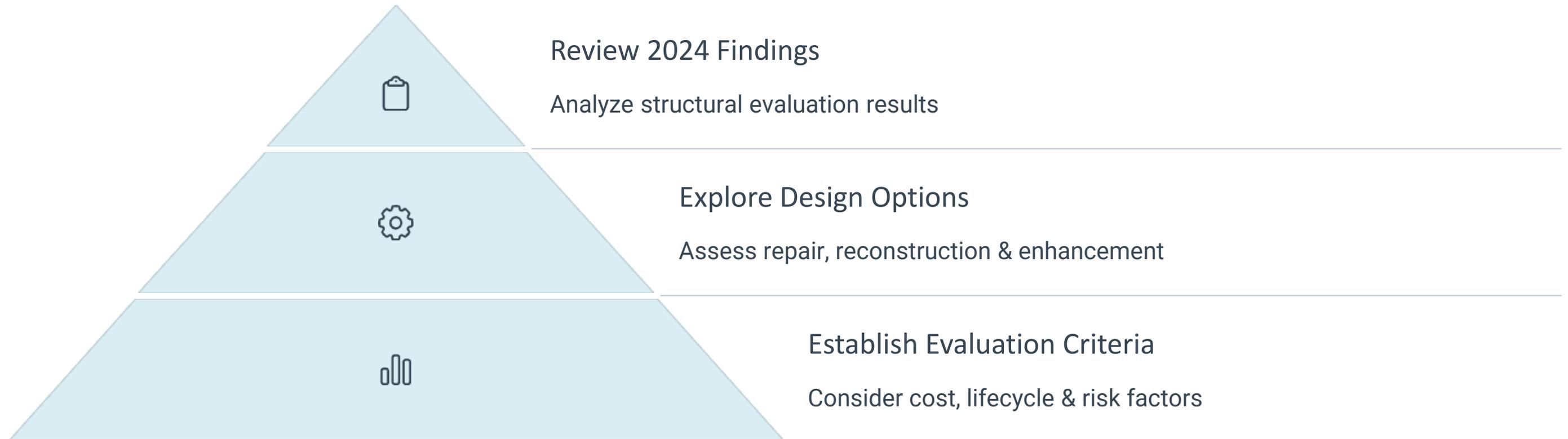
Each of these phases will include opportunities for public input and regular updates to City Council. The committee's progress will be documented and made accessible to ensure transparency throughout the process.



Part III: Council Directives and Reporting Timeline

This presentation provides an overview of the directives provided by City Council to the WAC and the reporting timeline for the initial review and status report.

Engineering Evaluation Overview



Our engineering evaluation begins with a thorough review of the 2024 Structural Evaluation findings and Phase 1A engineering studies. This foundation will inform our understanding of the current condition of the Relieving Platform and Seawall infrastructure.

Working closely with staff and consultants, we'll explore the full spectrum of potential design options, from basic repairs to complete reconstruction or enhanced redesigns. We'll then recommend comprehensive criteria for evaluating future phases, including cost considerations, lifecycle analysis, risk mitigation strategies, and potential permitting impacts.

Marina Operations Assessment

Lease Agreement Review

Evaluate the current Safe Harbor Marinas lease agreement to ensure alignment with public access goals and federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) obligations.

Identify any inconsistencies between commercial operations and community access requirements.

Public Benefit Enhancement

Discover opportunities to increase recreational access through the marina and develop strategic partnerships that amplify community benefits.

Assess current usage patterns and identify underutilized areas with potential for expanded public programming.

Policy Recommendations

Develop comprehensive policy recommendations that balance commercial viability with community interests within the marina area.

Create frameworks for sustainable operation that serve both business and public needs.

Public Access Opportunities



Enhancing public benefit requires a multifaceted approach that considers both physical access and programmatic opportunities. We'll identify specific locations where improved access can be created while maintaining necessary operational security for marina functions.

By developing strategic partnerships with recreational providers, educational institutions, and community organizations, we can expand the range of activities available to visitors while ensuring compliance with LWCF obligations.

Community & Stakeholder Engagement



Identify Key Stakeholders

Local businesses, residents, visitors, agencies



Gather Input

Conduct surveys, forums, interviews



Analyze Feedback

Identify patterns and priorities



Incorporate Findings

Integrate community perspectives

Meaningful community engagement is essential to the success of this project. We will solicit input from a diverse range of stakeholders including local business owners, residents, frequent visitors, and relevant state and federal agencies with jurisdiction or interest in the waterfront area.

Our engagement strategy will employ multiple methods to maximize participation, including public forums, targeted interviews, online surveys, and interactive workshops. These approaches will help identify community priorities and concerns while building support for the eventual recommendations.





Participation Enhancement Methods

Digital Engagement

Develop interactive online platforms for continuous feedback and updates. Include virtual reality visualizations of proposed changes to help stakeholders better understand potential impacts.

- Interactive website with feedback mechanisms
- Social media engagement campaigns
- Virtual town halls and webinars

In-Person Participation

Create multiple opportunities for face-to-face engagement at convenient times and locations. Ensure accessibility for all community members regardless of work schedules or mobility limitations.

