

Borough of West Cape May Master Plan Reexamination Report



West Cape May, NJ

(DRAFT MAY 29, 2025)

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Regional Context

West Cape May Borough comprises 1.2 square miles within Cape May County, the southernmost county in the State of New Jersey. The southern portion of the Borough extends to within roughly 1,000 feet of the Atlantic Ocean near the southernmost point of New Jersey. The Borough is bounded by Lower Township to the south, west, and northwest, and Cape May City to the east and northeast (see **Map 1**) and is located to the south of the Cape May Canal, which runs through Lower Township. The Borough is largely surrounded by protected natural areas, particularly within Lower Township, including the Higbee Beach Wildlife Management Area to the east and the Cape May Wetlands State Natural Area to the south.

The Borough's population at the time of the most recent decennial census was 1,010 residents. The Borough's population density (856 residents per square mile of total area) was more than two and a half times the population density of Cape May County (333 residents per square mile), but less than the state (1,196 residents per square mile), which is the most densely populated state in the country.

The Borough lies entirely within the Coastal Area Facilities Review Act (CAFRA) boundary, identified as part of New Jersey's Coastal Management program. The Borough is also within the jurisdiction of the Southern Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) covering Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem Counties.

1.2 Transportation

As shown in **Map 2**, Broadway (County Road 626), which becomes Seashore Road in Lower Township to the north, is the Borough's primary north-south road. Broadway is the Borough road with the highest traffic volume¹ and has a mixture of residential and commercial uses. Broadway/Seashore Road connects Cape May City to the south and extends across the Cape May Canal Bridge to the north. Sunset Boulevard (County Road 606) runs along the southern boundary of the Borough, connecting Cape May Point Borough to the west with Cape May City where it becomes West Perry Street. Bayshore Road (County Road 607) also provides north-south connections to the west of most of the developed portions of the Borough.

