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INTRODUCTION

The Borough of Atlantic Highlands is a small, highly developed community located on Sandy Hook Bay in northeastern Monmouth County. The Borough’s small size, 1.2 square miles in area, places it 35th in the total land area among Monmouth County’s 53 municipalities.

Atlantic Highlands has a long history dating back hundreds of years, when the Lenape inhabitants lived along its cliffs and creeks. Significant changes have occurred to the area from the time of Henry Hudson’s 1609 visit and the 1664 purchase of the whole peninsula by English settlers. Now Atlantic Highlands has a reputation as an attractive, small-town residential community beside a long waterfront and large harbor.

This Master Plan represents a direction and a clear course of action to realize the future vision for Atlantic Highlands. That vision involves retaining its character as a small town and at the same time continuing to thrive as an active, livable waterfront community with diverse housing, ample recreation, a healthy environment, adequate infrastructure, and quality education, while maintaining a positive economic climate.

This Master Plan represents the collection of data produced from the efforts of diverse groups of individuals within the community, who have produced an extensive amount of valuable research and documents. It represents a tool for the people of Atlantic Highlands to use to guide the future of their unique community.
PLANNING HISTORY

Prior to being incorporated into the 1975 Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL), New Jersey statutes provided for the adoption of a master plan by municipal planning boards. The MLUL required that adopted zoning ordinances reflect the goals and objectives stipulated in the master plan. Subsequently, N.J.S.A. 40:55D-62 provides that after August 1, 1988 master plans must be re-examined at least every six years and a report issued. If specific changes are recommended, then the master plan should be amended following established procedures.

In 1964, in accordance with New Jersey statutes, the Borough of Atlantic Highlands prepared its first Master Plan that was subsequently amended in 1966. In December, 1988 under Borough direction, Townplan Associates undertook a detailed study of the existing land uses in Atlantic Highlands. Tax maps, assessment data, aerial photography, and field surveys of the Borough were utilized as part of the effort to update and confirm the nature and location of land uses within the Borough. As a result of an examination report that also was adopted in 1988, the Borough’s Zoning Ordinance was updated and completely revised in June, 1993.

Although not due until 1994, another re-examination was done in 1990, which resulted in a totally new Master Plan that was adopted on August 2, 1990. The new plan was then revised on October 4, 1990 and again on January 3, 1991 to reflect additional data and policy changes. Then again, in 1996 another re-examination report was approved and adopted.

By ordinance, in 1995 the Atlantic Highlands Planning Board assumed the functions of the Zoning Board, which was abolished pursuant to a 1994 amendment to the State’s Municipal Land Use Law, P.L. 1994,C. 186, sec. 1.

The fourth re-examination report of the Master Plan and Development Regulations was prepared in 2002 by the Borough of Atlantic Highlands Planning Board.

Although the next re-examination report is not due to be prepared by the Atlantic Highlands Planning Board until August 2, 2008, updating of the Master Plan was recommended following receipt of 2000 Federal census data on housing and population. The professional planning firm of Thos. J. Scangarello & Associates, P.A. was retained in 2005 to prepare the 2006 Master Plan, which consolidates the existing Master Plan with the 2002 Re-examination report and identifies any areas that need further clarification.
This Master Plan serves to replace the previous 1990 Master Plan excepting the recently adopted Housing Element and Fair Share Plan adopted December 1, 2005 and amended December 11, 2006 which shall remain in full force and effect as an element of the Master Plan. It will:

- Focus on preserving the Borough’s unique historic and bayside community character, while providing a vision for the future.
- Propose directions influenced by new concepts in planning, coupled with previous planning concerns established in the 1988 Master Plan.
- Update the population information found in the prior plan so that informed planning recommendations can be made.
- Provide new language and maps for natural resource categories already identified in the prior Master Plan.
- Add several new categories for consideration such as; coastal resources, water resources; stream corridors; woodlands; and wildlife; federal and state emergency management guidelines.
- Update the historic inventory, in addition to providing new maps to reflect the expanded historic district.
- Revise the Land Use Element to support the policies of this plan.
- Change the Waterfront Design Element to Coastal Element that will reflect the broader concerns associated with coastal regions and consider changes based on recommendations expressed at the State level.
- Revise the Utility Services Element to incorporate provisions relative to septic disposal systems.
- Provide new mapping to designate existing circulation networks and proposed circulation networks. Scenic roadways will be identified based on Monmouth County Scenic Roadway Plan standards.
- Respond to several standards and policies pertaining to environmental issues and to fair share housing issues, which have been adopted by major State agencies that directly affect the development capabilities of the remaining vacant lands within the Borough of Atlantic Highlands.

This Master Plan fully complies with the requirements provided for in N.J.S. 40:55D-28.
VISION

INTRODUCTION

The vision of Atlantic Highlands is to retain its character as a small town, while continuing to thrive as an active, livable waterfront community with diverse housing, ample recreation, a healthy environment, adequate infrastructure, quality education, and a positive economic climate.

The goals and objectives set forth in this Master Plan evolved to accomplish the vision for Atlantic Highlands. They represent the collective efforts of all those town groups listed below to provide a cohesive plan to realize that vision. The Borough has relied on many different commissions/committees for assistance in developing plans. These committees include Environmental Commission, Shade Tree Commission, Historical Society (non-profit), Chamber of Commerce, Harbor Commission, and a subcommittee comprised of municipal officials specifically designated for re-examination of the Master Plan. Through these means, the planning process takes into account the main geographic, economic, demographic and other realities and needs of the Borough.

Commissions and committees made up of citizen volunteers are used extensively in the planning process. Proposals, debates and decisions in the master plan reexamination process were conducted in public meetings.

Nine municipalities in the region comprise the Monmouth County Bayshore Region. Having formed the Bayshore Regional Collaborative, these nine municipalities have developed a plan to improve, enhance and revitalize all of their communities. The Collaborative's overall plan for the area focuses on enhancing the waterfront and preserving the maritime character of the region. These concerns are not only important from an environmental perspective, but also for economic development in the region. Relevant suggestions found in the Bayshore Regional Strategic Plan have been incorporated into the goals and objectives set forth in this Master Plan.
A. HERITAGE

GOAL:
Maintain and enhance the town’s architectural, historic and scenic heritage as an asset for the future.

OBJECTIVES:
- Seek to promote well-conceived and more widespread preservation by providing practical guidance and economic incentives sought by homeowners for restoration of historic structures.
- Provide a set of principles, objectives, and policies that would provide guidance for protecting and enhancing the town’s historic heritage.
- Mandate a coherent program of action.
- Revise the Borough Development Regulations to incorporate stronger policies, ordinances, guidelines, incentives and other action aimed at historic preservation and restoration, as noted above.
- Create a Historic Preservation Commission.
- Complete and update historical building inventory and extend to the Central Business district and the west side of town.
- Update existing landmarks provisions in land development ordinance for Municipal Land Use Law conformance.
- Encourage the continuing exchange of information on restoration experience, materials, sources and services through the Historical Society and the Older Homes Group it sponsors.
- Aid the Historical Society to collect and house reference information, historic documents and exhibits, maintaining the Strauss Mansion Museum as a public resource on town history.
- Focus on the preservation and physical enhancement of the historic district on Victorian Hill by means of better documentation and public interpretation. Similar efforts will be made for the Victorian architectural heritage and streetscapes on the west side of town.
- Develop preservation, restoration and re-development initiatives on a townwide basis.
B. HOUSING

GOAL:
Limit future development and population density.

OBJECTIVES:

- Update existing land use and housing data to determine remaining available vacant land.

- Develop town-wide policies to restrain additional housing development so as to maintain the small-town character of the Borough.

- Develop ways to discourage infill as much as possible.

- Continue to improve the balance between housing development and open space preservation, with the aim of providing residents increased opportunities for active and passive recreation (including bayfront activities, trails and greenways), maintaining natural buffers and wildlife habitat, and sustaining property values and residents’ enjoyment that depend in part on these assets.

- Include housing data from the 2000 census to determine future needs.

- Examine possible ordinance changes regarding existing housing and new construction to further reduce the inventory of multi-family homes and encourage single-family housing.

- Review the requirements of the “Local Redevelopment and Housing Law,” P.L. 1992 C. 79 (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq.) to determine if changes are needed to prepare and carry out any redevelopment plans the Borough may establish.

- Review Borough’s affordable housing obligation based on updated rulings.

- Promote zoning that provides for the protection and enhancement of existing housing that can serve as affordable housing.

- Promote building codes that are in conformance with FEMA and State Emergency Management Guidelines and are consistent with sound loss mitigation practices with the goal of preserving life and property.

- Promote environmental sustainability in the development and renovation of residential property in accordance with the U.S. Green Building Council’s LEED system (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) that sets standards for site development, water and energy efficiency, material selection, indoor environmental quality and other environmental design factors.
C. COMMERCE

GOAL:
Encourage structural and aesthetic improvements in the business entertainment and light industry districts to strengthen their commercial attraction, promote a viable economic base, and expand the choice of goods, services and employment available within the Borough.

OBJECTIVES:

- Continue to promote, protect and foster interaction of the Borough’s four main geographic elements (historic district, business and entertainment district, bayshore and harbor, and scenic, natural and recreational lands). Work to continue these elements as the mainstay of the Borough’s tax base, real estate appeal, employment opportunities and community life.

- Continue Borough efforts to upgrade and revitalize the business and entertainment district to attract businesses and customers, while maintaining and strengthening its characteristics - human scale and pedestrian friendliness, small-town/small-shops nature, inviting and restful traditional streetscape treatment, historic-style storefronts, low-key signage, convenient parking, litter-free environment, etc.

- Continue plans to link the business district with the Many Mind Creek greenway, the waterfront and the harbor.

- Study redevelopment possibilities in the West Avenue corridor south of Highland Avenue and the light industry district that would improve business prospects, the mix of uses and services provided, the aesthetics of structures and streetscapes, vehicular and pedestrian access, traffic and circulation patterns, etc., while also creating the greenway along the district’s “back yard” of Many Mind Creek and enhancing its streambed and bank conditions, vegetated buffer, wetland functionality, flood control, and aesthetic appearance.

- Study redevelopment opportunities in the municipal harbor including additional commercial space and aesthetic and structural enhancement of existing commercial structures. Consider alternatives to the current Municipal Harbor launch ramp operation with an eye toward increased pedestrian safety, optimal use of available parking and enhanced boater safety.

- Improve traffic circulation and parking provisions.

- Improve pedestrian and cyclist safety through repair, restoration, installation of sidewalks and bike lanes throughout the borough.
- Continue to support the restoration and renovation of existing business properties for commercial use.

- Promote environmental sustainability in the development and renovation of commercial property in accordance with the U.S. Green Building council’s LEED system (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) that sets standards for site development, water and energy efficiency, material selection, indoor environmental quality and other environmental design factors.

- Promote environmental sustainability in the development and renovation of residential property in accordance with the U.S. Green Building council’s LEED system (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) that sets standards for site development, water and energy efficiency, material selection, indoor environmental quality and other environmental design factors.

- Redraw the boundaries for the town center designation to emphasize the downtown business and entertainment district. Encourage restoration and revitalization rather than new development in these areas.

- Participate with other communities in the Bayshore Region to develop an overall development strategy for Route 36, focusing within Atlantic Highlands on the area at and west of First Avenue.

- Join with other municipalities in the Bayshore Region and other levels of government, as well as business, environmental, and cultural organizations to promote the area as a tourist destination and also implement plans relating to economic development, waterfront and open space resources, and transportation.

**D. LINKAGES and EDGES**

**GOAL:**
Seek appropriate linkage and balance of waterfront open space and recreational activities with waterfront commercial and commuter activities to enhance the character and amenities available along the bay side.

Improve the quality of the Borough’s network of roadways, trails and gateways.

**OBJECTIVES:**
- Implement the concept plan for Many Mind Creek and its greenway trail as the missing link between the Henry Hudson Trail coming from the west and planned Bayshore Trail to the east, which will also provide a walking and biking connection from west side residential areas to recreation at Firemen’s Field, to the business district and to the Marina.

- Finalize the financing and management arrangements with the County and State and complete construction of the Bayshore Trail eastward from the Marina to Henry Hudson Springs, Popamora Point and beachfront, and neighboring Highlands Borough.
- Pursue needed trail linkages and extensions in the Lenape Woods Nature Preserve to connect the existing east and west sections, create a trail eastward to Mt. Mitchill Scenic Overlook, complete links downhill to the future Bayshore Trail, and cooperate with Middletown on the proposed pedestrian bridge from the Preserve to the Campo Trails south of Highway 36.

- Support the maintenance and upgrading of transit connection to nearby towns and Manhattan.

- Assure continuation of the commuter ferry service by providing additional parking, working to construct a ferry terminal and ticket office, and improving passenger access, and by continuing to explore possible grants for these purposes.

- Strengthen links among the ferry system, the business and entertainment district, the local bus stop at Center Avenue, and New York commuter buses at Highway 36 - for example, by improving gateway, destination and parking signage, establishing shuttle bus service if feasible, and installing route maps at key points.

- Improve sidewalks.

- Add new bike lanes and a skate park.

- Improve community preparedness in case of storms, flooding, or other disasters that have impact on the Borough.

- Improve traffic circulation and parking provisions downtown and in the Marina.

- Consider NJDOT Centers of Place grant program as a funding source.

- Continue participation in the Bayshore Regional Collaborative to support the initiatives established in the Bayshore Regional Strategic Plan.
E. INFRASTRUCTURE and SUSTAINABILITY

GOAL:
Maintain and improve systems where deemed necessary. Ensure that investment in infrastructure supports a sustainable pattern of land uses that builds on past public investment in roads, schools, utilities and public open space.

OBJECTIVES:
- Continue to identify and correct infiltration and inflow problems within the sanitary sewer system.
- Assess the existing zone with septic systems to determine the feasibility of municipal sewer based on complex issues such as topography, geological stability, technological alternatives, system layout, costs and financing methods. Alternatively, adopt a septic maintenance program with municipal oversight.
- Put in effect new stormwater management measures in order to reduce nonpoint pollution, control erosion and sedimentation, reduce flooding and gain the full benefit from wetlands and stream buffers.
- Continue to update and improve the water supply system, which has parts that are over 100 years old.
- Continue with street improvements to maintain and improve local road system.
- Work with state and county road departments to replace several outdated bridges.
- Identify scenic roadways for designation on updated mapping and develop construction guidelines to preserve the roadways and their public viewscapes.
- Take all necessary steps for grant-seeking, planning, remediation of contaminants, other environmental studies, public consultation and negotiations with landowners, to achieve Borough acquisition of the remaining two tracts of bayfront property, including activation of the $2.5 million bond ordinance for acquisition of waterfront property.
- Seek an appropriate linkage and balance along the bayfront between open space, recreation, environmental conservation and public access needs, and activities related to commuting, parking, ferry operations, private-boat docking, charter boats, restaurants and other commercial activities.
Ensure compliance with all Federal and State regulations and guidelines for coastal management.

OBJECTIVES RELATED TO THE MARINA:

- Maintain and improve the facilities and services in the municipal marina for support of boat launching, operation, docking, and storage. The aims are to enhance the quality of harbor activities, reduce environmental impacts, ensure customer loyalty, and increase revenues and the resulting town-wide economic benefits, while also meeting State objectives relating to boating, tourism, fishing, coastal management and water quality.

- Help to develop, and to implement as possible, emerging plans for bayshore regional cooperation in dredging, remediation of dredge spoils when needed, and beneficial use of dredged materials as part of a long-term dredge management program for the marina.

- Encourage and enforce the practices mandated in the State-wide “Clean Marina” program and the related Borough ordinance that prevent pollution in the marina on land and in the bay, expand the sewage pump-out facilities and complete other new physical installations, institute relevant contractual provisions for leaseholders, and conduct staff training required for full compliance.

- Enhance non-boating related activities in the Marina area to attract residents and visitors to the marina.

- Encourage commuters to spend additional time in the borough by creating a more “gateway like” atmosphere at the marina to encourage patrons and commuters to “discover” Atlantic Highlands.
F. COMMUNITY

GOALS:
Retain the small-town residential character while continuing to thrive as an active, livable waterfront community.

OBJECTIVES:
- Maintain the delicate balance between natural, recreational, residential and commercial uses along the entire waterfront.
- Continue the Borough's commitment to open space preservation.
- Maintain pedestrian and bike friendly streetscape where it currently exists and create additional such areas where feasible.
- Obtain specific grants to support Borough objectives of community, preservation and enhancement.
- Formally adopt measures for existing tree maintenance and protection, in addition to existing measures in the steep slope zone, and adding language to Borough ordinances regarding planting requirements for new development.
- Preserve as much as possible of the Borough's natural landscape.
- Continue to participate with other bayshore towns in “shared interest” of ecological and economical resources in order to promote a regional effect.
- Continue to support and participate in County, State and Federal endeavors for coastal protection.
- Continue with plans to acquire available vacant land to support the proposed Open Space and Recreation Plan and the goals proposed in the 5-year action plan listed below:
  a. Provide increased active and passive recreation for children and adults, including active recreation such as ball games and swimming, and passive pursuits such as hiking and nature observation.
  b. Offer trail access and other open space amenities to additional neighborhoods.
  c. Help restrain growth in housing and population density in the Borough, thus maintaining both quality of life and property values.
  d. Reduce the danger of over-intensive development along our borders.
e. Protect natural resources such as creeks and banks, bay coast and beaches, steep slopes and slump block zones, forests and wetlands.

f. Preserve and enhance the environment by maintaining existing buffers against highway noise and air pollution, saving natural habitat needed by birds and wildlife, and preserving tree mass that moderates temperature and wind effects.

g. Add to natural/environmental education opportunities available to children and adults.

h. Provide increased protection from flooding by maintaining and improving existing wetland areas that absorb storm surge and run-off.

G. NATURAL RESOURCES

GOALS:
Identify all of the natural resources within the Borough and develop comprehensive plans for the conservation of those resources.

OBJECTIVES:

- Protect natural resources such as creeks and banks, bay coast and beaches, steep slopes and slump block zones, forests and wetlands.

- Preserve and enhance the environment by maintaining existing buffers and establishing new buffers where necessary.

- Protection of woodlands and tree cover for the stability of both slopes and soil, the control of erosion, the reduction of sediment reaching the streams/ the harbor/ the bay, the retention of rain and groundwater (the source of the Borough’s drinking water), the supply of nutrients needed for other kinds of vegetation, the provision of shelter and habitat needed by birds and other wildlife, the counteracting of car fumes and other air pollution, the maintenance of buffers against traffic noise, for shade relief and cooling effects in summer, for the moderation of wind effects, for privacy buffers between residences, and screening between different land uses (residential, commercial, industrial, etc.).

- Educate Borough residents about the positive and valuable functions of wetlands in (e.g.) flood abatement, water quality, and habitat provision.

- Strengthen monitoring and enforcement to eliminate unauthorized tree removal, slope disturbance, wetland infill and other abuses of natural resources.
- Continue the measures required under the State-mandated Borough stormwater management plan and ordinance, undertake follow-up projects recommended in the regional stormwater management program for the Many Mind Creek watershed, and develop further ordinances as necessary for the implementation of the above objectives.
POPULATION

Over the period from 1890 to 1970 the Borough of Atlantic Highlands experienced rapid and virtually uninterrupted population growth. During that time the borough population grew from only 945 to 5,102. The only exception was the period from 1910 to 1920 when the Borough experienced a slight decrease in its population. Its growth rate has since been lower than Monmouth County and the State as a whole. While Monmouth County has been the fourth largest growing county in New Jersey, its most recent development has been moving westward to areas where large tracts of vacant land are still available. While the county’s population is expected to continue to grow, Atlantic Highlands’ population has largely moderated and stabilized, having reached its peak in 1972.

The composition and characteristics of Atlantic Highlands population are also changing. These changes can be an important consideration in planning for the future needs of the Borough in terms of residential, commercial, office, and recreational land uses and public services.

The changing composition of the population has resulted from an increasing birthrate, increasing elderly population, and declining household size. Atlantic Highlands, with 13.2 percent of its population aged 65 and over, has experienced an increasingly aged population, which is expected to continue to slowly increase. The trends create a need to plan for a changing population composition and for a periodic monitoring of changes in migration patterns and age characteristics.

Population trends are influenced by a variety of factors, including national, state, and regional economic conditions, social changes and government policy. Changing birth rates, changing employment trends, consumer preference, and numerous other factors can affect future development within the Borough of Atlantic Highlands. The Borough, however, can guide future development and can manage growth within the Borough by establishing appropriate standards for population density as part of its land planning effort.

As updated census data for population and housing become available, the Planning Board should monitor this new information to evaluate its planning program to determine if it is meeting the changing needs and desires of the present and future residents of the Borough.
DATA SOURCE

The demographic data used in this analysis are derived from a variety of sources. The U.S. Census provides data on general population characteristics in the form of characteristics for persons, households and families, and housing units. Historical and geographical comparisons are possible through the use of Census data. In addition, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Industry, Office of Demographic and Economic Analysis, annually compiles demographic data and provides estimates on population characteristics of the state, metropolitan regions, counties and municipalities. Additional demographic information is compiled by the Monmouth County Planning Board and the Borough Clerk’s office.

