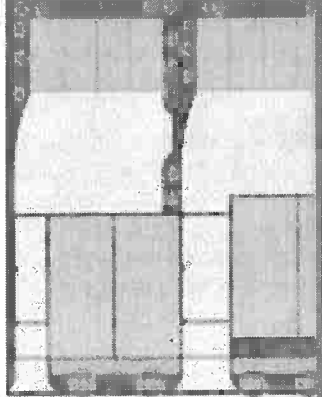

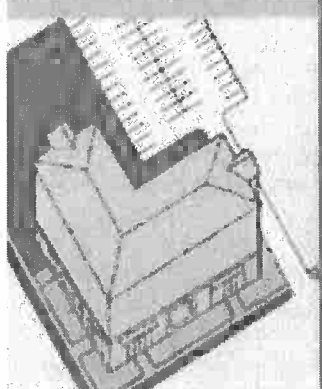

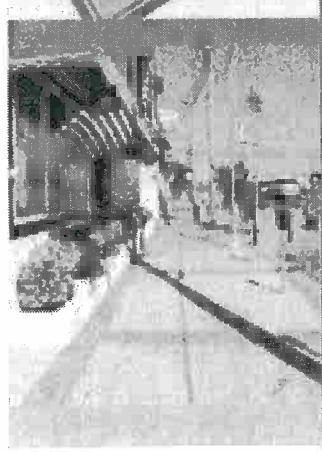

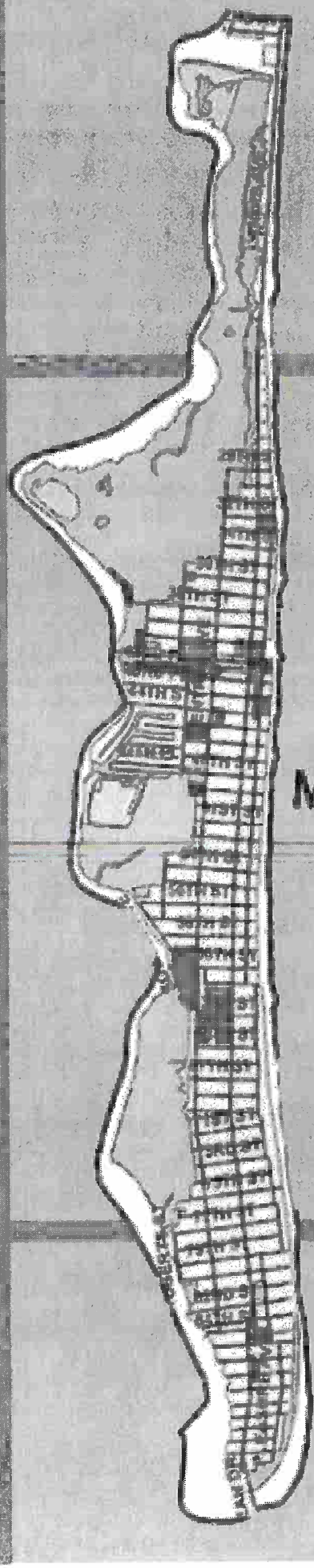

Sea Isle City
Master Plan Re-Examination

December 2007

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Sea Isle City
Master Plan Re-Examination

December 2007

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A. Introduction and Background

Local development decisions affect quality of life in many ways, including: a healthy environment, clean and plentiful water, safe roadways, compatible land uses, adequate public facilities, and impacts to property values and taxes. A Master Plan is the blueprint for a municipality that depicts current land uses, and guides decisions for both growth and conservation. A Master Plan can provide a cohesive focus by outlining development goals and objectives for a community. This Re-Examination Report (pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89), while not a complete Master Plan, provides various strategies for the future growth of Sea Isle City (SIC) as well as a broad range of recommendations.

MASTER PLAN RE-EXAMINATION OBJECTIVES

The Board of Commissioners/City Council of the City of Sea Isle City has directed the City's Planning Board to re-examine the City's Master Plan and development regulations, and prepare a report on the findings of this re-examination pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89. The statute requires all municipalities to provide for such review at least every six (6) years. The purpose of this requirement is for regular, periodic reviews of current information and changing conditions within the municipality to test the continued viability of the Plan. This Re-Examination Report prepared by KEPG will state and address the following areas:

1. The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the City at the time of the adoption of the last Re-Examination Report.

2. The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased.

3. An evaluation of the extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the last adopted Re-Examination Report, with particular regard to density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition and recycling of designated recyclable materials and changes in State, County and Municipal policies and objectives.

4. Specific changes recommended for the Master Plan and developmental regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new Master Plan or development regulations should be prepared.

5. The report will consider the incorporation of redevelopment plans into the Master Plan and Development Regulations.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF SEA ISLE CITY

The City of Sea Isle City is a barrier island located on the east coast of Cape May County, surrounded by Upper Township, Dennis Township, Middle Township and Avalon (Figure 1).

With the City being located on a beautiful island, the ocean and beaches are its main attractions. The island was first visited by an Indian tribe primarily for fishing. In 1692, Joseph Ludlum became the first owner of the island, and divided it into three sections, one of which eventually became Sea Isle City. Although mainlanders visited the island for fishing, hunting and other recreational activities, there were no permanent settlements established on the island for another 200 years.

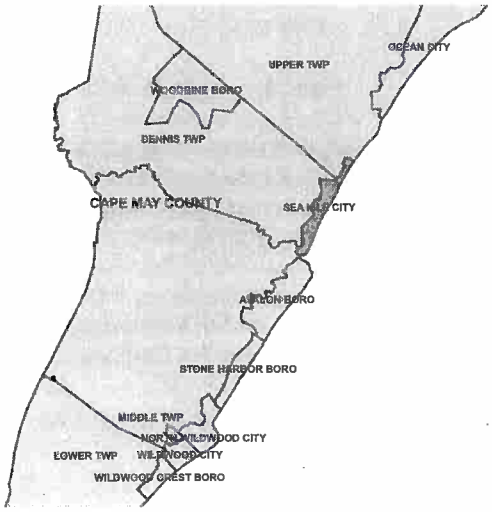


Figure 1: Cape May County Municipalities

In 1880, Charles Kline Landis purchased the island, with the intention of creating a picturesque and relaxing vacation island, and renamed it Sea Isle City. The community officially became a borough in Cape May County in 1882. A year later, new rail line and road were constructed to connect the island to the mainland, which lead to the booming of the island's tourism. The huge influx of tourists resulted in quick and vast improvements to its hospitality facilities.

The introduction of the automobile to Sea Isle City changed the makeup of the community in many ways, leading to the decommissioning of the trolley line in 1916. With transportation becoming less centralized, hotels became less popular in favor of smaller, more remote cottages and boarding houses that began to appear rapidly around the community.

Modern day Sea Isle City is as beautiful and picturesque as it was when it was founded over one-hundred years ago. Today it continues to attract many beachcombers who are looking for fun and relaxation, but there are also many modern conveniences to entertain them.[1]

PREVIOUS PLANS AND STUDIES

The City of Sea Isle City prepared and adopted its last Master Plan in 1988. This plan has been used as the basis for regulating and controlling development in the City. The 1988 Master Plan was followed by one Re-Examination Report in 1994, and a second Re-examination in 2002. Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89, the following section details the major problems and objectives relating to land development in the City at the time of the adoption of the 2002 Re-Examination Report, and the extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased.

The 2002 Reexamination report did not identify any major new problem areas relating to land development, and noted that the objectives, policies and standards of the 1988 Master Plan and the 1991 Zoning Ordinance were still valid. The report did not recommend the preparation of a new master plan or new development regulations. The report addressed certain recommended changes to specific recommendations of the 1988 Master Plan and to specific regulations of the 1991 Zoning Ordinance. No recommended changes were proposed for the Zoning Map. Specific recommendations from the 2002 Reexamination report are noted below along with changes that have taken place over the past six (6) years.

1. *Continue to develop parking, especially in the business area. The adopted plan for the 48th Street Park should be implemented, and a plan should be developed for a public parking area in the Northend. All off-street public parking should be metered.*

   Parking continues to be an ongoing problem, primarily during the summer months when the City's population swells to 37,000 visitors. While no major changes have been made to the parking plan for the City, the recently appointed Governing Body has approved the 48th Street site as the location for the future library to be funded by the County. In association with the library, the Governing Body noted the importance of utilizing some of this land for daily parking for summer visitors.

   As a general note, if the City were able to build any parking on municipally-owned parcels, regardless of their location, metering would provide additional revenue for the City as well as encourage the responsible use of the parking spaces (e.g. no unregulated overnight parking, etc.)

[1] History of Sea Isle City www.visitnjshore.com (referred August 2007)

2. *Authorize funding to plan, design and construct an open space-passive recreational facility on the Cospar Parcel, and delay funding for Phase II of the Downtown Plan until the facility on the Cospar Parcel is complete.*

   In December 2003, Cairone & Kaupp, Inc. completed a park plan for the Cospar Parcel for Sea Isle City – the Excursion Waterfront Park. This Plan included a public open space on the south side of the park with access walkways and an amphitheatre on the northern end of the site. The Plan has not been implemented; there has been some sentiment that the Plan may be too extensive for the site. The City's current planning efforts address a number of downtown issues, but a more detailed examination of the Cospar Parcel was not included for additional study.

   The Cospar property is part of the City's Recreational and Open Space Inventory (ROSI), and accounts for 0.90 acres of this total inventory. Accordingly, any development for this site must be approved by the Green Acres program which is administered by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). The listing of this site on the City's ROSI limits its future development to use as a recreational site.

3. *Continue to seek funding and regulatory approval to implement the adopted erosion control plan for the City's Northend.*

   The federal government has essentially taken over this project and its focus is on beach replenishment rather the previously used timber and stone groin system. The City is now focused on the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) to get funding for beach replenishment and enhancement. These endeavors should continue, and be expanded to include an analysis of the impact of rising sea levels on the coast of Sea Isle City. A recent study funded in part by the Policy Research Institute for the Region (PRIOR) and the Science, Technology and Environmental Policy Program at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs of Princeton University entitled *Future Sea Level Rise and the New Jersey Coast* noted that the vulnerability of the coast of Sea Isle City was classified as "high," the most severe classification presented in the report.

4. *Create a plan of development for the future Marina site on the bayfront land between J.F.K. Boulevard and 38th Street.*

   A plan for development of this site has not been formalized by the City. Currently, a subcommittee has been convened to begin to address potential development opportunities for the site. The land is zoned C-3 (Marine Commercial/Industrial Zoning District) which includes a yacht club, a marina, a restaurant, or a public dock among the permitted uses. A number of additional permitted uses exist for this site that appear inappropriate; these include: a residential dwelling unit, boat sales, rental and service, a personal service establishment, a minor repair ship or operation, a building materials storage yard, a fully enclosed marine storage warehouse, an ice house or refrigeration plant, a site for packing and handling of fish and other seafood in wholesale quantities, laundry, uses providing district support of fishing fleet activities, or utility use or structure. Much of this site is wetlands habitat and cannot be used for development; many of the permitted uses are likely to damage the existing habitat. The site located at Joseph A. Larosa Way and Kneass Avenue is currently occupied by the Public Works Department; this Re-examination Report notes adaptive reuse possibilities for this site (see Land Use and Parking & Circulation).

5. *Authorize funding to construct the adopted plan for the 48th Street Park, which includes eight (8) tennis courts, public parking, a walking path and landscaping.*

   Since the 2002 Reexamination Report, the City has located the tennis courts in Dealy Park, located on Central Street between 59th and 63rd Street. As noted previously, the 48th Street site is now being considered for use as the new location for the City's library, with associated visitor parking. The reuse of this site must respect the wetlands habitat (perhaps incorporating a wetland "learning center" in conjunction with the library – a smaller version of the Wetlands Center in Stone Harbor). Any development on the 48th Street site will require approval by CAFRA; providing environmental preservation and learning opportunities illustrates how the City can create a unique development on this both beautiful and useful site.

6. *Continue to limit development in the vulnerable and environmentally sensitive Northend by continuing the single and two-family zoning in this area.*

   The City Administration and Planning Board continue to support the preservation of environmentally sensitive lands and further realize that the protection and enhancement of these areas not only increases the value of the adjacent properties but also supports the City's overall summer tourism industry.

7. *Continue to encourage the preservation of on-street parking to supplement the off-street parking areas.*

   The preservation of on-street parking is essential if the City is going to be able to provide the number of parking spaces necessary to service summer visitors to the island. The current practice of multiple, closely spaced curb-cuts is gradually inhibiting the number of on-street parking spaces available in the City's neighborhoods. As a result, the land use section of this Reexamination Report addresses recommended Design Guidelines that illustrate site layout and circulation plans that will improve the current practices within the community.

   Beyond the attention given to the on-street parking issue lies a larger concern for the community – how to address the City's summer population of 37,000, a thirteen-fold increase over the non-peak season population for the City (±2,800 persons). This issue has been a concern for the City over the years, but has become increasingly critical as the City's peak season population has risen over the years and is projected to continue to rise annually. The challenges of providing off-street parking are universal – urban areas such as Atlantic City are limited in terms of available land to utilize for parking structures; suburban land is costly and the runoff created by parking lots is detrimental to the environment; smaller densely developed cities such as Sea Isle City often feel the cost of building a parking structure is prohibitive; etc. The reality is that the automobile is an American way of life, and the primary means by which Americans travel – including the majority of residents and visitors to Sea Isle City. Accordingly, Sea Isle City must recognize that any efforts to address the problem of parking, and the accompanying traffic congestion, will take a significant commitment of funds. Without funding to address parking facilities, circulator busses, off-site parking or intercept lots, etc. the challenges of addressing the issue will remain.

   The circulation and parking component, as well as the land use component, of this Reexamination Report make several recommendations to address the parking and traffic congestion issue(s). The circulation and parking plan, as presented, must be addressed as a phased plan. The Parking & Circulation component of this Re-examination Report address this in significant detail.

Recent studies by the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) reveal that County Route 625 (Sea Isle Boulevard) had a 7-day total of 127,510 vehicle trips (62,101 eastbound and 65,409 westbound trips) for the Labor Day weekend holiday in 2007. While the study did not break down per-day volume, one could assume equal trip generation over the 7-day period. If we assumed such, the total daily vehicle trips eastbound to Sea Isle City during this period equates to 8,872 trips per day. Realistically, a majority of the 62,101 eastbound trips occurred over a 4-day period (Friday – Monday), and furthermore, it is possible that a majority of these eastbound trips were concentrated to Friday and Saturday as visitors arrived in Sea Isle City. Ultimately, the ability of Sea Isle City to intercept some of these vehicles (specifically day-trippers) will help to alleviate congestion and parking issues on the island.

8. *Continue to monitor energy use by City departments.*

The need to reduce/conserve energy has become a proactive mandate in cities across the nation, and the world. This is increasingly relevant in light of the recent increases in energy costs. The close monitoring of energy use by City Departments should continue and new measures/standards should be adopted by the City to reduce the current use. Additionally, Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards should be required for any new municipal buildings within the City.

9. *Continue the City-wide Recycling Program.*

The City's recycling program is operated locally through the Department of Public Works and administered by the Cape May County Municipal Utilities Authority (CCMUA) via a joint services agreement that is in effect until 2011. The State of New Jersey updated its Solid Waste Management Plan in January 2006, requiring County MUAs to update their plans as well. Accordingly, in July 2007, CCMUA adopted an updated Solid Waste and Recycling Plan that requires all municipalities in the County to update their local plans. In this way, the State, County, and local plans will all reflect similar methods for recycling, goals, and procedures. Sea Isle City must adopt an updated Recycling Ordinance by January 2008 that is in accordance with the CCMUA Plan. A sample ordinance is included in Appendix I of this Reexamination Report.

In terms of recent successes with recycling percentages, the City's current recycling program falls short of the goals that have been established by the State of New Jersey. The numbers for 2006 are as follows:

> Where a statewide goal of 50% of municipally-collected solid waste is in effect, Sea Isle City recycled 36% of its municipally-collected solid waste (Cape May County recycled 36.5%of its municipally-collected solid waste).
>
> Where a statewide goal of 60% of all solid waste (municipally collected, demolition waste, automobiles, etc.) is in effect, Sea Isle City recycled 51.4% of its *total* solid waste (Cape May County recycled 58.8%of its total solid waste).

While the City did not achieve the goals as set by the State of New Jersey, the efforts to improve should be continued.

10. *Continue to pursue the acquisition of privately owned land parcels located in flood prone areas and within the City's sand dune system.*

The City remains committed to the preservation and acquisition of open space as necessary. The City should continue to work with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) to secure any available funding for the acquisition of these important environmental lands. With the recent passage of the State's referendum, additional State funds will likely be made available to the Green Acres and Blue Acres (e.g. wetlands, coastal protection areas, etc.) programs.

As part of this Reexamination Report, a survey was distributed to the Planning Board members of Sea Isle City (see Appendix A). While the protection of open space scored relatively low, the need to protect the City's environmental treasures must be continued.

11. *Continue to encourage the activities of the Yacht Club at its current location.*

This effort should be continued and the City has noted its intent to keep the C-6 (Yacht Club Zoning District) designation for the site. The commitment to preserving boat access along the island is essential given the maritime history of the City as well as the fact that it provides for recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike.

12. *Continue to encourage the Board of Education to consider constructing a second floor expansion over the existing building if and when an expansion is necessary. This would conserve the limited recreational and play area at the school site.*

Based on the 2000 Long Range Facilities Plan prepared by Wayne Allan Neville for the Sea Isle City Board of Education, the existing structure contains a total of 39,348 SF and is situated on a 2.02 acre lot (with a building coverage of 44.70%). The most recent numbers indicate that less than 100 students are currently enrolled in the school (down from 128 students in 2000). Based on the declining enrollment, the need for a second floor expansion is not necessary at the present time, however the need to preserve open space and park space within the neighborhoods of the community warrants that the existing recreational and play area remain.

There was discussion regarding the adaptive reuse of the school for the newly proposed community library facility, however the community, and subsequently voted by the Governing Body, chose the 48th Street site to be the future home of the library. The future of the school remains unclear at the present time, however, should the school cease operation as such, the possible adaptive reuse of the building as a community center, performing arts facility, public playground, etc. should strongly be considered.[2]

[2] Graphic illustration from Microsoft Corporation Live Earth

13. *Continue to study the feasibility of permitting as a permitted principal use, parking lots in any commercial district.*

    Parking lots are considered "accessory uses" in the C-1 (General Business District) and the C-2 (Neighborhood Business District) zoning classifications. The current land values within these commercial districts do not appear to warrant their use for parking at the present time. This is not to diminish the tremendous need for parking in the City that occurs during the peak tourist season. At issue is whether this parking should be located randomly on commercially zoned land that would provide breaks in the continuity currently provided by commercial buildings being located side-by-side. The fabric of a successful downtown area requires retail establishments that are at ground level and not broken up by parking lots or residential uses – critical mass is necessary for a commercial area to thrive economically.

    Parking should be considered on a few of the municipally owned parcels that are zoned accordingly. The parking and circulation component of this report addresses recommendations in detail (general recommendations have been noted in the 2002 Reexamination Report recommendation #7 as noted previously in this section).

14. *The recommended parking area in the Northend mentioned in recommendation No. 1 of this report should be established with restroom facilities, but only if public sewers are available.*

    Sewer service is currently absent in the area of the City generally located north of 22nd Street and south of 1st Street, with the exception of the City-owned land between 26th and 22nd Streets As noted in the response to recommendation #1, GIS analysis appears to indicate that a significant majority of the site is wetlands habitat and therefore undevelopable. If, after detailed site analysis, any parking could be safely located on this site with no disturbance to the coastal wetlands, restroom facilities could be provided even without sewer service. New environmentally-friendly waterless toilets/urinals could be utilized.

15. *Continue to protect and conserve the City's natural resources.*

    The need to continue the protection and conservation of the City's natural resources must continue to be at the forefront of all planning issues. As noted in previous responses to the recommendations from the 2002 Reexamination Report, wetland protection, dune replenishment, open space preservation/acquisition, etc. must be proactively addressed. The proposed passive park on the former landfill site is an example of this commitment. As noted in the open space and recreation component of this Reexamination Report, the possible use of the site for wind energy, solar panels, etc. in conjunction with the passive functions of the park should be considered.

16. *Maintain all City-owned lands and do not dispose of these lands.*

    This recommendation continues to remain in effect with a few issues outstanding. The recent decision of the County to build a new library facility leaves open the possibility that the current site may be able to be sold for a commercial use that supports the downtown business environment. If the City gives consideration to the sale of this site in the future, the City should consider deed restricting the use of the site for a development that includes first floor commercial development with upper-level residential uses, possibly requiring 25% of these units to be made available for affordable/workforce households. This would show the City's commitment to meeting the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) obligations as well as illustrating the quality of development that can be carried out if planned for in advance.

17. *Continue to establish a long range Capital Improvement Plan.*

While the City doesn't have a formal CIP, the last few pages of the City's annual budget typically incorporate a three (3) year capital improvement plan with a proposed budget for future City department and capital expenditures. The City is currently in the process of preparing a formalized CIP working with all City departments to create a long term plan. The City Administration and City Council should work in conjunction with the Planning Board to prepare a long-range Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

18. *Continue to seek regulatory approval to extend sanitary sewers to First Street in order to service the entire Northend.*

The City continues to seek regulatory approval for the extension of the sanitary sewers.

While the Land Use Regulation Program and the NJDEP have resisted this due to the impacts of increased development in this area, the City does not have plans to develop this area but would like to offer the municipal services to those residents currently residing in this area (and eliminate the use of septic fields on the barrier island for environmental reasons).

19. *Investigate the St. Joseph's School site for multi-purpose recreational and community uses.*

The City should continue working with the school to determine if there is an opportunity to create a shared parking and/or recreational concept with the Church.

20. *Continue to develop Townsends Inlet Waterfront Park as a passive recreational facility and do not establish active recreational uses in this Park.*

Townsends Inlet Waterfront Park, located between the Ocean Drive and Roberts Avenue rights-of-way south of 93rd Street, is currently operating as a passive park with available parking (approximately 32 spaces). No active recreational uses are planned at this time.

21. *Impervious surfaces on individual lots should be controlled by establishing a certain percentage of the lot being a pervious surface. This will reduce the amount of surface runoff and will help to minimize the impact on the City's storm sewer system.*

Pursuant to §26-11 of the Land Use Code;

> *Lot Coverage shall mean that percentage of a lot covered by buildings and accessory buildings. For the purposes of this chapter, lot coverage shall include all sidewalks, parking areas, automobile access driveways, and internal roadways, whether covered by an impervious or pervious material.*

While the definition section of the Ordinance appears to effectively equate to "impervious coverage," the Lot Coverage section that follows each zoning classification consistently refers to principal and accessory building coverage. This issue should be corrected so that impervious coverage of all lots is regulated in the City's Land Use Code.

The 2002 Reexamination report noted that the City did not contain an area in need of redevelopment or an area in need of rehabilitation, and therefore, a redevelopment plan was not recommended at that time.

MASTER PLAN RE-EXAM PROJECT PROCESS

The planning process for the Sea Isle City Master Plan Re-Examination began with a methodical analysis of existing land planning and development conditions in the City. This was done by field reconnaissance studies, analysis of GIS and other databases, as well as the study of previous Master Plan/Re-Examination Reports and Land Use Ordinances. The process included assessing various study parameters, such as a visual survey of existing conditions, population analysis, land use and zoning analysis, transportation and infrastructure analysis, recent residential and nonresidential development activity and commercial development activity especially in the Downtown Business District.

KEPG worked closely with the City's Planning Board, City Commission/Council, City professionals including the Planning Board Attorney and Engineer, and key stakeholders during the course of this twelve (12) month project. Public participation was a major component of this project with KEPG conducting as many as six (6) information/feedback sessions with the Planning Board which were open to the public at large for feedback and comment. These meeting were scheduled to correspond with the various phases in the plan development process (refer to Appendix B) to see the PowerPoint slide presentations made for the Re-exam project). All public meetings were well advertised and attended with an average of approximately twenty-five (25) people from the general public attending each meeting. Another technique successfully used in this project was a focus group survey conducted with the Planning Board, during the initial phase of the project. KEPG facilitated two (2) meetings with the Planning Board to undertake a structured survey to understand key opportunities and issues in Sea Isle City. The survey questions, categorized into various topics such as parks and recreation, zoning, economic development etc., became a comprehensive tool in evaluating priorities (refer to Appendix A for The Planning Board survey forms and consolidated survey results).

