

# City of Cape May



Cape May County, New Jersey

## Master Plan Reexamination

February 27, 2009 – Revised March 13, 2009



# **Master Plan Reexamination Report**

**February 27, 2009 - Revised March 13, 2009**

## **Prepared For:**

**City of Cape May Planning Board**  
**643 Washington Street**  
**Cape May, NJ 08204**

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Several previously adopted planning documents were utilized in the preparation of this Master Plan Reexamination. These documents are listed as an inventory of master plan reference documents and included for reference as indicated below:

**Master Plan, City of Cape May, Cape May County, NJ, March 2003**

**City of Cape May, Cape May County, New Jersey, Housing Element & Fair Share Plan, December 2008**

**Zoning Map, City of Cape May dated March 15, 2005 and revised July 19, 2005**

**Code of the City of Cape May, Last Supplement 11-1-2008**

**City of Cape May, Land Development Regulations, November 6, 2000**

**City of Cape May, Historic Preservation Commission Design Standards**

**City of Cape May Historic Preservation Map dated July 11, 2006**

**The Vision Plan for the City of Cape May, New Jersey, October 2007**

**Cape May County Solid Waste Management Plan, 2007**

**Cape May County Comprehensive Plan, 2007 (Amended)**

**Borough of West Cape May Master Plan Update, December 30, 2005.**

**Township of Lower, Master Plan Reexamination, October 18, 2007**

This report is a reexamination of the above referenced March 2003 Master Plan. It is the intent of this report to reexamine, review and update the information contained in the 2003 Master Plan. Formatting of this document provides Master Plan language to remain unchanged as regular type, new and updated information is indicated in bold type and language to be removed is indicated with strikethrough type. It is intended to create a comprehensive document and many of the graphics, photos, maps and tables from the Master Plan have been reproduced from the original document. For editing purposes, some graphics, photos, maps and tables from the 2003 Master Plan have been omitted and the original 2003 Master Plan should be referenced for that information.

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**Tables for Housing Element are included by reference only. See adopted Housing and Fair Share Plan for actual tables.**

**Tables and Figures for Traffic Element are included by reference only. See 2003 Master Plan for actual figures.**





# Introduction

## Master Plan Reexamination Report

The statutory requirements for the Master Plan are established in NJSA 40:55D-28 (Municipal Land Use Law). At a minimum, in order for the City of Cape May to establish valid zoning and land development standards, the Master Plan must contain the following:

- 1) *A statement of the objectives, principles, assumptions, policies and standards upon which the constituent proposals for the physical, economic and social development of the municipality are based.*
- 2) *A land use plan element (a) taking into account and stating its relationship to the statement provided for in paragraph (1) hereof, and other master plan elements provided for in paragraphs (3) through (13) hereof and natural conditions, including, but not necessarily limited to, topography, soil conditions, water supply, drainage, flood plain areas, marshes, and woodlands; (b) showing the existing and proposed location, extent and intensity of development of land to be used in the future for varying types of residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, recreational, educational and other public and private purposes or combination of purposes; and stating the relationship thereof to the existing and any proposed plan and zoning ordinance; and (c) showing the existing and proposed location of any airports and the boundaries of any airport safety zones delineated pursuant to the “Air Safety and Zoning Act of 1983,” P.L. 1983, c. 260 (C. 6:1-80 et seq.); and (d) including a statement of the standards of population density and development intensity recommended for the municipality;*
- 3) *A housing plan element pursuant to section 10 of P.L. 1985, c. 222 (C. 52:27D-310), including, but not limited to, residential standards and proposals for the construction and improvement of housing.*

The Master Plan must also contain a specific policy statement indicating the relationship of the proposed development of the municipality, as developed in the master plan to (1) the master plans of contiguous municipalities, (2) the master plan of the county in which the municipality is located, (3) the State Development and Redevelopment Plan adopted pursuant to the “State Planning Act,” sections 1 through 12 of P.L. 1985, c. 398 (C. 52:18A-196 et seq.) and (4) the district solid waste management plan required pursuant to the provisions of the “Solid Waste Management Act,” P.L. 1970, c. 39 (C. 13:1E-1 et seq.) of the county where the municipality is located. Various other elements including the circulation element, utility service plan element, community facilities plan element, recreation plan element, conservation plan element, economic plan element, historic preservation plan element, recycling plan element, and farmland preservation plan element are optional components of a municipality’s Master Plan.



The Master Plan provides a vision for the municipality. The Master Plan provides direction and guidance for the growth, resource preservation, and land use decisions. A good comprehensive plan recognizes the needs of the municipality; the municipality's relationship to neighboring communities, the County, State and other regional agencies; and existing constraints and opportunities such as circulation patterns, environmental conditions, and development patterns; and includes projections and anticipated development trends. The Master Plan is a document that is adopted by the municipal Planning Board. After the plan is adopted, implementation of the plan is achieved by means of three (3) interrelated actions: legislative action by the governing body, capital improvement planning and continuing planning efforts.

*In Accordance with section N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89 of the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL), The governing body shall, at least every six years, provide for a general reexamination of its master plan and development regulations by the planning board which shall prepare and adopt by resolution a report on the findings of such reexamination, a copy of which report and resolution shall be sent to the county planning board and the municipal clerk of each adjoining municipality.*

The Planning Board has determined that an update and reexamination to the existing Master Plan is appropriate at this time. A new Master Plan is not warranted at this time. The re-examination of a municipality's master plan ensures periodic review of information and changing conditions in the interest of keeping municipal planning efforts current.

The statute requires that the reexamination report address five (5) specific areas. These requirements are set forth herein and are followed by the appropriate response statements below:

## **Required Provisions of Periodic Reexamination Reports**

### **Part I - Major Problems and Objectives**

The first provision stated in N.J.S.A 40:55D-89a of the Municipal Land Use Law or MLUL states that a re-examination report shall include: *The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report.*

The major problems and objectives identified in the 2003 Master Plan are provided and restated in both Section II Goals and Objectives, Principles, Assumptions, Policies and Standards and each individual element reexaminations contained in this plan.

### **Part II - Status of Major Problems and Objectives**

The second provision stated in N.J.S.A 40:55D-89b of the Municipal Land Use Law or MLUL states that a re-examination report shall include: *The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.*

An analysis has been performed for the major problems and objectives identified in the 2003 Master Plan to determine the extent to which problems have increased or decreased and if objectives have been met. This information is provided and restated in Section II Goals and Objectives, Principles, Assumptions, Policies and Standards and each individual element reexaminations contained in this plan.

### **Part III - Changes in Assumptions, Policies and Objectives**

The third provision of a reexamination is contained in 40:55 D-89c of the MLUL and requires that a reexamination report address: *The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies, and objectives forming the basis for the master plan or development regulations as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation, collection, disposition, and recycling of designated recyclable materials and changes in State, County, and Municipal policies and objectives.*

#### **Reexamination of Population, Land Use, Housing Conditions and Circulation Trends:**

Whereas it has been determined that population, land use, housing conditions, and circulation trends continue to follow projections and trends identified in the 2003 Master Plan, no further specific study is warranted.

#### **Re-examination of State Development and Redevelopment Plan (State Plan):**

On January 2, 1986, the New Jersey Legislature enacted the New Jersey State Planning Act. As part of this Act, the New Jersey State Planning Commission was created and directed to prepare and adopt a statewide plan for growth and redevelopment in New Jersey. The premise of this plan was to develop a plan for the New Jersey that reflects agreement between all levels of government – municipalities, counties and the State – and provides a blueprint for "smart growth" throughout the State.

In 1992, the Commission released the *State Development and Redevelopment Plan* (State Plan). Incorporated into the State Plan is a Resource Planning and Management Structure. This structure identified five (5) basic "planning areas", outside of the Pinelands areas, based on physical size, population densities, availability of infrastructure, and pattern of existing land uses. These planning areas are mapped on the Resource Planning and Management Map (RPMM).

As required by law, all governmental agencies are required to reexamine their planning documents every six (6) years. In 1997 the State Planning Commission began a reexamination of the State Plan. On March 31, 1999, the State Planning Commission approved the *New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan: Interim Plan*. A new State Plan was approved in 2001.

**This reexamination of the State Plan has provided municipalities, county agencies, and citizens with the opportunity to provide comments on the previously adopted State Plan and make suggestions and recommendations. Municipal and county agencies were also offered an additional chance to request changes in policy and / or request modifications to the RPMM.**

**When the State Plan was adopted in 1997, the plan was to serve as an advisory document providing recommendations that would result in "smart growth" or a pattern of "preferred growth throughout the State. In her 1998 State of the Union address, Governor Whitman clearly stated that one of her goals is that all State agencies use the State Plan as a basis for their policy and decision making process. Decisions regarding funding, priority of improvements / maintenance, and implementation of new projections or extensions of existing systems should now be required to be based on the principals and concepts contained in the State Plan.**

**The State agencies that have integrated the State Plan into their policies and decision-making processes include the Department of Community Affairs (NJDCA), Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), and Council on Affordable Housing (COAH). All of these agencies potentially impact the City.**

**The New Jersey State Planning Commission approved the release of the Preliminary State Development and Redevelopment Plan (State Plan) and the Preliminary State Plan Policy Map On April 28, 2004. This action launched the third round of Cross-acceptance.**

**Cross-acceptance is a negotiating process between the state, counties, and municipalities and public that is meant to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate and shape the goals and policies of the State Plan. The State Plan and the State Plan Policy Map are intended to represent the input of these parties so that a State Plan can be created that makes sense for all of New Jersey. Cross-acceptance concludes with written Statements of Agreements and Disagreements supported by each negotiating entity and the State Planning Commission and with the negotiated agreements being added to the Draft Final State Plan.**

**The State Planning Commission updated the guidelines for plan endorsement in 2007. Plan endorsement is a voluntary review process designed to ensure the coordination of the state, counties, and municipalities and public planning efforts for achieving the goals and objectives in the State Plan. These guidelines set the standards by which municipal petition will be evaluated for consistency with the State Plan. Upon endorsement, municipalities are entitled to financial and technical incentives that can assist in implementation of the endorsed plans. Cape May City has started the endorsement process but has not received endorsement to date.**

**Cape May County:**

The Cape May County Comprehensive Plan was adopted in July of 2002. On February 15, 2005 the Plan was amended to include a new Open Space and Recreation element that met the guidelines of the Green Acres Program of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. The Plan was further amended in 2007 to include a preliminary Farmland Preservation Plan in accordance with State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) requirements. Based on a review of this plan, there have been no changes to the County Master Plan that would affect the assumptions, goals and objectives identified in the 2003 Master Plan.

**Adjoining Municipalities:**

The master plans for all adjoining municipalities were reviewed during the preparation of this reexamination. The Borough of West Cape May Master Plan Update was prepared December 30, 2005. The Township of Lower adopted its latest master plan in 1978 and its latest reexamination was adopted on October 18, 2007. Based on a review of these plans, there have been no changes that would affect the assumptions, goals and objectives identified in this reexamination report.

**Part IV - Recommended Changes for Master Plan or Development Regulations:**

The fourth provision of a reexamination is contained in N.J.A.C. 40:55 D-89(d) of the MLUL and requires that a reexamination report address: *The specific changes recommended for master plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared.*

Specific changes and recommendations based on the underlying objectives, policies and standards have been provided in this report and are identified within the specific elements and Section II of this report. It has been determined that a new master plan is not warranted at this time.

**Part V - Recommended Redevelopment Plans:**

The fifth provision of a reexamination is contained in N.J.A.C. 40:55 D-89(e) of the MLUL and requires that a reexamination report address: *The recommendations of the Planning Board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law," P.L. 1992, c. 79 (C 40 A: 12 A-1 et seq.) into the Land Use Element of the municipal Master Plan, and recommended changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.*

There are no recommendations for the incorporation of a specific redevelopment plan at this time. However, based on the recommendations contained within this reexamination, a redevelopment plan could be considered in the future.

**It is recommended that the purposes set forth in the 2003 Master Plan Introduction be updated as follows:**

**The** ~~This~~ 2003 Master Plan has been prepared in accordance with the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law. The purpose of Cape May's Master Plan is to provide a guide to accomplish a coordinated and harmonious development of the City. It is based on an analysis of present and future needs. The Master Plan is designed to promote the health, safety, and general welfare, as well as efficiency and economy in the land development process, and the maintenance of property values.

Specifically, the Master Plan is to identify land use constraints and opportunities and serve as a formal statement of Cape May's policies regarding future land use and development while maintaining Cape May's historic character. The Plan is designed to encourage sound growth and redevelopment, to strengthen and sustain Cape May's economy, and to establish appropriate criteria for the location of housing, commerce and light industry coordinated with the protection and enhancement of existing natural resources.

The Master Plan serves as a basis for zoning as well as for reviewing development applications. It is a listing of priorities and preferences which, when instituted as an integral part of the decision-making process, can help to ensure sound, high-quality land use in Cape May. This report has been designed to meet the statutory provisions of the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (Chapter 291, Laws of New Jersey, 1975, as amended), and will provide Cape May with an up-to-date, meaningful planning program designed to permit orderly residential and non-residential development and redevelopment within the municipality.

~~This~~ **The** 2003 Master Plan represents a continuation of the City's planning efforts, which include the 1988 Land Use Element, the 1991 Harborfront Enhancement Master Plan and Historic Preservation Element, the 1994 Land Use Element, the 1995 Housing Plan and the 2000 reexamination Report. These earlier plans and their background studies have been reviewed to put in perspective the historical pattern of planning and development policies in Cape May. **All the above referenced documents including the 2003 Master Plan were reviewed and utilized to prepare this reexamination.**

**The following is a restatement of the regional location information identified in the 2003 Master Plan that remains valid:**

## **Regional Location**

The City of Cape May is a 2.2 square mile community located at the southern end of New Jersey and Cape May County.

Cape May's southern shoreline is formed by wide, white sand beaches that border the Atlantic Ocean and the City is influenced by sensitive environmental features that are described below. Wetlands occur throughout all sections of the city and limit development on vacant lands,

particularly near Cape May Harbor in the east end. Protection of fragile dunes is essential to protection of the valuable beach resources. Cape May considers itself to be America's first resort community. Settlement occurred in the early nineteenth century but few structures remain from that period. However, it is Cape May's extraordinary collection of late-nineteenth century Victorian architecture that has led to the City's designation as a National Historic Landmark. Summer remains Cape May's busiest season, with vacationers being attracted by a combination of its historic ambiance and its beachfront location. Although most of the New Jersey coast is occupied by resort communities, Cape May receives the second largest number of visitors, after Atlantic City. Unlike many other beachfront towns, a wide-range of activities have led to Cape May's emergence as a year-round resort.

Cape May benefits from its proximity to major population centers and visitor attractions in the Mid-Atlantic Region. It is approximately 50 miles south of Atlantic City, 80 miles southeast of Philadelphia and 150 miles south of New York City.

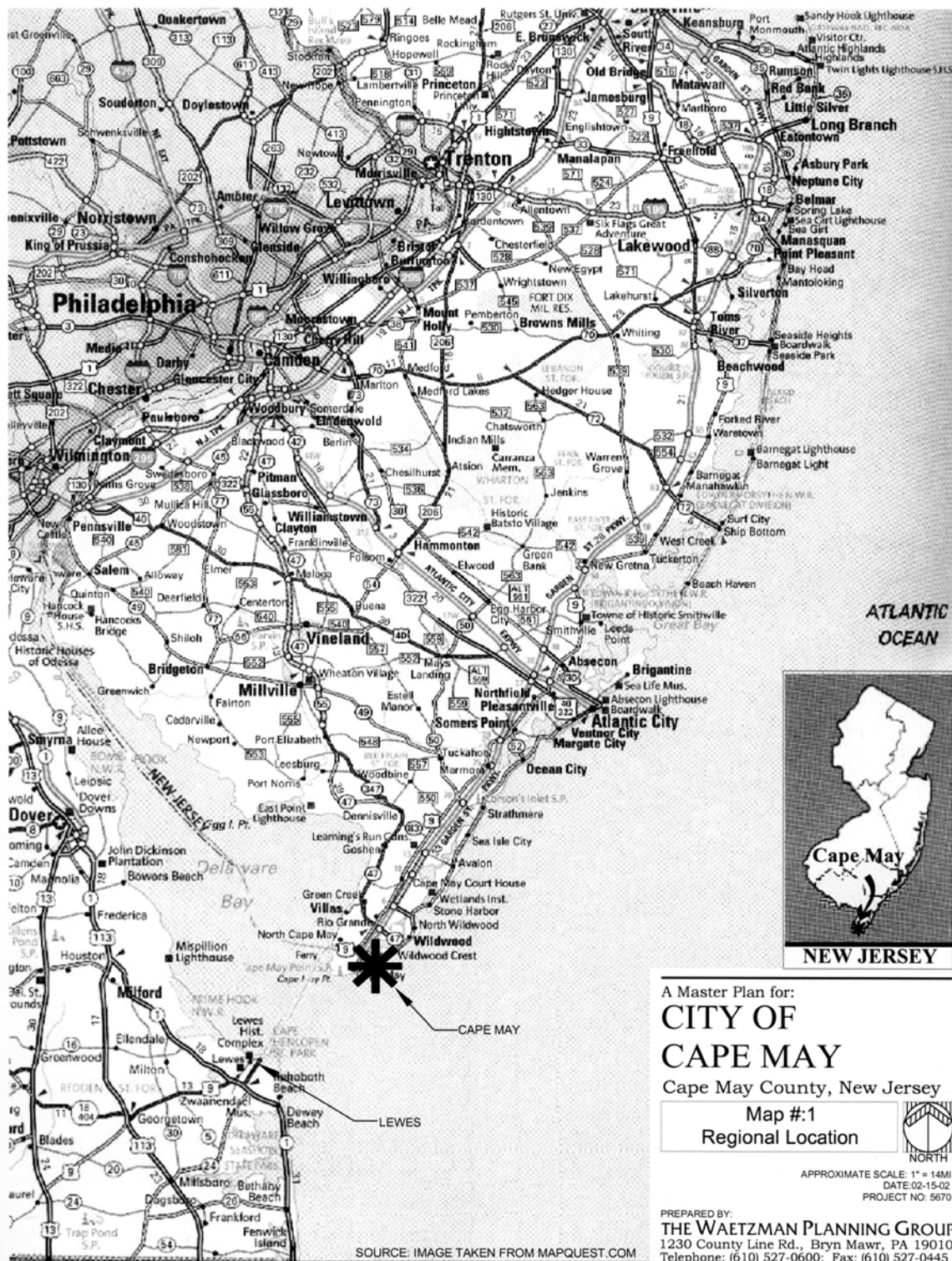
Both Route 9 and the Garden State Parkway terminate in Lower Township, near the Schellenger's Landing Bridge, which provides the main route for vehicular traffic approaching Cape May. A secondary street access is available via Seashore Road, through West Cape May.

The Cape May-Lewes Ferry, which provides service between the southern end of New Jersey and Lewes, Delaware, is located at the western end of the Cape May Canal. Buses connect the ferry with Cape May's Transportation Center, which is located near the City's main shopping district, the Washington Street Mall. The Transportation Center is also serviced by the Cape May Seashore Railroad, which provides service between the City and Cape May Court House, via the historic Cold Spring Village.

Cape May is separated from the New Jersey mainland by Cape May Harbor and the Cape Canal, which is part of the Intracoastal Waterway. This island is shared by the City of Cape May, the Boroughs of West Cape May and Cape May Point, and a portion of Lower Township. Cape May City shares municipal borders with the Borough of West Cape May and Lower Township. The eastern end of the city is occupied by a U.S. Coast Guard base, which occupies approximately 20% of the land area in the City.

Cape May's regional location is shown on Map 1.







# I. Background Studies

The 2000 Reexamination Report detailed the changes in development conditions since the 1988 Master Plan was adopted. A number of other changes have occurred either on a regional or statewide basis that have also changed the conditions for development **were identified in the 2003 Master Plan. Inventory information was taken from the 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census Data and other source information as identified. U.S. Census Data for 2006 was not available for the City of Cape May. Therefore, this reexamination relies on the 2000 U.S. Census Data as provided in the 2003 Master Plan and as stated below.**

~~The most significant of these are:~~

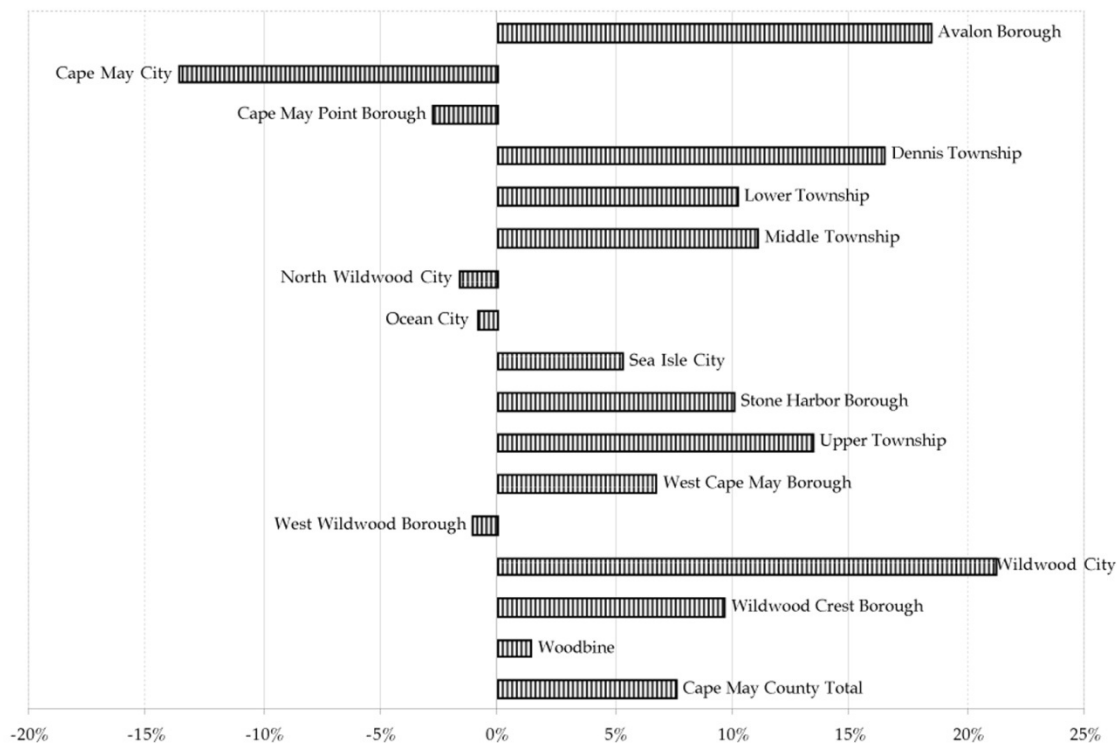
## Local and Regional Growth

### Population

According to the 2000 Census, the City of Cape May lost 634 persons in its population between 1990 and 2000, more than a 13% decline. This was the largest percentage decline of any municipality in Cape May County. As shown in Table I-1: Population in Cape May County Municipalities, four other municipalities also saw their populations decline. These were Cape May Point Borough, North Wildwood City, Ocean City, and West Wildwood Borough. The remaining eleven municipalities experienced growth in the same time period, ranging from approximately 1.5% in Woodbine to more than 21% in the City of Wildwood. Cape May County as a whole experienced 7.6% growth over the decade. These changes are shown in shown in Figure I-1: Percent Change in Population 1990 – 2000.

**Table I-1: Population in Cape May County Municipalities**

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Avalon Borough	2,143	1,809	18.46%
Cape May City	4,034	4,668	-13.58%
Cape May Point Borough	241	248	-2.82%
Dennis Township	6,492	5,574	16.47%
Lower Township	22,945	20,820	10.21%
Middle Township	16,405	14,771	11.06%
North Wildwood City	4,935	5,107	-1.63%
Ocean City	15,378	15,512	-0.86%
Sea Isle City	2,835	2,692	5.31%
Stone Harbor Borough	1,128	1,025	10.05%
Upper Township	12,115	10,681	13.43%
West Cape May Borough	1,095	1,026	6.73%
West Wildwood Borough	448	453	-1.10%
Wildwood City	5,436	4,484	21.23%
Wildwood Crest Borough	3,980	3,631	9.61%
Woodbine	2,716	2,678	1.42%
<b>Cape May County Total</b>	<b>102,326</b>	<b>95,089</b>	<b>7.61%</b>

**Figure I-1: Percent Change in Population 1990 – 2000**

Cape May's decline in population is a continuation of a trend that began in the 1980's. The 1970 population of 4,392 grew more than 10% in 1980 to 4,853. Between 1980 and 1990, however, the population declined nearly 4% to 4,668. The ~~current~~ **2000** population of 4,034 brings the population to more than 8% below the 1970 population. **It is estimated that the 2008 population figure is 3,800. The population decrease trend appears consistent through 2008.**

These declines do not reflect any lessening of Cape May's viability. To the contrary, real estate in Cape May remains desirable and vacancy rates are low. Few new homes are being built (other than the redevelopment of existing residential lots.) The decline probably reflects the increasing number of residential properties that are used as second homes. The census data reflects residency on Census Day (April 1, 2000) and the owner's census data has been recorded at the location of the primary residence. As noted below in the housing section, 51.4 % of Cape May's homes were designated for seasonal use in the 2000 census. This is an increase of 968 seasonal homes since 1990, when seasonal homes accounted for 27.7% of the housing stock.

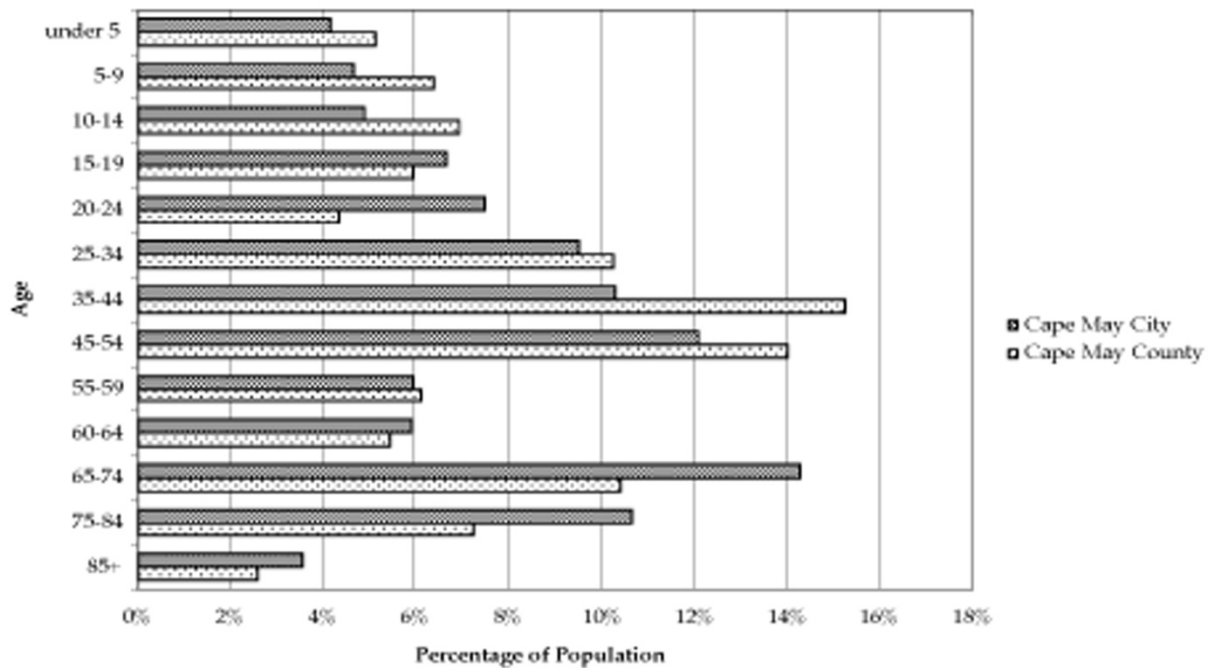
Cape May County prepares population projections to the year 2020. The projections for the City of Cape May show slightly less than 4% increases every five years to achieve a population of 4,692 by the year 2020. This is a 16.3% increase over the course of twenty years. The projections for the entire county show a similar increase.

The apparent discrepancy between this forecast and recent trends was discussed with County Planning Director James Smith. He indicated that his projection is based on countywide trends towards suburbanization and increased birthrates. The County projection did not specifically account for the dramatic upturn in the number of seasonal housing units in Cape May City. On the other hand, it is possible that a number of the new seasonal homeowners are purchasing homes in anticipation of future use as a retirement home. Cape May was cited recently by a national magazine as one of the ten best places in America to retire, a fact that has already been discovered by a number of local residents. As noted below, 28.4% of Cape May City residents are age 65 or older, as compared with 20.2% of the total County population. Once a proportion of current seasonal homeowners actually do retire in Cape May, they will be listed as permanent residents. This may help reverse the trends of declining population and increased seasonal homeownership that were found in the last census.

The Census breaks the population down by age cohorts. Table I-2: 2000 Age Cohorts shows the break-down for the City of Cape May and Cape May County. This table is shown graphically in Figure I-2: Comparison of City and County Age Cohorts. Generally, in comparison to the County as a whole, Cape May has an older population. The population age 65 and older has just been cited. In addition, children under the age of 19 make up 24.3% of the County's population as compared with 20.3 % of the City's population. The largest discrepancy between the City and County is in the 35-44 year old cohort. This group constitutes 10.3 % of the City's population and 15.3% of the County's population.

