

NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

BAYFRONT DISTRICT



Plan Prepared by Rutala Associates

STUDY AREA



GOALS

- PROVIDE A BROADER ARRAY OF RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.
- A MORE BEAUTIFUL AND EASILY ACCESSIBLE WATERFRONT THAT WELCOMES SAILBOATS AND DAY VISITORS.
- A LIVELIER, MORE WALKER-FRIENDLY BAY AVENUE WITH INTERESTING SHOPS AND RESTAURANTS.
- A MORE HOMEOWNER-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENT THAT ENCOURAGES RESIDENTS TO STAY AND IMPROVE THEIR HOMES RATHER THAN RELOCATE.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

THE CITY OF SOMERS POINT RECEIVED FEEDBACK FROM PEOPLE WHO LIVE, WORK, SHOP, AND DINE IN BAYFRONT DISTRICT. THE ONLINE SURVEY HELPED TO DETERMINE THE PROJECTS AND PRIORITIES DESIGNED TO REVITALIZE AND REJUVENATE THE AREA AND TO DETERMINE THE PERCEIVED STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS, AND PRIORITIES IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

STRENGTHS

1. MARINAS & BEACHES
2. GATEWAY THEATER & LIBRARY
3. RESTAURANTS & BARS
4. HISTORIC STRUCTURES & MUSEUMS
5. WIDE RANGE OF AVAILABLE EVENTS
6. WALKABLE & BIKEABLE COMMUNITY, COMPACT NATURE
7. FISHING, PIER, BOAT RAMP, WATERFRONT ACCESS

WEAKNESSES

1. DREDGING NEEDS
2. DRAINAGE, RESILIENCY NEEDS
3. VACANT LOTS, ABANDONED PROPERTIES, INAPPROPRIATE USES (TOW BOAT USA, TROCKI PROPERTY, OLD GAS STATION ON SHORE ROAD)
4. PARKING & TRANSPORTATION NEEDS
5. WATERFRONT ACCESS IS DISJOINTED, NEED FOR HARBOR WALK
6. LACK OF A HOLISTIC PLAN, MARKETING PLAN, AND IDENTITY
7. AGING INFRASTRUCTURE, LIGHTING NEEDS
8. RESTROOM FACILITY NEEDS
9. SEASONAL TRAFFIC CONGESTION

OPPORTUNITIES

1. THE WATERFRONT
2. WEALTHY COMMUNITIES SURROUND NEIGHBORHOOD
3. SOMERS POINT HAS EVERYTHING, NO REASON TO LEAVE
4. WALKABILITY OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD
5. IT IS A HUB OF TRANSPORTATION – THREE BIKE PATHS AVAILABLE, PARKWAY INTERCHANGES
6. REVITALIZATION OF HISTORIC STRUCTURES
7. MANY EVENTS
8. NEW DEVELOPMENT PLANNED – DOLPHIN DOCKS MARINA. SOMERS MARKET, SOUTH JERSEY YACHTS, DRIP & SCOOP

THREATS

1. SEVERE STORMS, FLOODING
2. WATERWAYS BEING FILLED IN, NEED FOR DREDGING
3. AGING INFRASTRUCTURE
4. PROPERTY NOT BEING MAINTAINED, RESPONSIBLY MANAGED
5. AGING CITY STRUCTURES – CITY HALL, LIBRARY, PUBLIC WORKS
6. CLOSING OF SHORE MEDICAL CENTER
7. OVER REGULATION, IMPACT OF NJDEP PACT REGULATIONS
8. LACK OF DIVERSIFICATION – BUSINESSES ARE STRONGLY TIED TO TOURISM
9. NEGATIVE IMPACTS ON TOURISM

PRIORITIES TO BE ADDRESSED

1. WAYFINDING

- A. WELCOME TO SP HISTORIC BAYFRONT DISTRICT, SPONSORED BY THE HISTORIC SOCIETY
- B. SOMERS MANSION SIGNAGE, SPONSORED BY THE PATRIOTS
- C. CONSISTENCY, HIGH QUALITY, BRICK ACCENTS

2. BAY AVENUE BANNERS, BRANDING

3. EXPAND WATERFRONT ACCESS

4. FLAGS & LIGHTING AT SOMERS MANSON & THE BEACH

5. LIBRARY – CLEANUP, POWER WASH

6. IMPROVED STREET LIGHTING

7. BELL TOWER LIGHTING AT MUSEUM

8. PLANTERS; TRASH, RECYCLING, BENCHES; CONSISTENT FURNISHINGS

9. CENTRE STREET ENHANCEMENT

10. NEW EVENTS

STRATEGIES FOR ECONOMIC GROW

STRATEGY 1 – BUILD ON SOMERS POINT AS A REGIONAL ATTRACTION. INCREASE THE REASONS FOR NON-RESIDENTS TO PATRONIZE LOCAL BUSINESSES OR FOR RESIDENTS TO SHOP MORE LOCALLY INSTEAD OF SPENDING DISPOSABLE DOLLARS IN OTHER MUNICIPALITIES.

STRATEGY 2 – ENCOURAGE ADDITIONAL HOUSING OPTIONS. ENTICE MORE PEOPLE WITH MORE DISPOSABLE DOLLARS TO LIVE IN THE CITY. THIS IMPLIES OFFERING LIVING OPTIONS THAT APPEAL TO THESE POTENTIAL RESIDENTS.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. PLACEMAKING

THE NPP PROGRAM HAS DEVELOPED PLACEMAKING GUIDELINES THAT MUST BE FOLLOWED WHEN NPP FUNDING IS BEING USED.

