Open Space and Recreation Plan

Atlantic County, New Jersey

May 2017

Prepared by Heyer, Gruel & Associates

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Open Space and Recreation Plan

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The 2017 Atlantic County Master Plan, Farmland Preservation Plan, and Open Space and Recreation Plan are updates to documents that are more than a decade old. As part of the State's post-Sandy recovery effort, the County received a grant for planning work to prepare a Strategic Recovery Planning Report (SRPR). The SRPR was prepared by Heyer Gruel and Associates and submitted to the County in January 2015. One of the main recommendations in the report is to update the County Master Plan and other planning documents. In order to carry out this recommendation, the County received a second Post-Sandy Planning Assistance Grant. A team comprising Heyer Gruel and Associates and Michael Baker International was selected to prepare the new Plans.

As part of the development of the County Master Plan, Farmland Preservation Plan, and Open Space and Recreation Plan, several meetings were conducted to obtain input from stakeholders and County residents.

Shortly after the inception of the plan development process, a meeting was held on the morning of March 24, 2016 at the Anthony Canale Training Center in Egg Harbor Township. County Planning Staff, municipal planners and planning consultants, and representatives from the Atlantic County Utilities Authority (ACUA), the Atlantic County Investment Authority (ACIA), the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority (CRDA), and other agencies were invited and in attendance. This meeting offered the consultant team the opportunity to present the scope of the project and background information. A lively and productive question and comment session provided a strong base from which to build the planning documents.

A second meeting was conducted at the Anthony Canale Training Center on the evening of July 14, 2016 to present draft information, field questions, and take comments from members of the public. This meeting was advertised digitally and in print by the County, and was well attended. Several elected officials, County Staff, and a number of residents were on hand to participate. Recommendations and comments presented by attendees at the meeting were incorporated into the drafting of the plan goals, objectives, and strategies.

On January 18, 2017, a working draft of all three plan documents was provided to the County for circulation, review, and comment. The plan was sent to representatives of each constituent municipality, relevant state and regional planning entities including the State Agriculture Development Board, The Pinelands Commission, and the Department of Community Affairs. Comments were solicited and accepted until February 15, 2017. A number of constructive comments were submitted to the consultant team and subsequently incorporated into the final versions of the plan documents.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Parks and recreation facilities play an important role in making desirable places to live and visit. Public recreation facilities and open space provide opportunities for exercise, social events, conservation and preservation of important natural resources, and help balance the pressures of growth in developing municipalities. Atlantic County contains over 108,000 acres of publicly owned open space. Approximately 74,765 acres are preserved by the State, 19,400 acres consist of a Federal wildlife refuge, 7,435 acres are owned and managed by the County, and 6,475 acres are preserved by municipal governments. In total, these preserved open spaces account for approximately 27% of the County's total land area.

The last County Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) was adopted in 2000. Since that time, development and demographic trends in the County have changed. The purpose of this OSRP is to consider the current state of the County and to establish a guiding document that Atlantic County can use to continue its mission to provide open space and recreation facilities to meet the needs of its residents.

At this time, the County faces several challenges. Since the last OSRP, the County's demographics have significantly changed. Not only have the coastal communities experienced a significant decline in their population, but the County's population as a whole is aging. Existing parks should be retrofitted to provide proper amenities for the aging populace. Revenues from the County Open Space tax have declined significantly over the past few years due to the economic downturn. The County is facing a variety of other emerging issues. These include promoting resiliency against future storms and climate change, dealing with challenges associated with the increasingly widespread use of unmanned aerial vehicles (also known as drones), and ensuring that the County's changing population is adequately served by existing facilities.

State planning documents also play a critical role in the development of Atlantic County. The 2001 State Development and Redevelopment Plan provides a vision for the future that serves to preserve and enhance the quality of life for all residents. The Pinelands Protection Act and the Coastal Area Facilities Review Act govern the County's (and its municipalities') land uses and the intensity of these uses. While these regulatory agencies provide environmental protection of the County's more sensitive environments such as wetlands, streams, and lakes, they do little to protect upland regions prone to development.

A Geographic Service Area Standard for Recreational Facilities is included as a part of this Plan. The County's park system in conjunction with municipal park systems give most of the County's residents adequate access to open space. Areas lacking facilities in close proximity include most of Egg Harbor City, the north-western portion of Galloway Township, and the south-western half of Weymouth.

Finally, the Plan includes recommendations and strategies for Open Space and Recreation planning, and an implementation matrix for taking action moving forward.

INTRODUCTION

What is Open Space?

In the simplest terms, open space is undeveloped land. Open space consists of the landscape and areas that link together the built environment in which residents of the County live and work. The nature and extent of these open areas, and the manner in which they are used and enjoyed help form a part of community identity. Open space consists of diverse environments such as forests, fields, meadows, lakes, ponds, beaches, rivers, streams, historic sites and structures, scenic views and corridors, athletic fields, gardens, orchards, farmland, and vacant lots. Different members of the community appreciate and enjoy these resources in different ways.

Why Does a Community Need Open Space?

Open space contributes to the value of a community and helps create pleasant, vibrant, sustainable places to live. Open space offers recreation opportunities, protects natural resources and wildlife habitat, and promotes human health and community wellbeing. Open space provides areas for active and passive recreation for residents of all ages, and provides an attractive amenity for visitors and tourists. The benefits of open space can be broken down into aesthetic value, ecological function, recreation opportunities, and cultural identities.

PATH AT LAKE LENAPE

Aesthetic Value

Open space often protects "beautiful places" consisting of different landscapes such as forests, fields, waterways, gardens and scenic vistas that offer aesthetic benefits to an area. Open space can create a pleasant and vibrant living environment. The restorative powers of natural scenery have been written about for generations. Residents and visitors alike form impressions about an area based upon its natural spaces and green areas.

Ecological Function

Lands in open space protection can protect and enhance air and water quality while limiting and offsetting the impacts of development. Open space can also help preserve vital storm water recharge lands and protect important environmental features such as floodplains, wetlands, and steep slopes. Development of flood hazard areas, wetlands, and steep slopes can have serious impacts on the resiliency of a community. Excessive filling of wetlands and development in flood plains limits the natural system's ability to absorb and retain water.

Recreation Opportunities

Open space, athletic fields, and natural areas provide opportunities for County residents of all ages to enjoy both formal and informal outdoor activities. Casual pick-up games and organized sports leagues utilize County and Municipal athletic fields. Natural areas provide venues for hunting, fishing, and other outdoor pursuits. The County's beaches, lakes, and parks provide gathering places for social events, and comfortable spots for passive recreation.

Cultural Identify

Historic and cultural resources help define a community and its residents' shared past. Preserving natural areas, farmlands, battlefields, historic structures and districts are important efforts that contribute to and enhance the County's quality of life.

How many types of Open Space are there?

Open space can mean different things to different people, but generally speaking, open space is used for active or passive recreation, natural resource protection or historic resource preservation.

Active recreation consists of activities that rely on development and infrastructure that involves regular upkeep and maintenance. Developed fields and courts (soccer, football, baseball/softball, tennis, basketball, volleyball, etc.), golf courses, swimming pools, playgrounds, skate parks, exercise equipment, boat launches, and performing arts spaces are all examples of active recreational facilities.

Passive recreation consists of low-impact activities and non-consumptive uses that require minimal disturbance of the natural environment and little or no upkeep and maintenance. Examples of passive recreation include wildlife observation, walking, hiking, biking, canoeing, kayaking, and picnicking. Hunting and fishing do not require formal infrastructure, but they are consumptive in nature so they share qualities with both passive and active recreation activities. When appropriately managed, their impacts are generally consistent with passive recreational activities.

Natural Resource Protection refers to open space that is specifically used for maintaining a sustainable community. The preservation of forestlands, wetlands, wildlife management areas, floodplains, and groundwater recharge areas, enhances resiliency from natural disasters and contributes to the sustainability of a community. Historic Resource Preservation involves maintaining locations and structures that have historic value in the community. The culture of a community is preserved through historic buildings, landmarks, and spaces that tell a common story. Interpretive signage highlights places of significance and gives visitors information regarding iconic sites and events throughout the history of the community.

What are the Benefits of an Open Space Plan?

A good Open Space Plan requires a comprehensive planning approach. The approach needs to look at opportunities and constraints in a given area, rely on public input and produce recommendations with value to the community. The open space planning process:

- Creates a proactive plan for open space protection – The County should take a proactive approach to identifying needs and creating capital plans for acquiring and developing facilities instead of reacting to land use changes brought about by the private sector.
- Prevents reactive actions spurred by specific development proposals – Establishing a framework for open space planning allows the County to know how individual development proposals fit into that larger framework and can be prepared to respond to proposals based on the plan's vision.
- Provides opportunities for funding – Open space plans that satisfy NJDEP Green Acres Program requirements meet one of the prerequisites for matching funds and acquisition grants.
- Creates community buy-in and support – The open space plan incorporates public input and provides a document that can be shared with community leaders and citizens to help build support for capital plans, open space acquisitions, and recreation facilities improvements.
- Contributes to Smart Growth Initiatives – Open space planning is an integral part of any Smart Growth Planning initiative. Open space planning contributes to the "Green Infrastructure" component of sustainable smart growth planning initiatives. The County can balance its focus between planning its transportation, utility and communications infrastructure, with its open space and "Green Infrastructure".

COUNTY PARK HUNTING SIGN

PINELANDS

ATLANTIC COUNTY OVERVIEW

The previous Open Space and Recreation Plan was adopted by the Atlantic County Board of Freeholders in 2000. At that time, the Atlantic City was thriving, which played a pivotal role in projecting a strong growing economy, as well as continued population growth. Over the past several years, the County has been slow to recover from the global recession, and Atlantic City has experienced a significant decline in economic growth as a number of casinos have closed. This slump in the economy has been reflected throughout the County.

One of the major challenges in the County is to provide ample open space facilities for its residents while its funding has significantly declined. The Open Space tax, which was once $0.02 per $100 of assessed value and generated over $11.6 million dollars in 2008, has been reduced to a mere 1/8th of a cent in 2015, generating less than $460,000 for the year. Although County funding has been significantly reduced, State and Federal regulatory programs have helped protect fragile and unique environmental resources in the County such as streams, wetlands and wetland buffers. Development pressures have slowed as new construction starts and permits have declined, but the County needs to continue to be vigilant in balancing its open space needs with development.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

In New Jersey, most land use planning has historically been delegated to municipal governments by the State under the Municipal Land Use Law, with some additional Land Use responsibilities provided to counties through the County Enabling Act.

State Development and Redevelopment Plan

Since the year 2000, a number of changes have occurred within the State as well as within Atlantic County. The State adopted the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) in 2001 which established Planning Areas in order to control and sustain growth. The Pinelands Protection Act remains a pivotal regulatory agency in the County. Additionally, the Coastal Area Facilities Review Act (CAFRA) provides similar framework to control growth and development along the State's waterfront.

The SDRP proposed that counties "play a vital coordination roles in Cross-acceptance and the preparation of Urban Complex Strategic Revitalization and Regional Strategic Plans to be endorsed by the State Planning Commission." The State Plan also created Planning Areas which identified areas with common characteristics and provided policy direction for each. These designated Planning Areas range from those considered Metropolitan through Rural/Environmentally Sensitive Areas. For more information regarding the SDRP, please refer to the County's Land Use Element.

However, over the past decade, the State's current administration has not made land use planning a priority. The State Plan has not been updated since 2001, and while a new draft State Plan was prepared in 2011, the State has yet to adopt the new plan or update the existing Plan.

New Jersey Pinelands Protection Act

In addition to the SDRP, the New Jersey Pinelands Protection Act has also established regulatory guidelines in which municipalities are required to conform. Each municipality is required to reflect the Pinelands Management Areas within their local zoning regulations. These Land Management Areas control the type of development and the density of development. These areas range from high density (Regional Growth Area allowing 4 dwelling units per acre) to extremely low density (Preservation Area allowing only pre-existing dwelling units).

The Coastal Area Facilities Review Act

The Coastal Area Facilities Review Act (CAFRA) is another regulatory land use program that influences municipal land use planning. CAFRA controls land use regulations including impervious surface requirements and density on both publicly and privately owned land. CAFRA regulations are generally applied to communities located within the Barrier Islands and Back Bay regions of the County.

Both the NJ Pinelands Commission and CAFRA control the density and impervious cover requirements which are frequently mandated for both public and private lands in order to provide environmental benefits and balance to the region as a whole. However, these plans and programs have provided little incentive toward the acquisition and development of properties to make them accessible to the public for recreational purposes. In more rural areas, the Statewide regulatory programs often result in reduced impervious surfaces for environmental protection purposes, but result in private large lot development. These programs create less intensity on a large scale, but offer little in the way of advancing useable or accessible public open space.

OPEN SPACE PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- **To preserve sufficient open space to protect the natural resources and cultural heritage of the County for public use, conservation, and education.**
  - Identify specific natural and cultural resources that are currently protected and those resources that require protection.
  - Encourage cooperation between Atlantic County Municipal Environmental Commissions to coordinate their respective natural resource inventories into a county wide natural resource inventory.
  - Develop partnerships between municipalities, counties, and all levels of government to foster protection of open spaces.
  - Provide open space strategies and policies consistent with state-wide Master Plan goals.

Preserved Open Space

Open Space Type

- NJ Natural Lands Trust
- NJDEP Fish & Wildlife
- NJDEP Parks & Forestry
- State Open Space
- County Open Space
- County Potential Mitigation
- Municipal Open Space
- Non-Profit Open Space
- PDC Restricted
- State Farmland PDC Transfer
- State Farmland Preservation
- County Farmland Preservation
- US Fish & Wildlife Service
- Atlantic County Bikeway East

N W E S

0 0.5 1 2 3 Miles

Source: NJDEP, NJGIN, NJOGIS, NJDOT, Atlantic County Office of GIS

This map is for demonstration purposes only and was not developed in accordance with National Map Accuracy Standards. Any use of this product with respect to accuracy and precision shall be the sole responsibility of the user. The map was developed, in part, using New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Geographic Information System (GIS) digital data, in conjunction with the Atlantic County Office of Geographic Information Systems, but this secondary product has not been verified by NJDEP and is not state authorized.

