

FEBRUARY 27, 2015

Thames River Heritage Park Plan

New London and Groton, Connecticut





The Yale Urban Design Workshop is a community design center based at the Yale School of Architecture, providing urban design and planning assistance to communities in the region.

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On the cover: Partial map of New London Harbor from the 1848 *Survey of the Coast of the United States*, A.D. Bache, Superintendent of the Coast Survey, published in Washington, D.C.

Above: 1950's postcard of the U.S.S. Nautilus, first atomic submarine, in New London Harbor (Published by the New London News Company, New London, CT)

Thames River Heritage Park Plan

A report prepared by the
Yale Urban Design Workshop
School of Architecture, Yale University
New Haven, Connecticut

Greetings from...

THAMES

The word 'THAMES' is rendered in large, 3D block letters with a red outline and a white fill. Each letter contains a different scene from River Heritage Park: 'T' shows a tall, thin tower; 'H' shows a large, curved structure; 'A' shows a white boat on the water; 'M' shows a large, rectangular building; 'E' shows a multi-story house; 'S' shows a boat on the water. The letters are set against a background of a blue sky and a river.

River Heritage Park

CONN.

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An appendix accompanies this report in a second volume, and includes related documents such as letters of support and a report on the water taxi demonstration project.

Thames River Heritage Park Plan



January 2015

The Avery-Copp House is pleased to present for publication the Yale Urban Design Workshop's Final Report on the Thames River Heritage Park. The unlikely story of how a small house museum became the catalyst for a project as complex as a regional park needs telling.

The story starts with the Copp family's expressed interest in seeing this small nonprofit, which it has supported over the years, reach a larger audience and become part of the revitalization of the area. Tasked with this challenge, the Board of Directors hired a local consultant who proposed hiring the Yale Urban Design Workshop, known for its many affordable, creative plans for revitalizing other Connecticut communities, to explore the feasibility of completing a regional park envisioned in the 1980s. The Copp family and Board of Directors had the temerity to pursue this recommendation.

With positive responses from area stakeholders and support from the legislative delegation, spearheaded by State Senator Andrew Maynard, Yale quickly realized that the prospects to complete the park were good enough to warrant a comprehensive update and re-conceptualization. A steering committee of Avery-Copp Board members and representatives from both sides of the river was formed to act as a sounding board for the YUDW's ideas and build regional support. Thus these inspiring plans for the Thames River Heritage Park have been brought into the realm of the possible under the auspices of the Avery-Copp House and with the generosity of the Copp family, which has underwritten the effort.

Let us take this gift and make it a reality.

President of the Board, 2006-2013

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**LAUNCH OF THE USS NAUTILUS, GROTON, JANUARY 21, 1954
FIRST NUCLEAR SUBMARINE**

(IMAGE SOURCE: UNITED STATES NAVY PHOTO, NAVY.MIL)



The Thames River Estuary has been home to a living, working waterfront since before the American Revolution.

Residential and commercial buildings bear witness to the central role of the region in the New England whaling industry, while dry docks and cranes testify to the continuing presence of shipbuilding and the center of American submarine design, construction and naval operations.

Massive forts once guarded the shore, while the Coast Guard trains today's coastal defenders on the river and the coast.

Heritage is a vital part of daily life along the Thames.



FORT TRUMBULL, NEW LONDON

The THAMES RIVER HERITAGE PARK will be a network of people, communities, institutions, sites and stories connected by and to the historic waterfront and natural landscape of the Thames River and Long Island Sound.

The Park will engage residents and visitors in a rich program of events, culture and experiences which celebrate the diverse peoples and traditions that have shaped the life of the region.

The Park will be designed, programmed and promoted to make that heritage and culture vivid and accessible to all.



THAMES RIVER
NEW LONDON
CONN

18. FORT TRUMBULL STATE PARK



17. BARQUE EAGLE



7. U.S. COAST GUARD MUSEUM



9. PARADE & MONUMENT



NEW LONDON

CONN

- 1. MOHEGAN SUN CASINO
- 2. CONNECTICUT COLLEGE
- 3. U.S. COAST GUARD ACADEMY
- 4. STATE PIER
- 5. ORIENT POINT FERRY
- 6. BLOCK ISLAND FERRY
- 7. U.S. COAST GUARD MUSEUM
- 8. UNION STATION
- 9. PARADE & MONUMENT
- 10. NATHAN HALL SCHOOL HOUSE

- 11. WHALF OIL ROW
- 12. FISHERS ISLAND FERRY
- 13. CUSTOM HOUSE MARITIME MUSEUM & NEW LONDON MARITIME SOCIETY
- 14. BANK STREET
- 15. STARR STREET
- 16. SHAW MANSION & NEW LONDON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
- 17. U.S. COAST GUARD BARQUE EAGLE
- 18. FORT TRUMBULL STATE PARK
- 19. HEMPSTED HOUSES

3. U.S. COAST GUARD ACADEMY



16. SHAW MANSION & NEW LONDON HISTORICAL SOCIETY



13. CUSTOM HOUSE MARITIME MUSEUM & NEW LONDON MARITIME SOCIETY



19. HEMPSTED HOUSES





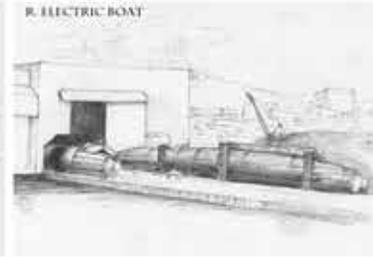
R HERITAGE PARK

CONNECTICUT

GROTON

- A. FOXWOODS RESORT CASINO
- B. NORWICH
- C. SUBMARINE FORCE MUSEUM & LIBRARY/ USS NAUTILUS
- D. HARVARD-YALE REGATTA
- E. GOLD STAR BRIDGE
- F. INTERSTATE 95
- G. SUBVETS WW II MEMORIAL
- H. BROTHER BAILEY HOUSE
- I. THAMES STREET

- J. FORT STREET LANDING
- K. AVERY-COPP HOUSE
- L. GROTON BANK HISTORIC DISTRICT
- M. BILL MEMORIAL LIBRARY
- N. GROTON MONUMENT
- O. MONUMENT HOUSE MUSEUM
- P. FORT GRISWOLD BATTLEFIELD STATE PARK
- Q. BENJAMIN AVERY HOUSE
- R. ELECTRIC BOAT





Introduction



01 Introduction

The Thames River estuary is a place of living history. From the deck of a boat, in one sweeping view, a visitor can survey a dynamic urban landscape developed through a continuous and ongoing engagement with the River over the course of centuries.

The cities of New London and Groton, perched opposite each other on the banks of the Thames River, were founded and developed as a result of a powerful relationship with the water. Their distinct urban forms, architecture, culture and industry emerged over time largely due to their access to the deep waters of the Thames estuary, Long Island Sound, and connections to the sea beyond. Today, these two cities, with their vibrant maritime industries and coastal defense installations, continue to define themselves in relation to the river and sea.

The concept for a **Thames River Heritage Park** to celebrate the rich and continuous engagement between Groton, New London and the Thames River has been around for more than 50 years. As early as the 1960's, planners at the Southeastern Connecticut Regional Planning Agency saw the potential in such a park to highlight the unique culture of the area, encourage heritage tourism, and produce economic development in the region.

In 1987, Connecticut put in place legislation to establish a statewide heritage park system, identifying the Thames Estuary as the most promising area in the state to test the concept, designating it as a model state heritage park site. In the ensuing 20+ years, with more than \$2 million in state funds invested in the park project, much was accomplished, but full implementation was not achieved. By 2010 the effort faded away.

Today, much of the original rationale for developing the park remains compelling, and major impediments to completion have disappeared. In fact, with the scheduled arrival of the National Coast Guard Museum to downtown New London in 2017

Daniel Lyman's Sketch Map of New London and Groton (facing page) showing the attacks made by troops under Benedict Arnold on Fort Trumbull and Fort Griswold on September 6, 1781 (Source: Library of Congress Digital Collections).

projected to bring as many as 500,000 visitors per year to the Thames region, now is a perfect time to reactivate and complete the park project.

Unlike a conventional state park with a fixed boundary and finite resources, the Thames River Heritage Park will draw together historical and contemporary sites, communities and institutions on both sides of the Thames, providing a unified framework within which visitors may experience the Thames region's excellent existing heritage attractions. Four anchors—Fort Trumbull State Park, Fort Griswold Battlefield State Park, the Submarine Force Museum, and soon the National Coast Guard Museum—will provide the necessary visitor services for the park. The anchors will be tied together by new physical connections, including a water shuttle system that will allow visitors to experience the Thames River itself as the heart of the region while moving between sites.

At each anchor site, strengthened pedestrian and bicycle linkages and clear signage will direct and connect visitors to additional heritage attractions like the Avery-Copp House or Shaw Mansion, and to restaurants, shopping and historic districts in Groton and New London. Mobile technology will increase the availability of information and interpretation throughout the park and allow for the coordination of schedules and events between participating institutions.

The Thames River Heritage Park will not only be a place, it will also be a platform upon which partner organizations can collaborate, seek funding, develop programming, and build capacity.

The Thames River Heritage Park has the potential to make the region as a whole greater than the sum of its individual parts. While enriching each local partner by making it part of

a larger network, the park will help define the region's cultural identity, encourage sustainable tourism, and with minimal investment produce a substantial regional economic impact.

REVISING THE HERITAGE PARK PLAN

The first plan for the heritage park is now more than 25 years old, and while the rationale outlined in the original study remains compelling, many of the strategies for implementation require revision. For instance, new technology like the internet and mobile devices make the big capital investment needed to build a bricks-and-mortar visitor center less necessary. And it may be that a non-profit entity is better equipped than the State to perform some of the roles required to sustain the Heritage Park, especially in an era of uncertain state budgets.

Perhaps the biggest and most positive change on the horizon is the commitment of the US Coast Guard to build the National Coast Guard Museum in downtown New London, to open in 2017. With as many as 500,000 new visitors projected each year, the museum could provide the critical mass needed to finally cement the Thames River Heritage Park project.

With dwindling state and federal funding for small, individual non-profit entities, and increased funding for coalitions and collaborations, the Heritage Park offers another important opportunity to heritage sites and groups in the region: the possibility of pooling resources for marketing and publicity, and of requesting funding for collaborative projects.

This new plan for the Thames River Heritage Park was developed in 2013 and 2014 in consultation with stakeholders, citizens, local and state officers, elected officials and representatives, and funded by the Avery-Copp House in Groton,

Connecticut. While it builds on the extensive planning work done for the original heritage park, it presents a new, streamlined strategy for the completion and ongoing functioning of the Park.

Following this introductory chapter, this plan is divided into six sections:

Section 2, *Project Background*, describes the current planning effort and rationale for restarting the park development process, and also provides a history of the heritage park project to date.

Section 3, *Visitor Experience*, details the way visitors will experience the park, as a clear, attractive framework within which diverse local sites are situated and coordinated. Arrival, orientation, way-finding and interpretation are discussed.

Section 4, *Areas, Anchors and Sites*, provides guidance on the kinds of improvements that are recommended at the component sites of the park, including specific comments on each of the anchors, as well as guidance for smaller institutional partners.

Section 5, *Park Organization and Administration*, focuses on organizational aspects of the park: responsibilities and relationships between the various partner organizations and the state, funding, and coordination.

Section 6, *Community Benefits*, includes a discussion of the role the park can play within the region as both a driver of economic development and as an educational resource.

Finally, Section 8, *Phasing and Next Steps*, provides guidance on how this project can be moved forward.

PRINCIPAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Principal recommendations of this report include the following:

Park Organization

» **Establish an organizational structure** capable of taking on the diverse roles required to administer the Thames River Heritage Park. Consider developing a public-private partnership between the State of Connecticut, the City and Town of Groton, the City of New London, and an independent, local, not-for-profit corporation, with a clear mandate from the state and municipalities to work on behalf of the heritage park.

» **Establish an action-oriented steering committee** consisting of local stakeholders, civic leaders, and citizens to steward the park process at the local level. Consider making the steering committee the board of directors of the non-profit entity.

» **Identify a local leader** who can take on the role of moving the park project forward.

» **Develop a detailed, long-range implementation plan** to guide the next 10 years of park development. Identify specific goals and projects to be accomplished, costs and potential funding streams.

» **Assign clear, concrete roles** to all members of the park organization, including the state, municipalities, and the non-profit corporation.

» **Identify and secure state funding to support core capital projects** of the park, including the deployment of physical infrastructure such as signage and the water taxi system.

» **Develop new funding streams** outside of state funding, to support the work of the park, through grants, foundation funding, and tax-deductible contributions.

» **Build a platform for collaboration** that will allow partner heritage institutions to develop group programming, events, and coordinate schedules.

» **Build capacity of partner heritage organizations** by providing support in the form of volunteer recruitment, educational program development, grant-writing, schedule coordination, etc.

» **Support, don't compete** with partner heritage institutions.

Park Experience

» **Establish a comprehensive and coordinated park framework**, including marketing, way-finding, parking, visitor services, transportation, signage and interpretation, to provide visitors to the Thames River Heritage Park with a clear, comfortable and unified, but thematically diverse experience within the park.

» **Develop a high quality, comprehensive brand and communications design** for the heritage park, including graphic logos, colors, signage, pennants, banners and standardized marketing text. Develop a park website to introduce potential visitors to what the park and region have to offer, and implement a regional and/or national marketing campaign.

» **Develop a comprehensive traffic and parking strategy** utilizing both existing parking reservoirs in Groton and New London and developing new satellite parking reservoirs connected to the water taxi system for high season usage.

» **Develop coordinated directional signage** at gateways to the park region, including Interstate 95, directing visitors to arrival points and parking facilities from which they can get orientation information, walk to park attractions, or board the water taxi system. Include signage at multi-modal arrival points like

Union Station and the ferry landings.

» **Establish a coordinated transportation framework**, tying together the dispersed attractions of the heritage park in a cohesive and interesting way, and implementing a “park once” strategy for the whole park.

» **Implement a water shuttle system** to connect the major anchor sites of the park, including Fort Trumbull State Park, Fort Griswold Battlefield State Park, the Submarine Force Museum, and the New London Waterfront District / Coast Guard Museum, which will allow visitors to experience the Thames River itself as an attraction. Integrate the water shuttle into the branding of the park, and if possible utilize a historic military vessel for transportation.

» **Develop better linkages between downtown New London and Fort Trumbull** through better pedestrian and bicycle links, and a water shuttle.

» **Improve Fort Griswold Battlefield State Park** to make it more accessible and more vivid and making it a premier heritage destination in New England.

» **Improve access to and use of the Thames River waterfront**, including new access and improved circulation and transportation options for pedestrians, bicycles, and especially a water shuttle linking New London, Groton, and the Submarine Force Museum

» **Implement an early-action water shuttle pilot project** to demonstrate the potential of such a system to connect sites and get visitors out on the water.

» **Develop a web site and GPS enabled mobile app** providing general visitor information (including specific information for each site) as well as detailed interpretative material. Allow visitors to create customized itineraries through the app based on their interests and use of geotagging and/or QR codes to

allow visitors to access information on sites through their mobile devices.

» **Encourage partner attractions to co-brand**, utilizing Heritage Park branding and graphics while maintaining their own diverse identities as independent organizations.

» **Develop park-wide events and programming** with partner heritage organizations.

» **Support the completion of the Coast Guard Museum** as the fourth anchor of the park, to add critical mass to the number of regional attractions.

» **Support the revitalization of Thames Street, Groton** as a lively mixed-use, pedestrian oriented corridor, linking historic sites and properties with businesses, parking, the waterfront and the neighborhood.

» **Explore mutually beneficial collaborative relationships**, projects and marketing with attractions in the extended Southeastern Connecticut region, including Mystic Seaport, the Connecticut River Museum in Essex, the Henry Ferguson Museum on Fishers Island, and Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun Casinos.

Education

» **Develop a specific cross-disciplinary place-based education curricula** for primary and secondary school students in the region, and encourage and facilitate partnerships between schools and park attractions. Include not only history, but also science, technology, math, economics, civics and other subjects, with emphasis on relationships and influences between subjects. Consider implementing project based learning.

» **Establish collaborations and connections between park attractions and area faculty and students** at University of Connecticut Avery Point,

Mitchell College, Connecticut College, and the United States Coast Guard Academy.

Economic Development

» **Establish mutually beneficial working collaborations with regional and state tourism agencies, chambers of commerce, and economic development groups** to market the park and the region to tourists, visitors, investors and entrepreneurs considering moving to the region. Highlight the recreational and quality of life aspects that the park may offer residents.

» **Explore and establish mutually beneficial relationships with businesses in New London and Groton** that may cater to tourists and visitors, such as restaurants, hotels and boutique shopping.



Project Background



02

Project Background

In 2013, the Board of the Avery-Copp House (ACH), a small, independent house museum located in Groton, Connecticut, on the advice of their special projects consultant, brought in the Yale Urban Design Workshop (YUDW), a community design center affiliated with the Yale School of Architecture, to think about how the museum could play a more vital and strategic role in the community, and increase its visibility and impact. In initial brainstorming meetings with the museum, the consultant introduced preliminary research on the dormant plan for a regional heritage park, which the group agreed had the potential of increasing the reach of all of its smaller constituent organizations and sites. Partly as a community service and partly out of self interest, the ACH board then retained the YUDW to investigate the potential for restarting the effort, and to think about what a Thames River Heritage Park for the 21st century might look like.

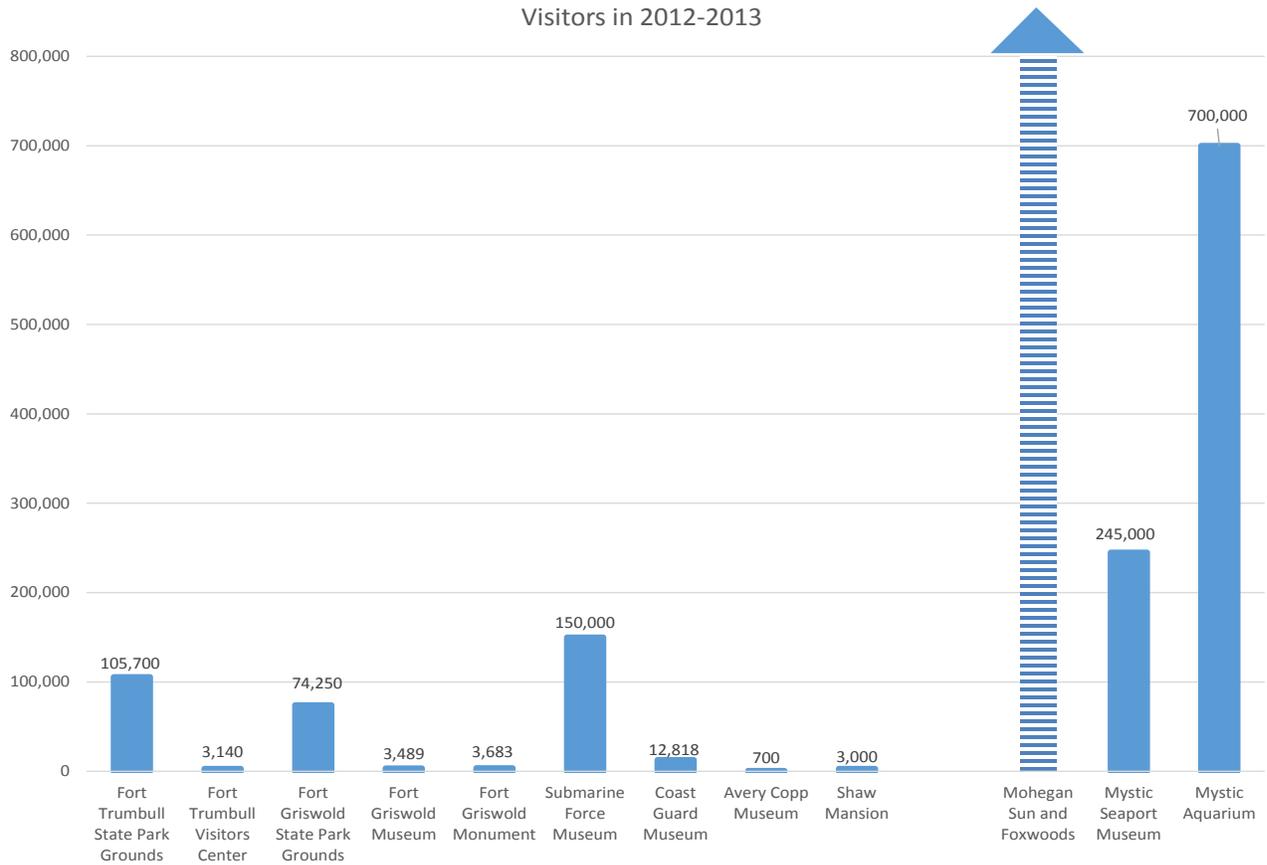
The project began with a series of thematic meetings and discussions with a small steering committee, established by the Avery-Copp House, which included museum staff, state and local legislators, and citizens from the area. The group developed a working vision statement in an attempt to define the park. The vision statement is presented following the table of contents at the beginning of this plan.

This initial period was followed by an extensive consultation with potential stakeholders, local officials and legislators in the region. Over the course of several months in 2013, the YUDW conducted more than 30 individual and small group meetings, to discuss the needs and concerns of members of the heritage community who might benefit from being part of the park. Through these





Visitors in 2012-2013



VISITATION AT REGIONAL HERITAGE ATTRACTIONS (above) in the 2012-2013 season.