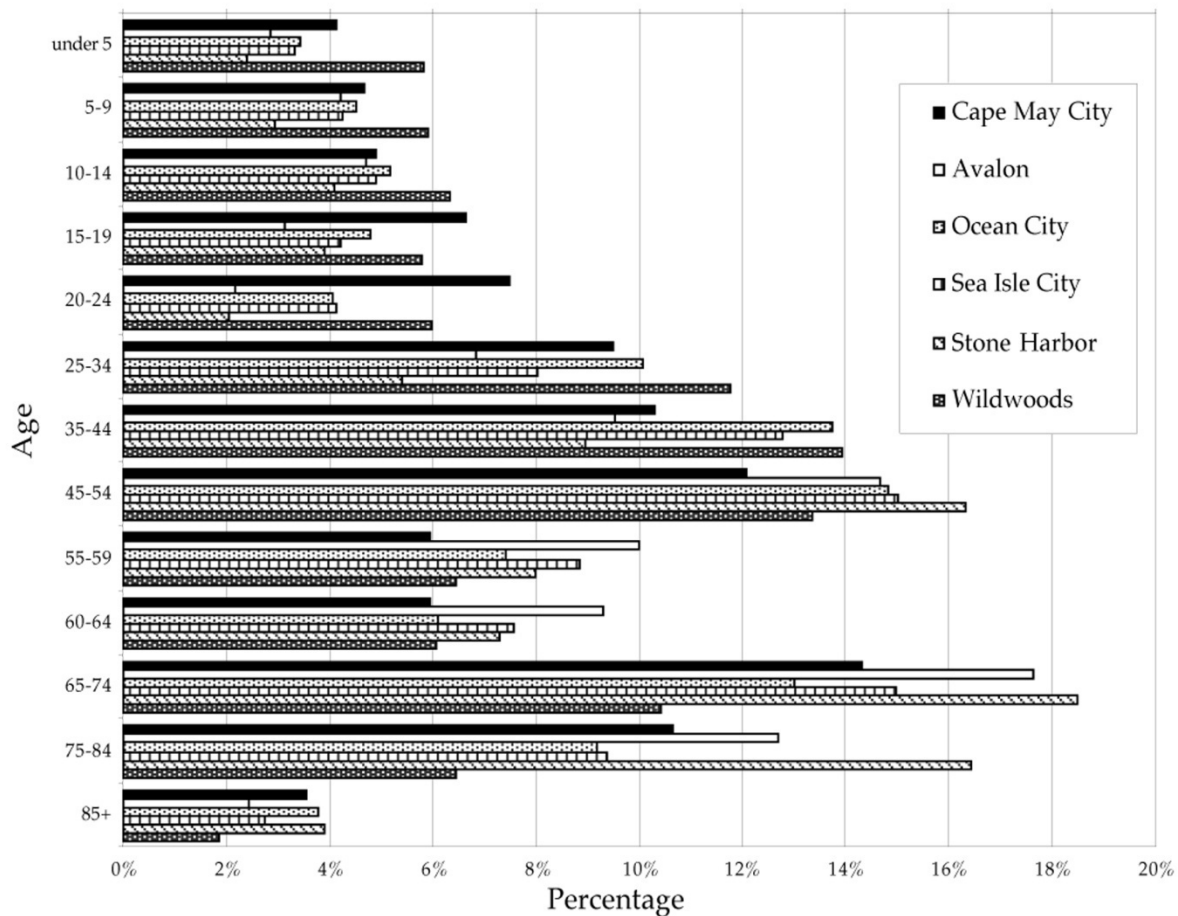
**Table I-2: 2000 Age Cohorts**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Population City of Cape May</b>	<b>% of Population</b>	<b>Population Cape May County</b>	<b>% of Population</b>
under 5	167	4.1%	5,244	5.1%
5-9	188	4.7%	6,541	6.4%
10-14	198	4.9%	7,103	6.9%
15-19	268	6.6%	6,082	5.9%
20-24	301	7.5%	4,450	4.3%
25-34	383	9.5%	10,473	10.2%
35-44	415	10.3%	15,606	15.3%
45-54	487	12.1%	14,354	14.0%
55-59	240	5.9%	6,239	6.1%
60-64	239	5.9%	5,553	5.4%
65-74	576	14.3%	10,662	10.4%
75-84	429	10.6%	7,394	7.2%
85+	143	3.5%	2,625	2.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4034</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>102,326</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Figure I-2: Comparison of City and County Age Cohorts**

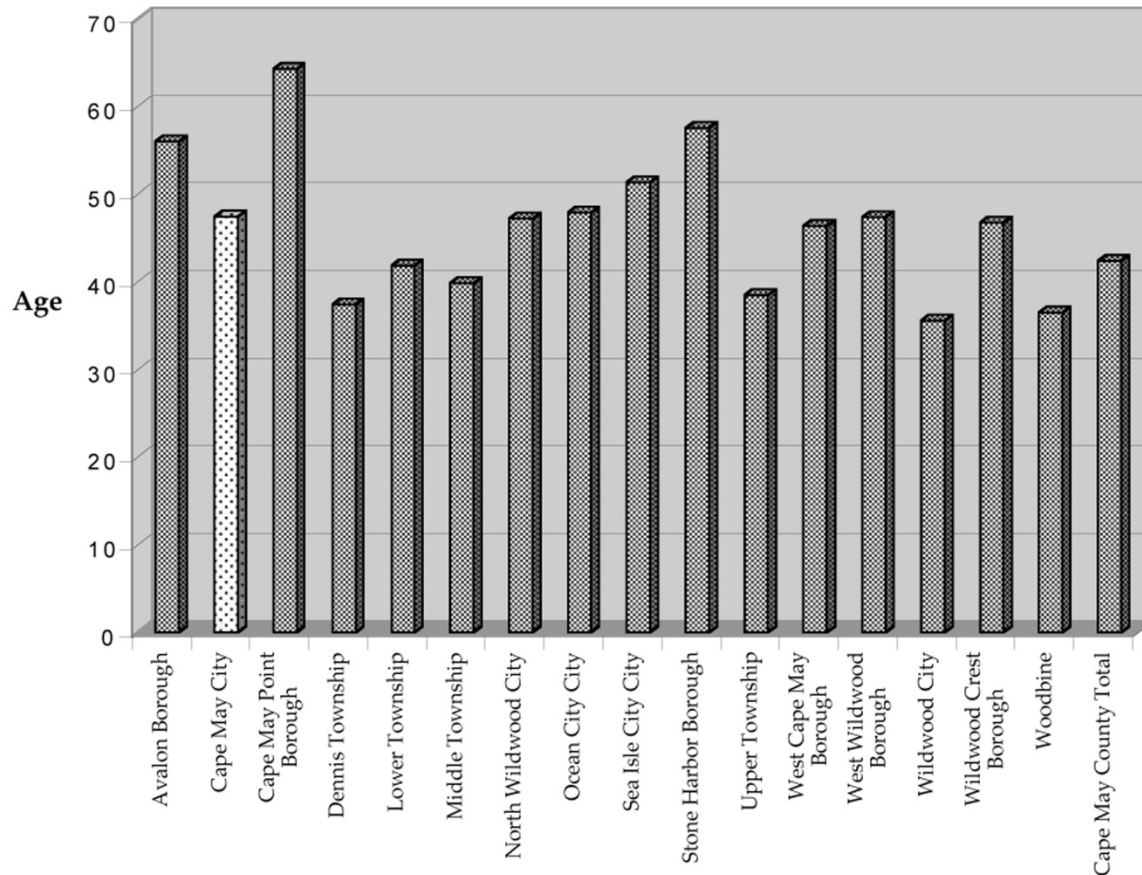
The age cohorts for the City of Cape May were also compared to five other shore resort municipalities that were thought to be similar to Cape May in terms of year-round occupancy. These are Avalon, Ocean City, Sea Isle City, Stone Harbor, and the Wildwood communities combined. This is graphically shown in Figure I-3: Age Cohorts for Shore Municipalities. In this comparison, rather than the County as a whole, Cape May's population is younger. Only the Wildwoods have a larger percentage of people less than 19 years of age. Cape May has the largest percentage of people in the 15-24 year old age group, 14.1%. This compares to the other shore towns with a range of 5.2 – 12.1% in this age group. In the 65 year old plus age bracket, both Avalon and Stone Harbor have a higher percentage of population at 32.7% and 38.7% respectively.



**Figure I-3: Age Cohorts for Shore Municipalities**

The median age for Cape May County is 42.3 years. The range of median ages for the County municipalities is a low of 35.5 years for Wildwood City to a high of 64.2 years for Cape May Point. The median age for the City of Cape May is 47.4 years. The median age for each of the municipalities in the County is shown in Figure I-4: Median Age. Five municipalities in the County have a higher median age than Cape May; Ocean City, Sea Isle City, Avalon, Stone Harbor and Cape May Point.



**Figure I-4: Median Age**

### Housing

Cape May has 4,064 housing units according to the 2000 Census. Of these units 1,821, or 45%, are occupied units, 2,089 housing units (51.4%) are for seasonal use. The remaining units are considered vacant. Comparing these figures with the 1990 Census, there were 4,052 housing units, 1,868 of which were occupied (46%), and 1,121 (27.7%) were considered for seasonal use.

The percentage of owner-occupied units increased between 1990 and 2000. Of the occupied housing units, 57% are owner-occupied and 43% renter-occupied. In 1990, 52% of the occupied housing units were owner-occupied and 48% were renteroccupied. The average household size in Cape May is 2.02 persons per household, compared with 1990 when average household size was 2.13 persons per household. This follows a national trend to smaller household size. Only three municipalities in the County have the same or a smaller average household size, Ocean City, Cape May Point and Stone Harbor. All three have an older population that tends to have a smaller household size. Cape May County has an average household size of 2.36 persons per household.

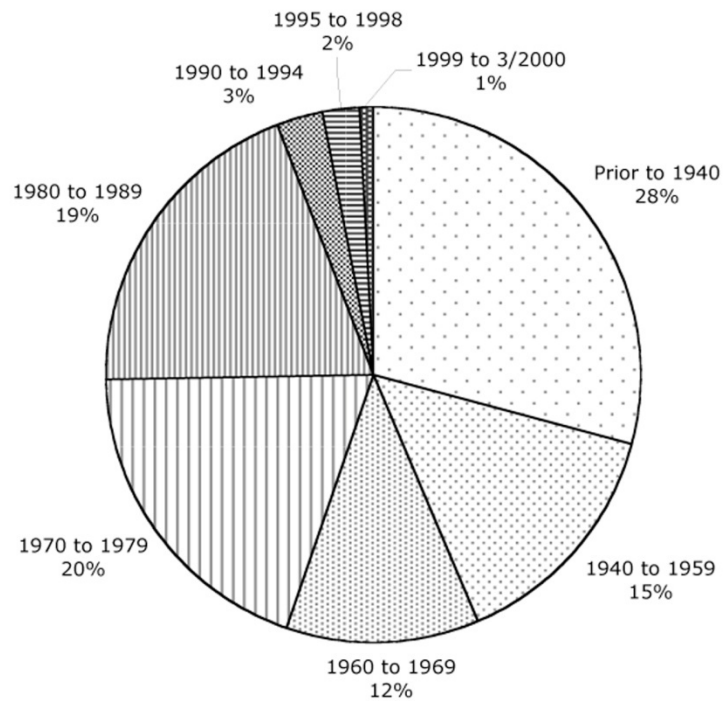
The median housing value for owner-occupied units from the 2000 census is \$212,900 in Cape May. This compares with a median value of \$137,600 for the county as a whole. Five of the other shore communities, Avalon, Cape May Point, Ocean City, Sea Isle City and Stone Harbor, have higher median housing values ranging from \$224,700 to \$445,300. Median values for municipalities in Cape May County are shown in Table I-3.

**Table I-3: Median Housing Value 2000**

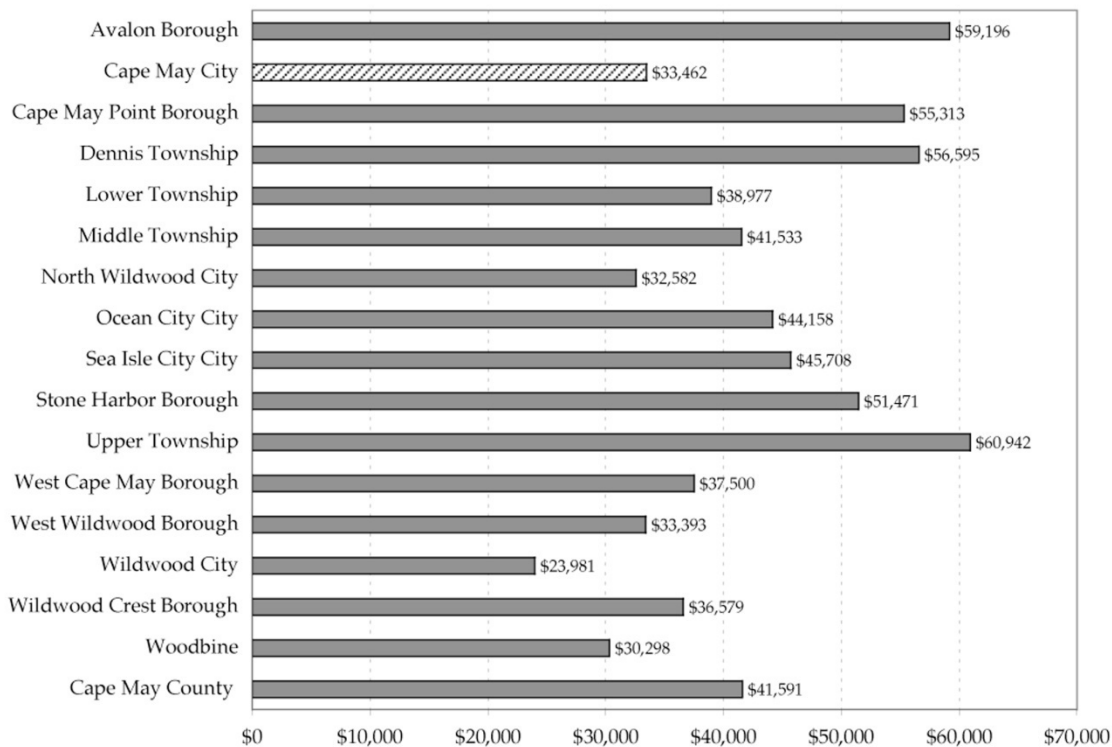
<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Median Value</b>
Avalon Borough	\$443,300
Cape May City	\$219,900
Cape May Point Borough	\$301,400
Dennis Township	\$135,500
Lower Township	\$95,900
Middle Township	\$116,200
North Wildwood City	\$129,600
Ocean City	\$224,700
Sea Isle City	\$280,100
Stone Harbor Borough	\$445,300
Upper Township	\$161,700
West Cape May Borough	\$174,100
West Wildwood Borough	\$87,600
Wildwood City	\$84,000
Wildwood Crest Borough	\$147,600
Woodbine	\$80,600
<b>Cape May County Total</b>	<b>\$137,600</b>

The vast majority of houses in Cape May were built more than twenty years ago. Of the 4,064 housing units from the 2000 census, 3039 of these units, nearly 75%, were built prior to 1980. Less than 6% of the housing units have been built since 1990. A breakdown by year built is shown in Figure I-5.



**Figure I-5: Year Housing Units Were Built****Income**

Income from the 2000 census is for the previous year, 1999. The median household income in 1999 for Cape May was \$33,462. This is less than the median household income for the County, \$41,591. A comparison of median household income for the municipalities in the County is shown in Figure I-6. The median family income for 1999 was \$46,250, which compares to a countywide median family income of \$51,402. Eighty families, about 7.7%, in Cape May were considered to be below the poverty line in 1999. Approximately 6.4% of the families in the County as a whole were below the poverty line.

**Figure I-6: Median Household Income**

## Natural Features

Cape May is designated in the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan as an Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area (**PA5**), which is apparent on Map 2 – Natural Features. The vast majority of land in Cape May is environmentally constrained by floodplain, wetlands or both. These environmentally sensitive lands, and the wildlife habitats that they support, are very much a part of what makes Cape May an attractive area to live and vacation.

### Floodplain

The low-lying barrier island is, not surprisingly, located almost entirely in the one hundred year floodplain. Zoning regulations require that the lowest floor level of any building be not less than ten and one-half feet above mean sea level to minimize property damage.

### Wetlands

A substantial portion of the eastern half of Cape May is preserved wetlands. There is great concern regarding the potential development of these wetlands in East Cape May. This is the last concentration of undeveloped land in Cape May. Much of this land is zoned residential and only the state's wetland protection policies have so far prevented development. A large

residential subdivision plan has been filed but it has been in litigation with the State over the extent of the wetlands for a number of years. The City is now proposing to acquire this land, which would assure its permanent protection.

Wetlands not only store water and help to control runoff and flooding, they support numerous wildlife habitats, some of them threatened or endangered species.

Cape May is an integral part of the Atlantic Flyway. Millions of birds migrate each fall to warmer climates and stop, rest and feed in Cape May to fortify themselves to continue the journey southward. This presents a unique opportunity to observe numerous species each autumn and again in the spring, and many tourists come to the area to observe the migrating birds. The habitats that support these birds are not only important environmentally, but economically as the migrating birds draw numerous tourists to the area.



The Cape May Environmental Commission has advocated a proactive policy regarding wetlands. They have suggested acquisition of all environmentally sensitive wetlands within the City Limits, and the protection of the east Cape May wetlands will go a long way towards advancing that goal. The adoption of a 300-foot wetland buffer has also been recommended, provided that it conforms to State guidelines. Cape May continues to rely on state regulations governing wetlands for establishment of appropriate wetland buffers.

### **Shade Trees**

The City recognizes the importance of protecting existing vegetation and replacing vegetation that is removed when land is developed. Cape May has a landscaping ordinance that requires up to 60% of a lot be left in vegetation and tree replacement for larger trees that are removed. The City participates in Tree City USA and has also adopted a “Community Forestry Management Plan” authored by the Shade Tree Commission with the intent of increasing the community’s understanding of the urban forest and increasing the public’s appreciation of trees on public and private land that benefit the entire community.

**Beaches**

Cape May's beaches are vital to both the environmental and physical protection of the City, as well as being one of its most valuable economic resources. The beaches are the first line of protection from storms approaching from the sea. Like all coastal communities, Cape May recognizes the fragility of dunes and has invested heavily in beach replenishment projects in cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It has also adopted special land use controls designed to limit further encroachments along the beach strand.







## State Development and Redevelopment Plan

The State Planning Commission was created by the State Planning Act in January, 1986 to create a guideline for the future growth of New Jersey called the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. The aim of the legislation was to ensure that New Jersey remained a desirable place to live and work, that a positive business climate was maintained, and that public expenditure for improvements to roads, sewers, water supply and the like was spent in the most efficient manner possible. The plan is to be designed to protect the natural resources of the state, identify areas for growth, limited growth, and agriculture or conservation, and to establish state policy on housing, the use of land, and economic development.

To achieve the legislative goals, the State Planning Commission, now the Smart Growth Commission, and its staff, the Office of State Planning, have developed plans with considerable public comment and formal negotiations (the cross-acceptance process) on points of contention. Following years of review, the first Plan was adopted on June 12, 1992. The current Plan was adopted on March 1, 2001. It is a policy document on growth management that seeks to coordinate the provision of public services for development and redevelopment in the most efficient manner and direct growth to the most appropriate locations. The organizing concept of the Plan is to designate planning areas and centers. There are five planning areas, including: Metropolitan Planning Area (PA 1), Suburban Planning Area (PA 2), Fringe Planning Area (PA 3), Rural Planning Area (PA 4) and its subset Rural Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area (PA 4B), and Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area (PA 5). In addition to the planning areas, the Plan defines five types of centers; Urban, Town, Regional, Village, and Hamlet. Centers are embedded within planning areas and are intended to be the focus of growth in the State. Ideally, centers are to be developed in a manner that creates “communities of place”.

Cape May is designated as a Town within the Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area (PA5). **Prior designation** Designation as a Town Center was as a result of a petition prepared by the City and adopted by the State Planning Commission in October of 1999. As a result, the City ~~is~~ **was** included in the 2001 Plan as a Designated Existing Town. This designation has given Cape May a priority in competing for state grant funding. The current State Plan has eliminated the concept of Centers Designation in favor of a process known as Plan Endorsement, ~~but the City's 1999 designation carries within a six year grace period before any further certification would be required.~~ **The State Planning Commission updated the guidelines for plan endorsement in 2007. The Cape May Town designation expired on January 7, 2008. Cape May City has started the petition process and anticipates that the town designation will be endorsed and reestablished in the near future.**

The State Plan's intention in the Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area is to

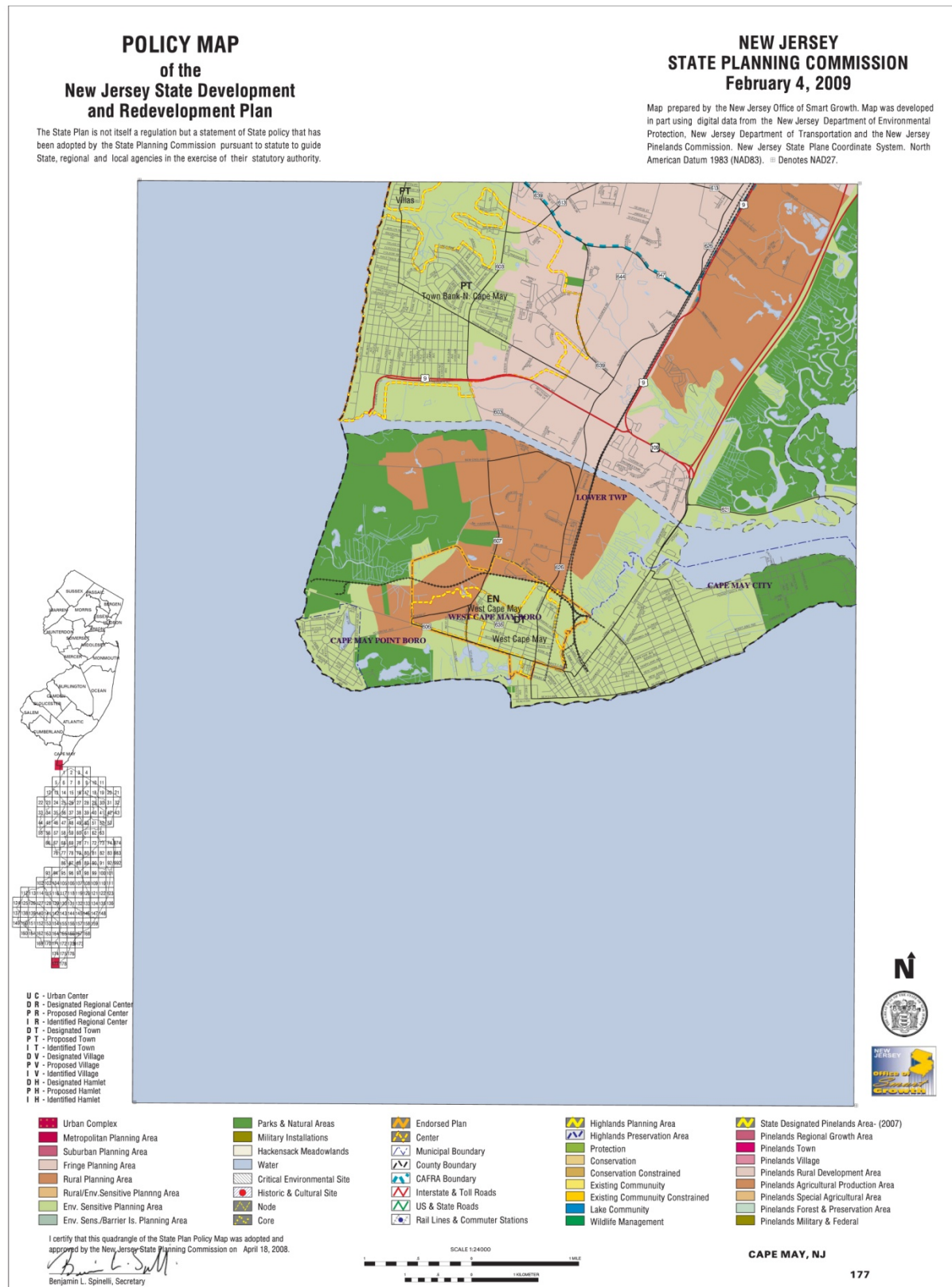
- Protect environmental resources, through the protection of large contiguous areas of land;
- Accommodate growth in Centers; and
- Protect the existing character of stable communities.

Cape May's master plan and development ordinances are generally consistent with the State Plan but the plan endorsement policy will require a detailed analysis of specific policies.

**Based on the reexamination review and update of population, land use, housing conditions and circulation trends, it has been determined that population, land use, housing conditions, and circulation trends continue to follow the projections and trends identified in the 2003 Master Plan, and no further specific study is warranted.**

**The following map is the current Policy Map of the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan.**







## II. Goals and Objectives, Principles, Assumptions, Policies & Standards

**A reexamination of the master plan must address the major problems and objectives relating to land development in the City identified in the 2003 Master Plan. The reexamination must also detail the extent to which such problems have been reduced or have increased and identify the extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the 2003 Master Plan. The following details these requirements of a reexamination as they pertain to the goals and objectives, principles, assumptions, policies and standards.**

The Municipal Land Use Law requires that the Master Plan contain a statement of objectives, principles, assumptions, policies and standards upon which the constituent proposal for the physical, economic and social development of the municipality is based. Cape May continues to be recognized as one of the premier resorts on New Jersey's Atlantic Coast. People are attracted to Cape May not only for its beautiful beaches but also for birding, fishing and other associated recreational opportunities; for the Victorian ambiance that has made the city famous and has given it its National Historic Landmark status; for the numerous cultural activities that are taking place in the community year-round, and for its dining and shopping opportunities.

This plan is based upon the assumption that Cape May will continue to be a major resort destination, attracting a large number of visitors who are well in excess of the number of year-round residents. Further, the number of seasonal homes now represents a majority of the housing stock **and the number of year round residents continues to fall**. Nonetheless, the City must continue to provide a full range of services to its year-round residents, including recreation and utilities.

Cape May's success has created its own set of problems, in terms of traffic congestion, parking shortages, and increasing pressure for the private redevelopment of relatively small lots. These issues have created problems for year-round and seasonal residents as well as for tourists. There is even some speculation that visitation to the City may have peaked and that future success will be dependent upon the resolution of these issues. The plan assumes that these problems can be mitigated, if not totally resolved, and their resolution has been given the highest priority in the planning process.

Protection of the environment continues to be an underlying assumption of the City's Master Plan. In this way, the plan will continue to advance the objectives of the State Plan as well.

The City Master Plan, the development policies as contained in this plan, and the City ordinances which govern the use of the land within the municipality, reflect the collective goals of the community. These adopted goals not only state the desires of City residents, they are also the criteria against which all land use and development activity should be measured. The goals are consistent with the earlier master plan and reexamination reports, with minor modifications.

The ~~nine~~ categories correspond to elements of the Master Plan. The objectives are the specific policies that will help achieve the specified goal. As Cape May has evolved, the objectives for the City have changed. Some of the objectives have remained the same, but others have been removed as the objective has been completed, or added as a need was identified.

## **Traffic Circulation and Parking Element**

**The goal stated (p. 19) in the Traffic Circulation and Parking 2003 Master Plan as follows remains valid:**

### **GOAL**

Develop a coordinated circulation system within a local and regional planning context to provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

**A review and update of the objectives stated (p. 19) in the 2003 Master Plan was completed and they remain valid and unchanged or are updated as follows:**

### **OBJECTIVES**

A. Encourage alternate circulation modes and networks to minimize and efficiently move auto traffic into and out of the city.

B. Evaluate county, state and federal transportation and circulation planning in order to coordinate them with local planning, giving particular emphasis to City entrances and exits.

C. Encourage restoration of railroad traffic and other high volume transportation modes as alternative means of accessing the City.

D. Minimize the negative impact of bus traffic on the City's street system.

E. Continue to explore the feasibility of centralized and satellite parking, and expanding parking supply.

F. Explore the feasibility of a shuttle service tying together parking lots and destinations in both Cape May City and Cape May County.

G. Study the feasibility of encouraging traffic to use alternate routes into Cape May City other than Lafayette Street.



H. Study the feasibility of converting Lafayette and Washington Streets into a oneway couplet.

**I. Complete the plan endorsement process to implement the City's "center" designation for the recently expired center with the State Office of Smart Growth and continue to investigate grant programs available for designated "centers", such as Smart Growth Grants.**

J. **Encourage the use of bicycles and walking as alternatives to the automobile.**

## **Community Services and Facilities**

**The Goals and Objectives that are relative to this element are stated on Page 19 under the heading "Community Services and Facilities". The following goal remains valid.**

### **GOAL**

Ensure the provision of an adequate range and availability of community services and infrastructure to accommodate existing and future City residents and visitors.

**A review and update of the objectives stated (pp. 19-20) in the 2003 Master Plan was completed and they are updated as follows:**

### **OBJECTIVES**

- A. Continue to provide all land uses with adequate service of water, sewerage, storm drainage and other utility systems in an economically feasible and coordinated manner.
- B. Continue to provide water supply from the desalinization plant while encouraging continued water conservation efforts.
- C. Continue to provide public safety services, in cooperation with adjacent municipalities.
- D. Evaluate the future use of the Franklin School.
- E. Evaluate the adequacy of City Hall and its facilities to meet the needs of the residents of the City now and in the future.
- F. The City should continue to maintain the existing private-public relationships and strive to investigate other opportunities that may present themselves in the future.**
- G. Continue to develop the proposed convention hall for use not only as a convention and community center but provide comprehensive services for residents, part time residents and tourists, business and civic groups, musicians, theatre and community groups, and non-profit entities.**

- H. The City should attempt to ensure the Cape May City Elementary School property will be returned to the City should the school ever be closed. This site could be utilized as a potential city hall, community center and/or a county library site.**

## **Residential Land Use**

**The 2003 Master contains the Land Use Element in Section III (pp. 24-35). The Goals and Objectives that are relative to this element are stated on Pages 20-21.**

**The following contains and update to the goals stated under the heading “Residential Land Use” (p. 20) in the 2003 Master Plan as follows:**

### **GOAL**

Preserve established residential districts and provide a wide range of housing types to meet the varied income and age level needs of residents and vacationers.

**A review and update of the objectives stated (p. 20) in the 2003 Master Plan was completed and they are revised and added to this section as follows:**

### **OBJECTIVES**

- A. Maintain opportunities for residents to obtain satisfactory housing at affordable prices through encouraging the existence of a wide range of housing types.
- B. Provide housing alternatives for the elderly, such as age-restricted development, assisted living facilities, nursing homes and congregate care facilities.
- C. Ensure that residential land use is compatible with the City’s natural and historic environment by reevaluating residential development and redevelopment patterns and adopting revised performance standards and bulk and area requirements as needed.
- D. Ensure that adequate parking is provided for any new development.
- E. Protect the remaining wetland **and environmentally sensitive** areas in the City.



## Commercial Land Use

The goals stated under the heading “Commercial Land Use” (pp. 20-21) in the 2003 Master Plan were reviewed and remain valid as follows:

### GOAL

Maintain Cape May’s unique appeal by offering varied activities and services in appropriate areas while maintaining the City’s character and quality of life.

The objectives stated under the heading “Commercial Land Use” (pp. 20-21) in the 2003 Master Plan were reviewed and remain valid as follows:

### OBJECTIVES

- A. Encourage the continuation of a variety of types of commercial land use within the City’s existing commercial districts. Promote the development of commercial areas that enhance the City’s pedestrian scale and encourage access by means of alternate forms of transportation other than the private automobile.
- B. Enhance the City’s economy and provide employment opportunities by encouraging appropriate commercial uses in commercial districts and other areas where appropriate access for such uses is available.
- C. Promote varied and convenient shopping opportunities for residents and tourists, including appropriate design features to enhance access for the physically challenged.
- D. Maintain the City’s environmental and historic quality by control of commercial land use patterns and adoption of improved design and performance standards for land use in all of the areas regardless of whether they are in the historic district.
- E. Support continued existence of the Coast Guard and fishing and tourism industries so as to enhance their important economic contributions.