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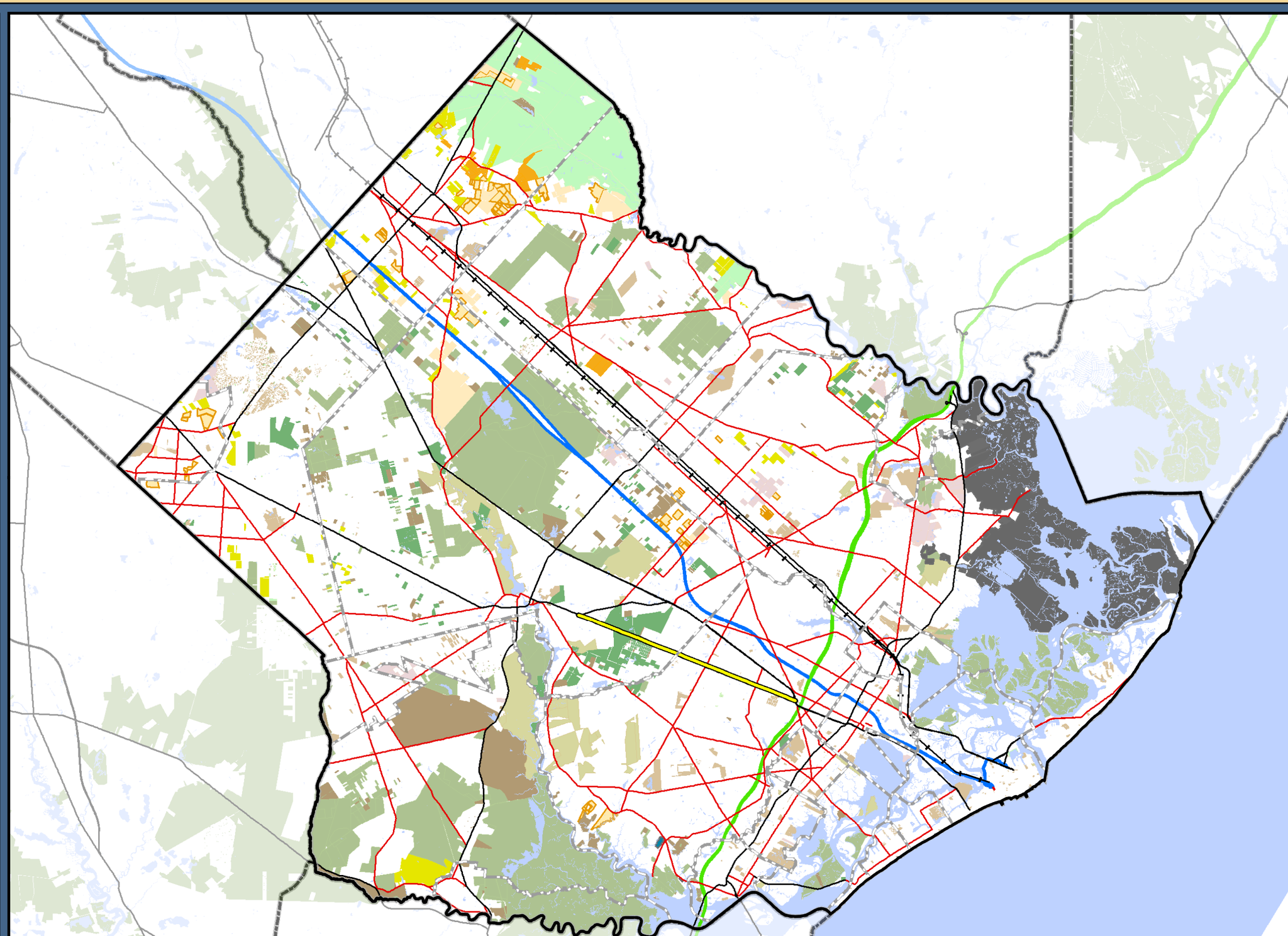
HEYER GRUEL & ASSOCIATES



- **To provide a balanced County open space and recreation park system that serves the greatest number of residents.**
  - o Identify potential open space and recreation sites within growing communities such as Egg Harbor Township, Hamilton Township, Galloway Township and Hammonton.
  - o Develop and implement a prioritized acquisition program that responds to the existing deficiencies in open space and recreational facilities.
  - o Provide municipalities a portion of the County Open Space Tax Trust Fund in order to assist in the acquisition of open space and the development of recreation areas.
  - o Construct park facilities and implement programs that respond to the multigenerational, ethnic diversity, and seasonal employee populations of the County, including both active and passive recreation needs.
  - o Identify funding sources and revenue generation mechanisms that can be implemented into the park planning process.

- **To provide a plan for public access to the County's waterfront resources for both active and passive recreational use of the County's open waters.**
  - o Implement as a component of the Park acquisition program, access points to the major water bodies of the County, including the Great Egg Harbor River, Mullica River, and bay areas.
  - o Identify potential sites for multi-use waterfront parks.
  - o Encourage eligible municipalities to develop and implement the NJDEP approved Municipal Public Access Plans

LAKE LENAPE

- **To establish an Eco-tourism program that incorporates the County Park system as a main attraction and important resource of the County.**
  - o Encourage corporate and public communities to be supporters of the County park system.
  - o Explore opportunities between the private and public sectors to support and fund enhanced tourism.
  - o Expand the County's camping facilities to accommodate visitors, particularly during the summer months.

- **To provide sufficient personnel, programming, and maintenance equipment to protect investments in the park system and deliver the highest possible level of service.**
  - o Consider an amendment, through voter referendum, to the Atlantic County Open Space Trust Fund that would allow a percentage of the revenue to be used for park maintenance and operation costs.
  - o Identify other funding sources and revenue generating mechanisms to ensure staffing and maintenance of the park system, such as corporate partnerships or lease arrangements.
  - o Encourage and develop open space and recreation programming and partnerships with local and regional business communities.

- **To ensure that all existing and future park facilities are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility standards and open to all County residents and visitors.**
  - o Survey and inventory existing facilities to assure compliance with the Americans Disabilities Act (ADA).
  - o Incorporate the needs of people with disabilities and comply with ADA standards when designing and developing new facilities.
  - o Continue to explore new avenues and opportunities to improve accessibility.

- **To continue to provide and expand greenways/trails and open space lands that link existing federal, state, county, and municipal open spaces to facilitate a variety of linear recreation activities, such as biking, hiking, backpacking, canoeing, and horseback riding.**
  - o In addition to acquiring lands, investigate opportunities for conservation and right-of-way easements that could be implemented into an overall County Greenways Plan.
  - o Establish partnerships with all levels of government, particularly municipalities, to promote a County Greenways Plan as an incentive to advance County eco-tourism.

COMMUNITY GARDEN, ESTELL MANOR

  - o Target properties for preservation to assist in the development of the High Point to Cape May Point Hiking Trail and Greenway.
  - o Provide linkages between Estell Manor Park across the South River and across Stevens Creek to connect to State-Owned Wildlife Management Areas.
  - o Target sites which will "fill the gap" between existing parks and provide a linear linkage.

- **To provide additional County Parks that provide a variety of active recreational facilities and are sufficient in size to accommodate multiple uses.**
  - o Target the acquisition of tracts that can be developed predominately for active recreational activities, such as soccer, baseball, softball, running tracks, and exercise trails.
  - o Design park facilities with sufficient open areas that can be easily adapted to a variety of needs, such as regional athletic tournaments.
  - o Consider modifications to the user fee system for particular active recreational activities including golf and pistol and archery ranges.

Support from the County administration, the Board of Chosen Freeholders, municipalities, and the public will be needed to implement the goals and policies of this Open Space and Recreation Plan.

COUNTY CHALLENGES

The County faces substantial challenges in providing sufficient recreational opportunities for all of its citizens. Open space planning is a key component of maintaining a high quality of life for residents and attracting visitors. Open space planning in today's environment is complex and encompasses a wide range of functions. Preserving open space is not reserving the "left over" lands, which are surplus areas to other uses. Land used to satisfy open space requirements must be considered an integral part of any community plan. Land should be set aside for open space in the same manner as residential, commercial, agricultural and industrial lands are designated in community master plans.

In order to address this challenge, every attempt to join public and private sector resources in pursuing this goal must be explored. Legal, financial and operational innovations which will allow for the acquisition, development and use of open space opportunities must be in place in order to meet the challenge. This plan presents objectives, goals and policies along with an action plan to promote the continued preservation of valuable natural resources and the provision of recreational facilities. Both the natural and built environments set Atlantic County apart as a special part of the State. The ocean, barrier islands, Atlantic City Boardwalk, and the unique characteristics of the Pinelands present a landscape that contains the features that have made New Jersey famous.

ESTELL MANOR PARK

Development surrounding Atlantic City, with casino gambling at the center intensified land use patterns in the barrier islands region of the County. However, between 2000 and 2010, the populations of these shore communities have significantly decreased. Current open space exists along the beaches, at schools, and in small parks scattered within each community. These municipalities, in conjunction with the County and State when applicable, should be proactive with the acquisition of open space. Future acquisitions can have the two-fold benefit of arresting excessive growth and enhancing resiliency to future storm events and sea level rise.

The bay communities are predominately developed with residential communities oriented to the waterfront environment with limited remaining open space opportunities. Suburban areas are similar to bay communities, in that both suburban and bay communities consist of development served by sewer service areas and their dominating regulatory agencies (either Pinelands or CAFRA) permit growth. Many of these areas have experienced tremendous growth over the past decade, specifically within the designated Regional Growth Area communities of Egg Harbor Township, Galloway Township, and Hamilton Township.

The remaining part of the County is within the pine and oak forests of the watersheds of the Mullica and Great Egg Harbor River systems. These municipalities have developed from farming communities, into small villages and towns. The two major rivers flowing through these areas to the bays of the County create unique and special environments. While most of these communities' populations have experienced slight growth, open space and recreational opportunities should reflect the needs of these municipalities.

It is of the utmost importance that the counties and municipalities of these growth areas work together within the state regulatory network to ensure that a balance between open space and development is realized.

The challenge for Atlantic County is to provide for the recreational needs of its population, preserve the historic and cultural heritage of its people, and enhance community resiliency in the face of environmental pressures.

FUNDING MECHANISMS

The New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan includes a strategy to "… Enhance, preserve and use historic, cultural, science and recreational assets." The State established the Garden State Preservation Trust Fund in 1998 by voter referendum to dedicate money for conservation purposes.

The public question authorized a constitutional dedication of $98 million per year for 30 years to fund open space preservation, conservation, farmland preservation, recreational development, and historic preservation. The first 10 years of the GSPT funding would be utilized toward appropriations for these endeavors and immediate payments toward debt service, while the remaining 20 years would be utilized solely to pay off GSPT bonds.

Following the initial 10 years of this successful program, there was momentum to continue the investment in preservation efforts. Another public question was placed on the ballot in 2014, approving a change to the state constitution to provide a stable funding source for preservation programs, through a dedication of funds from the Corporate Business Tax. The implementing legislation was signed by Governor Christie in 2016. The Preserve New Jersey Fund allocates specific percentages of the Corporate Business Tax to be utilized for Green Acres, Blue Acres, Farmland Preservation, and Historic Preservation programs each year.

Through the GSPT (formerly) and now the Preserve NJ Fund, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection offers the Green Acres program, which provides matching grants and low interest loans to assist municipalities, non-profit entities, and counties with the acquisition and development of land for open space and recreational uses. More recently, the NJDEP has begun to provide assistance for the acquisition of flood prone properties through the "Blue Acres" offshoot of the Green Acres program. Blue Acres acquisitions focus on properties that have been damaged by floods and are prone to recurring damage caused by flooding. The goal is to remove properties that suffer repetitive losses from the flood plain and to create a buffer to enhance resiliency and protect other properties from damage.

For local governments, Green Acres acquisition awards are broken into specific funding categories: Planning Incentive acquisitions; Site Specific Incentive acquisitions; Urban Aid acquisitions; and Standard acquisitions. Eligibility for specific funding categories is based on a number of factors including:

1. Designation as a Qualifying Open Space Referendum County or Qualifying Open Space Referendum Municipality
2. Adoption of an Open Space and Recreation Plan, prepared in accordance with Green Acres guidelines
3. Project location – Sites located within a designated Urban Aid municipality

As defined within the Green Acres regulations (N.J.A.C. 7:36-2.1), a Qualifying Open Space Referendum County or Qualifying Open Space Referendum Municipality includes any county or municipality that has:

1. Approved and implemented, and is collecting and expending the revenue from, an annual levy authorized pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:1215.1 et seq. for an amount or at a rate equivalent to at least one half of one cent per $100.00 of assessed value of real property, or for an amount or at a rate established by the county or municipality, respectively, and in effect as of April 1, 1999, whichever is greater; or

2. Adopted an alternative means of funding for the same or similar purposes as an annual levy, which the Department approves to be stable and reasonably equivalent in effect to an annual levy for an amount or at a rate determined by the Department.

History of Green Acres Acquisition Funds Received by Atlantic County

Planning Incentive acquisitions receive up to a 50% matching grant for allowable project costs, as well as potential low-interest loans (not more than 2%; based on funding availability). Eligibility for this funding category is open to local governments that meet the definition of a Qualifying Open Space Referendum County or Municipality, and that have adopted an Open Space & Recreation Plan prepared in accordance with Green Acres guidelines.

In the year 2000, with an annual Open Space Tax levy of 2 cents per $100 of assessed value of real property and an adopted Open Space & Recreation Plan prepared in accordance with Green Acres guidelines, Atlantic County executed its first Project Agreement with Green Acres, under the Planning Incentive category. Over the next several years, due to its active and successful preservation initiatives, Atlantic County executed 10 amendments to its Project Agreement with Green Acres, allocating a total of $20,300,000.00 and resulting in the preservation of 1,883 acres.