STAKEHOLDERS (facing page) discuss the heritage park project at a public presentation at the Groton Municipal Building on November 12, 2013.

discussions, the following common issues were identified as important things that the heritage park might be able to address:

- » Declining visitors to regional heritage-based institutions, both small and large
- » Declining local, state and federal funding available to individual heritage based groups
- » Small heritage-based institutions struggle for funding, visibility and relevance
- » Disconnected heritage sites in the region rely on automobile to get from one to another; weak pedestrian and transit connections between sites and between New London and Groton

» Experience of visiting different sites is uncoordinated; erratic information and opening schedules and events

» Fort Griswold, the most important Revolutionary War site in the state, is under-interpreted and under-supported by the state, despite the recent marketing campaign branding Connecticut “still revolutionary”

» New London and Groton struggle for a cohesive image as a destination in the region and nation; difficulty competing with other destinations for tourists

Through these meetings and ongoing discussions with the steering committee, the YUDW explored various aspects and potentials of the heritage park to be framework to address many of the issues noted above, but also to be a strategy for regional transportation and economic development. On November 12, 2013, the YUDW hosted around 30 stakeholders at the City of Groton Municipal Building for a public presentation of the initial

concept for the park and a discussion session.

Opportunities presented included:

- » Connect institutions and sites, physically and programmatically, to make the whole more than the sum of individual parts
- » Connect both sides of the Thames through water-based transit infrastructure
- » Get people out on the water to understand the geography and environment of the Thames, New London and Groton
- » Economic development benefits on both sides of Thames
- » Opportunities to link local schools and curricula to the Heritage Park and its sites
- » Funding available for organized coalitions and networks
- » Prepare for the arrival of the Coast Guard Museum and find ways of leveraging its visibility and levels of visitation, while mitigating the negative potential effects of traffic and parking through regional traffic and parking management strategies
- » Making the Thames region a destination in and of itself, not a side show to Mystic or the Casinos.

The following were presented as key elements of a successful project:

For Groton:

- » Successful revitalization of Thames Street as a lively, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented corridor, linking historic sites and properties with businesses, parking, the waterfront and the neighborhood.

- » Significant improvements to the Fort Griswold site, to make it more accessible and more vivid, assuming its logical and rightful role as a premier heritage destination in New England.

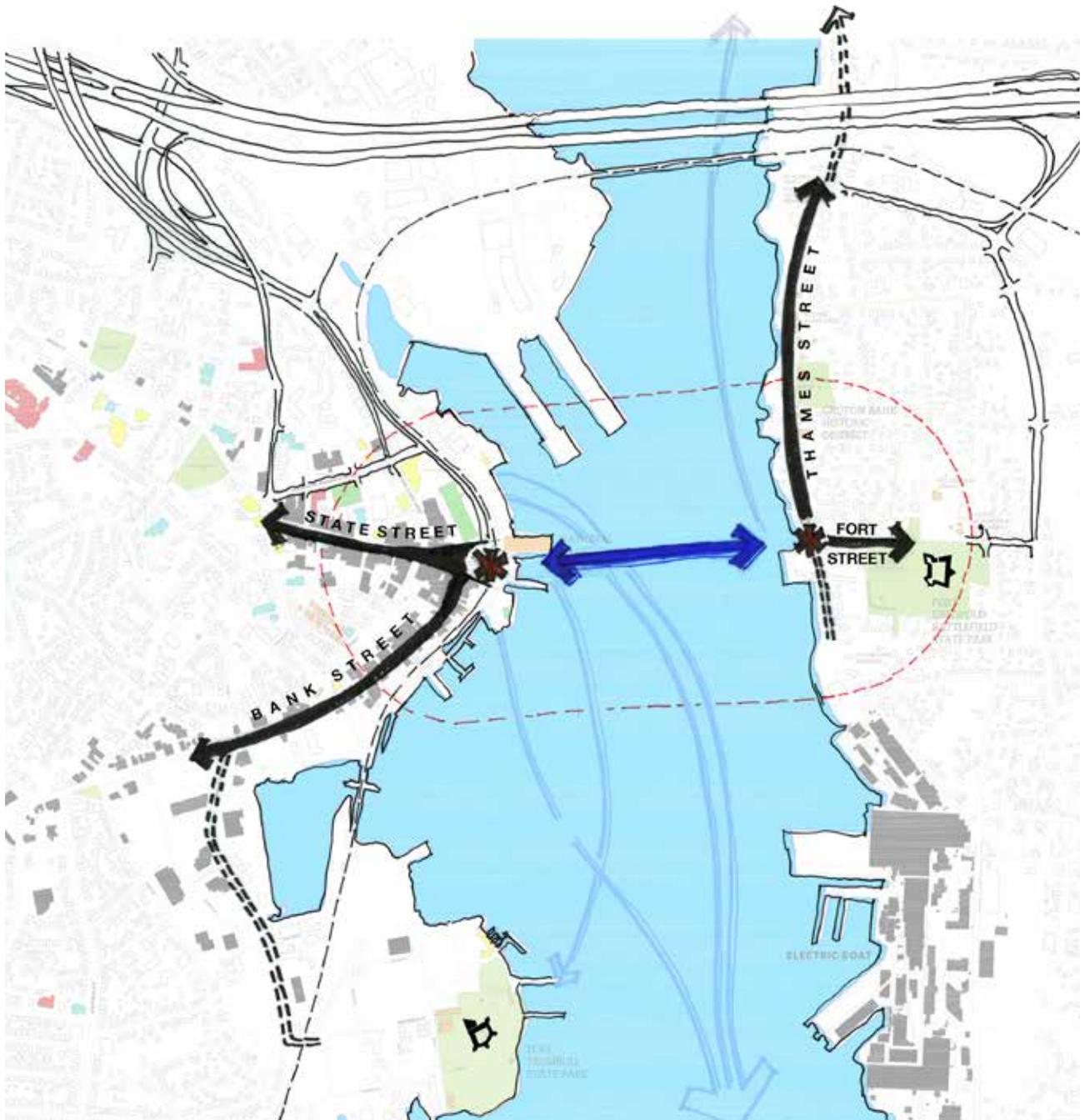
For New London:

- » Better and multiple linkages between downtown New London and its transit hub and Fort Trumbull.
- » Successful planning for and integrated implementation of the Coast Guard Museum.

For the Region:

- » Improved access to and use of the Thames River waterfront, including new and improved circulation and transportation options for pedestrians, bicycles, and especially a water shuttle linking New London, Groton and the Submarine Museum.
- » Improved interpretation and marketing of the heritage, environmental and cultural resources of the region.
- » A broad-based and effective coalition of local citizens, institutions and governments to plan, promote, implement and manage the Park.
- » Making the Heritage Park not simply a framework for regional tourism, but also making it a plan for regional cultural and educational initiatives, environmental management, as well as regional transportation and economic development.

On December 18, 2013, the YUDW and members of the steering committee were invited to Hartford to meet with and update state officials, including Commissioner Dan Esty and staff at the Department of Energy and Environmental



THAMES RIVER HERITAGE PARK DIAGRAM illustrating the potential connection of the New London Waterfront District and Groton Bank through a water shuttle, connecting parallel commercial streets running along the waterfront (Bank Street and Thames Street) and important streets running inland (New London's State Street, and Groton's connection to Fort Griswold, Fort Street)

RIDERS BOARDING THE WATER SHUTTLE AT GROTON BANK. For two weekends in September, 2014, the steering committee, with the support of the City and Town of Groton, the City of New London, the State of Connecticut, and others, ran a highly successful water taxi pilot, complete with temporary signage. For a full report, see the appendix volume of this report.

Protection (DEEP), Deputy Commissioner Kip Bergstrom of Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), and others on the concept and progress the planning effort.

In spring of 2014, the steering committee continued to meet to discuss specific aspects of the project and consider ways to advance the project. During this time the committee expanded to be more inclusive and diverse, especially as community interest in the project grew. In May 2014, legislators introduced and passed a state bill streamlining the process of moving the park forward.

In September, 2014 the project was publicly presented at a press conference at the Groton Monument as part of the remembrance of the Battle of Groton Heights. A two-weekend long pilot of the water taxi program, connecting New London, Groton and Fort Trumbull, complete with temporary heritage park signage, was run with great success. Boats ran continuously almost to capacity.

The final draft of this report was delivered in January, 2015.

HERITAGE PARK PROJECT HISTORY

The first mention of a heritage park centered on the Thames River appeared as early as 1966, when planners at the Southern Connecticut Regional Planning Agency proposed a “Marine Heritage Area” for Southeastern Connecticut in the pages of *Historic Preservation Magazine*. The concept arose out of a comprehensive planning process for the 516 square mile Southeastern Connecticut region, which identified the high density of important institutions, attractions and sites related to the history of American maritime culture in this area. Proposed to span from New London east to Stonington Borough, the heritage area would have included a variety of distinct sites illustrating different aspects of this areas 300 year long affiliation with the sea—of trading, fishing, whaling and ship building—including Fort Griswold, Mystic Seaport and Stonington Lighthouse.

It was not until 1987 that the state passed the Heritage Park System Act (Public Act 87-463), envisioning a statewide system of heritage areas focused on particular themes, and which would be educational and recreational resources for their community while also encouraging tourism. It was around this time that the federal government was also establishing its National



1988

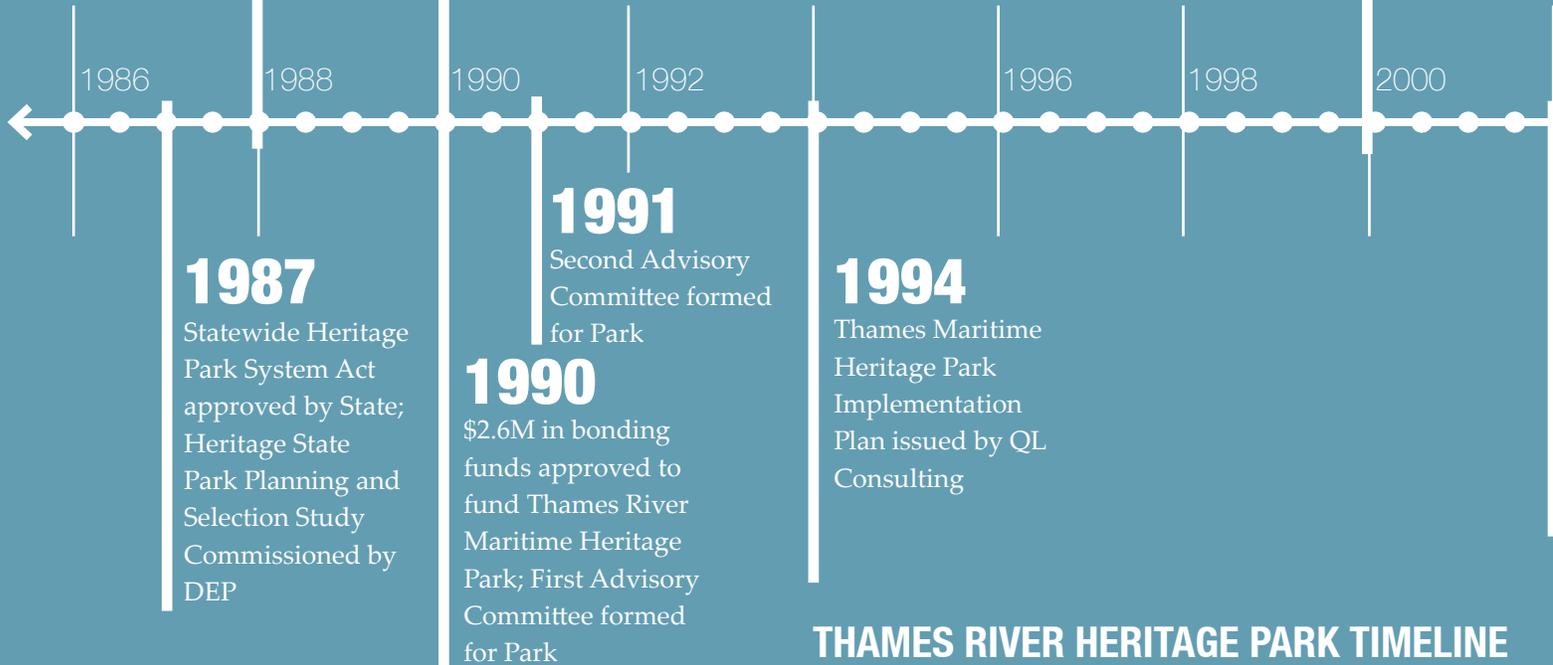
Final Heritage Park Plan issued and presented

Thames Estuary selected as model study area and more detailed planning commissioned



2000

Opening of Fort Trumbull State Park

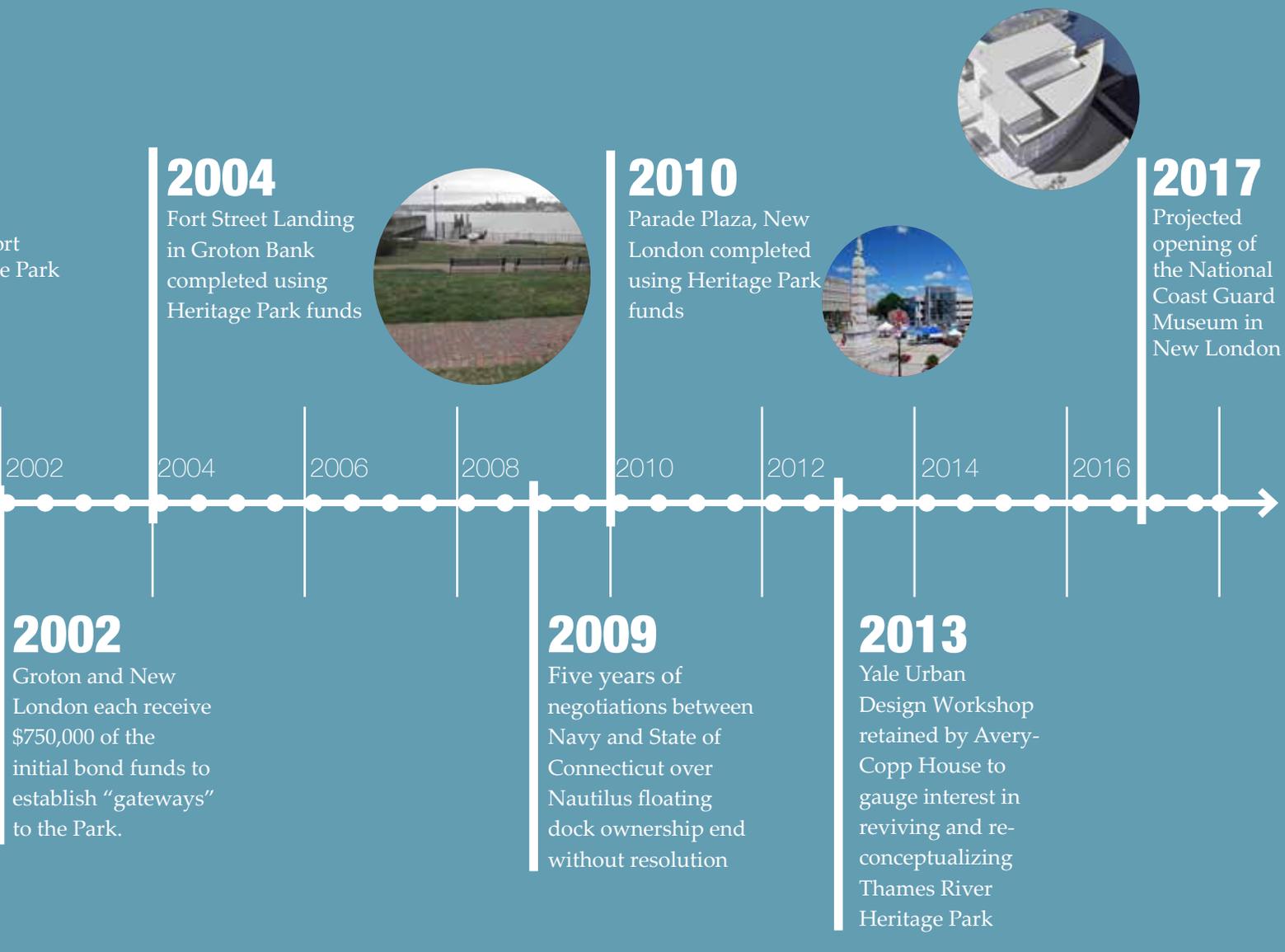


Heritage Area program within the National Parks Service, with the first area designated in 1984. Following a detailed planning period, the state identified the Thames estuary as a site of particular interest and national importance in the history of American maritime culture and designated it as a model study area for the system. The next year they initiated plans for the Thames River Maritime Heritage Park.

The park, as proposed in 1987, focused more narrowly on the Thames estuary, extending from the Submarine Force Museum in the north, south to the Ledge Light at the mouth of the river to Long Island Sound. To structure the park, an extensive water taxi system, connecting important points of interest on both sides of the river was coupled with new pedestrian and bicycle trails in Groton

and New London. A primary park visitors center with interpretative museum was proposed in downtown New London on the waterfront to anchor the operation, along with a new visitor center at Fort Griswold Battlefield State Park (Fort Trumbull was still a military installation at the time of the study).

In 1990, \$2.6 million in bond funds were allocated for the state park and an advisory committee consisting of 10 representatives of Groton and New London was formed to establish the boundaries of the park, its name, themes, and sites to be included. In 1991 a new advisory board replaced the first, and later an implementation plan was commissioned from QL Consulting of Lexington, Massachusetts with Tom Martin of Cambridge, Massachusetts. The report



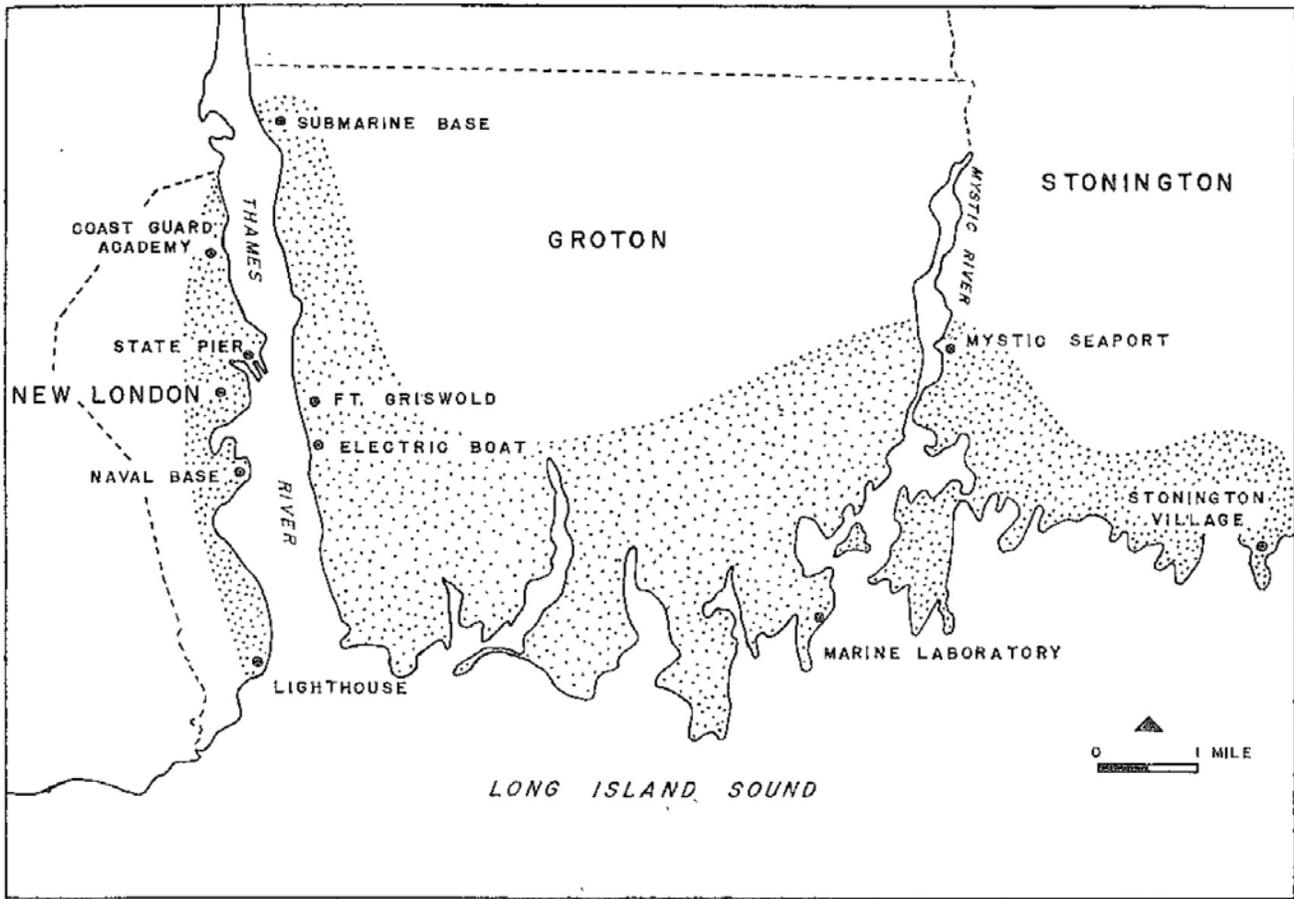
identified six strategic components to the park's execution: construction of an interpretation and visitors center, establishment of collaborations between local sites and attractions, development of new and expansion of existing attractions, creation of a management system for the park, implementation of a transportation concept, and finally, creation of a promotion and marketing campaign for tourists.