## Oceanfront and Harborfront Land Use

The goals stated under the heading “Oceanfront and Harborfront Land Use” (p. 21) in the 2003 Master Plan were reviewed and remain valid as follows:



**GOAL**

Protect the environmental quality of the oceanfront and harborfront land while encouraging public access.

**A review and update of the objectives stated (p. 21) in the 2003 Master Plan was completed and they are revised and added to this section as follows:**

**OBJECTIVES**

- A. Preserve environmental integrity of natural resources in harborfront and oceanfront area.
- ~~B. Implement design guidelines for hotels, motels, and other uses in this area as permitted by zoning.~~
- ~~B.C. Improve access opportunities for the physically challenged.~~
- ~~D. Determine if uses permitted by zoning are appropriate considering the character of the area.~~
- C. **Maintain current beach replenishment and dune erosion protection measures as they are essential to safeguard oceanfront and harborfront land uses.**
- D. **Encourage water dependent uses that promote additional public access to the Cape May Harbor including Devil's Reach and Schellenger's Creek and Cape May Inlet.**

**Recreation and Open Space**

**A review and update of the objectives stated (pp. 20-21) in the 2003 Master Plan was completed and they remain valid as follows:**

**GOAL**

Preserve and enhance the City's open space system and upgrade recreational land use to protect Cape May's environmental resources and meet the needs of residents and visitors.

**A review and update of the objectives stated (pp. 20-21) in the 2003 Master Plan was completed and they remain valid and are updated as follows:**

**OBJECTIVES**

- A. Continue to acquire open space, including private bathing beaches, to increase the amount of recreational space available for use by residents and visitors.
- B. Create an open space and pedestrian network that connects points of interest and encourages non-vehicular means of transportation.
- C. Continue to upgrade and diversify the recreational uses and facilities offered by municipal parks.
- D. Provide controlled access to wetland areas to promote environmental protection and public education.
- E. Improve access and maintenance of beach areas **and continue to construct accessible access compliant with ADA requirements.**
- F. **Acquire lands and consolidate ownership of the areas bordered by St. John Street, Lafayette and the Cape May Elementary School to facilitate an upgrade in active recreation. Playground equipment and playing field equipment needs upgrading.**
- G. **Acquire environmentally sensitive lands in east Cape May known as Sewell Point. Acquisition of the tract would ensure the area east of Pittsburgh Avenue would be retained as open space for passive environmental recreation.**

**Community Services and Facilities**

The 2003 Master contains the Community Facilities and Recreation Element in Section VI (pp. 91-97). The Goals and Objectives that are relative to this element are stated on Page 22 under the heading “Environmental Protection”.

The following contains an update to the goals and objectives stated under the heading “Community Services and Facilities” (p. 19-20) and “Recreation and Open Space” (pp. 21-22) in the 2003 Master Plan as follows:

**GOAL**

Ensure the provision of an adequate range and availability of community services and infrastructure to accommodate existing and future City residents and visitors.

**A review and update of the objectives stated (pp. 19-20) in the 2003 Master Plan was completed and they are updated as follows:**

**OBJECTIVES**

- A. Continue to provide all land uses with adequate service of water, sewerage, storm drainage and other utility systems in an economically feasible and coordinated manner.
- B. Continue to provide water supply from the desalinization plant while encouraging continued water conservation efforts.
- C. Continue to provide public safety services, in cooperation with adjacent municipalities.
- D. Evaluate the future use of the Franklin School.
- E. Evaluate the adequacy of City Hall and its facilities to meet the needs of the residents of the City now and in the future.
- F. **The City should continue to maintain the existing private-public relationships and strive to investigate other opportunities that may present themselves in the future.**
- G. **Continue to develop the proposed convention hall for use not only as a convention and community center but provide comprehensive services for residents, part time residents and tourists, business and civic groups, musicians, theatre and community groups, and non-profit entities.**
- H. **The City should attempt to ensure the Cape May City Elementary School property will be returned to the City should the school ever be closed. This site could be utilized as a potential city hall, community center and/or a county library site.**

**Conservation**

**The 2003 Master Plan does not contain a specific element for conservation. Although there is not an element for this portion of the plan, Goals and Objectives that are relative to this element are stated on Page 22. It is recommended that a specific Conservation Element be implemented at this time.**

**The following contains an update to the goals and objectives stated under the heading “Environmental Protection” (p. 22) in the 2003 Master Plan, and they should be provided under the new “Conservation” heading as follows:**

**GOAL**

**To protect the quality of the City of Cape May’s natural and manmade environment in order to preserve the balance of its ecological systems and safeguard the future health and welfare of residents and visitors.**

**A review and update of the objectives stated (p. 22) in the 2003 Master Plan was completed and they are updated and revised as follows:**

### **OBJECTIVES**

- A. Conserve and protect environmentally sensitive resources including natural, scenic and historic areas in the City by requiring that new land uses be subject to performance standards designed to minimize potential adverse impacts.
- B. Minimize negative effects of land use upon the City's built environment through evaluation and implementation of performance standards for environmentally sensitive lands.
- C. Encourage the preservation of environmentally sensitive lands in order to protect the environmental integrity of unique resources.
- D. Pursue the acquisition of wetlands by the City and a consortium of public and private environmental groups.
- ~~E. Encourage recycling in order to meet the County's goal of recycling 65% of the total waste stream.~~
- E. **Strive to maximize the City's energy conservation and energy efficiency to aid the State of New Jersey in achieving its energy goals stated in the State Energy Master Plan.**

### **Historic Preservation**

**The Historic Preservation Commission has indicated that there are numerous historic and architecturally significant sites located throughout the City, and that the National Historic Landmark status pertains to the entire City and not just the Historic District. It is recommended that emphasis should be added to the goal stated (p. 22) in the 2003 Master Plan as follows:**



### **GOAL**

Maintain the City's National Historic Landmark status through preservation of historic and architecturally significant sites **throughout the whole City.**

**A review and update of the objectives stated (pp. 22-23) in the 2003 Master Plan was completed and they remain unchanged as follows:**

**OBJECTIVES**

- A. Investigate the possibility of revising area and bulk regulations for historic resources.
- B. Develop the Historic Preservation Commission's role in choosing "street furniture".
- C. Encourage businesses to retain the historic character of the streetscape by obtaining "Victorian" lights, benches and similar items.
- D. Developing an historic plaque purchase program.
- E. Coordinate the efforts of the Historic Preservation Commission, the Planning Board, the Zoning Board and Council.
- F. Continue to implement the 1991 preservation plan.

**Regional Planning**

**GOAL**

**The goals stated under the heading "Regional Planning" (p. 23) in the 2003 Master Plan were reviewed and remain valid as follows:**

Encourage a cooperative planning effort among the various jurisdictions within the area to formulate mutually acceptable development policies, realizing that adjacent development may have a significant impact on the City's goals and objectives.

**A review and update of the objectives stated (p. 23) in the 2003 Master Plan was completed and they remain unchanged as follows:**

**OBJECTIVES**

- A. Interact with officials in Lower Township, in devising a plan of action for alleviating the existing traffic situation at Schellenger's Landing Bridge.
- B. Review the Master Plans of surrounding communities to ensure compatible land policies and promote a sound regional planning effort.
- C. Continue existing programs of intergovernmental cooperation in areas such as water supply and public safety, while exploring new opportunities for further cooperation.



The following contains an update to the goals and objectives stated under the heading “Environmental Protection” (p. 22) in the 2003 Master Plan. A new section titled “Recycling and Solid Waste” should be provided as follows:

## **Recycling and Solid Waste**

### **GOAL**

To ensure a comprehensive and efficient solid waste and recycling program is provided for the City of Cape May to safeguard the future health and welfare of residents and visitors.

A review and update of the objectives stated (p. 22) in the 2003 Master Plan was completed and they are revised and added to this section as follows:

### **OBJECTIVES**

- A. Encourage greater overall recycling efficiency and promote greater resident, business and tourist participation in recycling. Implementing additional recycling equipment, more frequent pickups, single stream recycling, visitor drop-off provisions, and institution of publicity programs should be considered to increase the recycling rate.
- B. The City should strive to achieve the New Jersey Statewide Mandatory Source Separation and Recycling Act’s established goal of 50% reduction of Municipal Solid Waste and 60% reduction of all solid waste through source separation and recycling by residential, commercial and institutional establishments.



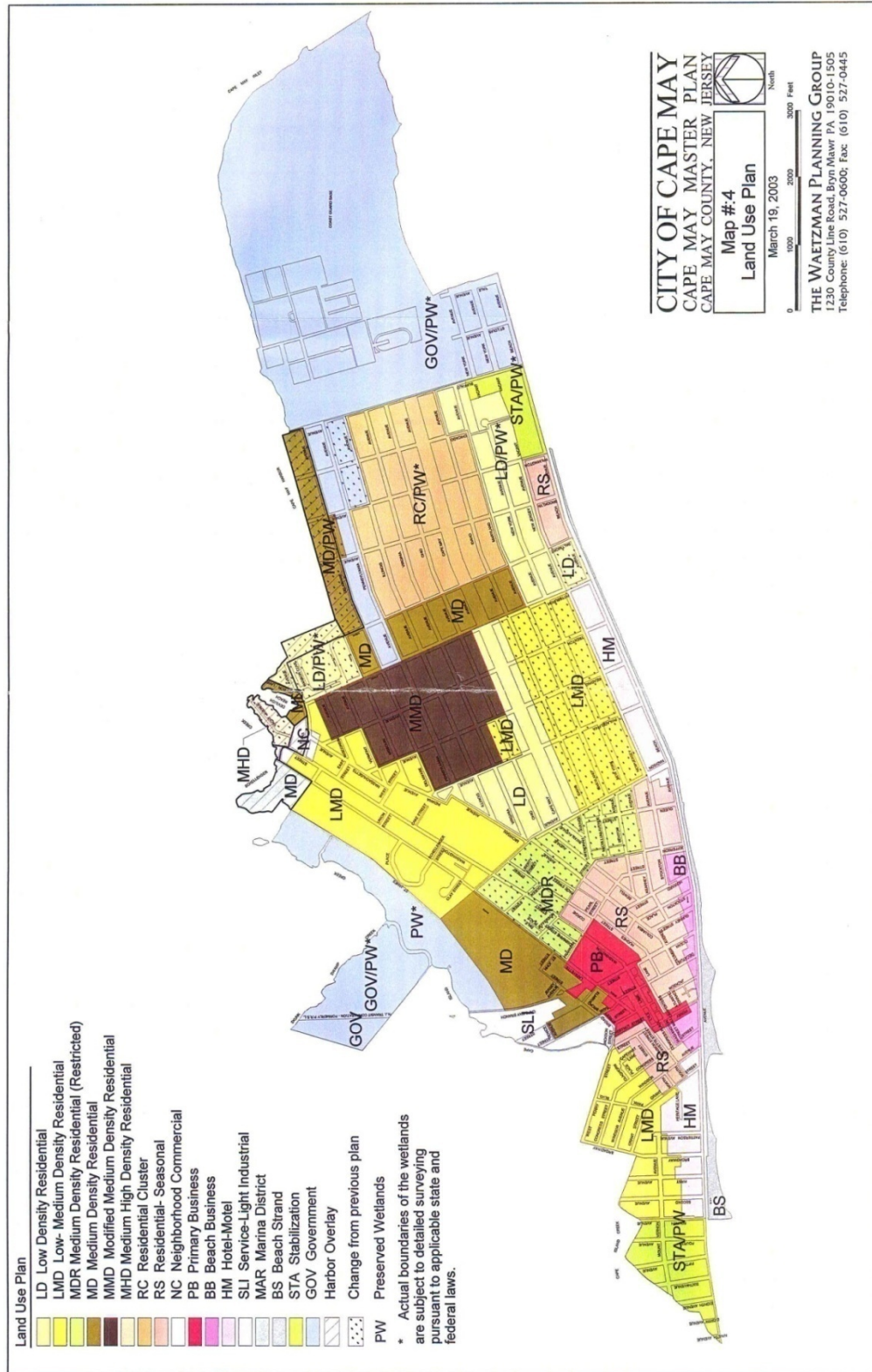
### **III. Land Use Element Reexamination**

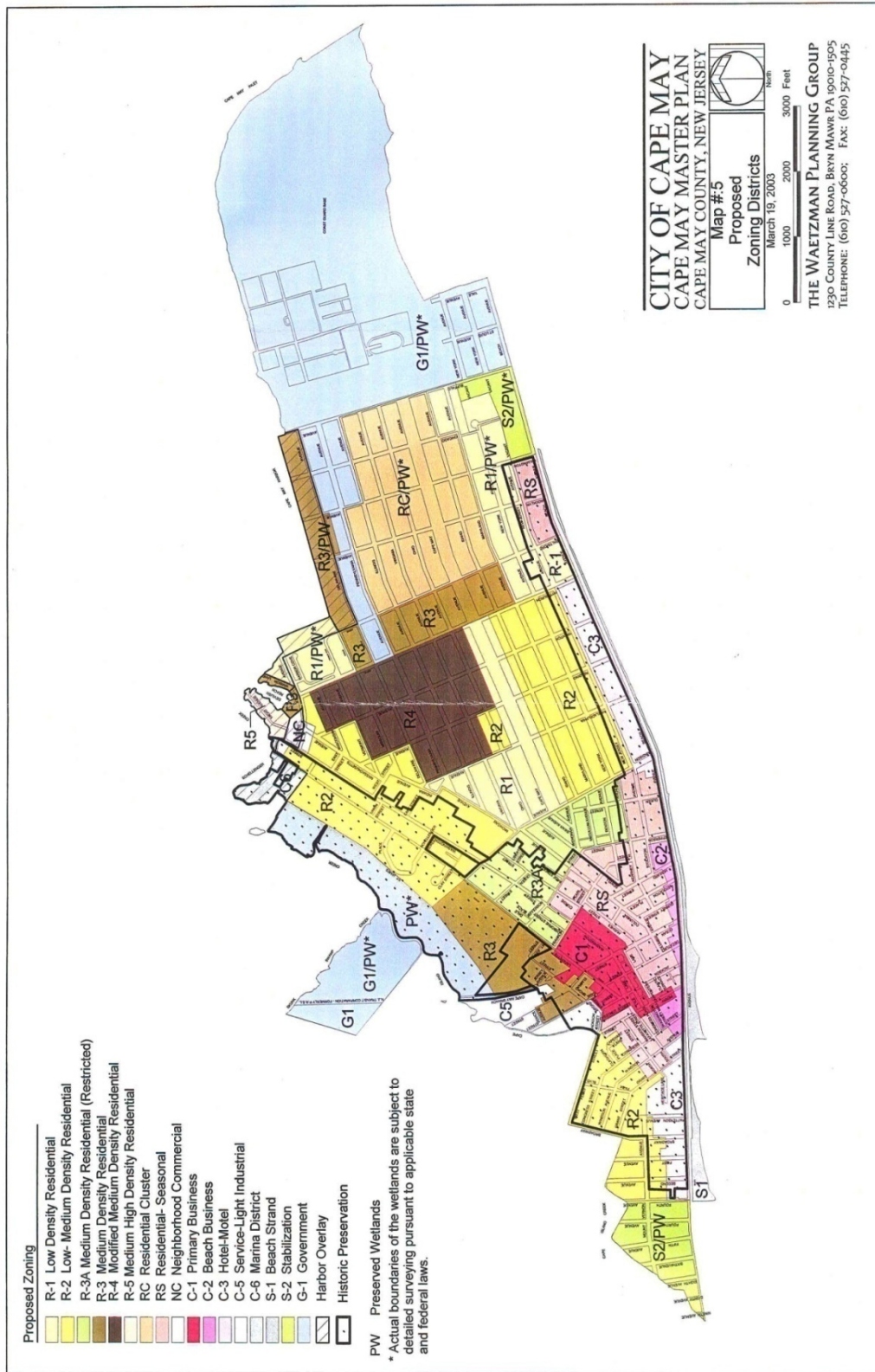
**The 2003 Master contains the Land Use Element in Section III (pp. 24-35). The Goals and Objectives that are relative to this element are stated on Pages 20-21. It is recommended that the following updates be included in Section III of the Master Plan. This Element is revised and updated as follows:**

#### **ASSUMPTIONS, POLICIES & RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cape May's patterns of land use have been established over the course of the City's long history and dramatic changes in land use patterns are not anticipated. The emphasis of this Land Use Element is to stabilize existing development and to protect it from encroachments that threaten to alter the existing character of Cape May, in areas of the City that are both within and outside of the historic district. This section proposes amendments to the Land Use Element that ultimately must be implemented through amendments to the zoning ordinance. ~~This section contains specific suggested changes but the entire zoning code is in need of a complete overhaul and rewriting. This is recommended as a next step in the planning process if funding can be obtained from City Council.~~ The Land Use recommendations are found on Map 4, and they correspond to proposed zoning amendments that are shown on Map 5. **The proposed zoning district recommendations indicated on Map 5 have been implemented with the exception of the NC Neighborhood Commercial District on the south side of Texas Avenue. It is again recommended that this NC district change be implemented for reasons stated within this reexamination.**

**In addition to the 2003 Master Plan Land Use Recommendation Map (Map 4) and Proposed Zoning Amendment Map (Map 5), the current zoning map titled "Zoning Map, City of Cape May, Cape May County, New Jersey", dated March 15, 2005 and revised July 19, 2005 has been included as follows:**









## Definitions of Dwelling Types & Accessory Apartments

~~The current ordinance definitions of dwelling types are somewhat at variance from common usage and lead to an imprecision of regulation and the potential for confusion. Accordingly, suggested amendments are proposed to the definition of various dwelling types. These revisions would better reflect common zoning usage and improve housing diversity within the city.~~

~~The definition of “dwelling, single family detached” does not need to be adjusted. Cape May’s definition of a “dwelling, single family attached” refers to “one of two dwelling units” separated by a party wall. This building type is more typically referred to as a “single family semi-detached dwelling” or a “twin home.” It is suggested that the current definition be renamed “dwelling, semi detached” and that it continue to be permitted in all zoning districts where attached dwellings are now permitted.~~

~~Some ordinances also permit two family detached dwellings or duplexes. These buildings contain two dwelling units in a single structure, each intended for occupancy by a single family, with one unit located above the other unit. This dwelling type is not now specifically permitted in Cape May, except as a multiple dwelling. It is recommended that these units be permitted in the R-3 District. The definition of quads does not need amendment, but it is recommended that they be restricted to the R-4 District. This dwelling type does not work well with a grid street system.~~

~~The term “dwelling, attached” is more commonly applied to townhouses in other communities, but Cape May’s ordinance now includes this dwelling type as a “dwelling, multiple.” Most ordinances make a distinction between townhouses and apartment-type multifamily dwellings because the apartments tend to have higher densities. It is recommended that the current definition for a “dwelling, multiple” be abandoned in favor of two new definitions. The revised definition for “dwelling, attached” would be “three to six single family dwellings constructed in a row, with each dwelling separated by a common wall from at least one other dwelling.” A new definition for “dwelling, multifamily” would be “a building other than a single family attached dwelling that is designed to accommodate three or more dwelling units within a single structure.”~~

**The recommended changes indicated above have been made to the Code’s zoning definition Section 525-4B as recommended and therefore, the above sections have been eliminated. The following indicates the current definitions of common residential uses:**

### **DWELLING, ATTACHED**

**Three- to six-family dwellings constructed in a row, with each unit having its own front and rear access to the outside, and no unit being located over another unit, and each unit being separated from any other unit by one or more vertical common fire-resistant walls.**

### **DWELLING, MULTIFAMILY**

**A building other than an attached dwelling that is designed to accommodate three or more dwelling units within a single structure.**

**DWELLING, SEMIDETACHED**

One of two dwelling units, designed for and occupied by a single family and having at least one party wall in common with an adjacent dwelling unit.

**DWELLING, SINGLE-FAMILY DETACHED**

A single-family residence on an individual lot with private yards on all four sides of the house.

**DWELLING, TWO-FAMILY DETACHED**

A building where not more than two dwelling units are entirely separated by horizontal floors unpierced, except for access to the outside or to a common cellar and having no party wall.

**QUADS**

Four attached residential units, two in front and two in the rear of the same building.

These definitions have been reviewed during this re-examination and it is recommended that no changes be made. However, Zoning Code Section 525-24A(1)h references “single family attached dwellings” as a permitted use. It is recommended that this section be revised to eliminate “single family attached dwellings” and indicate “attached dwellings” as a permitted use in accordance with the current definitions.

~~A maximum density of 8 dwelling units per acre is suggested for single-family attached dwellings. Townhouse design standards should also require the articulation of architecture so that building facades are offset by architectural detailing resulting in at least a two-foot change in the building plane not less than once every twenty-four feet.~~

~~The minimum width of townhouse units would be established at twenty-four feet and no more than six units would be permitted in an unbroken row. A minimum separation between buildings of twenty feet is proposed, with a minimum side yard of ten feet for each end unit. Current building setbacks and rear yards in each district would remain as now permitted for multiple dwellings. Height would be as currently permitted in each district.~~

~~The maximum density for multifamily dwellings is proposed to be 12 dwelling units per acre. Articulation of building planes is encouraged and the predominant plane of a building in any one direction would not be permitted to exceed one hundred feet without a 90° change in the direction of the predominant building plane for at least thirty-five feet. A minimum separation between adjacent buildings of twenty-five feet is proposed, with a minimum side yard of twenty feet for perimeter buildings. A minimum twenty-five foot building setback and rear yard is proposed. Building heights would remain as now permitted in each district.~~

The above referenced recommendations have been removed as they have been addressed. Maximum suggested densities have been addressed with minimum lot size regulations. Setback and bulk regulations were addressed within the area and bulk regulations for all

districts that permit attached dwellings and multifamily dwellings. Architectural design changes have been made to the Code's Zoning Section 525-59J as follows:

**(4)**

Attached dwellings shall be constructed so that building facades are offset by architectural detailing resulting in at least a two-foot change in the building plane not less than once every 24 feet. The minimum width of attached dwellings shall be 24 feet, and no more than six units shall be permitted in an unbroken row. No attached dwelling building shall be less than 20 feet from any other attached dwelling building.

**(5)**

Multifamily dwellings shall be constructed so that the predominant plane of a building in any one direction shall not exceed 100 feet without a ninety-degree change in the direction of the predominant building plane for at least 35 feet. No multifamily dwelling building shall be less than 25 feet from any other multifamily dwelling building.

It is recommended that the definitions for apartments be reviewed and revised. Within the current zoning ordinance, no definition for "apartments" is provided. Apartments over commercial uses are a permitted use within the C-1 Primary Business District and the C-2 Beach Business District. Accessory residential apartments are a permitted accessory use within the C-3 Hotel-Motel District and C-6 Marina District. The following are the only current definitions that pertain to apartments:

**ACCESSORY RESIDENTIAL APARTMENT**

Living quarters for the owner or manager of a commercial establishment.

**APARTMENT HOUSE**

Any building other than a hotel, motel, tourist/guest house offering dwelling units for rent primarily intended for permanent occupancy. For the purposes of this chapter, apartment house regulations and requirements are included within the designation of multifamily dwelling.

It is recommended that these definitions remain unchanged. It is also recommended that the following definitions be provided to address the lack of a definition for "apartments over commercial uses":

**APARTMENTS OVER COMMERCIAL USES**

One or more dwelling units comprised of one or more rooms designed to provide complete self-contained living facilities including a private bath and kitchen facilities for one or more occupants above a commercial use.

**COMMERCIAL USE**

A use involving the sale and/or rental of goods or provision of services carried out for profit.

To provide for the development of affordable housing to meet the affordable housing needs of low and moderate income residents, allowance of accessory apartments within the residential zoning districts within the City is proposed in accordance with the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan. This mechanism allows for the use of the City's existing and proposed dwellings and accessory buildings to be utilized for affordable housing opportunities. Accessory apartments shall also be permitted for all zoning districts that allow apartments over commercial uses.

#### **ACCESSORY APARTMENT**

A dwelling unit in compliance with affordable housing regulations within the principle building or within an existing accessory building comprised of one or more rooms designed to provide complete self-contained living facilities including a living/sleeping space, cooking facilities with kitchen sink and complete bathroom with shower and sanitary facilities.

Current affordable housing regulations encourage zoning and development standards to be relaxed to provide incentives for the creation of affordable housing. The City has a number of businesses that may be suitable for development with accessory apartments over a commercial use to meet the affordable housing needs of low and moderate income residents. However, many of such potential sites are constrained by the inability to provide off-street parking spaces. It is anticipated that potential occupants of accessory apartments will provide a permanent labor source that is now lacking within the City and thus would rely less on auto travel and create a more transit friendly environment that may reduce the necessity for onsite parking. The City should further evaluate the accessory apartment affordable housing program and consider a relaxation of parking standards if warranted.

#### **Protecting Residential Neighborhoods: ~~MU & HD~~ & Evaluation of the NC District**

The 2000 Master Plan Reexamination Report identified several zoning districts that required attention. These were the MU Mixed Use District, the HD Harbor District and the R-4 Residential District. ~~During the course of this study the 2003 Master Plan, several additional changes were suggested, as described below.~~ The 2003 Master Plan identified several additional recommended changes. The MU and HD districts have been eliminated based on the 2003 master plan recommendations for the reasons set forth below.



The ~~current~~ **former** Mixed Use district primarily ~~encompasses~~ **encompassed** Yacht Ave but also ~~includes~~ **included** both sides of Washington Avenue where it makes a 90° turn and heads north



toward Lafayette Street. The district ~~now permits~~ **permitted** marine-related retail sales, auto service stations, marinas, fishing piers, and clubs. There is a marina at the end of Yacht Avenue as well as the Coast Guard Auxiliary, but most uses on this street are residential.

Yacht Avenue is unique in the City in that it is the only residential street where lots on both sides of the street adjoin water. The uses on Washington Street are non-residential and include a gas station. Lots on the north side of Yacht Ave. are generally quite small, with some lots having an area of less than 1,000 square feet and lot widths of 15 feet or less. Lots are deeper and have a larger lot area on the south side, but many are less than 50 feet in width. Older development is characterized by small cottages, but increasing land values have led to lot consolidation and the construction of larger buildings, including multiple dwellings. The street is not part of the historic district but some have suggested that it has a special character that is worthy of preservation. However, that character is more one of small New England sea shanties than of the Victorian homes that characterize the existing historic district.

The **2003** master plan **and this reexamination** does not make a recommendation on the inclusion of Yacht Avenue in the historic district. That issue should be determined by the Historic Preservation Commission. However, the **2003** master plan ~~does~~ **did** recognize that the character of Yacht Avenue **is was** threatened by ~~current~~ **former** MU zoning regulations. In addition, there may be a safety concern. The right-of-way width of Yacht Avenue is just 16.5 feet wide at entrance and expands to 33 feet beyond the throat. These widths ~~may not be~~ **are not** adequate for increased residential densities. The Fire Department has noted that these conditions are a matter of concern if density is allowed to increase on this street. **Traffic safety still remains a concern.**

Zoning rules for the adjacent **former** Harbor District ~~pose~~ **posed** a similar potential threat to its existing character. The 1988 Master Plan recommended the establishment of a waterdependent mixed use Harborfront district that would combine the uses permitted in the existing MU and C-6 districts.

The plan stated that “the harborfront district should extend the entire length of the City’s harbor.” It also recommended a more detailed Harborfront Enhancement Master Plan, which was prepared in 1991. The principles of the Harborfront Enhancement Master Plan remain valid and are applicable to more than the ~~current~~ **former** Harbor District. It ~~is~~ **was** recommended that they be applied instead to a Harbor overlay district that would apply to a wider area, as described below.



The Harbor District ~~is now~~ **was** limited to the area along the Harbor, from Harbor Lane to Missouri Avenue, east of Pittsburgh Avenue, and the north side of Delaware Avenue, from Baltimore to Buffalo Avenues. The south side of Delaware Avenue ~~is~~ **was** also included from Brooklyn to Wilmington Avenues.

Land use in the Harbor District ~~is~~ **was** primarily limited to public parkland and singlefamily detached dwellings built on lots of approximately a quarter acre in area. Many of these homes are within a development built in accordance with the Planned Waterfront Residential Option. Other uses include a 2.3-acre tract at the northeast corner of Missouri and Pittsburgh Avenue, which is devoted to a **former** U.S. Navy communications antenna **site that is now vacant**, and the Nature Center of Cape May, which is located at 1600 Delaware Avenue.

The **former** Harbor District regulations ~~now permit~~ **permitted** a number of uses not currently present in the district, including clubs, lodges and fraternal organizations, fishing piers, marinas, commercial uses (in conjunction with Planned Waterfront Residential Option), and the retail sales and rental of goods and services related to recreational or marine uses (as a conditional use). There ~~is~~ **was** a concern that these uses would threaten the predominantly residential character of the **former** Harbor District **area**. ~~as it now exists~~. Public access uses are provided for at the Fisherman's Memorial Park, and there are no other remaining large tracts for commercial or marina development that would affect the character of nearby residential properties. However, **it was determined that it** may be unwise to encourage the redevelopment of existing sites for nonresidential uses through attractive zoning incentives.

It ~~is~~ **was** recommended that the MU Mixed Use and HD Harbor District be deleted from the zoning map and the following suggested map amendments ~~are~~ **were** proposed.

First, a Harbor Overlay ~~would be~~ **was** established over all zoning districts adjacent to Cape May Harbor and Cape May Inlet, to the depth of the first row of properties. A full variety of water dependent uses ~~would be~~ **are** permitted, including marinas with accessory sales, yacht clubs, piers and docks.