During the height of local development activity, Atlantic County actively pursued acquisition of lands for parks and open space. Green Acres funding was critical to the County's efforts, stretching available County Open Space monies to protect and preserve natural resources to the greatest extent possible. However, the economic downturn resulted in a reduction of the Open Space Tax rate that has had far-reaching implications to the County's land acquisition efforts.

In 2009, the annual tax levy was reduced from the maximum allowable 2 cents per $100 of assessed value, to ½ cent. Subsequently in 2015, it was further reduced to 1/8 of a cent. The County now collects a fraction of what it had in the previous two decades, which has greatly impacted all programs funded through the tax. Effects are twofold: Less money is collected through taxation to directly fund preservation programs, and Atlantic County is no longer eligible for Planning Incentive category grants from Green Acres. Currently, Atlantic County is eligible for Green Acres funding in the Standard Acquisition category, which allows a matching grant of up to 25% of allowable acquisition costs and a potential low-interest loan to supplement the grant (GSPT can authorize a matching grant up to 50% of allowable acquisition costs, under special circumstances). The resulting lack of preservation dollars will greatly affect preservation efforts now and into the future.

Table 1.1 Atlantic County Open Space Tax

Year	Tax Rate	Amount Generated
1991	1/2 cent	$933,670.43
1992	1/2 cent	$967,489.06
1993	No Tax	$0.00
1994	1/2 cent	$913,723.30
1995	No Tax	$0.00
1996	1/4 cent	$459,564.60
1997	1/4 cent	$451,545.15
1998	1 cent	$1,875,962.03
1999	1 cent	$1,914,388.55
2000	2 cents	$3,991,789.33
2001	2 cents	$4,163,704.10
2002	2 cents	$4,492,342.77
2003	2 cents	$5,014,625.09
2004	2 cents	$5,565,170.17
2005	2 cents	$6,640,417.78
2006	2 cents	$7,935,383.97
2007	2 cents	$10,241,858.91
2008	2 cents	$11,651,279.30
2009	1/2 cent	$2,809,312.76
2010	1/2 cent	$2,776,325.26
2011	1/2 cent	$2,472,392.02
2012	1/2 cent	$2,472,392.02
2013	1/2 cent	$2,087,483.23
2014	1/2 cent	$2,069,075.23
2015	1/8 cent	$458,385.48
2016	1/8 cent	-
Total		$82,358,280.54

Other Green Acres Programs

The Preserve New Jersey Act (P.L. 2016, C12) has made limited competitive funding available to counties and municipalities for Land Acquisition and Park Development, and Local Government Stewardship projects. The Land Acquisition and Park Development grant provides money for the purchase of land to be used for active or passive recreation, historic sites, conservation areas, and natural areas, and for the development of recreational facilities on land already owned by, or leased by, a local government unit. Applications for the Land Acquisition and park Development grants are encouraged to address the provision of outdoor recreation space for children and projects that promote sustainable and resilient communities.

The Local Government Stewardship project provides funding for activity "which is beyond routine operations and maintenance, undertaken by the State, a local government or qualifying tax exempt nonprofit organization to repair or restore lands acquired for recreation and conservation purposes for the purpose of enhancing or protecting those lands for recreation and conservation purposes." The Stewardship grants are for projects with eligible costs over $100,000, and are 50% matching grants, or 75% matching grants for projects in an Urban Aid municipality.

The Pinelands Conservation Fund

The Pinelands Conservation Fund (PCF) provided funding for 36 land acquisition projects totaling $8.95 million in expenditures between 2007 and June 30, 2016. Atlantic County was the recipient of $300,000 toward the acquisition of just under 700 acres in Hamilton Township, known as the Cologne Avenue property. There were six other projects completed in the County using PCF allocations. Buena Vista Township received $10,000 toward the purchase of the Capri tract, The New Jersey Conservation Foundation received $106,000 for the purchase of Wharton Properties tract in Mullica Township and $10,000 toward the purchase of the Lee tract in Galloway Township, and The Nature Conservancy received $3,496.50 toward the preservation of the Igels Trust property and $2.276,227 toward the purchase of Lenape Farms in Estell Manor City. A total of 3,650 acres have been preserved in the County utilizing the PCF allocations. The Pinelands Commission does not have an open PCF funding round at this time.
Frank H. Stewart Trust

The Frank H. Stewart Trust was established to provide funding to assist Gloucester, Salem, Atlantic, Cumberland, and Cape May Counties, and their constituent municipalities in the acquisition of land for public parks, recreation, game refuges, fishing or propagation of fish, bird sanctuaries, or grounds for the protection and preservation of wildlife. Applications for funding are accepted year-round, with an annual award of $150,000 in September in one or two grants. The Trust is managed by Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. and an application form is available online.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

The LWCF was created by Congress in 1964 to provide funding to federal, state, and local governments to purchase land, water, and wetlands for the benefit of the public. The goal of this fund is to acquire land that provides recreational opportunities, clean water, preserves wildlife habitat, enhances scenic vistas, protects site of archeological or historical significance, and maintains the pristine nature of wilderness areas.

The scoring criteria for grant applications focuses on the provision of recreation and recreational access, watershed protection and climate change mitigation and adaptation, protection of threatened and endangered species habitats, local community support and partnerships, regional ranking, and benefits from an operation and maintenance standpoint.

LAKE LENAPE

INVENTORY OF COUNTY OPEN SPACE FACILITIES

The following inventory of Atlantic County's Park System provides details regarding each of the facilities that are owned and operated by Atlantic County. The County's Park System has been defined into categories based upon a number of factors including area of land, types of uses supported, and the degree of development. These categories are Parks and Recreational Facilities, Tracts, and Natural Areas. An inventory of permitted uses and facilities is included at the end of this section. A County Open Space Inventory map can be found on the following page.

Parks and Recreational Facilities

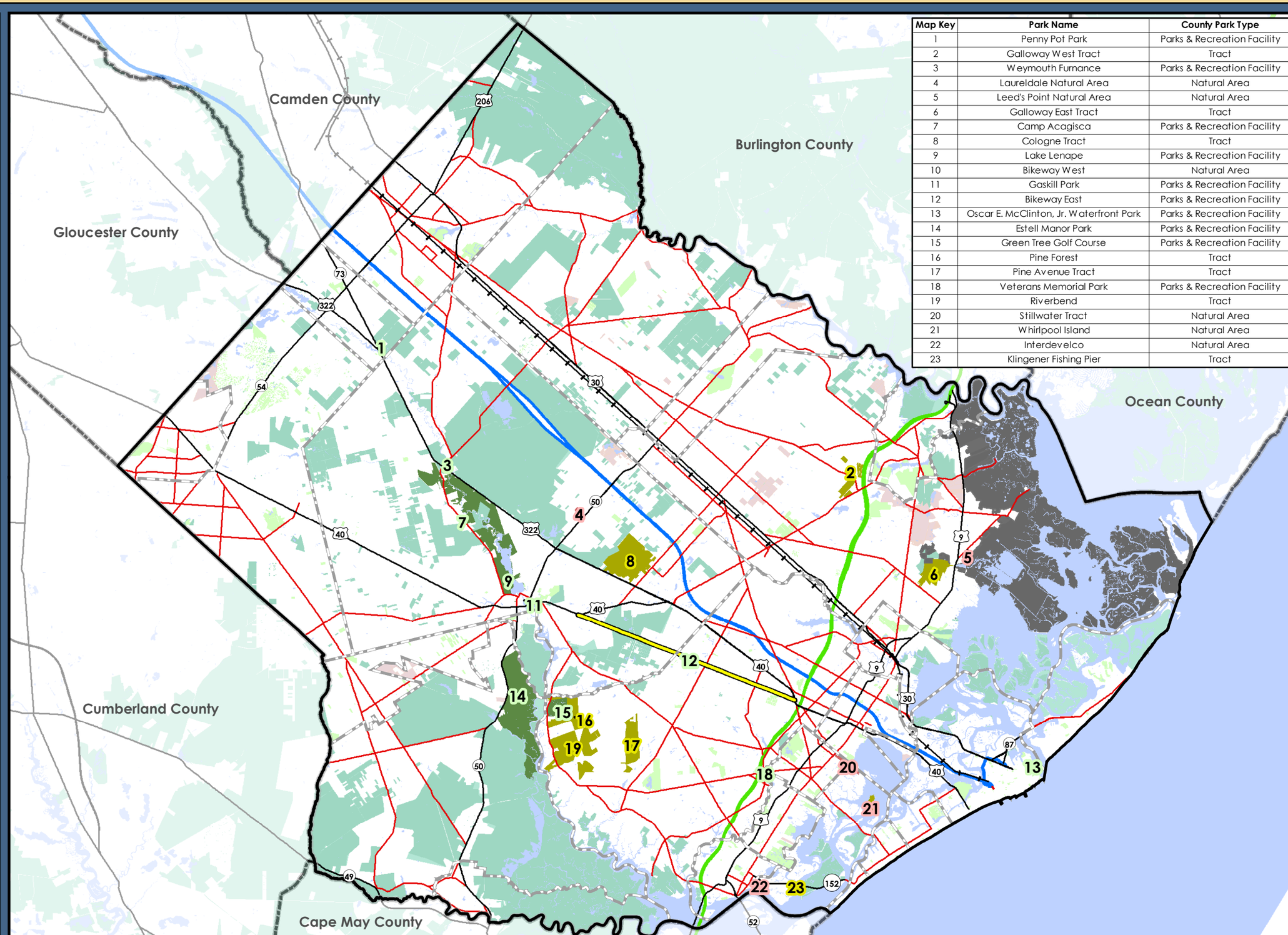
Parks and Recreational Facilities offer various active and passive recreational amenities, improvements, and facilities with designated access points. These sites are actively managed and maintained for public use. Hunting activities are prohibited in most of these parks with the exception of designated portions of Lake Lenape West and Estell Manor Park.

Table 1.2 County Parks and Recreational Facilities

Park Name	Block	Lot	Municipality	Acreage	Year Acquired
Bikeway East	2904 / 2601 / 1701 / 1704 / 1801 / 1810 / 1934 / 1933 / 2004 / 2006 / 1029 / 1131 / 1177.01 / 1177.02	1 / 1 / 1 / 1, 2 / 1, 2 / 1, 2 / 1, 2 / 1, 2 / 1 / 1, 2 / 4, 4.01 / 7 / 1 / 1	Egg Harbor Township	32.0	1982
Camp Acagisca*	587	25	Hamilton Township	-	1987
Estell Manor Park	51	5	Estell Manor	1,663.8	1974
	51	6, 6.05		42.3	1993
Gaskill Park	746 / 749	5 / 11, 12	Hamilton Township	10.6	1928
Lake Lenape East	588	72, 75.01	Hamilton Township	17.5	2007
Lake Lenape West	587 / 588	3, 9, 25, 38, 55 / 3, 29.1	Hamilton Township	1,920.9	1987
	520	23		183.2	2005
	520	22		23.4	2006
Oscar E. McClinton, Jr. Waterfront Park	94	1	Atlantic City	4.4	1997
Penny Pot Park	3409	2	Folsom Borough	19.8	1984
Green Tree Golf Course	4901 / 5001	66, 70 / 25	Egg Harbor Township	241.7	1992
Weymouth Furnace Park	523, 589, 591	1 / 1, 2, 3 / 37, 38, 44	Hamilton Township	9.3	unknown
Veterans Memorial Park	5506	1	Egg Harbor Township	0.8	unknown
			Total	4,169.6	-

*Camp Acagisca was acquired by the County as part of the Lake Lenape West purchase in 1987.

County Open Space Inventory



Map Key	Park Name	County Park Type
1	Penny Pot Park	Parks & Recreation Facility
2	Galloway West Tract	Tract
3	Weymouth Furnance	Parks & Recreation Facility
4	Laureldale Natural Area	Natural Area
5	Leed's Point Natural Area	Natural Area
6	Galloway East Tract	Tract
7	Camp Acagisca	Parks & Recreation Facility
8	Cologne Tract	Tract
9	Lake Lenape	Parks & Recreation Facility
10	Bikeway West	Natural Area
11	Gaskill Park	Parks & Recreation Facility
12	Bikeway East	Parks & Recreation Facility
13	Oscar E. McClinton, Jr. Waterfront Park	Parks & Recreation Facility
14	Estell Manor Park	Parks & Recreation Facility
15	Green Tree Golf Course	Parks & Recreation Facility
16	Pine Forest	Tract
17	Pine Avenue Tract	Tract
18	Veterans Memorial Park	Parks & Recreation Facility
19	Riverbend	Tract
20	Stillwater Tract	Natural Area
21	Whirlpool Island	Natural Area
22	Interdevelco	Natural Area
23	Klingener Fishing Pier	Tract

County Open Space

- Parks & Recreation Facilities
- Natural Area
- Tract
- Bikeway East
- **Municipal Open Space**
- **Non-Profit Open Space**
- **State-Owned Open Space**
- **US Fish & Wildlife Service**

N W E S

0 0.5 1 2 3 Miles

Source: NJDEP, NJGIN, NJOGIS, NJDOT, Atlantic County Office of GIS

This map is for demonstration purposes only and was not developed in accordance with National Map Accuracy Standards. Any use of this product with respect to accuracy and precision shall be the sole responsibility of the user. The map was developed, in part, using New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Geographic Information System (GIS) digital data, in conjunction with the Atlantic County Office of Geographic Information Systems, but this secondary product has not been verified by NJDEP and is not state authorized.

The geodetic accuracy and precision of the GIS data contained in this map has not been developed nor verified by a professional licensed land surveyor and shall not be nor is intended to be used in matters requiring delineation and location of true ground horizontal and/or vertical controls.

HEYER GRUEL & ASSOCIATES

Bikeway East

The Bikeway East is a 7.56-mile section which extends from the Harbor Square (formerly known as the Shore Mall) in Egg Harbor Township to the Atlantic County Vocational/Technical School in Hamilton Township. A traffic signal with pedestrian activation for safe crossings is located at English Creek Avenue. Parking for the bike trail is located at Harbor Square, Atlantic County Institute of Technology, and at English Creek Avenue. Interpretive signage is included along the trail containing information related to Pinelands ecology, and the history of the Pennsylvania Reading Seashore rail line. This project was awarded a $541,000 Federal Intermodal Transportation Grant.