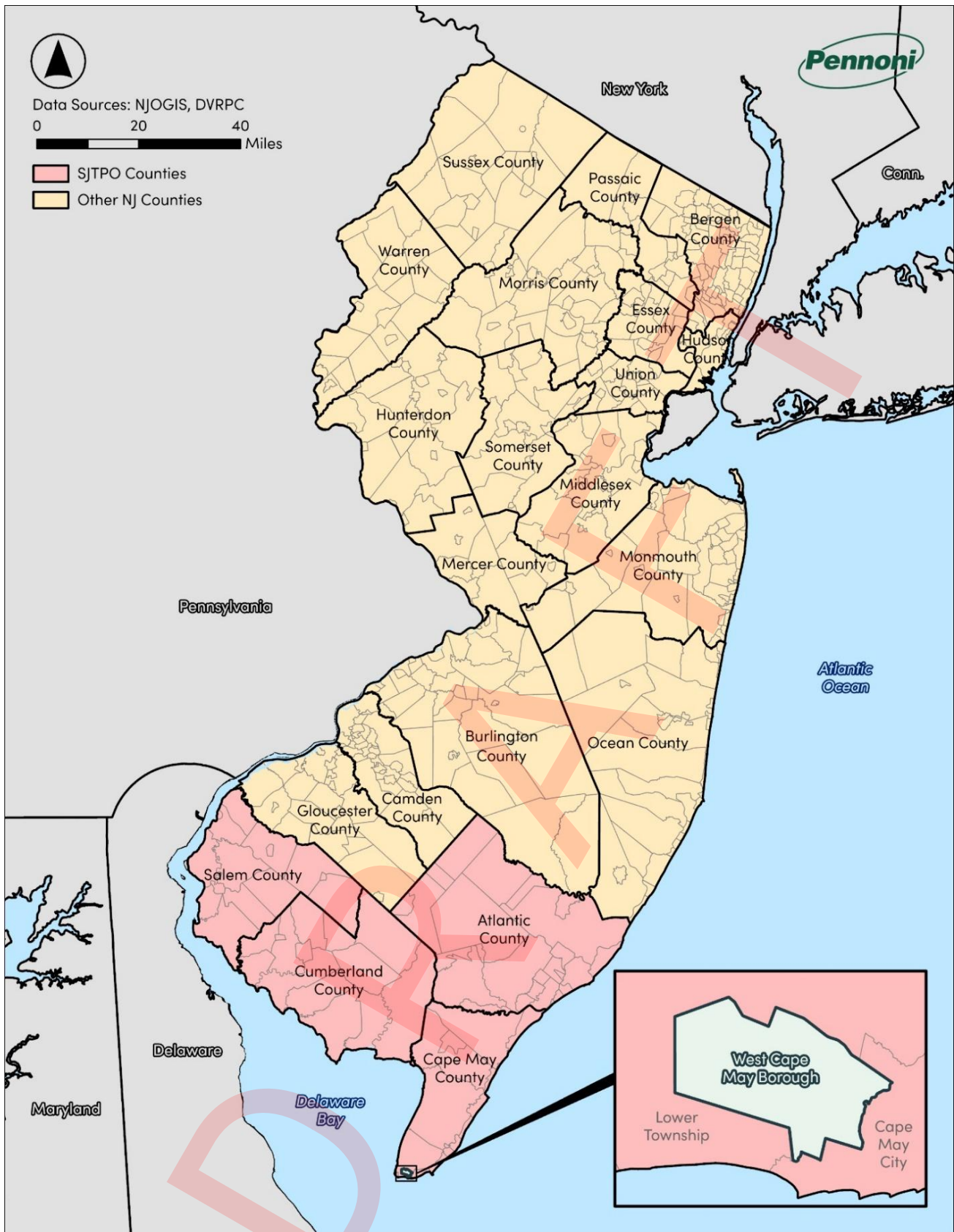


Figure 1 View from Broadway and Eldredge Ave

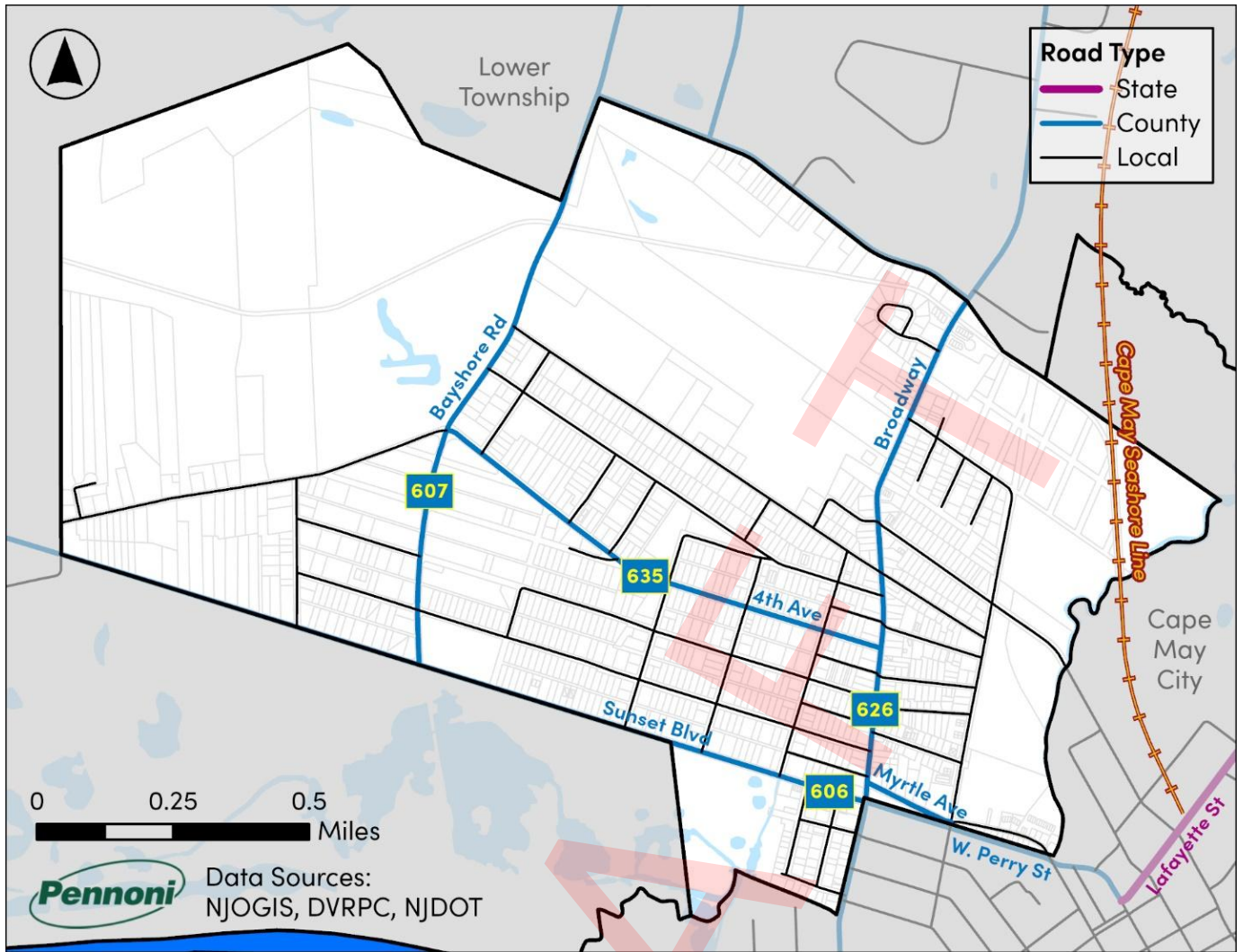
Numbered streets extend to the west from Broadway from Second Avenue to Sixth Avenue and are largely residential in uses. Fourth Avenue also serves as a County Road (County Road 635) and connects Broadway with Bayshore Road.

West Perry Street connects to Lafayette Street in Cape May City (State Route 109), which offers the only other connection across the Cape May Canal and connects to the southernmost extent of the Garden State Parkway in Lower Township.

¹ New Jersey Department of Transportation Traffic Count Stations: <https://www.njtns.org/map/>