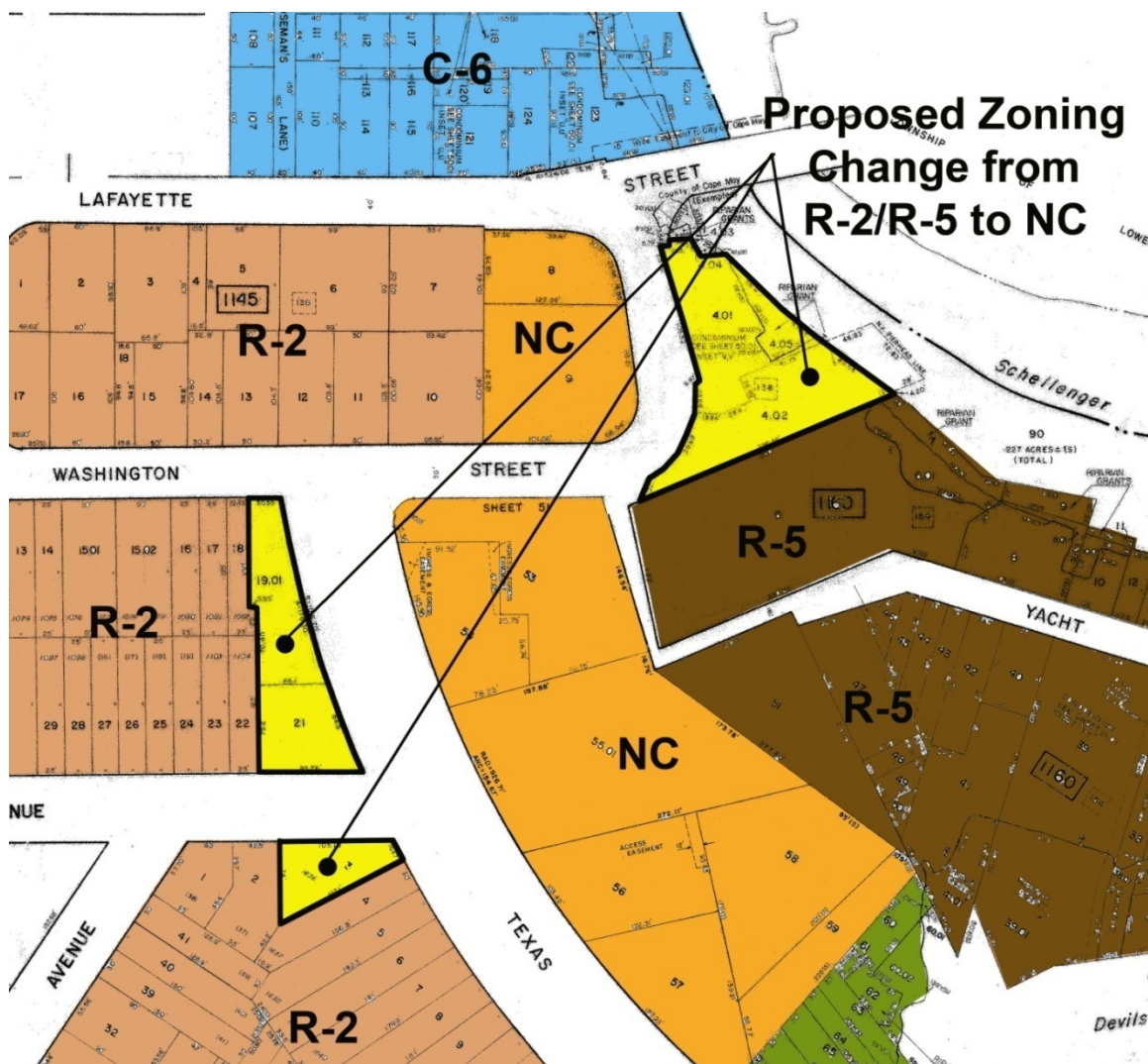
**As per the recommendations within the 2003 Master Plan, The MU and HD districts have been eliminated and the Harbor Overlay has been established along Cape May Harbor, Devil's Reach and Schellenger Creek to allow for water dependent uses. Although these recommendations have been implemented into the current zoning ordinance, the above referenced section has been retained because it forms the basis for planning adjustments proposed for the NC Neighborhood Commercial District as detailed below.**

The ~~existing~~ NC Neighborhood Commercial district on the north side of Texas Avenue (anchored by the Wawa) ~~would be~~ **was** extended to include properties on Yacht Avenue, prior to its 90° turn, and on both sides of Washington Avenue, where it makes its westward turn towards Lafayette Street. ~~The NC regulations now permit single family detached and attached dwellings by right and multiple dwellings as a conditional use, thus protecting existing dwellings in this area.~~ It ~~is~~ **was** recommended **in the 2003 Master Plan** that three nonconforming properties on the south side of Texas Avenue be included in this NC District as well, in order to make the existing uses conforming. The properties are now used as a restaurant/tavern and as professional offices.

**The NC district was expanded. However, the nonconforming properties on the south side of Texas Avenue were not included in the NC district as recommended in the 2003 Master**

**Plan.** It is again recommended that these properties be added to the NC district to create a comprehensive neighborhood commercial district and to establish parcels containing the existing nonconforming commercial business uses as conforming by NC zoning.

It is also recommended that additional nonconforming lots be added to the NC district. Block 1160, Lots 4.01 and 4.02 are currently within the R-5 residential district and contain nonconforming uses, a multiple family dwelling and a real estate office. Opposite these parcels and abutting Washington Street, are a gas service station and the Cape May Marlin and Tuna Club located within the NC Neighborhood Commercial District. To bring the uses of Block 1160, Lots 4.01 and 4.02 into conformity and to create a comprehensively planned NC district, it is recommended that these parcels be added to the NC District. The proposed changes to the NC District are as depicted below:



To address the potential for increased density concerns and lack of supporting road infrastructure concerns cited in the 2003 Master Plan, it is recommended to not add any lots fronting on Yacht Avenue into the NC District.

**The following recommendations were incorporated into the zoning code and zoning map as recommended:** The balance of Yacht Avenue ~~would be~~ **was** designated within a proposed new R-5 District that ~~would permit~~ **permits** single-family detached and semi-detached dwellings on lots of 1,500 square feet per unit. Other bulk standards ~~would be~~ **were created to be** consistent with those ~~now existing~~ in the **former** MU District. Single-family attached and multifamily dwellings ~~(as defined by the proposed new definitions)~~ **would be** **are** prohibited, but existing dwellings of these types would be protected as legal, non-conforming uses. Marina uses could continue by virtue of the Harbor Overlay.

The west side of Harbor Lane ~~is also now~~ **was also** in the **former** MU District, but its character is substantially different than that of Yacht Avenue. Newer homes, representing a mixture of dwelling types, are present in this portion of the district and access is less of a concern. It ~~is~~ **was** proposed that this area be rezoned to R-3 **and this area has been rezoned as recommended.** The permitted uses ~~would be~~ **were** revised to reflect the proposed new dwelling definitions and quads ~~would be~~ **were** deleted as a permitted use in this district.

### Revisiting the R-3 District

The R-3 Medium Density Residential District is now one of Cape May's largest residential districts in terms of land area and it is the most permissive in terms of the range of uses that it permits. Based upon the definitions **in place at the time of the 2003 Master Plan**, the R-3 District ~~permits~~ **permitted** single-family detached dwellings, single-family attached dwellings, two-family detached dwellings, tourist/guest houses, multiple dwellings, and quads. Houses of worship, historic conversions, municipal uses, and schools ~~are~~ **were** also permitted by right in this district.

~~Many areas now zoned R-3 have developed in accordance with a broad sampling of the dwelling types now permitted by the R-3 District regulations. No changes are proposed for these areas.~~



~~However, the~~ **The** portion of the R-3 District that is west of Madison Avenue and south of Lafayette Street is, with a few exceptions developed almost entirely with single-family detached dwellings. Some the larger homes, particularly those in or near the historic district, have been converted to tourist/guest homes. This is an option permitted in the R-3 and R-S districts but not in the R-2 or R-1 districts.

This core of single family dwellings is located in the portion of the R-3 District that is west of Madison Avenue and south of Lafayette Street. It is supportive of the character of the historic district, even though some of the homes in this District are not actually in the historic district. A proliferation of multiple family dwellings, attached dwellings and two family dwellings would undermine the character of these neighborhoods and should be discouraged.



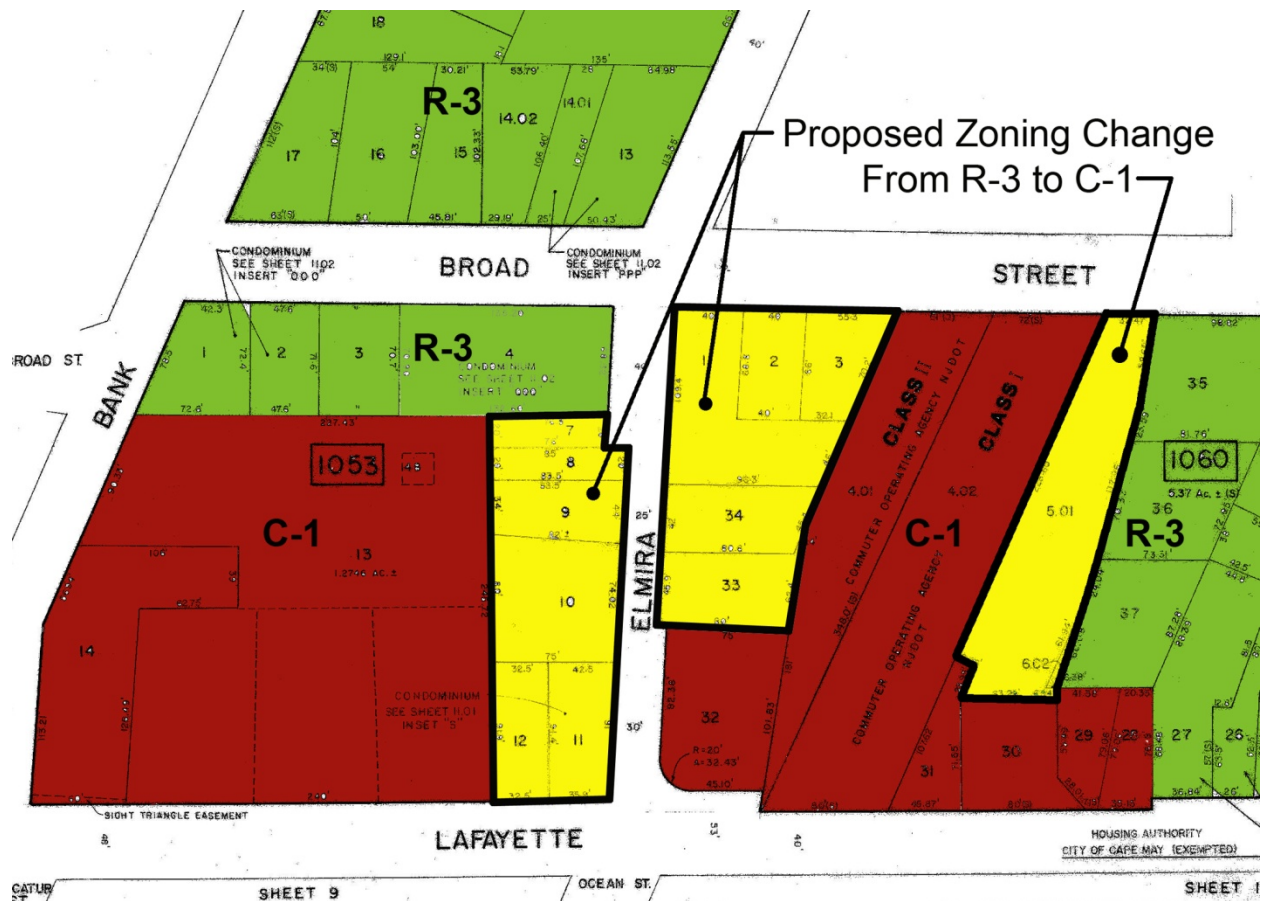
The most famous local example of the havoc that unsympathetic development could bring to the surrounding neighborhood is the so-called Christmas Island development on the triangular block formed by Swan, Wenonah and Madison Avenues. The small site got its name from the fact that it was once entirely occupied by a nonconforming Christmas shop. Developers acquired the site and submitted plans for a multiple dwelling that fully complied with the R-3 regulations. The site plan was approved by right, but many thought it to be out of character with the surrounding area.

To avoid similar situations, it ~~is~~ **was** recommended **in the 2003 Master Plan** that a new R-3A Restricted Medium Density Residential district be established in the areas now zoned R-3, which are west of Madison Avenue and south of Lafayette Street. The R-3A District would maintain the same bulk standards as now permitted for single-family detached dwellings in the R-3 District, but the only permitted residential uses would be single-family attached and tourist/guest houses. Permitted nonresidential uses such as houses of worship, historic conversions, municipal uses, and schools would also be permitted.

Ironically, this area includes Christmas Island. However, there are no adjoining districts that would permit multiple dwellings if this zoning recommendation were adopted. To avoid a spot zone, it ~~is~~ **was also** recommended that this and other uses that are not in concert with the proposed zoning change would be designated as legal nonconforming uses. **The R-3A district has been established as recommended between Madison Avenue, Jefferson Street, Kearney Avenue and Columbia Avenue.**

**Ownership and use pattern changes have occurred on Elmira Street since the 2003 Master Plan. Within Block 1060, lots fronting on Elmira Street are zoned R-3 and Lots 4.01, 4.02, 34-32 fronting on Lafayette Street are zoned C-1. Lots within Block 1053 are zoned R-3 with the exception of Lots 13-15 which front on Lafayette Street. The City has obtained Block 1060, Lots 1, 2, 3, 33, & 34 and has developed this parcel with a parking lot. Based on the existing nonconforming commercial development patterns within Block 1053 that front on Elmira Street and the commercial uses in Block 1060, this area relates more to the C-1 commercial uses on Lafayette Street and is now less appropriate for residential use and more appropriate for commercial uses. It is recommended that the C-1 district be expanded to include Block 1053, Lots 7-12 and Block 1060, Lots 1-3, 6.01, 6.02, 33, 34, as detailed in the map below:**





## The R-4 District

The R-4 district is found only in the Village Greene, an area with a distinctive character that is not found elsewhere in Cape May. Homes are a mix of single-family detached dwellings, single-family attached dwellings and quads, on lots that are a minimum of 6,250 square feet for single family detached homes, 5,000 square feet for ~~attached~~ **semidetached** homes, and 11,250 square feet for four unit quads. These are the only dwelling types permitted in the District. ~~It should be noted that what the current ordinance defines as attached homes would be defined as single family semi-detached dwellings under the proposed definitional changes.~~



Most dwellings in the area were built as one-story units but some have been expanded to two stories. These increased building heights created some controversy, again by those who felt that two story buildings detracted from the special character of the Village Greene section. The height of principal buildings in the R-4 district was limited to 20 feet in 1993, but some felt that even this restriction was being subverted by clever renovations that were designed to comply with the ordinance but which nonetheless added an additional level of living space. The **2003**

Master Plan **proposed** ~~proposes~~ no changes to the R-4 bulk standards but ~~addresses~~ **addressed** the issue of roof slopes in the following section.

### **Avoiding the McMansion**

One of the concerns that has arisen in Cape May and many other communities is the issue of people buying an existing home, tearing down the dwelling, and then building a new home on the lot that is the maximum permitted by current zoning regulations. Such homes are often out of character with the surrounding neighborhood and are sometimes referred to as “Monster Homes” or “McMansions.” Rising real estate values, the desirability of Cape May, and the scarcity of undeveloped, buildable lots makes this an increasingly attractive option. Currently, Cape May’s zoning ordinance controls building mass by regulating setbacks, building height and lot coverage. This may not be sufficient. One measure of building mass is the floor area ratio (FAR).

The Cape May Zoning Ordinance already defines FAR as “the sum of the area of all floors of buildings or structures compared to the total area of a site.” However, the area and bulk regulations do not presently control FAR in residential districts. (Lot usage ratios and habitable floor area usage ratios are regulated, but only in the R-4 District.) Controlling floor area ratio is one way to insure that the size of a redeveloped home does not grossly differ from those of other nearby homes.

Determining the correct FAR is important however. Aerial photographs of existing development were studied, as were records of floor area and corresponding lot area supplied by the City Assessor’s office and a local realtor, who sits on the Planning Board. Following that research, it ~~is~~ **was** recommended that a base floor area ratio of 0.40 be established for single-family detached dwellings in all zoning districts. The differences in minimum lot area will account for distinctions between zoning districts. It is important not to penalize existing homes, particularly older homes in the historic district where some existing homes already have a large FAR. Accordingly, it ~~is~~ **was** suggested that in every instance the permitted FAR be established as the greater of the base FAR or the FAR of an existing dwelling on a lot, which was constructed prior to 1950 in all residential districts except R-4, and prior to 1970 in the R-4 District.

The recommended base floor area ratio for other dwelling types contained in the 2003 Master Plan is 0.45 for single-family semi-detached dwellings (and two family detached, ~~if authorized~~); 0.50 for ~~singlefamily attached and~~ multi-family dwellings, and 0.55 for quads, in accordance with the proposed definitional changes. As with single-family detached dwellings, the permitted FAR would be established as the greater of base FAR or the FAR of an existing dwelling on a lot that was constructed prior to 1950 in all residential districts except R-4, and prior to 1970 in the R-4 District.

**Floor area ratio requirements have been implemented in Code Section 525-52. Adjustments were made to the recommended floor area ratios for quads and additional standards were implemented for the C-1, C-2, RS and R-4 districts. They are as follows:**

- A.** Except as otherwise provided in this section, the following maximum floor area ratios shall apply uniformly throughout the City:
- (1)** Single-family detached dwellings: 0.40.
  - (2)** Semidetached dwellings: 0.45.
  - (3)** Two-family detached dwellings: 0.45.
  - (4)** Multifamily dwellings: 0.50.
  - (5)** Quads: 0.36.
- B.** All dwellings in the C-1, C-2 and RS Zones shall be subject to a maximum floor area ratio of 0.65.
- C.** Single-family detached dwellings in the R-1 Zone shall be subject to a maximum floor area ratio of 0.50. [Amended 6-21-2005 by Ord. No. 37-2005]
- D.** The floor area ratio of each dwelling built prior to 1950 shall be the greater of its floor area ratio (on the effective date of this chapter) or the applicable floor area ratio set forth in this section; provided that, in the R-4 Zone, the floor area ratio of each dwelling built prior to 1970 shall be the greater of its floor area ratio (on the effective date of this chapter) or the applicable floor area ratio set forth in this section.
- E.** Dwellings in the R-4 Zone shall be subject to the floor area ratio restrictions set forth in § 525-17B.

It is recommended that no adjustments be made to the current floor area ratios contained in the zoning code, as the adjustments appear to have been made to “fine tune” these standards.

**Floor area ratio definitions have also been implemented in the Code.** The definition of floor area ratio ~~should be~~ **was** amended to clarify that it only applies to the principal structure on the lot and that it excludes the floor area of both attics and basement or ground level areas that are not designed for human habitation. One suggestion would be to base it on habitable area and to define that as “an **interior** finished room, enclosed by a floor, ceiling and permanent weather-resistant walls; which has a minimum floor to ceiling height of 6.5 feet; and which is intended primarily for occupancy by human beings.” This would exclude garages (whether attached or detached from the dwelling) as well as sheds,



parking areas, storage areas, and mechanical equipment shelters. ~~The amendments to the floor area ratio definition would approximate the current habitable floor area usage ratio definition, but are more consistent with common zoning usage. It is recommended that those standards be deleted from the code.~~

Another ~~approach would be~~ **recommendation of the 2003 Master Plan** was to regulate roof pitch as a means of preventing unaesthetic flat roofs. This could be an issue in all zoning districts as builders attempt to fit the maximum livable area into district height limitations but it has already been noted as a problem in the R-4 district. A predominant roof pitch of not less than 4 inches in 12 and not more than 12 inches in 12 would be appropriate and would eliminate nearly flat and very steep rooflines in non-historic sections of Cape May. Mansard roofs should also be permitted. **This was addressed within the revised definition of building height as follows:**

### **BUILDING HEIGHT**

**The vertical distance measured from the mean level of the crown of the road in front of the building to the highest point of the roof deck for flat and mansard roofs or to the highest ridge line of pitched roofs. For pitched roofs, an additional five feet may be added to the maximum building height permitted in the zoning district in which the building is located, except in the R-4 Modified Medium-Density Residential District, which shall be governed exclusively by the provisions of § 525-17B(2) and in which district the maximum height of any building, including necessary appurtenances or common decorative features and regardless of roof style, shall not exceed 20 feet. "Pitched roofs" are defined as any roof with 80% or more of its projected horizontal planes (areas) constructed at slopes equal to or greater than four in 12. Maximum heights shall not prohibit necessary appurtenances or common decorative features exceeding those heights, except in the R-4 Modified Medium-Density Residential District, which shall be governed exclusively by the provisions of § 525-17B(2) and in which district the maximum height of any building, including necessary appurtenances or common decorative features and regardless of roof style, shall not exceed 20 feet. Height regulations are subject to the requirements of § 525-58D.**

### **Fine Tuning Existing Residential District Boundaries**

Several other small changes to residential zoning boundaries ~~are~~ **were** proposed **in the 2003 Master Plan**. One area that is recommended for a zoning map amendment is the block bounded by Pittsburgh, Beach, Baltimore, and New Jersey Avenues. This block had been zoned C-3, reflecting its former use as the site of the large Christian Admiral Hotel. The hotel was razed, despite its historic status, because it was in too poor a state of repair to be salvaged. The land was then subdivided into 75 by 150 foot lots, on which large oceanfront single family detached homes have been constructed. Given the current land use, this block is more properly zoned R-1.

**This recommendation was addressed by Ordinance No. 133-2008 which became effective April 8, 2008. A R-1A Low Residential overlay was created which contains the same use regulations as the R-1 district. The bulk and area standards are the same as the R-1 district except for building setback, rear yard setback, minimum habitable floor area, lot coverage and floor area ratio which have been implemented to maintain the large scale dwellings that currently exist. Mapping of the R-1A area should be added to the Zoning Map.**

Another proposed map amendment ~~would~~ **contained in the 2003 Master Plan** proposed the ~~rezone~~ **rezoning of** both sides of Ohio Avenue, between Philadelphia and Reading Avenues, to the R-2 District. This would better conform to existing patterns of development. This area ~~is now~~ **was** zoned R-4 but is not part of the Village Green Development.

**This recommendation was addressed by the Zoning Map for the City of Cape May, dated March 15, 2005 and revised July 19, 2005 which was adopted October 18, 2005.**

**The Zoning Board of Adjustment has granted numerous use variance applications for expansions and renovations to structures located on the south side of Maryland Avenue between Wilmington Avenue and Buffalo Avenue. This area is comprised of all lots within Block 1222 (Lots 1-10) and Block 1223 (Lots 1-10) and is completely developed with twenty (20) semidetached dwellings on lots that measure 50' x 125'. This area is unique since the semidetached development occurs uninterrupted on one side of the street for two blocks and no development has occurred on the opposite side of the street. This area is currently zoned R-1 which does not allow semidetached dwellings.**

**As demonstrated by numerous renovation applications that have been approved by the Zoning Board, these structures are aging and warrant rehabilitation and renovations. To validate the existing uses as conforming uses and better facilitate appropriate renovations, it is recommended that this area be changed to the R-3 district. The R-3 district permits semidetached dwellings on 5,000 square foot lots. Floor area ratio requirements should also be adjusted to that which has been permitted in the R-1 district. The preserved wetlands PW designation should also be kept for this area.**

### **Residential Site Improvement Standards**

An area of great concern to the Planning Board has been the excessive demands for offstreet parking that is generated by summer rentals. It is not uncommon for multifamily groups or even unrelated individuals to share a summer rental and to arrive in Cape May with far more vehicles than there are available off-street parking permits. Parking issues will be treated in more detail in the Circulation Element. It is important to note here, however, that the City is not able to directly amend its zoning regulations as they affect off-street parking standards for residential uses. These are now regulated by the New Jersey Residential Site Improvement Standards (RSIS), which apply the same per-bedroom parking standards to every municipality from urban cities



such as Newark and Camden, to rural communities such as Lower Alloways Township, and to seashore resorts like Cape May. **It was recommended that the zoning ordinance should be amended to reflect all applicable RSIS standards. This recommendation has been addressed. The RSIS has been implemented into the zoning ordinance Sec. 525-49C(1) as a parking requirement for all dwellings.**

### Nonresidential Districts

No significant changes ~~are~~ **were** proposed **in the 2003 Master Plan** to the boundaries of the nonresidential districts, other than the aforementioned removal of the former Christian Admiral Hotel Block from the C-3 District, **which has been addressed**, and the fine-tuning of the Neighborhood Commercial District on Texas Avenue, **which has partially been addressed. The aforementioned NC District changes should now be implemented as recommended. It is also recommended that the C-1 district be expanded to include Block 1053, Lots 7-12 and Block 1060, Lots 1-3, 33, 34 as previously indicated.** ~~Instead, it is recommended that attention be turned towards improving the aesthetics of these districts and avoiding the unintended encroachment of commercial uses into residential districts~~

**As indicated in the 2003 Master Plan, it is again recommended to avoid the unintended encroachment of commercial uses into residential districts where not warranted by sound planning principles.** The master plan recognizes that a number of nonconforming nonresidential uses exist in residential districts. Those nonconforming uses that existed prior to the establishment of any zoning regulations in the City; those that were conforming under the zoning regulation in effect at the time the use was established; and those for which a use variance was obtained are all legally protected nonconforming uses. However, as a matter of public policy, the master plan views the further expansion of nonconforming uses onto new lots in residential districts, even if adjoining or close to existing nonconforming uses, to be a threat to the integrity of the residential district that should be discouraged by the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Another concern is the lack of architectural detailing that is present on the rear of some older commercial buildings. Views from rear streets are as important as those from the front of the building and need to be appropriately treated. **It was recommended that** Section 32-46.1 of the zoning ordinance should be revised to require that building treatments avoid long uninterrupted façade planes without architectural detailing or changes in the direction of the façade plane. All elevations that are visible from a public street should be treated. Section 32-46.10 already gives the Planning Board approval power over the exterior design of a large number of nonresidential and multiple dwelling buildings. This provision should be expanded to include ~~townhouses~~ **attached dwellings**, when that definition is added to the ordinance.



**Architectural design changes have been made to the Code's zoning Section 525-59J as previously indicated.**

Buffer, **screening** and landscape standards are equally important and **it was recommended that they** should be upgraded when the new zoning ordinance is prepared. ~~Section 32-46.8, Screening, is particularly in need of attention. It was recommended that different~~ Different standards should be established for the degree of screening required, based upon the proposed land use and the land use from which it is to be screened. ~~The landscaping standards in Section 32-46.9 are more complete, but~~ **and the landscaping standards** should be reviewed to insure a better mix of deciduous, evergreen, and ornamental trees, as well as both high and low level shrubs.

**These recommendations have been addressed. Additional screening requirements based upon proposed and existing land uses have been implemented and are contained in Sec. 525-59H. Landscaping standards in Sec. 525-59I contain requirements for deciduous, evergreen, and ornamental trees, as well as both high and low level shrubs.**

Signage regulations for residential and commercial properties are limited but are generally appropriate for the character of the city. ~~Only minor adjustments to these regulations are required.~~ At the same time, it is recognized that directional signage for tourists needs to be improved and specific recommendations are made in the Circulation Element. This is particularly important for a community like Cape May where a high percentage of motorists during the summer season may be first-time visitors who are unfamiliar with the City. The confusion of these motorists only serves to compound traffic congestion. Adequate signage is only part of the answer, however. It must be present in a graphically simple but recognizable family of signs, against a background that does not compete with other messages for the motorists' attention. The photo above, of the existing condition at the intersection of Sidney and Washington Avenues, is an example of what to avoid.



**Signage regulations contained in Section 525-48 for residential and commercial properties have been adjusted and no changes are recommended. Signage recommendations for directional signage remain valid and should be implemented consistent with the Circulation Element reexamination.**

## Table of Uses

~~It has been recommended that the entire zoning ordinance be rewritten and recodified. No changes are proposed that affect the current uses permitted in all zones.~~ The following table

of uses reflects ~~the recommendations of this Land Use Element.~~ **an update to the Table of Uses contained in the 2003 Master Plan:**

**Summary of Uses By Right in Cape May Zoning Districts  
March 2009**

Uses By Right	R-1	R-1A	R-2	R-3A	R-3	R-4	R-5	RC	RS	NC	C-1	C-2	C-3	C-5	C-6	G-1	S-1	S-2	HO
Amusement Centers in Existing Structures														•			•		
Animal Hospitals and Boarding														•					
Apartments above Commercial Uses											•	•	•						
Arts, crafts, fine arts, & studios											•	•	•						
Auto Rental Office											•			•					
Auto or Truck Rental Office														•					
Automobile Body Repair Shop														•					
Automotive Service Station														•					
Auto Wash														•					
Beach (and Dune) Protection Projects																	•	•	•
Bicycle Rental											•	•	•	•					
Boat Building, Repair, Sales, Rental & Storage															•				
Boat Club										•					•				•
Boatels, etc.															•				
Building, Plumbing or Electrical Contractor														•					
Business, Admin, & Prof. Offices										•	•	•	•	•	•				
Clubs, Lodges, Frat, Org.											•		•						
Cold Storage Plant, Beverage, Baking, etc.														•					
Commercial Recreation (Limited)												•		•					
Commercial uses in Pln Res Wtrft Opt.																			
Drinking Establishments, Licensed											•	•			•				
Dune Protection Projects																			
Dwelling, Multiple-Family					•				•	•			•						
Dwelling, Quads						•													
Dwelling, Single-Family Detached	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•				•		•				
Dwelling, Single-Family Semi-Detached					•	•	•		•					•					
Dwelling, Townhouse Attached					•				•				•						
Dwelling, Two-Family Detached					•		•		•				•						
Eating Establishments, no drive-thru										•		•	•						
Eating Establishments, On-Premise, no drive-thru											•								
Financial Institutions										•	•								
Fishing Piers, Boat Docks															•				•
Funeral Parlors														•					
Government Uses, Federal																•			

\* - District Added    \*\* - District Deleted

• - Use Permitted

✓ - Use Added    X - Use Deleted

C = Conditional Use

**Summary of Uses By Right in Cape May Zoning Districts  
March 2009**

Uses By Right	R-1	R-1A	R-2	R-3A	R-3	R-4	R-5	RC	RS	NC	C-1	C-2	C-3	C-5	C-6	G-1	S-1	S-2	HO
Historic Conversions	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C				
Hotels & Motels												•	•						
Launching Ramps																			•
Libraries, Art Galleries, Museums											•	•							
Light Manufacturing														•					
Marina															•				•
Marine or rec. retail sales & service															•				
Motor Vehicle Sales														•					
Municipal Uses	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•										
Off-Street Parking Facilities														•					
Parking Lot or Garage, Public										•	•	•	•	•	•				
Parks and Conservation Areas																			•
Personal Services Shops										•	•	•							
Places of Worship	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•							
Planned Res. Waterfront Option.																			
Printing Plant														•					
Radio, Television or Recording Studio														•					
Recreation, Beach Related																	•		
Recreation, Not Detrimental to Dune Stabilization																		•	
Recreation, Public, & Cultural Uses																			•
Research and Development Uses														•					
Retail sale of goods or prep. Foods											•	•							
Retail sale of goods or prep. Foods (≤5,000 sf)										•									
Retail Stores & Service Businesses														•					
Schools	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•										
Service Businesses											•								
Shopping Centers											•								
Shopping Center, Neighborhood										•									
Small Appliance Repair Shops										•									
Taxi Stations											•	•							
Teaching Center																			•
Theatres, w/o drive-in											•			•					
Tourist/Guest Homes				•					•				•						
Travel Agencies												•							
Wholesale Businesses, Warehousing, Bldg Material														•					

\* - District Added    \*\* - District Deleted    • - Use Permitted  
 ✓ - Use Added    X - Use Deleted    C = Conditional Use



### Other Recommendations

The current zoning ordinance permits averaging of existing front yard setbacks to determine setback requirements. The intent of the setback averaging is to maintain the character of the street by allowing a deviation from the required setback, in cases where many of the existing structures do not conform to front building setbacks. This provision is contained in code Section 525-59A(4) which reads as follows:

**Average percent of front yard setbacks.** In a block where 50% or more of the lots have been developed and have nonconforming front yard setbacks, a new or existing structure may be constructed or expanded so as to provide a front yard equal in depth to the average front yard of the existing buildings of four lots that are contiguous to the property. The new setback is to be no greater than 10 feet past the front of any adjacent structures. Computation of the average front yards of contiguous lots shall be performed in accordance with the following requirements:

- (a)** Computation shall be based upon the arithmetic mean distance calculated for the four properties that are contiguous with the property, on the same side of the street and in the same block as the property.
- (b)** Porches and steps shall be included in the calculation of the front yard setback.
- (c)** Certification of the average front yard setback shall be provided by a New Jersey licensed land surveyor.

