

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made on the premise that broad-based community participation along with energetic municipal coordination and direction are necessary to implement an effective neighborhood-conservation program. Agencies exist at the state and federal levels which can assist in various capacities, but long-lasting results can only occur with community initiative and determination.

1. Provide for the protection of the Southern Thames Street Neighborhood's important historical buildings and residential, business and commercial districts as well as its streetscapes and waterfront.
 - a. Publicize key properties within the Southern Thames Street Neighborhood which are listed in the National Register of Historic Places (Appendix A) in order to stimulate preservation and restoration programs and encourage applications for restoration grants-in-aid administered by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission (Appendix B).
 - b. Nominate the Southern Thames Street Neighborhood to the National Register of Historic Places, based on its historical development and cohesive building fabric.
 - c. Consider expanding the local historic district as a means of stabilizing the Southern Thames Street Neighborhood's historical environment, through the approval of the Newport City Council, thereby giving the Newport Historic District Commission responsibility for review of all major exterior alterations, demolition and new construction (Appendix D).
2. Re-establish and maintain the historical and environmental identity of the Southern Thames Street Neighborhood's residential area, business district and commercial district as a goal of new planning efforts.
 - a. Pay particular attention to the Thames and Spring Street corridors and their subsidiary streets. The waterfront, a major focal point of the neighborhood, should be improved by redevelopment which is sympathetic to its historical character.
 - b. Encourage the re-use of commercial, public, residential and semipublic structures within the Southern Thames Street Neighborhood. When original uses are no longer appropriate or feasible, viable re-uses should be identified and implemented, such as the conversion of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century houses into professional offices or recycling an obsolete fire station or school building for commercial or residential use.
 - c. Establish, through provisions of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, a method of reselling properties within the neighborhood's residential area, business district and commercial district, to homeowners or developers with building plans which are compatible with the neighborhood.
 - d. Ensure that the designs of new public buildings (such as the Thames Street Fire Station) proposed for construction within the Southern Thames Street Neighborhood, reflect a sensitivity to the surrounding historical environment.
3. Enhance the historical image of the Southern Thames Street Neighborhood; encourage pride in its heritage and involve the entire community—including local preservation and historical groups, libraries, the Newport School Department, the Office of the Mayor and all interested organizations—in the implementation of a neighborhood conservation program.
 - a. Develop a local history curriculum for the Newport School Department including the historical development of the Southern Thames Street Neighborhood.
 - b. Install a series of historical markers in the Southern Thames Street Neighborhood as a visible source of public information about this area's history and in recognition of successful preservation projects.
 - c. Keep citizens informed through regular media coverage of progress in the neighborhood's revitalization.
 - d. Conduct walking tours of the Southern Thames Street Neighborhood with an emphasis upon the area's historical development and neighborhood improvements.