Map 1 Location within New Jersey



Map 2 Major Roads

1.3 Land Use

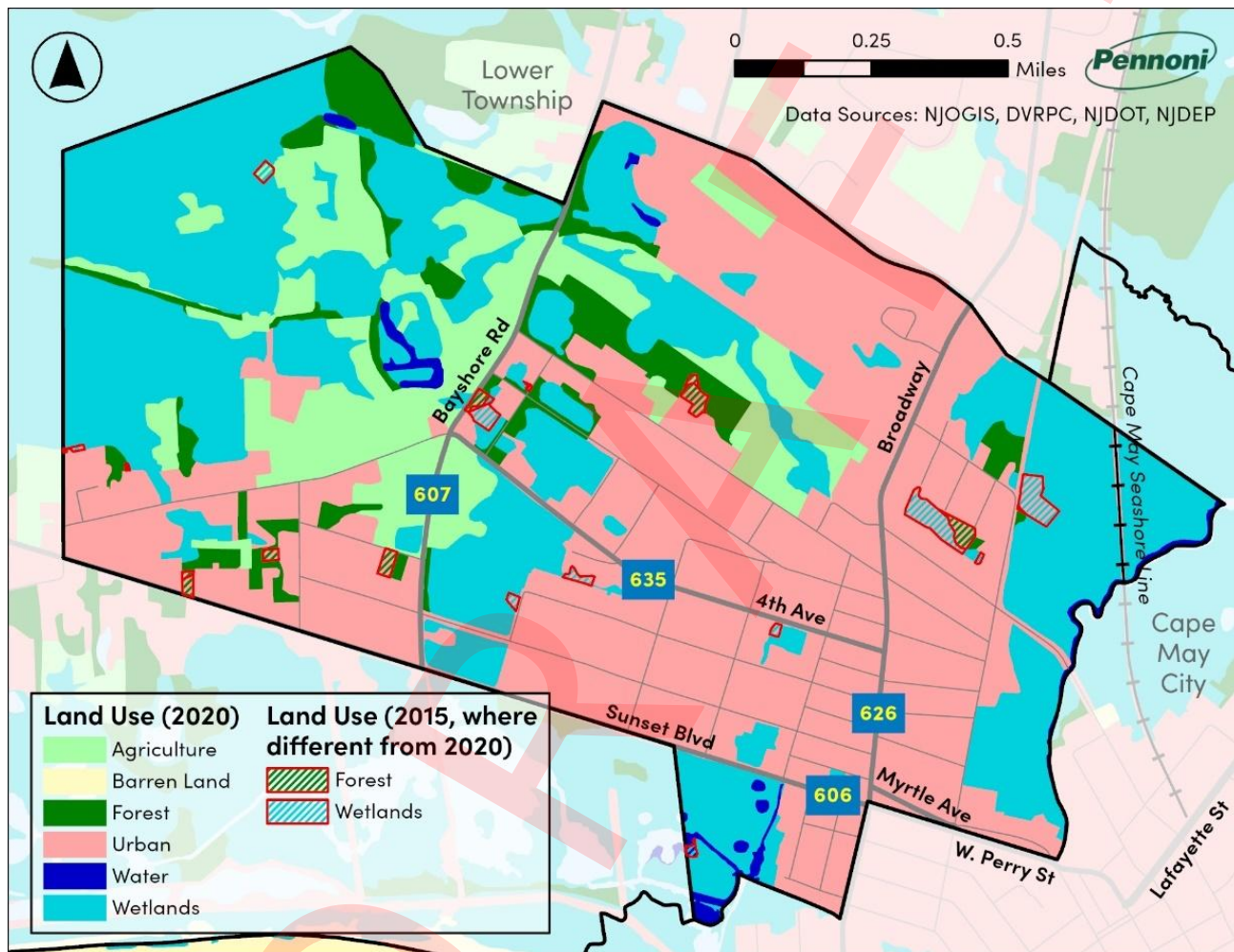
Less than half of the Borough (45.7%) was developed with urban land uses as of 2020, the most recent year that data was available from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). An additional 13.2% of the Borough is improved as agricultural uses. Wetlands (34.2%), forest (5.7%) and Water (1.1%) comprise the remaining roughly 40% of the Borough, which is largely protected from development.

Urban land uses are generally bounded by Park Boulevard to the east and Bayshore Road to the west as well as a section to the west of Bayshore Road and south of Stevens Street. Wetlands are most prominently located to the east of Park Boulevard and the northwest of Bayshore Road and Stevens Street, as well as being interspersed in otherwise predominantly urban areas. Agriculture and forest areas are typically mixed with wetlands.

The Borough's land use distribution has remained relatively stable between 2015, the year that the Borough most recently adopted a Master Plan Reexamination Report and 2020, the year with the most recently available data. Urban land increased by 7.6 acres, or 1.0% of the Borough's total land, during this period, suggesting a subtle incursion of development into natural lands. The combined loss of Forest and Wetland areas corresponds closely with the increase in urban development. **Map 3** shows the Borough's land use in 2020 and identifies areas that have changed since 2015.

Land Use Type	2015		2020		2015 – 2020 Change (acres)
	Acres	% of Borough	Acres	% of Borough	
Agriculture	99.4	13.1%	99.7	13.2%	0.3
Forest	46.2	6.1%	43.4	5.7%	-2.8
Urban	338.3	44.7%	345.9	45.7%	7.6
Water	8.4	1.1%	8.6	1.1%	0.2
Wetlands	264.1	34.9%	258.9	34.2%	-5.2
Barren Land	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0%	0
Total	765.4	100.0%	756.5	100.0%	--

Table 1 Change in Land Use between 2015 and 2020



Map 3 Land Use in 2020 and Change from 2015

1.3.1 Urban Land Use

Of the 345.9 acres designated as urban land uses in 2020, residential land uses of all densities (rural/low-density, medium-density, and high-density) comprised roughly 80% of the Borough's urban land and over 35% of the Borough's total land. Medium-density residential, or residential urban/suburban neighborhoods greater than 1/8 acres and up to

and including ½ acre lots², comprises over half of the Borough's urban land alone (188.8 acres or 54.6%). Rural/low density residential, residential neighborhoods with area greater than ½ acre lots³, comprises 52.3 acres (15.1%), while high-density residential, single units or multiple dwelling units on 1/8 to 1/5 acre lots⁴, occupies 38.5 acres (11.1%). Residential neighborhoods extend throughout the portions of the Borough that are developed as urban land uses, with high-density residential more clustered along Broadway and rural/low-density residential more commonly found on urban areas that are furthest away from Broadway.

Commercial/services comprise 28.0 acres (8.1% of urban land) as of 2020. While commercial/services uses are scattered throughout the Borough, they are most clustered along Subset Boulevard and Myrtle Avenue near the intersection with Broadway. Note that some land uses that are considered mixed or other urban built-up land include commercial businesses, including some that are found along Broadway to the north of Fourth Street.

As noted above, urban land use increased by 7.6 acres between 2015 and 2020. This increase was also seen for almost all urban land use types. Residential land uses saw an increase of a total of 7.4 acres, with high-density residential seeing the biggest increase (4.1 acres). Commercial/services land use also expanded by 1.6 acres. Mixed or other urban built-up land decreased by 1.2 acres. This land use includes areas that cannot be separated into individual categories at the mapping scale employed⁵.

Urban land use distribution is shown in **Map 4** and detailed in **Table 2**.