Parallel to this effort, the State was working to make Fort Trumbull into a new state park. Beginning in 1990, in a *Base Realignment and Closure Process*, the United States Navy merged their Naval Underwater Sound Laboratory, which had occupied Fort Trumbull since 1950, with the Naval Underwater Systems Center in Newport, Rhode Island, and began the base

closure process. Under the *Federal Parks to Lands Program*, 16 acres of the former facility was later transferred to the State of Connecticut for the creation of the park. By 2000, when Fort Trumbull State Park opened, the site had been cleared of most of its 20th century structures, and the imposing and well preserved granite structure of the fort itself, which had been hidden for the greater part of a century, was revealed.

Throughout the 1990's, the park advisory committee continued to meet and worked on advancing aspects of the heritage park.

Beginning in 1990, the group grappled with the location for the park visitors center. Unforeseen infrastructure costs and difficulty with DEP permitting associated with the original proposed



THE SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT MARINE HERITAGE AREA as proposed by the Southeastern Connecticut Regional Planning Agency in 1966 would have included much of the area along the coast from New London to Stonington.

(Image from "A Proposed Marine Heritage Area for Southeastern Connecticut, in *Historic Preservation*, Vol. 18, No. 1, Jan-Feb 1966, p. 31.)

site for the visitor center on the waterfront behind Union Station in New London, caused it to be set aside. A long search for a new site considered options around the New London Parade and elsewhere. Union Station was the last site to be officially considered by the advisory committee and much work was done with the assistance of DECD to promote the location, but protracted negotiations with the owner failed to procure the site.

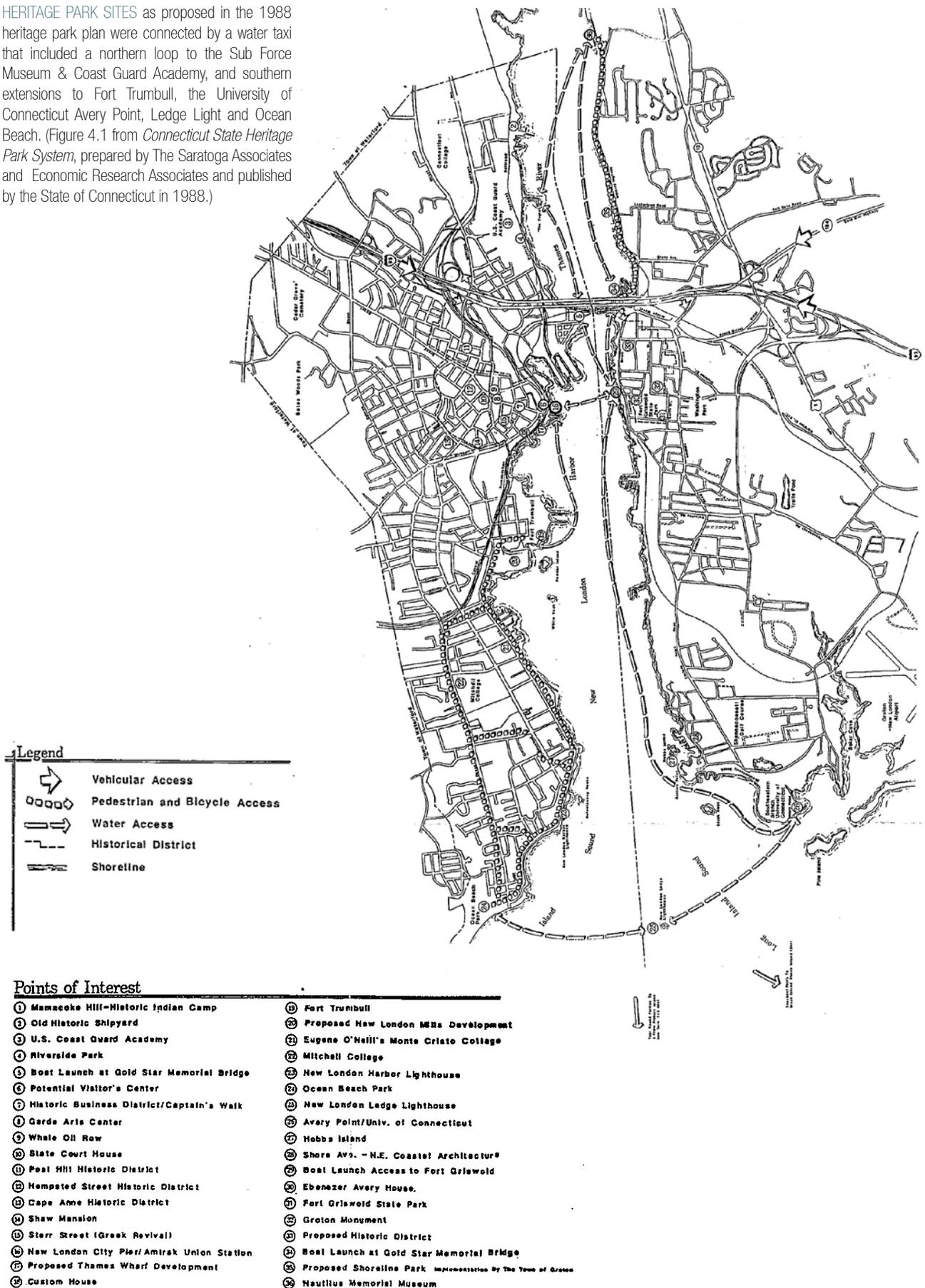
Work on the water taxi infrastructure continued. By 2004, the Fort Street Landing, a water taxi dock serving Groton Bank and Fort Griswold had been constructed. Water taxi docking facilities were also installed at Fort Trumbull State Park.

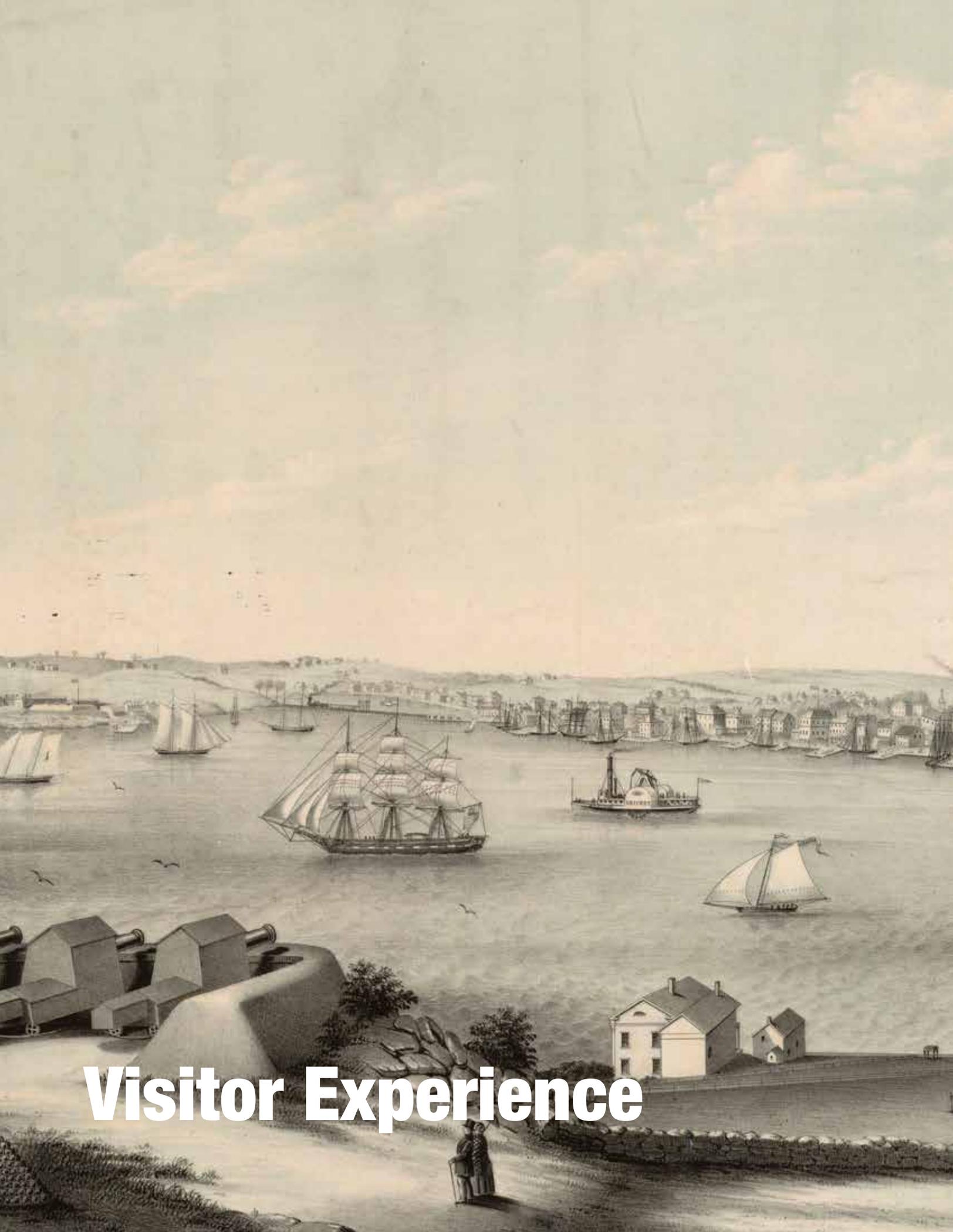
Beginning as early as 2004, the State of Connecticut

began to negotiate with the United States Department of the Navy over the placement and ownership of the floating dock that would give the water taxi access to the Submarine Force Museum and USS Nautilus. The state did not wish to gift the dock unconditionally to the Navy, but the navy was only willing or able to accept unconditional gifts. Discussions lasted for several years and around 2009 apparently petered out without a resolution.

Whatever the specifics, it is clear that despite the progress that had been made on the park, by this time, fatigue over the protracted implementation period had stalled the project. The remaining state funds allocated in 1990 were spent to support improvements to the New London Parade Plaza and conservation work on the Groton Monument.

HERITAGE PARK SITES as proposed in the 1988 heritage park plan were connected by a water taxi that included a northern loop to the Sub Force Museum & Coast Guard Academy, and southern extensions to Fort Trumbull, the University of Connecticut Avery Point, Ledge Light and Ocean Beach. (Figure 4.1 from *Connecticut State Heritage Park System*, prepared by The Saratoga Associates and Economic Research Associates and published by the State of Connecticut in 1988.)





Visitor Experience



03 Visitor Experience

The Thames River Heritage Park will be defined by two new structuring elements: a management overlay and new internal circulation infrastructure.

INTRODUCTION

As a collection of independent heritage institutions, sites, historic districts, and commercial areas, the Thames River Heritage Park's over-arching identity will be defined not by asking constituent institutions to conform to a larger image of the park, but instead by providing two new structuring elements that will redefine the relationship of the constituents to one another.

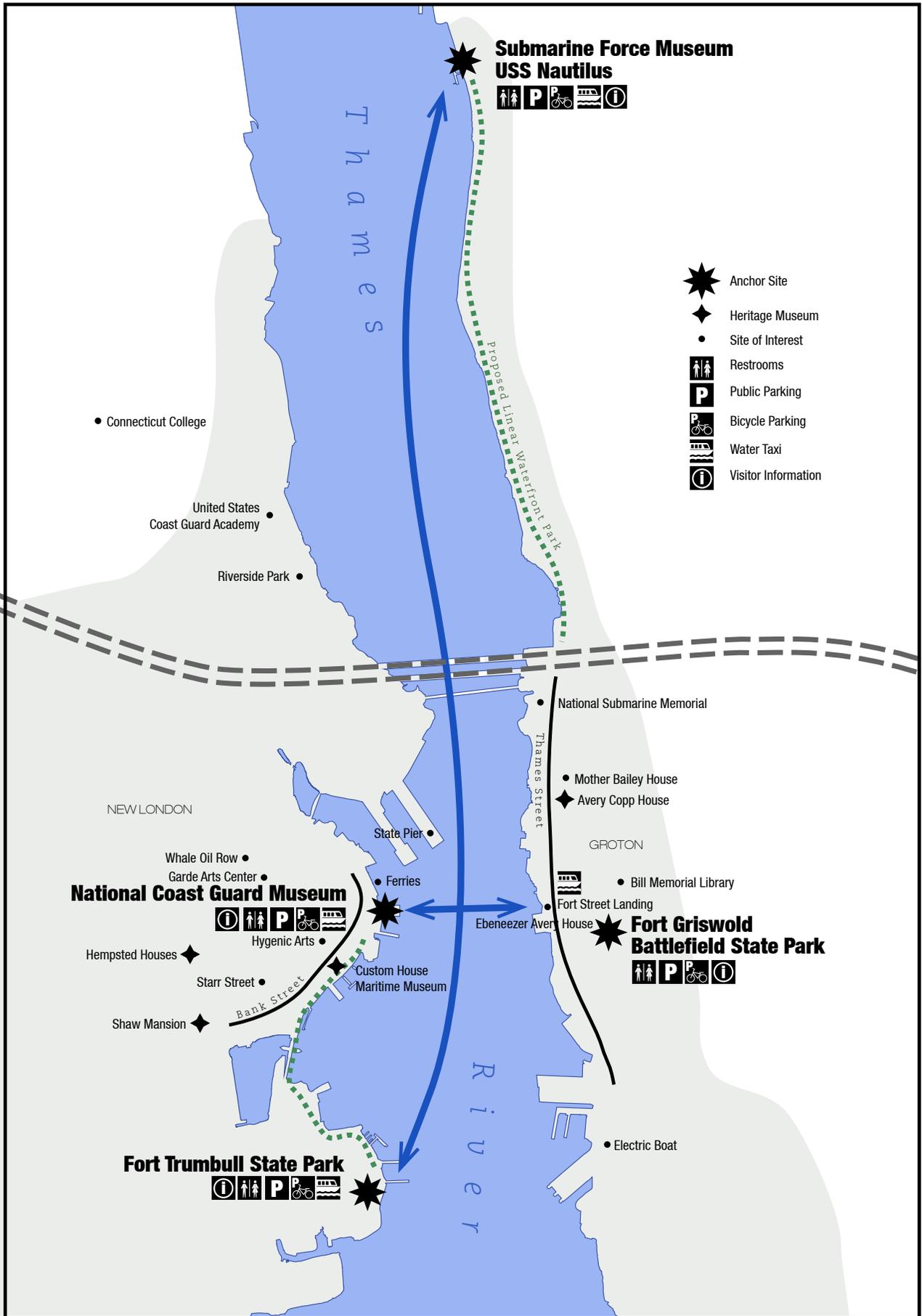
The first of these elements is a management overlay, providing coordination of schedules and programs between sites, and producing clear, consistent and accessible information and interpretation common throughout the Park. This management structure will be made visible to visitors through identifiable, characteristic and coordinated signage, graphics, information kiosks, websites, and mobile apps.

The second element will be a new internal coordinated circulation infrastructure, including enhanced pedestrian and bicycle access to and connection between the sites, a coordinated regional parking strategy, and a signature water taxi system linking both sides of the Thames, the four anchor sites, and providing a way for visitors to readily experience the space of the river itself.

The legibility of the park as a collective will largely depend on the deployment and continuing maintenance of these elements.

VIEW OF NEW LONDON FROM FORT GRISWOLD
CA. 1884 (previous pages) published by Holmes
& Co., and printed by E.C. Kellogg, Hartford,
Connecticut.

DIAGRAM OF THAMES RIVER HERITAGE PARK
(facing page) showing the relationship of the
four anchors with their visitor services, additional
heritage sites, water taxi connections, urban areas
and waterfront streets. Green dashed lines indicate
proposed waterfront connections between Groton
Bank and the Sub Museum and downtown New
London and Fort Trumbull.



ARRIVAL, ORIENTATION AND WAYFINDING

Unlike a conventional park experience with a single point of arrival and orientation at a visitor’s center (as the Heritage Park was originally envisaged), the Thames River Heritage Park will have multiple points of arrival. Each of the four anchor sites, including the National Coast Guard Museum, Submarine Force Museum, Fort Trumbull State Park, and Fort Griswold Battlefield State Park, will be a major site of arrival and orientation for the larger park, and should be equipped to introduce visitors to the Heritage Park and all it has to offer, while also providing basic visitor services like restrooms and parking.

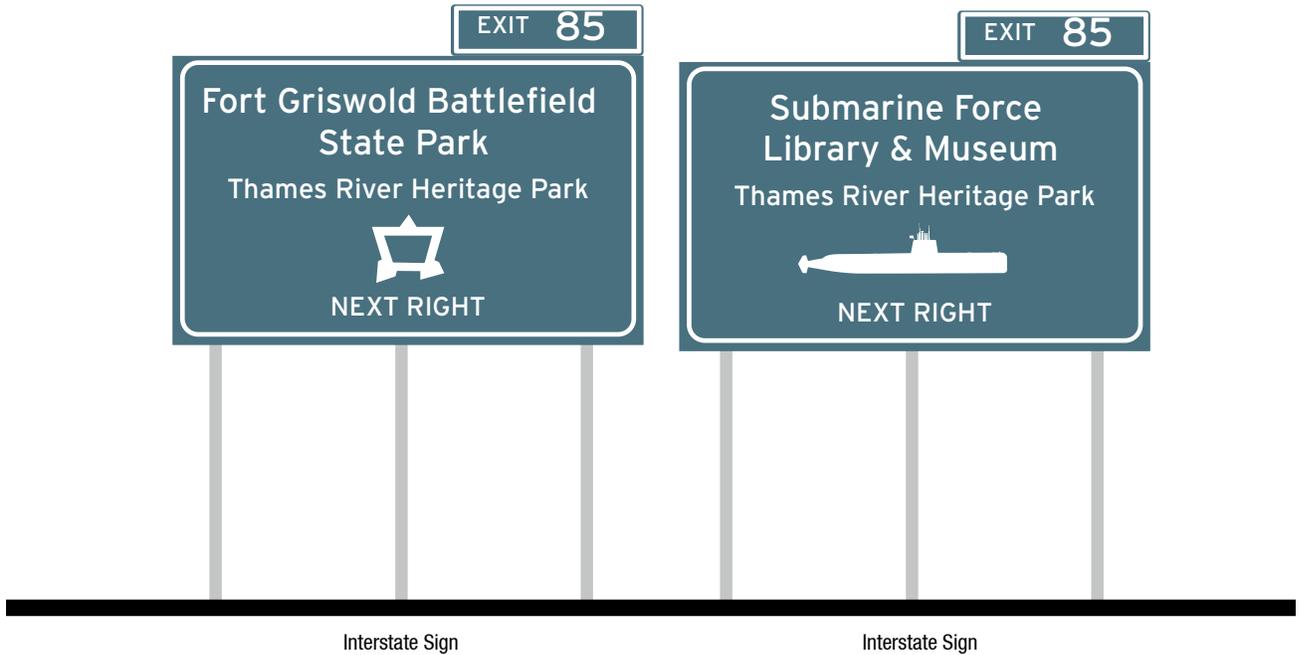
Initial Arrival and Orientation

For the foreseeable future, most visitors will continue to arrive in the Thames Region by private automobile from Interstate 95. A clear and coordinated automotive wayfinding signage system, with a distinct graphic identity, should

direct visitors beginning on the interstate to any of the anchor sites, or to satellite parking facilities. Once visitors have arrived they will be encouraged to leave their cars behind for the day and experience the park attractions, along with Groton Bank and downtown New London, by water shuttle and on foot. Comprehensive orientation and wayfinding signage should be provided at strategic locations adjacent to parking lots and near entries to the anchor sites. This type of signage should also be provided at the ferry landings and train station in downtown New London where visitors will also first arrive in the region.

Exterior signage at these initial arrival locations should include general information about the Heritage Park, how to find nearby points of interest, opening hours, and how to access the water shuttle service. These signs would also point visitors to online resources available through their own mobile devices. These electronic resources will provide more detailed information about each park site, including





Interstate Sign

Interstate Sign



Large Scale Local Automobile Sign
(End of Highway Ramp
or Regional Routes)

Medium Scale Local Automobile Sign
(Primary Local Routes)

Small Scale Automobile Sign
(Local Streets)

COORDINATED AND CLEAR AUTOMOTIVE SIGNAGE should lead visitors from Interstate 95 to one of the park's parking facilities. All signage should conform to an overall design concept which governs signage at every scale, producing a cohesive image for the heritage park as an entity which organizes the other sites.



background and interpretation, real time tracking information for the water shuttle, and perhaps even customizable itineraries and tie-ins with local restaurants, hotels and shops. Digital information could be updated regularly by park management without the need to physically visit each site and swap out displays.