- Pop-up information booths at the waterfront
- Neighborhood-based listening sessions
- Design charrettes with facilitated activities

Inclusive Outreach

Implement strategies to reach traditionally underrepresented groups and ensure diverse perspectives are included in the planning process.

- Multilingual materials and interpreters
- Partnerships with community organizations
- Targeted outreach to youth and seniors

Evaluation Criteria Development



Financial Considerations

Initial costs, long-term maintenance, funding sources



Lifecycle Analysis

Durability, maintenance requirements, replacement timelines



Risk Mitigation

Climate resilience, structural integrity, public safety



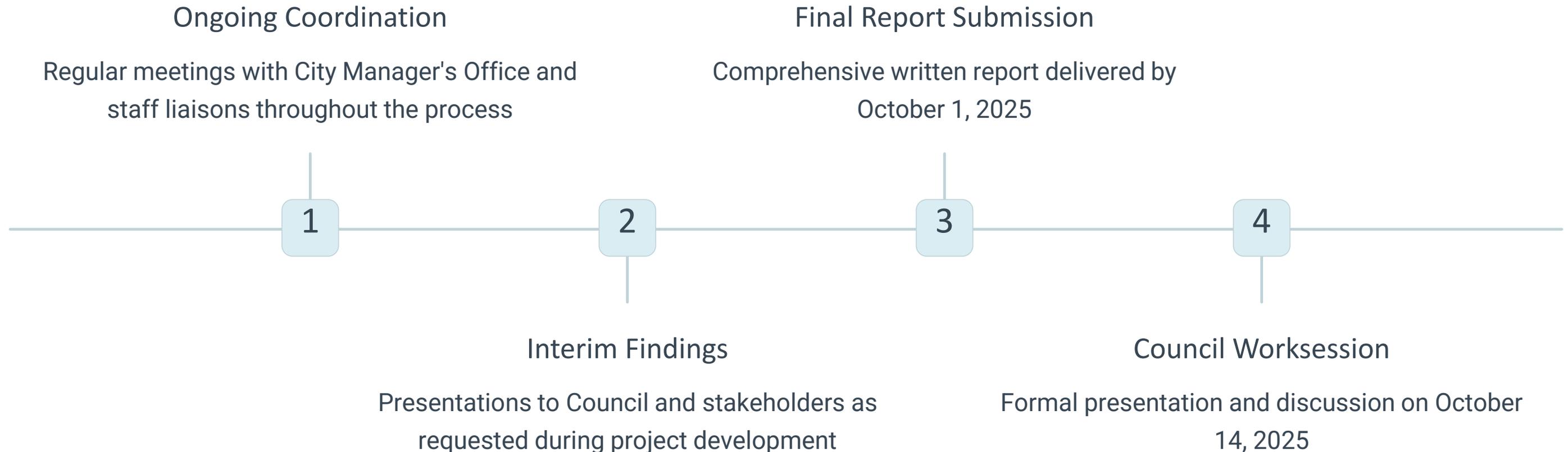
Regulatory Compliance

Permitting requirements, environmental impacts, legal obligations

Developing robust evaluation criteria is critical for assessing future phases of the waterfront project. We will create a comprehensive framework that balances immediate needs with long-term sustainability and resilience considerations.

Our approach will include detailed cost analyses that account for both initial construction expenses and ongoing maintenance requirements. We'll also evaluate options based on their expected lifespan, ability to withstand climate impacts, and alignment with regulatory requirements from local, state, and federal agencies.

Reporting Timeline & Next Steps



Our work will culminate in a comprehensive written report addressing all directives, to be submitted to City Council no later than October 1, 2025. This timeline ensures adequate review before the scheduled Council Worksession on October 14, 2025.

Throughout the process, we will maintain close coordination with the City Manager's Office and designated staff liaisons. We stand ready to present interim findings as requested, ensuring that Council remains informed of our progress and emerging recommendations.

Conclusion

Proactive Planning

The establishment of the WAC represents a forward-thinking approach to park management, positioning Beaufort to address challenges before they become crises and to seize opportunities for enhancement.

Collaborative Approach

By bringing together diverse expertise and perspectives, the committee creates a framework for inclusive decision-making that reflects the needs and aspirations of the entire community.

Lasting Legacy

Through thoughtful stewardship and strategic planning, the WAC will help ensure that this beloved public space continues to serve as Beaufort's living room for generations to come.

As we embark on this important work together, we reaffirm our commitment to preserving what makes Waterfront Park special while embracing opportunities to make it even better. The park's future depends on our collective wisdom and dedication to this community treasure.

Questions and Discussion



Initial Clarification

Address immediate questions about the committee's scope and process



Idea Sharing

Capture preliminary suggestions and concerns from committee members



Action Items

Identify follow-up tasks and responsibilities before next meeting

We now invite committee members and attendees to share their questions, insights, and initial thoughts. This discussion will help shape our agenda for future meetings and ensure we're addressing the most pressing concerns for the Waterfront Park.

Please identify yourself when speaking and keep comments concise to allow everyone an opportunity to participate. We'll document all questions and suggestions for follow-up, even those we cannot address fully today.



Part IV: Executive Session

At this time, the WAC will enter into Executive Session to receive confidential legal advice from the City Attorney regarding ongoing litigation and potential contract negotiations.