TABLE NO. 1
HISTORIC POPULATION: 1890-2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Atlantic Highlands Census</th>
<th>% Change</th>
<th>Monmouth County Census</th>
<th>% Change</th>
<th>New Jersey Census</th>
<th>% Change</th>
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<td>1880</td>
<td>945</td>
<td></td>
<td>69,128</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,444,933</td>
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<td>1900</td>
<td>1,383</td>
<td>46.3</td>
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<td>18.7</td>
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<td>1910</td>
<td>1,645</td>
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<td>94,734</td>
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<td>1920</td>
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<td>104,925</td>
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<td>1930</td>
<td>2,000</td>
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<td>147,209</td>
<td>40.3</td>
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<td>1940</td>
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<td>161,238</td>
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<td>225,327</td>
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<td>48.4</td>
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<td>5,102</td>
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<td>461,849</td>
<td>38.1</td>
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<td>18.2</td>
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<td>1980</td>
<td>4,950</td>
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<td>8.9</td>
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<td>4,629</td>
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COMPONENTS OF POPULATION CHANGE: 1960-2000

Population change is comprised of two components:

- Natural increase or decrease (births versus deaths)
- In and out migration (the movement of residents into or out of the Borough).

During the period from 1960 to 1970, population growth in Atlantic Highlands resulted from both a high birth rate and the in-migration of population. In the decade, which followed, 1970 to 1980, population decreased as a result of a reduction in the birth rate, a slight increase in the number of deaths and a fairly large out-migration of population. Large out-migration continued during 1980-1989.


POPULATION ANALYSIS

POPULATION SIZE

The total population in Atlantic Highlands was reported as 4,705 persons in the 2000 Census. The population decreased by 1.6 percent from the 4,629 persons recorded in 1990.

TABLE No. 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Atlantic Highlands</th>
<th>Monmouth County</th>
<th>New Jersey</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Estimate</td>
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<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>4,950</td>
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<td>503,173</td>
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<td>1981</td>
<td>4,911</td>
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<td>5,061</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>531,287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>5,061</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>543,572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>4,925</td>
<td>-2.7</td>
<td>553,618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>5,005</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>553,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>4,812</td>
<td>-3.8</td>
<td>552,161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-1989</td>
<td>-2.6</td>
<td>-9.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>4,629</td>
<td>-3.8</td>
<td>553,192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>4,757</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>558,257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>4,798</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>565,310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>4,811</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>571,094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>4,825</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>577,126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>4,839</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>583,991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>4,848</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>589,866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>4,865</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>596,791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>4,882</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>603,214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>4,896</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>611,444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-1999</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>4,705</td>
<td>-3.9</td>
<td>613,301</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: (1) United States Department of Labor, Bureau of the Census, and 1980 Census of Population
RATE OF POPULATION GROWTH

The population growth rate from 1970 to 2000 is summarized in Table No. 3. Atlantic Highlands realized a drop in population between 1970 and 1990.

**TABLE NO. 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Change (No.)</th>
<th>Change (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>2,335</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>3,083</td>
<td>748</td>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>4,119</td>
<td>1,036</td>
<td>33.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>5,102</td>
<td>983</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>4,950</td>
<td>-152</td>
<td>-2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>4,629</td>
<td>-321</td>
<td>-6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>4,705</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census Bureau, 1990 & 2000
POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

AGE, GENDER AND RACE CHARACTERISTICS
The following table provides age and gender characteristics in Atlantic Highlands as of 2000. Both the male and female population between the ages of 35 and 44 represent the largest percentile at 19.0% of the total population. The next largest group is 15.1% of the population that also includes both sexes 45 to 54 years of age. Seniors (over 65 years of age) represent 14.1% of total population.

TABLE NO. 4
AGE AND GENDER CHARACTERISTICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>2,274</td>
<td>2,431</td>
<td>4,705</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 5</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 9</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 14</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 - 19</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 - 24</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 29</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 - 34</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 - 44</td>
<td>428</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>896</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 - 54</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>711</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 - 59</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 - 64</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 - 74</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75+</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Age</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census Bureau: 2000
The Borough’s racial composition as of 2000 is outlined in Table No. 5. White population represents 94.4 percent of the residents. Non-white population consists of 5.6 percent of the community.

**TABLE NO. 5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>4,440</td>
<td>94.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>4,705</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census Bureau: 2000

**TABLE NO. 6**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Attainment: 25 Years and Over</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total population 25 years and over</td>
<td>1,533</td>
<td>1,833</td>
<td>3,366</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 5th grade</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th to 8th grade</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th to 12th grade, no diploma</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate (incl. equivalency)</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>896</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college credit, less than 1 year</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 or more years of college, no degree</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate degree</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>426</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>846</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional degree</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate degree</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent high school graduate or higher</td>
<td>91.8</td>
<td>91.3</td>
<td>91.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent bachelor’s degree or higher</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census Bureau: 2000
INCOME LEVEL

Table No. 7 outlines household income-by-income category as of 2000. The median household income for 2000 was $64,955, which is a 69 percent increase compared to the 1990 median household income of $44,705. Comparable data for Monmouth County indicates that the median household income for a two-person household in 1999 was $64,271 and in New Jersey the median household income was in 1999 was $55,146.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Category</th>
<th>Number of households</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,989</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $10,000</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 - $14,999</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15,000 - $24,999</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000 - $34,999</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000 - $49,999</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000 - $74,999</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000 - $99,999</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000 - $149,999</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000 - $199,999</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$200,000 or more</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
<td>$64,955</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census Bureau: 2000
Compiled by: Thos. J. Scangarello & Associates, P.A.

HOUSEHOLD SIZE

The Borough's average household size is 2.39 persons per household according to the 2000 census. Although Atlantic Highlands experienced an increase in both the population and the number of households between 1990 and 2000, the average household size decreased. Atlantic Highlands' average household size is summarized in Table No. 8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Number of Households</th>
<th>Household Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>4,950</td>
<td>1,861</td>
<td>2.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>4,629</td>
<td>1,774</td>
<td>2.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>4,705</td>
<td>1,989</td>
<td>2.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS AND TRENDS

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

Employment data from 1997 to 2003 is reported in Table No. 9. The data indicates that the number of private jobs in Atlantic Highlands increased while the number of government jobs has remained constant. Private weekly wages show a slight increase while government weekly wages have increased from $695 to $713 for the four-year period.

### TABLE NO. 9
**COVERED EMPLOYMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Jobs</th>
<th>Weekly Wage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>$582.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$695.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>$603.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$700.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>$615.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$712.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>$618.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government (Local)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>$713.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Federal)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$931.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS AND OCCUPATION PATTERNS

Table No. 12 summarizes employment status of persons at the age of 16 and over by gender. Approximately 68.2 percent of the employment-age residents in Atlantic Highlands are participating in the civilian labor force, of which 94 percent are employed. The overall unemployment rate is relatively low at 5.9 percent.

TABLE NO. 10
EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF PERSONS 16 AND OVER BY GENDER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Status</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population 16 years and over</td>
<td>1,779</td>
<td>2,004</td>
<td>3,783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed Forces</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian Labor Force</td>
<td>1,323</td>
<td>1,260</td>
<td>2,583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>1,253</td>
<td>1,177</td>
<td>2,430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Unemployment Rate: %)</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not in Labor Force</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>744</td>
<td>1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Participation Rate: %)</td>
<td>74.4</td>
<td>62.8</td>
<td>68.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census Bureau: 2000

Table No. 11 outlines resident employment by occupation for employed persons at the age of 16 and over. In 2000, the majority of resident employment is classified as management, professional and related occupations.

TABLE NO. 11
EMPLOYED PERSONS 16 AND OVER BY OCCUPATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,253</td>
<td>1,177</td>
<td>2,430</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management, professional and related occupations</td>
<td>641</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>1,131</td>
<td>46.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service occupations</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales and office occupations</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction, extraction and maintenance occupations</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production, transportation, and material moving occupations</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US Census Bureau: 2000
POPPULATION PROJECTION

The North Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (NJTPO) provides growth projections for Atlantic Highlands. The projections indicate total population in five-year increments. Table No. 12 provides the population projections for Atlantic Highlands and Monmouth County from 2000 to 2030. The future Atlantic Highlands population is predicted to grow at a reduced rate compared to the projected County population growth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE NO. 12</th>
<th>NJTPO POPULATION PROJECTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atlantic Highlands</td>
<td>4,705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population increase from 2000</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent (%) increase from 2000</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monmouth County</td>
<td>615,301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population increase from 2000</td>
<td>24,199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent (%) increase from 2000</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: North Jersey Transportation Planning Organization, 2005
EXISTING LAND USE

BACKGROUND

At the time the first Atlantic Highlands Master Plan was prepared in 1964, the Borough had already developed as a suburban residential community. That first land use survey revealed that the principal land use within the Borough was single-family residential with very few multi-family units.

The majority of commercial activity was located primarily along First Avenue, between Route 36 and the waterfront with only a few stores and taverns scattered throughout the Borough. The 1964 report observed that at that time retail sales in the Borough were declining and that local consumer spending was increasingly being lost to highway shopping centers. The report also noted that eight stores located along First Avenue were vacant at the time of the survey.

All other categories comprised a significantly small percentage of the total developed land area within the Borough, with the exception of vacant land. Although the report indicated vacant land to comprise over 15 percent of the Borough’s total land area, it noted that the majority of the vacant land was unsuitable for development.
LAND USE SHARES AND CATEGORIES

There are eight categories of land use in Atlantic Highlands.

RESIDENTIAL: single-family housing, houses occupied by two to four families, and apartment buildings and other large structures for multiple family use.

- The dominant dwelling type in the borough is detached single-family housing, representing over half of all land in the borough.

- A small number of buildings contain two to four families, using less than one per cent of borough lands. Most were created by converting single-family dwellings.

- Larger multi-family structures, including apartment complexes, condominiums and townhouses, accounted for over 3 per cent of land use as of 1988. Since then, Portland Pointe, an apartment building devoted to senior housing, was constructed.

COMMERCIAL: includes retail and service businesses, mixed commercial/residential uses, and professional businesses, which operate in offices or houses.

- The main commercial uses, which accounted for 5.5 per cent of land use or around 4.2 acres in 1998, are centered in two areas:

  1. First Avenue: Most extensive in the eight blocks between the shopping center at the Highway 36 intersection and Bay Avenue/Ocean Boulevard.

  2. West Avenue.

A wide variety of business, entertainment and professional service activities are based in these two areas. Included are banks, stores for gifts, novelties, clothing, liquor and other retail items, gas stations, auto services and parts, boating supplies and services, bicycles, printers and publishers, office supplies and services, spas, electronics, laundry, upholstery, framing, hair dressers, dance studio, used books, tanning, movie theater, playhouse, restaurants and food services, pharmacy, and professional services in legal, dental, real estate, architectural and other fields.

In addition, several businesses are on land bordering the harbor, including three restaurants, a fishing supply store, the commuter ferry, and charter fishing and pleasure boats which dock at and operate from the waterfront.

LIGHT INDUSTRY: Accounts for less than one acre or 0.1 per cent of land use in the Borough in 1988. These uses are mainly between West Avenue and Many Mind Creek.
PUBLIC FACILITIES: include those facilities provided and used by Borough government departments and operating services, as well as public schools and postal facilities.

- These uses occupied approximately 33 acres or around 4 per cent of the Borough land in 1988.
- Facilities of Borough government departments and services include the following:
  1. Borough Hall, which contains municipal offices, police headquarters, town public library, and auditorium/courtroom.
  2. Emergency Services Building, which houses the Fire Department and First Aid. The building fronts on both East Mount Avenue and East Highland Avenue east of First Avenue.
  3. Borough Water Department, recycling center, public works garage and yard off West Lincoln Avenue.
  4. Pumping station of Atlantic Highlands-Highlands Regional Sewer Authority -- First Avenue north of Bay Avenue.
  5. Atlantic Highlands Elementary School and playground.
  7. Municipal Marina, including pier areas and facilities leased from the Borough: including the Shore Casino Restaurant, a restaurant, a pizzeria, and the fish-tackle shop.

QUASI-PUBLIC FACILITIES: include places of worship, private school facilities, community and fraternal organizations.

- These uses occupied approximately 9.57 acres or less than 2 per cent of the Borough land area in 1988.
- Houses of worship located in Atlantic Highlands include the following:
  1. Central Baptist Church
  2. First Presbyterian Church
  3. Kings Highway Fellowship
  4. Living Word Christian Church
  5. St. Paul Baptist Church
  6. Methodist Church
  7. Saint Agnes Church on Center Avenue

- Other facilities:
  1. Strauss Mansion and Museum of the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society
  2. Masonic Hall on Garfield Avenue
  3. Firemen’s Field House at Washington Avenue and Avenue C
  4. Mother Theresa Regional School on Central Avenue and Charles J. Hesse III Parish Center
PARKS AND RECREATION: includes lands owned by the Borough and the County which is preserved as open land and devoted to active or passive recreation.

- All existing open space which is dedicated to park and recreation uses is detailed in section 8 of this report, together with the 5-year plan for acquiring additional open space with New Jersey funding under an application which was submitted to the ‘Green Acres’ program in July 2000.

- The Borough owns the following land that represent about 3 per cent of the land area as of 2000:
  1. Seven small parks or tot lots of a half-acre or less (2.85 acres total),
  2. One multi-use park with a beach on the bay (7.5 acres),
  3. Old railroad right-of-way between the harbor and the Highlands border which is slated to become the Bayshore Trail for hiking and biking (12 acres)
  4. In addition, the Borough owns the 40-acre Lenape Woods Nature Preserve, of which 3 acres are inside the borough borders and 37 acres are in neighboring Middletown.
  5. Note: The playing fields of Fireman’s Fields (6.8 acres) are privately owned by the Firemen’s Association, not by the Borough.

- Other open space and recreation areas:
  1. The Monmouth County Park System owns two land areas in the Borough
  2. Mt. Mitchell Scenic Overlook Park (12 acres),
  3. Beach, trail and wetlands next to the Highlands border, which is called Popamora Point (13 acres).
  Note: The marina and boat basin, covering 20.8 acres including water areas around the piers, is counted under ‘public facilities’ above.

VACANT PRIVATE LAND: Very limited in the Borough, and infill development occurring in recent years has reduced it further.

- In 1964 vacant land was over 15 per cent of the Borough total area, of which majority was ‘unsuitable for development’ (Borough Master Plan 1996.5-1).

- By 1988, vacant land had been reduced to 11.5 per cent and was still lower by 2000.

- As of 2006, the remaining vacant lands are in scattered small lots an acre or less in size, except for two lots which are around 6 acres each.
STREETS AND ROADS:

- Account for approximately 136 acres or about 18 per cent of all land in the Borough.

DEVELOPMENT GUIDANCE

Guidance for the development and redevelopment of the borough is provided in two key documents:

- The Borough Master Plan contains a longer term vision; discusses broad goals, available options, and desirable patterns to be weighed and pursued over the coming six years; and is reviewed and revised as necessary every six years as mandated by State law.

- The Borough Development Regulations establish specific zones for particular types of land use so that neighboring uses will be as compatible and harmonious as possible; and they elaborate standards, criteria and construction specifications to be followed by developers. The regulations cover where land can be developed, what uses are permitted and prohibited in each zone, how intensive development may be in terms of building bulk, height, lot coverage and other measurable factors, and how to plan for drainage, off-street parking, landscaping, lighting, signage and other similar amenities and appurtenances. Also, specific requirements are laid down regarding building size, land disturbance, perseverance of vegetation and other factors which are especially important in the steep slope areas comprising the eastern third of the Borough's territory.
There are 16 zoning districts in the Borough, as described in Table No. 13 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Residential</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-1</td>
<td>Detached single family residential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-2</td>
<td>Detached single family residential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-3</td>
<td>Detached single family residential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O-R</td>
<td>Detached single-family residential, professional and business offices scaled to be compatible with residential design, home occupations, and conversions of dwellings to office use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Senior citizen residential.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RTH</td>
<td>Townhouse and attached single family residential.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MF-1</td>
<td>Multi-family garden residential.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MF-2</td>
<td>Multi-family mid-rise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Business Districts</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HBD</td>
<td>Historic business district on First Avenue oriented to pedestrians with off-street parking consolidated in public lots. Architectural controls coordinated with streetscape improvements. New development must demonstrate adequate capacity in off-street parking facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBD</td>
<td>Central business district oriented to First Avenue with on site parking required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HB</td>
<td>Highway business district oriented to automobile access from Route 36.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WB</td>
<td>Waterfront business district encouraging new retail and water oriented uses to link the HBD with the marina area. Pedestrian orientation, architectural, and streetscape controls required. Off-site parking to be consolidated in shared lots. Visual and physical access to the waterfront required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other districts</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LI</td>
<td>Light industrial district west of West Avenue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MR</td>
<td>Marine recreation district for water dependent and water oriented uses supporting marina and recreation activity. Visual and physical access to the waterfront required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC</td>
<td>Marine Conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PB</td>
<td>Public Open Space/Recreation District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST</td>
<td>Steep Slope Overlay Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Historic District Overlay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Affordable Housing District</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: “Our Town’s Environment” prepared by the Environmental Commission.
PRINCIPLES

In order to promote the conservation of desirable community features, restrain future development on scarce un-built land, and guide preservation, restoration and redevelopment efforts, this Master Plan is based on the following principles:

1. Maintenance and enhancement of the Borough’s traditional community form, characterized by its central business district, historic districts, streetscapes and buildings, waterfront orientation, residential areas, pedestrian scale, and open space and recreation areas.

2. Maintenance of the present intensity of land use, density of population, and existing lot sizes and configurations in view of environmental and other constraints, and in line with the capacity of existing infrastructure, the need to maintain satisfactory levels of municipal services, and the goal of preserving the community’s traditional character and economic viability.

3. Maintenance and preservation of existing single-family neighborhoods.

4. Restricting multi-family residential use to the existing units in specifically defined locations, which are already built as such.

5. Encouragement of a viable economic base.

6. Identification and conservation of environmentally critical natural features.

7. Appropriate linkage and balance of waterfront open space and recreation activities with waterfront commercial and commuter activities to enhance the character and improve the amenities centrally available along the bay side of town.

8. Recognition and preservation of historic sites and districts and encouragement of their restoration, rehabilitation and adaptive use.
OBJECTIVES

1. To secure safety from fire, flood, panic and other natural and manmade disasters including the development of disaster mitigation plans in advance of need.

2. To limit future land development and population density to ensure neighborhood, community and regional well being and protection of the environment.

3. To prevent the degradation of the environment through the improper use of land, streams and stream corridors, wetlands, the bay front, and woodlands, and through reduction of tree cover and vegetation on the land.

4. To encourage bayfront open space and recreational activities, adequate public services for beach use, hiking, and boating, as well as improved commercial facilities.

5. To establish new and upgrade existing municipal recreational facilities, including ball fields, trails for biking and hiking, beaches, and Lenape Woods Nature Preserve.

6. To preserve historic sites and districts and to restore, rehabilitate and set adaptive uses for historic buildings.

7. To protect areas with scenic, cultural and recreational value, particularly along the waterfront, stream corridors, the Ocean Boulevard “scenic route” and other scenic roadways, streetscapes in historic districts, and hilly woodlands.

8. To promote a desirable visual environment in terms of open space and recreation lands, stream corridors, the bayfront, the Marina, scenic roadways, landscaping, buildings and infrastructure.

9. To encourage restoration as well as re-development of substandard sites, buildings and streetscapes which contribute to the improvement and enhancement of the community.

10. To provide sufficient space in appropriate locations for commercial, residential, light industrial, and open space and recreational uses.

11. To maintain and attract beneficial commercial and light industrial uses in their existing zones.

12. To promote the recovery of recyclable materials from the municipal solid waste stream and encourage the conservation of energy.

13. To encourage the appropriate and efficient expenditure of public funds by coordinating public and private development within the framework of existing land use patterns and densities, re-development needs and conservation principles.
ASSUMPTIONS

The Atlantic Highlands Master Plan is based upon the following assumptions:

1. There will be no catastrophic disruption of the existing natural and/or man-made features of the Borough.

2. There will be continued long-term economic expansion within the region. While little or no population growth is expected in Atlantic Highlands and land use and population density are almost at the limits of capacity, there will be opportunities to enhance the economic base of the community by virtue of its recreational waterfront and favorable access within a developing region, and by pursuing redevelopment initiatives that build on the existing appeal and advantages enjoyed by the Borough.

POLICIES

The Atlantic Highlands Master Plan is based upon the following policies:

1. Provision of a variety of residential and non-residential uses which will maintain the Borough of Atlantic Highlands as an attractive community on Sandy Hook Bay.

2. Protection of the environmental quality of the Borough through measures that maintain sensitive features, especially steep slopes, landmarks, historic sites, areas containing scenic or recreational resources, woodlands, stream corridors, wetlands and natural areas on the bay shore.

3. Management of waterfront development in accordance with an overall plan to protect the amenity of a waterfront location and boat harbor, and to assure the community of physical and visual access to the bay, including access for swimming, boating, off-pier and wade-in fishing, and walking on tidelands.

