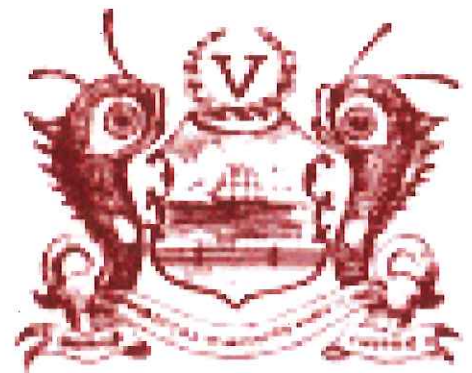


2016 Master Plan Reexamination  
City of Ventnor  
Atlantic County, New Jersey



Prepared by:  
Rutala Associates  
Polistina & Associates

December 2016

**Commissioners  
Committee**

Beth Holtzman, Mayor  
Lance B. Landgraf, Jr.  
Tim Kriebel

**City Administrator**

Maria Mento

**City Clerk**

Janice K. Callaghan

**Planning Board**

Jay Cooke, Chairman  
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Lorraine Sallata  
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Peter Tocco  
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Marie McQueen  
Leonard Mordell  
Michael Wieson  
Craig Hurless, Board Engineer  
Stanley Bergman, Jr., Esq., Board Attorney  
Patricia Kedziora, Board Secretary

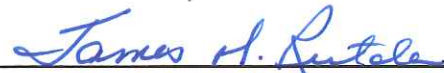
**Master Plan Steering**

Mike Wieson  
Jay Cooke  
Roman Zabihach  
Commissioner Lance Landgraf  
Mike Einwhechter  
Robert Gross  
Dan Stecher  
Stanley Bergman, Esq.  
Jim Agnesino

**Master Plan Team**

James M. Rutala, PP, AICP  
Rutala Associates  
  
Craig Hurless, PE, PP  
Polistina & Associates  
  
Richard Perniciaro, PhD  
ACCC Center of Regional &  
Business Research  
  
Mark Petrella, AIA  
SOSH Architects

Original signed and sealed in accordance with N.J.A.C. 13:41



**James M. Rutala, Licensed Professional Planner #2704  
Rutala Associates, LLC**

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## **1.0 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

The Master Plan represents the City of Ventnor's vision for itself and a means for guiding land development policy and planning decisions. Once adopted by the Planning Board, the Master Plan serves as the basis for governing land use throughout the City on both a private and public level. Goals and objectives serve as the crux of the Master Plan, outlining a vision for a community and delineate actions that can achieve that vision.

In recognizing the importance of a Master Plan or comprehensive plan for municipalities, the State of New Jersey enacted the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) which requires communities to have a Master Plan to zone. Per the MLUL, plans shall be reexamined at least once every ten years to ensure that goals and objectives remain current and to update the Master Plan based on changes underway both within and outside the community since the time of the last Master Plan Reexamination.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89, this report constitutes a Reexamination Report for the City of Ventnor. Ventnor last completed Reexamination Reports in 2006 and 1996, with an additional Reexamination Report and Land Use Element update completed in 1988. This Reexamination Report is based on the goals and objectives of the 2006 report, which itself was built upon approximately 60 years of land use regulation in the City of Ventnor. The need for a Master Plan Reexamination was underscored in the wake of Superstorm Sandy, which struck New Jersey in October 2012 and resulted in much damage in Ventnor and along the Jersey coast. Because of Superstorm Sandy, infrastructure needs and regulatory changes have significantly altered conditions in the City that require reexamination. This master planning effort is funded by a Post Sandy Planning Assistance Grant provided by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs.

To ensure that the public has significant input into the Master Planning Process a wide variety of meetings were held. A Master Plan Steering Committee was established and met monthly. The Committee consisted of four members of the Planning Board including the Chairman and the City Commission representative; the Planning Board Engineer and Solicitor, business leaders, a realtor, a representative of the Ventnor Tourism Association and the City Building Official.

In addition, two public meetings were held to receive input from the residents of Ventnor. The first was held on Saturday, July 27, 2016 at the Ventnor Education Community Complex and the second was held on October 17, 2016 at Ventnor City Hall. Both meetings were well attended and a wide variety of planning concepts and recommendations were discussed.

Members of the business community attended a focus group session on October 5, 2016 to gain insight and build consensus on various solutions. Finally, a series of meetings were held with the City Commissioners and the Planning Board to present demographic and economic trends and the planning recommendations.

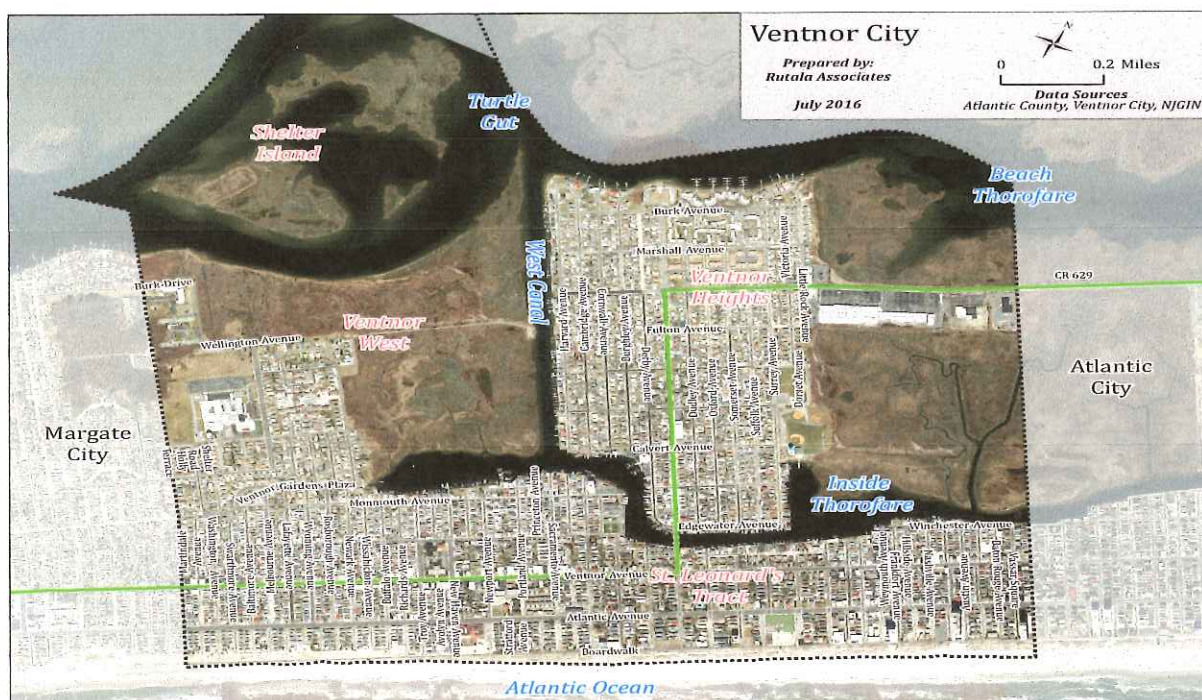
## 1.2 Background

Ventnor is an oceanfront resort city in Atlantic County, New Jersey. The City consists of 1.951 square miles of land mass and 1.571 square miles of water, comprising just over 3.5 square miles of total area and is bounded by Atlantic City to the east, Margate to the west, and various canals and tidal waterways to the north. The Atlantic Ocean forms the southern border of the City. Ventnor has 1.6 linear miles of oceanfront, including a boardwalk running the length of the City's boundary as well as a fishing pier and dune system.

The City was incorporated in 1903 from a portion of Egg Harbor Township, and was one of the last municipalities in Atlantic County to incorporate. Having formed as the result of a speculative investment by a railroad company, Ventnor takes its name from a seaside village on the Isle of Wight in England. Located between Atlantic City and Margate, the City expanded significantly when marsh directly north of the City was filled and prepared for development. This neighborhood is now known as Ventnor Heights. St. Leonard's Tract, one of the City's oldest neighborhoods, comprises oceanfront blocks between the Thorofare and the ocean from Surrey Avenue to Cambridge Avenue. The neighborhood within the tract is notable for its master planning, deed restrictions, and neighborhood association. Additional neighborhoods include Ventnor Gardens (located near the City's border with Margate) and North Beach (located between Jackson Avenue and Victoria Avenue near Atlantic City).

Figure 1 provides an overview of the City. The City of Ventnor is approximately 62 miles from Philadelphia, 40 miles from Cape May, and 120 miles from New York City.

**Figure 1.1 – Aerial Photograph of Ventnor, New Jersey**



Ventnor is mostly laid out on a traditional street grid, with the Boardwalk, Atlantic Avenue, Ventnor Avenue, and Winchester Avenue running parallel to the ocean's shoreline. The City is not directly connected to the mainland, though the mainland is accessible from Margate and Atlantic City.

The City's location on a barrier island has not come without a price. There have been many natural disasters such as hurricanes and nor'easters that have significantly affected the New Jersey coast. Of the many natural hazard events to receive federal declaration, eight of the most recent events have occurred in five years, from 2007 to 2012.

Ventnor is primarily a residential community with a relatively large proportion of its residents employed in Atlantic City and neighboring communities. The casino industry is the City's largest employer. Because of Ventnor's location on Absecon Island, it is known for its beaches, boardwalk, stately buildings like City Hall on Atlantic Avenue, water access and open spaces in areas such as Ventnor West. Ventnor also has a vast variety of small and large businesses located throughout the community, including the Ventnor Shopping Center, which provides a supermarket that serves Atlantic City and other areas outside of the City of Ventnor. There are five defined commercial areas in the City: Ventnor Shopping Center; North Beach; Downtown Ventnor; Downbeach; and Dorset Avenue.

### **1.3 Requirements of the Periodic Reexamination Report**

The MLUL requires that the Reexamination Report address each of the following statutory requirements:

- The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last Reexamination Report.
- The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.
- The extent to which there have been significant changes in 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 of natural resources; energy conservation; collection, disposition, and recycling of designated recyclable materials; and changes in state, county, and municipal policies and objectives.
- The specific changes recommended for the Master Plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared.

- 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.40A:12A-1 et seq.) into the Land Use Plan 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.

The report that follows addresses each of these statutory requirements.

#### 1.4 General Municipal Goals

The Municipal Land Use Law empowers municipal governments with the right to control the physical development of the lands within their bounds. N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2 of the Municipal Land Use Law, as amended, lists 15 general purposes regarding the local planning process. The City of Ventnor reaffirms these purposes in addition to its more specific goals and objectives that are described later in this report.

- a. To encourage municipal action to guide the appropriate use or development of all lands in this State, in a manner which will promote the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare;*
- b. To secure safety from fire, flood, panic and other natural and man-made disasters;*
- c. To provide adequate light, air and open space;*
- d. To ensure that the development of individual municipalities does not conflict with the development and general welfare of neighboring municipalities, the county and the State as a whole;*
- e. To promote the establishment of appropriate population densities and concentrations that will contribute to the well-being of persons, neighborhoods, communities and regions and preservation of the environment;*
- f. To encourage the appropriate and efficient expenditure of public funds by the coordination of public development with land use policies;*
- g. To provide sufficient space in appropriate locations for a variety of agricultural, residential, recreational, commercial and industrial uses and open space, both public and private, according to their respective environmental requirements in order to meet the needs of all New Jersey citizens;*
- h. To encourage the location and design of transportation routes which will promote the free flow of traffic while discouraging location of such facilities and routes which result in congestion or blight;*

*i. To promote a desirable visual environment through creative development techniques and good civic design and arrangement;*

*j. To promote the conservation of historic sites and districts, open space, energy resources and valuable natural resources in the State and to prevent urban sprawl and degradation of the environment through improper use of land;*

*k. To encourage planned unit developments which incorporate the best features of design and relate the type, design and layout of residential, commercial, industrial and recreational development to the particular site;*

*l. To encourage senior citizen community housing construction;*

*m. To encourage coordination of the various public and private procedures and activities shaping land development with a view of lessening the cost of such development and to the more efficient use of land;*

*n. To promote utilization of renewable energy resources; and*

*o. To promote the maximum practicable recovery and recycling of recyclable materials from municipal solid waste through the use of planning practices designed to incorporate the State Recycling Plan goals and to complement municipal recycling programs.*

## **1.5 Review of Planning Documents**

The following documents were examined for the preparation of this report:

### **Master Plans**

- Reexamination Report of the Master Plan 2006
- Reexamination Report of the Master Plan 1996
- Ventnor Master Plan – Land Use Element 1989

### **Other Plans and Documents**

- Margate – Ventnor Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, 2016
- Atlantic County Multi-Jurisdictional Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2015
- City of Ventnor Code: Chapters 102 (Development Regulations), 126 (Flood Hazard Areas), 138 (Housing Standards), 143 (Land Use Procedures), and 180A (Redevelopment Plans)
- Development of Climate Change Adaptation Elements for Municipal Land Use Plans: Building Resiliency in Ventnor City, New Jersey, 2015
- Ventnor “Getting to Resiliency” Recommendations Report, 2015
- Ventnor Community Forestry Management Plan, 2015
- Strategic Recovery Planning Report, 2014
- Northeast Ventnor Redevelopment Plan, 2001

## Section 1 – Major Problems and Objectives in 2006

### **Master Plan Reexamination 2006**

The 2006 Master Plan Reexamination described the history of land use regulation in Ventnor and reiterated eleven goals and policies that originated with the 1996 Master Plan Reexamination. The 2006 Reexamination broadly explained how progress has been made towards those goals, which are listed in the following section.

#### **1. General Development Goals**

At the time of the City's last reexamination plan, the City prioritized community facilities and parks/recreation development. This continues to be a priority for the City. Recreation improvements are being explored for the Municipal Fishing Pier and the surrounding area, and the City is working with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) to successfully complete a diversion related to the redevelopment of its municipal ice rink. Moreover, development options for Ventnor West have decreased since development of the area was first broached. This is due in part to economic conditions as well as existing and unremediated environmental conditions on-site. Goals and objectives from the 2006 Reexamination pertaining to General Development Goals are listed below.

- The image of Ventnor City as a family-oriented beach and resort community with its own special identity must be maintained. The re-creation of the municipal oceanfront developments such as the Ventnor casino and its related structures should be encouraged.
  - a. *The City has invested substantial improvements in the Boardwalk through a redecking project utilizing long-life materials.*
  - b. *The Absecon Island Beachfill has recreated a wider expanse for recreational usage. With the beachfill project came new beach accesses as well as new handicapped access points.*
  - c. *The City has actively pursued Green Acre funding for rehabilitation of the Municipal Fishing Pier, which will also include a new Recreational Building and handicapped-accessible public bathrooms.*
  - d. *The City recently completed construction of an expanded Library and Cultural Arts Center at the location of the former Ice Rink Building. The location, being close to the beach and Boardwalk, encourages public enjoyment of the beach and Boardwalk as part of the Library and Cultural Arts visitation.*
  
- The recommendations of the Ventnor West Redevelopment Agency regarding the Ventnor West area should be actively pursued.
  - a. *With the advent of the State Master Plan, it has been a struggle to maintain this area as part of the developable areas.*
  - b. *The City continues to coordinate with the county in the Cross-Examination Process and encourage inclusion of this area within the PA5 Developable Area.*

## 2. Housing Goals

Housing objectives in Ventnor in 2006 focused on decreasing density and dangerous overcrowding conditions in the City. Since the time of the 2000 Census, the amount of multifamily housing in the City has decreased dramatically while single-unit detached and attached housing has increased. More housing information is presented later in this report. While development regulations continue to focus on preserving stable neighborhoods and promoting public safety, damage from Superstorm Sandy and new floodplain regulations have presented redevelopment challenges for Ventnor. In addition, there has been little activity in Ventnor regarding administration of the Fair Housing Act. The City remains committed to compliance with the Act when warranted. The housing goals and objectives from the 2006 Reexamination are listed below:

- Recognizing the large amount of current multifamily development, additional multifamily zoning should be discouraged.
  - a. *The Redevelopment Plan has recognized that multifamily development, if performed in a planned fashion, can actually reduce overall housing density.*
  - b. *New development of single-family housing in the R-11 Multifamily District has resulted in meeting this intended policy in areas where multifamily housing was not appropriate.*
  - c. *With the increase in land values and underutilization of certain commercial areas, the consideration of a planned multifamily residential project could be an advantage provided there is adequate infrastructure to support the development.*
  - d. *Multifamily housing, in the proper density and location, can offset the economic pressure placed on existing buildings on oversized lots from demolishing and subdividing, resulting in larger homes on smaller lots and increased density.*
  
- Development regulations shall protect and preserve existing stable residential neighborhoods. At the same time, the City must adopt policies and programs to encourage the rehabilitation and/or replacement of aging obsolescent housing with modern construction.
  - a. *The adoption of the Northeast Ventnor Redevelopment Plan provides a guide for redevelopment for an existing high-density residential and commercial portion of the City.*
  - b. *Continued evaluation of the zoning regulations by the Planning Board and forwarding of recommendations to the governing body for needed zoning changes assures the effectiveness of zoning requirements.*
  - c. *Desire to work within the existing Zoning Map and bulk regulation framework assures continued compatibility between old and new development.*
  
- The present municipal policy of eliminating illegal conversion of existing single-family residences into multifamily structures is to be continued.
  - a. *Continued proper code enforcement has led to a substantial reduction in attempts to increase density through use of single-family structures as multifamily units.*

- b. *Increased land values in shorefront communities have resulted in a reduction of the older housing stock and replacement with new code-compliant structures.*
  - c. *The adoption of the Northeast Ventnor Redevelopment Area has provided a focus on many of the high-density older housing stock areas and created a plan where new development is encouraged.*
  - d. *The elimination of duplex uses formerly permitted in some of the residential districts has increased property sale transactions and has forced property owners to either apply for Certificates of Non-Conformity or face deconversion, thereby eliminating such unapproved units.*
- The City has historically made every attempt to comply with the Fair Share Housing Act and will continue to comply with the Act when compatible with existing development and land use within the municipality.
- a. *Increased land values continue to cause an impediment to Fair Share Housing on barrier islands.*
  - b. *The City continues to both support existing and encourage new senior-citizen and age-restricted development.*
  - c. *The existing property tax structure would not support the additional funding necessary to provide offsite contributions to receiving municipalities.*
  - d. *The calculation methods employed by the Department of Community Affairs result in onerous obligations which discourage municipalities from compliance.*

### **3. Utilities/Infrastructure Goals**

The 2006 Master Plan Reexamination demonstrates the City's concern with the effects of redevelopment projects in Atlantic City. Ventnor's proximity to Atlantic City has long been both an asset and a planning concern from a municipal services and planning perspective. Though Ventnor's population and housing density have decreased since 2006, utility and infrastructure provision has remained a priority for the City. Utilities and infrastructure were damaged during Superstorm Sandy, and the changing development landscape within the City underscores the need for Ventnor to reevaluate its facilities. In addition, growth in Atlantic City has slowed significantly since the economic recession of the late 2000s and the increase in regional casino competition. This has resulted in a drag on economic growth, which has particularly affected Ventnor. The effects of the regional economic slowdown are discussed later in this report.

In recognition of these effects, it is likely that demand for infrastructure and utilities has decreased and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Ventnor's utilities and infrastructure needs have been examined in the context of resiliency given the City's vulnerability to sea level rise and the placement of its critical facilities in areas with high flood risk. The goal and objectives pertaining to utilities and infrastructure from the 2006 Reexamination are presented below.

- Land development decisions must be considerate of available utility and roadway infrastructure and recognize the impact that the redevelopment of Atlantic City, including casino gambling, has upon the municipality.
  - a. *The City has both expended budgetary monies and sought outside funding for improvements and sustenance of its infrastructure in order to both sustain existing and encourage new development.*
  - b. *The effect of casino gaming on adjacent municipalities has been reduced through increased housing units within Atlantic City.*
  - c. *The adoption of the Northeast Ventnor Redevelopment Plan has provided the catalyst necessary to bring attention to the effects that casino gambling has on older housing stock.*

#### **4. Community Facilities, Open Space and Recreation Goals**

As noted previously, community facilities, open space, and recreation facility maintenance and development are priorities for Ventnor. The City is physically and economically oriented towards its most important natural asset: the ocean. However, Ventnor has other important recreation and cultural offerings, such as its bayfront, Cultural Center, and library. As existing recreation and open space offerings continue to be utilized and demanded by its population, the City is examining the utility of its existing facilities and determining the refurbishment, replacement, and addition of new facilities. Ventnor West, which comprises more than 150 acres of municipally owned natural lands along Wellington and Wissahickon Avenues, offers potential for development of passive recreation and open space. Goals and objectives from the 2006 Reexamination regarding community facilities, open space, and recreation are listed below.

- Environmentally sensitive lands will be protected.
  - a. *Continued modifications to state environmental regulations result in increased prohibition to development in even questionably sensitive lands.*
  - b. *New development on demolished existing properties eliminates pressure on undeveloped lands.*
  - c. *The State Master Plan and Cross Acceptance limits development within any new areas not already served by utilities.*
  
- Recreational opportunities will be continued by protecting the resources of the Atlantic Ocean, Ventnor beach, Boardwalk, waterways, and existing municipal recreation areas. Support for the funding of beachfront protection should be encouraged. The encouragement of youth and adult recreational activities including emphasis on water-oriented sports for which the community is ideally suited should be encouraged.
  - a. *This objective was substantially met with the construction of the recent Absecon Island Shorefront Protection Project, resulting in a new wider beach area and increased recreational area.*
  - b. *The City continues to improve and rehabilitate the existing recreational facilities by seeking outside funding and providing yearly budgetary funding.*

- The development of a Municipal Historical Museum and/or Archive Building in order to preserve the beach and resort community identity of the City should be encouraged.
  - a. *This objective was fully achieved with the building of the expanded Library and New Cultural Arts Center, which included a designated area for the Ventnor Historical Museum.*

### **5. Economic Development Goals**

The need for economic development in the City is underscored by the region's fragile economic state and the closing of five casinos in Atlantic City. Though the City is mostly residential in nature, Ventnor has commercial districts that are several blocks long along both Ventnor and Atlantic Avenues. A smaller commercial district on Dorset Avenue serves the residential community of Ventnor Heights, and a regional shopping center is located on Wellington Avenue. The City is developing an Economic Development Element as part of this master-planning effort to guide the City. The 2006 Reexamination included an economic development goal and several objectives that are listed below.

- The continuation of commercial business areas will be encouraged and new types of businesses examined for their potential community contribution. Low impact commercial development will be encouraged.
  - a. *The City has continued support of commercial areas through increased services and improved infrastructure.*
  - b. *The expansion of existing, and development of new, commercial development has been undermined through increased property values. With the potential of high return for conversion of commercial to residential, property owners tend toward elimination of commercial use.*
  - c. *The City is attempting to stabilize the remaining commercial areas through acquisition of commercial properties and preparing for sale for new commercial development.*
  - d. *The City has invested substantially in core residential needs; such as the New Elementary School and Library/Cultural Arts Center. By providing improved residential services, there is an increased local pride and support for local businesses.*

### **Section 2 – The Extent to Which Such Problems and Objectives Have Been Reduced or Have Increased Subsequent to the Last Reexamination**

The City has made progress in addressing many of the problems and objectives identified in the Reexamination Report from 2006. Some of the problems or challenges and objectives identified in previous planning studies still need to be addressed. Outlined below is a summary of the problems and objectives that remain valid since the last reexamination.

#### **1. General Development Goals**

Ventnor continues to utilize its waterfront expanses and explore opportunities to further utilize these assets. Given the importance of recreational and cultural amenities to the whole of the City and its visitors, the City will continue to strengthen and maintain its status as a resort community through

the provision of a variety of recreation options and services. Ventnor West and Shelter Island is a vast open space area that provides a variety of vegetation and bird habitat. The potential exists to develop this area as a wildlife sanctuary with an abundance of water access that can be a signature destination in New Jersey much like the Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge and the Cape May Bird Observatory.

## **2. Housing Goals**

Ventnor's housing stock has undergone significant changes since the time of the last Reexamination. The 2006 Reexamination Report made note of the City's attempts to decrease density and enforce existing regulations preventing illegal residential conversions. In addition, the report discouraged multifamily housing and called for the replacement of obsolete housing with new construction. These policies, in combination with long-term demographic trends that have played out across the Jersey Shore, have resulted in a marked decrease in housing density in Ventnor.

Ventnor, along with other municipalities on Absecon Island, did not submit a plan to the New Jersey's Council on Affordable Housing (COAH). In addition, Margate, Longport, Atlantic City, and Ventnor did not join in a 2014 lawsuit by 24 municipalities from Atlantic and Cape May counties regarding COAH obligations. Notwithstanding its non-participation, the development of new affordable housing obligations is currently underway for Ventnor and all the municipalities in New Jersey. According to a report published by eConsult, a firm commissioned by a consortium of municipalities to calculate possible obligations based on demographic data, Ventnor's initial summary obligation is 52 units, including an unmet prior round obligation, 21 units for "present need", and four units for "capped prospective need". The Fair Share Housing Center and the New Jersey Builders Association have performed additional calculations that will factor into the final determination of obligations. Due to the de facto disbanding of the Council on Affordable Housing, the New Jersey court system will handle the administration of the Fair Housing Act, including the assignment of obligations and approval of housing plans. Though Ventnor has remained largely uninvolved in recent affordable housing litigation, the City remains committed to complying with the Fair Housing Act.

In recognizing housing trends in both the City itself and the region at large, Ventnor should continue to ensure that a diversity of housing types is offered with respect to the City's municipal resources and the characteristics of Ventnor's unique neighborhoods.

## **3. Utility/Infrastructure Goals**

The 2006 Reexamination Report prioritized utility and infrastructure needs from the perspective of population and economic growth in the region. However, the region's economy and population is no longer growing. The City has focused on keeping its existing infrastructure and utilities in good repair for existing development in Ventnor while continuing to seek cost-sharing services and outside funding. These arrangements provide value to customers and allow the City to access new capital funds to invest in its infrastructure.

Superstorm Sandy significantly damaged the City's infrastructure and brought renewed attention to nuisance flooding problems in the City. Nuisance flooding has long been an issue in New Jersey

coastal communities and is forecasted to increase in frequency and severity due to climate change. The Ventnor Heights neighborhood has frequently experienced nuisance flooding over the past several decades. Two pump stations are under construction to serve this section of the City. In addition, the western boundary of the City has witnessed nuisance flooding in part due to an out-of-service pumping station located at the eastern terminus of Ventnor Gardens Plaza. In 2016, a joint project between the City of Margate, the Atlantic County Utilities Authority, Atlantic County and Ventnor resulted in a new stormwater pump station in Ventnor that services the Ventnor Gardens neighborhood as well as a portion of Margate. These projects were made possible by a grant and loan from the New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust. These projects demonstrate the type of improvements that Ventnor should pursue to maintain the physical and financial resiliency of the City.

In recognizing the vulnerabilities of Ventnor's utilities and infrastructure (including its roads, sewers, bulkheads, and stormwater conveyance), the siting and design of new facilities should take sea level rise, coastal flooding, and erosion into account. Existing facilities should be hardened against hazards to the greatest possible extent, such as through the elevation of critical equipment and floodproofing of buildings. Forthcoming roadway projects, such as the raising of roadbeds and the installation of drainage systems, should consider potential impacts on neighboring properties and allow for permeable surfaces to the maximum practicable extent. Moreover, Ventnor continues to seek additional partners on such projects and aggressively pursue shared services agreements and grants to minimize the City's capital outlays.

#### **4. Community Facilities, Open Space and Recreation Goals**

As both a resort town and a year-round community, Ventnor currently offers an array of recreational facilities and is dedicated to the maintenance of those facilities. When resources are available, the City looks to refurbish and expand its offerings. At the time of the 2006 Reexamination, the City recently completed an expansion of its Library and Cultural Arts Center located between Newport and New Haven Avenues along Atlantic Avenue. The amount of land area for beach recreation will continue to increase due to the forthcoming beach replenishment project. The City should monitor the use of its existing recreation facilities and determine whether the facilities sufficiently meet the recreational demands of its visitors and residents. Moreover, Ventnor should consider whether existing facilities' utility could be increased through the redevelopment of its parks and open space considering the shifting demographics of the City.

One of the goals from the 2006 Reexamination called for the protection of environmentally sensitive areas. The City has long considered development of Ventnor West, which consists of two parcels of land approximately 150 acres in size along West Canal. The 2006 Reexamination plan notes that previous development plans for the area were compromised with the advent of the State Plan and coastal area regulations. An open space diversion agreement between the NJDEP and Ventnor stemming from the demolition of the municipal skating rink will result in 14 acres of preserved land on a portion of woodlands in Ventnor West.

## 5. Economic Development Goals

The 2006 Reexamination indicated a concern with the City's eroding commercial base due in part to aggressive residential real estate development. While residential development in the City continues, the City's economy has been considerably affected by the closing of five casino hotels in Atlantic City. In 2013, just under half of Ventnor's workers commuted to Atlantic City for work. These closings in Atlantic City have led to high unemployment, foreclosures and abandoned properties.

The challenges presented by this economic contraction have brought renewed urgency to economic development goals in Ventnor. The City seeks to continue expanding its commercial offerings to strengthen its taxable base and commercial amenities. As the City transitions to a seasonal community, Ventnor hopes to attract businesses that service both its year-round population and amenity-seeking seasonal population with the goal of a robust, stable, and job-producing commercial sector in Ventnor.

### Section 3 - The Extent to Which There Have Been Significant Changes in the Assumptions, Policies and Objectives

#### 1. Density and Distribution of Population

Ventnor's population has declined since 2000. This decline followed decades of population growth in the City, when the population increased by 1,905 residents or 17.3 percent of its 1990 population. Between 2000 and 2010, the City lost 2,260 residents, or 17.5 percent of its 2000 population. Given the factors discussed later in this report, it is expected that Ventnor's year-round population will continue to decline. The table below demonstrates the change in population since 1940.

**Figure 1.2 - Population Change by Decade in Ventnor**

	Population	# Change	% Change
<b>1940</b>	7,905		
<b>1950</b>	8,158	253	3.2%
<b>1960</b>	8,688	530	6.5%
<b>1970</b>	10,385	1,697	19.5%
<b>1980</b>	11,704	1,319	12.7%
<b>1990</b>	11,005	-699	-6.0%
<b>2000</b>	12,910	1,905	17.3%
<b>2010</b>	10,650	-2,260	-17.5%

Source: New Jersey State Data Center

Density is a measure of the distribution of population over a given area. Ventnor's relatively small land area, intensity of buildings, and compactness of development have contributed to Ventnor's status as the densest community in Atlantic County. Even with the decrease in population in the City since 2000, Ventnor has remained the densest community in the county, followed by Margate, Pleasantville, and Atlantic City. This decrease in density can be attributed to the demolition of

multifamily housing units, enforcement against illegal conversions, and an increasing number of households living in the City on a seasonal basis.

Despite Ventnor’s high density, density itself is not necessarily a measure of quality of life. Scarcity of land resources and high real estate values have led to development at greater densities in coastal communities across New Jersey. The densities of communities on Absecon Island are several factors larger than the density of the county aggregate. This is due to the relatively low densities of mainland Atlantic County communities as well as the preservation of massive inland tracts, such as the Atlantic City International Airport site in Egg Harbor Township, comprising more than 5,000 acres, or Forsythe Wildlife Refuge in Galloway, which comprises more than 20,000 acres.

**Figure 1.3 - Density of Atlantic County**

	Land Area (square miles)	Total Population		Persons per Square Mile	
		2000	2010	2000	2010
<b>New Jersey</b>	7,354.2	8,414,378	8,791,894	1,144.2	1,195.5
<b>Atlantic County</b>	555.7	252,547	274,549	454.5	494.1
Absecon City	5.4	7,638	8,411	1,415.5	1,558.8
Atlantic City	10.7	40,517	39,558	3,770.1	3,680.8
Brigantine	6.4	12,594	9,450	1,971.7	1,479.5
Buena Borough	7.6	3,873	4,603	511.1	607.4
Buena Vista Township	41.1	7,432	7,570	181.0	184.4
Corbin City	7.7	468	492	61.1	64.2
Egg Harbor Township	66.6	30,726	43,323	461.4	650.5
Egg Harbor City	10.9	4,545	4,243	415.7	388.1
Estell Manor	53.3	1,588	1,735	29.8	32.5
Folsom Borough	8.2	1,972	1,885	240.4	229.8
Galloway Township	89.1	31,209	37,349	350.4	419.3
Hamilton Township	111.1	20,499	26,503	184.5	238.5
Hammonton	40.9	12,603	14,791	308.2	361.8
Linwood	3.9	7,172	7,092	1,855.6	1,834.9
Longport	0.4	1,054	895	2,736.5	2,323.7
Margate City	1.4	8,193	6,354	5,789.9	4,490.3
Mullica Township	56.4	5,912	6,147	104.8	108.9
Northfield	3.4	7,725	8,624	2,269.6	2,533.7
Pleasantville	5.7	19,012	20,249	3,339.2	3,556.5
Port Republic	7.5	1,037	1,115	138.6	149.0
Somers Point	4.0	11,614	10,795	2,882.0	2,678.8
Ventnor City	2.0	12,910	10,650	6,615.5	5,457.4
Weymouth Township	12.1	2,254	2,715	186.4	224.6

Source: New Jersey Department of Labor

In terms of distribution of population across the City's land area, the portions of the City closest to Atlantic City are the densest. The blocks immediately adjacent to the City's ocean shoreline are inhabited on a more seasonal basis, while homes in Ventnor Heights and between Monmouth and Winchester Avenues tend to be occupied on a more year-round basis, per the 2010 Census.

## 2. Housing Stock Changes

At the time of the 2000 Census, there were just over 8,000 residential units in Ventnor. The American Community Survey estimated 7,614 housing units in Ventnor in 2014, representing a decrease of 395 units, or 4.9 percent of the City's housing stock. While the overall number of housing units in Ventnor decreased, the number of single-unit detached and attached homes increased by 13.2 percent and 17.9 percent, respectively. During this time, Ventnor lost an estimated 1,007 units of multifamily housing (i.e. housing with more than one unit in a structure). This decrease was especially pronounced in structures with three to four units and structures with five to nine units, which lost 59.7 percent and 44.1 percent of their units, respectively. This decrease can be attributed to de-conversions back to single-family units as well as the demolition of multifamily structures since the time of the 2000 Census.

Building permit data provided by the City of Ventnor largely confirms the trend of decreased housing density. In the table below, selected housing data from the City's Division of Construction Code Enforcement shows high building activity before the Great Recession. Beginning in 2009, construction activity decreased significantly until 2012, when the economy began to rebound and Superstorm Sandy struck. The years since Superstorm Sandy have seen significant construction activity, including the demolition of more than 70 structures and the construction of 90 new buildings.

**Figure 1.4 - Ventnor Building Permits: 2005-2015**

	New Building	Addition	Alter.	Demo	C/O Issued	Units Gain	Units Lost	Change
2005	27	12	850	1	18	10	1	9
2006	9	6	702	0	38	0	0	0
2007	25	4	705	6	21	1	0	1
2008	21	11	792	2	58	0	0	0
2009	7	8	658	8	43	0	0	0
2010	2	9	756	5	19	0	0	0
2011	7	6	665	9	12	0	0	0
2012	7	8	1,012	10	8	1	0	1
2013	17	10	1,625	17	12	0	0	0
2014	44	22	961	20	27	9	7	2
2015	29	75	903	35	71	16	31	-15
	<b>195</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>9,629</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>-2</b>

Source: City of Ventnor Building Permit Data

New structures built within Ventnor over the past decade have tended to be detached and attached single-family housing units. In some cases, new developments have been infill projects replacing higher-intensity uses. In other cases, existing homes were demolished to make way for new, flood elevation-compliant homes. This trend should continue for some time into the future as flood insurance rates continue to escalate.

As of December 2015, almost 300 dwelling units in the City of Ventnor were under foreclosure. The City is actively inventorying these units so that they can be identified. The foreclosure issues are significant throughout Atlantic County where over 7,500 units were in some stage of foreclosure as of late 2015. Specific planning efforts will be needed to address this growing issue.

### **3. Circulation Changes**

Ventnor's circulation has remained largely unchanged since the time of the last Reexamination. No major state highways run through the City, and the only connection to the mainland is through Atlantic City or Margate. County Route 629 runs through the City, and begins in Ventnor along Wellington Avenue at the Atlantic City border, continuing southeast along Dorset Avenue, and southwest along Ventnor Avenue to the Margate border. New Jersey Transit offers bus service via the 505 Route, which serves the communities of Absecon Island and provides connections to additional routes. In Ventnor, the bus stops along Ventnor Avenue. In the summer of 2016, Ventnor's commissioners approved a pilot program to allow jitney service along Atlantic Avenue to Margate and Atlantic City.

The City of Ventnor has completed a Bicycle-Pedestrian Safety Study with the City of Margate. The study, funded by a grant from the New Jersey Department of Transportation, analyzes traffic, crash, and parking data; public input; and the current streetscape to propose improvements to the bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in both cities. Bikeable and walkable streets are important from a safety and wellness perspective and are desirable for recreation and transportation purposes.

In addition, Atlantic County has been awarded a \$3.5 million grant to make safety improvements on County Route 629. This project includes the construction of pedestrian and traffic signal improvements. The City of Ventnor should consider capitalizing on this opportunity to pursue streetscape improvements, decorative crosswalks and other physical enhancements on Ventnor Avenue and Dorset Avenue.

### **4. Conservation of Natural Resources**

Ventnor remains committed to protecting and preserving its natural assets, which include its oceanfront, Ventnor West, bayfront, and marshes in Ventnor Heights. The ED (Environmental District) zoning designation, which only permits development of passive recreation facilities or utilities, protects the marshes of Ventnor Heights and Shelter Island. Ventnor West is within the R-10 District, which permits public uses as well as senior-citizen housing, neighborhood businesses, boat facilities, and hotels as conditional uses. Currently, Ventnor West consists of vacant woodlands and wetlands, and a 10- to 15-acre portion of the 175-acre site has been preserved in a diversion agreement with the NJDEP. Due to the environmental history of the site, the remainder of Ventnor

West is unlikely to be developed. Additionally, the site (along with Shelter Island and the Ventnor Heights marshes) is designated as a “Critical Environmental Site” in the Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area 5 under the New Jersey State Plan. The City should pursue funding to make Ventnor West a wildlife refuge with trails, boating access and birding lookout platforms.

While Ventnor’s properties within the ED Zone are currently protected from development, they do not appear on the City’s Recreation and Open Space Inventory (ROSI), which permanently protects the lands from development. In addition, the marshlands are subject to coastal erosion, particularly along the Beach Thorofare. Until the 1980s, Shelter Island remained a singular land form. Since then, the island’s land surface has continued to shrink and fragment. Marshes along the Inner Thorofare have eroded at a much slower rate but remain at risk for erosion. The City should pursue restoration projects for these wetlands to stabilize the erosion, provide habitat, and serve as a buffer for storm surge and flooding. Shelter Island should be restored, potentially by using dredge materials to provide protection from back-bay flooding and to add to the wildlife refuge in Ventnor West.

### **5. Energy Conservation**

Ventnor has undertaken numerous projects related to energy conservation since the time of the last Reexamination Report. In August 2015, CDM Smith completed an Energy Audit Report for the City’s municipal buildings. An energy audit was also completed for the Ventnor Educational Community Complex. The audit reviewed electric and gas use by buildings owned by Ventnor and identified possible costs and benefits of performing retrofits and upgrades to improve energy efficiency. In addition, the City received funds through the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Rebate (EECBG) for Direct Install energy efficiency projects.

The City should continue to develop an aggressive policy that promotes energy efficiency through building placement and design. The City continues to promote mass transit, bicycling and walking as alternatives to single-occupancy vehicles. Exploring solar on public buildings, the installation of electric vehicle charging stations, and bike lanes on Ventnor and Atlantic Avenues as well as throughout the City should also be implemented.

### **6. Recycling**

Recycling and trash pickup throughout the City of Ventnor is provided by the Atlantic County Utilities Authority (ACUA). Ventnor’s recycling was last modified in 2014 by Ordinance 2014-32 to add a list of materials that must be separated from trash and recycling, such as textiles, CFC refrigerants, fluorescent lights, and asphalt. Additionally, the City offers a prescription drug drop box to allow for safe disposal of medications. Recycling and waste reduction should continue to be a priority through the reduced use of single-use bags, the institution of community paper-shedding days, and regularly scheduled beach and bay cleanups.

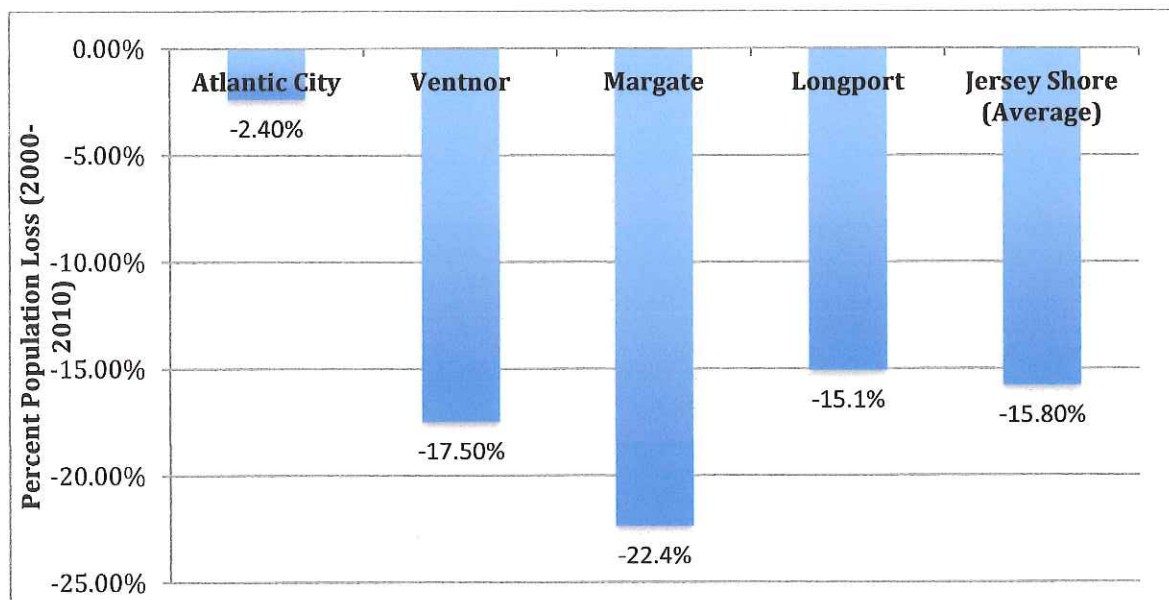
### **7. Declining Population**

As noted previously in this report, Ventnor’s population has declined since the time of the last Master Plan Reexamination. The population in Ventnor recorded at the time of the last decennial census (2010) is close to the City’s population level in 1970. Currently, the City is nearly one-fifth off of its

population peak of 12,910 residents in 2000. Moreover, the number of housing units in the City has also dropped by nearly 5 percent, from 8,009 units in 2000 to an estimated 7,614 units by 2014. The 2006 Master Plan Reexamination was prepared amidst the City’s population decline, though it is not specifically addressed in the Reexamination. However, the Reexamination did address eliminating illegal conversions to multifamily housing as well as efforts to decrease density throughout the City. Because Ventnor is essentially built-out and almost all developable land has been developed, decreases in density will likely be characterized by decreases in population.

Ventnor is experiencing a transition from a year-round community to a seasonal community. This is most apparent in data examining the amount of seasonal homes in the City. Seasonal homes accounted for 23 percent of Ventnor’s housing stock in 2000 and now account for 35.9 percent of the City’s housing stock.

**Figure 1.5 - 2000-2010 Population Percent Change for Absecon Island Communities and Jersey Shore Communities on Average**



Source: US Census Bureau

School enrollment at Ventnor Educational Community Complex has continued to decline, with the number of students decreasing to 753 students in 2015-2016 from 1,160 students enrolled in the 2002-2003 school year. In combination with the other factors discussed in this section, it is expected that Ventnor’s year-round population will continue to decrease and the supply of multifamily housing will likely continue to decrease. In recognition of these trends, the City should anticipate shifting demands on its municipal services and utilities.

### 8. Economic Downturn

Coastal South Jersey is weathering the effects of several disruptive changes to the regional economy, including the contraction of gaming in Atlantic City, declining year-round populations, damages from

Superstorm Sandy, and increased flood insurance costs (which are discussed in the subsequent sections). The Great Recession and the legalization of casino gambling in nearby states including Pennsylvania, Maryland and New York caused spending in Atlantic City to decline significantly, leading to the closure of five casino hotels. Thus, the unemployment rate in the Atlantic City area was 10.1 percent during April 2015, though the rate decreased to 7.4 percent as workers left the labor force, per the *South Jersey Economic Review*. The downturn has depressed the demand for labor and employment, which has led to decreases in home values and a rise in foreclosures.

The effect of the regional economic downturn on Ventnor has been acute, though it is mitigated somewhat by Ventnor's own seasonal economy. Per the American Community Survey, 46.9 percent of Ventnor's working population (or approximately 2,260 workers) commute to Atlantic City for work. These estimates indicate that approximately 430 residents (or 9.1 percent of the City's workforce) work in Ventnor, and 122 residents (or 6.8 percent) commute to Egg Harbor Township for employment. Because nearly half of Ventnor's workers commute to Atlantic City, Ventnor's workforce is especially susceptible to employment changes in Atlantic City proper. Per the New Jersey Casino Control Commission, in 2014, 1,347 Ventnor residents were casino employees and 247 jobs were at risk or no longer extant due to casino closures. The American Community Survey Employment Characteristics data provides generalized jobs data from which data about Atlantic City-based jobs can be inferred. For example, nearly 36 percent of the City's workforce is in service-based occupations, with more than 1,000 residents in the food service industry. Therefore, it is likely that many of these jobs are based out of Atlantic City. Many other kinds of jobs for City residents (such as management and sales professions) are indirectly linked to the casinos, which together are the largest employers in the region.

Whereas the previous Reexamination Report was written when the regional economy was performing strongly, this Reexamination was prepared in recognition of a declining economy. The City should ensure that its own employment base is stable, and consider shifting its economic dependency from Atlantic City by attracting new businesses and continuing to add amenities while shoring up its municipal finances and resources to mitigate further financial impact from Atlantic City. Moreover, when economic conditions in the region do improve, Ventnor will be well placed to benefit.

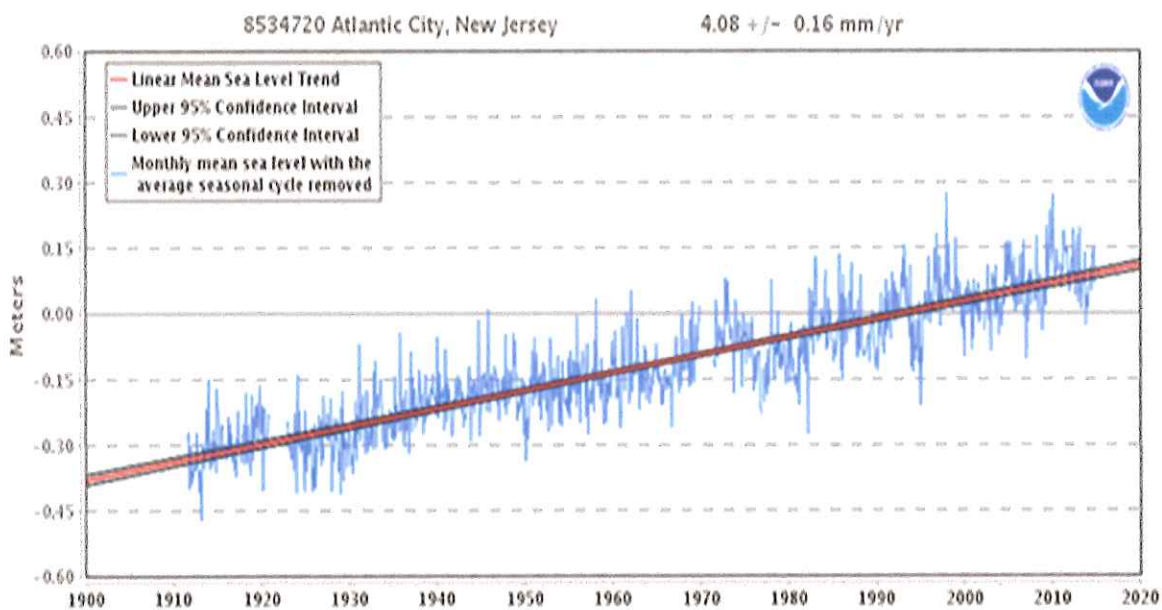
## **9. Coastal Storm Vulnerabilities**

Ventnor's location on a barrier island is a double-edged sword: Though it benefits tremendously from the economic and natural functions of a coastal environment, the City is especially vulnerable to hazards manifest in the forms of coastal erosion, nor'easters, tropical and subtropical storms, and changes in geomorphology. Superstorm Sandy acutely demonstrated Ventnor's vulnerability to coastal storms. Due to climate change and sea level rise, the effects of coastal storms will be increasingly pronounced in coastal communities. Though Ventnor's oceanfront dune system held up during Superstorm Sandy, significant flooding occurred from the bay, where coastal flooding defenses are less robust or non-existent. Ventnor's Strategic Recovery Planning Report noted that 88.3 percent of the City's total land area – representing 1,179 acres – is within the High-Risk Flood Area. In addition, the condition and lack of bulkheads on the bay side contributes to flood risk. As sea

levels rise, more portions of the City will become vulnerable to smaller-scale flood events which will likely increase in frequency and intensity. Figure 6 shows the historic amount of sea level rise at the Atlantic City Tidal Gauge. Sea level rise measurements were tabulated over the course of a century. Though the monthly mean sea level varied each month, there is a noticeable upward trend in sea level rise at an annualized rate of 0.16 mm per year, or a total sea level rise of 4.08 cm since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Superstorm Sandy caused costly damage to both public infrastructure and private structures in Ventnor. Per data from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs provided to New Jersey Spotlight, 1,912 homes inhabited year-round suffered damage, with 89 suffering severe damage (more than \$28,800) and 190 suffering major damage (between \$8,000 and \$28,800). In addition, 578 rental units were damaged, including 223 with major damage and 29 with severe damage, and 416 businesses were impacted. Insurance claims in Ventnor were significant.

**Figure 1.6 - Historic Sea Level Rise for the Atlantic City Tidal Gauge**

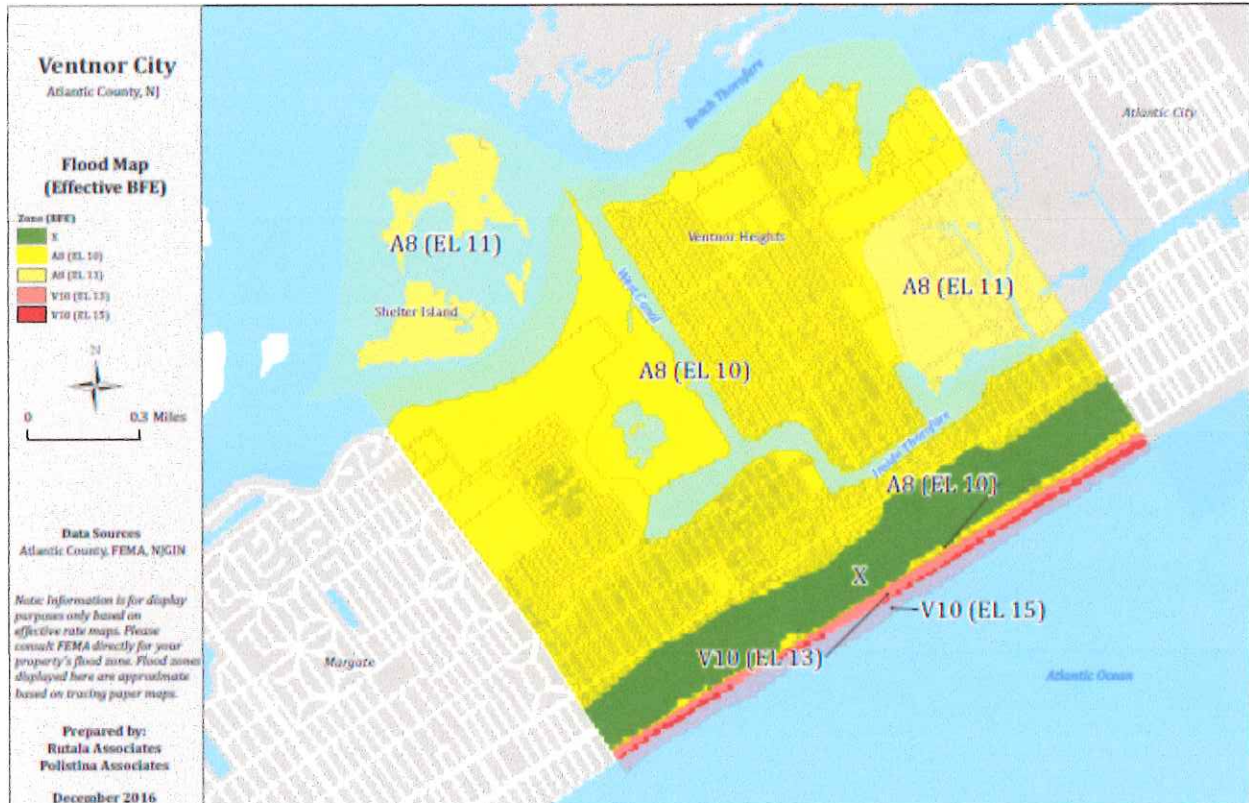


Source: [www.njfloodmapper.com](http://www.njfloodmapper.com)

Per data published by New Jersey Spotlight, \$33.8 million in losses were paid to property owners in Ventnor after Superstorm Sandy. In all, more than 2,500 claims were filed and 1,850 were paid. Flood damage accounted for 843 claims filed and 753 paid, while commercial non-flood claims accounted for 31 of those paid (representing incurred losses of \$521,961) and residential non-flood damage accounted for 705 claims, or \$5.4 million. (Note: this data likely only applies to owner-occupied housing units.)

FEMA has proposed rules that will require anyone who wants to build in a flood-prone area with federal funds to do so at higher elevations. Homes and businesses would have to build at least two feet above the base flood elevation, up from the current requirement of one foot. Critical facilities like firehouses and nursing homes would have to be built three feet above the base elevation, up from two feet. Existing buildings would be unaffected unless owners substantially improved them with the help of federal money.

**Figure 1.7 - 1983 Flood Insurance Rate Map for Ventnor**



## 10. Flood Insurance Costs and Affordability

Legislative changes to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) were enacted in March 2014 and implemented in April 2015 through the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014 (HFIAA). Though Congress mandates periodic reforms of the NFIP, this reform was important for many homeowners affected by Superstorm Sandy. The law will continue to phase out subsidies for insurance policies on buildings constructed before the effective date of a community's Flood Insurance Rate Map (also known as pre-FIRM buildings).

**Figure 1.8 - Extent of Superstorm Sandy Storm Surge**



Several provisions in the law were implemented to limit rate increases and prevent payment of full-risk rates upon purchasing a new home or policy. However, a surcharge of \$25 for primary residences and \$250 for all other structures was instituted. In addition, owners of second homes and substantially damaged and improved properties were initially obligated to pay a 25 percent rate increase, though property owners may qualify for lower rates based on the extent of their building's flood-proofing.

In addition to reforms to the NFIP, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has also undertaken revisions to Flood Insurance Rate Maps across New Jersey. Prior to Superstorm Sandy, FEMA was working on updates to the region's Flood Insurance Rate Maps. In the wake of the storm, the State of New Jersey adopted the preliminary work maps that FEMA was producing with the intent of enforcing more up-to-date flood standards. The revised preliminary FIRM was issued on January 30, 2015 and will likely be adopted formally by FEMA by 2017.

The recently instituted flood insurance reforms and proposed flood maps will affect Ventnor's homeowners and renters. Much of Ventnor's housing stock (82.9 percent) was built before 1980. Though property owners of the pre-FIRM buildings may experience some short-term relief, flood insurance costs are likely to rise – particularly for owners of structures that are not sufficiently flood-proofed. Moreover, the costs of flood-proofing a structure may be too excessive for homeowners. This may result in homeowners choosing to sell their property and move out of the City in lieu of flood-proofing their property. Furthermore, while the reduction of the size of the V Zone in Ventnor may provide some relief for property owners, those properties will continue to be most at risk during

coastal flooding events. For renters of pre-FIRM buildings whose owners have not undertaken flood-proofing measures, rental costs may increase and renters may be subject to displacement if buildings are demolished or substantially refurbished.

While the flood insurance regulatory changes and new maps will better protect policyholders and the fiscal state of the NFIP as well as encourage flood-resilient structures in vulnerable areas, the implementation of the new regulations will likely result in a cost burden and change the character of Ventnor's neighborhoods. Considering this, the City should revisit its development regulations (explained in a subsequent section of this report) to determine whether modifications to the zoning code are warranted in light of best practices for flood-resilient structures.

### **11. National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System**

The Community Rating System (CRS) is designed to reward communities for taking steps to reduce flooding risk. These activities and elements include public information, mapping, regulation, flood-damage reduction, and early warning systems. Actions under these categories are eligible for points that are added up to designate where the community is "rated" per class rankings of 10 through 1.

Over 1,200 communities nationwide, including 61 in New Jersey, participate in the CRS. Of those, about a dozen communities are in Class 5, the highest ranking in the state, saving residents 25 percent off their flood insurance.

The City of Ventnor has achieved a Class 6 rating, which results in a 20 percent discount on flood insurance premiums in Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA) and a 5 percent reduction in non-SFHA areas. The City should strive to gain a Class 4 rating by completing a watershed management plan, actively participating in the regional public participation information program, updating website information on flood mitigation and preparedness, implementing living shoreline projects to enhance back bay protection, elevating structures and developing a detailed repetitive loss mitigation plan.

### **12. Hazardous Mitigation Grant Applications**

Immediately after Superstorm Sandy, the City prepared a series of Hazardous Mitigation Grant applications for consideration by FEMA. The projects highlighted in these applications include:

- Funding to elevate homes located in the floodplain.
- Funding to implement pump stations at Ventnor Gardens and Ventnor Heights.
- Funding to install a Citywide Warning System.
- Installation of check valves throughout the City to prevent back flow of storm drainage systems.
- Emergency generators for water and sewer pumping stations.
- Bulkhead replacement along the Intracoastal Waterway.

Many of these projects have been funded by various means and are being constructed. The City should continue to be a leader to ensure that all necessary mitigation efforts are pursued.

### **13. Strategic Recovery Planning Report, 2014**

In 2014, the City received funding from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs to prepare a Strategic Recovery Planning Report (SRPR). The SRPR is a comprehensive planning document that contains actionable recommendations both for rebuilding the community and increasing the resilience of infrastructure and buildings. This report analyzed flood risks in the City. It also outlined multi-year investments to increase economic development and made recommendations to protect neighborhoods and infrastructure from future natural disasters. This Master Plan Reexamination effort is one of the many recommendations in the SRPR.

### **14. Atlantic County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2016**

The City of Ventnor participated in the development of this important planning document when it was prepared in 2015. Its goals include:

- Promoting disaster-resistant development;
- Building and supporting local capacity to enable the public to prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters;
- Reducing the possibility of damage and losses from natural disasters.
- Incorporating post Superstorm Sandy issues and the impacts of sea level rise.

This plan identifies community policies, actions, and tools for long-term implementation to reduce risk and potential for future losses. Adopted, implemented and maintained on an ongoing basis, these plans will gradually, but steadily, lessen the impacts associated with hazard events in Atlantic County. The Ventnor Master Plan Reexamination refers often to this plan and incorporates many of its recommendations.

### **15. Getting to Resilience Report, 2014**

The Getting to Resilience Report prepared by the Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve recommends both short- and long-term resiliency planning strategies. Most the short-term strategies revolve around public education on the dangers of flooding and providing information to the public on flooding and sea level rise. Long-term strategies include rewriting municipal plans and regulations to reduce flood vulnerabilities. Specific to the Master Plan process, the report recommends that floodplain management be incorporated into the Master Plan as well as potential impacts from sea level rise and surge vulnerabilities.

### **16. Climate Change Adaption Elements for Municipal Land Use Plans: Building Resiliency in Ventnor, New Jersey, 2015**

The effort was funded by the New Jersey Sea Grant Consortium. The goal was to provide recommendations for the incorporation of data, mapping, language and actions to address climate change in Ventnor's land use planning documents. The plan recommended the use of green infrastructure, protection of open space, and development of living shorelines, among other efforts to make the City more resilient.

### **17. The Absecon Island Coastal Storm Risk Reduction Project**

The project is sponsored by the United States Army Corps of Engineers and the State of New Jersey to replenish and protect the oceanfront shorelines of Absecon Island. Originally authorized in 1996, the project was completed in Atlantic City and part of Ventnor by 2004. The remaining portions of the project include the shoreline of southern Ventnor, Margate, and Longport and are underway at the time of this Reexamination Report's preparation. The subsequent phase of the project will stabilize and protect Ventnor's shoreline through widening the beach and extending the existing dune system south past the municipal boundary at Fredricksburg Avenue. These improvements will provide added storm protection throughout Absecon Island and most the funding is provided by the Army Corps and the State.

### **18. The New Jersey Back Bays Study**

An effort like The Absecon Island Coastal Storm Risk Reduction Project known as the New Jersey Back Bays (NJBB) Study is underway to develop and eventually fund resiliency improvements along the back bays. The NJBB study area is located behind the barrier islands of Monmouth, Ocean, Burlington, Atlantic and Cape May counties. The purpose of the study is to investigate Coastal Storm Risk Management strategies and solutions to reduce damages from coastal flooding affecting population, critical infrastructure, critical facilities, property, and ecosystems. The NJBB Study is being performed to align with the goals to:

- Provide a risk management framework, consistent with NOAA/USACE Infrastructure Systems Rebuilding Principles; and
- Support resilient coastal communities and robust, sustainable coastal landscape systems, considering future sea level and climate change scenarios, to reduce risk to vulnerable populations, property, ecosystems, and infrastructure.

### **19. Atlantic City Intracoastal Waterway Relocation Feasibility, 2011**

In 2011, the South Jersey Transportation Authority retained The Louis Berger Group, Inc. to consider the feasibility of relocating the New Jersey Intracoastal Waterway (NJIWW) where it passes along Beach Thorofare between McGahn Bridge and Shelter Island. The existing portion of the waterway which passes through the mile stretch would remain unmodified, continuing to serve existing boating interests. The study concludes that this relocation would improve the functional operation and alignment of the existing NJIWW, thus providing greater maneuverability for commercial and recreational vessels and serving to reduce traffic congestion along Dorset Avenue.

### **20. Residential Site Improvement Standards**

The Residential Site Improvement Standards (RSIS) set forth the standards for residential development. Residential applications before the City must conform to the standards or apply for exemptions or waivers to the standards based on special conditions. The latest regulation can be found at N.J.A.C. 5:21-1.1 et seq. effective on February 6, 2006. It should be noted that residential stormwater management is addressed in the RSIS in Chapter 7 at N.J.A.C. 5:21-7.1 et seq.