Camp Acagisca

Previously a Girl Scout camp and bordered by the Great Egg Harbor River, this 70-acre property is now part of the Atlantic County Park System. Group camping is available at the Park, and public access is provided for a canoe launch area.

Estell Manor Park

The Atlantic County Park in Estell Manor consists of approximately 1,800 acres of picturesque pinelands habitat embraced with a wonderful history adding to its rich environmental attributes. The Park's location is a short distance south of the County seat in Mays Landing, a historic town itself.

Estell Manor Park is located between NJ Route 50 to the west, which provides access, and the South River and the Great Egg Harbor River to the east. The Great Egg Harbor River, and its South River tributary, is a federally designated Scenic and Recreational River.

Once home to Native Americans, this land became the homestead of the Estell Family. In the early 19th Century they started the Estellville Glassworks, producing both window glass and bottles.

The Bethlehem Loading Company, a munitions plant started in the early 1900's for the World War I effort, is also located within the Park. During wartime, the area housed an entire community for workers and soldiers. The area became known as Belcoville, from Bethlehem Loading Company.

The glassworks and munitions plant ruins, as well as, the Estell Family homestead, which is restored and protected, remain as integral components of the park system and Atlantic County's cultural heritage. A hallmark of open space and recreation planning, Estell Manor Park is a treasure in the County Park's system.

A primary feature of the Estell Manor Park is the Warren E. Fox Nature Center, current headquarters for the park system. The building, built in 1984, uses an architectural design which incorporates passive solar heating. The Center provides education and recreation programs, live animal and environmental displays, maps, brochures, and rest room facilities. Bikes are loaned through the Nature Center at no charge.

The Veterans Cemetery is also located within this park. It was officially designated in 1985 and serves as a final resting place for eligible veterans of the United States Armed Forces and their spouses. The cemetery can accommodate 6,700 interments. Upon completion of the final phase of expansion, the cemetery will accommodate approximately 14,000 interments.

There is one group camping site with a pavilion located in the park which can hold up to 20 people.

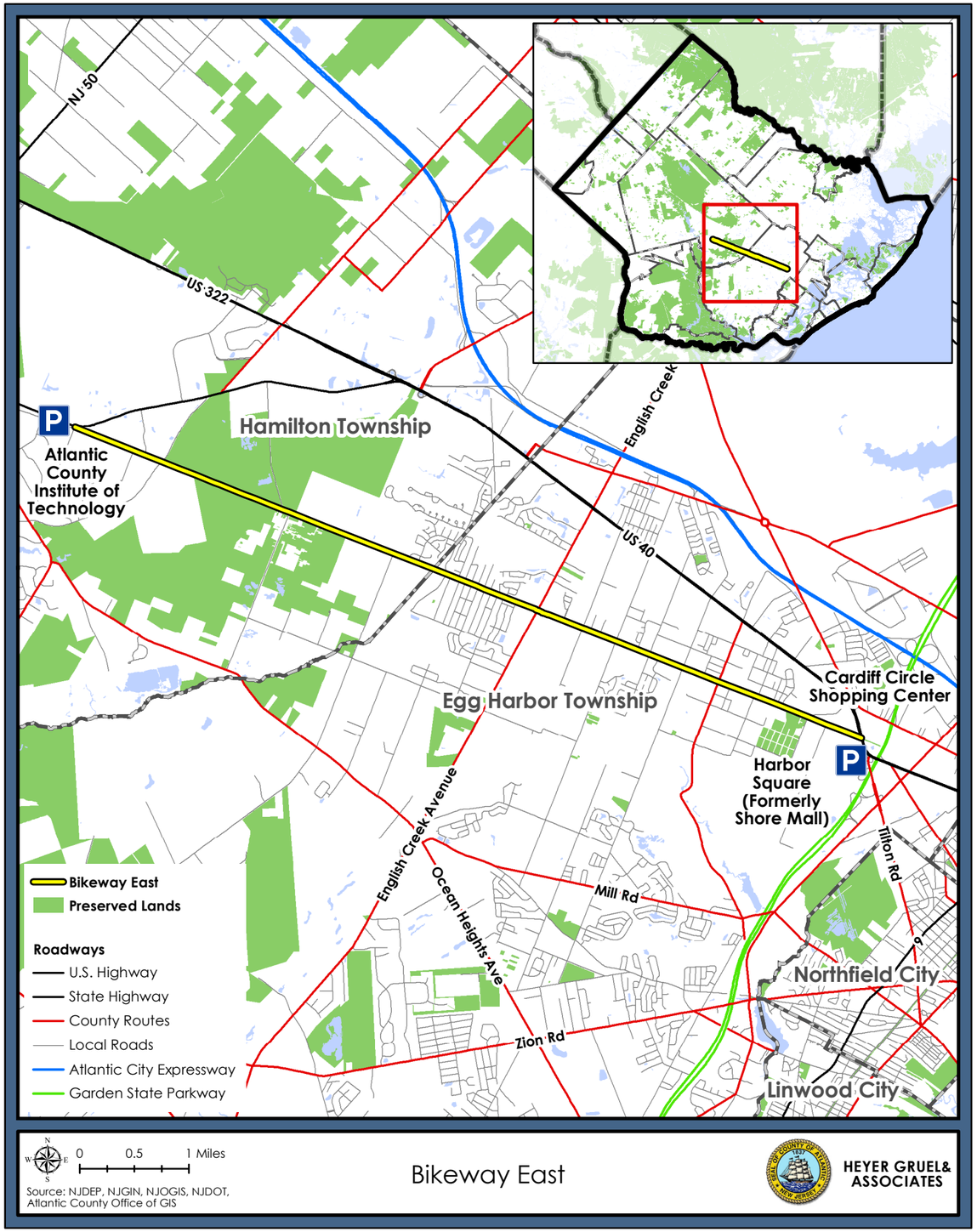
The Park recently added a Mountain Bike Trail as another amenity in the northern end of the park. This trail winds through the uplands of the pinelands, and provides obstacles and sharp turns for mountain bike users.

The Park is currently exploring options for the development of a pedestrian bridge over the South River to connect the Park to State-owned open space in Weymouth. Estell Manor Park is also considering expanding the picnic/activity areas.

Nature lovers, exercise enthusiasts, outdoorsmen, and sightseers can find a variety of opportunities to explore at the Estell Manor Park.

Atlantic County Veterans Museum

The Atlantic County Veterans Museum is located in the historic Estell Manor House in Estell Manor Park. The recently restored structure dates to 1832 and remodeled in the 1920s. The property was home to Rebecca Estell Bourgeois Winston, who was the first mayor of Estell Manor and the first female mayor in New Jersey. The museum will house documents and artifacts of historical significance as well as personal items donated by area veterans and their families. The museum is a valuable historic resource that will honor and preserve the memory of bravery and sacrifice contributed by county residents.



The museum hosted an open house for veterans and their families on December 7, 2016, and will be fully open to the public later in 2017.

ESTELL MANOR HOUSE

Gaskill Park

Gaskill Park, located in the historic town of Mays Landing, Hamilton Township was once a port for ships during the Revolutionary war. Today, boaters may moor their boats along the bulkhead of the Great Egg Harbor River. The scenic bulkhead also provides fishing and photography opportunities for local residents and visitors. The Park has beautiful landscaping with picnic areas, a playground for the children and a gazebo that is a choice setting for weddings. The Atlantic County Library and the Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs are only a short walk through the Park.

Lake Lenape

The park area is on the western shore of Lake Lenape. However, the entire lake and portions of the eastern shoreline north to Weymouth Furnace are within the Park's domain. A myriad of recreation activities can be enjoyed, such as camping, hiking, boating, fishing and hunting within approximately 2,100 acres of the Park. Lake Lenape has 18 sites available for campers which can hold up to 6 people each. The camping facility includes access to water pumps and port-a-johns. The County is currently expanding the campsite facilities to better serve the County's residents and visitors.

Since 2000, Atlantic County has developed several facilities along the western shore. These include a boathouse and ramp, floating dock, waterfront access, picnic areas, play facilities for children between 2 and 12 years old and parking areas. Boating is also permitted in the lake provided the boat is either a car topper, such as a canoe or kayak, or the boat's engine has a horsepower of less than 9.9. A boat ramp is included

On the eastern shore of the lake, the County is currently renovating a catering facility with plans to accommodate groups and activities. Revenues generated from this site will be returned to the County Open Space Trust.

Oscar E. McClinton Jr. Waterfront Park

This 4.5-acre waterfront park is located in the Inlet section of Atlantic City, NJ. Development of this water oriented passive recreation facility required the assembly of 64 individual properties. This park provides passive recreation featuring waterfront themes. An expansive lawn area encircled with a decorative walkway is the centerpiece of the park. The Park includes an observatory-pavilion overlooking the Absecon Inlet that provides shelter for sightseers and a stage for outdoor concerts. The beach area extends land ward with a barrier-free ramp to provide public access to the beach from the promenade. The entire park is landscaped with native coastal vegetation and has lighting and benches.

Penny Pot Park

One can set off on a canoe journey through many County parks via the Great Egg Harbor River by starting at Penny Pot Park. This 20-acre parcel in Folsom Borough, located at 8th street and Rt. 561 is ideal for a canoe launch. However, due to environmental constraints associated with its wetlands active recreation opportunities are limited.

John F. Gaffney Green Tree Golf Course

As part of the County's goal to preserve and protect open space lands, Atlantic County acquired the 241-acre Green Tree Golf Course through the New Jersey Green Acres funding program in 1992. The County satisfied dual goals by protecting open space and providing an opportunity for affordable recreation. Green Tree is a regulation 18 hole, par 72, 5,600-yard course that provides excellent golfing opportunities. The Green Tree Golf Course purchase is a true success. The course operates at capacity during the prime golfing season, while paying for its operation and maintenance costs through user fees.

Weymouth Furnace

Weymouth Furnace Park is located north of Lake Lenape Park along on Route 559. This is the site of an early 19th Century iron furnace and paper mill whose ruins can still be seen today. Tables, informational signage and rest room facilities enable the visitor to have a relaxing picnic before taking off on a canoe or kayak run of the Great Egg Harbor River.

Veterans Memorial Park

The Veterans Memorial Park is a small park (less than 1 acre) located on the corner of Zion Road and Bargaintown Road in Egg Harbor Township. It is dedicated to those who have served.

GASKILL PARK

LAKE LENAPE

WEYMOUTH FURNACE PARK

Tracts

Tracts are defined as large, continuous parcels of land, often comprised of several lots, left in their natural state with no facilities or improvements. These sites are limited to passive recreational uses and hunting activities as permitted within the Parks Ordinance.

Table 1.3 County Tracts

Park Name	Block	Lot	Municipality	Acreage	Year Acquired
Cologne	854	30	Hamilton Township	697.2	2008
Galloway East	1067 / 1068 / 1069 / 1167.01	2 / 1 / 1 / 10.01, 56	Galloway Township	371.5	1994
Galloway West	663.01 / 669	56 - 61 / 2 & 3	Galloway Township	110.9	2014
	681.01	23		8.5	2013
	681.01 / 682 / 683 / 684 / 685 / 686 / 687	11-16, 17.01, 17.02, 18, 19.01, 19.02, 19.03, 20-22 / 1.01, 1.02 / 1 / 1 / 1 / 1 / 1		48.7	2015
	681.01	4		20.0	2014
Pine Avenue	5101	59/60	Egg Harbor Township	308.7	2002
	5101	63		103.6	2002
	5101	258		25.5	2005
	5101	271		4.1	2005
Riverbend	8201/ 4901 /	2, 5, 6 / 4 /	Egg Harbor Township	529.7	1987
	7801	55		123.4	1993
	7901	2		157.0	1994
	7901 / 7902	15.01 / 1		66.4	2004
	7801	3		32.5	2008
Pine Forest	4901 / 5001	71 / 1	Egg Harbor Township	269.8	2004
	4901	51		23.3	2006
	4901	56		91.2	2007
			Total	2,992.0	-

Natural Areas

Natural areas are similar to tracts but at a much smaller scale. These sites tend to be smaller in size with limited access and lacking formal amenities. These preserved lands are to be left in their natural state. Hunting activities are not permitted in these areas.

Table 1.4 County Natural Areas

Park Name	Block	Lot	Municipality	Acreage	Year Acquired
Bikeway West	732 / 743 / 744 / 745	76 / 14, 15 / 11 / 10	Hamilton Township	2.3	1996
Leeds Point Natural Area	1267	3	Galloway Township	4.2	1986
Laurel Dale Natural Area	847 / 849	6 / 1	Hamilton Township	29.3	~1850s
	849	1		27.3	1948
Interdevelco	9604	3	Egg Harbor Township	25.0	1993
Klingener Fishing Pier	4-F	VX6Y	Egg Harbor Township	2.3	1990
Stillwater	179.02	49.01	Northfield	44.4	unknown
	9801	2	Egg Harbor Township	40.0	unknown
Whirlpool Island	9809	1	Egg Harbor Township	98.2	unknown
			Total	273.0	-

Planned & Proposed Improvements to County Open Space

With a limited amount of funding available, the Atlantic County Parks and Recreation Department in conjunction with the Department of Planning are strategically planning to expand and/or improve current facilities.

Projects currently underway include expanding the campsite facilities at Lake Lenape West and renovating the catering facility at Lake Lenape East. Proposed projects include a public access facility at Motts Creek, and the development of a pedestrian bridge over South River and Stephen's Creek which will connect Estell Manor Park to the State-owned Wildlife Management Areas. The bridge crossing South River is in the permitting stage, while the Stephen's Creek bridge is only conceptual.

The County is also in the process of acquiring approximately 360 acres in the Pinelands to create the Mill Pond Watershed Natural Area. This property is located off of the Garden State Parkway (exit 44) and will serve as preserved open space with limited amenities (if any). The County is pursuing this project to satisfy a requirement of the New Jersey Pinelands Commission for mitigation of secondary impacts related to the Garden State Parkway Improvement Project at Exit 44.