Land Use Type	2015			2020			2015 – 2020 Change (acres)
	Acres	% of Borough Urban Land	% of Borough Total Land	Acres	% of Borough Urban Land	% of Borough Total Land	
Residential (rural/low density)	50.1	14.8%	6.6%	52.3	15.1%	6.9%	2.2
Residential (medium density)	187.7	55.5%	24.8%	188.8	54.6%	25.0%	1.1
Residential (high-density)	34.4	10.2%	4.5%	38.5	11.1%	5.1%	4.1
Commercial/services	26.4	7.8%	3.5%	28.0	8.1%	3.7%	1.6
Athletic fields or recreational land	19.3	5.7%	2.6%	19.3	5.6%	2.6%	0.0
Mixed or other urban or build-up land	15.4	4.6%	2.0%	14.2	4.1%	1.9%	-1.2
Railroads, transportation, communication or utilities	4.9	1.4%	0.6%	4.9	1.4%	0.6%	0.0
Total	338.2	100.0%	44.7%	346.0	100.0%	45.7%	--

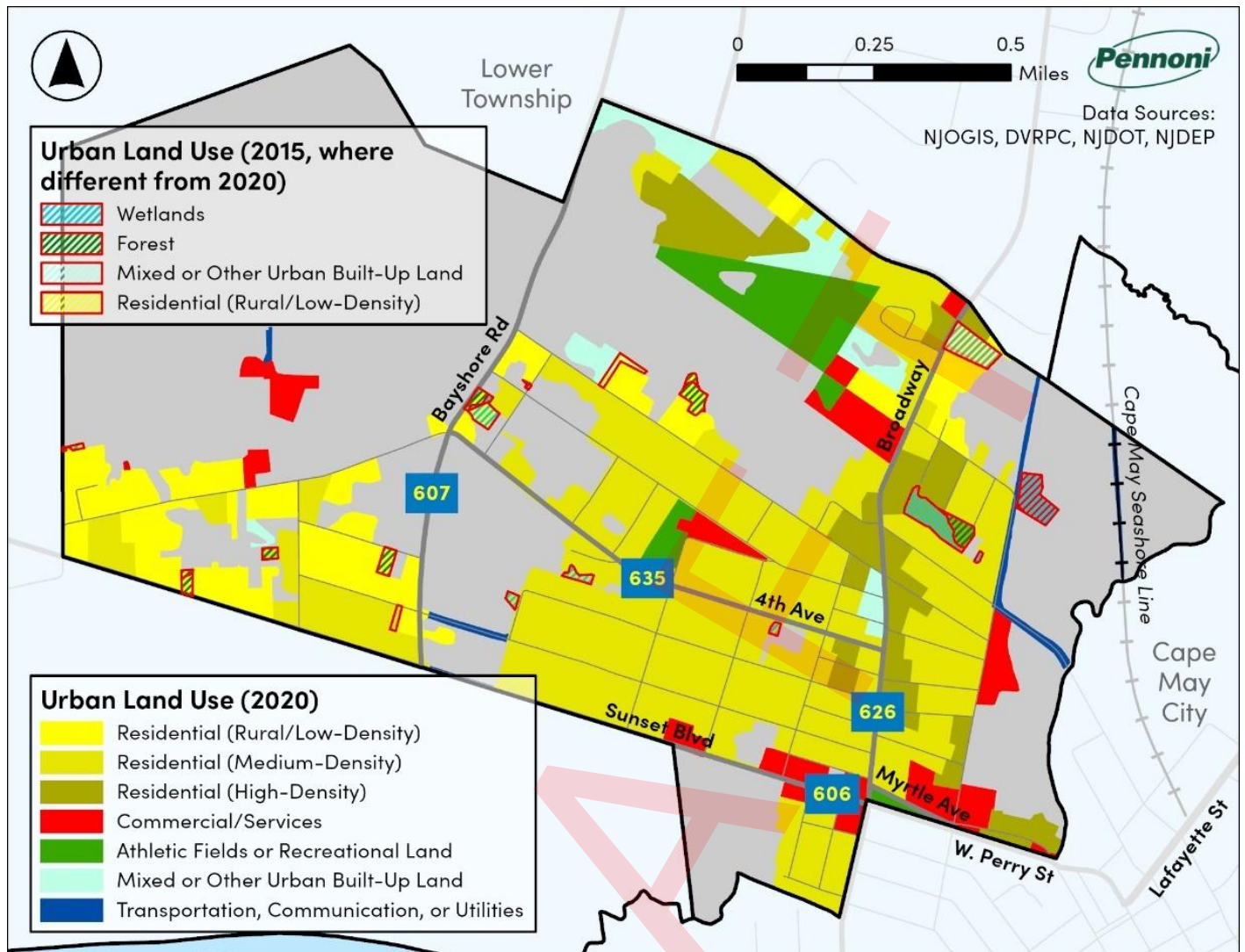
Table 2 Change in Land Use between 2015 and 2020

² New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection 2015 LAND USE/LAND COVER CLASSIFICATION: <https://www.nj.gov/dep/gis/digidownload/metadata/lulc15/anderson2015.html>

³ ibid

⁴ ibid

⁵ ibid



1.4 Master Plan Update Requirement

West Cape May Borough, as well as all other municipalities within the State of New Jersey, is required to maintain an up-to-date Master Plan and associated development regulations. The Borough has undertaken this comprehensive review of its planning in accordance with the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (NJSA 49:55D-89) which requires, at least every ten (10) years, a general reexamination of the Municipal Master Plan and development regulations by the Planning Board. This Reexamination Report fulfills this obligation. Furthermore, this report must be adopted by the Borough's Planning/Zoning Board, in its capacity as a Planning Board, by resolution. A copy of the report and resolution will be sent to the New Jersey Office of Planning Advocacy and the County Planning Board. This will include a notice that a report and resolution have been prepared and sent to the Municipal Clerk of each adjoining municipality.

West Cape May Borough's most recent Master Plan Reexamination Report was adopted in October 2015, which evaluated the Borough's most recent Master Plan, which was adopted in December 2005.

