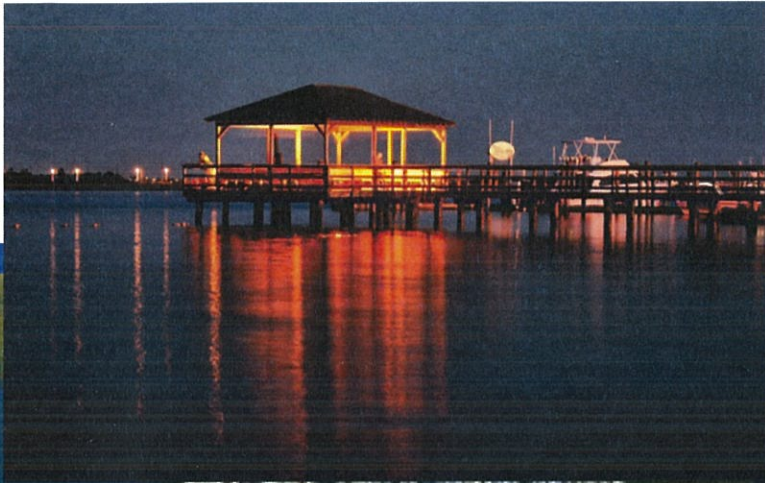


Somers Point Master Plan Reexamination



SOMERS POINT
NEW JERSEY
the shore starts here!



Prepared by
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January 2015



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1.0 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION

1. Introduction

The New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) requires that each municipality in New Jersey undertake a periodic review and reexamination of its local Master Plan and municipal development regulations at least every 10 years in order to determine the need for updates and revisions. This report constitutes the Master Plan Reexamination Report for the City of Somers Point as required by the MLUL (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89).

The Somers Point Planning Board adopted what was called the “Development Plan” in 1979 which included an analysis of the previous background studies performed in 1973 and provided an update of those reports. The 1979 Plan included a Land Use Element, a Circulation Element and a Community Facilities Element.

Subsequently, the Planning Board adopted a Land Use Element in 1990, 1993, Housing Element in 1998 and 2005, and Master Plan Reexaminations in 1989, 1998 and 2004. This Master Plan Reexamination Report serves as the required 10-year Reexamination for the 2004 Reexamination, which was adopted on November 10, 2004.

This master planning effort is being fully funded by a grant provided by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (NJDC A). NJDC A has allocated Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery funds for this program.

2. Background

Somers Point is located on Great Egg Harbor Bay, is approximately four square miles in land area and 1.1 square miles of water area. The city is bounded by Egg Harbor Township to the east and west and Linwood City to the north, while the bay borders the City to the south.

Somers Point is the oldest settlement in Atlantic County, dating back to 1693 and originally known as Somerset Plantation. Somers Mansion, built in 1725, now houses the Atlantic County Historical Society museum and is the oldest intact building in Atlantic County.

Surrounded by water on three sides, Somers Point has always had a strong maritime connection. The original connection between Somers Point and Beesley's Point was a ferry established in 1693, not too far from where the current Garden State Parkway Bridge is today. There has been a strong connection to the U.S. Navy since the Second Battle of Tripoli Harbor in 1804 when Master Commandant Richard Somers, great grandson of the founders of Somers Point, attempted to explode a vessel and create enough havoc to end the hostilities. Somers has a monument in his honor in Annapolis at the Naval Academy and in Somers Point next to the City Library on Shore Road.

Somers Point has a long and rich history that predates the birth of the United States of America. Its location on the water continues to influence the culture and economy of the city. Somers Point is known for its marinas, boating, and fine restaurants. The city celebrates the bay with numerous events throughout the year such as Bayfest, Somers Point Crabbing tournament, and the Somers Point Beach Concert Series.

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

The city is served by major transportation routes, including the Garden State Parkway. Significant north-south routes are Route 9 and Shore Road. Important east-west streets include Ocean Heights Avenue, MacArthur Boulevard and Somers Point-Mays Landing Road. The commercial establishments in Somers Point serve the surrounding communities and are primarily concentrated on Route 9, MacArthur Boulevard, Shore Road and Bay Avenue. Two bridges join Somers Point to Cape May County on its southerly border; they are the Garden State Parkway Bridge and the newly constructed Route 52 Causeway into Ocean City.

Somers Point is primarily a residential community with a relatively large proportion of its residents employed in Somers Point and neighboring communities. Shore Memorial Hospital, a modern 380-bed medical facility, is Somers Point's largest employer, providing 1,400 jobs. Because of Somers Point's location on the Great Egg Harbor Bay, it is known for its marinas, boating, and numerous fine restaurants. Somers Point also has a vast variety of small and large businesses located throughout the community, including many medical professional offices as a result of the location of Shore Memorial Hospital.

This master planning reexamination has been fully funded by a grant provided by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (NJDCA). NJDCA has allocated Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery funds for this program.

Figure 1.1 provides an overview of the City. The city is approximately 10 miles southwest of Atlantic City and 60 miles southeast of Philadelphia.

Figure 1.1 – Aerial Photograph of Somers Point, NJ



3. Requirements of the Periodic Reexamination Report

This Master Plan Reexamination is prepared and adopted pursuant to the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL), N.J.S.A. 40: 55D-89, which requires the planning board to provide for a general reexamination of its master plan and development regulations at least every 10 years. The MLUL requires that the Master Plan Reexamination shall state:

- The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report.

- The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.
- The extent to which there have been significant changes in assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the Master Plan or development regulations as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses; housing conditions; circulation; conservation of natural resources; energy conservation; collection, disposition and recycling of designated recyclable materials; and changes in state, county and municipal policies and objectives.
- The specific changes recommended for the Master Plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared.
- The recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the “Local Redevelopment and Housing Law,” P.L.1992, c. 79 (C.40A:12A-1 et seq.) into the Land Use Plan Element of the municipal Master Plan, and recommended changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.

The report that follows addresses each of these statutory requirements.

4. General Municipal Goals

The Municipal Land Use Law, enacted by the State Legislature on January 14, 1976, empowers municipal governments with the right to control the physical development of the lands within their bounds. N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2 of the Municipal Land Use Law, as amended, lists 16 general goals regarding the local planning process, which are as follows:

- (a) To encourage municipal action to guide the appropriate use or development of all lands in this state in a manner that will promote the public health, safety, morals and general welfare;
- (b) To secure safety from fire, flood, panic and other natural and man-made disasters;
- (c) To provide adequate light, air and open space;

- (d) To ensure that the development of individual municipalities does not conflict with the development and general welfare of neighboring municipalities, the county and the state as a whole;
- (e) To promote the establishment of appropriate population densities and concentrations that will contribute to the well-being of persons, neighborhoods, communities and regions and the preservation of the environment;
- (f) To encourage the appropriate and efficient expenditure of public funds by the coordination of public development with land use policies;
- (g) To provide sufficient space in appropriate locations for a variety of agricultural, residential, recreational, commercial and industrial uses and open space, both public and private, according to their respective environmental requirements in order to meet the needs of all New Jersey citizens;
- (h) To encourage the location and design of transportation routes that will promote the free flow of traffic while discouraging location of such facilities and routes that result in congestion or blight;
- (i) To promote a desirable visual environment through creative development techniques and good civic design and arrangements;
- (j) To promote the conservation of historic sites and districts, open space, energy resources and valuable natural resources in the state and to prevent urban sprawl and degradation of the environment through improper use of land;
- (k) To encourage planned unit developments that incorporate the best features of design and relate the type, design and layout of residential, commercial, industrial and recreational development to the particular site;
- (l) To encourage senior citizen community housing construction;
- (m) To encourage coordination of the various public and private procedures and activities shaping land development with a view toward lessening the cost of such development and to the more efficiently using land;
- (n) To promote utilization of renewable energy sources;
- (o) To promote the maximum practicable recovery and recycling of recyclable materials from municipal solid waste through the use of planning practices designed to incorporate the State Recycling Plan goals and to complement municipal recycling programs; and

(p) To give municipalities the flexibility to offer alternatives to traditional development, through the use of equitable and effective planning tools including clustering, transferring development rights, and lot-size averaging in order to concentrate development in areas where growth can best be accommodated and maximized while preserving agricultural lands, open space and historic sites.

5. Review of Current Planning Documents

The City of Somers Point Master Plan consists of the following documents.

- Development Plan, 1979
- Master Plan Land Use Element Update, 1990
- Master Plan Land Use Element Amendment, 1993
- Master Plan Reexamination Report with Housing Element, 1998
- Central Bay Avenue/Shore Road Redevelopment Plan, 2004
- Historic District Gateway Redevelopment Plan, 2004
- Master Plan Reexamination Report, 2004
- Mac's Shore Redevelopment Plan, 2005
- East Maryland Avenue Gateway Redevelopment Plan, 2005
- Master Plan Housing Element/Fair Share Plan, 2005
- Master Plan Historic District Element, 2010
- Somers Point Vision Plan, 2012
- Strategic Recovery Planning Report, 2014
- City of Somers Point Development Regulations

Section1 - Major Problems and Objectives in 2004 and the Extent to Which Problems and Objectives Have Been Reduced or Have Increased

5.1.1 Development Plan, 1979

The Development Plan 1979 stated that the majority of the City has been developed and that the remaining developable land should be developed in a matter consistent with the residential character of the City. The 1979 Plan identified the following desirable features, which form the basis for City planning:

- Residential character
- Open space resources
- Diversity of recreational activities – passive and active

- Adequate mix of existing land uses
- City's history and historical features

And the general objectives included:

- Retention and enhance the city's predominately residential character;
- Continued growth, predominately residential, at a pace consistent with municipal services;
- Retention of an adequate mix of land to provide a range of services for the city and region;
- Retention and protection of the diverse recreational activities available in the community;
- Retention and protection of the open space and natural resources of the community; and
- Provision for the safe and efficient movement of vehicles and pedestrians.

No reexamination or update of the Master Plan was completed until 1989.

5.1.2 Master Plan Land Use Element Update, 1990

The 1990 Master Plan Land Use Element Update identified the City as a developed residential community and endorsed the same goals and objectives that were established in the 1979 Master Plan. This Report affirmed many of the goals and objectives from the 1979 Master Plan. The 1990 Plan recommended:

- The creation of the Somers Point Historic District. The Somers Point Historic District was proposed to consist of three zoning districts: the Historic Village Commercial, the Historic Village Residential and the Historic Village Waterfront.
- Modification of the Planned Industrial District providing an opportunity for flexible multi-tenant industrial mixed land use including office, light manufacturing and warehousing.
- The creation of a Bayfront District to provide the opportunity for mixed use residential/marina land use with particular emphasis on marina and waterfront design standards.

5.1.3 Master Plan Reexamination Report, 1998

The 1998 Reexamination Report listed the following three new areas of concern for which recommendations were made:

- Historic preservation;
- Recreation/open space and environmental concerns, including public access to the waterfront; and
- Residential and non-residential land uses.

The goals provided in the 1998 Reexamination Report include:

1. The residential character of the City should continue to be enhanced.
2. The maritime heritage of the City combined with the continued vigilance for historic preservation should continue to be enhanced.
3. Open space and natural resources are to be conserved and expanded where appropriate.
4. The City shall adopt policies and implement strategies to solve circulation issues including enhancing parking, preventing traffic congestion and providing for safe and efficient pedestrian movement and traffic flow, especially in the Bayfront area.
5. The issues involving Shore Medical Center and its zoning must be resolved.

5.1.4 Master Plan Reexamination Report, 2004

The 2004 Reexamination Report built on the objectives and goals identified in the 1989 and 1998 Reexaminations and further modified the goals of the 1979 Master Plan by revising the first goal to state, “The residential and commercial mix of the City should be enhanced.” The following objectives were included in the 2004 Reexamination:

- Preserve the Bay Avenue historic district and respect its significance in relationship to development in the district and the adjacent area;
- Promote resort-oriented housing, hotels and businesses;
- Establish a resort destination “feel” where appropriate;
- Enhance cultural and artistic venues;

- Continue to coordinate the City's redevelopment efforts with the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) Route 52 improvement project; and
- The zoning along Route 9 should be evaluated utilizing strategic planning in order to ensure that the associated traffic and circulation impacts do not negatively affect the City and the adjoining residential neighborhoods.

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

The City has made progress in addressing many of the problems and objectives identified in the 1979 Master Plan and the Reexamination Reports from 1989, 1998 and 2004. Many of the problems or challenges and objectives identified in previous planning studies still need to be addressed. Outlined below is a summary of the problems and objectives that remain valid since the last reexamination.

5.2.1 Open Space and Recreation Element

The City continues to look for opportunities to improve and expand its recreation facilities and open space inventory. Improving public access to the bayfront and providing bike path connections to the regional network continue to be works in progress. Specific objectives that remain from the 1979 Master Plan and 2004 Reexamination include the following.

- Retain and protect diverse recreational opportunities.
- Protect open spaces and natural areas.
- Enhance pedestrian and bicycle movements throughout the City.
- Improve public access to the waterfront.
- Expand opportunities for pedestrian access, recreation and economic development.\

The 2004 Reexamination Report identified the following actions that the City has taken since adoption of the 1998 Reexamination that contribute, directly or indirectly, to addressing flood hazards:

- Stabilization of the long-standing erosion problem at Kennedy Park.
- Purchase of 14 acres of land on the Patcong Creek near the Garden State Parkway.

A new Recreation and Open Space Element will be included in the Master Planning effort to continue the City's efforts.

The Reexamination Report also acknowledged the 2004 release of New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Stormwater Management Rules and recommended the City evaluate its current ordinances, plans and regulations to ensure consistency with these rules.

With the exception of the land purchase and the limitation on impervious coverage in front-yard areas, the actions identified in the Reexamination Report address existing flood-related issues but do not address ways to minimize or avoid future flood impacts.

The City will need to develop additional planning strategies and regulations to address flooding and environmental concerns raised due to Superstorm Sandy and the threat of sea level rising. These strategies and regulations should be more fully discussed and developed in an amendment to the 2014 Land Use Element.

5.2.2 Community Facilities Element

The City continues to upgrade community facilities as funding becomes available. Superstorm Sandy has increased community awareness of the need to upgrade the stormwater system and other utilities. The 2014 Community Development Element will detail the future recommendations for Community Facilities.

5.2.3 Housing Element

The Housing Element that was adopted in 2005 remains in effect. Earlier this year the New Jersey Supreme Court ordered the State to adopt new regulations, comparable to the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) rules that expired more than 15 years ago. COAH has failed to act affirmatively. The City should monitor the status of the proposed rule changes.

5.2.4 Circulation Element

Reducing traffic congestion, improving the road network, enhancing pedestrian safety and providing additional pedestrian and bicycle linkages throughout the City remain objectives of the City's Master Plan. Since the 2004 Reexamination Report, the state has completed the Route 52 Causeway Project. This project runs from Route 9 along MacArthur Boulevard and included the Route 52 Bridge into Ocean City. These improvements impact vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle movements throughout the City. The completion of these improvements provides an opportunity for redevelopment along the commercial portions of the Route 52/MacArthur Boulevard.

Traffic-calming and streetscape improvements along Bay Avenue have been completed and have improved pedestrian safety. Other opportunities for traffic calming will be recommended in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Element.

The bikeway from Linwood along the Shore Fast Line trolley right of way must be extended and connects to the Route 52 Causeway. This new link will facilitates north-south bicycle movements within the City. Cross-town bicycle and pedestrian connections (east-west) continue to need improvement and this topic will also be addressed in the newly developed Bicycle and Pedestrian Element.

Since the last Master Plan Reexamination, the Shore Medical Center's 800-car parking garage has been completed and does not have any negative impacts on the area.

5.2.5 Historic Preservation Element

Preservation and promotion of the City's maritime heritage continues to be a community objective. Opportunities exist for restoration and rehabilitation of historic properties. However, balancing preservation goals with the need for development and redevelopment in the historic district remains a concern. The Master Plan Historic District Element was adopted by the Planning Board in 2010 and this Element remains in effect. This Element furthers the objectives of the 1979 Master Plan and 2004 Reexamination which includes the protection of the Bay Avenue Historic District.

5.2.6 Economic Development Element

The City continues to actively address economic development issues. The City has used a formal redevelopment process to drive economic development and more recently developed a Vision Plan to address economic development. The 2012 Vision Plan indicates that close to half of the businesses that lined MacArthur Boulevard prior to the start of construction have either failed or moved during the course of the project. However, since the completion of the Route 52 Causeway, three new businesses have been constructed on this beautifully enhanced causeway.

The Vision Plan also identifies the following needs:

- A working waterfront that includes maritime businesses that provide moorings, sales and servicing;
- Recreational-related businesses;
- Dining and restaurant uses; and,
- Lodging.

The Route 9 commercial corridor continues to warrant additional study and improvement. Both the 2004 Reexamination and the 2012 Vision Plan point out the need for additional controls that regulate the appearance of this commercial corridor.

The Vision Plan recommends that the City promote mixed-use development in all commercial areas and provide a livelier, more pedestrian-friendly Bay Avenue.

The completion of Shore Medical Center's \$125-million expansion is well integrated into the City and surrounding neighborhoods.

Specific objectives that remain from the 1979 Master Plan and 2004 Reexamination include the following.

- Provide for a mix of land uses that accommodate a range of services for City residents and the region;
- Expand opportunities for pedestrian access, recreational opportunities and economic development;
- Develop additional resort-oriented housing and businesses;
- Enhance and develop cultural and artistic venues;
- Focus on redevelopment opportunities now that the Route 52 improvements are complete;
- Develop appropriate zoning along the Route 9 commercial areas that balance the intensity of land uses with traffic and circulation concerns; and
- Develop appropriate regulations to address aesthetic concerns in all commercial zones.

An Economic Development Element will be developed as part of this planning effort to provide specific guidelines for the future economic enhancement of the City of Somers Point.

5.2.7 Land Use Element

According to the U.S. Census, the City added 154 dwelling units between 2000 and 2010. This results in a modest increase in the City's housing stock of approximately 2.8 percent. The City remains a desirable residential community. The 1979 Master Plan and 2004 Reexamination both indicate the continuing need to enhance the residential character of the City while respecting the traditional village character of much of the City. This objective remains valid in 2014. Specific objectives that remain from the 1979 Master Plan and 2004 Reexamination include enhancing the residential character of the community. A new Land Use Element is part of this planning effort.

5.2.8 Development Regulations

The 2004 Reexamination Report provides a comprehensive review of recommended changes to the City's development regulations. These changes can be grouped into redevelopment, signage, design standards, historic preservation, parking and zone changes.

1. Redevelopment

A detailed discussion of redevelopment areas can be found in Section 5. The 2004 Reexamination recommended that property adjacent to the Gateway Theater, the southwest corner of Maryland and Bay Avenue and the northeast corner of Maryland, Bay Avenue and the southeast corner of Maryland and Sunny Avenue should all have zone or use changes incorporated into redevelopment plans.

2. Signage

Sign regulations unique to the historic district continue to be an unmet objective. Create new regulations that limit and control banners, signs and temporary signs in all districts.

3. Design Standards

A continuing objective from 2004 is developing standards that address appropriate siding and trim color. This should be expanded to include design standards for both residential and nonresidential development. The 2012 Vision Plan recommends a better-looking Route 9 commercial corridor, a more beautiful waterfront and bayside marina. These should all be objectives of any future plan.

4. Historic Preservation

Balancing new construction with renovation projects in the historic districts continues to be an objective. The level of review by the Historic Commission for renovations should be clarified.

5. Parking

Parking or the lack of parking has been an ongoing problem and is discussed in both the 1979 Master Plan and 2004 Reexamination. A comprehensive parking study may be necessary to address this issue. The 2004 Reexamination lists the following parking problem areas: Bay Avenue, Shore Road, the municipal parking lot on Bay Avenue and Annie Avenue and satellite parking.

The 2012 Vision Plan lists parking capacity, controls, costs, availability, and turnover as "hot button" issues in the bayfront area. The availability of parking in

the hospital's new parking garage may provide some relief, but this has not been documented. The Vision Plan notes:

- The hospital garage will be made available to neighbors and businesses at normal rates.
- Permit parking has been instituted along the mostly residential blocks of Higbee, Gibbs, New York and 1st street.
- "Smart" parking meters are being installed in municipal lots near the waterfront.

The effectiveness of these new parking solutions will need to be evaluated.

5.2.9 Zoning Changes

The 1998 and 2004 Reexaminations also included a number of specific zone problems that remain unresolved or need to be reevaluated. They include the following.

- The present sign regulations refers the HVC Zone HC-1 and the HVW Zone to HC-2 and these standards do not properly serve the Historic District. Sign regulations unique to the Historic District should be created. The Planning Board will ask the Historic Preservation Commission to give detailed recommendations for consideration.
- Section 114-103 of the Development Regulations should change the wording "appropriate colors: to "appropriate siding and trim color."
- It is recommended that a comprehensive parking strategy be developed and implemented for Shore Road and Bay Avenue. The Planning Board does not feel a pilot program allowing for a three hour limit on all parking on Bay Avenue should instated without a pilot for use of parking meters. A comprehensive parking plan is needed for Bay Avenue. There does not appear to be the need for a pilot program at this time since there is very limited parking on Bay Avenue.
- The Planning Board does believe at this time that there should be a Visitor's Parking lot for satellite parking with a shuttle service available to the Bay Avenue area. It believes that any such specific idea with respect to a parking solution should be part of an overall general traffic parking plan for the Bay Avenue area.
- The Planning Board encourages the governing body to clearly define crosswalks on Bay Avenue and Shore Road but considers the issue of overall beyond the Planning Board's jurisdiction.

- The northeast corner of Route 9 and Somers Point-Mays Landing Road should be changed to Highway Commercial1 (HC – 1). However, lot 2 should be retained in its current zoning as Recreational Golf Course District (RGC).
- Ordinance sections dealing with signs and banners should be revised. Temporary signs should be permitted for a period but not to exceed sixty 1601 days. Promotional events including grand openings should be permitted but not to exceed sixty (60) days. There should be no pennants or tinsel. Promotional materials and signs of any nature should be attached to utility poles or support wires. All such signs and banners must be kept in good condition and should be removed if torn, tattered, frayed or faded. Sign regulations should discourage some of the promotion displays so that they are not continuous and to prohibit other promotional displays which are tacky. Precise language for signage changes should be discussed in more detail and a recommendation made to City Council for necessary development regulation changes.
- The Highway Comercial-1 district should be studied to determine if it should be extended along Bethel and Marks Road.
- The Recreational Land/Marina District zone should be extended to include Route 559.
- Lands bounded by Cooper and Hamilton Avenues and Groveland and Chapman Boulevard should be rezoned from R-1 to R-MF.
- The permitted uses along Route 9 should be reevaluated.

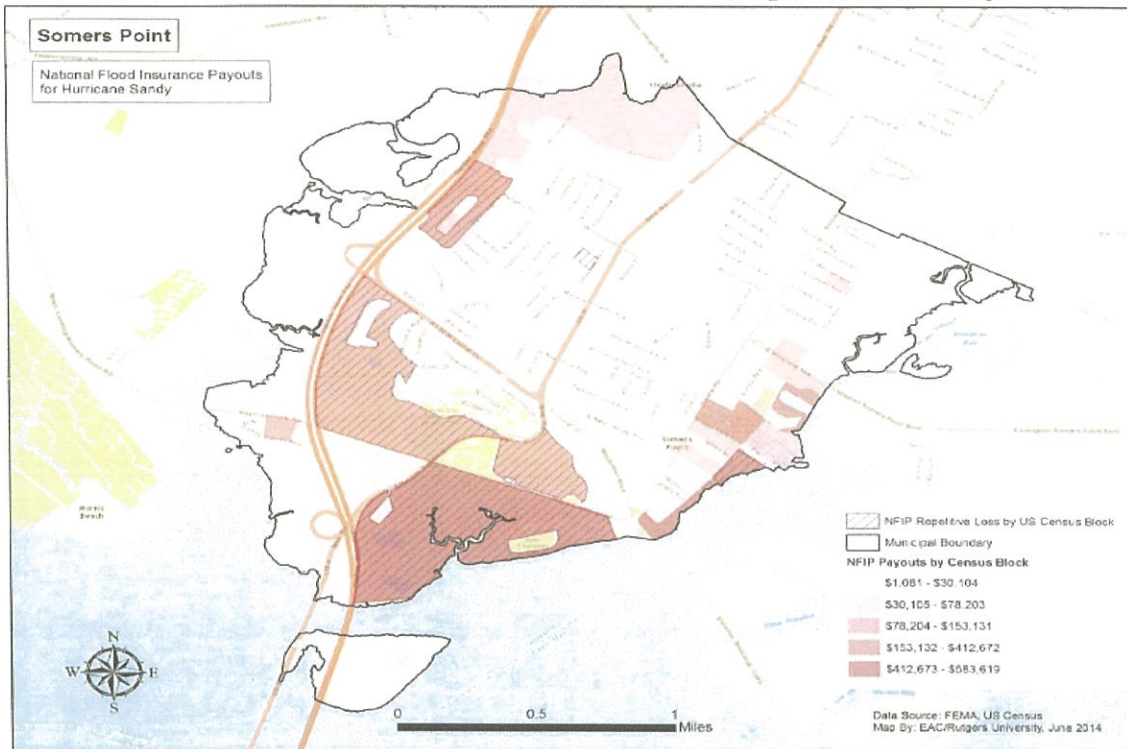
Section 3 – The Extent to Which There Have Been Significant Changes in the Assumptions, Policies and Objectives

5.3.1 Impacts of Superstorm Sandy

Since the 2004 Reexamination Report, the community has a heightened awareness of flooding from hurricanes such as Superstorm Sandy, as well as from rising sea levels. New flood maps have been issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and new data on sea-level rise has become available. The City will need to develop additional planning strategies and regulations to address flooding and environmental concerns raised due to Superstorm Sandy and rising sea levels. These strategies and regulations should be more fully discussed and developed in an amendment to the Land Use Element of the Master Plan.