Other projects that are currently in the conceptual phase of development include the completion of the Bikeway West and the redevelopment of the site of the former Klingener Fishing Pier. The Bikeway West is an 11-mile section that is proposed to extend from Gaskill Park in Mays Landing, Hamilton Township to Route 54 in Buena Vista Township. The Klingener Fishing Pier, located in Egg Harbor Township, received substantial damage in July 2011 due to fire, and again August 2011 during Hurricane Irene and in 2012 from Superstorm Sandy. The fishing pier is being removed and proposals for the site include a public kayak/canoe launch.

The County should also consider filling in the gaps as a way to assist in the development of the High Point to Cape May Point Hiking Trail and Greenway proposed by the New Jersey Sierra Club.

Table 1.5 Atlantic County Park System Permitted Uses

	Atlantic County Park System																																		
	Boathouse	Boating Access	Boat Mooring	Boat Ramp	Camping	Cross Country Skiing	Driving Range	Exercise Trail	Firearms Training Facility	Fishing	Gazebo	Golf Course - 18 Holes	Guided Hikes	Handicapped-Barrier Free	Hiking	Historic Sites	Horseback Trails	Hunting	In Line Skating	Kayak / Canoe Access	Mountain Biking	Nature Trails	Nature Center	NJ Birding & Wildlife Map	Pavilions	Playground	Picnic Tables	Rest Rooms	Scenic View	Soft Ball	Soccer	Veterans Cemetery	Volley Ball	Unimproved Trails	ACREAGE
1) Lake Lenape Park West	•	•		•	•	•				•	•		•	•	•			•	•	•	•	•		•		•	•	•	•					•	2128
2) Lake Lenape Park East										•				•											•	•	•	•	•	•			•		17
3) Estell Manor Park		•		•	•	•		•		•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	1677
4) River Bend Property						•			•	•				•	•		•	•						•				•	•					•	1294
5) Galloway East (Seaview)						•									•		•	•			•			•										•	371
6) Galloway West (Moss Mill)						•									•			•			•													•	188
7) John F. Gaffney / Green Tree Golf Course							•					•																•							241
8) Whirlpool Island		•								•								•																	98
9) Penny Pot Park										•										•							•								20
10) Weymouth Furnace Park										•				•		•				•				•			•	•	•						8
11) Gaskill Park		•	•							•	•			•		•				•						•	•	•	•						11
12) Oscar E. McClinton Jr. Waterfront Park										•															•	•			•						4
13) Leeds Point Natural Area																																			4
14) Veteran's Memorial Park																																			3
15) Atlantic County Bikeway						•									•				•		•														51
16) Camp Acagisca					•								•	•						•					•										69
17) Cologne Avenue Tract						•									•		•	•			•								•					•	699
18) Pine Avenue Tract						•									•		•	•			•													•	442
																																	Total		7325

VETERANS CEMETARY IN ESTELL MANOR PARK

WARREN E. FOX NATURE CENTER

ESTELL MANOR PARK

INVENTORY OF MUNICIPAL PARKS

There are over 490 municipal parks totaling approximately 6,000 acres in Atlantic County. The following is a listing of municipally owned open space resources compiled by local Recreation and Open Space Inventories (ROSI).

The ROSI is a requirement of the Green Acres Program for any jurisdiction that has received Green Acres Grant money for Open Space acquisition. Not only are the lands purchased with these funds required to be listed, but also are any lands held in public ownership at the time of the initial grant that are held for recreation or conservation purposes. These lands are to be held as restricted and not dispersed. Removal of lands listed on previous ROSIs is prohibited without consent of Green Acres. Lands held by public agencies such as school boards, parking authorities, and housing authorities should not be inventoried unless those lands are held for recreation or conservation purposes.

ROSI Key:

- Park Name: if followed by DIV = the parcel was entirely diverted; if followed by P/DIV = parcel was partially diverted; if followed by COMP = parcel was a compensation piece for a previous diversion
- Interest: Fee Simple Purchase = FEE; Leased Land = LEASED
- Type: M = Municipal; C = County; N = Nonprofit

Table 1.6 Absecon

Park Name	Acreage	Interest	Type
EMMA C. ATTLES SCHOOL	15.3	FEE	M
FRANKLIN BOULEVARD	2.6	FEE	M
H. ASHTON MARSH SCHOOL	2.7	FEE	M
HERITAGE PARK	15.8	FEE	M
JONATHAN PITNEY REC COMPLEX	0.5	FEE	M
MEMORIAL PARK - DIV	6.2	FEE	M
PITNEY ROAD	17.3	FEE	M
PITNEY ROAD PARK - COMP	46.3	FEE	M
SENIOR CITIZENS PARK	0.4	FEE	M
ABSECON BOAT RAMP	-	FEE	M
TOTAL	107.0		

Table 1.7 Atlantic City

Park Name	Acreage	Interest	Type
Albany Ave Road Improvement Project-Comp	2.6	FEE	M
Alexander Park - DIV	0.1	FEE	M
Altman Field	2.0	FEE	M
Annapolis Ave Rec Complex	6.6	FEE	M
Arctic & Texas Avenue	0.9	FEE	M
Arizona & Bay Memorial Park	0.0	FEE	M
Bader Field	142.6	FEE	M
Boys Club Rec Complex	1.6	FEE	M
Brigantine Boulevard	3.6	FEE	M
Brighton Park	1.7	FEE	M
Brown Memorial Park	1.0	FEE	M
Columbus Park - P/DIV	0.0	FEE	M
Connecticut & Oriental	-	FEE	M
Expressway Park - DIV	-	FEE	M
Expressway Pitney Village	-	FEE	M
Gardners Basin	11.6	FEE	M
Horace Bryant Playground	0.4	FEE	M
Lagoon Playground	1.2	FEE	M
Madison Avenue	-	FEE	M
Melrose Park	2.2	FEE	M
Pete Pallitto Field	3.0	FEE	M
Pitney Village Playground	3.8	FEE	M
Pop Lloyd Baseball Stadium	5.0	FEE	M
Texas Ave Playground	1.1	FEE	M
Uptown Complex	4.1	FEE/LEASE	M
Urban Waterfront Parks	4.4	FEE	C
Venice Park	3.3	FEE	M
Virginia & Mediterranean	-	FEE	N/M
Westside Memorial Park	1.7	FEE	M
TOTAL	204.7	-	-

Table 1.8 Brigantine

Park Name	Acreage	Interest	Type
15th St Basketball Court	0.3	FEE	M
16th St Park	0.6	FEE	M
26th St Park	0.1	FEE	M
26th St Playground	6.0	FEE	M
35th St Park	0.8	FEE	M
42nd St Rec Area	14.1	FEE	M
6th St Boat Ramp	0.9	FEE	M
Beach & Dunes	0.8	FEE	M
Casa Drive Parking Lot	0.2	FEE	M
City Dock	0.5	FEE	M
Conservation / Public Beach	4.8	FEE	M
Conservation Area	0.5	FEE	M
East Shore Drive Tot Lot	0.2	FEE	M
Golf Course	10.0	FEE	M
Haneman Park	0.6	FEE	M
Public Area Beaches	1.8	FEE	M
St Phillips School Property	4.8	FEE	M
Veteran's Memorial	0.0	FEE	M
TOTAL	47.0	-	-

Table 1.9 Buena Borough

Park Name	Acreage	Interest	Type
Blackwater Pond Park	100.7	FEE	M
Bruno Melini Park	29.0	FEE	M
Kennedy Dr. Open Space	2.5	FEE	M
Landfill Site	16.9	FEE	M
Open Space	78.3	FEE	M/N
TOTAL	227.5	-	-

Table 1.10 Egg Harbor City

Park Name	Acreage	Interest	Type
Open Space	-	FEE	N

Table 1.11 Egg Harbor Township

Park Name	Acreage	Interest	Type
Broadway Park	60.0	M	FEE
Childs-Kirk Memorial Park	2.8	M	FEE
Childs-Kirk Park	30.0	M	FEE
Cook	4.1	C	FEE
Couchoud Community Center - COMP	60.4	M	FEE
Delaware Avenue Park	24.0	M	FEE
Delilah Oaks Park	5.4	M	FEE
Egg Harbor Envir. Park	14.8	M	FEE
Eht Regional Park	181.9	M	FEE
Elm Avenue Park	1.9	M	FEE
English Creek Park	1.2	M	FEE
Estell Manor Park Veterans Cemetery-COMP	23.7	C	FEE
Fernwood	0.9	M	FEE
Greentree	344.3	C	FEE
John Couchoud Community Center - DIV	4.8	M	FEE
Landgraf Ave	55.6	M	FEE
Molino	64.7	C	FEE
Naame	22.9	M	FEE
Open Space	0.4	C	FEE
Our Family United	305.8	C	FEE
Polakoff Estate	270.2	C	FEE
Police Athletic League	1.4	M	FEE
Powell Creek Natural Area	123.4	C	FEE
Riverbend Park	502.9	C	FEE
Riverbend Park/Nathanson	158.2	C	FEE
Shires Park	1.1	M	FEE
Terry	26.1	C	FEE
Tony Canale Park	68.6	C	FEE
Tremont Ave	4.7	M	FEE
Veterans Memorial Park	31.0	M	FEE
Wetland Mitigation Bank	25.5	C	FEE
Rt 152 Fishing Pier	-	C	FEE
Whirlpool Island Park	-	C	FEE
TOTAL	2,422.5	-	-

Table 1.12 Estell Manor

Park Name	Acreage	Interest	Type
Champion	24.2	FEE	N
Daniel Estell Manor Park	43.4	FEE	N
Estell Manor Park Acq	1799.0	FEE	N
TOTAL	1,866.5	-	-

Table 1.13 Folsom

Park Name	Acreage	Interest	Type
Penny Pot	20.2	FEE	C

Table 1.14 Galloway

Park Name	Acreage	Interest	Type
Field	13.0	FEE	M
Gabriel Field Ext	9.9	FEE	M
Gabriel Memorial Field	20.5	FEE	M
Galloway Park	20.5	FEE	M
Glenn	15.1	FEE	C
Glenn Park	43.3	FEE	M
Imagination Field Expansion	4.9	FEE	M
Jefferson	0.2	FEE	C
Jones & Upshaw	0.4	FEE	C
Municipal Fields	11.7	FEE	M
Open Space	46.1	FEE	C
Pine Needle Park	3.4	FEE	M
Pinehurst East	7.3	FEE	M
Ponzio	40.9	FEE	M
Rear Library	0.3	FEE	M
Reeds Bay - COMP	4.3	FEE	C
Seaview Estate	362.2	FEE	C
Vettese	20.0	FEE	M
Wetlands	61.7	FEE	M
TOTAL	685.7	-	-

Table 1.15 Hamilton Township

Park Name	Acreage	Interest	Type
Bikeway West	1.3	FEE	C
Cologne Associates	970.6	FEE	C
Cologne Field	14.4	FEE	M
Estell Manor Park Veterans Cemetery-COMP	220.3	FEE	C
First Avenue	14.1	FEE	N
Gaskill Park	8.2	FEE	C
Genovese Property	37.2	FEE	C
Hardings Lake Ballfields	3.8	FEE	M
Hardings Lakes Hockey	0.5	FEE	M
Hickory St Rec Area	33.5	FEE	M
Human Services Center	2.6	FEE	M
Lake Lenepe Park	1786.8	FEE	C
Leipe Farm Acq	60.3	FEE	M
Memorial Park	0.7	FEE	M
Millville Avenue	9.7	FEE	M
Mizpah Ball Field	9.1	FEE	M
Open Space	-	FEE	C
Pine Avenue Park	27.6	FEE	C
Rosa Quaterman Park	1.3	FEE	M
Seventh Street	8.7	FEE	M
Stillwater Park	-	FEE	C
The Cove	3.9	FEE	M
Tunney Property	146.0	FEE	M
Underhill Park	71.5	FEE	M
Waterfront Real Estate	17.1	FEE	C
Weymouth Furnace	10.6	FEE	C
TOTAL	3,459.6	-	-

Table 1.16 Hammonton

Park Name	Acreage	Interest	Type
11th Street Park	24.0	FEE	M
Cedar Branch Park	1.0	FEE	M
Hammonton Lake Park	3.9	FEE	M
Hammonton Little League	18.7	FEE	M
Hammonton Rec Complex	179.2	FEE	M
Kiwanis Club	0.1	FEE	M
Lake Park	33.0	FEE	M
Ninth St Park	13.5	FEE	M
Ninth Street Park	28.8	FEE	M
Veterans Park	1.0	FEE	M
William Smith Conservation Area	96.8	FEE	S
TOTAL	400.0	-	-

Table 1.17 Linwood

Park Name	Acreage	Interest	Type
All Wars Memorial Park	16.4	FEE	M
Bike Path	3.9	FEE	M
Hartshorne Park	3.2	FEE	M
Meadow & Upland	480.3	FEE	M
Open Space	6.2	FEE	C
Performance Park	0.6	FEE	M
South Jersey Industrial Properties	9.5	FEE	M
Wetlands	12.4	FEE	M
TOTAL	532.3	-	-

Table 1.18 Margate

Park Name	Acreage	Interest	Type
Jerome Ave Rec Facility	6.5	FEE	M
Lucy Park	0.8	FEE	M
Minnie Creek Wetlands	6.9	FEE	M
Playground	1.5	FEE	M
Public Beach	18.3	FEE	M
Public Library Park	2.6	FEE	M
Puiblic Beach	18.0	FEE	M
Vacant Lot(S)	15.7	FEE	M
Waterfront Park	1.8	FEE	M
TOTAL	72.0	-	-

Table 1.19 Mullica Township

Park Name	Acreage	Interest	Type
Egg Harbor Road	0.2	FEE	M
Indian Cabin Road	150.4	FEE	M
Mullica Twp Rec Park	13.3	FEE	M
Nesco Road	0.3	FEE	M
None	25.1	FEE	M
Wharton Property	64.6	FEE	N
TOTAL	253.8	-	-