## **21. Municipal Stormwater Management**

Under the Municipal Land Use Law Section 40:55D-93, every municipality shall prepare a stormwater management plan and a stormwater control ordinance to implement the plan. The City of Ventnor has adopted a Stormwater Management Plan in accordance with these requirements. As required by the Municipal Land Use Law, the Stormwater Management Plan shall be reexamined at each Master Plan reexamination.

## **22. Atlantic City Gateway Project**

Ventnor's location relative to Atlantic City positions the City for significant change for the near future. The Gateway Project, a mixed-use public-private partnership between Stockton University and South Jersey Gas, is currently underway in Atlantic City at the intersection of Atlantic and Albany Avenues. When completed in 2018, the project will result in classrooms, student housing, and office space on currently vacant lots in the Chelsea neighborhood of Atlantic City. Though the project will be built just over a half-mile from Ventnor's municipal boundary, Gateway has the potential to change the character of neighborhoods in the section of Ventnor closest to Atlantic City. The new office space for South Jersey Gas may increase housing demand in Ventnor and serve as a catalyst for additional development in the immediate vicinity.

Student housing and facilities construction in Atlantic City will stimulate demand for additional facilities in the area. The limited supply and/or higher costs of housing operated by Stockton University will increase demand for off-campus student housing nearby. While this is a phenomenon experienced by many communities that host institutions of higher education with residential components, this project would represent the first project of this kind in coastal South Jersey. Student campus facilities can have a range of effects upon surrounding communities. Property values may increase for nearby properties due to the presence of a stable population, new facilities, and a new spending market. Students may also choose to stay in the area upon graduation, which will increase the supply of an educated workforce and drive demand for jobs and investment in the area. On the other hand, demand for student housing may spill over into adjacent neighborhoods, leading to the potential for illegal residential conversions and displacement of existing residents. Crime may also increase, and businesses serving the extant communities in Atlantic City and Ventnor may transition to serve the incoming population.

Careful planning and code enforcement on the part of Ventnor will mitigate the negative externalities associated with the Atlantic City Gateway project and allow the City to enjoy the benefits of positive externalities. With the closure of casinos in Atlantic City, the economy is transitioning to one that may be less dependent upon tourism and the service industry. While the Gateway Project anticipates this future demand, this presents an opportunity for Ventnor to plan for future growth.

## **Section 4 – Recommended Changes in the City’s Master Plan, Development Regulations, and Zoning Map**

### **1. Master Plan Recommendations**

The 2016 Master Plan Reexamination will include a Land Use Element, Circulation Element, Utility Services Element, Community Facilities Element, Open Space and Recreation Element and for the first time, given the need to focus on future hazards, a Resiliency Element will be provided. An Economic Development Element will also be carefully crafted to guide the future of the City.

### **2. Zoning and Development Regulations Changes**

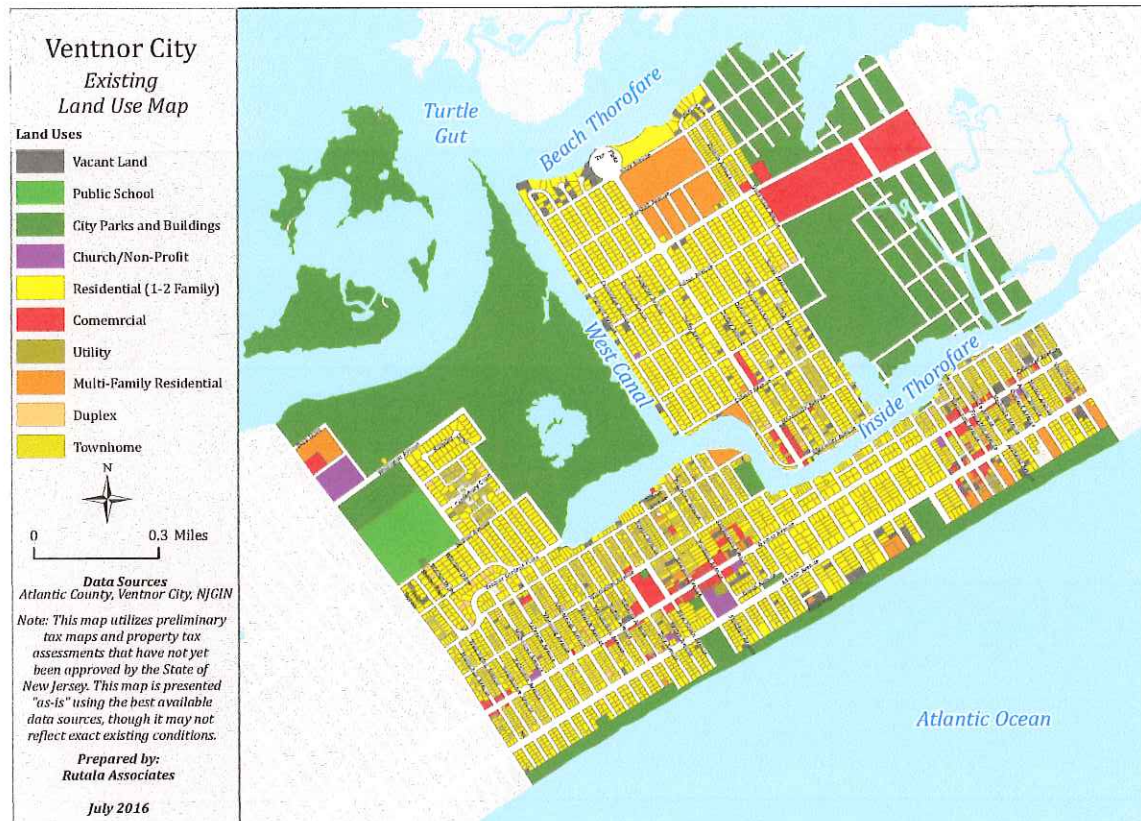
Ventnor’s current master planning efforts represent the first comprehensive reexamination of land use changes in a decade. Flood insurance changes following Superstorm Sandy further demonstrated the need to reform or amend the City’s zoning code to facilitate rebuilding and recovery. The Master Plan Reexamination resulted in the following recommendations:

- Reexamine regulations governing commercial districts.
- Comprehensively reexamine and address standards for two-family dwellings and duplexes. Currently, the zoning regulations address these uses as follows; Existing duplexes are a permitted use in the R-5 and R-6 District, permitted as a conditional use in Block 276 of the R-6 District. Attached single-family construction is a permitted conditional use in the R-7 District. Two-family dwellings and duplexes are permitted uses in the R-9 Overlay District. In the R-11 District, these uses are defined as "condominium apartments" which are indicated as a permitted use. Regulations for the replacement of existing non-conforming duplexes and apartments is set forth in Section 102-115. Nonconforming uses, and expansion thereof are addressed in Section 102-117. Restoration of nonconforming uses, buildings and structures is addressed in Section 102-118.2I. To facilitate and address improvements to, promote raising of structures to address compliance with flood regulations and to promote the elimination of older housing by demolition and reconstruction of new structures, it is recommended that these Sections be reviewed and revised to provide a comprehensive and clear set of regulations that are consistent with each other. Evaluate if City wide zoning standards are appropriate for duplexes and two-family dwellings. Revise language in §102-115.2 to address elevation of two-family dwellings and duplexes.
- Amend zoning for two-family dwellings (side by side units) to reflect individual lot ownership, and the definition of two family dwellings should be amended as well. Fee simple lots for two-family dwellings has been a zoning trend driven by flood insurance and other considerations that should be addressed in the zoning regulations. Bulk regulations should incorporate a "per lot" methodology. Clarify §102-115.3 to address attached single-family dwellings on separate lots, whether they are separated per lot or per unit.
- Reexamine corner lot regulations and calculations of effective building width and the related impact on permitted building height, roof slope envelope and eave height. Redevelopment of

corner lot parcels has necessitated numerous variances and inconsistencies with building heights with the neighboring lots.

- Dormer regulations for corner lots need to be reevaluated.

**Figure 1.10 - Existing Land Use Map of Ventnor City**



- Reduce setbacks from houses and decks to the beach bulkhead to the side yard setback of the governing zoning district. A reduction of this standard should be examined while still providing some setback to allow for maintenance of the bulkhead.
- Update the City's Zoning Map to be consistent with the land development code.
- Clarify allowance of public schools to be conforming uses in all residential districts (Specifically the R-6 zone where the school is currently located). Bulk and Area regulations for school may also be appropriate.
- To address and promote compliance with flood regulations without variance approval, amend building heights to allow for home elevations to non-conforming structures greater

than three feet above the base flood elevation (BFE) to reduce the need for variances. This amendment should address variance approval would only be required for expansion of the structure outside the building setbacks.

- Address building heights for structures not within the 100-year floodplain ("X" zones). Building height, principle building is defined as follows:

*For any new construction, substantial improvement, and substantial addition to any building located in an area of special flood hazard as set forth in § 126-7 of this Code, the vertical distance measured from the base flood elevation as shown on the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Base Flood Elevation (BFE) Maps, plus two feet of freeboard, to the highest finished surface of the coping for a flat roof, deckline for a mansard roof, or gable for a pitched or hip roof structure. If the principal building first floor is at least two feet over the base flood elevation, the maximum building height shall be measured from the first-floor elevation, but no more than four feet greater than the base flood elevation, to the highest finished surface of the coping for a flat roof, deckline for a mansard roof or gable for a pitched or hip roof structure. For any new construction, substantial improvement, and substantial addition to any building located in an area designated as AE8 Zone as set forth in § 126-7 of this Code, the vertical distance measured from the base flood elevation as shown on the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Base Flood Elevation (BFE) Maps, plus three feet of freeboard, to the highest finished surface of the coping for a flat roof, deckline for a mansard roof, or gable for a pitched or hip roof structure. If an existing principal building's first floor is below the base flood elevation, plus two feet of freeboard, and the building is not being raised or the building is not located in an area of special flood hazard as set forth in § 126-7 of this Code, the maximum building height shall be the vertical distance measured from Elevation 11.8 (NAVD88) for all principal structures located south of Atlantic Avenue and Elevation 10.8 (NAVD88) for all principal structures located north of Atlantic Avenue to the highest finished surface of the coping for a flat roof, deckline for a mansard roof, or gable for a pitched or hip roof structure. (See § 102-118.2, Exceptions.)*

- Building heights for structures not within the flood zone are measured from the reference elevation indicated above. It is recognized that these structures are still at risk and may be more at risk in the future recognizing sea level rise. Applications before the planning board have shown cases where building height measurements from these reference elevations are too low and that houses on lots abutting that are within the flood zone may have allowable building heights of several feet higher compared to houses within the "X" zone. This is particularly the case primarily along Ventnor Avenue and Atlantic Avenue. It is recommended that these elevations be reviewed and adjusted accordingly. Examine the need to revise building heights in §102-118.

- Amend the R-7 district to include waterfront bulkheads and decks as accessory uses. This district abuts both Inside Thorofare and East Canal and these accessory uses should be incorporated like the R-2 District.
- The requirement for the second residential unit only for "seasonal use" should be reexamined in the R-7 District. Changing demographics and economic conditions as well as difficulty in enforcement potentially necessitate a change. Elimination of the seasonal use restriction may be warranted.
- Revise language governing the R-7 district to change "attached single-family construction" to "two-family dwellings" and allow this type of dwelling on either one or two lots. Evaluate if this use in the R-7 district shall remain a permitted conditional use or change it to a permitted use. the conditional use standards have driven conditional use variance applications before the Planning Board.
- Incorporate zoning regulation to address raising of and improvements to non-conforming structures and structures on non-conforming lots to eliminate the need for variances. Variances should only be required for new improvements that do not conform to bulk and area standards.
- Address exceptions for lot areas in the R-2 District and apartment houses in §102-118.
- Revise §102-118.2 (J) addressing maximum building heights to simplify and clarify.
- Revise §102-118.3 Additional Regulations to make projections of front eaves and setback to 5 ft., clarify whether decks in rear yards on second story are allowed (D), update the prohibitive regulations regarding the provision of off-street parking (G), and change the regulations regarding steps and stairs from first floor decks and porches (M).
- Address driveways for off-street parking in §102-118.6.
- In §102-119, consider site plan waiver or administrative review.
- Address fees in §102-160.4.
- Upgrade building codes and zoning laws to reflect the increased risk of storm and floods.
- Streamline the development review process.
- Revise the zoning application requirements.

## **Section 5 – Redevelopment Areas**

There are two redevelopment zones in the City of Ventnor. The Ventnor West Redevelopment Area consists of the R-10 Zoning District, which comprises the lands north of Wellington Avenue in Ventnor West and east of Buffalo Avenue. This redevelopment plan resulted in the construction of the Shalom House, which is a rental housing project for seniors located near the Margate border. Due to the lack of development activity or substantial improvements in the area, environmental constraints, and the plan's age, the plan should be amended to reflect a new vision for the site. In addition, development of sections of Northeast Ventnor are governed by the Northeast Ventnor Redevelopment Plan.

### **1.6 Master Plan Comparisons**

The New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law requires that the City evaluate the relationship of its Master Plan to the plans of adjacent communities, the Atlantic County Master Plan, the State Development and Redevelopment Plan and the appropriate Solid Waste Management Plan. The Ventnor Master Plan Reexamination is consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of both the Atlantic County Master Plan and the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan.

#### **1.6.1 Relationship to the State Plan**

The State Plan is adopted by the State Planning Commission and is used to guide state agencies and municipalities in planning efforts across multiple jurisdictions. A guiding force of the State Plan is cross acceptance, where municipalities, counties, and the state negotiate to achieve consensus and consistency for planning efforts across the State's various jurisdictions. The latest State Plan was adopted in 2001. In 2011, the Office for Planning Advocacy released a draft State Strategic Plan to replace the 2001 plan. The Strategic Plan has not yet been adopted.

There have been no significant changes in the State Development and Redevelopment Plan that the City will need to address. The State Plan classifies most of City as a PA-1: Metropolitan Planning Area. Metropolitan Planning Areas are designed to provide for much of the state's future growth through revitalization of cities and towns, promotion of growth in compact forms, stabilization of older suburbs, redesign of areas of sprawl and protection of the character of existing stable communities. The State Plan policy objectives for land use, housing, economic development, transportation, natural resource conservation, recreation, redevelopment, historic preservation, public facilities and services all support the proposals of the City's Master Plan.

#### **1.6.2 Relationship to the Atlantic County Master Plan**

The Master Plan Reexamination has been prepared to incorporate the goals of the Atlantic County Master Plan (ACMP) dated October 2000. The Ventnor Master Plan has addressed each planning goal of the ACMP except for farmland protection. The goal of farmland protection is not applicable to the City of Ventnor's land uses.

### 1.6.3 Relationship to Planning Efforts in Adjacent Municipalities

Atlantic City's zoning boundaries at its border with Ventnor along Jackson Avenue include the R-2 and MTM District. The R-2 District allows single-family residential developments, though there are two high-rise condominium buildings three blocks northeast of Ventnor's municipal border. Atlantic City's R-2 zoning is largely compatible with Ventnor, whose zoning districts along the Atlantic City boundary include the R-9, RR-1, and C/MU districts. These districts support single-family detached dwellings, existing high rises and townhomes, parks, bed and breakfasts, municipal buildings or parking lots, mixed-use buildings, and retail/professional services. Bulk, yard, and size requirements are largely similar for districts on either side of the municipal boundary.

The following actions are recommended regarding the Atlantic City Gateway project:

- Monitor zoning and land use changes in Atlantic City near the Ventnor border.
- Continue Ventnor's regimen of code enforcement and prevent illegal conversions.
- Allow higher densities of infill development on currently vacant parcels in the neighborhoods closest to Atlantic City while preserving and expanding single-family and two-family apartments elsewhere.
- Examine commercial zoning along Ventnor and Atlantic Avenues for opportunities to prevent retail uses out of character with the City.

Along the Margate border, Ventnor has designated R-3, C, R-4, R-6, and R-10 zoning districts. These districts support single-family detached houses, parks and playgrounds, schools, parking, retail, service stations, public buildings, existing duplexes and townhomes, and preserved lands. Adjacent zoning districts within Margate include the S-60, S-50, GO, S-30, S-25(HD), and S-25 zones. Except for the GO District (which serves Government and Open Space), the bordering zoning districts are single-family residential. The southern portion of the Ventnor/Margate border (Fredricksburg Avenue) is largely compatible, though commercial uses are permitted on Ventnor Avenue within Ventnor's municipal boundary and not in Margate. Heading northwest along Fredericksburg Avenue, shifts in land use are apparent north of Balfour Avenue. On this section of the border, the Ventnor City Educational Complex (which includes a school and playing fields) abuts low-density residential neighborhoods on both sides of the border. Past the Educational Complex, the right-of-way becomes unimproved. An electric utility substation is present at the Margate border near Wellington Avenue and is surrounded by vacant woodlands on either side. At the border near Burk Avenue, the Ventnor side of the border includes vacant woodlands, a synagogue, and age-restricted apartments. The Margate side contains a multifamily apartment building and single-family detached housing. Despite this zoning inconsistency, Ventnor's border with Margate is mostly congruent.

It is the policy of the City to work cooperatively with neighboring communities. Atlantic City and Margate, while very different communities, are predominately residential where they abut Ventnor and their land uses adjacent are attached and detached housing. These uses are compatible to those of Ventnor.

## 2.0 LAND USE ELEMENT

### 2.1 Introduction

The Land Use Element seeks to maintain a balance in land use while providing the framework for planning and policy goals. It is designed to maintain and improve the quality of life for residents, property owners and visitors to the City. The Land Use Element has been organized into three distinct parts. First, the Land Use Element identifies goals and objectives. Second, it reviews existing land uses. Third, it recommends land use changes.

### 2.2 Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives were included in the 2006 Master Plan Reexamination:

- The image of Ventnor City as a family-oriented Beach and Resort Community with its own special identity must be maintained. The re-creation of the Municipal Oceanfront Developments such as the Ventnor Casino and its related structures should be encouraged.
  - a. *The City has invested substantial improvements in the Boardwalk through a redecking project utilizing long life materials*
  - b. *The Absecon Island Beachfill has recreated a wider expanse for recreational usage. With the Beachfill Project came new beach accesses as well as new handicapped access points*
  - c. *The City has actively pursued Green Acres funding for rehabilitation of the Municipal Fishing Pier which will also include a new Recreational Building and Handicapped accessible Public Bathrooms.*
  - d. *The City recently completed construction of an expanded Library and Cultural Arts Center at the location of the former Ice Rink Building. The location, being close to the Beach and Boardwalk, encourages Public enjoyment of the Beach and Boardwalk as part of the Library and Cultural Arts visitation.*
- The recommendations of the Ventnor West Redevelopment Agency regarding the Ventnor West area should be actively pursued.
  - a. *With the advent of the State Master Plan, it has been a struggle to maintain this area as part of the developable areas.*
  - b. *The City continues to coordinate with the County in the Cross-Examination Process and encourage inclusion of this area within the PA5 Developable Area.*
- Recognizing the large amount of current multifamily development, additional multifamily zoning should be discouraged.
  - a. *The Redevelopment Plan has recognized that multifamily development, if performed in a planned fashion can actually reduce overall housing density.*
  - b. *New development of single-family housing in the R-11 Multifamily District has resulted in meeting this intended policy in areas where multifamily housing was not appropriate.*

- c. *With the increase in land values and underutilization of certain commercial areas, the consideration of planned multifamily residential projects could be an advantage provided there is adequate infrastructure to support the development.*
  - d. *Multifamily housing, in the proper density and location, can offset the economic pressure placed on existing buildings on oversized lots from demolishing and subdividing, resulting in larger homes on smaller lots and increased density.*
- Development Regulations shall protect and preserve existing stable residential neighborhoods. At the same time, the City must adopt policies and programs to encourage the rehabilitation and/or replacement of aging obsolescent housing with modern construction.
    - a. *The adoption of the Northeast Ventnor Redevelopment Plan provides a guide for redevelopment for an existing high-density residential and commercial portion of the City.*
    - b. *Continued evaluation of the Zoning Regulations by the Planning Board and forwarding of recommendations to the Governing Body for needed zoning changes assures the effectiveness of zoning requirements.*
    - c. *Desire to work within the existing Zoning Map and Bulk Regulation framework assures continued compatibility between old and new development.*
- The present Municipal Policy of eliminating illegal conversion of existing single-family residences into multifamily structures is to be continued.
    - a. *Continued proper Code Enforcement has led to a substantial reduction in attempts to increase density through use of single-family structures as multifamily units.*
    - b. *Increased land values in shorefront communities has resulted in a reduction of the older housing stock and replacement with new code compliant structures.*
    - c. *The adoption of the Northeast Ventnor Redevelopment Area has provided a focus on many of the high-density older housing stock areas and created a plan where new development is encouraged.*
    - d. *The elimination of duplex uses formerly permitted in some of the Residential Districts has increased property sale transactions and has forced property owners to either apply for Certificates of Non-Conformity or face deconversion, thereby eliminating such unapproved units.*

Additional goals, updated for 2016, include:

- Enable the development and redevelopment of sustainable housing stock in the character of existing neighborhoods.
  - a. Amend the zoning code to facilitate home elevations without requiring the need for variances.
  - b. Streamline site plan and administrative review to facilitate home-rebuilding and flood-mitigation measures.

- c. Enact landscaping ordinances to promote streetscapes and promote stormwater infiltration.
  - d. Enact design standards to ensure that new infrastructure or private property flood-mitigation building requirements are aesthetically pleasing and do not substantially detract from the neighborhood streetscape.
  - e. Using the Community Rating System (CRS) as a guide, enact development standards recommended by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that will enable Ventnor to score more points in the CRS program and allow insurance holders to enjoy higher discounts on their flood insurance premiums.
- Use zoning to promote the establishment of businesses and the revitalization of Ventnor’s business districts.
    - a. Revisit and revise existing zoning standards for the City’s commercial districts.
    - b. Ensure that bulk requirements support flood-proofing measures for the City’s commercial districts.
    - c. Consider the institution of streetscape and landscaping requirements.

### **2.3 Existing Issues and Land Use/Development Patterns**

Ventnor comprises approximately 1,248 acres (1.951 square miles) of land area and 1,005 acres (1.571 square miles) of water area within its municipal boundaries. The City demonstrates desirable characteristics of both urban and suburban communities. Towards its border with Atlantic City and along Ventnor Avenue, housing stock and structures are denser and set back closer to lot lines, evoking an urban feel and development pattern. In the newer sections of the City, such as in Ventnor Heights, the Gardens, and Ventnor West, suburban development patterns are more pronounced. These sections of town tend to have driveways, larger yards, and less dense housing stock. Ventnor’s newest housing tends to be located along the waterfront and consists of larger, single-family homes with off-street parking. Taken altogether, Ventnor’s built form demonstrates a variety of building types, layouts, and neighborhood rhythm.

Ventnor’s status as a waterfront resort and residential community located adjacent to a regional center has exerted considerable development pressure on Ventnor while leaving the City vulnerable to changes in the local economy. Higher property values at oceanfront beach blocks have helped contribute to the supply and demand for larger vacation homes in these areas. Blocks inland from the waterfront tend to be older and under less pressure for redevelopment. Generally, year-round residents live in Ventnor Heights and the blocks between Monmouth and Ventnor Avenues whereas the blocks between Ventnor Avenue and the Boardwalk tend to have more seasonal residences (except for the North Beach neighborhood). Ventnor’s working population, nearly half of which commutes to Atlantic City, is especially susceptible to the regional economic downturn. Thus, the older and more affordable housing stock in the year-round sections of the City may suffer from deferred maintenance as unemployment rises and work becomes scarce.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) 1983 Federal Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) is provided in Figure 2.1. The yellow area in Zone A8, meaning this is an area of the 100-year flood.

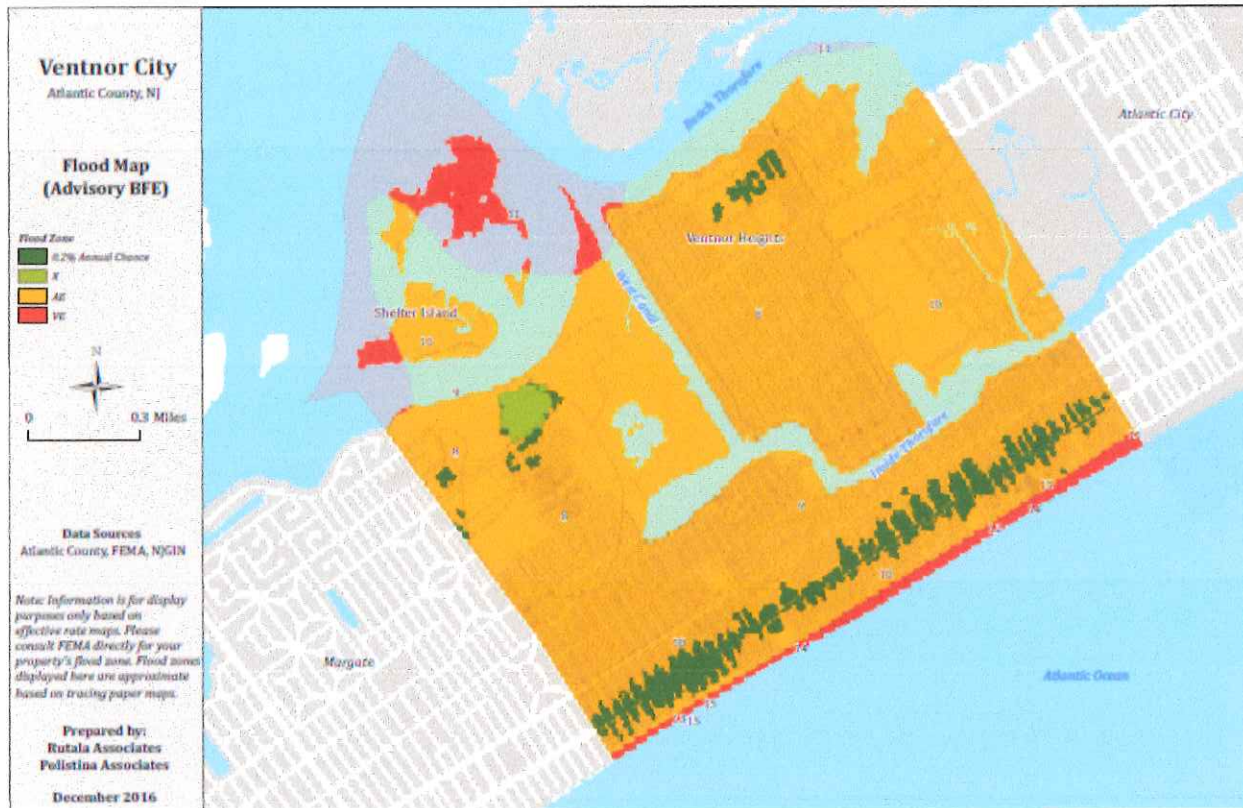
The Base Flood Elevation (BFE) for this area has been determined to be 8 feet above sea level. The red area along the beach is Zone V10, meaning that these areas fall within the 100-year coastal flood with velocity or wave action. BFE for this area has been determined to be 10 feet above sea level. The green areas between the A-8 and V10 zones are Zone B, which illustrates areas between the limits of the 100-year flood and the 500-year flood. This area is less susceptible to flooding. The 1983 FIRM will continue to be used for flood insurance purposes until the new flood maps are adopted.

**Figure 2.1 – 1983 Flood Insurance Rate Map for Ventnor**



The 2015 preliminary FIRM keeps much of the City within the A Zone. Small sections of blocks along Atlantic Avenue are in the X Zone, while the oceanfront VE Zone straddles the dunes and boardwalk. Nearly all residential structures are outside of the Coastal V Zone (where damage from wave impacts can be experienced) except some residences located north of Burk Avenue and some homes near Titus Fields. Much of the wetland portion of Ventnor West is in the Coastal A zone, while a small section of the site is out of the flood zone entirely. Small sections of the residential portion of the neighborhood are in the X Zone. Base flood elevations range from eight feet in Ventnor West and the Heights to nine feet in the central portion of the City and 10 feet in the blocks nearest the ocean.

**Figure 2.2 – 2015 Preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Map for Ventnor**



Ventnor is especially vulnerable to coastal flooding and hazards. The repercussions on these risks for land use is multifarious:

- The natural functions of the floodplain, such as serving as a wave buffer, are compromised by waterfront development.
- Bulkheads and coastal hardening may provide short-term protection from flooding but long-term risk of erosion.
- New Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) and increased flood insurance premiums will financially burden homeowners and renters who will end up shouldering the cost for flood-mitigation measures or leaving the City if the cost of compliance is too high.
- Ground-floor-level businesses will likely require flood-proofing measures to retain easy pedestrian access to shops in commercial districts without experiencing high premiums.
- Sea level rise will increasingly threaten properties that may have mitigated for storms and flooding occurring at existing sea levels but not in consideration of future rises.
- Structures built without appropriate flood-mitigation measures (e.g. anchoring) continue to be at substantial risk for catastrophic and repetitive flood damages.

While the risks to Ventnor’s structures and infrastructure will remain considerable, recognition of these risks and implementation of new development regulations based on these risks will help to

protect owners, renters, and business owners from property damage and preserve the City's character.

**Figure 2.3 - Land Use Distribution in Ventnor**

Category	Acreage	% of Total Land Area	% of Developable Lands*
<b>Total Land Area</b>	1,248.6		
Road Right-of-Way	266.9	21.3%	
<b>Developable Land*</b>	523	41.8%	
Low-Density Residential	389.2	31.1%	74.4%
Multifamily Residential	37.2	2.9%	7.1%
Commercial	43.26	3.5%	8.3%
Church/Charitable	8.4	0.6%	1.6%
Public School	19.4	1.5%	3.7%
Vacant Lands	24.78	2%	4.7%
Utilities	0.71	0.05%	0.14%
<b>City Government</b>	454.8	36.4%	
<i>Natural Lands (Ventnor West, Shelter Island, Ventnor East)</i>	375.95	30.1%	
<i>Parks</i>	69.06	5.3%	
<i>Parking Lot</i>	0.5	0.04%	
<i>Public Works</i>	2.19	0.1%	
<i>City Hall</i>	0.5	0.04%	

Sources: Atlantic County Office of GIS, U.S. Census, Ventnor City Tax Assessor  
 Numbers may not total to 100% due to rounding or assessment discrepancies

\* Developable lands include public and privately owned lands on which development has taken place

Understanding the distribution of land use in a community is an important planning tool that informs the balance of land use, as shown in Figure 2.1. Of Ventnor’s total land area, approximately one-fifth is taken up by vehicle rights-of-way, which include improved and unimproved streets. Though this land is not readily developable, street coverage has important implications for stormwater runoff, nuisance flooding, and the provision of parking. Street rights-of-way are usually covered by impermeable surface that do not allow water to infiltrate into the ground. Right-of-ways are also used for utility easements, stormwater conveyance, and sanitary operations. Atlantic Avenue, which has a 65-foot paved right-of-way across the City, itself comprises more than 13 acres of land area. In certain circumstances, rights-of-way can be vacated as part of site developments and improvements.

The largest cohort of land use in Ventnor is low-density residential uses. This includes single-family detached and attached homes, duplexes, and small condominium/townhouse units. Just under one-third of the City’s total surface area is covered by this land use, which comprises the clear majority (74.4 percent) of Ventnor’s developable land. Multi-family residential use, which includes high-rises, apartment buildings, and garden apartments, comprises 37.2 acres of the City’s land area, or

approximately 7 percent of the City’s land area. Commercial areas represent 3.5 percent of the City’s land area and 8.3 percent of its developable area. Vacant lands comprise approximately 4.7 percent of Ventnor’s developable lands. Based on Ventnor’s current development patterns, the amount of land used for low-density residential uses will likely increase, while the amount of multi-family residential and commercial areas will likely decrease or stay the same. As remaining vacant properties become developed and existing properties are redeveloped, the balance of land use will continue to shift towards lower density residential based on existing zoning. A discussion of the City’s zoning districts is found later in this Land Use Element.

**Figure 2.4 - Existing Land Use Map**

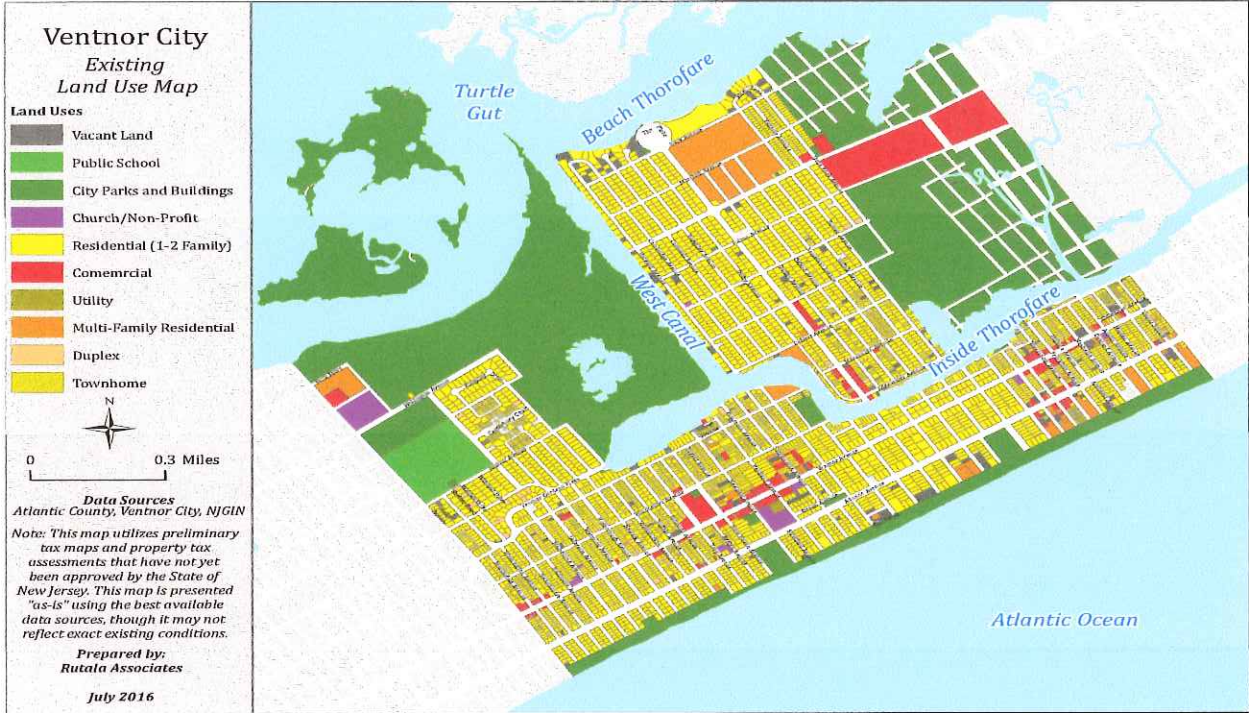


Figure 2.2 illustrates land uses across the entirety of Ventnor. For the purposes of this Land Use Element, Ventnor has been divided into five neighborhood districts based on the City’s development and layout to better examine land use on a neighborhood scale. These divisions were based largely on original subdivision maps in combination with the existing built form of the neighborhoods, thereby representing planning areas for this Land Use Element.

- **North Beach**, consisting of the area from Victoria Avenue to Jackson Avenue between the Inside Thorofare and the Atlantic Ocean.
- **St. Leonard’s Tract**, which consists of the entirety of the original St. Leonard’s Tract, an adjacent block, and beach blocks.
- **Ventnor Heights**, which consists of the lands northwest of the Inside Thorofare to the Beach Thorofare, and from the West Canal to the City’s municipal boundary with Atlantic City.

- **Downbeach Ventnor**, which includes the area from the beach to the block of homes on the south side of Balfour Avenue, from North Cambridge Avenue to Fredricksburg Avenue including Ventnor Gardens.
- **Ventnor West**, which includes the synagogue and housing north of Balfour Avenue and the wetlands east of Ventnor Gardens.

### 1. North Beach Neighborhood

North Beach is in the northeastern section of Ventnor on Absecon Island. North Beach is one of the oldest sections of the City and features a diversity of uses and structures. Two commercial districts are extant in this neighborhood along both Ventnor Avenue and Atlantic Avenue. This neighborhood also features several multi-family apartment buildings that provide a wide range of housing opportunities. The City's tallest occupied building – 5000 Boardwalk – is located near the Atlantic City border. Several other high-rise condominiums are located throughout the neighborhood in addition to larger single- and two-family homes. North Beach includes the John Stafford Historic District, which comprises properties along Atlantic, Austin, Baton Rouge, Marion, and Vassar Avenues and is listed on both the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

Several large vacant plots of land remain in this neighborhood, particularly near South Nashville Avenue. The most recent redevelopment effort in this neighborhood was the construction of The Waves townhomes between Little Rock and Weymouth Avenues. The Waves consists of 27 townhouses and replaced the former Monaco motel. In the wake of an eminent domain threat during the 2000s, North Beach residents formed a neighborhood association that continues to promote the neighborhood and foster civic pride in the community. Efforts to rebrand the neighborhood as a residential and business district with new shops and restaurants remain ongoing.

### 2. St. Leonard's Tract Neighborhood

St. Leonard's Tract was originally subdivided in 1905 and consisted of the blocks between the east side of Cambridge Avenue and the west side of Surrey Avenue between Atlantic Avenue and the Inside Thorofare. St. Leonard's Tract represents one of the oldest examples of homeowner's associations (established in 1921), and the neighborhood's near-uniformity in built form is mostly due to a deed restriction placed on the neighborhood when the homes were first built. Streets in this neighborhood were named for English dukes, thereby paying tribute to British-inspired heritage characterized by the City's name. Many homes in this area are architecturally distinctive, and street trees are prevalent.

The tract is almost entirely residential, and no commercial properties are extant on Atlantic or Ventnor avenues, unlike in the adjacent neighborhoods of North Beach and Downbeach Ventnor. Though some homes have been rebuilt or redeveloped over the past several decades, the neighborhood's character has remained largely the same. The apartment buildings and homes built between Atlantic Avenue and the Boardwalk were not subject to the original deed restrictions because the high-water line had nearly reached Atlantic Avenue when Ventnor was first developed. St. Leonard's Tract is also home to Suffolk Avenue Park, which contains tennis, basketball, and beach

volleyball courts as well as a playground. The R-1 residential district includes this neighborhood and largely preserves the development regulations in the original deed restrictions. This neighborhood is not expected to change in character.

### **3. Downbeach Ventnor Neighborhood**

Downbeach Ventnor includes several neighborhoods and subdivisions in the City and consists of the blocks between the Boardwalk and Balfour Avenue between Cambridge Avenue and Fredericksburg Avenue at the border with Margate. For the purposes of this Element, the neighborhood also includes the area along the eastern shore of the Inside Thorofare near the Public Works Building. Until the late 1920s, the water body now known as the Inside Thorofare extended as far west as Washington Avenue and all areas north were marsh. By 1931, that area (as well as Ventnor West) was filled and platted. By the 1930s, the area south of Monmouth Avenue was near build-out. The area is distinguished by its large retail/commercial district and variety of residential housing types ranging from the ranchers and bungalows of Ventnor Gardens to architecturally varied beachfront homes, duplexes, and mixed-use second-floor apartments. Lot sizes tend to be larger at the beachfront and in Ventnor Gardens and smaller in the blocks between Monmouth and Ventnor Avenues. This neighborhood also contains the City's only area zoned for marine services, located along Sunset Avenue.

### **4. Ventnor Heights Neighborhood**

Ventnor Heights is a suburban neighborhood built on former marshlands across the Inside Thorofare from Absecon Island. It is accessible by Dorset Avenue from the south and Wellington Avenue from points north and east along County Route 629. The site consists largely of single-family detached homes but demonstrates a variety of land uses, including commercial areas along Wellington Avenue near the border with Atlantic City, a small business district along the southern portion of Dorset Avenue, and multifamily housing/garden apartments between Wellington and Burk avenues. A condominium tower is located at the bend of the Inside Thorofare. Much of the eastern portion of Ventnor Heights is marsh, while the western boundary of the neighborhood borders the West Canal and the wetlands of Ventnor West. Duplex/two-family homes in the neighborhood are found in the northeastern section, particularly along North Victoria Avenue.

Building activity in Ventnor Heights will mostly involve the redevelopment of existing homes to better withstand flood events and the construction of single-family homes in the neighborhood north of Burk Avenue along West Canal. Until the 1960s, most development did not extend north of Balfour Avenue. Ventnor Heights is decidedly more suburban in nature than the other neighborhoods of the City, containing mostly single-family homes, garden apartments, and some duplexes. Two small commercial areas are located along Dorset Avenue, including a mixed-use area just north of the Dorset Avenue Bridge and a smaller strip mall area along Dorset between Balfour and Calvert Avenues. Another commercial area is located along Wellington Avenue near the Atlantic City border and is characteristic of larger strip mall. While the existing zoning overlay supports mixed use, the current developments include a grocery store, discount stores, and a maintenance facility for the Tropicana Resort in Atlantic City.

## **5. Ventnor West Neighborhood**

Ventnor West consists of approximately 240 acres of land area on Absecon Island in addition to Shelter Island in the bay. This neighborhood was one of the last neighborhoods in the City to take shape. The site was previously marshland until the 1920s and 1930s when it was filled for development. The City has long owned the land, and remaining private vacant lots were taken after a blight declaration in the 1970s. Shelter Island was formerly the site of Ventnor's sewage treatment plant. The 1948 Master Plan envisioned boat launch facilities at the site and recommended developing the tract only after the other sections of Ventnor became built-out. The 1988 Master Plan envisioned several scenarios under which the site's 90 buildable acres could be developed under a comprehensive plan, but noted the high cost of environmental remediation would likely be prohibitive for future developments.

Currently, Ventnor West includes over 170 acres of woods and marsh north of Wellington Avenue and east of Wissahickon Avenue. This tract is comprised of two tax parcels, one of which comprises the wetlands portion of the site and one that includes the upland portion. An apartment building for low-income seniors is located on the Margate border along Fredricksburg Avenue along with a communications tower. A synagogue is located at the corner of Swarthmore and Wellington avenues just north of the former driving range. Single-family home development is present between Fulton Avenue and the Wellington Avenue right-of-way, while the area south of Fulton Avenue to Balfour Avenue largely consists of duplexes and townhomes. The Ventnor City Educational Complex is located west of Lafayette Avenue and receives students from across the area. A grassy field north of the school once contained Ventnor's track and driving range and is proposed for further recreational development

Future changes to this neighborhood will include the demolition or elevation of flood-prone homes, and the preservation of Ventnor West for passive and active recreation. The area is also threatened by coastal erosion. The peninsula in Ventnor West along West Canal has also experienced erosion and may result in higher risk to nearby neighborhoods due to the potential lack of a storm buffer.

Figure 2.5 – Neighborhoods in the City of Ventnor

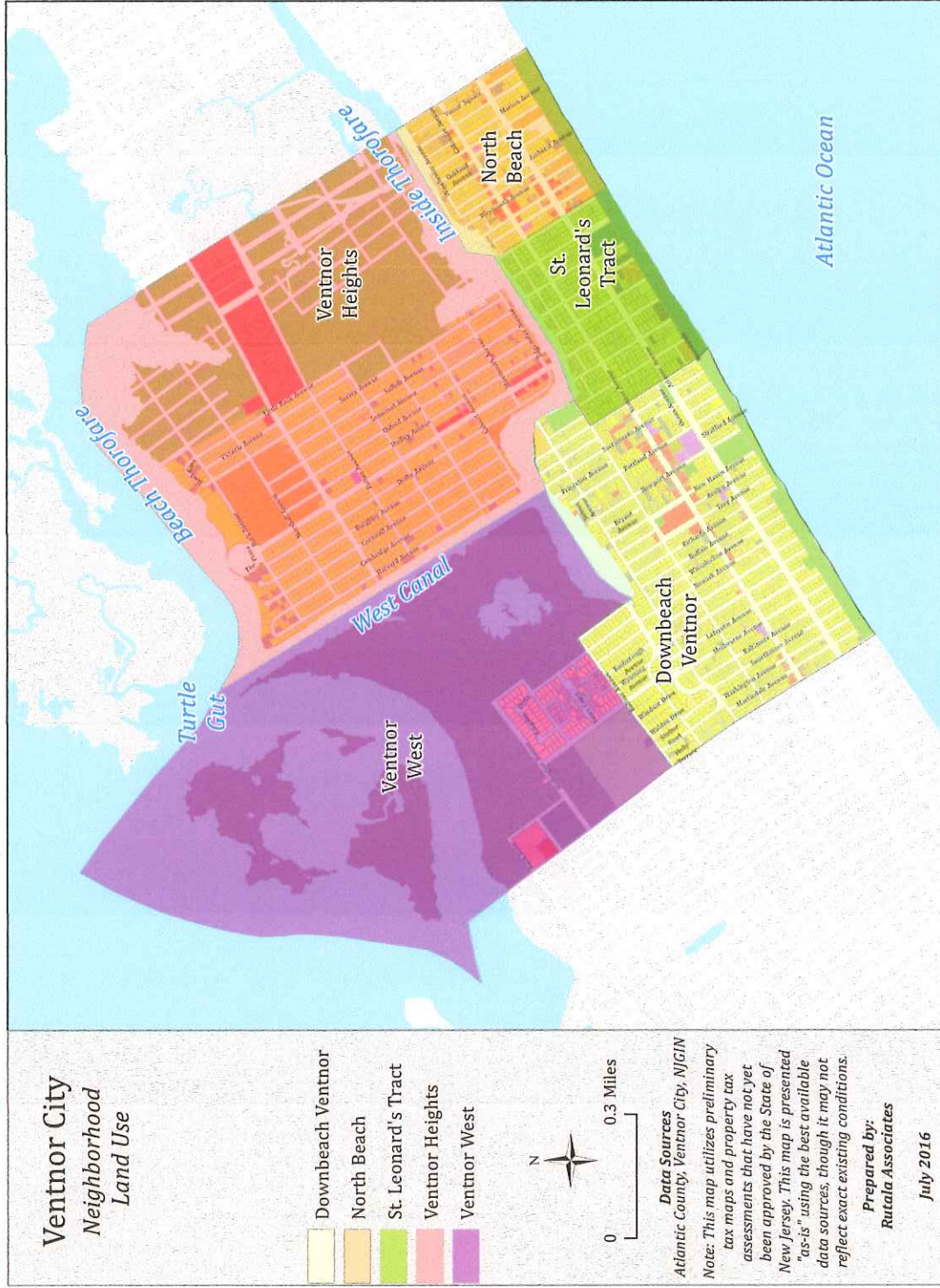


Figure 2.6 - North Beach Land Use Map

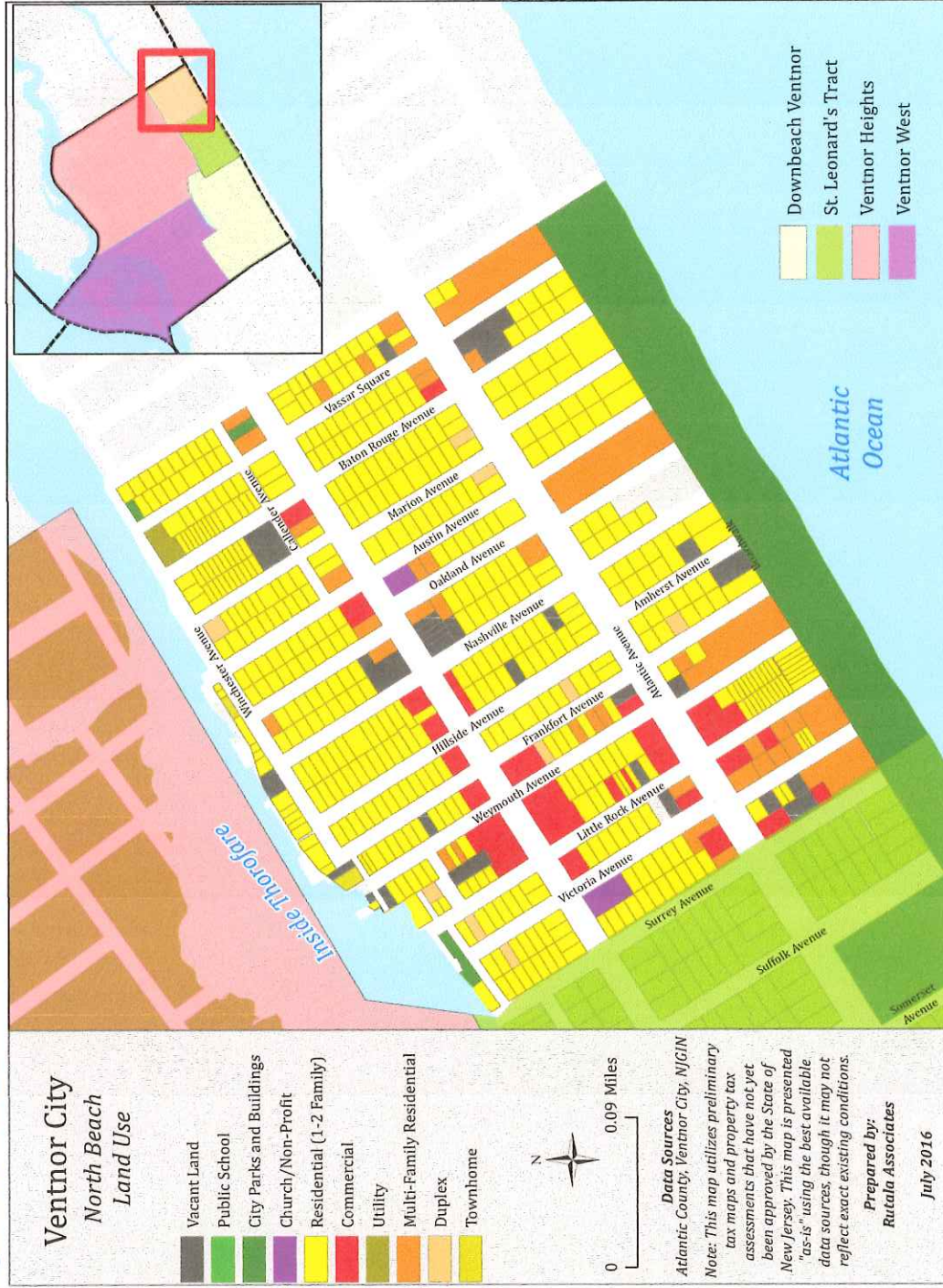


Figure 2.7 - St. Leonard's Tract Land Use Map

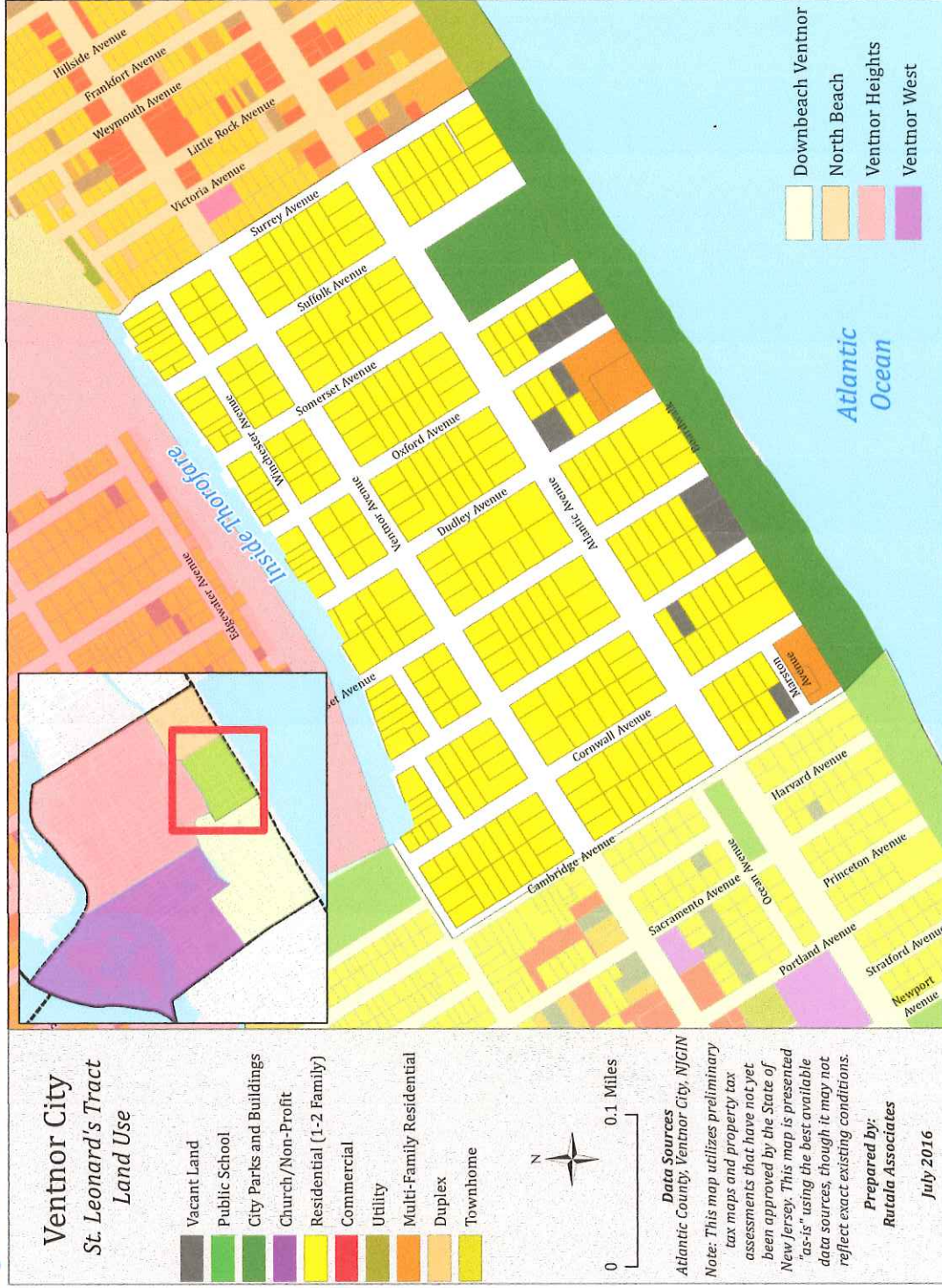


Figure 2.8 - Downbeach Ventnor Land Use Map

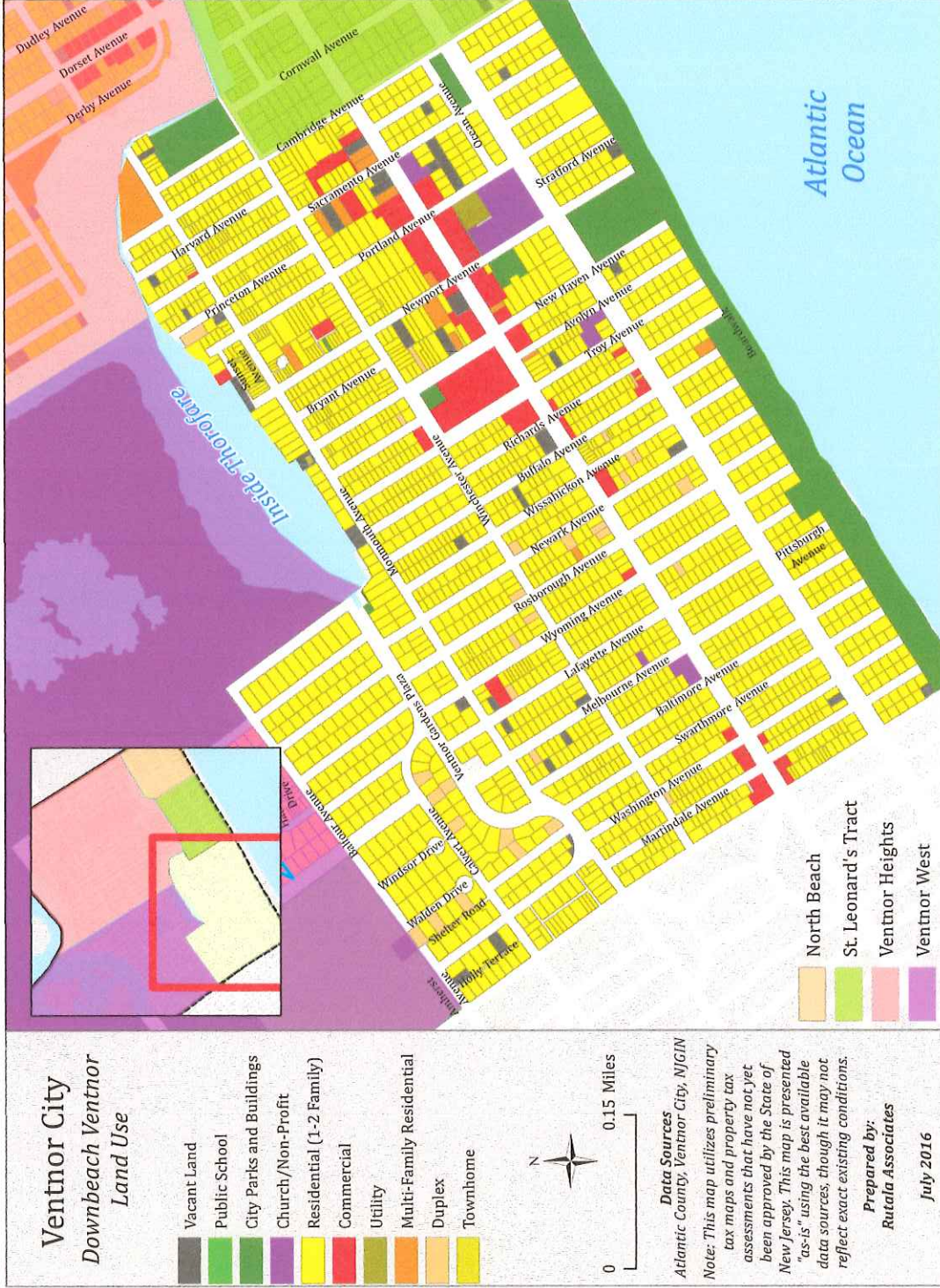


Figure 2.9 - Ventnor Heights Land Use

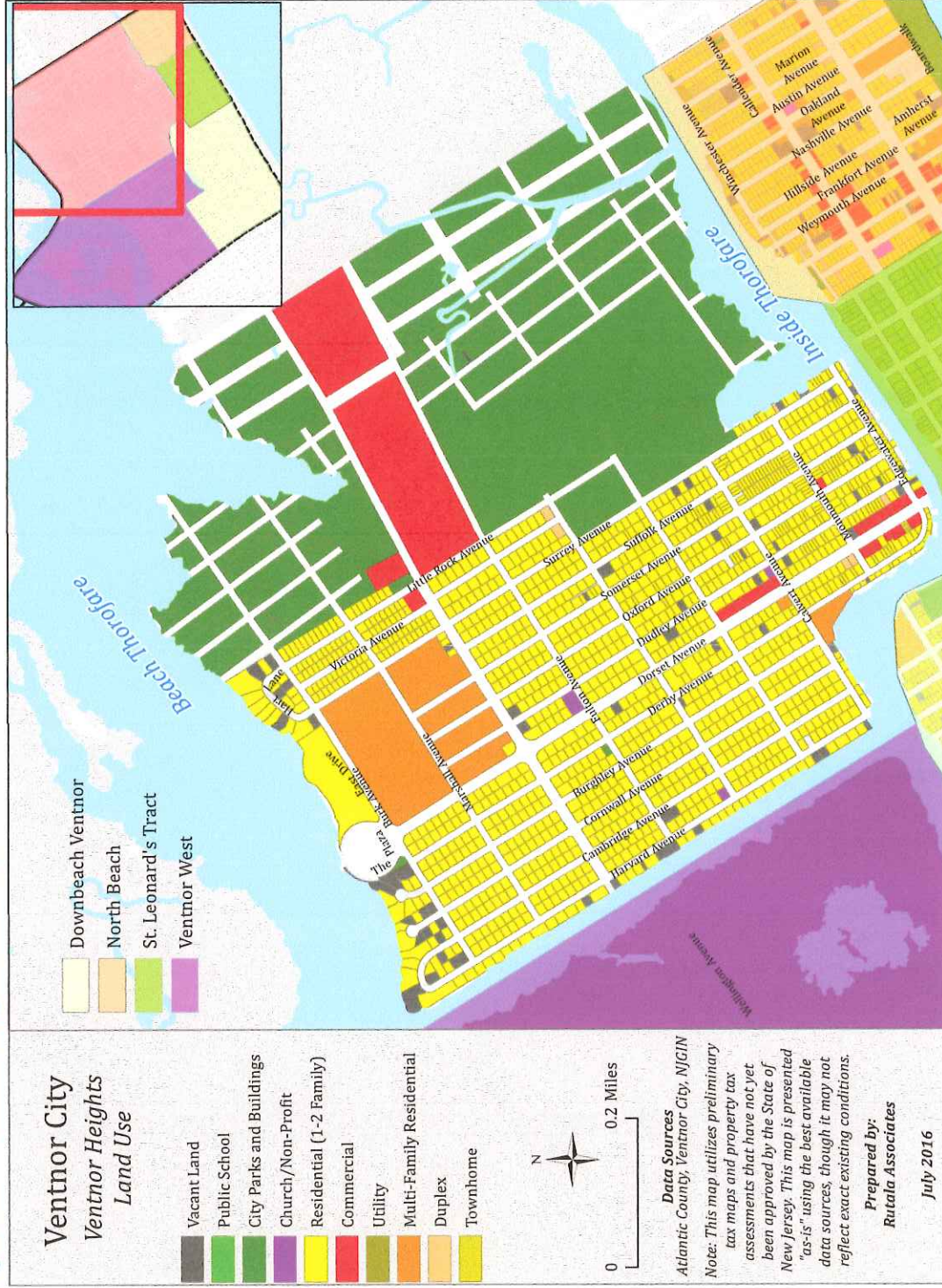


Figure 2.10 - Ventnor West Land Use Map

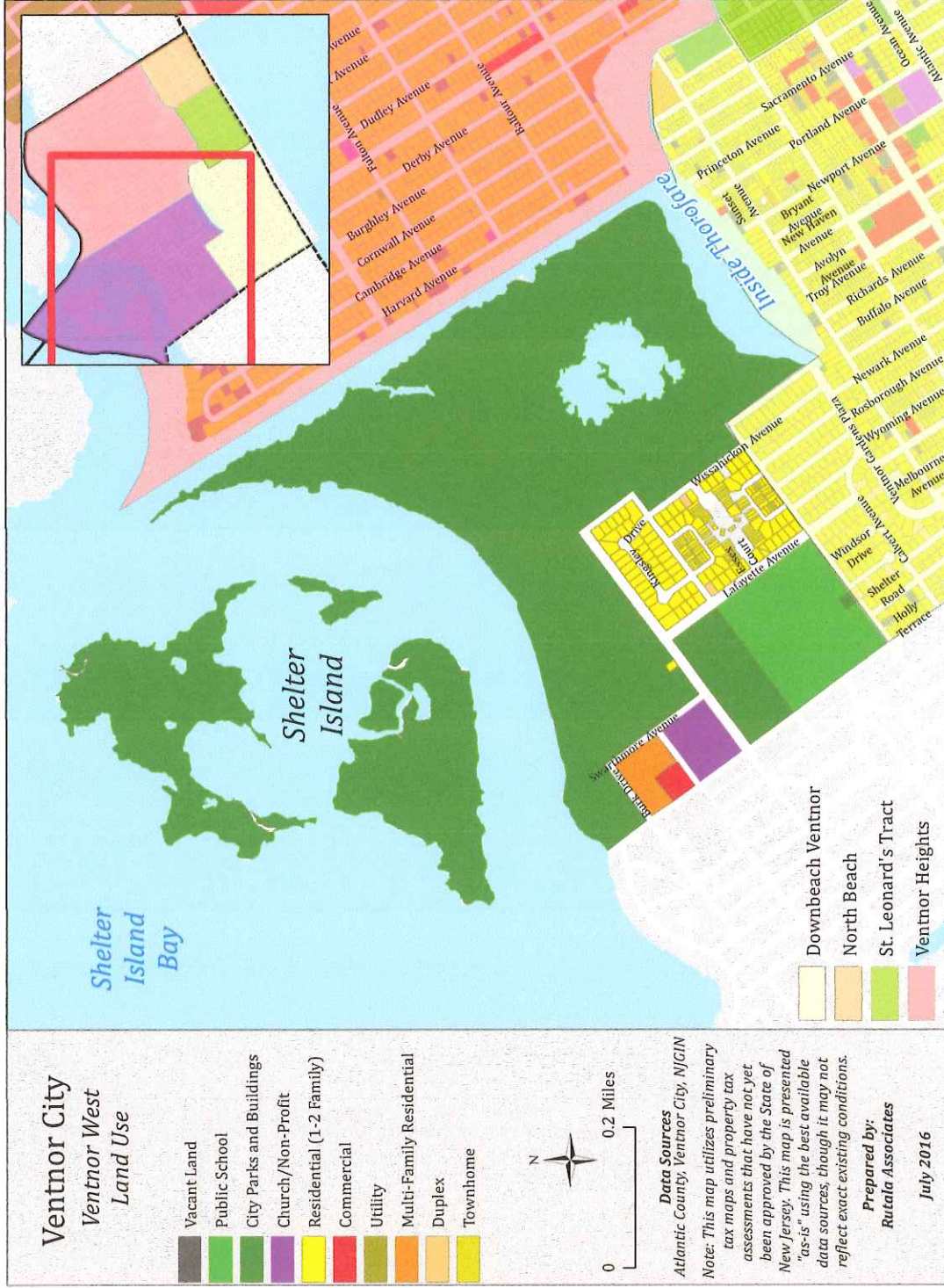


Figure 2.11 - Schedule of Zoning Districts

Zone (Article)	Min. Lot Size	Density	Max. Lot Coverage & Height	Principal Uses	Conditional Uses
<b>R-1</b>	6,250 square feet to 10,000 square feet	4.3 to 7 du/acres		Single-family detached, parks and playgrounds, municipal buildings, public utility substations, and educational uses	Places of worship and hospitals
<b>R-2 (V)</b>	4,800 square feet	9 du/acres	65%	Single-family detached, parks and playgrounds, and municipal buildings	R-1 conditional uses
<b>R-3 (VI)</b>	3,000 square feet	14.5 du/acre	75%	Single-family detached, R-1 permitted	R-1 conditional uses
<b>R-4 (VII)</b>	2,312 square feet	18.84 du/acre	75%	Single-family detached, R-1 permitted	R-1 conditional uses
<b>R-5 (VIII)</b>	4,800 to 6,700 square feet	6.5 to 9 du/acre (Varies by street location)	65%	Single-family detached residential, existing duplexes, parks and playgrounds, and municipal buildings	R-1 conditional uses
<b>R-6 (IX)</b>	5,930 square feet	7.3 du/acre	65%	Single-family detached residential, existing duplexes and townhouses, parks and playgrounds, and municipal buildings	R-1 conditional uses, duplexes in Block 276 under certain conditions
<b>R-7 (X)</b>	2,000 square feet	21 du/acre	75%	Single-family detached residential, R-1 principal uses, and municipal buildings	R-1 conditional uses, bed and breakfasts in certain locations, attached single-family construction

Zone (Article)	Min. Lot Size	Density	Max. Lot Coverage & Height	Principal Uses	Conditional Uses
				seasonal secondary residential units	
<b>R-8 (XI)</b>	3,900 square feet	11 du/acre	40% (building)	Single-family detached residential	R-1 conditional uses
<b>R-9 (XII)</b>	Varies	Varies	Varies	Single-family detached, existing high-rise apartments, existing townhomes, parks, playgrounds, and municipal buildings	Existing accessory uses, R-1 accessory uses, bed and breakfast operations
<b>R-9 Overlay (XII)</b>	Varies	Varies	Varies	Single-family detached, two-family, duplexes, apartments, garden apartments, townhomes, existing high-rises, and existing townhome residential units	Existing accessory uses, R-1 accessory uses, bed and breakfast operations
<b>R-10 (XIIIA)</b>	5,000 square feet	N/A	50%, five stories (for housing conditional use)	Public recreation, public wildlife preserves, dams, culverts, and bridges, utility transmission lines, public/quasi-public uses	Senior citizen housing, neighborhood business/retail, boat slips/docks, hotel conference center
<b>R-11 (XIIB)</b>	5 acres		60%;	Single-family detached, townhouses, condominium apartments, existing townhomes	
<b>Redevelopment 1 (XIIIC)</b>	2,000 to 4,000 square feet	Varies	75%	Single-family detached, existing two-family dwellings, multi-family conversion to age-restricted, conversion of multifamily to bed and breakfast guesthouses, surface-level	

Zone (Article)	Min. Lot Size	Density	Max. Lot Coverage & Height	Principal Uses	Conditional Uses
<b>Redevelopment 2 (XIIC)</b>	2,000 to 4,000 square feet	Varies	75%	parking, municipal buildings, public utilities, parks, playgrounds and recreational facilities Single-family detached, existing two-family dwellings, townhomes, multi-family conversion to age-restricted housing, multi-family conversion to bed and breakfast guesthouses, surface-level parking, bed and breakfasts, age-restricted apartments, assisted living facilities	
<b>City Commercial (XIIIA)</b>	3,000 square feet	14.5 du/acre	60%; 35 feet	Single-family detached, retail shops, enclosed restaurants/coffee shops, professional and financial services, single-level parking facilities, municipal/utility buildings, existing automobile service stations; laundry pickup/drop off, fitness centers	R-1 conditional uses and drive-in banks
<b>Mixed Use (XIIIB)</b>	2 acres	20 du/acre	60%; 48 feet	Professional offices, multi-family housing	
<b>Design Commercial (XV)</b>	Design Center: 5 acres	N/A	30%; 35 feet	City Commercial and banks, laundry pickup facilities, motion picture theaters,	Restaurants, automobile sales/services, dry-cleaning establishments

Zone (Article)	Min. Lot Size	Density	Max. Lot Coverage & Height	Principal Uses	Conditional Uses
	Automobile services: 3 acres			parks/playgrounds, public utility substations	
<b>Design Commercial Overlay (XVA)</b>	3 acres	N/A	80%; 75 feet	City Commercial and Design Commercial as well as restaurants, food retail, luncheonettes, shops, financial and personal services, art shops, florists, professional offices, commercial recreation, hotel/motel, casino support businesses, five-story apartment buildings	Automobile sales/services, dry-cleaning
<b>Marine Commercial (XVI)</b>	0.5 acres	N/A	65%	Marina/marine services; water-oriented service establishments	N/A
<b>Environmental District (XVII)</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	Public recreation, wildlife, dams/culverts/bridges, utility transmission lines	N/A

## **2.4 Zoning Descriptions and Locations**

R-1 District - The Residential-1 district is a low-density zone supporting educational, municipal, and utility uses as well as single-family homes on lots at least 6,250 square feet in size on north-south streets, 6,900 square feet on east-west streets, and 10,000 square feet along the bulkhead and seawall. This zoning designation covers much of the land included in the original St. Leonard's Tract, including the blocks south of Winchester Avenue from Cambridge Avenue to Surrey Avenue. With some of the largest lot size requirements for single-family development, this zoning regulation attempts to preserve the neighborhood character for the areas covered by 30-year deed restrictions for St. Leonard's Tract that were in place in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

R-2 District - The Residential-2 District shares much of the same principal, accessory, and conditional uses as the R-1 District and supports suburban residential development. Smaller minimum lot sizes and depth, a higher percentage of allowable building and lot coverage, and setback requirements ensure sufficient space between developments. The R-2 District covers much of Ventnor Heights, including the areas north of Calvert Avenue to Wellington Avenue.