The City experienced extensive damage as a result of Superstorm Sandy, with 379 insurance claims filed as of September 15, 2013 and \$2,239,287 losses paid, according to the N.J. Department of Banking and Insurance. This compares to the flooding history in the City over the last 35 years, in which only 335 insurance claims were filed between January 1, 1978 and September 30, 2013.

Figure 1.2 – National Flood Insurance Payouts for Superstorm Sandy

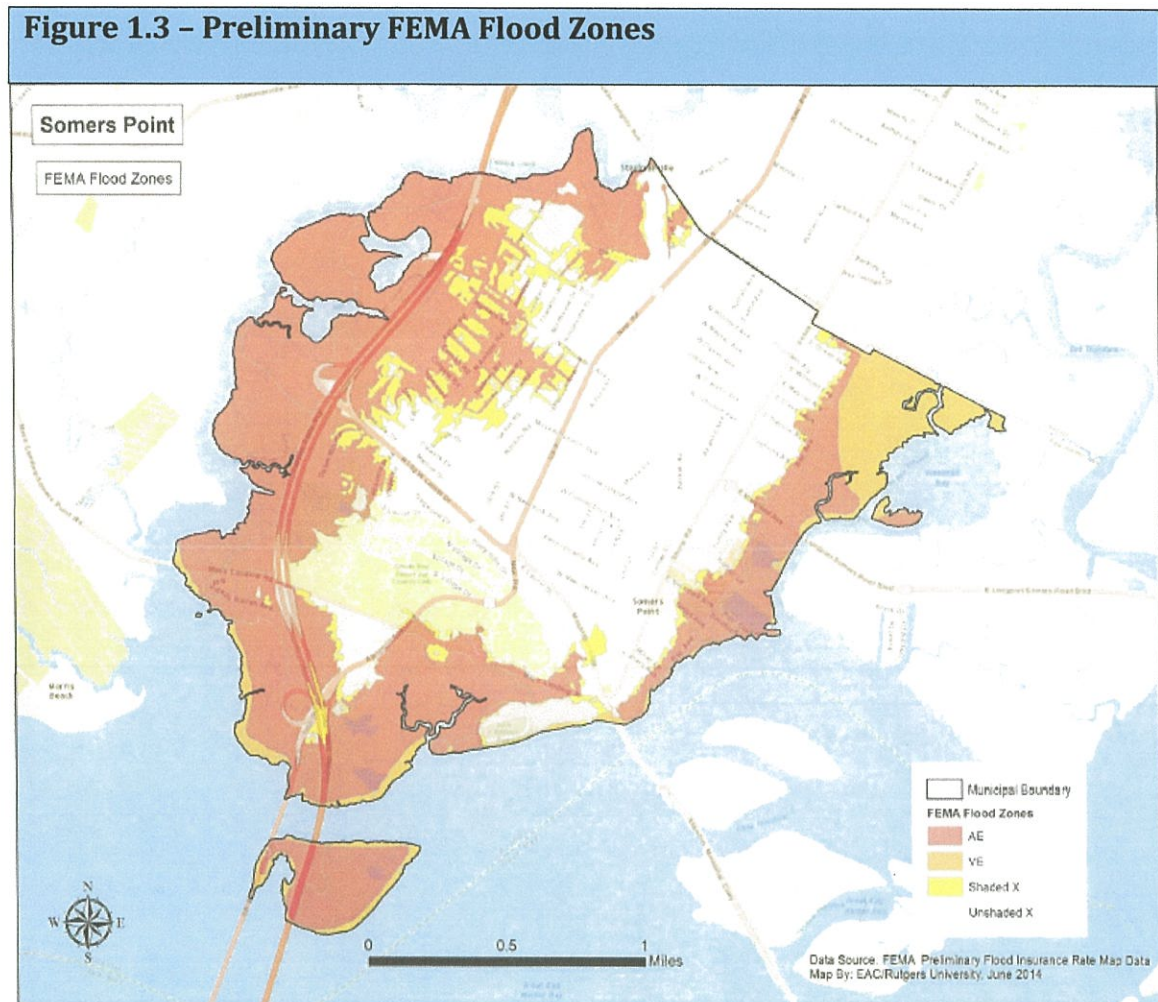


The ratable base of the City was reduced by more than \$1,728,800 as of March 1, 2013. A total of 83 properties incurred some damage, and 44 of these properties are located at the South Pointe at the end of Broadway where damage included air-conditioning units and bulkheads. A total of seven structures were deemed substantially damaged by the City’s Building Official. It is expected that additional properties will be added to this list in the coming months. One bayfront business was totally destroyed by Superstorm Sandy.

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) records show that there are 20 repetitive-loss properties in Somers Point.

The most recent Preliminary Work Map (Figure 1.3) from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) shows the A zones are expanding, placing more of the City in a high-risk category. A total of 182 properties have been added to the A zone.

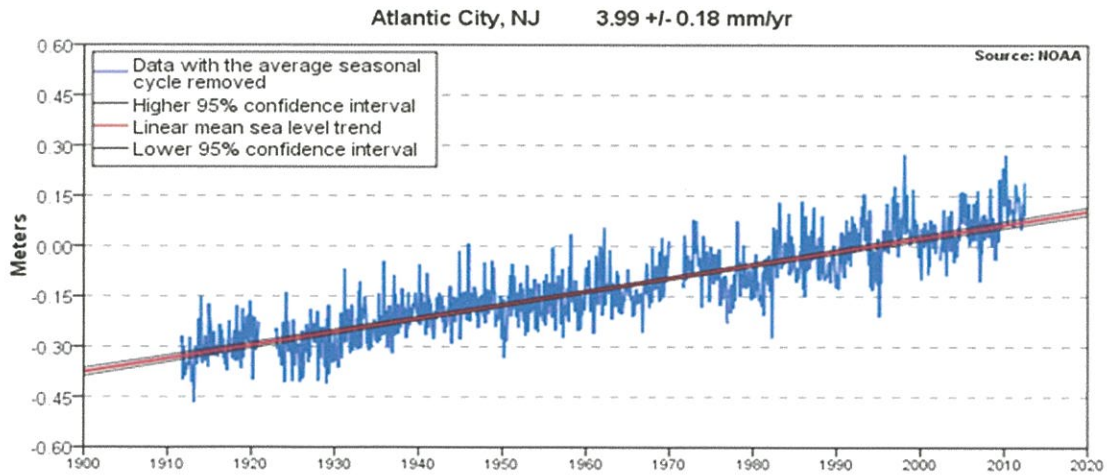
Also, a new V zone is recommended on Broadway Avenue, which will impact nine properties, and on Bay Avenue, impacting 10 properties.



The initial Flood Hazard Boundary Maps (FHBM) for Somers Point were issued on December 28, 1973 by FEMA. Almost a decade later, the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) were released. The FIRMs are based on historic, meteorologic, hydrologic, and hydraulic data, as well as open space conditions, flood control works, and development.

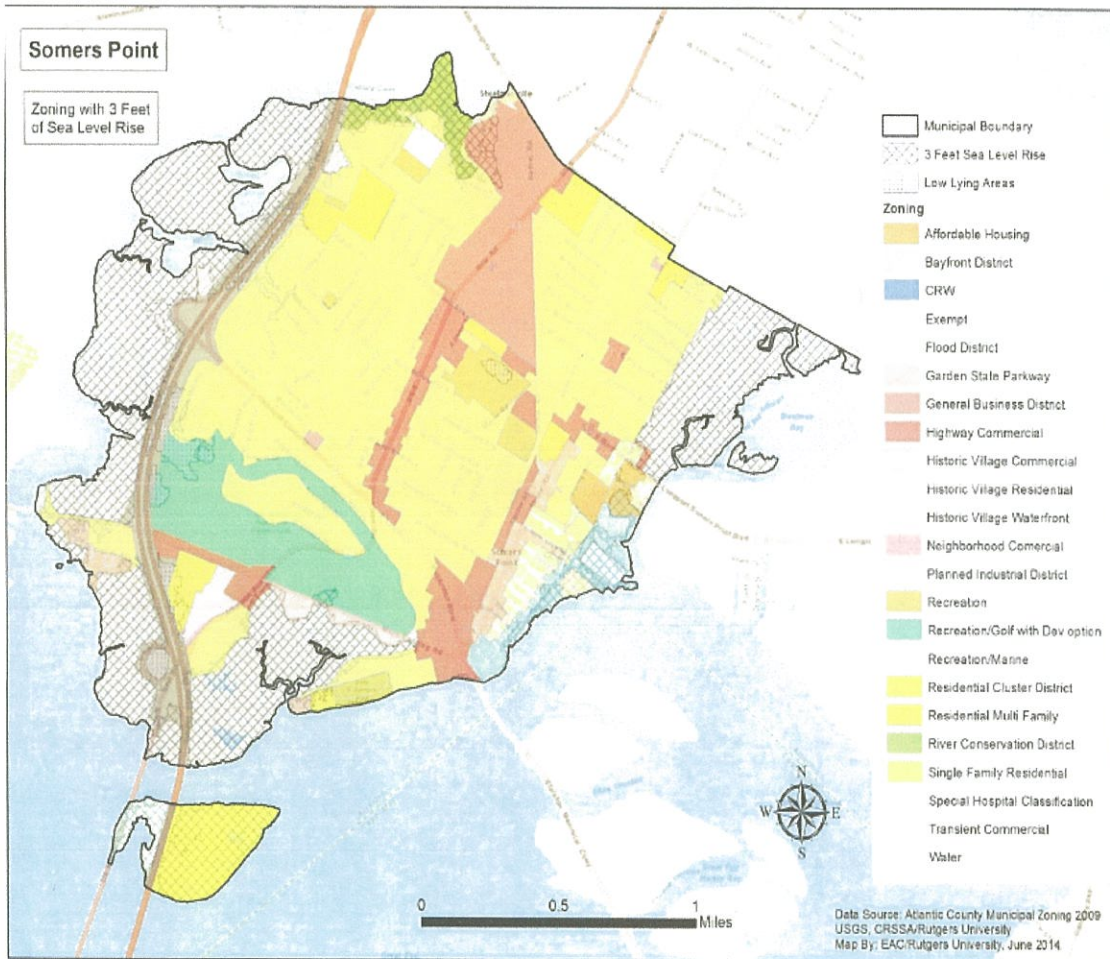
The historical rate of sea level rise along the New Jersey coast over the past half-century was 0.14 inches/year, while predicted future rates are expected to increase to 0.5 inches/year. This means that by 2050 sea level is expected to rise by approximately 1 foot and by 2100 sea level is projected to rise about 3 feet along the Jersey Shore (Figure 1.4).

Figure 1.4 – Historic Rate of Sea Level Rise along the New Jersey Coast



Source: www.njfloodmapper.com

Figure 1.5 – Somers Point Zoning with Three Foot of Sea Level Rise



5.3.2 Homeowners Flood Insurance Affordability Act of 2014

This law provides for the gradual increase of flood insurance rates until the premiums reaches full-risk rates. With limited exceptions flood insurance premiums cannot increase more than 18 percent annually. The exceptions may see increased up to a 25 percent annual increase until they reach full-risk rate include:

- Older non-primary residences insured with subsidized rates;
- Severe Repetitive Loss Properties insured with subsidized rates;
- And buildings that have been substantially damaged or improved built before the local adoption of a Flood Insurance Rate Map (known as Pre-FIRM properties).

As of September 30, 2013, there were 1,066 NFIP flood insurance policies in effect in the City of Somers Point, insuring property valued at \$230,694,700. The total cost of premiums in 2012 was \$860,825. Between January 1, 1978 and September 30, 2013 there were 335 insurance claims filed for property owners in Somers Point and the total payment was \$6,016,359. Listed below are the insurance claims resulting from Hurricane Sandy.

Figure 1.6 - Total Insurance Claims Resulting From Superstorm Sandy as of September 15, 2013

Claims Filed	379
Percent Paid	69.7 percent
Closed, No Payment	93
Losses Paid	\$2,239,287
Average Losses Paid	\$8,482

Source: New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance

5.3.3 Regional and Local Economy Changes

Atlantic County has lost 13,000 jobs since 2006 and this trend is expected to continue for the next few years as the largest industry in the county, the casino industry adjusts to loss of market share to the surrounding states of New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania and Maryland.

At the same time wealth is migrating to the barrier island communities that are served by Somers Point merchants providing an opportunity for business expansion and repositioning.

The 2014 Economic Development Element discusses these changes in more depth.

5.3.4 Vision Plan, 2012

In 2012, the City of Somers Point went through a vision planning process. The Vision Plan identifies the City as well positioned to participate in a vital seasonal market, which draws from a regional market of over 200,000 people during the summer months. The City itself has a working waterfront with maritime businesses, restaurants recreational businesses, galleries, shops and public uses. The City is also comprised of comfortable neighborhoods with lots of possibilities and a shopping corridor with most everything you need. The City is also home to a regional medical center and many medical offices and services (Somers Point Vision Plan 2012 pages 1-2).

What has emerged from the Vision Plan is a clear vision for Somers Point as a vibrant, waterfront community with better looking and more successful Route 9 commercial corridor, a broader array of recreational opportunities, an attractive and accessible waterfront, a livelier and more walker friendly Bay Avenue, and finally a homeowner friendly environment which encourages residents to stay and improve homes rather than to relocate. This vision is in keeping with the following long standing goals of the City's Master Plan.

- Enhance the residential character of the City
- Expand and improve the maritime heritage of the City
- Preserve historic structure
- Conserve and expand open space and natural resources
- Solve circulation issues, enhance parking, prevent congestion and provide safe pedestrian movement,
- Work with major employers to enable growth and sustainability i.e. Shore Medical Center.

The amended Land Use Element will build upon the previous City Master Plan and the 2012 Vision Statement.

5.3.5 National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System

The City has commenced the application process and anticipates joining the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS). To date, the City

has submitted a letter of interest to the FEMA Regional Office and on December 9, 2013 a Community Assistance Visit occurred. The City expects to be included in the Community Rating System in 2015.

Over 1,200 communities nationwide, including 61 in New Jersey, participate in the CRS. On those about a dozen communities are in class five, the highest ranking in the State, saving residents 25 percent off their flood insurance.

5.3.6 Strategic Recovery Planning Report, 2014

In 2014, the City received funding from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs to prepare a Strategic Recovery Planning Report (SRPR). The SRPR is a comprehensive planning document that contains actionable recommendations both for rebuilding the community and increasing the resilience of infrastructure and buildings. It identifies sea level rise as a challenge and documents projects that by 2050 sea level is expected to rise by approximately 1 foot and by 2100 sea level is projected to rise about 3 feet along the Jersey Shore. This report analyzed flood risks in the City. It also outlined multi-year investments to increase economic development and made recommendations to protect neighborhoods and infrastructure from future natural disasters.

5.3.7 Atlantic 4 – All-Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2014

The City and three other Atlantic County communities were not included in the Atlantic County Hazard Mitigation Plan when it was developed in 2005. For this reason, the four communities (Buena Vista Township, Egg Harbor City, Port Republic and the City of Somers Point) have banded together to prepare an All Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). A grant for this project was awarded in August 2012, prior to Superstorm Sandy. The Plan provides a blueprint to address the City's vulnerability to natural hazards and help the City qualify for additional funding sources.

5.3.8 Getting to Resilience Report, 2014

The Getting to Resilience Report prepared by the Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve recommends both short- and long-term resiliency planning strategies. The majority of the short-term strategies revolve around public education on the dangers of flooding and providing information to the public on flooding and sea-level rise. Long-term strategies include land acquisition through Blue Acres or other buyout programs of land in floodplains and rewriting municipal plans and regulations to reduce flood vulnerabilities. Specific to the Master Plan process, the report recommends that floodplain management be incorporated into

the Master Plan as well as potential impacts from sea-level rise and surge vulnerabilities.

5.3.9 Residential Site Improvement Standards

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

5.3.10 Municipal Stormwater Management

Under the Municipal Land Use Law Section 40:55D-93, every municipality shall prepare a stormwater management plan and a storm water control ordinance to implement the plan. The City of Somers Point has adopted a Stormwater Management Plan in accordance with these requirements. As required by the Municipal Land Use Law, the Stormwater Management Plan shall be reexamined at each Master Plan reexamination. Somers Point first adopted a stormwater ordinance on March 23, 2006. The plan was filed with Atlantic County and has been recognized as a complete plan.

5.3.11 Review of Zoning of Adjoining Municipalities

The New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) requires that the City evaluate the relationship of its Master Plan to the plans of adjacent communities, the Atlantic County Master Plan, the State Development and Redevelopment Plan and the appropriate Solid Waste Management Plan.

Somers Point adjoins Linwood, Ocean City, Upper Township and Egg Harbor Township. Linwood is located to the north of the City. Egg Harbor Township and Ocean City are located to the east and are separated by a waterway, Upper Township is located to the south and is separated by the Great Egg Harbor River and Egg Harbor Township to the west is separated by the Patcong Creek.

It is the policy of the City to work cooperatively with neighboring communities. Linwood is a predominately residential community and its land uses adjacent to Somers Point are attached and detached housing. These uses are compatible to those of Somers Point.

To the east, Egg Harbor Township is separated from Somers Point by Bass Harbor. This section of the Township is zoned Conservation Recreation Wetlands (CRW) and

low density residential. Egg Harbor Township is accessed by the Somers Point-Longport Causeway (Route 152)

Likewise, Ocean City is separated from Somers Point by the Egg Harbor Bay and Ship Channel, a large swath of land that is predominately protected wetlands. The new Route 52 Causeway connects Somers Point to Ocean City.

To the south, Upper Township is separated from Somers Point by the Great Egg Harbor Bay. The Township provides for low density residential development which is consistent with surrounding land uses. The Garden State Parkway provides the only direct highway access to Upper Township from Somers Point.

To the west is Egg Harbor Township separated by the Patcong Creek. Much of the land adjoining the Creek is zoned for conservation and low density development. Both Somers Point – Mays Landing Road (CR 559) and Ocean Height Avenue (CR 559 Alt.) provide access to Egg Harbor Township from Somers Point.

The Somers Point Master Plan is consistent with the goals, objectives and policies of both the Atlantic County Master Plan and the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan.

Somers Point has a very aggressive recycling plan which includes curbside collection of recyclables on a weekly basis for all businesses and a bi-weekly basis for all homes. This program is provided on a contract basis by the Atlantic County Utilities Authority. Solid Waste is collected by the City collection crews and disposed by at a lined landfill that serves the entire county. These programs are consistent with the District Solid Waste Management Plan.

Section 4 – Recommendations Changes in the City’s Master Plan, Development Regulations and Zone Plan

5.4.1 2004 Recommendations

The 2004 Reexamination identified 47 specific land use recommendations for changes to the City’s land use regulations. It also stated the City’s Land Development Ordinance should be comprehensively revised. Of those 47 specific recommendations the following eight recommendations remain.

1. The zoning of the service station on Lot 1 at the northeast corner of Route 9 and Somers Point-Mays Landing Road, which should be changed from Recreational Golf Course District (RGC) to Highway Commercial – 1 (HC-1). However, Lot 2 should be retained in its current zoning as RGC.

2. It is recommended that the Recreational Land/Marina District (Rec-B) zone be extended to include Somers Point-Mays Landing Road (Route 559) at Patcong Creek.
3. Lands bounded by Cooper and Hamilton avenues and Groveland Avenue and Chapman Boulevard should not be rezoned from R-1 to R-MF (multi-family residential).
4. The permitted uses along Route 9 should be reevaluated to consider providing for mixed use development.
5. Renovation projects should proceed without review by the Historic Preservation Commission in the following limited circumstances so long as they are in concert with the surrounding neighborhood:
 - a. Re-roofing of residential structures;
 - b. Repair or replacement of wood fences in rear and side-yards of residences within the proper setback of the front dwelling;
 - c. Concrete flatwork containing no imprints, colors or curbs;
 - d. Siding on residential housing so long as the horizontal façade of dwellings remains unchanged in design;
 - e. Minor repairs estimated to be less than \$1,000 due to storm damage, weather or infestation so long as the design of the original structure remains unchanged;
 - f. Decks and porches that are not visible from the street and are in concert with the surrounding neighborhood; and
 - g. Repair of the front porches and steps so long as they maintain the original design, size and shape.
6. The present sign regulations refer the HVC Zone to HC-1 and HVW Zone to HC-2, and these standards do not properly serve the Historic District. Sign regulations unique to the Historic District should be created.
7. Grant funds should be pursued to complete a comprehensive parking strategy should be developed and implemented.
8. Ordinance sections dealing with signs and banners should be revised. Temporary signs should be permitted for a period not to exceed 60 days.

Promotional events including grand openings should not be permitted to exceed 60 days. There should be no pennants or tinsel. Promotional materials and signs of any nature should not be attached to utility poles or support wires. All such signs and banners should be kept in good condition and should be removed if torn, tattered, frayed or faded. Sign regulations should discourage promotional displays so that they are not continuous and to prohibit other promotional displays that are tacky. Precise language for signage changes should be discussed in more detail and a recommendation made to City Council for necessary development regulation changes.

Section 5 – Redevelopment Areas

The Planning Board working with the City Council has adopted five redevelopment plans to spur economic growth in the City. By utilizing the redevelopment planning tools provided in N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq., the City aims to enhance opportunities for redevelopment that will improve specific properties and by extension the entire City.

5.5.1 Central Bay Avenue/Shore Road Redevelopment Plan

This redevelopment area contains approximately 46 acres and is bounded by East Maryland Avenue to the north, Bay Avenue to the east, Gibbs Avenue to the south and the City’s bikeway to the west. This redevelopment area also includes Shore Memorial Hospital. The plan has undergone some modifications since it was originally adopted. The plan seeks to revitalize the Central Bay Avenue/Shore Road area in order to create a vibrant, engaging mixed-use community and to plan for the needs of Shore Memorial Hospital within the context of the City’s redevelopment policies. The success and failures of this plan should be evaluated as part of a new land use element and modifications to the redevelopment plan made as necessary and appropriate.

5.5.2 Mac’s Shore Redevelopment Plan

The Mac’s Shore Redevelopment Plan contains two lots located on the southbound side of Shore Road. The lots contain approximately 30,000 square feet in area. The plan seeks to revitalize Mac’s Shore area in order to create an upscale residential development and to provide adequate parking for existing uses along Shore Road. The success and failures of this plan should be evaluated as part of a new land use element and modifications to the redevelopment plan made as necessary and appropriate.

5.5.3 East Maryland Avenue Gateway Redevelopment Plan

This Plan contains approximately 5.9 acres and is bounded by Maryland Avenue to the north, the bay to the east and south and Bay Avenue to the west. The overall vision

for the East Maryland Avenue Gateway Redevelopment Area is to provide for either a mix of uses, or a single use, which will complement and support the existing marina and the surrounding area. The success and failures of this plan should be evaluated as part of a new land use element and modifications to the redevelopment plan made as necessary and appropriate.

5.5.4 Historic District Gateway Redevelopment Plan

The Historic District Gateway Redevelopment Plan contains approximately 22 acres and is bounded by Pennsylvania Avenue to the north, Shore Road to the east, MacArthur Boulevard to the south and First and Second Streets to the west. The plan seeks to revitalize the Historic District Gateway area in order to create an enticing mixed-use gateway into the City and to capitalize on the existing historic facilities in the area. The success and failures of this plan should be evaluated as part of a new land use element and modifications to the redevelopment plan made as necessary and appropriate.

5.5.5 The Gates Redevelopment Plan

In October 2014 a preliminary needs investigation redevelopment study was adopted by City Council for a property known as, The Gates, a multifamily housing development located on Shore Road. The property is described on the City's tax maps as Block 1114; Lots 3, 4.01, 4.03, and 4.04. The study found that redevelopment of The Gates will have social and economic benefits for the City. Without such a designation, the site may continue to decline and have even more substantial detrimental impacts on the surrounding area. It is anticipated that renovation and rebranding of this site will result in improved quality of life for the residents of Somers Point by removing conditions that have a blighted influence on surrounding properties, enhancing aesthetics, providing a sense of place and stabilizing property values.

Additional redevelopment areas will be identified by the Board as warranted and in keeping with the future Land Use Element of the Master Plan Reexamination.

2.0 LAND USE ELEMENT

1. Introduction

The City of Somers Point, originally known as Somerset Plantation, dates back to 1693. This four-square-mile town is located in the eastern portion of Atlantic County. Somers Point was first incorporated as a borough in 1886.