A. WAYFINDING - GOAL IS TO PROVIDE FOR A WAYFINDING SYSTEM THAT WILL PROMOTE THE BAYFRONT DISTRICT AND ALL THE SITES IN SOMERS POINT AND DIRECT VISITORS TO THESE POINTS OF INTEREST. ALL OF THIS SIGNAGE WILL BE BRANDED WITH THE NEW CITY LOGO TO PROVIDE A VISIBLE AND CONSISTENT MESSAGE.

B. GATEWAYS - GATEWAYS DRAW PEOPLE INTO A DISTRICT AND LETS YOU KNOW THAT YOU ARRIVED AT A SPECIAL PLACE. PHYSICAL GATEWAY ARCHES, ROADSIDE SCULPTURES, LIGHT BEACONS, AND THE LIKE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- C. BICYCLE PARKING .
- D. STREETSCAPE DESIGN - STREETSCAPE DESIGN GUIDELINES BE ESTABLISHED FOR THE MAJOR BUSINESS DISTRICTS OF SOMERS POINT – PARTICULARLY BAY AVENUE, BUT ALSO ON SHORE ROAD AND CENTRE STREET.
- E. CREATIVE PLACEMAKING - A CREATIVE PLACEMAKING PLAN IS A METHOD TO BRING TOGETHER THE VARIOUS ASPECTS OF SUSTAINABILITY; SPECIFICALLY FOCUSING ON ARTISTS, HISTORICAL SOCIETIES, CULTURAL GROUPS, MUSICIANS, THEATER, AND MORE.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. ARCHITECTURAL ENHANCEMENT – HIGHLIGHT HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND MUSEUMS, PRIORITIZE RESIDENTIAL AND STOREFRONT FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS.

3. ENHANCE RESILIENCY

4. ENCOURAGE WATER TAXI SERVICE

5. SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS

6. VALUE ADDED OPTIONS FOR RESTAURANTS – PROMOTE SIDEWALK DINING AND PERMITTING WINE SALES ROOMS.

7. MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS INITIATIVES-SOCIAL MEDIA AND ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS

8. COMPLETE STREETS IMPROVEMENTS - ENHANCED PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE ACCESS IN AND AROUND THE COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS ON BAY AVENUE.

RECOMMENDATIONS

9. EVENTS - HOLD NIGHT MARKETS, LIVE MUSIC, FARMER'S MARKETING, AND OTHER TYPES OF PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY EVENTS. BUILD ON THE SUCCESS OF EXISTING SPECIAL EVENTS SUCH AS THE BAYFEST, BEACH CONCERT SERIES AND GOOD OLD DAYS BY DEVELOPING ADDITIONAL EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

10. SUPPORT A VARIETY OF HOUSING OPTIONS - ENCOURAGE ADDITIONAL LIVING OPTIONS FOR SENIORS AND OTHER EMPTY NESTERS.

11. SUPPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - CONTINUE TO USE LOCAL TOOLS TO ENCOURAGE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE CITY'S MASTER PLAN.

12. SEEK FUNDING ALTERNATIVES - THE CITY SHOULD CONTINUE TO AGGRESSIVELY SEEK GRANTS AND OTHER FUNDING SOURCES TO FUND PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS.

13. DEVELOP A HARBORWALK

2022 BUDGET

THE YEAR 1 BUDGET REPRESENTS A \$125,000 NPP GRANT AND \$25,000 IN MATCHING FUNDS. THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS ARE PLANNED IN 2022 USING NPP FUNDS. THE CITY WILL PROVIDE ADDITIONAL MUNICIPAL FUNDS TO UPGRADE THE STREETLIGHTS ON BAY AVENUE AS THE LOCAL MATCH. THIS MATCH WILL BE A MINIMUM OF \$25,000 AS REQUIRED BY THE NPP GRANT.

RETAIN PROFESSIONAL TO DESIGN WAYFINDING SYSTEM (\$20,000)

PROVIDE DESIGN CONCEPTS FOR WAYFINDING FOR THE DISTRICT.

INSTALL BANNERS ON BAY AVENUE AND SHORE ROAD (\$10,000)

BANNERS WILL BE USED TO BRAND THE BAYVIEW DISTRICT.

2022 BUDGET

ESTABLISH A FARMERS MARKET AT SOMERS MANSION (\$20,000)

THE PATRIOTS FOR SOMERS MANSION WILL OVERSEE THIS NEW EVENT THAT WILL ATTRACT OLD AND NEW VISITORS TO THE BAYVIEW DISTRICT.

UPGRADE LED DECORATIVE STREETLIGHTS ON BAY AVENUE (\$45,000)

MANY OF THE EXISTING LIGHTS ARE NOT WORKING AND NEED NEW WIRING. ALL THE EXISTING LIGHTS WILL BE UPGRADED TO BRIGHTER LED FIXTURES.

INSTALL BIKE RACKS IN KEY LOCATIONS (\$10,000)

INSTALL THEMED BICYCLE RACKS AT THE CITY'S THREE PUBLIC PARKING LOTS ON BAY AVENUE AND AT THE CITY HALL PARKING LOT.

ADMINISTRATION (\$20,000)

PREPARATION OF NPP PLAN AND GRANT ADMINISTRATION

5 YEAR PLAN

THE NPP PLAN CALLS FOR THE COMPLETION OF MAJOR PROJECTS IN THE FOLLOWING TIMELINE:

- WAYFINDING DESIGN – 2022
- WAYFINDING INSTALLATION – 2023
- BAY AVENUE STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS – 2022,2023
- SOMERS MANSION FARMERS MARKET – 2022
- SHORE ROAD STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS – 2024
- FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS – 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026
- CENTRE STREET STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS – 2025
- SIDE STREET STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS – 2026