4. Enhancement of the central business district and light industrial areas to strengthen their commercial attraction and to expand the choice of beneficial goods, services, and employment opportunities available within the Borough.

5. Maintenance of the liveability and value of residential neighborhoods.

6. Management of architectural elements that are seen from the bay to maintain and enhance our Victorian architectural heritage.
LAND USE ELEMENT
INTRODUCTION

The land use plan element guides the extent and intensity of development within Atlantic Highlands. The land use recommendations are coordinated with the other master plans elements, the basic planning studies and the statement of principles, objectives and assumptions.

The land use element has been drawn based largely upon these historic development patterns, existing land use, and the need to preserve the Borough’s traditional form and neighborhoods. It seeks to maintain the current intensity of land use and density of population, which are almost at the limits of capacity, so as to ensure neighborhood; community and regional well-being and protection of the environment. It also continues the emphasis on preserving open space and improving recreation opportunities.

Thirteen land use districts are planned to provide a balance of residential, commercial, light industrial and marine uses. The districts listed on Table 15 are overlain by designations to protect landmarks, historic area, flood hazard areas, steep slopes, wetlands and stream corridors. It is intended to establish 50-foot stream buffers along both banks of Many Mind Creek and Wagner Creek, in cooperation with Middletown Township for banks on its side of the border. In the buffers, no form of construction is to be allowed, trees and vegetation are to be preserved and public access trails are to be established within the greenways.

In summary, the Land Use Plan makes recommendations based on the following planning actions:

- The small town residential character should be maintained through coordinated efforts related to revitalization of the community, preservation of open space and maintaining a viable coastal resource. Actions will be based on updated ordinances and zoning regulations that will allow the Borough to control the pace and direction of new projects. All proposals will be viewed in a more global perspective as the Borough continues to participate with other bayshore towns in strategies and plans for economic and ecological resources.

- Residential growth and development should be limited based on several factors: preservation of open space, ordinance changes that support incentives to adapt the existing inventory of multi-family structures into units for single family use, and policies that discourage future infill.

- The historic aspect of the Borough should be viewed as an asset for the future, one that should be enhanced through legal measures as well as town-wide initiatives. Practical guidance and incentives could be made available to homeowners for the restoration of their historical structures. The creation of a Historic Preservation Commission and the adoption of a comprehensive ordinance dealing with historic preservation would allow a framework for protecting and enhancing the Borough’s historic heritage.
Commercial attraction should be encouraged to establish a viable economic base. Projects already underway to upgrade the central business district and light industrial areas should continue and be maintained to support the existing businesses and attract new businesses, which provide new opportunities for goods, services, employment and customers. The plans to link the waterfront and town center should develop to support the Borough’s efforts for revitalization. Improving the ferry facilities, as well as the road and parking network will support the efforts for economic stability.

Balance between waterfront commercial and commuter activities with waterfront open space and recreational activities is an important step for the future success of the Borough as a viable tourist community. Improving the existing road networks, and the upgrading of transit connections to urban areas will support and enhance the quality of life of Borough residents. Additionally, the plans for development of a network of pedestrian and bicycle links for work and pleasure should go forward to further enable the Borough’s community to experience the pleasures associated with bayshore life. Guidelines will need to be established to protect the intent and future plans for linkages contained within the Borough and those connecting to other bayshore and metropolitan communities.

Commitment to an upgraded sanitary sewer system is critical for the success of all of the goals put forth in the Master Plan. An in-depth study of existing service and thorough assessment of the area currently with septic systems is imperative to understand the future demands the borough will experience and to provide realistic guidance to residents using septic systems, many of which are aging. Coupled with these findings, is the need to continue efforts to improve the borough’s water supply system. Both systems must be examined and developed in support of an overall plan for the borough and not reduced to spot examination based on limited individual service.

The enhancement and preservation of natural resources should occur in a way that is supported and maintained by future residents and visitors. In the long run, it will be an educated public armed with the understanding of the importance for policies and projects that will guarantee the Borough’s conservation success. They must understand such issues as:

a. What resources stabilize soil and why it is important;

b. What sources retain groundwater and why it is important;

c. What vegetation attracts wildlife or might counteract pollution and how that impacts every day life and;

d. How natural buffers can not only provide separation between land uses but also minimize the impact of weather conditions.
This is a single plan of united efforts concerning all areas of future land use within the Borough and with adjacent neighbors. Each goal and objective must be met to minimize the goals of the Master Plan.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
The Goals of this Plan have changed somewhat from previous plans due to changes not only on a municipal level, but affected by state and regional policies as well. The lack of available land for development and an ever increasing awareness of the need for preservation of what is unique to the community, and conservation of its natural resources have influenced the direction of the goals of this plan. Some are directions that were not previously encouraged. The recommendations of this Land Use Element are specifically established to support all of the Objectives of the seven basic Master Plan Goals.

1. HERITAGE
   Maintain and enhance the town's architectural, historic and scenic heritage as an asset for the future.

2. HOUSING
   To limit future development and population density.

3. COMMERCE
   Enhancement of the central business district and light industrial areas to strengthen their commercial attraction and to expand the choice of beneficial goods, services, and employment opportunities available within the Borough. Encouragement of a viable economic base.

4. LINKAGES AND EDGES
   Appropriate linkage and balance of waterfront open space and recreational activities with waterfront commercial and commuter activities to enhance the character and improve the amenities centrally available along the bay side of town. Improve the quality of the Borough's network of roadways, trails and gateways.

5. INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY
   Maintain and improve systems where deemed necessary.
   Ensure that investment in infrastructure supports a sustainable pattern of land uses that builds on past public investment in roads, schools, utilities and public open space.

6. COMMUNITY
   Retaining the small town residential character while continuing to thrive as an active, livable waterfront community.

7. NATURAL RESOURCES
   Identify all of the natural resources within the Borough and develop comprehensive plans for the conservation of those resources.
RESIDENTIAL

Approximately 428.10 acres or 55.74 percent of the total area of the Borough is in residential use. This represents approximately 32 acres less than the amount reported for the 1964 survey. Single-family residential use accounted for approximately 398.2 acres, or 51.85 percent of the total Borough land area. This represents a decrease of 3.58 percent since 1964. This may be partially due to attrition through demolition or conversion to other uses, although recent years have seen re-subdivision and infill development with single family residences.

Although single-family structures are the dominant dwelling type within the borough, two and four family residential development occupies just over 5.5 acres, a significant increase over the 1964 survey. The majority of two and four family units have been created from the conversion of single family dwellings, although some recently constructed units also are found. This type of development is most common in areas east of Grand Avenue.

The multi-family category includes apartments, condominiums, townhouses and other attached housing of five or more dwellings. These multi-family uses combine to total approximately 24.27 acres or 3.16 percent of the total Borough land area. Although multi-family development is scattered throughout the Borough, the larger complexes include: Highlandia Apartments, Capri Apartments, located on East Avenue south of Route 36; and King James Courts Condominiums, located off Highway 36 west of Sears Avenue, Brookside Terrace off Grand Avenue, and Belvior Condominiums on Center Avenue, and Scenic Ridge townhouses on E. Highland Avenue.

There are seven residential land use districts that have been created based upon established land use patterns. The established residential districts are to be maintained in their present form. Existing lot layouts are to be kept at their present dimensions and configurations. Subdivisions that result in non-conforming lots are to be discouraged.

R1
Residential-1

- The land use in this district is predominantly single family.
- Two-family conversions have been eliminated in this district.
- Conversion of houses containing 2 or more units to single family use is encouraged.

R2
Residential-2

- The land use in this district is predominantly single family.
- Two-family conversions have been eliminated in this district.
- Conversion of houses containing 2 or more units to single family use is encouraged.
The land use in this district is predominantly single family on large lots and steep slopes.
- Two-family conversions have been eliminated in this district.
- Conversion of houses containing 2 or more units to single family use is encouraged.

Multi-family garden units
- This type of multi-family attached housing is restricted to this location and to the number of units already existing.

Multi-family mid-rise
- This type of multi-family attached housing is restricted to this location and to the number of units already existing.

Townhouse residential units
- This type of multi-family attached housing is restricted to this location and to the number of units already existing.

Senior citizen housing development
- A new senior housing development, Portland Point, has had a positive impact in providing housing for seniors in the Borough in furtherance of the objectives of the Master Plan.

Office-residential
- Located and maintained along the southern frontage of Memorial Parkway.
COMMERCIAL

Commercial development accounts for approximately 42.49 acres or 5.53 percent of existing land use within Atlantic Highlands. This represents an increase of approximately 22.62 acres or 114 percent over the 1964 totals. Incorporated within the commercial land use category are such uses as retail/service, mixed use (commercial/residential), office/professional and home/professional or occupation. The office/professional and home/professional occupation and mixed-use categories accounted for just over 8 percent of commercial acreage within the Borough. Commercial development within Atlantic Highlands is primarily centered on First Avenue extending from Bayshore Plaza, located at the intersection of route 36 and First Avenue, to the waterfront. These uses include a variety of commercial activities including banks, food service, taverns, realty offices, retail outlets, auto service stations, and other similar uses.

A second but lesser concentration of business activities can be found along West Avenue between Route 36 and Bay Avenue. These uses represent a relatively large percentage of the commercial acreage, but account for only a small number of the actual commercial uses. These uses include printers, auto service stations, foodservices, and building contractors.

Four Districts have been defined for commercial, retail and service uses.

HBD

Historic Business District

- Based upon historic quality of the streetscape and the buildings.
- Streetscape improvements coordinated with building facade improvements are encouraged.
- Projects subject to Historical Review Commission review (future).
- Off-street parking is confined to public lots outside the HBD boundaries.
- Development applications must demonstrate that adequate parking capabilities are available to accommodate new uses in outside districts.
- Residential is a conditional use:
  - Units are confined to upper stories of mixed-use buildings with ground floor space restricted to commercial activities.
  - Smaller residential units, designed for occupancy by one or two person households, would be allowed.
WB
Waterfront Business District
- The intent of this district is to encourage development that is based on unified plans coordinated with the marina area.
- This district represents an expansion of the business district into the waterfront to permit additional retail and entertainment/restaurant use on underdeveloped property.
- Office space is a conditional use.
- The percentage of floor area in office use is limited to encourage a mix that stimulates pedestrian activity in the day and evening.
- Open space and pedestrian areas are integrated.

CBD
Central Business District
- This district provides for an expanded range of general commercial uses.
- On-site parking is required.
- Less emphasis on pedestrian orientation. Residential is a conditional use:
  - c. Units are confined to upper stories of mixed-use buildings with ground floor space restricted to commercial activities.
  - d. Smaller residential units, designed for occupancy by one or two person households, would be allowed.

HB
Highway Business District
- Commercial uses.
- Shopping centers oriented toward Route 36.

INDUSTRIAL
Historically, industrial activity has not been a major component of the developed land area within Atlantic Highlands. Lands devoted to industrial use within the Borough declined from 14.32 acres in 1964 to approximately 0.88 acres in 1988. Industrial uses are found along Lincoln Avenue between First Avenue and West Avenue.

LI
Light Industrial District
- Retail uses not permitted.
- Range of industrial uses
PUBLIC LAND
This category includes property in public ownership, exclusive of municipal and county park land and the Municipal Marina. It accounts for Board of Education property, municipal buildings and lands, Municipal Utilities Authority property, and State and Federal lands. Public lands, exclusive of the Municipal Marina and park and recreation sites, total 33.17 acres. The Municipal Marina, which contains the Shore Casino Restaurant, totals approximately 15.42 acres or slightly over 2 percent of the Borough land area. Included within the public lands category is publicly-owned beach which accounts for 23.45 acres or slightly over 70 percent of the borough public lands. In addition, there are approximately 26.91 acres of vacant land in public ownership, which have been included within the vacant land category. These occur in a few relatively large parcels scattered throughout the municipality. One parcel that runs along the waterfront is presently under consideration as a potential park/recreation site to be included within an overall waterfront development project, to include additional ferry parking. The largest parcel is located along Wagner Creek between Center Avenue and the waterfront.

QUASI-PUBLIC
Quasi-public lands include places of worship, private school facilities, fraternal organizations. These uses occupy approximately 9.57 acres, or less than 2 percent of the Borough land area. Houses of worship located in Atlantic Highlands include the Central Baptist church, First Presbyterian Church, Kings Highway Faith Fellowship, Saint Agnes Roman Catholic Church and Saint Paul Baptist Church. Other quasi-public uses include Mother Theresa Regional School on South Avenue and the Masonic Hall on Garfield Avenue.

PARKS AND RECREATION
Included in this category are municipal and county lands that have been developed for active and passive recreation purposes. Such sites total approximately 14.01 acres. Recreation facilities owned and maintained by the public school district and private schools are not included in this total since their availability for public use is limited.

The two most prominent recreation areas within the Borough are the Firemen’s Memorial Field and the Mount Mitchell Scenic Overlook that was recently re-developed to include a 9/11 memorial. In addition, several small parks and lots have been developed throughout the borough. Existing municipal recreation facilities are small in area, serve primarily the residential neighborhoods, and provide limited active recreation. The inclusion of the Mitchell Scenic Overlook is responsible for the majority of the 7.04 acres increase in this category since the 1964 survey.
VACANT LAND
This category includes undeveloped lands that are in private ownership. Lands in this category total approximately 88.38 acres, accounting for slightly more than 10 percent of the total land area of the Borough. Only three large parcels of vacant land exist - the Giuliani tract located between Bay Avenue and the waterfront, the McConnell tract at Avenue D and the bay, and the Harmon tract off E. Highland Avenue.

STREETS AND ROADS
The Borough’s street system accounts for approximately 136 acres or just under 18 percent of the Borough’s total land area.

Three districts have been defined for these uses.

MR
Marine Recreation District
- This district incorporates the marina and public open space uses oriented to the waterfront.
- Uses are restricted to the following:
  a. Water dependent or water oriented facilities.
  b. Support uses.
  c. Recreational uses.
  d. Public open space.

Two conservation categories have been created to provide the basis for district regulations.

PB
Public open space/recreation areas
- This designation is applied to locations that are/will be reserved for active and passive recreation use accessible to the public.

- Portions of the land identified as “waterfront at town center”, located west of the marina, would be desirable as “public open space/recreation areas (PB)” for such uses as a town beach, bicycle trail, pedestrian promenade and Many Mind Greenway. Inclusion of a portion of the peninsula and related neighboring mainland (the former railroad pier and its approach) would enable that point of land to be reshaped and replanted as a pedestrian walkway and fishing site. Co-existing uses include: town and ferry parking, potential retail, and other marine and recreation uses.
Lenape Woods Nature Preserve: The Preserve comes under the conservation zone category for “public open space/recreation (PB)”. While the Preserve includes land acquisitions that neighbor Atlantic Highlands and fall within Middletown borders, it is recommended that all Borough maps include the full area of the Preserve.

**MC**

Marine Conservation District

- This designation is applied to areas waterward of the mean high water line.
- Disturbance in this area is limited.
- This area is intended to maintain the open bay.
- Atlantic Highlands residents should enjoy the town’s coastline while they can. According to scientists and local environmental experts the town may experience the effects of global warming sooner than originally expected. If predicted sea level changes of three feet are accurate, flood levels would reach an additional seven feet.

**SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

In addition to the land use classifications proposed, the following measures are also recommended:

1. Floor area ratio controls should be applied to commercial, industrial, and residential land uses.
2. Developable area standards should be applied to assure that each parcel has sufficient land area outside of steep slopes and wetlands.
The purpose of this Element is to establish a comprehensive set of policies to identify and preserve historic resources in Atlantic Highlands. The Historic Element is optional under the Growth Management Act (GMA), but Atlantic Highlands is choosing to incorporate this element into the Plan because historic preservation is not only an important part of Atlantic Highlands character, it is vital to the Borough's future economic prosperity as well.
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

For thousands of years Lenape Indians, the original inhabitants, lived along the cliffs and creeks, fished in the bay and hunted in the woods of the area. Evidence of their presence consists of projectile points, pottery shards, and piles of discarded clam shells, as well as documents from early European explorers and Dutch and English colonists.

1609 The first European to visit the area was Henry Hudson in his ship “Half Moon”. His ship’s log tells of obtaining fresh water from natural springs in the area, now commemorated as Henry Hudson Springs.

1664 Popamora, the Lenape chief of the area, agreed to a deed selling the entire peninsula between the Ocean and Keyport to English settlers. William Bowne, with sons John and James, and seven other Europeans came from Gravesend, Long Island and from Rhode Island and soon settled along Many Mind Creek in the area that became Atlantic Highlands, then known as Portland Poynt.

1667 New Jersey’s first Legislature met in Portland Poynt and under authority of Nicholls Patent granted three separate townships: Middletown, Shrewsbury and Freehold.

1776-1783 Troops from both armies were present in the area. Standing today along the old roads are many markers noting camp sites used by the British en route to Sandy Hook after the Battle of Monmouth.

1830 The area began developing. Louis Despreaux, owner of the house near Henry Hudson Springs, known as the “Spout House”, sold fresh water from the springs for 5 cents a barrel to fishing vessels, especially the New England Fishing Fleet. The Spout House still stands today at the corner of Hilton Road and Belvidere Road.

1834 William Brown built the first dock at the end of what is now First Avenue. It is believed he built the house on First Avenue known as “The Homestead”, which sold in 1867 to Thomas Leonard; in turn, Leonard gave it to his son, Thomas Henry Leonard, later to be known as “the father of Atlantic Highlands.” The house was later moved from First Avenue to the corner of Mount and Second Avenues, where it remains today.

1840 At that time, the area of Atlantic Highlands was divided basically into four farms. On the west side, from the area of Washington Avenue to the Bay, was the Brown farm, later the Leonard’s. From Washington Avenue to the hills was the Roberts farm. On the east side, the Hooper farm was on the water, and inland were the Patterson-Woodward farms.
1879 Thomas Henry Leonard began residential development of the Borough by selling land on the east side of First Avenue to about Fourth as town lots. He used the money from the sales to extend the original Brown's Dock farther into the Bay to accommodate the new steamships connecting to Manhattan.

1881 The Atlantic Highlands Association, a group wishing to establish a Methodist camp meeting grounds like Ocean Grove, purchased the Hooper farm and other properties, and laid out portions on the east side of the Borough.

1882 The first church (Methodist) in Atlantic Highlands was built on First and Mount Avenues (later moved). First Post Office established. Fire Company formed.

1883 First drug store. First public school opening.

1887 A Borough government was established. Street lights were introduced.

1889 Atlantic Highlands National Bank opened. Atlantic Highlands Association sold their pier to the Central Railroad.

1891 The Borough government was reincorporated into the Mayor-Council form.

1892 The Central Railroad pier became the terminus for railroads and steamships, further adding to growth of the area as a popular summer community.

1895 First Casino Club organized. The Stone Bridge was built over Grand Avenue and dedicated in 1896. First introduction of electric lighting. Application for a trolley line along First and West Avenues was submitted. A second public school was constructed.

1905 The steamboat Mandalay began running three round trips to New York City daily, enabling the borough’s work force to commute to their jobs in the City while still having the pleasures of living on the shore.

1908 On August 13, the “Journal” recorded the long-anticipated extension of the electric trolley car into Atlantic Highlands from the Stone Church branch of the Jersey Central Traction Company. The single tract was laid on First Avenue, made a loop down Center Avenue, passed the Railroad Station on what is now West Avenue, and traveled up Mount Avenue to rejoin First Avenue. Connections could be made to travel on to Highlands, Red Bank or Keyport. The First Avenue trolley was in operation until the early 1920s.
Atlantic Highlands has a variety of residential and commercial structures remaining from the Borough’s early history and development. Two areas which serve as historic focal points in Atlantic Highlands are the Victorian Hill District, covering an area of approximately 60 acres on a steep hill which rises up from Sandy Hook Bay to an elevation of 120 feet above mean sea level, and the First Avenue streetscape of the Historic Business District, which comprises the two blocks of First Avenue between Mount Avenue and Ocean Boulevard. The majority of houses in the Atlantic Highlands District date back to the late 1800’s and represent a number of late Victorian styles. Included in the district is the Stone Bridge constructed in 1896. The First Avenue streetscape serves as part of the Borough’s commercial center and was largely constructed during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These two districts contain over half of the currently inventoried notable historic structures in Atlantic Highlands. These historic structures are identified in the Monmouth County Historic Sites Inventory, which was undertaken in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, which identifies and recognizes historic properties, and which was updated in 2006. The County Inventory also assessed the eligibility of Atlantic Highlands sites for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

Fortunately, a number of private owners have worked hard to maintain and enhance their historic houses, including extensive restoration in some cases. Also, some homeowners have recently formed an Older Homes Group under Historical Society auspices to share information on ways of achieving better house preservation. Unfortunately, however, some houses have been remodeled without historical sensitivity or are inadequately maintained, and are losing their architectural quality and property value. Also, current market conditions have led to demolition of historic houses in some nearby towns (a phenomenon known as “scrape-downs”) and often to construction of jarringly inappropriate and oversized houses in their place.
2007 POLICY STATEMENT

The policy expressed in the Historic Preservation/Restoration Element is to encourage and guide a range of actions needed to preserve the rich heritage of Atlantic Highlands. The Element promotes the preservation and enhancement of those buildings, structures and areas of historic and aesthetic value that reflect the cultural, social, economic and architectural history of Atlantic Highlands.