The Land Use Plan Element seeks to maintain a balance in land use while providing the framework for planning and policy goals. It is designed to maintain and improve the quality of life for residents, property owners and visitors to the City. The Land Use Element has been organized into four distinct parts. First, the Land Use Element provides a demographic analysis of the community providing a comparison of the 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census. Second, it identifies goals and objectives. Third, it reviews existing land uses. Fourth, it recommends land use changes.

2. Demographic Characteristics

2.1 Population

The 2010 U.S. Census reports that Somers Point has a population of 10,795 persons. This is a decrease of 819 persons or 7 percent from the 2000 population. While Atlantic County experienced an 8.7 percent increase in population from 2000 to 2010, many of the communities along the coast experienced a population decrease during this time period.

Figure 2.1 - Population Trends 1930 to 2010						
Somers Point				Atlantic County		
Year	Population	Number change	Percent	Population	Number Change	Percent
1930	2,073	---	--	124,823	--	--
1940	1,992	-81	-3.9	124,066	-757	-0.6
1950	2,480	488	24.4	132,399	8,333	6.7
1960	4,504	2,024	81.6	160,880	28,481	21.5
1970	7,919	3,415	75.8	175,043	14,163	8.8
1980	10,330	2,411	30.4	194,119	19,076	10.8
1990	11,216	886	8.5	224,327	30,208	15.5
2000	11,616	398	3.4	252,552	28,225	12.5
2010	10,795	-819	-7.0	274,549	21,997	8.7

Source: U.S. Census

Figure 2.1 identifies population trends for Somers Point and Atlantic County from 1930 to 2010. The 2010 Census also reports that 78.7 percent of the population is white, 10.7 percent African American, 3.1 percent Asian and others making up the remainder.

2.1.1 Population by Age

As indicated above the total population in Somers Point decreased by seven percent from 2000 to 2010. Figure 2.2 provides population by age cohort for the 2000 and 2010 Census. The largest decrease was for persons 25 to 44 years of age, where a decrease of 9.3 percent occurred. The decrease in the school-age children, individuals under 5 and those between 5 and 14, was 3.4 percent. The decrease in school-age children could impact future school enrollments and affect future school facility planning efforts; however, any decisions should be made cognizant of the fact that the total number of housing units increased from 2000 to 2010. There was a slight decrease of 1.5 percent for persons 65+.

	2000		2010		2000 to 2010 Change	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Under 5	699	6	644	6.0	-55	-0.04
5 to 14	1,541	13.2	1,204	11.2	-337	-2.9
15 to 24	1,295	11.1	1,419	13.2	124	1.1
25 to 34	1,583	13.6	1,290	12.0	-293	-2.5
35 to 44	2,090	17.9	1,303	12.0	-787	-6.8
45 to 54	1,631	14	1,884	17.4	253	2.2
55 to 64	1,027	8.8	1,474	13.6	447	3.8
65+	1,748	15	1,577	14.6	-171	-1.5
Total	11,614	100	10,795	100	-819	-7.1

Source: U.S. Census

2.2 Housing Units

The 2010 U.S. Census reports that there were 5,556 housing units in Somers Point. This represents a 154-unit increase (2.8 percent) over 2000, when there were 5,402 housing units. Of the 5,556 units, the census reports that 4,655 units (83.8 percent) are occupied. Of the 4,655 occupied units, 56.4 percent are owner-occupied and 43.6 percent are renter-occupied units. Figure 3 provides a tabulation of housing units for 2000 and 2010.

The average household size in owner-occupied units is 2.36 persons and the average household size of renter-occupied units is 2.26 persons per unit. The persons per household in Somers Point is less than the average in Atlantic County (2.63) and the State of New Jersey (2.7).

Figure 2.3- Housing Units 2000 to 2010			
	2000	2010	Percent change 2000 to 2010
Total Housing Units	5,402	5,556	2.8
Occupied Housing Units	4,920	4,655	-5.4
Vacant Housing Units	482	901	87.0

Source: US Census

2.2.1 Seasonal Housing Units

The 2010 Census lists 528 units in Somers Point (9.5 percent) as seasonal, recreational or occasional use compared to only 318 or 5.9 percent of the total units in 2000. Hence, there has been an increase in the number of seasonal homes in Somers Point, a trend that is expected to continue.

2.2.2 Housing Characteristics

The U.S. Census through American Community Survey provides information on the physical characteristics for occupied housing units for 2008-2012 (2008-2012 American Community Survey). Figure 2.4 below provides information on the number of units in each structure. Just over 60 percent of the total units in the City are one-unit attached or detached units and approximately 21 percent of the units are in structures with more than 10 units in them.

Figure 2.4 - City of Somers Point Number of Units in Structure		
Units in structure	Estimate	Percent
1-unit, detached	3,226	57.4
1-unit, attached	276	4.9
2 units	304	5.4
3 or 4 units	278	5.0
5 to 9 units	291	5.2
10 to 19 units	797	14.2
20 or more units	405	7.2
Mobile home	39	0.7
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0	0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey

Figure 2.5 provides census data on the year structures were built. Approximately 72 percent of the units in the City were built more than 50 years ago and only 4.2 percent were built prior to 2000. The age of the structures in Somers Point will help the City to qualify as an area in need of rehabilitation should the City wish to use this planning tool.

Figure 2.5 - City of Somers Point Year Structure Built		
Year Structure Built	Number of units	Percent
Total housing units	5,616	100
Built 2010 or later	12	0.02
Built 2000 to 2009	227	4.1
Built 1990 to 1999	217	3.9
Built 1980 to 1989	529	9.4
Built 1970 to 1979	1,172	20.9
Built 1960 to 1969	1,508	26.9
Built 1950 to 1959	1,039	18.5
Built 1940 to 1949	296	5.3
Built 1939 or earlier	616	11.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey

Figure 2.6 indicates that the majority of housing units in the City have between 4 and 6 rooms. Less than 3 percent of the structures have 2 or fewer rooms and only 9.3 percent have nine or more rooms.

Figure 2.6 - City of Somers Point Number of Rooms per Structure		
Number of Rooms	Number of Structures	Percent
Total housing units	5,616	100
1 room	70	1.2
2 rooms	93	1.7
3 rooms	539	9.6
4 rooms	1,268	22.6
5 rooms	1,145	20.4
6 rooms	1,034	18.4
7 rooms	605	10.8
8 rooms	396	7.0
9 rooms or more	466	9.3
Median rooms	5.2	n/a

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey

Figure 2.7 provides data on the value of occupied structures. The American Community Survey reveals that almost 75 percent of the occupied structures in the City have a value between \$200,000 and \$499,000. No structures were listed as having a value of more than \$1 million. The median value is listed as \$244,100, which compares favorably with the Atlantic County average median value of \$248,100.

Figure 2.7 - City of Somers Point Value of Occupied Structures		
Value	Number	Percent
Owner-occupied units	2,700	
Less than \$50,000	72	2.7
\$50,000 to \$99,999	30	1.0
\$100,000 to \$149,999	166	6.2
\$150,000 to \$199,999	373	13.8
\$200,000 to \$299,999	1,453	53.8
\$300,000 to \$499,999	546	20.2
\$500,000 to \$999,999	60	3.3
\$1,000,000 or more	0	0
Median (dollars)	\$244,100	n/a

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey

2.3 Market Area

The City is well positioned to participate in a vital seasonal market, which swells the summer population to more than 200,000 people (see Figure 2.8). The City itself has a working waterfront with maritime businesses, restaurants, recreational businesses, galleries, shops and public uses. The City is also composed of comfortable neighborhoods with lots of possibilities and a shopping corridor with nearly everything people need.

Figure 2.8 - Somers Point Market Area				
Community	Population		Median Hhld. Income	Median Family Income
	Year Round	Seasonal		
Somers Point	10,795	12,380	\$47,312	\$51,489
Linwood	7,092	7,092	\$80,518	\$103,529
Longport	895	5,000	\$70,625	\$107,188
Margate	6,354	25,000	\$77,667	\$90,625
Ocean City	11,701	120,000	\$55,202	\$79,196

Upper Township	12,373	12,373	\$81,250	\$97,372
S. Egg Harbor	20,000	20,000	\$69,754	\$78,259
Total/Average	69,210	201,845	\$67,689	\$81,758

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2006-2010 American Community Survey

The market area that Somers Point businesses serve includes almost 70,000 year-round residents and more than 202,000 seasonal visitors. These 70,000 year-round residents account for nearly \$5.5 billion in income.

3. Goals and Objectives

Previous planning efforts in the city have identified a variety of goals and objectives. These goals and objectives have remained unchanged for over 30 years. While these goals, primarily from the 1979 Development Plan, remain relevant, this document will expand and update the land use goals and incorporate suggestions articulated during the 2012 Vision Process and this Master Plan update process.

Previous planning goals for the city included the following:

- Retention of the City’s predominately residential character.
- Continued growth, predominately residential, at a pace consistent with municipal services.
- Retention of an adequate mix of land uses to provide a range of services for the City and region.
- Retention and extension of the diverse recreational activities available to the community.
- Retention and protection of the open space and natural resources of the community.
- Retention of the community’s historical features.
- Provision for the safe and efficient movement of vehicles and pedestrians.

The following goals and objectives have been identified to help improve the quality of life for all residents in the City and to encourage appropriate development and redevelopment throughout the City.

a. Preserve the quality of the City’s residential neighborhoods.

- Discourage conversion of residentially zoned properties to retail or office uses.
- Minimize conflicts between residential uses and retail, office and hospital uses.

- Promote the creation and maintenance of community facilities that serve the City’s residents.
 - Promote rehabilitation of historic buildings.
 - Promote the rehabilitation of substandard housing.
- b. Encourage properly scaled residential and nonresidential infill development.**
- Ensure that infill development is done in a manner that respects the style and scale of surrounding buildings.
 - Preserve the quality of neighborhood-oriented development.
 - Review the zoning map and modify districts where necessary to match zoning to existing development patterns.
 - Promote mixed-use centers in appropriate nonresidential zones.
 - Direct development of regional retail uses to areas that have convenient access to the state highway network.
 - Review the bayfront area to determine if there are additional residential and retail opportunities.
 - Encourage development and redevelopment along the Route 9 commercial corridor with new design standards to ensure aesthetically pleasing development.
- c. Preserve environmentally sensitive lands via acquisition, conservation easements and development clustering.**
- Secure public access easements whenever possible along waterfront areas.
 - Limit development in the floodway and require two feet of freeboard whenever development occurs in a flood zone.
 - Participate in acquisitions through the Blue Acres or other buyout programs of land in floodplains.
- d. Promote the development and redevelopment of attractive retail, office and mixed uses through the application of architectural and site design standards.**
- Utilize design strategies to promote safe pedestrian and bicycle environments.
 - Encourage the creation of a unique sense of place through architecture and streetscape designs for prominent commercial corridors.
 - Establish signage standards appropriate to each zone and provide a cohesive and clear image in commercial corridors.

e. Preserve and expand the City's maritime heritage by exploring opportunities for mixed use residential and marina uses along the waterfront.

- Review the waterfront area to determine if there are additional residential and retail opportunities.
- Provide for a broader array of recreational opportunities in the waterfront area.
- Encourage efforts to beautify the waterfront and provide public access along the waterfront.
- Encourage a more vibrant, attractive, publicly accessible waterfront area by facilitating the development of interesting shops, restaurants and seasonal activities.
- Ensure the waterfront area remains pedestrian-friendly and has interesting shops and restaurants.

f. Develop zoning standards to make the community more sustainable and storm resilient.

- Review all zoning standards that affect stormwater runoff, floodplain management and sea level rise.
- Adopt standards for elevating and floodproofing homes in the Historic District.
- Improve public education on the dangers of flooding and sea level rise.

4. Land Use Issues

The City is primarily a residential community with significant commercial areas along Route 9, McArthur Boulevard and the waterfront. The Atlantic County 2013 Ratable Breakdown for the City of Somers Point reveals that the total value of property in Somers Point is \$683,027,574. Approximately 69.3 percent of the dollar value in Somers Point is in residential uses of one to four units (class 2 properties). Apartments (class 4C) account for 5.9 percent of the total value. Commercial uses (class 4A) account for approximately 23.3 percent. Vacant land (class 1) accounts for 1.2 percent and public utilities account for less than 1 percent. Figure 2.9 provides a more detailed breakdown of value.

Figure 2.9 - City of Somers Point 2013 Ratable Breakdown					
Class 1	Class 2	Class 4A	Class 4C	Public Utility	Total
Vacant Land	Residential 1-4 units	Commercial	Apartment		
\$8,351,400	\$473,381,500	\$159,401,300	\$40,372,100	\$1,521,274	\$683,027,574

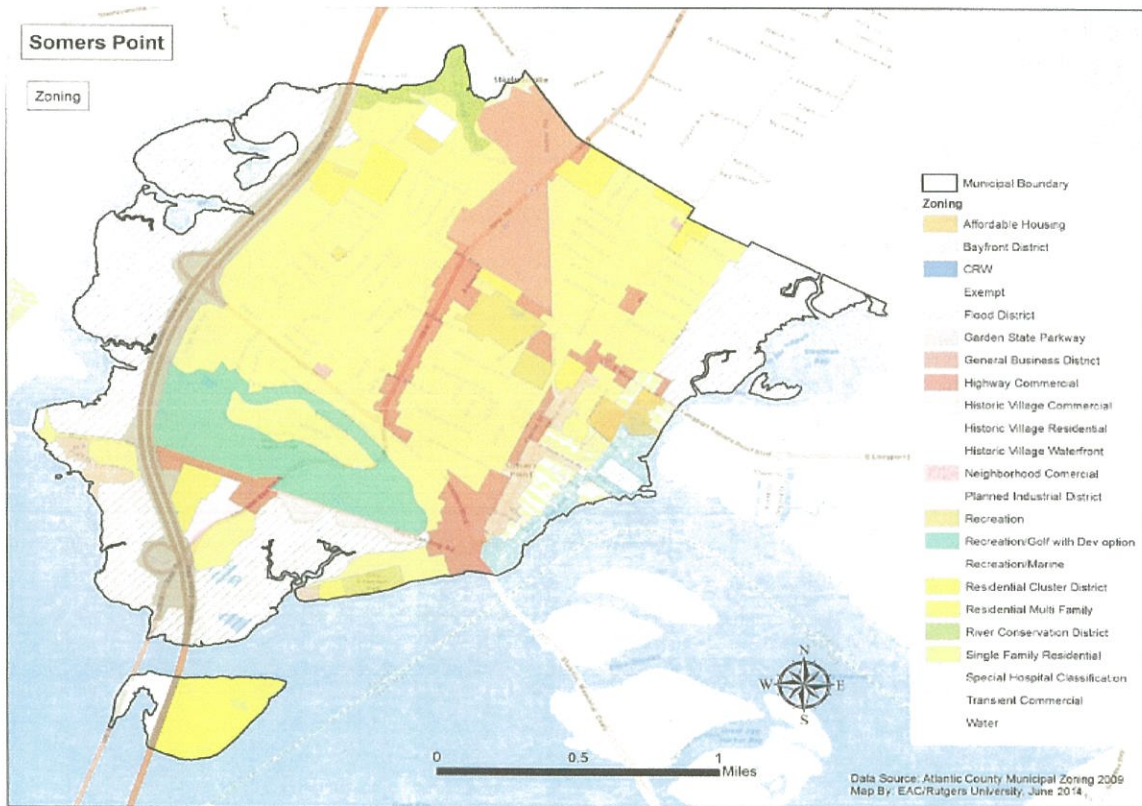
Source: Atlantic County 2013 Ratable Breakdown

An examination of the development and redevelopment policies in the City reveal several land use issues that apply to the City as a whole or to multiple zoning districts. These issues are discussed below.

4.1 Residential Districts

As indicated in Figure 2.5, there are 5,556 housing units in Somers Point, with more than 57 percent being single-family detached units and approximately 21 percent of the units considered apartment-type units in structures with 10 or more units.

Figure 2.10 – Somers Point Zoning Map



In general, the residential zones in the City serve the community well. The character of residential areas should be protected, and continued vigilance is necessary to

ensure that commercial and institutional uses do not encroach upon residential areas in the R-1 zone. Special attention should be given to residential uses in the historic district zones. Many of the homes in the Historic Village Residential (HVR) zone are threatened by teardowns and replacement with homes that are much larger and out of character. The bulk regulations in the HVR district should be evaluated, as many of the residential lots in the zone do not comply with the bulk standards. Similarly, opportunities to provide additional residential uses in the Historic Village Commercial (HVC) and Historic Village Waterfront (HVW) zones should be investigated and allowed with appropriate design standards that protect the historic character of this area.

Design standards for elevating homes should be reviewed and, if appropriate, adopted in all residential zones.

4.2 Business Districts

Business uses are permitted in 12 of the City's zoning districts and provide for a variety of business uses. Zoning in Somers Point for nonresidential development ranges from small neighborhood businesses to large regional shopping centers. The business uses provide a stable economic base for the City. The various business zones provide for a range of services and goods that meet the needs of both City residents and the region. Recently, concerns have been raised with regard to the condition and viability of some of the older businesses along Route 9. A careful review of the zoning in these areas is warranted to determine if changes are necessary to encourage the redevelopment of these areas. A more comprehensive study or redevelopment plan may be necessary to provide for cross-access easements and shared parking. Design standards should be considered for the highway commercial uses.

4.3 Maritime/Waterfront Districts

Maritime and waterfront uses provide a unique opportunity for both residential and nonresidential redevelopment along the waterfront. These areas should be carefully studied to ensure that the existing maritime uses are compatible with new residential and nonresidential growth. Consideration should be given to limiting dry land boat storage and encouraging other waterfront or maritime uses. Any new development in these areas should include provision of public access to the waterfront and incorporate pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly designs.

4.4 Hospital District

The recent expansion by the hospital and the construction of a new parking garage have addressed many of the concerns regarding development in and around the

hospital. The City will have to continue to monitor this area to ensure that the hospital does not negatively impact the surrounding residential area.

4.5 Historic Preservation Districts

The City's Historic Commission reviews development application for sites that are within an historic district and provides recommendations to the Planning Board or Zoning Board. In order to retain a property's historic integrity, these recommendations should be consistent with those of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. The historic district designation helps protect a unique resource in the City, and any change in these zones should be carefully evaluated. As mentioned earlier in this element, many of the single family homes in the HVR district are in danger of being torn down and replaced by much larger homes that are not in character. Zoning changes to protect the character of our historic homes should be developed. Many of the homes in the HVR district do not comply with the bulk standards, which results in time- consuming and costly delays for homeowners seeking to improve their homes. Consideration should be given to modifying the bulk standards for homes in the HVR district.

5. Zoning Recommendations/Land Use Changes

During the Master Plan process, the Planning Board has entertained suggestions from property owners, developers and residents for changes to certain zones. Some of the changes outlined below are intended to provide consistency in the current zoning ordinance and should not change the scale or character of development. Other changes are proposed to enhance or revitalize certain areas of the City and promote economic development.

5.1 Residential Districts

The City includes three residential zones designated as R-1 Single Family, R-MF Multifamily Residential and R-CL Residential Cluster. Residential uses are also permitted in all three of the HVC zones. The dominate lot size is 7,500 square feet; however, lots in the older section of the community are smaller. There is very little vacant land within the areas permitting residential development.

5.1.1 R-1 Single Family District

The R-1 zone is the City's primary residential district, and the zone represents the largest zoned area in the City. This zone permits single family homes on lots of 7,500 square feet and is scattered throughout the City. The purpose of the R-1 District is to permit residential development within the City of Somers Point with sufficient

controls to protect natural resources. Density is limited to 5.8 dwelling units per acre. The R-1 zone permits professional offices as a conditional use on all lots fronting on Shore Road between Ocean Heights Avenue and the northerly right-of-way line of Goll Avenue. The bulk of the R-1 zone is located east of the Garden State Parkway. There are clusters of the R-1 zone located throughout the City.

No changes are recommended for this zone.

5.1.2 R-MF Residential Multifamily District

The purpose of the Multifamily Residential District is to permit residential development of higher densities consistent with existing developmental patterns within the City of Somers Point. Permitted uses include: garden apartments, townhouses and two-family dwellings on three-acre lots or larger. Density is limited to 12 units per net residential acre. There are five R-MF locations scattered throughout the City.

Lands bounded by Cooper and Hamilton avenues and Groveland Avenue and Chapman Boulevard should not be rezoned from R-1 to R-MF (multi-family residential).

5.1.3 R-CL Residential Cluster District

The purpose of the Residential Cluster District is to permit residential cluster development with sufficient controls to protect natural resources and the environment. Permitted uses include: single-family detached; single-family detached, zero lot line; single-family detached, patio house; and single-family detached, atrium house. The maximum density shall be one dwelling unit per adjusted gross acre with both public sewer and water, or one dwelling unit per two adjusted gross acres without both public sewer and water. There is one R-CL district located in the far southern portion of the City.

No changes are recommended for this zone.

5.1.4 Historic Districts

The historic zones permit residential development in all districts including the HVC, HVR and HVW. These districts will be discussed below under Historic Districts.

5.2 Affordable Housing Districts

For the purposes of fulfilling the City of Somers Point affordable housing obligation as prescribed by the New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing, the City has zoned the following:

Multifamily residential and townhomes are permitted uses in the AH1, AH2 and AH3 zones.

The AH1 zone permitting a maximum of 120 units (94 market-rate plus 26 low- and moderate-income). consistent with Section 3.4.1 of the Settlement Agreement of Litigation in the matter of Bay Avenue Redevelopers, L.L.C., Bass Harbor, L.L.C., Harbour Cove Marina, L.L.C., and S.P. #2 v. City of Somers Point, Docket No. ATL-L-3204-05 P.W. (Mount Laurel) (the "Settlement Agreement"), on a minimum tract size of 2.5 acres.

The AH2 Zone permitting a maximum of 16 units on a minimum lot of 0.75 (±) acres.

The AH3 Zone permitting a maximum of 190 units on a minimum acreage of 8.20 acres.

No changes are recommended for this zone.

5.3 Commercial Districts

5.3.1 GB General Business District

The purpose of the General Business District is to encourage major commercial concentration with easy highway access and with an overall compatible design. Permitted uses include retail stores and shops; banks and financial institutions; fully enclosed restaurants; craft shops; barbershops and beauty parlors; studios for artists, photographers and sculptors; indoor health club, squash or racquetball facilities; family billiard parlors; indoor recreational facilities; indoor cinemas; delicatessens; retail bakery; taverns; dinner theaters, theaters for the performing arts or other cultural facilities; electronic appliance and other service shops; nursery and garden centers; dry cleaning/laundry establishments; factory authorized new automobile sales, agencies and services, including repair shops adjacent to and in connection therewith, including new and used car lots; automobile repair shops; general, corporate, administrative and professional offices; and nursing homes, convalescent facilities and continuing-care facilities. Conditional uses include: fast-food restaurants, gasoline service stations and car washes. Minimum lot size is two acres. The GB zone fronts on both Route 9 and Bethel Road.

No changes are recommended for this zone.

5.3.2 HC-1 Highway Commercial District

The purpose of the Highway Commercial-1 District is to encourage major commercial concentration with easy highway access. Permitted uses include: retail stores and service establishments; fully enclosed restaurants and drinking establishments;

general business and professional offices; banks; personal services; minor repair operations for televisions, radios, watches, shoes and appliances; gasoline service stations; and public buildings operated by the City of Somers Point. Fast-food restaurants are permitted as a conditional use. Minimum lot size of 15,000 square feet is required.

Recommended changes:

1. Mixed-use development should be considered in the HC-1 zone.
2. Design standards should be developed for nonresidential zones with particular focus on the Route 9 commercial corridor. Design standards should be tailored to the character of each commercial zone.
3. Consideration should be given to providing an incentive to property owners who share parking and provide cross-access easements.
4. The zoning at the intersection of Maryland Avenue and Bay Avenue should be changed to HC-1.
5. The zoning on Groveland Avenue and Bethel Road should be examined to determine if there is a justification to expand the HC-1 zone in these areas. Careful consideration should be given insure that the existing residential neighborhoods are not adversely impacted.

5.3.3 HC-2 Highway Commercial District

The purpose of the HC-2 District is to encourage major commercial concentration with easy highway access. Permitted uses include those permitted in the HC-1 district as well as motels and methadone clinics. Minimum lot size is 15,000 square feet.

Recommended changes:

1. The permitted HC-2 zone should be reevaluated.
2. Mixed-use development should be considered in this zone.
3. Design standards should be developed for nonresidential zones with particular focus on the Route 9 commercial corridor. Design standards should be tailored to the character of each commercial zone.

4. Consideration should be given to providing an incentive to property owners who share parking and provide cross-access easements.

5.3.4 NC-2 Neighborhood Commercial District

The purpose of the NC-1 District is to encourage the establishment of essential service facilities in neighborhood areas. Permitted uses include essential service establishments, including, but not limited to, grocery stores, delicatessens, convenience stores and pizza shops. Minimum lot size is 15,000 square feet.

Recommended changes - Mixed-use development should be considered in this zone.

5.3.5 BF Bay Front District

The purpose of this district is to preserve the unique natural resources of the area and to encourage development that is compatible with these resources and surrounding uses, providing for a mixture and variety of residential, retail, commercial and water- and non-water-related recreational uses and facilities and as an integral part of the overall developmental picture of the district. Permitted uses include: boat sales and rentals; boat storage and maintenance; boat dockage facilities and boat launches and fishing piers; fully-enclosed water-related service and/or recreational establishments; all existing residential uses present at the time of passage of this chapter; single-family detached dwellings; single-family attached condominiums; and general business offices and professional offices. Lot sizes vary depending on uses.