R-3 District - The Residential-3 District supports single-family residential development and other uses of the R-1 District, yet requires significantly smaller lot sizes (3,000 square feet as opposed to 5,750 square feet required in the R-1). Though minimum lot sizes are considerably smaller, yard dimensions and setbacks are not significantly reduced from the lower-density residential districts. Thus, building coverage up to 50 percent and lot coverage up to 75 percent are permitted. Currently, this zone comprises the beachfront blocks from Cambridge Avenue to the Margate border as well as blocks northwest of Atlantic Avenue.

R-4 District - Like the Residential-3 District, the Residential-4 District supports higher densities of single-family detached dwellings. The required minimum lot size is reduced to 2,312 square feet, and minimum lot widths are reduced to 37 feet. Building and lot coverage are the same as those required for R-3 zones. R-4 zones are found in locations throughout the City and continue to support a diverse housing types. Areas of this city with R-4 zones include lower Ventnor Heights (between Calvert and Edgewater avenues), along the Inside Thorofare north of Winchester Avenue, a large area between Atlantic Avenue and Monmouth Avenue near the Margate border, and scattered blocks near Winchester Avenue.

R-5 District - The Residential-5 zone comprises a small four-block area in Ventnor Heights and permits single-family detached housing and duplexes depending on the property's orientation to the street. Minimum lot sizes are 5,800 square feet and 4,800 square feet for single-family properties and 6,700 square feet and 6,000 square feet for duplexes. Existing duplexes are permitted throughout the zone, except for properties along Surrey Avenue between Wellington and Fulton avenues.

R-6 District - The Residential-6 zone is among the most recent to develop in the City, and consists of the area north of Monmouth Avenue in the western section of the City. In the 1920s, the existing marshes were filled and streets were platted, and the area was developed gradually over the second

half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Currently, the zoning permits single-family detached homes and existing duplexes and townhomes. New duplexes are permitted within Block 276, which comprises the interior land area bounded by Lafayette and Wissahickon avenues between Fulton and Balfour avenues. Thus, the blocks north of Fulton Avenue between Buffalo and Lafayette avenues retain a single-family detached character, while properties between Balfour and Fulton avenues are denser. The remainder of the area is comprised of a mix of single-family detached homes and duplexes. The Ventnor City Educational Complex sits on 20 acres near the Margate border and anchors the neighborhood. Utility and open space/recreation uses are also present.

R-7 District - The Residential-7 zone permits single- and two-family dwellings, as well as uses permitted in the R-1 District. The R-7 zone also permits conditional uses that include bed-and-breakfast uses and attached single-family units. In the R-7 zone, bed-and-breakfasts are only permitted along a stretch of South Weymouth Avenue and the eastern section of South Little Rock Avenue between Atlantic and Ventnor avenues. New single-family detached units require a minimum lot size of 2,000 square feet, while new two-family structures require a minimum lot size of 3,600 square feet (as opposed to 2,000 square feet for existing two-family structures). The R-7 zone is one of the city's largest and governs most of the properties between Surrey and Little Rock avenues between Atlantic Avenue and the Inside Thorofare, large residential sections of the City between Cambridge Avenue and Lafayette Avenue between the Thorofare and Atlantic Avenue, and a portion of Washington Avenue and Martindale Avenue between Winchester and Ventnor avenues.

R-8 District - The Residential-8 zone permits single-family detached units as well as conditional uses permitted under the R-1 District. Minimum lot sizes are required to be 3,900 square feet, with minimum lot dimensions of a 60-foot width by a 65-foot depth. The R-8 District includes a section of Ventnor Heights bounded by Dorset Avenue to the west, Burk Avenue to the north, Wellington Avenue to the south, and Little Rock Avenue to the east (including the eastern portion of Little Rock Avenue between Marshall and Burk avenues). Currently, the area includes nonconforming duplexes and multi-family residential apartment buildings.

R-9 District - The Residential-9 zoning supports several housing typologies, including single-family detached units, existing high-rise apartments, and existing townhomes. Parks and municipal buildings are also permitted as principal uses. Conditional uses include accessory uses found in the R-1 District and high-rise apartment building accessory uses. Bed and breakfasts are permitted as a conditional use in a three-block area between Surrey and Frankfort Avenues. The R-9 District extends from the Atlantic City border to Surrey Avenue between Atlantic Avenue and the Boardwalk. In addition, the high rises along the Inside Thorofare (Ventnor on the Bay and Sunset Harbor) are included in the zone.

A Residential-9 Overlay District was added to the City's zoning districts in 2013 and applies to Blocks 9, 10, 11, and 12 (which include the beachfront blocks between South Frankfort Avenue and South Surrey Avenue). The overlay district permits medium and high-density residential buildings in the area as-of-right and sets standards for the various building types.

R-10 Ventnor West Development District - The R-10 Ventnor West Development District includes approximately 155 acres of vacant city-owned land along the Beach Thorofare and West Canal. In addition, the area includes a single-family detached house, a synagogue, communications tower, and an age-restricted apartment building. This area was previously a redevelopment area, with many of the original properties declared blighted and taken by the City in 1974. Since 1974, the clear majority of the land has remained undeveloped. The undeveloped lands were the subject of several development proposals ranging from residential developments to a dredge spoils site. The site's history as a municipal dump and sewage treatment facility and the lack of sewer service has complicated development proposals for Ventnor West.

Current permitted uses include passive recreation and utilities, municipally owned buildings, golf courses, senior housing, neighborhood business/offices, marina facilities, and hotel/conference centers. Per the zoning ordinance, development in the area is subject to a plan for the entirety of the parcel. Minimum lot sizes are required to be at least 5,000 square feet in size, with a 40 percent open space and 50 percent total site coverage requirement.

R-11 Special Development - The R-11 Special Development District is among the newest sections of the City to develop. The zone consists of the area north of Burk Avenue and east of North Harvard Avenue in Ventnor Heights. Single-family dwelling units, townhomes, and condominiums are the principal permitted uses, with condominiums and townhouses permitted on lots no smaller than five acres and with single-family houses permitted pursuant to the regulations of the R-2 district.

C - City Commercial District - The City Commercial zone governs land development in the City's various commercial districts. These districts and zones are found on Ventnor Avenue near the border with Margate, between Buffalo Avenue and Portland Avenue, and between Victoria and Little Rock avenues. Additional areas with City Commercial zoning include a stretch of Atlantic Avenue between Surrey Avenue and Weymouth Avenue, and along the lower portion of Dorset Avenue. Various commercial retail and service uses are permitted along with single-family dwellings and public buildings. Conditional uses include allowable conditional uses in the R-1 District. A 3,000-square-foot minimum lot size is required for all developments in the zone. The bulk and setback requirements permit denser types of commercial development than is typical of a commercial district. However, only single-family detached dwellings are permitted residential uses.

MU – Mixed-Use Development District - The Mixed-Use Development District includes lots on the north side of Ventnor Avenue between Buffalo and New Haven avenues as well as the entirety of Block 123. Multi-family residential developments are permitted on structures fronting Ventnor Avenue at a 45-foot height.

MC - Marina Commercial - The Marina Commercial District is the smallest single zone in the City. The MC Zone encompasses properties along the Inside Thorofare between Portland and Newport avenues along Sunset Avenue. The area currently contains boat slips, docks, a small boatyard, and related structures for the Newport Marine facility on the north side of Sunset Avenue. Based on aerial

photographs, marina functions in this area date back to at least the 1930s, with the current structures constructed sometime before the mid-1950s.

Development in this zone is governed by Article XVI, with the purpose to “encourage water-oriented business development which is compatible with the predominant residential nature of Ventnor’s waterways”. Permitted uses include marina and marine service facilities as well as water-oriented service establishments. The current structures and parcels likely predate the establishment of the City’s zoning code, and it is likely that the existing structures have a certificate of nonconformance.

ED - Environmental District - The Environmental District consists of lands south and north of the Wellington Avenue shopping plaza as well as Shelter Island located north of the Turtle Thorofare. Currently, the lands in this zone are saline marshes and tidal flats. Per Article XVII, which governs land use in this district, this zone was created because it is tidally flowed and can serve important functions as floodwater storage, transition areas, and sediment and pollution traps. Wildlife preserves, public recreation uses not requiring construction of structures, streets, or parking, utility lines, and dams, culverts, and bridges are permitted in this zone.

DC - Design Commercial - The Design Commercial zone is an overlay district encouraging mixed uses. The overlay area consists of Block 303, which currently includes a Dollar General and the maintenance yard for the Tropicana Resort in Atlantic City. The minimum lot size for this overlay is three acres,

**Redevelopment Districts**

A redevelopment plan was adopted for a section of Northeast Ventnor in September 2001. While the large-scale redevelopment imagined because of the plan did not occur, the standards set forth in the Redevelopment Plan remain in place. The 2001 Redevelopment Plan resulted in two new districts: Residential Redevelopment 1 and Residential Redevelopment 2.

RR-1 Residential Redevelopment 1 - Permitted uses include single-family detached houses, existing two-family dwellings, conversion of multifamily apartments to age-restricted and bed-and-breakfast guesthouses, parking, parks and recreation facilities, municipal buildings, and utility substations.

RR-2 Residential Redevelopment 2 - The Residential Redevelopment 2 zone comprises lots fronting Little Rock, Weymouth, and Frankfort avenues. Per the Redevelopment Plan, this designation permits uses such as single-family detached houses, existing duplexes, townhomes, conversion of multi-family apartments to age-restricted/bed-and-breakfast guesthouses, surface-level parking, new bed and breakfasts, assisted living facilities, and new age-restricted housing construction.

**2.5 Recommendations**

The City’s development regulations have been reviewed and it has been determined that the following changes should be addressed.

### **2.5.1 Overall Zoning and Development**

The following recommendations are provided for the zoning ordinance and map:

- Update the City’s Zoning Map to be consistent with the land development code. Rezone open space areas including Ventnor West and Ski Beach to ED, Environmental District. A Future Land Use Map is provided in Appendix A.
- Examine the need to revise building heights in §102-118.
- Revise §102-118 (J) addressing maximum building heights to simplify and clarify.
- Revise §102-118.3 Additional Regulations to make projections of front eaves and setback consistently 5 feet, clarify whether decks in rear yards on a second story are allowed (D), update the prohibitive regulations regarding the provision of off-street parking (G), and change the regulations regarding steps and stairs from first floor decks and porches (M).
- Revise landscaping ordinance §102-118.4.
- Address driveways for off-street parking in §102-118.6.
- Allow public schools in the R-6 zone.
- In §102-119, consider site plain waiver or administrative review.
- Address fees in §102-160.4.

### **2.5.2 Residential Districts**

- Amend 2-family dwelling zoning to reflect fee simple lot ownership, and amend the definition of dwelling units (especially duplexes) as well.
- Amend building heights to allow for home elevation to three feet above the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) to reduce the need for variances.
- Amend the R-7 district to include waterfront bulkheads and decks as accessory uses and reexamine the requirement that the second residential unit be for seasonal use.
- Revise language governing the R-7 district to define “attached single-family construction” and allow attached single-family units on one lot.
- Revise language in §102-115.2 to address elevation of existing duplexes.

- Clarify §102-115.3 to address attached single-family dwellings on separate lots, whether they are separated per lot or per unit.
- Address exceptions for lot areas and apartment houses in the R-2 District in §102-118.

### **2.5.3 Commercial Districts**

- Reexamine and amend regulations governing commercial development.
- Rezone the commercial districts in North Beach and the CBD area that runs from Portland to Buffalo Avenues on the south side of Ventnor Avenue and Portland to New Haven on the north side of Ventnor Avenue from C to MU. This rezoning is designed to incentivize reconstruction of this CBD.
- Amend the standards in the MU zone to require that parking for residential units meet RSIS requirements, there would be no parking requirements for commercial uses. Architectural standards would be recommended to ensure that the buildings are designed in an aesthetically pleasing manner. The maximum heights would remain 48 feet. The minimum lot size would be reduced from 2 acres to 3,000 SF (same as C zone) to open this development concept to more properties. The principal uses would be expanded to include all uses included in the C zone including commercial uses and restaurants in addition to the professional uses currently permitted. Mixed use development would only be permitted in structures fronting on Ventnor Avenue.

### **2.5.4 Additional Land Use Recommendations**

- Develop design standards and signage recommendations for nonresidential zones with focus on the Ventnor Avenue, Atlantic Avenue and Dorset Avenue commercial corridors. Design standards should be tailored to the character of unique district to promote attractive neighborhoods and business areas. Compatible building designs in terms of building massing, material and character should be required. Standards that address architecture as well as site design, landscaping, buffering and parking lot design should be incorporated into the City's zoning.
- Assure that the public is aware of any changes in FEMA's flood maps as they are updated and any FEMA flood map changes that will result in revisions to building requirements.
- Expedite recertification under FEMA's Community Rating System to provide greater flood-insurance discounts to property owners in the City of Ventnor. Given recent legislation, the cost of flood insurance will increase significantly and the CRS discount is one of the best ways to control future costs.

- Adopt the latest version of FEMA's flood maps as they are released, strengthening elevation requirements in the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance based upon the most stringent version of FEMA's flood maps, and increasing freeboard requirements.
- Amend zoning and development regulations to require all new or expanded single-family dwellings that do not otherwise require site plan or subdivision approval to undergo a stormwater review process.
- To address issues that occurred during the derecho, it is recommended that the tree maintenance ordinance be carefully reviewed. Potential changes would be to require all contractors performing tree trimming and cutting within the city limits to maintain minimum liability and worker's compensation insurance, provide written estimates to property owners and include provisions for license suspension and revocation provisions.
- Consider requiring a flood elevation certification prior to issuing a Certificate of Occupancy when a property is sold. This will provide important information to the buyer, ensure compliance with local ordinances and assist the City in obtaining a higher flood insurance discount for its property owners through FEMA's Community Rating System.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive parking strategy. There is a shortage of parking during the summer months especially in the Ventnor Avenue Business District. The proposed parking study will determine the extent of the critical need and how best to address this need.
- Cement the relationship between the City's commercial corridors and residential neighborhoods by linking residential neighborhoods to commercial corridors via vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian connections. Shared parking and access in commercial corridors should be investigated to increase the convenience of visiting adjacent properties, reducing traffic on the streets and increasing the total available parking.
- The Governing Body has designated the entire city an area in need of rehabilitation. It is recommended that the City consider providing for a short-term tax exemption to provide an incentive for home elevations and major rehabilitation as well as new construction.

### **3.0 RESILIENCY ELEMENT**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

In the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy and other natural disasters occurring at an increasing frequency, resiliency has emerged as an integral aspect of sound planning principles. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, “resiliency” can refer to an ability to rebound, the nature of being elastic, or the capacity to recover. As a framework for community planning, resiliency looks to ensure that communities do not merely recover, but are in a stronger position than before to withstand additional hazards and ensure community safety and quality of life for posterity. In recognizing the importance of resiliency, the New Jersey State Legislature now requires municipal land use elements to strategize for storm resiliency and address risks and hazards such as sea level rise and flooding.

Ventnor is vulnerable to hazards that are both man-made and natural. Its location on Absecon Island has brought it prosperity, and the City has long reaped the benefits of tourism, a large year-round community, and adjacency to Atlantic City – the region’s economic center. However, those characteristics are a double-edged sword: Ventnor’s location renders it vulnerable to natural hazards that affect coastal communities, such as flooding and shifts in coastal geomorphology. With much of the City’s workforce commuting to Atlantic City, Ventnor’s economic fate is tied to that of its neighbor’s. Additionally, the population of residents living in Ventnor year-round has decreased through the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The challenges that the City is facing are long-term and not entirely within the control of the municipality. However, these issues gained new urgency following the landfall of Superstorm Sandy in 2012. Superstorm Sandy caused significant damage to both coastal and inland communities in New York, New Jersey, and nearby states. Superstorm Sandy struck a few miles east of Ventnor, causing considerable damage from flooding, storm surge, and wind.

The Ventnor Strategic Recovery Planning Report adopted in 2014 noted that the City’s ratable base lost \$5 million due to damage from Superstorm Sandy. Additionally, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Disaster Recovery Action Plan reports that 45 percent of households in the census tract that includes the northern section of Ventnor Heights and the neighborhood immediately east of it suffered major or severe storm damage. Nearly 40 percent of households in the census tract bounded by Dorset Avenue to the north and New Haven Avenue to the south suffered major or severe damage, while just less than one-third of households in the tract consisting of residences south of New Haven Avenue suffered major/severe damage.



### **3.2 Goals and Objectives**

This Resiliency Element, among the first of its kind in a municipal master plan in New Jersey, will describe existing conditions and vulnerabilities affecting the City of Ventnor, provide strategies and recommendations for municipal resilience, determine additional stakeholders and other plans involving resilience, and describe an Action Plan for implementing resiliency measures.

The goal of this Resilience Plan is to address the current and future social, economic and ecological resilience of the City to the impacts of sea level rise and anticipated increases in the frequency and severity of storm surge, coastal flooding, and erosion.

### **3.3 Overview of Resiliency Planning Efforts**

In addition to the planning efforts noted in the Master Plan Reexamination 2016, Ventnor has participated in various resiliency planning reports over the past few decades.

#### **Shore Protection Master Plan**

In 1981, the State of New Jersey's Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) – Division of Coastal Resources released the New Jersey Shore Protection Master Plan. The Master Plan was created to “reduce the negative impacts of and conflicts between shoreline erosion management and coastal development, reduce hazard losses, and satisfy shore user demands in an equitable way”. The Plan was notable for its use of a “reach” approach for engineering plans, whereby shoreline protection plans are consistent across areas where similar coastal processes are occurring. Previously, communities had used a piecemeal approach for shoreline protection, whereby communities completed projects independent of each other. The Master Plan divided New Jersey's shoreline from Raritan Bay to the Delaware River into 16 different shorelines. The communities of Absecon Island were considered an individual reach, thus paving the way for coordination of shoreline protection activities between Atlantic City, Ventnor, Margate, and Longport.

#### **Coastal Storm Hazard Mitigation Plan**

Several years after the publication of the Shore Protection Master Plan, a separate Coastal Storm Hazard Mitigation Plan was developed for Absecon Island and Ocean City (Peck Beach). This document served as a Hazard Mitigation and Recovery planning document for the study area writ large, and then offered descriptions, analyses, and specific recommendations for the municipalities within the study area. The vulnerability analysis for Ventnor pointed to several key issues that affected Ventnor during the mid-1980s:

- Bulkheads and seawalls constituted oceanfront protection and no dunes were present;
- Ventnor lost 5.6 feet/year in erosion between 1952 and 1971;

- More than half of Ventnor Heights was subject to tidal flooding exacerbated by homes built at low elevation and without proper anchoring; and
- The northern section of Ventnor, where the beach was 200 feet wide, benefited from replenishment projects in Atlantic City while the southern section of Ventnor (where the beach was only 50 feet wide) fared worse.

### **Post-Sandy Planning Efforts**

Since Superstorm Sandy, the City of Ventnor has been engaged with various forms of resiliency planning. In April 2015, the Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve published the *Getting to Resilience Recommendations Report* for the City. The report included several recommendations to further resiliency planning efforts in Ventnor, as well as to increase the City’s Community Rating System class, which is described in more detail later in this Element.

Funding from the CDBG Disaster Recovery Program was enabled through Major Disaster Declaration DR-4086. These funds were distributed by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs and provided for a capital improvement plan, Strategic Recovery Planning Report, and community development plan for the City’s business district. The various reports completed since Superstorm Sandy are described in the Master Plan Reexamination 2016.

### **3.4 Existing Conditions and Vulnerability**

The conditions in Atlantic County’s coastal areas continue to change. The Atlantic City tide gauge is located on Steel Pier and, while there are gaps in the data due to equipment outages and/or data availability, it provides a good look at the historic patterns of water levels on Absecon Island. The gauge has been in place since August 1911 and all heights are measured in mean low water.

9.0 ft. — December 11, 1992 nor’easter

8.8 ft. — September 14, 1944 (Hurricane); October 29, 2012 (Superstorm Sandy)

8.6 ft. — September 27, 1985 (Hurricane Gloria); October 31, 1991 (Halloween Blizzard)

8.4 ft.— March 6, 1962; August 9,1976 (Hurricane Belle)

8.2 ft. — November 25, 1950

8.0 ft. — Major tidal flooding begins. At this level, flooding starts to become severe enough to begin causing structural damage along with widespread flooding of roadways. Vulnerable homes and businesses may be severely damaged or destroyed as water levels rise further above this threshold. Numerous roads become impassable and some neighborhoods may be isolated. The floodwaters become a danger to anyone who attempts to cross on foot or in a vehicle.

7.8 ft. — October 25, 1980; January 4, 1992; January 23, 2016

7.6 ft. — January 2, 1987; March 19, 1996;

- 7.5 ft. — October 14, 1977; March 2, 1994; June 4, 2012
- 7.4 ft. — December 22, 1972; October 18, 2009
- 7.3 ft. — October 23, 1953; December 20, 1995; October 7, 2006; November 13, 2009
- 7.2 ft. — September 12, 1960 (Hurricane Donna); October 22, 1961; December 9, 1973; September 25, 1977; September 26, 1992 (Tropical Storm Danielle); November 14, 1997; February 5, 1998; October 29, 2011; January 3, 2014; January 10, 2016; February 8, 2016
- 7.1 ft. — November 1, 1947; January 23, 1966; February 19, 1972; November 15, 1981; December 13, 1996; January 28, 1998; January 25, 2000; January 3, 2003; December 11, 2003; May 25, 2005; January 31, 2006
- 7.0 ft. — Moderate tidal flooding begins (coastal flood warning threshold). At this level, widespread flooding of roadways begins due to high water and/or wave action with many roads becoming impassable. Lives may be at risk when people put themselves in harm's way. Some damage to vulnerable structures may begin to occur.
- 7.0 ft. — November 30, 1944; August 28, 1971 (Tropical Storm Doria); December 2, 1974; February 26, 1979; January 10, 1993; December 6, 1996; December 25, 2002; May 12, 2008; March 9, 2013; December 9, 2014; October 2, 2015
- 6.8 ft. — Flooding begins in Pleasantville. Flooding begins along Longport Boulevard (NJ Route 152) between Somers Point and Longport. Flooding begins along Atlantic County Route 559 in Somers Point (the section between US Route 9 and NJ Route 52).
- 6.6 ft. — Flooding begins around Absecon Inlet in Atlantic City. Flooding begins in Longport between 11th Street and 24th Street.
- 6.4 ft. — Flooding begins on the north end of Brigantine. Flooding begins on Absecon Creek in Absecon along Absecon Boulevard (US Route 30), Shore Road and New Road (US Route 9). Flooding begins in Margate. Flooding begins along Bay Avenue in Somers Point.
- 6.3 ft. — Coastal flood advisory threshold
- 6.2 ft. — Flooding begins on the White Horse Pike (US Route 30 - Absecon Boulevard) in Absecon and Atlantic City. Flooding begins along the back bays in Atlantic City\* and Ventnor. Flooding begins on the Black Horse Pike (US Routes 40 and 322) in West Atlantic City. Flooding begins along US Route 9 at the north end of the Beesley's Point Bridge.
- 6.0 ft. — Minor tidal flooding begins.
- 5.8 ft. — Flooding begins at the most susceptible locations in West Atlantic City.

### 3.5 National Flood Insurance Program

Ventnor has participated in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) since 1971. The City has adopted the most recent advisory flood map created by FEMA. See the table below for more information:

**Figure 3.1 - Ventnor NFIP Statistics**

	<b>2008</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
Number of Policies	4,640	4,946	9 percent
Number of Losses	1,270	3,868	205 percent
Total Claims Payment (2008)		\$9,594,913	
Total Claims Payment (7/2016)		\$85,777,272	
Value of Insured Properties (7/2016)		\$1,046,266,400	
Cost of Insurance Premiums (7/2016)		\$4,460,879	

### 3.6 Community Rating System

The NFIP Community Rating System (CRS) is a voluntary incentive program that recognizes and encourages community floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum NFIP requirements. The City of Ventnor is currently rated a Class 6 community.

Under the CRS, there is an incentive for communities to do more than just regulate construction of new buildings to minimum national standards. Communities earn credit by engaging in 18 activities organized under four categories: Public Information, Mapping and Regulations, Flood Damage Reduction, and Flood Preparedness. CRS class designation is determined by how many credits a community earns through these activities. CRS classes range from a Class 9 (requiring 500-999 CRS credits) to a Class 1 (requiring 4,500 or more CRS credits).

Under the CRS, flood insurance premiums are adjusted to reflect community activities that reduce flood damage to existing buildings, manage development in areas not mapped by the NFIP, protect new buildings beyond the minimum NFIP protection level, help insurance agents obtain flood data, and help people obtain flood insurance.

Because of the CRS program, flood insurance premium rates are discounted to reflect the reduced flood risk resulting from the community actions meeting the three goals of the CRS: reduce flood losses; facilitate accurate insurance ratings; and promote the awareness of flood insurance.

Nationwide there are 1,095 communities receiving flood insurance premium discounts based on their implementation of local mitigation, outreach, and educational activities that go well beyond minimum NFIP requirements. While premium discounts are one of the benefits of participation in CRS, it is more important for communities carrying out these activities to save lives and reduce property damage.

### **3.7 Repetitive Loss Analysis**

The Community Rating System requires a Repetitive Loss (RL) analysis to help the City to target neighborhoods that have witnessed significant losses to ensure that their needs are addressed.

A repetitive loss (RL) property is any insurable building for which two or more claims of more than \$1,000 were paid by the NFIP within any rolling 10-year period since 1978. An RL property may or may not be currently insured by the NFIP. Currently there are over 122,000 RL properties nationwide.

The National Flood Insurance Fund is very concerned with RL properties since they strain the insurance fund's resources. In fact, the RL properties are the biggest draw on the fund. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has paid almost \$3.5 billion in claims for RL properties. RL properties not only increase the NFIP's annual losses and the need for borrowing, but they drain funds needed to prepare for catastrophic events. Community leaders and residents are also concerned with the RL problem because residents' lives are disrupted and may be threatened by the continual flooding.

Over the years, there have been several efforts aimed at addressing repetitive losses. Federal, state and local flood-control and stormwater management projects have been aimed at reducing the risks. The FEMA post-disaster Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) projects have mitigated nearly 3,000 RL properties. In 1994, the National Flood Insurance Reform Act authorized the Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Program and a new insurance coverage called Increased Cost of Compliance, or "ICC." This coverage has been added to policies purchased or renewed since June 1, 1997.

Policyholders whose home or business is damaged by a flood may be required to meet certain building requirements set by the community to reduce future flood damage before repairing or rebuilding. ICC provides for the payment of claims up to \$30,000 toward the costs to comply with state or community floodplain management laws or ordinances after a flood event in which the structure has been declared substantially damaged in accordance with the locally enforceable regulation.

ICC can complement other resources by providing a portion of the non-federal cost share for mitigation grants. Policyholders can assign the ICC claims payment over to the community

so that ICC claims can be efficiently combined with mitigation grant funds for acquisition, relocation, or similar beneficial projects. This coverage is aimed at enforcement of substantial damaged properties. It underscores the regulatory requirement that substantially damaged properties be eliminated or modified to reduce their risk. ICC claims are adjusted separately from flood damage claims. Policyholders can only file an ICC claim if their community determines that a flood has substantially damaged their home or business. This determination is made when they apply for a building permit to begin repairing their home or business.

The National Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2004 also recognized repetitive loss as a significant problem and defined severe repetitive loss as: “a single family property (consisting of 1 to 4 residences) that is covered under flood insurance by the NFIP and has incurred flood-related damage for which 4 or more separate claims payments have been paid under flood insurance coverage, with the amount of each claim payment exceeding \$5,000 and with cumulative amount of such claims payments exceeding \$20,000; or for which at least 2 separate claims payments have been made with the cumulative amount of such claims exceeding the reported value of the property.”

There are currently approximately 6,000 properties nationwide meeting the definition of a severe repetitive loss. In addition, the 2004 Act authorized a pilot program to mitigate severe repetitive loss properties. The administration of the pilot program is in the final planning stages. In the past five years, almost 28,000 properties nationwide have been bought out or elevated, several thousand of which were repetitive loss properties.

Some repetitive loss properties are not located in a flood zone. Historically, approximately 25 percent of claims paid under the NFIP are paid to properties insured outside of the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA). Since 1978 the NFIP has paid over \$2.8 billion in claims outside of the SFHA. This is due to a variety of reasons. Usually the area in question was not studied at the time the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) was prepared because the watershed is small or flooding in the area is caused by storm water. Major new floodplain mapping projects are underway for New Jersey and are expected to go into effect in 2017. FEMA uses many factors to establish flood study priorities. Repetitive loss experience is one such factor, especially where claims have been paid outside of the mapped regulatory floodplain. Another issue is localized flooding due primarily to no or insufficient local drainage systems. Most of the time these areas are outside of the community’s regulatory floodplain and thus are not subject to the zoning regulations and building standards that are in place in higher-risk areas.

Based on 2016 data, the City of Ventnor has 192 repetitive loss properties, 39 of which are classified as severe repetitive loss properties. The repetitive loss map provided below indicates that there are three distinct areas of the City where clusters of loss properties are located.

### **Ventnor Heights**

The highest concentration of RL properties are found in Ventnor Heights. This area is predominately filled land that was developed in the mid-1900s. The City has recently constructed two pump stations in this area to help mitigate nuisance flooding. Many of the homes in this area have been elevated since Superstorm Sandy. It is recommended that the City continue to encourage that all structures in the Ventnor Heights neighborhood be elevated at least two to three feet above Base Flood Elevation. Under the new preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps, most Ventnor Heights is in the AE Zone, with a Base Flood Elevation of eight feet. Per the Ventnor's current Flood Hazards Area ordinance, found in Chapter 126 of the municipal code, new and substantially improved residential structures in this zone must be elevated three feet above the Base Flood Elevation while new and substantially improved non-residential structures must be elevated two feet above the base flood elevation.

### **Back Bay**

The second largest cluster of RL properties is along the Intracoastal Waterway (ICWW), with the homes that immediately front on the bulkhead being those most impacted. Homes within a block of the bulkhead also dominate the RL list. The City is planning bulkhead repairs in this area and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has completed a Federal Interest Determination for this area. It is recommended that the City continue to work with the Army Corps to determine if more significant improvements can be considered in this area. It is also encouraged that all structures in this Back-Bay neighborhood be elevated at least two to three feet about Base Flood Elevation.

### **Ventnor Gardens Plaza**

The third largest cluster of RL properties is along Ventnor Gardens Plaza, Monmouth Avenue and Winchester Avenue. The City, in cooperation with the City of Margate and the county, has completed a pump station to service this neighborhood. It is recommended that all structures in this neighborhood be elevated at least two to three feet above Base Flood Elevation.

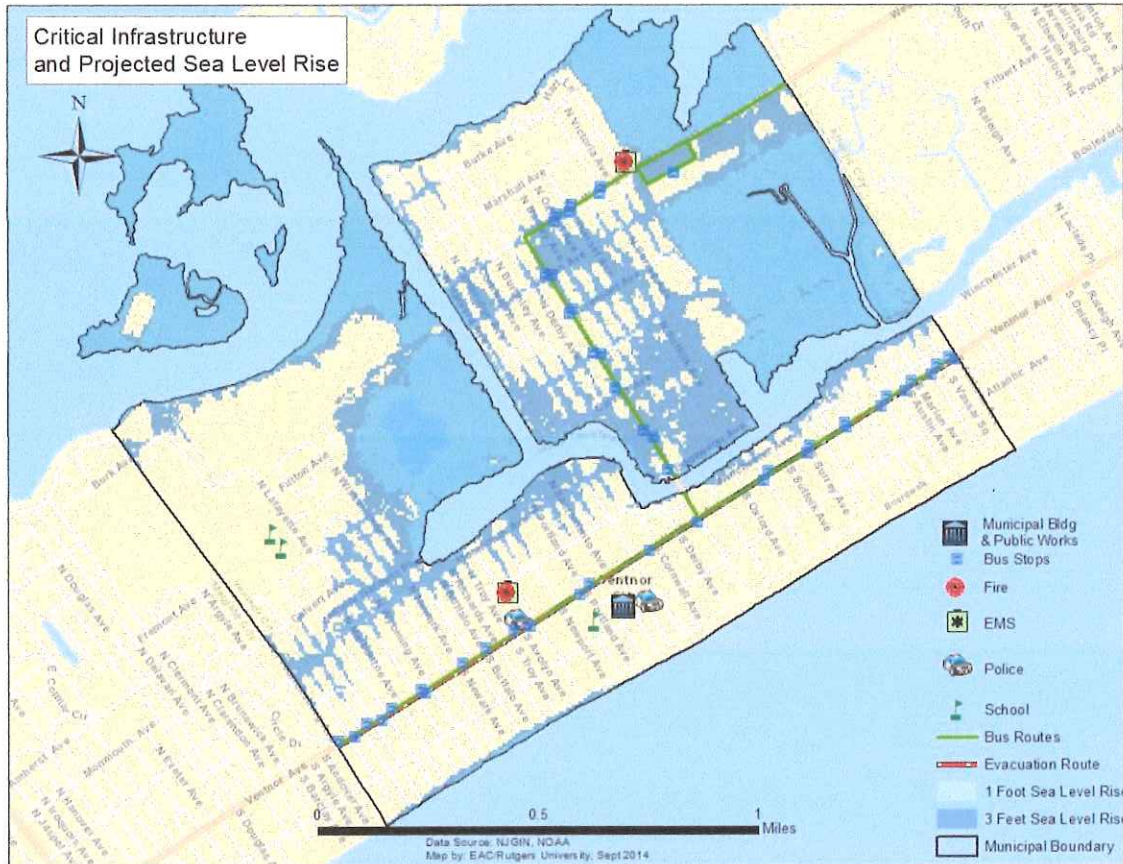
The City has applied for FEMA Flood Mitigation Assistance Grants on behalf of RL property owners. This program is offered on an annual basis. It is recommended that the City provide a letter to all RL property owners asking them if they plan to elevate their structures and when they plan to proceed. In this way, the City will develop a list of properties when funding opportunities present themselves.

Grants like the FEMA Flood Mitigation Assistance Program do not pay the entire cost of elevation; the property owner must provide matching funds for a portion of the cost. Also, to qualify for these FEMA programs the property must be covered by NFIP flood insurance at the time of the application.

### 3.8 Critical Infrastructure

Fire and EMS operations located in the northeastern section of Ventnor Heights are vulnerable to a one-foot rise in sea level. For the most part, the municipality's critical operations, such as municipal offices, public works department, and police headquarters are in the higher elevation at 1601 Atlantic Avenue.

Figure 3.2 – Critical Infrastructure and Projected Sea Level Rise



The 2007 Atlantic County Hazard Mitigation Plan provided an insight into those roads in the City of Ventnor that tend to flood. Nuisance flooding is an issue along Wellington Avenue, especially since this roadway is a major connector to US Route 40/322.

Other critical areas are in Ventnor West along North Dudley Avenue, Fulton Avenue, North Oxford Avenue, and Fremont Avenue. These streets are lined with homes where property owners should still be encouraged to use permeable pavers for driveways and walkways on their properties, and where variances for relief from street tree and vegetation requirements should be avoided.

In addition, the wetlands along the back bay provides protection to the infrastructure and homes in the City. As erosion and sea level rise continue, these wetlands are being displaced.

Steps should be taken to stabilize these wetlands through living shorelines, which will not only reduce erosion and increase resiliency but will also qualify for Community Rating System credits.

There are three types of living shorelines:

- Natural or nonstructural living shorelines use strictly natural vegetation, such as biologs.
- Hybrid living shorelines incorporate the use the natural vegetation or biodegradable organic materials along with low-profile jetties or groins.
- Structural living shorelines involve the use of hard structures such as breakwaters.

The type of living shoreline utilized along the shore is dependent upon the characteristics of the site, such as wave action and the strength of the current. The City has worked with The Nature Conservancy to develop plans for living shorelines to stabilize portions of Ventnor West.

**Figure 3.3 – Living Shore Lines**

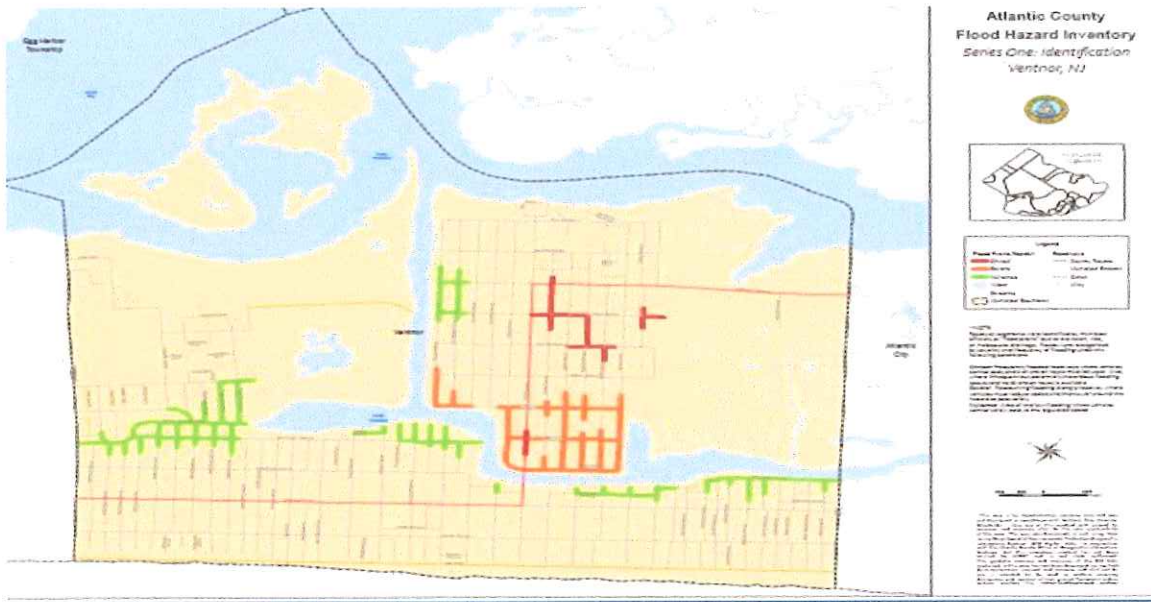


The map produced by Atlantic County on the following page illustrates flood prone roadways in the City. Storm surges from storms such as Superstorm Sandy can cover much of the City's land area, including roadways not identified as flooding problems here. The map shows

streets that are at heightened risk from flooding from tides and more common precipitation events. While the blocks nearest to the beach are generally not prone to flooding, the roadways closest to the bay frequently experience nuisance flooding. The southern and eastern sections of Ventnor Heights closest to the Inside Thorofare and marshes are also likely to flood under normal circumstances, particularly along Dudley and Fulton Avenues near the intersection of Dorset and Wellington Avenues. The immediate area surrounding Ventnor Gardens Plaza (which was open water until the area was filled in the 1920s) also experiences nuisance flooding in addition to certain sections of Monmouth and Winchester Avenues.

Improvements to County Route 629, which traverses the beachfront communities on Absecon Island and in Cape May County, are in the planning and construction stages. Wellington Avenue in Ventnor Heights is part of CR-629 and experiences tidal flooding. Future planning efforts for this roadway should take into consideration the larger drainage issues along the Beach Thorofare and Wellington Avenue/West End Avenue and mitigate the risk of runoff onto adjacent properties.

**Figure 3.4 – Flood Prone Roadways in the City of Ventnor**



### 3.9 Utilities

Ventnor’s density of population and structures requires a dense utility network to provide services such as water, heat, sewer services, stormwater conveyance, and electricity. All developed portions of the City are serviced by these utilities, which are controlled and owned by both private companies and public entities.

The City of Ventnor provides water and sewer service to properties within the City, while the

Atlantic County Utilities Authorities (ACUA) handles sewage treatment. Ventnor’s energy services are provided by Atlantic City Electric and gas services are provided by South Jersey Gas. The transmission and distribution facilities of South Jersey Gas and Atlantic City Electric share easements and rights-of-way, such as along the unimproved portion of Wellington Avenue.

**Potable Water**

Ventnor’s water supply is sourced from the Kirkwood-Cohansey Aquifer, which stretches along the Atlantic Coastal Plain of New Jersey from southern Monmouth County southwest across the Pine Barrens to northern Cape May County and Cumberland County. The New Jersey Geological Survey identifies induced leakage (whereby surface water leaks into the aquifer) and saltwater intrusion as possible issues affecting areas in the aquifer region. Though the NJGS identifies this as “not a major issue” for most the aquifer area, saltwater intrusion is more likely to be a problem near areas of tidal surface water such as Ventnor.

The City’s Water and Sewer Utility owns and operates the potable water service serving the City. Wells are in various locations throughout the City. These locations include the facilities near the baseball fields along Surrey Avenue in Ventnor Heights, Lily Park along Winchester Avenue in North Beach, and on the grounds of the Ventnor City Educational Complex. The facilities for pumping water from the wells are located at or close to sea level, which presents resiliency concerns as sea levels rise and leave the municipally owned facilities vulnerable to storm damage and equipment failure.

Per the most recent data compiled in December 2015, Ventnor has a surplus of water in its water supply. Water supply allocation permits are submitted by the City’s Water and Sewer Utility to the NJDEP to ensure the sustainability of the water supply. Per data published by the NJDEP, water pumped out of wells in Ventnor has decreased by nearly one-third since 2012, though water pumped from City wells increased between 2003 and 2010 even as the City’s population decreased. An existing interconnection with the Atlantic City Municipal Utility Authority allows Ventnor to use potable water pumped from the ACMUA. One of Ventnor’s six wells has been offline since 2009, while the remaining working wells have been periodically taken out of service for repair.

**Figure 3.5 - Water Allocation for the Ventnor City, December 2015**

	Allocation	Demand	+/-
Daily	3.6 MGD	2.673 MGD	0.927 MGD
Monthly	85.25 MGM	82.857 MGM	2.393 MGM
Yearly	725 MGY	695.045 MGY	29.955 MGY

MGD: Million gallons/day; MGM: Million gallons/mo.; MGY: Million gallons/yr.

Source: NJDEP Data Miner

Ventnor's water supply system is vulnerable to coastal flooding. All the City's wells are in the Special Flood Hazard Area. The City should consider elevating or flood-proofing existing water infrastructure in the City and remain cognizant of the effects of sea level rise upon underground water infrastructure.

### **Heat and Natural Gas**

South Jersey Gas maintains the natural gas distribution network and pipelines that run through the City. These critical facilities are underground and traverse the waterways and roadways within and surrounding Ventnor. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) nautical charts indicate two pipeline areas in the City's waterways, including one along West Canal and Inner Thorofare and another near North Swarthmore Avenue. South Jersey Gas is continuing work on projects that will affect energy reliability and resiliency in coastal South Jersey, such as the South Jersey Gas Pipeline Reliability Project, which will re-power the Beesley's Point power plant in Upper Township.

### **Electricity**

Atlantic City Electric continues to upgrade its facilities, and plans to spend \$108 million on distribution-line hardening and \$35 million on storm response as part of its PowerAhead grid resiliency program. These improvements will improve the reliability of electric service in Ventnor and prevent future service disruptions due to storms. In 2014, Atlantic City Electric completed improvements to the Marven Substation at the border of Margate and Ventnor on Fredricksburg Avenue.

While burying electrical transmission lines is desirable for protection from wind damage and aesthetics, transmission lines are more vulnerable to flooding when buried.

### **Impervious Surface – Stormwater Management**

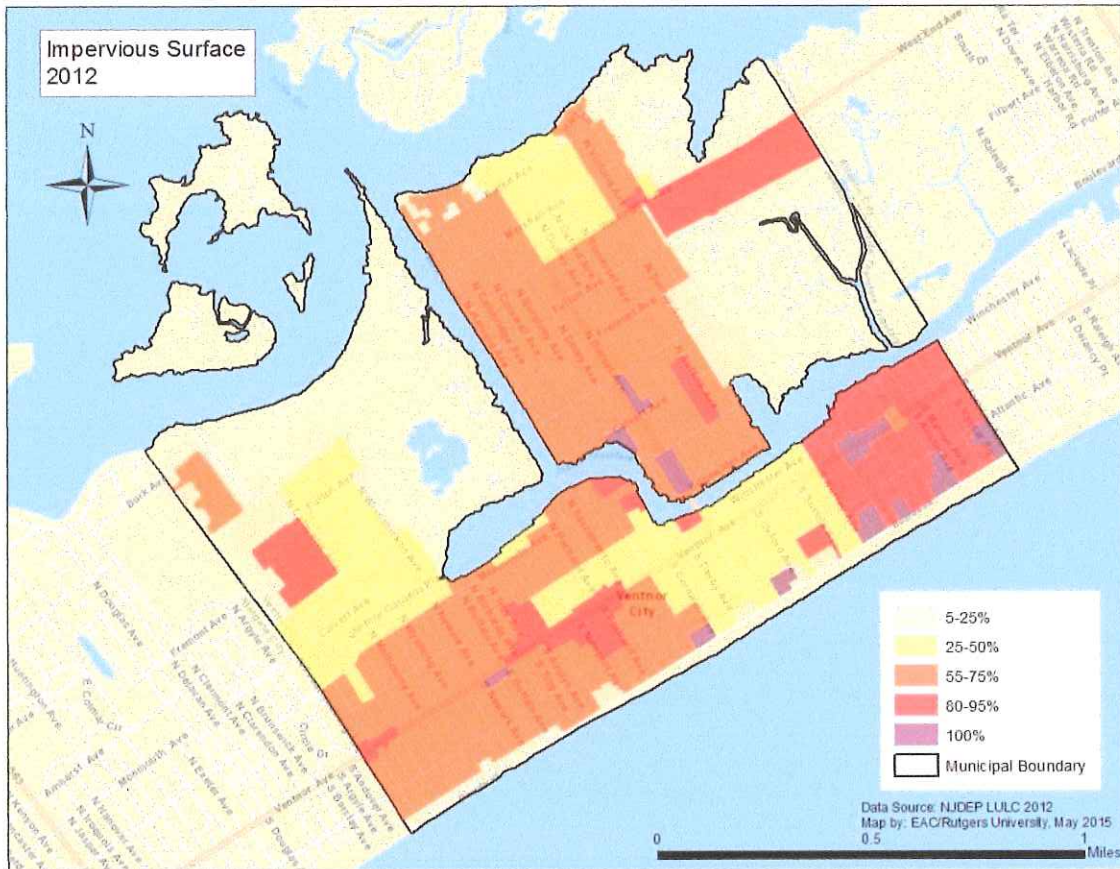
Impervious surfaces are defined as roads, parking lots, rooftops, driveways, sidewalks, and compacted soils. These surfaces do not allow stormwater to infiltrate the ground, instead causing runoff to enter local water bodies, flood in or around homes and businesses, or enter and burden the local sewer system. Figure 3.6 depicts Ventnor City's impervious coverage in 2012. In 2012, there were multiple areas of the City that are 100 percent impervious. Ventnor City is generally close to 75 percent imperious.

### **3.10 Open Space**

Open space serves many purposes, from animal habitat to public recreation to the mitigation of stormwater flooding. Ventnor City currently has over 600 acres in conservation. The largest tract of open space, Ventnor West, is not entirely preserved and portions of it are zoned for development. There are several City parks in locations throughout the City, though none perform natural floodplain functions. However, the City's 1.6 miles of uninterrupted beach front are replenished regularly and will soon exhibit a complete dune system.

Undeveloped tracts in the City that perform open space and natural floodplain functions can be found along Inside Thorofare and Beach Thorofare.

**Figure 3.6 – Impervious Surface in the City of Ventnor 2012**



Shelter Island, located north of Ventnor West in Shelter Island Bay, is a collection of marsh islands in Ventnor’s boundary. The island has experienced significant erosion over the past several decades, breaking the singular island into three separate land masses. The eroding state of the Island and its importance as a buffer for flooding provides an opportunity for the island to be reclaimed to its 1977 boundary. The Army Corps has reviewed this area to consider filling a portion of the site with dredge material to restore it to its original condition.

### **3.11 Recommendations**

3.11.1 The City should continue to be actively involved in the development of the New Jersey Coastal Storm Risk Management Study to ensure that issues that are important to the sustainability of the City are identified and analyzed and that implementable solutions are recommended and funded. It is anticipated that the implementation of

back bay improvements will be funded by the Army Corps of Engineers in a similar manner to the beach replenishment program.

3.11.2 The City should continue to actively pursue funding on behalf of its residents to elevate buildings at least two to three feet above the Base Flood Elevation. This would include public structures and water wells that are in flood-prone areas.

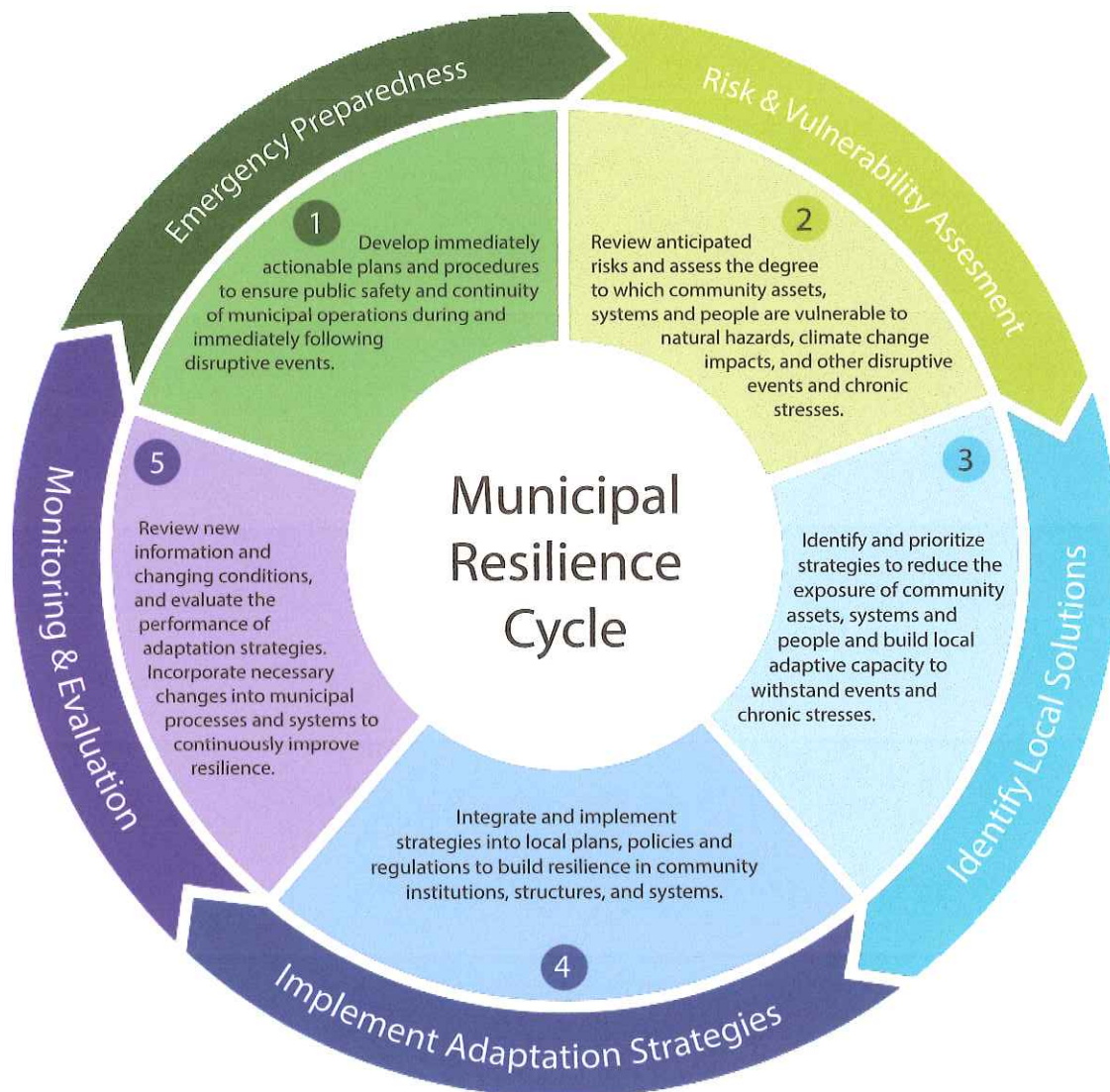
3.11.3 The City should strive for a Class 4 designation in the NFIP Community Rating System. This will result in at least a 30 percent discount on flood insurance and will qualify the City for special grants for home elevation and mitigation. This can be accomplished by:

- a. Actively participating in the regional Public Participation Information program and updating the City's web site with information on flood mitigation and preparedness.
- b. Implementing living shoreline projects to enhance back bay protection.
- c. Continuing to update the Repetitive Loss Mitigation Plan provided in this Master Plan Element.
- d. Sending annual mailings to FEMA-designated floodplain properties to inform property owners of the flood hazard. The cover letter clearly states that the recipient's property is subject to flooding and is in the floodplain. The mailing also includes information on flood safety, flood warning and preparedness, flood insurance requirements, property protection measures, grants for structure elevation and other useful information.
- e. Mailing an annual outreach geared specifically to realtors, lenders, and insurers to inform them of the local flood hazard, of flood insurance requirements and that the City provides free technical and floodproofing assistance.
- f. Continuing to provide technical assistance to residents for map information and flood-protection assistance. These services are provided as a public service to the inquirer and are documented in a log for the CRS. The CRS encourages the community to publicize the availability of these flood hazard awareness services.
- g. Continuing to map areas not shown on the Flood Insurance Rate Map, preserving open space and enforcing higher regulatory standards.