1.5 Statutory Requirements

This Reexamination Report conforms to the requirements of the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) which stipulates that each municipality in the State of New Jersey shall reexamine its Master Plan and development regulations at least every ten (10) years. Specifically, N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89 states:

The governing body shall, at least every ten years, provide for a general reexamination of its Master Plan and development regulations by the Planning Board, which shall prepare and adopt by resolution a report on the findings of such reexamination, a copy of which report and resolution shall be sent to the Office of Planning Advocacy and the County Planning Board. A notice that the report and resolution have been prepared shall be sent to any military facility commander who has registered with the municipality pursuant to section 1 of PL 2005, c.41 (C.40:55D-12.4) and to the municipal clerk of each adjoining municipality, who may request a copy of the report and resolution on behalf of the military facility or municipality.

This report addresses the requirements of a reexamination by including sections addressing the following:

- A. The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the Borough at the time of the adoption of the last Master Plan or Reexamination Report.
- B. The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date.
- C. The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis of the Master Plan and development regulations, as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, the collection, disposition and recycling of designated recyclable materials and changes in State, County and municipal policy, goals, and objectives.
- D. The specific changes recommended for the Master Plan and development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, and whether a new plan or regulation should be prepared.
- E. The recommendations of the Planning Board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law", P.L. 1992, c.79 (C.40A:12A-1 et seq.) into the Land Use Plan element of the municipal master plan, and recommended changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the Borough.
- F. The recommendations of the Planning Board concerning locations appropriate for the development of public electric vehicle infrastructure, including but not limited to, commercial districts and, areas proximate to public transportation and transit facilities and transportation corridors, and public rest stops; and recommended changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary or appropriate for the development of public electric vehicle infrastructure.

2.0 MAJOR PROBLEMS AND OBJECTIVES RELATING TO LAND DEVELOPMENT IN THE BOROUGH

Pursuant to N.J.A.C:40:55D-89a provides that the reexamination report shall state: The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report.

The Borough's most recent Master Plan Reexamination Report was adoption in 2015. That Reexamination Report evaluated the 2005 Master Plan Objectives that were identified in the 2005 Master plan Reexamination and the 2005 Comprehensive Master Plan Update. The 2015 Master Plan Reexamination Report also identified new Issues and Objectives and made new recommendations within Master Plan and Development Regulations.

Note that the wording of the following Problem Areas, Objectives, Assumptions, and Recommendations are based on how they appear in the 2015 Reexamination Report, unless otherwise noted.

The 2005 Master Plan lists the following Objectives within the Statement of Objectives, Principles, Assumptions, Policies, and Standards (SOPAPS):

2.1 Problem Areas from Master Plan and 2015 Reexamination Report

The following Objectives were identified in previous Master Plan updates and Reexamination Reports that were specifically mentioned in the 2005 Reexamination Report and reviewed in the 2015 Reexamination Report.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #1:

Provide adequate municipal sanitary sewer, storm sewer and water service throughout the Borough.

2005 Report Status:

Recent water and sewer projects have extended municipal service to the developed sections of the Borough. While improved properties do exist in the unserved portion(s) of the Borough, said improvements are generally isolated and not part of an organized development pattern.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

Expanding water and sewer infrastructure to support future development is no longer a desired objective; therefore, all of the 2005 infrastructure objectives should be deleted and replaced with the following:

- Continue to provide upgrades to the infrastructure system to service existing development.
- Expansion of infrastructure beyond existing sewer service area or into environmentally sensitive areas should not occur.
- The collection disposal and recycling of designated recyclable materials is encouraged and remains a priority.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #2:

Develop a strategy for expanding municipal sewer service to areas in the western portion of the Borough, which lie within the sewer service area but have no access to municipal sewer mains.

2005 Report Status:

The lack of infrastructure in the unserved portion(s) of the Borough serves as an institutional protection against sprawl-type development and promotes the preservation of open space. Accordingly, the provision of water and sewer "throughout the Borough" even in areas within the sewerable service area is no longer an objective of Borough Planners.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

This Objective was deleted, to be replaced with Objectives listed is strategic objective #1.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #3:

Continue to upgrade and extend the infrastructure network to service future residential development and to strengthen the economic future of the Borough.

2005 Report Status:

While Borough Planners continue to prioritize upgrading the infrastructure network to service existing residential development and to strengthen service to commercial zoning districts, expanding infrastructure to support future development is no longer a desired objective.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

This Objective was deleted, to be replaced with Objectives listed is strategic objective #1.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #4:

Identify a supplier of safe water.

2005 Report Status:

While the recently completed Cape May City desalinization plant provides safe drinking water to all properties in West Cape May connected to the municipal water supply, Borough Planners continue to be concerned about salt intrusion into the aquifer, especially where such intrusion affects those Borough properties serviced by well water.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

This Objective was deleted, to be replaced with Objectives listed is strategic objective #1.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #5:

Explore the possibility of expanding the sewerable area boundary to include houses currently prohibited from connecting to the municipal sewer service.

2005 Report Status:

While Borough Planners continue to prioritize the upgrade of the existing infrastructure network to service existing residential development, expanding the sewer service area is no longer a desired objective.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

This Objective was deleted, to be replaced with Objectives listed is strategic objective #1.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #6:

In areas not presently sewered, encourage innovative waste disposal systems.

2005 Report Status:

While Borough Planners continue to encourage innovative waste disposal systems to support existing development, such systems are no longer encouraged if they are designed to foster new, sprawl-type development.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

This Objective was deleted, to be replaced with Objectives listed is strategic objective #1.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #7:

In areas not presently sewered, encourage innovative waste disposal systems.

2005 Report Status:

While Borough Planners continue to encourage innovative waste disposal systems to support existing development, such systems are no longer encouraged if they are designed to foster new, sprawl-type development.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

This Objective was deleted, to be replaced with Objectives listed is strategic objective #1.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #8:

Encourage new growth within existing service capacity and characteristics of a growing resort economy.

New development should be related to the capacity of existing services and a variety of services and facilities should be provided to serve existing and future residents.