This provision requires that the entire block and not only lots that front on the subject street must be surveyed to verify that 50% are nonconforming. This requirement has led to considerable survey expense to applicants and in some cases has been a detriment to front yard setback averaging. Front yard setback is encouraged to preserve and maintain the character of Cape May's streetscapes and therefore it is recommended that the ordinance be revised as follows:

**Average percent of front yard setbacks.** In a block, where 50% of all lots that front on the same street as the subject lot have been developed and have nonconforming front yard setbacks, a new or existing structure may be constructed or expanded on the subject lot so as to provide a front yard equal in depth to the average front yard of the existing buildings of four lots that are contiguous to the property. The new setback is to be no greater than 10 feet past the front of any adjacent structures. Computation of the average front yards of contiguous lots shall be performed in accordance with the following requirements:

**(a)** Computation shall be based upon the arithmetic mean distance calculated for the four properties that are contiguous with the property, on the same side of the street and in the same block as the property.

**(b)** Porches and steps shall be included in the calculation of the front yard setback.

**(c)** Certification of the average front yard setback shall be provided by a New Jersey licensed land surveyor.

It was recommended in the 2003 Master Plan that the entire zoning ordinance be rewritten and recodified. This issue has been addressed as The Zoning Ordinance of the City of Cape May was rewritten, recodified and adopted by Ordinance No. 10-2004 on December 2, 2004.

During the recodification of the Zoning Ordinance, the RS district bulk and area standards for single family detached dwellings and single family attached dwellings were changed. The requirements in the former Code Section 32-13.2a Table 1 reflect a minimum building setbacks of 20 feet for both uses. Current Code Section 525-16B(1) Table 1 indicate setbacks of 25 feet for both uses. Review of the 2003 Master Plan study indicate that no recommendation for the increase was made by the Planning Board and that this appears to be a typographical error. It is recommended that the Zoning Ordinance be revised to reflect minimum building setbacks of 20 feet for both uses.

During the reexamination review, inconsistencies were discovered on the official Zoning Map. It is recommended that the Zoning Map be revised to address inconsistencies between the zoning boundaries and the district list of Block and Lot numbers listed on the map.

The Vision Plan for the City of Cape May was prepared in 2007. This plan was prepared to build on the City's rich history and its ecological resources while recommending improvements that will reinvigorate the image of the city as well as enhance its unique character. This plan recommends park improvements and acquisitions, streetscape improvements, and transportation and parking improvements. This plan targets five areas for urban design improvements; Beach Avenue west; Convention Hall vicinity; Beach Avenue east; Harbor Vicinity; Washington Street Mall and vicinity. This plan is generally consistent with the Master Plan and this reexamination. It is recommended that the City implement recommendations contained in the Vision Plan as resources become available, providing they are not inconsistent with the findings, goals, objectives and recommendations of this report.



## **IV. Traffic and Parking Reexamination**

**The Traffic and Parking Element is contained in Section IV (pp. 38-83) of the 2003 Master Plan. This section contains numerous sub-sections that contain the various assumptions, policies and recommendations as required in the Master Plan. The reexamination update, comments and recommendations of the Traffic and Parking Element is the result of a coordinated effort by the Planning Board and the Cape May Parking and Traffic Advisory Committee. The following reexamination section identifies, gives the current status and updates the assumptions, policies and recommendations statements with recommendations as follows:**

### **Introduction**

This section discusses the existing traffic and parking conditions for the City of Cape May, followed by an analysis of issues, and recommendations for improvements. This analysis is largely based upon field views and data collection conducted in the summer of 2002, during the months of July and August.

During the summer, motorists encounter significant congestion entering Cape May, between the Canal Bridge and Schellenger's Landing Bridge, and also on Lafayette Street, typically between Franklin Street and Ocean Street. Further, finding an available parking space in the downtown and on many beachfront blocks during the summer season can be extremely difficult. Outside of the summer season, traffic and parking concerns in the City are generally minimal. For all these reasons, the Traffic and Parking chapter focuses on addressing summer conditions.

It is not anticipated that the City would be able to completely eliminate traffic congestion, or should even try to do so. The moderate level of congestion on many downtown blocks helps ensure that motor vehicles travel at an appropriate pace, allowing them to safely share the roadway with the large number of two-wheel and four-wheel bicyclists, pedestrians, horse-drawn carriages, trolleys and other transportation modes. Similarly, while the parking demand downtown can be alleviated to some degree, it will always be difficult to provide the number of parking spaces needed to accommodate all visitors within a short distance of their destination. The goal of the recommendations in this chapter is to improve traffic and parking conditions across the City, but to maintain the historic character of the community that makes it such a popular resort community.

Many of the recommendations set forth in this section involve streets and intersections under the jurisdictional control of Cape May County. Therefore, the implementation of any of these recommendations must be approved by and coordinated with the Office of the Cape May County Engineer. Specific recommendations for all parties are highlighted in italics.

**It is recognized that the assumptions, policies and recommendations contained in this element are based on the extensive traffic analysis performed during the summer of 2002**

by Orth Rodgers Associates (ORA).

It is understood that background growth of traffic has occurred in the City that is typical of similar roadways in the State. The 2002 traffic analysis identified problematic areas based on traffic at the time of study and it is also recognized that the background growth that has occurred only exacerbates the problems identified in the Master Plan.

Based on the fact that there have been no significant changes to traffic conditions throughout the City, other than typical growth, it has been determined that a new traffic study is not warranted at this time and that problems recognized through the previous study remain valid unless otherwise addressed by the City as identified specifically in the Reexamination.

## **Existing Conditions**

### **Road Classifications (p. 39)**

Functional road classifications have not changed within the City since the 2003 Master Plan. No changes are recommended for this section.

### **Volumes (pp. 40-45)**

Traffic volumes contained in the Master Plan are based on the traffic analysis performed during the summer of 2002. There have been no significant changes to traffic conditions throughout the City, other than typical traffic growth, thus the volumes identified remain a valid foundation and effective tool for establishing the assumptions, policies and recommendations contained in the Master Plan and Reexamination. No changes are recommended for this section.

### **Parking Conditions (pp. 46-48)**

The parking analysis contained in the Master Plan are based on the ORA analysis performed during July and August of 2002. There have been no significant changes to parking conditions throughout the City, other than typical traffic growth, thus the issues identified remain a valid foundation and effective tool for establishing the assumptions, policies and recommendations contained in the Master Plan and Reexamination. No changes are recommended for this section.



## Analysis and Recommendations

### Traffic Signals (p. 49)

The traffic signals in the City provide for an orderly and safe movement of traffic and are well maintained. Except for the intersection of Ocean Street and Washington Street, and Franklin and Washington Street, all of the traffic signals are owned and maintained by Cape May County. Under agreement, the County also maintains the signals at the above-noted intersections.

#### ***Beach Avenue (p.49)***

The largest cluster of traffic signals is along Beach Avenue where there are seven closely spaced signals. The signals are synchronized during the summer months to avoid multiple stoppages along Beach Avenue and provide for adequate side street green time to accommodate vehicular and pedestrian traffic. During the off season, the signals go into a flashing mode, flashing yellow to Beach Avenue and red to the side streets. ORA has been advised that consideration is being given to having these seven traffic signals operate in a stop-and-go mode year round. *If that program is advanced, consideration should be given to actuating all side street approaches and installing pedestrian pushbuttons so that side street approaches only receive a green signal upon demand; i.e., when a vehicle or a motorist is waiting. The actuation should only be used in the off-season.* During the peak season, “fixed time” mode would be better suited to the large pedestrian volumes.

**The Committee recommends against operating the seven traffic signals on Beach Avenue in a stop-and-go mode year around.**

#### ***Madison Avenue (p.49)***

The two signalized intersections of Madison Avenue and Lafayette Street, and Madison Avenue and Washington Street operate in a "fixed time" mode. That is, they cycle through their timing schedule whether or not there are vehicles waiting on the side street, Madison Avenue.

In order to make the traffic signals more traffic responsive so that they only service the side street upon demand, it is recommended that these signals operate on a "semiactuated" mode; they would continuously provide green time to vehicles on Lafayette Street and on Washington Street until a vehicle stops at the Madison Avenue approaches. Vehicle detectors already exist at these locations, but would have to be activated by the County. To accommodate pedestrians, push buttons would have to be installed. The changes will have a positive effect on traffic flow on both Lafayette Street and Washington Street.

**To the extent they have not yet been implemented, the recommendations made under this heading are valid and shall remain as recommendations.**

#### ***Washington Street and Ocean Street (pp.49-50)***

Early in the study, ORA identified a significant conflict between pedestrians and vehicular traffic at this intersection, much of which could be traced to the exclusive pedestrian phase. Exclusive

pedestrian phases are very unusual in New Jersey. There are only about 10 in the entire State. As a result, pedestrians are conditioned to cross at intersections during the non-conflicting phase.

At this intersection, the phasing sequence consisted of a green signal for Ocean Street, followed by Washington Street, followed by the exclusive pedestrian phase. However, pedestrians typically crossed Ocean Street during the Washington Street green and did not wait for the following exclusive pedestrian phase. As a result, traffic on Washington Street often encountered unnecessary delays. Based on the observations and recommendations made by ORA, the signal phasing has already been adjusted as follows: green signal for Ocean Street, followed by the exclusive pedestrian phase, followed by the Washington Street phase. Although this revision was made after the peak summer season, field observations indicate a significant increase in the percentage of pedestrians crossing the intersection during the exclusive pedestrian phase and not in conflict with vehicles.

Observations at this intersection also revealed that all of the signal indications are post mounted at the curb line, not over the roadway. Although the vehicular signals are not as visible as they could be, there is no indication that this is causing a problem, based on the crash data. On the other hand, the pedestrian "Walk/ Don't Walk" signals are located on the same signal support just a couple of feet below the vehicular indications. The vehicular indications are much brighter than the pedestrian indications. When the pedestrians see the prominent green ball vehicle indications, they seem to overlook the less visible "Don't Walk" message. Separation between the two conflicting signal indications would help reduce pedestrian confusion. *It is recommended that the "Walk/ Don't Walk" indications be remounted on an 8-foot arm or pipe extension from the existing signal pole so that they are located directly over the sidewalk area at the crosswalk and not in the same line of sight with the vehicular indications.*

It is also suggested that during peak periods, a crossing guard type person or police person be assigned to the intersection to ensure in a polite way that the pedestrians wait for their exclusive pedestrian phase. ORA understands that this has been tried in the past with minimal success, but more extensive efforts may yield more success.

**This area continues to be a problem area from a traffic/pedestrian standpoint. To the extent they have not yet been implemented, it is recommended that the proposals made under this heading remain valid.**

**The following recommendation has been addressed by removing the referenced signal and therefore it should be removed from the master plan as indicated below.**

***~~Transportation Center Traffic Signal (pp. 50-51)~~***

~~The existing traffic signal at the Transportation Center entrance on Lafayette Street is located approximately 150 feet from the signal at Lafayette Street and Ocean Street. These two signals operate from the same controller to provide for what is known as an "inside clearance interval" which allows westbound vehicles that have passed the Transportation Center driveway to clear~~

~~the Ocean Street signal before it turns red. This in turn allows for an unimpeded left turn movement into the transportation center. This inside clearance interval wastes 10 seconds of green time every 70 second signal cycle, adding to significant delays for westbound traffic.~~

~~Traffic counts conducted on a Saturday afternoon between 2:00 and 6:00 PM showed an average of three vehicles per hour turning left into the Transportation Center. Field observations at other times corroborated this very low demand. If this traffic signal were removed, these few vehicles would be able to make their turns in existing gaps in traffic. Eliminating this stopping point for westbound Lafayette Street traffic allows vehicles to proceed directly to the stop bar at Ocean Street. Motorists would further benefit if the signal at Ocean Street were changed to a lead green interval from the current lag green interval. It is, therefore, recommended that the traffic signal at the Transportation Center on Lafayette Street be removed. The stop bar should also be removed, and signs installed directing pedestrians to the crosswalks at Lafayette Street and Ocean Street. A lead green interval should be installed to replace the lag run interval.~~

The following new recommendations endorsed by the Committee shall be added as follows:

**NEW**        *Beach Avenue at Pittsburgh Avenue*

It is recommended that the City facilitates placing a flashing warning light on the south side of Beach Avenue, facing west, just prior to the intersection of Pittsburgh Avenue, in conjunction with appropriate, highly visible signage directing eastbound motorists on Beach Avenue to turn left onto Pittsburgh Avenue for the “Garden State Parkway”. It has been observed that motorists, who are unfamiliar with the Pittsburgh Avenue route for leaving Cape May, miss the turn onto Pittsburgh Avenue and end up at Wilmington Avenue/Poverty Beach. As a result, they meander through Maryland, New York and New Jersey Avenue residential sections looking to return to Pittsburgh Avenue. It is believed that highlighting the left turn from Beach Avenue onto Pittsburgh Avenue as the preferred route to exit Cape May will relieve some of the frustration of temporarily lost motorists as well as some of the traffic congestion in the residential areas adjacent Poverty Beach and Shelton College.

**NEW**        *Lafayette Street at Decatur Street*

Due to the difficulty experienced by motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians in crossing Lafayette Street at Decatur Street, the Committee recommends that some form of traffic control be installed at this location. Traffic controls which are recommended for consideration include a traffic light synchronized with the light at Lafayette and Ocean Streets, a flashing light or, at a minimum, a four way stop sign.

**One-Way Streets (pp. 51-56)**

One-way regulations are typically implemented to reduce congestion and increase the carrying capacity of a street network. They have been especially effective in downtown districts

comprised of narrow streets, with on-street parking and high vehicular and pedestrian volumes. By eliminating opposing traffic movements, they are also effective in reducing conflicts (delays) and crashes at both signalized and non-signalized intersections. In addition, streets can benefit from the addition of parking lanes and dedicated bicycle lanes. Even with increased traffic volumes, studies have shown that conversion from two-way to one-way traffic flow reduces travel times and crashes by 10 to 50 percent.

There are a few possible negative effects of converting to one-way operation. Some motorists may have to travel an extra distance to reach their destination. However, over time, most motorists will adjust their driving habits to minimize that inconvenience. Sufficient signing and pavement markings must be installed to clearly delineate the one-way operation in order to avoid wrong way movements. A good system of interconnected streets is beneficial. Transit operations will have to adjust their routes accordingly. The one-way system must take into consideration response times by emergency service personnel.

Some business owners are concerned that a change in operation will reduce business by decreasing traffic flow. Studies have shown that the opposite in fact occurs. After a brief learning curve as motorists adapt to new traffic patterns, the customer base increases because it actually becomes easier and safer to reach a particular business. One-way street conversion has also been shown as having no effect on residential property values.

Other benefits of one-way operations include:

1. Provides additional turning lanes without widening.
2. Simplifies traffic signal timings.
3. Reduces vehicle/pedestrian and vehicle/vehicle conflicts at intersections.
4. Meets changing traffic patterns almost immediately at a minimal cost; large capital expenditures are not required.
5. Facilitates the unloading of commercial vehicles.
6. Since widening is typically not required, sidewalks, trees, etc. are not disturbed.
7. At mid-block pedestrian crossings, pedestrians only have to look one way.

There are already in existence several one-way streets in the City, all of which operate efficiently. The crash analysis shows minimal crash experience on the designated oneway streets, the one exception being the circular flow with multiple weaving areas at the east end of Lafayette and Washington Streets in the vicinity of Sidney Street and Texas Avenue. That area operates more like a traffic circle than a one-way street system.

***Carpenters Lane/ Lyle Lane and Decatur Street(p. 52)***

~~When ORA began this citywide traffic study, it was advised that the City had already determined that reversing the current one way flow on Carpenters Lane and Lyle Lane would reduce a significant congestion point at the intersection of Ocean Street and Carpenters Lane. Based on collected data and field observations, ORA concurs that reversal of the current one way flow on~~

~~these two streets should provide a significant improvement to the overall traffic flow in the area without having any adverse impacts elsewhere.~~

~~ORA also examined the commercial vehicle unloading situation in the area and the feasibility of prohibiting the left turn from Lafayette Street to Decatur Street to help reduce congestion on Lafayette Street. As a result of field views, it was recommended that Decatur Street be designated one way in the northbound direction between Carpenters Lane and Lafayette Street. This will provide the same effect as a no left turn prohibition and will complement the reversal of flow on Lyle Lane. Decatur Street should be marked for two lanes entering Lafayette Street, the left lane for left and through traffic, and the right lane for right turns only. Appropriate signing and pavement markings must be installed.~~

~~It was also recommended to designate two loading zones on Decatur Street, one on the westerly curb line north of Lyle Lane, and another on the easterly curb line of Decatur Street for a short distance south of Lyle Lane. Both areas were recommended with the intent of maintaining adequate sight distance for pedestrians, and travel lanes for vehicles.~~

~~Action has been taken on the above items as of the writing of this Circulation Plan.~~

**The City has implemented the one way recommendations for Decatur Street and the recommendations under this heading shall be removed as indicated above.**

***Bank Street [Between Lafayette Street and Broad Street] (p. 52)***

Bank Street intersects Lafayette Street slightly offset toward the west from Decatur Street. Sight distance to the left from Bank Street is restricted by a wall. Vehicles exiting Bank Street and Decatur Street try to merge or cross Lafayette Street vying for the same gaps in traffic. This will be more pronounced after the implementation of the one-way on Decatur Street. The reversal of traffic flow on Lyle Lane will make for increased traffic volumes exiting Decatur Street. Further, Bank Street traffic will no longer be able to access Decatur Street. In order to provide for the safest possible traffic flow in the area, *the short block of Bank Street between Lafayette Street and Broad Street should be made one-way away from Lafayette Street (northbound).* That diverted traffic would then use Broad Street to Jackson Street to Lafayette Street, a minimal distance out of their way. As a result, a significant congestion point along a main arterial will be eliminated.

**These recommendations have not been implemented to date and shall remain valid with the more specific location “Between Lafayette Street and Broad Street” indicated above.**

**The following new recommendation endorsed by the Committee shall be added as follows:**

**NEW            *Bank Street and Venice Avenue***



**It is recommended making Bank Street one way for cars traveling out of Cape May between the drive way located behind the “Wawa” convenience store site to Venice Avenue and Venice Avenue one way from Bank Street to Elmira Street. This change in the traffic flow would create between 20 and 35 parking spaces just a short walking distance to the center of town. Implementation of Bank Street one way in this manner would free up cartway width to enable parking on the Bank Street Commons side of the street where no parking presently exists. That portion of Bank Street between the driveway behind the Wawa to Broad Street would remain two ways in order to maintain ingress and egress of delivery trucks and other vehicles which currently use that driveway. It should be noted that these additional Bank Street parking Street spaces were available for decades up until Bank Street was repaved several years ago.**

***Lafayette Street and Washington Street (pp 53-56)***

Washington Street and Lafayette Street are parallel east/west roadways approximately 1 1/2 miles in length that traverse the City from its entrance at Lower Township to the Washington Street Mall area. They are approximately 300 feet apart. At the easterly entrance to the City, Lafayette Street and Washington Street form a one-way couplet in the Sidney/Texas Avenue area. These two roadways are connected to each other by 10 cross streets, three (3) of which have signalized crossings: Madison Avenue, Franklin Avenue, and Ocean Street.

Both Lafayette Street and Washington Street operate as two-way streets carrying one lane of traffic in each direction. Parking is permitted along Washington Street on alternate sides for most of its length. Parking is permitted on Lafayette Street in only two locations: in front of a residential neighborhood and the Elementary School. At both locations the curb line has been set back to shadow the parked vehicles.

On both streets, numerous Sycamore trees growing between the sidewalk and the curbing lean out over the roadway. Advisory signs are placed advising motorists, especially truckers, of that condition.

The two roadways are relatively narrow, with widths of 26 to 28 feet for Lafayette Street, and 30 feet for Washington Street. Because of their narrow widths, and because vehicles typically travel faster on these roadways than those downtown, they do not provide an amenable environment for bicycling. Few bicyclists choose to ride there.

Traffic counts taken during the study revealed that 70 percent of all traffic coming into and out of the City from the north, as well as internal circulation movements, use Lafayette Street. Motorists tend to exit on the same street or driveway that they use to enter a city. Under the current street configuration, motorists that enter Cape May via Lafayette Street, exit via Lafayette Street. Field observations and traffic counts confirm this. For example, motorists exiting the beachfront area of the City via Madison Avenue were observed crossing Washington Street, then turning right onto Lafayette Street to exit the City, rather than follow the shorter route of Washington Street out of the City.

Based on field observations and an analysis of the traffic volume data, it is recommended that Lafayette Street be made one way westbound and Washington Street one way eastbound from Sidney Street to Ocean Street. It should be noted that under this proposal, 20 percent of the traffic on the two roadways will be shifted to Washington Street, and the tour trolleys and buses accessing the Transportation Center from the west will have to change their route.

However, the following positives can be achieved:

There will be one lane of moving traffic on each street instead of the present two lanes.

Parking can be permitted on one side of each street for its entire length, as opposed to the current situation, in which parking is only permitted on Lafayette Street for limited sections. Additional meters could be considered in the downtown area.

A dedicated bicycle lane can be established along the entire length of both streets to accommodate two wheel and four-wheel bicycles, as well as horse drawn carriages, thus minimizing interference with vehicular traffic (Figures IV-4 and IV-5).

The parking lane and bike lane will provide safe distance between moving vehicles and the overhanging trees.

Emergency vehicles will be less affected by congestion since vehicles can pull to either side to allow them to pass.

The City has expressed interest in physically widening Lafayette Street at Elmira Street to create a westbound through/left-turn lane and a right-turn lane. This action would no longer be needed since the one-way configuration will permit the westbound approach on Lafayette Street at Elmira Street to be restriped to provide for an exclusive left-turn lane and a combination through/right lane. This lane configuration will also emphasize the termination of the one-way westbound flow on Lafayette Street at this intersection. A leading green arrow could be installed to facilitate the left turn onto Ocean Street.

The left turn prohibition from Lafayette Street into the Acme parking lot currently presents both an enforcement and congestion problem, as many motorists choose to ignore it. This left turn can now be allowed, thereby eliminating that congestion point.

Left turns at other key intersections such as at Madison Avenue and Franklin Street can have their own designated lane, thereby no longer blocking traffic.

A number of issues must be addressed to facilitate the proposed conversion. A greater number of vehicles will now be turning left from Ocean Street onto Washington Street to exit the City. An increase in left-turn volumes at this intersection can be accommodated because the Washington Street phase of the signal timing can be eliminated. A lead left phase for Ocean Street traffic turning left onto Washington Street can be provided, and a few more seconds added to the pedestrian interval.

Motorists desiring to make a U-turn can do so via the various connector streets, some of which are signalized. A formal signed U-turn can be established on Sidney Street by converting its one-way southbound direction to a two-way English style traffic system separated by a positive barrier (Figure IV-6).

Some residents have expressed concern about one-way conversion in the past due to the perception that one-way streets would lead to faster traffic speeds. However, because only one lane of moving traffic is proposed on each street, not two lanes, differences in vehicular speeds should be minimal. Vehicles will not have the option of changing lanes to travel at a faster speed.

It should be noted that the implementation of a one-way system will require the approval of the County, as well as the New Jersey Department of Transportation. It will require major changes to the signing and pavement markings. An extensive publicity effort will have to be made to ensure that everyone in Cape May, as well as the adjoining municipalities, are aware of the impending change in traffic flow. Implementation should be considered in the off seasons of February and March, or October and November.

**These recommendations have not been implemented to date. The proposals made under this heading are long standing and controversial. Although the analysis, on its face, appears to substantiate the conclusions reached, it is further recommended that the City solicit and consider public input before a decision is made to implement these recommendations.**

### **Geometric Improvements (p.56)**

While geometric improvements are much more costly than traffic control devices, there are times where they are needed to improve traffic flow and safety. Such improvements are usually considered longer term since they require detailed plan development, securing funding and possible right-of-way acquisition.

#### ***Elmira Street (p.56)***

The City is currently working on plans to widen *Elmira Street between Lafayette Street and Broad Street* in order to provide for two-way traffic, one lane in each direction. *This traffic study endorses that project.* This improvement would provide for better downtown traffic circulation and is compatible with a recommendation later in the study to direct traffic into the City from Ferry Road in Lower Township via Broadway, Central Avenue, and short sections of Park Boulevard and Leaming Avenue in West Cape May through Elmira Street.

**This recommendation remains valid. The City is continuing with the implementation of the recommended improvements.**

#### ***Broad Street (p.56)***

The City is currently working on plans to widen Broad Street from the railroad tracks to St. Johns Street, by narrowing the sidewalk on the northerly side. The roadway widening here will

improve overall traffic circulation in the downtown area. *That widening should include an increase of the corner radius at the intersection of Broad Street and St. Johns Street.*

**This recommendation remains valid. The City is continuing with the implementation of the recommended improvements.**

***Ocean Street between Hughes Street and Carpenters Lane (p.56)***

The easterly curb line of Ocean Street between Hughes Street and Carpenters Lane extends into the northbound travel lane of Ocean Street, creating a significant jog in the traffic flow. That alignment change is so significant that a northbound motorist not paying full attention to driving tasks could inadvertently ride up on the sidewalk. It should be noted that there was no crash data at this location which would indicate that this is a chronic problem. Cutting back the wide sidewalk area approximately five (5) feet would smooth out the northbound traffic flow while still leaving sufficient sidewalk width. This action should leave a slight jog, thus acting as a traffic calming feature as well as shadowing the trolleys parked at the Washington Street intersection (Figure IV-7).

**This recommendation has not been implemented to date and continues to remain valid.**

***Ocean Street between Washington Street and Carpenters Lane (p.57)***

There is a designated CAT bus stop along the westerly curblin of Ocean Street at the corner with Carpenters Lane. This is an excellent location for the CAT bus stop which services the mall area. The location also provides very good visibility for promoting the CAT service. Buses stopped at this location interfere with through traffic as well as block pedestrian sight lines. The sidewalk area is extremely wide. *Cutting into the sidewalk area for a width of eight (8) feet, for the length of one CAT bus, will improve traffic flow and sight lines. This would still leave ample sidewalk area for pedestrian traffic* (see Figure IV-7).

**This recommendation has not been implemented to date and continues to remain valid.**

***Lafayette Street and Ocean Street (p.57)***

The Acme parking lot is located on the northeast corner of the intersection. At the corner, the parking lot is approximately 3 feet higher than the sidewalk area. The two are separated by a vertical concrete wall. Field observations have shown that many pedestrians walking from the Mall area/ Washington Street to Lafayette Street cut across the parking lot, heading toward the corner at Ocean Street. Once they reach the corner and see the elevation difference, about half of the pedestrians turn around and go another way while the other half jump off the wall. *It is recommended that a couple of steps be installed to facilitate the pedestrian movement from one elevation to the other.* Such construction should not interfere with any of the current parking spaces, and will be of more importance once the traffic signal at the Transportation Center is removed and all pedestrians directed to cross at the remaining signalized intersection.

**This recommendation has not been implemented to date. It is recognized that private property rights may be involved in implementation. It is further recommended that appropriate directional signage be provided for pedestrians.**

***Washington Street at Texas Avenue (pp.57-58)***

~~On the two-lane Washington Street approach to Texas Avenue, there is a triangular concrete island which channelizes the right lane of Washington Street onto Texas Avenue and the left lane as a through movement leaving the City. A public comment suggested cutting back the island to give the right lane on Washington Street the option of going straight ahead or turning right. Based on traffic analysis, the cut back of the channelizing island is not recommended. Two lanes of vehicles entering the 90 degree left turn just beyond the island in advance of the one lane exit from the City could create severe weaving conditions with the potential of increasing the crash experience in the area.~~

**A cut back of the channelizing island has been considered and again is not recommended by the Committee. It is recommended that this section be removed from the Master Plan as indicated above.**

***Route 109 at Schellenger's Landing Road (pp58-59)***

The most congested area in the region is not actually in Cape May City, but in Lower Township, on Route 109 at the westerly end of the Canal Bridge. At this point, two westbound lanes of traffic converge into one through lane. At the same point where the lanes merge, a very heavy left turn movement into Schellenger's Landing Road is introduced, as is a U-turn lane from under the bridge. The lane drop/heavy left turn combination creates extensive backups during peak periods and general slowing of traffic and erratic lane changes throughout the day. In the opposite direction, one very wide lane is provided for vehicles exiting the City.

At this location during a 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM counting period on a Saturday in August, the following traffic volumes were recorded:

These numbers are similar to field observations taken during other hours of the day and week.

The roadway width from curb to curb is 50 feet. On Route 109 on the easterly side of the intersection, a narrow island comprised of back-to-back vertical curbing separates opposite directions of travel. Left turning vehicles wait adjacent to this curbing to make the left turn into Schellenger's Landing Road.

*If this dividing island is removed, there is sufficient width of pavement to create a painted 11-foot, left-turn storage lane and two through lanes of 12 and 13 feet in width which would merge beyond the intersection. A painted island would be installed on the westerly side of the intersection to keep traffic exiting the City in one wide lane until they are beyond the intersection (Figure IV-8).*

As noted, this entire intersection which negatively impacts traffic entering Cape May City is outside of the City limits in Lower Township. There is also a split jurisdiction of the roadway between Cape May County and the NJDOT. All three jurisdictions would have to concur in these recommendations, with all likelihood the County taking the lead.

