

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Promote Recreational Access to the Delaware River

Historically, the Delaware River has been a major commercial and industrial resource for the region. As a result of improvements in water quality since the 1970s and policies adopted by the State of New Jersey and other governmental agencies, the Delaware River is also becoming a major recreational resource for local citizens. Currently, public access to the river in Gloucester City is limited to Proprietors Park which generally occupies the river's edge between Market Street and Jersey Avenue. This park provides very limited "contact" recreation (fishing) and visual access to the waterway. Proprietors Park has approximately 566 linear feet of frontage on the Delaware River, which represents approximately 5% of the total frontage of the City.

Direct public access to the Delaware River will be improved in the near future with the construction of the recently approved restaurant/marina complex on the site of the Old Coast Guard Station. The access provided by this development can take many forms including access to boaters utilizing the Rack Marina Facility, visual access for restaurant patrons and a public access walkway along the water's edge of the site. The development of this project will provide an additional 1,200 linear feet of waterfront access frontage, increasing the proportion of the river open for public use to approximately 15.3% of its total length.

Although the redevelopment of the Coast Guard Station triples the river frontage accessible for public use, the project is somewhat isolated since there is no physical linkage along the water's edge to Proprietors Park and since the number of boat storage slips is insufficient to create a critical mass necessary to promote the survival of the project.

To increase public access to the Delaware River and to assure the economic viability of the Coast Guard Redevelopment Project, the Economic/Strategic Plan Element of this Master Plan recommends that the entire unindustrialized core area of the Delaware River frontage (See Figure CP-2) be treated by the City as a Riverfront Recreational Redevelopment Area. The concept of this proposal is to promote interaction of the public with the waterway and encourage commercial activities that are compatible with the area. Specific elements of the Riverfront Recreational Redevelopment Plan include:

- The redesign of Proprietors Park to accommodate the development of a marina in the adjacent riparian lands;
- The addition of a fishing pier in the marina design to further encourage fishing by residents currently using the Park and all citizens of the City;
- The development of a riverwalk along the water's edge, linking the Proprietors Park Marina, the Senior Citizens Complex, and the redeveloped Coast Guard Station;

- The development of additional Rack Storage Marina Facilities adjacent to the "Coast Guard" site that are needed to establish a "critical mass" of activity;
- Provision of utilities throughout Proprietors Park to support special events scheduled by the City.

The implementation of the Riverfront Recreational Redevelopment Plan will achieve the goal of promoting river access by providing additional opportunities for use by recreational boaters, providing improved opportunities for fisherman to use the waterway, promoting linear public access along the waterway, and providing support facilities for the City to sponsor events focused on the River frontage.