Table 1.20 Pleasantville

Park Name	Acreage	Interest	Type
Brighton Rec Complex	3.0	FEE/ROW	M
Brighton Rec Complex - COMP	1.7	ROW	M
Clematis Ave Park	44.6	FEE	M
Cresson Ave	1.5	FEE	M
Edgemoor Conservation - COMP	13.8	FEE	M
High School	9.4	FEE	M
Leeds Avenue Park	3.4	FEE	M
Leeds Avenue School	6.1	FEE	M
Leeds Avenue School (School #3)	5.3	FEE	M
Max Manning Complex	9.8	FEE	M
Max Manning Complex - COMP	0.2	FEE	M
N Pleasantville Little League	3.2	FEE	M
North Main Street School	-	FEE	M
Open Space	0.5	FEE	M
S Pleasantville Little League	2.4	FEE	M
South Main Street School	0.3	FEE	M
Tilton Avenue Park	0.6	FEE	M
Ty Hellrich Field	4.9	FEE	M
Walnut Avenue - DIV	1.7	FEE	M
West Leeds Road - DIV	2.3	FEE	M
Woodland Ave Park	0.1	FEE	M
Woodland Ave Park - COMP	2.8	FEE	M
Woodland Ave Park - DIV	0.8	FEE	M
Yacht Basin	4.3	FEE	M
TOTAL	122.8	-	-

Table 1.21 Port Republic

Park Name	Acreage	Interest	Type
Clarks Mill Pond	77.5	FEE	M
Firemans Pond Rec Area	4.5	FEE	M
Former Landfill	3.3	FEE	M
French Estate	277.6	FEE	M
Harry Bowen Park / Public Beach	17.3	FEE	M
Leek Tract	114.6	FEE	M
Open Space	68.1	FEE	M
Raring Acquisition	-	FEE	M
Roehl Tract	52.0	FEE	M
TOTAL	614.8	-	-

Table 1.22 Somers Point

Park Name	Acreage	Interest	Type
Lawrence "Bud" Kern Field	24.5	FEE	M
Bayfront Area	1.1	FEE	M
Drag Island	8.0	FEE	M
Exton Rd Area	0.3	FEE	M
Fehrle Field	8.7	FEE	M
Greentree Golf Course	-	FEE	C
J F Kennedy Park	10.9	FEE	M
Municipal Beach Park	2.2	FEE	M
Senior Citizens Center	1.2	FEE	M
Wayne Drive	4.1	FEE	M
TOTAL	61.0	-	-

Table 1.23Ventnor

Park Name	Acreage	Interest	Type
Beach Front Mini Golf	2.8	FEE	M
Beach Front Tennis	2.9	FEE	M
Beachfront	42.1	FEE	M
Former Driving Range	8.6	FEE	M
Playground	0.1	FEE	M
Ski Beach Park	0.2	FEE	M
Surrey Rec Fields	7.1	FEE	M
Tennis Courts	3.6	FEE	M
Ventnor West	1.7	FEE	M
TOTAL	69.0	-	-

INVENTORY OF STATE OPEN SPACE FACILITIES

Atlantic County contains over 74,800 acres of preserved state lands. These lands consist of Wildlife Management Areas, Natural Areas, Preserves, Forest Fire, State Forests, and a State Marina. Each of these types of State parkland are governed by different agencies, which are explained below.

Wildlife Management Areas

All wildlife management areas (WMAs) in Atlantic County are owned by the New Jersey DEP Division of Fish and Wildlife. These open areas permit hunting, fishing in addition to non-consumptive uses. There are 12 WMAs in the County consisting of over 54,100 acres across 17 municipalities. Table 1.24 gives a breakdown of each WMA.

Natural Areas

Natural Areas in New Jersey are those areas that are defined and protected under the Natural Areas Act. These lands are subject to a much stricter set of regulations as they have been found to contain ecologically significant species, endangered species, and, in general, have a great deal of biodiversity. Natural Areas allow public access, provided the access does not conflict with the goal of preservation of natural diversity. Activities generally include scientific research, education, hiking, hunting, fishing, boating, and nature viewing.

Atlantic County has one Natural Area, the North Brigantine Natural Area which consists of 1,343.9 acres and is located in the City of Brigantine.

Preserves

Preserves are another category of open space at the State level. All preserves in Atlantic County are managed by the New Jersey Natural Land Trust which is an independent agency in but not of the Division of Parks and Forestry in NJDEP. Its mission is to preserve land in its natural state for enjoyment by the public and to protect natural diversity through the acquisition of open space. The Trust is a quasi-public agency and was established in 1968 with the protective power of the State that would have the support of private-sector open space preservation and conservation organizations. Passive recreational uses, hunting, and educational purposes are permitted on preserves provided it does not negatively affect the biological diversity on the land.

Atlantic County has 23 Preserves totaling over 6,600 acres. Table 1.25 details each of the preserves found in the County.

Table 1.24 Wildlife Management Areas in Atlantic County

Name	Municipality	Acreage (by Mun.)
Absecon Wildlife Management Area	Atlantic City	566.1
	Brigantine City	1,179.5
	Galloway Township	1,693.0
	Absecon City	299.1
	Pleasantville City	74.1
Cedar Lake Wildlife Management Area	Buena Vista Township	45.5
Great Egg Harbor River Wildlife Management Area	Weymouth Township	839.6
	Estell Manor City	0.0
	Hamilton Township	4,139.5
	Buena Vista Township	948.0
	Folsom Borough	601.0
Hammonton Creek Wildlife Management Area	Galloway Township	37.7
	Egg Harbor City	1.4
	Hammonton Town	96.8
	Mullica Township	5,662.0
Makepeace Lake Wildlife Management Area	Galloway Township	0.0
	Hamilton Township	11,177.9
	Mullica Township	390.6
Malibu Beach Wildlife Management Area	Egg Harbor Township	256.5
Maple Lake Wildlife Management Area	Weymouth Township	39.7
	Estell Manor City	4,666.2
Peaslee Wildlife Management Area	Weymouth Township	169.9
	Estell Manor City	5,149.8
	Buena Vista Township	210.5
Pork Island Wildlife Management Area	Egg Harbor Township	713.9
Port Republic Wildlife Management Area	Port Republic City	848.5
	Galloway Township	626.5
Tuckahoe Wildlife Management Area	Corbin City	3,804.5
	Somers Point City	73.9
	Estell Manor City	9,316.4
	Egg Harbor Township	1,041.4
White Oak Branch Wildlife Management Area	Buena Vista Township	1.9
	Folsom Borough	4.1
	TOTAL	54,675.7

Source: NJDEP State Owned Lands GIS Dataset updated 2016

Table 1.25 State Preserves in Atlantic County

Name	Municipality	Acreage
Allen's Woods Preserve	Hamilton Township	177.6
	Folsom Borough	2.4
Babcock Creek Preserve	Hamilton Township	103.5
Bears Head Preserve	Hamilton Township	253.9
	Buena Vista Township	29.3
Catawba Preserve	Weymouth Township	115.0
	Estell Manor City	153.7
Clarks Landing Preserve	Galloway Township	788.7
	Egg Harbor City	28.7
Collings Pines Preserve	Folsom Borough	58.2
Danenhauer Preserve	Hamilton Township	9.5
Dr. Charles Breedis Preserve	Hamilton Township	46.1
Hamilton Preserve	Hamilton Township	2,060.9
	Egg Harbor Township	142.2
Heathercroft Preserve	Northfield City	0.0
	Egg Harbor Township	66.5
Hirst Ponds Preserve	Galloway Township	365.4
John's Woods Preserve	Hamilton Township	208.8
Little Mill Preserve	Mullica Township	38.8
Mankiller Preserve	Galloway Township	21.0
	Hamilton Township	716.8
Nacote Creek Preserve	Port Republic City	13.0
Pancoast Preserve	Buena Vista Township	404.0
Panther Branch Preserve	Buena Vista Township	23.0
Pleasant Mills Preserve	Mullica Township	101.7
Pomona Woods Preserve	Hamilton Township	171.7
Risley Channel Preserve	Egg Harbor Township	11.7
Thompsontown Preserve	Hamilton Township	232.0
Three Rivers Preserve	Hamilton Township	211.1
Waldhausen Woods Preserve	Folsom Borough	59.8
Watering Race Preserve	Hamilton Township	12.4
	TOTAL	6,627.5

Source: NJDEP State Owned Lands GIS Dataset updated 2016

State Forests

The State Forests in New Jersey not only preserve land, but also contain facilities and activities for visitors to enjoy. State Forests are owned by the NJDEP Division and Parks and Forestry. The New Jersey State Park Service actively manages and maintains these areas.

Atlantic County contains one State Forest; Wharton State Forest is the largest single tract of land within the New Jersey State Park System and offers an array of facilities and activities. Facilities and activities include a visitor's center, interpretive center, Batsto Village, Atsion Village, camping, hunting, fishing, trails, picnic tables and food concession, playgrounds, boating/canoeing, swimming, and cross country skiing. Wharton State Forest expands across three counties: Atlantic, Burlington, and Camden Counties. Within Atlantic County, this State Forest is within Hammonton and Mullica Township, occupying 9,147.3 acres and 3,193.4 acres, respectively, giving a total of 12,344.7 acres.

WHARTON STATE FOREST

Other State Owned Land

Other State owned land includes State Marinas, Forest Fire, Aviation, and miscellaneous lands.

Atlantic County contains one State Marina, Senator Frank S. Farley State Marina, which is located in Atlantic City. This Marina occupies approximately 48.6 acres and is managed by the Golden Nugget casino, even though it is owned by the NJ Division and Parks and Forestry. The marina offers 640 floating slips and can dock yachts up to 300 feet in length.

Atlantic County contains the Forest Fire Division C Headquarters located on Route 40 near its intersection the Atlantic County Route 559. Forest Fire is administered by the Division of Parks and Forestry within the NJDEP and is responsible for protecting life and property from wildfire on both private and public land. Division C is the southern New Jersey location, with Division A and B defined as North and Central New Jersey, respectively. There are also two fire towers located in the County: McKeetown Fire Tower in Egg Harbor Township and Mizpah Fire Tower in Hamilton Township.

There is an aviation field owned by the NJDEP, which is currently utilized by the New Jersey Forest Fire Service to assist with wildfire suppression and aerial firefighting efforts. The airport is approximately 270 acres and is located near the intersection of US Route 322 and NJ Route 50 in Hamilton Township.

Miscellaneous lands are those lands owned by the NJDEP that are not specifically identified as belonging to a specific department or program. There are approximately 7.8 acres of miscellaneous lands in Northfield and another 40.4 acres in Egg Harbor Township.

INVENTORY OF FEDERALLY OWNED OPEN SPACE

The Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge is the only federally owned open space tract located within Atlantic County. The Wildlife Refuge covers more than 20,000 acres of environmentally sensitive forests and wetlands. Forsythe is home to one of the most active flight paths in the Atlantic Flyway. Birds including the Atlantic brant, American black duck, piping plovers, peregrine falcons, ospreys, bald eagles, black skimmer, least tern, great blue heron, and oyster crackers are known to frequent this area.

The main entrance is located in Oceanville, Galloway Township off of Route 9 near the Great Bay. Amenities provided at this location include nature trails, a visitor contact station, an auditorium, and a wildlife drive.

WHARTON STATE FOREST

FRANK S. FARLEY STATE MARINA, ATLANTIC CITY

EDWIN B. FORSYTHE NATHIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Historic preservation plays an important role in preserving and enhancing the character of a community. Atlantic County has a rich history dating back centuries that includes the culture and settlements of First Nation people that predate the arrival of European settlers. The County is home to remnants of early European settlements that pre-date the Revolutionary War, along with artifacts, locations, and structures of historical value in the ensuing centuries. The County and its constituent municipalities have worked diligently in partnership with other private and public entities to ensure that the history of the County is preserved and celebrated.

"LUCY"

Historic preservation is an important national policy. This became apparent through the adoption of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (the Act). Therefore, it should also be an important policy at the state, county, and especially at the local level of government.

MARVEN GARDENS

The Act authorizes the Department of the Interior to establish and maintain the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) which is maintained federally by the National Park Service (NPS). The NPS in-turn establishes the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) who administers the programs at the state level. It provides for the Advisory Council of Historic Preservation and also requires federal agencies to establish Agency Preservation Officers. The SHPO by far has one of the most important roles in preservation planning. Their office administers the preservation elements of the Act at the state level and consequently the SHPO is a key person to assist the county and municipalities in their respective historic preservation efforts, along with the New Jersey Historic Trust which provides funding for preservation capital projects. In the State of New Jersey, the SHPO is the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection.

The Atlantic County Office of Cultural & Heritage Affairs is also a valuable source of Atlantic County history. Their office is in the County's Mays Landing Library Branch overlooking the Great Egg Harbor River. It is also within Mays Landing's Historic District which listed in the New Jersey & National Register of Historic Places.

It is imperative that local governments take the initiative when it comes to historic preservation. Even though the state and federal government have a valuable role to play in preservation planning they are not in a position to regulate private property. It is the New Jersey Home Rule Act of 1917 (N.J.S.A 40:48-1 et. seq.) that has brought forth a municipality's general police power of which zoning is a derivative through the enactment of the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL - N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1 et. seq.).

SAMUEL RICHARDS HOUSE

SOURCE: WIKIPEDIA, SMALLBONES - OWN WORK, PUBLIC DOMAIN

It is not within the scope of this element to describe each municipality's historic areas and sites within Atlantic County. However, there are districts of historic value throughout the County, including: Absecon - North and South Shore Road; Egg Harbor City - most of downtown (Philadelphia Avenue) and cross streets. Also, of interest is Pleasantville - North and South Shore Road; Somers Point - Shore Road and the Bay Front Area, and in Hamilton Township the Mays Landing Sugar Hill, Main Street, and Mill Districts. Egg Harbor City, Port Republic, and Ventnor historic districts may warrant state, as well as, national significance.

VENTOR CITY HALL

Diverse architectural styles are also present throughout the County. These range from common bungalows that show the County's historic connection to the sea, to the fantastic whimsy of Lucy the Elephant. Within this range are one and two story cottages; Four-square; ell-shaped; Italianate, and Georgian, Dutch, and Spanish - Colonial Revivals.

