



In the two hundred and forty years since Newburyport was founded on the banks of the Merrimack the nature of maritime activity has changed along its waterfront but not the intensity. Today, there are between 1200 and 1400 boats in the harbor during the summer months. Newburyport remains a port city proud of its maritime heritage. In the past, Newburyport's downtown and neighborhoods fronted directly onto the harbor. Two centuries of incremental filling have pushed the harbor's edge 300 to 600 feet away from Merrimack and Water Street. While most of the industrial sheds and coal piles have been cleared away in recent years, much of the land remains in private hands blocking public access to and enjoyment of the waterfront. This Strategic Plan presents a set of recommendations to help forge once again a strong link between city and harbor.

Four interrelated goals have guided the recommendations of the Newburyport Waterfront Strategic Plan.

- Support the working waterfront and enhance landside facilities for recreational and commercial maritime uses.
- Dramatically expand public access to the waterfront while linking the North End and South End to the downtown.
- Enhance and expand public places along the harbor to support recreation and relaxation by the water.
- Reinforce and extend the historic downtown to the waterfront with a new harborside neighborhood.

The summary recommendations below are color coded to reflect these goals.

- Existing harbor walk
- Proposed harbor walk
- Other trail connections
- Mooring field
- Boatyard
- Public park
- Existing buildings
- Potential buildings

- Support Working Boatyards in the Waterfront Marine Dependent (WMD) Zone and protect from further encroachment by non-water-dependent uses.
- Extend shore line access upriver of Cashman Park over time as outlined in the City Master Plan.
- Allow marina expansion in front of the former Towle Building site as it redevelops and explore harbor walk extensions and a future public boating program for rowing and/or sailing.
- Protect historic view corridors down public streets to the water by setting waterfront development back from these sight lines.
- Expand and improve the harbor walk and reconfigure parking to improve shoreline access.
- Improve athletic facilities including a new larger soccer field. Explore shared parking arrangements with the former Towle building during busy weekends.
- Extend a new fishing pier upstream from the existing municipal pier with support from the Massachusetts Public Access Board.
- Expand Cashman Park to Merrimack Street in the vicinity of Kent Street to forge better links with the neighborhood.
- Extend the Harbor Walk underneath the Route 1 bridge linking the North End to the Central Waterfront.
- Establish a system of public ways extending the historic street pattern of Newburyport to the water.
- Establish a Rail Trail connection south to the MBTA railroad station and Newbury and north to Salisbury.
- Extend the scale and character of downtown Newburyport to the waterfront by establishing a vibrant harbor side neighborhood.
- Improve the pedestrian character of Merrimack Street with trees, walks, and infill redevelopment from the North End to the Downtown.
- Support maritime activities in the Waterfront Mixed Use (WMU) Zone while supporting a healthy mix of uses set back from the shore.
- Expand the Central Waterfront Park and explore options for accommodating replacement public parking.
- Establish a new Waterfront Visitor's Center to serve transient boaters and others.
- Expand and improve the Fish Pier for the working fishing fleet.
- Install a new public boardwalk in conjunction with a new integrated fish processing and sales facility. Provide interpretive materials on the Atlantic fisheries.
- Improve public access to the range lights and interpret their role as aids to navigation.
- Explore future reuse of underutilized deep-water frontage for maritime use.
- Dramatically expand direct access to the waterfront for residents and visitors through the establishment of a continuous two-mile Harbor Walk from Joppa Flats to Cashman Park.
- Complete the Rail Trail loop from the waterfront through the South End to the MBTA railroad station and Newbury.

Newburyport Waterfront Strategic Plan

NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS

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