Recommended change - Permitting lodging in the marina district should be evaluated.

5.3.6 TC Transient Commercial District

The purpose of the TC zone is to encourage development of moderately scaled motels, restaurants and recreational facilities with easy highway access. Permitted uses include: motels on 30,000-square-foot lots and fully enclosed eating and drinking establishments on 15,000-square-foot lots.

No changes are recommended for this zone.

5.3.7 SHOS Special Hospital District

The purpose of the SHOS district is to encourage the orderly growth of existing hospital facilities within the City. Permitted uses include all types of health-care related and medical uses such as hospitals, clinics, practitioners' offices and the like, including support facilities.

Recommended change - Permitting mixed use development in this zone.

5.3.8 PMC Professional Medical Commercial District

The purpose of the PMC zone is to permit health-care related uses. Permitted uses include: hospitals, clinics and medical practitioners' offices; health-care services; health planning services; medical office buildings; professional offices; public buildings operated or occupied by the City of Somers Point; methadone clinics; retail service establishments; retail shops; fully enclosed restaurants (but not including service of alcoholic beverages); business services; banks; personal service establishments; and minor repair operations.

No changes are recommended for this zone.

5.4 Recreational Districts

5.4.1 RGC Recreational Golf Course District

The purpose of the RGC District is to encourage major recreational concentration and open space conservation. Permitted uses include an 18-hole golf course.

Recommended change - The northeast corner of Route 9 and Somers Point-Mays Landing Road contains a gas station on Lot 1, which should be changed from Recreational Golf Course District (RGC) to Highway Commercial-1 (HC-1). However, Lot 2 should be retained in its current zoning as RGC.

5.4.2 REC-A Recreational Land District

The purpose of the REC-A District is to recognize and delineate those areas of land that have been developed and dedicated by the city for recreational use. Permitted uses are limited to active and passive recreational uses, such as parks, playgrounds, courts, fields or other municipally operated recreational uses.

No changes are recommended for this zone.

5.4.3 REC-B Recreational Land/Marina District

The purpose of the REC-B District is to permit integrated development that promotes and provides public access and use of the waters adjacent to the site. Permitted uses include: boat building; marine rental and sale, including fishing equipment and fuel; repair, rental, sale and storage of boats; fishing piers; boat docks; boat launches; marine-related wholesaling and processing within a completely enclosed building; and public recreation and cultural uses on publicly owned property. Minimum lot size is 10,000 square feet.

Recommended change - It is recommended that the REC-B zone be extended to include Somers Point-Mays Landing Road (Route 559) at Patcong Creek.

5.5 Historic Districts

The purpose of the Somers Point Historic District is to acknowledge the special and unique character of Somers Point's bayfront and riverfront village areas, which consist of the HVC, HVR and HVW zones. These districts include the residential and nonresidential land uses representing the community's growth and change during the nineteenth century, when maritime businesses and activities were an important part of the City's economy. The Somers Point Historic District is also established to provide special provisions designed to preserve and protect the historical nature of the bayfront and riverfront villages, while at the same time encouraging renovations, rehabilitation and new construction compatible with existing aesthetic patterns in order to promote and continue the revitalization of Somers Point's downtown area. The intent of all standards and guidelines in the Somers Point Historic District is to safeguard the heritage of the city by preserving that part of the City which reflects elements of its cultural, social, economic and architectural history and to promote the use of the historic area for the education, pleasure and welfare of the citizens of the City and its visitors.

Recommended changes:

1. Renovation projects should proceed without review by the Historic Preservation Commission in the following limited circumstances so long as they are in concert with the surrounding neighborhood:
 - a. Re-roofing of residential structures;
 - b. Repair or replacement of wood fences in rear and side-yards of residences within the proper setback of the front dwelling;
 - c. Concrete flatwork containing no imprints, colors or curbs;
 - d. Siding on residential housing so long as the horizontal façade of dwellings remains unchanged in design;
 - e. Minor repairs estimated to be less than \$1,000 due to storm damage, weather or infestation so long as the design of the original structure remains unchanged;
 - f. Decks and porches that are not visible from the street and are in concert with the surrounding neighborhood; and
 - g. Repair of the front porches and steps so long as they maintain the original design, size and shape.

2. Consider amending the City's Historic District ordinances to provide the Committee a clear framework to gauge whether or not new construction is "in concert with the surrounding neighborhood" §114-98(C).
3. Design guidelines should be established to guide development in the Historic District to maintain the streetscape and character of the neighborhoods. The guidelines should be in conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, which should be the controlling regulation for any work on an historic home.

5.5.1 HVC Historic Village Commercial District

Permitted uses in the HVC zone include: retail stores and service establishments, but not including convenience-type stores; fully enclosed restaurants and drinking establishments; general business and professional offices; banks; personal service establishments; minor repair operations for televisions, radios, watches, shoes and appliances; public buildings operated by the City of Somers Point; theaters, museums, art galleries and similar uses; all existing residential uses present at the time of passage of this chapter; and off-street parking lots and parking garages. Conditional uses include residential flats on the second floor above permitted nonresidential uses.

Recommended changes:

1. The present sign regulations refer applicants in the HVC zone to the HC-1 zone and those in the HVW zone to HC-2 zone for sign regulations. These standards do not properly serve the Historic District and sign regulations unique to the Historic District should be created.
2. Residential lot sizes and lot dimensions should be evaluated, as many of the lots in this zone are substandard and nonconforming, making it difficult for homeowners to make improvements to their homes.

5.5.2 HVR Historic Village Residential District

Permitted uses in the HVR District include all uses permitted in the R-1 Single-Family Residential District. Conditional uses include tourist/guest houses.

Recommended changes:

1. In order to protect the residential character of the City's historic district, a cap on the maximum building size or a maximum floor area ratio should be

adopted to ensure that future development in historic districts is compatible with existing development.

2. Residential lot sizes and lot dimensions should be evaluated as many of the lots are substandard and nonconforming, making it difficult for homeowners to make improvements to their homes.

5.5.3 HVW Historic Village Waterfront District

Permitted uses in the HVW zone include: all permitted uses as defined in the Village Residential zone; boat sales and rentals; boat storage and maintenance; boat dockage facilities and fishing piers; fully-enclosed water-related service and/or recreational establishments; restaurants and drinking establishments; theaters, small retail shops and stores, but not including convenience-type stores; general business offices and professional offices; all existing residential uses present at the time of passage of this chapter; and off-street parking lots and parking garages. Conditional uses are tourist/guest houses and residential flats situated on the second floor above permitted nonresidential uses.

Permitting lodging in the marina districts should be evaluated.

- Residential lot sizes and lot dimensions should be evaluated as many of the lots are substandard and nonconforming, making it difficult for homeowners to make improvements to their homes.
- Permitting lodging in the Marine Village Waterfront (HVW) district should be evaluated.

5.6 Industrial District

The purpose of the I-PID Planned Industrial District is to encourage light industrial, warehousing and other concentrated uses, with the intention of achieving such a concentration while retaining natural resources and use of existing structures, and recognizing the developmental constraints of the area. Permitted uses include light industrial processes that do not generate harmful or unpleasant odors, fumes, smoke, vapors, gases or other air or water pollutants, vibrations, noise, glare, industrial wastes or any other deleterious by-products of the operation beyond the confines of the structure. Such uses shall include, but not be limited to: electrical goods production; furniture manufacturing; toy manufacturing; professional and scientific instrument manufacturing; printing and publishing; electronics and clothing manufacturing; research and design laboratories; public utility structures; fully

enclosed warehouses; fully enclosed wholesale business establishments, including merchandising, distribution and storage, but not including the storage of gasoline, petroleum or petroleum products; athletic development and training facilities; and all principal uses permitted in the HC-1 District.

No changes are recommended for this zone.

5.7 Flood District

The purpose of the Flood District is to recognize that certain areas within Somers Point are environmentally sensitive, are subject to tidal flow and flooding conditions and can be classified as tidal marsh-wetlands areas as defined and delineated by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). Permitted uses include: public recreational uses associated with the natural environment and not requiring the construction of any structures, streets or parking; public wildlife preserves designed for passive recreation; and utility transmission lines.

No changes are recommended for this zone.

6. Additional Land Use Recommendations

6.1 Design Guidelines

1. Design standards and signage recommendations should be developed for nonresidential zones with particular focus on the Route 9 and Bay Avenue commercial corridors. Design standards should be tailored to the character of each commercial zone.
2. Consider design standards that will promote consistent front yard setbacks in the Historic District.
3. Ordinance sections dealing with signs and banners should be revised. Temporary signs should be permitted for a period not to exceed 60 days. Promotional events including grand openings should not be permitted to exceed 60 days. There should be no pennants or tinsel. Promotional materials and signs of any nature should be attached to utility poles or support wires. All such signs and banners should be kept in good condition and should be removed if torn, tattered, frayed or faded. Sign regulations should discourage some of the promotional displays so that they are not continuous and to prohibit other promotional displays that are tacky. Precise language for signage changes should be discussed in more detail and a recommendation made to City Council for necessary development regulation changes.

6.2 Resiliency/Sustainability

1. As part of this Master Plan process the Planning Board supported and City Council adopted Ordinance No. 30 of 2014 which anticipate future sea level rise and storm impacts to maximize the city's resiliency efforts. This ordinance, adopted on November 20, 2014, requires freeboard of two feet above the Base Flood Elevation and permits the opportunity to increase the freeboard to three feet without a variance. The ordinance also defines substantial damage/improvements to be all reconstruction, rehabilitation, or damage that exceed forty percent of the market value of the structure. The City should maintain and enforce this ordinance in order to safeguard structures in the community and to obtain the highest possible insurance discount through FEMA's Community Rating System.
2. Assure that the public is aware of any changes in FEMA's flood maps as they are updated and any FEMA flood map changes that will in revisions to building requirements.
3. Amend the bulkhead height design requirements to elevation eight, or to a new standard set by ordinance and recommended by the City Engineer.
4. Expedite certification under the FEMA's Community Rating System to provide flood insurance discounts to property owners in Somers Point. Property owners in the City of Somers Point currently pay flood insurance premiums in the approximate amount of \$1.0 Million per year. If the City enters the CRS program at a Class 7 a 15 percent flood insurance discount or \$150,000 discount will be provided to every policy in Somers Point. Some communities have achieved a Class 5 classification resulting in a 25 percent discount or \$250,000 annually. Given recent legislation the cost of flood insurance will increase significantly and the CRS discount is one of the best ways to control future costs.
5. Consideration should be given to adopting the latest version of FEMA's flood maps as they are released, strengthening elevation requirements in the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance based upon the most

stringent version of FEMA's flood maps, and increasing freeboard requirements.

6. As part of the Master Plan process guidelines were prepared to assist property owners in the Historic District to elevate their homes and to insure that new development is consistent with the fabric of the Historic District.
7. To address flooding concerns, the City should consider matching Coastal Area Facilities Review Act (CAFRA) standards for impervious coverage in all zones.
8. Amend zoning and development regulations to require all new or expanded single-family dwellings that do not otherwise require site plan or subdivision approval to undergo a stormwater review process.
9. To address issues that occurred during the derecho, it is recommended that the tree maintenance ordinance be carefully reviewed. Potential changes would be to require all contractors performing tree trimming and cutting within the city limits maintain minimum liability and workers compensation insurance, provide written estimates to property owners and include provisions for license suspension and revocation provisions.
10. Consideration should be given to requiring an elevation certification prior to issuing a Certificate of Occupancy when a property is sold. This will provide important information to the buyer, insure compliance with local ordinances and assist the City in obtaining a higher flood insurance discount for its property owners through FEMA's Community Rating System.
11. Require digital as-built drawings for all stormwater systems for new development as part of site plan approval so that this information can be incorporated into the City's stormwater mapping system. Also require digital site plan and subdivisions be submitted digitally.

6.3 Parking

1. A comprehensive parking strategy should be developed and implemented. There is a shortage of parking during the summer months

especially in the Bay Avenue Business District. The proposed parking study will determine the extent of the critical need and how best to address this need.

2. The relationship between the City's commercial corridors and residential neighborhoods can be cemented by linking residential neighborhoods to commercial corridors via vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian connections. Shared parking and access in commercial corridors should be investigated as a way to increase the convenience of visiting adjacent properties, reducing traffic on our streets and increasing the total available parking.
3. The parking standards for offices and banks in the HC-1 and GB zones should be reduced from 5 spaces per 1,000 square feet to 4 spaces per 1000 square feet. This is consistent with the current standards used in the industry and will provide for additional open space and a reduction of impervious surfaces.

6.4 Redevelopment

1. As part of the Master Plan process, City Council has designated the entire city an area in need of rehabilitation. It is recommended that City Council consider providing for a short term tax exemption to provide an incentive for new construction and renovations.
2. Additional redevelopment areas should be considered for areas that meet the criteria as a means to encourage ratable expansion.

6.5 Community Design

Design standards should be developed and used to promote attractive neighborhoods and business areas. Compatible building designs in terms of building massing, material and character should be required. Standards that address architecture as well as site design, landscaping, buffering and parking lot design should be incorporated into the City's zoning.

3.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

1. Introduction

Somers Point is in the midst of an economic rebirth that can bring more businesses and residents to the City than ever before. Shore Medical Center's impressive state-of-the-art medical complex is the centerpiece of this development. In addition, the City has experienced other economic growth opportunities from a number of surrounding expansion and reconstruction projects – all of which have led to opportunities. Leading this transformation is the Route 52 Corridor – the gateway to Ocean City from the Garden State Parkway – that runs directly through Somers Point. This gateway has offered a unique opportunity for entrepreneurs and investors to capitalize in business along one of the county's highest trafficked locations. Other construction projects are underway including the new Garden State Parkway Bridge which will link Somers Point to Cape May County with a multi-use path.

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

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

The use of marketing studies to inform economic development decisions is not new to the City. Much the same process was envisioned in 2012 in the Vision Plan. In the interim, Superstorm Sandy interrupted the process. The 2012 Vision Plan provided a clear vision for Somers Point as a vibrant waterfront community with a better-looking and more successful Route 9 commercial corridor, a broader array of recreational opportunities, an attractive and accessible waterfront, a livelier and more walkable and bikeable Bay Avenue, and finally, a homeowner-friendly environment that encourages residents to stay and improve homes rather than relocate. This vision is in keeping with the following long-standing goals of the City's Master Plan.

- Enhance the residential character of the City;
- Expand and improve the maritime heritage of the City;
- Preserve historic structures;
- Conserve and expand open space and natural resources; and
- Solve circulation issues, enhance parking, prevent congestion and provide safe pedestrian movement.

Developing the particular action items needed to complete this vision in a manner that is both resilient and sustainable is the goal of the Strategic Recovery Planning Report.

2. Economic Trends

2.1 Post Superstorm Sandy - General Trends

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

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

As the Figure map below shows, the near-term consequences of these changes are already being absorbed by the housing marketplace. As the inland communities recover from the housing bubble of 2007, the shore communities are seeing a loss of value due to both the cost factors cited above as well as the uncertainty still being priced in the housing market.

Figure 3.1 – Housing Value Changes on Absecon Island and Atlantic County, 2007-2010			
Local Government	2007	2010	Change
Margate	\$592,671	\$486,382	-18 percent
Ventnor	\$468,523	\$362,052	-23 percent
Atlantic County	\$293,064	\$289,638	-1 percent

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

Finally, there are some intra-City shifts that will occur due to Superstorm Sandy. Parts of the City experienced extensive damage as a result of the Superstorm, with 379 insurance claims filed as of September 15, 2013 and \$2,239,287 losses paid, according to the New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance. This compares to the flooding history in the City over the last 36 years, in which only 336 insurance claims were paid between January 1, 1978 and May 31, 2014, totaling \$6,234,001 in

payments. The highest historic loss amount among all the mainland communities in Atlantic County.

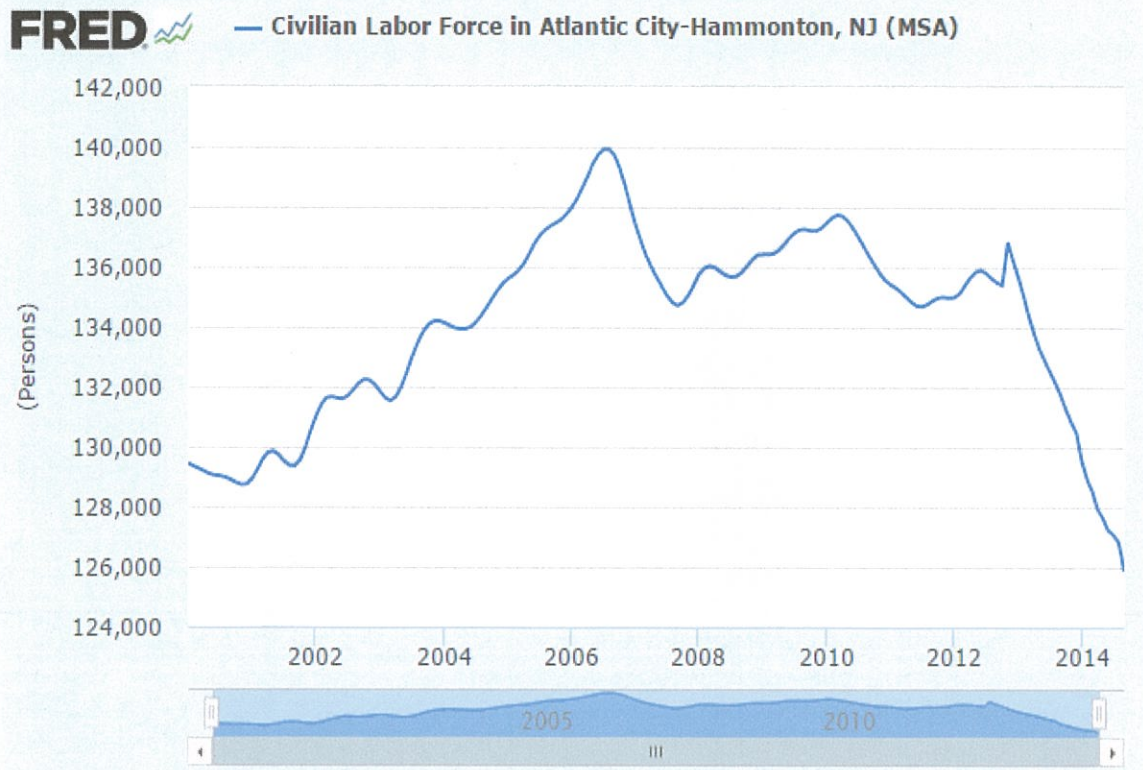
The ratable base of the City was reduced by more than \$1,728,800 as of March 1, 2013. A total of 83 properties incurred some damage, and 44 of these properties are located at the South Pointe at the end of Broadway, where damage included air-conditioning units and bulkheads. A total of seven structures were deemed substantially damaged by the City's Building Official. It is expected that additional properties may be added to this list in the coming months. One bayfront business was totally destroyed by Superstorm Sandy.

As of May 31, 2014, there were 1,069 National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) flood insurance policies in effect in the City of Somers Point, insuring property valued at \$237,958,200. The total cost of premiums in 2014 was \$900,615. One way to reduce the premiums for flood insurance is to participate in FEMA's Community Rating System which will be discussed in more detail in this Master Plan Element.

County wide employment continues to drop and this trend is not expected to end in the next few years. While Somers Point is ideally located to take advantage of regional market that surrounds it, one cannot overlook the County side employment issues and their potential consequences. Figure 2 below provides a snapshot of the growth and shrinkage of the civilian labor force in Atlantic County. From a low of 129,000 jobs in 2001 to a high of 140,000 jobs in 2006, the civilian labor market is not at its lowest level in at least 14 years with 126,000 jobs. A loss of 14,000 jobs in less than eight years.

Atlantic County has among the highest unemployment rate in the nation, above 10 percent. This is a decrease since the post-recession highs of 13 percent, but the gap between the State of New Jersey's unemployment rate and the Atlantic County are has widened significantly since the recession. In September 2014, the State's unemployment rate was 6.5 percent compared to the Atlantic County rate on 10.5 percent.

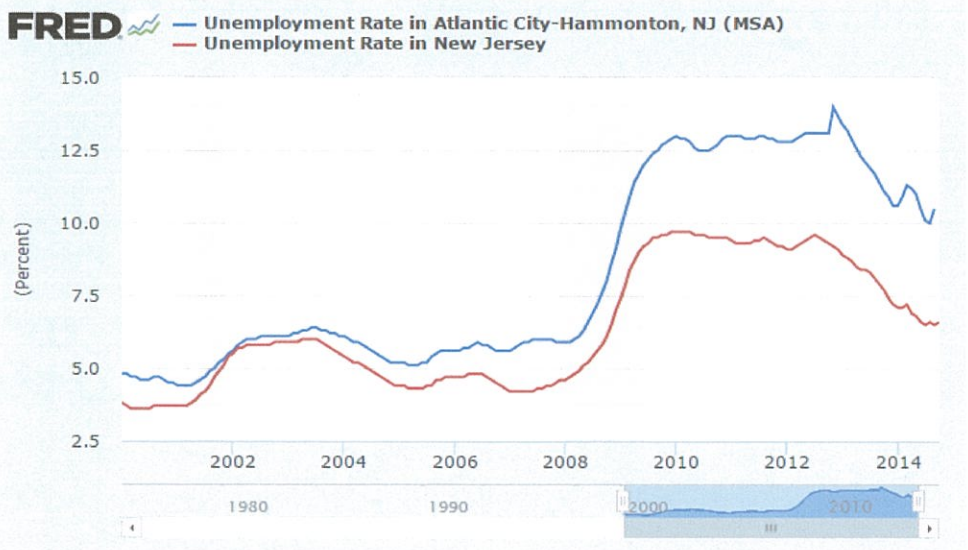
Figure 3.2 – Civilian Labor Force in Atlantic County, 2000 to 2014



Source: US. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Shaded areas indicate US recessions - 2014 research.stlouisfed.org

Figure 3.3 – Unemployment Rate for Atlantic County and New Jersey, 2010 to 2014



Shaded areas indicate US recessions - 2014 research.stlouisfed.org

2.2 Somers Point - A Demographic Snapshot

The relatively recent development of the American Community Survey (ACS) by the U.S. Census Bureau as a means of reporting demographic, social, economic and housing data at the local level in years between the decennial census reports allows a timely snapshot of the City. However, this data alone does not give any information about the relative performance of the City in relationship to the rest of the region. The next section provides much of that context.

However, it is instructive to view some basic information to give the relative data some context. This is done below. As the Figure shows, in the broad context of income and home prices, the City's competitive position compared to the rest of Atlantic County has deteriorated since 2000.

Figure 3.4 - Median Household Income in Somers Point and Atlantic County, 2000 and 2010			
Year	Atlantic County	Somers Point	Percent of County Average
2000			
Median HH Income	\$43,933	\$42,222	96.1 percent
Avg. Home Sale Price	\$128,387	\$129,169	100.6 percent
2010			
Median HH Income	\$54,766	\$47,312	86.4 percent
Avg. Home Sale Price	\$285,003	\$236,301	82.9 percent
Percent Growth			
Median HH Income	24.7 percent	12.1 percent	
Avg. Home Sale Price	122.0 percent	82.9 percent	

Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

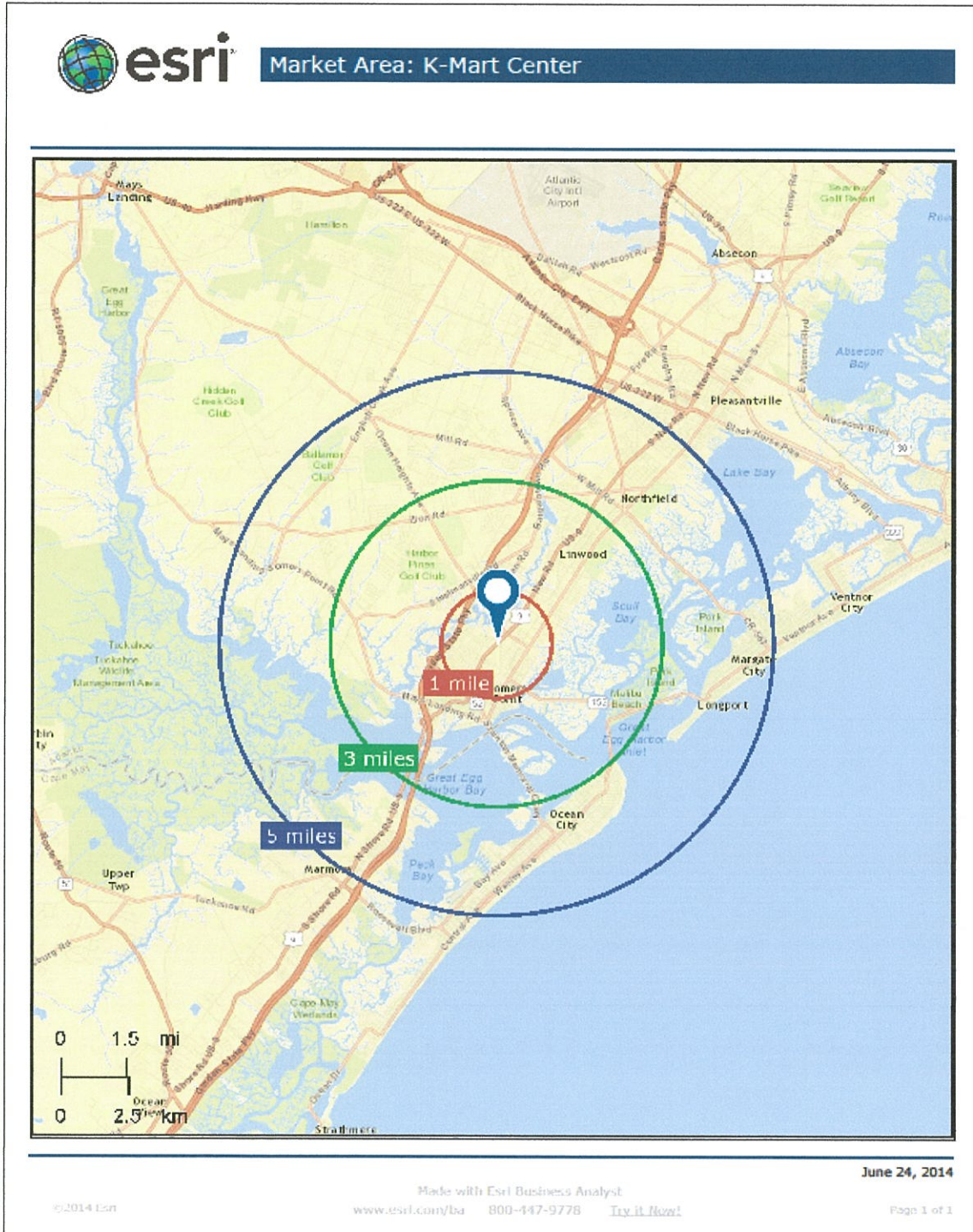
The growth in median household income of 12.1 percent over the decade is less than half of the gain at the county level. While workers will generally commute to other municipalities for job opportunities, the data more reflects the housing options in the City, their price ranges, and the demand for these homes by households with relatively lower incomes. The existence of mass transit routes also provides a low-cost means for residents to live in the City while working outside of it.