**It is recognized that this is a significant problem area for traffic entering and leaving Cape May and generally agrees with the observations and recommendations contained under this heading. However, it is also recognized that this section of Route 109 is within the boundaries of Lower Township and that solutions to the problem must be coordinated with Lower Township, Cape May County and the New Jersey Office of Smart Growth. It is further recommended that the City prioritizes this recommendation and continued to work with the above referenced parties to implement the recommendations.**

**The following new Committee recommendation shall be added as follows:**

**NEW**            *Lafayette Street at Madison Avenue*

**Lafayette Street widens west of Madison Avenue and the additional width is used for on street parking. It is recommended to construct a curbed bump-out from the curb on the elementary school side on Lafayette Street into the wider portion west of Madison Avenue adjacent to the entrance of the parking lot. This bump-out would serve at least three purposes. First, it would contribute to the safety of school children crossing Lafayette Street by providing a “landing area” and shortening the length of the crossing. Second it would serve as a traffic calming structure which narrows the roadway, causing motorists to slow down as they approach this narrowed section which would also contribute to the safety of the children. Third, it could serve as a platform for a removable sign. During the summer months, when school is not in session, there could be a sign installed directing motorists driving on Lafayette Street toward center city to turn right into the elementary school parking lot for “Free Parking and Trolley Service To Center City”. The goal is to minimize traffic entering the downtown area by enhancing the use of the Elementary School parking lot as a remote parking lot serviced by a shuttle. During the school year, appropriate signs could be installed as desired by the School.**

**Signing (p. 59)**

Studies have shown that most motorists make minimal reference to maps when traveling to unfamiliar areas, and rely primarily on signing once they reach their destination. Motorists also have a tendency to enter and exit an area via the same route without trying to see if there is a less congested or shorter route available. Such behavior causes congestion. Of more concern is the fact that a confused or lost motorist is more likely to get involved in an accident. All of the above creates undesirable traffic situations, especially in resort areas where many motorists are first time visitors or travel to the area infrequently.



Good directional signing can alleviate most of the noted concerns, and disperse traffic such that a high percentage of motorists do not use the same route when entering and exiting an area.

Good guide signing requires that signs are located sufficiently in advance and are legible so that motorists can make the proper decision before they must negotiate a turn. These signing practices are difficult to implement in urban areas with closely spaced streets, limited right-of-way, curbside parking, driveways, and overhanging trees. Such conditions are typical throughout the City.

The following discussion highlights problem areas that were observed during our traffic studies and field observations and provides general recommendations which, once implemented, will significantly improve traffic operations and safety.

***General Guide Signing (p.60)***

A very high percentage of the traffic entering the City comes from the Garden State Parkway, with much smaller percentages coming from the Cape May-Lewes Ferry, Route US 9 and Ocean Drive. All of this traffic is currently signed to enter the City via Route 109 and the Schellenger's Landing Bridge. Once within the City limits most motorists continue down Lafayette Street to the downtown area, then diverge to their final destinations, such as lodging, the beachfront or even the Cape May Point Lighthouse. If this traffic could be redirected to alternate, less congested routes, overall traffic congestion will decrease significantly.

**The assumptions made in the above referenced section remain valid and it is recommended that this paragraph remain in the updated Master Plan reexamination.**

***Automobile Traffic from the Ferry (p.60)***

Vehicles from the Ferry should not have to enter the City via Route 109. *Directional signing should be installed on eastbound Ferry Road directing that traffic onto Seashore Road (CR 626). Seashore Road becomes Broadway in West Cape May. Signing should be installed in advance of the intersection of Broadway and Central Avenue directing traffic destined for Cape May City to turn left onto Central Avenue. At the same location, straight through signing should be installed directing motorists to the West Cape May Business District, the beach, and the lighthouse. Signing for the beach and the Lighthouse should be installed at the intersection of Broadway and Sunset Boulevard (CR 606).*

*Traffic for Cape May City that had been directed onto Central Avenue should be signed for a left turn onto Elmira Street. Until such time as Elmira Street is widened to provide two-way traffic, a turn to either the left or right at Broad Street will take visitors to the downtown area. A "Welcome to the City of Cape May" sign should also be installed at the Cape Island Creek Bridge. Reverse signing should direct motorists along these routes back to the Ferry, which will keep this traffic out of the downtown area.*

**This recommendation has not been implemented to date and remains valid.**

***Cape May Lighthouse (p. 60)***

Although it is a significant destination for many motorists, directional signing to the Lighthouse is limited. Many motorists drive into the City, and only then ask for directions to the Lighthouse. *Traffic on the Garden State Parkway, Ferry Road, and Ocean Drive should all be directed to the Lighthouse via Seashore Road to Broadway Avenue to Sunset Boulevard. See specific recommendations made under the heading ‘Signs to Ease Congestion on Lafayette Street between the Acme and Colliers’ below.*

**This recommendation has not been addressed and remains valid. It is further recommended that the recommendation be revised to include the language above.**

***Cape May Canal Bridge Area (p. 60)***

Although not directional signing, the installation of "Lane Ends" warning signs should significantly benefit inbound traffic flow. There currently is no notice to southbound motorists crossing the Cape May Canal Bridge that their two lanes will merge to one lane at the south end of the bridge. As a result, motorists continue in two lanes until the skip lines end, roughly at the same location where large volumes turn left onto Schellenger's Landing Road, and a southbound U-turn ramp is introduced. (This location is also discussed in the section on geometric changes.) This is a significant congestion point for inbound traffic. ~~This matter has been discussed with the County Engineering Department and they have subsequently requested the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) to install a series of warning signs advising motorists that the left lane ends.~~ These signs will not reduce all of the congestion, but will assist in smoothing out the traffic flow. **It is recommended that this matter be once again discussed with the County Engineering Department and the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) requesting that a series of warning signs advising motorists that the left lane ends be installed.”**

**The recommendation remains valid. In addition, it is recommended that the above statement be revised as indicated above.**

**The Committee recommends deleting the three (3) headings and associated information set forth on page 61 of the 2003 Master Plan as listed below, as they are no longer valid.**

***Lafayette Street, Vicinity of Sidney Avenue (p. 61)******Perry Street and Jackson Street (p.61)******Signage for Exiting Traffic (p. 61)***

**The above referenced deleted sections shall be replaced with the following three (3) Committee recommendations:**

**NEW**        *Signs on Beach Avenue to Ease Traffic Leaving Cape May on Beach, Pittsburgh and Lafayette Streets*

It is recommended to place signs at or near the intersections of Beach Avenue with Broadway, Grant, Perry, Jackson, Decatur and Ocean Sts, directing motorists to the Garden State Parkway, Route 9 and the Ferry via Broadway Avenue; and at Beach Avenue and Patterson Street, moving the sign that says “next right to CM Point and Ferry” closer to the intersection of Beach and Broadway. It is believed that incorporating this signage will redirect at least some of the traffic leaving Cape May from the Lafayette Street/Washington Street/Pittsburgh Avenue exit routes to The Ferry/Garden State Parkway via Broadway and the West Cape May bridge.

**NEW**        *Signs to Ease Traffic on Lafayette Street Near the Entrance/Exit of Cape May*

It is recommended to place a sign advising motorists to stay left for 'The Historic District, Tennis Club, Physick Estate' at Lafayette Street before Sidney Street. It is also recommended placing, at Sidney and Washington Streets, a sign advising motorists to turn right on Washington Street for 'The Historic District, Tennis Club, Physick Estate' and retaining the signs directing motorists to turn left for the beaches and Coast Guard Station. It should be noted that there are existing signs on Lafayette Street before Sidney Street advising motorists to stay right for center city and the business district and left for the beaches and Coast Guard Station. However, it is believed that the additional signage directing motorists to the Historic District, Physick Estate and tennis club via Washington Street will divert that traffic from the more heavily traveled Lafayette Street onto the less heavily traveled Washington Street, further relieving congestion on Lafayette Street resulting from incoming traffic.

**NEW**        *Signs to Ease Congestion on Lafayette Street between the Acme and Collier's.*

It is recommended to place a sign advising motorists to turn right on St John Street for “West Cape May, Cape May Point” at Lafayette and St. John Streets and also recommends placing a sign, at Broad and Elmira Streets, advising motorists to turn right on Elmira Street for “West Cape May, Cape May Point”. It is further recommended to place a sign on Elmira Street at the edge of town boundary advising motorists to turn right on Broadway for “Garden State Parkway and Ferry”; and to turn left on Broadway for “West Cape May and Cape May Point”. In addition, the Committee recommends placing a sign on West Perry Street at Broadway (on the “Godmothers” corner) advising motorists coming from Cape May Point to turn left for “Garden State Parkway and Ferry”. It is believed that adding this signage will divert at least some of the traffic passing through Cape May to Cape May Point, West Cape May, the Ferry and the Garden State Parkway away from center city thereby reducing congestion in that area due to transient motorists.

*General Signage Issues (pp 61-62)*

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There are several global issues that these signing recommendations address. First, they spread entering and exiting traffic out which will relieve congestion in the downtown business district. Second, they expose motorists to other parts of the City, including businesses that they would not normally see. Third, they also expose motorists to additional parking opportunities, both metered and unmetered, that could be used both then and in the future to alleviate the parking crunch in the downtown area. While the change in the traffic signal timing sequence at the intersection of Ocean Street and Washington Street has had some very positive effects in decreasing the pedestrian/vehicular conflicts, some visible signage to remind pedestrians to obey the signals could also help. *It is recommended that signs with the message “Pedestrians, Be Courteous, Obey Walk Signals” be installed on the signal poles on all four corners of the intersection facing approaching pedestrians on the Mall, as well as those coming from the Washington Street approaches.*

Many of these signing recommendations involve county roads, so any implementation will require concurrence and coordination with the Office of the County Engineer.

**This recommendation has not been implemented and remains valid.**

**The following new Committee recommendation shall be added as follows:**

**NEW**            *Uniformity and Esthetics of Signage*

**In recognition of the historic beauty of the City of Cape May, the Committee recommends that all of the signage be uniform, attractive and in consonance with the historic beauty of Cape May; accordingly, the design of all signage will be subject to the approval of the Cape May Historic Preservation Commission.**

**Pavement Markings (p.62)**

Pavement markings provide an important, cost effective function in providing guidance and information for both motorists and pedestrians. As a general statement, the existing pavement markings throughout the City are properly placed and in relatively good condition, although a few were beginning to fade by the end of the summer. Once pavement markings are placed, they must be maintained since they do deteriorate rapidly due to weather and traffic flow. This is especially true for transverse markings such as stop lines and crosswalks. Certain types of crosswalk marking designs and materials can reduce labor and maintenance costs, while enhancing the visibility of the crosswalk.

In addition to how they are placed, the composition of pavement marking materials is critical to their durability. NJDOT has done significant research into pavement marking materials and their durability. The following is a brief summary of those findings. There are four commonly used materials: paint, epoxy, thermoplastic, and inlaid tape. Paint is the least durable, lasting about one year; epoxy and thermoplastic pavement markings will last three (3) to five (5) years; and inlaid tape applied to new asphalt could last up to 10 years. The life cycle of all of these

materials is increased significantly with the addition of glass beads to the mix. The beads also provide these materials with their nighttime retroreflectivity. The State recommends that thermoplastic pavement markings be used for stop lines, crosswalks, and word and symbol messages and the other three materials for center lines and edge lines. To reduce long-term maintenance costs and work efforts, consideration should be given to using long life pavement marking materials in future applications.

***Beach Avenue from Grant Street to Broadway (p. 62)***

The current positioning of the centerline pavement markings on a portion of Beach Avenue restricts the movement of traffic when motorists are entering and exiting parking spaces on the beach side of the street. The travel way is of sufficient width to allow for the shifting of the centerline to improve traffic flow. *It is therefore recommended that the centerline on Beach Avenue between Grant Street and Broadway be relocated approximately five (5) to seven (7) feet to the north of its current location.*

**The above recommendation remains valid and it is recommended to add the language as indicated above.**

**The following new Committee recommendations shall be added as follows:**

**NEW**      ***Beach Avenue from Ocean to Howard Streets***

**It is recommended that left turn lanes be added at Ocean Street, Gurney Street, Stockton Place and Howard Street to allow traffic proceeding eastward to make left turns without impeding the through eastbound traffic on Beach Avenue. This would alleviate some of the congestion caused by motorists desiring to turn left at those intersections.**

**NEW**      ***Beach Avenue***

**It is recommended to place additional signs along Beach Avenue warning motorists that pedestrians in designated crossing areas have the right of way. At present there are only a few signs warning motorists that pedestrians have the right of way crossing Beach Avenue. It is recommended that such warning signs be placed along Beach Avenue at least between alternate pedestrian crossings from Pittsburgh Avenue to First Avenue in proximity to the designated crossing areas. In addition, it is recommended that pedestrian crossings at all streets intersecting Beach Avenue, between Wilmington Avenue and First Avenue, be clearly marked on the surface of Beach Avenue at each intersection. Furthermore, it is recommended that a pedestrian crossing area be marked across Beach Avenue at the east end of the promenade. Because there is an entrance to the beach at the east end of the promenade, people routinely cross Beach Avenue to enter the beach or the promenade at that location. It is recognized that this location is in the middle of the block between Madison and Philadelphia Avenues and therefore would not normally be a suitable location for a designated pedestrian crossway. However, since pedestrians have been**

crossing Beach Avenue here and will continue to do so, safety concerns dictate the placement of a clearly marked cross walk for people entering and leaving the beach and promenade.

***Lafayette Street at St. Johns Street (p.63)***

During periods of congestion on Lafayette Street, traffic backs up from the traffic signals at Ocean Street and the Transportation Center through this intersection, frequently blocking it. Because St. Johns Street is very narrow and this is a 'T'-style intersection, many motorists do not notice it. In order to improve the visibility of the intersection and inform westbound motorists of its width, *it is recommended that crosswalks be painted across all three approaches and that two "Do Not Block Intersection" signs be installed, one on the near right side corner and one on the far right corner of the intersection.*

**This recommendation remains valid and to the extent they have not yet been implemented, the Board proposes that the recommendation remain. It has been observed that this remains a significant problem area.**

## **PARKING**

**The following new Committee recommendations shall be added as follows:**

**NEW *Additional Parking Meters and Tiered Parking Rates***

**It is recommended that the installation of additional parking meters along Beach Avenue from Trenton Avenue to Wilmington Avenue. It is also recommended to install parking meters from Beach Avenue to New Jersey Avenue on Madison, Philadelphia, Reading, Trenton, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Brooklyn and Wilmington Avenues. The addition of these meters is consistent with the meters already installed along Beach Avenue and those streets perpendicular to Beach Avenue between Second Avenue and Queen Street.**

**It is recommended that there be two tiers of parking rates. There should be a premium rate, which is higher than the present standard rate, for prime locations such as those adjoining the mall and those along Beach Drive. The present standard rates would remain in effect for all other parking locations. In addition to increasing parking meter revenues, this two tiered system would encourage motorists to park at more remote, less expensive places such as the Jackson Street lot or at free lots such as the Elementary School lot. It is also recommended that the three hour limit should be enforced at those parking spots in the vicinity of the mall to encourage turnover.**

**It is recommended that a substantial portion of the parking meter revenues be earmarked for other parking and traffic matters, for example underwriting free parking at remote locations such as the Cape May Elementary School lot and free transportation from those lots to Cape May attractions such as the beach and the Mall.**



**NEW** *Unloading/Loading Zones at Beach Entrances*

It is recommended to create and maintain unloading/loading zones at each beach entrance with appropriate signage identifying each zone as such. Since there “no parking” areas are presently located at most, if not all beach entrances, this might simply entail erecting the appropriate signage and identifying these areas as beach goers unloading/loading areas as part of the publicity program (see below). The Committee also recommends that the signage incorporate appropriate messages regarding the availability of shuttle service between the beach and the remote parking areas.

**NEW** *Opportunities for Parking with Changing Regulations*

In the past, compliance with state motor vehicle code has required the elimination of a significant number of on-street parking spaces within the City. An example of this situation was the elimination of parking opposite of ‘T’ intersections within the City. Intersections typical of this characteristic include Ocean Street’s intersection with Beach Avenue. All parking spaces were eliminated on the ocean side of Beach Avenue for the required distances opposite Ocean Street.

Currently, there is pending state legislation that could alter requirements for on street parking. Municipalities could gain greater control of on-street parking and safety standards within their own communities. While the outcome of any proposed legislation is unclear at this time, the City should remain proactive in its objective to provide additional parking and seek safe on-street parking opportunities as they become available.

***Paired Parking (p. 63)***

~~Parallel parking maneuvers along a curb line can cause significant congestion in high traffic areas, especially in areas where travel lanes are narrow. Studies have shown that typical curbside parking space lengths around 22 to 24 feet, similar to that found throughout the City, require motorists to consume 32 seconds maneuvering their car into a position where it no longer blocks the travel lane. This time can vary widely depending on the type of vehicle and driving skill of the driver. Such delays could cause following motorists to lose up to one-half of the available green time at the next signalized intersection. If this maneuver time obstructing a travel lane can be decreased, congestion will ease.~~

~~In the 1970's, a new concept in curbside parallel parking was introduced. It shortens the individual parking stalls and provides for a distinct maneuver area between pairs of parking spaces. This system is most effective when implemented on streets which are, by design, too narrow for anything but parallel parking and too congested to accommodate it well. Studies of parking maneuvers with this type of paired parking shows that through traffic is obstructed less than five (5) seconds on average since most of the parking maneuvers, except for the initial slowing of the vehicle, are accomplished outside of the travel lane.~~

~~This paired parking concept also lends itself to the placement of landscaping or street furniture adjacent to the maneuver area. With good engineering, the maneuver areas can be located to include curb cuts, or fire hydrants to minimize loss of parking spaces as the parking lane is reconfigured.~~

~~Several configurations of the paired parking system have been evaluated over the years. The currently recommended configuration is composed of two, 17 foot spaces with a 14 foot maneuver area between each pair. A typical layout is shown on Figure IV-9. It is possible that a couple of existing spaces could be lost in the configuration of a block; however, the positive effects on traffic operations and aesthetics far outweigh that loss. In some cases, the loss of metered spaces could be offset by installing meters on another block in the same area.~~

~~This parking configuration can be installed any place curbside parking maneuvers interfere with traffic movement, whether metered or not.~~

~~To significantly reduce traffic congestion, it is recommended that this configuration be installed at the following locations: along Beach Avenue between Howard and Madison Streets and also between Decatur Street and Grant Street.~~

**Paired parking was implemented in front of the Post Office along Washington Street and was later reverted back to parallel parking after it was determined as problematic. It is recommended that this section be removed as indicated above.**

***Ocean Street, Vicinity of the Star of the Sea School (p. 64)***

During school days, school buses park along the westerly curb line of Ocean Street between Lafayette Street and Washington Street to pick up and discharge students attending the Star of the Sea School. Due to the narrowness of Ocean Street in this area, the buses block all but about five (5) feet of the southbound lane. As a result, all southbound vehicles must cross the centerline to pass the buses. *City officials should work with the administration of the Star of the Sea School to see if the school bus loading area can be relocated to another location. Two possibilities are on-site, or to the school side of Decatur Street since that street has just been converted to one way operation and the required travel way has thus been cut in half.*

**These recommendations remain valid to the extent they have not yet been implemented, and should be retained in the updated Master Plan for further consideration.**

***Parking Demand (p. 64)***

One of the most significant traffic issues in Cape May is the difficulty of finding a parking space in the downtown. As noted in the Existing Conditions section, on-street parking spaces in the downtown are at capacity on most summer days. Indeed, it can be difficult to find a parking space in the entire western third of the city, roughly west of Jefferson Street. The parking

situation, in turn, contributes to traffic congestion in the downtown, as motorists frequently circle blocks several times in the effort to find a parking space.

While on-street parking on Beach Avenue east of Madison Avenue also fills up in the course of the day, it is generally possible in this area to find a parking space one or two blocks removed from the beach. Addressing the parking problem in the downtown, on the other hand, requires a comprehensive solution. As discussed earlier, the parking situation has worsened in the past 16 years, a trend that will likely continue.

***Parking Supply (pp 64-65)***

The City has increasingly limited options for creating new parking spaces in the downtown. A 1986 Cape May traffic and parking study recommended expanding the Perry-Jackson lot, and re-organizing the Bank Street lot to create more spaces. Both of these recommendations were implemented. The Department of Public Works has been active in restriping on-street parking areas to yield a greater number of spaces, but these result in relatively few additional spaces compared to the demand. There are few under-utilized lots in the downtown today. However, one possibility for a new surface or structured parking facility would be the site of Vance's Bar.

It is understood that the current owner may be interested in selling this property. This site could be developed in conjunction with the adjacent parcel occupied by the Wise Anderson Recreation Complex. This complex is in need of rehabilitation; if it is decided to develop a local park on another site, this site would be available for parking. Together, these two sites would comprise a parcel of approximately 320 by 300 feet. If the entire parcel could be developed as a surface lot, it would yield about 300 parking spaces, which would be a major asset in addressing the downtown parking shortage. Commercial land uses and parking lots in the downtown were examined to identify the possibility for sharing parking with private uses. Based upon field views, this alternative does not offer significant potential to create new spaces.

The City is considering the possibility of developing surface parking in the vicinity of the intersection of Elmira and Venice Streets. Presuming that environmental and community impact issues could be addressed, the City has indicated that this lot could accommodate 100 spaces. *This lot is about one-quarter mile from the Mall, and employees in downtown establishments would be very likely to use it if given the opportunity.*

**The City has continued to evaluate implementation of parking at Elmira Street. This recommendation remains valid. It is recommended that conversion of the identified "under-utilized lots" in the downtown area for parking be pursued. Based upon preliminary investigations by the Master Plan Parking and Traffic Advisory Committee, the possibility of sharing private parking lots for public use does not appear to offer significant potential for creating new parking spaces. The major objections of the private owners seem to involve liability and staffing issues. It is further recommended that the City evaluates other potential sites for parking. Sites located out of the center of town may be viable if connection with the shuttle system is provided.**

***Parking Enforcement (p. 65)***

As discussed in the Existing Conditions section, up to 8% of motorists park longer than the three hours permitted at most meters on streets around the Washington Street Mall. *It may be possible to reduce this violation rate, and thus create greater turnover at these meters, through more rigorous enforcement of the three-hour limit. This can be accomplished simply by chalking tires.* A parking enforcement officer would circle downtown streets and make a colored chalk mark on the tire of vehicles, and return three hours later to identify vehicles with these chalk marks. These vehicles would then be ticketed.

Cape May City could maintain its image as a tourist-friendly community by waiving the first ticket, but treating the second parking ticket as a traffic offense. This would be especially advised since many visitors to the city would not necessarily be aware that “meter-feeding” is not permitted. The primary goal of this ticketing program would be to reduce the number of violations by downtown employees or regular visitors.

It should be noted, however, that enforcement of the three-hour limits would have limited potential for addressing the parking problem downtown. Even if all employees currently parking on the streets adjacent to the Mall – Carpenters, Lyle and Mansion – moved their vehicles elsewhere, the spaces freed up would be far lower than the current excess parking demand.

**Assuming that a certain amount of extended parking still exists, the recommendations made under this heading shall remain valid to the extent the recommendations have not yet been implemented.**

***Satellite Lots and Shuttle System (pp 65-72)***

One of the most promising means for alleviating parking demand downtown would be the creation of an effective bus shuttle and satellite lot system. Either of these two strategies can be effective in reducing parking demand in downtown Cape May, but since they would be most effective in combination, they will be discussed together.

A “satellite lot” refers to any lot outside the downtown where visitors, or employees living outside the downtown, could park their vehicle and thence walk, bicycle or shuttle to the downtown. Ideally, a satellite lot should be located to the north of the city so that motorists would not need to encounter the congestion on Route 109 between the Canal Bridge and Schellenger’s Landing Bridge, or on Lafayette Street in Cape May.

There is an existing satellite lot on Lafayette Street at the Cape May Elementary School. There are 62 spaces at this school, including six handicapped stalls. In the summer, a sign is installed on Lafayette Street southbound in advance of the lot, as well as at the lot itself. A sign indicates that a CAT (Cape Area Transit) shuttle passes by the lot, although there is no information on the schedule or where the motorist should stand to wait for the shuttle. On field views, some motorists were observed apparently waiting for the shuttle in the parking lot, while the shuttle drove by on Lafayette Street. Further, as is true of the CAT shuttle itself, the existence of the

satellite lot has been poorly publicized. Very few vehicles – less than 15 – were ever observed using the lot.

A factor in the poor usage of the elementary school lot may be its location. It is about 1/2 mile to the Mall, and 0.6 miles to Beach Avenue. Studies show that people are reluctant to walk more than 1/4 mile after parking, although some people were observed to be walking to the downtown. Further, visitors have to pass through significant congestion – between the Canal Bridge and Schellenger’s Landing Bridge – to reach this lot, and may not see the point in parking outside the downtown once they have navigated the most congested roadways. Although the CAT shuttle services this lot, it runs relatively infrequently, at once every 30 minutes, and is relatively expensive at \$2.00 fare. At this fare, a couple would spend \$8.00 for a round trip, far more than the \$4.50 that would be required to park at a downtown meter for six hours. For a larger family, it would, of course, be even more costly to use the CAT shuttle.

ORA examined the possibility of locating a satellite lot outside Cape May City, at sites recommended by the *Cape May Intermodal Ground Transportation Feeder Study*, prepared by the South Jersey Transportation Authority in May 1995. Municipal officials from Cape May communities, including Cape May City, participated in this study along with other agencies. This study has been important in analyzing the potential for shuttle service in the region. For example, its recommendation for a “Downtown Loop” shuttle service led directly to the creation of the Cape Area Transit system. Recommendations for improved shuttle service in the future should build upon this study. This traffic study will thus analyze some of the recommendations in that report, pointing out, when necessary, how strategies should be revised.

The *Feeder Study* recommended three locations as being the most promising park and ride lots:

- Historic Cold Spring Village
- Rio Grande Mall
- Elementary School #2 – Cape May Court House

All three of these sites have limited potential as a successful satellite lots to be served by a shuttle. The distance that motorists on the Parkway would travel out of their way to reach Cold Spring Village is roughly equal to the distance to downtown Cape May. The large majority of motorists would likely not travel out of their way to that extent, when within striking distance of downtown. Further, this attraction is most popular on summer weekends – when the need for satellite parking is greatest. Based on communications with Cold Spring Village, it appears that it would be difficult to use its parking lot as a satellite facility. Motorists would have to go well out their way from the Parkway, passing through the Cape May Court House business district, to reach Elementary School #2, and this site also does not seem feasible. *Rio Grande Mall on Route 47 would be more feasible in terms of location, and should receive further consideration.*

One reason why these sites were identified in the 1995 report is their proximity to the Cape May Seashore Line rail service, which runs between the 4-H Fairgrounds and the Cape May Transportation Center. This excursion rail service is a welcome amenity and adds to the historic character of the Cape May area. The operator estimates its ridership at 22,000 to 24,000 per year,

which is useful in reducing traffic and parking in Cape May City. The City should promote the availability of the Seashore Lines, just as it should better promote the CAT shuttle.

However, the creation of any satellite lots outside the city should typically be planned with shuttle service in mind, not rail service. Shuttle service has greater potential for reaching a much larger audience than rail service. With round-trip adult fares ranging from \$5.00 to \$8.00, and child fares ranging from \$4.00 to \$5.00, depending upon the distance from Cape May, the Seashore Line is more costly than desired to attract a wide audience. Further, with only four trips per day into and out of the city, it runs far too infrequently to capture the many visitors. The City should thus not focus upon development of the Seashore Lines as a means for significantly reducing traffic flow into the city.

Several of the sites identified in the study have some potential for use as park and ride lots that would be serviced by a shuttle. These include the Charles Sandman Consolidated School on Seashore Road in Lower Township, and the Carl Mitnick School, also on Seashore Road in Lower Township. Charles Sandman School has approximately 70 spaces. Carl Mitnick School offers greater potential as a satellite lot, with 127 spaces in its parking lot, and capacity for parking on a flat, grassy area next to the asphalt lot. It lies along Seashore Road south of Route 9, and thus would attract motorists who prefer not to travel out of their way, especially for those coming from the ferry.

*Although not analyzed in the 1995 report, the location with the greatest potential as a satellite lot would be the grassy lot owned by the NJDOT on Route 109 at the base of the Canal Bridge. This site would be visible and accessible, and would be particularly attractive to incoming motorists inasmuch as congestion on Route 109 through Schellenger's Landing often starts at this point. However, this lot is across the roadway from a residential area, and a satellite lot here thus presents community impact issues that would need to be addressed. Major impacts would include traffic, lighting associated with the parking lot, and noise. Extensive landscaping would be needed to buffer this use from the residents. With roughly 54,000 square feet of this lot being developable – presuming environmental concerns could be addressed – this area could accommodate at least 180 vehicles.*

As noted earlier, the most promising means for intercepting both visitors and employees, and convincing them not to drive into the city, is a bus system, not a rail line. NJ Transit Routes 552, 313, 315, 316 and 319 all travel through Cape May County municipalities, terminating at the Cape May Transportation Center. However, none of these bus routes would likely attract the seasonal vacationer. These bus routes have been operating for many years, and have attracted only a small number of persons traveling to Cape May, most of them workers. The most frequent of these services runs hourly, and most of these routes take far longer to travel between the Wildwoods and Cape May than is desirable. The route with the shortest service between Wildwood Bus Terminal and Cape May only has four trips per day. Further, most families simply do not make the effort to investigate regular bus service on vacation. A special shuttle has the marketing appeal necessary to capture this audience.



Two strategies for shuttles offer the greatest potential for attracting employees and visitors from their personal vehicles:

1. *Improve attractiveness and awareness of the existing CAT shuttle; and*
2. *Develop a regional shuttle to pick up vacationers and employees from other municipalities in Cape May County.*

To a large extent, these two strategies are intertwined. Greater success in promoting the use of the CAT shuttle within Cape May City will lay the foundation for a well-used regional shuttle. In the absence of an effective shuttle system – both locally and regionally – it will become increasingly difficult to address parking demand in downtown Cape May without investing in new facilities, such as a parking garage. A discussion of both strategies follows.

#### Improve attractiveness and awareness of existing CAT shuttle

The City of Cape May has contracted with a private bus company, Lion Tours, to operate the CAT shuttle, which it has done for four seasons. The City of Cape May does not subsidize the service, although NJ Transit essentially provides a subsidy by leasing the shuttle at no charge to Lion Tours. In 2002, the City Route shuttle operated on weekends from May 24 to June 23, and September 6 to October 13. Between June 24 and September 2, the summer schedule operates between 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM seven days per week. There is also a Lighthouse Point route, which operates from June 21 to September 2. For both routes the fare is \$2.00 each way, and \$6.00 for a daily pass.

Official ridership data for 2002 is not available, but was estimated to range between only 15 and 100 riders per day. Assuming an average of 50 riders per day, the service would have attracted roughly 4,900 riders in the summer of 2002. The largest boarding is at the Washington Street mall; the second largest boarding occurs at the Canyon Club Marina, to pick up visitors who have boated to the city. In picking up riders at the Washington Street mall, and those who have arrived via boat, the shuttle has very little impact in reducing the number of persons who park down-town.