OBJECTIVES

In order to implement the 2007 policy, five preservation/restoration objectives are presented in the following section:

1. Ordinance changes to facilitate preservation/restoration efforts;
2. Creation of a Historic Preservation Commission;
3. Development of tools to encourage property owners to preserve, restore and adapt their historic structures;
4. Completion and updating of the historic building inventory to coincide with or add to the Monmouth County Historic Sites Inventory and also the State List for Historic Buildings, as well as examining the possibility for the inclusion of additional historic districts; and
5. Development of a Community Education Program.

- Ordinance changes to facilitate preservation/restoration efforts.

The objective is to develop positive Regulations, Ordinances, and action mechanisms that support and encourage preservation, restoration and adaptive use of historic structures and help maintain the wider heritage of historic streetscapes and districts. These rules “should protect historic districts, through a combination of zoning and architectural review, from intrusions, demolitions, incompatible alterations and new construction, and other negative visual impacts,” as recommended in the Monmouth County Historic Preservation Guide (page 28). Zoning would be the strongest tool, especially for historic districts where it is important to “protect the exterior appearance of buildings, historically appropriate siting and street configurations, as well as to encourage adaptive use, rehabilitation and harmonious new construction” (page 40 of the Guide).

The Middletown Township zoning ordinances relating to historic preservation could well serve as a model for Atlantic Highlands to adapt and adopt. One section provides clear and comprehensive “standards of consideration for historic landmarks and historic districts” (listed below under Standards of Consideration). A second section provides a broad policy framework for historic preservation (listed below under Visual Compatibility Factors). It also sets out procedures for review by
a Landmarks Commission of building permits for historic buildings, except in cases of immediate emergency repairs. The Commission carries out architectural-historical reviews of plans for restoration, rehabilitation and additional construction at landmark sites.

Visual Compatibility Factors

Visual compatibility factors should be adopted to preserve the integrity and authenticity of historic buildings and districts and to insure the compatibility of new structures. Visual compatibility factors should be considered by the Historic Preservation Commission when performing a review. If past architectural styles are to be used, a copy of a specific structure is preferable to an amalgam of building types and styles.

The following visual compatibility factors should be listed in the historic preservation ordinance:

1. Height.

   The height of the proposed building shall be visually compatible with adjacent buildings.

2. Proportion of building’s front facade.

   The relationship of the width of the building to the height of the front elevation shall be visually compatible with buildings and places to which it is visually related.

3. Proportion of openings within the facility.

   The relationship of the width of windows to the height of windows in a building shall be visually compatible with the buildings and places to which it is visually related.

4. Rhythm of solids to voids in front facades.

   The relationship of solids to voids in the front facade of a building shall be visually compatible with the buildings and places to which it is visually related.
5. Rhythm of spacing of buildings and streets.

The relationship of the building to the open space between it and adjoining
buildings shall be visually compatible with the buildings and places to which it is
visually related.

6. Rhythm of entrance and/or porch projections.

The relationship of entrance and porch projections to the street shall be
visually compatible with the buildings and places to which it is visually related.

7. Relationship of materials, texture and color.

The relationship of materials, texture and color of the facade and roof of a building
shall be visually compatible with the predominant materials used in the buildings to
which it is visually related.

8. Roof shapes.

The roof shape of a building shall be visually compatible with buildings to which
it is visually related.

9. Walls of continuity.

Appurtenances of a building such as walls, open-type fencing and evergreen
landscape masses shall form cohesive walls of enclosure along a street, to the extent
necessary to maintain compatibility with the buildings and places to which it is
visually related.

10. Scale of building.

The size of a building, the mass of a building in relation to open spaces, the
windows, door openings, porches and balconies shall be visually compatible with
the buildings and places to which it is visually related.

11. Directional expression of front elevation.

A building shall be visually compatible with buildings and places to which it is
visually related in its directional character, whether this be vertical character,
horizontal character or non-directional character.
12. Exterior features.

A structure's related exterior features such as lighting, fences, signs, sidewalks, driveways, and parking areas shall be compatible with the features of those structures to which it is visually related and shall be appropriate for the historic period for which the structure is significant.

Other potential resources to draw upon in preparing Atlantic Highlands historic preservation guidelines and regulations include:

1. The Secretary of the Interior's standards and guidelines on preservation and rehabilitation. Their basic philosophy is to identify, retain, and preserve the form and details of historic properties. The emphasis is on maintaining and protecting such properties first, repairing and rehabilitating second, and replacing only when maintenance or repairs of certain components are not feasible or cost-effective. The standards serve as a yardstick for assessing Federal endorsement, funding or tax-incentives (where applicable) for preservation work on historic properties. They are fundamental and foundational for, and should be built into, municipal regulations as well.

2. The Monmouth County Historic Preservation Guide.

3. The experience and guidelines of other New Jersey towns (e.g. Newton) that have made quantum improvements in their historic districts and sites and are models for successful, municipal promotion of preservation and related heritage tourism.

- Creation of a Historic Preservation Commission

The Commission should be established in the Borough to provide consultative assistance to historic property owners. It would have responsibility under the Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-107) to compile a survey of historic sites, give advice on the Preservation Plan Element of the Master Plan, and review and provide recommendations on applications for development, and also carry out educational programs. If the zoning ordinance of the Borough also designates and regulates landmark sites and districts, then the Commission would have powers to grant or deny permits for the development or alteration of the designated sites.

Its first responsibility should be the drafting of guidelines and regulations to incorporate into new ordinances for adoption by the Borough.
Standards of Consideration

In carrying out all of its duties and responsibilities, including but not limited to the nomination of landmarks and districts for historic designation and the review of regulated activities, the Commission shall be guided by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings, which may hereafter be amended and which are given as follows:

1. Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide a compatible use for an historic property which requires minimal alteration of the building, structure, or site and its environment, or to use a property for its originally intended purpose.

2. The distinguishing original qualities or character of an historic building, structure, or site and its environment shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided when possible.

3. All buildings, structures, and sites shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and seek to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged.

4. Changes which may have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history and development of a building, structure, or site and its environment. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right, and this significance shall be recognized and respected.

5. Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship, which characterize a building, structure, or site shall be treated with sensitivity.

6. Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced, wherever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other buildings or structures.

7. The surface cleaning of structures shall be undertaken with the gentlest means possible. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that will damage the historic building materials shall not be undertaken.

8. Every possible effort shall be made to protect and preserve archaeological resources affected by, or adjacent to any project.
9. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historical, architectural or cultural material, when such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood or environment, and when such design is not visible from the street.

10. Wherever possible, new additions or alteration to structures shall be done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired.

- Development of tools to encourage property owners to preserve, restore and adapt their historic structures.

Possible tools to support this effort may be the following:

1. Property tax incentives.

The existing ordinance (Section 11-2, pages 1102-1105) offers property tax abatement incentives for improvements on existing dwellings and on multiple dwellings and commercial or industrial structures more than twenty years old. “Improvements” can mean work done for purposes of historic preservation, restoration and rehabilitation of residential or business district structures. Building improvements typically increase the assessed value of a property and also the property tax that is levied on it. However, the ordinance provides that, when an abatement is granted for a dwelling, up to $15,000 in new assessed value is phased in over a period so that the tax levy on that amount only goes up 20 per cent per year during five years. The same phasing applies to income-producing buildings (multiple dwellings and commercial or industrial structures), but the ceiling of assessed value on which taxes can be abated is $25,000.

The Borough Council should increase the ceiling for the available tax abatement on all landmarked structures 100 years of age or older that undergo appropriate historic preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, or adaptive use. Such an increase is warranted because structures of that age are under greater threat of deterioration, disuse, and even demolition, and need more improvement work of greater complexity, difficulty and cost, than younger buildings. Also, these 100 year-plus structures usually represent historical architectural styles and construction methods that are more scarce and thus more valuable historically as a community heritage resource.
The ceiling of assessed value to be abated for 100-year-plus structures of any type could be set at $50,000. This would replace the $25,000 level being set for dwellings over 20 years old and match the new top level enacted for income-producing buildings. If owners of the 100-year category want to qualify for an abatement higher than $25,000, the planned improvements would be required to be certified by the Historical Preservation Commission as appropriate forms of historical preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, or adaptive use, according to agreed standards to be incorporated into the ordinances. Through the certification process, if sought by owners, they would receive sound advice relating to their structure and its streetscape, as necessary. The process also would help ensure that the community benefits from a well-conceived and harmonious restoration in exchange for the postponement of additional Borough tax revenue.

In addition, the Monmouth County Historic Preservation Guide lists other possible tax incentives which would require closer study:

a. Property tax credit based on a percentage of restoration or rehabilitation expenditures.

b. Assessment at “current use value” rather than “highest and best use” valuation.

c. Recognition of decreased assessed value after donation of a preservation easement or landmark designation.

2. Conservation Easements.

Conservation easements covering exteriors/facades and historic/scenic views. Under certain conditions, Federal and State tax laws can treat easements as tax-deductible charitable contributions. The owner/donor continues to own and use the property, the municipality still receives property taxes, adjacent property values may increase because historic and scenic value is protected, and the community gains the benefit of a protected historic property.

3. Deed restrictions and covenants.

Deed restrictions and covenants can be used to maintain the historic integrity of buildings as well as surrounding land, to rule out facade alteration or obstruction of a particular view. The strongest method is restrictive covenants that run with the land. If these agreements are enforced by a qualified organization, they may be eligible for treatment as tax deductible charitable contributions.

Where an historic property, particularly in a more compacted “downtown” area, has additional development potential under zoning and land use regulations, those unutilized development rights can sometimes be transferred by sale to another site where they can be translated into new construction. The seller is thus compensated for the restriction of development on the historic site, and the buyer can construct the equivalent amount of development on a second site.

- Completion and updating of the historic building inventory to coincide with or add to the Monmouth County Historic Sites Inventory and also the State List for Historical Buildings, as well as examining the possibility for the inclusion of additional historic districts.

Historical architecture is an essential element of Atlantic Highlands physical image today. The historic architectural styles, building scale, and streetscapes prevailing in much of Atlantic Highlands are an integral part of the town’s basic fabric and help define its special character. These sites, which are part of the heritage from the past, are also important to the town’s sense of community, real estate appeal, property values and economic survival, both now and for the future.

Landmark Designation Standards

To guide the identification and designation process, the following standards should be used for evaluating the significance of properties and their eligibility for landmark status in Atlantic Highlands:

1. The landmark is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local, state or national history; or

2. The landmark is associated with the lives of persons significant in the past; or

3. The landmark embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that it represents the work of a master, or that it possesses high artistic values, or that it represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

4. The landmark has yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in prehistory or history; or
5. The landmark exhibits scenic, historic, architectural, archaeological, or cultural features which make a unique contribution to the townscape of the Borough.

- **Development of a Community Education Program.**

The Borough should sponsor a program, which educates community residents and makes them aware of the location and significance of landmark features. Such a program might include recognition through the award of landmark certificates to owners of landmark properties, historic markers on landmark sites, information distributed through the Borough or special publications newsletter, and sponsoring programs and events. This would complement the award of plaques to historic houses over 100 years of age, which is done by the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society.

**INVENTORY**

**Background**

Many structures in Atlantic Highlands are 100 years old or more. The present inventory designates 46 sites as landmarks, including residences, three churches, the Stone Bridge, two special scenic views, and some First Avenue buildings. (In contrast, State property records show that 240 structures in town are 100 years of age or older; though not all of these are in original condition, a number of them are worthy as historic sites and should be designated.)

Most of the 46 existing sites are in two historic districts. As named in the 1990 Master Plan, these are the:

1. “Atlantic Highlands District”, which is now renamed “Victorian Hill Historic District”. This district is located on land from Second to Hooper/Chapin Avenues, and from Ocean Boulevard to E. Highland/E. Mount Avenue.

2. “Historic Business District”. This district is located on First Avenue between Mount Avenue and Bay Avenue Ocean Boulevard.

These are overlay districts, meaning that historic designation is “in addition to such designation and regulation as the zoning ordinance may otherwise require” in those locations (section 65.1 of the Municipal Land Use Law). The existence of these overlay districts only represents a pleasant form of recognition; it does not, in itself, provide any protection of historic structures in those districts, nor any incentive for their preservation and restoration.
## Historic Landmark Districts and Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>NRHP Eligible*</th>
<th>Source**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>VICTORIAN HILL DISTRICT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. District as a whole</td>
<td>Second to Hooper/Chapin Avenues; Ocean Boulevard to Mount; north side of E. Highland Avenue from 8th Avenue to Grand Avenue</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>MCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual structures:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 38 Ocean Boulevard</td>
<td>'Barre Harbor Cottage' - Queen Anne residence</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>AH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 44 Ocean Boulevard</td>
<td>'Peck House' - Queen Anne style residence</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>AH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. 48 Ocean Boulevard</td>
<td>'How Kola' - Colonial Revival residence</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>MCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. 54 Ocean Boulevard/5th</td>
<td>Colonial Revival/Neo-Classical residence</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>MCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Ocean Blvd/east of 7th</td>
<td>Peanut stone steps/Victorian house</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>AH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Second and Mount Aves</td>
<td>'Old Red Homestead' - Leonard House</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>MCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Third Ave (Ocean/Mount)</td>
<td>First wooden house in Borough</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>AH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Third and Highland Aves</td>
<td>Central Baptist Church - Romanesque Revival</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>MCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Third and Highland Aves</td>
<td>Presbyterian Church - Gothic revival style</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>MCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Third and Mount Aves</td>
<td>Site of First Methodist Church</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>AH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. 33 Fourth Avenue</td>
<td>Stick Style residence</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>MCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. 12 Seventh Ave</td>
<td>Queen Anne/ Stick Style residence</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>MCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. 28 Seventh Avenue</td>
<td>Queen Anne style residence</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>MCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. 16 Eighth Avenue</td>
<td>Victorian style residence</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>MCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. 60 Eighth Avenue</td>
<td>Carpenter Gothic residence</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>MCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. 78 Eighth Avenue</td>
<td>Queen Anne style residence</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>MCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Eighth Ave. next to #78</td>
<td>Peanut stone steps</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>AH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Mount &amp; 7th Aves</td>
<td>&quot;Woodmanse House&quot; - Queen Anne residence with Colonial elements</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>AH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. 12 Prospect Avenue</td>
<td>Carpenter/Queen Anne style residence</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>MCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. 22 Prospect Avenue</td>
<td>Colonial Revival on Shingle/Queen Anne</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>MCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. 27 Prospect Avenue</td>
<td>&quot;The Towers&quot; (Strauss Mansion) - Queen Anne style residence</td>
<td>Possible</td>
<td>MCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. 46 Prospect Avenue</td>
<td>'Forest Cottage' - Shingle Style residence</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>MCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. 95 Mount Avenue</td>
<td>Queen Anne style residence</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>MCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Mount Ave. bridge</td>
<td>Stone bridge over Grand Ave</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>MCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. 102 Mount Avenue</td>
<td>'The Stable House'</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>AH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Mount &amp; Summit Aves</td>
<td>'Crawford Cottage' - Victorian style residence</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>AH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. 43 Hooper Avenue</td>
<td>Queen Anne style residence</td>
<td>District</td>
<td>MCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. 27 Hooper Avenue</td>
<td>Craftsman Style residence</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>AH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OTHER RESIDENTIAL AREAS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East side:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. 58 E. Lincoln Avenue</td>
<td>Queen Anne style residence</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>MCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. 27 E. Washington Ave Late</td>
<td>Queen Anne residence</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>MCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. 37 E. Washington Ave.</td>
<td>Late Queen Anne residence</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>MCHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. 170 Ocean Boulevard</td>
<td>'Point Lookout' residence - portion predates Revolutionary War</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>MCHA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NRHP

Address
34.  26 Belvidere Road
35.  Hilton at Bayside Drive
36.  Observatory Place
37.  Center Ave and Ave C
38.  Avenue D between West Highland & South Aves
West side:

39.  First Avenue streetscape
Individual structures:
40.  33 First Avenue/Bay Ave
41.  42 First Avenue
42.  85 First Avenue

SCENIC VIEWS
43.  Ocean Boulevard at Hofbrauhaus, Mt. Mitchell Park, Point Lookout bridge
44.  Center Ave, park & creek, bay beach & dunes at Many Mnd Creek, Popamora Point
45.  Promenade in the Marina

LIGHT INDUSTRY ZONE
46.  South side of W. Lincoln, west of West Avenue

WEST SIDE HISTORIC DISTRICT
Over 70 structures on the west side were built 100 or more years ago, and a number of these are vernacular Victorian residences whose exteriors are still close to original. These sites deserve individual landmark status and should be so designated.

SEARS HOUSES
At least a dozen houses in town are kit houses marketed by Sears, Roebuck and Co. during the period 1908-1940. If the exteriors are still close to the original, they should be designated as historic sites.

Notes:
* NRHP - National Register of Historical Places. The entry 'district' in this column means the site is eligible for inclusion in the Register as a contributing element in an historic district, not by itself. NRHP eligibility was determined in the 1984 sites inventory by Monmouth County Historical Association (MCHA), with some updating in 2006.

** The sources for designation of the historic sites and districts listed were either designated by Monmouth County Historical Association (marked as “MCHA”), or selected by the Atlantic Highlands Planning Board in consultation with the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society (marked as “AH”).
The biggest, most visible and most appreciated feature of Atlantic Highlands is its coastline along Sandy Hook Bay. The waterfront stretches 2.5 miles from west to east along the southern edge of the bay. Behind this shore, the territory of the town is a relatively narrow strip ranging in width from only a half mile to one mile maximum. Seen from many vantage points, whether above on the highland ridge or down at the tidal flats, the coast is an important defining factor in the environment and life of the Borough.
HISTORY

- During the late 1800s, individuals and groups came from New York City and the surrounding vicinity to camp along the water in tent colonies.

- The creation of the municipal marina took place from 1938 through 1940. It was built with municipal, state and federal funds; the Atlantic Highlands Lions Club supplied the vision and determination. Today, the municipal marina is the second largest on the East Coast, home to 715 craft.

- From the late 1800s through the 1940s, steamship service was a major source of transportation. Steamers such as the “Sandy Hook” and “Monmouth” navigated the waters, bringing commuting businessmen and vacationers to Atlantic Highlands. In 1892, the Central Railroad of New Jersey built a major pier at the end of First Avenue. Several trains at a time could continue to the end of the pier to offload steamboat passengers. In 1966, the existing Central Railroad pier was destroyed by fire.

- In 1992, high-speed ferry service was introduced into the Borough. Now, eleven runs a day leave Atlantic Highlands for the “city”.

CURRENT USES

Looking at the entire waterfront segment-by-segment reveals three main types of uses: natural, recreational, and residential, with a few commercial uses mixed in.

- Sandy beaches. Nature and nature-based recreation are combined at two sandy beaches at opposite ends of the coastline. Both beaches are available for swimming and other public uses, contain some grassy sand dunes, wetlands and woodlands, and are permanently dedicated as open space. One beach, next to Wagner Creek at the western border with Leonardo, covers about 400 feet of bayfront. It forms part of the Center Avenue Park owned by the Borough.

The other beach, next to the eastern border with neighboring Highlands, is about 1,600 feet long. It is part of Popamora Point, a County-owned park. Inland from its dunes will be built the eastern segment of the bayshore bike-and-hike trail, which will run there from the marina.

- Coastal bluffs section. Natural elements currently prevail below the high coastal bluffs between the eastern end of the harbor and Henry Hudson Springs. While residential structures top bluffs as high as 100 and 200 feet above sea level, below them is a narrow strip about 1,800 feet along the waterside, which contains a small beach area and fringe wetlands. At water’s edge is the rocky coastal embankment of a railroad line, which used to parallel the shoreline. The area will be developed recreationally as part of bayshore bike-and-hike trail, while retaining its natural character as much as possible.
- **Below Bayside Drive.** Natural vegetation also prevails on the more gentle slopes rising from the water below Bayside Drive east of Henry Hudson Springs. This segment, which covers about 3,200 feet of shore length, also contains a few wetland pockets and the rocky fringe of the former railroad’s embankment. Here, too, the bike-and-hike trail is planned as an active recreational use running through the preserved natural setting.

- **Marina and boat storage areas.** The main recreational use of the coastal zone is boating. The total water frontage devoted to boating uses is about 4,800 feet, with the bulkheaded part of the marina accounting for 1,180 feet of this. In addition, under a Borough lease, the Sandy Hook Bay Catamaran Club (also called the “Hobie Cat Club”) based at the Center Avenue Park, uses the bay-edge of the beach for launching boats and the back beach for summer boat parking. The total footage includes not only the active docks and rented boat slips of the Atlantic Highlands Marina, but also boat storage on the eastern end of the marina, along the mouth of Many Mind Creek east of Avenue A (Skipper’s Shop yards), and east of the beach at Center Avenue Park (Blackfoot Mobile Marine boatyard). On the bayfront of the same private property which contains the Skipper’s boatyard, there is also a curved sandy beach between Avenue A and First Avenue; only a 50-foot-wide portion of this beach on the Avenue A end is Borough-owned and has public access. Commercial facilities at the Marina are three restaurants, a bait and fishing supply shop, day-tripper fishing boats and party boats, and the commuter ferry to Manhattan.