According to the 2010 Census, a total of 1,074 firms were located in Somers Point in 2007 with merchant wholesaler sales of \$9,186,000, retail sales of \$310,620,000 and food service sales of \$58,799,000 annually. Retail sales per capita in 2007 was \$27,271 compared to \$16,409 throughout Atlantic County showing the strength of the Somers Point market and the fact that it serves the surrounding region.

One way to better assess both the market potential as well as the relative position of Somers Point versus its neighbors is to delineate the marketplace by distance rather

than political jurisdiction. This can be done by concentric circles of varying distances from a fixed point, illustrated in the map below as being distances of 1, 3 and 5 miles from the Somers Point Plaza Shopping Center.

Figure 3.5 – Somers Point Market Area



As shoppers are not influenced by local property taxes or municipal boundaries to the same extent as homeowners are, this market delineation adds perspective to the actual marketplace faced by commercial establishments.

While the population in the 1-mile radius is estimated to be 9,016, that in the 5-mile radius is substantially greater, at 69,210 on a year-round basis. The regional population increases to more than 200,000 during the summer season. The corresponding median family incomes average \$81,758, a very large difference that can be exploited by businesses in the City.

Figure 3.6 – Somers Point Market Area				
Community	Year Round Population	Seasonal Population	Median Hhld. Income	Median Family Income
Somers Point	10,795	10,795	\$47,312	\$51,489
Linwood	7,092	7,092	\$80,518	\$103,529
Longport	895	5,000	\$70,625	\$107,188
Margate	6,354	25,000	\$77,667	\$90,625
Ocean City	11,701	120,000	\$55,202	\$79,196
Upper Township	12,373	12,373	\$81,250	\$97,372
Southern Egg Harbor Twp.	20,000	20,000	\$69,754	\$78,259
Total/Average	69,210	200,260	\$67,689	\$81,758

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2006-2010 American Community Survey

These 70,000 year-round residents account for nearly \$5.5 billion in income.

The ESRI report also estimates the same demographic and economic indicators for the year 2018. In this case, the population projections indicate a region that is primarily built out in terms of housing and population growth potential. While part of Egg Harbor Township can accommodate new housing units, most of the other municipalities are near capacity, including Upper Township, which is restricted by a lack of sewer and water infrastructure. The 5-mile radius market area is expected to increase in population to 68,251, a gain of only 500 residents.

2.3 Somers Point’s Role in the Regional Economy

To assess the competitive position of Somers Point in the regional marketplace, data illustrating the role of City businesses and residents will be examined. A standard means of viewing strength in employment is shift-share analysis. Given the data available, the Figure below reports the results of this analysis for Somers Point relative to the rest of the county except for Atlantic City, which tends to distort the county totals in a few NAICS (North American Industrial Classification System) categories.

Figure 3.7 – Shift Share Analysis of Somers Point Compared to Atlantic County

MARKETING SOMERS POINT EMPLOYMENT SHARE CRBR, JULY 2014				
INDUSTRY/EMPLOYMENT 2010	SOMERS POINT	COUNTY (MINUS ATL CITY)	SOMERS PT. SHARE	RELATIVE SHARE
TOTAL	6,137	80,781	7.6%	
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	0	1,629		
Utilities	0	491	0.0%	-7.6%
Construction	117	5,734	2.0%	-5.6%
Manufacturing	41	3,479	1.2%	-6.4%
Wholesale trade	36	2,869	1.3%	-6.3%
Retail trade	1,394	18,086	7.7%	0.1%
Transportation and warehousing	0	2,343	0.0%	-7.6%
Information	8	686	1.2%	-6.4%
Finance and insurance	320	2,750	11.7%	4.1%
Real estate and rental and leasing	236	3,970	5.9%	-1.7%
Professional and technical services	136	4,032	3.4%	-4.2%
Administrative and waste services	118	3,042	3.9%	-3.7%
Educational services	0	1,410	0.0%	-7.6%
Health care and social assistance	2,172	10,532	20.6%	13.0%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	379	2,030	18.7%	11.1%
Accommodation and food services	661	4,515	14.6%	7.1%
Other services, except public administration	225	3,027	7.4%	-0.2%
GOVT.	292	10,156	2.9%	-4.7%

Source: Atlantic Cape Community College

The results are as expected in the NAICS areas of healthcare, recreation and food places where Somers Point exceeds its average employment concentration of 7.6 percent for all jobs by 13 percent, 11 percent and 7 percent respectively. This shows that as a regional business center, the City has a comparative advantage in these industries. Also of note is the favorable competitive position of finance and insurance and the neutral position of retail trade. The latter tends to be concentrated in the county in townships with major transportation routes that allow for a fairly large regional marketplace.

Somers Point competes well in the growing retail market. The retail market continues to grow in Atlantic County despite high unemployment since this market segment is strongly supported by visitors and the regional market. Somers Point is attractive to national retail chains that are usually found in strong regional center such as Pet Smart and Pier One. There is adequate market strength to attract additional national chairs to Somers Point.

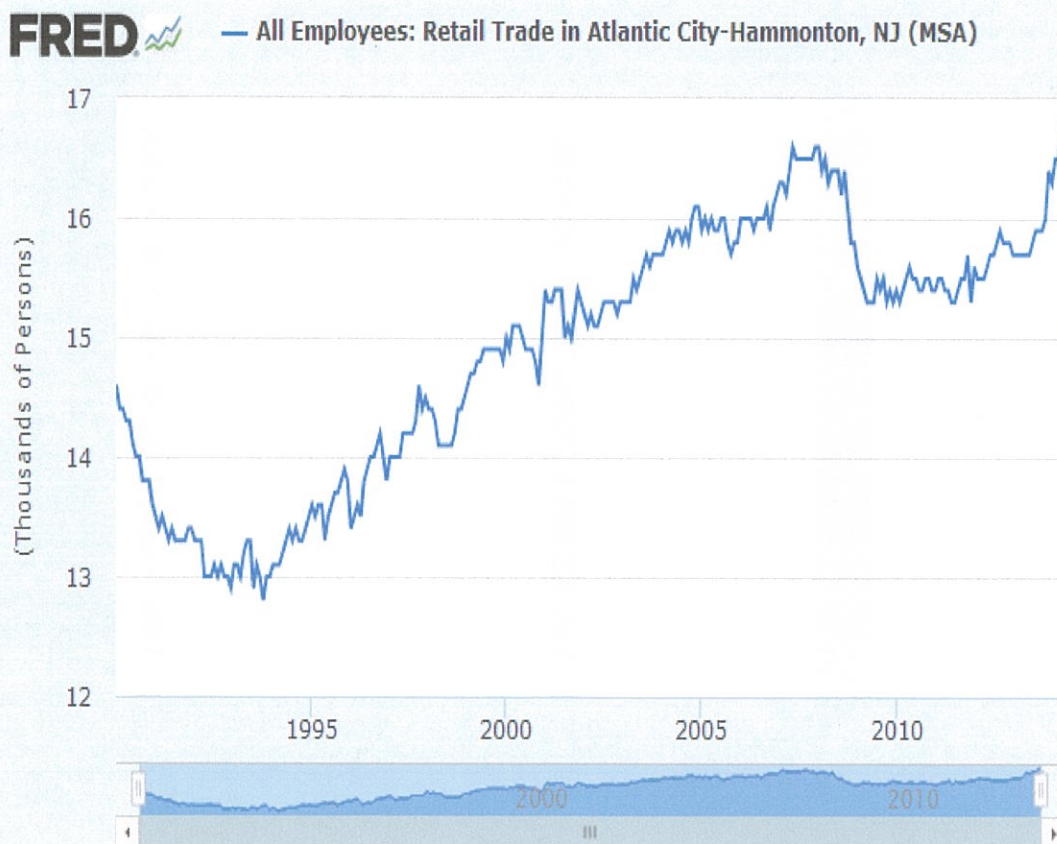
Figure 3.8 - All Employees in Retail Trade in Atlantic County, 1999 to 2014

☆ **All Employees: Retail Trade in Atlantic City-Hammonton, NJ (MSA)**

2014-05: **16.5** Thousands of Persons (+ see more)

Monthly, Seasonally Adjusted, SMU34121004200000001SA, Updated: 2014-07-09 11:29 AM CDT

Click and drag in the plot area or select dates: 1yr | 5yr | 10yr | Max 1990-01-01 to 2014-05-01

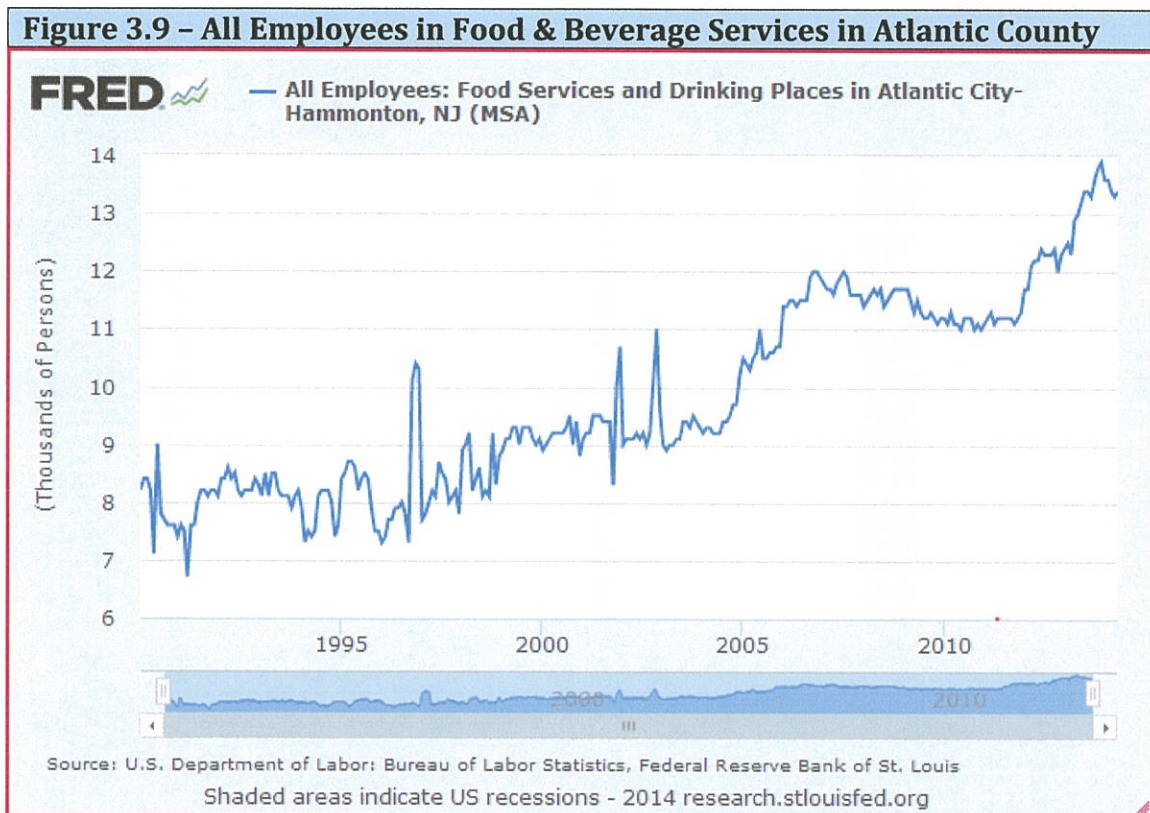


Source: U.S. Department of Labor: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis

Shaded areas indicate US recessions - 2014 research.stlouisfed.org

One area of opportunity for the City is professional and technical services employment, which has a fairly large base in the county at 4,032 employees. In addition, the presence of a large health-care sector indicates that many higher paid employees working in the City may not live here. This in itself creates another opportunity.

Another business sector that is seeing significant growth in Atlantic County is the food and beverage sector. Growth in this sector is depicted in the graphic below.



The summary of American Community Survey data presented below includes comparisons with all of the municipalities in the 5-mile market area.

It presents a very consistent picture of the competitive position of Somers Point in the regional marketplace. While the overall picture presented is one of lower-income residents in housing units of lower value than most of the region, the employment data suggests that dollars are imported by health care, recreation and restaurant services.

The highlighted data elements show that the following areas could be improved to increase the competitive position of the City and its businesses:

- **Educational attainment:** A key indicator of income and disposable income, the 23 percent of residents with a bachelor's degree or higher is among the lowest in the marketplace.

- Median household income: The median household income of \$62,744 is substantially lower than many of the surrounding towns. This is very important as it impacts the choice and success of goods and services sold to local residents. While all residents cannot have high incomes, the diversity and value-added of local businesses depends on local residents, as well as out-of-towners who will be attracted by the services offered.
- Poverty Level: The poverty level is very high at more than 14 percent. This indicates that many residents are attracted to Somers Point by the availability of low-cost housing. This also is reflected in the regional perception of the school district, a key determinant of home values.

This same data shows that there is a significant growing market in the wealthier communities that surround Somers Point. All of the communities within a 5 mile market area have higher household incomes and a lower poverty level than the county average. Also, all of the surrounding communities have more owner occupied homes than the Atlantic County average except for Ocean City, which is primarily a seasonal resort. These indicators of wealth bode well for the strength of the Somers Point market area.

MARKETING SOMERS POINT
2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
CRBR, JULY 2014

Subject	County	EHI	Linwood	Longport	Margate	Northfield	SomersPt	Ocean City	Upper
HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE									
Total households	101,018	14,903	2,597	522	3,094	3,250	4,620	5,809	5,013
Households with one or more people under 18 years	33.7%	40.8%	33.2%	7.3%	15.4%	36.8%	30.7%	19.9%	33.1%
Households with one or more people 65 years and over	28.3%	22.7%	32.1%	57.9%	52.5%	31.1%	26.9%	42.3%	29.0%
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT									
Percent high school graduate or higher	83.7%	89.2%	94.0%	92.0%	95.1%	93.3%	88.7%	95.4%	93.8%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	24.1%	28.5%	48.0%	47.0%	44.8%	32.3%	22.9%	46.6%	34.2%
EMPLOYMENT STATUS									
Percent Unemployed	11.9%	12.1%	7.1%	3.8%	9.8%	9.8%	9.3%	9.2%	7.8%
COMMUTING TO WORK									
Worked at home	2.4%	2.2%	4.3%	3.9%	5.2%	1.7%	3.6%	5.0%	2.2%
OCCUPATION									
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	129,418	21,031	3,444	410	2,848	4,261	5,151	5,145	6,252
Management, business, science, and arts	28.4%	32.0%	50.3%	50.5%	42.6%	35.9%	31.9%	42.7%	39.2%
Service	31.5%	28.8%	17.4%	13.7%	19.2%	25.8%	32.4%	19.8%	18.5%
Sales and office occupations	23.4%	24.4%	19.9%	24.1%	28.0%	22.7%	21.7%	25.8%	23.0%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance	8.1%	7.3%	7.8%	10.2%	6.6%	8.7%	7.6%	7.7%	12.7%
Production, transportation, and material moving	8.3%	7.5%	4.6%	1.5%	3.6%	6.9%	6.3%	4.0%	6.6%

	County	EHT	Linwood	Longport	Margate	Northfield	SomersPt	Ocean City	Upper
INCOME									
Median household income (dollars)	54,559	69,432	86,492	71,136	66,444	64,167	49,607	56,463	76,633
Mean household income (dollars)	71,262	80,884	121,544	128,462	103,561	80,837	62,744	83,257	94,076
Per capita income (dollars)	27,227	28,618	45,646	69,608	50,850	31,192	27,220	40,520	37,802
PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE BELOW POVERTY									
All people	12.8%	6.5%	3.2%	4.3%	9.8%	6.8%	14.1%	6.9%	4.6%
HOUSING OCCUPANCY									
Total housing units	126,824	16,177	2,793	1,646	7,138	3,417	5,616	20,056	6,539
Occupied housing units	79.7%	92.1%	93.0%	31.7%	43.3%	95.1%	82.3%	29.0%	76.7%
Vacant housing units	20.3%	7.9%	7.0%	68.3%	56.7%	4.9%	17.7%	71.0%	23.3%
HOUSING TENURE									
Occupied housing units	101,018	14,903	2,597	522	3,094	3,250	4,620	5,809	5,013
Owner-occupied	69.6%	88.3%	88.6%	90.0%	79.0%	91.6%	58.4%	63.6%	92.2%
Renter-occupied	30.4%	11.5%	11.4%	10.0%	21.0%	8.4%	41.6%	36.4%	7.8%
SEX AND AGE									
Total population	274,402	42,890	7,109	979	6,459	8,626	10,853	11,790	12,283
Median age (years)	40.1	39.2	45.5	62.5	57.3	43.2	40.0	52.5	46.1
18 years and over	76.8%	72.3%	75.9%	92.6%	86.9%	76.4%	74.9%	85.4%	77.7%
65 years and over	14.3%	10.2%	16.7%	43.6%	33.5%	16.8%	15.2%	29.8%	15.0%

3. Business Districts in Somers Point

3.1 Route 9 Business District

The Route 9 Business District can be described as two distinct but intertwined commercial centers. North of Groveland Avenue, Route 9 is the home of many large contemporary retail centers including Ocean Heights Center and Somers Point Plaza. These centers have continued to thrive despite the economic downturn in the region. These properties are maintained and marketed by management companies that attend to the overall appearance and recruit a complementary mix of retailers that benefit from shared parking and proximity to a “park and shop” environment. Given the success of this significant retail cluster, the potential for added density exists, especially at the Somers Point Plaza. Additional shops designed to encourage additional safe pedestrian activity may further strengthen these centers and provide for a more complete shopping experience.

Given the high income demographics of the region that will be discussed later in this report, higher-end shopping options may be considered in this area, which will provide for higher net revenues which will expand the tax revenues from these sites.

South of Groveland Avenue, Route 9 is the primarily strip centers. In this area, the parcel depth makes it difficult to redevelop with many of the new users that are in the marketplace. This area is not pedestrian friendly and a need exists for crosswalks, pedestrian signals, sidewalks, lighting and landscaping.

Given the parcel depth along this section of Route 9, small-scale non-retail uses such as offices should be considered in this area.

3.2 Bay Avenue Business District

The Bay Avenue Business District has a rich history as a music, dining and nightlife attraction. Various restaurants, taverns, marinas, galleries and shoppes line Bay Avenue offering something for everyone. The Gateway Theater is under renovation and a new pier and transient marina is planned for Higbee Avenue.

3.3 Shore Medical Center Business District

Shore Medical Center’s impressive state-of-the-art medical complex project is the centerpiece of development in Somers Point. The Surgical Pavilion at Shore Medical Center (formally known as Shore Memorial Hospital) has attracted physicians and medical staff and allowed Somers Point to offer more opportunities to the business community, along with additional job opportunities for local residents and those looking to make Somers Point their home.

Shore Medical Center’s Surgical Pavilion maximize energy efficiencies, using modern green building materials. This Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified building has achieved high performance in key areas including: sustainable site design, water savings, energy efficiency, material selection and indoor environmental quality.

The Shore Medical Center employees 1,500 and has been recognized as the only hospital in New Jersey to be a “Planetree Designated Patient-Centered Hospital.” This designation acknowledges Shore’s achievement and innovation in delivery of patient centered care.

The Medical Center has influenced the entire community by attracting medical offices primarily on Shore Road and the local streets surrounding the facility. The Center also owns a significant amount of vacant property, primarily on Bay Avenue that is available for future development. As part of the recent expansion of the Medical Center a 640 space parking deck was constructed, which has ample space for the Medical Center as well as the general public. The spaces are offered at a flat fee for 24 hours.

3.4 MacArthur Boulevard Business District

As a result of the Route 52 Corridor improvements the MacArthur Boulevard Business District has gone through a renaissance. Existing businesses have upgraded this structures and sites and new businesses including Shore Orthopedic University Associates, Wawa and a new restaurant has located in the area.

4. Special Events

Annual events like Restaurant Week draw large crowds to Somers Point, often transforming it into a family block party atmosphere. One of the most successful and longest running events is the Somers Point Bayfest – a 14 block open air event along Bay Avenue packed with vendors, crafters, games and give-a-ways. Other annual events include the Good Old Days Festival, held annually for over 30 years at Kennedy Park; the Somers Point Concert Series featuring a weekly free concert at William Morrow Beach on Bay Avenue; the Trail of Two Cities Walk and Run; and Somers Point Restaurant Week. All of these events are designed to bring commerce to the City both in the summer and during the shoulder seasons.

5. History and Culture

Somers Point is the oldest settlement in Atlantic County dating back to 1693. Formerly known as Somerset Plantation, the town’s name comes from the Somers family, who were among the first settlers in the area. Historical landmarks commemorating the Somers family can be found throughout the City including Somers Mansion, located at 1000 Shore Road. Built between 1720 and 1726 by Richard Somers, some of John Somers – the first area settler, Somers Mansion is Atlantic County’s oldest standing house and is now listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, as well as being listed on the Historic American Buildings Survey.

6. Opportunities for the City of Somers Point

The process of creating economic development that is resilient and sustainable in a small city that is integrated with a larger region economically can be contentious as well as competitive with neighbors. This is especially true in a region that – at least in the short-term – promises to be not so competitive in the larger Mid-Atlantic/Delaware Valley. However, as the 2012 Vision Plan makes clear, the success of Somers Point depends on the continued success of the region as a hospitality and recreation center. Taking advantage of

the City's central location and natural assets can be a regional success as well as add to the diversity of attractions of the mid-Shore area.

Opportunities for economic growth can be explored through two strategies, which are not independent of each other. Starting from the proposition that local economic development is created by first finding ways to import other people's dollars, these strategies can be summarized as follows:

Strategy 1 – Make Somers Point a Regional Attraction. Increase the reasons for non-residents to patronize local businesses or for residents to shop more locally instead of spending disposable dollars in other municipalities. Since the larger region has very few industries that export goods or services outside of the region, for our purposes this implies attracting more people to shop, recreate, dine and seek health-care services in Somers Point. These activities will in turn invigorate secondary services such as real estate, finance, legal and other ancillary services.

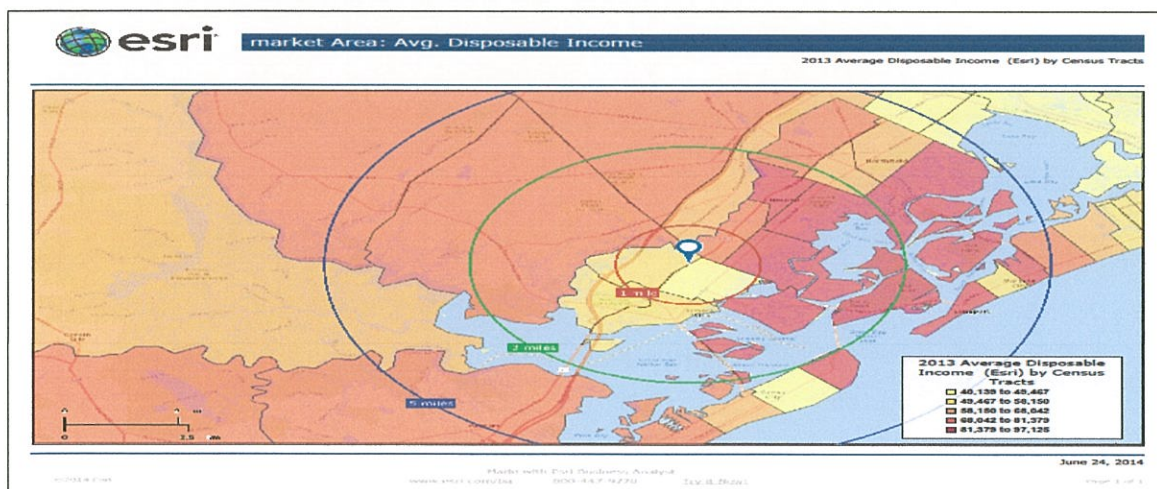
Strategy 2 – Encourage Additional Housing Options. Entice more people with more disposable dollars to live in the City. This implies offering living options that appeal to these potential residents.