- h. Developing and documenting programs that reduce potential damages in areas that are flood prone. While most of the points in the CRS are given for acquisition and relocation of flood-prone properties, mitigation practices, such as floodproofing or retrofitting a flood-prone building, are equally beneficial to reducing flood damages to the community. Extra credit is provided for addressing repetitive loss problems and individual properties. Credit also is awarded in this category for regularly maintaining the community's drainage systems, enforcing stream dumping regulations, and inspecting waterways after a storm.
  - i. Installing an early warning system and enhancing its flood response plan. Informing residents of emergency and safety measures is also credited.
  - j. Adopting a Watershed Management Plan by working with the other communities of Absecon Island, which is a prerequisite for a Class 4 designation.
- 3.11.4 The City should perform an infrastructure audit of Ventnor's water and sewer services to determine which facilities are most vulnerable to storm damage and equipment failure. Critical facilities should be elevated, and water mains with recurring damage should be mapped to indicate areas of potential failure.
- 3.11.5 The City of Ventnor and the Ventnor City School District should partner to perform a joint Energy Savings Improvement Plan. Co-planning for energy savings will result in cost savings and efficiencies for both institutions as well as better coordination in implementing the recommendations of energy audit reports commissioned by both institutions.
- 3.11.6 The City should continue to work with the county, the state, the NJDEP and the Army Corps to develop a plan to elevate Wellington Avenue. This route is a major accessway into and out of the City and access should be maintained.
- 3.11.7 The City should consider encouraging green infrastructure to reduce the amount of impervious surface.
- 3.11.8 The City should continue to explore the development and funding of living shorelines along the back-bay area.
- 3.11.9 The City should continue to work with the Army Corps to evaluate the bulkheads along the ICWW and determine the optimum height and then work to implement these improvements. Since some structures are cantilevered over the bulkhead, these improvements may need to be coordinated with the elevation of the existing structures.

3.11.10 To implement the plan to establish a preserve area for hiking and wildlife tourism in Ventnor West, the City should commission an updated study of the species and habitat in the area to ensure their protection and inclusion in any future preserve.

3.11.11 The City should continue to work with the Army Corps to evaluate the potential of restoring Shelter Island with dredge materials.



<http://www.njresiliency.com/about/resilience-cycle/>

## **4.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT**

### **4.1 Introduction**

While there was some mention of the economic challenges and opportunities for the City of Ventnor in past Master Plans, this is the first Economic Development Element to be prepared for the City. This element will analyze the existing economic drivers in the City and provide direction for future policy decisions.

### **4.2 Goals and Objectives**

The 2006 Reexamination included an economic development goal and several objectives that are listed below.

- The continuation of commercial business areas will be encouraged and new types of businesses examined for their potential community contribution. Low impact commercial development will be encouraged.
  - a. *The City has continued support of commercial areas through increased services and improved infrastructure.*
  - b. *The expansion of existing, and development of new, commercial development has been undermined through increased property values. With the potential of high return for conversion of commercial to residential, property owners tend toward elimination of commercial use.*
  - c. *The City is attempting to stabilize the remaining commercial areas through acquisition of commercial properties and preparing for sale for new commercial development.*
  - d. *The City has invested substantially in core residential needs; such as the New Elementary School and Library/Cultural Arts Center. By providing improved residential services, there is an increased local pride and support for local businesses.*

### **4.3 Market Analysis**

To fully understand the economic potential of the City of Ventnor, a market analysis was prepared. The analysis provides information to serve two purposes:

- To update the demographic and economic status of the City using the latest available information.
- To provide the information required to allow the City to reach a sustainable level of economic progress by improving its competitive position in the regional economy.

The City has made use of marketing plans with the designation of the North Beach neighborhood as well as the formation of the Ventnor Tourism Association. Future economic sustainability will need to build on these activities. With the recent developments in the regional economy, Ventnor will need to be proactive to create a sustainable economy to meet two broad challenges:

1. As the regional economy adjusts to the decline of business activity in Atlantic City, efforts by neighboring municipalities to retain business will pressure Ventnor to continue to improvise. The evolution of the regional economy in the post-monopoly years of casino gaming has already offered some hints at where economic opportunities will emerge.

The efforts of governmental bodies to revive the economy of Atlantic City have resulted in plans to develop new institutional projects in education, health care and regulated industries. The fortuitous location of the Gateway Project and the presence of new health-care professionals in Rowan University's mid-town medical school provide a target for commercial establishments in Ventnor City.

**Figure 4.1 – Planned Gateway Campus on Albany Avenue in Atlantic City**



The Gateway Project will have the most significant economic impact on Ventnor. The \$210-million complex will include Stockton University's Atlantic City campus and the corporate headquarters for South Jersey Gas. The campus, a public-private development with the nonprofit Atlantic City Development Corporation, will feature a 56,000-square-foot academic building with on-site parking and residential housing for 500 students. The project will also include a new corporate headquarters for South Jersey Gas, to be built atop a new 885-space parking garage.

2. The overall scale and variety of commercial establishments in the City are best suited to accommodate the demands of residents and second homeowners. The small, dispersed commercial areas make walking to a neighborhood establishment for food or personal services convenient to most of the residential neighborhoods except, perhaps, for Ventnor Heights.

However, there is a trend of the continued transition of the City into a more seasonal housing market, as evidenced by the growing number of seasonally occupied housing units. This trend makes it imperative to attract residents of neighboring towns and regional tourists to keep current year-round establishments in business as well as maintain and expand seasonal activity.

#### **4.4 Economic Trends**

The trifecta of events that have impacted both the City of Ventnor and the region in general have all resulted in uncertainty about the future economy and demographic makeup. With the onset of the recession in 2007, the consequences of Superstorm Sandy and flood-insurance changes, and, finally, the downsizing of the casino sector in neighboring Atlantic City, this uncertainty remains as a determinant in planning for the future.

The following trends need to be assessed given this background. As in any uncertain times, being adaptive and nimble are two important qualities to foster and retain. In general, the region is in what can at its best be described as a holding pattern. As the table below shows, the period of growth that characterized most sectors of the region from 1997 – 2006, when Atlantic County led the state in many positive indicators, is now over.

Ventnor, like much of the region, has shown a decline in overall population of over 18 percent since 2000. The City has issued very few building permits for new residential or commercial properties, not inconsistent with the uncertainty posed by external factors. In addition to having fiscal impacts, a decline in year-round population puts competitive pressures not only on individual businesses but also on competing business districts.

Figure 4.2 – Population Estimates for Selected Communities, 2011, 2013, 2015

<b>POSITIONING VENTNOR CITY POPULATION ESTIMATES, 2011 - 2015 CRBR, JUNE 2016</b>				
<u>Area Name</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>%ch, 2011 - 15</u>
<b>Atlantic County</b>	<b>275,078</b>	<b>276,321</b>	<b>274,219</b>	<b>-0.3%</b>
Absecon	8,414	8,410	8,317	-1.2%
Egg Harbor Twsp.	43,576	43,990	43,882	0.7%
Linwood	7,081	7,071	6,973	-1.5%
Margate	6,357	6,313	6,237	-1.9%
Northfield	8,624	8,615	8,521	-1.2%
Somers Point	10,803	10,811	10,688	-1.1%
<b>Ventnor</b>	<b>10,641</b>	<b>10,626</b>	<b>10,486</b>	<b>-1.5%</b>

One of the important indicators of the future demographics of any region is the number of births, an indicator of the number of younger households in- or out-migrating. This is also an indicator of school enrollments in the future. It will also influence retail purchasing patterns over time.

As shown, births in the region have declined in general and Ventnor, at 2.6 percent of the births in 2012 – the last year for which data is available – is not an exception to this trend.

Figure 4.3 – Birth Rates for Selected Communities, 2016

<b>POSITIONING VENTNOR CITY BIRTHS, BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE CRBR, JUNE 2016</b>									
Mother's Municipality									
<u>Year</u>	<u>Absecon</u>	<u>EHT</u>	<u>Linwood</u>	<u>Margate</u>	<u>Northfield</u>	<u>Somers Pt.</u>	<u>Ventnor</u>	<u>Atlantic Cnty</u>	<u>Vnt. % of Cnty.</u>
2006	97	536	52	38	83	124	109	3,642	3.0%
2007	96	517	48	38	96	129	118	3,607	3.3%
2008	103	522	41	39	65	147	118	3,686	3.2%
2009	95	536	49	29	89	146	104	3,742	2.8%
2010	82	480	55	30	65	130	110	3,282	3.4%
2011	89	521	51	30	83	143	111	3,465	3.2%
2012	93	552	52	24	74	147	86	3,291	2.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>655</b>	<b>3664</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>966</b>	<b>756</b>	<b>24,715</b>	<b>3.1%</b>

Like many of the shore towns from Brigantine to Cape May City, the ability to attract and retain younger households has become a local focus of businesses, school boards and zoning boards. This

issue goes to the heart of the character of the town, one with many retirees and second homeowners, or one with a core year-round population.

**Figure 4.4 – Average Home Sale Price for Selected Communities, 2007, 2015**

<b>POSITIONING VENTNOR CITY AVG. SALES PRICE, RESIDENTIAL CRBR, JUNE 2016</b>			
<b><u>Muni/Year</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>	<b><u>2015</u></b>	<b><u>% Change</u></b>
Absecon	\$230,291	\$188,878	-18%
Atlantic City	\$258,457	\$127,629	-51%
Egg Harbor Twsp.	\$275,049	\$244,685	-11%
Linwood	\$397,670	\$234,082	-41%
Margate	\$592,679	\$521,120	-12%
Northfield	\$290,974	\$222,698	-23%
Somers Point	\$304,194	\$223,586	-26%
<b>Ventnor</b>	<b>\$468,523</b>	<b>\$345,435</b>	<b>-26%</b>

This issue is of interest now as housing values have fallen significantly in the region and have not recovered as they have in other parts of New Jersey and the nation. As the table above shows, this trend is evident on the barrier islands as well as on the mainland. With continued confusion about the major employment sector in the region, the affordability of shore communities, especially Ventnor with its many casino industry employees, will continue to see a shift in housing tenure, ownership and price.

The housing issue is further impacted by the significant number of foreclosures and abandoned homes in the region. Atlantic County leads the nation in foreclosures. Per RealtyTrac, an online tracking service, there are 1,061 properties in Ventnor that are in some stage of foreclosure.

While the trend in prices is important, the actual level of prices in Ventnor is important for the future. Situated between the least expensive market in Atlantic City and the very expensive housing market of the rest of the Downbeach area, Ventnor is in the midst of what could be a period that changes the character of the community. As will be shown, the housing costs are very high compared to the incomes of year-round residents, while at the same time it offers the most affordable barrier island housing between Atlantic City and Wildwood.

With the next shift in the economics of homebuyers in the marketplace, this could result in either a continued deterioration of values or an influx of wealthier buyers, many of whom will be second homeowners. The table below shows the relative position of Ventnor on this indicator at 45.2 percent of homes being vacant part of the year. In addition, Ventnor was at 39 percent in 2010, a sign

that a trend toward more seasonal use of the housing stock may be occurring.

**Figure 4.5 – Housing Occupancy for Selected Communities, 2014**

<b>POSITIONING VENTNOR CITY HOUSING OCCUPANCY, % VACANT CRBR, JUNE 2016</b>	
<b>Muni/Year</b>	<b>2014</b>
Atlantic County	20.4%
Absecon	6.2%
Egg Harbor Twsp.	8.4%
Linwood	8.5%
Margate	55.1%
Northfield	4.6%
Somers Point	16.1%
Ventnor	45.2%

Finally, one indicator of both housing affordability and disposable income is household income. As shown below, Ventnor is losing its competitiveness in terms of income. This is most likely a consequence of being a bedroom community for many in the hospitality industry, which has declined severely since 2007. Moreover, in terms of business development, this trend indicates a loss of purchasing power by residents and, coupled with the loss of year-round residents, an indication that the businesses open in the off-season that service locals could be having trouble in staying open all year.

**Figure 4.6 – Median Household Income for Selected Communities, 2010, 2014**

<b>POSITIONING VENTNOR CITY MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME, ACS 2010 -2014 CRBR, JUNE 2016</b>				
<b>Year</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>% change</b>	<b>% of County</b>
Atlantic County	\$54,768	\$54,392	-0.7%	100%
Absecon	\$64,370	\$61,199	-4.9%	113%
Egg Harbor Twsp.	\$69,754	\$71,868	3.0%	132%
Linwood	\$80,516	\$88,542	10.0%	163%
Margate	\$66,667	\$65,568	-1.6%	121%
Northfield	\$70,980	\$67,528	-4.9%	124%
Somers Point	\$47,312	\$47,945	1.3%	88%
Ventnor	\$52,465	\$50,129	-4.5%	92%

One of the obvious ways to ameliorate these difficulties is to augment the local availability of disposable income by attracting outside dollars. This could be from residents of nearby towns or from visitors to the region.

#### **4.4.1 Post Superstorm Sandy Economic Impacts**

While it takes many years for property-value and land-use adjustments to be made after a large natural disaster, there are some general trends that can be hypothesized and watched given the known policy changes that have already been adopted.

The most immediate impact of policy changes will come from the rules adopted on the state level for rebuilding using relief funds. The requirement of at least one foot of freeboard above Base Flood Elevation for new, substantially rebuilt and elevated homes will make shore homes more expensive and make it harder to enter and exit (especially for older residents and families) while at the same time substantially reducing the value of homes that are non-conforming. In addition, the recently finalized flood maps and the FEMA National Flood Insurance Program's new rates that are based on actual costs of insuring properties near tidal waterways will cause the costs of homeownership in these areas to increase.

In short, the housing market will put a premium on properties that were not damaged by Superstorm Sandy and are not severely impacted by the new policies. These changes will be made at the margins of the marketplace, offering Ventnor an opportunity to capture part of the shifting housing-market values.

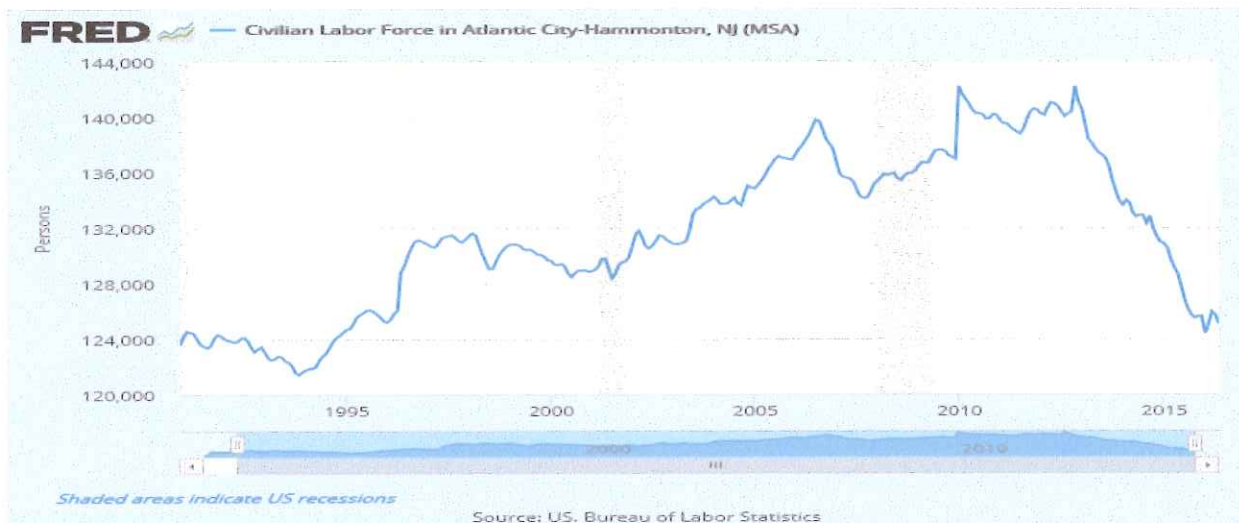
Finally, there are some intra-City shifts that will occur due to Superstorm Sandy. Parts of the City experienced extensive damage because of the superstorm, with 3,315 closed insurance claims filed as of July 31, 2016 and \$85,777,272 losses paid, per the New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance.

As of July 31, 2016, there were 4,846 National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) flood insurance policies in effect in the City of Ventnor, insuring property valued at \$1,046,266,400. The total cost of premiums in 2016 was \$4,460,879. One way to reduce the premiums for flood insurance is to participate in the Community Rating System of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which will be discussed in more detail in this Master Plan Element.

#### **4.4.2 Ventnor in Relationship to the Region**

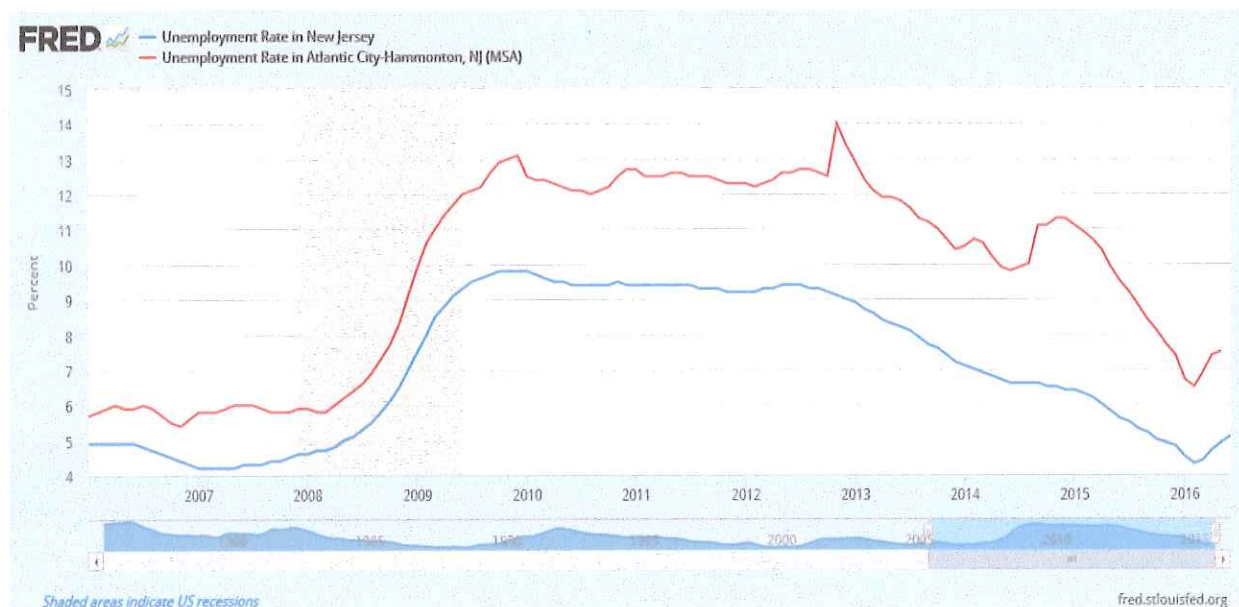
Countywide employment continues to drop, and this trend is not expected to end in the next few years. Figure 4.7 below provides a snapshot of the growth and shrinkage of the civilian labor force in Atlantic County. From a low of 129,000 jobs in 2001 to a high of 142,000 jobs in 2012, the civilian labor market is now at its lowest level in 20 years with 125,000 jobs. About 17,000 jobs have been lost since Superstorm Sandy and the closing of many casinos in Atlantic City.

**Figure 4.7 – Civilian Labor Force in Atlantic County, 1993 to 2016**



Atlantic County has among the highest unemployment rates in the nation, above 7 percent. Unemployment peaked after Superstorm Sandy at 14 percent in November 2012 compared to 9.1 percent statewide.

**Figure 4.8 – Unemployment Rate for Atlantic County and New Jersey, 2010 to 2016**



The gap between the State of New Jersey's unemployment rate and Atlantic County's rate most recently narrowed slightly. In June 2016, the state's unemployment rate was 5.1 percent compared to the Atlantic County rate of 7.5 percent.

To better understand Ventnor's place in the regional marketplace, the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) – which reports demographic, social, economic and housing data at the local level in years between the decennial census – allows the timeliest snapshot of the City. Using this data in comparison to that of surrounding communities provides the relative position of the City in relationship to the rest of the region. The next section provides much of that context.

As has been discussed above, the recent trends show movement toward a more seasonal housing market as well as a growing gap between incomes and housing costs. The census information gives more details about this picture of the City. The municipalities used are meant to be instructive but are also those that could be considered as “competition” in terms of business and spending attraction. Information for all municipalities in the region is available at:

[http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/lpa/acs/2014/acs14\\_5Yr\\_MCD\\_ATL\\_ndx.html](http://lwd.dol.state.nj.us/labor/lpa/acs/2014/acs14_5Yr_MCD_ATL_ndx.html).

Some highlights of the following table on *Demographic Comparisons* are highlighted in blue and include:

- The 23.4 percent of households with a person under 18 years of age is the second lowest and indicates a similarity with Margate on this measure. As discussed previously, the low percentage of households composed of younger family units is a characteristic of a shore community with expensive housing in a region with few high-wage industries.
- Ventnor's residents have a low educational attainment at 27.6 percent of adults with a bachelor's degree. In general, this reflects the local job market, but it is also an indicator of incomes and buying patterns.
- With its proximity to the employment center for any of its employed residents, Ventnor exhibits a commuting pattern that is very highly concentrated in public transportation at 21.1 percent. A change to other work locations or non-working households would have an impact on traffic and parking patterns.
- As alluded to above, the occupational sector that employs Ventnor's working population is heavily concentrated in the service sector at 35.9 percent. It is also overrepresented in construction and maintenance occupations while underrepresented in management and professional services. The industry that employs many of these residents is the hospitality sector, which employs 38.3 percent of working residents.

**Figure 4.9 – Demographic Comparisons for Selected Communities, 2014**

<b>POSITIONING VENTNOR CITY DEMOGRAPHIC COMPARISONS, ACS 2014 CRBR, JUNE 2016</b>							
Subject	Absecon	Atl City	EHT	Linwood	Margate	Northfiel	Ventnor
<b>HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE</b>							
Total households	3,247	15,847	14,854	2,537	3,272	3,089	4,170
Households with one or more people under 18 years	28.4%	33.0%	41.2%	32.7%	13.6%	36.9%	23.4%
Households with one or more people 65 years and over	32.0%	26.6%	24.2%	35.5%	51.1%	32.9%	37.6%
<b>EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT</b>							
Percent high school graduate or higher	87.1%	69.2%	89.4%	93.5%	94.2%	92.6%	87.5%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	28.8%	15.6%	29.6%	45.0%	43.0%	32.7%	27.6%
<b>COMMUTING TO WORK</b>							
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	2.6%	27.7%	1.8%	0.8%	1.8%	0.8%	21.1%
<b>OCCUPATION</b>							
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	4,176	15,256	21,524	3,345	3,020	4,182	4,819
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	35.5%	14.5%	33.8%	48.7%	44.3%	36.1%	28.0%
Service occupations	26.6%	47.6%	27.6%	16.2%	18.8%	27.4%	35.9%
Sales and office occupations	24.5%	22.0%	23.6%	22.2%	28.1%	24.7%	19.8%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	7.6%	5.5%	7.2%	6.2%	5.1%	6.3%	10.6%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	5.8%	10.5%	7.8%	6.8%	3.7%	5.4%	5.7%
<b>INDUSTRY</b>							
Arts, entertainment, recreation, gaming, accommodation, food services	26.4%	43.1%	21.9%	15.2%	17.8%	27.3%	38.3%
<b>INCOME AND BENEFITS</b>							
With Food Stamp/SNAP benefits in the past 12 months	4.2%	28.6%	7.3%	3.8%	3.5%	5.4%	18.6%
<b>PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE BELOW THE POVERTY LEVEL</b>							
All people	7.2%	35.8%	9.8%	1.9%	9.4%	10.7%	16.6%
<b>HOUSING TENURE</b>							
Occupied housing units	3,247	15,847	14,854	2,537	3,272	3,089	4,170
Owner-occupied	83.4%	29.6%	86.6%	86.0%	76.2%	90.4%	58.5%
Renter-occupied	16.6%	70.4%	13.4%	14.0%	23.8%	9.6%	41.5%
<b>MONTHLY HOME OWNER COSTS, % OF INCOME</b>							
35.0 percent or more	44.4%	62.3%	38.7%	33.5%	37.6%	42.6%	51.1%
<b>SEX AND AGE</b>							
Median age (years)	46.3	37.0	39.3	47.3	59.8	44.8	42.9
<b>RACE</b>							
Total population	8,400	39,521	43,699	7,071	6,343	8,616	10,632
White	83.7%	36.8%	70.1%	96.7%	96.8%	91.6%	80.5%
Black or African American	7.8%	42.9%	12.2%	1.8%	1.2%	1.6%	2.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.3%	1.5%	1.5%	0.4%	0.2%	0.5%	0.0%
Asian	7.3%	17.0%	12.2%	2.0%	1.6%	6.4%	13.5%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	10.3%	25.1%	16.2%	4.2%	2.7%	9.3%	19.7%

- In terms of federal assistance and poverty, Ventnor ranks second in the comparison, only exceeded by Atlantic City (Pleasantville, not viewed as a municipality that competes with Ventnor, is not included in the comparison).
- The incidence of renter-occupied housing units greatly distinguishes Ventnor from all surrounding communities except Atlantic City. At 41.5 percent of units rented, it is almost double that of Margate, the next highest. This reinforces the trends discussed previously showing that housing prices and incomes are becoming very disparate.
- The 51.1 percent of those paying greater than 35 percent of incomes on housing costs confirms this imbalance. This is made up by less upkeep of properties, less disposable income and spending, more households per housing unit, or any number of other ways to compensate for the need to be in Ventnor. These strategies are balanced against proximity to work, the ability to commute and not own a car, and other lifestyle/necessity choices.
- Finally, as is reflected in the wide array of ethnic eating places and grocery stores, the population is disproportionately – compared to the county and many surrounding communities – Asian and Hispanic.

These demographic characteristics are what give Ventnor its more urban nature and diversity of retail establishments. In general, the City has always been part Atlantic City and part Downbeach, both culturally and economically. Sitting between a resort in extreme financial stress and the very affluent City of Margate gives Ventnor its attraction and its uncertain future.

One other indicator of Ventnor's place in the regional marketplace is the industrial sectors that characterize its businesses. The table below is the latest information on the City's business community with regards to how it compares to the rest of the county. Ventnor's share of county employment was 2.1 percent in 2014 or 1,719. The relative share column shows in which sectors Ventnor is underrepresented or overrepresented compared to its overall share.

The relative shares highlighted in green are those in which the City has exceeded its overall 2.1 percent share or nearly matched it. These are the sectors in which Ventnor out-performs the county.

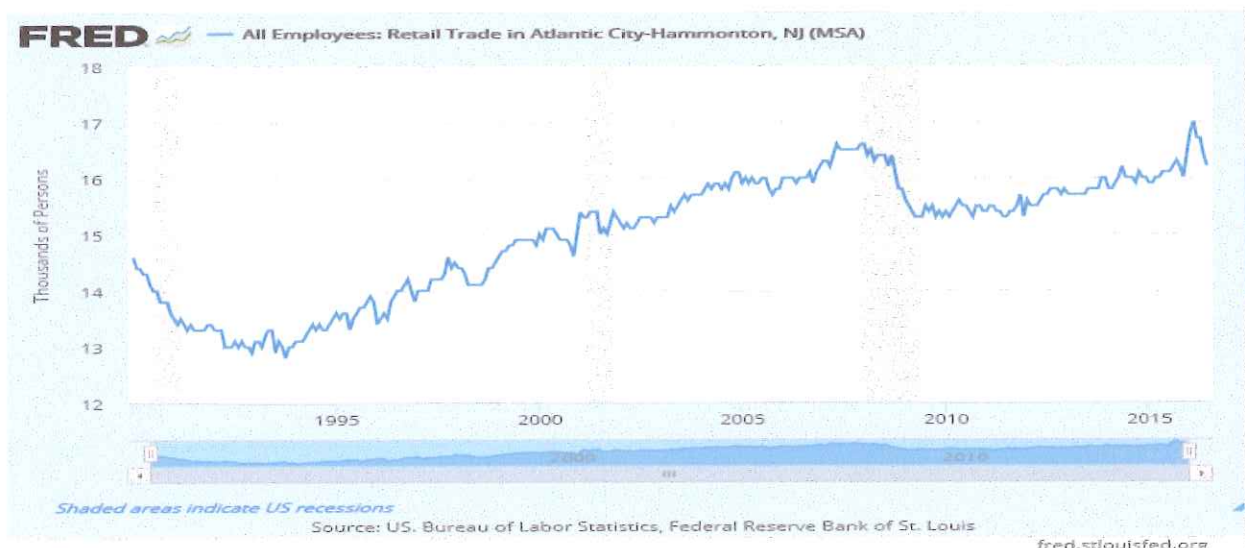
By far the strongest sectors for Ventnor are food services and personal services. The City also performs well in health and social services, administrative services, real estate and retail trade. These present opportunities for expansion as the City already exhibits a comparative advantage in them.

**Figure 4.10 – Employment by Place of Business, 2015**

<b>POSITIONING VENTNOR CITY EMPLOYMENT BY PLACE OF BUSINESS, 2014 CRBR, JUNE 2016</b>				
<u>INDUSTRY/EMPLOYMENT 2010</u>	<u>VENTNOR</u>	<u>COUNTY (MINUS ATL CITY)</u>	<u>VENTNOR SHARE</u>	<u>RELATIVE SHARE</u>
TOTAL	1,719	80,781	2.1%	
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	0	1,629	0.0%	-2.1%
Utilities	0	491	0.0%	-2.1%
Construction	86	5,734	1.5%	-0.6%
Manufacturing	0	3,479	0.0%	-2.1%
Wholesale trade	0	2,869	0.0%	-2.1%
Retail trade	354	18,086	2.0%	-0.2%
Transportation and warehousing	0	2,343	0.0%	-2.1%
Information	0	686	0.0%	-2.1%
Finance and insurance	21	2,750	0.8%	-1.4%
Real estate and rental and leasing	77	3,970	2.0%	-0.2%
Professional and technical services	59	4,032	1.5%	-0.7%
Administrative and waste services	88	3,042	2.9%	0.8%
Educational services	0	1,410	0.0%	-2.1%
Health care and social assistance	236	10,532	2.2%	0.1%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	0	2,030	0.0%	-2.1%
Accommodation and food services	152	4,515	3.4%	1.2%
Other services, inc. personal services	157	3,027	5.2%	3.1%
GOVT.	489	10,156	4.8%	2.7%

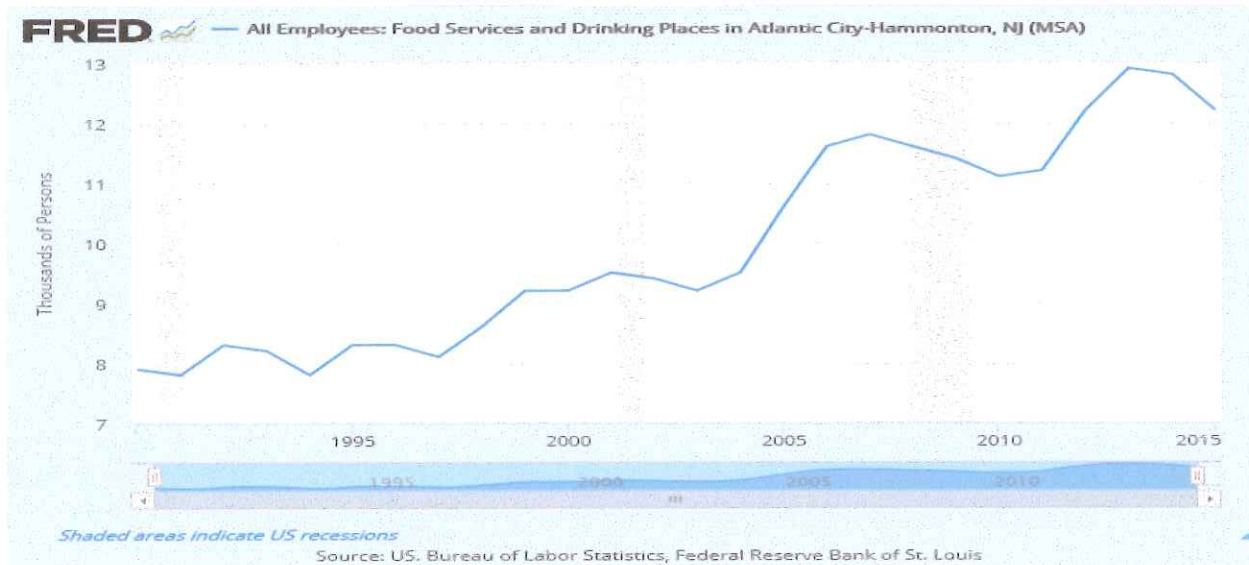
Ventnor competes well in the growing retail market. The retail market continues to grow in Atlantic County despite high unemployment since this market segment is strongly supported by visitors and the regional market. With more than 20 million visitors coming to Atlantic City each year and a \$6 billion tourism economy in the county, retail has growth potential.

**Figure 4.11 – All Employees in Retail Trade in Atlantic County, 1995 to 2016**



The food and beverage sector has also continued to grow in the Atlantic County market. Again, this is due in large part to the visitors and second homeowners that frequent the area. Growth in this sector is depicted in the following figure.

**Figure 4.12 – All Employees in Food & Beverage in Atlantic County, 1990 to 2016**

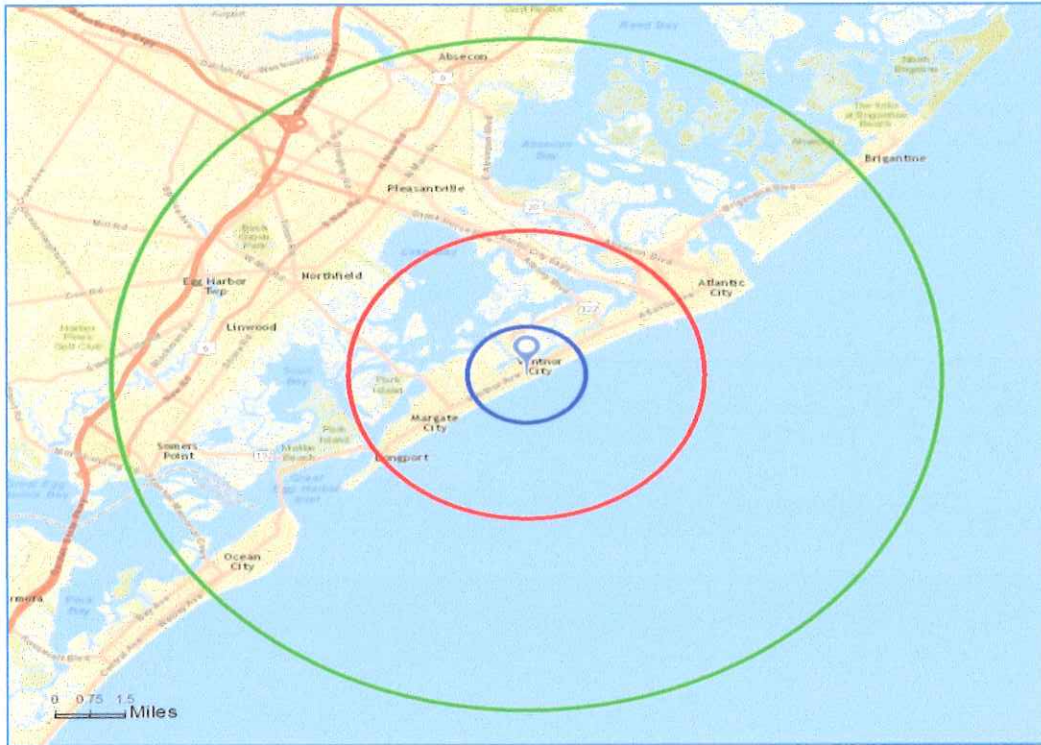


A final way to present Ventnor’s role in the regional marketplace is by examining the *Retail Goods and Services Expenditures Report* developed by ESRI and found in Appendix I. This report shows the goods and services that are purchased by residents in a 1-, 3- and 7-mile radius from City Hall. These concentric areas are shown on the map below. The 1-mile circle includes most of Ventnor, the 3-mile adds Downbeach and parts of Atlantic City, while the 7-mile radius adds some of the mainland communities.

In addition to this spending data, the report also categorizes the consumers in that concentric circle by “lifestyle” as defined by ESRI’s *Tapestry* classification system. This information provides a context for those residing in the marketplace and the potential for businesses positioned to meet their demands.

The spending data shows the limits to the marketplace in which Ventnor is located. While residents within the 1-mile radius spend more than the national average on travel, food and recreation, and remodeling, those in the 3-mile and 7-mile radius underspend the national averages in virtually all categories. The low incomes in Atlantic City and Pleasantville severely limit the potential in the local marketplace from residents.

**Figure 4.13 – Market Radii for the City of Ventnor, 1, 3, and 7 Miles**



In the figure below, detailed are the lifestyle categories that best characterize the local marketplace. Once again, the mix that Ventnor presents straddles the urban nature of Atlantic City and the retired, more economically comfortable neighbors to the south in the Downbeach communities.

**4.14 – Lifestyle Categories for the City of Ventnor**

<b>POSITIONING VENTNOR CITY ESRI TAPESTRY LIFESTYLE SEGMENTS CRBR, JUNE 2016</b>		
<b><u>SEGMENT/RADIUS</u></b>	<b><u>1-MILE</u></b>	<b><u>7-MILE</u></b>
<b>City Lights</b>	38.1	6.7
<b>Golden Years</b>	37.9	9.8
<b>Comfortable Empty Nest</b>	14.9	<5%
<b>Silver &amp; Gold</b>	5.2	5.8
<b>Front Porches</b>	4.0	7.1
<b>Soc. Sec. Set</b>	<4%	8.4

To better understand these categories, definitions of the major lifestyle segments in Ventnor are described below.

- **City Lights:** a diverse array of a bit older residents with fewer children and slightly more persons 75+. The ethnic diversity is also a bit higher with higher ratios of Asians and Hispanics.
- **Golden Years:** Independent, active seniors nearing the end of their careers or already in retirement. This market is primarily singles living alone or empty nesters. Those still active in the labor force are employed in professional occupations; however, these consumers are actively pursuing a variety of leisure interests — travel, sports, dining out, museums, and concerts. They are involved, focused on physical fitness, and enjoying their lives. This market is smaller, but growing, and financially secure.
- **Comfortable Empty Nesters:** Residents in this large, growing segment are older, with more than half of all householders aged 55 or older; many still live in the suburbs where they grew up. Most are professionals working in government, health care, or manufacturing. These Baby Boomers are earning a comfortable living and benefitting from years of prudent investing and saving. Their net worth is well above average (Index 363). Many are enjoying the transition from child rearing to retirement.

#### 4.5 Demographic Trends

To understand the future economic development opportunities, communities such as Ventnor must first understand the demographic trends that are occurring in this ever-changing market. Recognizing and applying emerging trends is the key to growth for any tourism destination. Many trends can easily be applied to grow interest in the region and expand the season to attract new visitors looking for experiences beyond the beach.

Ecotourism and agritourism are forms of niche tourism, and currently considered a growth industry in United States. They are difficult to define since participation in both reflects different level of activities.

Internationally and nationally, ecotourism and agritourism activities are high on the visitor's bucket list and many are perfectly suited for the Atlantic Cape Region. Sustainable travel continues to be a big part of the vacation planning process and one of the fastest growing trends is nature-based tourism. Deeply influenced by the green movement, vacation planners seek new and exciting experiences that will enhance their vacation, maintain their lifestyle and, when possible, give back to the community. For Baby Boomers, leisure travel is their No. 1 activity, and they will spend an estimated \$157 billion this year looking for experiential activities that include both ecotourism and agritourism.

Culinary tourism, the birth of the foodie, is on the rise for Boomers, and they are willing to pay for

the experience. But they are not the only ones who want to know how food is grown, processed and prepared. Millennials want to be part of the action; they are 75 million strong, growing up and going on vacation. In the age of GMO, people want to know exactly how their food is grown, and there is a huge interest in how to prepare food and pair it with wine and beer. Small farm-to-table culinary experiences can be offered in Ventnor.

Other local experiences such as home-grown produce and products, seafood and farm-to-table options help bring the destination to life, bring visitors back and create memories. The growth of wineries, breweries and distilleries add to the local appeal. The Jersey Fresh brand is a source of pride for the farmers and businesses that produce quality local products. A farmer's market or annual wine festival could leverage this trend in Ventnor.

A trend that can easily be adapted by all businesses is to provide the visitor with opportunities to become immersed in the local culture through eco/agri, historic and cultural tourism. Building a vacation around a beach cleanup or dune-grass planting would appeal to a wide range of visitors and allow them to give back. To capitalize on trends, marketing professionals should identify travel trends of "green" travelers and partner with like activities in the region by offering options that appeal to the green traveler – eco/agritourism, history and arts and culture.

Based on population projections released by the U.S. Census Bureau, Baby Boomers are aging and shrinking in numbers. While they still have the upper hand in traveler spending, and represent 24 percent of the U.S. population, there is a new group, Millennials, closing the gap, and we need to be aware of their attitude from marketing to them to providing services. Some general trends include:

- The fact that Millennials would rather spend on experiences than things, and are willing to pay more.
- Mobile device-friendly marketing should be a top priority. Desktop travel booking is declining.
- Provide free Wi-Fi – Mobile devices and wearable technology is here to stay.
- Upgrades – Everyone is looking for value and that "special" treatment as a reward for their business.
- Local Experiences – This includes eco/agri attractions, local history, cultural events, home-grown produce, seafood and specialties, farm-to-table, wineries, breweries and distilleries.
- Cultural Immersion – Millennials are looking for experiences that bring the destination to life; they want to "own" it and learn something new.
- Signature Experience – This experience is customized to make it happen when they are ready

and that fits their personality; it lets them get involved.

- Smaller towns are making a bigger splash when it comes to travel planners, a big plus for destinations like Ventnor.
- Safety continues to drive the engine for family vacations – from terrorism to Ebola, there's a lot to think about when planning a vacation.
- Cycling Tourism – Cycling tourism is replacing golf tourism for middle-aged men and with the growth in bike path development in Atlantic County, this is a market that Ventnor can serve.
- Health, wellness and fitness are top interests. Ventnor is one of the few barrier island communities with a Boardwalk – a magnet for bicyclists, runners and walkers.

Boomers, considered the wealthiest age group, are becoming "elders," and while they are not readily admitting it, they are slowing down a bit. With an estimated 74.9 million Boomers born between 1946 and 1964, there were 75.3 million Millennials born between 1981 and 1997. They also make up one fourth of the U.S. population, and in this country, they wield about \$1.3 trillion in annual buying power. Forget about Generation X, (age 35-50). Millennials are three times the size of those born between 1965 and 1980, who will not outnumber Boomers until 2028. Immigration will continue to increase the numbers of this group in the U.S. Per Census Bureau statistics, the Millennial population is projected to peak in 2036 at 81.1 million. By 2050, there will be a projected 79.2 million Millennials.

Millennials are a generation of consumers who are savvier than other generations and have a better understanding of marketing and their value as consumers. They are changing the way advertisers are marketing products, and companies who want their business better pay attention. Through social media, they understand the power of effecting change and truly believe they can help a brand succeed or fail. They don't want to be inundated with advertising, but want to be entertained or made to feel and look good. They are totally into the digital world and getting their information from their smartphones. They don't find online ads as credible and are getting and sharing information between friends, who are their most trusted source for product information. Nearly 9 out of 10 own a smartphone and they check it on average 45 times a day.

Millennial Statistics (Source: LeadsCon by John Egan)

- 43 percent of Millennials in the U.S. are non-white, the largest share of any generation (Pew Research Center).
- 25 percent of Millennials in the U.S. speak a language other than English at home (U.S. Census Bureau).

- Median income in the U.S. for Millennials who are year-round, full-time workers is \$33,883 (U.S. Census Bureau).
- 85 percent own smartphones (Nielsen).
- 87 percent of online adults in the U.S. age 18 to 29 use Facebook, 53 percent are on Instagram, 37 percent are on Twitter, and 34 percent are on Pinterest (Pew Research Center).
- Five out of six Millennials in the U.S. connect with companies on social media networks (SDL).
- 33 percent of older Millennials (ages 26 to 33) have earned at least a four-year college degree, making them the best-educated group of young adults in U.S. history (Pew Research Center).
- 26 percent in the U.S. are married, compared with 36 percent of Generation X, 48 percent of Baby Boomers and 65 percent of the Silent Generation at the same age (Pew Research Center).
- 66 percent in the U.S. follow a company or brand on Twitter, and 64 percent like a company or brand on Facebook to score a coupon or discount (University of Massachusetts Dartmouth).
- 56 percent would share their location with companies to receive coupons or deals for nearby businesses (USC Annenberg Center for the Digital Future).
- 51 percent would share information with companies in exchange for an incentive (USC Annenberg Center for the Digital Future).
- 6 percent consider online advertising to be credible (SocialChorus).
- 95 percent feel friends are the most credible source of product information (SocialChorus).

#### **4.6 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Analysis**

##### **4.6.1 Purpose**

This section of the Economic Development Element will provide the strategic direction the City should take in developing a healthy and sustainable local economy. These strategies are guided by the ideas and impressions of stakeholders through a process that evaluates the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) to economic development. SWOT analysis is especially useful for strategic planning and priority setting in a community setting.

The purpose of a SWOT session is to assess the internal assets – strengths and weaknesses – of the City of Ventnor to meet the external challenges both current and future – opportunities and threats - that will impact the economic performance of the local business community.

In short, the SWOT process helps the community to understand the steps that are required to remain economically competitive in the region. The results of this exercise will help to inform the vision statement of the City: “Where does Ventnor want to be in the future”?

#### **4.6.2 Conducting the SWOT Analysis**

The SWOT analysis was conducted in two sessions. On July 30, 2016, the public was invited to a listening session conducted by Rutala Associates. It was conducted on a weekend to allow as much participation as possible from both year-round and second-home residents. That session asked participants to identify the main assets (strengths) and the weaknesses of the City from their perspective. Once these were identified, some ideas were sought to help mitigate these weaknesses. These are summarized below.

The second session was conducted with Planning Board and City Council members on August 15, 2016. The purpose of that session was to organize the ideas and information gathered in the public listening session into areas to generate strategies to be included in the Master Plan. That session began with a summary of the public input by grouping the strengths and weaknesses into categories as follows:

- Strengths: What do you like about Ventnor?
  - Natural assets including parks, recreation, Boardwalk.
  - Built environment including library, schools, pier, homes, restaurants.
  - Community atmosphere including family-oriented, diverse population, volunteerism and businesses that serve the local population.
  - Location assets including easy access to Ocean City and Atlantic City, affordability and value.
  
- Weaknesses: What could be better in Ventnor?
  - Fiscal issues including value for taxes, commercial vacancies, lack of ratables.
  - Public works/zoning issues including poor drainage, vacant lots, lack of landscaping standards/enforcement, dredging needs, and litter.
  - Neighborhood atmosphere issues including drug dealing, transient/winter residents, vacant properties.
  - Lack of proactive initiatives including need for modernization, liquor laws, secondary educational choices, need for marketing/image, and the need to address climate change.

To begin the process of creating strategies to address these concerns, the second session focused on how best to address these weaknesses to adopt the ideas generated by the public, elected officials and consultants. This was done in a two-step process.

First, the known external threats were listed. These included:

- FEMA rules, especially dredging and community rating, and flood insurance rate escalation.
- Loss of retail and food/drink sales to neighboring communities.
- The demise of the casino industry causing unemployment for Ventnor residents as well as a loss of visitors and potential tourism.

Second, the known external opportunities were listed. These included:

- Demand for second homes along the shore in Margate, Brigantine and the wider region. This would bring investment in upgraded homes, wealthier residents, and reduction in densities in some neighborhoods.
- The development of the Gateway Project in Atlantic City near Ventnor's North Beach area.
- Possible alliances with the Atlantic County Economic Development Corporation and a new regional destination marketing organization (DMO) for marketing purposes.
- The existence of commercial areas in strategic areas given the general movement of visitors and residents on Absecon Island.

The SWOT-session process concluded with the ability to add strategies that mitigate these threats and leverage these opportunities to the Master Plan.

#### **4.7 Tourism Marketing in the Atlantic Cape Region**

Understanding the market is just a small portion of the equation towards effective marketing. Atlantic County supports a \$6.7 billion tourism industry with significant growth potential, and there is clearly a lack of comprehensive marketing and branding of the region.

##### **4.7.1 Existing Tourism Marketing Efforts**

There are many organizations in the Atlantic Cape Region that specialize in tourism marketing. Below is a summary of how some of these organizations are structured, their funding sources, their goals and their accomplishments.

- **Cape May County Department of Tourism** – The function of the Tourism Department is to promote the 16 municipalities within the county as tourism destinations. Established in the mid-1940s and called the Department of Public Affairs, the office was tasked with disseminating information about county government and marketing the beach resorts and attractions to visitors.

The Tourism Department's promotional and marketing efforts focus primarily on the top five attractors, which include central and northern New Jersey, Pennsylvania and New York, with expanded efforts in the Baltimore/Washington D.C. and New England regions. Target markets also include Canada, focusing on the Province of Quebec and French-speaking visitors from Montreal.

The Cape May County Tourism Department is a Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) that is not membership driven and does not operate like a chamber of commerce. The Tourism Department has a staff of six that handles all aspects of marketing and promoting the entire county. The 2016 Cape May County budget includes \$730,808 for the Department of Tourism, \$362,608 for salaries and wages and \$368,200 for other expenses. This budget was offset by a Cooperative Marketing Grant in FY15 of \$52,188.

The Cape May County Department of Tourism has earned state and national recognition for its work in marketing Cape May County. The department has received 11 Excellence in Tourism awards from the state Division of Travel and Tourism, two Hospitality Sales Marketing Association International (HSMAI) Excellence in Travel Marketing Awards and one Award of Excellence from the North American Travel Journalists Association.

The Cape May County Tourism Department works closely with the Southern Shore Region Tourism Council to promote the region as a diverse and exciting destination with one message.

- **Southern Shore Region Tourism Council** – The Southern Shore Regional Destination Marketing Organization (SSRDMO) is a nonprofit corporation representing tourism businesses in the southernmost region of New Jersey including Cape May and Cumberland counties. SSRDMO works to enhance and improve the business climate in New Jersey by promoting travel to Cape May and Cumberland counties in a targeted geographic area, assisting member businesses and growing the demand for travel to the region. The SSRDMO sponsors a web site at [www.njsouthernshore.com](http://www.njsouthernshore.com).
  - An annual \$50 dues investment pays great dividends by helping a wide range of tourism-related businesses grow with the help of local and state tourism professionals.
  - Members are kept up-to-date on issues, information and other strategies from officials and employees who work in the tourism business around the state.
  - Members also benefit from cooperative advertising discounts, public relations work, networking opportunities and website exposure.
  - Membership is open to every sector of the tourism industry from accommodations, cultural and historic attractions, restaurants, transportation and chambers of commerce.

The primary role of the SSRDMO is to influence government and private-sector thinking and action on behalf of the regional tourism businesses and other stakeholders, promoting positive measures that help the industry grow and prosper in a sustainable manner. The

efforts of the SSRDMO are targeted towards increasing leisure travel as well as encouraging visitors to stay longer and visit more often. Specific marketing efforts work to increase demand for hotel/motel rooms, rentals, attraction visits, sightseeing tours, restaurant meals, event tickets and more. Key principles guide the development of the destination marketing including brand awareness, assessing and addressing visitor needs, developing effective partnerships with tourism stakeholders, and maximizing the use of the current information and distribution system in place in both counties.

- **The Wildwoods** – The Greater Wildwoods Tourism Improvement and Development Authority (GWTIDA) raised \$3.26 million in 2015 for tourism marketing. The marketing area includes Wildwood, North Wildwood, West Wildwood, Wildwood Crest and the Diamond Beach section of Lower Township. Collectively, this area is known as Five Mile Island. The towns collect a two percent tourism tax (\$376,103); a 1.85 percent room tax (\$1,651,390) on hostelries, restaurants and bars; and a Municipal Flat Tax (\$1,217,499) to help fund marketing and tourism reinvestment. The GWTIDA sponsors a single website for the five communities, [www.wildwoodsnj.com](http://www.wildwoodsnj.com). GWTIDA also acts as the island’s destination management organization, overseeing the integrated process of product development, research and planning, marketing, advertising, promotions and public relations. Additionally, GWTIDA funds and assists special events within the island to enhance the visitor experience and extend the tourist season. The Thunder on the Sand Race Series, Family Nights on the Boardwalk, fireworks, Pirates Weekend, classic car shows, International Kite Festival, Irish and Italian festivals and the National Marbles Tournament are just a few of the over 160 events the authority hosts each year.
- **Ocean City** – The City has a Division of Public Relations and Information with a 2016 budget of \$939,000 for salaries and wages and \$192,340 for other expenses. Ocean City imposes a license fee on all rental units. Any single or duplex unit rented for less than 175 days is charged \$30. For a structure containing 305 units the fee is \$125, and \$10 for each additional unit.
- **Ocean City Tourism Development Commission** –The purpose of the commission is to promote tourism on behalf of the City of Ocean City through assisting the City with appropriate advertising and promotional literature. A local mercantile fee on rental properties helps to fund this organization. The commission consists of four members appointed by the mayor with the advice and consent of City Council. Appointments are for two-year terms. Membership also includes one City Council member for his or her term of office.
- **Sea Isle City Tourism Commission** – The commission consists of 11 members and two alternates, all appointed by the mayor. The commission’s activities are funded through a local mercantile tax. The City raises \$100,000 annually through mercantile fees and includes

\$400,000 annually in its municipal budget for tourism-related events, concerts, staffing and collateral.

- **City of Avalon** – A rental license fee in 2016 is charged at \$250 per single family unit, \$500 per duplex and \$750 per triplex. These funds are used to support the tourism programs.
- **Cape May City Tourism Utility** – Established in 2012, the Tourism Utility is responsible for the functions of managing and operating all recreational programs, special events, a public information office, the Convention Hall and the marketing and promoting of tourism in Cape May City. It is a separate division of City government and functions under the direction of City Council. The 2016 budget for the Tourism Utility is \$1,155,100 – \$374,000 for salaries and wages and \$781,100 for other expenses. There are eight full-time employees in the Tourism Utility, and many seasonal recreation staff members. The overall 2015 revenues totaled \$1,266,287 resulting in \$159,587 more than anticipated. The Tourism Utility ended 2015 with an estimated surplus of \$353,016, and a self-liquidating status.
- **Ocean County Department of Business Development and Tourism** – The 2016 budget includes \$190,000 for other expenses for this department. Ocean County sponsors a website at [www.oceancountytourism.com](http://www.oceancountytourism.com).
- **Meet AC, Inc.** - Meet AC, Inc. is the sales and marketing nonprofit that supports the Atlantic City Convention Center. The center provides 486,600 contiguous square feet of exhibit space, as well as 45 meeting rooms featuring an extra 109,100 square feet, and ample pre-function space. Meet AC's duties include attracting conventions and meetings to the city, booking convention space, hotel rooms and off-site venues, and other ancillary activities. The CRDA Board approved a budget of nearly \$9.4 million for Meet AC in 2016.
- **Somers Point Economic Development Advisory Commission** – The EDAC consists of nine regular members. It was formed to advise City Council of current and future conditions involving economic development in the City of Somers Point. The primary purpose of the Commission is to market the economic strength of the City to provide stability for existing businesses while encouraging future development within City limits.

A dollar amount not less than 33-1/3 percent of the hotel and motel occupancy tax revenue received by the City of Somers Point during the preceding calendar year or \$50,000, whichever is less, is included within the annual budget as a line item to fund the Somers Point Economic Development Advisory Committee.

The EDAC works with the Somers Point Business Association (SPBA) on a regular basis. The SPBA is an organization that brings together businesses and professionals interested in the promotion, improvement and advancement of the business climate of Somers Point and in the surrounding areas. The SPBA hosts monthly meetings on relevant and timely business issues.

The EDAC initiated and assisted with the launch of the “Live in Somers Point” campaign – which yielded a great deal of publicity and interest in the City as a place to live or purchase a second home. The campaign was awarded a 2014 New Jersey Tourism Excellence Award.

- **Hammonton** – The Town of Hammonton would like to establish a DMO that would involve a collaboration between the town, the Eagle Theatre, the Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Hammonton, businesses and other organizations. The town allocates about \$65,000 to advertise the greater Hammonton area as a tourism destination.

#### 4.7.2 Atlantic County Destination Marketing Organization

New Jersey DMO’s mission is to advance the sustainability of New Jersey-based DMOs by helping to establish a permanent funding allocation in New Jersey and lead the tourism industry and the professionals that operate DMOs to the highest national standards.

Based on the New Jersey DMO guidelines, an Atlantic County DMO is recommended. To support the tourism and business expansion establish an Atlantic County DMO would be beneficial for the following reasons:

- Promote tourism
- Guide local municipalities in establishing concrete marketing plans
- Support businesses in the area
- Family and community development
- Influx of international visitors
- Variety of attractions to highlight, such as:
  - Wineries
  - Water parks
  - Amusement parks
  - Downtown shopping
  - Year-round events
  - Beach and Boardwalk
  - Atlantic County has the world’s 3<sup>rd</sup> tallest lighthouse, the Absecon Lighthouse

The DMO should be housed in the newly established Atlantic County Economic Development Alliance (ACEDA), a nonprofit corporation tasked with bringing businesses to Atlantic County. The budget for the agency is approximately \$1.2 million a year. The agency’s budget includes \$780,000 for salary and wages.

The mission of the ACEDA is to drive economic growth and cultivate economic diversity in Atlantic County through the execution of the Atlantic County Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan developed in 2015 by AngelouEconomics, a nationally recognized independent consultant from Austin, Texas.

One of the major goals of the ACEDA is to brand and aggressively market the region, an effort that is sorely needed. By including tourism marketing in this effort, a completed marketing campaign can be established for Atlantic County, much like the campaigns that already exist in most counties in New Jersey. The AngelouEconomics report supports this effort in its Executive Summary on page 16:

Tourism has always been a pivotal industry for Atlantic County. The recent decline in casino gaming in the area is not a reason to give up on tourism, but rather a reason to redefine tourism. The success of Las Vegas has not been due to casinos alone, but rather to the mix of attractions the city offers. Three strategies can help redefine the destination opportunities in Atlantic County:

- Correlate Countywide Attractions
- Extend Tourism Peaks
- Expand Sports and Ecotourism

The ACEA needs to take stock of its offerings and work to better promote them through the Internet and marketing collateral. Conventions, especially relating to gaming ..., are a good way to bring in business-related visitors who will spend money within the local economy. The tourism season needs to be expanded beyond the summer months. This can potentially be accomplished through shallow port cruises, weekday tour packages, and sports leagues and tournaments. The Pinelands, wetlands, fisheries and vineyards are important resources to not be overlooked. Atlantic County has immense potential in terms of eco-tourism, particularly valuable within the dense northeastern U.S. geographic area.

With the ACEA taking the lead on regional tourism marketing and becoming the regional DMO, it can partner with many existing organizations to gain strength and expertise.

**The Lloyd D. Levenson Institute of Gaming, Hospitality and Tourism (LIGHT)** at Stockton University provides a forum for public policy discussions regarding the gaming, hospitality and tourism industries in New Jersey. The Levenson Institute engages faculty, students and others in research, conferences and report writing to support sound decision-making among policy makers and leaders in the region's three largest industries.

Along with other Stockton University centers, institutes and programs, LIGHT is a key part of Stockton's commitment to playing a central role in issues that are vital to the economic and social well-being of the community and region.

LIGHT can provide the timely metrics needed to establish and maintain a strong marketing and branding effort in Atlantic County.

The Institute's activities in support of gaming, hospitality and tourism include:

- Professional training and educational opportunities that provide the latest skills, knowledge and abilities;
- Jersey Shorecast Outlook for the tourist season throughout southern New Jersey;
- Conferences, symposia and lecture series;
- Survey and experiential research; and
- Industry reports and newsletters.

**Cape May County Tourism Department** – The department has actively promoted the need for tourism marketing and branding in Atlantic County and is willing to partner on this effort, bringing years of experience and expertise to the effort.

**Meet AC and Atlantic County Municipal Efforts** – By establishing a countywide effort for tourism marketing and branding, the municipalities can leverage this initiative instead of competing for scarce resources like DMO designations.

#### **4.7.3 Ventnor Tourism Efforts**

The Ventnor Tourism Association (VTA) supports, promotes, and advertises Ventnor City and Downbeach. VTA acts as Ventnor's destination marketing organization overseeing the integrated process of planning, marketing, advertising, promotions, and special events. The VTA's primary goal is to establish itself as the premier destination marketing organization in the Downbeach region by highlighting the Ventnor City area, the home to a variety of significant cultural, historic, educational, and artistic venues. The 2016 concert budget for the VTA is \$15,000 and, in addition, the VTA co-sponsored the Go Green Boat Parade and the Absecon Island Surf Competition.

#### **4.8 Special Events in Ventnor**

There are many special events that are offered in Ventnor for residents and tourists. Special events are an important aspect of the economy in any tourism-driven community.

**Chef's Night Out** - An annual event that started in 2011 as a fundraiser to beautify the city has grown over the years into a dine-around featuring the best the Ventnor restaurant scene has to offer. The Ventnor Beautification Committee has used funds raised through the event to rejuvenate the Boardwalk and downtown area.

**Dorset Street Fair** - Local merchants, crafters, artists, and live music are set up along the two commercial districts of Dorset Avenue. The event is presented by the Dorset Avenue merchants.

**Nights in Ventnor Go Green Parade** – Since 2008, this citywide event is held at Ski Beach, the boat launch on Dorset Avenue at the bay. The route takes paddlers through a mile and a half of the inland waterway, ending at the Viking Rowing Club.

**Ventnor Summer Concert Series** – free beach concerts are provided every Wednesday at the Newport Avenue Beach from June to September.

**Tour De Downbeach Bike Event** - This summertime favorite is a Downbeach event, founded and started by the Ventnor Merchants Association and now jointly presented with the Margate Business Association, the Borough of Longport, and Atlantic City.

It is recommended that additional special events be added to promote the community and to attract visitors and second home buyers.

#### **4.9 Civic and Non-Profit Organizations**

The City of Ventnor has many active civic and non-profit organizations that sponsor events and work to promote the City. Some of these organizations are described below:

**Downtown Ventnor Inc.** – a non-profit organization of volunteers dedicated to improving the visual appeal and vibrancy of downtown Ventnor, while promoting its image as a progressive, exciting place to live, shop and invest.

**Ventnor Beautification Committee** – Ventnor City Beautification Committee is a volunteer group of dedicated residents committed to help create and complement a positive image for and with the City of Ventnor through projects, events and fundraisers. Founded in 2009, the Ventnor City Beautification Committee sponsors Ventnor City Garden Tour and Ventnor’s Chef’s Night Out, along with other events.

**Ventnor City Cultural Arts Center** – sponsors Art in the Park and Ocean Breeze Art & Crafts Show, along with a wide variety of classes, workshops and camps at the Library Complex at 6500 Atlantic Avenue.

**North Beach Committee** - The North Beach Residents' Committee was formed in 2008 by a group of North Beach residents who were eager to promote and publicize North Beach. Working closely with City officials, the North Beach Residents' Committee has successfully completed many projects, including hanging beautiful, large flower baskets throughout the neighborhood, the North Beach Merchant Discount Program, a neighborhood cleanup day, a publication informing residents of Ventnor rules and regulations and other valuable projects.