In addition to the Planning Board meetings, KEPG participated in a number of sub-committee meetings set up by the newly elected City Council to address long-term growth and development in Sea Isle City. This involvement with community stakeholders, including residents, merchants, property owners and community leaders was critical to the development of recommendations and strategies in this Re-Examination Report, as many of the strategies outlined in the Re-Examination Report were discussed at these meetings. Feedback received from the community, incorporated within the technical, legal and regulatory framework, forms the basis of KEPG's Master Plan Re-Examination Report.

PRIMARY CONSIDERATIONS

The primary issues and considerations facing Sea Isle City at the time of preparation of this Re-Examination Report were evaluated to develop strategies for future growth of the City. The major issues and opportunities relating to different elements of re-examination are outlined below.

Housing

- Analysis of density in both residential and commercial zones
- Council On Affordable Housing (COAH) analysis
- Examination of the City's infrastructure and existing zoning to determine appropriate housing build-out capacity

Land Use and Zoning

- Downtown zoning not consistent with existing land use
- Opportunity for consolidation of residential zoning districts (R1 and R2)
- Limit first-floor residential use in downtown commercial zones
- Encourage mixed-use development in downtown

Parking & Circulation

- Inadequate downtown and residential parking
- Absence of public parking for campground visitors to SIC beach
- Need for multi-modal transportation options to alleviate traffic congestion
- Need for a new municipal parking lot/facility

Parks & Recreation

- Vacant landfill site at north end
- Promenade and beach beautification
- Inadequate library resources and space

Economic Development, Policy and Administration

- Incorporation of a downtown Special Improvement District (SID)
- Designation of Redevelopment Areas
- Designation of a downtown Main Street Corridor
- Work closely with the Committee to promote "shoulder" seasons

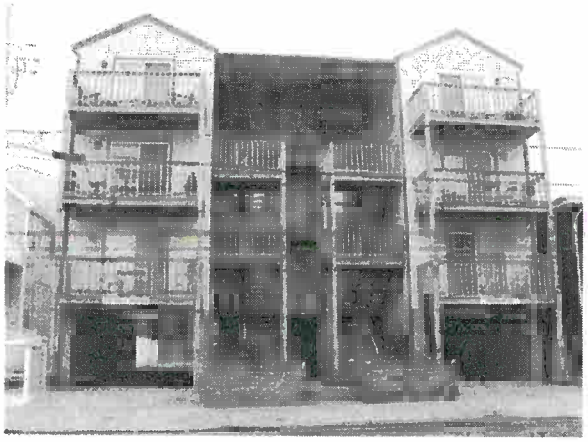
The sections that follow present a detailed analysis of the current conditions and recommendations for future development for each element of the Re-Examination Report. Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89, the following sections also address changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the last Re-Examination Report; specific recommendations for each element; and recommendations for redevelopment areas.

B. Housing

A Housing Plan for Sea Isle City

The purpose of a Housing Plan for Sea Isle City is to not only research and analyze the existing housing situation, but to begin to create a local strategy to provide an adequate supply of housing serving a range of income groups. The reality is that the upper income group, those above 120% of area median income (AMI), are likely to be in a much better position to find and afford adequate housing in the City and/or region – increased opportunities are available to this segment of the population. Accordingly, the lower income groups (those less than 80% or even 50% of AMI) are the City's/region's neediest residents in terms of housing provision and have traditionally been serviced by the many federal programs administered by the State, County, and City. While this segment of the population will continue to require housing assistance, it is the lower/middle-income households (50% to 120% of AMI), often noted as needing workforce housing, that will be at risk of having very limited opportunities for decent "affordable" housing in the coming years, especially as housing cost increase disproportionately with income.

This Plan will outline the current housing situation in Sea Isle City as well as provide a basic framework for the City to begin to understand and address its Council On Affordable Housing (COAH) obligations pursuant to the Fair Housing Act. More importantly, however, is the Plan's ability to create a strategy to simply address the provision of housing for all of the aforementioned income groups, with special attention focused on the needs for workforce housing in the City.



Existing Housing Conditions

Given that the City is a favorite vacation resort community, a majority of Sea Isle City's housing stock is vacant for major part of the year. The US Census data indicates that only about 20% of the total housing units in the City are occupied year-round and of these occupied housing units, approximately 77% are owner-occupied and 23% renter-occupied. The general housing characteristics for Sea Isle City are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: General Housing Characteristics

Subject	Number	Percent
OCCUPANCY STATUS		
Total housing units	**6,622**	**100.0**
Occupied housing units	1,370	20.7
Vacant housing units	5,252	79.3
TENURE		
Occupied housing units	**1,370**	**100.0**
Owner-occupied housing units	1,053	76.9
Renter-occupied housing units	317	23.1
VACANCY STATUS		
Vacant housing units	**5,252**	**100.0**
For rent	235	4.5
For sale only	30	0.6
Rented or sold, not occupied	35	0.7
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	4,864	92.6
For migratory workers	0	0.0
Other vacant	88	1.7
RACE OF HOUSEHOLDER		
Occupied housing units	**1,370**	**100.0**
One race	1,363	99.5
White	1,350	98.5
Black or African American	2	0.1
American Indian and Alaska Native	6	0.4
Asian	4	0.3
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0
Some other race	1	0.1
Two or more races	7	0.5
AGE OF HOUSEHOLDER		
Occupied housing units	**1,370**	**100.0**
15 to 24 years	26	1.9
25 to 34 years	100	7.3
35 to 44 years	200	14.6
45 to 54 years	244	17.8
55 to 64 years	277	20.2
65 years and over	523	38.2
65 to 74 years	268	19.6
75 to 84 years	198	14.5
85 years and over	57	4.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

Sea Isle City has a total population of 2,832 – 2,193 residents live in owner-occupied housing units, and 639 residents rent housing units (Table 2). It is worth noting that the rental units in the City have a slightly smaller household size when compared to the owner-occupied units.

Table 2: Household Population		
Subject	**Number**	**Percent**
Population in occupied housing units	**2,832**	**100.0**
Owner-occupied housing units	2,193	77.4
Renter-occupied housing units	639	22.6
Per occupied housing unit	2.07	(X)
Per owner-occupied housing unit	2.08	(X)
Per renter-occupied housing unit	2.02	(X)
(X) Not applicable. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000		

Physical housing characteristics of vacant housing units in Sea Isle City are shown in Table 3 below. The data note that the City's vacant housing stock is primarily comprised of 2-unit, 1-unit attached, and 1-unit detached housing structures; and majority of the structures have four (4) rooms or more (thus providing for the needed space in the peak summer months when the population reaches ±37,000 persons.

Table 3: Physical Housing Characteristics - Vacant Housing Units: 2000		
Subject	**Number**	**Percent**
Vacant housing units	**5,268**	**100.0**
UNITS IN STRUCTURE		
1, detached	847	16.1
1, attached	1,314	24.9
2	1,956	37.1
3 or 4	300	5.7
5 to 9	286	5.4
10 to 19	206	3.9
20 to 49	186	3.5
50 or more	173	3.3
Mobile home	0	0.0
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0	0.0
ROOMS		
1 room	0	0.0
2 rooms	74	1.4
3 rooms	198	3.8
4 rooms	1,124	21.3
5 rooms	1,358	25.8
6 rooms	1,514	28.7
7 or more rooms	1,000	19.0

Table 3: Physical Housing Characteristics - Vacant Housing Units: 2000		
Subject	**Number**	**Percent**
YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT		
Built 1999 to March 2000	322	6.1
Built 1995 to 1998	1,053	20.0
Built 1990 to 1994	639	12.1
Built 1980 to 1989	1,023	19.4
Built 1970 to 1979	1,036	19.7
Built 1960 to 1969	499	9.5
Built 1950 to 1959	335	6.4
Built 1940 to 1949	173	3.3
Built 1939 or earlier	188	3.6
BEDROOMS		
No bedroom	0	0.0
1 bedroom	432	8.2
2 bedrooms	1,232	23.4
3 bedrooms	1,932	36.7
4 bedrooms	1,386	26.3
5 or more bedrooms	286	5.4
SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS		
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	7	0.1
Lacking complete plumbing facilities	0	0.0

(X) Not applicable.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

Table 4 below shows the year of construction of Sea Isle City's housing stock. The data illustrate that a majority of the City's owner-occupied housing units were constructed between the years 1970 and 1990. Most of the City's renter-occupied housing units were constructed between 1970 and 1980.

Table 4: Year Structure Built: 2000

Subject	Number	Percent
TENURE BY YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT		
Owner-occupied housing units	**1,031**	**100.0**
Built 1999 to March 2000	19	1.8
Built 1995 to 1998	74	7.2
Built 1990 to 1994	54	5.2
Built 1980 to 1989	214	20.8
Built 1970 to 1979	233	22.6
Built 1960 to 1969	128	12.4
Built 1950 to 1959	179	17.4
Built 1940 to 1949	22	2.1
Built 1939 or earlier	108	10.5
Median	1973	(X)
Renter-occupied housing units	**341**	**100.0**
Built 1999 to March 2000	14	4.1
Built 1995 to 1998	10	2.9
Built 1990 to 1994	24	7.0
Built 1980 to 1989	25	7.3
Built 1970 to 1979	104	30.5
Built 1960 to 1969	56	16.4
Built 1950 to 1959	50	14.7
Built 1940 to 1949	31	9.1
Built 1939 or earlier	27	7.9
Median	1971	(X)

(X) Not applicable.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

Fair Share Plan

(1) Overview of COAH Process

This Housing Plan element for the City of Sea Isle City has been prepared in accordance with the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law N.J.S.A. 40:55D-28(3) which provides for "a housing plan element, including but not limited to, residential standards and proposals for the construction and improvement of housing." The Fair Housing Act, N.J.S.A. 52:27D-310, provides further that such housing element "shall be designed to achieve the goal of access to affordable housing to meet present and prospective housing needs, with particular attention to low- and moderate-income housing..." Specific requirements are included also with respect to population, employment and housing stock characteristics and provisions for compliance with the Fair Housing Act of 1985. The Fair Housing Act mandates that each municipality provide a realistic opportunity for decent housing for low- and moderate-income families to reside within the City now and in the future, and for the City's "fair share" of the low- and moderate-income families of the region, again, at the present time and in the future.

Why Plan for Affordable Housing?

Beyond the fact that the provision of such housing is both necessary and fair, the New Jersey Supreme Courts stated in *Mount Laurel II* that "the lessons of history are clear, even if rarely learned. One of those lessons is that unplanned growth has a price..." Further, the Court stated that "communities that are growing and creating jobs have a responsibility to house the poor who will arrive in these locations in pursuit of jobs." The Court wanted municipalities to depend on long range land use planning rather than on purely economic forces to drive development.

Background on the New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) Implementation

The following is excerpted from N.J.A.C. 5:94-1.1

(a) The Council's third round rules in this chapter which implement a "growth share" approach to affordable housing represent a significant departure from the Council's first and second round methodologies in that they link the actual production of affordable housing with municipal development and growth. The Council believes that this approach will hew more closely to the doctrinal underpinning of *Mount Laurel* in that municipalities will provide a realistic opportunity for construction of a fair share of low- and moderate-income housing based on sound land use and long range planning. These rules will harness future growth to produce affordable housing by deeming that all growth-related construction generates an obligation.

(b) Both the Court and the Legislature wanted to establish a system that would provide a realistic opportunity for housing, not litigation. As the Court stated in upholding the Fair Housing Act, "The legislative history of the Act makes it clear that it had two primary purposes: first, to bring an administrative agency into the field of lower income housing to satisfy the *Mount Laurel* obligation; second, to get the courts out of that field." The Council's "growth share" methodology allows each municipality to determine its capacity and desire for growth in a way that is consistent with the policies of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan; its *Mount Laurel* obligation arises as a share of that growth. These rules are, therefore, designed to be both more flexible and less negotiable.

(c) There are three components to the Third Round Methodology; the rehabilitation share, any remaining Prior Round obligations for the period 1987-1999, and the "growth share." Growth share is generated by statewide residential and non-residential growth during the period from 1999 through 2014, and delivered from January 1, 2004 to January 1, 2014. As a result, for every eight (8) market-rate residential units constructed, the municipality shall be obligated to provide one (1) unit that is affordable to households of low- or moderate-income. Job creation carries a responsibility to provide housing as well. For every 25 newly created jobs

as measured by new or expanded non-residential construction within the municipality in accordance with the square foot calculations as noted in the procedural rules, the municipality shall be obligated to provide one unit that is affordable to households of low- and moderate-income. This method tightens the working definition of "realistic opportunity" to meet the constitutional obligation with not merely a good faith attempt, but with the actual provision of housing for low- and moderate-income households.

(2) City Information

General Description of Sea Isle City / Major Considerations

Sea Isle City is a compact community located along the shore in Cape May County, and situated on a barrier island. The City is rather densely populated in the area south of 22nd Street, and extending to the southern terminus of the island at 93rd Street. According to the US Census 2000, Sea Isle City realized an increase in population from 1990 thru 2000, from 2,692 persons to 2,835 persons or a net increase of 143 persons.

Planning Areas

According to the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (the State Plan or SDRP), Sea Isle City is designated as an Environmentally Sensitive/Barrier Island Planning Area (PA-5), and has petitioned the Office of Smart Growth (Department of Community Affairs). Designation as a Town Center would afford Sea Isle City increased opportunities for Smart Growth Planning under the SDRP guidelines. The Town Center designation is generally targeted at; "traditional designated centers of commerce or government throughout New Jersey, with diverse residential neighborhoods served by a mixed-use Core offering locally oriented goods and services."

City Master Plan and Municipal Concurrence with the State Plan Vision Statement

The 2001 State Plan contains the following Vision Statement for Housing:

> *Preserve and expand the supply of safe, decent and reasonably priced housing by balancing land uses, housing types, and housing costs and by improving access between jobs and housing. Promote low-and moderate-income and affordable housing through code enforcement, housing subsidies, community-wide housing approaches and coordinated efforts with the New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing.*

It is the intent of this plan to address all aspects of this State Plan vision. Many of these issues will be addressed directly in this Housing Element of the new Master Plan for Sea Isle City while others will be part of the general planning documents and Design Guidelines that are currently being completed for the City.

(3) Housing Requirements

Requirements Pursuant to COAH Regulations from 1987 – 2014

This Plan will determine the City's affordable housing need for the period 1987 thru 2014 (January 1st) via the analysis of prior rounds (COAH First and Second Round Obligations) and creates a framework to meet this required obligation, in addition to the current Third Round obligation. Based upon the Council of Affordable Housing (COAH) N.J.A.C. 5:94, Appendix C, Sea Isle City has the following pre-determined prior round obligations:

Table 5
Prior Round (1st & 2nd) Obligations

	Rehabilitation Share	Total Obligation from 1st & 2nd Rounds (1987 – 1999)
Sea Isle City	0 units	113 units

Source: COAH 2006

Residential Growth

To determine the current Third Round Fair Share obligation, the data and forecasts of the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO) have been utilized to determine Sea Isle City's "growth share." While a more detailed analysis could be completed based upon a review of building permits, certificates of occupancy (CO's), demolitions, square feet of commercial space constructed, etc. over the past decade, COAH accepts SJTPO data and it has proven relatively accurate in other studies.

Table 6
Third Round Population and Household Projections
South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization

2005 Population	2015 Population	2005 – 2015 Population Growth
2,951	3,182	231

2005 Households	2015 Households	2005 – 2015 Household Growth
1,426	1,537	112

Projected Residential Growth Share for Affordable Units (Households/9)

13

Population projections, as developed by the SJTPO Regional Transportation Plan for the Year 2015 indicate a slight increase in population of 231 persons for the City between 2005 and 2015 as well as an increase of 112 households within the City during the same period.

As noted previously, the Substantive Rules for COAH require that the City utilize a metropolitan planning organization (MPO), of which SJTPO qualifies, to provide a projection for the period between and inclusive of the years 2005 and 2013 only. The aforementioned chart goes slightly beyond this nine (9) year projection requirement, but is important in demonstrating the estimated housing needs envisioned over the next decade in Sea Isle City.

Non-Residential Growth

This estimated Third Round requirement of thirteen (13) affordable units must be further expanded to include the City's estimated *non-residential* development during this period. As noted previously, the Third Round rules further incorporate Fair Share requirements based upon jobs created as measured by new or expanded non-residential construction within the City. Pursuant to COAH, one (1) affordable housing unit is required for every twenty-five (25) jobs created within Sea Isle City.

The region's Metropolitan Planning Organization, the SJTPO has estimated employment projections at an anticipated increase of approximately 13,851 jobs in the City between 2005 and 2015 (Table 7). Accordingly, using SJTPO data, 554 units of affordable housing would be required over the next seven (7) years – through the end of the Third Round for COAH.

Table 7
SJTPO Employment Growth Projections
(2005 – 2015)

2005 Jobs	2015 Jobs	2005 – 2015 Job Growth	Projected Non-Residential Growth Share for Affordable Units (Job Growth/25)
1,190	1,266	76	4

Based on the SJTPO employment projections, Sea Isle City appears to have a non-residential obligation of four (4) affordable housing units for the Third Round. This, added to the residential obligation of thirteen (13) units equates to a total obligation of seventeen (17) units.

Combined with COAH's Prior Rounds (1st & 2nd) affordable housing requirements of 113 units, Sea Isle City has a total affordable housing obligation of 130 units prior to 1 January 2014.

(4) The Existing Affordable Housing Units in Sea Isle City

Through the former Sea Isle City Housing Authority (SICHA), a number of housing vouchers (Section 8 vouchers) were administered. Recently, the handling of Section 8 vouchers has been given to Cape May County. Currently, 34 Section 8 vouchers are administered within Sea Isle City. There is currently no age-restricted developments, group homes, assisted living facilities or other inclusionary housing districts within the City.

(5) Meeting Sea Isle City's COAH Obligations

COAH's First and Second Rounds (an obligation of 113 units) permit the following breakdown of units:

- Up to 25% of the 113 units may be age-restricted units
- Up to 50% of the 113 units may be Regional Contribution Agreement (RCA) units (in this case, Sea Isle City could reach an agreement with another New Jersey community who has adequate affordable housing units where Sea Isle City makes a monetary contribution to that community to fund ongoing rehabilitation/construction projects for improved affordable housing options)
- At least 25% of the 113 units must be rental units in Sea Isle City (note: for every rental unit and/or group home, COAH offers a "2 for 1" credit for each unit restricted for affordable housing built)

COAH's Third Round (an obligation of 17 units) rules were slightly revised. The new rules permit the following breakdown of units:

- Up to 50% of the 113 units may be age-restricted units
- COAH no longer allows RCA units
- At least 25% of the 113 units must be rental units in Sea Isle City (note: for every rental unit, COAH offers a "2 for 1" credit for each family rental unit restricted for affordable housing built *above the required 25% threshold*)

Given these scenarios, the following table (Table 8) outlines the current status of the First and Second Rounds of COAH, as well as recommended actions to meet the obligations for these prior rounds. Additionally, the recommended actions for addressing the current round (Third Round) are noted as well. The paragraphs following the table outline this plan in detail.

Table 8
Possible Housing Typology to Satisfy COAH Obligation

	Proposed First/Second Round Action	Proposed Third Round Action (for units built between 2005 and 2015)
Age Restricted Development	28	8
RCA's	51	Negotiate the possibility of using the available 5 units from the First and Second Rounds with COAH
Rental/Section 8	34	0 new
City Subsidized Rental or For-Sale Product	0	4
Total Obligation	113	17

Note: 50% of the affordable units must be for those families classified as low-income households (those earning less than 50% of AMI); the remaining 50% may be allocated for moderate-income households (those earning less than 80% of AMI).

(6) Overview for COAH Substantive Certification

Plan Background

The following plan is a recommendation to address both prior rounds substantive certification (First and Second Rounds) as well as the present round (third) requirements for the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH). The prior rounds' requirement of 113 units and the Third Round requirement of 17 units equates to 130 units of affordable housing that must be addressed by the Sea Isle City prior to 1 January 2014. While no plan can truly estimate or predict what will occur within the City over the next decade (thus addressing third round growth share requirements), such a plan can put into place a method to meet the community's affordable housing needs/requirements.

Sea Isle City is projected to have relatively stable growth, and may be generally categorized as a steadily growing barrier island community of almost 3000 persons. The community is relatively built out and has demonstrated minimal population growth based upon the 1990 to 2000 US Census.

In addition to the fact that the City is relatively built out, it should also be noted that the northern end of the City does not have public sewer service (although public water service is available north to 1st Street), thus exacerbating its ability to address future residential and/or commercial growth, and accordingly, affordable housing.

An examination of the City's housing stock revealed that there are no pre-existing (pre-COAH) age-restricted housing developments or group homes / assisted living centers that would serve to alleviate the City's First and Second Round COAH requirements.

The City is not necessarily in a financial, or personnel, position to establish a Community Development Corporation (CDC) to create affordable housing opportunities, or develop a scattered site housing program to "redevelop" properties that have been foreclosed upon as affordable housing (and deed restricted accordingly). Currently, there are no funds available for Regional Contribution Agreements

(RCA's) to transfer up to 50% of the prior rounds obligation to another municipality within the housing region by means of a contractual Regional Contribution Agreement.

The following table (Table 9) illustrates the regional income limits for housing within Region 6 as designated by COAH. Region 6 includes Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland and Salem counties.

Table 9
Region 6 (Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, & Salem Counties)
2007 Regional Income Limits3

Household Size	Median Income	Moderate (80% of AMI)	Low (50% of AMI)	Very Low (30% of AMI)
1 person	$44,015	$35,212	$22,008	$13,205
1.5 persons	$47,159	$37,727	$23,580	$14,148
2 persons	$50,303	$40,243	$25,152	$15,091
3 persons	$56,591	$45,273	$28,296	$16,977
4 persons	$62,879	$50,303	$31,440	$18,864
4.5 persons	$65,394	$52,315	$32,697	$19,618
5 persons	$67,909	$54,327	$33,955	$20,373
6 persons	$72,940	$58,352	$36,470	$21,882
7 persons	$77,970	$62,376	$38,985	$23,391
8 persons	$83,000	$66,400	$41,500	$24,900

(7) The Proposed Housing Plan

Given the unique situation that Sea Isle City finds itself; a densely built community located on an environmentally sensitive barrier island with an Environmentally Sensitive/Barrier Island Planning Area (PA-5) designation according to the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) and limited land available for new construction, it is recommended that the City meet with COAH representatives to re-address the prior round COAH requirements to determine if these numbers may be revised in light of this unique situation. For example, a vacant land analysis for Sea Isle City will demonstrate the difficulty in finding land available for the construction of affordable housing.

Table 10
Total Units Per Round

1st and 2nd Round - Rehabilitation Share	Total Obligation from 1st & 2nd Rounds (1987 – 1999)	Total Estimated Obligation from 3rd Round (2004 - 2014)
0 units	113 units	17 units

3 New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing (COAH), Income Limits, 2007.

However, in an attempt to address the current requirements, it is recommended that the City implement a Fair Share Residential Growth Share Ordinance that requires one unit of affordable housing for every *eight* market units developed.

In the case of the City's projected residential development (112 units of housing between 2004 and 2014), such a Growth Share Ordinance would satisfy the estimated Third Round obligation for affordable housing units. To address the prior rounds' obligation of 113 units:

- The City of Sea Isle City currently has **34** units of Section 8 vouchers in use throughout the City that should apply toward meeting 1st and 2nd Round obligations.

- The City should begin negotiation and budgeting procedures to utilize its ability to transfer up to 50% of the City's prior rounds' obligation (**51** units, where up to 56 units are eligible for RCA) to another municipality within the housing region by means of a contractual regional contribution agreement (RCA) between Sea Isle City as the "sending" municipality and another municipality as the "receiving" municipality. The current cost of RCAs is $35,000 per unit.

- The City should consider utilizing age restricted development to satisfy 25% of its 1st Round and 2nd Round obligations (up to **28** units). Age restricted units could be incorporated as part of a larger downtown plan where this population is strategically located near the amenities they need and desire. This can be done via many avenues including: the creation of an inclusionary zone for such development within the downtown area, or requiring a minimum percent (e.g. 25%) of residential development in the downtown commercial zones to be deed-restricted for this type of housing for residents over the age of 55 years old.

If implemented, these methods would provide for 113 units of affordable housing. As the City of Sea Isle City continues to explore options for meeting its COAH obligations, it is worth noting that at least 25% of the affordable units required for all rounds must be rental units, not for-sale units. The City's existing 34 Section 8 vouchers for apartment units provide opportunities for families with low- or moderate-incomes to secure a quality living environment without necessitating a down payment (as required to purchase a house/condominium). Each of these units may count for two units towards the City's 1st and 2nd Round obligations. Additional opportunities to meet the COAH obligations include:

- The City should explore the possibility of working with a Community Development Corporation (CDC) or others to locate units (rental or for-sale units) of affordable workforce housing in the City.