Therefore, municipalities should strive to incorporate historic preservation elements within their master plans. These elements should include historic surveys and establishment of historic preservation commissions as promulgated by the MLUL. This is the first step in the right direction towards flexible zoning ordinances that are sensitive to a home owner's needs to maintain their historic property and the municipality's need to preserve those structures. The most current list of the County's historic resources is in Table 1.27 from the New Jersey and National Register of Historic Places.

Table 1.26 Atlantic County's Historic Resources
New Jersey and National Register of Historic Places

District / Site Name	Municipality	Location	Designation
Captain Francis Babcock House	Absecon City	324 South Shore Road	National Register / State Register
John Doughty House	Absecon City	40 North Shore Road	National Register / State Register
Dr. Jonathan Pitney House	Absecon City	57 North Shore Road	National Register / State Register
Absecon Lighthouse	Atlantic City	Pacific and Rhode Island Avenues	National Register / State Register
Atlantic City Convention Hall	Atlantic City	Boardwalk between Pacific, Mississippi, and Georgia Avenues	National Historic Landmark / National Register / State Register
Beth Israel Synagogue	Atlantic City	34 Pennsylvania Avenue	State Register
Church of the Ascension	Atlantic City	1601 Pacific Avenue	National Register / State Register
Madison Hotel	Atlantic City	123 South Illinois Avenue	National Register / State Register
St. Nicholas of Tolentine Church	Atlantic City	1409-1421 Pacific Avenue	National Register / State Register
Segal Building	Atlantic City	1200 Atlantic Avenue	National Register / State Register
Robert J. Walker, shipwreck & remains	Atlantic City		National Register
World War I Memorial	Atlantic City	South Albany Avenue, Ventnor Avenue, and O'Donnell Parkway	National Register / State Register
South Tuckahoe Historic District	Corbin City	NJ Route 50 and north portion of Tuckahoe-Mount Pleasant Road (Also in Upper Township, Cape May County)	National Register / State Register
Egg Harbor Commercial Bank	Egg Harbor City	134 Philadelphia Avenue	National Register / State Register
Mullica River / Chetsnut Neck Archaeological Historic District	Egg Harbor City / Mullica Township		State Register
Neutral Water Health Resort Sanitarium	Egg Harbor City	Corner of Claudius Street and London Avenue	National Register / State Register
Captain John Jeffries Burial Marker	Egg Harbor Township	Palestine Bible Church Cemetery, County Route 559	National Register / State Register
Bethlehem Loading Company Mays Landing Plant Archaeological Historic District	Estell Manor City	109 NJ Route 50	National Register / State Register
Estellville Glassworks Industrial Historic District	Estell Manor City	Estell Manor Park, Stevens Creek, Maple Avenue, Walkers Forge Road, and NJ Route 50	National Register / State Register
Head of the River Church	Estell Manor City	NJ Route 49 at Aetna Drive	National Register / State Register
Risley School	Estell Manor City	134 Cape May Avenue	National Register / State Register
Jacobus Evangelical Lutheran Church	Folsom Borough	May Landing Road	National Register / State Register
L.N. Renault and Sons Winery	Galloway Township	42 North Bremen Avenue, Bremen Avenue, and Leibig Avenue	State Register

Table 1.27 Continued

Smithville Apothecary	Galloway Township	Smithville-Old Towne and Moss Mill Roads	National Register / State Register
Abbott's Modern Cabins	Hamilton Township	217 NJ Route 40	State Register
Mays Landing Historic District	Hamilton Township	East and West Main Streets and intersecting streets	National Register / State Register
Samuel Richards Hotel	Hamilton Township	106 East Main Street	National Register / State Register
Schooner "Weymouth" Site	Hamilton Township		National Register / State Register
Weymouth Road Bridge	Hamilton Township	Weymouth Road Bridge over Great Egg Harbor River	National Register / State Register
William L. Black House	Hammonton Town	458 Bellevue Avenue	National Register / State Register
Linwood Borough School No. 1 (Linwood Public Library)	Hammonton Town	16 West Poplar Street	National Register / State Register
Linwood Historic District	Hammonton Town	Maine and Poplar Avenues, and Shore Road	National Register / State Register
Church of the Redeemer	Longport Borough	20th and Atlantic Avenues	National Register / State Register
Great Egg Coast Guard Station Building	Longport Borough	2301 Atlantic Avenue	National Register / State Register
Lucy, the Margate Elephant	Margate City	Decatur and Atlantic Avenues	National Historic Landmark National Register / State Register
Marven Gardens Historic District	Margate City	Between Ventnor, Fredericksburg, Winchester, and Brunswick Avenues	National Register / State Register
Pleasant Mills	Mullica Township	Elwood-Pleasant Mills Road	National Register / State Register
Risley Homestead	Northfield City	8 Virginia Avenue	National Register / State Register
Amanda Blake Store	Port Republic City	104 Main Street	National Register / State Register
Port Republic Historic District	Port Republic City	Central and Pomona Avenues, Riverside Drive, St. Johns Lane, Chestnut Neck, Clarks Landing, and Port Republic-Smithville Roads	National Register / State Register
Bay Front Historic District	Somers Point City	Parts of Anna, Bay, Decatur, Delaware, Gibbs, Higbee, New Jersey, and Somers Avenues	National Register / State Register
Somers Mansion	Somers Point City	1000 Shore Road	National Register / State Register
John Stafford Historic District	Ventnor City	Portions of Atlantic, Austen, Baton Rouge, Marion, and Vassar Avenues	National Register / State Register
Tofani - DiMuzio House	Ventnor City	12 South Cambridge Avenue	National Register / State Register
Ventnor City Hall	Ventnor City	6201 Atlantic Avenue	National Register / State Register
Belcoville Post Office	Weymouth Township	1201 Madden Avenue	National Register / State Register

Source: NJ State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

NEEDS ANALYSIS

In order to secure access to additional sources of funding and support for historic preservation, municipalities may become involved in the SHPO Certified Local Government (CLG) program. The CLG program enables a municipality to be eligible for funding through the State and to review nominations for NRHP status prior to submission of the applications to the SHPO. At this time, only the Township of Hamilton and Somers Point City are participating in the CLG program.

ESTELLVILLE GLASSWORKS

Municipal Historic Preservation Commissions (HPC) may be created by local ordinance in accordance with the regulations in the Municipal Land Use Law. The HPC can act in an advisory capacity to the Planning Board, or can be imbued with regulatory authority to make final determinations on projects subject to its review. Four municipalities in the County have active HPCs: Hamilton, Estell Manor, Hammonton, and Somers Point.

A number of communities have historical societies, which act in a less official capacity as custodians of local history. Abescon, Brigantine, Egg Harbor Township, Mullica, Galloway, Longport, Margate, Northfield, Ventnor, and Weymouth all have historical societies. There are also a number of local history museums throughout the County. Local governments and resident volunteers will continue to the lead the way in ensuring successful historic preservation efforts within Atlantic County. The County should offer support in any way possible, and coordinate its recreation and open space resources with historic preservation resources where appropriate.

When evaluating the recreation needs for Atlantic County, one must approach a needs analysis with a comprehensive point of view. The existing and changing demographics of Atlantic County play a significant role in predicting future uses and users of open space. Park acquisition, development and maintenance require stable funding mechanisms which are currently lacking. Lastly, resiliency should also be kept in mind when acquiring future tracts of land. Other issues such as drones and waterfront access should also be addressed by the County.

The demographics within Atlantic County have been shifting since 2000. The median age of residents in Atlantic County has increased from 37 to 40.5 years between 2000 and 2010. The most rapidly growing segments of the population are those between 45 and 64 years old. The population of children has declined; the 0 to 5 age cohort has remained stagnant while those within the 5 to 14 cohort declined by over 2,000 persons. The 25-44 cohorts have experienced a marked decline as well – both in raw numbers and in percentage of the population. The data appears to show a trend that fewer people are starting families in Atlantic County, which does not bode well for long-term growth prospects. The aging populace of the County will also play a role in determining the type of open space facilities that are most desirable.

Table 1.27 Population by Age 2000 and 2010, Atlantic County

Population	2000		2010		Change, 2000 to 2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Population	252,552	100.0%	274,549	100.0%	21,997	8.7%
Under 5 years	16,483	6.5%	16,484	6.0%	1	0.0%
5 to 14	37,479	14.8%	35,388	12.9%	-2,091	-5.6%
15 to 24	30,260	12.0%	37,505	13.7%	7,245	23.9%
25 to 34	33,626	13.3%	31,243	11.4%	-2,383	-7.1%
35 to 44	43,706	17.3%	36,306	13.2%	-7,400	-16.9%
45 to 54	33,872	13.4%	44,620	16.3%	10,748	31.7%
55 to 64	22,689	9.0%	34,101	12.4%	11,412	50.3%
65 and over	34,437	13.6%	38,902	14.2%	4,465	13.0%
Median Age	37		40.5		-	-

Source: US Census Bureau 2000 & 2010

When planning for an aging community, the importance of recreation should not be overlooked. Parks and open spaces should be "senior friendly" and create comfortable and accessible places where people can feel a sense of attachment to the community and engage in social and recreational activities. Parks and open spaces have also been shown to provide health benefits, including reducing stress levels which improves cognitive function and performance in addition to providing places for light exercise which can slow the aging process.

A number of cities around the world are implementing "playgrounds for seniors". While these public parks are limited to a select few cities in the United States, countries in Europe and Asia have had great success implementing them. Most commonly, parks are retrofitted to include senior friendly equipment, trails and benches designed to meet their needs. "Senior Only" parks (or portions of parks) can also create a safe place for the aging community.

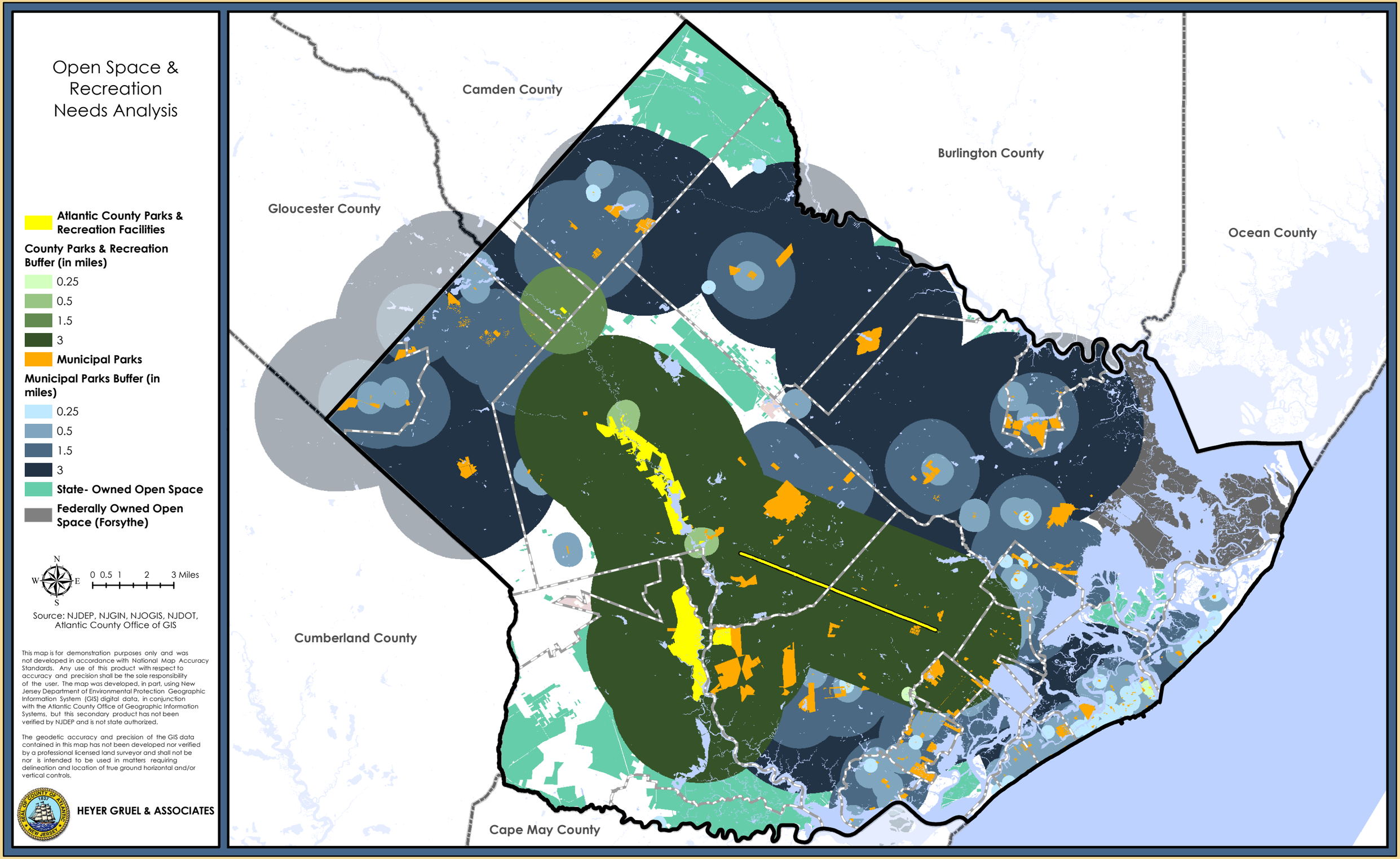
Senior friendly facilities and amenities include but are not limited to:

- Parks that incorporate natural elements into the design
- Clean spacious restrooms
- Comfortable benches with backrests, arm rests, and shaped to support the back and waist
- Sufficient space around benches for those with walkers or wheelchairs
- Picnic tables designed for the comfort of seniors
- Location of rest areas under trees, canopies or gazebos to provide shade
- Walking paths marked with distance travelled
- Paths and trails be made of rubbery non-slip materials, have handrails, provide adequate lighting, and be landscaped in a way to provide clear visibility
- Low-impact exercise machines and/or stations that are easily accessible
- Providing recreational programs such as outdoor yoga classes or Tai-Chi
- Safe, clean and quiet environment

For more information regarding planning for senior parks, please refer to "Placemaking for an Aging Population: Guidelines for Senior-Friendly Parks" published by the UCLA Complete Streets Initiative, Luskin School of Public Affairs, and Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies (June 2014).

