



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
CITY OF CHICAGO

August 6, 2015

Report to the Commission on Chicago Landmarks

on

**Marina City**  
**300-340 N. State St. (evens);**  
**301-351 N. Dearborn St. (odds)**

**The Department of Planning and Development finds that the proposed designation of Marina City as a Chicago Landmark District supports the City's overall planning goals for the surrounding Central Area of Chicago and is consistent with the City's governing policies and plans.**

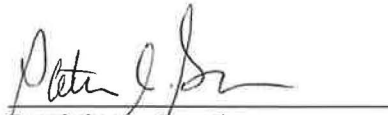
Marina City, designed by Chicago architect Bertrand Goldberg and constructed between 1960 and 1967, is an icon of Chicago architecture and urban planning. This "city within a city," the first of its kind to layer residential, commercial, and entertainment uses into a dense high rise complex in the center city, was the most ambitious and forward-thinking post-war urban renewal project in Chicago in an era defined by ambitious urban renewal projects. Commissioned by a janitor's trade union, designed by a visionary architect, blessed by the country's most powerful mayor, and ultimately controlled by one of Chicago's most influential power brokers, Marina City exemplifies the complexity inherent in large-scale urban endeavors in the post-war era. Stylistically, Marina City is an impressive and captivating example of the Expressionist Style within the Modern Movement, and a powerful response to the glass-and-steel International-Style high rises influenced by architect Mies van der Rohe.

The District occupies an approximately 3-acre site located on the north bank of the Chicago River and bounded by State and Dearborn Streets. In 1961 the District was zoned as a Planned Development (PD 13). This early and innovative Planned Development accommodates a very broad range of permitted uses, including: multi-family residential dwelling units, off-street parking, hotel, business and professional offices, retail and commercial services, banking uses, day-care centers, restaurants and live entertainment venues, and a marina. The wide range of uses permitted under the Planned Development reflects the design intention that Marina City be a complete "city within the city."

Marina City is located in the Near North Side Community Area within the larger Central Area of Chicago, an area of the City that has been the subject of several planning efforts. In 1958, the City adopted the *Development Plan for the Central Area of Chicago*, a comprehensive and ambitious plan that focused on the city's central business district and lakefront as the keys to Chicago's future economic stability. When the Planned Development for Marina City was approved in 1961 it was regarded as conforming to and furthering the goals of the City's 1958 plan. In 2003 the City adopted the *Central Area Plan* which recommended protection and preservation the most significant historic buildings and districts through landmark designation and economic incentives. Similarly, in 2009 the City adopted the *Central Area Action Plan* which also recommended historic preservation to preserving the character of the Central Area. Designation of Marina City is consistent with these planning initiatives.

The Department supports the designation of Marina City as a Chicago Landmark District. Preserving districts such as this provides many long-term benefits to the City. Landmark designation encourages the preservation and rehabilitation through a range of incentives. It serves as a model for sustainable development by retaining existing buildings and adapting them to modern conditions. Preservation of Chicago's architectural heritage attracts tourists and new residents as well as contributes to the quality of life for Chicago citizens.

In conclusion, landmark designation of Marina City supports the City's overall planning goals for the Central Area and is consistent with the City's governing policies and plans.

  
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Patricia A. Scudiero  
Managing Deputy Commissioner