**Ventnor Go Green** – The committee organizes the Ventnor Go Green Parade, aimed at promoting sustainability. All participants in the parade must use floatation devices that have no motor or use fossil fuels.

**Ventnor Green Team** – A committee appointed by the Mayor to further the goals of Sustainable Jersey and to gain certification and grant funds for the City.

**St. Leonard's Tract Association** – is the neighborhood association for property owners in the history St. Leonard's Tract.

#### **4.10 Marketing Ventnor**

Branding and promotion is an emerging trend for towns throughout the country. By establishing a unique brand and communicating your story to visitor, potential residents, investors and business owners Ventnor will remain top of mind. A brand is a promise and it should reflect what distinguishes the City from all others. The City operates under various logos and tag lines. The City's tag line is "Shorely the Best". The Ventnor Tourism Association operates under the tag line "Play Here. Stay Here. Shore'ly Amazing." It is recommended that a professional marketing firm be retained to develop one logo and establish a tag line for the City. This logo should be used on all letterhead, advertising, social media, etc.

Once the logo and tagline are finalized, a new, aesthetically pleasing and information-rich website should be developed. The website design should include search engine optimization and integrate the brand highlighting all the City's unique assets.

To continue to promote the City, continuous media relations are needed. Ongoing press releases, tours, promotions and events will continue to keep the City top of mind in the public's eye. The press releases should be distributed to a wide array of media outlets throughout the Delaware Valley – the primary market for the City of Ventnor.

An online digital ad campaign along with some traditional mediums (print, radio and TV) should be considered. Continuous marketing and advertising are important elements of the branding of the community. By developing a brand that resonate the City will establish an emotional connection the its customers.

#### **4.11 Business Districts in Ventnor**

The commercial districts in the City of Ventnor are strategically located. The North Beach area on Ventnor Avenue on the eastern border of the City will be the closest to the new Gateway Project in the Lower Chelsea neighborhood in Atlantic City. The commercial district on the opposite end of Ventnor Avenue is the closest to one of Margate's restaurant zones, with popular restaurants located about a quarter-mile to the west. Finally, the Dorset Avenue commercial zones are on an entrance to the City from U.S. Route 40/322 and Wellington Avenue. In short, the commercial areas are in locations that allow for competitive strategies with neighboring municipalities except for waterfront private commercial activities.

Ventnor Avenue is the primary commercial corridor in Ventnor, with three distinct business districts spread along its length: North Beach District, the Central Business District and the Downbeach Business District. Traffic signals are clustered in the districts and provided at intersections with

major roads. Ventnor Avenue is 54 feet wide with one 19-foot-wide travel lane and on-street parking in each direction. These excessively wide lanes increase exposure for pedestrians crossing the street and can also lead to cars passing each other within the lane. There are no bike facilities on Ventnor Avenue and bike parking is very limited.

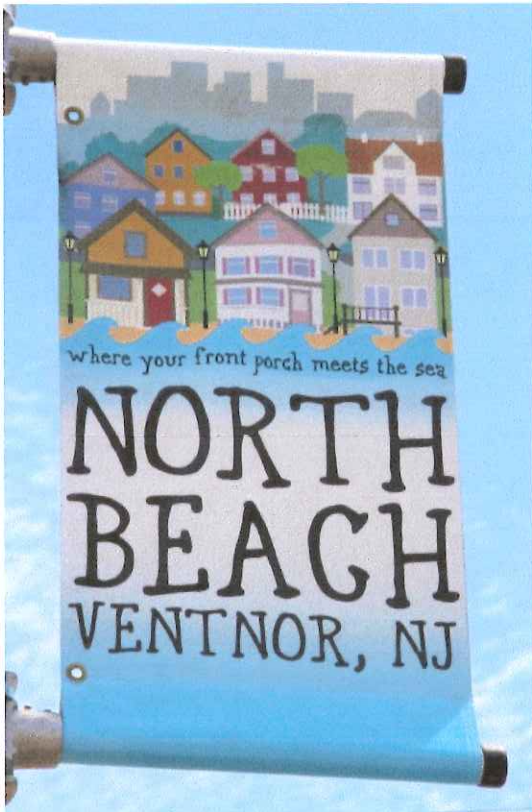
Dorset/Wellington Avenue is the primary entrance and exit route into Ventnor from the Atlantic City Expressway and U.S. Route 40/322. Dorset Avenue has a 50-foot-wide cartway with a travel lane and parking lane in each direction. Crosswalks are present at each of the intersections along Dorset Avenue. Signalized intersections along Dorset Avenue do not have pedestrian signal heads. Wellington Avenue was resurfaced in 2015 with 12-foot-wide travel lanes and a 14-foot-wide center turn lane. The resurfacing project provided shoulders of varying width but did not include bicycle lanes. The Ventnor Plaza and the Dorset Avenue Business Districts are in this area.

As the closest parallel street to the beach, Atlantic Avenue is the main travel route through the City of Ventnor. Atlantic Avenue carries four lanes of traffic through Ventnor and Margate, and then reduces to two lanes with a center turn lane in Longport. On-street parking is allowed on both sides of Atlantic Avenue. Margate's section includes a 5-foot-wide bike lane in both directions, while Ventnor has wider inside and outside lanes and no bicycle lanes. Crosswalks are present at all four legged intersections, with varying styles through the study area (parallel, high-visibility, and mixed). At signalized intersections, the traffic equipment is outdated and pedestrian signal heads are only present at only one intersection – Dorset Avenue. The pedestrian clearance time to cross Atlantic Avenue at some signals is based on a walking speed of 4.0 feet per second, which is higher than the 3.5 feet/second recommended in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The signals have also lost their progression over time and with it the ability to regulate traffic flow at a consistent speed. Crossing Atlantic Avenue on foot is particularly challenging at un-signalized intersections, where pedestrians must navigate four lanes of moving traffic in one crossing and face the potential for a “multi-lane threat.” This threat arises when a vehicle in one lane stops for the crossing pedestrian, but the vehicle in the other lane does not because the visibility of the pedestrian is blocked by the first vehicle. The difficulty in crossing is exacerbated by the tendency on Atlantic for vehicles to travel well more than the speed limit, which makes it harder for pedestrians to adequately judge gaps in traffic or stopping distances. A business district is located on Atlantic Avenue in the North Beach Neighborhood of the City.

The business districts include:

#### **1. North Beach Business District**

The North Beach Business District consists of two distinct areas: a three-block area that extends from Weymouth Avenue to Surrey Avenue on Atlantic Avenue and a ten-block area on Ventnor Avenue that starts at the Atlantic City boundary (Jackson Avenue to Little Rock Avenue. Both districts consist of a combination of C and C/MU zones. The Commercial Mixed Use Zone has a base lot requirement of 3,000 square feet.



The Ventnor Avenue area is almost fully occupied with restaurants, an ice cream parlor, specialty stores, a yoga studio and other interesting uses. Outdoor dining is very popular in this district and it is a trendy, up and coming area.

The Ventnor Avenue area consists of a wide variety of service businesses including law offices, restaurants and take-out food establishments. This area has a higher vacancy rate than the Ventnor Avenue area and includes a vacant theater.

The area has its own brand, compliments of a very active community organization, the North Beach Resident's Association. Banners have been installed on both Ventnor and Atlantic Avenues, hanging flower baskets and a beautiful flower-filled lifeguard boat distinguishes these districts from the others.

## **2. Dorset Avenue Business District**

The Dorset Avenue Business District includes two areas along Dorset Avenue, the first extends from the Dorset Avenue Bridge to Monmouth Avenue and the second runs from Calvert Avenue to Balfour Avenue. Both areas are zoned C – Commercial. The Commercial District has a base lot minimum requirement of 3,000 square feet.

## **3. Downtown Central Business District**

The Downtown Central Business District (CBD) extends from Portland Avenue to Buffalo Avenue on Atlantic Avenue. This District includes an abandoned service station and some vacant lots. This entire area is zoned C – Commercial.

## **4. Downbeach Business District**

The Downbeach Business District is located on Ventnor Avenue and extends from the Margate boundary (Fredricksburg Avenue) for two and a half blocks to just east of Washington Avenue. The district is zoned C – Commercial.

## **5. Ventnor Plaza**

Located at the entrance into Ventnor along Wellington Avenue, the Ventnor Plaza Shopping Center houses a supermarket, Ventnor's Post Office, and a variety of smaller stores. The Design Commercial Zoning District is 33.21 acres and it which includes the Shopping Center

extends from the Atlantic City boundary to Little Rock Avenue. The base lot requirement a minimum of 5 acres.

#### **4.12 Economic Opportunities**

In summary, Ventnor is trending toward a community characterized by a more seasonal economy with second homeowners owning the more valuable properties, while the off-season is dominated by residents working locally but making fairly low incomes. This will put added stress on the year-round businesses. This is not a call for gentrification. One of Ventnor's biggest assets is its diversity of housing types and costs, from tract housing in the Heights to denser housing on the north side of Ventnor Avenue to oceanfront homes south of Atlantic Avenue. A balance of housing tenure (renter, owner, seasonal, year-round) is what is needed.

To balance this trend, a marketing strategy with three goals is needed. These are listed below and discussed in more detail in the next section:

- 1. Attract more local professionals and second homeowners to the housing market.** The timing for this strategy is paramount. The development of Stockton University's campus and the South Jersey Gas project at the south end of Atlantic City creates an opportunity for this strategy.

Professionals and second homeowners demand very similar qualities from a community. They require a walkable and bikeable community with well-maintained open space and recreational areas. Given the increases that are anticipated in flood insurance, a well-managed and maintained flood insurance discount program should be promoted.

- 2. Promote more regional tourism.** Using the Ventnor Tourism Association, promote activities to surrounding communities. Neighborhood-centered activities in the summer and shoulder seasons can draw attention to the City's businesses. In addition, the City needs to work with other municipalities to grow tourism in general, especially to create alternatives for the tourists attracted to Atlantic City. Ventnor has a competitive advantage in this strategy.

City leaders should promote the need for a regional tourism marketing strategy that will provide a platform for promoting and marketing the community, its attributes and events. Our surrounding counties have been very successful in investing in regional tourism and this effort is showing a significant return on investment.

- 3. Integrate the commercial activity of the City with the natural environment.** There are currently very few businesses (mostly near the Dorset Avenue bridge) that are water-oriented. The canal, ocean and bay all offer opportunities not found on the mainland. While current land-use patterns may make this difficult, the expanded use of parks, the Boardwalk and bike paths needs to begin this process.

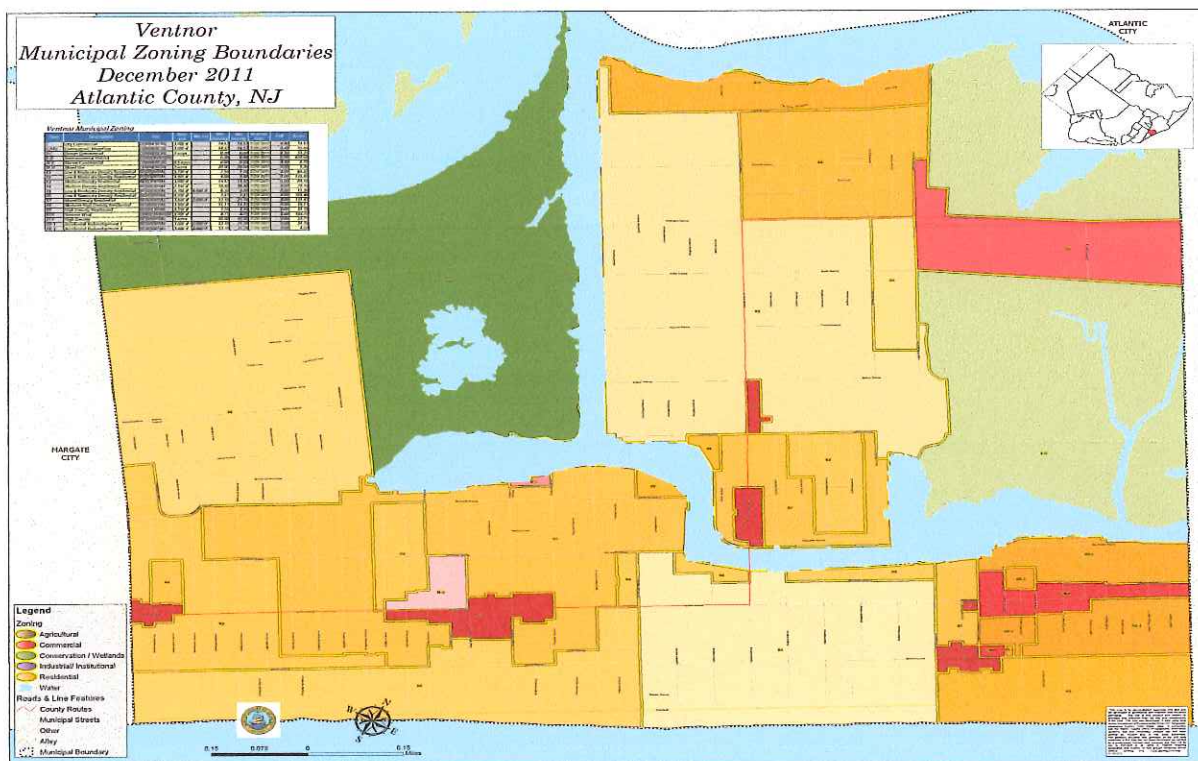
Ventnor West holds the potential to be developed into an ecotourism park with walking trails, birding activities, transient boating opportunities, kayak and paddle-boat launches and the like. Other areas of the waterfront should be considered for water-dependent uses and to provide access.

The process of creating business development that is both resilient and sustainable depends a great deal on land-use patterns and capabilities. Ventnor’s zoning map is shown below and, as has been noted by many, it has several small commercial districts scattered throughout the City.

The characteristics of Ventnor’s land use from which new opportunities can be derived include:

- Except for a very small Marine/Commercial (MC) zone on the canal, there is no commercial zoning on either the bay or the ocean. The area near the Dorset Avenue Bridge is small but does border the canal.
- Now that the referendum for the sale of alcoholic beverages in Ventnor has passed, the City has a new opportunity to develop. This will allow local restaurants complete with surrounding communities. Prior to this change some of the eating and drinking expenditures “leaked” out of the City’s economy to neighboring municipalities.

**Figure 4.15 – Ventnor Municipal Zoning Boundaries, 2011**



- There is public space on both the bayfront and the oceanfront. These are used for public entertainment and attract sizable crowds.

**Opportunities for Strategy 1: Attract more local professionals and second homeowners to the housing market.**

The aging of Atlantic County in general, following a growth spurt in the schools and housing which spanned 1997- 2007, has created a generation of residents on the cusp of becoming empty nesters. Many of these folks have all the lifestyle demands that match Ventnor’s potential: a diverse housing stock that allows for downsizing; a healthy environment; an ethnically diverse population and restaurant assortment; and proximity to the entertainment in Atlantic City.

Some strategies that take advantage of these assets include:

- Further identification of distinct neighborhoods like North Beach. This will allow such activities as block parties, restaurant weeks, nights out, and community open houses to be advertised and run with a limited amount of coordination.
- Enhanced pedestrian and bicycle access in and around the city and to neighboring cities.
- Positioning the public-school district as an advantage. The table below shows that the district has declining enrollments. In 2016, the enrollment dropped to 703. This capacity and smaller classes can be used to attract professionals with families. An effort to advertise the opportunities at Atlantic City High School for prepared students should be made; it is the one comment that parents from all Downbeach make when their children have successfully graduated from Atlantic City High School and gone on to quality institutions. In addition, the growing number of choice high school and charter schools should also be made known to potential residents.

**Figure 4.16 – Ventnor Educational Community Complex Enrollment, 2010, 2015**

<b>POSITIONING VENTNOR CITY SCHOOL ENROLLMENTS, 2010 - 2015</b>			
<b>CRBR, JUNE 2016</b>			
	<b>2010-11</b>	<b>2015-2016</b>	
<b>Program</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Preschool	45	37	
Kindergarten	90	86	
Grade 1	93	70	
Grade 2	106	79	
Grade 3	103	95	
Grade 4	97	71	
Grade 5	124	77	
Grade 6	94	69	
Grade 7	114	85	
Grade 8	117	84	
<b>Total</b>	<b>983</b>	<b>753</b>	<b>-23%</b>
<b>K-3</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>-16%</b>

**Opportunities for Strategy 2: Promote more regional tourism.**

Tourism is a major economic driver in Atlantic County and in the City of Ventnor. In 2015, direct sales attributed to tourism accounted for over \$6.7 billion. The table below indicates that significant potential that exists in ratable growth due to second and seasonal rental home development.

**4.8 – Tourism Metrics Comparing Atlantic County to Cape May County**

	<b>Atlantic County</b>	<b>Cape May County</b>
<b>Tourism Direct Sales</b>	\$6.7 billion	\$6.0 billion
<b>Tourism Employment</b>	47,620	25,884
<b>Property Net Taxable Value</b>	\$35.2 billion	\$47.5 billion

Ventnor needs to augment the revenues of its businesses by attracting more tourists who already visit the region. This has a local as well as a regional perspective to it. To work locally, using the Ventnor Tourism Association, this would entail:

- Better signage to attract the many tourists who pass through the City. In short, a visitor needs to find the city to be easy to traverse and enjoyable. Wayfinding signage should be installed in phases throughout the City to point out areas of interest, parks and business districts. Each neighborhood should be branded with a unique name and design, much like North Beach.
- Advertising annual events that would attract visitors from surrounding communities, such as a food-truck jamboree.
- Restructuring the special events ordinance to encourage a diversity of events in the community.
- Getting word out through advertising made available at locations near the City where tourists may already visit, such as on the Boardwalk.
- The City has produced successful events and it should build on this success and add more events.

**Opportunities for Strategy 3: Integrate the commercial activity of the City with the natural environment.**

Use of the natural environment extends from nature walks to potted plants on Ventnor Avenue. With the potential to enhance Ventnor West as a wildlife refuge and park, the City of Ventnor at to its ecotourism attractions. These give the City a sense of promoting physical health. Some opportunities include:

- Providing maps for points of access to bikeways and walking tours.
- Using existing public space to create more of a small nature-preserve area to attract younger families with children.

#### **4.13 Recommendations**

The City of Ventnor is an attractive place for people to live and play. The recommendations in this Element build upon the City’s strengths by improving established retail centers, encouraging redevelopment along all waterfront areas and expanding the arts, historic resources, dining and recreation areas throughout the City. As these core areas continue to grow, they will invigorate and cause secondary services such as real estate, finance, legal and other ancillary services to grow. Listed below is a summary of the Economic Development Element recommendations.

##### **4.13.1 Implement a Tourism Marketing Strategy**

A strategy for attracting tourists to the City of Ventnor is needed. Demographic data clearly shows that the community’s population has declined and the second-home market is expanding. This trend benefits the taxpayers of Ventnor and should be nurtured. Strategic objectives to achieving this goal include:

- Fund Tourism-Related Activities – The funding sources must be available to support additional events, advertising, marketing and branding.
- Define Value of Tourism – Set and monitor tourism-related metrics, review tax information to define the existing market and identify niche travel groups and new markets.

##### **4.13.2 Build a Brand**

Retain marketing and branding experts to assist in brand enhancement and exposure. Determine one icon that can be used to promote the City of Ventnor. While Atlantic City to the north promotes the gaming experience and Margate to the south promotes Lucy the Elephant, Ventnor needs an identity as well. The development of an eco-park in Ventnor West is one option that would create an identity for the City as a green and environmentally responsible community. The birding, water activity and environmental experience that this development would provide ties directly to the demographic analysis presented herein.

##### **4.13.3 Enhance the Use of Social Media for Marketing the City**

Social media is here to stay and is continually being improved. It is constantly changing, and just when you think you understand it, someone decides it needs to be improved. While it starts with a website, there is so much more that can and must be done to engage tourists. The first step may include developing a complete digital marketing platform that ties into many social media

components. This effort can be done regionally or countywide and supported by a State Cooperative Marketing Grant. Professionals can be retained to analyze the accrued digital database to better understand visitors and build a customized digital marketing plan from the ground up. This can include:

- A comprehensive psychographic and lifestyle segmentation profile of visitors based on the existing database.
- Online reputation audit: Social media messages are only part of your brand reputation. The “other half” of the conversation can be audited to provide a theme and sentiment analysis of online mentions through social and review sites that affect or add to the brand.
- Google analytics assessment: To dissect online metrics to allow the community to understand what these numbers revealed. This can result in actionable insights into how visitors interact with the brand online.

**4.13.4 Creative Placemaking Planning**

A Creative Placemaking Plan would specifically focus on artists, cultural groups, musicians, theater, and more. The Creative Placemaking Plan document strategically integrates the creative community into the community as a whole, developed with public input. The plan starts with developing a Creative Assets Inventory — a compilation of all individual artists, arts groups, galleries, the Recreation Commission, the Tourism Commission, the Garden Club and the Green Team. Integrating these individuals and separate groups into a single plan sets the common goal of improving the quality of life in Ventnor.

**4.13.5 Initiate Additional Events**

Build on the success of existing special events such as the Beach Concert Series by developing additional events year-round. The governing body should support the Tourism Commission in expanding its mission statement to encourage city event organizers to participate in citywide branding efforts. It is recommended that the Tourism Commission serve as a clearinghouse for any event planned in the City. All proposals should be submitted to the Commission for review and approval. The Commission should ensure that events are properly planned and that the City brand is promoted and included on all advertisements. The Commission should evaluate each event after it occurs to consider what can be done to improve the experience. An expanded monthly event schedule should be implemented. Below is an example of annual events that could be integrated into the already successful City event’s calendar:

- May – Kick-off of Summer Concert Series from May to September
- May – Ventnor’s Chef’s Night Out
- June – Ventnor Tourism First Day Festival
- June – Le Tour De Downbeach

- June – Art in the Park
- July – Ventnor City Garden Tour
- August – Ventnor Go Green Water Parade
- August – Absecon Island Surfing Championship
- August – Ocean Breeze Arts and Craft Show
- September – Beach BBQ Labor Day Weekend
- September – Downbeach Back Bay Cleanup
- October – Downtown Block Party
- November – Food & Wine Festival
- December – Holiday Parades

#### **4.13.6 Consider the creation of a Special Improvement District**

A Special Improvement District (SID) provides a mechanism for the businesses in the City to organize as a single entity and to manage themselves to become an effective destination for professional services as well as shopping and dining; it is funded by the businesses and landlords in the SID. The short-term goal of the Ventnor SID could be to promote the local business districts through joint advertising, billboards, special events and welcome bags for new home owners and seasonal visitors. The SID can include all the commercial property owners in the community. There are over 100 managed commercial districts in New Jersey alone.

A SID is authorized by State law (Special Improvement District Act, N.J.S.A. 40:56-65, et seq.) and created by an ordinance of the governing body to collect a special assessment on the commercial properties and/or businesses in that area. That assessment is granted to a municipally-assigned District Management Corporation (DMC). This entity is typically a non-profit organization, separate and distinct from the municipality itself. The DMC, which is typically governed by a board comprised of more than 50 percent business & property owner stakeholders, sets the agenda, priority, and initiatives of the organization, in addition to hiring and supervising staff, and determining the annual budget and assessment amount. In a sense, the business community becomes self-governing: private resources from the stakeholders are assessed and used as determined by the businesses to fulfill what they see as the greatest needs of the business areas.

The SID can do things that City Government or an Economic Development Committee cannot do. The best way to illustrate this distinction is by example of the shopping mall: every mall is a collection of stores and eateries that were selected by plan based on their appeal to the local marketplace, and placed in their respective locations within the mall by careful design. They operate under common hours of business, they all contribute to an annual marketing program for which they all benefit, and they share in the costs of special events, improvements, provision of security (that supplements local police support), and even the maintenance of common areas. They can do this because the entire mall is owned by a single owner; the commercial buildings in a typical community are all owned by various owners. The SID allows the businesses to operate more like the businesses in a mall, managed by a single group rather than by each individual merchant on his or her own. The SID operates with a

funded budget, and pursues a strategy to grow business by managing the appearance, the marketing, the events, for the commercial corridor in ways that the municipality, the Chamber of Commerce or the Business Development Committee cannot do. State law also grants the DMC of the SID a variety of powers and capabilities for improving and enhancing the viability of the district.

In addition, the SID could play an important role in promoting tourism in the City and the creation of new events in each business district. Shore communities have learned from experience that events are an incredible means of attracting new and long-term visitors while providing enjoyable occasions for the City’s residents. The creation of additional events such as a Food and Wine Festival and block parties attract residents from throughout the region and visitors to Ventnor.

**4.13.7 Appoint an Economic Development Advisory Committee**

If a SID is not being considered, the governing body and the business community may benefit by the appointment of an Economic Development Advisory Commission. Its purpose would be to advise the Governing Body on current and future economic development initiatives. The Commission would assist in marketing the economic strength of the City to provide stability with for our existing businesses while encouraging future development within City limits. The Commission could have an annual budget that is derived from the mercantile license fee on seasonal rental properties.

**4.13.8 Create a Marketing Fund**

It is recommended that a mercantile fee be considered for seasonal rental properties with a portion of the revenue being used to promote and expand local tourism efforts. N.J.S.A. 40:52-1 (n) authorizes a municipality to establish a license for property owners who rent properties to tenants for less than 175 consecutive days. Every property owner who rents property for a short term would be required to apply for an annual license.

**4.13.9 Implement Coordinated Marketing**

Explore the option of providing coordinated marketing for all the businesses in Ventnor or by Commercial District. The Economic Development Advisory Committee can provide for press releases and FAM tours of the City.

**4.13.10 Enhance the Customer Experience**

Enhance the customer’s experience to build the business district’s attractiveness. Businesses that engage both their employees and their customers gain a 240 percent boost in performance-related business outcomes. Businesses that focus on the customer experience understand the essential role of human nature in driving performance, especially in those critical moments when engaged employees and engaged customers interact. Customer Service training can be offered by the Economic Development Advisory Committee, the Atlantic County Economic Development Alliance or the Greater Atlantic City Chamber of Commerce.

#### **4.13.11 Provide Value-Added Options**

Continue to promote sidewalk dining and permit wine sales rooms. These uses can enhance the city's reputation as an epicurean destination. The inability to serve alcohol – a profit center for restaurants and an attraction for millennials and baby boomers – may be preventing some restaurateurs from considering moving to Ventnor.

#### **4.13.12 Initiate an Architectural Review Process**

The Planning Board should implement an architectural review process for renovations and new construction in the Commercial Districts.

#### **4.13.13 Enhance Pedestrian and Bicycle Access in and around the Commercial Districts**



As stressed in the Ventnor/Margate Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Plan - residents and visitors alike enjoy walking, biking and jogging throughout Absecon Island. This experience can be enhanced by creating bike lanes on Ventnor Avenue, lowering the speed on Atlantic Avenue and encouraging bike use in the commercial districts by strategically locating bike racks, bike corals and bike repair stations. This action would make Ventnor friendlier to both pedestrians and bicyclists. Likewise, by providing more highly visible

crossways on Ventnor Avenue, pedestrian and bicycle activity will be encouraged.

#### **4.13.14 Enforce Zero Set Back Requirements**

Implement a long-term strategy to ensure that all commercial establishments are designed to front on the major street with no setbacks. Some of the commercial establishments on Ventnor Avenue have been permitted to develop with parking in front of the establishment. This negatively impacts the continuity of the shopping district, impedes pedestrian flow and is aesthetically unpleasing.

#### **4.13.15 Restrict curb cuts in the Business Districts**

To provide a safe and continuous walkway for pedestrians, curb cuts should be reduced in the commercial districts. The Planning Board should enforce a policy of not allowing curb cuts in any of the Commercial Districts.

#### **4.13.16 Improve Commercial Parking Options**

Review parking standards in the commercial districts and the potential for shared parking.

#### **4.13.17 Enhance Parking Meters**

Upgrade the parking meter system to provide for credit cards and cell phone payment. By privatizing this service, the City can obtain new, efficient meters; eliminate the needs to budget for replacement and maintenance; and increase revenues.

#### **4.13.18 Implement Streetscape Improvements**

Streetscape improvements are recommended for the commercial nodes along Ventnor Avenue, Atlantic Avenue and Dorset Avenue. Streetscape improvements such as pedestrian scale, energy efficient, LED lighting, sidewalk improvements, wayfinding signage, clearly defined crosswalks and street trees help to create a better walking experience and sense of place, while also improving pedestrian safety by softening the appearance of the roadway, calming traffic, and making bicyclists and pedestrians more visible. Street trees have been documented to provide several general benefits (i.e. increased property values, stormwater management, aesthetics) as well as benefits directly related to walking and biking (e.g. reduced air and noise pollution, traffic calming, protection from the elements). These improvements should be augmented features including bump-outs, bike lanes, bike racks, trash and recycling containers and other amenities.

#### **4.13.19 Add Wayfinding Signage**

Improved branded signage is needed to attract the many tourists who pass through the City. Wayfinding signage should be installed throughout the City. Wayfinding signage should be incorporated into the improvements along Ventnor and Atlantic Avenues to direct visitors to points of interest including shopping districts, the community center and library, City Hall, parks and playgrounds and ecotourism destinations like Ventnor West.

The Commercial Districts are not clearly defined and they have no pivotal intersection or gateway. A package of consistent and well-designed wayfinding signage would help shoppers locate businesses and parking areas and could begin to brand the areas as shopping and dining destination.

#### **4.13.20 Install Curb Extensions at Major Intersections**

Curb extensions improve conditions for pedestrians by shortening the crossing distance and increasing visibility between motorists and pedestrians, while also helping to manage traffic speeds. Another benefit of curb extensions is that they provide additional sidewalk space, which is particularly important in business districts along Ventnor Avenue and Atlantic Avenue where sidewalk space is limited but in high demand. This extra space can be used for sidewalk furniture, bicycle parking, and/or “green infrastructure” elements such as stormwater infiltration and street trees.

#### **4.13.21 Pedestrian Upgrades at Signalized Intersections**

Addressing deficient conditions at signalized intersections is an important component of improving pedestrian safety. Full signal upgrades are recommended at intersections along Atlantic Avenue, Ventnor Avenue, and Dorset Avenue where existing signals lack full or partial pedestrian features. The CR 629 Signal Optimization Project also recommended full upgrades at all traffic signals along Ventnor Avenue. Upgrades should include high-visibility crosswalks, ADA-compatible curb ramps and countdown pedestrian signal heads.

#### **4.13.22 Install High-Visibility Crosswalks**

Visible crosswalks increase pedestrian safety, and they can also help to brand the community. High-visibility crosswalks have been shown to increase motorist yielding and channelization of pedestrians. The Federal Highway Administration has concluded that high-visibility crosswalks have a positive effect on pedestrian and driver behavior.

**Figure 4.18 – Photograph of a Designer Crosswalk in Ocean City, New Jersey**



#### **4.13.23 Implement Safety Enhancements on Ventnor Avenue Near Dorset Avenue**

The section of Ventnor Avenue between Sacramento Avenue and Dorset Avenue has the highest concentration of bicycle/pedestrian crashes in the City, with many involving pedestrian crossings at un-signalized intersections. It is recommended that this issue be addressed by:

- Adding high-visibility crosswalk markings at three unsignalized intersections (N. Cornwall, N. Derby, and N. Dudley) with a pedestrian refuge island at N. Derby Avenue.
- Removing the second (curbside) through-lane in the eastbound direction. Removal of this lane would allow space for a bicycle lane in each direction and on-street parking in one direction, and would encourage lower vehicle speeds. Preliminary traffic analysis indicates that the second through-lane is not needed to maintain adequate traffic flow.

#### **4.13.24 Complete Safety Enhancements at Dorset Avenue Bridge**

The section of Dorset Avenue between Ventnor Avenue and Monmouth Avenue is a high-crash area. To address this issue, the following treatments are recommended:

- Improving sight lines at the Edgewater Avenue intersection by adding curb extensions and re-aligning the existing crosswalk.
- Installing a bikeable surface over the open metal grate bridge surface (minimum 6' width in each direction). Surface options include steel plates or concrete infill; both treatments have been utilized to retrofit similar bridge surfaces in other communities.
- Adding buffered bicycle lanes to Dorset Avenue through Ventnor Heights. The bike lanes would extend south to Winchester Avenue, where they would transition to Shared Lane Markings for one block before connecting with the Ventnor Avenue bike lanes.
- Painting or texturizing the Dorset/Edgewater/Derby intersection to calm traffic and create a gateway into Ventnor Heights.

#### **4.13.25 Enhance Transit Access**

NJ Transit provides service along Ventnor Avenue. All NJ Transit stops should be clearly marked and be accessible by sidewalks. The City should work with NJ Transit to identify stops that have the highest ridership and prioritize those stops for additional pedestrian amenities, such as lighting, shelters, seating or trash receptacles.

#### **4.13.26 Become a Bicycle Friendly Community**

The League of American Bicyclists offers this certification to recognize a community's commitment to improving conditions for bicycling through investment in bicycling promotion, educational programs, infrastructure and pro-bicycling policies. Funding is prioritized for communities that are designated a Bicycle Friendly Community.

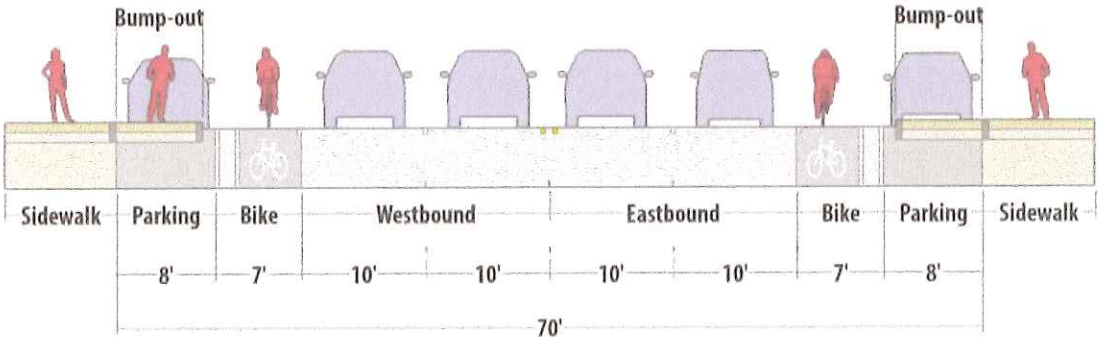
#### **4.13.27 Support Bike Lanes**

Bike lanes are portions of the roadway that are reserved for the exclusive use of bicycles through designated signage, striping, and pavement markings. They decrease the stress level for bicyclists by providing a dedicated riding space and increasing the predictability of bicycle and motor vehicle

movements. Bicycle accessibility is required to attract additional business and the second home market. Bike lanes are recommended for the following streets:

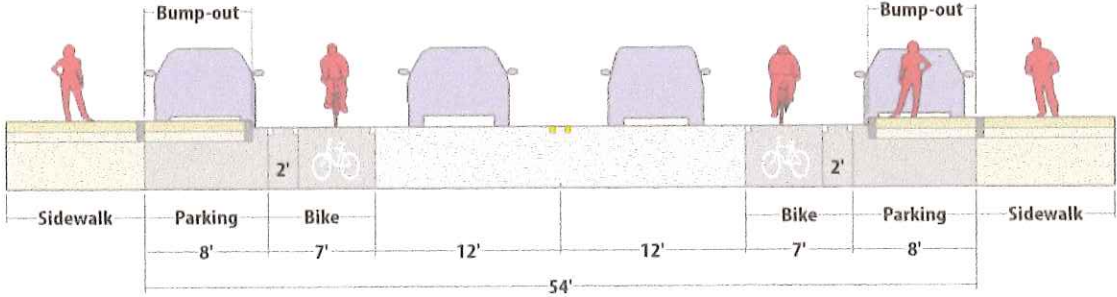
- Atlantic Avenue;
- Dorset Avenue (between the bridge and the bay);
- Ventnor Avenue; and
- Wellington Avenue (between Dorset Avenue and Route 40/322).

**Figure 4.19 – Cross Section of Proposed Buffered Bike Lanes on Atlantic Avenue**



Ventnor Avenue’s wide travel lanes present an opportunity to better accommodate the many bicyclists who ride on this active commercial street. Bike lanes would better organize the roadway space by indicating the best place for bicyclists to ride, while at the same time discouraging cars from speeding and passing within the lane. Figure 4.19 shows the recommended section for Ventnor Avenue, which features 12-foot-wide travel lanes with a 7-foot-wide buffered bike lane in each direction. A 2-foot striped buffer area is recommended between the bike lanes and on-street parking to encourage bicyclists to ride outside of the door zone.

**Figure 4.20 – Cross Section of Proposed Buffered Bike Lanes and Curb Extensions on Ventnor Avenue**



**4.13.28 Install Bicycle Parking**

Bicycle parking is important at activity generators including businesses, schools, transit stops, employment centers and public facilities such as City Hall, the Community Center and parks. Secure, well-lit bicycle parking located close to building entrances and transit entry points can make bicycling more attractive, and reduces the risk of bicycle damage or the theft. A bicycle parking plan is included in the Ventnor - Margate Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan to address the demand for bicycle parking. Additional locations may be warranted based on local demand.

Bicycle parking can be provided in the form of bike racks and corrals, or more secure facilities such as bike shelters and lockers. Bike racks are relatively low cost, have a small footprint, and can be customized to match or enhance local aesthetics and brand. Bike corrals have a larger footprint and provide storage for multiple bicycles. Bike shelters provide secure, covered protection for multiple bicycles, while bike lockers provide added protection from theft by using an enclosed storage space.

**4.13.29 Work with Neighborhood Cities to Create a Bike Share System**

Bike share is an urban transportation concept based on collective use of a distributed supply of bicycles. Through this system, bicycles are made available for shared use to individuals on a short-term basis. A major benefit of bike share is that people can borrow a bike from point “A” and return it at point “B”. Given the success in other Northeastern cities, it is recommended that the beach communities – Longport, Margate, Ventnor, and Atlantic City – study the feasibility of implementing a regional bike share system for Absecon Island. A Bike Share System has already been implemented successfully at the Claridge Hotel in Atlantic City.

**4.13.30 Enhance the City’s Certification in Sustainable Jersey**

The Ventnor Green Team has done an excellent job to achieve certification in Sustainable Jersey and to promote the City’s environmental activities. By enhancing this effort, the City can promote its status as a leading sustainable community. This will assist the City to secure various grants.

**4.13.31 Achieve Compliance with the New Jersey Urban and Community Forestry Program**

The State enables communities to address tree related liability if they satisfy the four requirements including writing a State approved Community Forestry Management Plan. This will allow the City to qualify for various grants and create a greener Ventnor.

**4.13.32 Secure Clean Ocean Action’s Municipal Blue Star Certification**

The biggest attraction in Ventnor is its beaches and the ocean. Clean Ocean Action is a non-profit that promotes clean water in coastal communities. The Blue Star Program was established to encourage towns along the coast to prioritize water quality protection measures. The Program encourages communities to promote health waters, resilient communities and environmentally-sound practices.

#### **4.13.33 Improve the Community Rating System (CRS) classification**

The City of Ventnor currently has a CRS certification of 6, which provides for a 20 percent discount on flood insurance. This is a substantial accomplishment and there are many coastal communities who have not attained this classification. Nevertheless, it is recommended that the City continue to strive to improve its classification.

#### **4.13.34 Establish a Pre-Application Committee**

Provide for a pre-application process for major development proposals to provide direction to applicants. This no-cost option would provide developers with a brief meeting with the City's engineer, planner and a representative of the planning board to present they proposal and gain useful comments. The City committee would offer non-binding suggestions and recommendations.

#### **4.13.35 Implement an Abandoned Properties Ordinance**

The Abandoned Properties Act provides communities with tools to address foreclosures and unsightly properties. It is recommended that the City adopt an Abandoned Properties Ordinance and take proactive steps to implement abandoned properties program. This Act give the City the ability to:

- Hold a special tax lien sale where bidders must present development plans and they risk to lose the liens if they do not make promised improvements within a stipulated time period. The Act allow buyers of the special liens to begin foreclosure within 10 days of the purchase, as opposed to a two-year waiting period under regular tax liens.
- Use eminent domain to take abandoned properties and sell them to developers who would rehabilitate them and resell or rent them.
- Establish an Abandoned Properties Registry and charge a progressive fee for these properties to encourage development – for example \$500 in year 1, \$1,500 in year 2, \$3,000 in year 3 and \$5,000 in year 4 and subsequent years.
- If there is a cluster of abandoned properties, it may be appropriate to designate area in Need of Redevelopment.

## **5.0 RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE ELEMENT**

As both an oceanfront resort and year-round community, Ventnor's recreational and open space amenities are an important driver for the City's economy as well as a point of pride and indispensable resource for City residents. Ventnor is unique in its uninterrupted oceanfront beach and Boardwalk as well as its large expanses of vegetated open space along the bayfront. Moreover, Ventnor has one of only two public boat-launch facilities on Absecon Island. The combination of these characteristics contributes to Ventnor's image and status as a City with an array of recreational offerings.

This Recreation and Open Space Element is provided to guide the future of Ventnor's parks and open spaces for the foreseeable future. Building upon public input, existing data about the City's parks, and previous parks planning efforts, this Element inventories the existing facilities in Ventnor, recognizes opportunities for improvements, and recommends specific actions that the City can take to realize the full potential for its recreational and open spaces. Since the time of the last Master Plan Reexamination, priorities and trends have shifted within the City. In recognizing these trends and the desires of both year-round and seasonal residents for new and improved facilities, this Element sketches a framework for what improvements to Ventnor's parks can look like and to guide future policy regarding parks and recreational facilities.

### **5.1 Introduction**

Parks and open space in Ventnor have long been a point of engagement for the community in Ventnor. This comprehensive Recreation and Open Space Element is the first of its kind for Ventnor and builds on decades of community involvement and input into recreation and open space decisions. The action of City residents helped contribute to the preservation of Ventnor West from use as a dredge spoils site and brought attention to the ecological value of the area. As the primary users of the City's parks and open space, residents have an important stake in planning the future of the City's parks.

This Recreation and Open Space Element is informed by the input of a variety of stakeholders and residents. In July 2016, Rutala Associates conducted a listening session for residents interested in participating in the master planning process. Additional stakeholder meetings were also held throughout 2016. Minutes from the Board of Recreation Commissioners were also consulted for the preparation of this Element. Additional developments regarding City parks will continue to seek community input to better cater to the desires of residents. For parks to be better utilized, they must meet the needs of those who will use them and be accessible. This Element will put those components in the context of the City's existing park resources to identify the gaps and bridge them.

### **5.2 Goals/Objectives**

Ventnor's Master Plan adopted in 2006 included the following goals and objectives with regards to open space and recreation:

- Provide a variety of recreational amenities that cater to the needs of the City's year-round and seasonal residents.

- a. Develop a dog park in Ventnor West.
  - b. Site and develop a skate park in the City.
  - c. Determine whether the City's existing recreational offerings are fully utilized and whether existing facilities should be replaced to increase utilization.
- Protect environmentally sensitive lands.
    - a. Continued modifications to state environmental regulations results in increased prohibition to development in even questionably sensitive lands.
    - b. New development on demolished existing properties eliminates pressure on undeveloped lands.
    - c. The State Master Plan and Cross Acceptance limits development within any new areas not already served by utilities.
- Utilizing Ventnor's natural assets, develop an ecotourism industry within the City.
    - a. Provide facilities in and better access to Ventnor West.
    - b. Permanently protect undevelopable wetlands within Ventnor.
    - c. Increase water access where appropriate.
- Develop a sustainable funding source to ensure the improvement and maintenance of existing and proposed facilities.
    - a. Consider the relocation and co-location of recreational facilities to more efficiently manage recreation options.
    - b. Pursue grant funding for desired recreational improvements or outside management of recreational activities.
    - c. Pursue shared services agreements for parks and recreational offerings.

### 5.3 Existing Publicly Owned Recreation and Open Space Areas

#### 5.3.1 Inventory

The Recreation and Open Space Inventory (ROSI) was last updated in December 2009. It has been revised and updated several times within the past decade and is required to qualify for Green Acres funding. The ROSI is the official inventory of parks and conservation areas owned by the City and ensures permanent protection of the areas inventoried. The ROSI does not include informal recreational lands or vacant municipal lands that have not been specifically designated for recreational or open space purposes. The City owns all of Ventnor's park and recreational facilities; there are no state or county open space holdings within Ventnor's boundaries. Currently, there are no private holdings of open space land in the City. Figures 5.1 and 5.2 identifies all the recreation and open space locations in the City of Ventnor.

**Figure 5.1- Recreation and Open Space Inventory (2009)**

**Recreation Lands**

<b>Block/Lot</b>	<b>Facility Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Size (acres)</b>	<b>Funded/Unfunded</b>
14/1	Suffolk Avenue Park	Between Suffolk/Somerset Avenues along Boardwalk	2.9	Unfunded
210/1, 210/2, 254/1	Titus Fields/Boathouse	Along North Surrey Avenue and Balfour Avenue	11.8	Funded
278/3	Former Driving Range	North Lafayette and Fulton Avenues	8.32	Funded
28/1	New Haven Ave. Park	Between Newport/New Haven Avenues along Boardwalk	2.9	Funded
313/15	Ventnor Fireman's Memorial Playground	North Derby Avenue and Fulton Avenue	0.1	Unfunded
Dorset Ave Right-of- Way	Ski Beach Park	Burk Avenue	2	Funded
500/1	Beach/Boardwalk/Fishing Pier	Along Boardwalk and Atlantic Ocean	40.86	Funded
103/1	Lily Park	Winchester Avenue between Little Rock and Victoria Avenues	0.18	Unfunded
<b>Recreation Total: 69.06 acres</b>				

**Conservation Lands**

<b>Block/Lot</b>	<b>Facility Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Funded/Unfunded</b>
500/1.01	Beach (Riparian)	Along Atlantic Ocean to high-tide line	269.85	Unfunded
<b>Conservation Total: 269.85 acres</b>				
<b>Total Recreation and Conservation Lands: 338.91 acres</b>				

### 5.3.2 Facilities

#### Beaches

Ventnor's oceanfront facilities are its most recognizable and popular. A dune system extends along the Boardwalk from Atlantic City to South Richards Avenue and will be extended to Longport soon. Ventnor's beaches are guarded during the summer months, and kayaking and surfing are permissible in marked locations. Beach tags are required for access and use of the beach in the summer season. The beach and Boardwalk facilities support a variety of recreational uses, and are accessible at the southern termini of every north-south street in the City. Gazebos and seating areas are available along the beach for use by residents or by registered nonprofit groups.



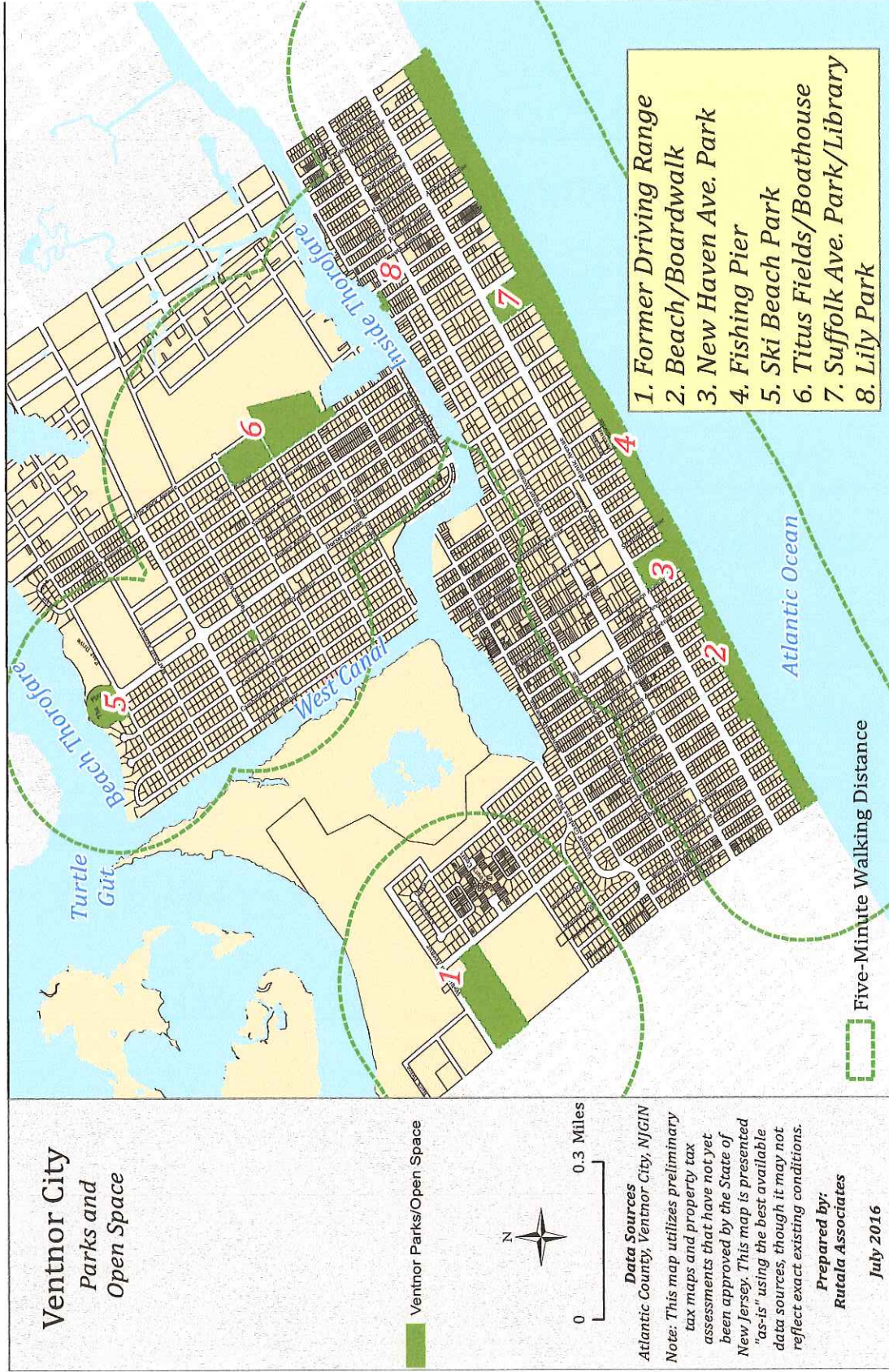
#### Fishing Pier

The City fishing pier is located at the southern end of Cambridge Avenue and extends more than 600 feet past the high tide line. It is one of the longest oceanfront piers in New Jersey. The pier was recently refurbished and offers restroom facilities on-site. Chapter 115 of the City Code governs use of the pier and describes the fee schedule for its use.

#### Ski Beach Park

Ski Beach Park is a two-acre park located at the end of Dorset Avenue in Ventnor Heights. The site consists of a 26,000-square-foot field, a boat launch, and more than 20 elongated parking spaces to support vehicles with boat trailers. No restroom facilities are located on-site. Ski Beach is one of the only public boat-launching facilities on Absecon Island.

Figure 5.2 - Ventnor Parks and Open Space



## **Boardwalk**

The Boardwalk is a very important asset to the community, and is well used by bicyclists and pedestrians for both recreational and transportation purposes. This high level of activity in a limited space results in conflicts between pedestrians and bicyclists, particularly during the busy summer months. This wooden Boardwalk runs the length of the City's shoreline from Fredricksburg Avenue at the Margate border to Jackson Avenue at the border with Atlantic City. The Boardwalk continues north along the entirety of Atlantic City's shoreline and will soon connect to Gardners Basin in the Atlantic City Inlet. Use of this facility is expected to increase as more Boardwalk amenities and on-road biking facilities are completed.

Bicycle and pedestrian access to the Boardwalk is provided via ramps at the end of each intersecting street. Wider ramps are provided at Washington, New Haven, Cornwall, and Suffolk, and Vassar Square. The Boardwalk is 20 feet wide, but has an effective clear width of approximately 14 feet due to benches, light poles, and railings. The Boardwalk has lighting at night throughout the year.

Signage is present at entrance points indicating the hours that bicycles can ride on the Boardwalk. The hours are consistent for weekends in the peak season with those for the Atlantic City Boardwalk, but differ in the off-peak season. The main difference is that bicycle riding is only permitted during daylight hours in Ventnor.

## **C Sure Children's Park/Suffolk Avenue Park/ Joe & Syd Abrams Memorial Playground**

This 2.9-acre park is located between Atlantic Avenue and the Boardwalk between Somerset and Suffolk Avenues near the St. Leonard's Tract neighborhood. This expansive park area includes two sand volleyball courts, a playground, seven tennis courts, a basketball court, a wall ball court, a seating area, and restroom and storage facilities. Beach access points are available at the ends of both Somerset and Suffolk avenues. More than 50 metered parking spaces are available in the Suffolk Avenue right-of-way, with additional parking available along Somerset and Atlantic avenues. This playground was recently refurbished through a public-private effort. This park contains the City's only basketball court, tennis courts, and wall ball area.

## **Titus Fields**

The Titus Fields complex includes two blocks along Surrey Avenue: a collection of baseball fields and boat facilities south of Balfour Avenue and field facilities north of Balfour Avenue. Together, the parcels comprise approximately 12 acres of parkland in Ventnor Heights. The southern portion of the park contains the John Holland boathouse and Viking Rowing Club, water utility facilities, a storage/office building, a seating area, a walking path, three baseball diamonds, and a soccer field with bleachers. The northern parcel consists of a football practice field, three baseball diamonds, a playground, and a bullpen. There are more than 80 parking spaces on site for the park facilities. The Titus Fields complex contains the City's only developed field facilities open for resident use.

## **Ventnor Firefighters Memorial Playground**

The Ventnor Firefighters Memorial Playground is a 0.1-acre park located in Ventnor Heights at the corner of Fulton Avenue and North Derby Avenue. The site contains a fenced playground for small children. It is approximately one-third of a mile away from Ski Beach Park and Titus Fields.

### **Former Bay Breeze Driving Range**

The former driving range is an 8.3-acre municipal park in Ventnor West. In the 1970s, the City received funding from the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund program to build a driving range on the site, which had formerly been a track and football field. The facility included netting around the range, a sheltered driving location, and a parking area. Budgetary concerns and deferred maintenance led the City to abandon the facility. Currently, the parking area and a portion of the shelter remain. The field is maintained and mowed.

### **Lily Park**

Lily Park is a 0.18-acre pocket park located along Winchester Avenue near Little Rock and Victoria avenues. The park is adjacent to a City-owned pumping station and offers a small, lighted sidewalk with three benches and grassy areas. The park overlooks the Inside Thorofare, marshes, and Ventnor Heights. Despite its location along the bulkhead, there is no water access from this location. Limited street parking is available.

### **Newport Avenue Park/ Bonnie Feldman Memorial Playground**

Newport Avenue Park is located behind the Library along the Boardwalk. The park contains a garden and seating area, playground, and a 33,000-square-foot sand court that is used for volleyball and outdoor concerts.

The Library also has facilities for community groups and cultural arts programming. Approximately 40 dedicated parking spaces are offered at this location and beach access is available at the termini of New Haven and Newport Avenues. Restroom facilities for beach and park users are available on the south side of the Library.

### **Board of Education Properties**

The Ventnor Board of Education owns the school facility and grounds between Fredricksburg Avenue and Lafayette Avenue. Existing facilities include playgrounds, outdoor fields, and an indoor gymnasium. Currently these facilities are surrounded by fences and are not accessible without permission.

The Ventnor Board of Education has published Policy Statement 1330 regarding the use of Board of Education facilities by non-students. Playground facilities owned by the Board of Education are owned and maintained separately from that of the City and are not on the Recreation and Open Space Inventory. Signs are currently posted along Fredricksburg Avenue and Balfour Avenue that indicate that use of the fields is prohibited. Residents or organizations who wish to use the facilities must receive permission in writing from the Board of Education and pay the scheduled fees.

### **Ventnor West**

The 155-acre property hold tremendous potential for the City of Ventnor. Per a diversion agreement with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), a 14-acre upland portion of the Ventnor West site will be placed on the ROSI for permanent preservation once the application process is finished. This will preserve a forested area of Ventnor West in perpetuity and allow for future passive recreational development and preservation in the larger Ventnor West tract.

## 5.4 Needs Assessment

### 5.4.1 Balanced Land Use Guidelines

Parks and open space have been long understood to be important for the health and enjoyment of residents. For dense communities, such as Ventnor, parks and open space are especially important. Small lot sizes and large lot coverage contribute to a lack of private open space for City residents. Thus, parks and open space provide gathering and recreational places, as well as spaces for exercise, relaxation, and ecotourism-based activities such as birdwatching. The City's miles of beaches and Boardwalk are important tourism draws and are a point of civic pride and identity.

The provision of parks and open space is an important function for governments across jurisdictions. To maintain the State of New Jersey's eligibility to receive funds from the national Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), the Green Acres Program of the Department of Environmental Protection prepares a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) every five years.

The 2013-2017 SCORP utilizes the Balanced Land Use guidelines for recommending the minimum amount of preserved open space per municipality. The recommended minimum set-aside for open space is 3 percent of all developed and developable area in the municipality. As defined by the SCORP, developable areas exclude areas with slopes over 12 percent, preserved open space, and wetlands. The Figure 5.3 demonstrates Ventnor's compliance with that guideline:

**Figure 5.3 – Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan Compliance**

<b>State Recommendation:</b>	<b>3 Percent</b>
<b>Ventnor Land Area:</b>	1,248.6
<b>Ventnor Parcel Area (approx.)</b>	981
<b>Area of Street Right-of-Ways (approx.)</b>	267
<b>Acreage of Existing City Parks</b>	69.06
<b>Acreage of Developable Land</b>	545.23
<b>Park Land Area as Percentage of Total</b>	12.68 Percent
<b>Surplus/Deficit</b>	+9.68 Percent

Sources: US Census, Atlantic County Parcel Data, MODIV Property Tax Data  
Numbers may not add completely due to rounding/approximation.  
Conservation lands not counted in land area calculation.

Ventnor's current park facilities comprise more than 12 percent of the City's developable land area, which exceeds the state-recommended minimum of 3 percent of developable land.

### 5.4.2 Accessibility

The ease of access to parks and open space facilities should be considered alongside their provision and acreage. The location of parks and recreational facilities in proximity to major roadways, community facilities, residential areas, and commercial areas is a large driver of the utilization of those facilities. Ventnor has an extensive sidewalk network along almost all its streets, and all of

Ventnor’s park facilities are accessible via sidewalk. The City’s Boardwalk, which is over one and a half miles long, connects several park facilities (including the Boardwalk, Newport Avenue Park, and Suffolk Avenue Park) as well as the beach and fishing pier. The Boardwalk is accessible at the southern terminus of every street in the City and allows an uninterrupted, vehicle-free walking path across the City.

During the preparation of this Element, parks and open space were analyzed with respect to the five-minute, quarter-mile walking distance commonly considered to be the length to which people are willing to walk to parks. This distance is shown on Figure 5.2, where the green dashed line shows a quarter-mile radius around park facilities. Using 2010 Census data, the analysis considered the number of people living within a quarter-mile of existing parks and recreational facilities. The analysis demonstrated that 82.5 percent of the City’s population lives within one-quarter mile of Ventnor’s parks and Boardwalk. The neighborhoods farthest from park facilities include sections of Ventnor Gardens and the homes located between Winchester Avenue and the Inside Thorofare.

**Table 5.4 - Ventnor Demographic Trends**

	1990	2000	2010
<b>Total Year-Round Population</b>	11,005	12,910	10,650
<b>Median Age</b>	40.2	40.6	45.5
<b>Residents Under Age 18</b>	1,745	2,582	1,983
<b>% Residents Under 18</b>	15.8%	20%	18.6%
<b>Residents Over Age 18</b>	9,260	10,328	8,677
<b>% Residents Over 18</b>	84.1%	80%	81.4%
<b>Residents Over Age 65</b>	2,410	2,550	2,120
<b>% Residents Over Age 65</b>	21.9%	19.8%	19.9%
<b>Non-Hispanic White Residents</b>	10,120	9,145	7,224
<b>% Non-Hispanic White</b>	91.9%	70.8%	67.8%
<b>Black Residents</b>	153	379	453
<b>% Black Residents</b>	1.3%	2.9%	4.3%
<b>Hispanic Residents</b>	580	2,213	1,922
<b>% Hispanic Residents</b>	5.3%	17.1%	18%
<b>Asian Residents</b>	163	962	924
<b>% Asian Residents</b>	1.5%	7.5%	8.7%

Source: US Census 1990, 2000, 2010

### 5.4.3 Demographic Shifts

Among the factors affecting the use of parks and recreational facilities is the demographic make-up of the community. Though Ventnor parks exists regardless of the City’s demographics, use of specific facilities may change based on demographic changes. Playgrounds, for example, are limited in use to those under the age of eleven. If the number of residents under that age declines, the provision of playgrounds in lieu of other facilities may be reexamined.

Moreover, the shifting cultural makeup of neighborhoods may result in the lack of demand for existing facilities and new demand for facilities that better serve the population. Finally, interest in specific sports tends to wax and wane over generations. Sports facilities built decades ago may not reflect interest in sports today.

Figure 5.4 shows the change in the age and demographic composition of residents from 1990 to 2010. During this period, the City's population grew diverse and slightly older. During this time, the median age increased from 40.2 years to 45.5 years, while the proportion of residents under the age of 18 rose between 1990 and 2000 and declined between 2000 and 2010. Broadly speaking, the percent of residents over the age of 65 has declined and the proportion of Hispanic and Asian residents living in Ventnor increased significantly.

#### **5.4.4 Amenities and Facilities**

Ventnor's current recreational options offer a wide range of activities. Figure 5.5 on the following page shows the types of activities supported at each park. The beach/Boardwalk, Suffolk Avenue Park, and Titus Fields offer the widest variety of amenities. These parks are located centrally to the City's population and offer some sort of dedicated parking and restroom facilities.

While the City has a diversity of options available individual sports/recreation options may only be found in one location in the City. For example, Ventnor's only basketball court is located at the Suffolk Avenue Park. Titus Fields offers the City's only baseball fields, one of which doubles as a soccer/football field. General grass/field facilities are found only in Titus Fields and at the former driving range, though no infrastructure supports activity in the latter area. While many City residents are within walking distance of playground facilities, different recreational options are scattered around the City. A Ventnor Heights resident seeking basketball facilities may have to travel over a mile to reach the City's single basketball court. Conversely, a resident of Ventnor Gardens or Ventnor West may have to travel farther to reach Ventnor's court and field facilities than Margate's.

While the provision of parks in a community is usually held constant, the types of facilities offered should change over time to reflect resident needs and recreation trends. Currently, Ventnor lacks a dedicated space for City residents for indoor sports activities (such as basketball), skating rinks, dedicated soccer/lacrosse/football fields, nature trails, and track facilities. Some facilities, such as the former driving range site or portions of Ventnor West, are underutilized or not developed. Residents have expressed support for the development of new recreational options, which are proposed later in this Element.

