

## **Director's Report and Recommendation**

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### **Maritime Academy Amendment**

#### **Proposal**

The Department of Planning and Development (DPD) proposes to amend the Land Use Code, Section 23.50.012 (Chart A, permitted and prohibited uses), to allow water-dependent or water-related research and education facilities of colleges and universities in the Ballard/Interbay Northend Manufacturing & Industrial Center (BINMIC).

#### **Background**

Water-dependant or water-related research and education facilities of colleges and universities offer primarily vocational programs that prepare students for a career in the maritime industry. Typical programs offer courses in navigation, vessel handling, seamanship, design, operation and maintenance of deck equipment, marine propulsion plants or associated equipment. Programs include significant proportions of on-vessel training and time spent on water. These floating classrooms are integral to a hands-on learning experience. Programs often include at-sea internships on commercial vessels.

The City of Seattle, as a major port and marine-industry hub, is an ideal city to learn water-related or water-dependant vocational trades. Maritime training programs are in high demand since they lead to family-wage jobs, frequently in local industrial businesses. Local industrial businesses depend on access to the pool of highly-trained workforce generated by these programs, establishing a cycle of education, employment and industry. The current economic slowdown has brought these jobs and inter-relationships into sharper focus. Maritime industrial businesses and highly skilled workers play a key role in the region's long-term economic health and recovery.

State Maritime Academies offer comprehensive training programs but there are only six overall in the country, and only one on the west coast, in Vallejo, California. Given the growing demand for the programs, smaller maritime training facilities often partner with community colleges to provide the kind of comprehensive curriculum offered in larger State Maritime Academies. The partnership allows these small programs to provide students with opportunities to combine training in specialized programs required for positions aboard ships, with essential business or management skills needed to be successful in the world of commercial shipping.

The Seattle Maritime Academy (SMA) is located in Ballard, on a 1.2-acre site bordering the Lake Washington Ship Canal and adjacent to the northeast abutment of the Ballard Bridge. The site is zoned General Industrial 1 (IG1) and a portion of the site falls within the Urban Industrial (UI) shoreline designation.

The SMA is a division of Seattle Central Community College (SCCC) and accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges and the U.S. Coast Guard and supported by the U.S. Maritime Administration. For students, SMA's appeal lies in its unique geographical assets of waterfront infrastructure on fresh water coupled with access to the ocean. The SMA provides vocational education, technical training and licensure preparation tailored to the needs of the

maritime industry. At the moment, the level and scope of training offered is directed at entry-level jobs in the commercial fishing, merchant marine and workboat sectors of the industry.

SMA graduates work in a variety of jobs within the maritime industry. Many remain in the Pacific Northwest, but graduates work throughout the country. Examples of jobs held by SMA graduates include positions with the following: Washington State Ferries, Alaska Marine Highway Systems, ConocoPhillips/Polar Tankers, Chevron Tankers, Crowley Marine, Foss Towing, Western Pioneer Towing, NOAA, University of Washington, M/V THOMAS G. THOMPSON, and Military Sealift Command.

SMA's current facilities in the BINMIC date from 1987 and are inadequate to meet the increasing demand for training, US Coast Guard certifications and licensing, as well as changes in the teaching environment. The proposed amendment would allow new facilities to be built on SMA's current site that can accommodate more students as well as upgrade technical facilities (refrigeration, simulation and navigation labs) to modern industry standards.

### **Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies**

The proposed amendment is consistent with the following Comprehensive Plan policies and goals:

#### Land Use Element

**LUG25** Promote high-value-added economic development by supporting growth in the industrial and manufacturing employment base

#### Economic Development Element

**EDG6** Develop a highly trained and well educated local work force that effectively competes for meaningful and productive employment earns a living wage and meets the needs of business.

**ED15** Preserve and support continued use of suitable shoreline areas for water dependent and related businesses involved in ship-building and repair, fisheries, tug and barge, provisioning and the cruise-ship industries.

#### Neighborhood Plan Element

**BI-P10** Support efforts to locate and attract appropriately skilled workers, particularly from adjacent neighborhoods to fill family-wage jobs in the BINMIC

**BI-P11** Support efforts to provide an educated and skilled labor work force for BINMIC businesses

**BI-P20** Support efforts to measure, encourage, and promote the significant role of the maritime and fishing industries

#### Human Development Element

**HD19** Work with community colleges, universities and other institutions of higher learning to promote life-long learning opportunities for community members and encourage the broadest possible use of libraries, community centers, schools, and other existing facilities throughout the city, focusing on development of these resources in urban villages areas.

### **Analysis**

Most of the land in the vicinity of the existing Maritime Academy is zoned General Industrial 1 and 2 (IG1 and IG2). In these zones in BINMIC, vocational schools are permitted uses. Colleges or universities (including major institutions) are permitted uses only in buildings that have existed since October 5, 1987.

In addition to the underlying, industrial zoning, the Shoreline Master Program (SMP) applies in IG1 and IG2 zones in the BINMIC. All of the land zoned IG1 or IG2 are located within the Urban Industrial (UI) or Urban Maritime (UM) shoreline environments. Water-dependent or water-related research and education facilities of colleges and universities, as well as water-dependent or water-related colleges, institutes for advanced study and vocational schools are permitted outright on waterfront lots in both the UI and UM shoreline environments, as either principal or accessory uses (SMC 23.60.840 and SMC 23.60.720).

Although the definition of ‘college’ and ‘university’ include a number of institutional uses, only community colleges are anticipated to partner with maritime programs to offer this type of specialized vocational training. There is only the one, existing maritime program. Given the specialized nature of the program and its locational demands, new institutions of this type, beyond the Maritime Academy, are not anticipated in the BINMIC.

### **Recommendation**

These proposed amendments to Section 23.50.012, would allow qualified educational institutions such as the SMA to build new structures or modify existing buildings to provide modern facilities necessary to train a skilled workforce. Allowing water-dependent or water-related research and education facilities is consistent with current code provisions allowing vocational schools in IG1 and IG2 zones in the BINMIC. Allowing additional educational and vocational uses can support industrial businesses by providing opportunities for maritime industrial workforce training and education, while minimizing impacts on existing industrial uses in the BINMIC. DPD recommends adoption of this proposal.