

Strategic Expansion of Kayak Access on Marco Island (White paper for discussion Author Martin Winter)

Executive Summary

Marco Island is fundamentally defined by its waterways. Expanding kayak access at key locations such as Veterans Community Park and the Bald Eagle / San Marco corridor provides measurable benefits for property values, environmental stewardship, and community equity.

Marco Island Context

Marco Island operates as a canal-based community where proximity to water drives property values and lifestyle benefits. However, access is uneven, with inland residents lacking direct water access compared to waterfront homeowners.

Evidence Base

Research shows that water quality and accessibility positively influence property values, recreation demand, and community desirability. Trails and paddling systems also improve quality of life and economic diversification.

Problem Statement

Current access is concentrated at limited sites, leading to congestion, informal launching, and inequitable access for inland residents.

Proposed Solution

Develop a distributed kayak access network with regional, urban, and neighborhood launch points.

Key Sites

Veterans Community Park:

- Central location
- Expands access for inland residents
- Reduces unauthorized launching

Bald Eagle / San Marco Corridor:

- Waterfront redevelopment area
- Walkable urban access point
- Enhances property desirability and economic activity

Residential Benefits

Increased property value, improved quality of life, reduced conflicts, environmental protection, and better distribution of recreational access.

Conclusion

Expanding kayak access at targeted sites creates an island-wide benefit, improving residential value, sustainability, and community livability.