2005 Report Status:

The development patterns in the Borough over the past several years have been large subdivisions on virgin lands. This has resulted in sprawl-type development and the loss of precious open space.

Borough Planners encourage and endorse development in West Cape May that conforms with Smart Growth Development Principles as follows:

- Community / stakeholder collaboration in development decision making.
- Mixing of Land Uses.
- Encouraging infill development and redevelopment directed to existing communities using existing infrastructure.
- Master Planning of communities utilizing compact, clustered community design, walkable neighborhoods and distinctive, attractive communities offering a sense of place.
- Open space conservation, farmland preservation and scenic resource protection.
- Provide for a range of housing choice and opportunity.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

This Objective was deleted, to be replaced with Objectives listed in strategic objective #1. The report also recommended review Sustainability objectives.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #9:

Develop a program to preserve and protect marshes, dense forests, stream corridors, and other open space throughout West Cape May to maintain the Borough's quality of life and to protect both manmade and natural environments (especially where the land and water meet, which is home to the largest number of wildlife species).

2005 Report Status:

Development in West Cape May is regulated by NJDEP under CAFRA and the federal government under the Army Corps. As such, while protection and preservation of the Borough's natural environment and man-made open spaces remains a priority for Borough Planners, such actions ultimately fall under the jurisdiction of other regulatory bodies.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

The 2005 objectives continue to remain valid today and if anything, play a greater role in the future of the Borough due to its natural environment and the fact that its natural resources serve as the basis of the Borough's economy. The elevated importance of sustainability and resiliency particularly the impact of the sea level was highlighted and addressed in the 2009 West Cape May Sustainability Plan prepared by the graduate Comprehensive Planning Studio through the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #10:

Encourage development of recreational facilities, parks and cluster housing in selected areas to ensure adequate open space, which should be distributed and designed to provide a variety of uses for both year-round and seasonal residents.

2005 Report Status:

The use of recreational uses as a tool for preserving open space continues to be favored by Borough Planners. However, funding for land acquisition remains an impediment for maximizing the use of this tool. Similarly, funding for new, multi-use open space in targeted locations remains an issue.

Clustering of development can provide for preservation of open space when the undeveloped portion of a tract is deed restricted against future development. While long an objective of Borough Planners, the Land Development Ordinance does not currently permit such clustering.

A thorough discussion of recreation and related land use issues is included under the Land Use Plan Element (section 7.0) and the Open Space, Recreation and Conservation Plan Element (section 9.0) of this Comprehensive Master Plan Update.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

The 2005 objectives continue to remain valid.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #11:

Plan for parks and recreational areas as well as conservation for unforeseeable needs of the public in the future.

2005 Report Status:

See comments from problem area #8

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

The 2005 objectives continue to remain valid today. The Borough also recognizes the need for recreational facilities as a means of preserving open space.

The most logical recreation planning option for the Borough is Open Space Acquisition and/or Farmland Preservation. A Greenway Plan and Eco-Park were conceptualized to meet the recreation and conservation needs and objectives for West Cape May. Additional areas were also identified to be considered for passive recreation.

- Greenway: Ocean-to-Bay network of paths connecting the Delaware Bay to the Atlantic Ocean via the Central Wetlands Corridor.
- Eco-Park: Recreational area in the eastern portion of the municipality that would contain active and/or passive recreation facilities, interpretive stations, eco-tourism opportunities and related uses.

The Borough created a Recreation Plan Subcommittee to develop strategies to implement these recommendations.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #12:

Encourage the development of bike paths, walking paths and recreational areas for use by year-round and seasonal residents of the Borough.

2005 Report Status:

Recent proposals to utilize existing municipal alleyways for bicycle paths met with considerable resident opposition, due to, variously:

- the loss of vehicular access and parking to make way for the proposed paths;
- the lack of connectivity between the proposed paths and other accessways in the Borough; and
- the cost of the proposed project.

Improving Borough sidewalks for pedestrian circulation especially in the commercial districts remains a priority for Borough Policymakers.

While providing adequate recreation facilities and improving circulation continues to be a priority for Borough Planners, the Borough is dependent on grant funding for the improvements required. Given the current fiscal climate such funding is increasingly scarce.

Section 5.2.2 S herein (in the 2005 Master Plan) details the newly formed Task Force on Alternative Transportation Modes, designed, in part, to address bicycle paths and related issues.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

The 2005 objectives remain valid in 2015.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #13:

Explore the possibility of purchasing open space which could be designated as parklands within the Borough, including wetlands and areas along Cape Island Creek, Explore private and public funding for these purposes.

2005 Report Status:

As stated, funding for open space land acquisition remains an issue for the Borough, which continues to explore public, private, institutional and other funding sources for acquisition, design and maintenance of open space for both active and passive recreational uses.

Again, a thorough discussion of open space and recreation is included under the Open Space, Recreation and Conservation Plan Element (section 9.0) of this Comprehensive Master Plan Update.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

The 2005 objectives remain valid in 2015.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #14:

Emphasize limited (utilization) of open space with a strategy including conservation of Borough owned property- but not limited to such.

2005 Report Status:

A visual survey of West Cape May conducted for this Comprehensive Master Plan Update (and augmented by the Tax Assessor's Records) finds, that of the 45 Borough-Owned Parcels, 1 such Parcel is developed as the Borough's Municipal Complex and 1 such Parcel is in use as Wilbraham Memorial Park. The remaining 43 Parcels are classified as vacant lands. As stated, funding for open space land acquisition and parkland improvements remains an issue for Borough Planners.

Additionally, as discussed throughout this section, there are competing objectives for the use of municipally-owned lands. Accordingly, the most appropriate method of open space conservation remains an issue for Borough Planners. A thorough discussion of open space is included under the Open Space, Recreation and Conservation Plan Element (section 9.0) of this Comprehensive Master Plan Update.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

The 2005 objectives remain valid in 2015.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #15:

Encourage dune and beach reconstruction south of Sunset Boulevard (possibly through joint municipal involvement).