- As part of the recommended Growth Share Ordinance, the City may wish to implement an increase in the density permitted within the downtown area residential and/or commercial zoning districts to assist in the creation of affordable housing units within the community. This issue should be examined in more detail at the time of ordinance implementation to see if such is necessary and / or ideal to promote the needed affordable housing development within the City. The current recommended commercial zoning revision under consideration as part of this Master Plan Re-examination Report (and outlined in the subsequent Land Use section) would allow for one (1) residential unit on a second or third floor location for every 1250 SF of lot area. This proposed increase in density is in line with Smart Growth principles and should ultimately provide for a larger full-time downtown population – a population that will likely frequent the commercial establishments in this area.

- Site specific options include the City agreeing to deed-restrict any property that it is considering selling. Specifically, the City is currently considering relocating the library from its current site on John F. Kennedy Boulevard. If the City proceeds with this relocation, the opportunity to sell this property exists. The site is ideal for a mixed-use development and could be deed-restricted to accommodate affordable units on the upper floors (25% of the units could be dedicated for affordable workforce housing). The City could initiate an ordinance that requires 25% of these units to be deed-restricted for affordable workforce housing.

(8) Actual Implementation

Utilizing the aforementioned recommendations (one-to-eight ratio), a multi-unit residential development that is proposed within the City will be required to construct one unit of affordable housing for every eight market rate units proposed. For demonstration purposes; should a developer propose a twenty (24) unit development, three (3) units within the development would be required to be affordable units. However should a developer propose an eighteen (18) unit development, two (2) units of affordable housing would be required to be located on site (16 units/8), *plus* a pro-rated "payment in lieu" of construction to the City for the remaining two (2) market units proposed. The City must conduct an analysis of the costs that will be incurred when subsidizing the construction and/or purchase of affordable housing in these situations. The costs will include land costs, water (well) costs, sewer (septic) costs, rights-of-way, and other construction costs. Ultimately, this cost as determined will need to be met by imposing a "payment in lieu" on any proposed housing construction within the City, whether one unit or seven units (noting that at eight units, the developer would be required to *construct* one affordable unit within the City).

The determination of an accurate cost will be imperative for the City to establish what this "payment in lieu" will be in terms of a dollar value – it is quite likely that the cost for an affordable unit in Sea Isle City will be in the range of $200,000 to $275,000 (an actual cost must be determined by the Tax Assessor based on an analysis of recent sales to set an accurate cost for a typical unit in the City). Assuming we use the midpoint of the range, $237,500, as the cost (until a more accurate figure is researched and determined), the "payment in lieu" for a single residential unit proposed in Sea Isle City would be the difference in what a low- or moderate income family can afford and the $237,500 value. For example, a four-person moderate-income family (80% of AMI) with an annual salary of $50,303 can expend *no more than 28% of their gross income* on housing (95% mortgage [5% down], taxes, insurance, etc.) to qualify as a COAH unit. In this case, this household can afford a house valued at $147,350 (assuming 5% down payment, 30 year fixed-rate at 6.5%, annual property taxes of $2,500, and homeowners insurance of $1000 per month).

This example results in a necessary subsidy of $90,150 ($237,500 - $147,350 = $90,150) for each unit of affordable housing allocated for moderate-income families. Based on the proposed <u>one unit of affordable housing for every eight market units developed</u>, the "payment in lieu" required for every individual market rate house built (and no accompanying affordable housing unit built on site) would be $11,269 ($90,150/8 = $11,269).

The necessary City subsidy for a *low-income* (50% of AMI) family of four, using the same housing cost parameters, would be significantly higher. A low-income family of four, expending 28% of their gross income ($31,440) could afford a house valued at $73,700. This *low-income* example results in a necessary subsidy of $163,800 ($237,500 - $73,700 = $163,800) for each unit of affordable housing allocated for low-income families. Based on the proposed <u>one unit of affordable housing for every eight market units developed</u>, the "payment in lieu" required for every market rate house built (and no accompanying affordable housing unit built on site) would be $20,475 ($163,800/8 = $20,475).

According to N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.3, at least 50% of the units restricted for affordable housing must be reserved for low-income households, while the remaining 50% may be used to house moderate-income families. As such, the average of the two subsidies, $15,872 ([$11,269+$20,475]/2 = $15,872), should be used as the City's required "payment in lieu" for affordable housing. Every unit of market rate housing built in the City would be required to pay this COAH fee if the required affordable housing units were not built on site as part of the proposed development. The City should consider allowing this "payment in lieu" for market rate housing developments that are less than eight (8) units. Any development of eight (8) market rate units or more should provide the required affordable housing units on site.

The City may also explore the option of charging a fee on commercial development (typically 1% or 2% of project cost) that would provide additional funding for the City's affordable housing program.

The City would need to deposit these monies in a separate, interest-bearing housing trust fund or deposited in an approved cash management fund. The City would then use these monies to provide the subsidy to fill the gap between the actual cost of housing and what a low- or moderate-income family can afford. This subsidy would, of course, only be eligible to qualified buyers. Given the high cost associated with the need for the City to meet its COAH obligations, an alternative option could be that the City explores the possibility of creating a Community Development Corporation (CDC) that operates as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization to actually locate and build (and possibly rehab existing structures) affordable housing within the City. The City may work with this organization to identify appropriate sites for such construction and may even locate and purchase foreclosed properties for rehabilitation and deed-restriction for affordable housing.

(9) Conclusion

Sea Isle City is a small densely built community with relatively stable growth over the past decade, with a similar growth forecast for the next ten (10) to twenty (20) years. The goals of the City's Master Plan indicate a strong desire to protect the City's environmental resources, increase/concentrate commercial activity in the downtown area, and reduce summer traffic congestion. Along with these goals, the City recognizes that it has a responsibility to address affordable housing in accordance with the New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing (COAH). This report has outlined the recent demographic trends (residential and non-residential) within the City as well as illustrating projections for future residential and non-residential growth over the next decade (2004 through 2014).

Based upon the analysis presented, Sea Isle City has a total responsibility to create 130 affordable housing units prior to 1 January 2014. Given the costs associated with development on a barrier island, the City will have difficulty addressing the COAH obligations without the assistance of the private market. Accordingly, this plan as presented requires any new housing development to provide affordable housing units at a ratio of one-to-eight – for every eight (8) units of market rate housing constructed, one (1) unit of affordable housing will be required. If a single lot is proposed for residential development – a payment in lieu of construction (based on a one-to-eight ratio or 12.5% of the estimated cost of the subsidy required for an affordable unit) will be required prior to the certificate of occupancy being issued for the market residential unit proposed. The exact value of an affordable unit in Sea Isle City must be determined in order to provide the exact "payment in lieu" value. For purposes of this Plan, the value has been set at $237,500 to construct and/or purchase an affordable unit, thus requiring a proposed single-family market rate residential unit to pay a $15,872 COAH fee to be deposited into a fund with the City to be used to create/build or subsidize the appropriate number of affordable housing units within Sea Isle City. Ultimately, the City's Assessor must analyze recent housing sales in the City and set a value for the cost of typical unit within the City.

The City, given the obvious hardship for an individual to make such contribution for required housing per COAH may wish to consider other City-wide opportunities for securing funding for the construction of such COAH units. Additionally, it should be noted the aforementioned values offer only a *starting* point for the City of Sea Isle City to begin to understand and address its affordable housing obligation. Additional analysis should be completed prior to the adoption of a final housing plan and, concurrent with the preparation of this plan, the City and its Planner should meet with COAH representatives to determine if feasible alternatives exist to address the City's obligations. Further discussions with COAH relative to possible reductions in prior round obligations should ensue. Specifically, the completion of a vacant land analysis might effectively illustrate a significant difficulty in constructing the amount of housing "obligated" by COAH's prior rounds.

The State of New Jersey and COAH representatives are currently in a wait-and-see mode with regard to recent lawsuits regarding its Third Round methodology. Based on the results of this litigation, this Plan should be reviewed, analyzed, and revised by the City prior to filing with COAH for eventual certification.

C. Land Use and Zoning

LAND USE AND ZONING PATTERNS

The total area of Sea Isle City is approximately 1,660 acres (based on current GIS data), of which approximately 490 acres or 30% is wetlands, and 263 acres or 16% is water. Assuming that about 25% of the remaining land area is used for roads and transportation infrastructure, the City has approximately 680 acres of developable land, most of which is currently developed.

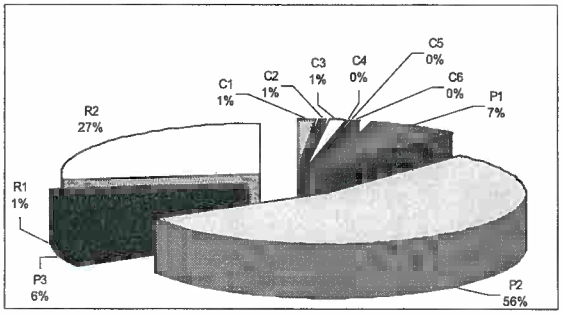
Sea Isle City's current zoning is depicted in Figure 4. The current zoning standards indicate that the P2 Wetland Conservation District is the City's largest zoning district. Following the conservation district the second largest district in the City is the R2 Two Family Residential District, which covers about 27% of the City. Area covered by each of the City's zoning districts is described in Table 11 below, and the percentage of area covered is illustrated in the chart below (Figure 2).

Table 11: Sea Isle City Zoning

Zoning District	Area(acres)*
C1-General Business District	19.89
C2-Neighborhood Business District	9.66
C3-Marine Commercial/Industrial District	20.00
C4-Beach Business District	6.77
C5-Motel Business District	3.48
C6-Yacht Club District	3.22
P1-Beach District	115.31
P2-Wetland Conservation District	847.71
P3-Public Use and Recreation District	92.54
R1-Single Family Residential District	9.47
R2-Two Family Residential District	411.51

*Based on County GIS Data

Figure 2: Sea Isle City Zoning



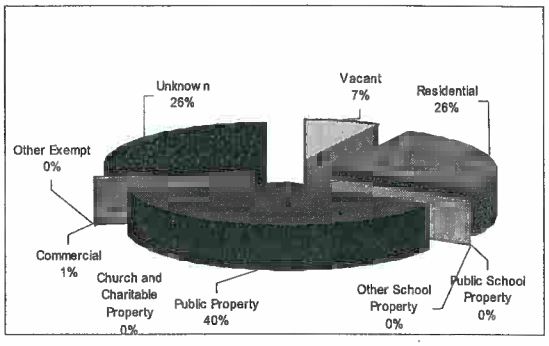
The City's Tax Assessor classifies each parcel by a tax code which indicates existing land use. These city-wide land use patterns are depicted in Figure 5. The data indicates that public property, which includes the City's wetlands, forms the largest land use category, followed by residential land use, which covers about 26% of the City. Area covered by various land uses is described in Table 12 below, and their percentages are depicted in the adjoining chart (Figure 3). This analysis is, however, limited by the accuracy of available GIS data[4]. The City should update/complete its GIS information so that a more complete analysis of land use patterns can be carried out.

[4] Approximately 52% of the City's parcels lack land use information in GIS data.

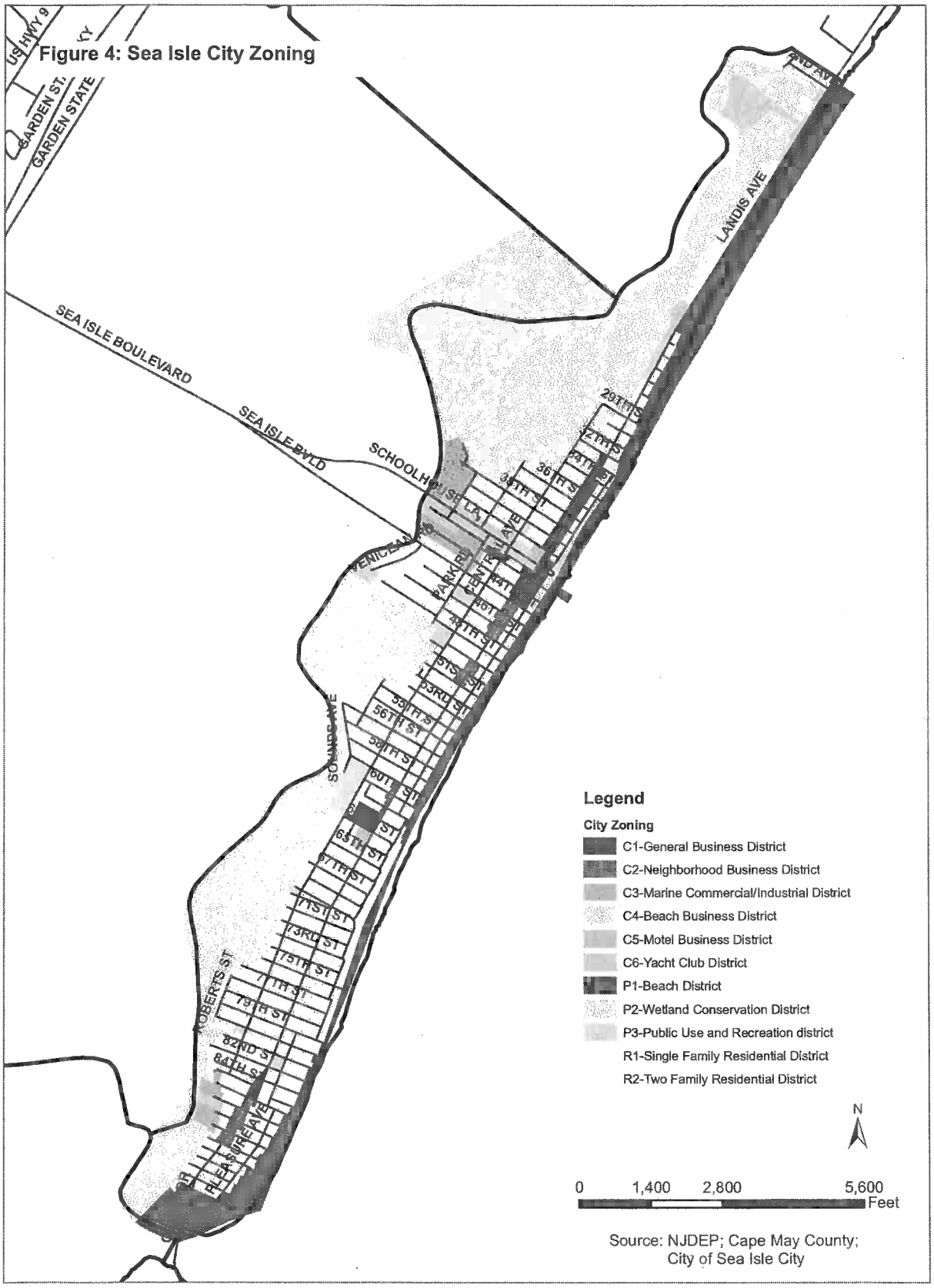
Table 12: Land Use by Property Classification*		
Property Classification Code	**Description**	**Area (Acres)**
1	Vacant	96.46
2	Residential	336.28
15A	Public School Property	0.06
15B	Other School Property	0.26
15C	Public Property	508.55
15D	Church and Charitable Property	1.60
15F	Other Exempt	0.48
4A	Commercial	13.40
Unknown	Unknown	342.09
	Total	**1299.18**

*Based on County GIS data.

Figure 3: Land Use by Property Classification



The US Geological Survey (USGS) publishes Land Use and Land Cover (LULC) data, which consists of historical land use and land cover classification data that was based primarily on the manual interpretation of 1970's and 1980's aerial photography. The LULC data for the City of Sea Isle City is depicted in Figure 6.



Source: NJDEP; Cape May County; City of Sea Isle City

Figure 4: Sea Isle City Zoning

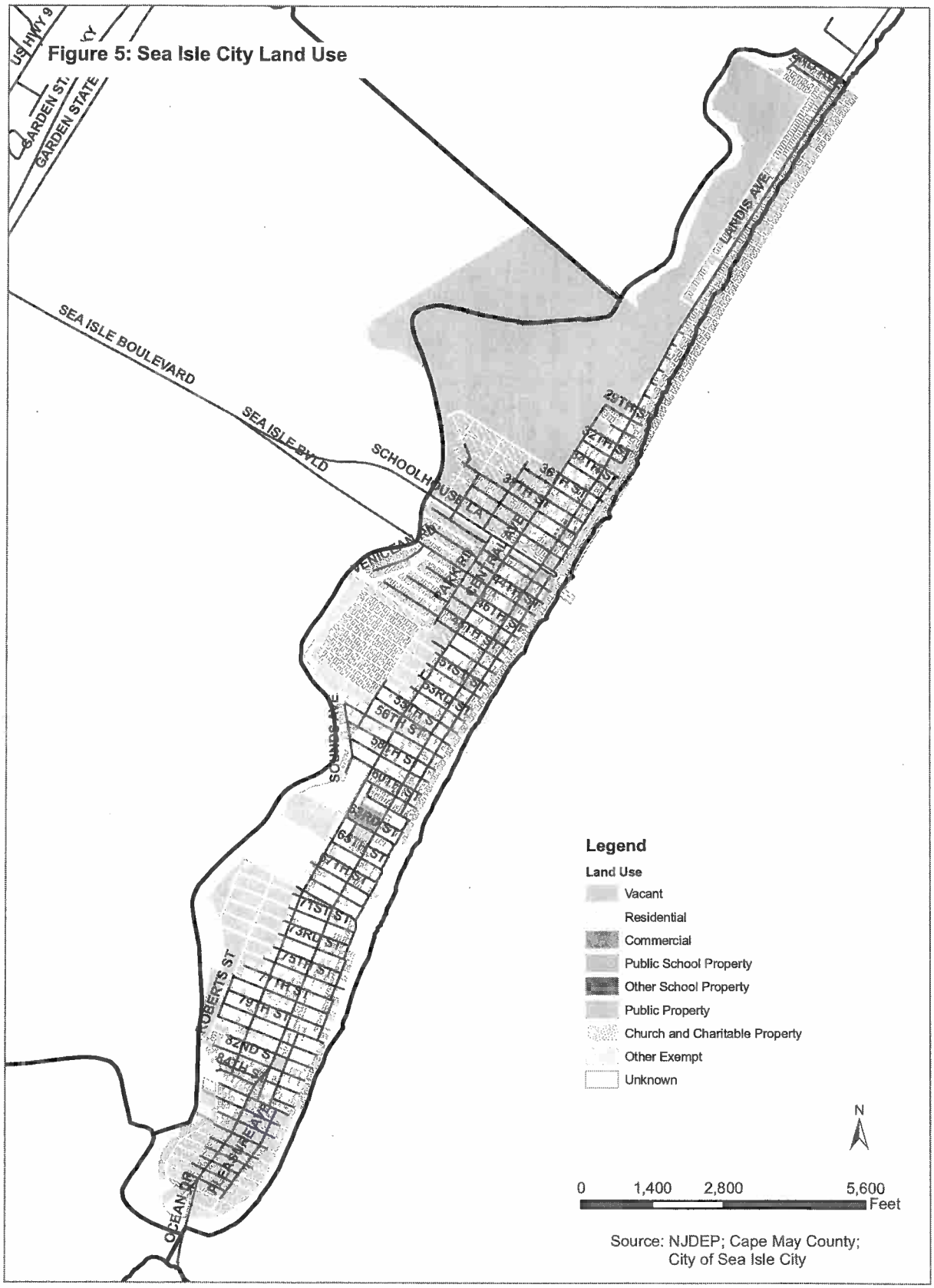


Figure 5: Sea Isle City Land Use

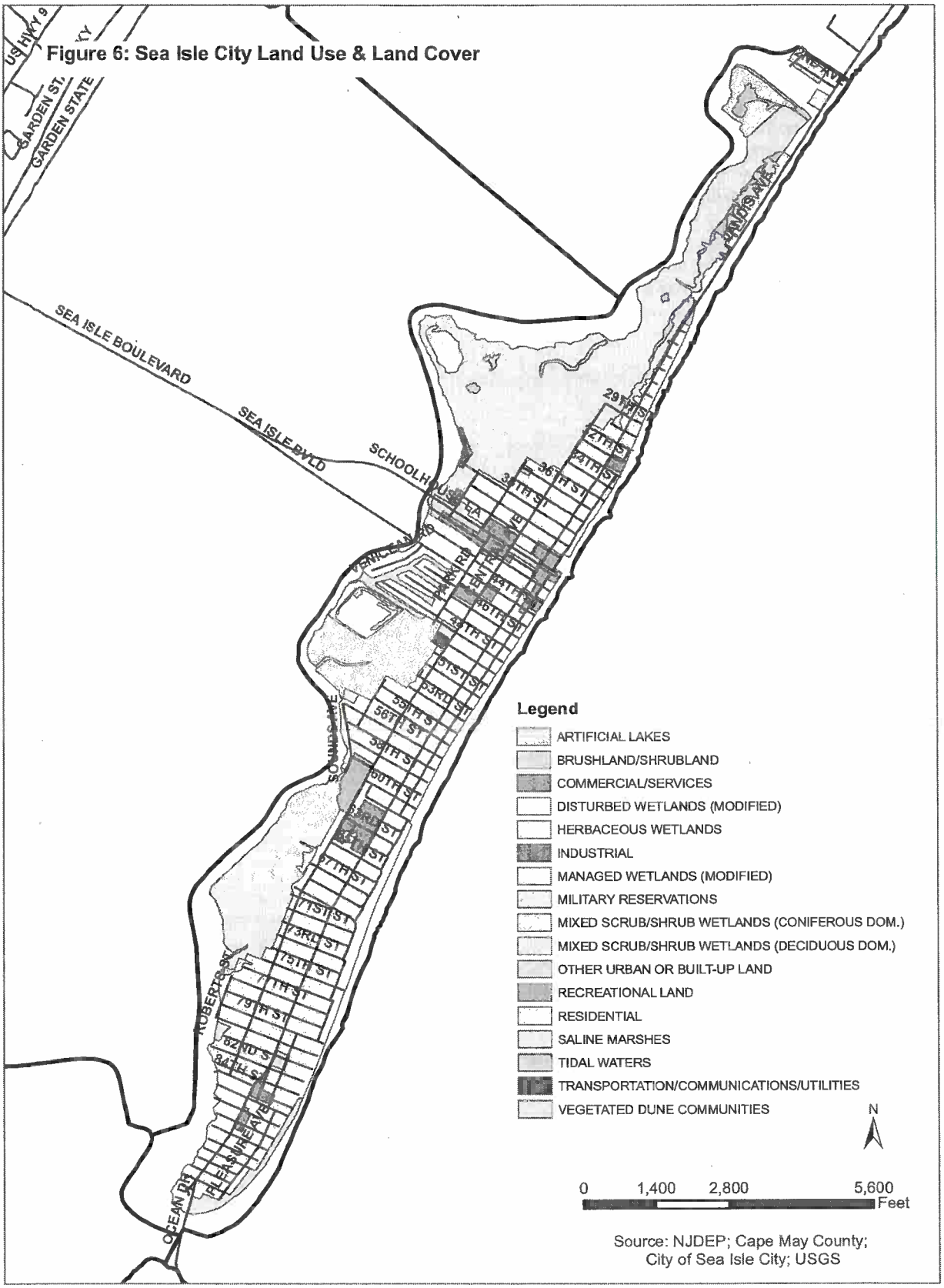


Figure 6: Sea Isle City Land Use & Land Cover

Source: NJDEP; Cape May County; City of Sea Isle City; USGS

BUILD-OUT ANALYSIS

A build out analysis is often used by cities to test existing regulations and to estimate what the future might bring when all land is developed to the maximum extent allowed. A build out analysis can help towns see the future, although the time frame for the future may be estimation. Such analysis can help a city evaluate its current situation and possible future development patterns.

Projected numbers and time-frame

According to the US Census, the City of Sea Isle City has 6,622 housing units as of April 2000. Adding the number of new housing units constructed between the years 2000 and 2006 to the year 2000 figures, the current number of total housing units in Sea Isle City equates to 7,080. Housing development in terms of new unit construction and demolitions used to arrive at this estimate is detailed in Table 13 below.