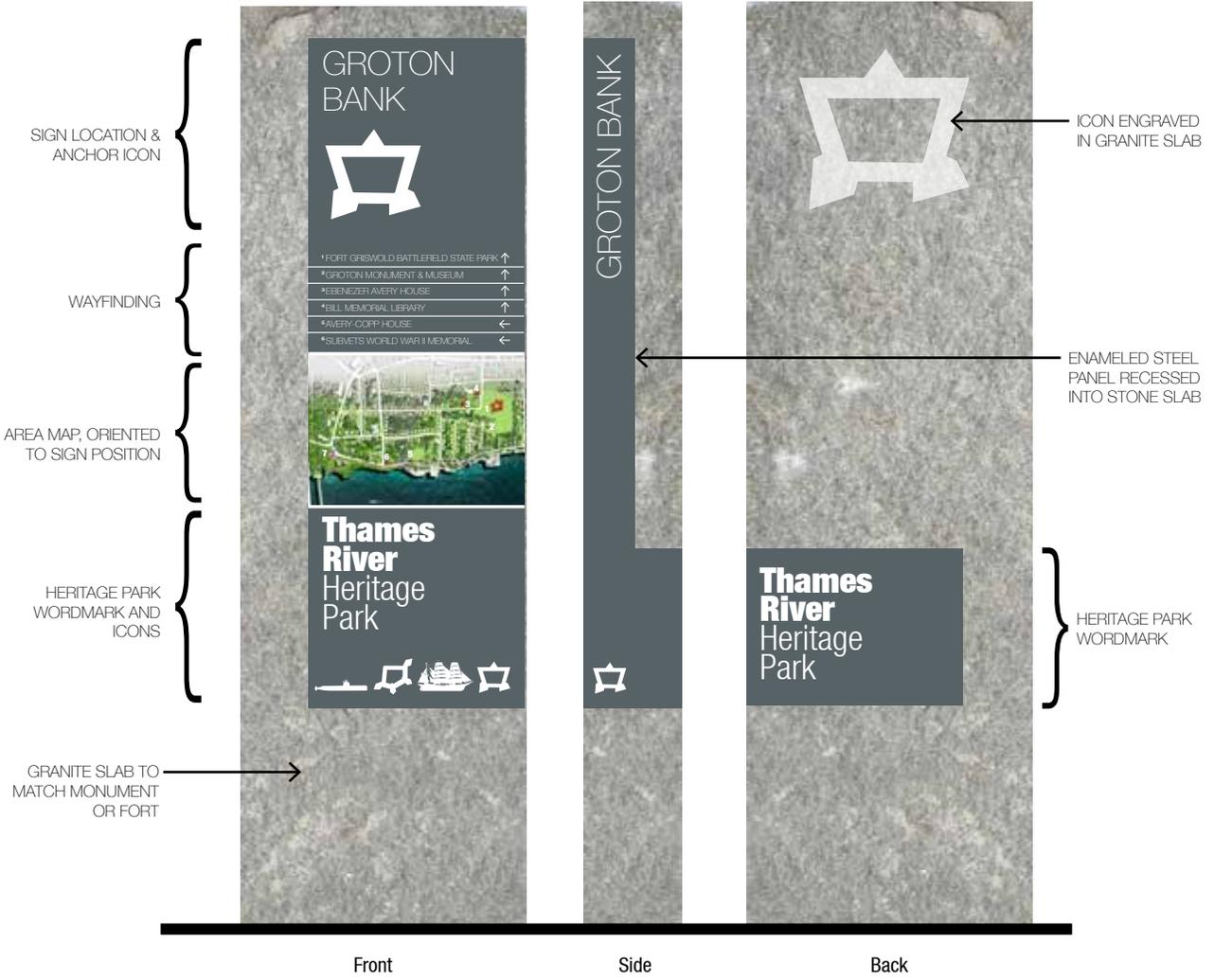
Online and digital orientation

Increasingly, online information presented through websites and mobile apps will orient many visitors to the Park's resources well before they arrive in the Thames region. Digital information could also be provided at physical locations through electronic kiosks, incorporating digital touch screen, which could be installed in the museums of the anchor sites, in the train station, and in tourist information centers north and south along the highway. Smaller electronic kiosks could be placed in member institution's museums or even in local businesses, incorporating inexpensive tablets like Apple ipads.

Secondary arrival and orientation points

The water shuttle landings will be important places to establish the identity and visibility of the Thames River Heritage Park, and will also be secondary points of arrival to the four major zones of the park: Groton Bank, downtown New London, the Submarine Museum and Fort Trumbull. Simple signature elements, such as repeated flags featuring the Heritage Park logo, would be visible both from the land and water, marking the location of these landing points. Local orientation and way-finding signage should be provided at each of the landing points, especially featuring a map of the local area. For local visitors who might arrive at the ferry landings by bicycle or on foot, orientation to the whole park, as well as how to use the water shuttle should also be included.

Visitors will be able to easily walk to the Park's other historical attractions such as the Avery-Copp House, Shaw Mansion or Hempsted Houses from the water shuttle landing. Clear, unobtrusive directional signage should be

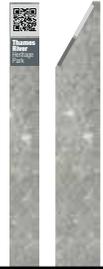




Gateway Marker



Horizontal Orientation & Wayfinding with Granite Support



QR Code Marker



Vertical Orientation & Wayfinding with Granite Support



Vertical Orientation & Wayfinding with Granite Support



Vertical Orientation & Wayfinding with Steel Support



Horizontal Orientation & Wayfinding with Steel Support

A SYSTEM OF PEDESTRIAN ORIENTATION AND WAYFINDING should provide consistent information throughout the region, and might incorporate local materials such as millstone granite.



MOBILE WAYFINDING AND ORIENTATION

Orientation and wayfinding will increasingly happen through GPS enabled, phone-based, mobile apps. Connecticut State Parks already has a well-developed mobile app which provides a great deal of information about its parks, including GPS based maps and visitor information, and the Heritage Park could take advantage of that established infrastructure. However, the development of an independent mobile app might offer greater flexibility in terms of content and functionality.

The use of Quick Response (QR) codes (matrix barcodes that can be read by a mobile device's camera) affixed to placards and signage within the park provides the opportunity to link mobile digital information to fixed physical locations. Things like opening hours, visitor's services, and especially extensive interpretative information could be linked to placard locations through QR.

A mobile app could be designed to include customizable itineraries, and could have ties with local businesses and restaurants. For instance, a visitor taking a walk around Fort Griswold could open the app, click on a button and have all local lunch places appear on a map, including user reviews.

Games such as geocaching could also be incorporated into a mobile app. Geocaching is a kind of digital treasure hunting game where participants search for hidden containers using GPS coordinates. The containers often contain a log, which the participant signs using a code name and returns, and they might also contain items to take away or trade. Within the park, a system of geocaches with collectable cards or other branded memorabilia could be developed providing a fun incentive to visit multiple sites, especially for younger visitors.

Thames River Heritage Park

Thames River Heritage Park

Thames River Heritage Park

Thames River Heritage Park

FORT GRISWOLD BATTLEFIELD STATE PARK

Thames River Heritage Park

SUBMARINE FORCE MUSEUM

Thames River Heritage Park

FORT TRUMBULL STATE PARK

Thames River Heritage Park

NATIONAL COAST GUARD MUSEUM

Thames River Heritage Park

FORT GRISWOLD BATTLEFIELD STATE PARK

Thames River Heritage Park

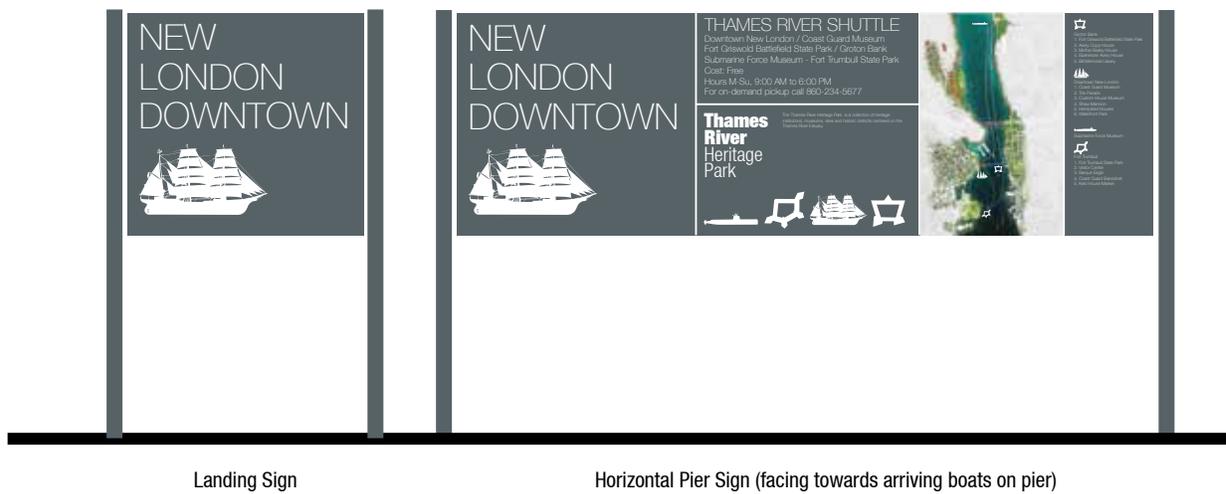
SUBMARINE FORCE MUSEUM

Thames River Heritage Park

FORT TRUMBULL STATE PARK

Thames River Heritage Park

NATIONAL COAST GUARD MUSEUM





provided along the route from the water shuttle landing to each of these sites. The sites themselves should have clearly identifiable signage.

THAMES RIVER WATER SHUTTLE

Within the Thames River Heritage Park, the primary means of circulating between anchor sites will be by a water shuttle system. In contrast to the current fragmentary and anemic experience of visiting sites on both sides of the river, characterized by the navigation of complicated access ramps and the highway bridge in a private car, the experience of moving between sites by boat will allow the visitor to see and comprehend the geography of the region from the dramatic vantage point of the water. Views of the sites will unfold and transform as the ferry moves along and across the Thames, making the transition between sites an integral and didactic part of the park experience, intimately related to the conception of the Park as being river-based.

Water shuttle background

As part of this planning process we examined water shuttle and taxi services in other American cities. Of the cities we looked at, including Fort Lauderdale, Baltimore, Miami, New York, Chicago, Seattle, Charleston, Washington DC, Boston and Oklahoma City, we found Charleston

and Baltimore to be the most analogous to the Thames area in both scale and structure.

Charleston Water Taxi

The Charleston Water Taxi (CWT) is run as a private tourist service, and its scale and the kind of anchors it connects are similar to the proposed Thames River Shuttle. CWT's primary route is a one way loop which connects Charleston Maritime Center and the Aquarium on the west bank of the Charleston Harbor with Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum (including an aircraft carrier and battleship museum) on the east. From there, the ferry runs back across the Harbor to the Waterfront Park / Charleston Historic district to the southwest, and then north along the shore, back to the Maritime Center.

A second summer-only, on-demand route runs up Shem Creek to access seafood restaurants, the fishing and shrimping fleet, and kayaking opportunities.

An all-day pass for CWT costs \$10 per person. The fleet consists of a single, 40' Corinthian Catamaran with a maximum capacity of 42, which makes the loop hourly. While the service is not supported by public dollars, the docking infrastructure is maintained with public funds.



PHASING OF WATER SHUTTLE SERVICE An initial phase of the water shuttle could simply link Groton Bank with the New London Historic Waterfront District (left image) or could link the four anchor sites, with the addition of Fort Trumbull and the Submarine Force Museum (middle image). A more extensive water shuttle service could link to universities and employers, like the Coast Guard Academy, Mitchell College, or Electric Boat.

Baltimore Water Taxi

Baltimore has two kinds of services, both of which are operated by a single company called Baltimore Water Taxi (BWT): a regular private service, and a service called the Harbor Connector supported by public funding. BWT's regular service runs seasonally and primarily serves tourists, making 17 stops and connecting many of the biggest waterfront tourist sites, including Aquarium, Harborplace, Science Center and Fort McHenry. Rides cost \$7 individually or an all-day pass can be purchased for \$12. In the summer boats run 7 days a week from morning to late evening to accommodate sightseeing as well as evening entertainment and dining.

The Harbor Connector is run by BWT under contract to the City of Baltimore, and is primarily a commuter service. It has two routes and makes 3 stops – Canton Waterfront Park, Tide Point and Maritime Park, and Runs M-F, 7am to 7pm. Riding the boat is free, but round trip rides are not allowed. The service is paid for by the city from city parking taxes and by donations from

employers who had previously operated their own commuter boats for the benefit of their workers. The annual budget for the two boat fleet, which runs year round, was \$297,000 in 2010. Two new boats were purchased by the city in 2010 using federal stimulus funds, and leased to the operator for \$1 a year.

Thames River Shuttle

The original Heritage Park implementation plan envisioned a privately run water taxi service which would operate without public support. After an initial establishment period of two years, DEP (now DEEP) reserved the right to negotiate a part of the profits based on performance.

For the successful long term implementation of a water shuttle system, finding a sustainable financial model on which to base the service will be critical – one which will allow the service to run at a loss as it passes through an establishment period that might last for several years. As in the examples above, a service might be provided either as a completely speculative venture, as a



publicly sponsored transit service, or as a hybrid of the two.

Speculative Model

In the speculative model, either the municipalities, state parks, or another designated agency or organization would issue an RFP for operators, and provide a general specification for the service, possibly including a maximum fare. It would be up to each bidder in his proposal to determine how the business of operating the ferry would work within that specification. In theory, the selected operator would then be able to “tune” the operations of the ferry in the first years of operation based on financial returns.

This kind of fully market-based approach may not provide the required break-in period for the service. The water taxi may need to run unprofitably in its initial years as people become aware of it and the Heritage Park itself becomes established. If the operator can't make a profit from the service in the short term he might try to reduce or curtail the service, or he might stop operating the service outright. There is a risk that this would be perceived by the local public as a failure of the project.

Public Model

In a purely public model, the agency in charge of the service would be able to set the schedule, route and fare irrespective of market demand. But there are also risks to the publicly funded model. With funding tied to state or municipal budgets, the possibility of the service being de-funded as a result of economic cycles or a perceived lack of use in the initial years of the service is likely.

Hybrid Model

A hybrid model, where a private operator runs the service and collects receipts, but also receives some kind of guaranteed subsidies from the state

or municipalities, might provide the best of both worlds. The subsidies might be given based on the guarantee of providing a particular route or schedule, and might be phased out over 3, 4 or 5 years, as the services becomes established over time. Other contributors could be identified to subsidize the service – it could be a branding opportunity for a company (like Electric Boat), or it could be subsidized by the state or Coast Guard Museum as part of a traffic management strategy that would allow visitors to the museum to park in satellite facilities outside of downtown New London.

The water shuttle will be one of the most important new elements of the Thames River Heritage Park, and it presents an important opportunity to express the identity of the park through color scheme and graphics on the boat itself, as well as through signage at each landing point. For more information on signage, see Arrival, Orientation and Wayfinding, at the beginning of this chapter.

INTERPRETATION

Detailed interpretation at each site will remain primarily the purview of the constituent institutions. But the park management framework will provide the opportunity to develop metanarratives for the region that could be presented online, through shared programming, through annual events, or through the development of primary and secondary educational curricula.

Sites and locations which are not actively managed, such as historic districts, individual houses, and other points of interest could be interpreted through a combination of new, coordinated signage and a mobile app or web site which might take advantage of geocoding technology or QR codes incorporated into the signage.

04

Areas, Anchors and Sites

The core of the Park consists of four important areas, each anchored by a major heritage site and linked by water shuttle. Two of these areas are more remote, while two are pedestrian-oriented urban zones which draw together many heritage sites with transportation, entertainment and commercial activities.

Within the Heritage Park framework, each area, anchor and site has an important role to play vis-a-vis the whole.

As primary destinations, anchors will serve as major attractors of visitors to the region. For many arriving in the Thames region for the first time, the anchors will be gateways to the Heritage Park, and will need to provide the necessary visitor services to support that function. This will include, as described in chapter 3, orienting visitors through visitor information kiosks and through the general knowledge of their staff, as well as providing practical things like restrooms.

Other heritage sites & institutions will add depth, density, diversity and interest to the Thames River region story, and will be attractors in their own right. In some cases they will also be primary destinations and should be able to orient visitors to Heritage Park resources. Accessed easily on foot from one of the water taxi landings, and in proximity to urban commercial areas, these institutions will develop shared interpretative materials and thematic programming that might extend through multiple sites throughout the region.

The anchors and heritage sites have an important role to play as proactive citizens in the neighborhoods that surround them, supporting and participating in preservation and redevelopment activities and contributing to the quality of the urban realm directly outside through their own maintenance and development.

The varied areas between and around these anchors and sites will be the setting and context within which heritage sites are understood,

THAMES RIVER HERITAGE PARK

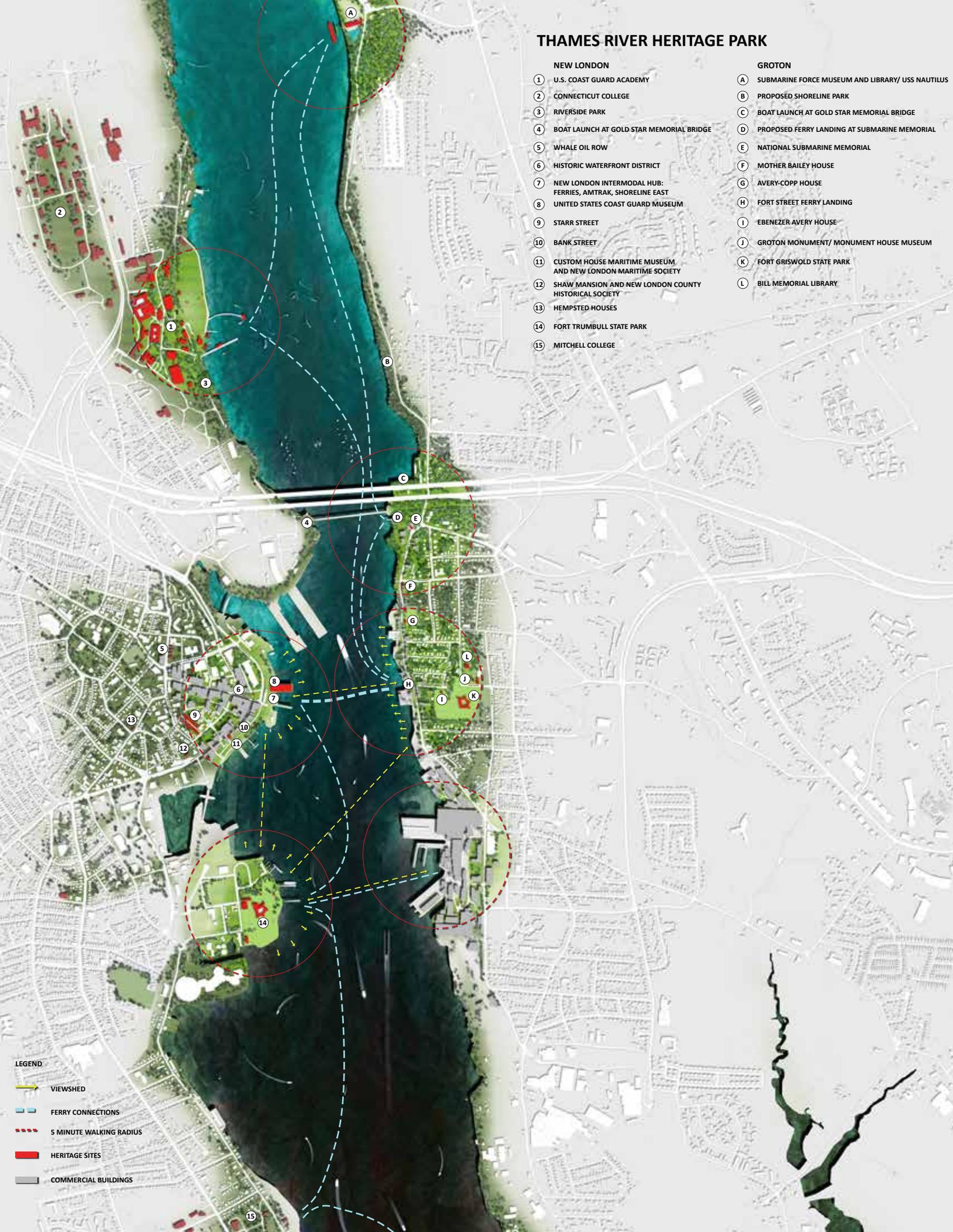
NEW LONDON

- ① U.S. COAST GUARD ACADEMY
- ② CONNECTICUT COLLEGE
- ③ RIVERSIDE PARK
- ④ BOAT LAUNCH AT GOLD STAR MEMORIAL BRIDGE
- ⑤ WHALE OIL ROW
- ⑥ HISTORIC WATERFRONT DISTRICT
- ⑦ NEW LONDON INTERMODAL HUB: FERRIES, AMTRAK, SHORELINE EAST
- ⑧ UNITED STATES COAST GUARD MUSEUM
- ⑨ STARR STREET
- ⑩ BANK STREET
- ⑪ CUSTOM HOUSE MARITIME MUSEUM AND NEW LONDON MARITIME SOCIETY
- ⑫ SHAW MANSION AND NEW LONDON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
- ⑬ HEMPSTED HOUSES
- ⑭ FORT TRUMBULL STATE PARK
- ⑮ MITCHELL COLLEGE

GROTON

- Ⓐ SUBMARINE FORCE MUSEUM AND LIBRARY/ USS NAUTILUS
- Ⓑ PROPOSED SHORELINE PARK
- Ⓒ BOAT LAUNCH AT GOLD STAR MEMORIAL BRIDGE
- Ⓓ PROPOSED FERRY LANDING AT SUBMARINE MEMORIAL
- Ⓔ NATIONAL SUBMARINE MEMORIAL
- Ⓕ MOTHER BAILEY HOUSE
- Ⓖ AVERY-COPP HOUSE
- Ⓗ FORT STREET FERRY LANDING
- Ⓘ EBENEZER AVERY HOUSE
- ⓵ GROTON MONUMENT/ MONUMENT HOUSE MUSEUM
- ⓶ FORT GRISWOLD STATE PARK
- ⓷ BILL MEMORIAL LIBRARY

- LEGEND**
-  VIEWSHED
 -  FERRY CONNECTIONS
 -  5 MINUTE WALKING RADIUS
 -  HERITAGE SITES
 -  COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS



providing a range of experiences for visitors, including vivid cultural and natural landscapes like the Thames River itself, and historic urban streets and neighborhoods, while giving access to contemporary local arts, transportation, lodging, shopping, food, and entertainment. Much of the economic development benefits derived from park activities will occur in these spaces between sites through careful public and private investment. Municipal and state government should, wherever possible, use all the tools at their disposal to create an environment which encourages the continuing heritage-based redevelopment of these areas as historic, vibrant areas.