- **Residential uses** line most of the northern edges of the slopes, hills, cliffs and bluffs which rise from the bay shore. Public access to coastal lands is permitted below most of these residential areas. However, except at low tides, there is no public access along one 1,250-foot waterfront segment between Avenue A and Avenue D which is lined with private residences relatively close to the water.
2007 POLICY STATEMENT

The goal of this element is to guide development and redevelopment along the waterfront and to coordinate local plans and ordinances with the Monmouth County’s Bayshore Waterfront Access Plan, the Bayshore Regional Strategic Plan, as well as changes expressed on a State level. Future development must respect the public interest in maintaining and enhancing this area as a community resource.

OBJECTIVES

In order to implement the 2007 policy the following coastal/waterfront design objectives are presented:

- The need to maintain and enhance public access to the waterfront.

Several public access areas exist today, although some sections are difficult to negotiate due to natural conditions. On the publicly owned segments, such access is a guaranteed right. The access points are listed below:

1. The sandy beach at the east end of town.
2. The sandy beach at the west end of town.
3. A 50-wide sand beach at the end of Avenue A.
4. Along the foot of the coastal bluffs and below Bayside Drive on the path of the former bayfront railroad.
5. In the municipal marina, the waterfront promenade behind the bulkhead line is fully open for public use, and some docks have pedestrian foot traffic, while others are limited to boat-owners who rent mooring slips.

With the completion of the bike-and-hike trail, some of the access difficulty existing today will be erased. Four main access points to the trail will exist:

1. From the east end of the marina.
2. Downhill from Henry Hudson Springs.
3. At the former Hilton Station of the railroad off Bayside Drive.
4. From Shore Drive in the Highlands.

Four other areas of the waterfront are bordered by private property, and so public access is not guaranteed above the high water line. From east to west, these are:

1. The peninsula of the old railroad-steamboat pier at the western end of the marina.
2. The sandy beach running west of the peninsula, to Avenue A.
3. The waterfront downslope from private residences on Harbor View Drive, where physical blockages prevent access from both ends (at Avenue A and Avenue D).

4. West of Avenue D at the bulkheaded waterfront bordering the boat storage facility of Blackfoot Mobile Marine.

Municipal policies and ordinances should be adopted based on regulations issued by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) under the Coastal Areas Facilities Review Act (CAFRA) section 7:7E-8.11 Public Access to the Waterfront.

Atlantic Highlands should incorporate Public Trust Doctrine language into ordinances for the assurance of municipal support for public access both existing and in the future. The Doctrine requires that tidal waterbodies be accessible to the public for navigation, fishing and recreation and that the public must have access to and use of privately owned “dry sand” areas as reasonably necessary to use the tidal waterbodies. The State recommended access zone of ten (10) feet above high-tide mark for “dry sand” should be used.

The bayfront area where public access still needs to be provided and assured and any blockages removed is between the eastern border of the Center Avenue Park and First Avenue. There are three issues of physical access in this area:

1. An upland fence barrier preventing access from Avenue D; and
2. The obstacle of a man-made jutting pier made of large stones which extends into the bay past the high water mark west of Avenue A.

The third issue involves the privately owned beach areas between Avenue A and First Avenue. Beach access for this area should be examined from a legal basis as it relates to the Public Trust Doctrine mentioned above.

- The need to develop and maintain the waterfront’s potential for recreation and open space uses.

As stated in the Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) adopted by the Planning Board and Borough Council and approved by DEP/Green Acres in early 2001, appropriate lands should be designated and reserved for open space and recreation, in the same way as other land uses. Open space should be looked on as an element of public infrastructure and services that must be provided and maintained to sustain the community.

Portions of the lands identified as “waterfront at town center” in the Plan would be desirable as “public open space/recreation areas (PB)” for such uses as town beach, bicycle trail, pedestrian promenade and Many Mind Creek Greenway. Inclusion of a portion of the peninsula and related neighboring mainland (the former railroad pier and its approach) would enable that point of land to be reshaped and replanted as a pedestrian walkway and fishing site. Co-existing uses include: town and ferry parking, potential retail, and other marine and recreation uses.
The efforts to create a pedestrian trail system stretching from the Marina to Popamora Point along Sandy Hook Bay will continue. The trail will unite a series of waterfront activity areas that includes the following features:

1. **Bayfront at town center.** North of Bay Avenue on the west bank of Many Mind Creek, the Borough intends to acquire land for open space, beach access and recreation (Guiliani tract, possibly to be renamed Sunset Beach Park) Public access to the jetty (former railroad-steamship pier) should be secured to allow for seating, fishing, and enjoyment of views over the bay. The trail of the Many Mind Creek Greenway would run along the creek’s east bank out to the jetty, in addition to its existing eastward path through the marina.

2. **Harbor Park and Marina.** A trail has been constructed behind the municipal marina and park, which offer active recreation and boating.

3. **Bayshore Trail and Linear Park.** The right-of-way of the former railroad will be converted to use as the Bayshore Trail and will be designed for pedestrian and bike access. Linkages to the trail will be provided from residential neighborhoods. Points of interest along the linear park will include Henry Hudson Springs and Hilton Station.

4. **Popamora Point.** This park terminates the Bayshore Trail at the eastern end of Atlantic Highlands and provides beach access and passive recreation.

5. **Bikeway.** A bike route could be marked along Bayside Drive and Ocean Boulevard providing scenic over-water views and access to the Mount Mitchill Scenic Overlook.

Additionally, the existence of the Bayshore Trail as publicly protected and permanently dedicated open space will ensure that the coastal base areas of the bluffs are not excavated or otherwise undermined.

There is still debate regarding uses for several existing undeveloped areas found along the waterfront. Further studies should be conducted and a plan of action adopted to be sure that those remaining properties will be developed over time in a manner that supports and enhances the community as a whole.

1. **The west.** The largest remaining open space in the Borough is the largely unbuilt land west of First Avenue and North of Bay Avenue on both sides of Many Mind Creek. (See “Bayfront at town center” above.) The area consists of five lots, of which the Borough owns only two unconnected lots totaling about 1 1/3 acre. The remaining acreage is the private ownership Giuliani and Hess tracts. Therefore, any proposals to reconfigure these lands for public purposes depend on these owners becoming willing sellers, the borough willing to finance the purchase costs, and a plan and layout being agreed upon as to how to use this space. So far it has not been possible to achieve sale of these lands to the Borough.
2. **The peninsula.** The undeveloped peninsula of land that used to be part of the old railroad and steamboat pier juts far out into the bay. It is privately owned.

3. **The east.** New piers for boats and for fishing have recently been installed here along the water, near an existing ramp for boat launching. Presumably, some natural enhancements on the land will accompany the planned bike-and-hike trail where it will turn toward and run along the bay here. Other development possibilities for this area need further investigation.

- The need to maintain and enhance the contribution made by the waterfront to the Borough by linking it to the First Avenue business district and encouraging appropriate water-oriented uses.

The Marina operation on the central part of the Atlantic Highlands coast is, in effect, the town’s biggest business and a sizeable source of Borough revenue. It is the second largest municipal harbor in New Jersey and is run as a municipal utility under the guidance of the Mayor and Council of the Borough. A feasible link between the town’s central business district and waterfront activities could enhance the economic base of the community. Improvements should be focused on transportation first. A study detailing the order and projected time frame for the creation of new transportation systems or the upgrading of existing systems should be undertaken.

The Waterfront Business District (WB) was created to encourage development based on unified plans coordinated with the marina area. This extends the area permitted for retail and entertainment while also integrating open space, recreation, beach access, and pedestrian areas. However, in order for this link to remain viable and its purpose realized, the Borough must address improvements to the links from the downtown to the ferry system.

Two areas for immediate attention would be:

1. To improve the existing roadway system; and
2. To implement a regular shuttle bus service.

- The need to coordinate with the State and County Plans for Coastal Zone Management and waterfront development.

The Borough will continue, wherever possible, to work closely with the State of New Jersey through its Green Acres program, with the Monmouth County Freeholders and Monmouth County Park System, and with neighboring municipal governments in efforts to preserve open space and provide recreational opportunities in the coastal zone.

Among New Jersey State organizations, the Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) has developed substantive guidelines and legal regulations, as well as education and public information programs, for many environment-related issues (including coastal
conservation and access) and provides matching funds for certain priority areas, including “Green
Acres.”

The DEP administers the Coastal Area Facility Review Act (CAFRA), originally enacted by the
legislature in 1977 and amended in 1994, which provides for the DEP to assess and decide on
plans for the use and development of coastal resources. The primary purpose of CAFRA is to
provide added protection to sensitive coastal areas located along the edge of the Atlantic Ocean,
Raritan Bay/Sandy Hook Bay, and Delaware Bay.

The New Jersey Coastal Management Program (NJCMP) sets a number of goals, policies and
standards to protect the values of coastal resources. Among the eight goals of the NJCMP are to
“protect and enhance the coastal ecosystem,” “encourage the preservation of open space,” and
“promote public access to the waterfront through the protection and creation of meaningful
access points and linear walkways” (from “New Jersey Coastal Management Program fact
sheet,” March 2002). The NJCMP’s legal framework includes CAFRA, the Wetlands Act, the
Waterfront Development Law, and the Public Trust Doctrine for access to and use of tidelands. Its
administrative arms include regulatory authority given in state coastal management and permit
rules (N.J.A.C.7:7E and 7:7) and planning activities by the DEP office of Coastal planning.
NJCMP is an approve part of the federal Coastal Zone Management Program.

Additionally, the Borough should continue to participate in and support the efforts of the bayshore
towns involved in developing the Bayshore Regional Strategic Plan. The issues and strategies
expressed in that document encompass many of the concerns and subsequent planning objectives
expressed above. Waterfront and open space preservation issues can no longer be viewed with
blinders. Future overall economic growth for the region is dependent on decisions and directions being
made by the united effort of municipalities.
MAP
The Municipal Land Use Law, specifically 40:55D-28(b)7, calls for the creation of a Recreation Plan Element.

Atlantic Highlands waterfront has beaches, dunes, wetlands and a thriving harbor for fishing and boating. Its steep slopes are forested and even flatter areas have substantial tree cover. The town's small area of 1.2 square miles is almost fully built out - about 95 per cent of the land is developed - and densely populated.

The movement to protect remaining open space in and surrounding Atlantic Highlands derives from this basic geography and demography. Beyond these figures, it also springs from the increased demand for active recreation by children, youth and adults, which outstrips available facilities. There is also growing public concern for the preservation of woodlands, waterfront, stream corridors and wetlands for purposes of both passive recreation and conservation of natural resources and habitat.
HISTORY
Atlantic Highlands has a strong commitment and a long history of providing recreation opportunities and preserving open space resources for public purposes. In recent years, Atlantic Highlands has been acquiring open space for public access and use as a deliberate policy.

- 1997-98, the town made five land purchases that created a 39-acre Lenape Woods Nature Preserve, consisting of an eastern section of almost 26 acres and a western section of 13 acres.

- November 1999 - The election ballot included an open space referendum which the voters approved by a margin of 2.5 to 1 (1,106 yes and 435 no).

- December of 1999 - The Borough Council adopted an Ordinance establishing a dedicated open space tax of 1 cent per $100 of assessed valuation.

- April 2000 - Twenty five per cent of households in Atlantic Highlands responded to a survey mailed out by the Environmental Commission. Asked what they find attractive about living in the town, respondents cited the “small town atmosphere” (90 per cent), water front and views (89 per cent), natural beauty (79 per cent), boat harbor (79 per cent), commuter ferry to New York City (51 per cent), and Lenape Woods Nature Preserve (48 per cent). Asked how they would like to see the town develop in the future, the highest percentage of respondents chose more public open space (48 per cent).

- July 2000 - A public meeting was held to introduce and discuss the proposal to submit a Planning Incentive application and a draft Open Space Recreation Plan (OSRP) to Green Acres.

- July 2000 - The Open Space Tax came into effect with property tax bills.

- July 2000 - The 2000 Recreation and Open Space Inventory (ROSI) is completed and certified by Borough Council with which they agree to permanently hold all lands currently dedicated to recreation and conservation purposes.

- August 2000 - The Environmental Commission submitted the OSRP and the Planning Incentive application to Green Acres.

  With Green Acres funding, the Borough acquired 9.24 acres to add to the eastern section of Lenape Woods Nature Preserve; it also bought one acre on upper Hillside Road, and dedicated almost 2 acres of Borough-owned land on the lower Hillside Road paper street to open space, creating the Cliffside section of the Preserve and enabling a link from the future Bayshore Trail uphill to Ocean Boulevard and the Preserve’s eastern section. All sections then totaled about 51 acres.
In addition, the Borough obtained shared use rights for ballfields that Middletown will build adjacent to the new acreage of Lenape Woods East.

- Following its December 2002 session, the Habitat Workgroup of the NY/NJ Harbor Estuary Program (HEP) designated the estuary of Many Mind Creek, its saltmarsh and the surrounding bayfront land of the Giuliani tract as a priority for acquisition and restoration (Project RB17).

- May 2003 - the Harbor Commission recommended and Borough Council approved a bond ordinance for $2.5 million to be used for acquisition of bayfront land.

- October 2003 - the Borough obtained a 1.38 acre corridor of land that connects the Campo Overlook section to the main eastern section of Lenape Woods Nature Preserve, bringing its total size to 52.39 acres.

- November 2003 - a community survey questionnaire was mailed to residents, seeking opinions about the future of bayfront lands west of the harbor. With a return rate of 19 per cent, 83 per cent of respondents favored acquiring the Giuliani tract for public ownership. Among other questions they answered, respondents wanted increased access to the bayfront for biking, walking, fishing, sunset viewing, kayak/canoe launching, etc., as well as protection of natural habitat, wetlands, and beach (93 per cent).

- September 2004 - the Mayor's Waterfront Advisory Committee recommended to the Borough Council that 1) “all available means should be used” to acquire “expeditiously” the Giuliani tract for public ownership and use; 2) its western portion should be preserved for open space, recreation, and habitat/wetland/beach protection; and 3) its eastern portion should allow for wetland, vegetated buffer and the Many Mind Creek Greenway, as well as some parking for ferry commuters.

- In 2004-2005 - town officials identified potential funding sources for acquisition of bayfront lands, in addition to the Borough bond ordinance and open space tax fund. These include Green Acres matching funds, Port Authority open space acquisition funds, grants from the Monmouth County Park System and the NY-NJ Baykeeper.

- April 2006 - residents presented to Borough Council a petition with almost 1,400 signatures, urging acquisition of the unbuilt 6.5 acre Giuliani tract. West bank land would be devoted to open space, recreation and habitat (including beach, dunes and saltmarsh), while the east bank would have a stream buffer, Greenway trail, and expanded ferry parking. In August came the withdrawal of a developer who had proposed building a very dense condo development with 80 units on the tract.
August 2006 - agreement was reached on open space preservation of a 27.3 acre portion of the lands south of Lenape Woods Nature Preserve and Highway, to be known as the Campo Trails. The agreement involved Middletown, the Friends of the Navesink Highlands, Green Acres, Atlantic Highlands, and the developer of a neighboring housing project.

April 2007 - the Campo Overlook section of the Preserve was officially opened, following an Eagle Scout project that created trails and installed fencing and signage.

May 2007 - a contract was approved to survey the Atlantic Highlands-Middletown boundary in the area where a trail corridor needs to be established to connect the east and west sections of the Preserve.

2000 OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN (OSRP)

The OSRP of Atlantic Highlands is a five-year program of land acquisition. It was prepared in 2000 by the Environmental Commission, reviewed by the Planning Board for consistency with the Borough’s Master Plan in January 2001, and adopted by the Borough Council on February 21, 2001. It was accepted by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection under its Green Acres Planning Incentive Program.

The purpose of the OSRP is to provide a vision of the Borough’s open space and recreation aspirations and a blueprint for their realization as far as possible. It also identifies logical and feasible ways of creating a comprehensive open space system to serve the unmet needs and growing interests of the population. It foresees acquisition of most vacant properties with substantial conservation and recreation value. The decision-making process for selecting properties for acquisition is based on numerous factors including site availability, owner willingness, development pressure, funding availability, recreation needs, and critical environmental issues.

The philosophy that motivates the OSRP has two components. First, the view has clearly emerged that Atlantic Highlands is a small town that wants to keep its character. With population density quite high and close to the carrying capacity of the land, the philosophy endorsed by the community is to restrain development, preserve as much unbuilt land as possible in its small territory, and also acquire and preserve neighboring lands as necessary.
The second motivation is to widen opportunities for recreation and outdoor enjoyment - in terms of geographic access, types of activities, and the population segments being served. This calls for land acquisition, which in addition to providing open space and natural conservation, seeks properties specially suited for active sports such as swimming, various ball games, and hiking. The range of interests to be served goes from bird watching to boating, from environmental education to soccer, from steep slope protection to slides and swings for tots. The Borough is committed to keeping all its recreation facilities open and accessible to the public and to serving the needs of all residents, including children, youth, adults, senior citizens and those with special needs.

Four types of needed recreation were singled out as having the least adequate capacity and the strongest unmet demand in the existing system and facilities available to Atlantic Highlands:

1. Playing fields for Little League, soccer, and field hockey;
2. Hiking;
3. Biking; and
4. Swimming.

Additionally, the Borough has identified a need for a skateboard park and has produced plans for one, and filed an application for grant assistance to the County to help support the project.

A number of desirable land acquisitions were identified and grouped into six projects according to location, resources, topography and possible uses. As a whole, these projects have features, new capacities and potential uses, which would satisfy a significant portion of identified unmet needs. The plan envisages that the recommended conservation of public open space must go hand-in-hand with efforts to sustain, preserve and improve the Borough’s two key centers of economic activity - the business district and the harbor - and to help enhance the Victorian historic district as an attractive and economically supporting asset; those efforts have their own appropriate planning and financing channels.

Six projects were originally proposed in the Action Plan. The six projects in their present state are summarized below. Attached to the full OSRP is a map titled “Atlantic Highlands Open Space and Recreation Plan” showing the location and configuration of all existing public and private sites for open space and recreation, as well as a general depiction of additional lands, which the Borough would like to acquire.
Lenape Woods Greenway
The next stage of land acquisition with Green Acres matching funds would create a trail corridor to join the existing east and west sections, and extend the area to the east and south by incorporating neighboring forested slopes that are unbuilt. This expansion would protect the corridor of sensitive slopes, woodlands, and natural habitat along the highland ridge; provide access for additional neighborhoods; connect to the County park at Mt Mitchell Scenic Outlook; extend the system of hiking trails; stop further encroachment from development along our borders; maintain the existing buffer against noise, traffic and pollution from the Highway 36 area; add to the nature/environmental education opportunity available to children and adults; preserve the tree mass which moderates temperature and wind effects; and preserve habitat sufficient to sustain birds and other wildlife living in the zone.

Waterfront at town center
The Borough has long wanted to obtain the privately owned lands in the waterfront zone west of the municipal harbor between the bay and Bay Avenue. These unbuilt lands consist of about nine acres (not counting surrounding waters) and include:

- The peninsula extending into the bay and related neighboring mainland. Fishing and pedestrian strolling take place on the peninsula, where there was a railroad/steam boat pier beginning in the 1890s. Mainland portions are currently used largely for ferry and marina parking.
- The curve of bayfront beach running from the foot of First Avenue westward to Avenue A. The beach and bay waters here are suitable for swimming and related water recreation. Also, low-water sand flats form a “delta” by the mouth of Many Mind Creek and water birds frequently feed there. The western portion of the beach is backed by a dune grass border.
- On the western portion behind the beach, about half a square block extending back to Bay Avenue. This large lot is bisected by Many Mind Creek and contains about an acre of wetlands. Mature pine trees line its borders along Bay Avenue.

Many Mind Creek Greenway
The Environmental Commission has developed proposals for a greenway along Many Mind Creek between the bay and Highway 36, in the center of the town's population and geography. The current decontamination and earth replacement work by New Jersey Natural Gas presents a one-time opportunity. Done right, the Borough can fashion a creek corridor which is better managed, better serves the needs of landowners, business and the public, and is a more attractive sustainable natural resource.

The key ingredients covered by proposals for this lower stretch of the creek are appropriate bank sloping and vegetation, including fringe wetland species to the high water mark; protection against flooding, erosion and degradation of water quality;
restoration for natural habitat including shade cover; provision of creekside trails; pedestrian crossing bridges and neighborhood access from the west side of town and to the “backyard” of the business district; and linkage to the Henry Hudson Trail. To achieve these objectives, the basic guideline is to establish a 50-foot wide buffer on stream corridors in relatively urbanized areas, such as this downstream portion of Many Mind Creek.

The upstream reaches of the creek form the southern and eastern borders of the Borough with Middletown (except for a segment near the creek’s source in the Lenape Woods western section). On the Atlantic Highlands side of the creek are fairly dense residential neighborhoods. Here the needs for better management of water flows and banks are similar to the downstream portion as described above. A protected buffer is important both for those purposes and for guarding against overintensive development on either side of our Middletown border. Ways of creating or maintaining such a buffer have to be worked out in consultation with owners along both banks. In some upstream sections, public trail development seems feasible on the buffers to be established along the creek, but must be evaluated lot-by-lot on both banks.