Recreational needs and amenities will traditionally vary from community to community. To help guide recreational planning efforts, the National Recreation and Park Association, a non-profit professional association that promotes parks, recreation, and conservation, has developed national standards to guide municipalities in providing adequate facilities for their populations.

**Table 5.5 - Recreation Offerings in the City of Ventnor**

	Boating	Court (Basketball)	Courts (Tennis)	Court (Volleyball)	Court (Wall ball)	Field (Baseball)	Fields	(Soccer/Football)	Fishing	Field/Open Space	Parking (Dedicated)	Pedestrian Paths	Playground	Restrooms	Seating	Swimming	Water Sports
<b>Bay Breeze Driving Range</b>										X	X						
<b>Beach/Boardwalk</b>	X								X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
<b>Firemen's Playground</b>													X		X		
<b>Lily Park</b>												X			X		
<b>New Haven Ave. Park</b>				X						X	X	X	X	X	X		
<b>Suffolk Ave. Park</b>		X	X	X	X					X	X	X	X	X	X		
<b>Ski Beach</b>	X								X	X	X	X					X
<b>Titus Fields</b>						X	X				X	X	X	X	X		

Recreational needs standards are listed in Figure 5.7 for both Ventnor’s year-round and seasonal population. Note that these recommendations were standardized across all American communities circa 1990 and may not reflect favored locational specialties or recent trends. Moreover, deficits/surpluses indicated in this table may be less applicable due to the mismatch between the summer population and the seasonal offerings of sports.

**Figure 5.6 - 2010 Year-Round and Seasonal Population**

2010 Year-Round Population:	10,650
2010 Summer Population	29,470
2010 Summer Population and Year-Round Population	38,672

Source:<http://www.acbiz.org/Doing%20Business/pdf/atlantic-county-seasonal-population-numbers-2010.pdf>

Based on the numbers calculated in Figure 5.7, Ventnor appears to have a deficit of recreational facilities for its combined year-round and seasonal population and largely meets the needs of its year-round residents. Interpretation of these numbers should consider the following:

- Sports such as football and soccer are traditionally held in the fall.

**Figure 5.7 - NRPA Standards for Selected Facilities**

Activity/Facility	Recommended Space Requirement	Recommended Size/Dimensions	Facilities per Population	Existing	Surplus/Deficit (Year-Round)	Surplus/Deficit (Year-Round and Seasonal)
<b>Basketball</b>	Youth: 2,400-3,036 sq. ft.	46' x 84'	1 per 5,000	1	-1	-7
	High School: 5,040-7,280 sq. ft.	50' x 84'				
	Collegiate: 5,600-7,980 sq. ft.	50' x 94'				
	7,200 sq. ft.	36' x 78' court plus 12' side and 21-foot end clearance	1 per 2,000	7	+2	-12
<b>Volleyball</b>	4,000 sq. ft.	30' x 60'	1 per 5,000	2	0	-6
<b>Football/Field Hockey</b>	1.5 acres	160' x 360' plus additional clearance	1 per 20,000	1	0	-1
<b>Soccer</b>	1.7-2.1 acres	195' x 330' to 225' x 360'	1 per 10,000	1	0	-3
<b>Multiple Recreation Court (basketball, volleyball, tennis)</b>	9,840 sq. ft.	120' x 80'	1 per 10,000	0	-1	-4
<b>Baseball (Little League) and Softball</b>	2 acres	60' baselines, 200'+ foul lines	1 per 5,000	4	0	-4
<b>Baseball (Official)</b>	3 to 3.85 acres	90' baselines, 320' foul lines	1 per 5,000	1	-1	-7

Source: Landcaster, R.A. (Ed.). (1990). *Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines*. Ashburn, VA: National Recreation and Park Association.

- Ventnor’s beaches provide open space for informal sports activities.
- The City’s only football/soccer field doubles as its official-sized baseball field, and events on either field cannot be conducted concurrently.
- The Ventnor City Educational Complex is used by arrangement for indoor and outdoor sports facilities.
- In the summertime, the City’s beach facilities experience the highest demand.

#### 5.4.5 Programming and Administration

The Department of Recreation and Education administers Ventnor’s recreational programming. The Department administers the City’s Beach Patrol, summer sports camps, and year-round recreational activities. Ventnor’s Board of Recreation Commissioners, which controls and oversees recreational facilities and approves applications for organized recreational events in the City, is comprised of Ventnor residents and meets regularly to decide on recreational matters. The Board of Recreation Commissioners does not oversee beach-related matters. Figure 5.8 shows the location of rules governing various recreational activities in the City’s code as amended by the Board of Commissioners.

**Figure 5.8 - Municipal Parks and Recreation Regulations**

Description	Location
Amusements	Chapter 63
Beaches	Chapter 62
Bikes/Skating	Chapter 75
Board of Recreation Commissioners	Chapter 41
Boardwalk	Chapter 79
Boating	Chapter 81
Boating Ramps	Chapter 82
Curfew	Chapter 101
Dogs and pets	Chapter 105
Fishing Pier Regulations	Chapter 115
Loitering	Chapter 147
Parades	Chapter 163
Parks and Playgrounds	Chapter 170
Peace and Good Order	Chapter 171
Piers	Chapter 174
Sand Dunes	Chapter 182
Surfing/Kayaking	Chapter 201
Tennis Courts	Chapter 206

## **5.5 Recommendations**

### **5.5.1 Recreation and Open Space Inventory Revisions**

Municipalities that receive open space funding from the State of New Jersey are required to submit a ROSI that list protected parkland parcels in a municipality. Placement of properties on the ROSI ensures permanent protection of the properties' open space and recreational functions. If municipalities plan to redevelop their parks for any reason (including new recreational uses), municipalities must begin a diversion process with the NJDEP.

Ventnor has submitted several updated ROSIs to the State since the 1990s. When applying for reimbursement for the City's expenditure on the Fishing Pier's refurbishment, the NJDEP discovered that the City had improperly diverted the site of its former municipal ice rink. Thus, reimbursement funds were withheld until the City completed the diversion process. Per the City's agreement with the NJDEP, a portion of Ventnor West will be permanently protected, thereby satisfying a Green Acres requirement to protect a property of higher value and acreage than the property that was initially diverted.

### **5.5.2 Recreation and Open Space Additions**

In addition to potential ecotourism developments in Ventnor West, Shelter Island (located just across the Beach Thorofare) and portions of Ventnor Heights are owned by the City and are likely undevelopable due to extensive marsh on-site. This area includes properties located north of Wellington Avenue as well as marsh east of Titus Fields and comprises more than 130 acres of minimally disturbed salt marsh. The City should consider adding these parcels to the Conservation portion of its ROSI and vacating the paper street rights-of-way between the parcels to increase its open space holdings.

Additionally, funding should be pursued to interpret these areas' ecological value and provide ecotourism opportunities. Designating these areas as open space will allow the City to augment its protected open space and preserve flood buffers without forgoing tax ratables or acquiring private properties. This action will also provide the City will additional CRS credits which may provide for higher flood insurance discounts in the future.

Recreational improvements are also in demand for existing facilities in Ventnor. Ski Beach Park, which contains the City's public boat launch and a parking lot, could be activated with a community gathering space supporting concerts, farmers' markets, and barbecuing. In addition, the Municipal Fishing Pier should be considered for the placement of a refreshment stand and better resident access.

**Figure 5.9 - East Ventnor Wetlands Area**



Source: New Jersey Geographic Information Network

### **5.5.3 Ventnor West: Recreation and Open Space Improvements**

Ventnor West has a long history of both development proposals and environmental activism. The site consists of filled marshlands, and was targeted for future development into residential neighborhoods characteristic of Ventnor. The City later sited its sewer plant at nearby Shelter Island, and sanitary disposal operations were undertaken in Ventnor West through the early 1970s. In 1974, Ventnor designated the site as a blighted area and proceeded in a taking of the Ventnor West property. In the 1980s, the City re-subdivided the vacant area into two lots: a parcel consisting of the upland forested area, and a parcel containing much of the wetlands portion. Various development proposals were considered, though the site's status as a former landfill complicated the intensive development previously proposed. Moreover, a portion of Ventnor West was considered for a dredge spoils site in the early 2000s. This proposal was withdrawn given environmental and health concerns.

The environmental status of Ventnor West has made it very valuable from an ecological perspective. Despite considerable disturbance, Ventnor West exhibits successional forest and wetlands resources and is a habitat for both animals and birds. A diversion agreement with the NJDEP will result in the permanent protection of approximately 13 acres of a forested portion of Ventnor West north of Kingsley Drive. The remainder of the site is not likely to be developed due to its sensitive ecological nature and various state regulations in addition to the lack of sewer service.

Ventnor currently offers a variety of recreational amenities spread out around the City. However, the City's density and built-out nature hinders the siting of new recreational facilities. Ventnor West

contains the two largest undeveloped parcels in the City and has been the subject of numerous development proposals by both public and private interests. Over the past several years, associations of Ventnor City residents have sought a privately funded dog park on the site of the City's former driving range behind the Ventnor City Educational Complex. While the City has indicated its approval for this proposal, the federal government needs to be engaged before modifications can be made to the site. The City should consider clearing the regulatory hurdles to develop a new plan for this eight-acre area. In addition, the relocation or addition of new park/field facilities to this area should be considered in addition to a skate park.

Ventnor West's history as a site of waste disposal and status as an ecological habitat complicate the site's development and stipulate that the any on-site improvements cause minimum ground disturbance. In addition, the shoreline area suffers erosion and is at risk for further damage due to sea level rise. Considering the site's ecological value, tourism potential, and on-site risks, this Element includes a proposed concept plan that attempts to balance the site's needs and residents' vision for the site. A concept plan for the development of Ventnor West is provided on the following page.

The concept plan for the overall site development of recreational/ecotourism facilities in Ventnor West includes the following amenities:

- Development of recreational facilities;
- Boat access facilities at the terminus of Swarthmore Avenue;
- Fishing pier area at the eastern end of Wellington Avenue;
- Parking facilities along Wellington Avenue and at the proposed boat launch site;
- Walking trails and observation decks in the forested portion of Ventnor West;
- Pedestrian circulation throughout the entirety of Ventnor West;
- Basketball/pocket park opportunities on vacant lands;
- Re-vegetated/restored wetlands to mitigate any damage from park development; and
- A living shore line to reduce erosion along the waterfront.

The uses proposed in this Element are low-intensity and are sited to provide the maximum amount of facilities with the least amount of environmental and residential disturbance. Restroom facilities are limited in this area due to the lack of sewer services. Portable toilet facilities should be provided for the proposed Wellington Avenue fishing pier and proposed boat launch. More formal restroom facilities can be developed near the parking area for the proposed field where sewer service is available. In addition, the plan provides for parking within the existing driving range parking lot due to the available space and its central location.

Due to the expansiveness of the Ventnor West area, a comprehensive pedestrian circulation network is envisioned that would encircle the site. A multi-use biking/walking trail would begin near the upland area near Balfour Avenue and continue north to Wellington Avenue. Wellington Avenue, which is currently unimproved, would be improved to facilitate vehicle parking and bike/pedestrian access. Within the forested and grassland portions of Ventnor West, trails would be unimproved to

mitigate environmental damage. Existing informal trails can be utilized to prevent additional disturbance. The main trail loop would consist of a path along the waterfront and offshoots through the area's interior. Careful brush clearing can provide a variety of habitats and remove invasive and non-indigenous species. Access to this area will also enable the City's schools and other research institutions to use the area as a "living classroom".

The former driving range facility has significant acreage but should be carefully planned in consideration of the range of activities proposed for the site. A skate park and restroom facility can likely be sited on a corner of the parking lot for the former driving range, including the area adjacent to the Atlantic County Utilities Authority pumping station or at the park's western end.

The concept plan would preserve approximately four acres of contiguous field space that could be used as a flexible baseball/softball and soccer/football field facility.

This concept for the Ventnor West area supports water-dependent uses along the Beach Thorofare and West Canal. The terminus of North Swarthmore Avenue has historically provided informal water access to the Beach Thorofare. The current access to the Beach Thorofare from Swarthmore Avenue is near the intersection with Burk Avenue, though no parking or vehicle access is provided. The development concept proposes improving the current access point with a parking lot and boat ramp that is set back from Burk Avenue behind a vegetated buffer. The area between Fredricksburg Avenue and Swarthmore Avenue can feature interpretative signs and seating areas along the waterfront. In addition, an improved Wellington Avenue right-of-way can provide access to West Canal. The terminus of Wellington Avenue in Ventnor West includes several structures related to utilities as well as a small bulkhead. Under the proposal, the bulkhead would be raised and improved to allow for fishing, seating, and paddleboard/kayak launch sites. This area would include lighting, fishing line disposal boxes, and portable toilets.

The Ventnor West area also includes smaller upland "pocket parcels" that can be used for recreational development. This includes a 10,000-square-foot area at the corner of North Wissahickon Avenue and an 18,000-square-foot space at the intersection of Fulton and North Wissahickon Avenues. Both areas provided informal access to the wetlands area to the east through the 1990s, though these access points have since become overgrown. Though the City maintains these areas, no facilities are available on-site. Signage indicates that the areas are used informally as dog-walking areas or playing fields. The concept plan proposes that these areas be formally used as recreational areas with appropriately sized facilities located on-site. The northern grassy area at the corner of Fulton Avenue has enough space to support a small basketball court, seating area, or community garden. The southern area at the corner of Balfour Avenue can also provide a small seating area or community garden and is an ideal site for a bird blind or small observation deck due to its proximity to the wetlands area of Ventnor West.

Additional parking can be provided along the Wellington Avenue right-of-way through the undeveloped portion of Ventnor West. Because the right-of-way is 50 feet wide, parallel/angled parking can be provided without a significant increase in impervious surface coverage or ecosystem

disturbance. The proposed boat launch facility at the terminus of Swarthmore Avenue will require an increase in impervious surface coverage outside of the City's right-of-way. To compensate for any impacts, a wetlands mitigation area is proposed for the tidally flowed area within the Baltimore Avenue right-of-way. This will result in the removal of invasive species in the area and can provide a stormwater discharge area for park developments across Wellington Avenue.

Comprehensive development of Ventnor West will require the cooperation of numerous stakeholders:

- The Ventnor West residential neighborhood should be reached out to directly to mitigate the impacts of increased traffic and visitation to the neighborhood.
- The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection administers the various regulations (including the Coastal Area Facilities Review Act, Tidelands claims, Freshwater Wetlands Act, and Coastal Wetlands Act) and will be needed for cooperation with the installation of a boat ramp, impacts to wetlands, and any site-remediation activities. Any lands flowed by tidal waters are under the jurisdiction of the State of New Jersey, and a final development plan should consider the necessary approvals needed for land disturbances, changes to the City's ROSI, and Green Acres funding.
- The National Park Service administers the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), which has historically provided funding to some Ventnor recreation projects and may be a funding source for future developments. Changes to facilities funded by the LWCF, such as the former driving range site, will require approval from the federal government.
- Due to the difficulty in accessing the Ventnor West site, Ventnor's public safety and public works departments should be consulted to determine locations for fire hydrants and emergency egress.
- South Jersey Gas and Atlantic City Electric both utilize utility easements within the Ventnor West site, including along the Wellington Avenue right-of-way and the southern boundary of the former driving range site. The utilities should be consulted to ensure the protection of their easement agreements and prevent conflicts of use.

Figure 5.10 - Ventnor West EcoPark Concept Plan



#### **5.5.4 Boardwalk Enhancements**

The Boardwalk is a tremendous asset to the City of Ventnor; however, several issues were identified related to conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and bicycle hours of operation. With a 14-foot effective clear width, the Boardwalk is currently not wide enough to designate separate walking and biking lanes. Widening the Boardwalk to provide sufficient space for designated bicycle and pedestrian zones should be considered.

Design standards should be developed for the Boardwalk to brand this important City facility. Standards for LED decorative lighting, waste and recycling containers, and street-end bike racks should be developed.

During peak periods, the Boardwalk should serve low-speed recreational bicycle trips, with the adjacent street network serving bicyclists desiring to ride at higher speeds. The following modifications are recommended to increase the Boardwalk's usefulness for biking while at the same time reducing potential conflicts:

- Advisory signs should be added along the Boardwalk to reinforce its role as a recreational bike route. At a minimum, signage should remind bicyclists to yield to pedestrians and pass on the left, encourage bicyclists to ride at appropriate speeds for a shared facility, and remind slower users to keep right. The signs can be developed in a context-sensitive manner using a unique theme that matches the local brand.
- The bicycling hours of operations should be expanded to allow 24-hour per day bicycle access for the entire off -peak period (October 1 to June 30) and on weekdays in the peak season. This would achieve better consistency between the Ventnor and Atlantic City Boardwalks and help to expand accessibility to the regional bicycle network.

#### **5.5.5 Fishing Pier Enhancements**

The Ventnor Fishing Pier is a municipal facility. Public access to the pier is permitted and the potential for pop-up refreshment areas is suggested to make this Pier more of an attraction.

#### **5.5.6 Ski Beach Park Improvements**

Ski Beach Park provides on the only boat ramps on Absecon Island. Enhancement of this park should include improvements to the boat ramp and beach area and provide for water taxis, paddle boards and kayaks. The potential for a concession for paddle board and kayak storage and rental should be considered. It is recommended that more scheduled events be planned for Ski Beach Park to maximize the use of this significant resource.

### **5.5.7 Newport Avenue Park Enhancements**

It is recommended that a mini-golf facility or skate board park be considers for the Newport Avenue Park on the Boardwalk frontage.

### **5.5.8 Playground Inspections and Enhancements**

Playground user safety must remain a priority. Annual inspections performed by a Certified Playground Safety Inspector experienced in the maintenance, inspection and installation of the equipment is required. Some basic requirements at the playground sites should include accessible paths, accessible and adequate safety surfaces, and adequate use zones surrounding all play equipment – all of which are tied to ADA issues. Also, trees must be trimmed to 7 feet above walkways and playground equipment. Signage is recommended. All playground equipment should be free of rust. It is a requirement in New Jersey that playgrounds have handicapped accessible paths per ADA specifications. It is advisable to check all play areas for maintenance and/or vandalism concerns on a regular basis, and to keep a record of these inspections in-house.

Given the Master Plan’s goal to attract the second home and vacation market to Ventnor, enhanced and well maintained parks and playgrounds are a must. The City’s Capital Plan should anticipate investing in these resources.

### **5.5.9 Beach Leases**

It is recommended that beach leases be considered for various uses.

### **5.5.10 Utilization Studies**

The City should survey its existing parks to ensure that each facility is being effectively utilized. If recreational facilities are underutilized, they should be removed and redeveloped into facilities that are currently in demand. Conversely, if resident and organizational demand for certain parks exceeds its current capacity, those facilities should be expanded. The community, the Department of Recreation and the Board of Recreation Commissioners should be consulted regarding any potential parks development.

### **5.5.11 Driving Range Utilization and Green Acres Administration**

The site of the former driving range has remained vacant since the facility was removed. Once the site of a track and field facility, the City received funds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to develop a driving range in its place. The 8.3-acre area is on the ROSI and has been the subject of various park proposals since the facility’s closure. However, the nature of open space funding regulations on the state and federal level constrains unilateral development of the site by the City. The City should clarify the terms of the open space funding agreements and undertake the steps necessary to develop new recreational options in compliance with existing title restrictions.

**6.0 UTILITY SERVICE ELEMENT**

**6.1 Introduction**

The 2006 Reexamination Report prioritized utility and infrastructure needs from the perspective of population and economic growth in the region. As indicated in this Reexamination, the region's economy and population is no longer growing. The City's focus is now on maintaining its existing infrastructure and utilities in good repair for existing development and redevelopment.

**6.1.1 Superstorm Sandy and Planning for Resiliency**

Superstorm Sandy significantly damaged the City’s infrastructure and brought renewed attention to nuisance flooding problems in the City. Nuisance flooding has long been an issue in New Jersey coastal communities and is forecasted to increase in frequency and severity due to climate change and sea level rise. Ventnor Heights has frequently experienced nuisance flooding over the past several decades. Two pump stations have recently been built to serve this section of the City. In addition, the western boundary of the City has witnessed nuisance flooding in part due to an out-of-service pumping station located at the eastern terminus of Ventnor Gardens Plaza. In 2016, a joint project between the City of Margate, the Atlantic County Utilities Authority, Atlantic County and Ventnor resulted in the construction of a new stormwater pump station in Ventnor that services the Ventnor Gardens neighborhood as well as a portion of Margate. These projects were made possible by a grant and loan from the New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust. These efforts demonstrate the type of improvements that Ventnor should pursue to maintain the physical and financial resiliency of the City.

In recognizing the vulnerabilities of Ventnor’s utilities and infrastructure (including its roads, sewers, bulkheads, and stormwater conveyance), the siting and design of new facilities should take sea level rise, coastal flooding, and erosion into account. Existing facilities should be hardened against hazards to the greatest possible extent, such as through the elevation of critical equipment and flood proofing of buildings. Forthcoming roadway projects, such as the raising of roadbeds and the installation of drainage systems, should consider potential impacts on neighboring properties and allow for permeable surfaces to the maximum practicable extent. Moreover, Ventnor continues to seek additional partners on such projects and aggressively pursue shared services agreements and grants to minimize the City’s capital outlays.

The purpose of this Element is to take inventory of the City's utility infrastructure that provides service for all that live and visit the City, assess adequacies and address vulnerabilities. It is the goal of this Utility Service Element to develop and maintain a coordinated utility service system within a

local and regional planning context to provide for properly located and adequately protected, resilient infrastructure.

This Utility Service Element includes mapping of public facilities and critical infrastructure. This mapping provided shows the location of such infrastructure in relation to important roadways and flood hazard areas. This Element outlines the need for and general placement and location of infrastructure elements that are considered necessary and essential to support the existing and projected development of the City. The Utility Service Element specifically addresses potable water, wastewater collection and treatment, and stormwater management.

## **6.2 Goals/Objectives**

A goal of this Utility Service Element is to advance resiliency planning and through such planning identify aspects of the City's infrastructure improvements which are vulnerable to damage resulting from future storm events, and provide for the development and prioritization of strategies aimed at mitigation of future storm damage. This Element also provides for utility service resiliency planning as indicated in the Resiliency Element. The following are goals for all future utility service projects:

- Plan for new development and public utility infrastructure to minimize risk from natural hazards.
- Promote public awareness of hazard mitigation and resiliency issues specifically as they relate to utility service.
- Focus public agencies on community utility vulnerabilities to hazards such as flooding.
- Encourage future capital projects to be located outside flood hazard areas where possible.
- Encourage renovations and modifications that are hardened and resilient to flood and storm-related impacts.
- Encourage municipal efforts and initiatives in FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS).
- Encourage regional solutions to flood- and storm-related impacts
- Plan future projects to accommodate future sea level rise.

## 6.3 Utility Service Inventory

### 6.3.1 Municipal Utilities

The Ventnor City Department of Public Works is situated at the Ventnor Water Works located at the intersection of Cornwall & Winchester Avenues in Ventnor City. The Ventnor City Department of Public Works consists of the following Departments; Streets, Vehicle Repair, Water and Sewer. The responsibilities of the Department of Public Works consist of the following areas; grounds and facilities maintenance; the mechanical and automotive maintenance; municipal and street infrastructure repair and maintenance including stormwater management; water and sewer utility operation and maintenance. It should be noted that substantial damage attributable to flooding occurred during Superstorm Sandy. This building is in an area prone to flooding.

### 6.3.2 Sanitary Sewer

The City of Ventnor owns and operates its own sanitary sewer collection system. The system is typically a gravity sewer system located within County and municipal easements that provide collection for both commercial and residential uses. The City has maintained mapping of the system titled "Sewer Infrastructure Improvement Act, Final Mapping, Ventnor City, Atlantic County, NJ" prepared by Carter Burkett Associates, dated 6/16/94, sheets 10 of 10. These gravity systems discharge to five (5) City owned and operated sanitary sewer pumping stations located at Lilly Park, Crown Key, Fulton and Harvard Avenue, Cornwall Avenue and Lafayette Avenue.

**Figure 6.1 - Location of Sanitary Sewer Pumping Stations**



When these sanitary sewer main pipes run too deep in the ground, pump stations located at low areas within the City are needed to lift the wastewater back up to street level, and continue to convey it through the systems. Thus, all pump station locations are susceptible to flooding as they are in the lowest areas of the City.

These systems provide regional collection and pumping to a primary discharge location. Ultimately all these City sewer systems discharge into the Atlantic County Utilities Authority (ACUA) pumping station located at Lafayette Street which pumps to the ACUA's Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility.

**Figure 6.2 - Atlantic County Utilities Authority Pumps Station Force Main in Ventnor**



The City does not have its own sewage treatment plant, instead relying on the ACUA treatment facility in Atlantic City for municipal wastewater processing. Wastewater sent to the ACUA facility is treated and eventually discharged into the Atlantic Ocean. Ventnor is one of 14 local municipalities that is

serviced by this regional treatment facility. Based on ACUA flow data ([http://acua-sp:3000/wwteamsite/sitereports/docflowinfo/acua\\_web/web\\_graphs.docx](http://acua-sp:3000/wwteamsite/sitereports/docflowinfo/acua_web/web_graphs.docx)), peak sewage flows historically occur during July and were 56.36 million gallons for that month in 2015. It should be noted that the pumping stations are susceptible to power outages and therefore require backup generators to maintain operation during such events.

### **6.3.3 Potable Water**

The Ventnor Water and Sewer Utility obtains its water from six wells drilled into the Kirkwood Aquifer. The main plant is located at Cornwall and Winchester Avenues has 4 wells which feed a 550,000 gallon below ground reservoir. The Utility also operates two 500,000-gallon capacity water towers, each with their own well. It should be noted that substantial damage attributable to flooding occurred during Superstorm Sandy. Six wells located throughout the City are operated to provide potable water for residents and visitors alike. Public water mains are primarily located within most County and municipal easements. The City maintains Water Location Maps and these have been specifically excluded from this Element as they are critical locations and exact locations are not meant for public disclosure. These well pumps are susceptible to power outages and therefore require backup generators to maintain operation during such events.

### **6.3.4 Stormwater Management**

Under the Municipal Land Use Law Section 40:55D-93, every municipality shall prepare a Stormwater Management Plan and a stormwater control ordinance to implement the plan. The City of Ventnor has adopted a Stormwater Management Plan in accordance with these requirements. As required by the Municipal Land Use Law, the Stormwater Management Plan shall be reexamined at each Master Plan reexamination.

The stormwater system is typically a gravity sewer system located within County and municipal easements that provide collection for both commercial and residential uses. The City has maintained mapping of the system titled "Sewer Infrastructure Improvement Act, Final Mapping, Ventnor City, Atlantic County, NJ" prepared by Carter Burkett Associates, dated 6/16/94, sheets 10 of 10. These systems typically discharge through bulkhead locations or to regional stormwater pump stations.

To address flooding in the community, the City has installed five environmental systems that are City owned and operated. These systems include stormwater sewer pumping stations located at Fulton and Harvard Avenues, Fulton and Little Rock Avenues, Calvert and Surrey Avenues and Little Rock and Fremont Avenues and Ventnor Garden's Plaza. The systems are greatly influenced by tidal elevations. During excessive high tides or tidal flooding, stormwater is trapped and cannot flow through the system until the tidal stage is lower than the discharge point. Bulkhead elevations also

play a role in holding back floodwaters so that the stormwater systems are not inundated. The City is extremely vulnerable to back bay flooding due to the height or condition of and or lack of bulkheads. It should be noted that the stormwater pumps are susceptible to power outages and therefore require backup generators to maintain operation during such events. Any infrastructure improvements designed to increase the rate and volume with which flood waters can be evacuated and/or abated should be explored.

As illustrated in both the Strategic Recovery Planning Report, September 2016 and Getting to Resilience Recommendation Report, April 2015, it is well known that flooding is typically found in the following areas during routine storm events:

- Newark to Fredericksburg Avenues
- Ventnor Avenue
- Ventnor Garden Plaza (Ventnor Heights)
- Wellington Avenue (Ventnor Heights)
- Dudley Avenue (Ventnor Heights)
- Dorset Avenue and surrounding side streets (Ventnor Heights)

These areas should be the focal point of future projects and funding to mitigate this nuisance flooding.

### **6.3.5 Solid Waste Management**

The ACUA is the lead agency responsible for implementation of the state-mandated County Solid Waste Management Plan. The ACUA has a single facility, the Haneman Environmental Park in Egg Harbor Township, which includes a transfer station where trash is unloaded, a bulky-waste recycling area, the landfill itself, a recycling center and a yard waste composting area. The site itself is over 360 acres.

The ACUA manages most trash and recycling operations for the municipalities in the County. Its general goals are:

- Facilitate the county's management of solid waste through source reduction, recycling, and reuse; and
- Educate the public, including seasonal residents and visitors, on the county's Solid Waste Management Plan.

The county's policies regarding these goals that affect Ventnor are:

- Assist and encourage source reduction programs and techniques to facilitate management of the county's waste flows;

- Assist in the development of educational programs to effectuate public awareness on the importance of recycling; and
- Assist in the Household Hazardous Waste Collection program and the development of a permanent facility for same.

Atlantic County is an integral partner with Ventnor about its utilities services. The regionalization of such services is a goal of the State Plan and will be most successful if all partners in the regionalization work toward the goals.

The ACUA collects landfill garbage and recycling waste in Ventnor on a weekly basis.

#### **6.4 Recommendations**

The City has a total of 36.45 miles of roadways, of which 34.03 miles were maintained by the municipality and 2.42 miles by the County. In planning for Ventnor's future, it is essential to project the impacts of future events. Based on mapping contained in the Reexamination, Category one storm surge is likely to inundate most of the road network in the City, including the main evacuation route of Ventnor Avenue, and all the City's bus routes and stops, which also serve a critical role in evacuation measures. These roadways also contain most of the City's water, sanitary sewer and stormwater sewer infrastructure. As more of the developed areas are projected to be impacted with three feet of sea level rise, so too is the transportation network, including current roadways, bus routes and stops, mostly in the Ventnor Heights area. Critical infrastructure not mapped but equally important includes wastewater pump houses and equipment. When in the flood hazard area, pump houses and equipment should be elevated above flood elevation or upgraded to mobile enclosures where vulnerable infrastructure could be moved out of harm's way in the case of a storm and returned to the site after.

To better plan for maintenance of the utility infrastructure and design future improvements, the following recommendations are hereby incorporated into this element as follows:

##### **6.4.1 Stormwater and Sewer Infrastructure Mapping**

The current infrastructure maps were prepared in 1994 and have not been revised. These maps should be updated to reflect most current conditions to aid in designing future improvements. The City should perform an infrastructure audit of Ventnor's water and sewer services to determine which facilities are most vulnerable to storm damage and equipment failure. Critical facilities should be elevated, and water mains with recurring damage should be mapped to indicate areas of potential failure.

#### **6.4.2 Green Infrastructure and Impervious Surface Reduction**

The City is impacted by flood water and stormwater runoff issues due to the proximity to the back bay and ocean as well as the generally low topography. Traditionally, modern America has relied on gray infrastructure which incorporates traditional pipes and sewers to mitigate stormwater issues. Alternatively, Green Infrastructure uses elements such as green roofs, rain harvesting systems, stormwater planter boxes, bio-swales, rain gardens and increased green spaces and conversion of non-pervious areas to landscape or more pervious areas. The City's zoning ordinance should be refined to include green infrastructure requirements. Reducing the amount of permitted impervious surfaces, especially in flood inundated zoning districts. Eliminating non-pervious areas within the City's easements including curb strips that have been paved over with concrete and re-establishing landscaping would both beautify the City and facilitate faster evacuation and percolation of storm and flood waters. Municipal projects could also incorporate green infrastructure strategies. Reduce impervious concrete patio, sidewalk and driveway construction for new construction. The zoning ordinance should be amended to encourage construction for a pervious surface. A 50 percent credit towards lot coverage calculation could be included to facilitate pervious material construction.

#### **6.4.3 Ventnor Heights Stormwater Management Study**

As detailed herein, the Ventnor Heights section of the City was significantly impacted by Sandy and, in fact, is particularly vulnerable to tidal and storm related flooding and other weather events. In addition to other recommendations in this Master Plan Reexamination which might be applicable to Ventnor Heights, a specific Stormwater Management Study, evaluating the entirety of the storm-related infrastructure in this section of the City is recommended. Incorporating techniques such as green infrastructure and lessening of impervious surfaces to quicken the rate of flood dissipation is also recommended.

#### **6.4.4 Bulkhead Mapping**

A comprehensive detailed mapping of all private and public bulkheads should be completed. Elevations, type and condition as well as gaps or absence of bulkheads should be indicated. This information should be used to develop a plan for implementation of a uniform bulkhead protection plan. The City should continue to work with the Army Corps to evaluate the bulkheads along the ICWW and determine the optimum height and then work to implement these improvements. Since some structures are cantilevered over the bulkhead, these improvements may need to be coordinated with the elevation of the existing structures.

#### **6.4.5 Bulkhead Repair and Installation**

Ventnor's Office of Emergency Management considers the condition of the back-bay bulkheads to be the City's most pressing storm-related vulnerability. NJDCA Post Sandy Planning Grants should be secured to fund a planning initiative to inventory back bay bulkheads to determine which need to be repaired, which elevated and/or which replaced. New bulkheads should be installed where no bulkhead currently exists. A similar analysis is recommended for the Beachfront. The bulkheads at Lily Park (Winchester Avenue between Little Rock and Victoria Avenues); on Winchester Avenue between Marion and Austin Avenues; at the Sacramento Avenue street-end (at Monmouth Avenue); and at the Derby Avenue street-end (at Winchester Avenue) are in poor condition and should be replaced. Ordinance No. 2014-44 has been passed to establish a minimum height of elevation 10.5' (NAVD88) for oceanfront bulkheads and seawalls, and a minimum height of elevation 8.0' (NAVD88) and maximum height of elevation 9.0' (NAVD88) for bayfront bulkheads.

#### **6.4.6 Emergency Generators**

An alternative source of electricity insures that critical facilities, wells and sanitation pumps continue to function in the event of power failure. Appropriately sized emergency generators should be installed, at a minimum, at the City's stormwater, water and sewer pumping stations. It is also recommended that any new equipment be sited, elevated and protected so that they are not in harm's way from flooding or storm related hazards. The Lafayette Avenue Sanitary Sewer Pump Station needs a generator. The Crown Key Sanitary Sewer Pump Station in Ventnor Heights also needs a generator. The Fremont Avenue Stormwater Pump Station in Ventnor Heights also requires a generator.

#### **6.4.7 Stormwater Pipe Evaluation**

The City's stormwater piping should be video-inspected to locate blockages and areas of deterioration. Based on the inspection results, an improvement plan and timeline should be prepared for repair or replacement.

#### **6.4.8 Installation and Maintenance of Check Valves**

Installation of check valves at all outlets to back-bay areas should be achieved to prevent back-ups in storm drainage systems during periods of minor to moderate flooding. It is also recommended that a maintenance plan of installed valve devices be provided. Maintenance of stormwater measures as well as other utility infrastructure should be evaluated as a candidate for shared services with other municipalities.

#### **6.4.9 Potable Water Infrastructure Hardening**

Analysis of all potable water well and pumping infrastructure should be made to mitigate any future impacts from flooding or storm related impacts. The 550,000-gallon underground reservoir at the main water plant needs an internal inspection and the access lids raised to prevent intrusion of flood waters.

#### **6.4.10 Inspection of City Owned Facilities**

An analysis of City-owned facilities should be undertaken to determine hardening and resiliency measures to mitigate the damage from future storm events.

#### **6.4.11 Best Practices Preparation**

Consideration should be given to the preparation of Best Practices to reduce likelihood of utility service interruptions during major natural or man-made events. Best Practice Measures would supplant existing building code requirements and would address issues such as backup power generation; the limiting of heating and cooling losses through windows, walls and roofs; and common access to potable water in multi-family structures.

**7.0 COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT**

**7.1 Introduction**

The City of Ventnor offers extensive municipal facilities that serve residents and visitors alike. The purpose of this Element is to take inventory of the City's community facilities, assess the facilities adequacies and address vulnerabilities.

It is the goal of this Community Facilities Element to develop a coordinated community facility system within a local and regional planning context to provide for properly located and adequately protected, resilient facilities.

This Community Facilities Element includes updated mapping of public facilities and critical infrastructure. This mapping provided shows the location of such infrastructure in relation to important roadways (evacuation routes) and flood hazard areas.

**7.2 Goals/Objectives**

A goal of this Community Facilities Element is to advance resiliency planning and through such planning identify aspects of the City's community facility improvements which are vulnerable to damage resulting from future storm events, and provide for the development and prioritization of strategies aimed at mitigation of future storm damage. This Element also provides for community facility resiliency planning as indicated in the Resiliency Element. The following are goals for all future utility service projects:

- Provide a variety of community facilities to accommodate the needs of the City's residents and visitors.
- Preserve, protect and maintain existing community facilities.
- Develop sustainable funding sources to ensure maintenance of existing facilities and development of new facilities.
- Critical Facilities should be sited in areas not prone to flooding or hardened and improved so that any impacts from disaster or storm events do not impact the City's ability to provide necessary emergency services.
- Plan for new community facility development to minimize risk from natural hazards.
- Promote public awareness of hazard mitigation and resiliency issues specifically as they relate to public facilities.

- Focus public agencies on community facility vulnerabilities to hazards such as flooding.
- Encourage future capital projects to be located outside flood hazard areas where possible.
- Encourage renovations and modifications that are hardened and resilient to flood- and storm-related impacts.
- Encourage municipal efforts and initiatives in FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS).
- Encourage regional solutions to flood- and storm-related impacts
- Plan future projects to accommodate future sea level rise.

### 7.3 Existing Community Facilities

#### 7.3.1 **Community Facility Inventory**

City-owned property includes the following buildings/facilities with services listed:

- City Hall  
City Hall is located at 6201 Atlantic Avenue and includes the offices of the Administration, City Clerk, Municipal Court, Police Department, Code Enforcement, Tax Collector, Finance Department and Emergency Management. The building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Vivian Smith, a prominent architect of southern New Jersey shore communities, designed Ventnor City Hall in 1928. Smith's design incorporated massing of the building consistent with the residential character of the town and is an example of the Jacobean Revival style. The building received grant funding and improvements were recently completed.
- Public Works Building at the Ventnor Water Works  
The Ventnor City Department of Public Works is situated at the Ventnor Water Works located at the intersection of Cornwall and Winchester Avenues in Ventnor City. The Ventnor City Department of Public Works consists of the following Departments; Streets, Vehicle Repair, Water and Sewer. The responsibilities of the Department of Public Works consist of the following areas: grounds and facilities maintenance; the mechanical and automotive maintenance; municipal and street infrastructure repair and maintenance; and water and sewer utility operation and maintenance
- Beach Patrol Headquarters  
The City of Ventnor City Beach Patrol is headquartered at Suffolk Avenue and the Beach. The patrol provides guarded beaches from 10:00 am-6:00 pm during the Summer months at the

following locations: Vassar Square, Austin Avenue, Frankfort Avenue, Suffolk Avenue, Dorset Avenue, Sacramento Avenue, Surrey Avenue, New Haven Avenue, Buffalo Avenue, Lafayette Avenue, Washington Avenue. The City of Ventnor requires Beach Badges for the Beach from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Badges can be purchased at Ventnor City Hall, Beach Patrol Headquarters, the Ventnor Fishing Pier, or on the Beach by any Beach Badge Inspector. Ventnor City offers two handicap locations for access to the beach. Located at Suffolk and the Beach, and Newport and the Beach, these locations offer Handicap parking, as well as ADA approved access ramps directly to the beach from our Boardwalk. If other special assistance is required, the Ventnor City Beach Patrol offers special assistance chairs for additional access to the beach.

- Ventnor City Library

The Ventnor Library Branch is part of the Atlantic County Library System. The library is located at 6500 Atlantic Avenue between South New Haven Avenue and South Newport Avenue. The building contains a library and meeting room for up to 60 persons. The Library is open to the public Monday thru Thursday 9:00 am to 8:00 pm and Fridays and Saturdays from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. The Cultural Arts Center is located within the library. The center includes a variety of classes available to Ventnor Residents. The Ventnor City Cultural Art Center, Inc. is a non-profit organization providing art and dance classes for Ventnor and the surrounding communities. The Ventnor Community Center is also located within the building. The building is utilized for many civic functions and community groups, including the senior citizen's nutrition site. A playground is also located on site.

The City also owns the following assets:

- Ventnor Boardwalk

Located along the beachfront from South Fredericksburg Avenue to Jackson Avenue, the Ventnor Boardwalk is 1.7 miles in length, and connected to the famous Atlantic City Boardwalk. The Boardwalk is an important and defining asset to the community. Many have enjoyed walking, jogging, or bike riding along the Boardwalk. Bike riding is permitted with some restrictions. Access ramps are located at the end of each intersecting street end.

- Ventnor Boat Ramp

Located at Dorset Avenue at the Bay known as "Ski Beach", the boat ramp is available for all Ventnor City Residents for the launching of boats and personal watercraft. It is one of the few public boat launch facilities on Absecon Island. The boat ramp is open during daylight hours. Parking spaces for approximately 20 vehicles with boat trailers are located on site. No bathroom facilities or other amenities are located on site.

- Ventnor City Fishing Pier  
The Ventnor City Fishing Pier is located at Cornwall Avenue and the Boardwalk. It is one of the few remaining piers extending over the ocean left in New Jersey. The pier itself extends approximately 600 feet over the ocean. The fishing pier offers seasonal rates for fishing or sightseeing. Chapter 115 of the City Code governs the usage of the facility.
  
- Ventnor City Beachfront Park  
This beachfront park is located adjacent to the Boardwalk at New Haven Avenue and the Boardwalk, and offers spectacular views of the beach and Atlantic Ocean. The centerpiece of the park is a Memorial water fountain dedicated to the memory of Hilya Stein.
  
- Beach Volleyball Courts  
The beach volleyball courts are located at two locations along Ventnor's beaches. They are located next to the Fishing Pier at Cambridge Avenue, and in front of the tennis courts at Somerset Avenue.
  
- Hobie Cat Beach  
The Hobie Cat beach is located at Somerset Avenue and the Beach. Sailboats can be registered for a fee on a seasonal basis.
  
- Kayak Beaches  
The two kayak beaches are located at Princeton Avenue and the beach and between Surrey Avenue and Suffolk Avenue. While there not any lifeguards assigned to this beach, it is supervised during the hours of 10:00 am to 6:00 pm by the lifeguards at Sacramento Avenues.
  
- Surfing Beach  
The surfing beach, which allows surfing, is located next to the Fishing Pier, and is open during daylight hours. There is no lifeguard assigned to this beach, it is supervised during the hours of 10:00 am and 6:00 pm by the lifeguards at Dorset Avenue.
  
- Municipal Parking Lot  
The Municipal Parking Lot is located on Newport Avenue between Atlantic and Ventnor Avenues. These metered parking spaces provide ample parking for nearby shopping or a day at the beach.
  
- Municipal Playgrounds  
These playgrounds are in five separate areas within Ventnor City. Locations include the Bonnie Feldman Memorial Playground at Newport Avenue and the Beach, the Joe and Syd Abrams Memorial Playground at Suffolk Avenue and the Beach, Titus Field in Ventnor Heights, the Firemen's Playground at Burghley and Fulton Avenues in Ventnor Heights, and the CSURE playground located at Somerset Avenue and the Boardwalk.

- Tennis Courts  
This tennis courts facility is located on Atlantic Avenue between Suffolk and Somerset Avenues. Ventnor City has seven tennis courts available for use during the summer months from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Lessons are available.
- Titus Field Recreation Fields  
This 12-acre recreation facility is located at Ventnor Heights, Balfour Avenue and N. Surrey Avenue. The site contains five (5) baseball fields, batting cages, two (2) (soccer/football) multi-sport playing fields, two (2) support structures, playground, and off street parking.
- Viking Rowing Club  
This boat house facility is owned by the City and leased to the Viking Rowing Club, the club is a non-profit organization and operates membership dues, and fund-raising events. The Club operates a rowing program for all ages and levels of experience. Located at the John Holland Boathouse at Titus Field in Ventnor Heights, rowing programs are available during the spring summer, and fall months.

Additional information regarding recreation and open space facilities is provided in the Recreation, Open Space and Conservation Element.

- Schools  
The Ventnor City Public School District operates one building known as the Ventnor Educational Community Complex (VECC) located at 400 N. Lafayette Avenue. The VECC was built in 1970 with additions constructed in 1974, 1983, 1997, and 2001. The district consists of two separate schools known as the Ventnor Elementary School and the Ventnor Middle School. Other facilities onsite include playgrounds, outdoor fields and parking.
- Public Bathroom Facilities  
Public Bathroom facilities are located at the following locations:
  - Library – New Haven and Atlantic Avenues
  - City Hall – 6201 Atlantic Ave; Ventnor Fishing Pier – on the Beach
  - Ventnor Tennis Courts – Atlantic and Somerset Avenues
  - Porta Potties – Suffolk Avenue Ramp
- Fire, Emergency, and Police Facilities  
The Ventnor City Police Department (VCFD) located at City Hall, 6201 Atlantic Avenue. The Department provides protection to approximately 2.15 square miles and employs approximately 38 sworn police officers, 8 full time Dispatchers, 2 Parking Violations Officers and a Records Clerk. City Hall is also the locale of the Emergency Operations Center.

As indicated on the Department's website, The Fire Department is a civil service department and is under the command of the Chief of Department. The VCFD has approximately 41 sworn personnel including the Chief. Of the 41 personnel, two are staff personnel consisting of the Chief, and one Fire Official. Ventnor City Fire Department responds to all medical emergencies in the city. Operations are based out of three buildings. Fire Station No. 1 is located at 20 N. New Haven Avenue and serves as headquarters. Fire Station No. 2, is in Ventnor Heights, at Little Rock and Wellington Avenues. The ambulances are stationed at the Ambulance Station located at 20 N. New Haven Avenue. Ambulance No. 1 handles all first and mutual aid calls. Ambulance No. 2 responds to second medical emergency calls, with the third ambulance acting as a reserve. With the continued increase in calls for service, this is being done more often. Off duty personnel are called when needed by a coded alpha-numeric paging system. All engines are equipped with five-inch supply line, allowing larger volumes of water over a greater distance. The department continues to house and man a water rescue boat with certified black water search and rescue divers. Engines must also serve nine (9) residential mid to high rise properties within the City that range from 5 to 20 stories tall.

#### Historic Assets

Ventnor's City Hall and the John Stafford Historic District (which includes portions of Atlantic, Austen, Baton Rouge, Marion and Vassar Avenues) are included on the National Register of Historic Places. Within the John Stafford Historic District, there are 32 historic properties. The State Historic Preservation Office also identifies the following areas as historically significant:

- The New Haven Firehouse, 20 North New Haven Avenue;
- The Saint Leonard's Tract Historic District, bounded by Atlantic, Cambridge, Winchester and South Surrey Avenues. Within the Saint Leonard's Tract District there are 202 historic properties; and
- The Tofani House, 12 South Cambridge Avenue.

#### Critical Facilities

The City's critical facilities, as depicted on the Critical Facilities Map below, include:

- Ventnor Elementary School, 400 N. Lafayette Avenue;
- Ventnor Middle School, 400 N. Lafayette Avenue;
- \*Fire Station No. 1, 20 N. New Haven Avenue;
- \*Fire Station No. 2, Ventnor Heights, Little Rock and Wellington Avenues;
- \*Ambulance Station, 20 N. New Haven Avenue;
- \*Police Station, 6201 Atlantic Avenue (City Hall); and
- \*Emergency Operations Center, 6201 Atlantic Avenue (City Hall).

During emergency events, critical facilities marked above with an asterisk (\*) must remain in operation.

**Figure 7.1 – Critical Facilities Located in the City of Ventnor**



#### 7.4 Risk Assessment and Impacts of Superstorm Sandy

Situated on a coastal barrier island, the City is vulnerable to high winds, nor'easters, hurricanes and other storms, coastal erosion and frequent flooding. Ventnor has received federal funding in the past 10 years for impacts due to events such as Superstorm Sandy, October 2012; Derecho, June 2012; Hurricane Irene, August 2011; Winter Storm, February 2010; Snowstorm, December 2009; and Nor'easter, November 2009.

The most prominent weather event that has come to be known as Superstorm Sandy was a hurricane that formed in the Caribbean on October 22, 2012 and made landfall near Brigantine, NJ as a post-tropical cyclone at approximately 7:30 pm on October 29, 2012. Superstorm Sandy caused extensive damage to the City of Ventnor from high winds, storm surge, and tidal flooding.

The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs reported that 199 homes within the City were Substantially Damaged and affected with major damage. Substantially Damaged designation requires that storm damage equal more than fifty percent of the market value of the property. Fire Station No. 2, which is located on Wellington Avenue, was flooded. Also, police and emergency vehicles were exposed to saltwater, and several roadways and sections of pavement were washed-out. Extensive portions of the Beach Boardwalk were damaged from wave and sand action, and floating debris. Various facilities in municipal parks were also damaged from falling trees and storm surge. There were also localized disruptions to water and sewer service, and electrical service was interrupted throughout the borough for several days. Additionally, Superstorm Sandy weakened bulkheads, caused shoreline erosion, and resulted in extensive damage to dunes.

To aid in the recovery efforts of the most severely impacted municipalities, the State of New Jersey developed the "Post Sandy Planning Assistance Grant Program". This grant program provides funding to develop a planning report which contain community recovery plans for municipalities and counties that have sustained a ratable loss attributable to Sandy of at least 1 percent or \$1 million. Pursuant to the award of the grant, the City commissioned a Strategic Recovery Planning Report (SRPR) to advance resiliency planning. The purpose of the SRPR is to outline a recommended set of actions to guide the City in promoting recovery from the impacts of Superstorm Sandy and provide resiliency to future storms. The actions recommended by the SRPR have been incorporated, described in detail and expanded upon in this Community Facilities Element.

Flooding is the most significant threat to the City and is the predominant concern for the City's policymakers. Ventnor City Strategic Recovery Planning Report, September 2014 identifies the following flooding issues:

- 88.3 percent of the City's land area (1,179 acres) is within the High Flood Risk area, equating to approximately 5.4 percent of the City's total improved value;
- There is a high number of repetitive risk properties within the City, being defined as any insurable building for which two or more claims of more than \$1,000 were paid by the National Flood Insurance Program within any rolling 10-year period since 1978; and
- The City is extremely vulnerable to back bay flooding due to the condition of or lack of bulkheads.

These vulnerabilities coupled with sea level rise and surge vulnerability projections identified in the Ventnor City Getting to Resilience Recommendations Report, April 2015 makes planning for resiliency a priority. Any level of inundation due to regular tidal flooding will have large scale impacts on emergency response and critical facilities. Projected sea level rise will increase impacts from storm events as a surge atop a higher sea level will be more dramatic. Necessary adaptation to sea level rise and the hazards of surge must be considered when planning for Ventnor's future.

### 7.4.1 Assessing Local Vulnerability

The effect and damages of these events can expose local vulnerability to critical community facilities, infrastructure and property. This means that a flood can become more than an inconvenience when it inundates an essential critical facility or critical access road, preventing evacuation and limiting emergency responses. It is necessary to assess past impacts to better plan for future events. The following impacts were documented after the impacts of Superstorm Sandy:

- City Hall - Substantial damage attributable to flooding occurred.
- Fire Station No. 2 - Substantial damage attributable to flooding occurred.
- Public Works - Substantial damage attributable to flooding occurred.
- Ballfields and associated improvements – flooding.
- City-wide - more than 6 million pounds of storm debris were removed.
- Beach and Dune Erosion - 350,000 cubic yards of sand were pumped onto the beach by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Restoration of the 100-foot-wide dune berm to an elevation of 12.75 feet was completed. The overall project for Absecon Island cost \$60.6 million.
- Approximately \$1,144,350 was spent by the federal government and \$381,450 was spent by the City for emergency management and protective measures.

Based on analysis identified in the Ventnor City Getting to Resilience Recommendations Report. Fire and EMS provisions located in the northeastern section of Ventnor Heights are vulnerable to a one foot rise in sea level. For the most part, the municipality's critical operations, such as municipal office, public works department, and police headquarters are in the higher elevation at 1601 Atlantic Avenue.

The City has a total of 36.45 miles of roadways, of which 34.03 miles were maintained by the municipality and 2.42 miles maintained by the County. Category one storm surge is likely to inundate most of the road network in the City, including the main evacuation route of Ventnor Avenue, and all the City's bus routes and stops, which also serve a critical role in evacuation measures. As more of the developed areas are projected to be impacted with three feet of sea level rise, so too is the transportation network, including current roadways, bus routes and stops, mostly in the Ventnor Heights area.

Regarding the two historic districts in the City, the John Stafford Historic District and the Saint Leonard's Tract Historic District, a category one storm is likely to impact the western properties in the Saint Leonard Tract closest to the lagoon. At 3 feet of sea level rise, the properties in the northwestern, lagoon front section of the Saint Leonard Tract are likely to be impacted.

One way the City can collect data on historic properties and their vulnerability to climate change impacts is to create a Historic Preservation Plan taking sea level rise projections and storm surge

inundation into account. The plan should list the characteristics of each building, and then address architectural and structural measures to make them more resilient to climate change. An example of this is the Cultural Resources Hazard Mitigation Plan that was done for Annapolis, Maryland. The plan includes structural and nonstructural mitigation techniques for the historic district.

## **7.5 Recommendations**

### **7.5.1 Utilization Studies**

The City should regularly assess and survey its facilities to verify that the facility is effectively utilized. Underutilization of facilities should be identified and that facility should be put into use to meet demands. Shared and regional service delivery should be explored.

### **7.5.2 Signage Improvements**

It is difficult to learn about or identify community facilities within the City due to lack of signage. Improved branded signage is needed to attract the many tourists who pass through the City and better create and define Ventnor's sense of place. Wayfinding signage should be installed throughout the City. Wayfinding signage should be incorporated into the improvements along Ventnor and Atlantic Avenues to direct visitors to points of interest including shopping districts, the community center and library, City Hall, parks and playgrounds and ecotourism destinations like Ventnor West. The Commercial Districts are not clearly defined and they have no pivotal intersection or gateway. A package of consistent and well-designed wayfinding signage would help shoppers locate businesses and parking areas and could begin to brand the areas as shopping and dining destination.

### **7.5.3 Sustainable Jersey Certification**

Sustainable Jersey is a certification program for municipalities in New Jersey that want to go green, save money, and take steps to sustain their quality of life over the long term. Ventnor City is registered for Sustainable Jersey certification and is in progress to reach Bronze Certification. The City has established a Green Team and has completed the Climate Adaptation: Flooding Risk Action, which is a Priority Action.

The City should continue to participate in this program. This program, which provides access to grants and identifies funding opportunities for sustainable projects, is an initiative of the New Jersey League of Municipalities' Mayors' Committee for a Green Future, the Municipal Land Use Center at the College of New Jersey, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities, and a coalition of non-profits and other state agencies. There are several green initiatives that can be easily accomplished, such as street tree planting and landscaping of yards and parking lots, measures to promote alternatives to automobile use such as bicycling and car sharing services and innovative zoning changes to foster more efficient buildings and green roofs.



#### **7.5.4 Green Infrastructure**

Traditionally, modern America has relied on Gray Infrastructure (traditional practices for stormwater management and wastewater treatment such as pipes and sewers) to solve its stormwater problems. However, Gray Infrastructure is expensive. Alternatively, Green Infrastructure can use landscaping and soil to help improve water quality in addition to managing stormwater runoff. Flooding impacts can be mitigated by using such Green Infrastructure elements as green roofs, rain harvesting systems, stormwater planter boxes, bioswales and rain gardens, and by increased tree canopy.

The City's zoning ordinance should be refined to include Green Infrastructure requirements for new construction and sizable renovations. Potential requirements could include street trees, rainwater harvesting and rain gardens. Reduction of impervious surfaces. One of the easiest ways to reduce flooding impacts is to capture rainwater before it hits the streets and becomes a problem. By allowing the soil to absorb the rainwater directly, there is substantially less sheet flow and, consequently, improved water quality. While this methodology will not address tidal flooding, it can be included as a component of the City's flood mitigation program.

The zoning ordinance could be amended to include the following methods to achieve this strategy:

- Reduce the amount of permitted impervious surfaces especially for zones commonly inundated with flood waters.
- Prohibit concrete patios and driveways for new construction.
- Instead of relying on pervious surfaces such as stone, permeable pavement or pavers set in sand are recommended. Permeable pavement should be utilized to the greatest extent practicable as development and redevelopment takes place.

#### **7.5.5 Inspection of City Owned Facilities**

An analysis of City-owned facilities should be undertaken to determine hardening measures to mitigate the damage from future storm events.

#### **7.5.6 Emergency Management Services**

One of the most important community service the City can offer its citizens is Emergency Management Services. This state-mandated position is tasked with implementing the City's Emergency Operations Plan. As awareness of disaster mitigation and preparedness has increased, municipalities are increasingly realizing that the best emergency response is preparedness before the disaster.

Most post Superstorm Sandy report recommends better coordination of response and expansion of mitigation efforts. In addition to infrastructure improvements and other mitigation measures recommended in planning studies, an important City service is outreach to increase citizen awareness and preparedness. The City should expand emergency management to ensure that mitigation and preparedness are incorporated into all necessary City documents and activities, including ordinance changes, capital budget planning, permitting, economic development plans, education and park planning.

Minimum steps include:

- Develop a Continuity of Operations Plan for any disaster;
- Establish a centralized Information Office for the public to get information, particularly regarding evacuation;
- Keep a special-needs resident inventory updated;
- Centralize all plans to ensure they are available to staff at times of emergency; and
- Actively seek regional cooperation for emergency management operations. The county has already set the stage with its countywide Hazard Mitigation Study, which could be the basis of outreach to other municipalities. This is a low-cost, no-loss step that could be immediately explored.

**7.5.7 Expand Sheltering Options**

The City does not have shelters within the City boundaries and defers to Atlantic County for shelter locations for residents. While enforcing evacuation, mandates are important to get residents out of harm's way, it is also pertinent to have shelters for those who stay behind including residents and emergency personnel. In the event of a flood event it is important that designated shelters are outside of the floodplain (beyond the limits of the 500-year floodplain where possible), are built to withstand high winds and other storm hazards, and have back up power and fuel supplies. As Ventnor City is almost entirely classified as a flood zone these shelters would need to be in place outside of the City. The County is currently working on revamping their sheltering plan and has identified 14 shelter locations. Atlantic County is responsible for sheltering county residents displaced by storms and evacuations. Ventnor City should remain involved in this process to ensure their residents will have plenty of shelter availability and options during future disaster events.

**7.5.8 Returning Acquired and City Owned Properties to Natural Floodplain Functions.**

Natural floodplains can absorb runoff and mitigate flooding issues. This can be done utilizing a variety of techniques including wetlands restoration, planting natural vegetation, reducing sediment compaction, and creating a natural profile. Returning land to natural floodplain functions can achieve significant CRS credits in the Natural Functions Open Space (NFOS) section. Funding for mitigation projects like this could be available by applying for a portion of the \$112 million in funding available through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in two recently announced Hazard

Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grant programs: Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) and Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM). For more information on Natural Functions Open Space credit requirements, visit page 420-13 of the CRS Coordinator's Manual. ([http://crsresources.org/files/2013-manual/crs\\_manual\\_508\\_ok\\_5\\_10\\_13\\_bookmarked.pdf](http://crsresources.org/files/2013-manual/crs_manual_508_ok_5_10_13_bookmarked.pdf)) Ventnor City has already begun taking steps towards maintaining the wetlands in Ventnor West and preserving their status as open space. The City is currently looking for funding to make this land more publicly accessible while providing an area of passive recreation. This will allow residents to enjoy the land as open space and the community will continue to benefit from having an area of natural floodplain. If other opportunities present themselves for this type of mitigation for other community facilities within the floodplain, they should be considered for restoration to natural floodplain function. The Titus Field Recreation Fields, which is a 12-acre recreation facility is located at Ventnor Heights, Balfour Avenue and N. Surrey Avenue is a potential candidate for this mitigation recommendation.

### **7.5.9 Emergency Speaker System**

The installation of a Citywide warning system would be beneficial for emergency notifications and public warning signals. This system would also be effective for providing emergency notification to beach and Boardwalk users. This system could also offer opportunity for creating ambiance by playing music on the Boardwalk and should be investigated.

### **7.5.10 Public Restroom Facilities**

Public Bathroom facilities are located at the Library – New Haven and Atlantic Avenues; City Hall – 6201 Atlantic Ave; Ventnor Fishing Pier – on the Beach; Ventnor Tennis Courts – Atlantic and Somerset Avenues; Porta Potties – Suffolk Avenue Ramp. These options appear to be inadequate in number and location. Options for new facilities at key areas are recommended. Hours of operation and expanded operating into the "shoulder season" is recommended.

### **7.5.11 Partnerships with the School District**

The City should continue to foster partnerships with the Board of Education since together they manage most of the community facilities in the City. It is recommended that the City work with the Board on the maintenance and upgrading of the school physical plants. The potential for joint-use of school facilities for community facilities should be mutually explored.

### **7.5.12 Implement Energy Audits**

The City and the School District recently completed Energy Audits of all facilities. Both agencies should ensure that all staff in all departments are aware of and implementing the recommendations from the Energy Audits. Savings from decreased energy use could be used to improve city facilities and services, but staff must be aware of the possibilities and have support to implement the recommendations.

The City and School District should consider jointly releasing a Request for Proposal to complete an Energy Savings Improvement Plan (ESIP) to upgrade lighting and heating/cooling systems in all public buildings. The ESIP program provides for certified vendors to upgrade energy systems paid for strictly by energy savings. Conversion of City-owned street lighting to energy-efficient LED technology can also be achieved via a ESIP.

### **7.5.13 Sustainability**

Sustainability, as generally considered, relates to the use of natural resources in such a manner as to meet current need without impinging upon the use of same by future generations. From an overarching perspective, aspects of sustainability include:

- Measures to reduce utilization of fossil fuels.
- Measures to reduce environmental impacts of development.
- Creative stormwater management.

To reduce dependency on fossil fuels, the City should employ the use of renewable energy systems at public facilities and the use of solar array and wind-driven systems. Such systems, whether ground or roof mounted, are by design less susceptible to flood damage as the arrays are elevated.

The City is convenient to a public compressed natural gas station at the Atlantic City Public Works Complex on Albany Avenue. The City should perform a benefit-cost analysis of the possibility of converting all or part of its vehicle fleet to operate on compressed gas.

To reduce environmental impacts of development, the City should, as part of the development / redevelopment approval process, look for opportunities to reduce impervious surface coverage. Where appropriate, consideration should be given to the use of permeable pavement or pavers set in sand.

## **8.0 CIRCULATION ELEMENT**

As both a year-round and resort community, the City of Ventnor offers extensive municipal facilities that serve residents and visitors alike. Community facilities, open space and recreation facilities take advantage of the City's natural assets, being both situated on the beach and bayfront. The City's circulation infrastructure must be planned to promote an efficient means of transportation throughout the City. The purpose of this Element is to take inventory of the City's circulation infrastructure facilities, assess the facilities adequacies and address vulnerabilities.