A word of caution is due given the intent of these strategies. In a town with little vacant land for development, change will often threaten existing businesses and housing developments. Also, any upgrading to encourage more value-added activities can and will harm local residents who count on local services for their routine, everyday expenditures. In both instances, growth that is sustainable will offer more and better employment opportunities to local residents. For those who cannot take advantage of these opportunities, growth needs to be balanced taking their needs into account.

6.1 Strategy 1 – Make Somers Point a Regional Attraction

The map below as well as the ACS data previously presented shows how the regional market is conducive to this strategy.

Figure 3.11 – Somers Point Market Area



Using the unique assets of the City – waterfront commercial property, central location, ease of access via transportation routes, established retail and dining districts – this presents a situation to be exploited by presenting more spending options for our neighbors and more activities to attract customers away from more local options. These could include:

- More recreational opportunities – by dredging the Bay Avenue waterfront and providing water taxi service and transient boat docking areas the City can be more attractive to visitors. Large boats that traverse the coast do not have a convenient place to dock between Cape May City and Atlantic City. Somers Point can become this port with restaurants, historic sites and shopping to serve the transient visitor. A water taxi from to Ocean City, Longport, Upper Township and Atlantic City can provide easy access for locals and visitors who want to visit Somers Point for the day or evening.
- Additional parking and transit options – The City owns and operates four conveniently located parking lots on Bay Avenue. If the opportunity presents itself for the City is acquire additional well located parking lots, the City should consider expanding its holdings in the Bay Avenue and Shore Road areas
- Provide value value-added options at existing properties – By permitting sidewalk dining, BYOB and display-and-sell winery outlets the City can enhance its reputation as epicurean destination.
- Enhanced pedestrian and bicycle access in and around the commercial districts on Bay Avenue and Route 9 – As noted in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Element of the Master Plan, Somers Point is the hub of bicycle activity in South Jersey. This experience can be enhanced by creating a bike loop on Bay Avenue, lower the speed on Bay Avenue and signing it as a Bike Boulevard. This action would make Bay Avenue friendlier to both pedestrian and bicyclist. Likewise by providing more highly visible crossways and continuous sidewalks on Route 9, pedestrian and bicycle activity will be encouraged.
- Improved retail locations – especially on Route 9 – as well as more upscale options. This could also entail upgrades to current shopping areas.
- Better signage to attract the many tourists who pass through the City - In short, Somers Point needs to make visiting easy and enjoyable. As noted in the Vision Plan, Wayfinding Signage should be installed throughout the City.
- Additional events - The City has produced extremely successful events such as the Bayfest, Beach Concert Series and Good Old Days, and it should build on this success.

6.2 Strategy 2 – Encourage Additional Living Options

Enhancing or changing the housing mix is not easily done. Private investors need to understand that their investment will seed other changes that will help them in the future as well as create opportunities for others. Once again, in a City that is constrained by a lack of open, developable land, this strategy means using any available space that does exist, upgrading current housing, and/or allowing higher densities in some zones. However, the only way to encourage current owners to invest and scale-up their existing properties is to show that a market exists by having new development act as an example.

The first obstacle to increasing housing options is normally overcoming the perception that any residential development will increase school enrollments and taxes. The chart below shows the enrollment history and projected enrollments for the school district. While these would need to be tested by the district in order to be verified, given current trends there appears that some capacity remains in the system.

Year	Enrollment
2004	1,165
2009	1,005
2010	972
2011	1006
2012	1049
2013	1039
2014	1047

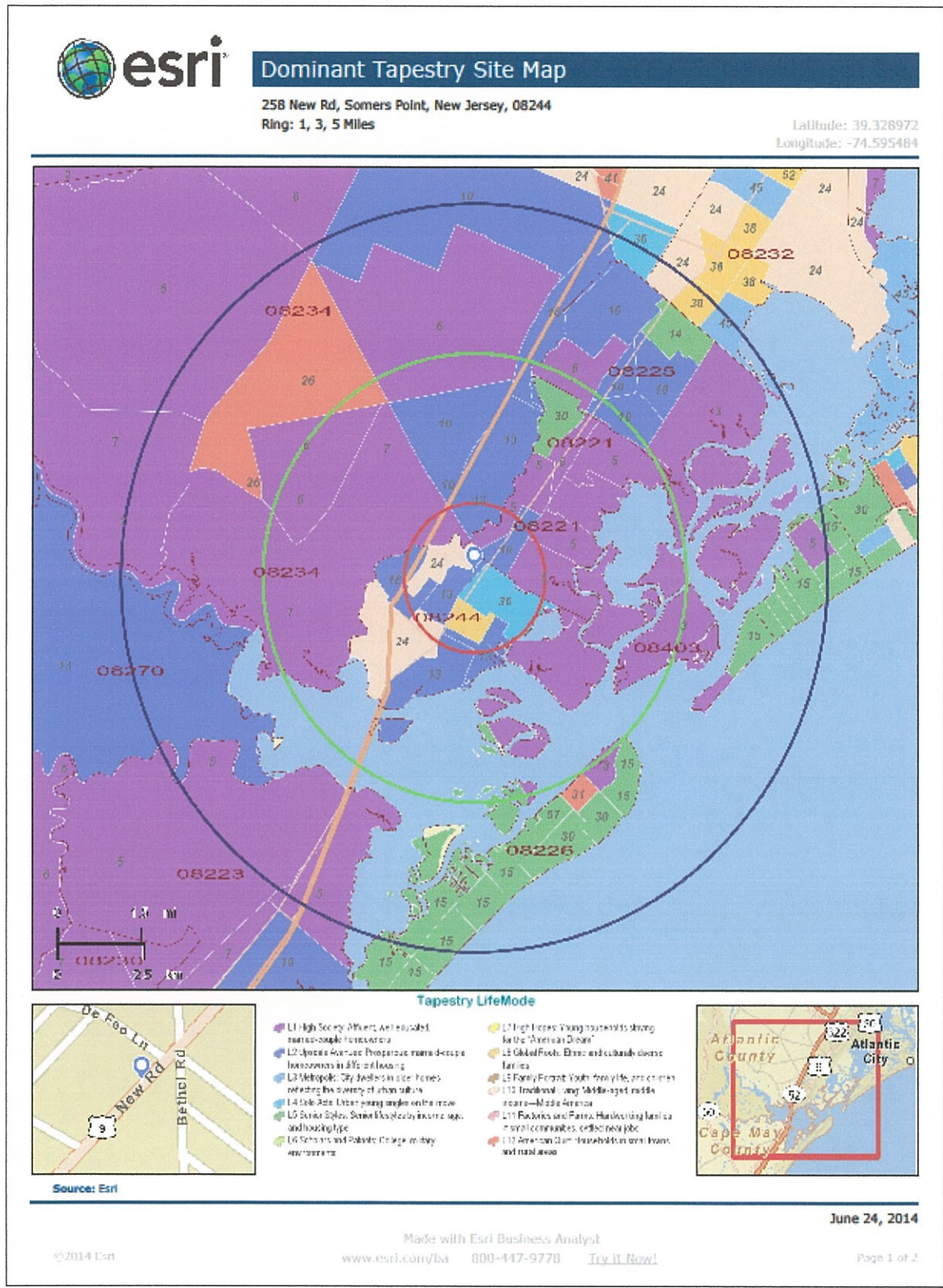
In reality, most upscale housing developments in our region tend to attract a high percentage of second-home and retiree purchasers, neither of which adds to school enrollments. One way of visualizing the demand for more upscale housing in our region is to analyze the neighboring communities and the lifestyles that their residents tend to live. This would form the basis for the type, price range and location that could be in demand if available in Somers Point.

To examine this further, the map below developed by ESRI uses the spending patterns, housing types, educations/professions, and age cohorts of homeowners to develop the Lifestyle Tapestry map shown below. The segment that each number on the map refers to is listed in Appendix 2 with further description available at:

<http://www.esri.com/library/whitepapers/pdfs/community-tapestry.pdf>

While the Silver and Gold (#15, green) dominates the wealthier barrier islands, the Wealthy Seaboard Suburbs (#5, purple) also can be a target group for Somers Point. In short, the region is attractive to those with disposable incomes and with a need or desire to live in the area. Providing more choices and a desirable location will attract these homeowners.

Figure 3.13 - Somers Point Market Area: Lifestyle Tapestry Map



Much has been written about the wealth and housing demands of the Baby Boomer generation. This group has specific demands that would be well-suited for a golf course or walking district.

Boomers are poised to reinvigorate the housing market for two important reasons. Since most homeowners of middle age and older have lived in their homes for several years, they have a far larger home equity cushion to fall back on -- a luxury that many first-time buyers who purchased during the housing boom lack. Unlike many younger home buyers, boomers can also tap into their home equity to take out a reverse mortgage in a pinch.

Second, and most important for the ailing home building industry, the generation that put a man on the moon has some very specific tastes. Boomers are looking for something different, they want to change their lifestyles. In recent years boomers have made their way to the Jersey Shore but higher property values and increasing flood insurance may force them to look at mainland communities that have the seashore feel without the costs like Wall Township in Monmouth County and Somers Point.

Across the board, ease of living drives many of the boomers' biggest housing asks. In a recent survey on boomer buying habits from the Met Life Mature Market Institute and National Association of Home Builders, 61 percent of boomers who moved into "age-qualified" homes (where the community's minimum age requirement is 55 or older) said that they chose their new home based on the layout of the rooms.

The same was true for those living in non-age-restricted communities -- the vast majority of boomers -- with nearly two-thirds of respondents (62 percent) saying that room layout was their biggest reason for buying. In practice, many boomers are looking for single-story homes, where the master bedroom is on the first floor. A dominate home design in Somers Point.

Couple these findings with the fact that households in the over-55 demographic account for almost a quarter of all new custom-home purchases, and you find a large market of buyers.

There are 39.5 million 55-plus households in America -- more than a third of the total households in the nation. Moreover, households in that age group account for about 12 percent of the households that change addresses in a given year, according to the Mature Market Institute report.

6.2.1 Housing for Empty Nesters

Empty nesters want marble floors, granite countertops, commercial-grade appliances, vegetable sinks, bidets, bathroom refrigerators, built-in vacuums, separate showers, steam rooms and Jacuzzis, eyebrow windows, French doors, interior gardens and water features, renewable flooring surfaces, media rooms with built-in screens and projection systems, dual master suites with walk-in closets—all rendered on a smaller scale in a 2,000-square-foot floor plan.

At the Boomer thinking firm Age Lessons, they refer to this phenomenon as “jewel box” housing, full amenity homes built on a smaller scale and confined to a single story. In the Boomer world, downsizing is proving to be a decidedly upscale activity, a matter of designing the best of everything into a smaller footprint.

These homes are often built in small clusters of no more than two dozen units and sold on a fee-simple basis with a homeowners association responsible for common elements like a guard house and gardens as well as exterior maintenance. The creation of this type of housing in Somers Point will strengthen the Route 9 market as well as the entire regional marketplace.

6.2.2 Mid-Term Living Options

A second means of carrying out Strategy 2 is to provide mid-term living arrangements such as hotels/motels, timeshares, marinas and transient docks for those wishing to stay in town for a few days to a few weeks. These opportunities could include:

- Small boutique hotels near the waterfront.
- Upgraded and expanded marinas for both larger boats as well as transient slips.
- Investment for a facility comparable to the Residence Inn within walking distance of Bay Avenue.

7.0 Organizational Structure for the Business Community

The Somers Point Economic Development Advisory Commission (EDAC) consists of nine regular members. It was formed to advise City Council of future and current conditions of economic development in the City of Somers Point. The primary purpose of the Commission is to market the economic strength of the City in order to provide stability with our existing businesses while encouraging future development within City limits. The EDAC has an annual budget that is derived from the three percent hotel/motel tax.

In addition to be a key role that the EDAC plays in promoting tourism and commerce in the City, the EDAC can play a powerful role in expanding the events offered in the City. Somers Point has learned from experience that events are a wonderful means of attracting new and long term visitors to the City, while providing enjoyable occasions for the City’s residents. The creation of additional events such as a Wine Festival or Oktoberfest will add additional reasons to attract residents from throughout the region and visitors to Somers Point.

8.0 Marketing Opportunities

Millions of tourists pass by the Route 9 area each year on their way to Margate, Longport, Ocean City and points south. The City’s goal is to provide for a wayfinding system



that will promote the Route 9 business district and all the sites in Somers Point and direct visitors to these points of interest. All of this signage will be branded with the new City logo to provide a visible and consistent message (Figure 3.14).

Figure 3.14 – Illustration of Wayfinding Signage



Source: Parsons Brinckerhoff

9. Streetscape Design

It is recommended that streetscape design guidelines be established for the major business districts of Somers Point – particularly Bay Avenue and Route 9.

The City has put in place the basic street design on Bay Avenue. Pedestrian level decorative lighting, street trees and crosswalks already exist and are in good condition. These improvements should be augmented with additional crosswalks at key intersections, traffic calming features including bump outs and decorative crosswalks, bike racks, trash and recycling containers and other amenities.

Likewise, MacArthur Boulevard has a good foundation with the recently completed Route 52 Causeway improvements. New walkways and decorative lighting creates a sense of place and are well designed and complimented by natural landscaping. Additions suggested are bike racks, trash containers and trash and recycling containers. An important feature that should be included in the MacArthur Boulevard Streetscape is wayfinding signage. Since this connector conveys traffic from the Parkway to Ocean City it is imperative that this opportunity is taken to explain to visitors all that Somers Point has to offer. The wayfinding signage should make travelers aware of the Route 9 Business District, Somers Mansion and other historic features, and the Bay Avenue experience.

Route 9 presents the biggest challenge. This State Highway was originally designed to convey traffic along the coast from Cape May to New York. With the construction of the Garden State Parkway, the function of this roadway changed forever but many of the old design features remain. Turning radius at intersection of MacArthur Boulevard and Route 9 is a good reflection of the past and should be reduced to calm traffic. Sidewalks should be separated from the curb by a grass strip to enhance the pedestrian experience and provide a safer walkway. The entire length of Route 9 should have sidewalks on both sides. Crosswalks are needed to access the school near Connecticut Avenue and to promote safe crossing. Crosswalk, pedestrian signage and push pads must be included at all signalized intersections. Bike racks and trash and recycling containers should be added. Site design should encourage landscaped frontage and parking in the rear of the property to promote a more attractive streetscape.

10.0 Garden State Parkway Improvements

As part of the master planning process, Somers Point Officials met with the New Jersey Turnpike Authority (NJTA) on June 27, 2014. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the future of the Garden State Parkway and the impacts that it may have on Somers Point.

NJTA officials indicated that the Authority has funding to expand the Parkway to three lanes in each direction to mile marker 35, just south of Tilton Road in Egg Harbor Township. While funding is not available at this time to expand the Parkway to three lanes south of Somers Point, the NJTA is preparing for this expansion by widening the bridges at Patcong Creek and over the Great Egg Harbor River.

The City has identified truck traffic on Laurel Drive as a major issue due to public safety and noise impacts. To address this issue, one option is to build a new southbound exit at Interchange 29. This would place truck traffic on a Route 9, a State Highway, instead of a local street (Laurel Drive). NJTA has commissioned Stantec Engineers to study this interchange and a concept plan is provided below (Figure 3.19).

Figure 3.19 – Concept Plan for Improvements to Interchange 29



The NJTA will not consider any changes to the Parkway that effect local communities unless the changes are strongly supported and advocated by local officials.

The NJTA noted that if a new southbound exit was built at Interchange 29, they would favor closing the southbound exit at Interchange 30; thereby, avoiding the cost to widen the two bridges over the Parkway to access Interchange 30 and eliminating the toll plaza on Laurel Drive.

While there is no guarantee that the NJTA will make any changes in the Somers Point area, it is clear that they will not consider changes unless they are strongly advocated by the City. The City's options include:

1. Do nothing.
2. Advocate for a new southbound exit at Interchange 29 and the closing of the southbound exit at Interchange 30.

3. Advocate for a new southbound exit at Interchange 29 and keep the southbound exit open at Interchange 30.

11.0 General Recommendations

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

- 11.1 It is recommended that a Creative Placemaking Plan be developed for the City of Somers Point. A Creative Placemaking Plan is a method to bring together the various aspects of sustainability; specifically focusing on artists, historical societies, cultural groups, musicians, theater, and more. The Creative Placemaking Plan document strategically integrates the creative community into the community as a whole, developed with public input. The plan starts with developing a Creative Assets Inventory — a culmination of all individual artists, arts groups, galleries, the Theater Collaborative of South Jersey, the Atlantic County Historical Society, the Somers Point Historical Society, Economic Development Advisory Board, the Somers Point Business Association, the Somers Point Arts Commission, the Recreation Commission, the Historic Preservation Commission, the Green Team, and more. Integrating these individuals and separate groups into a single Plan for the future sets the common goal of improving the quality of life in Somers Point.
- 11.2 Provide value value-added options at restaurant properties by promoting sidewalk dining and permitting wine sales rooms. These uses can enhance the city's reputation as an epicurean destination.
- 11.3 Enhanced pedestrian and bicycle access in and around the commercial districts on Bay Avenue and Route 9 – As noted in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Element of the Master Plan, Somers Point is the hub of bicycle activity in South Jersey. This experience can be enhanced by creating a bike loop on Bay Avenue, lower the speed on Bay Avenue and signing it as a Bike Boulevard. This action would make Bay Avenue friendlier to both pedestrian and bicyclist. Likewise by providing more highly visible crossways and continuous sidewalks on Route 9, pedestrian and bicycle activity will be encouraged.

- 11.4 Encourage current regional shopping centers to undertake improvements that will enhance pedestrian safety.
- 11.5 Provide better signage to attract the many tourists who pass through the City. As noted in the Vision Plan, Wayfinding Signage should be installed throughout the City. Wayfinding signage should be incorporated into the improvements along MacArthur Boulevard. The wayfinding signage should make travelers aware of the Route 9 Business District, Somers Mansion and other historic features, and the Bay Avenue experience.
- 11.6 Encourage a common management and operation plan for the State-owned Somers Mansion and the Atlantic County Historical Society Museum run by a single entity to maximize the benefits of these facilities.
- 11.7 Build on the success of existing special events such as the Bayfest, Beach Concert Series and Good Old Days by developing additional events throughout the year. City Council has adopted an Ordinance to change the Economic Development Advisory (EDAC) Commission's mission statement and encourage city event organizers to participate in city-wide branding efforts. It is recommended that the Economic Development Advisory Commission serve as a clearing house for any event planned in the City. All proposals should be submitted to the EDAC for review and approval. The EDAC should insure that events are properly planned and that the City brand is promoted and included on all advertisements. The EDAC should evaluate each event after it occurs to consider what can be done to improve the experience. An expanded monthly event schedule should be implemented. Below is an example of what the annual events calendar could include:
- April – Bayfest
 - May – Boat & Car Show
 - June – Crab Feast
 - July – Kick-off of Summer Beach Concert Series
 - August – Wine Fest
 - September – Good Old Day's Festival
 - October – Oktoberfest/Rocktoberfest
 - November - HarborFest
 - December – Holiday Parades
- 11.8 Encourage additional living options for seniors and other empty nesters. The baby boomer generation continues to retire and this can provide a significant market for Somers Point given the services and attractions provided.

11.9 Provide mid-term living arrangements such as hotels/motels, timeshares, marinas and transient docks for those wishing to stay in town for a few days to a few weeks. These opportunities could include:

- Small boutique hotels near the waterfront;
- Upgraded and expanded marinas for both larger boats as well as transient slips; and
- Investment for long term facilities comparable to the Residence Inn within walking distance of Bay Avenue.

11.10 Streetscape design guidelines should be established for the major business districts of Somers Point particularly along Bay Avenue, MacArthur Boulevard and Route 9.

The City has put in place the basic street design on Bay Avenue. Pedestrian level decorative lighting, street trees and crosswalks already exist and are in good condition. These improvements should be augmented with additional crosswalks at key intersections, traffic calming features including bump outs, bike racks, trash and recycling containers and other amenities.

Likewise, MacArthur Boulevard has a good foundation with the recently completed Route 52 Causeway improvements. New walkways and decorative lighting creates a sense of place and are well designed and complimented by natural landscaping. Additions suggested are bike racks, trash containers and trash and recycling containers. An important feature that should be included in the MacArthur Boulevard Streetscape is wayfinding signage. Since this connector conveys traffic from the Parkway to Ocean City it is imperative that this opportunity is taken to explain to visitors all that Somers Point has to offer. The wayfinding signage should make travelers aware of the Route 9 Business District, Somers Mansion and other historic features, and the Bay Avenue experience.

Route 9 presents the biggest challenge. This State Highway was originally designed to convey traffic along the coast from Cape May to New York. With the construction of the Garden State Parkway, the function of this roadway changed forever but many of the old design features remain. Turning radius at intersection of MacArthur Boulevard and Route 9 is a good reflection of the past and should be reduced to calm traffic. Sidewalks should be separated from the curb by a grass strip to enhance the pedestrian experience and provide a safer walkway. The entire length of Route 9 should have sidewalks on both sides. Crosswalks are needed to access the school near Connecticut Avenue and to promote safe crossing. Crosswalk, pedestrian signage and

push pads must be included at all signalized intersections. Bike racks and trash and recycling containers should be added. Site design should encourage landscaped frontage and parking in the rear of the property to promote a more attractive streetscape.

11.11 Continue to aggressively pursue outside funding for economic development projects that are in compliance with the City's Master Plan. Such funding sources including:

- New Jersey Economic Development Authority Incentives;
- Short Term Tax Abatement for New Construction and Renovations Only
- Transportation Enhancements;
- Zoning Code Revisions;
- Shop at Home Incentives;
- Infrastructure Enhancements;
- Expanded Events Schedule; and
- Value Added Restaurant Options.

11.12 The City should continue to aggressively seek grants and other funding sources to fund public improvements. Some of the funding sources include:

- Post Sandy Planning Grants
- New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust for Utility Construction
- NJDOT Safe Routes to School Grants
- NJDOT Safe Streets to Transit Grants
- NJDOT Bikeway Grants
- NJEDA Funding for Economic Development

11.13 Install high visibility continental-type crosswalks at all signalized intersections as shown in Figure 3.20 below. Continental crosswalks increase the crosswalk visibility and increases pedestrian safety. High visibility crosswalks have been shown to increase motorist yielding and channelization of pedestrians. The Federal Highway Administration has concluded that high-visibility crosswalks have a positive effect on pedestrian and driver behavior.

Figure 3.20 – Photograph of a Continental Crosswalk



12. Route 9 Recommendations

- 12.1 Sidewalk standard should be required in all zones along Route 9. The minimum width should be five feet and a grass strip of two feet should separate the curb line and the sidewalk. Where possible, a three foot grass buffer should also be provided between the curb and sidewalk to provide a more comfortable environment for pedestrians. The only section of Route 9 that should not have sidewalks is south of Somers Point-Mays Landing Road where the New Jersey Department of Transportation is planning a two way bicycle/pedestrian track on the west side of Route 9 to connect to the new bike/pedestrian way on the new Parkway Bridge over the Great Egg Harbor River.
- 12.2 All property owners on Route 9 should be required to install sidewalks when their property is reviewed by the Planning Board and Zoning Board.
- 12.3 The City should provide the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) with a problem statement that will prioritize:
- a. The need to install sidewalks along Route 9 for the entire length from Ocean Heights Avenue to Somers Point-Mays Landing Road.
 - b. A consistent speed limit of 35 mph on Route 9. The speed limit on Route 9 varies from 40 mph between Ocean Heights Avenue and MacArthur Boulevard

to 35 mph between MacArthur Boulevard and Somers Point-Mays Landing Road to 45 mph between Somers Point-Mays Landing Road and the Garden State Parkway.

- c. Reduced curb radii at major intersections. An example is the radii at the intersection of MacArthur Boulevard and Route 9 is shown below in Figure 3.21. Reduce the turning radii at intersections provide for traffic calming and improved site access.