Wagner Creek/Center Avenue Park extensions
Wagner Creek, the only other stream in Atlantic Highlands, forms the western border with Leonardo. It requires protection by natural buffers for the same reasons as Many Mind Creek. On one bank on its northern portion next to the bay are several acres of mixed woodland/wetland protected by the Borough-owned Center Avenue Park. The park includes an upland area used for T-ball, a tot lot and parking, and a beach area, which is shared between swimming, sunning and walking by the general public and boat launchings by the Sandy Hook Bay Catamaran Club which leases some park land for boat storage. This protected zone should be extended in two directions: Eastward along the beach as far as Avenue D, in order to increase public recreational uses of the bayfront; and Southward for four blocks along Wagner Creek to provide a buffer and greenway to serve flood control needs, preserve habitat, and connect to the Henry Hudson Trail near Highway 36. These acquisitions might be accomplished mainly by negotiating easements or outright purchase for buffers 50 feet wide.

Bayside Drive bluffs
Bayside drive on the eastern end of Atlantic Highlands is bordered on its north side by the bay coast and on its south side by steep slopes and bluffs which rise to 260+ feet above sea level - the highest point on the Atlantic seaboard of the United States. Some coastal land in this corridor has experienced and continues to be at risk of “slump blocking.” Because of this geological phenomenon, it is critical to protect the slopes from several dangers. These include excessive water permeation and water back-up (e.g. from walls) which increase the weight and the slip and slump tendencies of soil blocks; disturbance of the slope toe which serves as a “foundation” and support for sharp bluffs above; deforestation and heavy drainage which destroy soil stability; etc.
Several conservation areas have been established on the water edge, slope sides and bluff top to offer such protection. These include the county beach park at Popamora Point next to the Highlands border, Mt. Mitchill Scenic Overlook Park and its downslope sides, the Henry Hudson Springs downslope conservation corridor, and four Borough-owned lots along Bayside Drive and the “paper street” of lower Hillside Avenue. In addition, in 2002, the Borough acquired an acre of unbuilt land high on the slope off Ocean Boulevard at Hillside Avenue. The planned Bayshore Trail for hiking and biking along the coast will run parallel to Bayside Drive; as publicly protected and permanently dedicated open space it will ensure that the coastal base areas of the bluffs are not excavated or other wise undermined.

However, a number of additional very steep areas remain unprotected against development that could seriously undermine their stability and that of lower elevations. In addition, there are important opportunities along this corridor for public access to stunning scenic water views, beautiful forested slopes, and passive recreation opportunities such as hiking. The OSRP action plan proposes that the Borough acquire and thus rescue, conserve and dedicate as public open space - such important segments of land along the Bayside Drive bluffs as they become available for either purchase or conservation/access easements.

**Lenape Woods South**

Along the Highway 36 double jughandle is a recent Kara Homes development. On its northern edge, the proposed housing footprint was reduced, conserving a corridor of wooded land that Atlantic highlands acquired in order to connect parts of Lenape Woods East. On the southern side of the highway, a partnership agreement saved 27 acres of land east and south of the Kara Homes housing for an open space corridor known as the Campo Trails. At the highway, this corridor will continue the north-south trails of Lenape Woods if a pedestrian bridge can be built over the highway; funding has been committed by the citizen group Friends of the Navesink Highlands for a bridge feasibility study. South of the Highway, the Campo Trails will eventually connect to Hartshorne Woods. The partnership arrangements for conserving the 27 acres involved funding from Middletown Township (which now owns the land), Atlantic Highlands, the Friends of the Navesink Highlands, and Green Acres, as well as a contribution by the developer.
2007 POLICY STATEMENT

The policy expressed in the Open Space and Recreation Element is intended to preserve the existing open space and to explore the possibility of acquiring additional lands, both within and outside of the Borough, in order to provide the space necessary to widen the opportunities and enrich the experiences available for recreation and outdoor enjoyment.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The OSRP provides a comprehensive set of goals and objectives designed to identify and address both the short and long term needs of present and future residents of the Borough. The proposed acquisition projects would serve the following specific recreation and conservation goals of the Borough:

- Provide increased active and passive recreation for children and adults, including active recreation such as ball games and swimming, and passive pursuits such as hiking and nature observation.
- Offer trail access and other open space amenities to additional neighborhoods.
- Help restrain growth in housing and population density in the Borough, thus maintaining both quality of life and property values.
- Reduce the danger of over-intensive development along our borders.
- Protect natural resources such as creeks and banks, bay coast and beaches, steep slopes and slump block zones, forests and wetlands.
- Preserve and enhance the environment by maintaining existing buffers against highway noise and air pollution, saving natural habitat needed by birds and wildlife, and preserving tree mass, which moderates temperature and wind effects.
- Add to natural/environmental education opportunities available to children and adults.

OBJECTIVES

- To support acquisition of the types of land which can provide open space for:
  - Natural resource protection - including plant and animal life; fish and wildlife habitats; streams, marshes, estuaries and bay areas which are important for water quality, filtering pollutants, and reproduction and survival of fish and other water life; and stream banks, bay beaches, dunes, wetlands and other areas of environmental importance or sensitivity.
  - Outdoor recreation - including areas that are particularly suited for parks and active recreation provide access to beaches and streams, trail systems, scenic corridors and utility easements, and serve as links with other recreation and open space lands.
- Protection of public health and safety - including areas needing special management or regulation because of hazards or special conditions such as steep slopes, flood plains, watersheds, erosion and siltation.
- Community character - including woodlands, open water, scenic resources, historic sites, and townscapes which have visual impact, contribute to the community’s image and add aesthetic value to the surrounding built environment.

- **Research and obtain all sources of funding available to finance land acquisition.**
  First priority in funding will be to obtain grants, such as the 50-50 matching grants available under the Planning Incentive program of Green Acres. Other sources and formulae will come into play as required, sometimes in combination. Green Acres also offers 30-year loans at 2 per cent interest, which could be advantageous in certain circumstances. The open space tax which the Borough voters endorsed, can be used to create access to larger sources of funding, and to repay any debt entered for land preservation, and to improve parklands already preserved. In recent years, heavy development pressures on unbuilt lands with high value as open space have led the Borough to pass bond ordinances meant for land purchase; several purchase actions were completed and have generated reimbursement of half the cost by Green Acres.

- **Change the way that open space and the preservation of open space is dealt with at the municipal level.**
  Appropriate lands should be designated and reserved for open space and recreation in the same way as for housing, business and other categories of land use. Open space should be looked on as an element of public infrastructure and services that must be provided and maintained to sustain the community.

- **To continue to cooperate with other entities in an effort to preserve open space and provide recreational opportunities.**
  At the government level, the Borough will continue wherever possible to work closely with the State of New Jersey through its Green Acres program, with the Monmouth County Freeholders and Monmouth County Park System, and with neighboring municipal governments in efforts to preserve open space and provide recreational opportunities.
Map
The Conservation Element is an essential component of the Master Plan as identified in 40:55D-28(b)8. The Conservation Element establishes the framework for the Borough of Atlantic Highlands to protect, conserve, responsibly manage and, where appropriate, restore or enhance the Borough's water resources; wetlands; stream corridors and floodplains; greenways; slump block and steep slope areas; woodlands and tree cover; and wildlife and wildlife habitat. Each of these areas is appropriate for special land use regulations.
HISTORY

- As was common in many parts of the world, especially during the 1900s, Atlantic Highlands too viewed wetlands as unproductive swamps that should be drained and filled in and used for building. Both saltwater and freshwater wetlands surrounding long stretches of Many Mind Creek were eliminated, especially between Highway 36 and the bay, but also along parts of the creek paralleling Highway 36. Nevertheless, hydric soils, high water tables, wetland types of vegetation and other characteristic wetland features are still present, together with some flooding since wetlands and their absorptive role have been reduced or eliminated.

- In 1987, New Jersey passed the Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act in recognition of the importance of such wetlands and the need to preserve them and their buffers. Formal determination of wetland areas are based on three main factors: the presence of “hydrophytic” vegetation which prefers or can tolerate saturated soil conditions; the presence of wetland or “hydric” soils; and an evaluation of the soil’s ability to support wetlands vegetation.

To preserve wetland areas, development in Atlantic Highlands is now subject to the Wetlands Act of 1970, the Freshwater Wetlands Act of 1987, the Flood Hazard Act, the Coastal Areas Facilities Act (CAFRA), and plan evaluation by the Army Corps of Engineers.

- Beginning in 1998, volunteers working with the Atlantic Highlands Environmental Commission did monthly water sampling and testing in Many Mind Creek and Wagner Creek. Between 2005 and 2007, this was replaced by professional testing at six sites on Many Mind Creek to detect problems of non-point source pollution. Along the bayshore between Aberdeen and Atlantic Highlands, similar data collection activities are being carried out on a number of creeks, brooks and lakes.

In addition, at six of these water bodies the Monmouth County Health Department also collects data on fecal coliform counts quarterly and nutrient levels twice a year. The data collected are shared at the county level to assemble a picture of non-point source pollution and contribute to watershed planning efforts.

- In 1996, an agreement was reached to end the dumping in the ocean of contaminated materials dredged up when deepening shipping channels in the bay. It was agreed to close the “Mud Dump Site” where these materials had been deposited in the ocean, around six miles off Sandy Hook. Instead, the contaminated area, which is 15 square miles, was to be capped with clean sediments as protection against the pollutants already there.
Since then, however, 3 million tons of new material have been deposited at the site under the name of capping and “remediation” of the existing dump. However, nearly one million tons of this exceeds the latest definition of limits for toxic contaminant PCBs, and other pollutants were also present.

This prompted a new campaign against ocean dumping led by Clean Ocean Action with a coalition of ocean advocacy groups. Over 200,000 people signed petitions and 100 local governments passed resolutions opposing continued dumping and pressing for promised new definitions of permissible material to use in capping the site.

During the summer of 2000, an eight-day, 150 mile protest march was held from one end of the Jersey Shore to the other, and other events and supporting actions were held by groups ranging from surfers to business owners.

- During the latter decades of the 1900s, despite predictable problems for environment and for construction stability, areas with steep slopes in the Borough were increasingly used as development sites. This trend was fed as population growth stimulated housing demand, suburban living became increasingly popular, coastal zones attracted high-end land prices, and economic prosperity made it all affordable.

In the second half of the 1980s and during the 1990s, in reaction to the more compacted neighborhoods and the loss of open space and recreation lands, which resulted from the real-estate boom, public counter-moves aimed at public land conservation began to gather steam. In 1989, the Atlantic Highlands Borough Council passed a steep slope ordinance, which set limits on the development of slopes greater than 10 per cent and specifies the detailed studies to be made when applying for permission to build on such slopes. The ordinance takes into account such factors as the extent of erosion and the potential for more; soil stability; maximum preservation of trees and other vegetation on site and in the surrounding area; the need to limit the extent of impervious surface to be constructed and the lot area to be disturbed; etc.

- In November of 2000 the Borough’s Forestry Master Plan was approved by the NJDEP Division of Parks and Forestry. This plan was prepared and is administered by the Shade Tree Commission. The Forestry Master Plan was prepared as a result from the NJ Shade Tree and Community Forestry Assistance Act passed in 1996. Atlantic Highlands’ approval certificate is No. 42, statewide.
Litter, debris and other pollutants enter the bay and ocean both from boats and from wash-downs off the land. In Atlantic Highlands there are ordinances and fines aimed at preventing boaters and pedestrians from despoiling the harbor, with enforcement by harbor security officers.

Every spring and fall, the Atlantic Highlands Environmental Commission organizes a beach clean-up by community volunteers in the area west of the harbor. In so doing, they join many other bayside and oceanside towns which take part in these region-wide “sweeps” organized by Clean Ocean Action.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR WATER RESOURCES

GOAL: The Borough's overall objective for water resources is to achieve “fishable and swimable waters”.

1. WATERSHEDS

Sound conservation, protection and management of the water resources on land within Atlantic Highlands begin with awareness of the watershed, its behavior and effects. It requires understanding of rainfall and natural water drainage from the hills and in the flatlands; underground water buried in aquifers; surface water flows in creeks, springs, wetlands and flood zones; and tide-water influences on stream mouths, shorelines and salt marsh. This hydrological system has positive and life-sustaining values - but also entails some risks and negative effects if engineering and development actions are not carefully planned.

Many Mind Creek and Wagner Creek are the main drainage channels for the territory of Atlantic Highlands. They carry almost all the surface water runoff from the Borough northward toward the bay. Some runoff enters these creeks directly over the land, some is retained in creekside wetlands, and some runs in stormwater drainage pipes, which are embedded under the streets and empty into the creeks. At their mouths, the two creeks are partially mixed estuaries, with a mix of seawater beneath a surface layer of freshwater moving seaward. Both creeks deposit sediments in a fan-shaped delta beneath the shallow bay-edge waters.

A smaller amount of runoff from the Borough is carried by a number of gullies and ravines in the steep slopes above the bayshore, between the eastern end of the harbor and near the border with the Highlands. Between storms some of these water courses are dry. As these waters enter the low-lying shore lands, some cross directly into the bay and some are retained for a period in isolated wetlands.
The slope below East Highland Avenue between upper Prospect Avenue and Scenic Ridge drains southward to the Navesink River. Runoff from there starts downhill by feeding an intermittent stream which goes through Middletown lands parallel to and then crossing Highway 36. It becomes a perennial tributary of Clay Pit Creek in the Navesink Estates townhouse development, passes through a culvert under Navesink Avenue, and heads to the estuary of Clay Pit Creek.

The total watershed territory, which drains into Raritan Bay/Sandy Hook Bay extends 18 miles east-west along the bayshore, between the Highlands and South Amboy. A total of 13 creeks, including Many Mind Creek and Wagner Creeks, carry water northward from sources one to four miles inland and empty into the bay.

For that reason, an integral part of the policy environment for Borough pursuit of its water resource goal is the essential linkage with neighboring towns that share the same watershed with Atlantic Highlands.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- The Borough should continue its partnership in Watershed Management Area 12 as mandated by DEP, and incorporate the goals and objectives addressed in the WMA 12 plan into the Borough’s Stormwater Management Plan.

- The implementation of non-structural Best Management Practices should be added to the Borough’s existing development regulations and applied to all new site design proposals. Whenever possible, the following nine strategies should be incorporated into site design:

  a) Protect areas that provide water quality benefits and areas particularly susceptible to erosion and sediment loss;

  b) Minimize impervious surfaces and break up or disconnect the flow of runoff over impervious surfaces;

  c) Maximize the protection of natural drainage features and vegetation;

  d) Minimize the decrease in the ‘time of concentration’ from pre-construction to post-construction. “Time of Concentration” is defined as the time it takes for runoff to travel from the hydraulically most distant point of the drainage area to the point of interest within a watershed;

  e) Minimize land disturbance, including clearing and grading;
f) Minimize soil compaction;

g) Provide low-maintenance landscaping that encourages retention and planting of native vegetation and minimizes the use of lawns, fertilizers and pesticides;

h) Provide vegetated open-channel conveyance systems discharging into and through stable vegetated areas; and

i) Provide other source controls to prevent or minimize the use or exposure of pollutants at the site in order to prevent or minimize the release of those pollutants into stormwater runoff. These source controls include, but are not limited to;

   I. Site design features that help to prevent accumulation of trash and debris in drainage systems;

   II. Site design features that help to prevent discharge of trash and debris from drainage systems;

   III. Site design features that help to prevent and/or contain spills or other harmful accumulations of pollutants at industrial or commercial developments; and

   IV. When establishing vegetation after land disturbance, applying fertilizer only in accordance with the requirements established under the Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Act N.J.S.A 4:24-39 et seq., and implementing rules.

- The Borough prepared a complete inventory and institute close control of its stormwater outfalls into the creeks and the bay. This will be done for two reasons: 1) DEP requirements under the “fishable and swimable” policy and state-wide watershed management initiatives. 2) Impervious cover in the Borough has expanded and is slated to continue expanding with approved development projects. This raises concerns related to creek-flooding, an existing problem, and issues of non-point pollution.
The following measures reduce the volume of stormwater run-off and the non-point source pollution it carries; the Borough has already adopted some of them, as I indicated:

1) At construction sites, control soil erosion and trap sediment by covering exposed soil with straw mulch or sowing grass seed, erecting a black cloth silt fence along the edge of sites (adopted). Studies show that mud pollution from construction sites must be reduced by 90 per cent or more to protect sensitive aquatic resources.

2) Limit the percentage of lot area, which can be disturbed by construction and the area which is allowed to have impervious cover (adopted).

3) Pass municipal regulations and educate homeowners to preserve trees and retain natural land cover that will absorb water into the soil, hold soil in place instead of eroding, and reduce the amount of sediment entering streams (tree preservation included in steep slope ordinance, but need in rest of town).

4) Provide for tree canopy over streams and other bank vegetation to reduce water temperature, act as a soil stabilizer and keep erosion in check.

5) Reduce or eliminate the use of fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides on lawns and gardens because these degrade water quality.

6) Create ponds that can keep 40 to 60 per cent of the nutrients and toxic metals out of nearby waterways (several ponds created).

7) Install signage on storm drain covers to indicate what bodies of water they flow into and discourage people from discarding pollutants in gutters and drains (completed town-wide).

The Borough should institute regulatory measures to ensure that future major drainage projects are designed with “stormceptors” (devices that intercept trash and some types of pollutants from passing through outfall pipelines), and should progressively retrofit storm drain covers that block trash.

Monthly water sampling and testing in Many Mind Creek and Wagner Creek should continue with the help of volunteers. The Borough of Atlantic Highlands should continue to share data at the county level in order to assemble an area-wide picture of non-point source pollution, which will in turn contribute to future watershed planning efforts.
The Borough in cooperation with Middletown should utilize the NPS Grant to develop a regional plan for watershed restoration and stormwater management for Many Mind Creek that will address the stormwater problems throughout the watershed and provide regional BMP solutions that are needed to reduce water quality impairments.

The Borough should determine what sites can achieve stormwater control with vegetative swales and buffers, as well as landscaping to control non-point source pollution, or what sites may require the building of a stormwater basin, to comply with the State standard that requires sufficient stormwater detention capacity to hold and slowly release the runoff from storms that have a likelihood of recurring once every two, 10 and 100 years.

The Borough should continue to extend the street drains and piping systems into the eastern hills section to control erosion and slope instability.

2) WETLANDS

Wetlands are areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater often and long enough to support vegetation adapted to survive in saturated soil, according to the definition used by the DEP. Wetlands generally occur in relatively flat areas between deep water and uplands, such as along Sandy Hook Bay, Many Mind Creek and Wagner Creek. They are variously referred to as salt marshes, tidal marshes, salt meadows, wet meadows, shrub swamps, swamps or bogs, depending on their locations and characteristics. Development patterns can change wetlands or even unintentionally create wetlands if the capacity of a land area to drain or infiltrate water becomes overburdened.

Wetland areas are essential to maintaining a healthy ecosystem. They provide important plant, fish and wildlife habitat, flood protection, erosion control, water quality maintenance, and recreation. Wetlands act as natural detention basins, temporarily store floodwaters, lower downstream flood crests, and slow the velocity of destructive water flow. They help maintain stream flow, reduce silt loads, filter chemical and organic pollutants, and serve as buffers to protect upland areas.
The two main types of wetlands, estuarine and palustrine, are both found in Atlantic Highlands:

**Estuarine wetlands** are formed in coastal areas along Sandy Hook Bay where the tide ebbs and flows, and at the mouths of Many Mind Creek and Wagner Creeks where bay tides meet the stream current. These salt and brackish marshes are home to myriad life forms, provide an integral link in the ecological food chain, and serve as a nursery and feeding habitat for food fish. However, increases of stormwater runoff can change the salinity of the creeks and their estuaries and add unwanted fertilizers and pollutants. Aquatic life, which relies on an estuarine habitat, is very sensitive to these humaninduced changes. As the quality of the habitat is reduced, so will the variety and number of resident species decrease.

**Palustrine forested wetlands** are areas of freshwater marshes, bogs or swamps, which are scattered along streams. Freshwater marshes also have great ecological value, support basic elements of the food chain, and are home to many fish, turtles, amphibians and mammals, as well as a refuge for various birds and waterfowl.

In April of 2000, engineers at Maser Consulting prepared a survey that identified isolated freshwater wetlands existing in several sections of the waterfront land - areas inundated or saturated by such freshwater sources as rainfall and surface water runoff. Some of these wetlands were caused naturally, and others resulted from the retention of water in the soil behind such structures as shoreline bulkheads and berms containing the dredge spoil site east of the harbor.

The majority of these wetland areas are classified as having intermediate resource value. They are characterized by their hydric (wet) soils and the prevalence of hydrophytic vegetation which is typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. According to the survey, the plant communities in these wetlands “are generally successional, consisting of a number of alien species and native species adapted to human disturbance.” The inventory was completed as part of the Borough’s application to DEP for a CAFRA (Coastal Area Facility Review Act) permit to construct the Atlantic Highlands section of the Bayshore Bicycle and Walking Trail, a continuation of the Henry Hudson Trail that begins in Keyport.