Table 13: Housing Unit Development

Year	Housing Units Gained		Housing Units Lost		Net New Housing Units	
	Sale	Rent	Sale	Rent	Sale	Rent
2000	125	112	90	37	35	75
2001	95	83	82	33	13	50
2002	92	79	89	31	3	48
2003	109	99	98	45	11	54
2004	123	107	124	51	-1	56
2005	134	92	130	34	4	58
2006	82	53	61	22	21	31
Total	**760**	**625**	**674**	**253**	**86**	**372**
New Housing units 2000-2006						458
Housing units (Census 2000)						6,622
Total Housing units						7,080

Source: The City of Sea Isle City; The US Census Bureau

To determine the full development potential of Sea Isle City, a build-out analysis based on the City's zoning ordinance is detailed in Table 14 on the following page. For this analysis, first the total land area in each zoning district is calculated using the County GIS data. This area is then multiplied by the permissible density in each zoning district to obtain the total number of dwelling units possible in each zoning district. The density is based on minimum lot standards. Analysis of the City's development potential using this methodology gives an estimate of the total number of dwelling units the City can expect if development reaches the maximum build-out level defined by its current zoning codes.

Table 14: Build-out Analysis			
Zoning	**Area(acres)***	**Max DU/AC****	**Total DU**
R1	9.47	8.7	82.42
R2	411.51	17.4	7160.19
C1	19.89	17.4	346.14
C2	9.66	17.4	168.02
C3	20.00	18.3	365.98
C4	6.77	17.4	117.87
C5	3.48	40	139.30
C6	3.22	0	0.00
Total	**484.00**		**8379.91**

* From GIS data

** Based on zoning ordinance

Based on this analysis, the City is estimated to have 8,380 dwelling units at build-out (utilizing the current zoning). Considering the existing number of housing units in the City (7,080), the City is 1,300 units short of its maximum build-out capacity. At the current construction rate of approximately 50 new units per year, the City is estimated to reach its build-out capacity in ±25 years (in the year 2032).

Implications on Infrastructure & Utilities

In order to estimate whether the City's sewage system can support the requirements of the City's maximum build-out housing stock, an estimate of the average daily sewage flow is calculated as shown in Table 15 below. This analysis utilizes the City's maximum sewage flow readings, which occur in the months of July and August. Readings for the peak period averages for the year 2006 yield an overall average daily sewage flow rate of 2.007 million gallons per day or MGD (refer to Appendix F). This translates to an average daily flow of 283.47 GPD per dwelling unit, for the existing 7,080 housing units in the City. When estimated for the total 8,380 dwelling units at build-out, the total average daily sewage flow at build-out (estimated in the year 2032) reaches 2.38 MGD. The City of Sea isle City has been a participant in the Municipalities Utility Authority regional sewer system in Cape May County since 1980. The City's allocation for sewage treatment, agreed to that year, is 2.39 MGD (an average for the months of July and August). This allocation is considered binding until the year 2020.

Table 15: Estimated Sewage Flow at Build-out (estimated at current rates)	
Average daily flow July 2006 (MGD)	2.099
Average daily flow August 2006 (MGD)	1.915
2006 Average daily flow (MGD)	2.007
Total existing Housing Units	7,080
Flow per Unit (GPD)	283.47
Total Housing Units at Build-out	8,380
Average daily flow at Build-out (MGD)	2.38

Mandatory water conservation measures as well as new appliances limit the average daily sewage flow per dwelling unit for new construction (this applies to all new construction since the year 1990). The goal of these new measures is to reduce the total daily household use to 225 gallons.[5] When this daily limit is applied to the new construction at build-out, the total flow estimate is 2.30 MGD, as shown in Table 16 below. This analysis indicates that while the current average daily sewage flow in the City is about 84% of the County's current allocation of 2.39 MGD to Sea Isle City, the estimated flow of 2.30 MGD at build-out is almost 96% of the current allocation. The improving water conservation measures applied to new construction do help in reducing the sewage flow; however, usage at build-out can start straining the City's existing sewage infrastructure.

Table 16: Estimated Sewage Flow at Build-out (estimated using conservation standards)	
Average daily flow July 2006 (MGD)	2.099
Average daily flow August 2006 (MGD)	1.915
2006 Average daily flow (MGD)	2.007
Conservation Average daily flow limit (GPD)	225
Addition Housing Units at Build-out	1,300
Average daily flow for additional Build-out Units (MGD)	0.29
Total Average daily flow at Build-out (MGD)	2.30

Policy recommendations for Smart Growth build out

As Sea Isle City nears its build-out capacity, it is essential to the long-term interests of the City that all new development and redevelopment follow Smart Growth principles. Smart growth recognizes connections between development and quality of life and leverages new growth to improve the community. Growth in this manner invests time, attention, and resources in restoring community and vitality to center cities and older suburbs. New Smart Growth is more town-centered, is transit and pedestrian oriented, and has a greater mix of housing, commercial and retail uses. It also preserves open space and many other environmental amenities. Listed below are the main principles for Smart Growth:[6]

- *Create Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices*: Providing quality housing for people of all income levels is an integral component in any smart growth strategy.
- *Create Walkable Neighborhoods*: Walkable communities are desirable places to live, work, learn, worship and play, and therefore a key component of smart growth.
- *Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration*: Growth can create great places to live, work and play -- if it responds to a community's own sense of how and where it wants to grow.
- *Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place*: Smart growth encourages communities to craft a vision and set standards for development and construction which respond to community values of architectural beauty and distinctiveness, as well as expanded choices in housing and transportation.

[5] Norman Day Associates, "An Analysis of the Ultimate Development Potential of the City of Sea Isle City Based on Current Zoning Regulations"
[6] Smart Growth Online www.smartgrowth.org

- *Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair and Cost Effective*: For a community to be successful in implementing smart growth, it must be embraced by the private sector.

- *Mix Land Uses*: Smart growth supports the integration of mixed land uses into communities as a critical component of achieving better places to live.

- *Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty and Critical Environmental Areas*: Open space preservation supports smart growth goals by bolstering local economies, preserving critical environmental areas, improving our communities quality of life, and guiding new growth into existing communities.

- *Provide a Variety of Transportation Choices*: Providing people with more choices in housing, shopping, communities, and transportation is a key aim of smart growth.

- *Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities*: Smart growth directs development towards existing communities already served by infrastructure, seeking to utilize the resources that existing neighborhoods offer, and conserve open space and irreplaceable natural resources on the urban fringe.

- *Take Advantage of Compact Building Design*: Smart growth provides a means for communities to incorporate more compact building design as an alternative to conventional, land consumptive development.

RECOMMENDED ZONING & LAND USE CHANGES

Based on the evaluation of existing land use and zoning conditions and future development patterns, the following zoning changes are recommended for the City of Sea Isle City.

1. a. Reduce the downtown commercial zoning district (C-1, General Business District along Landis Avenue) from its current northern terminus at 32nd Street to 37th Street (see Figure 7). The recommended zoning designation for this area is residential (R-2, Two-family Residential District), the zoning designation that currently surrounds this area.

   Site analysis indicates there are only three (3) commercial properties remaining along Landis Avenue between 32nd and 37th Streets; the Scoop Daddy's Ice Cream shop on the northwest corner of 33rd Street and Landis Avenue, the Pirate Island Golf facility on the southwest corner of 33rd and Landis Avenue, and a barber shop (with a few additional commercial uses) on the second floor of the a multi-unit structure on the northwest corner of 36th Street and Landis Avenue. The remaining properties are either residential or vacant at the present time. The following list illustrates those blocks and lots (a total of 44 lots based on the current GIS data available) that would be impacted by this zoning change:

   <u>32nd to 35th Streets</u>

   Block 32.03 Lots 11, 12, 23, 24

   Block 33.02 Lots 1.01, 2.01, 2.03, 8.01, 8.02, 9.01, 9.02, 11, 12, 24

   Block 33.03 Lot 23

   Block 34.02 Lots 1.01, 1.02, 2.01, 8, 9, 11, 12.02, 24

   Block 34.03 Lots 12.01, 23

   <u>35th to 37th Street</u>

   Block 35.02 Lots 1, 2, 8, 9

   Block 35.03 Lots 11, 12, 23, 24

   Block 36.02 Lots 1, 2, 8.01, 8.02, 9.01, 9.02

   Block 36.03 Lots 11.01, 11.02, 12, 23, 24

   b. Reduce the C-4, Beach Business District zoning designation along Pleasure Avenue from 32nd Street to 35th Street and rezone this area R-2, Two-family Residential District, tying into the area's surrounding zoning designation. Fun City, a commercial/recreational use, once occupied a major portion of this land; however this use is no longer present on site and the current land use within this boundary is primarily residential. The following list illustrates those blocks and lots (a total of 36 lots based on the current GIS data available) that would be impacted by this zoning change:

   Block 32.02 Lots 1.01, 1.02, 2.01, 2.02, 3.01, 3.02, 4.01, 4.02, 4.03, 5.02, 5.03, 8.01, 8.02, 8.03, 8.04, 9.01, 9.02, 10.01, 10.02, 10.03, 10.04, 11.01, 11.02, 11.03, 11.04, 12.02, 12.03, 12.04

   Block 33.01 Lots 5, 12, 6.01, 13.01

   Block 34.01 Lots 5, 6.01, 12, 13.01

A detailed evaluation of the current land use patterns was completed on all aforementioned properties. Based on this evaluation and an assessment of future development scenarios for the downtown area of Sea Isle City, it was determined that a reduction in the C-1 – General Business District Zone would create a more cohesive, compact, and pedestrian-friendly 10-block downtown business district along Landis Avenue. Meetings with representatives of Main Street New Jersey (MSNJ) further reinforced the importance of consolidating commercial development in the downtown – creating critical mass in a limited area. Further, this zoning recommendation more accurately reflects the existing land use pattern in the area along Landis Avenue and north of 37th Street – an area that is primarily residential in character.

The properties located within the C-4, Beach Business District are currently not utilized for commercial purposes, but are residential land uses. These uses tie into the surrounding R-2, Two-Family Residential Zoning and would be more appropriately designated as such.

Accordingly, it is recommended that the northern boundary of the C1 – General Business District zone be restricted to 37th Street as illustrated in Figure 7. Additionally, also illustrated in Figure 7, the C-4 – Beach Business District should be restricted to 35th Street.

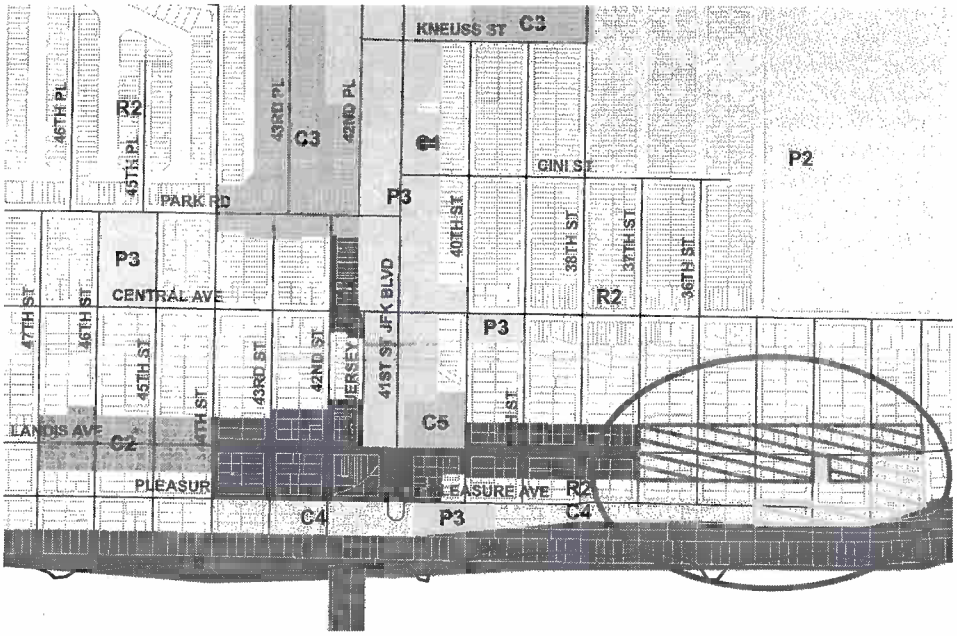


Figure 7: Downtown Commercial Zoning Change

In addition to the site's physical evaluation completed for this area, a build-out analysis has been completed for this scenario (assuming a reduction in commercially zoned land from 32nd to 37th Street for the C-1 Zone and a reduction from 32nd to 35th Street for the C-4 Zone) and projected numbers are shown in Table 2 of Appendix G (the first table of the three illustrates build-out numbers for the *current* zoning and is also the same number noted in previous Table 14). This recommended zoning change would not change the number of units possible at build-out for Sea Isle City – total build-out would remain at 8,380 units based on the fact that the City's existing zoning ordinance permits the same residential density in both the commercial (C-1, Central Business District and C-4, Beach Business District) and residential (R-2, Two-Family Residential) zoning districts.

2. Rezone the back-bay (C-3 Marine Commercial zoned properties north of 38th Street and west of Sounds Avenue) to the R-2, Two-Family Residential zoning classification. These blocks and lots are currently occupied by residential structures. This recommendation appears to be in conformance with the Marina Committee that was established to examine this area. The blocks and lots (a total of 28 lots based on the current GIS information available) affected by this zoning recommendation include the following:

Block 37.07	Lots 1, 1.01, 2, 3, 4, 5, 5.01, 6.01, 6.02, 7, 8, 9.01, 9.02, 9.03, 9.04, 10, 11, 12, 13, 13.01, 13.02, 14, 15.01, 15.02, 16, 17, 18, 19

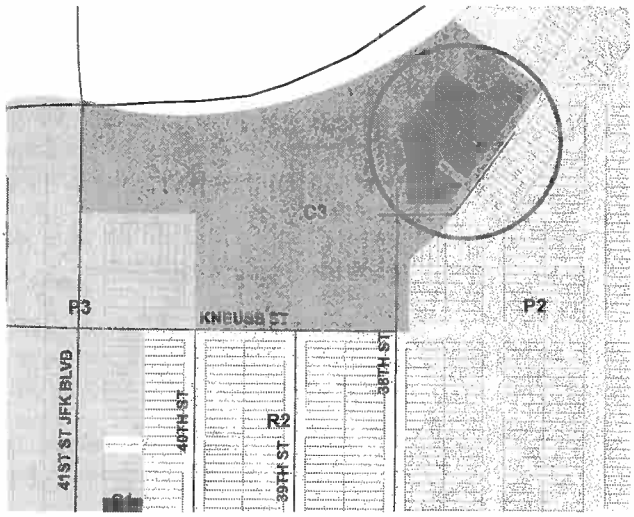


Figure 8: Zoning Change for Properties along the Back Bay

This recommendation brings the existing residential land uses into conformance with an appropriate zoning classification. One residential structure exists to the south of 38th Street, however it is not recommended that this C-3 Marine Commercial zoning designation be changed to R-2 – Two-Family Residential zoning at this time. This recommendation may be considered by the Board in the future, but the present recommendation is to leave all land south of 38th Street zoned for Marine Commercial development. The City should keep this land, the only land with both water access and access to the 38th Street right-of-way (and boat ramp) available for future opportunities.

3. Change the zoning of the properties at 63rd Street and Landis Avenue (southwest corner) from the C-5, Motel Business District zoning classification to C-1, General Business District classification to more accurately reflect the existing land uses on site. The site is currently used as a recreational site – a miniature golf course to be specific. This is not a specifically permitted use within the C-5, Motel Business District zoning classification and would be more appropriately classified as C-1, General Business District. The blocks and lots (a total of 8 lots based on the current GIS information available) affected by this zoning recommendation include the following:

Block 63.03	Lots 12.02, 13.02, 14.02, 15.02, 27.02, 28, 29, 30

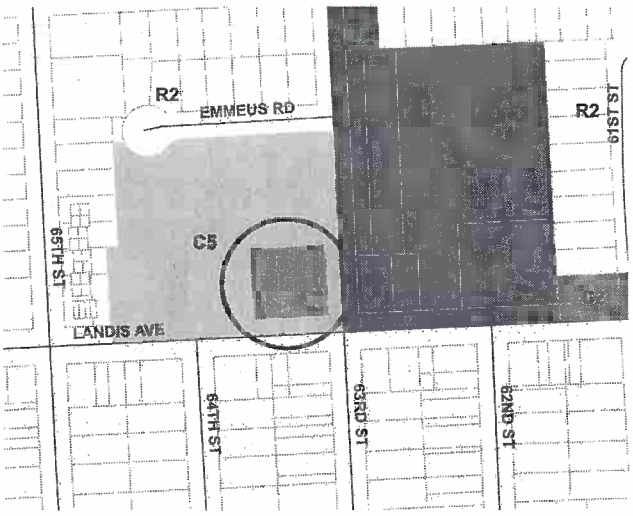


Figure 9: Commercial Zoning Change near 63rd Street

4. Limit residential development in commercial zones to upper levels only and increase the density for residential development to provide for increased population in this area and to create a viable downtown district/environment.

   The commercial zones in the City currently allow for single- and two-family homes as a principal use. It is recommended that this use be removed from the C-1 (General Business District), the C-2 (Neighborhood Business District), the C-3 (Marine Commercial/Industrial District), and the C-4 (Beach Business District) zoning classifications. Commercial districts that are broken up by parking lots and/or housing units often lose their viability as a result of these "breaks" in the continuity of the commercial/retail fabric along the street.

   While residential use on the first floor of a commercial district is not a desirable use, upper story residential use is typical of successful downtowns and "main streets" throughout the US. Increased density for these residential units can provide a variety of housing options (e.g. workforce housing, etc.) that may not typically be provided for in a suburban community, or island community such as Sea Isle City. This increased density can help to put more "feet on the street" and keep the existing commercial establishments economically viable. Increased activity and density in a downtown district is both expected and desirable.

   The City's commercial zones (C-1 thru C-4) currently allow two (2) residential units per each 5,000 SF lot (or a density of seventeen [17.4) units per acre). This is the same density permitted in the City's ubiquitous R-2 (Two-Family) residential zone. The prior recommendation to eliminate first floor residential units in the commercial zones (C-1 thru C-4) does nothing to *increase* the number of residents that may live in the downtown and neighborhood commercial areas; it simply restricts these residents to the upper floors (2nd and 3rd stories). Accordingly, it is recommended that the residential density be doubled in these commercial districts – to allow for four (4) upper-story residential units per each 5,000 SF lot (or a density of 34 [34.8] units per acre).

   This recommendation is based on Smart Growth planning principles that encourage increased residential densities in downtown areas or neighborhood commercial districts (upper stories only). The density of development in a community can affect:

   - *Land consumption* – increased density reduces land consumption
   - *Costs of providing services* – increased density generally decreases the costs of providing public services
   - *Use of public transit* – increased density typically increases the use of public transit
   - *Housing affordability* – increased density generally provides an increase in the type of housing options available (e.g. affordable or workforce housing)
   - *Community character* - increased density often adds to the character of a community by providing unique housing options (e.g. lofts, multi-story units, etc.)

   Density can provide a critical mass of people in an area such that commercial establishments have access to more potential customers – critical mass can be essential to the success of downtown or neighborhood commercial centers. The American Planning Association's recommended densities indicate higher densities than what currently exists in the downtown commercial area. The following table indicates recommended densities by housing types:

Typical Densities of Select Housing Types[7]

Housing Types	Typical Gross Density range (Units/Acre, including streets)
Single-family detached (1 to 2-story)	4 to 10
Single-family rowhouses (2 to 3-story)	8 to 20
Three to six-family houses (3 to 4-story)	8 to 25
Multi-family rowhouses (3 to 4-story)	20 to 40
Low-rise multifamily (2 to 5-story)	15 to 50
Lofts	25 to 50
Mid-rise multifamily	100 to 150
High-rise multifamily	60 to 200+

This increase in density is recommended for all C-1 thru C-4 zoning districts in the City, however the Planning Board and Governing Body should meet with the public to ensure that those C-1 thru C-4 zoning districts located *outside* of the downtown area will benefit from this increased density.

A build-out analysis has been completed for this scenario (assuming an increase in residential density where four [4] units are permitted per 5,000 SF of lot area) and projected numbers are shown in Table 3 of Appendix G.[8] Under this scenario, the City's build-out number increases from 8,380 units to 8,889 units. If the commercial zoning districts are scaled back from approximately 32nd Street to 37th Street in the downtown area (as recommended in #3 of this section), this proposed density increase would result in 8,804 units at time of build-out (Table 4 of Appendix G).

5. While the City's public works facilities are currently located on the property on the back bay at Joseph A. Larosa Way and Kneass Avenue and zoned P-3 (Public Use and Recreation District) and C-3 (Marine Commercial/Industrial District), a plan for its possible relocation is recommended. This would make this site available for future development more appropriate to those uses familiar in a downtown (e.g. pedestrian friendly/scale, architectural design features relating to the area, etc. Ideas for reuse of this site range from a "fisherman's wharf" themed development to a marina – this theme could continue across JFK Boulevard to the south side of 42nd Place.

   As subsequently noted in the circulation component of this Re-examination Report, the site at Joseph A. Larosa Way and Kneass Avenue could serve as the location of a future parking structure that would be linked with a circulator bus or trolley that carries visitors up and down the island during the heavily trafficked summer months. The first floor could contain restaurants/commercial development, taking advantage of the views of the back bay.

6. The City has determined that the newly proposed library should be located on the 48th Street site. It is recommended that the actual structure be situated along the shoreline (respecting the environmental constraints both appropriate and required by law) to capture the best views of the back-bay and parking specifically dedicated for this facility should be located close to the building. Information currently available indicates the size of the proposed structure to be two-stories and ±11,000 SF (on a 5,000 – 6,000 SF footprint). The additional surrounding land should be used for long-term parking for visitors. This site should be designed to provide for these multiple uses and should preserve the quality of the wetlands that surround it. The City should ensure that it has the final review of the County's proposed plan for this facility/site in conjunction with its professional planner. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification should be required for this building.

[7] American Planning Association, "Planning and Urban Design Standards," p. 471
[8] This is equivalent to one (1) residential unit per 1,250 SF of lot area

D. Circulation and Parking

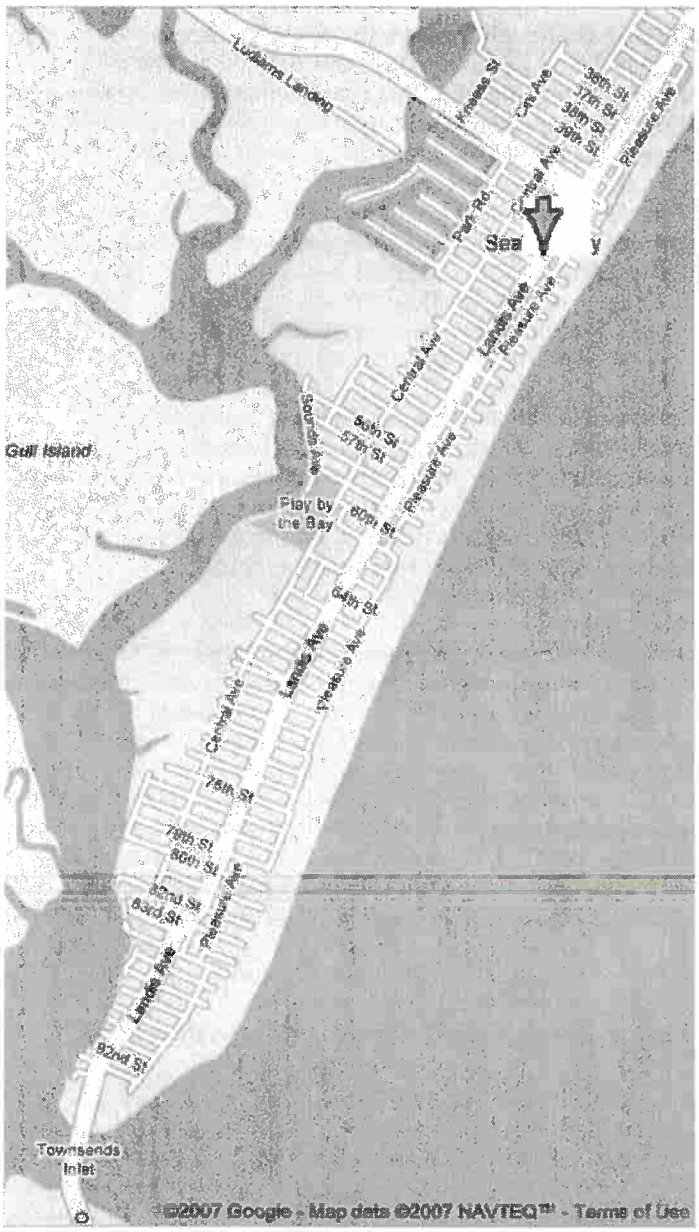
Circulation and parking is a perpetual problem for most beach communities along the nation's eastern seaboard, and the South Jersey shore in particular. Sea Isle City is no exception to this general fact as it is located on a barrier island with limited land area. Specific recommendations for transportation and parking based on actual traffic counts/volumes, level of service projections/traffic modeling and parking studies correlating to land uses is beyond the scope of any Master Plan Re-examination study. A detailed study undertaken by a professional transportation planner/engineer in conjunction with a land use planner is recommended. However, the following preliminary parking/circulation recommendations are made from a land use planning perspective based on KEPG's research and analysis as well as the feedback received from residents and stakeholders in Sea Isle City.