Four Areas

Of the four areas in the Heritage Park, Fort Trumbull State Park and the Submarine Force Museum are more remote sites where the anchor is the primary destination, but which also give immediate direct access to, and views of, the Thames River landscape. The greatest challenge for these sites as parts of the Heritage Park will be connecting them to the whole. Introduction of the water shuttle will make a big difference in this respect, but other connections should also be sought, including better pedestrian and bicycle connections between the New London Historic Waterfront District and Fort Trumbull, and between the Submarine Force Museum and Groton Bank.

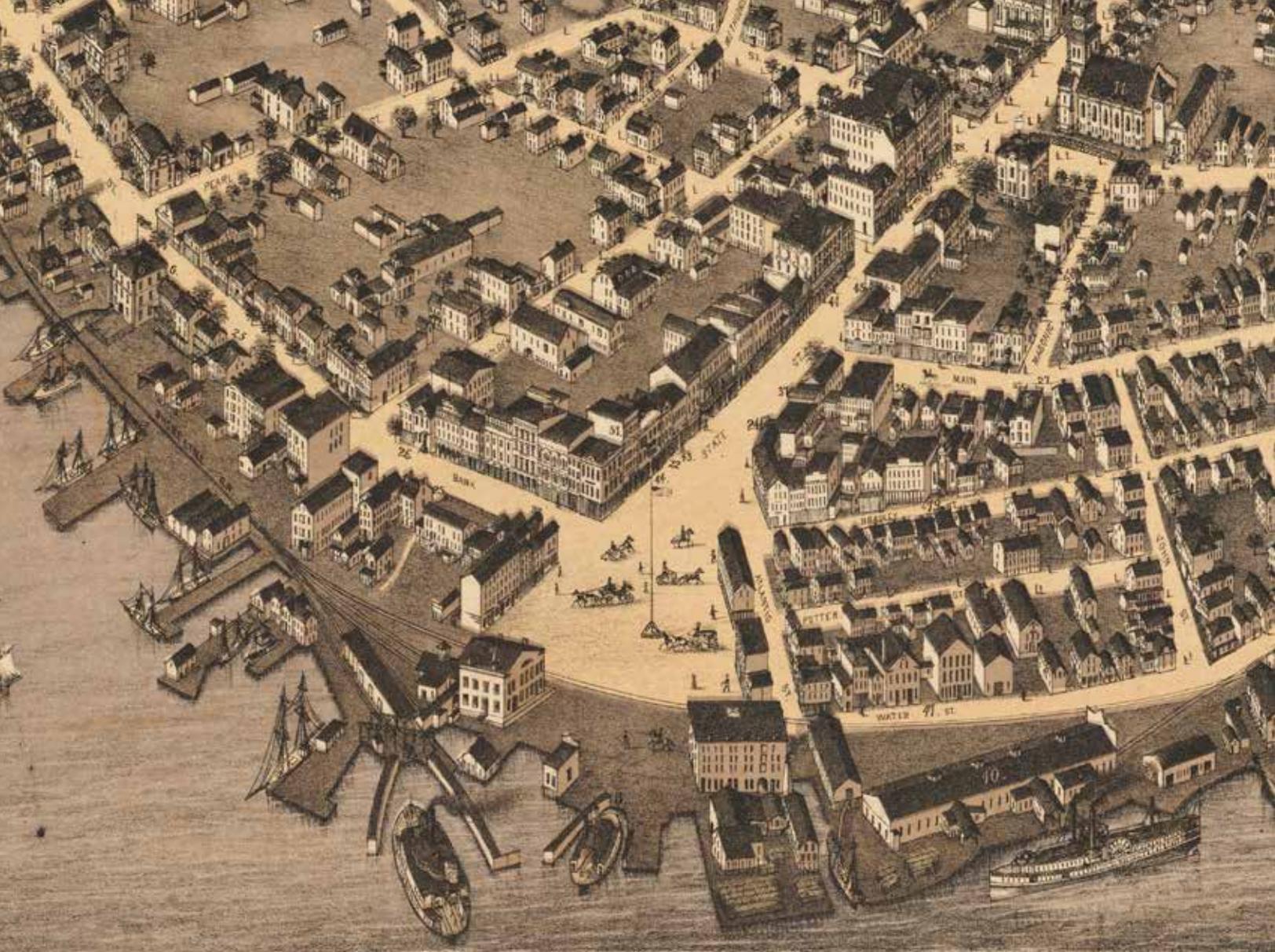
The other two areas, the New London Historic Waterfront District and Groton Bank, are distinctive and different urban zones, each with its own anchor, but which also draw together other important heritage sites with historic neighborhoods, architecture, shopping, dining, commerce, and entertainment, to produce a rich, vivid, and layered experience. For Groton Bank, the greatest challenges include providing better access to and interpretation at Fort Griswold

Battlefield State Park, and the biggest opportunity is the redevelopment of Thames Street as a vibrant, active, water-oriented, historic commercial area. For the New London Waterfront District, the greatest challenges will be accommodating the new Coast Guard Museum and mitigating its associated traffic and parking demands, and the greatest opportunity, continuing to encourage the increasingly successful, but still fragile, redevelopment of Bank and State Streets.

For both of these urban areas, traffic and parking are major issues - in the case of Groton Bank, little parking exists along the waterfront and Thames Street is a narrow street with high speed traffic. For New London, high summer demand created by the Coast Guard Museum will necessitate new parking solutions. As a regional parking strategy, the water shuttle system, in combination with satellite parking areas, could alleviate these seasonal spikes in demand without putting new parking lots or garages in critical urban areas better redeveloped as pedestrian-oriented.

NEW LONDON WATERFRONT DISTRICT

Within the Heritage Park, the New London Waterfront District has the highest concentration of heritage sites, including the Nathan Hale Schoolhouse, Hempsted Houses, Custom House Museum, Garde Arts Center, Shaw Mansion, and Hygienic Art Park connected by attractive and vibrant commercial areas, including those along Thames and Bank Streets. Historic architecture, such as the well preserved 19th century Greek revival houses on Starr Street as well as those on Whale Oil Row, the H.H. Richardson train station, and the attractive New London Parade Plaza and associated 20th century commercial

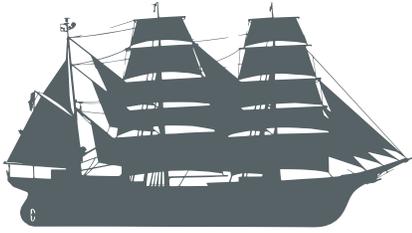


NEW LONDON'S BANK AND STATE STREETS CONVERGED IN THE PARADE which originally opened up directly to the river, connecting the city to ferries and other river and ocean transportation (detailed of *New London 1876* published by O.H. Bailey & Co., Boston, Mass; Source: Wikimedia)

buildings, provide glimpses into various periods of the city's rich history. As the site of the future National Coast Guard Museum, and as the regional transportation hub where ferries from Fishers Island and Long Island come together with Amtrak and Shoreline East trains, downtown New London will be where many regional visitors will begin their visit to the Thames River Heritage Park.

National Coast Guard Museum

The National Coast Guard Museum (NCGM), projected for completion in 2018, will anchor the New London Waterfront District. It will be the Coast Guard's premier museum, of national importance, designed and programmed to celebrate the history and accomplishments of the US Coast Guard, to honor the men and women who have served, and to illustrate the Coast Guard's current maritime missions to protect, secure, and steward the coastal areas of the United States. With projected visitation of up to



New London Waterfront District

HERITAGE SITES:

1. NATIONAL COAST GUARD MUSEUM (ANCHOR - FUTURE)
2. USCG EAGLE (FUTURE LOCATION)
3. NATHAN HALE SCHOOLHOUSE
4. GARDE ARTS CENTER
5. HYGIENIC ART
6. CUSTOM HOUSE MARITIME MUSEUM / LIGHTHOUSE TOURS
7. SHAW MANSION
8. HEMPSTED HOUSES
9. STARR STREET
10. WHALE OIL ROW

SHOPPING, RESTAURANTS AND HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE:

11. BANK STREET
12. STATE STREET

TRANSPORTATION:

- A. UNION STATION / AMTRAK TRAINS / SHORELINE EAST
- B. FISHERS ISLAND FERRY
- C. LONG ISLAND FERRIES
- D. STATE PIER
- E. PARKING
- F. THAMES RIVER SHUTTLE LANDING



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GOVERNOR WINTHROP BOULEVARD

UNION STREET

EUGENE O'NEILL DRIVE

WATER STREET

JAY STREET

HUNTINGTON STREET

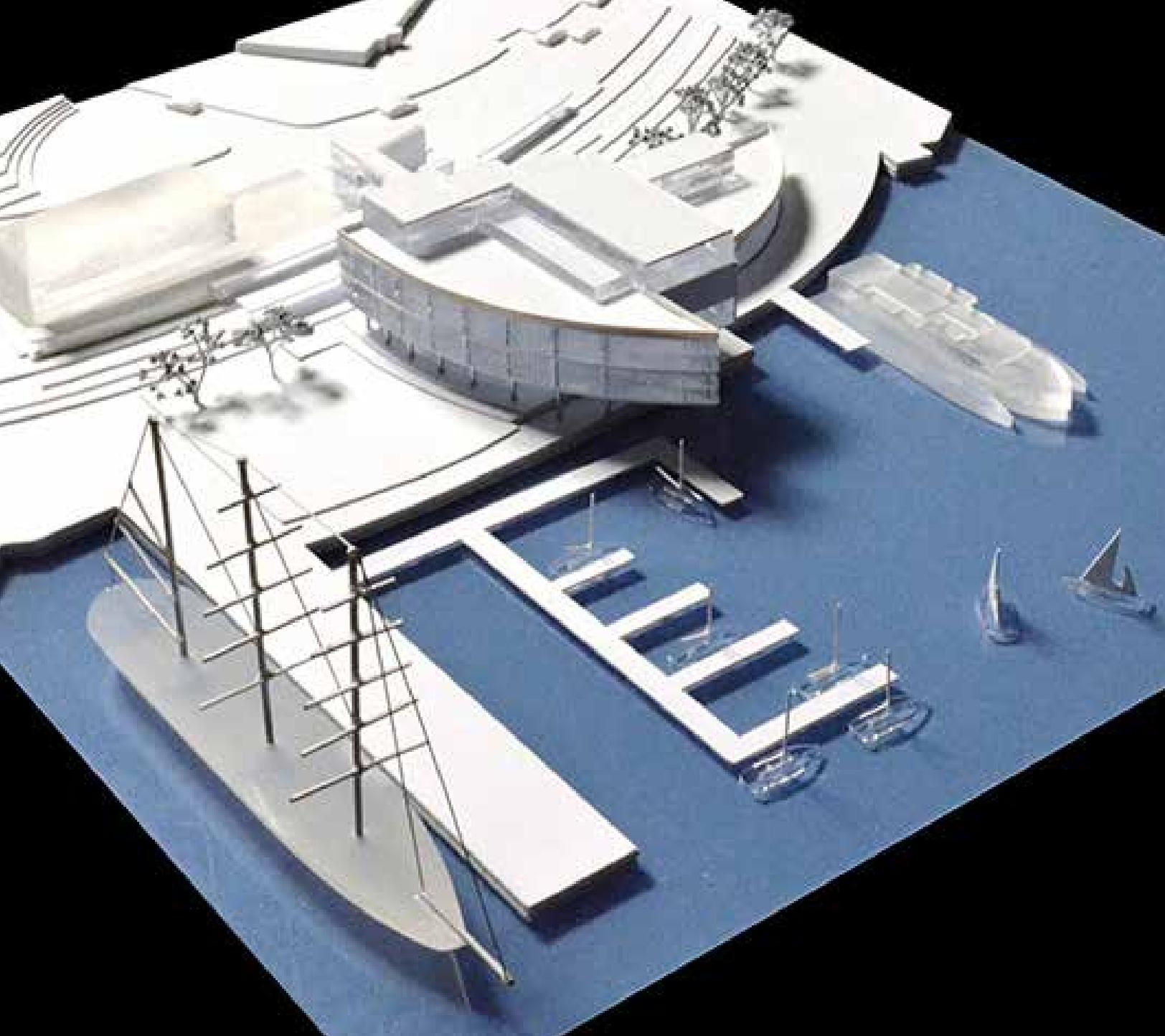
WASHINGTON STREET

TILLEX STREET

BANK STREET

STATE STREET

WATER STREET



500,000 patrons, the Museum has the potential to become the second-most visited attraction in the region, falling just behind the Mystic Aquarium.

The Coast Guard has a long association with New London. For much of the 20th century the Coast Guard maintained training facilities in New London, first at Fort Trumbull, and after its completion in 1930, at the Coast Guard Academy in the northern part of the city.

The museum's key location in downtown New

London, adjacent to the multi-modal hub and within walking distance of downtown parking, restaurants, shops and Waterfront Park, make it a key anchor within the Thames River Heritage Park, where it will serve as a principal gateway. The museum should provide visitor services for the park, including information and orientation through signage and staff.

The NCGM will also be a primary point of access for the water shuttle system, which will dock at the adjacent City Pier. Visitors to the museum will enjoy easy access on the shuttle to other



NATIONAL COAST GUARD MUSEUM (facing page) as proposed will be constructed on the waterfront adjacent to the multi-modal hub, and the USCG training ship, the Eagle, will be tied up at city pier when not at sea.

NEW LONDON WATERFRONT PARK (above) currently terminates just north of Shaw's Cove, a stone's throw from Fort Trumbull peninsula.

regional park sites, remote parking, and vice versa.

One of the most pressing issues faced by the National Coast Guard Museum and the City of New London is the dramatic increase in demand for parking, and the potential number of new downtown automobile trips that will be generated as a result of the museum's location. The recent Environmental Assessment prepared for the Coast Guard by URS Group, Inc. in March 2014, projects about 2,500 visitors on an average summer weekend day, requiring around 325 parking spots, including staff parking. During frequent summer events such as Op Sail / Schooner Festival, that number will be dramatically higher. Creating a system of distributed parking reservoirs connected to the Thames River Water Shuttle would allow visitors to the Coast Guard Museum to park elsewhere and take the water shuttle to the museum.

New London Waterfront Park

The National Coast Guard Museum will also

have direct access to Waterfront Park along the Thames River, which runs south along the river's edge. This park provides the longest unbroken stretch of visual access to the Thames River waterfront (and spectacular views of its active harbor life, including Electric Boat across the river), but currently terminates just north of the railway bridge across Shaw's Cove, leading to Fort Trumbull. As proposed elsewhere, a pedestrian and bicycle bridge leading from the end of the waterfront park to Fort Trumbull could further enrich and strengthen the experience of a visit to New London - providing the ability of visitors to the National Coast Guard Museum to access the historic home of the Coast Guard at the fort on foot, even in the off season when the water shuttle is not running. Such a bridge might also encourage redevelopment of the rest of the Fort Trumbull peninsula, which has stood fallow since the neighborhood there was controversially demolished in the 2000's.

Waterfront Park currently terminates just behind the train station. Extension of the park north in the form of a boardwalk and trails could also better connect the New London Historic Waterfront District to State Pier, where small cruise ships occasionally come to dock (and might more often), to the Old Town Mill, another interesting heritage site which is currently difficult to access except by car, and beyond to Riverside Park and the U.S. Coast Guard Academy north of the Goldstar Bridge. Such a trail could also be tied into improved pedestrian and bicycle access across the Goldstar Bridge itself, which currently exists only on the north side of the north span of the bridge, accessed in a convoluted way from Williams Street. Access along the south side of the south span could be connected to downtown New London and Groton Bank to the east, and would also provide an impressive and dramatic vantage point of the whole Thames Estuary.

Recommendations:

» Support the establishment of the National Coast Guard Museum in downtown New London; Establish collaborative agreements with the Museum to function as a primary anchor and gateway to the Thames River Heritage Park.

- » Create a permanent Thames River Water Shuttle landing for the New London Waterfront District on City Pier.
- » Develop a regional parking strategy that takes advantage of the water shuttle system to mitigate the impact of seasonal traffic and parking demand in downtown New London.
- » Support continuing redevelopment efforts on State and Bank Streets, as water oriented, historic, walkable, mixed use streets.
- » Plan the extension of Waterfront Park south to Fort Trumbull via pedestrian and bicycle bridge, and north to the Old Town Mill, Riverside Park, the Coast Guard Academy and perhaps further.
- » Establish better bicycle and pedestrian connections between downtown New London and Groton Bank via the Goldstar Bridge. Consider establishing new pedestrian and bicycle access to the bridge's south span to improve connectivity and provide a dramatic vantage point on the Thames estuary, Groton and New London.

GROTON BANK

As Groton's counterpart to New London Historic Waterfront District, Groton Bank is both less dense and less developed, but equally interesting. Thames Street, which runs parallel to the River, served historically as Groton Bank's main street. An attractive and historic neighborhood of early American 18th and 19th century houses, many of which were the homes of sailors and ship's captains involved in maritime industry, stand on the hill above with dynamic views of the harbor. Nestled right into this neighborhood at the top of the bank stands a dramatic ensemble of sites including the Fort Griswold Battlefield State Park with its earthen fortifications and Revolutionary War monument, the Monument House Museum,

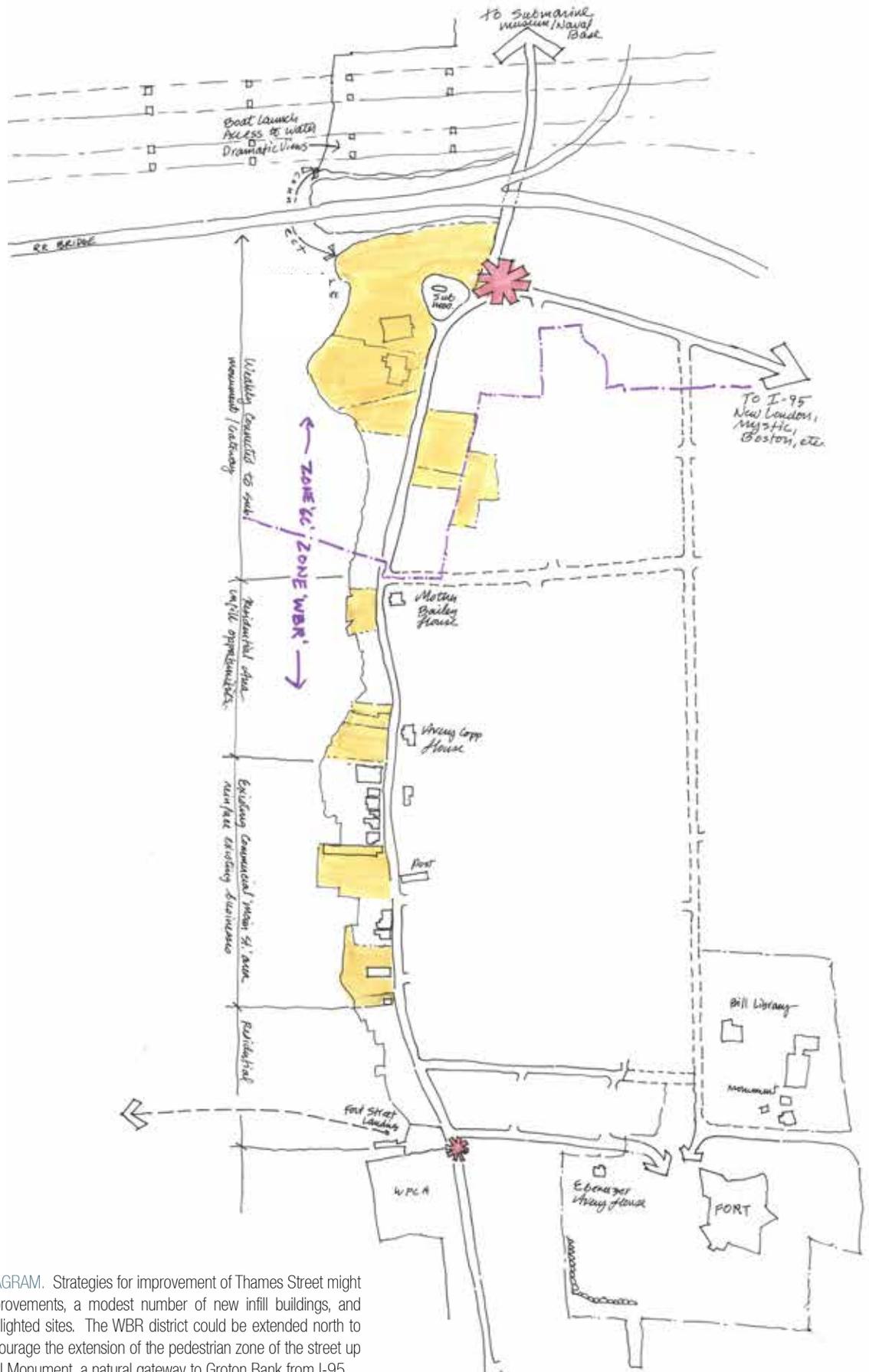
the Bill Memorial Library, and the Ebenezer Avery House. Along Thames Street north of Fort Street stand other heritage sites including the Avery-Copp House, the Mother Bailey House (recently acquired by the City of Groton), and the Subvets WWII Memorial.