It is the goal of this Circulation Element to develop a coordinated community circulation system within a local and regional planning context to provide for properly designed, located and adequately protected, resilient circulation system.

This Circulation Element includes updated mapping of roadway facilities and critical infrastructure. This mapping provided shows the location of such infrastructure in relation to important roadways (evacuation routes) and flood hazard areas.

### **8.1 Introduction**

This section discusses the existing traffic and parking conditions for the City of Ventnor, followed by an analysis of issues, and recommendations for improvements. A well-designed transportation network should connect a community together and give residents and visitors options where different vehicular modes such as bikes and shuttles, sidewalks, and mass transit offer an alternative to automobile use. A resilient transportation and circulation system in should provide ease of access to residents, visitors and business patrons by enhancing accessibility. It is a goal that all can opt not to drive, yet still accomplish most, or all, of their everyday tasks. It also means that people can remain safe in the event of a storm, flood, or other disaster, by ensuring greater resiliency, flood proofing in design and redundancy that if a primary access is blocked, another alternative exists, reducing the chances that residents are left stranded and emergency response is not hindered.

During the summer, motorists can encounter significant congestion within the City of Ventnor. 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 peak conditions.

It is not anticipated that the City would be able to 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 bicyclists, pedestrians, buses, jitneys and other transportation modes. Similarly, while the parking demand in downtown business areas 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 circulation and parking conditions across the City, and to maintain the residential and commercial 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 Atlantic County. Therefore, the implementation of any of these recommendations must be approved by and coordinated with the Office of the Atlantic County Engineer.

## **8.2 Goals/Objectives**

A goal of this Circulation Element is to advance resiliency planning and through such planning identify aspects of the City's roadway and circulation improvements which are vulnerable to damage resulting from future storm events, and provide for the development and prioritization of strategies aimed at mitigation of future storm damage. This Element also provides for community facility resiliency planning as indicated in the Resiliency Element. The following are goals for all future transportation and circulation projects:

- Provide a variety of means of circulation to accommodate the needs of the City's residents and visitors. Encourage alternate circulation modes and networks to minimize and efficiently move auto traffic into and out of the City.
- Preserve, protect and maintain existing circulation facilities.
- Develop sustainable funding sources to ensure maintenance of existing facilities and development of new facilities.
- Critical Facilities and means to access them should be sited in areas not prone to flooding or hardened and improved so that any impacts from disaster or storm events do not impact the City's ability to provide necessary emergency services.
- Plan for new transportation development to minimize risk from natural hazards.
- Provide bicycle and pedestrian linkages between major destinations within the City, and to neighboring municipalities.
- Promote public awareness of hazard mitigation and resiliency issues specifically as they relate to public transportation facilities.
- Focus public agencies on the City's transportation vulnerabilities to hazards such as flooding.
- Encourage future capital projects to be located outside flood hazard areas where possible.

- Encourage renovations and modifications such as elevating roadways so that they are hardened and resilient to flood- and storm-related impacts.
- Encourage municipal efforts and initiatives in FEMA’s Community Rating System (CRS).
- Evaluate county, state and federal transportation and circulation planning to coordinate them with local planning, giving emphasis to City entrances, exits and evacuation routes.
- Encourage regional solutions to flood- and storm-related impacts to the circulation system.
- Plan future projects to accommodate future sea level rise.
- Continue to explore the feasibility of expanding parking supply.
- Explore the feasibility of a Jitney or shuttle service tying together regional destinations in both City and County.
- Encourage the use of bicycles and walking as alternatives to the automobile.
- Provide identification and guide signs for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Provide safe and adequate bicycle parking options at key destinations, businesses and in all public parks.

It shall be a goal for the City to develop a coordinated circulation system within a local and regional planning context to provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

### **8.3 Inventory**

#### **8.3.1 Roadway Infrastructure**

Ventnor’s circulation has remained largely unchanged since the time of the last Master Plan Reexamination. The City’s roadway is primarily laid out in a traditional street grid pattern with the City’s primary roadways running parallel to the ocean shoreline. The City is connected by roadways to Atlantic City to the north and Margate to the south. No direct access is provided to the mainland and the City must utilize other municipal roadways for access and for coastal evacuation routes. No major state highways run through the City. County Route 629 runs through the City, and begins in Ventnor along Wellington Avenue at the Atlantic City border, continuing southeast along

Dorset Avenue, and southwest along Ventnor Avenue to the Margate border. The City has 36.45 miles of roadways, with 2.42 miles being owned and maintained by Atlantic County and 34.03 miles of roadways being owned and maintained by the municipality.

### 8.3.2 Emergency Evacuation Routes

Ventnor's barrier island waterfront location and the potential for additional hurricanes and storms in the future make it necessary to plan for emergency evacuation routes to move people and equipment in times of emergency, and provide safe, efficient routes to emergency shelters and similar facilities within the region. This is particularly important for flood-prone areas of the City. Key aspects of emergency evacuation route planning include identification of existing and potential routes, completing necessary modernization and flood proofing, ensuring that routes are properly maintained and marked through signage, and informing the public about the presence of such routes. Emergency evacuation routes should provide regional connections as the City has no emergency egress linked directly to the City. Modernizing and flood proofing roadways to be used as emergency evacuation routes will improve mobility and facilitate the evacuation of the City in times of crisis. To aid in this planning, this re-examination is updated to include public facilities and critical infrastructure mapping. Note that this mapping shows the relation of these features to mapped flood hazard areas.

Figure 8.1 - Evacuation Routes and Critical Facilities in the City of Ventnor



The Atlantic County Coastal Evacuation Route through Ventnor is Ventnor Avenue. Ventnor Avenue is a municipal roadway east of Dorset Avenue and is County Route 629 west of Dorset Avenue. Evacuees would travel either east or west along Ventnor Avenue. Those traveling east would travel to Route 40/322 through Atlantic City and Egg Harbor Township or through Atlantic City to the Atlantic City Expressway or to Route 30 to Absecon. All Routes are susceptible to flooding with the Expressway being the least susceptible. Those traveling west would travel to Route 563 through Margate or through Route 152 through Longport. Both Routes are susceptible to flooding. As the evacuation routes are prone to flooding evacuations are necessary well in advance of any flood type disaster.

Category one storm surge is likely to inundate most of the road network in the City, including the main evacuation route of Ventnor Avenue, and all the City’s bus routes and stops, which also serve a critical role in evacuation measures. As more of the developed areas are projected to be impacted with three feet of sea level rise, so too is the transportation network, including current roadways, bus routes and stops, mostly in the Ventnor Heights area.

**Figure 8.2 – Atlantic County Evacuation Routes**



Source: <http://www.readyatlantic.org/act/evacroutemap.asp>

The traffic signals in the City provide for an orderly and safe movement of traffic and are well maintained. Traffic signals are located at major intersections along Atlantic Avenue, Ventnor Avenue, Dorset Avenue and Wellington Avenue.

### 8.3.3 County Roadways

The County of Atlantic has one county roadway link through the City. County Route 629 extends from the Atlantic City border west to Wellington Avenue, south to Dorset Avenue and then west along Ventnor Avenue to the border with Margate. This road is partially an evacuation route as indicated above. The County of Atlantic also operates the Dorset Avenue Bridge over Inside Thorofare along this route. This bridge is a Bascule type bridge located along mile 72.1 of the New Jersey Intercoastal Waterway. The yearly bridge schedule from 6/1 thru 9/30 – From 09:15 to 21:15 opens on the ¼ and ¾ hour. Other times on demand. This bridge is expensive to operate and relocation of the inland waterway should be explored as indicated in this Master Plan Reexamination.

**Figure 8.3 - County Roads Serving the City of Ventnor**

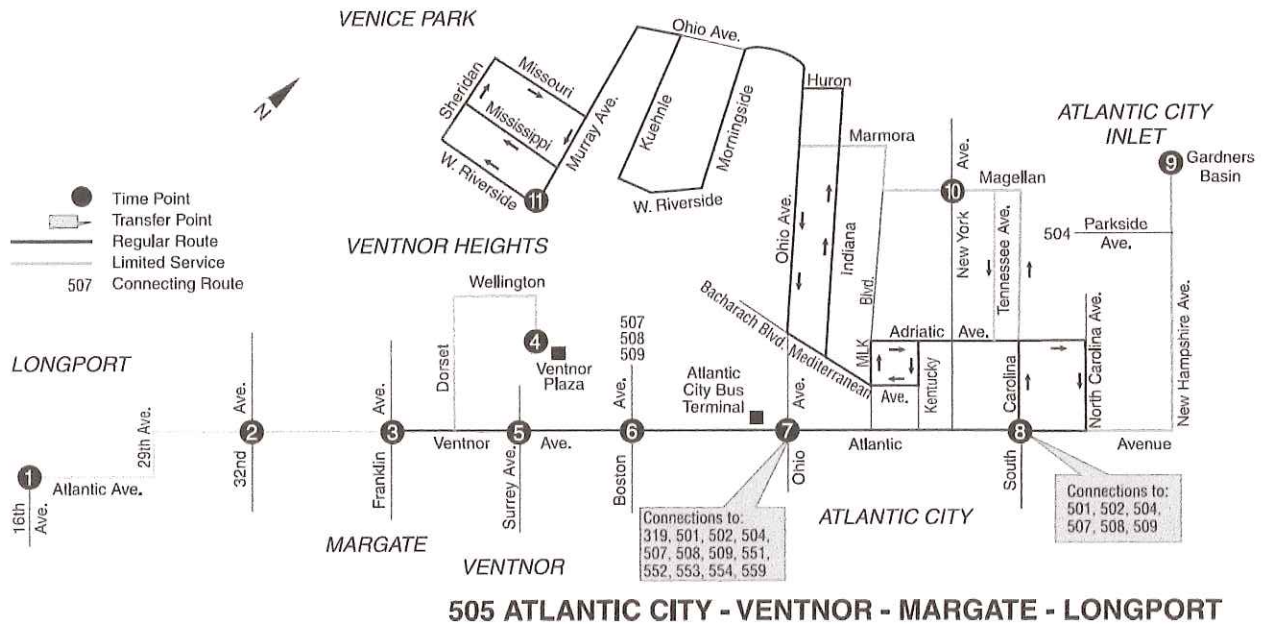


### 8.3.4 Bus Routes

Ventnor is served by New Jersey Transit for bus service. New Jersey Transit Route 505 provides service between Atlantic City, Ventnor, Margate and Longport. As detailed in the figure below, there are two stops within the City. Regular service is provided to Ventnor Avenue and Surrey Avenue.

Limited Service is provided to Ventnor Plaza at Wellington Avenue. Refer to [njtransit.com](http://njtransit.com) for full schedule and rates.

**Figure 8.4 - Bus Routes Serving the City of Ventnor**



### 8.3.5 Jitney Service

During the summer of 2016, both the City of Ventnor and neighboring City of Margate approved Jitney routes operated by the Atlantic City Jitney Association through the cities. Ventnor cited that the expansion would help reduce traffic and alleviate parking concerns, as well as reduce intoxicated driving. Local businesses would also benefit as people would have an efficient way to travel to the City. In Ventnor, the route ran along Atlantic Avenue and was operated from 10 a.m. to 1 a.m. Thursday through Sunday.

Stops were located on both sides of Oakland Avenue, in front of City Hall heading south, on Newport Avenue near the Atlantic County Library/Ventnor Branch, and at the Suffolk Avenue tennis courts. Stops were not permitted in front of residential properties, and drivers were not being permitted to pick up passengers trying to flag them down. Rides ranged from \$3.00-\$4.00. This trial was given 45 days to see if it was a viable program. Both Ventnor and Margate ended the program after the trial period. Poor awareness of Jitney service, lack of promotion, lack of route info, driver confusion, poor marketing, and the rise of UBER and similar ride share services were key reasons cited on online publications why Jitney ridership was almost non-existent in the Downbeach area. It is

recommended that the City evaluate the trial programs deficiencies noted above and any implementation in the future should be planned to address these.

Although different in many respects, studies on successful shuttle systems indicate that they 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; and
- 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.

### **8.3.6 Boardwalk, Streets, Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities**

The City of Ventnor is a community with ties to the beach, bay and local tourism economy. walking and bicycling is a popular activity within the City in the summertime. Visitors and residents enjoy walking and bike riding along the boardwalk and through the neighborhoods, both for recreation and exercise. Bicyclists and pedestrians are often beach goers that travel along and cross over major roads to get to the beach or boardwalk. 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.

Ventnor's boardwalk is an essential component of the bicycle and pedestrian facilities within the City. Located along the beachfront from South Fredericksburg Avenue to Jackson Avenue, it is 1.7 miles in length, and connected to the famous Atlantic City Boardwalk. Access ramps are located at the end of each intersecting street end. The boardwalk is 20 feet wide, but has an effective travel way of approximately 14 feet due to improvements such as street lights, trash cans, benches and railings. The boardwalk is a shared use facility that allows both pedestrians and bicycles. Bicycle use is only permitted on Saturdays and Sundays July 1st through Labor Day between the hours of 6 am and 12 noon. During the same time, weekday use is permitted during daylight hours. Labor Day through June 31 bicycle use is permitted during daylight hours. Signage is provided at access points indicating these restrictions. The boardwalk is well used by pedestrians and bicyclists for both recreational and transportation purposes.

Atlantic Avenue is another main pedestrian and bicycle route through the City due to its proximity to the beach and boardwalk. This street carries four lanes of traffic through the City. The route travels through both signalized and unsignalized intersections. On street parking is permitted on both sides of the street. Sidewalks are provided and no bike lanes are present. Ventnor Avenue is similar but only carries two lanes through the City.

Dorset/Wellington Avenue is another important street and pedestrian and bicycle route through the City and is the primary access point into Ventnor from the Atlantic City Expressway. Dorset Avenue is a 50 feet wide travel way with sidewalks and on-street parking on both sides. The route travels through both signalized and unsignalized intersections. No bicycle lanes are present.

Monmouth and Winchester Avenues are also important travel routes through the City's residential districts. These routes run parallel to Ventnor Avenue and form a one-way street pair. Each road has one travel lane and on-street parking on both sides. The route travels mostly through unsignalized intersections. No bicycle lanes are present.

Most other local and neighborhood streets within the City have sidewalks and little or no other provisions for bicycle lanes.

The Circulation Element's vision is to develop and expand the City's network of bicycle and pedestrian linkages and secure the recreation and transportation benefits of bicycling and walking for residents. The Circulation Element envisions a network of bicycle and pedestrian linkages that connects the residential developments with open space and recreation areas; schools; shopping and business centers; and, other key destinations in the City and neighboring municipalities. In all variations, bicyclists and pedestrians will be able to travel in a safe and efficient manner throughout the City, which will boost bicycling and walking as a means of transport.

In addition, Atlantic County has been awarded a \$3.5 million grant to make safety improvements on County Route 629. This project includes the construction of pedestrian and traffic signal improvements. The City of Ventnor should consider capitalizing on this opportunity to pursue streetscape improvements, decorative crosswalks and other physical enhancements on Ventnor Avenue and Dorset Avenue with focus on the commercial districts.

**8.4 Recommendations**

The concepts and recommendations presented in this Plan were developed in accordance with current design guidance, but are not fully engineered. Implementation of many of the recommendations will require engineering studies to refine design elements related to traffic warrants, right of way, drainage design, utilities, and other considerations. This study did not investigate whether existing curb ramps or other pedestrian features are compliant with current ADA standards.

Recommendations from this study will also need to be advanced in accordance with state and federal regulations that govern environmentally-sensitive areas, which include coastal zones, wetlands, woodlands, and preserved open space. The avoidance of regulated wetlands will be a consideration during the implementation of recommended shared use path projects. Projects adding new paved areas will also need to meet NJDEP Stormwater Management (SWM) Rules for groundwater recharge and runoff quantity. The use of pervious paving – whether asphalt, concrete, or gravel – can help to mitigate potential environmental impacts related to stormwater runoff.

### **8.4.1 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Implementation**

The City of Ventnor has completed a Bicycle-Pedestrian Safety Study with the City of Margate titled the "Ventnor-Margate Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan". The study was funded by the New Jersey Department of Transportation and it analyzes traffic, crash, and parking data; public input; and the current streetscape to propose improvements to the bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in both cities. The Plan includes a future bicycle and pedestrian network that links neighborhoods with schools, parks, businesses, and other destinations. The study's recommendations focused on improving safety and mobility, and serve as the basis for implementing future bicycle and pedestrian projects in Ventnor and Margate.

It is recommended that the findings of this Plan as they relate to Ventnor City be incorporated into this Circulation Element in their entirety and implemented. The bicycle and pedestrian issues that are specific to the City are summarized below. These Plan recommendations have been sorted to indicate recommendations for Ventnor and have only been summarized and the complete Plan should be referenced when implementing these recommendations.

#### **Ventnor Boardwalk**

- Speed differential between people walking and biking on boardwalk creates potential for crashes and near misses
- Bicycle hours are not consistent with Atlantic City, i.e. the boardwalk in Ventnor does not allow riding at night
- Lack of bicycle parking at entrance points

#### **Atlantic Avenue**

- Multiple crashes at many of the signalized and un-signalized intersections
- Vehicles exceeding the speed limit
- Lack of pedestrian features at signalized intersections
- Multi-lane threat at un-signalized crossing locations
- No provision for bike travel
- Unsafe/distracted behavior across all modes – walking, biking, and driving

#### **Ventnor Avenue**

- Several high-crash locations are located within the corridor
- Excessively wide travel lanes increase pedestrian exposure and allow cars to pass each other in the lane
- No provision for bike travel
- Lack of bicycle parking in business districts

#### **Dorset Avenue**

- Safety issues associated with Dorset Avenue Bridge – high crash location
- Open metal grate bridge surface is incompatible with bicycling
- Poor sight distance at intersection with Edgewater Avenue

- No provision for bike travel

### Monmouth/Winchester Avenues

- Crash history on Winchester and Monmouth Avenues
- Lack of stop control may facilitate cut-through traffic
- Crosswalks at most intersections are not marked

### School Access

- Large and/or complex intersections that are intimidating to cross on foot
- Lack of safe bicycle routes to schools

The recommendations presented in this Plan are intended to create a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian network for the study area that enhances non-motorized safety and mobility and promotes access to local and regional destinations in Ventnor as well as neighboring Margate. The plan has five individual components: 1. Pedestrian Improvement Plan; 2. Bicycle Network Plan; 3. Focus Areas; 4. Safe Routes to School; 5. Policy and Program Recommendations. These components are framework plans covering the entire study area. While presented individually, these components work together to create an integrated bicycle and pedestrian network for both communities and provide specific individual recommendations for each community.

**Figure 8.5 - Pedestrian Improvement Plan**



The following Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation Plan recommendations are summarized and incorporated into this Element as follows:

## **1. Pedestrian Improvement Plan**

### **Corridor-wide Pedestrian Improvements**

Strategies were developed to make it safer, more convenient, and more appealing to walk along and across the major pedestrian corridors in the City. These corridors include Atlantic Avenue, Dorset Avenue (between Ventnor and Balfour), and the business districts along Ventnor Avenue.

### **Curb Extensions at Major Crossing Locations**

Curb extensions improve conditions for pedestrians by shortening the crossing distance and increasing visibility between motorists and pedestrians, while also helping to manage traffic speeds. Another benefit of curb extensions is that they provide additional sidewalk space, which is important in business districts along Ventnor Avenue where sidewalk space is limited but in high demand. This extra space can be used for sidewalk furniture, bicycle parking, and/or “green infrastructure” elements such as storm water infiltration on and street trees. Curb extensions are most effective when installed at sidewalk grade level, but can also be implemented using paint or textured surfaces combined with vertical elements such as flexible bollards or planters.

### **Parking Restrictions at Intersections to Improve Pedestrian Visibility**

When vehicles are parked too close to pedestrian crossings, they limit sightlines of both pedestrians and motorists, which can increase the risk of crashes. Restricting parking and other sight obstructions adjacent to crosswalks helps pedestrians to safely cross the street by providing motorists with a clearer view of pedestrians and pedestrians with a clearer view of oncoming vehicles. A variety of treatments can be used to encourage better parking behavior including painting the curb, roadway striping (box or triangle), flexible bollards, and curb extensions. While low cost treatments such as paint or striping may be effective in some areas, in others it may be necessary or desirable to provide physical roadway measures such as flexible bollards or curb extensions to prevent motorists from parking too close to the crosswalk. Flexible bollards and curb extensions can be combined with bicycle parking to provide an additional benefit.

### **Consistent, High-visibility Crosswalk Markings**

Good crosswalk design is an important component of creating pedestrian-friendly intersections. High visibility crosswalks – often referred to as “continental” or “ladder-style” crosswalks – are more visible to drivers than two parallel lines and are recommended for the primary walking corridors listed above. All crosswalks should be aligned to best match likely pedestrian travel paths, and all legs of an intersection should have the same type of marking.

Crosswalks in areas with high pedestrian volumes should have a minimum width of 10 feet, which allows for comfortable bi-directional pedestrian travel. In business districts and at other gateway intersections, treatments such as brick pavers or textured surfaces can be considered to further emphasize a pedestrian-oriented environment.

### **Pedestrian Upgrades at Signalized Intersections**

Addressing deficient conditions at signalized intersections is an important component of improving pedestrian safety. Full signal upgrades are recommended at intersections along Atlantic Avenue, Ventnor Avenue, and Dorset Avenue where existing signals lack full or partial pedestrian features. The CR 629 Signal Optimization Project also recommended full upgrades at all traffic signals along Ventnor Avenue. Upgrades should include high-visibility crosswalks, ADA-compliant curb ramps, countdown pedestrian signal heads, and No Turn on Red (R10-11 in MUTCD) signage at all approaches.

### **Pedestrian Crossing Improvements at Un-Signalized Intersections**

Providing safe and convenient crossing opportunities is an essential component of pedestrian circulation. Simply put, pedestrians should have the opportunity to cross the road safely. Several treatments can be used to improve safety at un-signalized pedestrian crossing locations. These measures include high-visibility crosswalk striping, In-Street Pedestrian Crossing signs (R1-6a), Pedestrian Warning Signs (W11-2), textured crosswalks, curb extensions, pedestrian refuge areas, and Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs). At locations with higher vehicle speeds/ volumes and/or multiple lanes in each direction, a higher level of control is desired to stop vehicles and provide additional protection for pedestrians. Types of intersection control include Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons (PHBs), pedestrian-actuated traffic signals, and full traffic signals.

### **Automatic “WALK” Signals at Intersections with Routine Pedestrian Activity**

Pedestrian signal heads can be pedestrian-actuated through the use of pedestrian push buttons (PPBs). The use of PPBs often results in longer waits for people trying to cross the street, as they may miss a cycle if they fail to push the button in time. Studies have also shown that compliance with PPBs is low – roughly 50 percent of pedestrians at intersections do not activate push buttons to cross at the intersection. An alternative is to provide automatic “WALK” signals at traffic signals (also referred to as pedestrian recall). Pedestrian recall gives pedestrians a “WALK” signal at every cycle, and thus no pushbutton or detection is necessary. Pedestrian recall is appropriate in business districts and areas with routine pedestrian activity, which include Ventnor Avenue and Atlantic Avenue. It can be used for the entire day, or limited to parts of the day with the busiest pedestrian activity.

### **Streetscape Improvements**

Streetscape improvements are recommended for the commercial nodes along Ventnor Avenue, Atlantic Avenue, Amherst Avenue, and Dorset Avenue. Streetscape improvements such as pedestrian scale lighting, sidewalk improvements, way finding signage, and street

trees help to create a better walking experience and sense of place, while also improving pedestrian safety by softening the appearance of the roadway, calming traffic, and making bicyclists and pedestrians more visible. Street trees have been documented to provide several general benefits (e.g. increased property values, stormwater management, aesthetics) as well as benefits directly related to walking and biking (e.g. reduced air and noise pollution, traffic calming, protection from the elements).

### **Geometric Improvements at Existing Crossings**

Enhanced treatments and geometric improvements are recommended at the intersections (listed below) in the study area. Specific improvements for each location are presented under the Safe Routes to School Plan and the Ventnor Area components are:

- Lafayette Avenue at Essex Court
- Lafayette Avenue at Fulton Avenue
- Wyoming Avenue at Calvert Gardens Plaza
- Dorset Avenue at Edgewater Avenue

### **New Un-Signalized Crossings**

Based on public input, site observations, and crash analysis, new un-signalized pedestrian crossings are recommended at the locations (listed below) to accommodate pedestrian desire lines. Each location should be evaluated individually to determine the appropriate treatment.

- Ventnor Avenue (CR 629) at N. Cornwall Avenue (Ventnor)
- Ventnor Avenue (CR 629) at N. Derby Avenue (Ventnor)
- Ventnor Avenue (CR 629) at N. Dudley Avenue (Ventnor)
- Lafayette Avenue at Fulton Avenue (Ventnor)
- Wellington Avenue (CR 629) at Suffolk Avenue (Ventnor)

### **New Signalized Crossings**

The intersection of Atlantic Avenue and Washington Avenue in Ventnor is a major pedestrian access route to the southern end of the boardwalk, but is spaced several blocks away from the closest signal in each direction. A traffic signal is recommended to provide a protected crossing at this location. An engineering study would be needed to determine if warrants specified in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) can be met.

### **Sidewalk Improvements**

Ventnor has an extensive network of continuous sidewalks throughout the City limits. Within this network, the sidewalk along Wellington Avenue currently ends at Little Rock Avenue and does not extend to the Ventnor Shopping Plaza. New sidewalk is recommended to accommodate people walking to the Plaza from the adjacent residential neighborhood.

## 2. Bicycle Network Plan

The Bicycle Network Plan shows the recommended bicycle network plan for Ventnor and Margate. Each link within the bicycle network plan is color-coded according to the recommended facility type, which include three categories: Shared Lane Markings, Bicycle Lanes, and Shared Use Paths. The plan was developed to connect major destinations within the study area and make bicycling a viable alternative for citywide travel, as well as connect with the regional bicycle network. Desired bicycle routes were identified based on the location of activity generators and stakeholder input. Specific facility types for each identified route were determined based on street characteristics – curb-to-curb widths, posted speed limits, and traffic volumes – combined with stakeholder input.

Figure 8.6 - Bicycle Network Plan



### Shared Lane Markings

Shared lane markings (commonly referred to as “sharrows”) are appropriate on streets where the posted speed limit is low enough to accommodate bicyclists and motor vehicles in the same lanes (30 mph or less). They are useful in situations where providing separate facilities for cyclists is difficult due to insufficient width. Shared lane markings on the pavement increase the visibility of cycling along a street and provide guidance to the cyclist



on the proper location to ride. Similar to bike lane symbols, sharrows should be placed after each intersection and then spaced as required in the MUTCD. Shared lanes markings are recommended for the following Ventnor streets and corridors:

- Balfour Avenue
- Dorset Avenue (between bridge and Atlantic Ave)
- Monmouth Avenue
- Winchester Avenue
- Wyoming Avenue

### **Bike Lanes**

Bike lanes are portions of the roadway that are reserved for the exclusive use of bicycles through designated signage, striping, and pavement markings. They decrease the stress level for bicyclists by providing a dedicated riding space and increasing the predictability of bicycle and motor vehicle movements. Bike lanes can be directional with traffic on each side of the street, or combined into a two-way facility on one side (referred to as a separated bikeway or cycle track).

Bike lanes should have a minimum width of 5 feet on curbed roadways; wider lanes are often desirable on streets with higher traffic speeds and volumes, a high percentage of heavy vehicles, on-street parallel parking, and/or relatively steep inclines. With lanes that are 7 feet or wider, a minimum 2 feet wide buffered area can be striped to further separate bike traffic from motor vehicle traffic and/or the door zone of parked vehicles. When bike lanes are placed next to parking, these buffered areas enable bicyclist to ride outside of the “door zone” where drivers enter and exit vehicles. Drainage grates can also pose a hazard for cyclists if the openings are parallel to the direction of travel. Bicycle safe drainage grates should be installed or retrofitted on all roads, but particularly those with bike lanes. Bike lanes are recommended for the following Ventnor streets:

- Atlantic Avenue
- Dorset Avenue (between bridge and bay)
- Ventnor Avenue
- Wellington Avenue (between Dorset and AC border)

### **Shared Use Paths**

Shared use paths (also referred to as “multi-use trails”) provide a dedicated pathway for bicycles and pedestrians that is physically separated from motor vehicle traffic. These facilities can be placed along roadways, through parks, or along other rights of way such as rail corridors or beachfronts. Shared use paths should be a minimum of 10’ wide to accommodate bi-directional traffic, but additional width is necessary in areas with high bicycle and pedestrian demand. In congested areas, centerline striping can help clarify the

direction of traffic and organize pathway traffic. Signage can also be used to remind bicyclists to yield to pedestrians and pass on the left, and remind slower users to keep right.

### Bicycle Parking Plan

Bicycle parking is important at activity generators including businesses, schools, transit stops, public facilities such as libraries or recreation centers, and other employment centers. Secure, well-lit bicycle parking located close to building entrances and transit entry points can make bicycling more attractive, and reduces the risk of bicycle damage or theft.

Figure 8.7 - Bicycle Parking Plan



A bicycle parking plan was developed to address the demand for bicycle parking throughout the study area. Ventnor's 12 of the 21 priority locations shown in the Bicycle Parking Plan were determined based on public input to the study website, activity generators, and site visits. Additional locations may be warranted based on local demand.

Bicycle parking can be provided in the form of bike racks and corrals, or more secure facilities such as bike shelters and lockers. Bike racks are relatively low cost, have a small footprint, and can be customized to match or enhance local aesthetics. Bike corrals have a larger

footprint and provide storage for multiple bicycles. Bike shelters provide secure, covered protection for multiple bicycles, while bike lockers provide added protection from theft by using an enclosed storage space.

### **3. Focus Areas**

This section covers the major travel corridors and key areas within Ventnor and Margate where a higher level of evaluation was necessary to comprehensively address issues related to both biking and walking. Concept plans were developed for some of these areas to graphically depict the recommended bicycle and pedestrian treatments.

#### **Ventnor Boardwalk**

The boardwalk is a tremendous asset to the City of Ventnor; however, several issues were identified related to conflicts between pedestrians/bicyclists and bicycle hours of operation. With a 14 feet effective clear width, the boardwalk is currently not wide enough to designate separate walking and biking lanes. Widening the boardwalk to provide sufficient space for designated bicycle and pedestrian zones should be considered.

During peak periods, the boardwalk should serve low-speed recreational bicycle trips, with the adjacent street network serving bicyclists desiring to ride at higher speeds. The following modifications are recommended to increase the boardwalk's usefulness for biking while at the same time reducing potential conflicts:

- Advisory signs should be added along the boardwalk to reinforce its role as a recreational bike route. At a minimum, signage should remind bicyclists to yield to pedestrians and pass on the left, encourage bicyclists to ride at appropriate speeds for a shared facility, and remind slower users to keep right. A variety of sign options are provided in Part 9 of the MUTCD. The signs can be developed in a context-sensitive manner using a unique theme that matches the local environment, as has been done in other communities.
- The bicycling hours of operations should be expanded to allow 24-hour per day bicycle access for the entire off -peak period (Labor Day to June 30) and on weekdays in the peak season. This would achieve better consistency between the Ventnor and Atlantic City boardwalks and help to expand accessibility to the regional bicycle network.

#### **Atlantic Avenue**

Atlantic Avenue presents major challenges for bicyclists and pedestrians, as evidenced by both technical analysis and local stakeholder feedback. Two sets of recommendations were developed to improve conditions on Atlantic Avenue: (1) operational recommendations that

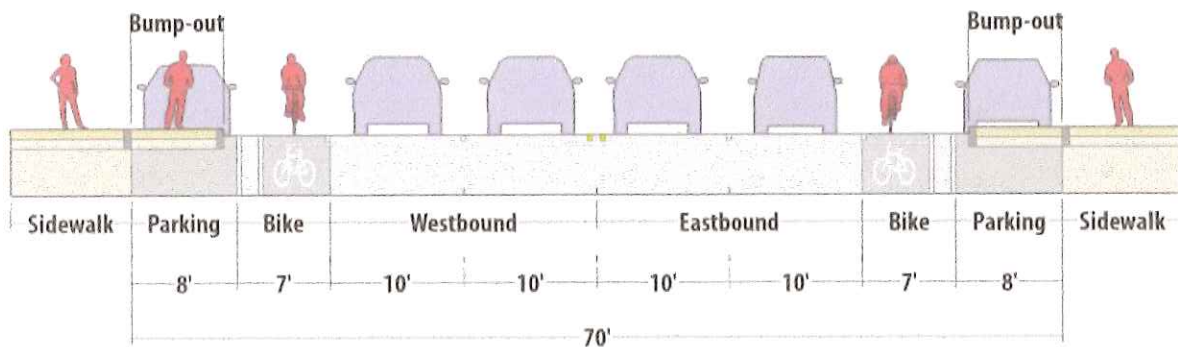
would provide modest benefits and could be implemented quickly, and (2) corridor re-design options that comprehensively address bicycle and pedestrian needs along Atlantic Avenue.

### Operational Recommendations

The following recommendations address operational deficiencies related to existing traffic signals, signage, and striping on Atlantic Avenue:

- Provide adequate time for pedestrians to cross at a walking speed of 3.0 or 3.5 feet/second
- Implement consistent crosswalk markings (high-visibility type on all approaches)
- Extend buffered bike lanes into Ventnor by reducing lane widths to 10'
- Explore GPS-based time clocks to achieve traffic signal synchronization and maintain an operating speed of 25 mph using the existing controllers
- Institute a speed limit reduction from 35 mph to 25 mph

**Figure 8.8 - Recommended Buffered Bike Lanes on Atlantic Avenue in Ventnor**



### Corridor Redesign Options

While the operational recommendations described above would provide some benefits, they do not address the most significant safety issue, i.e. that a four-lane section on combined with numerous un-signalized crossing locations creates a situation where pedestrians desiring to cross Atlantic are often exposed to multiple lanes of fast-moving traffic. Four-lane sections have also been shown to increase crashes for motorists because they encourage higher speeds and weaving. Under the current four lane configuration, additional protected crossings would be needed along the length of the corridor to significantly improve the pedestrian crossing situation.

An alternative approach is to redesign the Atlantic Avenue corridor so that it functions better for all users. Converting Atlantic Avenue from a four-lane to a three-lane section (commonly referred to as a road diet) is recommended as a comprehensive solution to address bicycle and pedestrian needs while also improving vehicular safety and maintaining parking in both directions. Road diets have been shown to provide benefits for all roadway users – bicyclists,

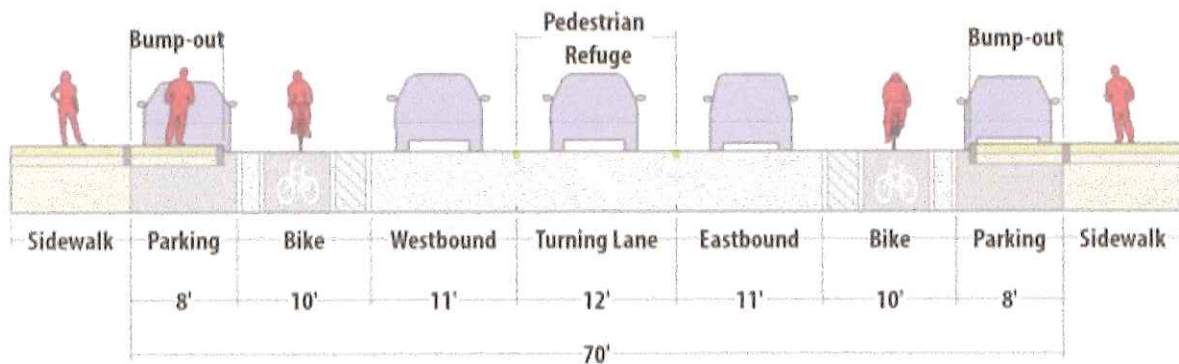
pedestrians, and motorists. In addition to providing space for bicycle lanes, they significantly improve pedestrian safety by allowing pedestrians to cross one lane of traffic at a time, thus eliminating the multi-lane threat condition. A road diet would also help to manage speeds on Atlantic Avenue by preventing vehicles from weaving and driving faster than the rest of the traffic flow. Finally, road diets have been shown to reduce vehicular crash rates by decreasing the number of conflict points.

Available traffic data indicates that Atlantic Avenue through the study area falls within acceptable traffic volume limits for road diet conversions. Implementation of a road diet would involve upgrade or replacement of the existing traffic signals, and may provide opportunities to reduce or consolidate the number of traffic signals – particularly those whose main purpose is to facilitate pedestrian crossings. Further study would be needed to determine the specific geometry and traffic design of a road diet on Atlantic Avenue, but the road diet would function best as a regional facility through Ventnor and Margate that is consistent with the section in Longport and could be extended into Atlantic City. Two versions of the three-lane section concept were developed: (A) a typical road diet with bicycle lanes in both directions and (B) a variation with a two-way bikeway on the beach side.

**(A) Three-Lane Section w/ Directional Bike Lanes**

The figure below presents a concept plan and cross-section for a road diet with directional bike lanes on Atlantic Avenue. In this scenario, the road would be restriped to provide one travel lane and a buffered bicycle lane in each direction with a two-way center turn lane. Enough width is available to buffer the bike lane from both the parking lane and the travel lane. The center turn lane can be used as a pedestrian refuge at intersections with one-way/southbound streets, where there are no turns from Atlantic onto the side street.

**Figure 8.9 – Three Lane Section w/Directional Bike Lanes on Atlantic Avenue in Ventnor**

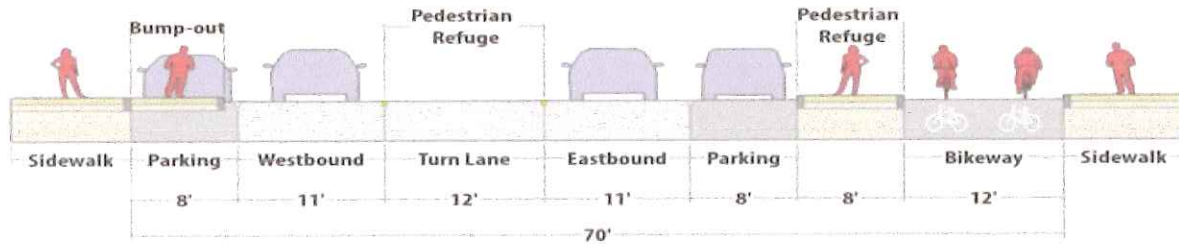


**(B) Three-Lane Section w/ Separated Bikeway**

The figure below shows a variation of the road diet that consolidates the directional bicycle lanes into a two-way, parking protected bikeway on the beach side of Atlantic Avenue. The

bikeway would be physically separated from traffic and designed to maintain both on-street parking and access to local driveways. This variation would provide a low-stress facility for bicycling along Atlantic Avenue, and would also benefit pedestrians by adding an additional refuge area between the bikeway and the travel lanes. Bicycle signals could be used at intersections to minimize potential conflicts between turning vehicles and bikeway users.

**Figure 8.10 – Three Lane Section w/Separated Bike Lanes on Atlantic Avenue in Ventnor**



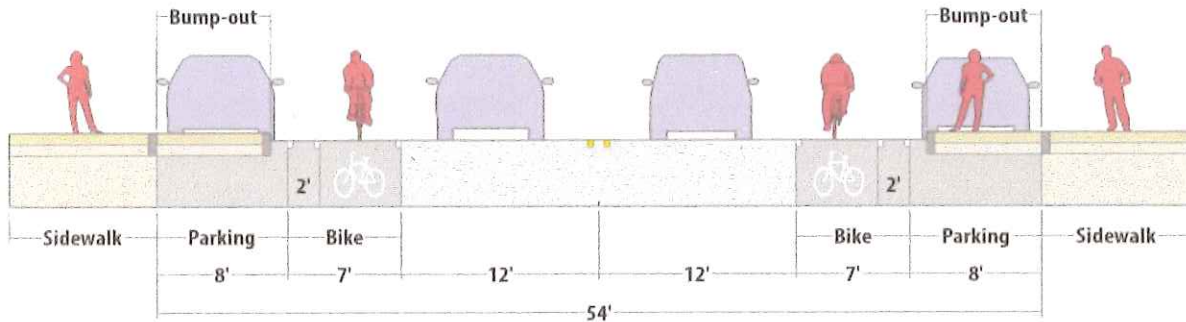
**Ventnor Avenue/Dorset Avenue (CR 629)**

Recommendations for CR 629 are focused on improving bicycle travel along these corridors and addressing pedestrian issues in specific problem areas. Complementary corridor-wide pedestrian recommendations for Ventnor Avenue and Dorset Avenues are discussed with the Pedestrian Improvement Plan earlier in this chapter.

**Ventnor Avenue Bicycle Lanes**

Ventnor Avenue’s wide travel lanes present an opportunity to better accommodate the many bicyclists who ride on this active commercial street. Bike lanes would better organize the roadway space by indicating the best place for bicyclists to ride, while at the same time discouraging cars from speeding and passing within the lane. The Figure below shows the recommended section for Ventnor Avenue, which features 12 feet wide travel lanes with a 7 feet wide buffered bike lane in each direction. A 2feet striped buffer area is recommended between the bike lanes and on-street parking to encourage bicyclists to ride outside of the door zone. The section of Ventnor Avenue between N. Wilson Avenue and Jerome Avenue currently has a center turn lane in addition to the two travel lanes. Design of the bicycle lanes through this section would need to balance the need for the center turn lane with the need for on-street parking in both directions. Bicyclists would also have the option to ride along the low-volume, low-speed frontage roads that run parallel to the main travel lanes.

**Figure 8.11 – Recommended Bike Lanes on Ventnor Avenue**



### **Ventnor Avenue at Dorset Avenue**

The section of Ventnor Avenue between Sacramento Avenue and Dorset Avenue has the highest concentration of bicycle/ pedestrian crashes in the study area, with many involving pedestrian crossings at un-signalized intersections. Bicycle and pedestrian needs in this area can be addressed by:

- Adding high-visibility crosswalk markings at three unsignalized intersections (N. Cornwall, N. Derby, and N. Dudley) with a pedestrian refuge island at N. Derby Avenue.
- Removing the second (curbside) through-lane in the eastbound direction. Removal of this lane would allow space for a bicycle lane in each direction and on-street parking in one direction, and would encourage lower vehicle speeds. Preliminary traffic analysis indicates that the second through-lane is not needed to maintain adequate traffic flow.

### **Dorset Avenue Bridge**

The section of Dorset Avenue between Ventnor Avenue and Monmouth Avenue is a high-crash area that was identified as a high priority problem area by local stakeholders. The following treatments are recommended:

- Improving sight lines at the Edgewater Avenue intersection by adding curb extensions and re-aligning the existing crosswalk
- Installing a bikeable surface over the open metal grate bridge surface (minimum 6 feet width in each direction). Surface options include steel plates or concrete infill; both treatments have been utilized to retrofit similar bridge surfaces in other communities.
- Adding buffered bicycle lanes to Dorset Avenue through Ventnor Heights. The bike lanes would extend south to Winchester Avenue, where they would transition to Shared Lane Markings for one block before connecting with the Ventnor Avenue bike lanes.

- Painting or texturizing the Dorset/Edgewater/Derby intersection to calm traffic and create a gateway into Ventnor Heights.

#### 4. Safe Routes to School

Concepts were developed to improve walking and bicycling access to local schools by addressing the problem areas identified in each City’s School Travel Plan. The Safe Routes to School Overview Plan provides an overview of the recommended improvements.

**Figure 8.12 – Ventnor Intersection Improvements**



#### Ventnor Gardens Plaza and Wyoming Avenue

Pedestrian improvements were developed for the intersection of Ventnor Gardens Plaza and Wyoming Avenue, which is part of the primary walking route to the Ventnor Educational Community Complex (VECC) but was identified as an area of concern in the *Ventnor School Travel Plan*. The improvements include curb modifications/extensions at each corner to calm traffic, improve visibility, and shorten crossing distances along with high-visibility crosswalks and stop control at each of the four legs. These improvements would create a safer and more predictable environment for children walking to VECC and facilitate better crossing guard safety and management at this intersection.

### **Lafayette Avenue**

A combination of bicycle and pedestrian improvements were developed for Lafayette Avenue directly in front of the VECC. The street is currently very wide (60 feet) and the space is not well defined, which leads to long crossings/vehicular speeding and makes it more difficult for crossing guards to manage the space. Bicycle lanes along Lafayette Avenue would provide dedicated space for kids biking to school, and along with a striped center turn lane, better define the roadway space. Curb extensions are proposed at the three crossing locations along Lafayette Avenue - Balfour Avenue, Essex Court, and Fulton Avenue – to shorten crossings, calm traffic, and improve visibility. Pedestrian refuge islands would also be included at each crossing location.

### **Monmouth and Winchester Avenues**

Shared lane markings are recommended as an immediate strategy for Monmouth and Winchester Avenues to improve conditions for children who are comfortable bicycling in the road, as well as others desiring to bicycle on these routes. This plan also recommends investigating the feasibility of bicycle lanes on Monmouth/Winchester as a longer-term strategy to improve bike access to schools within the study area. Bike lanes could be achieved by replacing one of the parking lanes with a bike lane, which would be located along the curb and separated from the travel lane with a 2-3 feet wide buffer area. The bike lanes would function as a one-way pair, with an east bound bike lane on Monmouth and a west bound bike lane on Winchester.

Increasing the number of multi-way stop-controlled intersections along Monmouth and Winchester Avenues was discussed as a strategy to provide safer pedestrian crossings and discourage cut-through traffic on these streets. Most intersections along Monmouth/Winchester lack crosswalks and are stop-controlled for only the minor streets, which can lead to driver and pedestrian confusion over who has the right-of-way and encourages cut-through traffic. Further study is recommended to determine which intersections could be converted to multi-way stops with marked crosswalks.

## **5. Policy and Program Recommendations**

Ventnor should work with Margate, Longport and Atlantic City to develop a regional education campaign for Absecon Island. A good example is the Street Smart NJ campaign, which is a public education, awareness, and behavioral change pedestrian safety campaign created and coordinated by the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA). This program has proved successful at changing travelers' behavior so that they are making smarter, safer decisions on the road. Education is geared towards all users - motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

### **Street Smart, NJ**

The Street Smart NJ campaign was first piloted in 2013 in five New Jersey communities – Hackettstown, Jersey City, Long Beach Island, Newark, and Woodbridge – and demonstrated the value of community-based efforts to change pedestrian and motorist behavior to improve safety. The program was expanded in 2016 to include the NJ Shore communities of Asbury Park, Bay Head, Bradley Beach, Long Branch, Manasquan, and Point Pleasant. The campaign uses radio, outdoor, and transit advertising – along with grassroots public awareness efforts and law enforcement – to address pedestrian safety. Communities and organizations can use the strategies and materials that are available on NJTPA’s website to create their own campaigns that build on the successes realized in the initial pilot communities. The bicycle and pedestrian recommendations outlined in this plan are designed to provide safe and convenient access to activity generators for non-motorized forms of transportation. While “engineering” solutions can go a long way to meet this need, a successful bicycle and pedestrian program also incorporates policy and program related recommendations. Program recommendations can improve conditions for bicyclists and pedestrians through education, encouragement, and enforcement actions, while policy actions that benefit bicycle and pedestrian travel can have long-lasting effects with minimal or even no financial cost.

### **Education**

Crash data analysis shows that engineering improvements alone will not reduce the incidence of pedestrian injuries and fatalities. Sustained education, coupled with encouragement and enforcement, has proven over time safety. The goal of an effective education program is to increase public awareness of non-motorized travel modes, and to teach safe behavior to walkers, cyclists, and motorists. Pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists all need to be taught how to co-exist safely, and that each is a legitimate user of the road. Successful education strategies can help motivate a change in specific behavior, and teach safety skills that can reduce the risk of injury. These programs also help raise awareness of pedestrian and bicycle issues.

### **Encouragement**

Many strategies can be used to encourage people to walk or bike instead of driving, especially for short trips. Bicycle and pedestrian education programs for children help to encourage walking and cycling at an early age. Building on previous efforts, Ventnor should continue partnering with Cross County Connections Transportation Management Association to develop and maintain bicycle/pedestrian programs at the local schools. Outreach to the adult population is equally important. The health benefits of active transportation can be a powerful encouragement tool when advertised and reinforced regularly. To reach residents, Ventnor should publish materials explaining the health benefits of biking and walking on municipal and partner websites (Green Team, School District, Police Department, etc.).

### **Bicycle Maps and Brochures**

Maps and/or brochures showing the bicycle network can help encourage cyclists to use designated routes – while also teaching motorists to expect cyclists on these routes. The beach communities should work together to develop materials that identify existing bicycle and pedestrian routes, both locally and regionally. By highlighting preferred routes for walking and biking, these maps can be useful to both residents and visitors. Maps can also contain information about the benefits of non-motorized transportation, walking and biking safety tips, relevant traffic laws, bicycle parking locations, and information about local biking or walking groups.

### **Enforcement**

Enforcement is a key component of a successful bicycle and pedestrian program. After the engineering recommendations are implemented, and in conjunction with education and encouragement efforts, new roadway conditions require enforcement for patterns of behavior to change. A common problem with enforcement actions is that one side is labeled the enemy and the other a victim, creating animosity among users. An effective program focuses on awareness and education, and enforces legal behavior among all users.

Enforcement alone will not always yield behavioral changes. Quite often, there is a physical condition that influences behavior. For example, a straight road with multiple and/or wide lanes often results in high speeds, regardless of the posted speed (Atlantic Avenue is a good example). In these situations, ticketing will not necessarily reduce speeds, and a change to the physical roadway is often required.

Enforcement should always be paired with education and encouragement to improve the bicycle and pedestrian environment. Without encouraging and increasing bicycle and pedestrian activity, motorists will not expect them to be in the roadway, and will be less prepared for their presence. Similarly, engineering efforts will be wasted without users of the bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

### **“Stop and Stay Stopped” Law**

New Jersey’s “Stop and Stay Stopped” law (enacted April 1, 2010) was evaluated in context of this study. While opinions on the law have been mixed, representatives from the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety have indicated that pedestrian crashes in most NJ Shore towns have decreased since the law’s passage. For example, in Ocean City there was a 46 percent drop in the five years after the law (36) compared with the five years prior to the law (67). In Ventnor and Margate combined, there were 95 bicycle/pedestrian crashes during the 3 full years preceding the law’s passage, as compared to 64 bicycle/pedestrian crashes in the 3 full years following passage (33 percent drop).

### **Modifications to Municipal Codes**

The portions of Ventnor's municipal codes that cover walking, biking, and street design were reviewed to understand how these regulations influence bicycle and pedestrian conditions. Several code modifications are recommended to improve conditions for bicycle and pedestrian travel, both now and with future land development decisions. These include eliminating bicycle registration requirements, regulating bike rack locations on sidewalks, and providing adequate room for street trees. A detailed description of these recommendations, listed by code section, is as follows:

- §75-2. Registration and Inspections. Remove recommendation that bicycles owned by Ventnor residents must be inspected and registered.
- §75-9. Time and Place Restrictions. Expand bicycle hours of operation to include night hours for all periods except Saturdays and Sundays during the peak season.
- §197-9. Obstructions by Goods or Merchandise. Add statement that bike racks can also be in the public easement sidewalk area, subject to certain limitations. For example: "bicycle parking shall be located so as not to block the pedestrian path on a sidewalk or within a site. A minimum of five feet of unobstructed passage is required on public sidewalks. All bike racks shall be located at least 24 inches in all directions from a wall, door, landscaping, or other obstruction that would render use of the racks difficult or impractical."
- §197-22. Sidewalk Specifications. Supplement minimum sidewalk width requirement with a greater minimum width (8-10 feet) in business and mixed use districts

Ventnor should develop bike parking ordinances to further support bicycling trips throughout the City. Bike parking ordinances typically require that bicycle parking is provided with new development and redevelopment. The number of required bike parking spaces is usually based on development characteristics such as square footage, number of residential units, number of employees, number of auto spaces, and/or minimum spaces per use (i.e. restaurants). Additionally, the City of Ventnor should develop and adopt a Complete Streets policy to integrate implementation of bicycle and pedestrian projects into local planning and design decisions.

### **Bike Share System**

Bike share is an urban transportation concept based on collective use of a distributed supply of bicycles. The bike share concept was pioneered (in its current form) in Europe and is now being implemented, designed, and/or studied in many North American cities. Through this system, bicycles are made available for shared use to individuals on a short-term basis. A major benefit of bike share is that people can borrow a bike from point "A" and return it at point "B". Given the success in other Northeastern cities, it is recommended that the beach communities – Longport, Margate, Ventnor, and Atlantic City – study the feasibility of implementing a regional bike share system for Absecon Island. Many

of the activity generators shown in the Bicycle Parking Plan would be candidate locations for bike share stations. A Bike Share System has already been implemented successfully at the Claridge Hotel in Atlantic City.

#### **8.4.2 Become a Bicycle Friendly Community**

The League of American Bicyclists offers this certification to recognize a community's commitment to improving conditions for bicycling through investment in bicycling promotion, educational programs, infrastructure and pro-bicycling policies. Funding is prioritized for communities that are designated a Bicycle Friendly Community.

#### **8.4.3 Enhance Transit Access**

NJ TRANSIT provides bus service along Ventnor Avenue. All NJ TRANSIT stops should be clearly marked and be accessible by sidewalks. The City should work with NJ TRANSIT to identify stops that have the highest ridership and prioritize those stops for additional pedestrian amenities, such as lighting, shelters, seating or trash receptacles. Promotion of the commercial districts is a natural benefit of enhanced service access.

#### **8.4.4 Develop Jitney/Shuttle Services**

During the summer of 2016, both the City of Ventnor and neighboring City of Margate approved Jitney routes operated by the Atlantic City Jitney Association through the cities. Both Ventnor and Margate ended the program after the trial period. Poor awareness of Jitney service, lack of promotion, lack of route info, driver confusion, poor marketing, and the rise of UBER and similar ride share services were key reasons cited on online publications why Jitney ridership was almost non-existent in the Downbeach area. It is recommended that the City evaluate the trial programs deficiencies noted above and any implementation in the future should be planned to address these.

Although different in many respects, studies on successful shuttle systems indicate that they 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.

The City should continue to look for opportunities for future Jitney and Shuttle services within the City and incorporate these shuttle strategies to ensure a successful mode of transportation that promotes the City's commercial and tourism.

#### **8.4.5 Signage**

Signage serves several important functions. Most importantly, it helps a user to identify his or her location and conveys information about facility characteristics. As such, proper signage is an important part of traffic, bicycle and pedestrian facility design. Signage should contain a minimal amount of text by making extensive use of icons and pictograms. All signage should be made of durable materials that resist fading, water damage, and vandalism. Regarding traffic signage, it is noted that the Federal Highway Administration's Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) provides standards for all traffic control devices nationwide, including signs for bicycle facilities. All traffic control devices nationwide must conform to its standards. It is, therefore, the recommendation of the Circulation Element that the current MUTCD be consulted when planning any future traffic control signage projects.

Improved branded signage is also needed to attract the many tourists who pass through the City. Wayfinding signage should be installed throughout the City. Wayfinding signage should be incorporated into the improvements along Ventnor and Atlantic Avenues to direct visitors to points of interest including shopping districts, the community center and library, City Hall, parks and playgrounds and ecotourism destinations like Ventnor West. The Commercial Districts are not clearly defined and they have no pivotal intersection or gateway. A package of consistent and well-designed wayfinding signage would help shoppers locate businesses and parking areas and could begin to brand the areas as shopping and dining destination and promote better and safer traffic circulation.

#### **8.4.5 Geometric Improvements**

While geometric improvements are much costlier 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. It is recommended that geometric improvements specifically recommended in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan be implemented.

#### **8.4.6 Pavement Markings**

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 in some locations. 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 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 these materials is increased significantly with the addition of glass beads to the mix. The beads also provide these materials with their nighttime reflectivity. 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 to streets.

**8.4.7 Street Amenities**

When planning roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, it is important to provide appropriate amenities. The appropriateness of an amenity will be determined by the function, type, and anticipated users of the facility. Amenities have a significant impact on a user’s overall experience, and may include: lights; signage; fences; tree grates; bicycle racks; bicycle repair stations and air pumps; benches; picnic tables/areas; drinking fountains; recycling and refuse containers; observation areas; and shelters, among others. These improvements that currently exist within the City are lacking consistency with their design. A set of design standards should be developed to create uniformity for all future street amenity projects. Incorporation of the City's historic areas should be considered in developing the design standards for all street amenities. A comprehensive theme should be planned to give and reinforce and develop the City's sense of place.

Streetscape improvements are recommended for the commercial nodes along Ventnor Avenue, Atlantic Avenue and Dorset Avenue. Streetscape improvements such as pedestrian scale, energy efficient, LED lighting, sidewalk improvements, wayfinding signage, clearly defined crosswalks and street trees help to create a better walking experience and sense of place, while also improving pedestrian safety by softening the appearance of the roadway, calming traffic, and making bicyclists and pedestrians more visible. Street trees have been documented to provide several general benefits (i.e. increased property values, stormwater management, aesthetics) as well as benefits directly related to walking and biking (e.g. reduced air and noise pollution, traffic calming, protection from the elements). These improvements should be augmented features including bump-outs, bike lanes, bike racks, trash and recycling containers and other amenities.

**8.4.8 Elevate Wellington Avenue**

As indicated throughout the reexamination, Wellington Avenue is plagued by nuisance flooding during the smallest tidal storm events. The City should continue to work with the county, the state, the NJDEP and the Army Corps to develop a plan to elevate Wellington Avenue. This route is a major

access way into and out of the City and access should be maintained and flood proofed to provide alternate means for egress into and out of the City.

#### **8.4.9 Maintenance**

The proper maintenance and upkeep of the City's street amenities and facilities will ensure the public's continued use, safety, and enjoyment. As such, maintenance is an integral part of the circulation facility planning process. A maintenance plan should be developed, maintained and funded in the yearly budget so that it provides for regular and adequate maintenance.

#### **8.4.10 Design Requirements**

All recommendations in this Element and any future circulation improvements should be developed and designed in accordance with current design guidance and requirements including:

- Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities, 4th Edition (AASHTO, 2012)
- The Guide for Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities (AASHTO, 2004 and 2010 Update)
- Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (FHWA, 2009)

#### **8.4.11 Parking**

It is recommended that the City develop and implement a comprehensive parking strategy. There is a shortage of parking during the summer months especially in the Ventnor Avenue Business District. The proposed parking study will determine the extent of the critical need and how best to address this need. The relationship between the City's commercial corridors and residential neighborhoods should be cemented by linking residential neighborhoods to commercial corridors via vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian connections. Shared parking and access in commercial corridors should be investigated to increase the convenience of visiting adjacent properties, reducing traffic on the streets and increasing the total available parking.

#### **8.4.12 Parking in Business Districts**

One of the most significant traffic issues in Ventnor is the difficulty of finding a parking space in the downtown business districts. As noted in the inventory section, on-street parking spaces in the downtown and beach blocks are at capacity on most summer days. Indeed, it can be difficult to find a parking space on the street. Metered spaces are existing in some locations. Many of the existing businesses do not have any off-street parking and those that do are very limited. 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. Addressing the parking problem in these areas requires a comprehensive solution.

It is recommended that the current use of meters be studied and evaluated. Meter type and difficulty in use has been identified as a problem. Pay kiosks or phone applications that facilitate easier payment options should be considered. The study should include a revenue, maintenance and operational fiscal review and investigate privatization. By privatizing this service, the City could potentially obtain new, efficient meters; eliminate the needs to budget for replacement and maintenance; and increase revenues.

It is recommended that the City pursue public parking options to increase parking supply where they become feasible. As indicated, many businesses have little or no off street parking. A parking trust fund could be implemented that allows businesses with deficient parking to fund the City's public parking acquisition and improvements as part of the land use process. These funds could be used for acquisition of future parking areas. Satellite parking sites with shuttle services should also be considered. The City should review parking standards in the commercial districts and the potential for shared parking. The City should also pursue parking agreements with sites that have underutilized parking. There are numerous church, library, and other use facilities that have low peak demands complementary with business use peak demands that could be utilized to increase parking. Evaluation of existing public parking facilities should also be completed. Necessary improvements should be identified; optimization of lots should be considered including the evaluation of leased spaces that may need to be limited.

It is also recommended that the City amend the standards in the MU zone to require that parking for residential units meet RSIS requirements, there would be no parking requirements for commercial uses. This recommendation is necessary to coordinate and promote the mixed commercial/residential uses recommended in the Land Use Element.

**8.4.13 Parking in Residential Districts**

One of the most significant traffic issues in Ventnor is the difficulty of finding a parking space in the residential areas during summertime. As noted in the inventory section, on-street parking spaces in the beach blocks are at capacity on most summer days. Indeed, it can be difficult to find a parking space on street. The parking situation, in turn, contributes to traffic congestion, as motorists frequently circle blocks several times in the effort to find a parking space. The promotion of off street parking should be considered with changes to the off-street parking requirements. Taking advantage of increased redevelopment and house raising to meet flood requirements, opportunities exist to increase the number of parking spaces within the City. Promotion of off-street parking would alleviate parking deficiencies and reduce on-street parking and traffic congestion by creating additional curb cuts where appropriate. It is recommended that Section 102-118.6 Off-street parking requirements be evaluated and modified to facilitate better off street parking requirements. Requirements for location of parking spaces, curb cut and other parking requirements should be revised to facilitate better off-street parking regulations and facilitate development with more flexibility and less variances. Wider curb cuts should be permitted for streets with no on-street parking.

#### **8.4.14 Unloading/Loading Zones at Beach Entrances**

It is recommended to 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 a publicity program to promote tourism within the City. Signage improvements should also be consistent with the NJDEP’s Municipal Public Access Plan requirements that required identification of public access points.

## **9.0 IMPLIMENTATION STRATEGY**

The Ventnor Master Plan Reexamination and associated Master Plan Elements provides a comprehensive approach to guide the future development of the City. However, planning is only one part of the Master Plan Process. It is important that steps be taken to ensure the implementation of this Plan. Provided in this Implementation Plan are strategies to help the local elected officials and the Planning Board take this Plan from ideas to reality.

### **9.1 Capital Improvement Plan**

The 2016 Master Plan Reexamination calls for comprehensive capital budget planning for the City. Since funding is limited and the challenges are substantial, the City should direct its capital budget planning to those infrastructure needs that are most immediately vulnerable. Consideration should be given to weighing the ongoing cost of maintenance for poorly operational facilities versus high initial capital costs for a more efficient, green and resilient new utility structure.

Capital budget planning, while staying cognizant of budget realities, should consider the long-term cost of short-term maintenance on antiquated facilities. The Strategic Recovery Planning Report emphasizes that all new utility services planning should be focused on reducing failure risk during future storms, which are forecasted to be larger and more damaging.