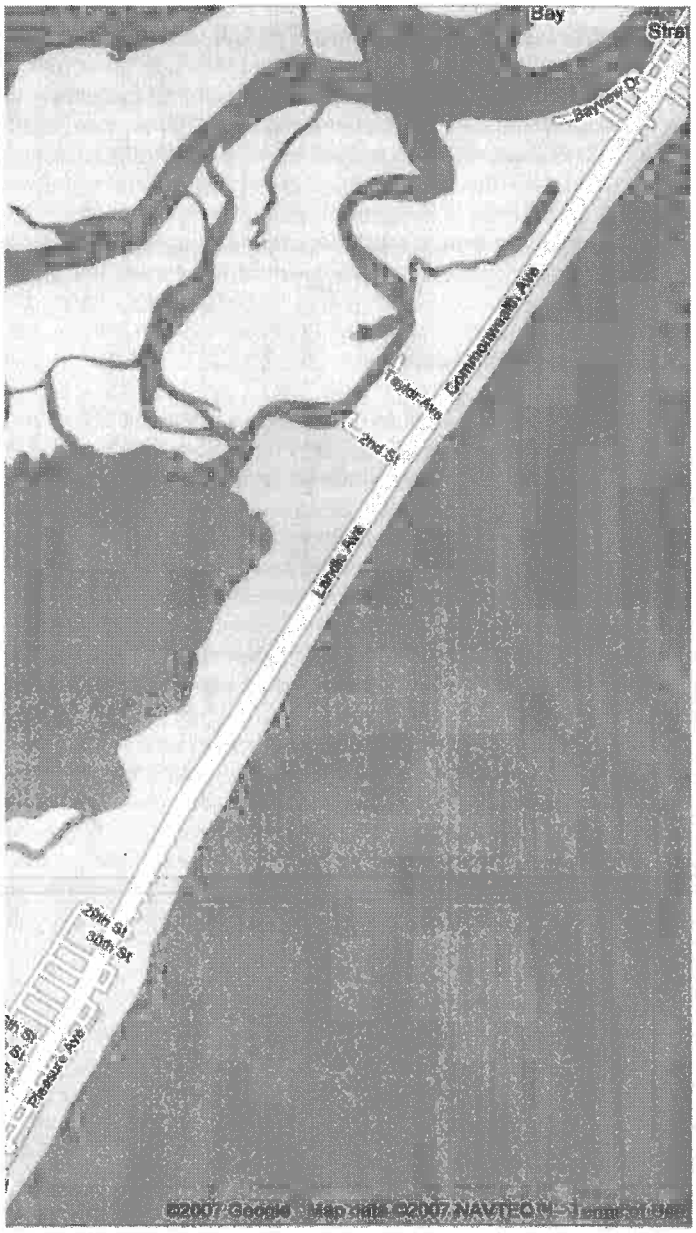
Existing Conditions

The City being platted as a grid works well in terms of an ideal circulation system. However, this grid is only as effective as its carrying capacities based on traffic volumes. As is the case in most coastal communities, the downtown areas are subject to increasing congestion in the peak summer months. This directly and indirectly affects adjacent residential communities within the City. There are three (3) principal rights-of-way that serve the City, namely, JFK Boulevard, Landis Avenue, and Central Avenue. JFK Boulevard and Landis Avenue are the only County roads while all other streets are under City jurisdiction (see street network map on the following page).

The existing number of 7,080 housing units in the City is 1,300 units short of its projected build-out of 8,380 dwellings. For discussion purposes, Sea Isle City, with a *total* land area of approximately 1,660 acres, is dense averaging approximately 4.27 gross dwelling units per acre. Based on a conservative estimate of 1.5 vehicles per dwelling unit, it may be argued that there is a total of 10,620 cars and resultant off-street parking spaces for all the residential properties in Sea Isle City. Additional data provided by the City shows up to 361 parking spaces in the downtown business district area along JFK Boulevard, Landis Avenue, and other surface lots including public facilities. Cumulatively, these numbers point to a large number of cars and associated parking spaces, all to be accommodated within the City's 1,660 acres. The minimal amount of land, the restricted street network, and the continued pace of development, all coalesce to create a parking and circulation predicament, and this is not even taking into account peak summer and visitor parking needs.

Street Network Maps





Past Plan Statements

Parking, and the lack thereof, has been addressed in some fashion in the City's 1988 Master Plan and subsequent Re-examination Reports in 1994 and 2002. The 1994 Re-examination Report in Section IV c. states - "*The issue of public parking areas throughout the City has been partially addressed. The City has established since 1988, public parking areas at JFK Boulevard and Central Avenue. These areas are currently used for public parking and this will continue into the near future. Ultimate use of these sites are currently being studied. The 1991 Zoning Ordinance also addressed the need for off-street parking by increasing the off-street parking requirements for both residential and commercial development. Public parking is still a concern notwithstanding the measures described above to address the issue. The City must continue to develop public parking especially in the business area.*"

The 2002 Re-examination Report in Section IV A. 1 states - "*Continue to develop parking especially in the business area. The City continues to pursue this goal. A new public parking area was created at the corner of 40th Street and Central Avenue in 2001. This parking created 21 public parking spaces. This parking area is adjacent to the new Ambulance Corps building which the City completed in 2002 to house the Ambulance Corps unit. The City has developed a joint recreation area and parking area plan at the 48th Street Park Site. This plan proposes to create 61 additional parking spaces along with proposed recreational facilities.*"

The 1988 Master Plan and the subsequent re-examinations have all identified the lack of parking in the downtown area. These plans have focused on the creation of surface parking lots as a way to mitigate this problem. A comprehensive strategy including multimodal transportation alternatives, a combination of surface, intercept lots, and parking structures and other Smart Growth strategies is needed to tackle this problem. This is explained in greater detail in the recommendations section of this chapter.

Primary Issues

From the above discussions in 1994 and 2000, it is clear that the parking issue has been a long-standing problem that is yet to be resolved. These plans outline the City initiatives to create new public surface parking lots. In our opinion, the effort to create small surface parking lots is a good one, however the City should initiate more sustainable and economically viable long-term options. Based on the build-out study undertaken for the land use element, demand created by businesses, visitors and increasingly higher residential density, will pose significant challenges to Sea Isle City. However, the real challenge lies in managing growth and its corollary functions that will bring about a better quality of life in this community in a way that will not deter growth and increased densities. Detailed and specific recommendations for transportation and parking should be undertaken by a professional transportation engineer/planner. However the following recommendations are made from a land use planning perspective for the purposes of this Master Plan Re-examination Report.

Vehicular Circulation - As discussed previously, there are no apparent vehicular circulation issues as the City is based on a grid, and theoretically this is the most ideal system, level of service and carrying capacities permitted. However, there are many "smart planning" strategies that address improvements to traditional grid circulation systems. Some require minor changes to the street network such as pedestrian bulb-bouts and islands, whereas, others such as traffic circles and transit lanes call for major changes. As discussed in the introduction to this chapter, all these and other considerations should be addressed in a comprehensive city-wide multimodal transportation planner by a professional transportation planner/engineer.

Pedestrian Circulation - The City is well connected through a system of pedestrian sidewalks. Additionally, the Promenade along the Beach is a unique multimodal City-wide connector and true infrastructure amenity of Sea Isle City.

Existing Parking & Inadequacies

Existing parking conditions in Sea Isle City include on-street parking, surface parking on City lots and private on-site parking. Most streets within the Downtown District are configured to accommodate on-street parking. For planning purposes, it is assumed that all residential properties within the residential zones (R1 and R2) are code compliant and have the required parking on-site. Therefore the shortage of parking mainly lies in the commercial districts (C1 through C6) and especially the downtown business district as most commercial properties and residential properties above do not require on-site parking.

To get a clearer understanding of the existing parking and inadequacies within the downtown business district, KEPG has undertaken an analysis of the current conditions and the implications on future growth and economic vitality of the City and subsequent recommendations.

Data provided by the City points to a total number of 361 parking spaces within the Downtown Business District. This includes parking along JFK Boulevard, Landis Avenue, and other surface lots including public facilities. Based on the land use data provided by the City via GIS, there is a total of approximately 24 acres of land dedicated for commercial use (C1, C2 and C4 zones) within the Downtown Business District.

The following table explains three (3) likely scenarios for future parking requirements within the Downtown Business District:

Growth Scenario	Land Area	FAR*	Possible Commercial Space (SF)**	Residential Units	Required Parking Spaces***
High intensity	24 Ac.	1.00	348,888	696	1,568
Medium intensity	24 Ac.	0.75	261,666	522	1,176
Low intensity	24 Ac.	0.50	174,444	348	784

* Based on permitted and realistic FAR scenarios
** FAR/3 based on proposed zoning requirements of commercial on first floor
*** Parking standard of 1 space per 400 SF of commercial area plus one (1) space per residential unit

In the example of the medium intensity growth scenario, with an assumed FAR of 0.75, 24 acres of land could hypothetically generate a total of 261,666 SF of built space (assuming only the first floor is commercial as required by the proposed zoning changes noted in the Land Use element of this Re-examination Report). Calculating the parking requirements for this space based on a contemporary standard of one (1) parking space per 400 SF, there is a need for 654 commercial parking spaces in the Downtown Business District. In addition to this number, there is a need of 522 additional spaces to accommodate residential development in this scenario (based on the build-out analysis for the proposed residential density increase of one [1] unit per 1,250 SF of lot area) within the Downtown Business District in a mixed use development pattern. This leaves us with a total number of 1,176 required parking spaces for the Downtown Business District to function as envisioned when built to capacity. Comparing this with the current available parking of 361 spaces as per City data, the Downtown Business District would be deficient by **815** parking spaces.

The following section discusses strategies to mitigate this problem through a multi-modal smart planning approach.

Recommendations

Sea Isle City is at a turning point in its evolution; not unlike the State of New Jersey or the nation itself. The impacts of success are beginning to manifest themselves at a magnitude not previously known or perhaps expected. Chief among these is the issue of traffic congestion and the lack of vehicular parking on the island. This issue, more commonly expressed as the "parking problem" in Sea Isle City, is partially the result of the City's recent successes in residential development on the island, the continually increasing numbers of seasonal visitors who desire to visit the City's beautiful beaches, and, quite simply, the region's population growth rates (see Table 17 below).

Table 17
State and County Population Increases

	Population		% of Increase	
Year	New Jersey	Cape May County	New Jersey	Cape May County
1900	1,883,669	13,201	n/a	n/a
1910	2,537,167	19,745	34.7%	49.6%
1920	3,155,900	19,460	24.4%	-1.4%
1930	4,041,334	29,486	28.1%	51.5%
1940	4,161,165	28,919	3.0%	-1.9%
1950	4,835,329	37,131	16.2%	28.4%
1960	6,067,412	48,555	25.5%	30.8%
1970	7,168,164	59,554	18.1%	22.7%
1980	7,364,823	82,266	2.7%	38.1%
1990	7,730,188	95,089	5.0%	15.6%
2000	8,414,350	102,326	8.9%	7.6%

Source: Cape May Data Book, January 2003

It is important to understand that in the context of parking and circulation "problems", providing for additional parking and increasing roadway carrying capacities may only solve the problem partially or temporarily. In order to maintain a desirable quality of life, City officials must understand the principles of Smart Growth solutions to circulation and parking and look beyond the traditional approaches that temporarily remedy this problem. The recommendations for Circulation and Parking are categorized into short-term and long-term strategies. The short-term strategies address immediate concerns and may be easier to implement in the near future, whereas the long-term strategies outlined at the end of the section discuss considerations that the City may wish to take into account to balance land use and circulation concerns for the future.

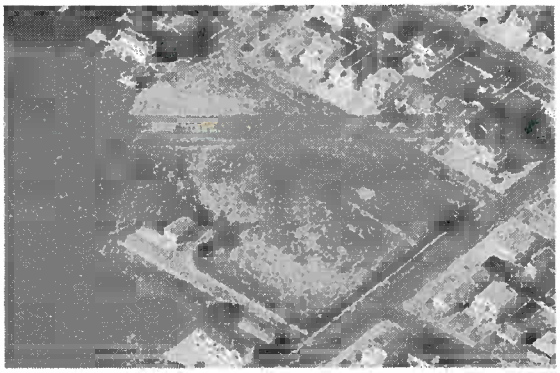
Short-term Strategies

a. Integrated Downtown Pedestrianization

Improve urban design and develop JFK Boulevard, 42nd Street and Landis Avenue between 37th and 48th Streets and the Promenade as pedestrian priority streets, which includes enhanced sidewalks of a minimum width of six (6) feet, stamped concrete crosswalks of a minimum width of six (6) feet, ADA compliant crosswalk ramps, intersection bulb-outs for safe pedestrian crossing, associated lighting and other streetscape elements that promote a nautical theme. This strategy would not only produce an aesthetically pleasing downtown and create a sense of place for Sea Isle City, but also create a better economic environment for downtown district shops and restaurants. The concept is to entice more people on the streets and to possibly get them to walk between the beach and the back-bay, thereby generating more visitor exposure time within the downtown district. The ultimate objective is to create a truly walkable Sea Isle City reducing the need for short vehicular trips.

b. Additional and Existing Surface Parking Lots

As a short-term measure, the City should pursue a strategy of creating additional surface parking lots especially within the Downtown Business district for revitalization of commercial activity. Surface parking lots should only work as a temporary measure on 48th Street and Park Road (prior to the initiation of the proposed new Library facility). These short-term facilities only work for downtown revitalization if operated in conjunction with a free trolley or people-mover system connecting these sites to downtown.



While the City also owns land on the west side of Landis between 22nd and 26th Streets that has the potential to be used for temporary visitor parking, a majority of this land appears to be wetlands habitat and is therefore protected from any development/use. This site should, however, be analyzed in detail to determine if *any* of the land could be used for the location of a small temporary parking lot for the primary benefit of beach-goers. The lot could be a shell covered permeable lot that does not appear out of place with the beach vernacular that surrounds it. If a detailed analysis confirms the existence of wetlands, this site should be preserved for its environmental value.

Existing off-street parking areas should be located and designed in a manner that supports and does not conflict with pedestrian activity, such as to the side or rear of buildings, and should be limited in size and scale through strategies such as shared parking, parking credits, and maximum parking limits. Additionally, new developments should provide no more than the minimum number of parking spaces required for the proposed land use by the underlying zoning district.

Another strategy to maximize the utility of surface parking lots, especially at public facilities such as the Ambulance Corps and Library, is to designate at least ten (10%) percent of the parking spaces for carpool or vanpool parking where feasible. This parking clearly marked "Reserved-Carpool/Vanpool Only" should be located closer to building and/or employee entrances.

c. Time Limits and Parking Machines for On-Street Parking

For a viable downtown commercial district, the emphasis for on-street parking within this area should be on short-term parking (e.g. parking duration limits, time-of-day limits, restricted parking zones) over long-term parking. Parking meters or other state-of-the-art devices, with appropriate time limits, should be installed and maintained in appropriate areas (two (2) hour limit on Landis Avenue and JFK Boulevard and long term four (4) hour parking in other areas).

A more effective system of a "common parking meter machine" as opposed to the current individual coin-fed parking meters should be put in place. This not only gives the option of paying by credit card, thereby reducing the possibility of fines and consequential ill-feelings of getting a parking ticket, it makes the urban environment more aesthetically pleasing as it reduces the visual clutter of individual meters on the street

City police or designated employees should strictly enforce parking regulations, such as overtime parking, double parking, parking in front of driveways and too close to fire hydrants and crosswalks. Additionally, loading zones with a 30 minute time limit should be designated for use by delivery vehicles only.

d. Joint/Shared Parking

The City should identify, encourage and facilitate discussions and agreements with private parties and or public agencies to promote joint or shared parking especially if the hours of use between the parties under consideration differ. The Planning Board set up a Joint/Shared Parking Committee to undertake this exercise of identifying sites and helping businesses and property owners pursue their joint/shared parking options.

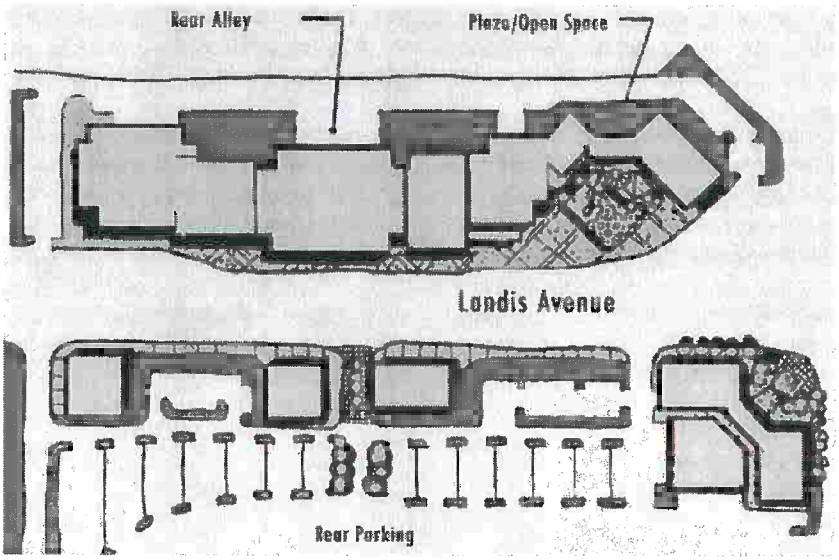
Where it can be demonstrated that the demand for parking of the combined uses of two or more buildings can be satisfied with the shared and jointly accessible off-street parking available to those uses, then a special exception to these parking requirements should be granted by the Planning/Zoning Board to satisfy the minimum parking requirements pursuant to conditions that may include:

a) The joint use of required facilities at different times may be allowed provided all of the following conditions are met:
   i) The applicant shows there will be no substantial conflict in the principal operating hours of the buildings or uses for which the joint parking use is proposed.
   ii) The parking facility will be within 1/4 mile of buildings or uses it will serve.

iii) The parties involved in the joint parking facility agree to the joint use arrangement in a legal document that has been approved by the Sea Isle City attorney and recorded in the Sea Isle City permits office.

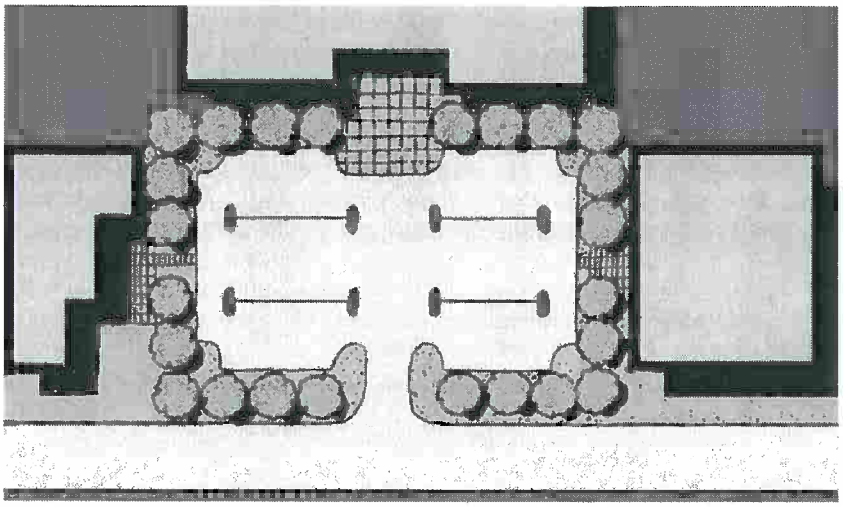
Additionally, the simultaneous joint use of required facilities may be allowed provided all of the following exist:

a) No more than two (2) uses under separate ownership or occupancy shall be involved.
b) The uses will occur on the same development site.
c) It can be reasonably anticipated that a number of customers or clients will be served.



e. Managed and Shared Property Access

The City should draft regulations as part of the Land Development Codes to restrict and manage access points on all primary arterial and collector roads, namely JFK Boulevard, Landis Avenue and Central Avenue by requiring shared access driveways and cross-access connections/easements for abutting properties. This primarily applies to non-residential uses.



f. Better Beach Access

Improve access to City beaches from the Promenade and vehicular streets especially between 29th and 57th Streets. This may be done by increasing pedestrian and bike access to the beach by improving street end connections to the Promenade from prominent east-west roads. The City identify and improve one (1) beach access points for every (4) four street blocks. This strategy may be effective in reducing the number of daytime vehicular trips within the City especially in peak summer months as visitors and residents have alternative and easier access to the beach. Other specific strategies to improve beach access include:

- Improve facilities such as wider boardwalk ramps where necessary, bike racks and amenities such as showerheads and restrooms at more street-ends especially within the Promenade area.
- Undertake an assessment to understand which east-west street would be appropriate for bike lanes. Following this assessment, incorporate bike lanes along these streets connecting them to a north-south bikeway possibly along Pleasure Avenue and add amenities in these locations such as bike racks to increase multimodal beach access.

g. Fee In-lieu of Parking

As recommended in the Land Use element of this Re-examination Report, an in-lieu parking fee may be submitted to the City for each required parking space that is not provided on-site. If a property owner is unable to comply with the parking requirements as per code and a variance is granted for parking relief in the downtown commercial zoning district, the property owner must pay a one-time payment per parking space deficiency (funds to be used for parking related improvements). The in-lieu parking fee shall be examined annually by the City of Sea Isle Planning Board based on current land and construction costs. A special "Multimodal Transportation" fund should be created to which in-lieu parking fees shall be deposited. This fund is to be used only for the construction of public parking facilities. Ultimately, this fund should be expanded to address all forms of multi-modal transportation needs.

Long-term Strategies

a. Satellite/Intercept Parking

The City should identify and pursue opportunities for satellite/intercept parking. Conceptually, this is shown to be effective as a parking solution, where reserved suitable land, adjacent to primary access roads is used for major car parking usage. Potential sites identified include:

- Intercept parking lot on the mainland (e.g. Dennis Township) possibly along Sea Isle Boulevard (CR 625) with the use of a trolley system to transport visitors to and around SIC (and connect to campgrounds); and,
- Underutilized rest area along the Garden State Parkway (near SIC exit 17) – rest stop location at Mile Marker 18.3

Inter-municipality/agency negotiations are important to implementing this concept for Sea Isle City. The City should give incentives for business owners within the Downtown Business District to promote these proposed areas for parking use. Additionally, the City will need to put in place an attractive and efficient shuttle service linking satellite/intercept parking areas with the Downtown Business District. In the peak season, an acceptable frequency and hours of operation should encourage best use of these facilities for all Downtown activities including beach visitation. Furthermore, the shuttle should also serve as an internal circulator within the Downtown area. This is discussed in detail in the following section. The following aerial photograph illustrates three (3) stars depicting the possible intercept parking sites as noted above. The larger star is the site located on the Garden State Parkway.

b. Parking Structure & Free Trolley

Sea Isle City currently has approximately 361 parking spaces in on-street and surface lots within the Downtown Business District. Revitalization of the Downtown Business District and increased traffic during the peak summer months will effectively create a greater parking challenge. In order to sustain the economic vitality of the City, an alternative for parking for Downtown Business District users and visitors, must be provided within District. To mitigate this challenge, the City should undertake a feasibility study for a parking structure in conjunction with a trolley system to provide future parking for Downtown patrons, visitors and residents.

- A possible location for a parking structure is along the back bay on publicly owned land at the foot of the Sea Isle Boulevard/JFK Boulevard bridge (at Joseph A. Larosa Way and Kneass Avenue). The existing Public Works facility could be moved to another site within the City or possibly off-shore to a less prime site in Dennis Township, freeing up this land for such a facility. This ±1.3 acre site is ideally situated to capture vehicles/visitors as they enter the City. Examination of this site, zoned P-3 (Public Use and Recreation District), indicates an opportunity to provide for a higher and better use than currently exists. The concept for this facility is patrons, visitors or residents could park at this facility prior to their entry into the Downtown Business District (thereby easing congestion), then catch a convenient circulator bus or trolley into the City. This trolley, should connect businesses, destinations & other parking areas within the City
- A longer-term initiative could be potentially to route the trolley in both the north and south directions along Landis Avenue to the City limits to serve residential areas.
- Given the challenges associated with getting visitors to use parking structure/facility and then to transfer to a trolley, our recommendation is to make the trolley free of charge. It is our understanding that the City officials have had this discussion with various trolley companies and may feel that a charge for the service is necessary. The need to cover the cost of the service is understandable, however, the first few years of operation are going to be critical and the level of convenience and satisfaction will determine future success.