The longest stretches of freshwater wetlands in the Borough are found next to Many Mind Creek between South Avenue and Highway 36, along the southern borders of town, and beside its two tributaries near West Avenue and Leonard Avenue respectively. Including tidal wetlands from Sandy Hook Bay to approximately South Avenue, the wetlands total 3.8 acres in this area.
OBJECTIVES:

- The Borough should continue the Many Mind Creek remediation started in 1998 by the New Jersey Natural Gas Company (NJNG). The replanting of vegetation will follow the recommendations found in the Atlantic Highlands Environmental Commission’s 1999 report, which were based on an analysis preformed by a stream restoration specialist, Steven Barnes.

- The Borough should continue to coordinate municipal regulations with state regulations by recognizing the restrictions placed on wetland development under Coastal Areas Facilities Review Act (CAFRA) jurisdiction and the NJ DEP permitting process requirements.

3) STREAM CORRIDORS, FLOODPLAINS, and GREENWAYS

Although Many Mind and Wagner Creeks are the most visible carriers of surface water, there are less visible, less voluminous flows in the Borough, mostly in the eastern hills section. These include:

- Small spring fed streams that have been channeled into underground pipes, such as from Ocean Boulevard at Grand Avenue, to the bay.

- Intermittent streams which flow only when it rains or at times of the year when soils are heavily saturated.

- Open springs that maintain steady output, such as the Henry Hudson Springs off Bayshore Drive.

- Saturated wetlands where water is visible all year round, or nearly so.

Floodplains provide wide areas where water can lie without causing downstream flooding, siltation and erosion. In addition, they retard excess runoff and provide natural detention areas.

Greenways preserve or improve the integrity of the landscape, not only by stemming the loss of natural features, but also by engendering new natural and social functions. The Borough currently has three high priority projects underway as part of the Open Space Plan:
**Lenape Woods Greenway**
The next stage of land acquisition with Green Acres matching funds would create a trail corridor to join the existing east and west sections, and extend the area to the east and south by incorporating neighboring forested slopes that are unbuilt. This expansion would protect the corridor of sensitive slopes, woodlands, and natural habitat along the highland ridge; provide access for additional neighborhoods; connect to the County park at Mt Mitchell Scenic Overlook; extend the system of hiking trails; stop further encroachment from development along our borders; maintain the existing buffer against noise, traffic and pollution from the Highway 36 area; add to the Nature/environmental education opportunity available to children and adults; preserve the tree mass which moderates temperature and wind effects; and preserve habitat sufficient to sustain birds and other wildlife living in the zone.

**Many Mind Creek Greenway**
The Environmental Commission has developed proposals for a greenway along Many Mind Creek between the bay and Highway 36, in the center of the town’s population and geography. The current decontamination and earth replacement work by New Jersey Natural Gas presents a one-time opportunity. Done right, the Borough can fashion a creek corridor which is better managed, better serves the needs of landowners, business and the public, and is a more attractive sustainable natural resource.

The key ingredients covered by proposals for this lower stretch of the creek are appropriate bank sloping and vegetation, including fringe wetland species to the high water mark; protection against flooding, erosion and degradation of water quality; restoration for natural habitat including shade cover; provision of creekside trails; pedestrian crossing bridges and neighborhood access from the west side of town and to the “backyard” of the business district; and linkage to the Henry Hudson Trail. To achieve these objectives, the basic guideline is to establish a 50-foot wide buffer on stream corridors in relatively urbanized areas, such as this downstream portion of Many Mind Creek.

The upstream reaches of the creek form the southern and eastern borders of the Borough of Middletown (except for a segment near the creek’s source in the Lenape Woods western section). On the Atlantic Highlands side of the creek are fairly dense residential neighborhoods. Here the needs for better management of water flows and banks are similar to the downstream portion as described above. A protected buffer is important both for those purposes and for guarding against overintensive development on either side of our Middletown border. Ways of creating or maintaining such a buffer have to be worked out in consultation with owners along both banks. In some upstream sections, public trail development seems feasible on the buffers to be established along the creek, but must be evaluated lot-by-lot on both banks.
**Wagner Creek/Center Avenue Park extensions**

Wagner Creek, the only other stream in Atlantic Highlands, forms the western border with Leonardo. It requires protection by natural buffers for the same reasons as Many Mind Creek. On one bank or its northern portion next to the bay are several acres of mixed woodland/wetland protected by the Borough-owned Center Avenue Park. The wetland is scheduled for restoration and enhancement under an approved plan. The park includes an upland area used for T-ball, a tot lot and parking, and a beach area, which is shared between swimming, sunning and walking by the general public and boat launchings by the Sandy Hook Bay Catamaran Club which leases some park land for boat storage. This protected zone should be extended in two directions: Eastward along the beach as far as Avenue D, in order to increase public recreational uses of the bayfront; and Southward for four blocks along Wagner Creek to provide a buffer and greenway to serve flood control needs, preserve habitat, and connect to the Henry Hudson Trail near Highway 36. These acquisitions might be accomplished mainly by negotiating easements or outright purchase for buffers 50 feet wide.

**GOAL:** To minimize the impact of stormwater to property and possessions due to flooding.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- The Borough should continue with the existing public outreach initiatives and develop new initiatives to continually inform the public of the importance and functionality of the springs and streams and other environmental issues that are crucial to the vitality of Atlantic Highlands.

  1) Monthly water sampling and testing in Many Mind Creek and Wagner Creek should resume with the help of volunteers, if possible, after professional testing is completed on Many Mind Creek under the regional watershed project.

- The Borough should implement the 2000 Open Space Plan to ensure undisturbed buffer zones along stream corridors and protection of associated floodplains.

- The Borough should consider the adoption of the following stream protection measures:
  1) Rule out the construction or paving in stream buffers;
  2) Establish wider buffer areas;
  3) Control and limit additional direct channeling of surface water runoff into streams;
4) Create protective stream conservation districts and greenways as overlays to be enforced by regulation which needs to be formulated and adopted;

5) Require some type of permanent vegetative cover beside the Borough’s two creeks;

6) Require a permit to remove any riparian trees;

- In developing the greenways initiatives, the Borough will seek all applicable federal, state and local funding sources in order to facilitate land acquisition to incorporate the greenway plans.

4) STEEP SLOPES / SLUMP BLOCKS / TREE REMOVAL

Slope is measured as the change in elevation (vertical distance) over horizontal distance and it is expressed as a percentage. Slopes greater than 12 to 15 per cent are potentially critical environmental impact areas, and experts agree that efforts should be made to keep them in their natural state. Slopes increase stormwater runoff rates and, when disturbed, are subject to erosion. They can be difficult to stabilize with vegetative cover. Slopes denuded of vegetation can result in nearby water bodies being subject to considerable sediment loads during rainstorms with an attendant loss of wildlife, water quality and aesthetic landscape.

Slump can result in major and rapid drop of steep slopes, cliffs and bluffs. Slump is identified as the downward movement of a block of earth material along some curved surface of failure. Although some slump movement is a natural phenomenon, man can inadvertently accelerate the process of slump development by 1) the placement of a load on top or along the slope; 2) disturbance of the toe of a slope, or 3) increasing soil moisture content by lawn watering, installation of drain fields within prone regions, or construction of ill-drained retaining walls.

GOAL: Restrict disturbance of sensitive slopes and protect mature vegetation.
OBJECTIVE:

- The Borough should re-examine the existing Steep Slope Ordinance to determine if existing requirements are adequate or if additional language or evaluation is required regarding tree removal, retaining walls, and slope buffers.

- The Borough should continue the efforts to acquire steep slope open space for preservation.

- The Borough should continue to evaluate and update all ordinances and zoning regulations related to tree preservation, tree replacement, and tree removal.

- Due to their expertise and experience in tree specification, planting and preservation, the Shade Tree Commission should be formally recognized and utilized as a part of the planning function involving public property and lands.
The Circulation Element is a required element of the Master Plan and is closely linked to all other general plan elements. This plan has been prepared to coordinate circulation recommendations for waterfront, business district, residential zones and open space development, to and identify intersections and streets in need of improvement.

The Circulation Element addresses the concerns (with related policy and action proposals to be developed) for the scenic roadways, presentation of public viewscapes from roadways, and related construction guidelines.

The Circulation Element is not limited to automobile-related transportation, but addresses the development of a balanced, multi-modal circulation system for Atlantic Highlands. It addresses such topics as public transportation, bicycle and pedestrian circulation, public recreation trails, linkages and coordination with other municipalities, and investments for the future as they relate to circulation.
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

2007 Policy Statement:

Create and maintain an efficient, safe and coordinated multi-modal circulation system, serving the needs of a variety of users.

ROADWAYS

Objectives:
Maintain a network of roads that is consistent with the land use patterns of Atlantic Highlands.

Atlantic Highland commuters travel primarily by car. Based on US Census 2000 statistics, 83.4% or 2,017 of the total 2,419 commuters drive to work; only 16.6% or 402 commuters take public transportation.

In Atlantic Highlands the following jurisdictional responsibility for roads has evolved:

- NJDOT: Memorial Parkway (Route 36)
- Monmouth County: Route 8
  - First Avenue
  - Ocean Boulevard (Scenic Route)
- Atlantic Highlands: All other roads in the Borough are either under Borough jurisdiction or are private streets.

The Borough Engineer each year identifies the street locations in need of attention. Improvements may include curbs, sidewalks, aprons, road pavement, overlay, stormdrains, etc.

Route 36

Route 36 is a busy and relatively fast moving roadway with lots of intersections, traffic lights, residences and driveways along its roughly 14 mile length in the Bayshore. Although traffic normally flows at acceptable levels of service, summer and weekend traffic congestion can create a problem for many travelers who use the road to reach destinations east and south of Atlantic Highlands, including Sandy Hook and the Jersey Shore. Route 36 is served by local and express buses; however, these modes of transportation are not easy to use. There are few park and ride locations and poor bus stop access. The need to cross Route 36 in one direction or the other limits use of these public transit options.
The Bayshore Regional Strategic Plan has set forth management strategies and implementation strategies in order to deal with the problems related to summer congestion. The plan recommends changes to Route 36, which will create a parkway feel and awareness of Bayshore character and the environment along Route 36. Two proposed major efforts include the replacement of the Route 36 drawbridge with a new fixed span bridge, and a summer traffic management plan that details roles and responsibility for a myriad of public agencies involved in traffic mitigation and planning in the region, including the NJ Highway Authority, NJ Department of Transportation, the National Park Service, the Transportation Operations Coordinating Committee (TRANSCOM) and staff from several local police departments.

**Scenic Roadways**

Natural views from scenic road and hillsides in Atlantic Highlands are one of its most valuable and noteworthy environmental resources. The views of the bay, Sandy Hook, the Bayshore and New York City are a key feature of the Borough's northern-facing slopes. The outlook ridge facing the bay and Manhattan was named “Bayview” in the 1880s. Then it became “Ocean Boulevard”. It is signposted and widely known as “Scenic Route” and Scenic Drive.” Other roads named for their water views are Prospect Avenue, Prospect Road, and Scenic Court.

In addition, there are beautiful landside views from roads and lands on the southern side of the ridge, looking toward the Navesink and Buttermilk Valleys and the Navesink River. On these slopes, road names again proclaim the heights and the views from them: Summit Avenue, Observatory Place, Highland Avenue, and Mount Avenue.

**Objective:** The preservation of public viewscapes from roadways and the development of related construction guidelines. The scenic outlooks to water and valley from county and borough roads deserve public protection because they are a public amenity. In 2000 Monmouth County Planning Board issued the Monmouth County Scenic Roadway Plan (MCSRP). It identifies county roadways that possess such a high degree of visual quality that driving, biking or walking along these roadways is a pleasurable and enjoyable experience. It provides design guidelines to be followed in preserving and enhancing county scenic roadways. Atlantic Highlands will consider adopting these design guidelines into current zoning and development regulations. Subject to these standards the Borough will create a list of designated roadways. The following roadways are possible candidates for qualification:

- Ocean Boulevard designated by Monmouth County
- East Highland Avenue (from Grand Avenue to Ocean Blvd)
Mount Avenue (from E. Highland Ave. over the Stone Bridge to Eighth Ave)

Bayside Drive - the entire loop at its western border going up Hilton/Prospect/Belvidere Road to Ocean Blvd.

Center Ave. between Ave. D and Wagner Creek

Implementing Goals:
In addition to state and local rules and initiatives to preserve scenic views, the Borough should consider the adoption of an adapted version of the County Planning Board published guidelines for “scenic roads” which include “alternate design standards and land use controls that will keep your beauty of the roads with your town.”

The guidelines can be found at: www.monmouthplanning.com/Scenic%20Roadway/SR%20Chap%203.pdf.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Objective: To improve the existing systems both in terms of function and safety in order to enhance the Borough’s economic potential and capitalize on its maritime heritage and natural resources.

Ferry Services

Since the passage of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) in 1991, federal funds have been available for investments in ferry facilities (not vessels or operations). New Jersey succeeded in receiving some of the competitive funds available, which the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) will utilize to support private sector ferry services within the NJDOT. The Office of Maritime Resources provides overall direction, oversight and coordination among various NJDOT units. Atlantic Highlands was one of nine initial ferry projects to benefit from this program.

The Seastreak Ferry Line serves the Bayshore region between Atlantic Highlands and New York City. It provides daily year-round ferry services to Pier 11 in lower Manhattan, to 34th street in Midtown, and to both Yankee and Shea Stadiums during baseball season. The ferry trips to Manhattan take approximately forty minutes. Although the ferries are usually packed with commuters on a daily basis, ferry service fares are prohibitive to many commuters.
Implementing Goals:

Possible opportunities for expanding ferry service and improving connections with other transit modes include:

- Provide for dredging along Raritan Bay that supports the continuation of existing ferry service;
- Improving traffic circulation in the marina area;
- Implementing shuttle bus service from ferries; and
- Expanding ferry service to accommodate weekend tourism, and other special events trips to and from New York City not associated with weekend commuting operations.

Bus Service:

New Jersey Transit and Academy Bus Lines offers bus service throughout the region with direct and connecting service to New York and other major regional destinations. Route 534 (m24) currently services the Atlantic Highlands area.

Implementing Goals:

- Atlantic Highlands currently has park and ride lots to serve the ferry service, however, none connect with the NJ Transit bus lines.
- Revision to the current zoning ordinance could grant businesses in the Atlantic Highlands area the ability to allow parking for commuters for a small fee without having to obtain approval from the local zoning board.
- Improve existing bus stops for convenience and safety.

Bicycle and Pedestrian:

Bicycle and pedestrian links to the waterfront and transit hubs such as park and rides should be created and enhanced. The pedestrian path system should incorporate the Henry Hudson Trail, pedestrian extensions linking the Henry Hudson to Firemen’s Field, and linking existing pedestrian paths to future pedestrian paths. Bike racks should be installed near the ferry dock and the highway 36 bus stop.
Implementing Goals:

- Completing the Henry Hudson Trail
- Incorporating the Bayshore Trail on local maps once it is built
- Follow the lead of Middletown-by requiring zoning changes to require sidewalks in new developments along Route 36 to facilitate pedestrian traffic
The intent of the Utilities Element is to guide utility service in a way that ensures adequate utilities will be available for all needs and it also provides a basis for determining the location of appropriate land uses. The Utilities Element will describe and evaluate the existing systems that currently serve Atlantic Highlands and it will also recommend future considerations or improvements of service where appropriate or feasible.
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

2007 Policy Statement:

Develop new systems or improve and maintain existing utility systems at the appropriate level of service to support the needs of Atlantic Highlands now and in the future.

SEWER

The Borough of Atlantic Highlands is serviced by the Atlantic Highlands/Highlands Regional Sewerage Authority (AHHSA). As a customer of the Township of Middletown Sewerage Authority (TOMSA), the AHHSA operates no wastewater treatment facilities of its own. All wastewater collected by the AHHSA is pumped from two pumping stations, one located on First Avenue in Atlantic Highlands, and the other located on West North Street in the Borough of Highlands, to treatment facilities owned and operated by TOMSA in Belford. The treated effluent is then transferred to the Monmouth County Bayshore Outfall Authority for disposal in the Atlantic Ocean. The AHHSA is assessed an estimated user charge by the TOMSA.

The wastewater treatment plants in the region have adequate capacity to handle current and projected residential and non-residential development and redevelopment. Maintenance, repairs and replacement of aging sewer infrastructure is a concern. To allow for growth and development, sewer repair and maintenance to reduce inflow and infiltration are necessary.

Approximately 81 percent of the units in Atlantic Highlands are serviced by the Borough’s sanitary sewer system. The Borough installs and manages the entire sewer system. A unit is defined as the following:

- Single family residence
- Apartment
- Rented room with private bath
- School
- Separate building connected to the sanitary sewer system
- Business with separate toilet facilities.
Property owners connected to sewers are responsible to maintain their pipe until it reaches the sewer line. Sewer charges are based on the amount of water a property owner uses. Average output per home in Atlantic highlands is about 260 gallons of wastewater per day. Residents receive a quarterly bill for sewer and water. The current rates as of 2006 are:

**QUARTERLY WATER AND SEWER RATES**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Gallons of water used per unit</th>
<th>Water rate per unit</th>
<th>Sewer rate per unit based on water use</th>
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<td>26,182 and over</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Each add'tl 748 gallons = 4.55</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>142% based on water calculations</td>
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</table>

**Sewer Collection**

Management and operation of the pipelines and pumping system are the responsibility of the Atlantic Highlands-Highlands Regional Sewerage Authority. Beyond the boundary lines of individual property owners, the sanitary sewer system operates primarily by gravity through pipelines running mostly under the streets. The age and condition of the pipes in the system vary greatly. Many pipes are from the original system, dating back to the mid1890s. As funding becomes available older pipes are being repaired or replaced.

**System**

- All pipelines feed into the main pumping station on the west side of First Avenue next to the Hesse building. A bypass pipe was recently installed at the pumping station to handle any obstruction in the flow.
- From the pumping station, sewerage is then pumped through pipes running north-northwest for about three miles to a secondary treatment plant in Belford on Center Avenue.
- Maximum plant capacity is 10.8 million gallons per day (mgd), as authorized by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. It currently treats 9 million gallons per day leaving a reserve capacity of 1.8 mgd. The largest share - 6.9 mgd - comes from Middletown Township, whose residents all have sewers.
- Atlantic Highlands is entitled to send up to 1.3 mgd to the Belford plant.
- Average Atlantic Highlands’ flow in 2006 was 400 -500 mgd and it has gone as low as 900,000 gallons per day.
Treatment

- Treatment starts by separating wastewater from solids through a series of large concrete tanks.
- The solids or sludge generated by the treatment process is trucked to a landfill in Pennsylvania where it is composted.
- The wastewater is chemically treated to kill any remaining pathogens.
- Treated wastewater is then discharged into an outfall pipe 48 inches in diameter.
- The pipe goes underground back through Atlantic Highlands and Highlands along the bayfront, crosses Sandy Hook, and then discharges into the Atlantic Ocean approximately 4,000 feet off Sandy Hook.
- This pipeline is maintained by the Monmouth County Bayshore Outfall Authority.

Stormwater inflow and infiltration of sewer system

Heavy rain or snowmelt draining to the First Avenue pumping station is the most difficult situation for the Borough’s system. This stormwater can increase flows up to 1/3 above normal. Basement sump pumps often discharge directly into sewer lines. The Borough has worked to reduce inflow and infiltration over the years. When the reductions are completed, it is expected that enough capacity will be freed up for the Borough to include the remaining 400 residential units if the sewage collection system can be extended.

Recommended locations for new lines and replacement/relining of existing systems

- 2nd Avenue
- 6th Avenue
- Memorial Parkway (part of Highway)
- Garfield Avenue
- Bay Avenue
- Highway 36 and First Avenue
- 7th Avenue and Memorial Parkway
SEPTIC SYSTEMS AND SEWER EXTENSION POSSIBILITIES

Homes in Atlantic Highlands not connected to sanitary sewers (458 units or 19% of total housing units) are all in the eastern section and mostly in steep slope areas. These homes have septic systems, whose efficient operation requires avoiding disposal of certain materials, regular maintenance and periodic pumping. Older or poorly managed systems can experience decay, blockage and breakdown, causing household problems and environmental risks and impacts. The steep slopes already face major water infiltration by drainage from natural surfaces and from building on more and more lots; the addition of septic systems at new houses and the malfunction of aging systems further strains the absorptive capacity of the soils. Waterlogged slopes are more likely to slump or slide because of the added weight and lubrication. These risks are additional reasons why it was especially important in the eastern hills area to increase existing lot sizes and configurations and rule out further subdivisions, and was mandated in the creation of a new R-3 zone.

In recent years, gravity-fed sanitary sewers have been extended through a shared arrangement with a house construction project uphill below East Highland Avenue so as to reach homes south of there between Sears Avenue and Grand Avenue. Some limited additional sewer hook-ups can be achieved by activating a shared arrangement with an approved senior housing project (Edgewood Park), directly south of the Atlantic Highlands’ eastern ridge along Highway 36 on Middletown lands.

