Explore the Riverfront District

The City of Grand Haven’s Historic Conservation District Commission invites you to take a step back in time as you explore the Riverfront District. Along your journey you will become acquainted with the area bound on the south by Jackson Street and Harbor Drive, on the north by the Grand River and the south channel, on the east by Second Street, and on the west by the end of the south pier head. Many of the railroad and shipping associated industries were located in this district.

Today, the district contains many of today’s municipal parks, retail shops, Waterfront Stadium, the Musical Fountain and the boardwalk. Locals and visitors come in droves to Grand Haven to enjoy a host of events and activities held along the waterfront throughout the year, but summer is certainly peak season. The Grand Haven Coast Guard Festival has been an event held on the waterfront since 1924 (escalating in 1937). The City of Grand Haven was named Coast Guard City, USA in 1999.

This self-guided walking tour can begin at any point on the map. Parking and public restrooms are designated on the map.

For more information about the history of this area, visit:

Tri-Cities Historical Museum
200 Washington Avenue
Grand Haven, MI 49417
tri-citysmuseum.org

Loutit District Library
407 Columbus Avenue
Grand Haven, MI 49417
loutitlibrary.org

Grand Haven City Hall
519 Washington Avenue
Grand Haven, MI 49417
grandhaven.org

About this Brochure
This walking tour was arranged by the Grand Haven Historic Conservation District Commission. We would appreciate your feedback. For a current listing of board members, visit grandhaven.org or you may contact a commission representative by calling the Grand Haven Building and Planning Office at 616-847-3490.

You are also welcome to attend the Grand Haven Historic Conservation District Commission meetings to ask questions or share information. Meetings take place on the third Thursday of the month at 5:00 p.m., at Grand Haven City Hall, 519 Washington Avenue, Grand Haven, MI.

Sources: In The Path Of Destiny, 2007
David H. Seibold, D.D.S.

Historic photos provided by,
Tri-Cities Historical Museum 2014©
Other photos provided by,
City of Grand Haven
Chamber of Commerce, is the approximate site of Avenue between the Depot Museum and the Ferry Landing & One South Harbor.

In 1994 the Coal Tipple was placed on the Grand Haven Harbor as the largest pleasure boat harbor on the Great Lakes. In 1959, referred to the Grand Haven Harbor as the "Riviera of the North," in reference to Grand Haven's beachfront which was considered to be one of the nicest in the state. The city's slogan was "Close to city, perfect for vacation, great for the family." The first docks with 54 slips were built in 1889, and today this portion of the marina is named "The Basin." These first revetment diggings were placed near the Tipple at the former Grand Trunk on Harbor Avenue was used to store coal and load steam engines for trains, the 350-ton concrete coal tipple was placed at the former Grand Trunk Union Depot on Harbor Avenue.

Escanaba Park is owned by the Army Corps of Engineers and offers boat sales, repairs and in/out service and storage. The Wharf Marina is still in business under new ownership and offers boat sales, repairs and in/out service and storage. In 1987 individual slips were sold to boat owners and today this portion of the marina is named "The Basin." These first revetment diggings were placed near the Tipple at the former Grand Trunk on Harbor Avenue was used to store coal and load steam engines for trains, the 350-ton concrete coal tipple was placed at the former Grand Trunk Union Depot.

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