Figure 3.21 – Proposed Intersection Improvements at the Intersection of MacArthur Boulevard and Route 9



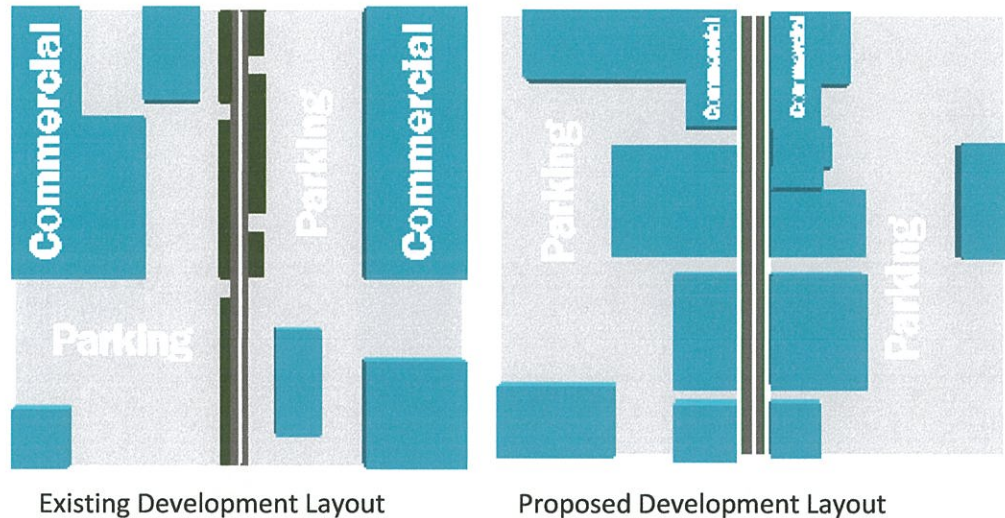
12.4 The City should continue to pursue funding for sidewalks and curb on the west side of Route 9 from Somers Point-Mays Landing Road to MacArthur Boulevard to connect the neighborhoods on Somers Point-Mays Landing Road to Jordon Road School.

12.5 Institute a long term development strategy for the Route 9 area to encourage development closer to the street with parking in the rear of the properties as depicted in Figure 3.22.

- Revise zoning to reduce setbacks, pull buildings up to the sidewalk.
- Encourage parking to be provided in the rear of the buildings.
- Develop design standards to encourage internal circulation, minimize driveway opening through shared access, shared parking and cross access easements.

- Enhance streetscape with consistent treatment throughout the Route 9 Corridor – wider sidewalks, pedestrian scale lighting, street trees and street furniture.

Figure 3.22 – Long Term Redevelopment Strategy for Route 9



- 12.6 The City should request an NJDOT speed study to evaluate the creation of a consistent 35 mph speed limit through the entire Route 9 corridor. A 35 mph speed limit would set a consistent driver expectation and be less stressful for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- 12.7 Driveway designs that pull the concrete sidewalk through the driveway, prioritizing pedestrians over vehicles should be required for all new developments and incorporate into the design guidelines. Currently many of the driveways are designed like intersections, prioritizing vehicles over pedestrians.
- 12.8 It is recommended that streetscape design guidelines be established for the Route 9 business districts of Somers Point. Pedestrian level decorative lighting, street trees and crosswalks already exist and are in good condition. These improvements should be augmented with additional crosswalks at key intersections, traffic calming features, bike racks, trash and recycling containers and other amenities.
- 12.9 Modify existing zoning and explore funding options to encourage existing retail locations along the Route 9 corridor to undertake upgrades.

13. Bay Avenue Recommendations

- 13.1 Dredging the Bay Avenue waterfront – the City has secured some funding for this dredging effort. Dredge material will be managed through thin layer application. Testing and permitting is required before the feasibility of this means of dredging disposal can be determined.

- 13.2 Encourage water taxi service - A water taxi to and from Ocean City, Longport, Margate, Upper Township and Atlantic City can provide easy access for locals and visitors who want to visit Somers Point for the day or evening.
- 13.3 Create transient marina - Large boats that traverse the coast do not have a convenient place to dock between Cape May City and Atlantic City. Somers Point can provide this service with a transient marina located off of Higbee Avenue.
- 13.4 Enhance the transient boat docking experience by providing restaurants, historic sites and shopping to serve visitor docking at the Bayfront.
- 13.5 Provide unencumbered sidewalks along Bay Avenue with enhanced streetscape improvements including paver delineated crosswalks, bicycle racks, street trees, pedestrian lighting and benches.
- 13.6 Provide additional parking on Bay Avenue - The City owns and operates four conveniently located parking lots on Bay Avenue. If the opportunity exists for the City to acquire additional well located parking lots, the City should consider expanding its holdings in the Bay Avenue and Shore Road areas.
- 13.7 Expand the pier at Higbee Avenue to provide for seasonal pop-up retail & dining options.
- 13.8 Harborwalk – Section 114.101E of the City’s Development Regulations require:

“All uses located on property abutting the Great Egg Harbor Bay shall provide, in a manner acceptable to the municipal agency, reasonable public access to and along the harbor and to adjacent properties along the harbor. Building shall be set back a minimum of 25 feet from the water as measured from the mean high-water line. The developer of a harbor front parcel shall construct a landscaped Harborwalk. The Harborwalk shall maintain continuity with the adjacent parcels and shall be maintained by the parcel owner and shall be part of the public access way.”

A Harborwalk from the Route 52 Bridge to William Morrow Beach is recommended to be built over time to connect waterfront restaurants, marinas and shops.

4.0 OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION ELEMENT

1. Introduction

A comprehensive open space and recreation system is a key component to any successful community. The purpose of this Open Space and Recreation Element is to raise the quality of life for the residents of Somers Point through a high-quality system of public open spaces, parks and recreation areas. Communities across the country have witnessed a definite enhancement of real and perceived values in their residential neighborhoods and business districts through a linked open space network of parks and waterfront enhancements.

Numerous recreational and athletic facilities are located throughout the City. These include eight baseball/softball fields, one football field, two street-hockey courts, two tennis and various basketball courts, a bicycle path that runs the length of Somers Point, boat ramps and a bathing beach. The City also provides a program of community education that includes a wide range of topics, from arts and crafts to physical exercise. The foregoing programs and facilities are supervised by a Council-appointed Board of Recreation and the City's Community, Education and Recreation Office (CER).

Privately owned facilities in Somers Point include a golf course, an indoor tennis and racquetball club and several others that provide well-rounded sports and exercise programs.

2. Existing Publicly Owned Open Space and Recreation Areas

2.1 John F. Kennedy Park

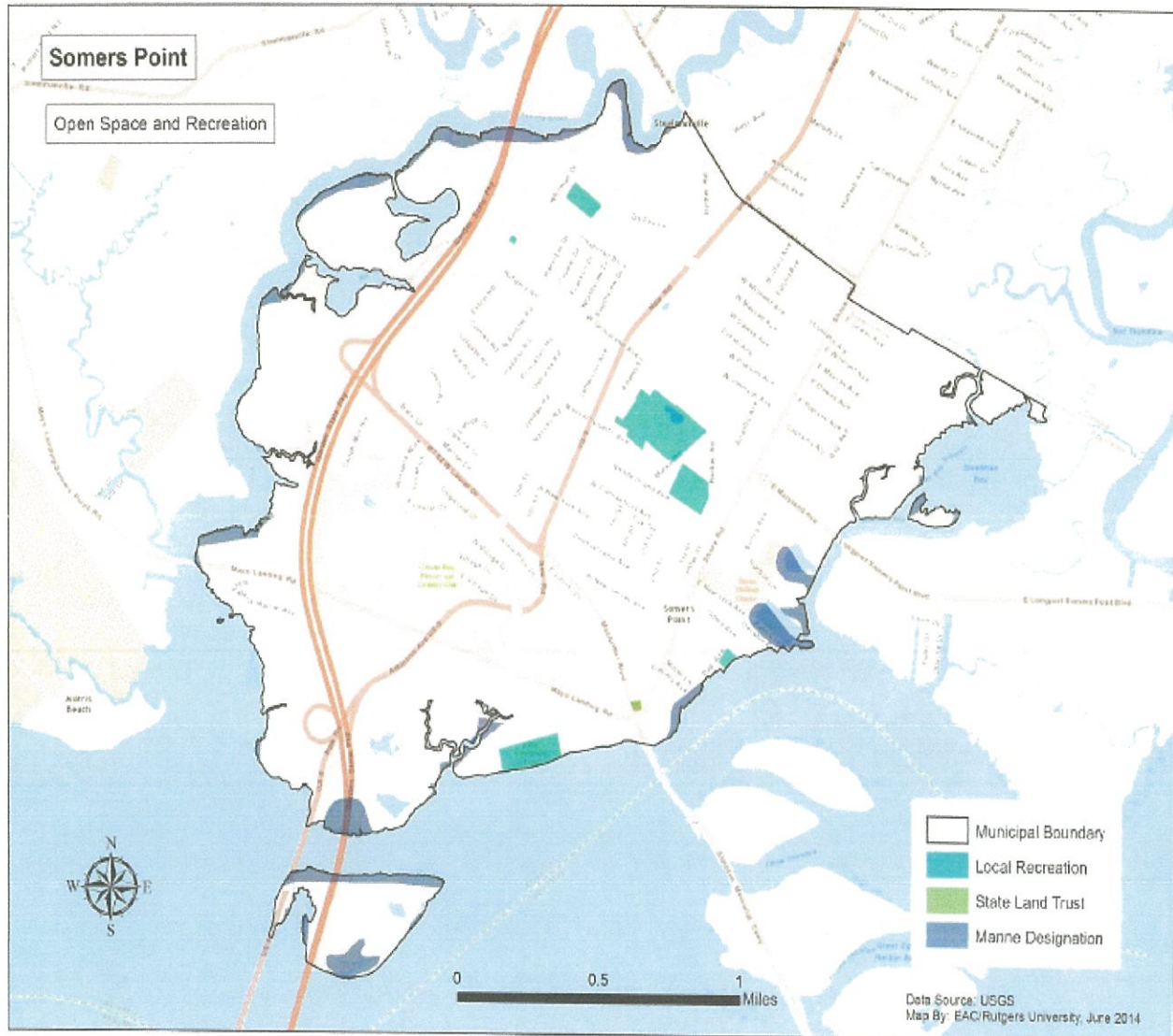
This facility is located along Broadway and is shown on Block 2012, Lot 1 on the municipal tax map. This park measures 1,117.5 feet along Broadway and is between 340 feet and 400 feet wide to the Great Egg Harbor Bay. JFK Park is utilized mainly as a passive recreational facility. The park is used as a picnic area for large groups and individuals alike, as a natural area for all age groups and as a passive sitting area for the senior citizen population of Somers Point, as well as adjoining communities. The park is also utilized as a boat-launching site to the waters of the Great Egg Harbor Bay. The various facilities located in the Park are as follows:

- (a) public boat ramp
- (b) pavilion area/picnic tables
- (c) benches
- (d) barbecues
- (e) swings
- (f) see-saws
- (g) volleyball court
- (h) 1,668-square-foot restroom building

As would be expected with a multi-purpose recreational facility of this type, the amount of time in which it is in use is extensive. This is particularly true during the summer season and on weekends from April to mid-November. Use of the park declines with the advent of inclement weather conditions.

A gabion system was recently constructed along the Great Egg Harbor Bay edge of this park. This improvement has stabilized the bank area with a technology that is considered a best practice for reducing erosion and stabilizing the water's edge.

Figure 4.1 – Open Space and Recreation in Somers Point, NJ



2.2 **Fehrle Field**

This facility is bordered by Third Street, Rhode Island Avenue, First Street and Bethel Road and is shown as Block 1216, Lot 5 on the municipal tax map. This facility is irregularly shaped and encompasses 8.8 acres.

Fehrle Field is a sports recreation complex that includes four baseball diamonds, two regulation size and two Little League; and one softball field. Also included is an all-purpose clubhouse, which includes a 1,800-square-foot warehouse which is used for storage, meetings and supervisory purposes and as a concession stand. The entire area is fenced in with four- and five-foot-high chain-link fence.

Fehrle Field is extensively used by the school age (6-17 years) children of the City of Somers Point. Various activities such as Little League and Babe Ruth Baseball, Girls' Softball, and Pee Wee, Midget and Varsity Football practices are held here. These activities are highly organized and are supervised by the parents of the City on a volunteer basis. As would be expected, use of this facility would coincide with the respective sport season, which would in essence place this facility in continual use. Prime use would occur from May through November, paralleling the baseball and football seasons.

2.3 Kern Field

This facility fronts on Marks Road and Seventh Street in the City of Somers Point and is shown as Block 1016, Lot 12 on the municipal tax map. Access to this facility is also provided via Street. This facility is irregularly shaped and totals 21 acres which includes a pond, freshwater wetlands and wooded areas.

This recreational area includes a Girls' Softball field, a football/soccer field with a perimeter asphalt track and a parking area (56 spaces). Also included is a small clubhouse, which is used for storage, supervisory purposes and as a concession stand. Two street-hockey courts are provided. A concession stand with a small covered pavilion is located between the street-hockey courts. This block building is utilized as a concession stand, for seating and for storage.

Kern Field is extensively used by school children (4-18 years) and adults. The fields are utilized by the city-organized baseball and football programs (typically 150 - 175 youth participants) as well as for a youth lacrosse league and for middle school sports programs (i.e., soccer, track and field programs). The hockey courts are used by the City's youth roller and street hockey leagues (typically 200-300 youth participants). Several organized adult sports programs also use the Kern field facilities (e.g., adult powder puff football, adult men's street hockey league). The track is used by children and adults alike for organized and informal (walking, jogging) purposes. In 2006, the Kern Field Master Plan was developed.

2.4 Senior Citizen's Park

The Senior Citizen's Building is located on Ambler Road between Massachusetts Avenue and Cornell Road and is designated as Block 1228, Lot 8 on the City's tax map. A shuffleboard courts and playgrounds complement this site.

2.5 William Morrow Beach

This facility is bounded by Bay Avenue on the west, a municipally owned pier at New Jersey Avenue to the south and a municipally owned pier at Higbee Avenue on the north. This site

is listed as Block 1612, Lots 1, 1.01, 2, and 2.01 on the City's tax map. The bay side of the beach is adjacent to Ship Channel, a navigable channel that directly accesses the Great Egg Harbor Inlet. Adjacent to the beach is a small parking lot and bathroom facilities. The New Jersey Avenue Pier is provided with benches, a picnic table, gazebo and fishing area. The pier at Higbee Avenue was purchased by the City in 1993 and a portion of the pier is leased to a commercial "day fisher" boat. Beach concerts are held throughout the summer at William Morrow Beach.

2.6 Somers Point Bike Path

A bike path occupies the right-of-way that carried the Shore Fast Line trolley, which connected Atlantic City and Ocean City until the 1940s. This facility was constructed in 1978 using federal and state funds. This facility is utilized by Somers Point residents, as well as residents from neighboring communities, and it connects to the City of Linwood Bicycle Path at Ocean Heights Avenue and to Ocean City via the Route 52 causeway. The bike path has a broad planted lawn on both sides of it and two pavilions.

2.7 Wayne Drive Property

This park is located on Tax Blocks 524, Lots 12 according to the City's tax maps. The area involved measures approximately 275 feet along Wayne Drive and 720 feet along DeFeo Lane and is directly opposite the site of the old Somers Point Sewage Authority Sewage Treatment Plant. Two tennis courts are provided. The tennis courts are used primarily by young and middle-age adults and experience heavy utilization during the summer months.

2.8 Patcong Creek Property

This undeveloped open space parcel is located near the Patcong Creek and provides views of the wetlands. The 12.8-acre parcel is listed as Block 525, Lot 1 and Lot 2.01 on the local tax maps. This site has access off of DeFeo Lane and is just west of the old Somers Point Sewage Authority Sewage Treatment Plant. The tip of the site that reaches into Patcong Creek is privately owned Block 251, Lot 1 and should be acquired by the City to complement this parcel.

2.9 Bay Avenue Property

This undeveloped open space area of Bay Avenue extending generally northeast of Maryland Avenue along the marine tidal marsh could be retained as a linear park strip along the meadows to preserve for posterity the unspoiled view of the wetlands in this area. In selected areas, two or three small parcels of 5,000 to 6,000 square feet could be selectively cleared to provide tiny park alcoves along this strip. They would not be elaborate facilities, but would merely serve as a place from which to view the meadows.

The areas adjacent to this narrow strip of land are inhabited by marsh grasses, which contributes nutrients to the estuarine ecosystem of the back-bay areas. As such, it is very unlikely that these areas could be developed, since the Wetlands Act of the State of New Jersey prohibits the destruction of such areas for development purposes. The proposal for this linear park, therefore, is compatible with existing land-use controls.

2.10 Exton Road Property

This undeveloped 0.3-acre parcel was dedicated to the City by a local developer for the purpose of developing a playground for the surrounding neighborhood. The parcel is located at the intersection of Exton Road and Pacific Avenue and is known as Block 525.04, Lots 5 and 7.

2.11 Drag Island

This undeveloped site is located at the terminus of Route 9 and is shown as Block 2903, Lot 1 on the City's tax map. The site totals 9.68 acres. The New Jersey Highway Authority and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection will provide an enhanced fishing area as part of the Garden State Parkway improvements. Access will be provided in the location of the old Beesley's Point Bridge.

2.12 Dawes Avenue School Playground

This playground is an extension of the existing facilities at the Dawes Avenue School, and is adjacent to the Somers Point Bicycle Path. The facility supports a basketball court and a sand play area with the bike path adjacent, and to the west, of this playground. This playground serves as a neighborhood park, as well as being utilized by the students of the Dawes Avenue School during school hours.

2.13 New York Avenue School Playground

This school has a schoolyard that includes a basketball court, swings and a climber. A lawn area adjacent to the school includes a monument. Access to this site is limited to school hours.

2.14 Jordan Road School Playground

The existing recreational facilities at the Jordan Road School include swings and a climber along Connecticut Avenue, a parking area and a paved game-court area adjacent to the existing school building along Jordan Road, a soccer field south of the school building running from Jordan Road to Tenth Street, and a basketball court in the vicinity of Pennsylvania Avenue.

2.15 Patriots Park

This veteran's memorial located at the intersection of Bethel Road and First Street was established on City owned land through private donations.

2.16 Richard Somers Park

The Richard Somers Monument – a project honoring Richard Somers, a local Barbary War hero who died in the explosion of the *Intrepid* in 1804 – is the City's newest landmark, unveiled in 2013 in a small park on Shore Road next to the City Branch of the County Library.

2.17 Route 52 Boat Ramp and Parking Facility

Built in 2013 as part of the Route 52 Causeway project, this boat ramp facility is one of the most active recreational facilities in the City. The facility provides parking for 18 vehicles and boat trailers, including two that are ADA accessible. In addition, parking for 10 vehicles are provided.

2.18 Route 52 Causeway Multi Use Path and Fishing Piers

The Route 52 Causeway is significant recreational resource available to the residents and visitors of Somers Point. The causeway provides a separated joint use path for pedestrians and bicyclist with will eventually connect to the Somers Point Bike Path.

Figure 4.2 - Recreational Facilities in Somers Point

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Function</u>
1. John F. Kennedy Park*	Broadway on the Great Egg Harbor Bay	10.5 acres	Community Park
2. Fehrle Field*	Bethel Road between First & Third Streets	8.8 acres	Community Park
3. Kern Field*	Marks Road & Seventh Street	21.13 acres	Community Park
4. Senior Citizen's Park*	Ambler Road between Massachusetts Avenue and Cornell Road	1.02 acres	Mini-Park
5. William Morrow Beach*	New Jersey and Bay Avenues	3.43 acres	Mini-Park
6. Somers Point Bike Path*	Abandoned Railroad Right-of-Way	9.8 acres	Community Park
7. Wayne Drive Property*	Wayne Drive and DeFeo Lane	4.14 acres	Community Park
8. Patcong Creek Property*	DeFeo Lane, Lot 1	12.8 acres	Open Space
9. Bay Avenue Property	Bay Avenue	67.8 acres	Open Space
10. Exton Road Property*	Exton Road	0.25 acres	Open Space
11. Drag Island Property**	Route 9 terminus	9.68 acres	Community Park
12. Dawes Avenue School Playground	22 West Dawes Avenue	0.5 acres	Playground
13. New York Avenue School Playground	121 West New York Avenue	0.5 acres	Playground

14. Jordon Road School Playground	121 Jordon Road	0.5 acres	Playground
15. Patriots Park	Bethel Road and First Street	0.5 acres	Mini-Park
16. Richard Somers Park	Shore Road	0.5 acres	Mini-Park
17. Route 52 Causeway Boat Ramp	Shore Road and Bay Avenue	0.85 acres	Mini-Park
18. Route 52 Causeway Joint Use Path and Fishing Piers	Route 52		Linear Park
Total		152.7 acres	

*Properties on the Recreation Open Space Inventory (ROSI)

**Drag Island is currently not accessible due to the Garden State Parkway construction.

3. Existing Privately Owned Open Space and Recreation Areas

3.1 Greate Bay Country Club

This private facility is approximately 140 acres of well-landscaped open space area. In the past decade, this facility has been upgraded to the point where it is now one of the finest golf course/country club facilities in South Jersey.

4. Needs Assessment

A recreation and open space needs assessment helps to determine gaps between existing facilities and the ideal system. The needs assessment will assist in determining the location and size of needed parks and open space; types of recreation facilities and program needs; and the necessary funding and implementation strategies.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) suggests that a park system, at a minimum, be composed of a “core” system of parklands, with a total of 6.25 to 10.5 acres of developed open space per 1,000 population. This classification is intended to serve as a guide to planning. The NRPA parkland guide further breaks down need by park classification.

<u>Component</u>	<u>Desirable Size</u>	<u>Acreage Suggested</u>
Mini-Parks	.25 to .5 per 1,000	2.7 to 5.4
Neighborhood Parks	1 to 2 acres per 1,000	11 to 22
Community Parks	<u>5 to 8 acres per 1,000</u>	<u>54 to 86</u>
Total	6.25 to 10.5 acres	68 to 113

The municipal parks in Somers Point total 70.35 acres with an additional 1.5 acres in school playgrounds and 80.85 acres in open space for a total of 152.7 acres. Taking into consideration that the city’s 2010 population was, there is a need for 68 to 113 acres of parkland in the city. Hence, the City meeting the NRPA guidelines.

5. Recommendations

5.1 Recreation Facility Improvements

1. Kern Field Improvement – The follow recommendations are provided for Kern Field:
 - a. Develop a trail system to connect the recreational facilities and the Somers Point Bike Path;
 - b. Consideration should be given to creating a walking/biking path using the Maryland Avenue right-of-way around the Recreation Building and behind the ballfield to Kern Field. This will keep pedestrian and bicyclists off Marks Road which can be congested at times; and
 - c. Expand the parking area to address the existing parking deficiencies.
2. Fehrle Field Improvements – Expand the parking area behind the 3rd Street baseball field to address the existing parking deficit. This improvement will allow visitors and fans to park in a safer area than on local streets.
3. Kern Field/Fehrle Field Access Improvement - Install sidewalks on both sides of Marks Road to provide pedestrian and bicycle access throughout the parks.
4. Community Center - An indoor recreation facility is needed for the wide variety of programs offered by the City. Currently the schools are used for this purpose but those facilities are not adequate for demand. Various sites should be reviewed for a Community Center and existing facilities should be evaluated to determine if they could be used or expanded to meet this need.

5.2 Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements

1. Bike/Pedestrian Crossing on Route 9 - Cross-town bike riding is frustrated by the lack of safe places to cross Route 9. Providing at least two additional pedestrian-activated signals along Route 9 will help correct this problem.
2. Bike Racks, Bike Repair Stations and Bike Lockers - As the hub of biking in South Jersey, Somers Point should provide accommodations to encourage cyclists to park and visit the many attractions in the City. Properly located bike racks and bike lockers would help to attract bicyclists to areas of interest in the City, including the Harbor Walk and historic sites.

3. Marshwalk - The City owned property along Bay Avenue north of Maryland Avenue provides wonderful views of the wetlands and the Absecon Island skyline. It is recommended that a Marshwalk be developed along the east side of Bay Avenue to provide an off-road walking, jogging and bicycle path.
4. Somers Point Bike Path – the City should pursue completing the Somers Point Bike Path to connect the existing path to the Route 52 Causeway. Land must be acquired and funding allocated for this important connection. Once completed bicyclist and pedestrian will be able to traverse a continuous off road path from Pleasantville to Ocean City.
5. Municipal Public Access Fund – the City should create a Municipal Public Access Fund as follows:
 - a. Any development within the City’s boundaries that would be required by the State to provide onsite public access should contribute to the City of Somers Point’s Public Access Fund (the Fund) in lieu of providing this access.
 - b. Money collected in the Fund must be used towards the proposed enhancements to public access identified in this plan.
 - c. A contribution to the Fund by the project developer/applicant will be required upon NJDEP approval of the developer/applicant’s permit application and the amount contributed will be consistent with the formulas found at N.J.A.C. 7:7E-8.11(f).
 - d. This Trust Fund will be dedicated under the provisions of N.J.S.A. 40A:4-39.

5.3 Open Space Acquisition

1. The tip of the City-owned Patcong Creek Property that reaches into Patcong Creek is privately owned. This parcel known as Block 251, Lot 1 should be acquired by the City to complement the Patcong Creek Property.
2. The City should continue to pursue funding to permanently preserve additional lands in the floodplain, with priority given to land along the Patcong Creek.
3. All potential funding sources should be considered for open space purchase and recreational development. Sources include Green and Blue Acres funding, the Atlantic County Open Space Fund, the Stewart Trust, the municipal open space tax fund, private investment, developer contributions and other grant/loan programs.