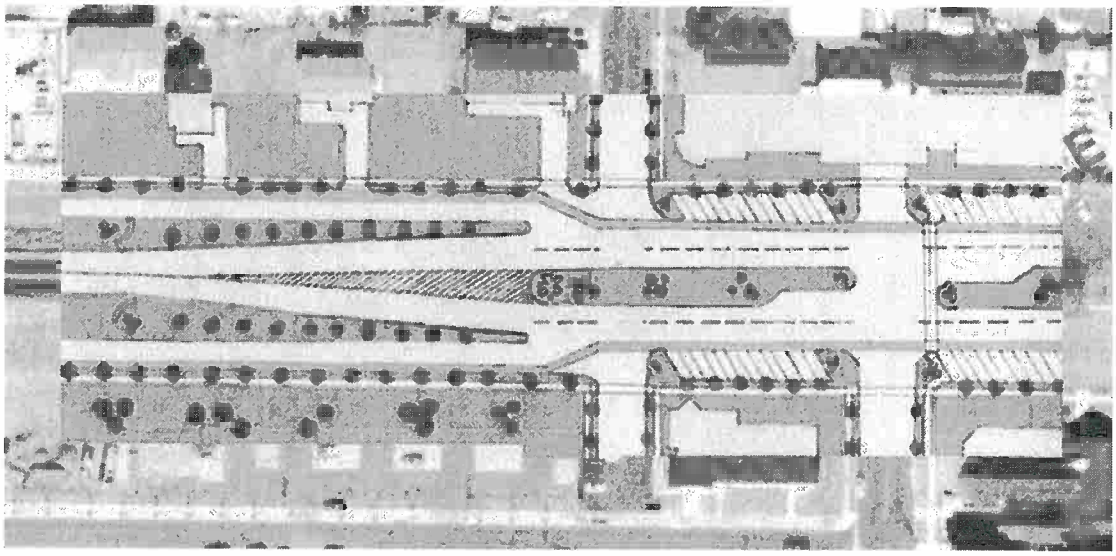
c. Gateways, Bridgescape and Wayfinding Signage

Gateways incorporated into the urban landscape at major entrance points into neighborhoods, districts, or communities create a "sense of place and identity". Gateways can be defined or reinforced by developing "gateway treatments", which often include landscaping, vertical elements such as arches or pylon features, and signage. These gateway features create a sense of arrival and departure, create a welcoming effect, and emphasize the transition from one district, community or neighborhood to another. Sea Isle City has a few of these elements, generally located at the terminus of JFK Boulevard. Additional such gateways may be incorporated at the following locations:

- In the median near the foot of the JFK Boulevard bridge – primary entrance to the City
- Downtown district transition areas on Landis Avenue, at 35th Street and 48th Street
- Landis and 82nd Street – entry into the back bay Marina district
- Northern City terminus at 1st Street and Landis Avenue
- Southern City limit at 95th Street and Ocean Avenue

Bridges are unique architectural and engineering elements that not many communities possess. Sea Isle City is one of those unique communities that not only has a bridge but one whose visual appeal is greatly enhanced by the dramatic entry into the City. There are numerous opportunities to improve the aesthetic appeal of the bridge. The City should coordinate with NJDOT and Cape May County to improve the visual aspects of the bridge. Strategies to improve the aesthetic appeal of the Sea Isle Boulevard/JFK Boulevard bridge include, but are not limited to: incorporating nautical themed tile murals into the concrete guards; the addition of colored light and "flowing" elements along bridge rails; painting the lighting fixtures with brighter colors; coating the shoulders with earth-tone terracotta colored asphalt; and down/accent lighting bridge balusters.

Sea Isle City would be well-served to install a city-wide wayfinding signage system to direct residents and visitors to the beach, recreation sites, prime destinations, parking areas and evacuation routes. The wayfinding signage should be consistent throughout the City, and should be developed in conjunction with the design themes outlined in the proposed design guidelines (Appendix E) to reflect the City's identity and create a sense of place.



d. Bringing it all together in Sea Isle City - *A Multimodal Community*

According to a recent survey by the National Association of Realtors and Smart Growth America, three-fourths of Americans believe that being smarter about development and improving public transportation are better long-term solutions for reducing traffic congestion than building new roads. Further, nearly three-quarters of Americans are concerned about the role growth and development play in climate change, as well as remaining concerned about traffic congestion. Half of those surveyed think improving public transit would be the best way to reduce congestion, and 26% believe developing communities that reduce the need to drive would be the better alternative. Only one in five said building new roads was the answer. In light of these national trends, Sea Isle City is presented with a unique opportunity to feasibly explore these options. The existing grid-pattern, plat, and peak volumes of traffic in Sea Isle City make this community an ideal candidate for establishing a comprehensive multimodal community. By definition, a multimodal community incorporates community features that reduce vehicular usage while supporting an integrated multimodal transportation system. Common elements include the presence of mixed-use development patterns, connectivity of streets and land uses, transit-friendly design features, and accessibility to alternative modes of transportation.

In light of the proposed zoning changes, anticipated redevelopment and reinvestment in the City, and the additional residents, visitors, and the traffic they will generate, the City should undertake a detailed and comprehensive study to establish Sea Isle City as a multimodal community. The preferred multimodal transportation system should integrate foot traffic, bikes, trolleys/people-movers and water-borne traffic in addition to vehicular traffic in correlation to land uses and associated parking facilities. A trolley/people mover loop circulating from major parking facilities to the downtown business district and beach would be an excellent way to move residents and tourists throughout the City while reducing vehicle trips and lessening the City's parking burden. Design standards, and operational measures should ensure streets are safe, convenient and appealing for all modes of travel, including transit, automobiles, trucks, bicycles and pedestrians. Multimodal design strategies shall include marked crosswalks, wider sidewalks, on-street parking, turnouts, traffic calming, raised medians, adequate drainage or other appropriate safety enhancements that reduce hazardous conflicts between modes and that are consistent with the planned functions of the roadway. A comprehensive system should be adopted and performance measures for each mode of transportation system should be evaluated.

The following table explains some basic criteria for developing and establishing Sea Isle City as a multimodal community.

Land Use	• Contain a variety of land uses, including both employment and residential • Include land uses promoting pedestrian, bicycle, and transit use
Density and Intensity of Land Uses	• Sufficient densities to demonstrate transit ridership • Sufficient intensities in and around central cores • Sufficient intensity along major transit corridors
Interconnected Street System	• Adequate levels of service for bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit • Appropriate numbers of connections within the street network • Connected pedestrian, bicycle, and transit network • Convenient modal connections • Convenient connections to regional transportation (i.e. Garden State Parkway)
Design	• Adequate access for pedestrians and cyclists to transit • Transit oriented development within the area (proposed recent zoning changes promote this) • Shorter block length providing easier access and better quality pedestrian environment
Incentives	• Expedited development review • A reduction in the traffic impact fee for mixed use developments

E. Parks, Recreation and Open Space

Open space and recreation elements are important contributors to improving the quality of life of a community. Being a waterfront resort community, the beach and promenade are the most popular recreational elements for Sea Isle City residents and visitors.

PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE CLASSIFICATION

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommends guidelines for park, recreation and greenways classification. These guidelines are expressions of the amount of land a community determines should constitute the minimum acreage, and development criteria for different classifications or types of parks, open space and greenways. Based on the NRPA guidelines, the classification system, location and size criteria used for Sea Isle City analysis are described in Table 18 below. The Table classifies parks and open spaces into different types, recommends ideal sizes for each park type, and suggests an optimal distance at which each park should be located from all City residents.

Table 18: Adopted Parks and Open Space Classification

Classification	Location Criteria	Size Criteria
Mini-Park	1,000 ft. distance	Less then 1 acres in size
Neighborhood Park	One-quarter mile distance	5 to 10 acres in size
School-Park	One-quarter mile distance	Variable
Community Park	One-half mile distance	Greater than 10 acres in size
Special Use	One-quarter mile distance	Variable

EXISTING PARKS, RECREATION AREAS AND OPEN SPACE

The beach and promenade lands account for approximately 112 acres of recreational open space in Sea Isle City. Wetlands in the City amount to 292 acres held for conservation purposes. In addition to the beach and promenade, the City has eight (8) publicly-owned parks and recreational areas. These developed or partially developed recreational lands total 27 acres.

The City's parks, recreational areas and open spaces as specified in the City's Recreation and Open Space Inventory (ROSI), are listed in Table 19 along with the blocks and lots, land area and park classification. As seen in Table 8, most of the City's parks are less than one (1) acre in size. The City has two (2) neighborhood parks of approximately five (5) acres each; and one (1) park, the Dealy Recreation Center, which is more than ten (10) acres in size and serves as the City's only community park. In addition, the City has one (1) Public School with a playground of approximately 0.77 acres, classified here as a school park.

The park locations in the City are shown in Figure 10 on the following page.

Table 19: Recreation and Open Space Inventory (ROSI)					
No.	**Name**	**Block**	**Lot**	**Area (acres)**	**Park Classification**
1	Dealy Recreation Center	59.04	2.01	14.55	Community Park
2	Memorial Park	41.09	13	0.82	Mini Park
3	SIC Marina Recreational	41.08 41.07 41.06 41.05	1 1 2 28-62	5.5	Neighborhood Park
4	SIC Community	40.03	1.03/3	0.38	Mini Park
5	Townsend's Inlet Waterfront Park	96.02 95.03 95.04	1, 2, 3 1-10 15-23	4.54	Neighborhood Park
6	59th St. Fishing Pier	59.05	1.02 1.03 1.04 1.05	0.13	Mini Park
7	85th St. Playground	86.01	21, 22 Part of 28 thru 32	0.18	Mini Park
8	Excursion Park (Cospar Acquisition)	39.01 40.01	5.01, 6.01, 0.899, & 7.01 5, 6, 7.01, 12, 13, 14.01	0.899	Mini Park
Total Area of Parks and Recreational Areas				**26.999**	
Special Use Open Space					
9	Beach, Dune, Upland & Promenade Lands			111.57	Special Use
10	Wetlands			292.15	Special Use
Total Area of Special Use Open Space				**403.72**	
Total Area on ROSI				**430.719**	
Other Open Space					
11	Sea Isle City Public School Playground			0.77	School Park

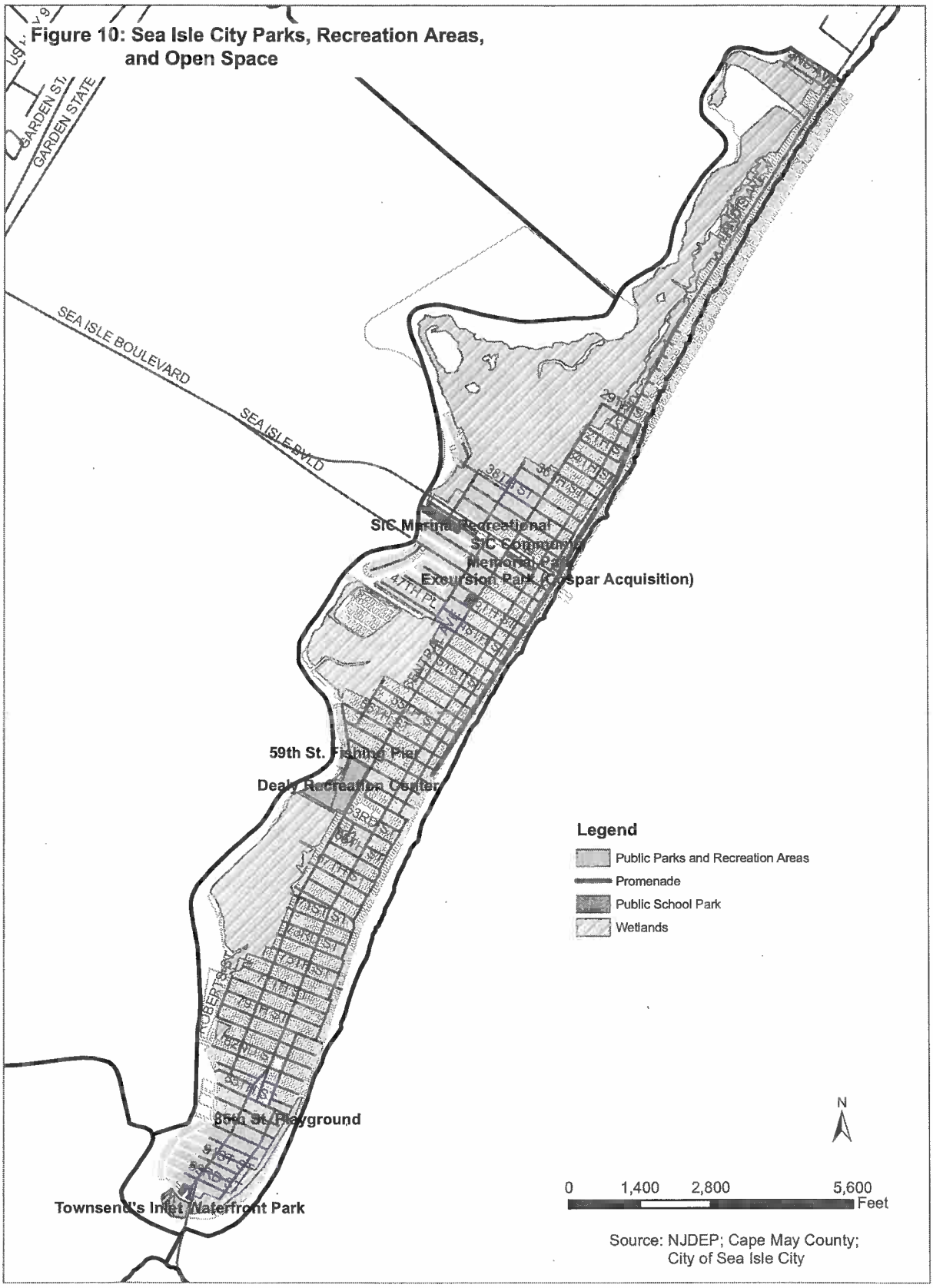


Figure 10: Sea Isle City Parks, Recreation Areas, and Open Space

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

To evaluate the current park system of Sea Isle City, existing conditions are first compared with the national guidelines for location and amount of parks, open spaces and recreational areas. This comparison is used to determine whether existing parks and open spaces in the City are sufficient or deficient when compared to the national standards.

Demographic Analysis

Demographic analysis estimates the need for public park and recreational land based on the population of the City. Level of service (LOS) is an expression of the minimum recreation and park infrastructure capacity required to satisfy the park and recreation needs of residents of a community. NRPA recommends the general amount for total park land in a community as a minimum of 6.25 to 10.5 acres per 1,000 residents. The total amount of public park land in Sea Isle City equates to 9.52 acres per 1,000 residents for the year-round population of 2,835, and only 0.73 acres per 1,000 residents for an estimated summer population of 37,000.

Table 20 below shows the amount of recommended and existing LOS ratios for different park categories. The analysis shows that the City lacks a significant amount of park space when compared with national standards.

Table 20: Demographic Analysis

Park Category	NRPA Recommended Ratio	Existing Ratio (General Population 2,835)	Existing Ratio (Summer Population estimated @ 37,000)
Mini-Parks	0.25 to 0.5 acres per 1,000 people	0.85	0.07
Neighborhood Parks	1 to 2 acres per 1,000 people	3.54	0.27
Community Parks	5 to 8 acres per 1,000 people	5.13	0.39

Spatial Distribution and Location Analysis

A spatial analysis conducted as per the NRPA recommendations to determine whether the parks are properly located and spaced for the population they serve is depicted in Figure 11 on the following page. Following the guidelines shown in Table 18, different buffers are set around the different classes of City's parks. The buffers represent the area whose residents have easy and convenient access to the parks.

The NRPA guidelines suggest that, in an ideal situation, every type of park and recreational facility should be located within the appropriate distance indicated of every resident, and that each neighborhood should have access to each type of park, depicted by overlapping buffers. As seen in Figure 11, most areas have easy access to some park or recreational facility, but not all. And, the area between 75th and 82nd Street does not have easy access to any park or recreational facility.

Demographic and spatial analysis following the NRPA standards points to a deficiency in the amount of public parks and open space in Sea Isle City. However, the NRPA standards should be viewed as general guidelines which do not take into account the particular characteristics of each community. Sea Isle City has the beach and promenade, which are unique recreational assets and fulfill many of the residents' recreational needs. Additional recommendations are discussed in the following section.

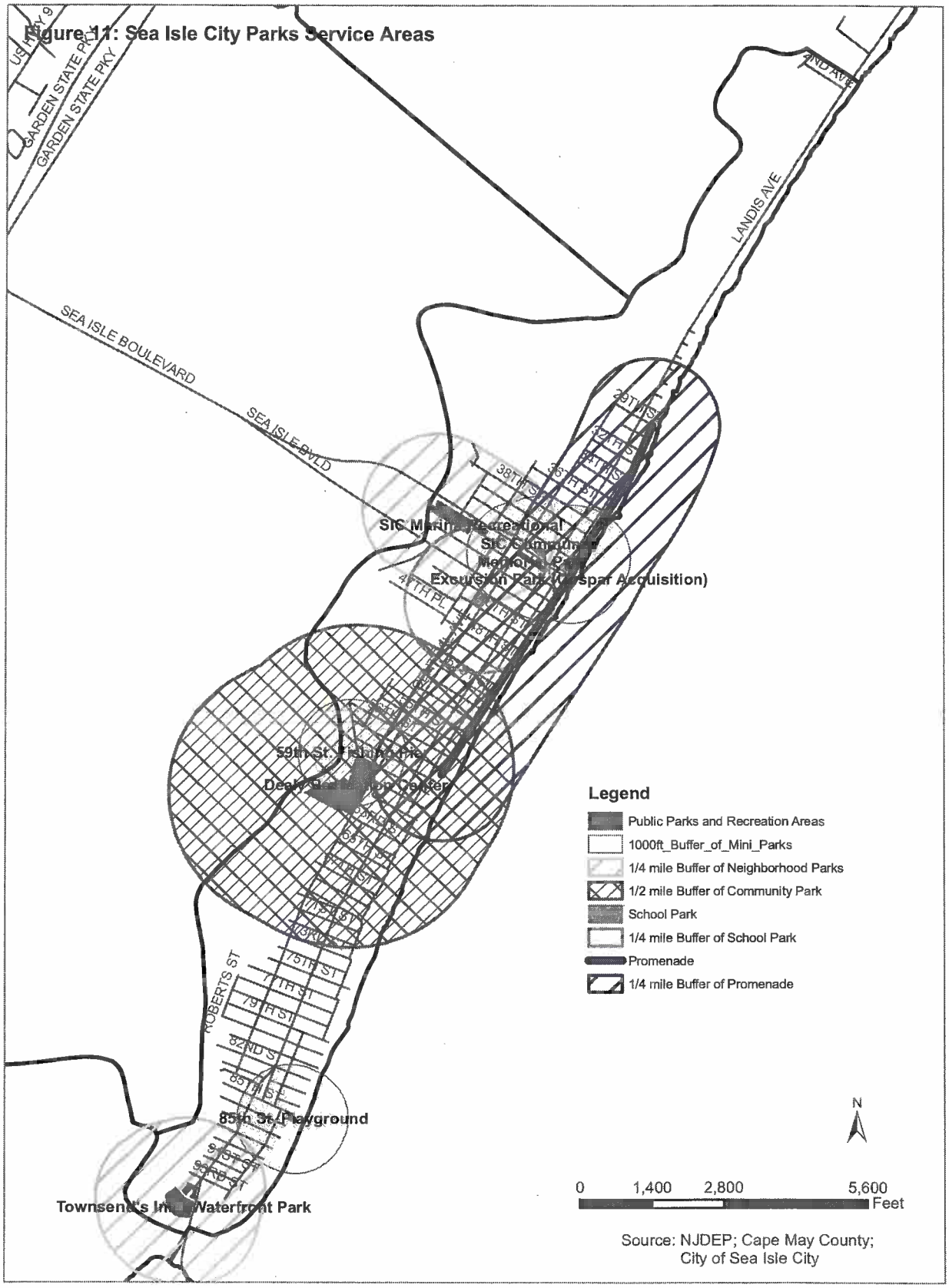


Figure 11: Sea Isle City Parks Service Areas

PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on site visits, needs assessment following the NRPA standards, and input gathered during Planning Board meetings, the following recommendations are presented in order to improve the parks, recreation and open space system of the City of Sea Isle City.

1. Create a passive park at the north end of the City. Preliminary efforts to develop this former landfill site are already underway and should be fully supported by the City. Development of the passive park could include traditional passive recreational activities such as bird watching, walking/hiking, biking, kayaking/canoeing, picnicking, as well as other unique recreational activities including an elevated bike path connecting to Landis Avenue. With such development, the park would serve the purposes of conservation and provide passive recreation opportunities for City residents and visitors. The site could also be evaluated for location of windmills and/or a solar energy site if such fits into the context as envisioned.

Figure 12: Passive Park

2. Evaluate city-owned vacant properties for development as neighborhood parks. Particularly evaluate the area between 75th and 82nd Street for the location of a new park, since it lacks the presence of a park. The feasibility of a neighborhood park on city-owned properties on Central Avenue and 80th Street may be made possible if the existing utility-use structures at this location are consolidated and possibly moved off-shore.

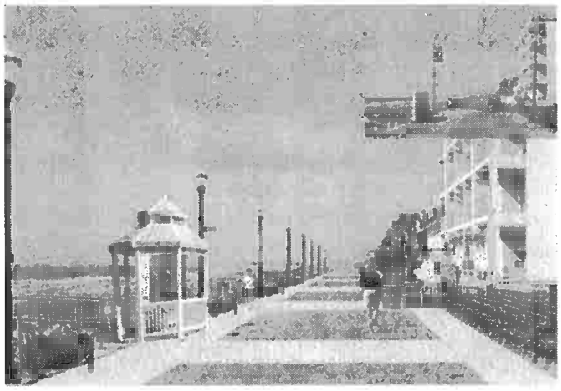
3. Evaluate the expansion of recreational opportunities at Dealy Recreation Center to include soft park surfaces with landscaping and educational nature trails along the wetlands portion of the site. Passive recreational opportunities could be realized on this portion of the site through the construction of elevated boardwalk ramps and or viewing areas that do not adversely impact the wetlands. These recreational opportunities include bird watching, nature trails and sunset viewing.

4. Undertake joint recreational programming with the School Board. Expansion of the school recreation area should be planned to allow public access during after-school hours. There was recent discussion regarding the adaptive reuse of the school for the newly proposed community library facility. However with both community consensus and subsequent approval by the Governing Body, the 48th Street site will be the future home of the library. The future of the school remains unclear at the present time, however, should the school cease operation as such, the possible adaptive reuse of the building as a community center, cultural center, performing arts facility or public playground.

5. Establish a City-wide policy to promote shared use of vacant public land especially for parks and recreation purposes. Such sites could be used for extra parking in the summer months, and then be used for recreational purposes such as playgrounds or basketball courts.

6. Expedite the construction of the Excursion Waterfront Park at 40th Street and the Promenade. As conceptual plans for this park were prepared in 2003, the City should set up a Committee to approve, modify and/or revise the Cairone & Kaupp Plan to reflect present conditions and work with the County to facilitate speedy implementation. The Committee should take into consideration the impact of the amphitheatre proposed in this plan, on the City's existing stage and seating area located on the Promenade at the terminus of JFK Boulevard.

7. Evaluate the possibility of allowing bikes along the Promenade where feasible. This concept may be functionally viable by designating a four feet (4') wide bike lane in either direction in conjunction with specific times of use varying by seasons.



8. Undertake a beautification program for the Promenade to include new surface treatments, landscape planters, lighting, street furniture and other amenities.

9. Evaluate the bayfront site between JFK Boulevard and 38th Street for development as a waterfront park and marina (dependent upon wetland habitat).