Given the large influx of visitors to Cape May in the summer, and the difficulty of finding parking down-town, the CAT shuttle should be able to attract a greater ridership than it currently does. The City of Cape May should take the following actions to better promote the shuttle:

*Create a more visible presence at the bus stop at the Washington Street Mall.* There is currently only one small sign southbound on Ocean Avenue adjacent to the Mall, mounted below a “No Parking” sign. A small plastic pouch affixed to the signpost contains schedules. Neither the sign nor the pouch is very visible. A more prominent sign should be installed here. In addition to the schedules in the plastic container, there should be a sign depicting the CAT route. Ideally, there would be a bench and/or shelter associated with this bus stop. The CAT would also benefit if the wide sidewalk at this location were cut back to create a “bus pull-out.” The bus could wait here without creating congestion on southbound Ocean Avenue, much as the MAC Trolley and horse-drawn carriages have curbside locations out of traffic on the northbound side of Ocean Street.

*Create a more visible presence at other key locations.* A number of CAT signs are posted at other locations around the city. Similar to the recommendation made for the Washington Street Mall, these signs should be more visible, with an affixed route map and with associated benches and/or shelters. Reserved bus stops should be created along Beach Avenue. This may involve the removal of several parking spaces. The removal of parking spaces is less of an issue on Beach Avenue east of Madison Avenue, since parking demand here is less pronounced. However, even on Beach Avenue west of Madison Avenue, the City should consider that a more functional shuttle system may lessen the demand for parking.

*Promote the shuttle.* Currently, many visitors remain unaware of the existence of the shuttle. As one example, ORA staff spoke to long-time annual visitors to the city, staying in a large hotel on Beach Avenue, who said they would have used the shuttle if they knew about it. Little effort is made to inform visitors of the shuttle. The availability of the CAT should be advertised on the web site for Cape May City, the Cape May City Chamber of Commerce, and other web sites. It should be described in literature sent to visitors. Participating members in the Chamber of Commerce should be encouraged to mention the CAT in their literature or on their web sites, and have CAT shuttle brochures in their shops and lodgings.

*Lower the price, and increase frequency.* As discussed above, Cape May City can take many actions to promote use of the shuttle. To lower the price of the shuttle, however, coordination with the operator of the shuttle is required. Particularly for larger groups, there is an economic disincentive to use the shuttle, and many visitors thus choose to drive and park at a meter. To encourage more visitors to use the shuttle, the fare should be lowered from \$2.00 per trip. The fare was increased from \$1.00 to \$2.00 at the beginning of the 2002 summer season, and the operator reports that ridership did not seem to have been affected. However, the ridership currently is quite low, and does not represent a normal market in which consumers' choice is affected by price. With greater awareness of the service, price will start to factor into the willingness of riders to use the service. The ideal situation would consist of greater promotional efforts by the City, and lower CAT fares. Among the most effective actions the City could take to increase shuttle ridership would be to institute free service. Free shuttle bus service is commonplace at many resort communities throughout the country. This would obviously require a subsidy by the City to the shuttle operator. Financially, this would be most realistic if the City approved a Tourist Tax, as discussed later.

Develop regional shuttle to pick up vacationers and employees from other municipalities in Cape May County.

The CAT City Route was only one of four potential shuttle services discussed in the 1995 SJTA *Feeder Study*. One route discussed with significant potential to reduce traffic and parking demand is the Route 9/ Beach Feeder Bus Service. Originating at the Rio Grande Mall, and concentrating on locations along Route 9/ Seashore Road, this shuttle would stop at a number of large campgrounds, such as Wildwood Canadian Campground and Green Holly Shore Campground. Campgrounds, in general, represent a potential major source of ridership. There are 47 campgrounds in Cape May County, with over 15,500 campground sites. A survey of campground visitors reveals that their willingness to take the shuttle is in direct proportion to the frequency and cost of service. A large majority of campground visitors interviewed indicated that

they would use the shuttle if it had a 15-minute frequency and was free; even with a \$1.00 fare, a majority of campground visitors indicated that they would use the shuttle, if service had no more than 30-minute headways.

Other services discussed in the 1995 *Feeder Study* – such as a shuttle between Wildwood Convention Center and Cape May County Zoo, and the Atlantic City International Airport route, would have less impact on intercepting motorists traveling to Cape May.

A shuttle route not discussed in the 1995 report – but which should be considered by Cape May City in its effort to create a regional service – would be a route which serves the largest resort areas to the north: Wildwood Crest, Wildwood, and North Wildwood. Depending upon further study, stops in these resort towns could be combined with stops in Stone Harbor and Avalon, or stops in the large campgrounds to the west of the Parkway. It would be advisable, at least initially, to focus on the feasibility of combining service to the Wildwood communities with the campgrounds clustered around the Route 9 corridor to the south of NJ Route 47. Through the Wildwood communities, the service would not replicate the existing New Jersey Transit routes with their regular stops along New Jersey Avenue. Rather, the shuttle would have a limited number of stops at major hotel/attractions in the Wildwoods. In addition to the marketing that should be carried out by the City of Cape May, Chamber of Commerce, and local businesses in Cape May, this service should be heavily marketed by the hotels, campgrounds and major attractions in communities to the north that it would serve. The service should be re-named so visitors can immediately understand the focus of the route, such as Cape May Seashore Express. When presented as a service focusing exclusively on the needs of these communities, it will be easier to convince visitors who normally would shy away from the bus to avail themselves of this service.

As noted above, the regional shuttle would focus on visitors staying in campgrounds and hotels in Cape May County to the north. It is not necessarily expected that the regional shuttle could be successful in intercepting visitors from a long distance driving into Cape May for the day or longer. Visitors driving long distances specifically for the purpose of seeing Cape May City and Cape May Point – particularly those visitors staying more than one day, and with correspondingly more baggage – are less likely to leave their vehicles at a lot outside the city and transfer to a shuttle. The shuttle should target those people who are already staying or live in the area. As discussed earlier, the existing CAT “City Route” should be better promoted and made more attractive to serve longer-term visitors who are already in the City.

Although the DRBA shuttle between Lewes Ferry and the Cape May Transportation Center has often been cited as evidence that a shuttle system can be successful in the Cape May area, there are in fact better and more relevant examples, as discussed below.

#### *Case Study #1: Provincetown, MA*

Provincetown, Massachusetts is similar to Cape May City in a number of important respects. Both are very popular seashore resort communities that draw people not simply for their attractive beaches, but because of their historic ambience. As a result, both draw extensive traffic

from visitors staying in adjacent seashore communities. Both are at a geographic terminus; Cape May lies on the extreme south of New Jersey, and Provincetown is at the tip of Cape Cod. Both are affected by heavy congestion on roadways heading into the city, and parking in the downtown is highly sought after. Indeed, at their two public surface lots downtown, Provincetown charges \$2.25 per hour and \$1.75 per hour, much higher than the \$.75 per hour rate at Cape May public lots.

To serve visitors in adjacent communities who wish to visit Provincetown, Cape Cod Transit operates “The Breeze,” also known as the Provincetown Shuttle. Servicing areas roughly 10 miles from Provincetown, the Breeze transports visitors at campgrounds and hotels/motels into the city. Indeed, motel owners on the Cape regard The Breeze as a valuable amenity. Its fare for adults is \$1.00, with a typical frequency of 30 minutes. It focuses on day-trippers, and has had little success in intercepting people from Boston or other metropolitan areas to the north. For the summer of 2002, it had a ridership of 115,000, which is 23 times greater than ridership on the CAT.

#### *Case Study #2: Rehoboth Beach, Delaware*

Rehoboth Beach lies across the Delaware Bay from Cape May. Rehoboth Beach is a very popular resort community, and it is difficult to find parking downtown. Many Cape May residents are familiar with the ferry service between Lewes, several miles north of Rehoboth Beach, and Cape May Point. However, the activity of the DART (Delaware Area Rapid Transit) First State Resort Transit Service in the Rehoboth Beach area actually holds more lessons for Cape May. DART Route 201 shuttles persons to downtown Rehoboth Beach from a large campground outside the city, and a 525-space park-and-ride lot which is only about one mile from the beach.

Ridership surveys have indicated that most vacationers chose to use the DART Resort Service due to the parking situation downtown. In the summer, it has a frequency of 10 to 30 minutes. One-way fare for the DART is \$1.00, with an unlimited ride daily pass being \$2.10. Visitors pay \$5 to park their car in the DART park-and-ride lot all day; for this fare, everyone in the car is provided a free unlimited ride daily bus pass, and there is thus an economic incentive for families or groups of visitors to use the park and ride lot. This is very different from the CAT shuttle, in which relatively high individual fares present a major disincentive for large families. Visibility of and access to the park-and-ride lot is excellent, being located 100 yards from Route 1, the major arterial leading to Rehoboth Beach. There is also signing along Route 1 before the park-and-ride lot. For the summer of 2002, ridership on the Route 201 shuttle was 166,265, which is 34 times greater than ridership on the CAT.

#### *Case Study #3: Burlington, Vermont*

Unlike the municipalities featured in the first two case studies, Burlington, Vermont is quite different from Cape May. However, it does serve as an example of a municipality that is using innovative techniques to discourage employees from parking in its downtown, which has a very popular pedestrian mall. A shuttle operated by the Chittenden County Transportation Authority picks up employees at a park and ride lot on the outskirts of downtown, at which 200 employees typically park. A monthly pass costs \$15.00. Although parking costs downtown vary, the service

provides an economic incentive for employees to use the shuttle. The shuttle operates at a frequency of 15 minutes for two-hour peaks in the morning and late afternoon, and at a frequency of 30 minutes for the rest of the day. The City has the goal of reducing the frequency of the off-peak service to 20 minutes.

***Conclusion: Shuttle Service (pp 72-73)***

*Cape May City should coordinate with Cape May County and with other municipalities in the County on creation of a regional shuttle system.* Such a system would help reduce the demand for parking in downtown Cape May, and obviate the need for land acquisition or construction of new parking facilities. Employees can be accommodated at locations outside Cape May City, freeing up a greater number of spaces for customers. Involvement of municipal officials and the local business community, in both Cape May and other municipalities, would be critical for this service to succeed. There is an incentive for other communities to cooperate on a regional shuttle system. It would reduce traffic and congestion on their roads, just as it would on Cape May streets. It would also provide a means for vacationers in Cape May to visit these towns.

Although different in many respects, successful shuttle systems share certain characteristics:

- They are well-publicized, through tourist literature, brochures at establishments, web site links, and other means
- They have prominent signage, both for associated satellite lots and the shuttle service stops;
- They have a frequency of 10 to 30 minutes;
- They provide economic incentives to ride, with reasonable fares set at no more than \$1.00 for a one-way trip, or through setting a fee to park at park-and-ride lots, and providing free shuttle service.

*Cape May City should strive to incorporate these features in both a local and regional shuttle service.*

*Cape May should set the goal of attracting a ridership of 100,000 per year to an expanded shuttle service – both local and regional routes – up from the current ridership of 4,900.* Experience in similar communities demonstrates that this goal is very achievable, but it will require much more promotion and coordination than has previously been attempted.

**The City continues to incubate and foster the growth of the shuttle service. For the 2008-2009 seasons, shuttle service is being provided by the Great American Trolley Company. This service is subsidized by the City as the City recognizes that aiding the funding of the shuttle service is essential in developing a self sufficient service. It is recommended that the City strive to create a self-sufficient shuttle service by incorporating sponsorships by business and commercial groups, the accommodations industry and funds generated by riders.**

**It is further recommended that one of the long term goals should be the establishment of a fare-free shuttle service. Otherwise, it is recommended that the stated conclusion reached be included in the updated Master Plan.**

***Parking Garage (p.73)***

A parking garage in the downtown is a long-term possibility for the City. It is currently not the most desirable option for the City, since the parking situation is most problematic within a relatively confined season. *However, as parking demand grows in the future, and if the City is successful in lengthening its tourist season, a garage should be considered as an option.*

The most strategic location for a parking garage would be at the intersection of Lafayette Street and Jackson Street. This would be the first opportunity for parkers entering the downtown via Lafayette Street. The Perry-Jackson public lot could be combined with the lot currently occupied by Collier's Liquor Store lot. The ideal garage would consist of a three-store facility, with retail at the front of the ground floor, leaving the remainder of the ground floor and two stories above for parking. Such a facility could yield roughly 280 spaces in the garage; combined with 20 spaces in the remaining Perry-Jackson lot on the other side of Chestnut Street, there would be 300 total spaces, versus the 127 in the existing Perry-Jackson lot and Collier's lot combined. However, the facility would be quite expensive. Façade treatments would be more extensive than a typical parking garage, given the need to complement the Victorian architectural character of the city. Construction on a non-rectangular lot would likely also help drive up costs past the typical estimate of \$10,000 per space. Construction costs for the garage portion alone - not including the cost of the retail space, and not including acquisition costs - could be as much as \$4.2 million.

The Bank Street lot could also be investigated as a structured parking facility. This could accommodate a parking garage with about 360 spaces, with approximate construction costs of up to \$5.2 million. There would be not acquisition costs. It should be noted that the parking demand at this site would be somewhat less than the intersection of Lafayette Street and Jackson Street.

**There was substantially no support among the Planning Board and Master Plan Parking and Traffic Subcommittee members for the construction of a parking garage in Cape May. Although there are very serious parking problems, they exist only for approximately three months out of the year. Consequently, the Committee deemed it inadvisable for the City to incur the expense for a structure which may only be sufficiently utilized during a fraction of the year. That being said, the Committee recognized that, as mentioned in paragraph one under this heading, circumstances could change which might justify revisiting this issue. Consequently, the Committee recommends that a parking garage not be included in the short term plans of the City but might be considered in the long term if warranted by changes in circumstances.**



***Lease Restrictions (pp. 73-74)***

One factor in the large demand for parking in some neighborhoods is the rental of single-family residential units to persons who share the unit with other adults. In such cases, there are often several vehicles parked in front of a house which lacks the parking facilities to properly accommodate them. *It is thus recommended that the City ordinance regulating the rental of properties be amended, by requiring a clause in the rental lease stating that the number of vehicles is limited to the greater of one vehicle or the number of off-street spaces provided.*

**This issue has not been addressed to date. This recommendation remains valid.**

***Bicycle Facilities (pp 74-77)***

Bicycling is a popular activity in Cape May in the summertime. Visitors and residents enjoy bike riding along the beach and through the many attractive neighborhoods, both for recreation and exercise. Further, given the difficulty in finding parking spaces on many streets, it is a highly practical transportation mode. For this reason, *the City should maintain its strong support for bicycling.*

Bicycle activity in Cape May is so extensive that it is more characteristic of some European town centers than the typical U.S. city. Bicyclists are regularly found on every street, often riding the wrong way on a one-way street, or on the wrong side of a two way street. This is typically undesirable, but there are relatively few bicycle crashes in Cape May. Part of the reason for this is because nonmotorized modes are so omnipresent. The mix of bicycles, pedestrians, surreys, and horse-drawn carriages, along with the short blocks, and narrow and parked-out streets, combine to create natural "traffic calming." As a result, vehicular speeding is rare on most Cape May streets. Motorists in Cape May quickly realize the importance of being cautious in driving around downtown streets, and are alert to the presence of these non-motorized modes.

The mix of motor vehicles and bicycles is more of a concern on Lafayette and Washington Streets, where the visual cues for slower vehicular speeds are not as pronounced, and motorists pass bicyclists at higher speeds. Because the lanes on Lafayette Street and Washington Street are narrow, motorists pass uncomfortably close to bicyclists. *For this reason, the creation of bicycle lanes would be desirable on these two roadways.* However, bicycle lanes could only be striped on these two roadways if they were converted from two-way to one-way streets, as discussed earlier and depicted in Figures IV-4 and IV-5. (The proposed bicycle network system is depicted in Figure IV- 10.)

Between the base of Lafayette Street and the border with West Cape May Borough, West Perry Street and Jackson Street could be integrated into bike route system, although the limited roadway width does not permit the creation of bike lanes. *Cape May should also coordinate with West Cape May Borough in encouraging the marking of bike lanes on Sunset Boulevard in that community.* Sunset Boulevard, which connects with West Perry Street in Cape May, leads to the Cape May Point Lighthouse and is an ideal route for recreational bicyclists. The typical cross-section on Sunset Boulevard is two 10-foot travel lanes, an 8-foot westbound shoulder, and 6-foot eastbound shoulder. This cross-section is bicycle-compatible today and would benefit from bike lane markings.

~~*Bicycle lanes should be striped today on Pittsburgh Avenue. That street varies from 58 to 60 feet, with a typical cross-section being two 15-foot travel lanes, and two 14-foot shoulders. Within the existing shoulder configuration of 14-foot, 8-foot parking lanes could be striped together with a 6-ft. lane marked for bicycle use. The 15-foot travel lanes could also be narrowed to create wider bicycle lanes. This could be useful in slowing vehicles on Pittsburgh Avenue, where speeding is more extensive than on most Cape May roadways.*~~

~~*Bike lanes could also be created on Madison Avenue south of Columbia Street, with its existing 48-foot cross-section. One possibility is two 11-foot travel lanes, with 13-foot shoulders, consisting of an 8-foot parking lane and 5-foot bicycle lane. Between Lafayette Street and Columbia Avenue, Madison Avenue could be signed as a bike route but without bike lane markings, accompanied by "Share the Road" signs.*~~

*As a link through the Mall area, Ocean Street could also be signed as a bike route. Beach Avenue, a popular corridor for bicyclists just as it is for pedestrians, could also be signed as a bike route. Neither roadway cross-section would permit the addition of bicycle pavement markings. However, the installation of bike route signage would alert motorists to the importance of "sharing the road." As depicted earlier in Figure IV-3, these two roadways carry more bicyclists than other roadways in the City, and the signage also acknowledges their de facto use as bike routes.*

*The City has installed bicycle racks at many places throughout the downtown and along Beach Avenue. Based on field views at various times during the summer, demand for bicycle parking continues to exceed supply. Demand is heavier at intersections than at the relatively few bike racks installed in mid-block locations. Examples of intersections with excess demand include Beach Avenue and Madison Avenue, Beach Avenue and Perry Street, Beach Avenue and Queen Street, and Beach Avenue and Broadway Avenue. There is slightly less demand at the bike racks on Beach Avenue east of Decatur Street, but even here the racks are often at capacity. The City should continue to increase the supply of bike racks, particularly west of Decatur Street.*

*Drainage grates with bars parallel to the roadway can catch the front wheel of a bicycle and cause loss of steering control. Bicycle wheels can drop into wider slots. For this reason, the City should replace these drainage grates with "bicycle friendly" drainage grates where practicable. In the interim, markings should be placed on the roadway to direct the bicyclist around the unsafe grate (Figure IV-11).*

**Although desirable, bicycle lanes on Washington and Lafayette Streets are not feasible unless those streets were to become one way. This issue has been addressed in the subsection dealing with one way streets and this recommendation should not be implemented until Washington and Lafayette Streets are made one way.**

**Bicycle paths have been constructed along Sunset Boulevard leading to Cape May Point, Sunset Beach and the lighthouse. West Cape May has also created bicycle paths along Park**

**Boulevard and portions of Broadway. The integration of these bicycle paths is a desirable goal which should be actively pursued.**

**The City has constructed bicycle paths on Pittsburgh, Madison and New Jersey Avenues and based on observations, these paths are popular and heavily used. The above referenced recommendations have been implemented and therefore removed as indicated above.**

**The remaining assumptions and recommendations under this heading which have not been addressed to date shall be retained in the updated Master Plan for further consideration and implementation as appropriate.**

### **Pedestrian Facilities (p. 78)**

The City of Cape May provides an amenable environment for pedestrians. The City is compact and built on a grid system. Because of this, pedestrians find it easy to walk around the downtown. The combination of narrow streets and, in many places, short blocks also facilitate safe, frequent pedestrian crossings. The pedestrian crash history is quite minimal given the large number of pedestrians in the summer months.

The major mid-block crossings throughout the Mall are typically well marked. *The City should also make an effort to install crosswalks at all unsignalized downtown intersections that currently accommodate large pedestrian volumes, both for stop and non-stop controlled approaches. As a typical example, the City should install crosswalks at the intersection of Decatur Street and Carpenters Lane (shown in photo).*

*Major pedestrian crosswalks in the City should be emphasized with prominent pavement markings.* One type which is becoming more popular due to both its added visibility as well as its durability is known as the continental crosswalk pavement marking. It is comprised of two-foot wide white, typically thermoplastic stripes with two-foot gaps between them. They should be installed so that the gaps coincide with the vehicular wheel tracks, thereby creating minimal wear and increasing the life expectancy of the material significantly. *Such markings should be considered for all midblock crosswalk areas and for high volume crosswalks at intersections, especially in the business district of Beach Avenue.* Figure IV-12 depicts a typical intersection with continental crosswalks.

The placement of "Yield to Pedestrians" signage on stanchions in the middle of the street, especially at the unsignalized major pedestrian crossings in the Mall area, act as reminders to motorists that they are obliged by State law to yield. Since they are in the middle of the street they also act as traffic calming devices to slow down traffic. *These signs contribute to the lack of recorded conflicts between motorists and vehicles in the Mall area, and their use should be continued, and expanded to other proximate crossings as appropriate.*

While the change in the traffic signal timing sequence at the intersection of Ocean Street and Washington Street has had some very positive effects in decreasing the pedestrian/ vehicular

conflicts, some visible signage to remind pedestrians to obey the signals could also help. *It is recommended that signs with the message "Pedestrians, Be Courteous, Obey Walk Signals" be installed on the signal poles on all four corners of the intersection facing approaching pedestrians on the mall as well as those coming from the Washington Street approaches.*

**It is recommended retaining the observations and recommendations made under this heading in the updated Master Plan for further consideration and implementation as appropriate.**

#### ***Pedestrian-Friendly District (p. 79)***

~~As part of its work on this Master Plan, ORA examined the feasibility of creating a “pedestrian-friendly district” for downtown streets. This district would prohibit vehicular traffic during peak pedestrian hours, perhaps through the use of movable bollards placed across a street entrance. This district would logically extend from the existing Washington Street Mall, since this area has the heaviest pedestrian volumes downtown. *After field observations and data review, it is recommended that no such district be created.* Based upon an analysis of crash reports, the streets around the Mall are currently safe for pedestrians. Vehicles driving on streets through the Mall, such as Decatur Street and Jackson Street, travel at relatively slow speeds in the summer season. In the 1 ½ years studied, there was one reportable pedestrian crash downtown, at the intersection of Ocean Street and Washington Street. However, vehicular movement through this intersection is critical to downtown circulation, and as such would not be a candidate for closure. It is also a concern that closing streets around the Mall would reduce access to the parking supply, and unnecessarily complicate traffic patterns, increasing volumes on other, equally~~

**The “pedestrian-friendly district” referred to under this heading was reviewed and it is again recommended that it not be created. Consequently, it is recommended that this section be deleted and not included in the updated Master Plan.**

**It is recommended that the following new section be added:**

#### **NEW Publicity**

**It is recommended that a new publicity program be instituted that is designed to assist motorists in navigating into, around and out of Cape May. The effort should identify preferred routes to the Mall, Beaches, Motels, B&B’s, the Victorian District, free parking, beach unloading/loading zones, walking opportunities and exit route options in an effort to minimize confusion, enhance traffic flow and reduce congestion.**

**It is recommended that this publicity program include at least the following: Creating and distributing maps depicting the preferred routes to the Cape May attractions as well as the location of the free parking lots and beach unloading/loading zones. The maps could also include a schedule of the trolley service.**

**In order to facilitate the distribution, there could be at least two versions of the maps. An Internet version which would be made available to users of the Internet, preferably as a feature of the Cape May website; and a hard copy version which is made available to visitors through all of the Cape May tourist attractions. In addition to maps, it is recommended that radio messages be periodically broadcast on 1700 AM which broadcasts tourist information and 101.5 FM, a station run by the Cape May Center for Community Arts.**

### **Implementation and Funding (pp 80-83)**

This section provides a summary of all recommendations made in the Traffic and Parking Chapter. The recommendations have been categorized based on the amount of time projected to design, secure sufficient funding and physically implement the improvements. The recommendations therefore have been separated into short term, intermediate and long term improvements.

Many of the recommendations can be implemented in fairly short order, since they only require changes in pavement markings or signage. Although much of the proposed conversion of Lafayette and Washington Streets into a one-way couplet can be accomplished with appropriate signage and markings, it will also require detailed preparation and publicity and thus cannot be accomplished immediately. Other improvements, especially geometric changes or the improvement of the CAT shuttle system, will require more funding. The most expensive item is a parking garage, but that is also the longest-term, and ideally would not be required if parking demand could be alleviated in other ways, such as a more effective shuttle system.

Major items could be funded through a tourism tax. Tourism is vital to the Cape May City economy, and is responsible for creating a large percentage of the jobs in the community. However, tourists do not contribute directly to city revenues, even as they place a large demand on city services. *To help subsidize a more active shuttle service, which would largely benefit tourists, or to finance construction of additional parking facilities and infrastructure improvements, consideration should be given to a "tourism tax", whether in the form of a modest tax on hotel rooms, on other services, such as restaurants, frequently used by tourists.* Many resort communities have implemented these taxes. Given Cape May City's reputation as a premier tourist destination, it is not believed that creating a tourist tax here would discourage visitation.

Following is a definition of improvement categories, followed by a summary of improvements:

**Short-Term Improvements** - Recommended improvements which could be completed ~~prior to the 2003 summer resort season~~ within a two (2) year timeframe, such as pavement marking and some signage changes.

**Intermediate Improvements** - Recommended improvements which can be completed in approximately ~~18 months or by the 2004 summer resort season~~ **two (2) to five (5) years**. This would include items such as roadway widenings and major revisions in traffic flow.

**Long-Term Improvements** - Recommended improvements which may take ~~two~~ **five (5)** or more years to complete, such as a regional shuttle or parking garage. **It is recognized that implementation of long-term improvements are dependent on state, county and local resource availability.**

**The information contained under this heading remains valid as updated above.**

**With respect to the tourism tax discussed in the third paragraph, it is recommended that this issue be thoroughly vetted by the public as well as affected groups such as the Tourism Commission and the Chamber of Commerce, before a decision is made to incorporate any such tax as recommended in the updated Master Plan.**

**Finally, the Board endorses the investigation of funding sources available through County, State and Federal agencies as well as quasi-public and private organizations for use in financing the improvements which are adopted for inclusion in the updated Master Plan; and urges that those sources of funding be vigorously pursued in order to minimize the financial impact which the implementation of such improvements may have on the City of Cape May.**

**It is recommended that the Charts providing guidance of short, intermediate and long term traffic circulation and parking goals found on Pages 81-84 be updated and evaluated by the City on an annual basis to provide guidance and planning for projects as funding becomes available.**





## **V. Housing Element**

**The Housing Element is contained in Section V (pp. 84-90) of the 2003 Master Plan. The Municipal Land Use Law N.J.S.A 40:55D-28(b)(3) requires a municipal master plan to include a Housing Element. It is a component of the master plan designed to achieve the goal of providing affordable housing by demonstrating that the zoning provides for adequate capacity and opportunity to accommodate residential and employment growth. It includes a statement of the standards, objectives and principals including, but is not limited to, residential standards and proposals for the construction and improvement of housing. It takes into account the environmental conditions, intensity of development, and existing zoning of a community; and a housing element which includes an analysis of housing, demographic and employment characteristics, and an analysis of municipal lands appropriate for affordable housing. It also sets forth the municipal fair share obligation.**

**To address these requirements, the City of Cape May Planning Board has prepared a new housing element and fair share plan titled “City of Cape May, Cape May County, New Jersey, Housing Element & Fair Share Plan” dated December 2008. The Housing Element and Fair Share Plan was adopted by the Planning Board on December 9, 2008 (Resolution 12-9-2008). The City Council of the City of Cape May endorsed the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan on December 16, 2008 (Resolution No. 282-12-2008). A petition for substantive certification has been submitted on December 29, 2008 to the Council on Affordable Housing for review and certification.**



## **VI. Community Facilities and Recreation Element Reexamination**

**The 2003 Master contains the Community Facilities and Recreation Element in Section VI (pp. 91-97). The Goals and Objectives that are relative to this element are stated on Page 22 under the heading “Environmental Protection”.**

**It is recommended that the following updates and revisions be included in Section VI of the Master Plan. This Element is revised and updated as follows:**

The City of Cape May faces an unusual challenge. Its year-round population is just ~~over 4,000~~ **under 3,800** people and yet it must provide a full range of municipal services to meet the needs of hundreds of thousands of seasonal visitors. The City has accomplished this mission through aggressive use of grant funding (facilitated by its designation as a “Center” in the State Plan); through a cooperative police service agreement with the adjacent municipalities of West Cape May and Cape May Point; and through innovative approaches to difficult problems, such its construction of the first water desalination plant in the Northeastern United States to provide an adequate supply of drinking water.

~~In 2001 Cape May’s voters supported a government reform initiative that for the first time authorized the direct election of a Mayor for a full four year term, to serve alongside a four-member City Council, whose members serve a three-year term. At the same time, the voters also elected a five-member Government Study Commission that was charged with the task of reviewing other local government options. A final report has not been issued, but the Commission has preliminarily voted by a 3-2 margin to recommend a Council Manager form of government, as provided for under the Faulkner Act. The two dissenting members of the Commission voted to support a Mayor-Council form of government. Once a final report is agreed to, it will be submitted to the City Clerk and a ballot question would be placed before the voters in 2003. Any approved changes would not become effective until 2004.~~

**The City of Cape May changed to a Council/Manager form of government on July 1, 2004. A municipality operating under a council/manager plan is governed by a municipal council which is elected at large and chaired by the mayor. The Council, in the council/manager plan, exercises the legislative power of the municipality. The mayor, in the council/manager plan, is a member of the council. The mayor presides over the council and has a vote, but no administrative authority. In addition to the mayor, there are four (4) other members of Council. The council appoints the municipal clerk, the municipal attorney, the tax assessor, the tax collector, the treasurer, the municipal court judge, and such other boards and commissions as may be provided by the administrative code.**

**The city manager exercises all the executive power of the municipality. It is the duty of the manager to see that all laws and ordinances, in effect in the municipality, are observed. The**

**manager appoints all other officers and employees of the municipality, and all other employees if no other method of appointment is provided in the code, or by general law. The annual budget, of a municipality operating under the Council/Manager plan, is prepared by the Manager, with the assistance of the treasurer. It is presented to the Council, in January, who then modifies it as it sees fit, prior to adoption.**



The City Government principally operates out of its City Hall, an older building at 643 Washington Street that was originally constructed as the local high school. As such, the building's design is inefficient for use as a modern government office building and it does not have adequate space to house all City functions. Police headquarters and most City administrative offices are located in City Hall, but the Recreation Department operates out of cramped quarters in Convention Hall and the offices of the Public Works Department are located at a separate complex, on Canning

House Lane. The former high school auditorium serves as a meeting room for City Council, the Planning and Zoning Boards, and other official ~~township~~ **municipal** meetings, but its balcony separates sections of City Hall's second floor. It must be used as a passageway between various second floor offices. **The Patrol Division and Detective Division of the Police Department are housed in a leased portion of the West Cape May Municipal Building.**

Nonetheless, the current ~~city hall~~ **City Hall** has the advantage of being centrally located at the edge of the downtown area. Further, it is located near a concentration of other public facilities, including the Fire Department building at Washington and Franklin Streets, **The Colonial House**, and the former Franklin **Street** School. A City-owned parking lot connects these facilities. A community-group has been given a ~~50-~~ **multi**-year lease on the Franklin **Street** School and is attempting to raise sufficient funds to renovate that building and to establish a Center for Community Arts. The Recreation Department continues to use the school's gym for its activities. The Fire Department building is ~~adequate for its current needs and~~ contains a public meeting room, equipment storage, bunk area (male only), office spaces including emergency management office space as well as a small fire museum. **Expansion of the Fire Department building may be required for a better utilization of existing space. The expansion could facilitate additional floor space that could be utilized for uses such as meeting area, training area, female bunk area office area.** Alternative sites are limited due to the built-up character of the City.