As an asset, Fort Griswold is poorly connected and difficult to access, under interpreted and under-marketed. Improvement of the fort as a premier destination within the Heritage Park could provide some of the necessary critical mass to spur the redeveloping Thames Street below as a lively, pedestrian friendly, mixed use area that orients itself simultaneously to the neighborhood above and the river below - in some ways a Groton version of New London's Bank Street.

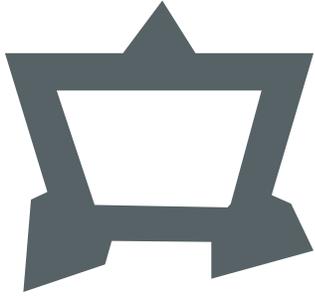
Thames Street

Today Thames Street has great potential to become a regional destination but suffers from rapid traffic moving between I-95 and points south (like Electric Boat) and from limited parking capacity to support businesses. While a few businesses have managed to take hold and thrive on Thames, a targeted redevelopment strategy including facade improvements, preservation and reuse of existing historic buildings, along with a modest amount of selective demolition and redevelopment of blighted sites and construction of new infill buildings could transform the Street physically and economically. The current renovation of the street and sidewalks by the city promise a more attractive, comfortable and safe street, and is a good first step. But for Thames Street to become a regional destination, more development is needed and better connections to the region are necessary.

As a regional transit system, the water shuttle has the potential to bring new patrons and visitors to Thames Street without the need for additional parking, potentially serving both area residents



GROTON BANK DIAGRAM. Strategies for improvement of Thames Street might include facade improvements, a modest number of new infill buildings, and redevelopment of blighted sites. The WBR district could be extended north to bridge street to encourage the extension of the pedestrian zone of the street up to the Subvets WWII Monument, a natural gateway to Groton Bank from I-95.



Groton Bank

ANCHOR: 1. FORT GRISWOLD BATTLEFIELD STATE PARK

HERITAGE SITES AND INSTITUTIONS:

2. AVERY-COPP HOUSE
3. EBENEZER AVERY HOUSE
4. MOTHER BAILEY HOUSE
5. BILL MEMORIAL LIBRARY
6. MONUMENT HOUSE MUSEUM
7. SUBVETS WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL

SHOPPING, RESTAURANTS AND HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE:

8. THAMES STREET

TRANSPORTATION:

- A. THAMES RIVER WATER TAXI



- 7
- 4
- 2
- 8
- 5
- 6
- 3
- 1

BRIDGE STREET
THAMES STREET
CHURCH STREET
SPICER AVENUE
BROAD STREET
PARSONS STREET
MERIDIAN STREET
SCHOOL STREET
PLEASANT STREET
NONNANT STREET
LATHAM STREET
FORT STREET
THAMES STREET
PARK AVENUE
SOUTH STREET
BAKER AVENUE

A



NARROW, LIVELY COMMERCIAL STREETS in Annapolis, MD (above, left) and the Borough of Stonington, CT (above, right) have a sense of activity and interest produced by signage, flags, differentiated but compatible architecture, and cars.



THAMES STREET (facing page, top) has wonderful historic architecture and a sense of intricacy, but rapid traffic and uneven street front development detract from its experience. GROTON RIVERFRONT (facing page, bottom). Revitalization along the water side of Thames Street should take advantage of the double orientation of fronts towards the street and backs opening up onto decks, terraces, and docks on the river.

(coming from New London to have dinner in Groton Bank) and tourists to the region who might begin their visit at another site but then make their way to Groton Bank for lunch, ice cream, or a visit to one of the heritage sites.

Thames Street, between Fort Street (where the water shuttle will land and where access to the Fort is provided) and the mother Bailey House at the corner of Broad Street, has a distinctive and attractive urban character defined by historic houses on the upland side and commercial and some residential development on the river side. While the historic architecture on the river side should be preserved, selective redevelopment of blighted and empty sites on the river bank over time with mixed-use residential and commercial buildings of appropriate character and scale would reinforce Thames Street's identity.

Any renovation or new construction on the water side of Thames Street should have a double orientation - doors to the street but opening through to decks, terraces and dock structures

to take advantage and open up to the river. Surface parking lots on the waterfront should be discouraged, with parking instead taking advantage of the change in grade by being tucked underneath new buildings with their front doors on Thames Street.

The narrowness of Thames Street has been understood as a limiting factor in its revitalization. But examples abound both locally and nationally where the narrowness of an important commercial street produces the sense of a rich, dense urban intimacy. Places like the Borough of Stonington, CT, Annapolis, MD, Nantucket, MA, and Eureka Springs, AK all have examples of commercially successful destination streets not much wider than Thames Street. In all these areas, cars add to the sense of vibrancy, but move slowly and carefully through the crowded pedestrian-oriented areas. On Thames Street, a combination of alternative through- routes and traffic calming strategies beginning at Bridge Street should be employed to increase pedestrian safety and comfort and reinforce the street's





character as a neighborhood main street, not a regional through route.

Today, the viable pedestrian urban experience of Thames Street ends somewhere around the Mother Bailey house at Broad Street, where the development further north changes character, becoming more fragmented, suburban and industrial. This area presents a real opportunity for redevelopment as higher density, low rise, mixed-use waterfront buildings to create a continuous urban experience along the entire length of Thames. The current shift in zoning from WBR to GC which occurs at Broad Street should be carefully re-examined and perhaps modified to support an appropriate redevelopment process all the way up to Bridge Street and the Subvets WWII Memorial, which should be a natural gateway for the street.

Along most of Thames Street, sites are restricted in size so as to severely limit on-site parking capacity, and the narrow width of Thames Street itself restricts on-street parallel parking. Open

SUBVETS WWII MEMORIAL lacks dedicated parking and is located amid incompatible surroundings. LATHAM STREET (facing page) is one of the few direct connections between Thames Street and the Fort, and could be upgraded to improve pedestrian safety and comfort.

sites available for surface parking are generally right on the waterfront, creating unattractive gaps in the urban fabric and detracting from the character of the area (for example the surface lot next to Puffin's Restaurant across from the Avery-Copp House). Integrating lower level parking to take advantage of the steep gradient between Thames Street and the river would improve the situation somewhat, but a new, consolidated satellite parking facility, perhaps located somewhere at the north end of Thames Street, has the greatest potential to create a large shared reservoir of parking to serve the whole region. As part of a new gateway to Groton Bank, an attractive satellite parking area with access to the water shuttle would encourage visitors to leave their cars and experience the region by boat and on foot, and could be incorporated into the lower



level of a mixed use development with water oriented commercial and residential above.

By attaching this parking reservoir to the water shuttle system, it could provide much needed additional capacity for the whole system. Close to the exit ramps of I-95, visitors to the region could easily find their way to this parking site and from there could walk, take a water shuttle, or bicycle to other parts of the Heritage Park and region. A phased strategy might involve installing a water shuttle landing and utilizing surface parking as a first step.

All public parking in Groton Bank should be clearly indicated, with directional signage that begins at the I-95 exit ramps, and with stated rules about access.

As part of a gateway to Groton Bank, the area surrounding the Subvets WWII Memorial should be improved through landscape, lighting and paving. Currently the memorial has no parking of its own and sits amid inappropriate

surrounding, though it does have dramatic views of the bridge.

Avery-Copp House

One of the primary roles to be played by heritage sites within their local context, beyond being active participants in local planning processes, and advocating for appropriate heritage-based redevelopment, is to contribute to the quality of the exterior urban realm through the improvement and upkeep of their facades, landscaping, sidewalks, signage, and access points. For instance, the Avery-Copp house has done an excellent job maintaining the quality of their buildings, and through the dense but naturalized planting of daffodils throughout their property have produced an attractive and unusual landscape that causes people to pause and admire. Other opportunities for the Avery-Copp to contribute to Thames Street might include upgrading their sidewalk fence with a more permanent and appropriate one, redeveloping their entry to be ADA accessible



6

4

5

Monument Street

7

3

2

Latham Street

Fort Street

Thames Street

1

Fort Griswold Improvements (facing page)

1. Thames River Water Shuttle landing
2. New park gateway at the head of Fort Street
3. Accessible pathway system connecting to Fort Street and Monument Street entries
4. Existing School redeveloped as Revolutionary War Museum / park visitor center / community center
5. New amphitheater for performances and events
6. New consolidated mid-block parking lot serving Bill Memorial Library, Fort Griswold & Thames River Heritage Park
7. New stairs and switchback ramps to provide better pedestrian access at the top of Latham Street.

from Thames Street, and developing new, attractive signage that clearly indicates opening hours. Another project might involve a restoring and restarting the granite spring head once used for watering horses on Thames Street. These kinds of improvement projects are examples that may apply to any number of heritage sites in the region.

Mother Bailey House

The late 18th century historic house at 108 Thames Street, once occupied by Anna Warner Bailey (often known as “Mother Bailey”), a local Revolutionary War heroine, was purchased by the City of Groton in 2010. Historical restoration of the property and opening as a Groton Bank heritage site will provide additional density to the Revolutionary War story in Groton, and will draw foot traffic north along Thames Street. As the house is redeveloped from a private residence and its ultimate use and function is determined by the city, its potential role as a feature of interest on Thames Street, and as an additional heritage site for Groton Bank should be carefully considered.

Fort Griswold Battlefield State Park

Fort Griswold Battlefield State Park should be a premier destination and anchor of visitation to the Groton Bank area. The park is the home of

Fort Griswold, an important former American military base constructed in the 18th century of stone and earth to defend the colonial port of New London. The fort figured prominently in the Revolutionary War where troops under “turncoat” Benedict Arnold raided and burned New London and attacked the fort in the Battle of Groton Heights.

Situated on a steep escarpment east of the Thames estuary, the park offers dramatic views of New London and the river out as far as Long Island Sound, and features the remains of the fort and its gun emplacements, a small museum with archeological materials and dioramas, and the granite Groton Monument, completed in 1830 to commemorate the defenders of the fort during the Battle of Groton Heights. Today the site receives 75,000 visitors per year, but as an important and vivid revolutionary war site of national importance (and in a state which brands itself as “still revolutionary”), with additional interpretation and marketing, this site could receive many more.

Today Fort Griswold is difficult to find by car and on foot, is under-interpreted and under-marketed. The water shuttle system, which will land at the foot of Fort Street below the park, will provide a new and clear gateway to the park above. To be effective, the connection between the landing and fort will need to be strengthened. Currently, no real entry to the park exists at the end of Fort Street. Instead visitors simply climb up a (sometimes muddy) slope to the top of the hill. A new, appropriate entry should be developed at the top of Fort Street, along with switchback pathways graded to meet ADA access requirements. This system of pathways should connect the gun emplacements, fort and historic entry at the corner of Monument Street and Park Avenue. In addition, during the summer season, a small Heritage Park-branded shuttle bus or electric vehicle could help move those unable to make the climb up the bank.

While apparently sufficient for today’s demand, Parking at Fort Griswold (currently provided only on-street) should also be expanded to



accommodate future increased visitation and to provide parking for visitors who begin their visit to the Heritage Park at the fort. A consolidated mid-block lot between the existing old school building and the Bill Memorial Library, buffered from the street and surrounding buildings by landscaping, could serve the fort, library and museum as well as Heritage Park visitors and visitors to Thames Street.

Additional interpretation is also badly needed at Fort Griswold. The Monument House Museum, which currently holds some interesting artifacts and models, begins to provide context for the site, but could use a curatorial update to improve the accessibility and appeal of its content, especially to younger audiences. The adjacent school building, currently not in use, might also provide an opportunity for expanded content. Part of the building could become a bigger Revolutionary War museum with an emphasis on Connecticut's role, a visitor center for the park and Groton Bank, and could also include flexible community space for other kinds of programming including

FORT GRISWOLD (above) and FORT TRUMBULL (facing page), two state parks which will anchor the Heritage Park.

assembly and temporary display.

The other connection between Thames Street and the Bill Memorial Library and the Monument House Museum along Latham Street should also be improved. Where Latham becomes pedestrian only above Slocomb Terrace, new steps and switchback ramps could provide a more comfortable and safe pedestrian experience while retaining sweeping views down to the harbor.

Recommendations:

» Improve the accessibility, interpretation, and marketing of Fort Griswold Battlefield State Park to make it a national Revolutionary War destination. Develop a new park entry on Fort Street from the water shuttle landing, new accessible paths, and

consolidated parking adjacent to the old school. Consider creating a new museum and visitor center for the park in the old school, with updated and expanded emphasis on the Revolutionary War.

» Encourage heritage-based improvements to Thames Street to create a lively, mixed-use and commercial destination in the region, including facade improvements, preservation and renovation of historic buildings, selective demolition and redevelopment of blighted sites, and new infill buildings on vacant sites.

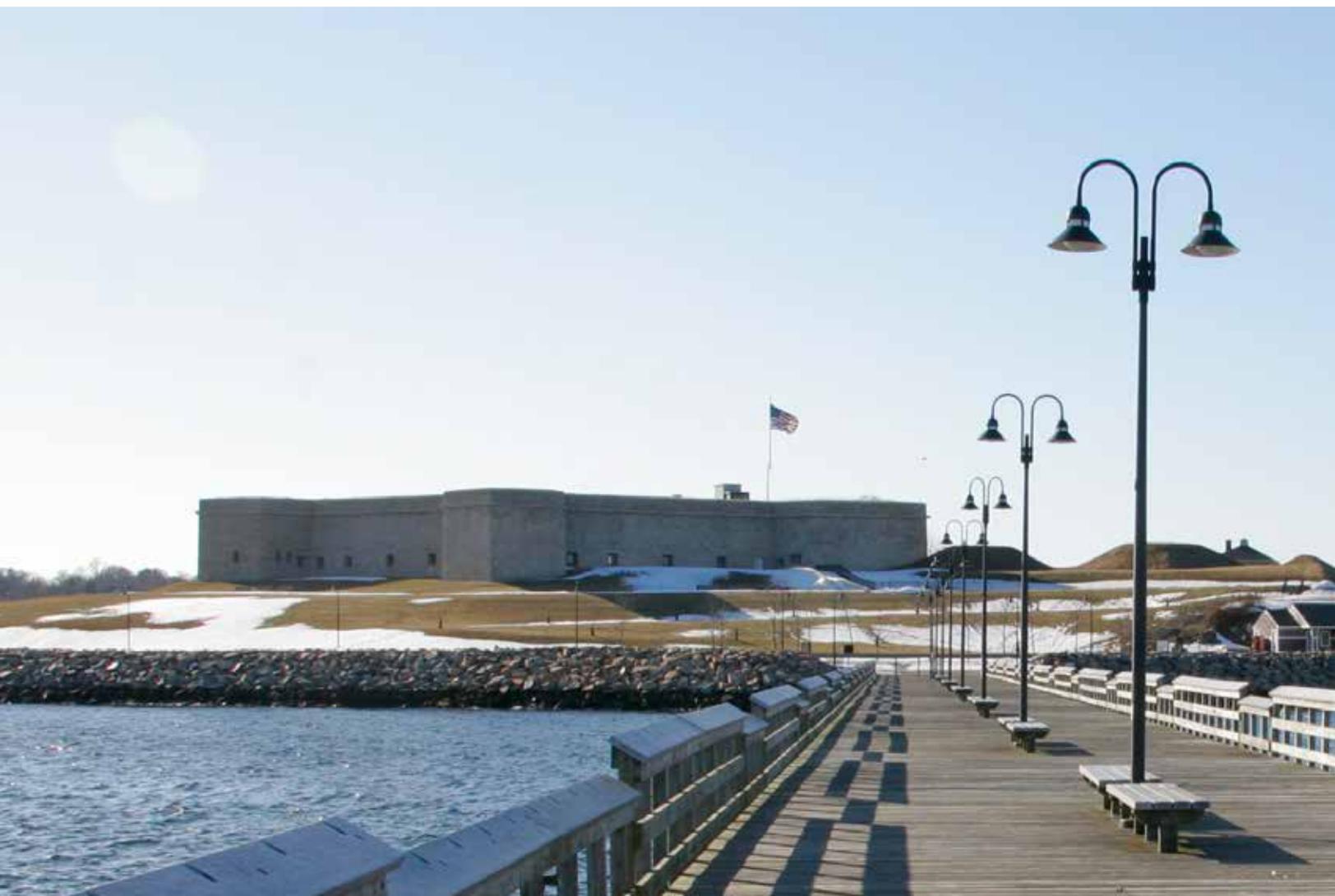
» Consider rezoning Thames Street from Bridge Street to Broad Street to encourage appropriate, heritage-based water-oriented redevelopment of the waterfront.

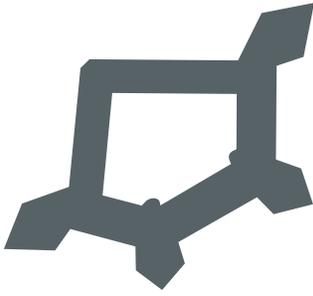
» Develop an appropriate and attractive new

gateway to Groton Bank at the north end of Thames Street, which incorporates a satellite parking facility and access to the water shuttle to encourage visitors to leave their cars behind and visit the region on foot. Improve the setting around the Subvets WWII Memorial using appropriate landscaping and lighting.

FORT TRUMBULL STATE PARK

Fort Trumbull State Park is a major attraction in the Thames Region, and is the site of the dramatic granite masonry fort, constructed between 1839 and 1852 as part of the Third System of fortifications of the United States. The area has played host to a number of important military installations over the years, beginning with the first fort, constructed in 1777 to protect New London Harbor from British attack. The





Fort Trumbull State Park

HERITAGE SITES AND INSTITUTIONS:

1. FORT TRUMBULL
2. VISITOR CENTER
3. CONFERENCE CENTER
4. USCG EAGLE (SEASONAL)

TRANSPORTATION:

- A. PARKING
- B. THAMES RIVER WATER SHUTTLE





A REDEVELOPED FORT TRUMBULL PENINSULA (above) could be better connected to downtown New London with a pedestrian bridge and could include a signature seaside hotel (*Fort Trumbull Vision*, Yale Urban Design Workshop, 2011).

US Revenue Cutter Service academy was located on this site, later becoming the Coast Guard Academy.

As a state park, Fort Trumbull is already well developed and little work needs to be done to prepare it to become one of the anchors of the Thames River Heritage Park. A water shuttle landing is already available on one of the piers, and the current museum and visitor center is staffed and well curated. A new band shell for the Coast Guard Band, planned for the park, would add to its capacity as a destination during special events.

One of the major challenges for Fort Trumbull State Park is that it is poorly connected to New London and difficult to navigate to from I-95.

The water shuttle will give it a direct seasonal connection to downtown New London, at least during the summer months, making it far more accessible. A new pedestrian and bicycle bridge across Shaw's Cove would further strengthen the connection between Fort Trumbull and downtown New London, making it a short 15 minute walk away from the transportation center and site of the National Coast Guard Museum.

The Fort Trumbull peninsula, upon which the state park sits, was cleared in the early 2000's for redevelopment through eminent domain, and was the subject of the controversial Supreme Court decision in *Kelo v. New London*. Unfortunately the peninsula has yet to be redeveloped. Elements of the plan prepared by the Yale Urban Design Workshop for the City of

New London in 2011, the Fort Trumbull Vision, could be well integrated into the Heritage Park framework. These include the aforementioned pedestrian bridge linking to downtown which could serve both visitors and potential residents of the area, but also a major new waterfront hotel and conference center proposed for the northern tip of the peninsula. While the Thames Region has many mid-market hotel rooms located close to the highways, few, if any, high end destination hotels exist in this area. A new waterfront hotel in Fort Trumbull, with a high quality restaurant and bar, associated deep water slips and transient docking facilities, would provide much needed rooms for Heritage Park visitors as well as space for events like meetings, retreats, and weddings that might locate in this area due to its accessibility and historical interest. Direct access from the hotel facility to the water taxi and Heritage Park sites could be an important and marketable theme and benefit for guests at the hotel.