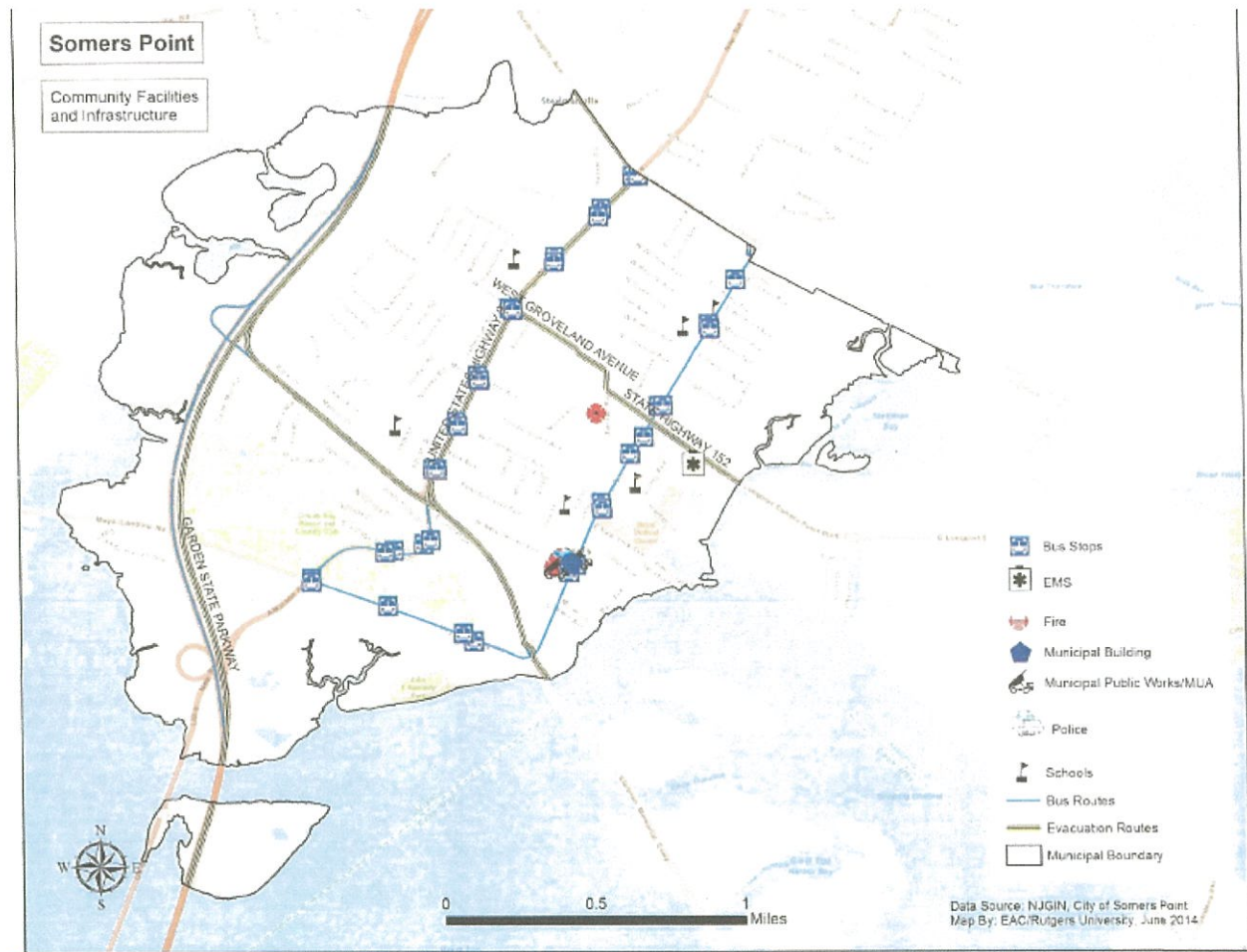
5.0 COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT

1. Introduction

The existing facilities within the City have not changed substantially from those shown on the Community Facilities Map previously prepared by Community Housing and Planning Associates. Several of the "Proposed" Community Facilities noted on this Map have been constructed, are under construction presently, or have been expanded to their present status. Our office is preparing a new Community Facilities Map which will upgrade the Community Facilities in Somers Point to their present level.

In the following pages a Community Facilities Plan will be presented which updates the existing community facilities in the City and which suggests new facilities, expansion of existing facilities and repairs to other existing facilities.

Figure 5.1 – Community Facilities in the City of Somers Point, NJ



2. Public Buildings and Facilities

2.1 Municipal Building

The Municipal Building is located at 1 West New Jersey Avenue and houses the Administration Offices, Mayor's Office, City Clerk, Tax Collector, Police Department, Municipal Court Offices, City Council Chambers, Emergency Management and other municipal functions. The building was constructed in 1972 and consists of 17,493 sq. ft.

2.2 Museum

This old church is part of the Municipal Complex and is a 2,388 square foot, wood frame building. It is located directly adjacent to the Municipal Building at 1 W. New Jersey Avenue. The church was built in 1886.

2.3 Library Building

The library is located at 801 Shore Road. This 7,200 square foot building was originally the site of City Hall, built in 1906. It now serves as a branch library of the County Library System through a lease with the City.

2.4 Zoning, Building & Tax Assessor's Office

This 1,984 square foot office is located at 741 Shore Road. This office is responsible for taking Planning/Zoning applications and processing through the Boards for appropriate review and action. The office issues construction permits, makes inspections, and issues certificates of occupancy. The Code Enforcement Official enforces Zoning Ordinances and other miscellaneous Ordinances of the City of Somers Point.

2.5 Public Works Complex

The Department of Public Works operates out of two locations: the Public Works Garage located at 830 Center Street and the Sewer Operations located on DeFeo Lane.

The Center Street building was built in 1957 and includes a 1,860 square foot office building; 7,500 square foot garage; a 975 square foot material storage building; and two storage garages.

The DeFeo Lane location houses a 3,102 square foot garage building. The DeFeo Lane parcel is known as Block 525, Lot 2.01 and includes approximately 8.8 areas of land, half of which is vacant. This parcel has 880 feet of frontage along DeFeo Lane.

The Department is responsible for resident pick up of trash, bulk items, metal, brush, and leaves. In addition to the removal of waste, the Department maintains all City owned properties. The Department of Public Works is also responsible for the maintenance of sewer pump stations and maintenance of sewer lines as well as being liaison for the sewer engineer for lateral connections of sewer lines to new or existing properties.

2.6 Fire Station #1

Located at Bethel Road and New Hampshire Avenue, the main building (10,000 square feet) was built in 1965. This facility is owned by Company #1 and the City leases the fire bays. A training tower and picnic shelter are also located on this property

2.7 Fire Station #2

This 8,860 square foot masonry building is located at 20 West New Jersey Avenue. This building is owned by the Company #2 and the City leases the fire bays. The building was built in 1942.

2.8 Senior Center

Located on Ambler Road and Massachusetts Avenue, this 2,020 square foot building was built in 1970. This facility includes the Senior Citizens Building, three (3) shuffleboard courts, benches, a covered pavilion and associated landscaping including young shade trees and buffer landscaping around the pump station.

2.9 Youth Center

This 2,400 square foot masonry building was constructed in 1970.

2.10 Gateway Playhouse

The center piece of the Bayfront District is the Gateway Theater, built in 1936 this 5,301 square foot structure is located at 738 Bay Avenue. Once a thriving arts center, the theater has been vacant for years. In 2006, the City purchased the property and Theater Collaborative of South Jersey a non-profit was formed to rebuild and eventually managed the theater. The Collaborative has raised over \$550,000 to date and needs \$400,000 to complete essential renovations to this existing theater and to make improvements that will make the building more resilient from future storms. Many groups have contributed to the rebuilding of the theater including: Shore Medical Center (\$100,000), Pepsi Refresh Everything (\$150,000), the Somers Point Business Association (\$10,000) and Fox Chase Bank (\$2,500). This building was inundated with water during Superstorm Sandy. When completed the theater will be used for performing arts, musicals, concerts, hospital and school assemblies

and community events. Restoring this local arts center is a Catalytic Project for Somers Point since it will bring a new sense of community and economic growth to the City of Somers Point.

2.11 Parking Facilities

The City of Somers Point owns and operates four public parking lots that primarily serve the Bay Avenue area. All of these lots provide free parking.

- Route 52 Boat Ramp and Parking Lot – this parking area is located at the intersection of Shore Road and Bay Avenue (Block 1810, Lot 1) and features ten vehicle parking spaces and 18 vehicle and trailers parking spaces, two of which are handicapped accessible.
- Bay Avenue and Annie Avenue Parking Lot – (Block 1812, Lot 6) provides 36 parking spaces, 3 of which are handicapped accessible.
- Bay Avenue and Higbee Avenue Parking Lot (northwest corner) – (Block 1513, Lot 16) provides 42 parking spaces, 4 of which have handicapped access.
- Marrow Beach Parking Lot – this lot is located at the southeast corner of Bay Avenue and Higbee Avenue (Block 1712, Lot 2) and provides 38 parking spaces.

3. Local Government Energy Audit Report 2012

The School District received grant funding from the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities to complete a comprehensive energy audit of all public schools. The audit identified the annual energy cost of each building and a variety of energy conservation measures, their costs and annual savings. The annual budget of all public buildings in 2009 is summarized in Figure 5.2.

Overall, the Somers Point School District is operating comparable to the average Source Energy Intensity of 144 kBtu/square-foot/year for K-12 schools in New Jersey. The District is also paying an average in cost of energy at \$1.70 per square-foot below the average costs of \$2.00 per square-foot.

Figure 5.2 - Annual Energy Budget for Public Schools in Somers Point, 2012

Building	Electric Budget	Gas Budget	Total Budget
Dawes Avenue School	\$116,947	\$0	\$116,947
Jordon Road School	\$101,746	\$31,870	\$133,616

New York Avenue School	\$23,229	\$5,475	\$28,704
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Source: Local Government Energy Audit

The recommended energy conservation measures (ECMs), net installation costs and annual savings are provided in Figure 5.3.

Figure 5.3 - Net Installation Cost of ECMs, Projected Annual Savings and Simple Payback for Public Schools in Somers Point

Building	ECMs	Annual Savings	Simple Payback
Dawes Avenue School	\$1,007,100	\$33,586	29.5
Jordon Road School	\$616,183	\$19,868	30.5
New York Avenue School	\$139,400	\$4,156	30.8
Totals	\$1,762,683	\$57,610	

Source: Local Government Energy Audit

The City maintains many buildings, some of which are relatively old and in need of energy efficiency upgrades. Below is a summary of electric use for each building over a twelve month period from June 2013 to June 2014. The cost provided only includes the cost of conveyance and does not include generation.

Building	Energy Consumed (kW)	Cost for Energy Use
City Hall	287,120	\$16,833.84
City Hall Annex	24,124	\$2,079.01
Library	65,362	\$5,498.47
Public Works Complex	490	\$142.71
Recreation Center	65,456	\$6,164.00
Museum	6,510	\$641.94
Sewer Department	12,439	\$1,151.85
Senior Center	29,432	\$2,430.59
Street Lights	262,554	\$45,782.06
Bike Path	116,539	\$26,881.00
Totals		

The 2013 Somers Point Audit shows the total cost for utilities for the City Facilities are:

Electric	\$138,800.81
Street Lights	\$72,231.48
Gasoline	\$86,432.86
Diesel Fuel	\$56,801.72
Natural Gas	\$35,231.30

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 Gateway Theater Completion- The City and the Theater Collaborative of South Jersey should continue to work together to pursue any grants that can be used to complete the Gateway Theater. An effort should be made to insure that the interior of the Theater reflects the historic nature of the building and the surrounding Bayside Historic District.
- 4.2 Energy Savings Improvement Plan - The City and the School District should jointly consider an Energy Savings Improvement Program to upgrade all public buildings with more energy efficient lighting and HVAC systems. This Program was designed by the NJBPU and the New Jersey legislature to allow school districts and towns to complete needed energy efficiency improvements funded by the future energy savings.
- 4.3 Community Center Site - The City should consider reserving adequate space for a community center. The community center is envisioned to including meeting rooms, a gym for sports and large assemblies, and possible space for a relocated library. The ideal sites are in the vicinity of the athletic fields at Fehrle and Kern Fields or along the Somers Point Bike Path.
- 4.4 LED Street Lights - The conversion of street lights from high pressure sodium or metal halide fixtures to light-emitting diode (LED) lighting can result in a 50 to 60 percent savings in electric. In addition to the electric savings, LED fixtures last up to 15 years – three times the life of current technologies; reduced glare; and the whiter light that enhances safety. Atlantic City Electric owns most of the street lights in Somers Point and they are starting to offer programs that provide for conversion to LED. The LED conversion can be paid for by the energy savings over time. It is recommended that the City consider this alternative.
- 4.5 Wayfinding - Develop a wayfinding system which incorporates the City’s branding. Signage bearing the logo would be used to identify community facilities.

APPENDICES

Appendix I: *ESRI Demographic and Income Comparison Profile*

Appendix 2: Tapestry Segment Definitions

APPENDIX 1: ESRI *Demographic and Income Comparison Profile*



Demographic and Income Comparison Profile

258 New Rd, Somers Point, New Jersey, 08244
Rings: 1, 3, 5 mile radii

Latitude: 39.32897
Longitude: -74.59548

	1 mile	3 miles	5 miles
Census 2010 Summary			
Population	9,016	28,239	67,754
Households	3,798	10,983	27,312
Families	2,368	7,614	18,112
Average Household Size	2.37	2.56	2.46
Owner Occupied Housing Units	2,195	8,360	20,789
Renter Occupied Housing Units	1,603	2,623	6,523
Median Age	41.4	42.9	44.1
2013 Summary			
Population	9,160	28,252	67,715
Households	3,848	10,986	27,262
Families	2,393	7,587	18,037
Average Household Size	2.38	2.56	2.46
Owner Occupied Housing Units	2,090	8,065	20,123
Renter Occupied Housing Units	1,758	2,922	7,139
Median Age	41.8	43.7	45.0
Median Household Income	\$48,884	\$67,869	\$66,775
Average Household Income	\$69,809	\$88,967	\$88,804
2018 Summary			
Population	9,352	28,579	68,251
Households	3,919	11,122	27,485
Families	2,428	7,648	18,131
Average Household Size	2.38	2.56	2.46
Owner Occupied Housing Units	2,152	8,248	20,519
Renter Occupied Housing Units	1,768	2,874	6,966
Median Age	42.0	44.5	46.0
Median Household Income	\$58,778	\$79,809	\$79,234
Average Household Income	\$81,566	\$103,473	\$103,494
Trends: 2013-2018 Annual Rate			
Population	0.42%	0.23%	0.16%
Households	0.37%	0.25%	0.16%
Families	0.29%	0.16%	0.10%
Owner Households	0.59%	0.45%	0.39%
Median Household Income	3.76%	3.29%	3.48%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2013 and 2018.

June 24, 2014

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Demographic and Income Comparison Profile

258 New Rd, Somers Point, New Jersey, 08244

Rings: 1, 3, 5 mile radii

Latitude: 39.32897

Longitude: -74.59548

2013 Households by Income	1 mile		3 miles		5 miles	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<\$15,000	391	10.2%	768	7.0%	2,042	7.5%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	345	9.0%	691	6.3%	1,620	5.9%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	497	12.9%	955	8.7%	2,380	8.7%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	731	19.0%	1,539	14.0%	3,787	13.9%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	613	15.9%	1,967	17.9%	5,084	18.6%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	508	13.2%	1,548	14.1%	3,712	13.6%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	456	11.9%	2,011	18.3%	4,798	17.6%
\$150,000 - \$199,000	161	4.2%	839	7.6%	2,158	7.9%
\$200,000+	147	3.8%	669	6.1%	1,681	6.2%
Median Household Income	\$48,884		\$67,869		\$66,775	
Average Household Income	\$69,809		\$88,967		\$88,804	
Per Capita Income	\$29,431		\$35,026		\$35,845	
2018 Households by Income	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<\$15,000	386	9.8%	720	6.5%	1,893	6.9%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	293	7.5%	554	5.0%	1,297	4.7%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	365	9.3%	665	6.0%	1,670	6.1%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	660	16.8%	1,314	11.8%	3,221	11.7%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	587	15.0%	1,797	16.2%	4,593	16.7%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	697	17.8%	2,030	18.3%	4,804	17.5%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	537	13.7%	2,203	19.8%	5,289	19.2%
\$150,000 - \$199,000	217	5.5%	1,037	9.3%	2,739	10.0%
\$200,000+	178	4.5%	802	7.2%	1,978	7.2%
Median Household Income	\$58,778		\$79,809		\$79,234	
Average Household Income	\$81,566		\$103,473		\$103,494	
Per Capita Income	\$34,290		\$40,758		\$41,747	



Demographic and Income Comparison Profile

258 New Rd, Somers Point, New Jersey, 08244
Rings: 1, 3, 5 mile radii

Latitude: 39.32897
Longitude: -74.59548

2010 Population by Age	1 mile		3 miles		5 miles	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Age 0 - 4	524	5.8%	1,542	5.5%	3,541	5.2%
Age 5 - 9	463	5.1%	1,683	6.0%	4,014	5.9%
Age 10 - 14	562	6.2%	1,963	7.0%	4,525	6.7%
Age 15 - 19	612	6.8%	2,034	7.2%	4,597	6.8%
Age 20 - 24	578	6.4%	1,421	5.0%	3,278	4.8%
Age 25 - 34	1,055	11.7%	2,617	9.3%	6,229	9.2%
Age 35 - 44	1,130	12.5%	3,683	13.0%	8,538	12.6%
Age 45 - 54	1,564	17.3%	5,033	17.8%	11,610	17.1%
Age 55 - 64	1,222	13.6%	4,027	14.3%	9,504	14.0%
Age 65 - 74	708	7.9%	2,253	8.0%	6,115	9.0%
Age 75 - 84	435	4.8%	1,352	4.8%	3,930	5.8%
Age 85+	162	1.8%	633	2.2%	1,872	2.8%

2013 Population by Age	1 mile		3 miles		5 miles	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Age 0 - 4	519	5.7%	1,488	5.3%	3,410	5.0%
Age 5 - 9	476	5.2%	1,621	5.7%	3,805	5.6%
Age 10 - 14	494	5.4%	1,835	6.5%	4,329	6.4%
Age 15 - 19	576	6.3%	1,860	6.6%	4,256	6.3%
Age 20 - 24	681	7.4%	1,689	6.0%	3,789	5.6%
Age 25 - 34	1,126	12.3%	2,779	9.8%	6,527	9.6%
Age 35 - 44	1,072	11.7%	3,329	11.8%	7,729	11.4%
Age 45 - 54	1,438	15.7%	4,622	16.4%	10,764	15.9%
Age 55 - 64	1,358	14.8%	4,362	15.4%	10,282	15.2%
Age 65 - 74	790	8.6%	2,588	9.2%	6,860	10.1%
Age 75 - 84	442	4.8%	1,377	4.9%	3,918	5.8%
Age 85+	187	2.0%	702	2.5%	2,045	3.0%

2018 Population by Age	1 mile		3 miles		5 miles	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Age 0 - 4	541	5.8%	1,519	5.3%	3,448	5.1%
Age 5 - 9	472	5.0%	1,571	5.5%	3,650	5.3%
Age 10 - 14	475	5.1%	1,774	6.2%	4,171	6.1%
Age 15 - 19	484	5.2%	1,679	5.9%	3,971	5.8%
Age 20 - 24	676	7.2%	1,637	5.7%	3,614	5.3%
Age 25 - 34	1,327	14.2%	3,243	11.3%	7,279	10.7%
Age 35 - 44	996	10.7%	3,024	10.6%	7,098	10.4%
Age 45 - 54	1,255	13.4%	4,118	14.4%	9,593	14.1%
Age 55 - 64	1,450	15.5%	4,599	16.1%	10,971	16.1%
Age 65 - 74	977	10.4%	3,134	11.0%	8,096	11.9%
Age 75 - 84	493	5.3%	1,545	5.4%	4,230	6.2%
Age 85+	205	2.2%	735	2.6%	2,128	3.1%



Demographic and Income Comparison Profile

258 New Rd, Somers Point, New Jersey, 08244
Rings: 1, 3, 5 mile radii

Latitude: 39.32897
Longitude: -74.59548

2010 Race and Ethnicity	1 mile		3 miles		5 miles	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
White Alone	7,123	79.0%	24,153	85.5%	56,147	82.9%
Black Alone	918	10.2%	1,645	5.8%	4,835	7.1%
American Indian Alone	15	0.2%	45	0.2%	132	0.2%
Asian Alone	331	3.7%	1,049	3.7%	2,807	4.1%
Pacific Islander Alone	5	0.1%	8	0.0%	19	0.0%
Some Other Race Alone	382	4.2%	687	2.4%	2,232	3.3%
Two or More Races	242	2.7%	652	2.3%	1,582	2.3%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	848	9.4%	1,845	6.5%	5,669	8.4%
2013 Race and Ethnicity	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
White Alone	7,122	77.7%	23,907	84.6%	55,480	81.9%
Black Alone	977	10.7%	1,728	6.1%	4,970	7.3%
American Indian Alone	15	0.2%	45	0.2%	134	0.2%
Asian Alone	350	3.8%	1,104	3.9%	2,969	4.4%
Pacific Islander Alone	5	0.1%	8	0.0%	19	0.0%
Some Other Race Alone	432	4.7%	766	2.7%	2,462	3.6%
Two or More Races	261	2.8%	693	2.5%	1,682	2.5%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	955	10.4%	2,050	7.3%	6,261	9.2%
2018 Race and Ethnicity	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
White Alone	7,097	75.9%	23,776	83.2%	55,049	80.7%
Black Alone	1,033	11.0%	1,819	6.4%	5,079	7.4%
American Indian Alone	15	0.2%	46	0.2%	142	0.2%
Asian Alone	396	4.2%	1,246	4.4%	3,326	4.9%
Pacific Islander Alone	7	0.1%	10	0.0%	21	0.0%
Some Other Race Alone	512	5.5%	904	3.2%	2,786	4.1%
Two or More Races	292	3.1%	777	2.7%	1,848	2.7%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	1,147	12.3%	2,460	8.6%	7,205	10.6%

APPENDIX 2: Tapestry Segment Definitions



Dominant Tapestry Site Map

258 New Rd, Somers Point, New Jersey, 08244
Ring: 1, 3, 5 Miles

Latitude: 39.328972
Longitude: -74.595484

Tapestry Segmentation

Tapestry Segmentation represents the fourth generation of market segmentation systems that began 30 years ago. The 65-segment Tapestry Segmentation system classifies U.S. neighborhoods based on their socioeconomic and demographic composition. Each segment is identified by its two-digit Segment Code. Match the two-digit segment labels on the map to the list below. A longer description of each segment is available at:

<http://www.esri.com/library/whitepapers/pdfs/community-tapestry.pdf>

Segment 01: Top Rung	Segment 34: Family Foundations
Segment 02: Suburban Splendor	Segment 35: International Marketplace
Segment 03: Connoisseurs	Segment 36: Old and Newcomers
Segment 04: Boomburbs	Segment 37: Prairie Living
Segment 05: Wealthy Seaboard Suburbs	Segment 38: Industrious Urban Fringe
Segment 06: Sophisticated Squires	Segment 39: Young and Restless
Segment 07: Exurbanites	Segment 40: Military Proximity
Segment 08: Laptops and Lattes	Segment 41: Crossroads
Segment 09: Urban Chic	Segment 42: Southern Satellites
Segment 10: Pleasant-Ville	Segment 43: The Elders
Segment 11: Pacific Heights	Segment 44: Urban Melting Pot
Segment 12: Up and Coming Families	Segment 45: City Strivers
Segment 13: In Style	Segment 46: Rooted Rural
Segment 14: Prosperous Empty Nesters	Segment 47: Las Casas
Segment 15: Silver and Gold	Segment 48: Great Expectations
Segment 16: Enterprising Professionals	Segment 49: Senior Sun Seekers
Segment 17: Green Acres	Segment 50: Heartland Communities
Segment 18: Cozy and Comfortable	Segment 51: Metro City Edge
Segment 19: Milk and Cookies	Segment 52: Inner City Tenants
Segment 20: City Lights	Segment 53: Home Town
Segment 21: Urban Villages	Segment 54: Urban Rows
Segment 22: Metropolitans	Segment 55: College Towns
Segment 23: Trendsetters	Segment 56: Rural Bypasses
Segment 24: Main Street, USA	Segment 57: Simple Living
Segment 25: Salt of the Earth	Segment 58: NeWest Residents
Segment 26: Midland Crowd	Segment 59: Southwestern Families
Segment 27: Metro Renters	Segment 60: City Dimensions
Segment 28: Aspiring Young Families	Segment 61: High Rise Renters
Segment 29: Rustbelt Retirees	Segment 62: Modest Income Homes
Segment 30: Retirement Communities	Segment 63: Dorms to Diplomas
Segment 31: Rural Resort Dwellers	Segment 64: City Commons
Segment 32: Rustbelt Traditions	Segment 65: Social Security Set
Segment 33: Midlife Junction	Segment 66: Unclassified

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