An immediate solution to the administrative needs of the City is not proposed here, but the City should remain alert to opportunities for future options, including the potential redevelopment of this entire complex of public buildings in the half-block bounded by Lafayette, Franklin and Washington Streets. This area of approximately two acres is shown in the accompanying aerial photograph. Other structures within the area include the headquarters of the Cape May Historical Society and two properties not now owned by the city: Alexander's Inn and the Macedonia Baptist Church. A number of the buildings in this area are historic and deserve careful future study. **Alternative sites for a new City Hall were explored by the City and it was**

**determined that they were not feasible at this time due to prohibitive acquisition costs and environmental constraints.**



The City's Recreation Department serves a number of users, both in the city and in surrounding communities, through fee-based programs. Discounts are offered to City residents, but all activities of the Recreation Department programs are self-sufficient and the department receives no budget from the City, though the City does provide for park maintenance and special events. The Recreation Department's year-round programs include youth sports, youth dance, adult softball leagues, youth soccer, ~~a martial arts program~~, aerobics, a swim team and an independent Little League program. Direct Users (individuals in unstructured programs) include those who avail themselves of open programs in the Elementary and Franklin School gymnasiums, and with swimming programs at the pool at the Elementary School and on the Coast Guard Base **for children, families, and senior citizens.**

An expanded program is offered to seasonal users. These activities are geared toward families and include a summer day camp and the children's playhouse. Special events, crafts festivals, and other attractions are conducted throughout the year. ~~principally at Convention Hall. A Wednesday night concert series is held on summer evenings at the band shell at Rotary Park,~~



~~near the Washington Street Mall. A “Concerts in the Park” series is held Wednesdays through Sundays at 8:00PM in the Rotary Park on Lyle Lane behind the Washington Street Mall. Trips are also offered to local attractions such as the Cape May Nature Center, The Wetlands Institute, the Cape May Point State Park, and the Cape May County Zoo at Cape May Court House. Special events, including parades, craft shows, art shows, concerts, beach volleyball, a sand sculpture contest and movies on the beach are provided.~~

Because city-owned recreational land in Cape May is limited, the Department makes use of other nearby facilities. Athletic fields in Lower Township and at the Cape May Elementary School are used once school is out for summer recess. The swimming pool and fields at the Coast Guard Base are made available when they do not conflict with base activities. County softball fields and outings to the County Zoo are also utilized in the department’s activities. There is no official relationship with the privately operated attractions such as the Cape May Environmental Center or the Cape May Bird Observatory.

**There is a defined need to acquire lands and consolidate ownership of the areas bordered by St. John Street, Lafayette and the Cape May Elementary School to facilitate an upgrade in active recreation. Playground equipment and playing field equipment needs to be upgraded.**

~~There is a question regarding the future of Cape May’s Convention Hall. The current building was constructed in 1965 to replace an earlier historic convention center that was destroyed by a hurricane. The present building is in need of repair, but structural improvements have been programmed. Some local leaders have suggested rebuilding Convention Hall, but that decision should not be approached lightly.~~

~~The total interior floor area of Cape May’s Convention Hall is 8,240 square feet, but most activities are limited to the 5,400 square foot area of the main wooden floor. The building provides the only significant publicly owned assembly area in Cape May, but it’s limited floor area cannot compete for large conventions and other attractions with either the 500,000 square foot Atlantic City Convention Center or even the 72,000 square feet of exhibition space available at the new Wildwood Convention Center. Nor is the demand for a new facility clear at present. Smaller conference facilities are available at several local hotels: Congress Hall, the Marquis de Lafayette and the Grand Hotel.~~

~~Another issue is that Cape May’s Convention Hall extends on piers over the beach, as shown in the photo below. This presents two problems: (1) it is highly susceptible to damage from future hurricanes and other severe storms and (2) new construction may not be permitted to extend southward beyond the limited footprint of the existing building. Careful future study is therefore needed before any decisions are made to replace the current facility. The City owns adjacent buildings west of Convention Hall that provide rental income. Other nearby privately owned buildings to the east could potentially be acquired. This would allow the provision of continued entertainment and restaurant uses along the Promenade and would supply rental income to help defray construction and maintenance costs for a new convention center. A second level exhibition hall could maximize the available assembly area, but care needs to be taken to protect~~

~~ocean views. Parking is also very limited in this area. Again, a market research and environmental study should be undertaken before any further actions are contemplated.~~

**Cape May has recognized the power of arts, history and culture in transforming the landscape of the community. The City has adopted a program of public-private partnerships that have infused a progressive growth of Cape May's annual economy into a ten and a half month economy as opposed to the average 12 week season typical in most seashore resort communities.**

**This program facilitates the leasing of City-owned property on a long term basis for \$1.00 per year with non-profit organizations being responsible for the renovations, operations, and maintenance of the properties. This ensures that the City maintains a nurturing environment by providing the essential physical infrastructure so that fledgling, local, non-profit cultural, arts and historical organizations can flourish while benefiting the taxpayer by reducing costs associated with maintenance of the properties.**

**Currently, the City has seven (7) such agreements involving City-owned property and they are listed as follows:**

- Emlen Physick Estate with Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts**
- Washington Street Mall Information Booth with the Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts**
- Franklin Street School with the Center for Community Arts**
- The former Welcome Center with Cape May Stage**
- The Nature Center with the New Jersey Audubon Society**
- The Marine Research Facility with Rutgers University**
- The Transportation Center/Welcome Center with the Chamber of Commerce of Greater Cape May**

**Through these public-private initiatives, tremendous opportunities have been presented and pursued to unify the business and residential segments of the City to achieve civic, social, cultural, arts, financial and tourism goals of the entire community. These partnerships have created employment opportunities that maintain the City's population base and solidify its economic viability. These non-profit organizations are staffed by a bank of volunteers who plan, develop and implement the vast array of programs, services and activities that are offered on a year round basis to residents and tourists alike. Without these partnerships, the comprehensive schedule of arts, history, cultural, social, environmental, educational, and recreational programs, services and activities could not be possibly funded and staffed by the City of Cape May without the dedication and commitment of these volunteers.**

**The City should maintain these private-public relationships and strive to investigate other opportunities that may present themselves in the future.**

The City of Cape May also recognizes the importance of the convention hall facility's role in providing comprehensive services not only for residents, part time residents and tourists, but also for business and civic groups, musicians, theatre and community groups, and non-profit entities. A consensus building approach was implemented to recognize the needs of the entire community and establish design criteria for replacing the 1965 structure, identified in the 2003 Master Plan as being in need of replacement.

A Public Question was voted on November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2008. The binding referendum was for the approval of the bond ordinance and permit financing for a new Convention Hall facility in the amount not to exceed \$10,500,000 with the final cost as well as the size, design, features, content and location of the convention hall facility to be determined based upon the input received at public forums. For this Question, 76% of the electorate voted and the question was passed with 66% of the total votes. City Council pledged an "open and transparent" process by holding five town meetings to allow public input on location, uses, design and construction as well as cost.



Based upon input from the general public, the proposed convention hall will house the same uses and programs as the existing hall and will serve primarily as a community center. The new multipurpose state of the art hall will continue to host events that include roller skating, craft shows, general exhibitions, dances for children, teens and adults, concerts, theatrical performances, special events, Jazz Festival, MAC Music Festival and the Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast. In addition the hall will allow the City to explore new cultural events and exhibits to be hosted therein.

The proposed new hall is anticipated to be fully operational during the 2010 summer season. The first floor will include an informational booth, vestibule, restrooms, lobby/prefunction area, reception desk, catering kitchen, elevator and monumental stair, main hall with seating up to 1200 persons, stage wings, storage, and several retail stores/commercial restaurant shell spaces. The second floor has a balcony, restrooms, administrative suite and several community meeting rooms.

The proposed new convention hall will be located at the site of the existing hall and will require demolition of the existing hall. It is proposed that the solarium be relocated to another beach front location as it is in sound physical condition and has fully leased retail space.



Cape May's greatest recreational asset is its beach strand, which attracts thousands of visitors to the community on a year-round basis. The exact acreage of the beach is difficult to determine, because it varies based upon both tidal conditions and erosion. Nonetheless, the City offers its visitors more than two and a half linear miles of a broad white sand beach. This area is

exclusive of those portions of the beach that are protected as part of the dune stabilization effort or for which access is restricted because it occurs within the limits of the U.S. Coast Guard base. The City has entered into a 50- year contract with the State and the Army Corps of Engineers to replenish the beach on a biennial basis, thus safeguarding this principal resource. The beach is protected during summer months by lifeguards and the Beach Patrol has sand wheelchairs available to promote handicapped access. Ocean rescue is facilitated by ~~motorized craft~~, a two waverunners, and ~~ten~~ twenty lifeboats.

**Accessible improvements (ADA) include a \$382,000 grant for construction of new access ramps from the street to the beach promenade. A follow-up grant is sought to then extend the ramps to the high-water mark at the beach and provide accessible showers, decks, and tables. Improvements are initially proposed at a total of four (4) beaches. These beaches are located at Grant Street, Gurney Street, Trenton Avenue and Wilmington Avenue. Ultimately, a total of ten (10) beaches are targeted for accessible improvements.**

Beyond the beach, the City's recreational assets are somewhat limited. The largest single tract of City-owned recreational land is approximately 9.5 acres of contiguous land that extends east of Madison Avenue, generally between Washington Street and Michigan Avenue. This site contains the historic and architecturally significant Emlen Physick Estate at 1048 Washington Street, which has been leased to the Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts. In addition to conducting tours of the Physick Estate, the Mid-Atlantic Center conducts a number of other year-round tourist-based activities, including its operation of the Cape May Lighthouse (which is located outside of the city limits). A portion of this 9.5-acre site is also leased to a private tennis club. Active city-managed recreational use is limited to approximately three acres, which is developed as Kiwanis Park. This Madison Avenue park features a tot lot and an attractive sitting area with a Gazebo and small pond. The entire 9.5 area tract is shown on the aerial photograph below.



## VII. Historic Preservation Element Reexamination

The Historic Preservation Element is contained in Section VII (pp. 98-100) of the 2003 Master Plan. It is recommended that the following updates and revisions be included in Section VII of the Master Plan. This Element is revised and updated as follows:



During the 2000 Master Plan Reexamination Report special attention was paid to the status of the City's historic preservation efforts because of its importance to the city's vitality. The HPC should be recognized for its contributions to the economic wellbeing of Cape May, of which much of its economy is based on its historic landscape.

This research has been updated by Wise Preservation Planning and is included here as the Historic Preservation Element. The earlier effort involved review of the existing regulations, meetings with officials of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), and discussions of the city's efforts with the National Park Service. More recently, Wise has reviewed new historic preservation design standards that were recently prepared by others and suggested amendments to the 2000 recommendations.

Both Wise and the HPC found that the preservation ordinances were generally working as intended. However a number of general concerns were identified **in the 2003 Master Plan**, as noted below. **There are eleven (11) concerns identified that contain assumptions, policies and recommendations. The following section identifies, gives the current status and updates the statements with recommendations as follows:**

### **ASSUMPTIONS, POLICIES & RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. There had previously been some confusion regarding the "flow" of an application. The new historic design standards will have a flow-chart which will improve the process. Applications are first submitted to the Construction Office, then they are reviewed as concept plans by the HPC, finally the plans are forwarded on to the Zoning or Planning Board, as appropriate. The application then comes back to the HPC for final approval. The new Historic Design Standards were enacted on December 17, 2002.

**The "City of Cape May Historic Preservation Commission Design Standards" has been revised to include flow charts for both Construction Permit and Development Review for Planning and Zoning Board. This specific recommendation has been addressed and should be removed from the list of recommendations.**



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2. There needs to be stronger – and codified – liaison between the boards and council. Informal reviews should be encouraged to prevent problems later on.

**The Planning and Zoning Boards, HPC and Council have made strides to coordinate their roles in the development process. This recommendation remains valid.**

3. Demolition by neglect had been a concern. A property maintenance code that addresses the issue of demolition by neglect was adopted by Council in 2000. It references the BOCA code and authorizes the use of liens to mandate improvements if owners are unable to cooperate. Had such an ordinance been in effect years ago, key historic structures such as the Admiral Hotel might have been prevented from becoming so deteriorated that renovations were no longer feasible. A more successful effort has been the restoration of the Congress Hotel, which reopened in 2002.

**The HPC has identified that demolition by neglect continues to remain a problem and it is recommended that the Property Maintenance Code Section 390 be revised to impose stricter time limits on the property owner to correct a violation.**

4. The HPC had previously recommended that the historic district be expanded to the whole city but that effort was not endorsed by the Planning Board. Current efforts have focused on a consolidation of the previous primary and secondary historic districts into a single unified district, following the previous boundaries. This boundary has been refined and is shown on the attached map. The HPC should serve as an advisory board for activity impacting historic resources outside of the current district. The critical concern is to explain how the review process would not include noncontributing properties.



**The consolidation of the primary and secondary historic districts has been implemented so that standards are cohesive for both districts and thus this recommendation should be removed. The HPC has again recommended that the historic district be expanded to the entire City. This recommendation is not endorsed by the Planning Board for the reasons given at the 2003 Master Plan. Concerns include overburdening property owners and developers with regulations.**

5. City should explore how the HPC could assist with design decisions regarding new construction outside of the historic district. It is true that the widespread introduction of new construction, built in an unsympathetic style, may threaten the character of the City. However, it is important to remember that many parts of Cape May are not characterized

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by Victorian design. Architectural features that are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood are of the greatest concern.

**This recommendation remains valid. The HPC has indicated there are approximately 600 historic structures within the City, and not all fall within the historic district. It is further recommended that as historical surveys are completed, the City should evaluate methods to protect structures located outside the historic district.**

6. It is recommended that the HPC look into the cost of hiring an architectural/historic administrator. This is done in other municipalities that review a similar number of applications. An additional inspector would also be helpful. Funding may be available from CLG grants. A professional education rotation should be created for HPC members to maintain the status of the CLG.

**The HPC has indicated that costs associated with hiring an architectural/historic administrator are prohibitive in implementing this recommendation. Funding through grant applications has not been successful. However, the HPC indicates that architectural/historic professionals are retained for review of specific projects. This recommendation should be removed as the HPC indicates that it is not likely to be achieved.**

7. A more effective follow-up system should be developed between the HPC and Construction Official. This would ensure that resources receiving a Certificate of Appropriateness are completed within the terms of the Certificate.

**A checklist has been developed by the HPC for the Construction Official and is currently being utilized. Enforcement of HPC Design standards continues to remain a concern and it is recommended that this recommendation remain.**

8. ~~The recently completed design guidelines~~ **“City of Cape May Historic Preservation Commission Design Standards”** are an important means of disseminating vital information about appropriate methods for and the importance of historic preservation in Cape May. The City and HPC should ensure that the guidelines are properly distributed and, when necessary, additional copies are professionally printed when the supply runs low.

**The Zoning Officer has indicated that the Construction Office provides copies of the “City of Cape May Historic Preservation Commission Design Standards” and up to 10 copies per week are provided as requested by property owners and developers. This recommendation remains valid and should be revised to indicate “City of Cape May Historic Preservation Commission Design Standards” in lieu of “recently**

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**completed design guidelines” as noted above. It is further recommended that new property owners be advised of the Design Standards, possibly through the tax office. Adding the Design Standards to the City website is also recommended.**

9. The public is often unaware that they are in the Historic District or that they own a historic resource. There is a need to produce a handbook of the historic resources and to advise new owners that they own a historic structure. Key structures should have plaques. These recommendations are already being approached in two phases.

**The City has adopted a new Historic Preservation Map on December 18, 2007. The HPC also maintains a Historic Building Survey Designation list. Providing plaques for key structures is a program that has not been implemented and there are no current plans to implement. It is recommended that the above recommendation remains valid as there remains a need to produce a comprehensive handbook for circulation to new homeowners and the public.**

10. The City should promote a better understanding with regard to the public and other governmental entities regarding the importance of the HPC in the planning and regulatory process and the economic well-being of the City.

**The City, HPC, Planning and Zoning Boards continue to strive in emphasizing the importance of the HPC in the planning and regulatory process. This continues to remain a recommendation as indicated above.**

11. The HPC and City is continuing to pursue grants, particularly through the CLG program, to conduct a city-wide survey of historic resources. Given the scope of the project, consideration might be given to conducting the survey in phases, thereby spreading the cost of the project over more than one year. Cape May must continue to jealously protect its status as a National Historic Landmark. These recommendations, coupled with the newly adopted design guidelines, will advance this goal.

**The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Natural & Historic Resources, Historic Preservation Office (HPO) continues to offer Certified Local Government (CLG) Historic Preservation Fund grants for eligible historic preservation activities. Eligible grant projects include:**

- **Historic preservation master plan elements**
- **Historic resource surveys**
- **National Register nominations**
- **Historic preservation education projects**

- **Historic structures reports**
- **Preservation plans**
- **CLG training opportunities.**

The HPC and City have been successful in obtaining CLG grants in the past and should continue to pursue this and any other grant opportunities on an annual basis. The HPC has utilized the grant process to implement the completion of historic survey process in phases. This recommendation continues to remain valid as the grants are awarded on an annual basis.



The following new recommendations are set forth below:

12. **Additional budgetary funding is requested to complete property surveys and educational needs. The City and HPC should also seek ways to fund other recommendations such as providing signage or plaques for key structures.**
13. **It is recommended that a liaison between the Planning Board, Zoning Board and the Energy Commission be implemented. The liaisons role will include providing input on the new construction to foster energy efficiency and more thoughtful construction in the City.**
14. **It is recommended that the Planning Board and City Council should notify the HPC for input on any proposed zoning changes.**
15. **It is recommended to update the Master Plan Historic Preservation Element by eliminating “Map #6 – Historic District” and incorporating “The Historic Preservation Map” dated July 11, 2006 prepared by Remington Vernick & Walberg Engineers as adopted by City Ordinance 127-2007.**
16. **During the creation of the latest Historic District mapping, the HPC has indicated that the Historic District Boundaries south of Beach Avenue (between Beach Avenue and the Atlantic Ocean) were omitted. It is recommended that the Historic District map be amended to reintroduce this area back into the Historic District.**

- 17. The HPC has indicated that recent City projects such as the new lifeguard station and mall improvements were designed without full review by the HPC. Although it is recognized that this review is not required by law, it is recommended that any future City projects that may impact historic districts or historic sites be reviewed by the HPC.**

**The Historic Preservation Commission has indicated that there are numerous historic and architecturally significant sites located throughout the City, and that the National Historic Landmark status pertains to the entire City and not just the Historic District. Cape May must continue to jealously protect its status as a National Historic Landmark. These recommendations, coupled with the newly adopted design guidelines, will advance this goal.**

## VIII. Recycling and Solid Waste Element Reexamination

**The 2003 Master contains the Recycling and Solid Waste Element in Section VIII (pp. 102-103). The Goals and Objectives that are relative to this element are stated on Page 22 under the heading “Environmental Protection”. This Element is revised and updated as follows:**

Cape May, like all New Jersey municipalities, participates in a mandatory recycling program. Cape May participates in the Cape May County Municipal Utilities Authority Regional Recycling Program and the goals of that Plan, as well as the goals of the New Jersey Source Separation and Recycling Act, are hereby incorporated by reference. **The City of Cape May contracts to collect recyclables from both residential and commercial properties, at curbside. The City is divided into five zones, with collection in each zone one day of the week.**

The City also maintains a drop-off station **known as the Central Recycling Station** at the Public Works Facility on Canning House Lane where residents and owners of commercial properties may bring their recyclable materials. This facility is open daily during the week in season, and has reduced hours out of season. Recyclables are transported from the Public Works Facility to the County’s regional processing facility for recycling. ~~The Public Works Facility accepts paper, glass, metal, plastic along with scrap metal, metal appliances and leaves and other yard clippings.~~ **The Central Recycling Station accepts paper products, glass food and beverage containers, plastic bottles and jugs, Christmas trees, leaves, grass clippings, yard waste, white goods, light iron materials, electronic waste and rigid plastic.**

The City is responsible for the trash and recycling collection for the public areas of Cape May, including the mall, promenade and public parks and beaches. In season, from April to September, the city is responsible for several hundred trash and recycling containers and empties them on a daily basis. Off-season these containers are emptied four times a week.

Currently glass, metal, and eligible plastic containers can be commingled in a recycling container. Paper and cardboard must be packaged separately in a paper bag or cardboard box and placed in a reusable container marked for recycling. Leaves and grass clippings are collected seasonally between April 15<sup>th</sup> and December 31<sup>st</sup>. Leaves and grass clippings are recyclable and are to be placed in reusable marked containers or compostable paper bags. The Public Works Department encourages residents to compost their own leaves and grass clippings and will provide information upon request.

The following regulations pertain to the treatment of recyclables collected or dropped off at the Public Works Facility:

- \* Paper may be placed in paper bags or in cardboard boxes. Paper must be uncontaminated newspaper, magazines, corrugated boxes, brown paper bags or writing paper.



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- \* All food and beverage containers made from glass, aluminum, plastic or tin are acceptable, but not flat (window) glass, mirrors, crystal, china or ceramics.
  - \* Leaves and grass clippings must be bagged in compostable paper bags or tarped to be placed in a dumpster. No plastic bags are permitted. Branches and tree limbs must be shorter than 6 feet in length and less than four inches in diameter.
  - \* Large metal appliances such as refrigerators, freezers, washers, dryers and hot water heaters are collected once a month on the regular recycling day in the first full week of the month.
  - \* Doors must be removed from refrigerators and freezers.

The success of the recycling program is critical in reducing both the cost and volume of solid waste that must be disposed of. It is therefore of concern to all citizens. ~~The goal for the State was to be recycling 65% of the total solid waste by the year 2000. In 1997, 61% of the solid waste was being recycled, but this had decreased to 53% by the year 2000. Cape May County was above average for the State at nearly 60%.~~ **The New Jersey Statewide Mandatory Source Separation and Recycling Act mandates the separation, collection and disposition of Designated Recyclable Materials and establishes a goal of 50% reduction of Municipal Solid Waste and 60% reduction of all solid waste through source separation and recycling by residential, commercial and institutional establishments.**

**The City has obtained a chipper, commercial shredder and leaf vacuum that has helped the City increase recycling rates. Additional recycling collection has been implemented for items including but not limited to boat shrink wrap, electronics and rigid plastics.**

**Cape May City has achieved a Municipal Solid Waste rate of 34.84% in 2007 which is similar to the Cape May County rate of 34.83%. Cape May City has met the 60% reduction goal in 2007 by achieving a 61.04% rate of total solid waste diverted.**

The City of Cape May believes that it has a high recycling rate, but it recognizes that the commitment to recycling of many residents and businesses may not be matched by seasonal renters who may not bother to separate out the recyclable material. **Contamination of recyclables and underreporting of recycling generated by the City continues to remain a problem in achieving the desired goals. The City should continue to evaluate and where warranted, implement additional recycling equipment, implement procedures such as more frequent pickups, single stream recycling, visitor drop-off provisions, and institute publicity programs to increase the recycling rate.**

**The City should also encourage Cape May County MUA to transition to single stream recycling. Single stream recycling is a program that means people no longer need to keep bottles and cans separate from paper and cardboard; all materials can be combined in the same container. Single stream recycling would allow municipalities to reduce staff, energy and maintenance costs and increase overall participation due to conveniences associated with this program.**

## **IX. Conservation Element**

The 2003 Master Plan does not contain a specific element for conservation. Although there is not an element for this portion of the plan, Goals and Objectives that are relative to this element are stated on Page 22. It is recommended that a specific Conservation Element be implemented at this time as follows:

### **IX. Conservation Element**

#### **ASSUMPTIONS, POLICIES & RECOMMENDATIONS**

##### **Environmental Protection & Conservation**

The vast majority of land not developed in Cape May is environmentally constrained by floodplain, wetlands or both. These environmentally sensitive lands, and the wildlife habitats that they support, are very much a part of what makes Cape May an attractive area to live and vacation and are also important for environmental tourism, such as birding. Where much of these lands are unable to be developed due to State development regulations, Cape May should strive to acquire lands that are developable in environmentally sensitive areas to preserve these lands from development and enable those to be used for passive recreation areas.

There is great concern regarding the potential development of these wetlands in East Cape May. A large residential subdivision plan has been filed but it has been in litigation with the State over the extent of the wetlands for a number of years. This 79 acre tract known as Sewell Point is a prime example of lands suitable for acquisition. The City should continue in its attempt to acquire this land, which would assure its permanent protection.

Much of the City is located within the one hundred year floodplain as delineated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency mapping. Zoning regulations require that the lowest floor level of any building be not less than ten and one-half feet above mean sea level to minimize property damage. The City should continue to enforce flood protection standards for development and implement flood protection/mitigation projects as funding allows. Benefits would include maintaining the City's reduced flood hazard insurance rates.

The City recognizes the importance of protecting natural resources. Current regulations preserve soils and existing vegetation and require the replacement of vegetation that is removed when land is developed. Cape May has a landscaping ordinance that requires up to 60% of a lot be left in vegetation and tree replacement for larger trees that are removed. Participation by the Environmental Commission and Shade Tree Commission in land development reviews has ensured compliance with the regulations and should continue.

Cape May's beaches are vital to both the environmental and physical protection of the City, as well as being one of its most valuable economic resources. Cape May recognizes the fragility of the beach and dunes and has invested heavily in beach replenishment projects in cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It has also adopted special land use controls designed to limit any further encroachments into these areas. As the beaches are the first line of protection from flooding and waves from storms approaching from the sea, continual preservation and enhancement of the beach and dunes shall remain a priority.

Cape May City has demonstrated an aggressive approach in implementing solutions and water conservation techniques to deal with problems associated with potable water. Salt water intrusion into the groundwater aquifers continues to remain a problem associated with Cape May City as well as other seashore communities.

The City solved its potable water salinity problem in 1998, when the desalination plant was completed. Cape May continues to supply other adjacent communities dealing with aquifer salt water intrusion problems with potable water. Cape May should continue its leadership role in dealing with this problem and strive to deal with problems associated with the desalination process, including energy costs and brine discharges.

It is recommended that the City implement alternative energy sources to help reduce costs associated with the desalination plant.

It is recommended that the City continue to monitor the desalination plant's NJDEP approved "permitted" discharges into Cape Island Creek to maintain conformance and eliminate potential adverse impacts.

### **Energy Conservation**

It is recommended that the City promotes energy and water conservation and efficiency measures including implementation of water efficient toilets, showers, faucets, and irrigation. Encouraging and implementing water conservation practices such as implementing rain sensitive irrigation controls, drip irrigation, rain barrel harvesting systems and drought tolerant planting selection are essential.

Cape May City should adopt practices that promote alternative energy sources and should continue its role as a "green community". The use of alternative energy sources including solar power, geothermal power, and wind power could provide long term energy cost savings and open grant opportunities for the City.

The City should advocate the use of solar energy for municipal projects. Cape May has proposed municipal solar energy projects that include the proposed convention hall, public works building and lifeguard headquarters. Municipal owned sites such as City Hall, Transportation Center, water tower, Cape May Stage, Firehouse, Franklin Street School, Mid-Atlantic Center for Arts, tennis club and Nature Center should be considered for solar or other alternative energy source.

Wind Power has played a significant role in Cape May County since 1706 and should also be considered for use in Cape May City today. Cape May City's location near the seashore may make it an ideal site for wind turbines and the City should look for project opportunities and consider further study where warranted. Furthermore, wave energy, geothermal energy, and other alternative energy options should be considered where viable.

The U.S. Coast Guard has proposed two 2-megawatt wind turbine generators at the U.S. Coast Guard Training Center in Cape May. It is understood that these turbines would address 66% of the facilities current energy use. The City should endorse the Coast Guard's wind turbine generator project as it is consistent with the energy goals and objectives of the City.

Since 1948, the City and the United States Coast Guard have progressively forged a cooperative and viable working relationship that has yielded numerous shared services and community programs which neither party could have operated or financed solely. A classic example of this relationship was the Coast Guard's support during the City's installation of a water desalination plant from 1995 to 1998. The Coast Guard provided technical assistance during the planning stages and lobbying support during the permit and funding phases of the project. This project not only addressed the City needs but addressed the Coast Guard base's needs as they currently are the largest bulk water user.

Using the City's prior relationships with the Coast Guard as an example, the City should also forge a relationship with the Coast Guard to take advantage of shared technical assistance and resources to address both parties future renewable energy projects. The relationship may provide opportunities for shared renewable energy initiatives in the future.

As private development of wind energy system projects becomes more prevalent, Cape May should address this type of development within its zoning regulations. The existing local zoning regulations do not address wind power improvements. Zoning should be adopted that includes standards for appropriate locations within the City, size and setbacks, appearance, and provisions to address abandonment.

The City should take an active role in incorporating energy efficiencies and strategies to reduce energy use and costs. The City should encourage and promote the use of energy efficient light bulbs in all municipal buildings. Electric low speed vehicles should be considered for the municipal vehicle fleet. Green Building Codes should be considered for all new and renovations to municipal buildings.

Deconstruction practices should also be considered for municipal projects. Deconstruction is the practice of disassembling a structure that allows for re-use and/or recycling components of a building. This process reclaims a substantial amount of materials and minimizes waste.

**It is also recommended that the City pursue certification through the Sustainable Communities program. Certification involves municipal completion of actions that pertain to energy efficiency, green design, health and wellness, land use and transportation, natural resources, operations and maintenance, sustainability planning, waste reduction and recycling. Upon completion of the certification program, municipalities gain access to grants up to \$25,000 that are intended to institute new greening and sustainability initiatives within the municipality.**