Multiple sites for mixed use parking structures were also identified as part of the plan for Fort Trumbull. It is possible that if structured parking was located close to the state park, it could be used as a satellite parking facility for the Heritage Park, functioning in much the same way as the one described above in Groton Bank.

Recommendations:

» Develop better connections between Fort Trumbull and the New London Historic Waterfront District. Support construction of a new pedestrian bridge between the downtown Waterfront Park and the Fort Trumbull peninsula

» Support the development of a premier waterfront hotel on the Fort Trumbull peninsula with conference and banqueting facilities that could benefit from direct access to the Heritage Park.

» Support the development of a Coast Guard Band bandshell at Fort Trumbull

» Consider developing additional satellite parking for the heritage Park on the Fort Trumbull peninsula.

SUBMARINE FORCE MUSEUM AND LIBRARY

The Submarine Force Library and Museum, managed by the United States Navy, is a museum and research center dedicated to the history of the development and use of submarines. With 300,000 visitors annually, it is one of the chief attractions of the Thames region, with broad appeal to many kinds of visitors ranging from veterans to history buffs, from serious researchers to children. The history of submarine design and manufacture has long been tied to the Thames Region, and especially to the Electric Boat (EB) division of General Dynamics which has produced submarines or parts of submarines in their facility on the Thames estuary just south of Groton Bank since 1911. The original core of the museum's collection was a gift from Electric Boat to the Navy in 1964.

The museum is also the home to the USS Nautilus (SSN-571), the world's first nuclear submarine, which was launched by EB in Groton in 1954.

Among the Thames River Heritage Park anchors, the Submarine Force Museum is the most remote and the most poorly connected to other area sites and to Groton Bank and Downtown New London. Situated 2 miles north of Interstate 95, its most immediate neighbor is the dramatic Naval Submarine Base New London, home of the east coast submarine force, but which is a closed Navy facility and cannot be visited without permission.



USS NAUTILUS the world's first nuclear submarine, built by EB in Groton, anchored at the Submarine Force Museum in Groton.

A WATERFRONT PARK running along military highway could better connect the Submarine Force Museum and Navy Base to Groton Bank, while providing access to the river for cyclists, joggers, and others.

As part of the Heritage Park, the water shuttle would dock directly at the museum, and provide visitors to the museum with easy access to Groton Bank, downtown New London, the other three anchor sites, as well as all the other park attractions. Visitors arriving at other points in the park could take the scenic ride on the water shuttle to visit the Submarine Museum.

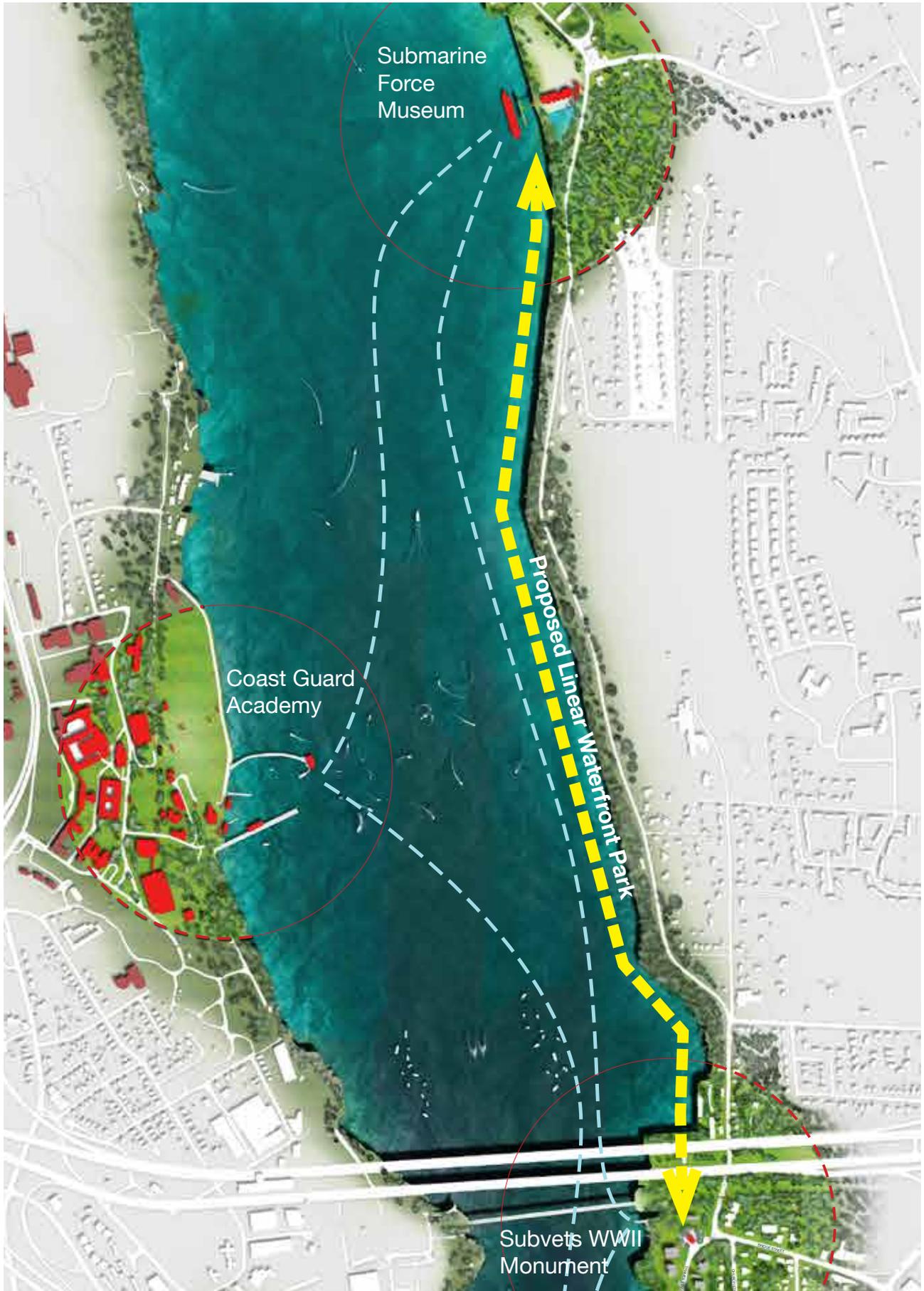
A new linear park and multi-modal trail, proposed in the Town of Groton as early as the 1980's, along the river bank west of Military Highway, could strengthen the link between the Submarine Museum (and the naval station) south to the Subvets WWII Memorial and commercial district in Groton Bank, while providing much-needed recreational and scenic access to the

river for cyclists, pedestrians, and joggers to the River. A linear park of this kind could also serve personnel stationed at the base and their families.

Recommendations:

» Connect the Submarine Force Museum to the water shuttle system by constructing a new floating dock.

» Better connect the Sub Force Museum to Groton Bank through the development of a new linear recreational trail and park along the Thames riverfront from the Subvets WWII Memorial, along Military Highway, to the museum.



05

Park Organization and Administration

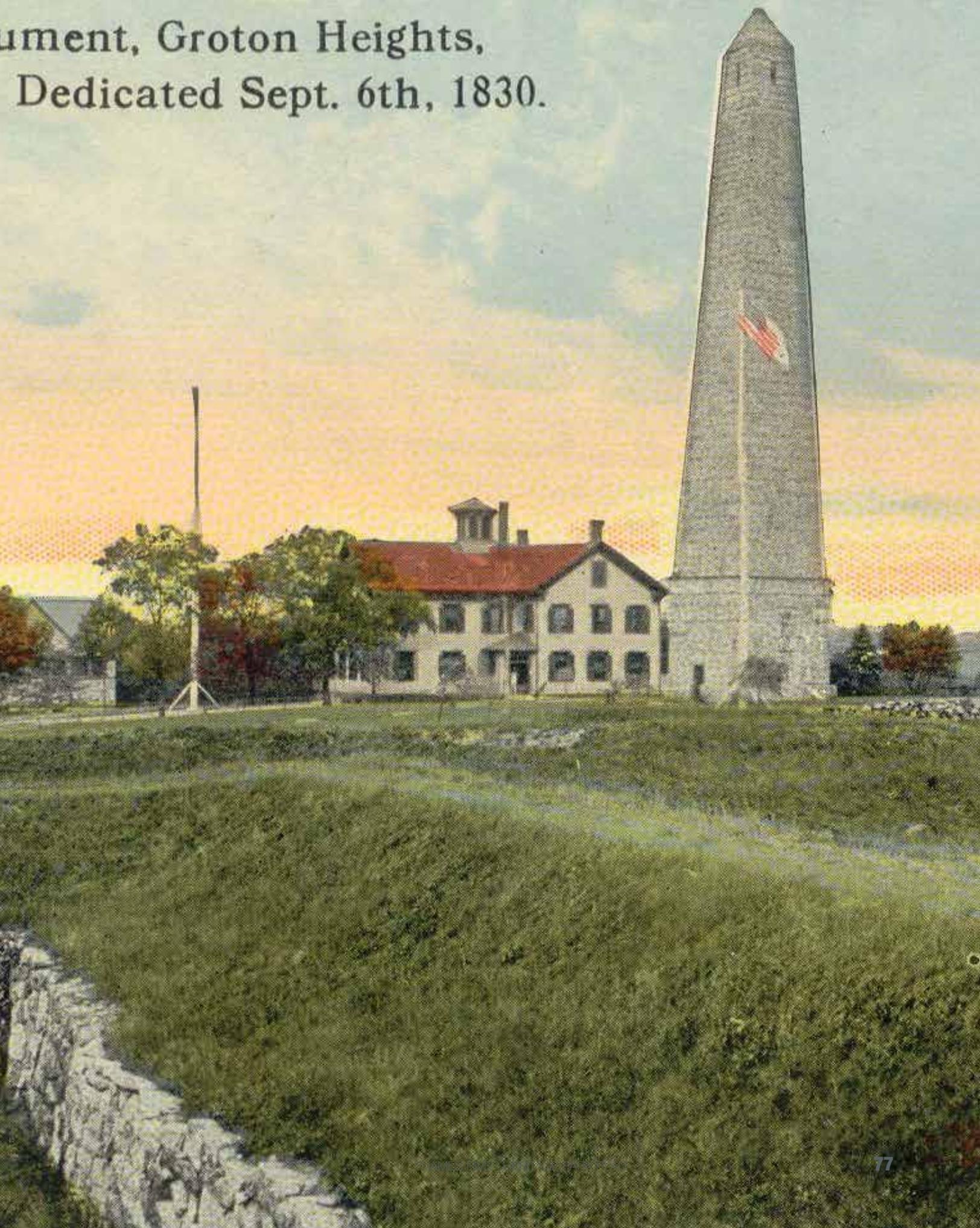
The Thames River Heritage Park will be both a Place and a Platform.

The Thames River Heritage Park will exist as two things: a PLACE, consisting of existing sites, areas, and parks, with an overall identity defined through the physical interventions described in Chapters 2 & 3; and as a PLATFORM upon which partners, governments, businesses and stakeholders can collaborate, seek funding, develop programming, market themselves, and build capacity.

Achieving this dual function will require an organizational and administrative strategy different from that of a conventional park. Whereas the management of a conventional park involves improvement and maintenance of specific state-owned property assets, the heritage park is not itself a property owned by the state - instead it is a collection of private and public physical sites, but also non-physical things like events, programming and education. Development of the heritage park requires investing in the shared physical resources described in Sections 2 & 3, but also supporting privately owned sites, and investing in, nurturing and supporting these other non-physical aspects of the park.

The administrative entity for the park will be a crucial piece of park infrastructure, capable of taking on diverse and evolving roles. These include first, the strategic role of developing, with partners, long range planning for the park and coordinating with other municipal and state planning agencies; Second, the operational & managerial role of deploying and maintaining physical infrastructure for the park including signage, boat docks, water taxi contracts, etc; and finally the support, development and advocacy roles of being a platform for heritage site development,

ument, Groton Heights,
Dedicated Sept. 6th, 1830.



collaboration, programming, and capacity building.

In the initial development of the Thames River Maritime Heritage Park beginning in the late 1980's, the state took on the first two of these roles. The State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) was understood to be the park's primary developer, and was to eventually manage all park facilities and provide all operational staffing and carry out long range planning. The Heritage Park Advisory Board, established through legislation, was the local partner tasked with representing municipal interests, reviewing plans for park development, and recommending sites for inclusion in the park. Since the park never became operational, it is not clear how the park would ultimately have been administered. QL Consulting's 1994 implementation plan called for the advisory board to become a management commission and a park manager to be hired as soon as a visitor center was constructed. But the state never fully deployed the physical infrastructure for the project (visitor center, boat landings, water taxi) and the Heritage Park Advisory Board remained advisory, never evolving into an operational agent or a platform for park development. We believe a new, fresh structure must be established which responds to current conditions and realities, realigns the partners, and precisely specifies their roles, relationships and objectives.

In the National Heritage Area (NHA) system of the National Park Service (NPS) and the state heritage area systems in New York and Pennsylvania, rarely does the state (in the form of NPS or a state park service) provide for the direct ongoing administration of the heritage area. In most cases, the state, through an established heritage park program provides support to a local entity in the form of technical assistance, manpower, funding and credibility. In some

cases that local entity might be a government appointed commission, while in other cases it might be an incorporated 501(c)3 non-profit. In the case of National Heritage Areas, the local entity might begin as an appointed commission and transition at some point into a non-profit, as federal funding tapers.

It is worth noting that the Thames River Maritime Heritage Park, as originally proposed by the State of Connecticut, should have become a model project which demonstrated how the state could cooperate with a multi-municipality region to develop its heritage resources, tourism and economy, while building its own internal capacity and technical expertise, and developing internal processes and procedures that could be deployed in other heritage areas throughout the state. As the establishment of the heritage park program at the state level never matured, in considering how to complete the implementation of the Thames River Heritage Park, not only are we left without the guidance of the state, but we also must assume that in this project, the state does not wish to resurrect its role of developing a system of heritage parks. We therefore must consider the possibility that this project is not a model, but a one-off. We believe this may mean the ultimate responsibility for the ongoing administration and development of the park will need to be vested in a local entity with the flexibility to steward the park, take on a variety of roles, and develop multiple funding sources.

ORGANIZATIONAL MODELS

We examined three possible organizational models for the Thames River Heritage Park. The first model returns to a similar structure to the one originally proposed by the state, where the state parks department takes a leading role in

administering the park, with the assistance of a local advisory panel. In the second model, a state appointed local commission is vested with the powers and responsibilities necessary to establish and run the park. In the third model, a public-private partnership is established, with roles split between the state and a local non-profit entity.

Scenario A: State Management

The State of Connecticut could simply resume its role as primary developer. It could establish and fund a local Thames River Heritage Park management office somewhere in the Thames region, with a dedicated park superintendent or program manager and staff as required. This office might piggyback on facilities and staff available at Fort Trumbull, or be a wholly separate management unit with office space in Groton or New London. The state would likely need to re-convene an advisory panel or board to provide the local knowledge and relationships, but the assumption is that the state would fund and perform the “work” required for each of these roles.

There are a number of compelling arguments that favor this strategy:

- Simplicity of the organization: all matters relating to the park are carried out by a single state-funded office under advisement from the advisory panel
- Legislation continues to be in place that, with funding, would allow the state to move forward quickly
- Two of the main anchor sites of the heritage park are in and of themselves state park sites administered by DEEP, with existing dedicated space and staff resident at Fort Trumbull. With added staff, the heritage park

could be administered as part of its existing structure

- In theory, the parks division already has much of the expertise, processes and structure in place to run such a park (this may or may not be true)
- Funding could come through the state parks budget, potentially giving access to state bond funds. The Governor’s office authorized \$60 million in bond funds in FY 2013, the 100th anniversary of the park system, to be spent on park infrastructure projects throughout the state

But there are challenges in this scenario. Bringing together the various roles and responsibilities needed to operate the park under a single state-run office could be difficult, though there are potential models in things like Business Improvement Districts (BIDs). But we believe the foremost challenge to this model is the implied requirement for consistent, ongoing single-source funding from the state. According to a recent study from the General Assembly’s Office of Program Review and Investigations, funding for Connecticut’s state parks has been on the decline since 2010 and now is below 2006 funding levels in adjusted dollars. Continuing uncertainty in the state budget following the 2008 recession could mean that the heritage park could find itself defunded or severely underfunded, as the parks department is in general. A further finding of the report is that administration within the parks division has been reduced to a “crisis management” model. Especially in the initial years of the heritage park, the park administrator will need to work aggressively to establish relationships and lines of communication, and to demonstrate value for stakeholders, the community and the state. Given current circumstances, it is unclear whether the state parks department is equipped or willing to

take on this role without specific new resources and a mandate from the top.

Scenario B: Public Commission

A second, all-public management option would expand the power of the advisory group, transforming it into an official state-appointed Thames River Heritage Park Commission, mandated under law and with the powers to work with and provide direction for state agencies to develop the park. In this option, the local role of DEEP might be reduced to administering capital projects, maintaining physical infrastructure, and perhaps project management support for the commission. The commission could be structured to coordinate with state agencies including DEEP, DECD and DOT at a high level, perhaps at the commissioner's level or through the governor's office, and could take up some of the community organizing and outreach functions of the project. They might also contract with consultants for specific aspects of the work like marketing and websites. They might be provided with a technical advisor funded by the state. Elected officials and representatives could be made members of the commission, including the Mayors and the Governor.

Scenario C: Public-Private Partnership (PPP)

A third option would be to transfer some of the core roles of the park to a new, local non-profit corporation. In surveying many national and state heritage areas and parks, it is common to find a local non-profit in a key position within the organizational structure, collaborating with the official state or national manager of the park to carry out specific tasks. In general, like the Heritage Park itself, the non-profit's role is to be a resource to the partner organizations, not to

compete with them.

At most, a non-profit might be the primary administrative and development entity for the heritage area, with continuing state funding and technical support. Certainly a non-profit with the right director, staff and an action-oriented board could take on many of the community organizing, outreach, collaboration, and development goals of the park. At its least, a non-profit might just be a conduit for fund raising.

A primary benefit of the non-profit form is the ability to manage funds in a more flexible way than the state can, including accepting tax-deductible contributions, conducting annual campaigns, operating concessions and gift shops, applying for public and private local, state and federal grants, and administering contracts. A non-profit might even be able to own land and develop its own projects to provide an income stream, as some preservation trusts do. These funds could in turn be donated to the state for specific projects, re-granted to support heritage park programming and capacity building projects developed by the member institutions, or used to support things like marketing campaigns, web sites, conferences, and mobile apps.

RECOMMENDED STRUCTURE

Were we confident that the state was committed to restarting the heritage park development program, it might make sense to seriously consider the options outlined above under scenario A and B, where once again, the state would take up a leading role in the deployment and ongoing operations of the park, making the Thames River Heritage Park a model for other projects. On the other hand, even if the state were committed, there is a compelling argument that

a partnership between a private non-profit and the state, as outlined in scenario C above, might provide the most flexible and scalable structure for moving forward.

At this time, we recommend that this effort be moved to public-private partnership model. For a public-private partnership to work, the roles of the partners and their relationships will need to be made clear, and a new non-profit entity will either need to be created or an existing one identified to carry on the work. Below, we have provided a preliminary list of the roles each of these partners might take on in the Thames Region.

PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP MODEL: ROLES AND TASKS

Collaborative Role:

- » In deep consultation with stakeholders, develop long range plans (10 years) for the heritage park
- » Share resources between local state parks and the Heritage Park non-profit.

State Roles:

- » Deploy remaining pieces of water shuttle infrastructure, including a new water taxi landing at the Submarine Force Museum. Maintain all infrastructure related to the water taxi system. (DEEP)
- » Fund an initial 5 year operation of the water shuttle system, with the possibility of renewal (DEEP / DECD / DOT)
- » Fund, develop, construct and maintain park signage throughout the region, working with municipal and federal agencies (DEEP / DOT)

- » Provide operational seed funding for the non-profit park entity for a minimum of an initial 5 year establishment period (DEEP / DECD / State budget)
- » Support collaboration and programming between Fort Trumbull State Park and Fort Griswold Battlefield State Parks and other Thames River Heritage Park institutions (DEEP)
- » Develop capital improvements to Fort Griswold Battlefield State Park to improve accessibility (pedestrian and automotive), visibility and interpretation (DEEP)
- » Support marketing and publicity efforts (Commission on Culture and Tourism, DECD, Eastern Regional Tourism District)
- » Mandate and support a special collaborative relationship between the superintendent of parks at Fort Trumbull and the Heritage Park non-profit.
- » Identify a specific project manager in the state government manage these activities and coordinate with the new non-profit entity.

Municipalities Roles:

- » Incorporate transportation strategies of the Heritage Park plan into local infrastructure improvement projects
- » Develop local economic development strategies around Heritage Park projects
- » Support and participate with the Heritage Park non-profit
- » Facilitate permitting and installation of Heritage Park signage and water taxi landings

Thames River Heritage Park Non-Profit Roles:

- » Manage marketing, advertising & public

relations on behalf of the park and its partner organizations. Develop and deploy Thames River Heritage Park web site, maps, brochures, and mobile applications. Coordinate with local, state and national tourism agencies and companies to bring visitors to the park.

» Help build the capacity of local heritage institutions and sites by providing support in the form of shared resources: staffing, marketing, grant-writing, and funding.