The City has secured a grant to fund the preparation of the Capital Improvement Plan. The scope of work for this grant recommends that that the development of this Plan involve the City's Administration, Engineer, Chief Financial Officer, City Planner, Financial Advisor, Bond Counsel and elected officials. The Plan should span a minimum of 15 to 20 years.

The Plan should include the inspection of stormwater and sanitary sewer systems, local roads and sidewalks and developing a priority ranking for needed improvements. The Plan should also include designing and surveying for various priority projects. Projects will be identified along with the associated costs and alternative sources of funding (i.e. grants, low-interest loans, private/public partnerships, etc.).

### **9.2 Ordinance Preparation**

The City has also secured a grant to fund zoning and related code changes. The City's zoning Ordinance should be analyzed from the perspective of refinements to the area and bulk standards which would potentially serve to mitigate damage from major storm events. As part of such an initiative, modifications to setbacks relative to height and the establishment of floor Area Ratio (FAR) requirements as a mechanism to balance structural size relative to lot area, might be considered.

Refinements to the Ordinance should include a Flood Resilience amendment to enable new and existing buildings throughout designated flood zones to meet the latest standards for flood-resistant construction. Such an amendment will serve to remove a range of impediments to flood-resistant construction and incorporate measures to mitigate potential negative effects of flood resistant

construction on the streetscape and public realm, to further reduce risks associated with natural hazards and minimize disruption to residents and businesses. Aspects which may be included in the amendment are:

- a. Measure building height with respect to the latest FEMA flood elevations;
- b. Accommodate building access from grade;
- c. Increase setbacks;
- d. Increase elevations of structures and bulkheads;
- e. Focus efforts to protect natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas and guide development away from hazard-prone areas;
- f. Improve building and zoning codes to minimize structural vulnerability to natural disasters;
- g. Locate mechanical systems above flood levels;
- h. Accommodate flood zone restrictions on ground floor use;
- i. Strengthen landscaping standards and streetscape requirements;
- j. A Post-Disaster Recovery Ordinance; and
- k. Regulations to implement the recommendations of the Master Plan Reexamination.

In addition to amendments to Zoning-related Codes, Ordinances & Regulations, preparation of new design standards are recommended to assure resiliency as a central component of new development, whether it be commercial, residential, mixed-use, or a public improvement.

### **9.3 Partnerships**

The limited amount of public funding available for capital improvements has rekindled interest in partnerships. Nonprofit or co-management of public facilities is a continuing trend because of the funding resources and flexibility afforded to nonprofit organizations. For example, the Master Plan recommends the creation of a special improvement district to fund the marketing and potentially some capital needs of the Business Community.

In addition, Certain grant funding is awarded to non-profits, state government and colleges. The City should consider networking with the following organizations, among others, for potential future collaboration:

- NJDEP, Office of Natural Resource Restoration
- Rutgers University
- The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey
- Atlantic Cape Community College
- New Jersey Audubon Society
- New Jersey Conservation Foundation
- The American Littoral Society

#### **5.6.4 Shared and Regional Services**

Shared and regional services is an option to reduce operating costs to free up funds for capital needs. The ACUA is a good example of the regional service delivery system that is designed to provide high quality services and reduced costs.

#### **5.6.5 Grant Funding**

Grant funding from public and private sources is an important source of funding for communities that wish to make capital improvements without passing the taxation burden that comes from bonding onto resident taxpayers. The City should continue to aggressively apply for grants and outside funding to achieve its capital program. The following list demonstrates a sampling of grant sources to which Ventnor may qualify for funding:

##### **New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Financing Program**

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and the Environmental Infrastructure Trust provide zero-interest loans for qualified projects that assist with compliance with the Clean Water Act. These loans can be provided for stormwater management and drinking water protection activities, and should be considered for wetlands remediation work as well as improvements to Ventnor's nuisance flooding problem. Open space and stormwater management goals can overlap and provide unique opportunities to co-locate and leverage multiple funding sources for joint projects. Eligible projects include:

- collection and conveyance facilities;
- on-site system rehabilitation;
- infiltration/inflow correction;
- combined sewer overflows;
- interconnection/cross-connection abatement projects
- stormwater/nonpoint source management projects (e.g., stormwater basins, equipment purchases, stream-bank stabilization);
- land acquisition and conservation; and
- remedial action activities.

##### **Federal Highway Administration: Trails Program (RTP)**

The U.S. Department of Transportation provides grants for trail development to municipalities that are disbursed through the NJDEP. Project applications are reviewed by the New Jersey Trails Council, and rewards of up to \$24,000 are available for construction and maintenance of new and existing trails.

##### **Fish and Wildlife Service: Boat Infrastructure Grant (BIG)**

Funds are available through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to develop boat infrastructure and facilities for transient recreational boats 26 feet or larger. Funding is awarded for two tiers of grants: one tier is rewarded on a competitive, ranked basis for capital projects while the other is provided

on a state-by-state basis for project development. New Jersey is eligible for \$200,000 in state funding each year for the project development tier.

### **NJDEP Green Acres Program**

New Jersey voters have enabled a trust fund that enables state funding of recreation and open space projects by public and nonprofit entities based on a small tax levy. This funding has provided for open space acquisitions and recreational developments in some form since 1961. The latest round of funding was released in 2015. Additional funds are supposed to be replenished by taxes to provide a sustainable source of income for the program. Ventnor has long participated in the Green Acres Program, which was used to fund the former ice rink and driving range complexes.

### **NJDEP Blue Acres Buyout Program (BAB)**

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection uses Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds for the Superstorm Sandy Blue Acres Program to purchase properties from willing sellers at the pre-storm value in areas that repeatedly sustain significant flood loss. The goal of the Blue Acres Program, which has historically served as part of DEP's Green Acres Program that purchases flood-prone properties, is to dramatically reduce the risk of future catastrophic flood damage and to help families move out of harm's way. Once acquired by the State, these homes will be demolished and the land will be permanently preserved as open space, accessible to the public, for recreation or conservation. The preserved land will serve as natural buffers against future storms and floods.

### **Frank H. Stewart Trust**

The purpose of the Frank H. Stewart Trust is to grant to Gloucester, Salem, Atlantic, Cumberland and Cape May Counties or any municipalities in these counties funding to acquire lands with flowing water courses or bounded by streams, or bodies of water.

### **Land and Water Conservation Fund**

This federal fund is supported by royalties from fossil fuel extractions to support conservation and recreation projects across the United States. States can receive matching grants under this program and enter a partnership with the National Park Service to develop park facilities. Ventnor has previously received funding from this source, including one in 1970 for improvements to the Newport Avenue Park and a 1975 grant for the former driving range site.

### **NFWF - Hurricane Sandy Coastal Resiliency Competitive Grants**

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) has provided grants for ecosystem restoration, stormwater treatment, green-blue infrastructure, and living shorelines for coastal communities affected by Superstorm Sandy. A living shoreline is proposed for a portion of the north shore of Ventnor West.

### **U.S. Department of Interior - Hurricane Sandy Coastal Resiliency Competitive Grant Program**

The U.S. Department of Interior (USDOI) is investing \$100 million in grant funding under the Hurricane Sandy Coastal Resiliency Competitive Grant Program. The grants are provided to better protect Atlantic Coast communities from future powerful storms by restoring marshes, wetlands and

beaches, rebuilding shorelines, and researching the impacts and modeling mitigation of storm surge impacts.

The NJDEP Office of Flood Hazard Risk Reduction Measures administers Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery program grants for stormwater and flood-risk infrastructure.

With more than 47,000 acres of wetlands spanning from Brick Township to Brigantine, the Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge absorbed much of Sandy's energy and storm surge, protecting some of the local communities in the path of the storm. The Forsythe Wildlife Refuge is a resiliency hub, which is a priority use for this funding. Resiliency hubs are coastal or inland areas characterized by preserved public or private open lands that contain an intact complex of ecosystems, habitats and "nature based infrastructure," and that are near or connected to population centers or communities. Ventnor West and Shelter Island can be considered a resiliency hub and funding through the USDOJ should be pursued.

### **National Flood Insurance Program – Increased Cost of Compliance Coverage**

Increased Cost of Compliance Coverage (ICC) funding is not a loan and does not have to be repaid. It is managed by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and is available to property owners who carry new and renewed standard flood insurance policies. It helps homeowners meet the costs of repairing or rebuilding their property to comply with building requirements of their community and reduce future flood damage. The maximum amount a homeowner can receive is \$30,000 and is based on a proof of loss, a detailed repair estimate and a substantial damage declaration from the community. ICC funding can be used to pay for:

- The elevation of a home above the flood elevation level adopted by the community
- The relocation of a home out of harm's way
- The demolition and removal of a damaged home

Eligibility requirements include:

- Location in a flood plain
- Property has suffered substantial damage from a flood
- Property has had repeated damage by floods

### **NJEDA Neighborhood and Community Revitalization Program**

Using Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) loans, the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) administers the Neighborhood and Community Revitalization program, which supports the long-term recovery of municipalities by funding economic revitalization projects. The program will assist in public facilities improvements, provide loans, loan guarantees and technical assistance to small businesses; and aid towards façade and code-related improvements. Eligible grantees include redevelopment agencies, municipalities, businesses, and non-profit organizations.

### **Sustainable Jersey Grants**

Sustainable Jersey is a certification program for municipalities in New Jersey that want to go green, save money, and take steps to sustain their quality of life over the long term. Ventnor City is registered for Sustainable Jersey certification and is in progress to reach Bronze Certification. The City has established a Green Team and has completed the Climate Adaptation: Flooding Risk Action, which is a Priority Action. The City needs to continue participation in this program and incorporate these sustainability concepts into the planning and maintenance of the City's utility infrastructure.

#### **New Jersey Energy Resiliency Bank Program**

Using Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds, the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) administers the New Jersey Energy Resilience Bank Program, which builds energy resilience by providing technical and financial support, including grants and low-interest loans, to critical facilities for energy resilience projects or enhancements to existing energy infrastructure.

#### **NJDEP Flood Risk Reduction Program (FHRRP)**

Using Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) will support Army Corps' efforts to implement flood risk reduction measures with an easement acquisition program. NJDEP will also use funds for competitive grants to local government entities for eligible flood hazard risk reduction and resiliency infrastructure measure improvements or projects.

#### **HUD Non-Federal Cost Share Match Program**

Using Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds, the Non-Federal Cost Share Match program gives the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) funding to cover the non-federal match portion of post-storm transportation and infrastructure repair and resiliency. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) will use CDBG-DR funds to cover the 20 percent required non-federal match for the EPA program to complete the repair and restoration of wastewater treatment systems and water supply systems, as well as increasing the resiliency and durability of these systems to help mitigate future risk and loss. The FEMA Match program provides critical funding support to eligible applicants that lack resources to provide some, or all, of the FEMA required match for FEMA Public Assistance Projects. CDBG-DR funds will be used to provide some, or all, of the match requirement under FEMA's Public Assistance.

#### **Reconstruction, Rehabilitation, Elevation and Mitigation (RREM) Program**

The RREM program was offered through the State of New Jersey and provided up to \$150,000 for eligible homeowners to repair, elevate or rebuild their primary residences in the affected communities. About 7,660 homeowners in New Jersey were awarded funds through the State's RREM program to raise their homes and to become compliant with new base flood elevation standards. As of October 2016, \$34,785,842 in RREM funds were obligated for Ventnor projects and \$24,951,309 was disbursed.

#### **Housing Resettlement Program (HRP)**

The Housing Resettlement program provides Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) grant awards of up to \$10,000 to eligible homeowners for any non-construction purpose that assists the Homeowner to remain in, or return to, the County in which they lived prior to Superstorm Sandy. As of October 2016, \$5,390,000 in HRP funds was obligated and disbursed to Ventnor property owners.

#### **Low Moderate Homeowners Rebuilding Program (LMI)**

The LMI Homeowner Rebuild program provides Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) grant awards of up to \$150,000 to eligible LMI homeowners for activities necessary to restore their storm-damaged primary residence, including reconstruction, rehabilitation, elevation and/or other mitigation activities. The program also provides reimbursement for eligible expenses incurred by the homeowners prior to the implementation of this program. As of October 2016, \$1,635,089 in LMI funds was obligated to Ventnor property owners and \$986,587 was distributed.

#### **Sandy Homebuyer Assistance Program (SHBA)**

The New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (HMFA) received Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds to administer the Sandy Homebuyer Assistance program, which provides financial incentives for low- and moderate- income households to purchase a home in one of the nine most impacted Sandy counties. Qualified homebuyers may be eligible for up to \$50,000 in assistance to help with the purchase of a home. As of October 2016, \$50,000 in SHBA funds were obligated and distributed to Ventnor property owners.

#### **Small Rental Properties/Landlord Rental Repair Program (LRRP)**

The Landlord Rental Repair program (LRRP) provides Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds to eligible landlords of rental properties from 1-25 units to repair damages incurred because of Superstorm Sandy. The program provides up to \$50,000 per storm-damaged unit to assist eligible landlords in repairing their residential rental properties. To be eligible for the award, the landlord must rent the CDBG-DR assisted-unit(s) to low-to-moderate income (LMI) households at approved affordable rents following completion of repairs. In addition to increasing the supply of affordable rental housing in areas that were damaged by Superstorm Sandy, LRRP is also serving to help revitalize storm-impacted neighborhoods. As of October 2016, \$923,371 in LRRP funds were obligated to Ventnor property owners and \$697,005 was disbursed.

#### **Small Business Grants (SBG)**

The Small Business Grants (SBG) program is administered by the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) using Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds to provide eligible small businesses and nonprofits impacted by Superstorm Sandy, as well as businesses looking to expand within storm-impacted communities, grants and forgivable loans of up to \$50,000 per impacted location. CDBG-DR funds can be used for eligible Sandy-related expenses include building repairs, equipment and inventory purchases, rent or mortgage payments, salary expenses, and utility costs for which they may need assistance. As of October 2016, \$151,371 in SBG funds were obligated and distributed to Ventnor property owners.

### **FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)**

HMGP is only offered during a presidentially declared disaster. This reimbursement program provides up to \$30,000 to assist homeowners with the elevation of their primary single-family residences in line with the Flood Insurance Risk Maps in affected communities. The HMGP provides grants to states and local governments to implement long-term hazard mitigation measures after a major disaster declaration. The purpose of the HMGP is to reduce the loss of life and property due to natural disasters and to enable mitigation measures to be implemented during the immediate recovery from a disaster. The HMGP is authorized under Section 404 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.

### **FEMA Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Program**

The Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) program was created as part of the National Flood Insurance Reform Act (NFIRA) of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 4101) with the goal of reducing or eliminating claims under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). FEMA provides FMA funds to help states and communities implement measures that reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of flood damage to buildings, manufactured homes and other structures insured under NFIP. Eligible properties must maintain flood insurance for the life of the structure. To receive an increased federal cost share, properties must be a severe repetitive-loss property or a repetitive-loss property.

Cost-share availability under the FMA program depends on the type of properties included in the grant. For example, severe repetitive-loss properties may receive up to 100 percent federal funding and repetitive-loss properties may receive up to 90 percent.

- In the case of mitigation activities to severe repetitive-loss structures:
  - FEMA may contribute up to 100 percent federal funding of all eligible costs, if the activities are technically feasible and cost-effective; or
  - FEMA may contribute an amount equaling the expected savings to the NFIP from expected avoided damages through acquisition or relocation activities, if the activities will eliminate future payments from the NFIP for severe repetitive-loss structures through an acquisition or relocation activity.
- In the case of mitigation activities to repetitive-loss structures, FEMA may contribute up to 90 percent federal funding of all eligible costs.
- In the case of all other mitigation activities, FEMA may contribute up to 75 percent federal funding of all eligible costs.

Structures with varying cost-share requirements can be submitted in one application. Applicants must provide documentation in the project application showing how the final cost share was derived.

FEMA will identify applications for further review based on several criteria, including but not limited to: savings to the NFIP, applicant rank and property status (e.g., repetitive-loss property, severe repetitive-loss property). FEMA also may identify an application for further review out of rank order based on considerations such as program priorities, available funds, and other factors.

### **FEMA Severe Repetitive Loss (SRL) Grants**

The SRL grant program was authorized by the Bunning-Bereuter-Blumenauer Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2004, which amended the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968 to provide funding to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of flood damage to severe repetitive-loss structures insured under the National Flood Insurance Program. Proposed projects must be cost effective with a benefit-cost ratio greater than 1.0. The homeowner's application must include an elevation certificate and signed, detailed contractor's estimate.

### **FEMA Repetitive Flood Claims (RFC) Grants**

The RFC grant program was authorized by the Bunning-Bereuter-Blumenauer Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2004, which amended the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968. RFC provides funding to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of flood damage to structures insured under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) that have had one or more claim payments for flood damages.

### **FEMA Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) Grants**

The PDM program used to provide funds to states, territories, Indian tribal governments, communities and universities for hazard-mitigation planning and the implementation of mitigation projects prior to a disaster event. This program should be restored. Funding these plans and projects reduces overall risks to the population and structures, while also reducing reliance on funding from actual disaster declarations. PDM grants are to be awarded on a competitive basis and without reference to state allocations, quotas or other formula-based allocation of funds.

### **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**

Provides funding and engineering support for beach renourishment as well coastal protection elements such as bulkheads, stormwater management systems and certain mitigation projects. The USACE also aids under the Continuing Authorities Program (CAP). The USACE will evaluate various projects to determine if there is a Federal Interest. If a Federal interest exists, the USACE will complete engineering and construction with a non-Federal sponsor who agrees to cost share the feasibility study and construction.

### **HUD Historic Preservation Funding**

Municipalities that have RREM recipients who have homes that are considered historic will be receiving funding from the state for historic presentation. The state has put aside \$3,000 to \$6,000 per property to mitigate any adverse impacts of the RREM Program on potential historic structures. These mitigation funds will be used to complete projects in the communities that document the historic significance of these properties or provide for public interpretation. The specific scope of these mitigation treatments will be developed through additional consultation between the DCA, DEP and Historic Preservation Office (HPO). It appears that the Programmatic Agreement covers how to complete Section 106 (SHPO review) for Sandy-impacted properties. It is suggested that this funding be used for:

- updated historic property inventories;
- documentation of any structures if slated for demolition;
- public interpretation plans of historic structures and their fragility; and

- mapping of historic areas, both current and historical.

#### **NJDOT Municipal Aid Grant Program**

Funds are given to municipalities for transportation projects.

#### **NJDOT Bikeway Grant Program**

Funds projects that promote cycling as an alternate mode of transportation.

#### **NJDOT Local Aid Infrastructure Funds**

Non-competitive discretionary funds to address emergency and regional transportation needs.

#### **NJDOT Safe Streets to Transit**

Program funds counties and municipalities to improve walkable access to transit facilities and public transportation.

#### **NJDOT Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Program**

Funds for infrastructure projects that facilitate bike and pedestrian access within 2 miles of schools.

#### **NJDOT - Local Bridges, Future Needs**

Funds the maintenance and rehab of county jurisdictional bridges.

#### **NJDOT/SJTPO Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)**

Funds non-traditional surface transportation projects.

#### **NJDEP Recreational Trails Program**

Funds to improve open space biking and hiking improvements.

#### **FHWA/FTA/SJTPO Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program**

Funds projects and programs that improve air quality and reduce traffic congestion.

#### **FHWA/SJTPO Local Safety Program**

Funds projects that contribute to a significant reduction in fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads.

#### **New Jersey Cooperative Marketing Grant and the Destination Marketing Organization Grant**

The state offers two programs that are directly targeted to tourism – the Cooperative Marketing Grant and the Destination Marketing Organization Grant. These programs are discussed below.

**New Jersey Cooperative Marketing Grant** - This program is a collaboration between the New Jersey Department of State, Division of Travel and Tourism and the New Jersey travel industry, whose goal is to promote New Jersey as a premier travel destination. Funding is provided to promote and market specific tourism opportunities in New Jersey.

The Cooperative Marketing Grant Program is open to any New Jersey organization that can demonstrate a significant interest in the New Jersey tourism industry. Organizations must show a match of 25 percent from partners or sponsors that are non-state funding sources. State funds awarded for the Cooperative Marketing Grant plus the non-state match must be spent on marketing programs. The match cannot be in-kind, cash on hand or bartered services. In 2016 the follow South Jersey organizations received Cooperative Marketing grants:

- 7 Mile Business Community Association Inc.     \$21,500
- Cape May County   \$20,500
- The Wetlands Institute                                 \$8,100
- Historic Cold Spring Village                         \$20,500

**New Jersey Destination Marketing Organization Grant** - A destination marketing organization serves to promote and market tourism of a destination in our state as its primary function. A destination can be a single city, a group of municipalities, or a defined region. The DMO works with hotels, restaurants, attractions and smaller tourism entities to offer the visitor a place to obtain information when planning a visit for business or pleasure. The DMO must work with area businesses to drive visitation when and where it is most appropriate. It must also be an advocate for the tourism industry. The DMO Grant program is open to any organization that meets the qualifications of an established destination marketing organization. Organizations must show a match equal to 25 percent of the grant request from partners or sponsors that are non-state funding sources. The match cannot be in-kind. Maximum request is \$200,000. In 2016 the following South Jersey organizations received DMO grants:

- Southern Ocean County Chamber                     \$128,580
- Meet AC   \$82,480
- Southern Shore Regional Tourism                    \$149,680

## **Appendices**

## **Appendix I: Future Land Use Map**

# Ventnor City Future Land Use Map

- Land Uses**
- Residential (1-4 Family)
  - Multi-Family Residential
  - Commercial
  - Utility
  - Public School
  - City Parks and Buildings
  - Church/Non-Profit
  - Vacant Land



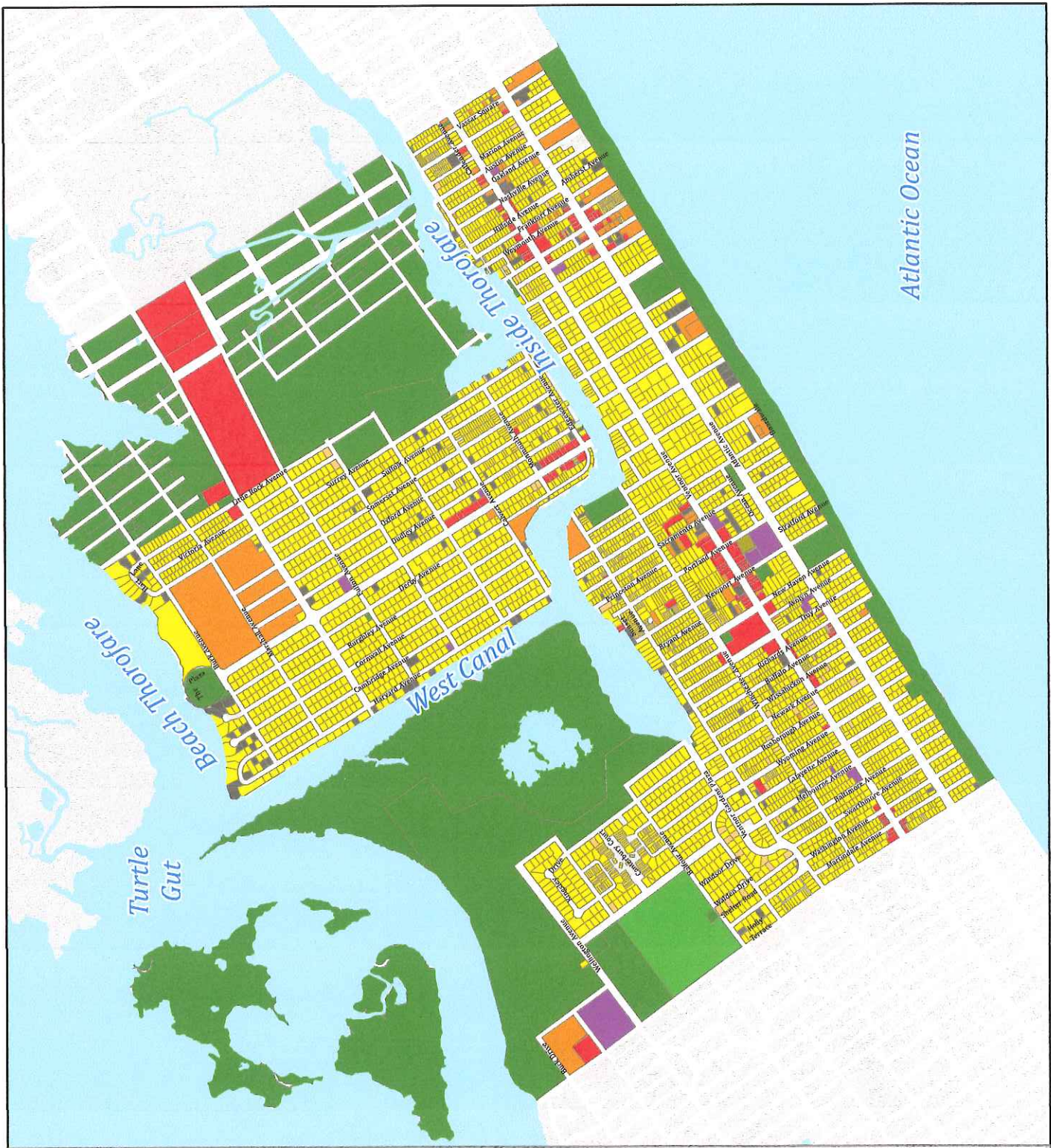
0  0.3 Miles

**Data Sources**  
Atlantic County, Ventnor City, NJGIN

*Note: This map utilizes preliminary tax maps and property tax assessments that have not yet been approved by the State of New Jersey. This map is presented "as-is" using the best available data sources, though it may not reflect exact existing conditions.*

**Prepared by:**  
Rutala Associates

**December 2016**



**Appendix 2: ESRI Retail Goods and Services Expenditures Report**



# Retail Goods and Services Expenditures

Ventnor City Hall  
6201 Atlantic Ave. Ventnor NJ 08406  
Ring: 1-mile radius

Latitude: 39.338  
Longitude: -74.480

Top Tapestry Segments	Percent	Demographic Summary	2015	2020
City Lights (8A)	38.1%	Population	10,872	11,009
Golden Years (9B)	37.9%	Households	4,800	4,871
Comfortable Empty Nesters (5A)	14.9%	Families	2,732	2,773
Silver & Gold (9A)	5.2%	Median Age	48.6	49.8
Front Porches (8E)	4.0%	Median Household Income	\$50,250	\$57,183
		Spending Potential	Average Amount	
		Index	2015	Total
<b>Apparel and Services</b>		96	\$2,225.06	\$10,680,280
Men's		98	\$426.23	\$2,045,908
Women's		97	\$782.77	\$3,757,287
Children's		92	\$343.06	\$1,646,678
Footwear		94	\$431.44	\$2,070,928
Watches & Jewelry		98	\$141.16	\$677,567
Apparel Products and Services (1)		103	\$100.40	\$481,913
<b>Computer</b>				
Computers and Hardware for Home Use		97	\$208.82	\$1,002,348
Portable Memory		96	\$5.16	\$24,770
Computer Software		100	\$20.21	\$96,994
Computer Accessories		99	\$18.96	\$91,005
<b>Entertainment &amp; Recreation</b>		96	\$3,190.86	\$15,316,126
Fees and Admissions		104	\$674.40	\$3,237,123
Membership Fees for Clubs (2)		104	\$177.64	\$852,666
Fees for Participant Sports, excl. Trips		102	\$123.07	\$590,714
Admission to Movie/Theatre/Opera/Ballet		105	\$172.37	\$827,375
Admission to Sporting Events, excl. Trips		98	\$65.29	\$313,401
Fees for Recreational Lessons		110	\$135.51	\$650,426
Dating Services		88	\$0.53	\$2,542
TV/Video/Audio		95	\$1,246.68	\$5,984,057
Cable and Satellite Television Services		95	\$850.42	\$4,081,994
Televisions		95	\$139.86	\$671,314
Satellite Dishes		85	\$1.33	\$6,394
VCRs, Video Cameras, and DVD Players		94	\$10.32	\$49,536
Miscellaneous Video Equipment		83	\$8.92	\$42,830
Video Cassettes and DVDs		91	\$29.14	\$139,869
Video Game Hardware/Accessories		87	\$19.99	\$95,932
Video Game Software		90	\$24.81	\$119,070
Streaming/Downloaded Video		99	\$5.70	\$27,382
Rental of Video Cassettes and DVDs		88	\$20.76	\$99,646
Installation of Televisions		96	\$1.08	\$5,180
Audio (3)		105	\$129.17	\$620,031
Rental and Repair of TV/Radio/Sound Equipment		96	\$5.18	\$24,877
Pets		91	\$515.04	\$2,472,208
Toys and Games (4)		96	\$117.56	\$564,265
Recreational Vehicles and Fees (5)		96	\$208.42	\$1,000,418
Sports/Recreation/Exercise Equipment (6)		88	\$166.31	\$798,279
Photo Equipment and Supplies (7)		96	\$77.76	\$373,254
Reading (8)		104	\$157.75	\$757,206
Catered Affairs (9)		113	\$26.94	\$129,317
<b>Food</b>		96	\$8,131.61	\$39,031,715
Food at Home		95	\$4,962.33	\$23,819,184
Bakery and Cereal Products		96	\$700.10	\$3,360,500
Meats, Poultry, Fish, and Eggs		94	\$1,084.33	\$5,204,799
Dairy Products		96	\$537.67	\$2,580,822
Fruits and Vegetables		99	\$972.87	\$4,669,757
Snacks and Other Food at Home (10)		93	\$1,667.36	\$8,003,305
Food Away from Home		96	\$3,169.28	\$15,212,531
Alcoholic Beverages		103	\$569.92	\$2,735,595
Nonalcoholic Beverages at Home		93	\$465.30	\$2,233,452

**Data Note:** The Spending Potential Index (SPI) is household-based, and represents the amount spent for a product or service relative to a national average of 100. Detail may not sum to totals due to rounding.

**Source:** Esri forecasts for 2015 and 2020; Consumer Spending data are derived from the 2011 and 2012 Consumer Expenditure



# Retail Goods and Services Expenditures

Ventnor City Hall  
6201 Atlantic Ave. Ventnor NJ 08406  
Ring: 1-mile radius

Latitude: 39.338  
Longitude: -74.480

	Spending Potential Index	Average Amount Spent	Total
<b>Financial</b>			
Investments	100	\$2,759.23	\$13,244,285
Vehicle Loans	88	\$3,732.35	\$17,915,282
<b>Health</b>			
Nonprescription Drugs	92	\$119.44	\$573,288
Prescription Drugs	93	\$464.31	\$2,228,702
Eyeglasses and Contact Lenses	97	\$87.13	\$418,200
<b>Home</b>			
Mortgage Payment and Basics (11)	101	\$9,495.95	\$45,580,545
Maintenance and Remodeling Services	103	\$1,740.08	\$8,352,402
Maintenance and Remodeling Materials (12)	90	\$270.61	\$1,298,922
Utilities, Fuel, and Public Services	94	\$4,754.49	\$22,821,551
<b>Household Furnishings and Equipment</b>			
Household Textiles (13)	100	\$98.83	\$474,387
Furniture	93	\$482.33	\$2,315,195
Rugs	110	\$27.14	\$130,267
Major Appliances (14)	93	\$249.60	\$1,198,063
Housewares (15)	97	\$70.12	\$336,590
Small Appliances	97	\$44.54	\$213,782
Luggage	105	\$9.66	\$46,356
Telephones and Accessories	88	\$44.30	\$212,617
<b>Household Operations</b>			
Child Care	100	\$447.41	\$2,147,553
Lawn and Garden (16)	99	\$430.53	\$2,066,546
Moving/Storage/Freight Express	99	\$73.56	\$353,096
Housekeeping Supplies (17)	95	\$683.25	\$3,279,604
<b>Insurance</b>			
Owners and Renters Insurance	95	\$479.14	\$2,299,869
Vehicle Insurance	96	\$1,166.13	\$5,597,403
Life/Other Insurance	94	\$432.32	\$2,075,137
Health Insurance	98	\$2,581.84	\$12,392,844
Personal Care Products (18)	92	\$430.85	\$2,068,090
School Books and Supplies (19)	92	\$165.26	\$793,245
Smoking Products	85	\$394.83	\$1,895,169
<b>Transportation</b>			
Vehicle Purchases (Net Outlay) (20)	88	\$3,574.43	\$17,157,287
Gasoline and Motor Oil	88	\$3,098.08	\$14,870,782
Vehicle Maintenance and Repairs	96	\$1,067.25	\$5,122,796
<b>Travel</b>			
Airline Fares	108	\$514.10	\$2,467,676
Lodging on Trips	103	\$464.18	\$2,228,054
Auto/Truck/Van Rental on Trips	102	\$34.53	\$165,762
Food and Drink on Trips	100	\$465.52	\$2,234,500

**Data Note:** The Spending Potential Index (SPI) is household-based, and represents the amount spent for a product or service relative to a national average of 100. Detail may not sum to totals due to rounding.

**Source:** Esri forecasts for 2015 and 2020; Consumer Spending data are derived from the 2011 and 2012 Consumer Expenditure



- (1) Apparel Products and Services** includes material for making clothes, sewing patterns and notions, shoe repair and other shoe services, apparel laundry and dry cleaning, alteration, repair and tailoring of apparel, clothing rental and storage, and watch and jewelry repair.
- (2) Membership Fees for Clubs** includes membership fees for social, recreational, and civic clubs.
- (3) Audio** includes satellite radio service, sound components and systems, digital audio players, records, CDs, audio tapes, streaming/downloaded audio, tape recorders, radios, musical instruments and accessories, and rental and repair of musical instruments.
- (4) Toys and Games** includes toys, games, arts and crafts, tricycles, playground equipment, arcade games, and online entertainment and games.
- (5) Recreational Vehicles & Fees** includes docking and landing fees for boats and planes, purchase and rental of RVs or boats, and camp fees.
- (6) Sports/Recreation/Exercise Equipment** includes exercise equipment and gear, game tables, bicycles, camping equipment, hunting and fishing equipment, winter sports equipment, water sports equipment, other sports equipment, and rental/repair of sports/recreation/exercise equipment.
- (7) Photo Equipment and Supplies** includes film, film processing, photographic equipment, rental and repair of photo equipment, and photographer fees.
- (8) Reading** includes digital book readers, books, magazine and newspaper subscriptions, and single copies of magazines and newspapers.
- (9) Catered Affairs** includes expenses associated with live entertainment and rental of party supplies.
- (10) Snacks and Other Food at Home** includes candy, chewing gum, sugar, artificial sweeteners, jam, jelly, preserves, margarine, fat, oil, salad dressing, nondairy cream and milk, peanut butter, frozen prepared food, potato chips, nuts, salt, spices, seasonings, olives, pickles, relishes, sauces, gravy, other condiments, soup, prepared salad, prepared dessert, baby food, miscellaneous prepared food, and nonalcoholic beverages.
- (11) Mortgage Payment and Basics** includes mortgage interest, mortgage principal, property taxes, homeowner's insurance, and ground rent.
- (12) Maintenance and Remodeling Materials** includes supplies/tools/equipment for painting and wallpapering, plumbing supplies and equipment, electrical/heating/AC supplies, materials for hard surface flooring, materials for roofing/gutters, materials for plaster/panel/siding, materials for patio/fence/brick work, landscaping materials, and insulation materials for owned homes.
- (13) Household Textiles** includes bathroom linens, bedroom linens, kitchen linens, dining room linens, other linens, curtains, draperies, slipcovers, decorative pillows, and materials for slipcovers and curtains.
- (14) Major Appliances** includes dishwashers, disposals, refrigerators, freezers, washers, dryers, stoves, ovens, microwaves, window air conditioners, electric floor cleaning equipment, sewing machines, and miscellaneous appliances.
- (15) Housewares** includes plastic dinnerware, china, flatware, glassware, serving pieces, nonelectric cookware, and tableware.



Ventnor City Hall  
6201 Atlantic Ave. Ventnor NJ 08406  
Ring: 1-mile radius

Latitude: 39.338  
Longitude: -74.480

**(16) Lawn and Garden** includes lawn and garden supplies, equipment and care service, indoor plants, fresh flowers, and repair/rental of lawn and garden equipment.

**(17) Housekeeping Supplies** includes soaps and laundry detergents, cleaning products, toilet tissue, paper towels, napkins, paper/plastic/foil products, stationery, giftwrap supplies, postage, and delivery services.

**(18) Personal Care Products** includes hair care products, nonelectric articles for hair, wigs, hairpieces, oral hygiene products, shaving needs, perfume, cosmetics, skincare, bath products, nail products, deodorant, feminine hygiene products, adult diapers, and personal care appliances.

**(19) School Books and Supplies** includes school books and supplies for College, Elementary school, High school, Vocational/Technical School, Preschool/Other Schools, and Other School Supplies.

**(20) Vehicle Purchases (Net Outlay)** includes net outlay for new and used cars, trucks, vans, motorcycles, and motor scooters.

**Data Note:** The Spending Potential Index (SPI) is household-based, and represents the amount spent for a product or service relative to a national average of 100. Detail may not sum to totals due to rounding.

**Source:** Esri forecasts for 2015 and 2020; Consumer Spending data are derived from the 2011 and 2012 Consumer Expenditure Surveys, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

June 02, 2016



# Retail Goods and Services Expenditures

Ventnor City Hall  
6201 Atlantic Ave. Ventnor NJ 08406  
Ring: 3-mile radius

Latitude: 39.330  
Longitude: -74.480

Top Tabestrv Segments	Percent	Demographic Summary	2015	2020
International Marketplace (13A)	19.0%	Population	39,664	39,945
City Lights (8A)	17.5%	Households	15,656	15,750
Golden Years (9B)	16.3%	Families	9,365	9,432
Silver & Gold (9A)	13.0%	Median Age	41.9	42.5
City Strivers (11A)	5.6%	Median Household Income	\$41,585	\$47,801
		Spending Potential	Average Amount	Total
<b>Apparel and Services</b>				
Men's		91	\$2,116.18	\$33,130,893
Women's		92	\$398.63	\$6,240,972
Children's		91	\$732.89	\$11,474,194
Footwear		91	\$338.71	\$5,302,885
Watches & Jewelry		93	\$425.71	\$6,664,993
Apparel Products and Services (1)		88	\$126.96	\$1,987,702
<b>Computer</b>		96	\$93.26	\$1,460,147
Computers and Hardware for Home Use		90	\$193.95	\$3,036,451
Portable Memory		91	\$4.88	\$76,334
Computer Software		95	\$19.29	\$301,946
Computer Accessories		89	\$17.09	\$267,596
<b>Entertainment &amp; Recreation</b>		87	\$2,891.17	\$45,264,195
Fees and Admissions		91	\$585.95	\$9,173,583
Membership Fees for Clubs (2)		88	\$151.52	\$2,372,224
Fees for Participant Sports, excl. Trips		89	\$107.51	\$1,683,197
Admission to Movie/Theatre/Opera/Ballet		95	\$156.81	\$2,455,094
Admission to Sporting Events, excl. Trips		83	\$55.33	\$866,170
Fees for Recreational Lessons		93	\$114.18	\$1,787,579
Dating Services		100	\$0.60	\$9,320
TV/Video/Audio		89	\$1,166.65	\$18,265,106
Cable and Satellite Television Services		89	\$795.97	\$12,461,780
Televisions		89	\$131.17	\$2,053,610
Satellite Dishes		80	\$1.26	\$19,789
VCRs, Video Cameras, and DVD Players		88	\$9.71	\$151,970
Miscellaneous Video Equipment		77	\$8.24	\$128,992
Video Cassettes and DVDs		87	\$28.00	\$438,311
Video Game Hardware/Accessories		88	\$20.33	\$318,271
Video Game Software		87	\$23.98	\$375,424
Streaming/Downloaded Video		94	\$5.38	\$84,304
Rental of Video Cassettes and DVDs		86	\$20.18	\$315,885
Installation of Televisions		81	\$0.91	\$14,203
Audio (3)		95	\$116.58	\$1,825,158
Rental and Repair of TV/Radio/Sound Equipment		92	\$4.94	\$77,407
Pets		82	\$466.82	\$7,308,508
Toys and Games (4)		89	\$109.80	\$1,719,048
Recreational Vehicles and Fees (5)		82	\$177.71	\$2,782,295
Sports/Recreation/Exercise Equipment (6)		80	\$151.78	\$2,376,319
Photo Equipment and Supplies (7)		86	\$70.12	\$1,097,821
Reading (8)		91	\$138.56	\$2,169,268
Catered Affairs (9)		100	\$23.78	\$372,246
<b>Food</b>		90	\$7,689.26	\$120,383,041
Food at Home		90	\$4,724.49	\$73,966,661
Bakery and Cereal Products		91	\$662.20	\$10,367,425
Meats, Poultry, Fish, and Eggs		91	\$1,042.91	\$16,327,852
Dairy Products		90	\$507.21	\$7,940,869
Fruits and Vegetables		93	\$921.60	\$14,428,527
Snacks and Other Food at Home (10)		89	\$1,590.57	\$24,901,988
Food Away from Home		90	\$2,964.77	\$46,416,380
Alcoholic Beverages		94	\$523.84	\$8,201,248
Nonalcoholic Beverages at Home		90	\$447.18	\$7,001,086

**Data Note:** The Spending Potential Index (SPI) is household-based, and represents the amount spent for a product or service relative to a national average of 100. Detail may not sum to totals due to rounding.

**Source:** Esri forecasts for 2015 and 2020; Consumer Spending data are derived from the 2011 and 2012 Consumer Expenditure



# Retail Goods and Services Expenditures

Ventnor City Hall  
 6201 Atlantic Ave. Ventnor NJ 08406  
 Ring: 3-mile radius

Latitude: 39.338  
 Longitude: -74.480

	Spending Potential Index	Average Amount Spent	Total
<b>Financial</b>			
Investments	94	\$2,596.00	\$40,642,965
Vehicle Loans	81	\$3,437.33	\$53,814,845
<b>Health</b>			
Nonprescription Drugs	86	\$110.72	\$1,733,458
Prescription Drugs	83	\$415.34	\$6,502,620
Eyeglasses and Contact Lenses	86	\$77.47	\$1,212,836
<b>Home</b>			
Mortgage Payment and Basics (11)	84	\$7,879.15	\$123,356,014
Maintenance and Remodeling Services	84	\$1,418.31	\$22,205,083
Maintenance and Remodeling Materials (12)	76	\$227.98	\$3,569,189
Utilities, Fuel, and Public Services	87	\$4,393.21	\$68,780,076
<b>Household Furnishings and Equipment</b>			
Household Textiles (13)	92	\$90.55	\$1,417,696
Furniture	86	\$443.18	\$6,938,394
Rugs	90	\$22.20	\$347,520
Major Appliances (14)	82	\$220.50	\$3,452,072
Housewares (15)	89	\$64.35	\$1,007,440
Small Appliances	90	\$41.13	\$643,959
Luggage	94	\$8.61	\$134,750
Telephones and Accessories	87	\$43.50	\$680,964
<b>Household Operations</b>			
Child Care	92	\$410.66	\$6,429,232
Lawn and Garden (16)	83	\$361.55	\$5,660,358
Moving/Storage/Freight Express	97	\$72.18	\$1,130,080
Housekeeping Supplies (17)	88	\$637.16	\$9,975,448
<b>Insurance</b>			
Owners and Renters Insurance	81	\$405.26	\$6,344,695
Vehicle Insurance	88	\$1,073.58	\$16,808,030
Life/Other Insurance	80	\$371.00	\$5,808,446
Health Insurance	86	\$2,276.34	\$35,638,335
Personal Care Products (18)	88	\$413.14	\$6,468,182
School Books and Supplies (19)	89	\$159.99	\$2,504,742
Smoking Products	86	\$398.94	\$6,245,785
<b>Transportation</b>			
Vehicle Purchases (Net Outlay) (20)	81	\$3,274.10	\$51,259,291
Gasoline and Motor Oil	83	\$2,916.78	\$45,665,093
Vehicle Maintenance and Repairs	88	\$980.71	\$15,353,982
<b>Travel</b>			
Airline Fares	96	\$457.31	\$7,159,594
Lodging on Trips	87	\$396.03	\$6,200,254
Auto/Truck/Van Rental on Trips	89	\$29.92	\$468,381
Food and Drink on Trips	88	\$410.34	\$6,424,266

**Data Note:** The Spending Potential Index (SPI) is household-based, and represents the amount spent for a product or service relative to a national average of 100. Detail may not sum to totals due to rounding.

**Source:** Esri forecasts for 2015 and 2020; Consumer Spending data are derived from the 2011 and 2012 Consumer Expenditure



- (1) Apparel Products and Services** includes material for making clothes, sewing patterns and notions, shoe repair and other shoe services, apparel laundry and dry cleaning, alteration, repair and tailoring of apparel, clothing rental and storage, and watch and jewelry repair.
- (2) Membership Fees for Clubs** includes membership fees for social, recreational, and civic clubs.
- (3) Audio** includes satellite radio service, sound components and systems, digital audio players, records, CDs, audio tapes, streaming/downloaded audio, tape recorders, radios, musical instruments and accessories, and rental and repair of musical instruments.
- (4) Toys and Games** includes toys, games, arts and crafts, tricycles, playground equipment, arcade games, and online entertainment and games.
- (5) Recreational Vehicles & Fees** includes docking and landing fees for boats and planes, purchase and rental of RVs or boats, and camp fees.
- (6) Sports/Recreation/Exercise Equipment** includes exercise equipment and gear, game tables, bicycles, camping equipment, hunting and fishing equipment, winter sports equipment, water sports equipment, other sports equipment, and rental/repair of sports/recreation/exercise equipment.
- (7) Photo Equipment and Supplies** includes film, film processing, photographic equipment, rental and repair of photo equipment, and photographer fees.
- (8) Reading** includes digital book readers, books, magazine and newspaper subscriptions, and single copies of magazines and newspapers.
- (9) Catered Affairs** includes expenses associated with live entertainment and rental of party supplies.
- (10) Snacks and Other Food at Home** includes candy, chewing gum, sugar, artificial sweeteners, jam, jelly, preserves, margarine, fat, oil, salad dressing, nondairy cream and milk, peanut butter, frozen prepared food, potato chips, nuts, salt, spices, seasonings, olives, pickles, relishes, sauces, gravy, other condiments, soup, prepared salad, prepared dessert, baby food, miscellaneous prepared food, and nonalcoholic beverages.
- (11) Mortgage Payment and Basics** includes mortgage interest, mortgage principal, property taxes, homeowner's insurance, and ground rent.
- (12) Maintenance and Remodeling Materials** includes supplies/tools/equipment for painting and wallpapering, plumbing supplies and equipment, electrical/heating/AC supplies, materials for hard surface flooring, materials for roofing/gutters, materials for plaster/panel/siding, materials for patio/fence/brick work, landscaping materials, and insulation materials for owned homes.
- (13) Household Textiles** includes bathroom linens, bedroom linens, kitchen linens, dining room linens, other linens, curtains, draperies, slipcovers, decorative pillows, and materials for slipcovers and curtains.
- (14) Major Appliances** includes dishwashers, disposals, refrigerators, freezers, washers, dryers, stoves, ovens, microwaves, window air conditioners, electric floor cleaning equipment, sewing machines, and miscellaneous appliances.



## Retail Goods and Services Expenditures

Ventnor City Hall  
6201 Atlantic Ave. Ventnor NJ 08406  
Ring: 3-mile radius

Latitude: 39.338  
Longitude: -74.480

- 
- (15) **Housewares** includes plastic dinnerware, china, flatware, glassware, serving pieces, nonelectric cookware, and tableware.
- (16) **Lawn and Garden** includes lawn and garden supplies, equipment and care service, indoor plants, fresh flowers, and repair/rental of lawn and garden equipment.
- (17) **Housekeeping Supplies** includes soaps and laundry detergents, cleaning products, toilet tissue, paper towels, napkins, paper/plastic/foil products, stationery, giftwrap supplies, postage, and delivery services.
- (18) **Personal Care Products** includes hair care products, nonelectric articles for hair, wigs, hairpieces, oral hygiene products, shaving needs, perfume, cosmetics, skincare, bath products, nail products, deodorant, feminine hygiene products, adult diapers, and personal care appliances.
- (19) **School Books and Supplies** includes school books and supplies for College, Elementary school, High school, Vocational/Technical School, Preschool/Other Schools, and Other School Supplies.
- (20) **Vehicle Purchases (Net Outlay)** includes net outlay for new and used cars, trucks, vans, motorcycles, and motor scooters.

**Data Note:** The Spending Potential Index (SPI) is household-based, and represents the amount spent for a product or service relative to a national average of 100. Detail may not sum to totals due to rounding.

**Source:** Esri forecasts for 2015 and 2020; Consumer Spending data are derived from the 2011 and 2012 Consumer Expenditure Surveys, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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June 02, 2016



# Retail Goods and Services Expenditures

Ventnor City Hall  
6201 Atlantic Ave. Ventnor NJ 08406  
Ring: 7-mile radius

Latitude: 39.337  
Longitude: -74.480

Top Tapestry Segments	Percent	Demographic Summary	2015	2020
Golden Years (9B)	9.8%	Population	130,380	131,553
Social Security Set (9F)	8.4%	Households	51,770	52,223
Front Porches (8E)	7.1%	Families	31,637	31,947
City Lights (8A)	6.7%	Median Age	41.7	42.2
Silver & Gold (9A)	5.8%	Median Household Income	\$43,522	\$50,012
		<b>Spending Potential</b>	<b>Average Amount</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Apparel and Services</b>				
Men's			90 \$2,082.46	\$107,808.864
Women's			90 \$390.87	\$20,235.154
Children's			90 \$725.21	\$37,544.250
Footwear			90 \$335.08	\$17,346.989
Watches & Jewelry			91 \$414.46	\$21,456.445
Apparel Products and Services (1)			88 \$127.21	\$6,585.659
<b>Computer</b>			92 \$89.63	\$4,640.366
Computers and Hardware for Home Use			89 \$192.68	\$9,975.196
Portable Memory			91 \$4.89	\$253.073
Computer Software			93 \$18.80	\$973.327
Computer Accessories			88 \$16.92	\$875.698
<b>Entertainment &amp; Recreation</b>			87 \$2,873.38	\$148,755.055
Fees and Admissions			90 \$581.31	\$30,094.388
Membership Fees for Clubs (2)			89 \$152.06	\$7,872.352
Fees for Participant Sports, excl. Trips			89 \$107.18	\$5,548.665
Admission to Movie/Theatre/Opera/Ballet			93 \$153.04	\$7,923.071
Admission to Sporting Events, excl. Trips			85 \$56.56	\$2,928.321
Fees for Recreational Lessons			91 \$111.86	\$5,790.996
Dating Services			100 \$0.60	\$30.983
TV/Video/Audio			89 \$1,165.42	\$60,333.927
Cable and Satellite Television Services			89 \$795.42	\$41,178.686
Televisions			89 \$131.71	\$6,818.547
Satellite Dishes			82 \$1.29	\$66.619
VCRs, Video Cameras, and DVD Players			89 \$9.81	\$508.006
Miscellaneous Video Equipment			81 \$8.74	\$452.318
Video Cassettes and DVDs			88 \$28.21	\$1,460.620
Video Game Hardware/Accessories			89 \$20.53	\$1,062.966
Video Game Software			89 \$24.47	\$1,266.739
Streaming/Downloaded Video			91 \$5.24	\$271.398
Rental of Video Cassettes and DVDs			87 \$20.38	\$1,054.886
Installation of Televisions			84 \$0.94	\$48.562
Audio (3)			92 \$113.95	\$5,899.246
Rental and Repair of TV/Radio/Sound Equipment			88 \$4.74	\$245.335
Pets			82 \$465.83	\$24,116.019
Toys and Games (4)			89 \$108.76	\$5,630.300
Recreational Vehicles and Fees (5)			78 \$170.96	\$8,850.607
Sports/Recreation/Exercise Equipment (6)			80 \$151.89	\$7,863.530
Photo Equipment and Supplies (7)			87 \$70.57	\$3,653.591
Reading (8)			89 \$135.99	\$7,040.237
Catered Affairs (9)			95 \$22.65	\$1,172.456
<b>Food</b>			89 \$7,579.49	\$392,390.425
Food at Home			89 \$4,653.91	\$240,932.690
Bakery and Cereal Products			89 \$651.90	\$33,748.756
Meats, Poultry, Fish, and Eggs			89 \$1,026.22	\$53,127.640
Dairy Products			88 \$497.86	\$25,774.194
Fruits and Vegetables			91 \$898.63	\$46,522.112
Snacks and Other Food at Home (10)			88 \$1,579.29	\$81,759.989
Food Away from Home			89 \$2,925.59	\$151,457.735
Alcoholic Beverages			92 \$512.53	\$26,533.594
Nonalcoholic Beverages at Home			89 \$442.55	\$22,910.709

**Data Note:** The Spending Potential Index (SPI) is household-based, and represents the amount spent for a product or service relative to a national average of 100. Detail may not sum to totals due to rounding.

**Source:** Esri forecasts for 2015 and 2020; Consumer Spending data are derived from the 2011 and 2012 Consumer Expenditure



# Retail Goods and Services Expenditures

Ventnor City Hall  
 6201 Atlantic Ave. Ventnor NJ 08406  
 Ring: 7-mile radius

Latitude: 39.338  
 Longitude: -74.480

	Spending Potential Index	Average Amount Spent	Total
<b>Financial</b>			
Investments	85	\$2,331.71	\$120,712,845
Vehicle Loans	83	\$3,528.78	\$182,685,006
<b>Health</b>			
Nonprescription Drugs	85	\$109.30	\$5,658,535
Prescription Drugs	84	\$416.86	\$21,580,996
Eyeglasses and Contact Lenses	86	\$77.05	\$3,988,714
<b>Home</b>			
Mortgage Payment and Basics (11)	84	\$7,911.16	\$409,560,585
Maintenance and Remodeling Services	84	\$1,413.24	\$73,163,311
Maintenance and Remodeling Materials (12)	76	\$227.16	\$11,760,027
Utilities, Fuel, and Public Services	87	\$4,419.17	\$228,780,250
<b>Household Furnishings and Equipment</b>			
Household Textiles (13)	91	\$89.52	\$4,634,613
Furniture	87	\$449.42	\$23,266,537
Rugs	88	\$21.77	\$1,127,265
Major Appliances (14)	83	\$223.78	\$11,585,348
Housewares (15)	88	\$63.58	\$3,291,319
Small Appliances	89	\$40.53	\$2,098,405
Luggage	91	\$8.36	\$432,638
Telephones and Accessories	86	\$42.91	\$2,221,588
<b>Household Operations</b>			
Child Care	91	\$405.15	\$20,974,672
Lawn and Garden (16)	83	\$359.26	\$18,598,674
Moving/Storage/Freight Express	96	\$71.01	\$3,675,972
Housekeeping Supplies (17)	87	\$629.63	\$32,596,078
<b>Insurance</b>			
Owners and Renters Insurance	81	\$410.06	\$21,228,863
Vehicle Insurance	89	\$1,074.24	\$55,613,422
Life/Other Insurance	81	\$375.06	\$19,416,859
Health Insurance	86	\$2,271.92	\$117,617,367
Personal Care Products (18)	87	\$409.08	\$21,178,216
School Books and Supplies (19)	89	\$159.92	\$8,279,013
Smoking Products	87	\$405.16	\$20,975,260
<b>Transportation</b>			
Vehicle Purchases (Net Outlay) (20)	83	\$3,336.64	\$172,737,813
Gasoline and Motor Oil	84	\$2,963.41	\$153,415,980
Vehicle Maintenance and Repairs	88	\$977.35	\$50,597,404
<b>Travel</b>			
Airline Fares	93	\$442.71	\$22,919,199
Lodging on Trips	86	\$391.07	\$20,245,671
Auto/Truck/Van Rental on Trips	89	\$30.02	\$1,554,037
Food and Drink on Trips	87	\$405.24	\$20,979,312

**Data Note:** The Spending Potential Index (SPI) is household-based, and represents the amount spent for a product or service relative to a national average of 100. Detail may not sum to totals due to rounding.

**Source:** Esri forecasts for 2015 and 2020; Consumer Spending data are derived from the 2011 and 2012 Consumer Expenditure

**(1) Apparel Products and Services** includes material for making clothes, sewing patterns and notions, shoe repair and other shoe services, apparel laundry and dry cleaning, alteration, repair and tailoring of apparel, clothing rental and storage, and watch and jewelry repair.

**(2) Membership Fees for Clubs** includes membership fees for social, recreational, and civic clubs.

**(3) Audio** includes satellite radio service, sound components and systems, digital audio players, records, CDs, audio tapes, streaming/downloaded audio, tape recorders, radios, musical instruments and accessories, and rental and repair of musical instruments.

**(4) Toys and Games** includes toys, games, arts and crafts, tricycles, playground equipment, arcade games, and online entertainment and games.

**(5) Recreational Vehicles & Fees** includes docking and landing fees for boats and planes, purchase and rental of RVs or boats, and camp fees.

**(6) Sports/Recreation/Exercise Equipment** includes exercise equipment and gear, game tables, bicycles, camping equipment, hunting and fishing equipment, winter sports equipment, water sports equipment, other sports equipment, and rental/repair of sports/recreation/exercise equipment.

**(7) Photo Equipment and Supplies** includes film, film processing, photographic equipment, rental and repair of photo equipment, and photographer fees.

**(8) Reading** includes digital book readers, books, magazine and newspaper subscriptions, and single copies of magazines and newspapers.

**(9) Catered Affairs** includes expenses associated with live entertainment and rental of party supplies.

**(10) Snacks and Other Food at Home** includes candy, chewing gum, sugar, artificial sweeteners, jam, jelly, preserves, margarine, fat, oil, salad dressing, nondairy cream and milk, peanut butter, frozen prepared food, potato chips, nuts, salt, spices, seasonings, olives, pickles, relishes, sauces, gravy, other condiments, soup, prepared salad, prepared dessert, baby food, miscellaneous prepared food, and nonalcoholic beverages.

**(11) Mortgage Payment and Basics** includes mortgage interest, mortgage principal, property taxes, homeowner's insurance, and ground rent.

**(12) Maintenance and Remodeling Materials** includes supplies/tools/equipment for painting and wallpapering, plumbing supplies and equipment, electrical/heating/AC supplies, materials for hard surface flooring, materials for roofing/gutters, materials for plaster/panel/siding, materials for patio/fence/brick work, landscaping materials, and insulation materials for owned homes.

**(13) Household Textiles** includes bathroom linens, bedroom linens, kitchen linens, dining room linens,

other linens, curtains, draperies, slipcovers, decorative pillows, and materials for slipcovers and curtains.

**(14) Major Appliances** includes dishwashers, disposals, refrigerators, freezers, washers, dryers, stoves, ovens, microwaves, window air conditioners, electric floor cleaning equipment, sewing machines, and miscellaneous appliances.

**(15) Housewares** includes plastic dinnerware, china, flatware, glassware, serving pieces, nonelectric cookware, and tableware.

**(16) Lawn and Garden** includes lawn and garden supplies, equipment and care service, indoor plants, fresh flowers, and repair/rental of lawn and garden equipment.

**(17) Housekeeping Supplies** includes soaps and laundry detergents, cleaning products, toilet tissue, paper towels, napkins, paper/plastic/foil products, stationery, giftwrap supplies, postage, and delivery services.

**(18) Personal Care Products** includes hair care products, nonelectric articles for hair, wigs, hairpieces, oral hygiene products, shaving needs, perfume, cosmetics, skincare, bath products, nail products, deodorant, feminine hygiene products, adult diapers, and personal care appliances.

**(19) School Books and Supplies** includes school books and supplies for College, Elementary school, High school, Vocational/Technical School, Preschool/Other Schools, and Other School Supplies.

**(20) Vehicle Purchases (Net Outlay)** includes net outlay for new and used cars, trucks, vans, motorcycles, and motor scooters.

**Data Note:** The Spending Potential Index (SPI) is household-based, and represents the amount spent for a product or service relative to a national average of 100. Detail may not sum to totals due to rounding.  
**Source:** Esri forecasts for 2015 and 2020; Consumer Spending data are derived from the 2011 and 2012 Consumer Expenditure Surveys, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

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## Dominant Tapestry Site Map

258 New Rd, Somers Point, New Jersey, 08244  
Ring: 1, 3, 5 Miles

Latitude: 39.328972  
Longitude: -74.595484

### Tapestry Segmentation

Tapestry Segmentation represents the fourth generation of market segmentation systems that began 30 years ago. The 65-segment Tapestry Segmentation system classifies U.S. neighborhoods based on their socioeconomic and demographic composition. Each segment is identified by its two-digit Segment Code. Match the two-digit segment labels on the map to the list below. A longer description of each segment is available at:

<http://www.esri.com/library/whitepapers/pdfs/community-tapestry.pdf>

Segment 01: Top Rung	Segment 34: Family Foundations
Segment 02: Suburban Splendor	Segment 35: International Marketplace
Segment 03: Connoisseurs	Segment 36: Old and Newcomers
Segment 04: Boomburbs	Segment 37: Prairie Living
Segment 05: Wealthy Seaboard Suburbs	Segment 38: Industrious Urban Fringe
Segment 06: Sophisticated Squires	Segment 39: Young and Restless
Segment 07: Exurbanites	Segment 40: Military Proximity
Segment 08: Laptops and Lattes	Segment 41: Crossroads
Segment 09: Urban Chic	Segment 42: Southern Satellites
Segment 10: Pleasant-Ville	Segment 43: The Elders
Segment 11: Pacific Heights	Segment 44: Urban Melting Pot
Segment 12: Up and Coming Families	Segment 45: City Strivers
Segment 13: In Style	Segment 46: Rooted Rural
Segment 14: Prosperous Empty Nesters	Segment 47: Las Casas
Segment 15: Silver and Gold	Segment 48: Great Expectations
Segment 16: Enterprising Professionals	Segment 49: Senior Sun Seekers
Segment 17: Green Acres	Segment 50: Heartland Communities
Segment 18: Cozy and Comfortable	Segment 51: Metro City Edge
Segment 19: Milk and Cookies	Segment 52: Inner City Tenants
Segment 20: City Lights	Segment 53: Home Town
Segment 21: Urban Villages	Segment 54: Urban Rows
Segment 22: Metropolitans	Segment 55: College Towns
Segment 23: Trendsetters	Segment 56: Rural Bypasses
Segment 24: Main Street, USA	Segment 57: Simple Living
Segment 25: Salt of the Earth	Segment 58: NeWest Residents
Segment 26: Midland Crowd	Segment 59: Southwestern Families
Segment 27: Metro Renters	Segment 60: City Dimensions
Segment 28: Aspiring Young Families	Segment 61: High Rise Renters
Segment 29: Rustbelt Retirees	Segment 62: Modest Income Homes
Segment 30: Retirement Communities	Segment 63: Dorms to Diplomas
Segment 31: Rural Resort Dwellers	Segment 64: City Commons
Segment 32: Rustbelt Traditions	Segment 65: Social Security Set
Segment 33: Midlife Junction	Segment 66: Unclassified

Source: Esri

June 24, 2014

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