As mentioned several times throughout the Plan, the limiting factor for park acquisition, development and maintenance are the funding mechanisms. With the County's Open Space tax drastically reduced, the County will expect to see a lull in its land acquisition and development of new facilities. While the existing Federal, State and County facilities are examples of good planning, additional parks and facilities should still be considered.

Future acquisitions should focus upon not only the needs of seniors, but also in protecting the population and property from natural disasters. This includes sea level rise, and increase in flooding and the number of hurricanes capable of hitting land. Land preservation can provide protection from future storms, protect water resources and wildlife habitat, and provide recreational open space. Atlantic County suffered substantial damage from Superstorm Sandy, Hurricane Jonas, Hurricane Irene, and a derecho which damaged forests and left residents without power for a number of days in 2012. Properties that should be targeted for park acquisition includes those that are within the 100-year floodplain, border the waterfront, flood frequently, and/or contain wetlands.


Open Space & Recreation Needs Analysis
Atlantic County Parks & Recreation Facilities
County Parks & Recreation Buffer (in miles)
0.25
0.5
1.5
3
Municipal Parks
Municipal Parks Buffer (in miles)
0.25
0.5
1.5
3
State- Owned Open Space
Federally Owned Open Space (Forsythe)
N
W
E
S
0 0.5 1 2 3 Miles
Source: NJDEP, NJGIN, NJOGIS, NJDOT, Atlantic County Office of GIS
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Camden County
Burlington County
Gloucester County
Ocean County
Cumberland County
Cape May County

Other issues with the County's park system include the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), which are commonly known as Drones. Drones can be used for photography and videography, but at this point in time, have very few regulations. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Division of Parks and Forestry released Policy Number 2.38 on July 8, 2015 which deals with Unmanned Aerial Vehicles. The Policy states that:

> *"The increase in the use of UAVs has the potential to cause unacceptable impacts such as harming visitors, interfering with emergency operations, causing excessive noise, impacting view sheds, damaging historic resources and critical infrastructure, posing security risks and disturbing wildlife… The operation of a UAV is hereby specifically prohibited within all lands and waters administered by the State Park Service."*

There are exceptions to this policy which permit the use of UAVs which would require approval from the Assistant Director of the State Park Service and obtain a Special Use Permit.

Public Meeting- July 14, 2016

On July 14, 2016, a public meeting was held at the Anthony Canale Training Center in Egg Harbor Township to receive feedback from the community on the County's overall Master Plan efforts, including this update to its Recreation and Open Space Plan. An Open House approach was utilized, allowing the public to visit stations and provide feedback on various issues including Open Space and Recreation, Land Use, Resiliency, Transportation and Infrastructure. In regards to Open Space and Recreation, a number of participants expressed a need to provide access to the waterfront and promote ecotourism.

A large number of participants expressed a need to provide access to the waterfront, particularly boat ramps and other access to the Great Egg Harbor River, which is a federally-designated National Scenic & Recreational River. Other suggestions included docks and boat slips with access to local restaurants and other amenities, in addition to acquiring land along the waterfront and leasing the space for boat cruises. Some wished to see park development and economic development along the eastern shore of Lake Lenape.

Other comments included the following:

- Using dredge spoils from river and back bay areas to fill the beach front
- Providing additional Horse Riding Trails and connectors between Weymouth and Estell Manor Park
- Acquiring land to create softball fields capable of providing Round Robin tournaments
- Community pool tied into the golf course
- Ecotourism

Geographic Service Area Standard for Recreational Facilities

The geographic service area standard provides a framework for examining the adequacy of parkland recreational facilities (both passive and active). Each recreational facility is assigned to a geographic class based on the extent of the surrounding community that it is likely to serve. The service area of a facility generally corresponds to the size of the park itself, but also takes into consideration the nature and specificity of the recreational use(s) located on-site. Beyond overall aggregate parkland provision acreages, this needs assessment method speaks to the population's proximity to parks of varying classes, revealing portions of the County that do not fall within the service area of any park. Widely-recognized categories of parkland developed by the National Recreation and Parks Association are used to classify the parks in the County into mini (or pocket) parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, regional parks, and special use parks, summarized in Table 1.28.

For the purpose of a County-wide analysis, County Parks which are classified as Parks and Recreational Facilities were included. Municipal parks located on the ROSI were also part of the analysis. State-Owned Land and Federally-Owned Land were not considered in the analysis as theses land uses consist of state forests, wildlife management areas, and nature preserves, which often have limited or non-existent recreational amenities.

The result of the analysis shows that the when the County park system is combined with the municipal park system, a majority of the County has adequate access to parks. However, portions of the County remain underserved and deficits do occur. These deficits occur within the Pinelands, mostly within the Forest and Preservation Management Areas. The County, working with the municipality, should target locations for parks and associated development along the Mullica Township and Hamilton Township boundary (Pinelands Forest/Village), and in the vicinity of Weymouth and Estell Manor (within the Pinelands Village).

Table 1.28 National Recreation and Parks Association Parkland Categories

Park Type	Description	Service Area	Typical Size	Atlantic County Parks
Mini Park / Pocket Park	Addresses limited or isolated recreation needs. Benefits include the ability to provide small recreation facilities in neighborhoods with little vacant land. An associated challenge is that they can be spread out and consequently hard to maintain.	1/4 mile	< 1 acre	Oscar E. McClinton, Jr. Waterfront Park Veterans Memorial Park
Neighborhood Park (small)	Parks that serve a residential neighborhood, providing active and passive recreation activities, with the scope of possible activities curtailed by limited size.	1/2 mile unobstructed by barriers	1-5 acres	Gaskill Park Weymouth Furnace Park
Neighborhood Park (traditional)	Parks that serve a residential neighborhood, providing active and passive recreation activities.	1/2 mile unobstructed by barriers	5-10 acres	
Community Park	Serves needs of entire community with courts, fields, and other recreational facilities.	1 to 2 miles (1.5 acres is used in the GIS analysis shown on the map)	Typically 10-50 acres	Penny Pot Park
Regional Park	Serves needs of community and the region beyond the community.	Over 3 miles	Over 50 acres	Bikeway East Estell Manor Park Lake Lenape (East & West) Green Tree Golf Course

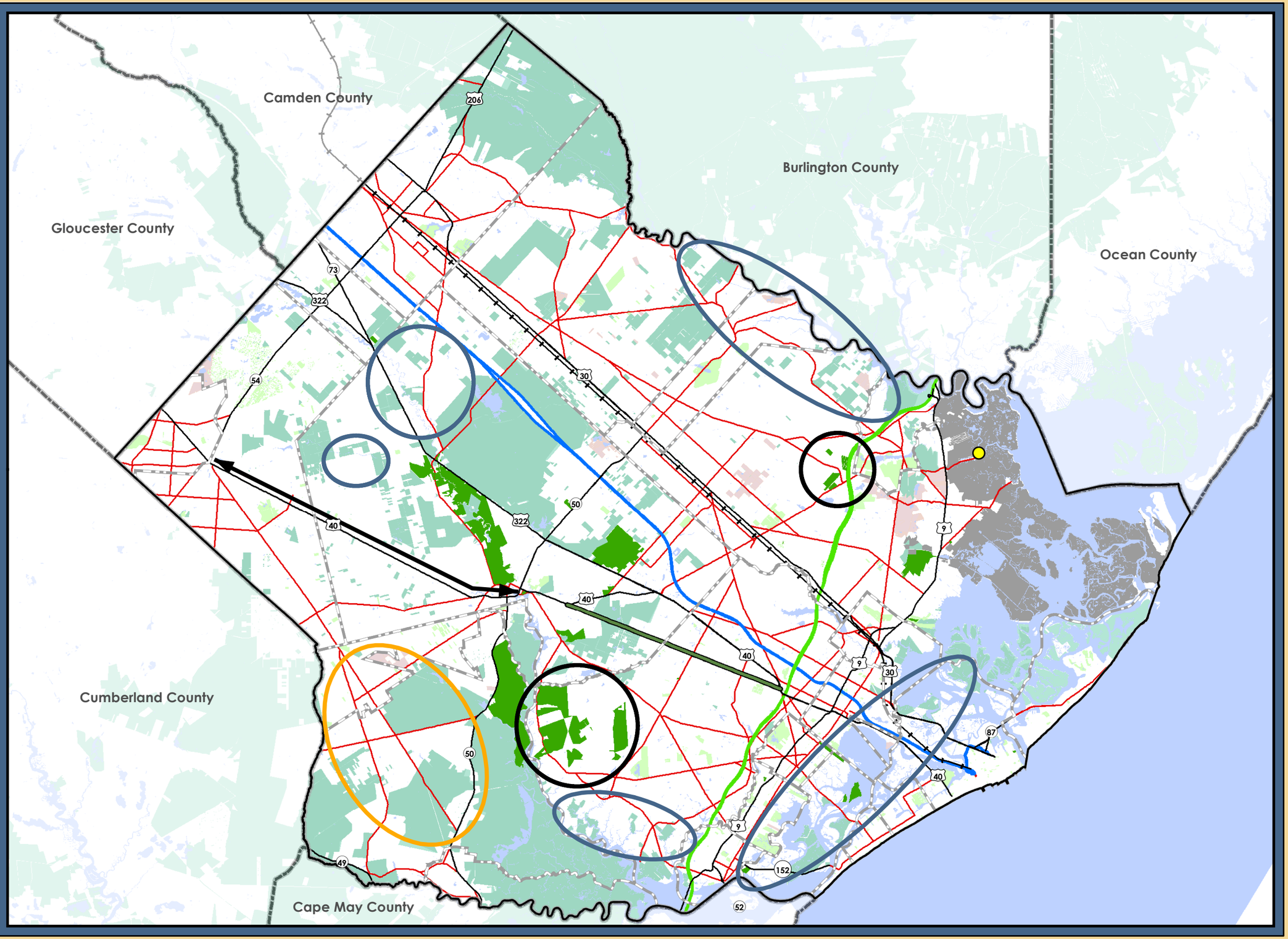
RECOMMENDATIONS

The overarching goal of Atlantic County's Open Space and Recreation Plan can be summarized as "providing a balanced County open space and recreation park system that best serves the greatest number of residents." While the County's composition varies greatly from the barrier islands to the rural communities, it is important that all residents have access to open space and recreation opportunities.

Based upon the Needs Analysis, the following recommendations should be pursued by the County to satisfy existing and future demands.

- Provide municipalities a portion of the County Open Space Tax Trust Fund in order to assist municipalities in the acquisition of parkland and the development of recreation areas.
- Acquire and develop lands for regional park facilities within the Regional Growth Areas to accommodate active recreation and are adaptable for large multiple use events.
- Identify programs between various levels of government that encourage and develop "partnerships" and "shared services".
- Continue to maximize revenues of the Open Space Tax levy by supporting the maximum rate allowed under law.
- Consider a new open space referendum to include tax funds for maintenance of County parks.
- Upgrade the core County maintenance staff as the County acquires and develops additional park lands.
- Develop a Marketing plan to capitalize on the benefits of eco-tourism and staff to coordinate activities
- Develop recreation programs for a diverse resident and visitor population, including an aging population.
- Acquire and develop lands for public access to coastal and inland water resources.
- Acquire and develop lands that have historical and cultural significance or satisfy a special need.
- Acquire lands for conservation and protection of natural resources and infill areas that serve as greenways and linkages to existing Federal, State and County facilities.
- Hire and train recreation staff
- Incorporate regulations controlling the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles into the County's Park System Ordinance.
- Prioritize land acquisitions which assist with the County's resiliency against natural disasters

Targeted Open Space



- Proposed Motts Creek Waterfront Park
- Proposed Bikeway West
- Targeted Infill Areas
- Targeted Resiliency Infill Areas
- Needs Analysis Infill Area
- County Open Space
- Municipal Open Space
- State-Owned Open Space
- Non-Profit Open Space
- US Fish & Wildlife Service

N W E S

0 0.5 1 2 3 Miles

Source: NJDEP, NJGIN, NJOGIS, NJDOT, Atlantic County Office of GIS

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IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

The matrix below gives the above recommendations a schedule to follow. Each recommendation has been classified as either being a short-, mid-, or long-term action. Short-term actions are usually completed within 1-3 years, mid-term in 3-7 years, and long-term in 7+ years.

Table 1.29 Implementation Matrix

Funding Mechanisms	Short-Term	Mid-Term	Long-Term
Continue to provide municipalities a portion of the County Open Space Tax Trust Fund in order to assist municipalities in the acquisition of parkland and the development of recreation areas.	On Going		
Continue to maximize revenues of the Open Space Tax levy by supporting the maximum rate allowed under law.	On Going		
Consider a new open space referendum to include tax funds for maintenance of County parks.		X	
Acquisition	**Short-Term**	**Mid-Term**	**Long-Term**
Acquire and develop lands for regional park facilities within the Regional Growth Areas to accommodate active recreation and are adaptable for large multiple use events.			X
Acquire and develop lands for public access to coastal and inland water resources.		X	
Acquire and develop lands that have historical and cultural significance or satisfy a special need.			X
Acquire lands for conservation and protection of natural resources and infill areas that serve as greenways and linkages to existing Federal, State and County facilities.		X	
Prioritize land acquisitions which assist with the County's resiliency against natural disasters	X		
Park Development	**Short-Term**	**Mid-Term**	**Long-Term**
Identify programs between various levels of government that encourage and develop "partnerships" and "shared services".	X		
Develop recreation programs for a diverse resident and visitor population, including an aging population.		X	
Maintenance	**Short-Term**	**Mid-Term**	**Long-Term**
Upgrade the core County maintenance staff as the County acquires and develops additional park lands.	On-Going		
Hire and train recreation staff	On-Going		
Other	**Short-Term**	**Mid-Term**	**Long-Term**
Develop a Marketing plan to capitalize on the benefits of eco-tourism and staff to coordinate activities	X		
Incorporate regulations controlling the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles into the County's Park System Ordinance.	X		