» Cultivate and support collaboration between partner organizations. Help develop collaborative projects and programming and facilitating collection sharing. Apply for public and private local, state and federal grants for collaborative projects on behalf of participating institutions.

» Coordinate schedules, programs and events between participating heritage institutions and other local groups.

» Facilitate communication between

participating heritage institutions and other entities

» With heritage partners, develop regional thematic and interpretative resources, including websites, apps, and printed materials

» With heritage partners, develop educational materials and school programs and curricula; consider employing a shared education director; interface with local schools, colleges and universities

» Coordinate volunteer activities; consider employing a volunteer coordinator

» Develop and fund internship opportunities

» Review, analyze and report on operations of the water taxi system; make suggestions for improvement and changes.

ORDER OF THE DAY,
AT THE GREAT GATHERING OF THE DE-
MOCRACY AT GROTON HEIGHTS, SEPTEMBER
5th, 1840.



The Procession will form at half past 9 o'clock, A. M. in front of the House of Capt. Elijah Bailey, in the following order--viz :

CHIEF MARSHAL-

- | | |
|---------|--|
| | BAND OF MUSIC. |
| | MARSHALS. |
| No. 1. | The Democracy of Groton. |
| | MARSHALS. |
| No. 2. | The Democracy of Ledyard. |
| | MARSHALS. |
| No. 3. | The Democracy of Stonington. |
| | MARSHALS. |
| No. 4. | The Democracy of North Stonington. |
| | MARSHALS. |
| No. 5. | The Democracy of New-London. |
| | MARSHALS. |
| No. 6. | The Democracy of Lyme. |
| | MARSHALS. |
| No. 7. | The Democracy of East Lyme. |
| | MARSHALS. |
| No. 8. | The Democracy of Waterford. |
| | MARSHALS. |
| No. 9. | The Democracy of Montville. |
| | MARSHALS. |
| No. 10. | The Democracy of Salem. |
| | MARSHALS. |
| No. 11. | The Democracy of Colchester. |
| | MARSHALS. |
| | BAND OF MUSIC. |
| | MARSHALS. |
| No. 12. | The Democracy of Norwich. |
| | MARSHALS. |
| No. 13. | The Democracy of Preston. |
| | MARSHALS. |
| No. 14. | The Democracy of Griswold. |
| | MARSHALS. |
| No. 15. | The Democracy of Franklin. |
| | MARSHALS. |
| No. 16. | The Democracy of Lisbon. |
| | MARSHALS. |
| No. 17. | The Democracy of Bozrah. |
| | MARSHALS. |
| No. 18. | The Democracy of Lebanon. |
| | MARSHALS. |
| | BAND OF MUSIC. |
| No. 19. | The Democracy from Windham, Hartford, Tolland, New-Haven, Fairfield, Middlesex and Litchfield Counties, & from other States. |
| | MARSHALS. |
| No. 20. | The Officers of the day. |
| No. 21. | Invited Guests. |
| No. 22. | Revolutionary Officers and Soldiers. |
| No. 23. | The surviving defenders of Fort Griswold. |

The procession will move precisely at 10 o'clock, A. M. and after passing some distance beyond the point of formation, will be countermarched towards the HEIGHTS. On arriving at the summit of the Hill the whole assemblage will halt and break to the right and left throughout the entire length of the procession, when No's. 23, 22, 21 and 20, followed by the remaining No's. in regular succession, will proceed through the open centre to the battle ground.

The immense assemblage of the Democracy on this occasion, renders it indispensably necessary that the regulations should be thus minutely detailed—and, while every Marshal will use his utmost exertions to preserve good order among the spectators and regularity in the line of the procession, it is confidently trusted that every true Democrat, every friend of good order, will cheerfully co-operate with them, and will promptly and willingly take their place in the procession agreeably to the foregoing regulations.

By order of the CHIEF MARSHAL.

06 Community Benefits

The Thames River Heritage Park will provide a range of community benefits including improvements to regional transportation and parking, place based educational curricula, and economic development.

While the Thames River Heritage Park will benefit its constituent institutions in ways previously noted, including increasing visitation, improving visibility and impact, facilitating collaborations and fund-raising, and increasing capacity, the heritage park will also have many important benefits to the local communities of Groton and New London and the region as a whole. These include benefits such as providing a regional parking and transportation framework through the establishment of the water shuttle system (discussed in earlier chapters), as well as enhancing economic development and educational resources.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

One of the most compelling arguments for the development of the Thames River Heritage Park is its potential to spur economic development in the region with little public capital outlay. The most obvious aspect of this is the impact of increased tourism to the region, in quantity and duration of visits, increasing demand for hotel rooms, restaurant meals and commercial goods. Increased demand for these kinds of services will improve the viability of existing businesses and provide opportunities for expansion or creation of new businesses.

The Heritage Park should explore and establish mutually beneficial relationships with businesses in New London and Groton that may cater to tourists and visitors, such as restaurants, hotels, boat operators, and boutique retail establishments. Opportunities include co-branding and advertising, sponsorship, development of vacation packages, and participation in events. Special relationships might be established with businesses that occupy



NEW LONDON

THAMES

GROTON

POQUONOCK PLAINS

NEW HAVEN AND HARTFORD

NEW LONDON

QUEEN'S HARBOR

Pleasant Beach

Ocean Beach

Bushy Point
Pine Island

Bluff Point

Goshen Point

Two Tree Island

No

US NAVAL STATION

Mamacoke Hill

Waterford

Quaker

Bailey Hill

Winthrop Point

Groton

F. Trumbull

Goose Island
Powder Island

Eastern Point

Avery Point

Bushy Point

Pine Island

Bluff Point

Goshen Point

Two Tree Island

No

historic properties, such as B&Bs or restaurants.

The Heritage Park will also contribute to improving the quality of life in the Thames region, making it a more attractive and vibrant place to live and to invest. Better access to the river, more recreational opportunities, better pedestrian connections, improved transportation access, and vital heritage attractions are compelling features that can be used to market the region to those looking to relocate.

Redevelopment of heritage areas like Groton's Thames Street, as proposed by this plan, would improve the quality of life in Groton while contributing new commercial tax revenues and increasing land values in Groton Bank.

Working collaborations should be established with regional and state tourism agencies, regional Chambers of Commerce, and economic development groups to market the park and the region to tourists, visitors, investors and entrepreneurs considering moving to the region.

EDUCATION

Another important community benefit of the Thames River Heritage Park will be to provide educational resources to local and regional schools and universities. For primary and secondary school students, elements of the park like Fort Griswold may already be the subject of conventional field trips, where historical scenes are described in relation to the landscape. But the Heritage Park could provide a platform for the development of a more integrated, layered, cross-disciplinary place-based educational curricula for students in the region, drawing on the diverse resources available in the park. This kind of curricula could include not only history, but also science, technology, math, economics, civics and other subjects, with emphasis on

relationships and influences between subjects, using the local urban and natural landscape as a frame for learning, and allowing students to engage with and better understand the forces that shape their local environment. Through interaction with community members, sites and institutions, students could forge strong ties to their community as they are encouraged to be active citizens. Through project-based learning, students could also make concrete contributions to their communities while developing a sense of personal achievement.

Place-based learning is becoming an important part of educational practices around the world, as the positive virtues of localism have been gradually expounded and accepted. Place-based education sees differences between places not as situations to be overcome (as standardized educational curricula often does) but instead seeks to take advantage of differences between places by encouraging student interaction with their local community fabric - physical, social, and environmental.

One example of this kind of education is provided by Connecticut's Architecture Resource Center (www.arcedusa.org) which has developed primary school programs and texts for New Haven and Hartford and which use local cultural landscapes to frame an understanding of the forces that shape their community. The physical aspects of the environment are used to organize discussions of economics, technology, politics and planning, connecting learning directly to the 'lived worlds' of the students.

The heritage park may also provide opportunities for other kinds of community-based learning, such as environmental education, service-based and work-based learning that could encourage student's direct involvement with local groups, businesses, governments, and institutions

THAMES STREET, GROTON (top) & BANK STREET, NEW LONDON (bottom). Groton's Thames Street has the potential to play a similar role for Groton as Bank Street does in New London. Running parallel to the water, Bank Street is home to attractive boutique retail, entertainment and restaurants that serve visitors and residents. Buildings between Bank Street and the river have back decks which open to dramatic views of the harbor.



through project-based activities. Students might develop original research or look for ways to solve a problem, or participating in real-world projects of Heritage Park organizations.

The Heritage Park might also provide opportunities for students and faculty at local and regional institutions of higher education to engage in community-based learning projects. Hospitality & Tourism students at Mitchell College might intern with the Heritage Park non-profit or serve as summer docents on the water shuttle or in some of the park sites, gaining valuable real-world experience. Students at University of Connecticut, Avery Point, Conn College or the Coast Guard Academy might develop educational programs or installations on environmental or historical themes. Students

at the Coast Guard Academy might hone their communications skills as Coast Guard ombudsman, leading tours of the National Coast Guard Museum.

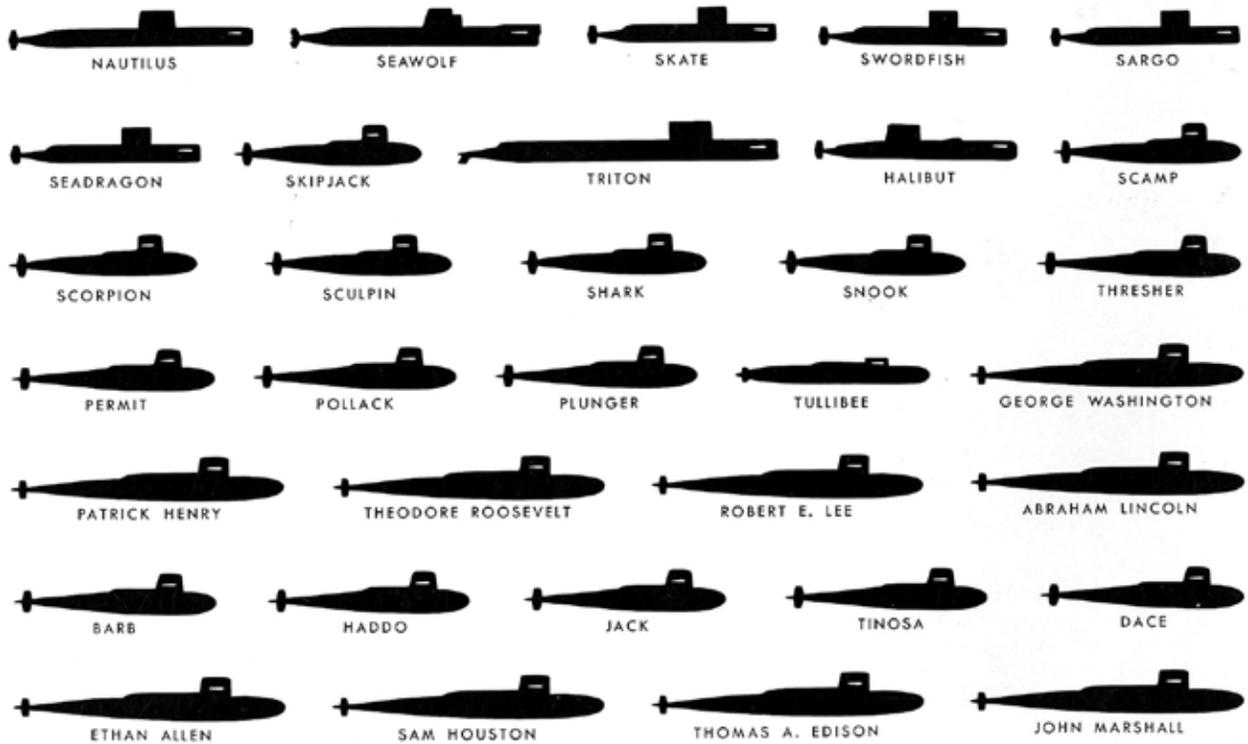
Many potential opportunities for collaboration and place-based learning could be provided by the Heritage Park framework. While some of this activity does currently go on through individual relationships between professors, teachers and individual heritage institutions, the Heritage Park non-profit organization could take on the role as a facilitator and organizer of resources. An education coordinator, paid or volunteer, belonging to the park could help to develop programming and projects, put people together, and track opportunities and resources.

07 Phasing & Next Steps

This Plan is intended to be used as a framework for the establishment of the Thames River Heritage Park. In the section that follows, recommendations discussed in the body of the report are organized according to priority and phasing. For the Park to realize its full potential, many recommendations of this plan will need to be initiated and delivered by different groups. While the internal, core operations of the Heritage Park, such as developing programming, education and marketing, will be initiated by the park non-profit entity (in collaboration with various groups), larger, related projects which involve municipal and regional planning will need to be delivered by Groton, New London, the State of Connecticut, or private developers.

In the following matrix, we have broken down recommendations into 3 phases of work. The first phase of 1-3 years focuses on the establishment of the park—creation of the park administrative entity, development of a communications design and marketing plan, and deployment of signage and the water shuttle. The second phase of 2-5 years is focused on developing the resources available through the park, including educational and thematic programming, educational collaborations, and events. The third phase identifies long range projects. In all three phases, core Heritage Park activities are generally listed first, followed by recommended activities that would be carried on by outside partners, such as the aforementioned planning and development projects.

While all of the recommendations of the report have long-term implications in terms of funding, maintenance and management, some recommendations, due to their scale, complexity and expense



may take years to develop. In the meantime, it is extremely important to identify and carry out short term projects that can translate the energy and concerns of the planning process into immediate and visible action. These short-term projects have over-riding importance as momentum builders and as a demonstration of the regional commitment to creation of the park.

While this plan provides a framework and overview of the form of the Thames River Heritage Park, how it might function, and what benefits might be received by the Thames River community, it is not an implementation plan. As the park administrative non-profit entity is established, a detailed and specific, task-oriented, long range plan should be developed with goals, milestones and funding sources to guide the

next 10 years of Thames River Heritage Park development.

Acronyms used in the following table include:

City of NL	City of New London
CT DECD	Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development
CT DEEP	Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
CT DOT	Connecticut Department of Transportation
HPNP	Heritage Park Non Profit

PHASE I: PARK ESTABLISHMENT (1–3 YEARS)	Principal Initiator	
Establish an organizational structure to administer the park and take this plan forward. Establish or identify a non-profit entity and seek state designation as the official park administrative entity. Establish an official steering committee and hire an action-oriented executive director. Establish an office for the administrative entity, potentially within Fort Trumbull State Park.	State of Connecticut, Thames Heritage Park Steering Committee	
Assign clear, concrete roles to all members of the heritage park organization, including the state, municipalities, and the non-profit corporation.	HPNP, CT DEEP	
Develop program for volunteer recruitment	HPNP	
Hire a part-time education director	HPNP	
Establish relationships with businesses in New London and Groton that may cater to tourists and visitors, such as restaurants, hotels and boutique shopping.	HPNP	
Develop funding streams outside of state funding, to support the work of the park, through grants, foundation funding, and tax-deductible contributions.	HPNP	
Establish a water shuttle landing at the Submarine Force Museum	CT DEEP	
Establish a water shuttle system connecting New London, Groton, Fort Trumbull and the Submarine Force Museum.	State of Connecticut DEEP / DOT / DECD	
Develop a brand and communications design for the heritage park, including graphic logos, colors, signage, pennants, banners and standardized marketing text.	HPNP	
Develop a park website and implement a marketing campaign.	HPNP	
Collaborate with regional and state tourism agencies and organizations to market the park and the region to tourists, visitors, investors and entrepreneurs considering moving to the region.	HPNP	
Encourage partner attractions to co-brand. Develop and distribute co-branding guidelines.	HPNP	
Design and Deploy coordinated directional signage throughout the park and region	HPNP	
Support the completion of the Coast Guard Museum as the fourth anchor of the park, to add critical mass to the number of regional attractions.	All	
Commission a detailed master plan for improvements of Fort Griswold Battlefield State Park to make it more accessible and more vivid	CT DEEP	
Develop a detailed regional traffic and parking plan for the heritage park, including the water taxi and satellite parking facilities	City of NL, City and Town of Groton	
Develop a detailed, long-range implementation plan to guide the next 10 years of park development.	HPNP	

	Partners	Projected Cost	Funding Sources
	City of NL, City and Town of Groton,	\$100,000 per year	State of Connecticut
	City of NL, City and Town of Groton		
	Heritage Organizations		
	Heritage Organizations	\$50,000 per year	
	Local Businesses		
	City and town of Groton, City of NL, State CT DEEP, CT DECD, CT DOT		
	CT Office of Military Affairs, US Navy, Submarine Force Museum, Heritage Park Non Profit	not available	State of Connecticut
	HPNP, City of NL, City and Town of Groton; CT DEEP, DECD, DOT, Military Affairs		State of Connecticut DOT, DECD, DEEP; Private Donors, Corporate Sponsors
	State and regional Tourism Agencies; Chamber of Commerce	\$25,000	City of NL, City and Town of Groton; State of Connecticut DECD; Private Donors, Corporate Sponsors
		\$40,000	
	Tourism Agencies, Chambers of Commerce, CT DECD, City of NL, City and Town of Groton		
	Heritage Organizations		
	CT DOT; City of NL, City and Town of Groton		
	HPNP, City of Groton		
	HPNP, CT DOT, DEEP, City of NL, City and Town of Groton, SCCOG		State of Connecticut
	City of NL, City and Town of Groton, CT DEEP, DECD, Heritage Organizations		CT DECD, CT DEEP; Community Foundations, Private Donors

PHASE II: PARK DEVELOPMENT, MID TERM (2–5 YEARS)	Principal Initiator	
Develop collaborative thematic programming between park partner groups	HPNP	
Develop a GPS enabled mobile app	HPNP	
Develop a place-based educational programming and projects for primary and secondary school students in the region, and encourage and facilitate partnerships between schools and park attractions.	HPNP	
Establish collaborations and connections between park attractions and area faculty and students at University of Connecticut Avery Point, Mitchell College, Connecticut College, and the United States Coast Guard Academy.	HPNP	
Develop park-wide events and programming with partner heritage organizations.	HPNP, Heritage Organizations	
Explore mutually beneficial collaborative relationships, projects and marketing with attractions in the extended Southeastern Connecticut region, including Mystic Seaport, the Connecticut River Museum in Essex, the Henry Ferguson Museum on Fishers Island, and Foxwoods and Mohegan Sun Casinos.	HPNP	
Develop new satellite parking reservoirs connected to the water taxi system for high season usage.	City of NL, City and Town of Groton	
Commission a planning study to improve pedestrian and bicycle links between downtown New London and Fort Trumbull, including a new bridge across Shaw's Cove	City of NL	
Commission a study to examine the revitalization of Thames Street, Groton	City of Groton	
Establish the Coast Guard Museum in Downtown New London	United States Coast Guard	
Commission a study for a linear park along Military Highway, linking the Submarine Force Museum with Groton Bank	City and Town of Groton	
Commission a study for a new and better bicycle and pedestrian lane to the south span of the Goldstar Bridge	Connecticut DOT	

	Partners	Projected Cost	Funding Sources
	Heritage Organizations	varies	State of Connecticut, Private Donors, Corporate Sponsors, Foundation Funding
	Heritage Organizations	\$15,000	Private Donors, Corporate Sponsors, Foundation Funding, State and Federal Grants
	Heritage Organizations, Boards of Education, Local Schools, Univerisites & Colleges		Community Foundations, State, Federal and Private Grants, Schools
	Heritage Organizations, Universities & Colleges		
	HPNP, Heritage Organizations		
	Regional Heritage and Tourism Destinations		
	CT DOT, CT DEEP, HPNP		State of Connecticut, City of NL, City and Town of Groton
			City of NL
	Town of Groton		City of Groton
	City of NL, HPNP, Others		
			Town of Groton
	City and Town of Groton, City of NL		Connecticut DOT, Federal Grants

PHASE III: LONG TERM PROJECTS (5–10 YEARS)	Principal Initiator	
Build a new linear park along Military Highway, linking the Submarine Force Museum with Groton Bank.	City and Town of Groton	
Develop a new visitor center and museum at Fort Griswold Battlefield State Park	CT DEEP	
Revitalize Thames Street, Groton as a lively mixed-use, pedestrian oriented corridor, linking historic sites and properties with businesses, parking, the waterfront and the neighborhood.	City of Groton	
Develop additional historic or maritime related sites and attractions along the Groton Bank - Submarine Force Museum corridor within easy access to the water taxi system.	City and Town of Groton	
Install a pedestrian and bicycle lane on the south span of the Goldstar Bridge	State of Connecticut DOT	

	Partners	Projected Cost	Funding Sources
	HPNP, City and Town of Groton		
	HPNP, CT DEEP, others		
	City and Town of Groton, City of NL		CT DOT, Federal Grants

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Copp Family

Eugenie Copp, Sr.
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Allyn Copp
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* Note: titles given may have changed over the course of this process.

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Corporations

Adam Wronowski, Cross Sound Ferry
Stan Mickus, Cross Sound Ferry

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The Garde Arts Center
City of New London
CT Office of Tourism
CT OpSail
Eastern CT Chamber
Fishers Island Ferry
New London Main Street
Eastern CT Tourism District

COLOPHON

This report was written and designed by the Yale Urban Design Workshop, a community design center based at the Yale University School of Architecture in New Haven, Connecticut.

The following individuals participated in the planning process and development of the report:

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Jack Wolfe, Student Fellow

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NEW LONDON



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