2005 Report Status:

Such reconstruction has been completed as part of a 2004 / 2005 Army Corps regional beach replenishment project.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

Dune and beach reconstruction project not referenced.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #16:

Develop a municipal natural resource inventory, a factual description of the environmental variables that affect or limit development in the Borough.

2005 Report Status:

The Environmental Resource Inventory commissioned by the Borough's Environmental Commission was completed in December 2003.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

ERI not referenced in 2015 re-examination report.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #17:

Ensure the monitoring of closed landfills in Lower Township.

2005 Report Status:

Subsurface conditions in municipal and other landfills have the potential to impact sources of drinking water as well as the natural environment. This issue remains a concern for the Borough.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

The 2005 objectives remain valid in 2015.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #18:

Develop a coordinated system for vehicular and pedestrian traffic and circulation that serves the needs of the community.

2005 Report Status:

As detailed under section 5.2.1 C herein (the 2005 Master Plan), traffic congestion and circulation concerns may be expected to increase as southern Cape May County in general and West Cape May in particular grow in popularity as both tourist destinations and residential communities. Improvements to traffic and circulation are anticipated to remain as objectives in perpetuity.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

These objectives still remain valid today. Many of the recommendations contained in the May 2015 Business Task Force Report relate to these objectives.

The design of a modern roundabout is underway for the West Perry, Myrtle Avenue, and Park Boulevard intersection and is seen as a top priority.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #19:

Explore methods to decrease congestion along Broadway and other major arteries, especially during tourist season.

2005 Report Status:

Section 5.2.2 S herein (the 2005 Master Plan) details the newly-formed Task Force on Alternative Transportation Modes, designed, in part, to address pedestrian circulation and congestion-related issues.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

These objectives still remain valid today. See 2015 Business Task Force Report for additional information.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #20:

Develop a strategy to reconstruct the poor surfaces of roads and streets. Encourage proper lighting in the commercial areas to enhance public safety.

2005 Report Status:

At Date of Publication, plans were in place for a County-sponsored improvement project at the intersection of Broadway, Perry Street and Myrtle Avenue. While currently in the funding stage, construction is anticipated in 2006.

Over the past several years, the Borough has been awarded grant funding from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for sewer improvements and roadway resurfacing work. Specifically:

- **USDA FY2003 Water & Sewer Replacement Project (Phase 1B Re-Bid).** At Date of Publication, project was all-but complete. Additional work with unutilized funds under consideration include an extension of the Second Avenue sewer main from Atlantic Avenue 275', repair of 10 storm inlets and refurbish lift stations.
- **USDA FY2004 Water & Sewer Replacement Project (Phase 2).** At Date of Publication, letter of intent with USDA had been executed. Design was to be initiated upon bonding of project. Completion of design expected approximately 8 weeks thereafter.

- **Reconstruction of Second Avenue and Myrtle Avenue (Re-Bid).** Project complete.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

These objectives still remain valid today. Projects identified in 2005 Master Plan were not referenced.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #21:

Pursue the reduction of traffic speeds on Sunset Boulevard, Broad, Stimson, Leaming, Central and Park Boulevard. Pursue a traffic light at the intersection of Stimson and Broadway. Enhance public safety by changing Pearl Avenue to a one-way, west to east.

2005 Report Status:

See prior comment.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

These objectives still remain valid today. Projects identified in 2005 Master Plan were not referenced.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #22:

Develop a strategy to provide parking for commercial establishments along Broadway and elsewhere as appropriate (e.g. satellite parking provided by the Borough; use of municipal property for public parking lots).

2005 Report Status:

The shortage of on-street and off-street parking is longstanding concern for the Borough. Such shortage is likely to increase as Borough Planners seek to expand commercial opportunities in the commercial district(s).

The parking regulations contained in the Land Development Ordinance and the Borough's attitude toward parking variances will impact this issue into the future.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

These objectives still remain valid today. See 2015 Business Task Force Report for additional information.

Providing additional access to the downtown center near Wilbraham Park is still a priority. In addition to making the area easier to reach by alternative means of transportation, additional parking would be one potential response to this need. A new parking lot has been constructed on Sunset, and there are other large parking lots available for customers of CVS/pharmacy, and the Park Boulevard shops. However, other area destinations are not sufficiently served by the current quantity of on-street and off-street parking. Ordinance 428-09 calls for a Dedicated Parking Fund which can be used by the Borough to acquire, lease, and maintain off-street parking in areas where privately provided parking is insufficient. Non-residential landowners may satisfy their minimum parking requirements by contributing to this fund if they are unable to provide sufficient parking on their own.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #23:

Promote public transit and revitalization of the rail service.

2005 Report Status:

While the Cape May ~ Lewes Ferry is a form of public transit, such system only serves to increase visitorship to West Cape May and thereby exacerbate circulation and parking problems on the Borough's street system.

As an adjunct to the Cape May ~ Lewes Ferry, a Cape Area Transit (CAT) shuttle system is operated by the Delaware River & Bay Authority. This shuttle runs from the Ferry Terminal, down Broadway and Perry Street to the Washington Street Mall in Cape May City. An additional route travels north on Route 9 to the Cape May County Zoo. In New Jersey, public transit including bus and rail services is owned and operated by New Jersey Transit, a division of NJDOT. While mass transit as a tool to reduce traffic congestion, parking problems and air pollution remains an objective for Borough Planners, actions to effectuate this objective fall under the jurisdiction of other bodies and are therefore not the purview of the Borough.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

These objectives still remain valid today. See 2015 Business Task Force Report for additional information. See also, report from Task Force on Alternative Transportation Modes referenced below.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #24:

Explore the feasibility of paving Borough alleyways and permitting their use for local traffic and/or pedestrian and biking traffic.

2005 Report Status:

As stated, recent proposals to utilize existing municipal alleyways for bicycle paths met with considerable resident opposition, due to, variously:

- the loss of vehicular access and parking to make way for the proposed paths;
- the lack of connectivity between the proposed paths and other accessways in the Borough; and
- the cost of the proposed project.