However, for many or all of the remaining properties with septic systems, whether or not they can be seweried depends on complex issues of topography, geological stability, technological alternatives, system layout, costs and financing methods. These issues need to be closely assessed to determine in which groups of houses it is deemed impossible. Absent such a study, homeowners with older septic systems cannot plan ahead because of two expensive questions:

- Is sanitary sewer coverage, with its initial and quarterly costs, possible.
- Will septic systems 30 to 50 years of age need to be replaced, with the major cost that entails.

Recommendation
To design and seek financing in the coming years, for a technical and economic feasibility study.

For any areas where sewers are found feasible, there would still be the difficult, major and time-consuming task of trying to marshal construction funding. If septic systems eventually could be eliminated in some areas, benefits would include:

- Reduced environmental risks and environment repair costs
- Elimination of operation-and-repair responsibilities
- Maintenance of property values for those homeowners
Possibly a reduction of Atlantic Highlands sewer rates as more users share the fixed costs incurred when the treatment plant shared by Middletown, Atlantic Highlands and Highlands was expanded some years ago.

WATER

The Atlantic Highlands Water Department is an independent, self-sustaining utility within the Borough government. It has 1800 customers, revenues of approximately $2 million a year, and 5 full time employees, including one to operate treatment facilities. Its budget comes entirely from user fees.

The water supply for Atlantic Highlands is provided by the Atlantic Highlands Water Department Plant located on West Lincoln Avenue. All drinkable water in Atlantic Highlands comes from natural water-bearing layers deep under ground, known as aquifers. This groundwater is drawn from four active wells that tap into the Raritan-Magothy and Englishtown aquifers 600 feet and 250 feet below the surface. Natural layers of clay protect the wells from contamination, which may be in the ground.

The Borough is within a water supply critical area designated by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection; therefore it is not possible to increase water withdrawals from the Raritan-Magothy Aquifer. To expand the water supply, the Borough will rely upon the Englishtown Aquifer. The Borough expects that this approach will meet its projected needs.

The Borough of Atlantic Highlands has six wells, three of which are in working order, two of which are shut down, and one of which is expected to be on line in early Spring. All of these well are described below:

- **Well No. 1** - Located on the site of the Public Works Yard on West Lincoln Avenue, Well no. 1 is in working order.
- **Well No. 2** - Located on the site of the plant on West Lincoln Avenue, Well No. 2 has been shut down due to clogged screens. For this well to be restored to working condition, the digging may result in possible contamination from coal tar residue at the New Jersey Natural Gas Company site. To avoid any problems, Well No. 2 has been shut down and will be replaced by Well No. 6.
- **Well No. 3** - Located on the site of the Public Works Yard on West Lincoln Avenue, Well No. 3 is out of service.
- **Well No. 4** - Located on the site of the plant on West Lincoln Avenue, Well No. 4 is in working order.
- **Well No. 5** - Located on Leonard Avenue, well No. 5 is in working order.
- **Well No. 6** - Located on East Avenue, this well became operational in 1990.
Atlantic Highlands is allowed to draw about 198 million gallons of water per year from these aquifers, but actual usage was 149 million in 2006. These aquifers serve wide areas of the state so the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) monitors the balance between extraction and natural replenishment, telling towns how much they can draw.

YOUR WATER SUPPLY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wells</th>
<th>No. 1</th>
<th>No. 4</th>
<th>No. 5</th>
<th>No. 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Lincoln Ave. plant</td>
<td>Lincoln Ave. plant</td>
<td>Leonard Avenue</td>
<td>East Avenue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depth</td>
<td>600 feet</td>
<td>600 feet</td>
<td>600 feet</td>
<td>250 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquifer</td>
<td>Raritan formation</td>
<td>Raritan formation</td>
<td>Raritan formation</td>
<td>Englishtown formation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed draw</td>
<td>118.5 million gallons per year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>79.2 million gallons per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average use</td>
<td>Winter: 4000,000-600,000 gallons per day.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Summer: 600,00-900,00 gallons/day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The DEP is concerned about depletion of aquifers underlying Monmouth County, which is classified as a “critical area.” Aquifers are recharged by water infiltrating from surface outcrops, wetlands, stream corridors, and soils, which allow deep penetration of water. If natural recharge areas are developed or covered by impervious surfaces, infiltration can be adversely affected. All Raritan formation outcrops are in Middlesex County. The Englishtown aquifer is recharged along a band of land running from Belford, Port Monmouth and Ideal Beach along the bay shore, southwest 20 miles into Monroe Township in Middlesex County. In Atlantic Highlands it is regularly monitored at a well off East Highland Avenue operated by the US Geological Survey (NJ District).
Treatment
The importance of the treatment process is emphasized by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which warns, “Inadequately treated water may contain disease-causing organisms. These organisms include bacteria, viruses, and parasites, which can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhea, and associated headaches.”

- Water pumped from the wells is piped into the central treatment and distribution plant on West Lincoln Avenue.
- There, raw well water goes through several steps:
  1. Aeration to remove any odor-causing hydrogen sulfide;
  2. Clarification by adding lime and alum which coagulates iron and settles it into a sludge pit; and
  3. Filtering to “polish” the water and remove any residual color.
- Chlorine is added as mandated by DEP at the rate of one to two pounds in the 500,000 gallons of water used per day (average), leaving a minuscule residual (0.3 parts per million).

Distribution
After treatment, water is pumped to two storage tanks at high elevations in town so as to maintain water pressure and use gravity for distribution downhill. The tank at Observatory Place holds a million gallons, and 200,000 gallons can go in the tank above East Highland Avenue and Eastpoint shopping center. This is about a two-day supply in summer and three days in winter. If an emergency ever cut off the supply, service could be provided by a connection at neighboring Leonardo with the New Jersey American Water Company.

The distribution system needs constant maintenance and is regularly upgraded; perhaps a fourth of it is over 100 years old. Eight-inch pipes have replaced all two-inch and many four-inch ones to expand flow volume. Annual flushing scours out the pipes. Over 200 hydrants provide fire protection, including several dozen recently added.

Such improvements have reduced residents’ complaints. There is still occasionally low water pressure in some locations. Dirty water can occur temporarily when sediments, which collect in pipelines, are disturbed by flushing, firefighting use or illegal opening of hydrants. Some problems are caused by sediment gathering in water main dead-ends, but these will all eventually be eliminated.
Testing
Water samples from around the Borough are regularly tested by independent water-quality laboratories, and results go to the Borough and DEP. Federal and State governments have established test procedures and limits called maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) for over 80 substances found in water. Under federal law, all water users now receive an annual report on drinking water quality, listing only those contaminants that were detected in the water. Atlantic Highlands’ first report, covering 1998, was mailed in February 2000. The 1999 report was provided in July 2000. The last report was issued in June 2006. All results from our water tests show no contaminants are present, except for six substances, which sometimes occur in miniscule amounts very far below the enforced MCL Limits.

The required water tests cover:
- Microbes (such as viruses and bacteria)
- 16 inorganic chemicals
- 62 volatile organic chemicals (VOCs) (from industrial and petroleum by-products)
- Radioactive contaminants (that occur naturally or from oil, gas or mining activities)
- 15 secondary contaminants (that have no health impact but may affect water’s odor, taste or appearance or have cosmetic effects on skin and teeth)

SOLID WASTE

Waste management is handled in Atlantic Highlands in three ways:
- Collection and disposal of solid wastes from residences;
- Special handling of restricted and hazardous wastes at the County level; and
- Recycling and waste avoidance measures.

Residential solid waste.
The Atlantic Highlands Sanitation Department makes curbside pick-ups of household solid waste twice weekly. Solid waste is disposed of at the landfill of the Monmouth County Reclamation Center on 6000 Asbury Avenue in Tinton Falls.

Atlantic Highlands alone generated 5,720 tons of solid waste in 2004. Regular solid waste totaled 4,945 tons per year and bulk materials and cleanup contributed an additional 775 tons. In 1987, before recycling, Atlantic Highlands generated 5,400 tons per year. Since 1987, Atlantic Highlands’ landfill contribution has remained relatively stable, but has risen slightly each year.
Restricted and hazardous waste.

There are special requirements for disposing of three categories of restricted waste:

- **Asbestos** - Since asbestos shingles and siding are classified as a restricted waste the Monmouth County Reclamation Center must be contacted prior to disposal (732) 918-0142. Asbestos is accepted on Wednesdays and Saturdays only, and special bags and labeling are required. Large fines (up to $50,000) can be assessed for improper asbestos disposal.

- **Construction debris** - The Borough will not collect construction debris, so residents must make arrangements for disposal with a private hauler or take debris to the landfill themselves.

- **Grass** - Grass cannot be mixed with waste, but is accepted at a special grass site located at the landfill during normal business hours. Ultimately grass clippings are transported to a compost site. Fees for grass clippings are $3.00 per carload or $35 per ton.

- **Pollution hazards** - Many types of waste involve pollution hazards and require special handling by the County household Hazardous Waste Facility, located on Shafto Road in Tinton Falls. It accepts household hazardous wastes such as pesticides, lawn and garden chemicals (fertilizers, herbicides), household cleaners, paints, solvents, thinners, varnishes, pool chemicals, propane BBB tanks, gasoline, motor oil, anti-freeze, batteries and other toxins. Materials must be in marked containers with original labels. Maximum 200 pounds of dry material and 20 gallons of liquid material per visit. The facility requires advance notice to schedule an appointment (732) 922-2234 for information call (732) 577-8400 or visit its website on the internet (www.njhazwaste.com).
RECYCLING

HISTORY

Recycling became compulsory in New Jersey in 1987 with the passage of the Statewide Mandatory Source Separation Act, which incorporates State and County recycling goals for solid waste. It requires that municipal development regulations controlling site plan and subdivision approval include provisions that ensure conformity with a municipal recycling ordinance. The goals of the legislation are to extend the life span of existing landfills, recover natural resources, and reduce pollution by encouraging remanufacturing.

RECYCLING PROGRAM

Atlantic Highlands requires that all residential properties separate for collection and recycling the following materials:

- Newspapers
- Glass bottles and jars
- Leaves
- Tin and bi-metal cans
- Aluminum cans
- Demolition materials

Non-residential properties are also required to separate for collection and recycling certain materials, which are:

- Newspapers
- Glass bottles and jars
- Leaves
- Tin and bi-metal cans
- Aluminum cans
- Corrugated cardboard
- High grade paper
- Demolition materials

The Borough collects recyclable materials from the curbside of each property and/or from a drop-off center to be designated by the Mayor and Council.

A recycling coordinator is appointed by the Mayor and Council. The coordinator is responsible for establishing the Rules and Regulations governing the days and times for the collection, sorting, transportation, sale and/or marketing of the recyclable materials.
When recycling became mandatory, a market existed for recycled items such as glass, metal, and newspapers, and towns could sell these items to offset the coast of pickup. As more and more towns began recycling, the supply of recyclables outpaced the demand, and now the Borough of Atlantic Highlands must pay to dispose of these items. The cost to dispose of recyclables in this way is still cheaper than to have them dumped at the Monmouth County Landfill. For example, it may cost $5.00 per ton to have newspaper hauled away by a recycler, but disposing of the same ton of newspaper at the landfill would cost over $55.00. This is known as “cost avoidance.”

Atlantic Highlands recycles a total of about 3,407 tons. This means each household recycles about 1.8 tons of waste per year. Because recycling saves on dumping fees, as demonstrated above, it makes the recycling program self-financing. Recycling is the law in Atlantic Highlands as provided in Borough Ordinance 894. Violators are subject to penalties under the law including fine, jail or community service. It is a punishable violation if you put recyclables in with regular garbage. If the County finds recyclables mixed when garbage goes to the landfill, the Borough is subject to fines. The recycling program in Atlantic Highlands is overseen by the Atlantic Highlands Sanitation Department.

Recycling Collection:
- Residential - Zone 1: first and third Wednesdays of each month;
  Zone 2: second and fourth Wednesday
- Downtown Businesses - recyclables picked up every Wednesday

Materials picked up curbside:
- Newspapers - tied in bundles, 8 to 10 inches high
- Corrugated cardboard - flattened and tied in bundles
- The following items placed in rigid containers, commingled, not separated:
  1. Aluminum cans
  2. Tin, steel and bi-metal cans
  3. Glass bottles and jars
  4. Plastic #1 and 2, but not margarine/butter tubs or baby wipe containers

Large items:
- Large items are picked up twice a month on the Saturday following the Wednesday pickup. Trucks automatically go to all streets and pick up bulky trash such as computers, televisions, furniture (upholstered, wood, metal, glass), carpeting, and mattresses.
- Appliances - Borough Hall must be notified to arrange for special pick-up; the trucks do not pick-up construction or demolition debris.

The Borough notifies residents about the seasonal schedule for pick-up of brush, yard waste (no grass), and leaves.
The Borough Recycling Center is located at the end of West Lincoln Avenue, to the west of West Avenue. The Center accepts the same items as the curbside pick up plus:

- mixed paper (junk mail, magazines, catalogs)
- high grade paper (letterhead, computer paper)
- phone books
- brush and yard waste (no grass)
- used motor oil and anti-freeze
- car batteries

Paint cans, which are empty and dry with lids removed, can be placed with regular trash and recyclables.

Household batteries are accepted at Borough Hall during business hours.

**Recommendation**

In order to ensure that future development is designed to accommodate recycling of solid waste, the site plan and subdivision regulations of the borough should require that adequate space on each site is devoted to a recyclable material storage area. The required amount of space for recyclable material storage should be incorporated into the provisions of the Ordinance.
The Community Facilities Element identifies existing public and quasi-public facilities within the Borough necessary to provide for the safety, health, educational and general welfare for present and future township residents.
OBJECTIVE

Encourage a sense of one community throughout the town so that all the separate areas feel connected. The townships public schools, governmental facilities, fire stations, police, library and community centers should communicate a sense of a single community.

1. Administration and Government

Atlantic Highlands Borough Hall is located at 100 First Avenue.

2. Fire Protection

Atlantic Highlands Fire Department is located at 10 East Mount Avenue. In 2006 alone the Fire Department responded to more than 120 calls for assistance. The Atlantic Highlands Fire Department has more than 115 years of tradition and service to the community. It is an all-volunteer organization.

3. Public Works

Construction projects for roads, streets, sidewalks, gutters and storm drains are overseen by the Borough Engineer, Borough Administrator, and director of Public Works, based on plans that are developed, approved and funded annually. Public works staff and equipment are deployed for routine repair of roads and streets, periodic cleaning of streets and storm drains, installation of signage, and collection of trash, recycling and brush. The Borough yard is located at the end of Lincoln Avenue and is open for recycling six days a week.

4. Emergency Services

Atlantic Highlands First Aid and Safety squad is an all-volunteer organization that has been providing around-the-clock free emergency medical services to the residents and visitors. Founded in 1929, the organization responds to several hundred calls a year. The squad has two emergency water rescue vessels for use in Sandy Hook Bay. The organization relies on donations from residents, businesses and the Borough. Recently it received a grant from the Department of Homeland Security, which will be used to equip every member of the squad with personal protection equipment.
5. Public Library

The Atlantic Highlands Public Library is located at 100 First Avenue. Mission is to provide convenient and equal access to information in useful formats; create environments which foster life-long learning, personal enrichment, and a literate society; strengthen information partnerships through resource sharing; and actively promote library services, programs and materials to the community. In order to accomplish this purpose, the library will support the principles of intellectual freedom as set forth in the Freedom to Read Statement and the Bill of Rights of the American Library Association.

6. Schools

Two schools serve Atlantic Highlands.

Atlantic Highlands Elementary School is located at 140 First Avenue, in Atlantic Highlands. It covers kindergarten to 6th grade.

Henry Hudson Regional School is located on the hill adjacent to Twin Lights in the neighboring town of Highlands, overlooking the Atlantic Ocean and Gateway National Area at Sandy Hook. The school district serves students in grades 7-12 from the towns of Atlantic Highlands and Highlands.

The Board of Education of the Henry Hudson Regional School District is committed to the philosophy and ideals of American democracy. Accordingly, it is committed to helping each pupil grow in understanding, appreciation and participation in democracy as a way of life. Therefore, the school must nurture a willingness on the part students to accept their responsibilities as citizens. These responsibilities include: interest in local, national and international affairs, knowledge about social, political, and economic forces, and respect for individual and social differences.

The mission of the Henry Hudson Regional School is to offer a curriculum that fosters high academic achievement and prepares individuals to succeed in a changing technological society.

7. Environmental standards.

Public and quasi-public community facilities should be developed, renovated or retrofitted for environmental stability in accordance with the U.S. Green Building Councils LEED system (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) that sets standards for site development, water and energy efficiency, material selection, indoor environmental quality and other environmental design factors.
The Municipal Land Use Law requires that all local master plans include a specific policy statement indicating the relationship of the plan to the master plans of contiguous communities; the Monmouth County Plan; the State Development and Redevelopment Plan; and to the County Solid Waste Management Plan. The policy of the Borough of Atlantic Highlands is to ensure that the Borough's development does not conflict with the development and welfare of neighboring municipalities, and the County, and the State as a whole. An analysis of the Borough Plan shows that it is compatible with the plans of adjoining municipalities.
CONTIGUOUS MUNICIPALITIES

The Borough of Atlantic Highlands adjoins the Borough of Highlands and the Township of Middletown.

**Middletown:** The abutting area of Middletown is planned as single-family residential, R-22 and R-15, and commercial, B-3. The community border, where undeveloped, is characterized by sensitive undeveloped wooded slopes and by hydric soils along Many Mind Creek. These features are not suitable for conventional development and should be conserved. Highland Avenue traverses property in both Atlantic Highlands and Middletown. While the Atlantic Highlands frontage is designated residential, a portion of Middletown is designated commercial. The Borough disfavors the use of Highland Avenue for commercial access. Moreover, any nonresidential use should be buffered. The Borough also urges that the vicinity of the landmark Bowne House, at the end of Leonard Avenue, be conserved.

**Highlands:** The area in Highlands, which abuts Atlantic Highlands, is zoned for residential, multi-family, mobile home, and neighborhood commercial uses. These more intensive uses in Highlands adjoin park space and single-family development in Atlantic Highlands. There is a need for both communities to coordinate planning efforts for the Bayshore Trail, waterfront access, and slope protection.

MONMOUTH COUNTY GROWTH MANAGEMENT GUIDE

The Monmouth County Growth Management Guide was adopted in 1982. Atlantic Highlands, with its unstable slopes and slump features, has been categorized as an environmentally sensitive area within the Coastal Growth Corridor. A strong transportation network has developed within the Corridor attracting higher density housing, commercial and office facilities. In 1987, the County Guide was amended to include the Bayshore Waterfront Access Plan. This plan promotes the implementation of Bayshore Waterfront Park, a linear park interconnecting recreational and open space areas from Aberdeen along the coast to Highlands.

The Atlantic Highlands Master Plan is supportive of the County Plan goals for the Bayshore Waterfront and has considered its recommendations in the preparation of the Municipal Conservation, Circulation and Land Use Elements. Atlantic Highlands is proposing connecting municipal park sites to the Bayshore Trail.
MONMOUTH COUNTY DISTRICT SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Monmouth County Reclamation Center in Tinton Falls serves as the landfill for solid waste generated by Monmouth County municipalities. It is also the site of the County recycling transfer station. The county Solid Waste Management Plan was amended in 1987 to mandate certified municipal recycling programs as a condition for municipal solid waste dumping privileges at the Monmouth County Landfill. Atlantic Highlands received certification from the County in September 1987 for having a recycling ordinance consistent with the County Plan. Annual recertification is contingent on meeting the goals set forth by the recycling law of the State. These goals include an acceptable Recycling Plan Element adopted as part of the Master Plan and an ordinance to amend the development regulations. The County has approved the Recycling Plan Element of Atlantic Highlands adopted on June 30, 1988.

STATE DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT

The State Planning Commission released the State Development and Redevelopment Plan in 1992. Since Atlantic Highlands is within the land area under the jurisdiction of the Coastal Area Facilities Review Act (CAFRA), the State Plan relies upon the policies, regulations and implementation mechanisms that have been developed by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to regulate coastal areas.

The Borough has participated in the cross-acceptance process of the State Plan. As a result, that portion of the Borough characterized by unstable and steep slopes is proposed as PA 5, Environmentally Sensitive. The remainder of the community is designated PA 1, Redeveloping Suburb, with a portion delineated as a “Center”.

Contemplated Changes:

Working with the County and neighboring towns as part of the Bayshore Regional Strategic Development and Redevelopment Plan, the Borough hopes that this process will identify ways to achieve revitalization, redevelopment, or at least aesthetic improvements along the Highway 36 corridor between Keyport and Atlantic Highlands. Previous Bayshore-wide plans described the Atlantic Highlands portion of the corridor as well planned, attractive and integrated with its locality (know as “Memorial Parkway” within Atlantic Highlands). The borough would like to see such a positive image extended westward from the town.

The Borough faces very practical, down-to-earth difficulties in approaching a vision of faster, concentrated, and higher-density growth that arises from the PA-1 designation. That vision is, in fact, contrary to the Borough’s own vision. The difficulties are scarce unbuilt land, an existing high density, the unsuitability of the historic district for other than restoration initiatives, and the critical environmental sites of its steep slope zone and Many Mind Creek corridor.