10. Undertake themed physical improvements and space programming at the Marina Recreational area near 42nd Place, to include improved landscaping and park equipment. Also evaluate the possibility for relocation of the public restroom and of structured parking to allow for better use of the park area. Improvement and promotion of the fishing pier should also be part of these improvements. This could further promote the fishing industry and marina related activities. If the City decides to locate a parking facility on the back bay at Joseph A. Larosa Way and Kneass Avenue, the resulting foot traffic would likely provide customers to this area that is often overlooked by visitors coming to the City to enjoy the beach.

11. Continue to preserve and protect the City's wetlands and natural resources such as the beach dunes and other environmentally sensitive lands.

12. Sea Isle City recognized an immediate need to update it current Library to include modern facilities and resources. For this purpose, the City established a committee and identified and evaluated several sites for the possible expansion or relocation of its library. Figure 13 shows the sites that were evaluated, which also included the facility's current location. KEPG initially recommended expansion at the current library site, since the location is in the downtown and would enable easy access to most residents and visitors. However, after evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of each location, and based upon discussions with City Council and Planning Board members, and residents, the property at 48th Street and Central Avenue was selected as the site for new City Library. The City should use this opportunity to coordinate with the County to develop a state-of-the-art facility, which can act as a learning center and venue for social affairs; provide sufficient computers for public use; have a powerful WiFi with the potential of providing service for entire town; and extended service hours. Using the available County funding resources, the City can build and maintain its new modern facility.

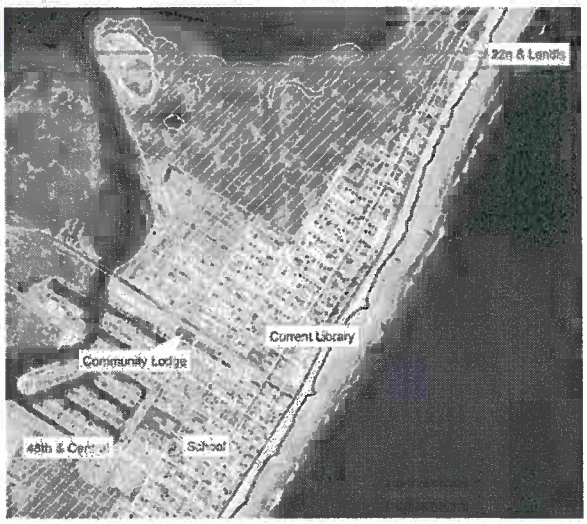


Figure 13: Possible Library Locations

F. Economic Development

NEED FOR COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic Development Planning is not only the process by which a community actively attempts to recruit desirable businesses but also the manner in which a community specifically addresses the issue of business retention. It is the marketing both of the community and of its residents as an available and qualified workforce. Once businesses are attracted to the area, locating them within specific zones, or locales, within the community through proper economic development planning is the next step. Focusing too narrowly on job creation and tax base supplementation is generally not the correct approach to an Economic Development Plan. This should be the end product of a well considered, comprehensive, and rational approach.

The Economic Development Plan for any community is one that recognizes existing land uses in the community and establishes a strategy for future development in a comprehensive manner to accomplish the following goals:

- Encourage development of commercial and other non-residential projects in a manner that will improve the fiscal status of the community.
- Ensure that economic development strategies are consistent with smart planning policies, which concentrate on commercial and industrial development in accessible locations with available infrastructure.
- Create Redevelopment Areas within the City in locations that are obsolete or underperforming.
- Create mixed-use developments in appropriate areas of the City rather than single-use developments that may become obsolete in the near future.
- Create a Business / Special Improvement District in the downtown as well as neighborhood-commercial areas.
- Improve quality of life for residents of the community via the attraction and retention of not only financially viable businesses, but also development that is aesthetically pleasing and socially responsible.
- Ensure all new development appropriately relates to its surroundings, land uses, zones, architectural character, etc.
- Implement a Development Impact Fee structure for future development activity.
- Increase revenue by identifying current and new sources of funding.

The aforementioned strategies are traditional mechanisms used by communities to ensure the flow of commercial and industrial tax revenue so vital to offset the cost of residential development. These are more traditional strategies which, when adopted as part of the land use policies, require distinct implementation action by the community to assure that sound economic development is realized. The implementation of such strategies can be accomplished with the development of well-designed commercial centers, mixed-use developments, industrial parks, office parks and other such employment generators. These may be achieved by a variety of public/private initiatives. Such action is typically set forth through redevelopment activities that can be initiated by either county or local agencies.

REVITALIZATION TOOLS FOR SEA ISLE CITY

The State of New Jersey offers many revitalization tools to local municipalities to bring about economic development in their communities. Many of these methods have been discussed in the previous section and some are more effective than others. The City should use the following four (4) major revitalization tools available in the current regulatory framework to help to revitalize Sea Isle City.

- Creation of Redevelopment Areas within the City in locations that are obsolete or underperforming.
- Creation of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts to encourage new economic development and jobs.
- Creation of a Business/Special Improvement (BID/SID) District in the downtown as well as neighborhood-commercial areas to create a pro-business environment.
- Creation of a Main Street District to attract visitors by "branding" which brings state and national recognition

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR REVITALIZATION

Recommended areas for revitalization are: land uses at the entrance of the City via the JFK Boulevard and the "T" intersection with Landis Avenue, the primary commercial and transportation corridor in Sea Isle City, including municipal utility buildings, commercial properties, marine commercial, residences, motels, and public park land.

This area commonly referred to as the Downtown Business District in Sea Isle City, shown in Figure 14, has significant revitalization opportunities. The concentration of nonresidential land uses and relatively low density development present in this area would justify revitalization efforts, as the City is experiencing a decline in retail and commercial functions. These efforts would facilitate physical improvements, attract business and ultimately increase economic activity thereby improving the tax base.

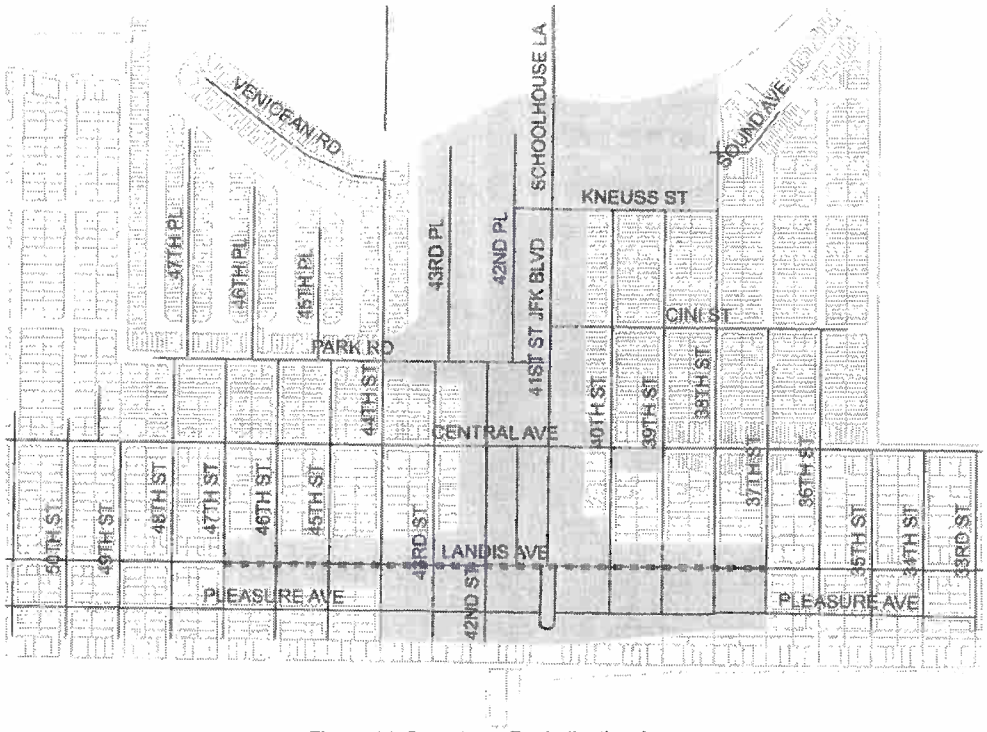


Figure 14: Downtown Revitalization Area

Figures 15 and 16 illustrate the area near Landis Avenue and 61st Street – the site of the existing ACME shopping center. This neighborhood commercial area serves an important role in providing services to the residents and visitors who live/stay in the southern end of the island. The land use element of this Re-examination Report noted opportunities to provide for improved building aesthetics, traffic circulation, signage, parking conditions, etc. The use of economic incentives as provided by the revitalization efforts may expedite these improvements – providing opportunities for the land owners and the community as well.

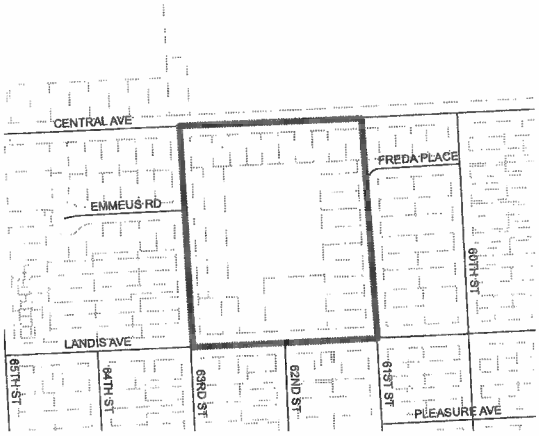


Figure 15: Landis Ave & 61st St. - Revitalization Area

Figure 16: Aesthetic Improvements - Landis Ave & 61st St.

The recognition of these locations as revitalization areas as recommended above is important as this would help foster subsequent revitalization efforts. Consequently, the City should undertake revitalization efforts by utilizing any of the specific tool(s) outlined above, namely, Redevelopment Designation, TIF District Designation, SID/BID Creation and or Main Street Formation. Such designations will demonstrate the City's commitment to see positive change within the character of the community and provide an instrument for economic development.

The following sections of this report broadly outline the regulatory and procedural framework for each of the revitalization tools outlined above.

REDEVELOPMENT AREA DESIGNATION

The redevelopment planning process is a proactive method of initiating economic development strategies within the community by targeting specific land areas for redevelopment consideration. By doing so, the redevelopment process enables the initiation of public / private partnerships to turn concepts into reality.

Background and Policy

The redevelopment process enables the community to provide unique revitalization opportunities under the umbrella of public/private partnerships. These regulations provide a broad spectrum of opportunity to initiate redevelopment strategies for specific target areas.

The core of this legislation finds its beginnings in public laws of 1929, which were then refined by the Redevelopment Laws of 1949, again in 1960, and ultimately revamped in 1992 into legislation entitled, "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law" (L.R.H.L.). The key provisions of the 1992 Redevelopment and Housing Law are as follows:

- The 1992 revisions consolidated and coordinated the redevelopment laws.

- The law acknowledged the relationship between a variety of redevelopment plans and the Municipal Master Plan, providing an important link in the process of assuring that local Master Plans were not subverted by redevelopment plans.

- It mandated that the Municipal Development Regulations be compared with the requirements of the redevelopment plan, again, to assure consistency with local goals and objectives and those created by the redevelopment plan.

- The law further assured coordination between the planning and redevelopment process by requiring identification of potential redevelopment areas in the municipal re-examination or master plan process, once again assuring that the redevelopment process was integrally linked with the planning process in the community.

- Lastly, the law established criteria for designating areas in need of rehabilitation or redevelopment. These criteria transcend the old "blighted area" requirements, which a controversial designation of the earlier regulations in 1949 and 1960. Frequently the blighted area terminology dissuaded public officials from using these laws because of the stigma associated with blight. With the revamping of these regulations by providing a broad base of conditions that qualify redevelopment areas, the law provides greater flexibility in its applicability without the designation of blight.

The law also makes the Planning Board an integral part of the process by requiring that the Land Use Element of the Master Plan be appropriately annotated with various areas designated for redevelopment consideration.

The benefits of redevelopment are substantial. The use of redevelopment laws can provide a wide range of benefits which not only accrue to the community, but also to private developers. Thus, the redevelopment law enables the forging of public/private partnerships and creates a unique cooperative opportunity between the development community and the local government.

The redevelopment action requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach for designated redevelopment areas. By designating these redevelopment areas in the Land Use element of the Master Plan, the Planning Board and the Redevelopment Authority can jointly view the "vision" for the community. Such action welds the redevelopment process to the comprehensive planning process of the community. However, the redevelopment process can also focus available resources into target areas, thus correcting existing problems or supplementing a more favorable land use policy for the community.

The redevelopment process provides a maximum level of creativity and flexibility and exempts the municipality from traditional municipal limitations such as public bidding processes. By doing so, the municipality can establish criteria to interview developers and select the one that is the most qualified for the process. This is an important factor in the redevelopment process since many times the "lowest bidder" is not the best qualified to complete a job. Developers with a long history of redevelopment action can provide portfolios showing successfully completed projects. Those with such experiences can be selectively gleaned from a field of developers to assure that the redevelopment project which has been selected can be successfully completed.

The process also permits a payment in lieu of taxes over a period of thirty years, which enables the municipality to capture almost a full portion of the tax dollar. Under the traditional process, the tax dollar is split between county, school and local purposes taxes. In redevelopment projects, depending upon the agreed formula, municipalities can capture substantially greater proportions of the tax dollar and use excess revenues to fund infrastructure, assist in financing, and initiate other creative ways to attract development to specific target areas.

The municipality can also exercise a greater level of control over the specific redevelopment projects by virtue of the developer agreements that are detailed legal documents as to how the project should proceed and standards by which it is to be constructed.

Thus, the redevelopment process provides a stable base for promoting public/private partnerships. Clearly, the redevelopment process is a vital tool in the planning and strategic redevelopment of designated target areas within the community. Therefore, it is being proposed here as an important component of the economic development package for the City of Sea Isle City. Accordingly, the target areas discussed in this report should be evaluated for eligibility as redevelopment districts. There are eight (8) criteria that allow eligibility for redevelopment designation. They range from the designation of buildings that are substandard, unsafe, unsanitary, dilapidated or obsolete; to land that has been vacant for over ten (10) years. The eligibility criteria for redevelopment action is sufficiently broad based to allow communities to legitimately qualify most redevelopment areas.

Another aspect of the redevelopment law is the designation of Areas in Need of Rehabilitation. In Subsection 14 of the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, areas may be delineated which are determined to be in need of rehabilitation. The qualifications for such areas are as follows:

A. A significant portion of the structures therein are deteriorated or in substandard condition;
B. There is a continuing pattern of vacancy, abandonment or underutilization of properties in the area with a persistent arrearage of property tax payments thereon; and
C. A program of rehabilitation may be expected to prevent further deterioration and promote the overall redevelopment of the community.

The primary difference between determining an area in need of rehabilitation and one for redevelopment is that the municipality lacks the ability to initiate condemnation powers for areas determined to be eligible for rehabilitation. Accordingly, most municipalities study such areas to determine whether the optimum goal can be reached either through a designation of redevelopment or rehabilitation. Such designations cannot be made until detailed analyses of the areas targeted for consideration are made.

The Implementation of a Redevelopment Plan

The implementation strategies employed to initiate a redevelopment plan are quite simple. The municipality may either designate a redevelopment agency and staff it, or it may assume the responsibility itself through the structure of the existing governing body, thereby saving costs for staff and additional bureaucracy. Most small communities opt to designate the governing body as the redevelopment agency, thus enabling a more streamlined course of action and accountability.

Upon establishment of the redevelopment agency within the community, the governing body can then initiate the process of redevelopment and coordinate that process with the Planning Board of the community. The latter is quite vital since many of the elements of the Master Plan are required to be incorporated in the redevelopment planning process to assure that consistency between the planning process and the redevelopment process is always maintained. Thus, the Planning Board becomes a vital component in the redevelopment process and, for most successful redevelopment efforts, the planning board remains involved in guiding the development process.

In summary, the redevelopment planning process is a proactive method of initiating economic development strategies within the community by targeting specific land areas for redevelopment consideration. By doing so, the redevelopment process enables the initiation of public / private partnerships to implement concepts into reality. For the project areas in Sea Isle City previously described, an analysis should be initiated by the Planning Board to determine the eligibility of these areas for redevelopment action. The Planning Board can then use another tool in reporting to the Governing Body (which can assume the role as redevelopment agency) as to the feasibility of the various projects and the consistency of these redevelopment efforts with the Master Plan's "vision" for the community.

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF) DISTRICT DESIGNATION

New Jersey law allows local governments the ability to designate areas within their jurisdiction as Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts. These specially designated districts are used by local governments as a way to spur economic growth by dedicating the sales tax revenues and additional property tax revenues generated with the TIF District for improvements within the district with the hope of encouraging new economic development and jobs. Generally, TIF districts are established when local governments designate a special renewal area in which businesses hope to expand. This allows the city to keep, for a set period of time, most of the new property taxes generated in the area, with a set amount going back to the School Board and County and possibly some to the developer with the rest for use on City needs such as streets, sewers and other projects deemed important.

What is a TIF District? TIF is a financing mechanism to encourage development of property that otherwise is too costly to development for a variety of reasons. "TIF", or tax increment financing, is a tool for the eradication of blight, the enhancement of conditions that cause blight, and a means for municipalities to use the growth in tax revenues – produced by an increase in real property taxes generated within a specified, eligible area of the municipality – to pay for the costs of (re)developing that area. When created, these revenues are deposited into a separate account (the Special Tax Allocation Fund or TIF Fund) which is controlled by the Redevelopment Agency, which in most cases is the City's governing body. The revenues are then used to pay for a wide variety of permissible "redevelopment project costs". A TIF Area (also referred to as the "redevelopment project area") can remain in place for up to 30 years.

What are TIF Revenues, and how are they Produced? When a municipality establishes a TIF District, it notifies the County and School Board to determine the total equalized assessed value of each lot, block tract and parcel of taxable real property within the Area. The value so determined is the "base value". In every subsequent calendar year, each taxing district which taxes real property in the area continues to receive real property taxes based on the application of its respective tax rate to the base value. It is the increase in real property value over the base, (the "incremental value") that produces the incremental property tax for use within the TIF. The incremental value is taxed in the same manner as is the base value, but rather than the real property taxes from this incremental value being distributed to the underlying taxing districts, it is instead distributed to the Special Tax Allocation Fund (TIF Fund) for use by the municipality in accordance Redevelopment Plan.

SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT CREATION

According to Cooperative Professional Services of New York[9], over 56 municipalities in New Jersey, in conjunction with their business communities, have utilized the Special Improvement District Management Act of 1984 to revitalize, professionally manage, and market their central business districts, industrial parks and commercial zones. Business and commercial areas that are facing increased competition, neglect and deterioration, or simply cannot focus on a community plan for improvement, have found remedies provided in the Special (Business) Improvement District statute. The statute allows for the authority, professional management, and committed funding mechanism necessary to effect real results.

Special (Business) Improvement Districts (also known as SID's or BID's) are true public/private partnerships and are essentially a public "authority" with the ability to address private business concerns in a cooperative community manner. The statute addresses three (3) essential parts of this partnership:

1. Creation of a public "authority" with specific powers and governance;
2. Designation of the form of professional management; and,
3. Funding capability in the form of a special assessment to finance the authority and management of the district.

[9] Special Improvement Information Guide.

Special (Business) Improvement Districts are governed primarily by the private sector members of the district. They are designed to be specifically responsive to business and economic revitalization needs by supporting a comprehensive, organized, cooperative and managed approach.

Special (Business) Improvement Districts

A Business Improvement District (BID), or Special Improvement District (SID), is an organization, management, and financing tool used by local businesses to provide specialized services such as a sidewalk clean-up, graffiti removal, physical improvements, security, special events, holiday lighting, area marketing and business promotion. Almost any type of service or improvement can be supported. The services are designed to complement rather than replace municipal government services in order to implement a business revitalization plan.

A SID (BID) is similar to a water, sewer or fire district in which property owners pay an additional charge for specific services. A SID is created under the authority of state law and enacted by municipal ordinance. The law permits property owners and businesses to organize and assess themselves to pay for the services that they determine they need. The assessments are collected by the local municipality and turned over to the SID. A district plan and a non-profit District Management Corporation (DMC) govern operation of a SID. The DMC has a Board of Directors and is made up of property owners, businesses, residents, other non-profits, and government officials. All decisions relating to the operation of the SID including budgets, annual assessments, and management of the specialized services are made by the DMC.

Goal of a Special Improvement District

Special (Business) Improvement Districts permit a municipality's business community to compete more effectively and efficiently with existing retail/commercial markets particularly shopping malls. By implementing structures for the professional organization and management of downtown business services, districts develop management strategies for competitive business development utilizing private/public partnerships. They begin with the understanding that service is a requirement for business development and excellent service is a competitive advantage. Excellent service is not an accident and neither are successful business communities. They are planned and managed professionally.

The Special Improvement District Management Act

The District Management Act provides statutory authority for municipalities to create tax supported business improvement districts also known as Special Improvement Districts (SIDs). The districts provide services to encourage and support retail/commercial economic activity.

The District Management Act is designed to provide municipalities with the ability to focus, elevate and manage services specifically designed to enhance the economic viability of business areas and downtown business centers. The services that are provided by a Business District are specific and unique to that business district. Districts are managed utilizing cooperative retail/commercial management technologies similar to shopping malls.

The purpose of the Act is to promote economic growth and employment, encourage self-financed business districts, designate professional management of the districts, and to develop public-private partnerships that implement self-help programs consistent with the local needs, goals and objectives. The Act empowers a District Management Corporation to provide up to twenty-four business management and economic development activities ranging from administering district affairs (adopt by-laws), purchase and manage property, to managing the provision of specific services and standards (design, promotions, marketing, rehabilitation, clean-up, security). A district management corporation is an organization that implements the district plan and oversees the common concerns of the district.

The Current Status of Business (Special) Improvement Districts

There are more than 1,600 Business Improvement Districts in the United States and Canada, and over 56 Business Improvement Districts in New Jersey. There are 47 states in the US that have SID/BID capability. The first six (6) in New Jersey were established during a three-year period from 1985 to 1988: Cranford, Trenton, Elizabeth, Englewood, Somerville, and New Brunswick. All six (6) are still in operation. In 1991, the Department of Community Affairs funded ten (10) municipalities interested in creating a Business Improvement District. By 1992 ten (10) new districts were established. By 1998 thirty (30) more were created.

Since 1992, many communities continued to explore BIDs for their downtowns and fifty (50) new districts have been established. All established districts are still operating. There are BIDs in less populated communities, such as Freehold, as well as in urban communities.

- Collingswood has three (3) BIDs and Jersey City has four (4) BIDs.
- Seaside Heights, Gloucester City and Livingston Twp. have municipality-wide BIDs.
- Newark's Downtown BID and Atlantic City are New Jersey's largest BIDs.
- There are Industrial BIDs in Collingswood, Paterson, Gloucester City and Irvington.
- There are BIDs, such as the one (1) in Gloucester City that specifically addresses contaminated vacant industrial land.

The average annual assessment collected per district is approximately $250,000, and the average budget, which includes other public and private funds, is approximately $400,000. The lowest district assessment is in Audubon at $38,500, and the highest is in Atlantic City at approximately $3,000,000. The BIDs manage a variety of community services such as parking, security, and redevelopment. BIDs act as contractors with other public entities, such as NJ Transit, to provide clean up and property maintenance services where interests coincide within a district. However, BIDs focus on providing enhanced services to their customers.

Why Consider a Special (Business) Improvement District?

The primary advantages of a Special Improvement District are: 1) a legal authority designed to promote downtown business revitalization; 2) the capability of professional management of retail/commercial services that enhance business in the district, and; 3) a dependable source of funding. SIDs allow for the organized and professional implementation of competitive business practices and services developed and maintained cooperatively at the local level. This is a technology that has been enjoyed almost exclusively by shopping malls. A SID permits a business district to employ the advantage of these retail / commercial cooperative management technologies in partnership with the municipality.

SIDs have proven to be excellent partners to community, government, industry and business as the catalyst for revitalization, community pride and effective planning. When the political will is present and combined with the business community's commitment to be competitive and cooperative, SIDs are the vehicle to make things happen. Although success can be defined as increased sales, less vacancies, higher property values, and more satisfied customers, the intangible element of rediscovering a sense of community progress is perhaps the most important and sustainable achievement of SIDs.

How Would a BID/SID Function in Sea Isle City?

Sea Isle City has a number of economic development options that are available for differing locales within the community -- from declaration of redevelopment areas, to tax abatement options, to zoning and marketing specific lands for commercial/industrial development. However, all of these options are primarily publicly guided incentives. BID/SID implementation is primarily the responsibility of the management organization created on behalf of the local businesses within a certain locale.

