

A View from the Water's Edge

From the day in 1666 that Robert Treat sailed up the Passaic River and landed at what today is Newark to the economic boom of the Industrial Revolution, the identity of many of the city's neighborhoods has been tied to the waterway. Since then, decades of pollution and neglect sent businesses along the banks of the Passaic into decline.

Today, as the city undertakes redevelopment and efforts to clean up the river are underway, a new plan that celebrates the River itself by introducing waterside activities, from boating to a Town Dock, marinas, and new parks, has gained wide support. While there are still many design issues to address, there is common agreement that placing a "String of Pearls" — a variety of lively and interesting experiences along the riverfront all linked by the continuous walkway in Joseph G. Minish Waterfront Walkway and Historic Area — will create shared access and benefits for the nearby neighborhoods and give the City of Newark a successful public waterfront that brings life back to the Passaic River.

Work began in early 2004 when Edison Properties, LLC asked Nautilus International Development Consulting, Inc., to explore waterside activities and help implement their vision of the Newark waterfront as a world-class place for all residents, workers and visitors to enjoy. Nautilus International is a New York-based consulting group whose work on waterfronts and downtowns around the world has helped transform them into urban assets.

Working with The Waterfront Center, a non-profit organization in Washington, DC, and Han-Padron Associates Engineers, Nautilus President Bonnie A. Harken, AIA, met with interested parties (downtown businesses, property owners, local residents, and government agencies) and identified potential activities along the waterfront from the Bridge Street bridge downtown to Chapel Street in the Ironbound.

Building on Newark's impressive progress in the last decade to envision a new 21st Century waterfront, Nautilus International's team took a comprehensive look at how to organize these water-based activities and balance public parks with private development along the 2.2 mile stretch of Minish Park. The result is a proposal to create major new open spaces at both ends of the walkway and concentrate new buildings in the center within walking distance of Penn Station, giving each "pearl" along the riverfront an important and complementary role. Here are some of the highlights from the String of Pearls.

West of Penn Station, NJPAC is only a 10-minute walk along the waterfront promenade. Wide-open spaces and a boathouse would provide an excellent place to sit and watch as crew racing teams reclaim their place in the river's history. Given the short walk from downtown's office buildings, this part of the riverfront will become a popular place for workers to relax during lunch and after work.

The area around Penn Station offers an opportunity to create a new Town Dock, a small marina and covered arcades along the



Rendering of proposed future activity at the Town Dock on the Passaic River. (Nautilus International)

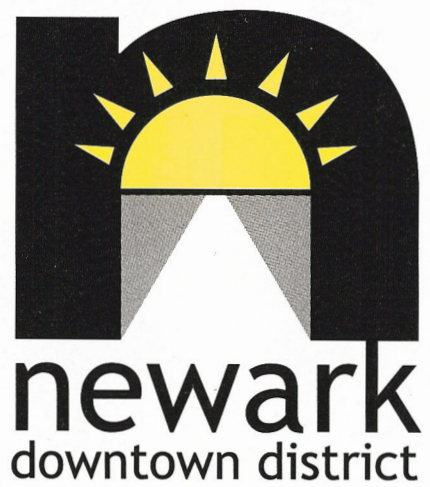
riverfront walkway. Repainting and dramatic night lighting for the historic railroad bridge is under study. More than 50,000 people already use Penn Station every weekday and new transit-oriented development is coming soon, so this 20-block area is bound to attract workers and other visitors day and night to enjoy the river or gather for events at the Town Dock.

East of Penn Station, the downtown cityscape gives way to more of a neighborhood atmosphere. An environmental education center is proposed, along with restored wetlands, meandering walkways and large open spaces for team sports and other recreational activities.

Newark is about to join hundreds of cities around the world that have recaptured old industrial waterfronts for redevelopment

into a new kind of economic asset. We hope that revitalizing the Passaic River will reconnect Newark's neighborhoods with their past and brighten their futures, and that people rediscovering the river's edge will find exciting new parks, marinas, docks, and boating to enjoy.

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