MAIN STREET FORMATION

The Main Street Approach developed by the National Trust's National Main Street Center in 1980 to assist downtown revitalization efforts nationwide is a community-driven, comprehensive methodology used to revitalize older, traditional business districts throughout the United States. The underlying premise of the Main Street approach is to encourage economic development within the context of historic preservation in ways appropriate to today's marketplace. The Main Street Approach advocates a return to community self-reliance, local empowerment, and the rebuilding of traditional commercial districts based on their unique assets: distinctive architecture, a pedestrian-friendly environment, personal service, local ownership, and a sense of community. The Main Street New Jersey Program was established in 1989 to encourage and support the revitalization of downtowns throughout the state. Main Street New Jersey Communities have brought significant numbers of new businesses and jobs to their respective downtowns. In addition, facade improvements and building rehabilitation projects have upgraded the image of Main Street.

The Four-Point Approach

The National Trust Main Street Center offers a comprehensive commercial district revitalization strategy that has been widely successful in towns and cities nationwide. Described below are the four points of the Main Street approach which work together to build a sustainable and complete community revitalization effort.

a. Organization involves getting everyone working toward the same goal and assembling the appropriate human and financial resources to implement a Main Street revitalization program. A governing board and standing committees make up the fundamental organizational structure of the volunteer-driven program. This structure delineates responsibilities and builds consensus and cooperation among the various stakeholders.

b. Promotion sells a positive image of the commercial district and encourages consumers and investors to live, work, shop, play and invest in the Main Street district. By marketing a district's unique characteristics to residents, investors, business owners, and visitors, an effective promotional strategy forges a positive image through advertising, retail promotional activity, special events, and marketing campaigns carried out by local volunteers. These activities improve consumer and investor confidence in the district and encourage commercial activity and investment in the area.

c. Design means getting Main Street into top physical shape. Capitalizing on its best assets such as historic buildings and pedestrian-oriented streets is a priority. An inviting atmosphere, created through attractive window displays, parking areas, building improvements, street furniture, signs, sidewalks, street lights, and landscaping, conveys a positive visual message about the commercial district and what it has to offer. Design activities also include instilling good maintenance practices in the commercial district, enhancing the physical appearance of the commercial district by rehabilitating historic buildings, encouraging appropriate new construction, developing sensitive design management systems, and long-term planning.

d. Economic Restructuring strengthens a community's existing economic assets while expanding and diversifying its economic base. The Main Street program helps sharpen the competitiveness of existing business owners and recruits compatible new businesses and new economic uses to build a commercial district that responds to today's consumers' needs.

The Main Street approach is incremental; and may not produce immediate change. Short term and immediate fixes often fail to address the underlying causes of commercial district decline. Expensive improvements, such as pedestrian malls or sports arenas, do not always generate the desired economic results. In order to succeed, a long-term revitalization effort requires careful attention to every aspect of downtown, a process that takes time and requires leadership and local capacity building. The 2004 National Main Street Trends Survey states that commercial districts continue to maintain the steady

progress they've made since 1998, when they seemed to have taken a big jump economically. This is trend is likely to continue in the coming years.

Benefits of being a Main Street New Jersey Community

New Jersey's Main Street Program believes that when a community participates in a comprehensive revitalization effort, its downtown can experience a return to economic vitality. Benefits of the New Jersey Main Street program include the following:

- Protecting and strengthening the existing tax base
- Increasing sales and returning revenues to the community
- Creating a positive community image
- Creating visually appealing and economically viable downtown
- Attracting new businesses
- Creating new jobs
- Increasing investment in the downtown
- Preserving historic architectural resources

Ingredients for a Successful Main Street

Nationally, the following six general statements characterize the most important ingredients of a successful Main Street.

a. Strengthen planning and land-use laws so that "rural" is really rural, and "urban" is really urban, and the sprawl between the two of them is controlled. Other regulatory factors include:
    - Main Street-friendly comprehensive plan
    - Financial incentives for Main Street investment
    - Incentives to create mixed-use neighborhoods
    - A retail size cap ordinance

b. Create an environment that cultivates and supports innovative new businesses. Offer training, peer-to-peer mentoring, seed capital, financing, and the market research needed to help independent businesses get established and grow on Main Street.

c. Facilitate 24/7 districts including housing. With people keeping an eye and ear on what's happening 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and neighborhood-serving retail businesses to meet their basic consumer needs.

d. Think beyond retail. Unlike a shopping mall, less than 20 percent of a Main Street district is used for retail businesses. The rest of the space is employed for housing, offices, government functions, entertainment, religion, and, increasingly, small-scale industries. These activities give Main Street districts economic buoyancy and market diversity.

e. Create entertainment needs as a stronger component of Main Street such as a theater, a spontaneous street performance, or a farmers market.

f. Emphasis on history. History was made on Main Street celebrations, protests, and festivals.[10]

[10] Reference: www.mainstreet.org; www.state.nj.us/dca/dcr/msnj/index.shtml

TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDR) ANALYSIS

On March 29, 2004, the State Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Act, authorizing the transfer of development rights by municipalities, was signed into law. This bill made New Jersey the first state in the nation to authorize TDR on a statewide level.

Based upon the State's Office of Smart Growth information, the transfer of development rights is a realty transfer system where development potential in a specified preservation area can be purchased by private investors for use in a targeted growth area. In exchange for a cash payment, landowners in the preservation ("sending") area place a restrictive easement on the property that will maintain the resource into perpetuity. The land in the designated growth ("receiving") area can then be developed at a higher density than allowed under the baseline zoning. This process reduces the consumption of critical resources, while still accommodating growth, and eliminates the "windfalls and wipeouts" in property values normally associated with zoning changes.[11]

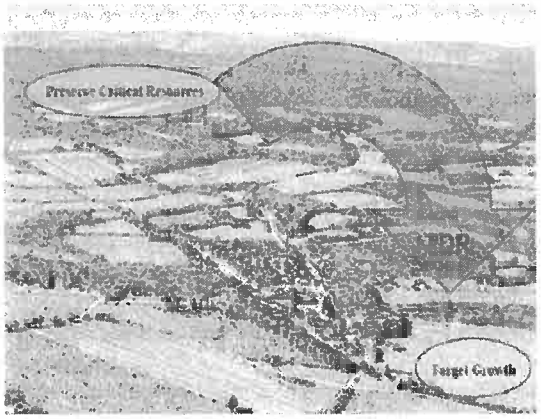
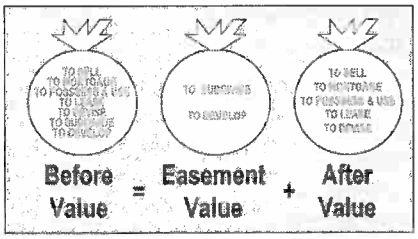


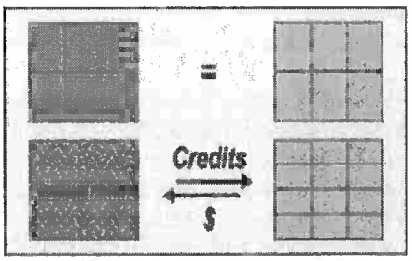
Figure 17: Transfer of Development Rights

How TDR Works!

Development rights are equal to the amount of development that is legally allowed to occur on a particular piece of property. For example, a six-acre property with 1-acre zoning (1du/acre) could potentially yield six residences. If the property had a resource that has been deemed suitable for preservation, it could transfer (sell) its 6 development rights (credits) to a property more suitable for development.

At a small scale, TDR seems much like clustering. Planning for and implementing TDR, however, is much more comprehensive than the typical cluster ordinance. Rather than merely allowing a cluster option that still leads to at least the partial consumption of the critical resource, a TDR program sets preservation goals and targets growth on a town- wide (or even regional) basis.





In the case of Sea Isle City, the use of TDR is challenging given the high percentage of existing land development – the ability to find adequate sending and receiving districts is very difficult; however the opportunity to create a regional TDR program exists. In this case, Sea Isle City could tie increased density in the downtown area to the preservation of valuable open/agricultural space in Dennis Township or other "sending municipalities" through a comprehensive and inter-agency "TDR Agreement." As noted earlier, this type of regional or inter-governmental planning is one of the goals of Smart Growth in New Jersey.

There may also be limited opportunities for TDR within the City in relation to the few vacant properties in the North end. Therefore an economic analysis to check the feasibility of implementing a TDR program with the potential supply of open space offshore, for instance in Dennis Township, or potentially in the north end of the City and demand possibly in Sea Isle City's downtown must be completed prior to the

[11] Graphic illustrations from the State of New Jersey's Office of Smart Growth website

implementation of a TDR program. While this concept may be difficult to implement, this should be considered for further analysis and study. Whether regional in scope or utilizing the north end as a "sending district" and the downtown as a "receiving district," the Planning Board and the Governing Body would need to be assured that offering developers this opportunity for increased density in the downtown is desirable at the present time. For TDR to work effectively, the developer, as a purchaser of the right to increased density in the downtown (e.g. paying a property owner in the northend of Sea Isle City for these "development rights") must have the opportunity for increased development density beyond what the zoning permits.

Presently, Sea Isle City does not appear to be in a position to implement TDR until an analysis of the currently proposed zoning recommendations in this plan's Land Use element can be made. Once these recommendations are in effect, the City may be able to determine their effectiveness in improving the economic environment in the downtown and neighborhood commercial areas. Until such time, the City does not have a clear understanding of the supply and demand for mixed-use development in these areas.

CONSOLIDATED PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES

The City should consider consolidating certain public functions such as its administrative offices, police services, ambulance corps, public works administration, utilities administration, post office, etc., into a centrally located facility to improve operational efficiencies and maximize available resources within the City. By doing this, the City could possibly free up certain key properties for development in the Downtown Business District to further the City's vision for this area.

This process may be initiated by assessing the spatial needs for all public facilities within the City and developing an expansion plan to accommodate all projected functions. Subsequently, the City should hire a consultant to program these functions spatially and identify a suitable location for this new facility through a public participation process, similar to the process adopted for determining the location of the proposed new Library. In addition to this positive economic impact created by this consolidation, the City could potentially realize annual savings in personnel, equipment, materials, utilities, reduced annual liability exposure and projected annual productivity increase. The consolidated public services facility also presents an opportunity of possibly creating a viable shared parking structure to serve this facility during working hours and the Downtown Business District during evenings and weekends.

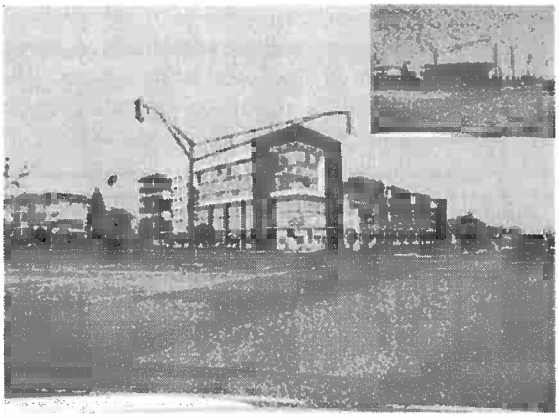


Figure 18: Consolidated Public Services Facility

IMPROVED DATABASE AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Sea Isle City, not unlike other municipalities in the country, has to deal with much administrative paperwork and data. To encourage economic development in the City by enabling the easy dissemination of information, the City may wish to further computerize and integrate their operations, especially in code enforcement, GIS mapping, tax assessment for property information and development approval process. In conjunction with this, the City may also wish to consider the creation of a centralized planning and development entity to handle all planning, zoning, permitting, certificate of occupancies and code enforcement. These would greatly streamline operations and create a pro-business environment furthering the City's vision, especially in the Downtown Business District.

In addition to improved database and information management systems, the City should establish a "Single Point Information Source" for general information on public facilities and services offered by the City and County. This single-point information facility and system could be located in multiple locations such as the library, post office, seasonal kiosks, beach-tag office and other prominent locations within the City.

In an effort to foster a greater community spirit and generate better participation in City programs and activities, the City may wish to create periodic newsletters for transmission via email and print. An email list of all residents and property owners could be created and regular newsletter updates and communication of events and programs could be done via email to achieve this objective.

GREEN DEVELOPMENT, WIND AND SOLAR ENERGY

A green city is one that adopts and implements several environmental friendly policies and practices considering air quality, electricity use and production, environmental perspective, environmental policy, green design (USGBC's leadership in energy and environmental design (LEED) program), green space, public health, recycling, socio-economic factors, transportation, and water quality.

Several federal agencies including the U.S. Department of Energy, National Science Foundation, Environmental Protection Agency and other agencies, offer grants and incentives for promoting and undertaking green city projects and initiatives to implement distributed solar technology (including photovoltaic and solar thermal), energy efficiency, load management, smart meters and cost reflective pricing in large-scale grid-connected urban sites.

Another objective is to encourage property owners to turn to renewable energy sources and help create a cleaner Sea Ise City. One way to achieve this would be for Sea Isle City to develop partnerships with consultants, agencies and firms that will develop and propose a design for a customer-friendly, community-wide system for the benefit of residents and business interested in installing solar energy systems. The New Jersey Clean Energy Program provides financial incentives (rebates of 30% - 70% of system costs) to owners who install qualifying clean energy generation systems such as fuel cells, photovoltaics (solar electricity), small wind and sustainable biomass equipment. The City should create awareness of these programs and benefits to its residents.

The State of New Jersey also provides subsidies for homeowners and businesses as well as loan guarantee programs, research and development funding, and renewable energy promotion. Some of these subsidies require state utility companies to buy a percentage of their energy from renewable sources; others mandate that a portion of state properties' energy be bought from green sources.

New Jersey Incentives for Renewable Energy offers numerous financial incentives through their various programs for public and private projects. One such program is the New Jersey SmartStart Buildings, which is a $27.8 million program sponsored by the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities in partnership with New Jersey's gas and electric utilities. The incentives provided through this program are available to all non-residential retail electric and/or gas service customers of the participating New Jersey utilities: Atlantic City Electric, Jersey Central Power & Light, Rockland Electric Company, New Jersey Natural Gas, Elizabethtown Gas, PSE&G, and South Jersey Gas. New Jersey SmartStart Buildings received its funding through New Jersey's Societal Benefits Charge (SBC), and is executed by the New Jersey utility that serves the location of the proposed project. As part of this objective, Sea Isle City should discuss such options with property developers and their own consultants in the interest of promoting a greener community.

In the public realm, the use of light emitting diodes (LED's) seems obvious. Sea Isle City should embark on a program to switch the majority of their street lights to LED's. These lights last longer and are more cost effective. This saves the city money both in energy and in labor time spent replacing bulbs. Cities such as Raleigh, N.C. have successfully switched some of their city-owned lights to LED's. Additionally, these fixtures may be powered by photovoltaic cells, reducing utility costs in addition to being environmentally friendly.

The City's 1988 Master Plan supported energy conservation though efficient use and conservation of fossil fuels. The Plan supported the conservation of energy in building construction and appliances. At the present time, some of the measures Sea Isle City can take to reduce its energy usage are listed below:

1. Encourage green building development, which uses energy efficiency in the building design, construction, renovation, operation, maintenance, and demolition.

2. Regularly update the City's building codes and building plan review to integrate optimum energy efficiency. Encourage the use of energy efficient appliances in homes, retail areas and offices.

3. Encourage construction of green roofs, starting with all public buildings. There is an opportunity in the near future to implement this concept on the proposed new Library Building on 48th Street.

4. Encourage water conservation through means such as water-saving shower heads and toilets, water and sewage flow restrictions, water recycling, etc.

5. Promote the use of solar energy through the use of solar panels in residential, commercial and office buildings. Public facilities including public buildings, utility stations, parks, public pools, street lighting, etc. should adopt the use of solar energy.

6. Evaluate the feasibility of construction of a wind farm at the north end of the City at the site currently under consideration for a passive park.

7. Make energy conservation information readily available at designated City offices and public school, and also encourage efforts for promotion of conservation activities.

8. Continue the City's waste recycling program and encourage efforts by residents and visitors.

G. Summary of Master Plan Re-examination Recommendations

HOUSING

1. Pursue certification of the City's Housing Plan to meet the City's COAH (Council On Affordable Housing) 1st, 2nd and 3rd round obligations as applicable through 2014 (see page 23 for details)

LAND USE

1. Limit the downtown commercial zoning (C-1, General Business District) to 37th Street from the present 32nd Street on Landis Avenue and limit the C-4 (Beach Business District from 32nd Street to 35th Street (see page 34 for details)

2. Rezone the back-bay (C-3 Marine Commercial zoned properties north of 38th Street and west of Sounds Avenue) to the R-2, Two-Family Residential zoning classification to match the current land uses (see page 36 for details).

3. Change the zoning classification of properties near 63rd Street and Landis Ave from C-5 to C-1 (see page 36 for details)

4. Remove residential use as a primary permitted use on all commercially zoned properties within the Downtown Business District and encourage mixed-use development by permitting residential uses on upper floors within this District; and increase the density of upper-story residential development (see page 37 for details)

5. Examine the site at Joseph A. Larosa Way and Kneass Avenue for the possible location of a future parking structure that would be linked with a circulator bus or trolley that carries visitors up and down the island during the heavily trafficked summer months (see page 38 for details)

6. Given that the City has determined that the newly proposed library should be located on the 48th Street site, the City should ensure that it has the final review of the County's proposed plan for this facility/site in conjunction with its professional planner. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification should be required for this building in addition to the City being involved in the siting of the actual facility (see page 38 for details)

7. Incorporate the proposed Sea Isle City Design Guidelines and Prototypical Layouts relating to public space design, site planning, landscape design, building design and signage as a non-mandatory guide for all property development within the City (see Appendix E details)

CIRCULATION & PARKING

1. Advance the concept of integrated downtown pedestrianization by improving urban design and developing JFK Boulevard, 42nd Street and Landis Avenue between 37th and 48th Streets and the Promenade as true pedestrian priority streets (see page 44 for details)

2. Develop a temporary surface parking lots on 48th Street and Park Road and explore shared use when the site is fully developed as the proposed library (see page 44 for details)

3. Develop temporary visitor parking, along the west side of Landis between 22nd and 26th Streets for the primary benefit of beach-goers (see page 44 for details)

4. Designate at least ten (10%) percent of the parking spaces at all public facilities for carpool or vanpool parking where feasible (see page 45 for details)

5. Install parking meters or other state-of-the-art devices, with appropriate time limits, in appropriate areas with two (2) hour limit on Landis Avenue and JFK Boulevard and long term four (4) hour parking in other areas (see page 45 for details)

6. Install a more effective system of a common parking meter machines as opposed to the current individual coin-fed parking meters (see page 45 for details)

7. Set up a committee to identify, encourage and facilitate discussions and agreements with private parties and or public agencies to promote joint or shared parking especially if the hours of use between the parties under consideration (see page 45 for details)

8. Draft regulations as part of the Land Development Codes to restrict and manage access points on all primary arterial and collector roads, namely JFK Boulevard, Landis Avenue and Central Avenue by requiring shared access driveways and cross-access connections/easements for abutting properties (see page 46 for details)

9. Improve access to City beaches especially between 29th and 57th Streets by increased pedestrian and bike access to the beach by improving street end connections to the Promenade from prominent east-west roads (see page 47 for details)

10. Adopt a fee In-lieu of parking where the property owner must pay a one-time payment per parking space deficiency if a variance is granted for parking relief within downtown commercial zoning district (see page 47 for details)

11. Identify and pursue opportunities for satellite/intercept parking possibly at intercept parking lot on the mainland or the rest stop on the Garden State Parkway (see page 48 for details)

12. Undertake feasibility studies for parking structure in conjunction with a trolley system to provide future parking for Downtown patrons, visitors and residents with easy access to the Downtown Business District (see page 49 for details)

13. Incorporate gateways into the urban landscape to create a sense of place and identity for the community (see page 50 for details)

14. Coordinate with NJDOT and Cape May County to improve the visual aspects of the bridge by incorporating nautical themed tile murals into the concrete guards; addition of colored light and "flowing" elements along bridge rails and painting the lighting fixtures with brighter colors (see page 50 for details)

15. Plan, design and install a comprehensive city-wide wayfinding signage system to direct residents and visitors to the beach, recreation sites, prime destinations, parking areas and evacuation routes (see page 50 for details)

16. Undertake a detailed and comprehensive transportation planning study to establish Sea Isle City as a multimodal community that integrates foot traffic, bikes, trolleys/people-movers and water-borne traffic in addition to vehicular traffic (see page 51 for details)

PARKS RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

1. Design and build a passive park that could include traditional passive recreational activities such as bird watching, walking/hiking, biking, kayaking/canoeing, picnicking, as well as other unique recreational activities at the north end of the City - the former landfill site (see page 57 for details)

2. Evaluate the feasibility of a neighborhood park on city-owned properties on Central Avenue and 80th Street, this may be made possible if the existing utility use structures at this location are consolidated and possibly moved off shore (see page 57 for details)

3. Evaluate expansion of recreation opportunities at Dealy Recreation Center on Central Avenue between 59th and 63rd Street to include soft park surfaces with landscaping and nature trails near the wetlands portion of the site (see page 57 for details)

4. Implement joint recreational programming with the Sea Isle City School Board on Park Road and 45th Street and the expansion of the school recreation area on Central Avenue and 45th Street to allow public access during after-school hours. If, given declining enrollments, the school should cease operation, consideration for adaptive reuse as a community center, performing arts center, or similar should be given (see page 57 for details)

5. Establish a City-wide policy to promote shared use of vacant public land especially for parks and recreation purposes. (see page 57 for details)

6. Expedite the construction of Excursion Waterfront Park at 40th Street and Promenade - Cospar Parcel (see page 57 for details)

7. Evaluate the possibility of designating a bike lanes on the Promenade where feasible, in conjunction with regulated times of use (see page 58 for details)

8. Undertake a beautification program for the Promenade that could include new surface treatments, planters, lighting, street furniture etc. (see page 58 for details)

9. Evaluate the bayfront site between JFK Boulevard and 38th Street for development as a waterfront park and marina (see page 58 for details)

10. Undertake themed physical improvements and space programming at the Marina Commercial area in the vicinity of 42nd Place, to promote the fishing industry, marina related activities and other affiliated uses (see page 58 for details)

11. Continue to preserve and protect the City's wetlands and natural resources such as the beach dunes and other environmentally sensitive lands (see page 58 for details)

12. Coordinate with the County to develop a state-of-the-art Library facility proposed on the 48th Street site, which can act as a learning center and venue for social affairs with extended service hours. (see page 58 for details)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1 Pursue revitalization of the Downtown Business District and Neighborhood Commercial Areas through the use of one or more specific revitalization tools widely used in the State of New Jersey to spur economic development (see page 60 for details). These tools include:
   - Creation of Redevelopment Areas
   - Creation of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts
   - Creation a Business/Special Improvement (BID/SID) District
   - Creation of a Main Street District

2. Undertake an economic analysis to check the feasibility of implementing a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program with the potential supply of open space offshore or potentially in the north end of the City and demand possibly in downtown Sea Isle City (see page 69 for more details)

3. Consider consolidating certain public functions such as City administrative offices, police services, ambulance corps, public works administration, utilities administration, post office, etc. into one or two centrally located complexes/facilities to improve operational efficiencies and maximize available resources thereby freeing up valuable land for other uses(see page 70 for details)

4. Encourage economic development in the City by enabling the easy dissemination of information by (see page 71 for details):
   - Computerizing and integrating City operations, especially in code enforcement, GIS mapping, tax assessment for property information and development approval process
   - Establishing a "Single Point Information Source" for general information on public facilities and services offered by the City and County at various locations
   - Creating periodic community newsletters for transmission via email and print to foster a greater community spirit and generate better participation in City programs and activities

5. Promote energy efficiency practices by (see page 71 for details):
   - Developing partnerships with consultants, agencies and firms that will develop and propose designs for installing solar energy systems for the benefit of interested residents and business
   - Embarking on a program to switch the majority of City street lights to LED's as these lights last longer and are cost effective in the long term
   - During the permitting process, encouraging property owners to turn to renewable energy sources to help create a cleaner Sea Isle City in addition to encouraging conservation of energy in building construction and appliances

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

1. Review, update and implement the recommendations of the Sea Isle City Stormwater Management Plan prepared by Walker Previtti and Holmes in March 2005 (see Appendix H for details)

RECYCLING

1. The City should continue to strive to meet the recycling goals of 50% for all municipally-collected waste and 60% of total waste (e.g. demolitions, cars, etc.) as set by the State of New Jersey. (see page 5 for details and Appendix I - model Recycling Ordinance[12])

[12] Source: Cape May County Solid Waste Management Plan (2007 - 2016) Appendix VI

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