On October 5, 2005, the Borough Commission created a Task Force on Alternative Transportation Modes to review traffic and transportation issues in the Borough. Specifically, this Task Force was assigned to:

- Identify short-term steps that the Borough can take to encourage bicycle use;
- Identify safety improvements for biking, walking and other forms of transportation;
- Research long-term improvements related to signed bike lanes, a survey of sidewalk resources and improvements to key intersections related to possible bicycle path routes; and
- Investigate funding for identified improvements.

Specific recommendations related to non-vehicular transportation are pending submission of the report by this Task Force.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

These objectives still remain valid today. See 2015 Business Task Force Report for additional information. See also, report from Task Force on Alternative Transportation Modes.

The Borough of West Cape May Local Bicycle and Pedestrian Assistance Study was completed and shared with the public in 2008. The Borough already has implemented some of the recommendations contained in the study, but the bicycle and pedestrian networks remain fragmented through most of the Borough except for Broadway. Further sidewalk construction is recommended in the study to create a more continuously walkable Borough. Striped crosswalks and other amenities have been added. Several blocks of Park Boulevard near Wilbraham Park have been restriped to include a bike lane, but no lane is provided farther north. A collaborative effort between West Cape May, Cape May, Cape May Point and Lower Township Environmental Commission is to improve and expand bicycle and alternative transportation modes throughout Cape Island is underway.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #25:

Encourage low-impact commercial development in the C-1 zone, including development of galleries, shops, restaurants and other development which encourages the growth of a resort economy; provides employment opportunities to the citizens of the Borough; enhances the tax structure of the Borough and generally helps to commercialize the Borough without disrupting the rural character of the community.

2005 Report Status:

As detailed under section 5.2.1 D, West Cape May does not provide the critical mass of commercial facilities necessary to sustain a true commercial district. This lack of a commercial sector represents a potential long-term detriment to the future of the Borough as a tourist destination and has far reaching effects for resident employment and the municipal tax base.

Borough Planners have long sought to attract the type of commercial development which would not negatively affect the identity and charm of West Cape May. While finding limited success to date, this objective remains a goal. A thorough discussion of land use issues is included under the Land Use Plan Element (section 7.0) of this Comprehensive Master Plan Update.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

These objectives remain valid, and a number are addressed in the May 2015 Business Task Force Report.

The need was expressed to expand appropriate commercial land uses within the Borough, specifically tourist accommodations with supportive small-scale retail and other uses, to create a commercial district on Broadway that would support the tourist economy and provide employment and business opportunities to residents. The lack of a significant commercial base has resulted in an over-reliance on residential property taxes to fund municipal services and education.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #26:

Promote diversity in services and accommodations by maintaining a balance of small businesses, hotels and motels, guest homes and more creative accommodations and services along Sunset.

2005 Report Status:

See prior comment.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

These objectives remain valid and a number are addressed in the May 2015 Business Task Force Report.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #27:

Use Historic Preservation as a means by which small-scale, low impact commercial development can be promoted without disrupting the rural residential nature of the community.

2005 Report Status:

Previous Master Planning efforts advised caution as to the methods the municipality would undertake to achieve these objectives. At issue was the perception that preservation regulations restrict the ability of property owners to react to changing circumstances, that product and construction costs related to true preservation would be substantially more than for modern buildings, and that undue regulations would infringe on the rights of property-owners.

In sum, Borough Planners and Policymakers while desiring to promote the preservation of the Borough's historic architecture feared that a regulatory environment created in the name of preservation would inhibit precisely the renovation and return-to-use of structures it was designed to promote.

In order to balance the interest in Historic Preservation with these regulatory concerns, Borough Planners adopted Master Plan recommendations which encouraged Historic Preservation where possible while permitting historic structures to be used for modern purposes.

While not utilizing the term, Borough Planners were endorsing the concept of "Adaptive Reuse".

The preservation of the Borough's significant historic architecture remains an objective for Borough Planners.

A thorough discussion of historic preservation is included under the Historic Preservation Plan Element (section 10.0) herein.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

These objectives remain valid and a number are addressed in the May 2015 Business Task Force Report.

Preservation of the built environment, specifically the historic architecture, continues to be a concern. Many developers and property owners have been demolishing older, architecturally-significant buildings and replacing them with modern and/or multi-unit structures. These historic structures are a key component of the Borough's tourist economy, and their loss impacts the aesthetics and attractiveness of the community to visitors and residents.

The 2005 Plan recommends establishing a "strong" Historic Preservation Commission (HPC). The Borough adopted a HPC ordinance in 2007. This ordinance established a strong HPC and is currently functioning and reviewing development applications. The establishment of a "strong" Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) of the type has given the Borough greater control over the character of its historic core.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #28:

Encourage expansion of commercial use oriented toward the re-use of valuable historic buildings that do not disrupt the tranquility of the area.

2005 Report Status:

See prior comment.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

These objectives remain valid and a number are addressed in the May 2015 Business Task Force Report.

In terms of the business district, the Borough hired the urban design firm Rhodeside Harwell through a Smart Growth grant to evaluate the business district. A Business Urban Design Plan was developed to direct the creation of a thriving commercial district.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #29:

Create flexible development controls for the large vacant tracts so that the rural atmosphere can be encouraged.

2005 Report Status:

Smart Growth development techniques such as (but not limited to) density averaging, clustering and dedicated open space requirements have proven effective in balancing the rights of property owners against the desire to preserve community character³⁶ in municipalities throughout the state and the country.

The Borough's Land Development Ordinance does not currently include such requirements.

Borough Planners continue to seek modifications to the Land Development Ordinance designed to provide the controls necessary to preserve open space. As part of this current Master Planning effort, a subcommittee of the Planning Board has been empaneled to review specific ordinance regulations and make recommendations as to appropriate modifications.

Thorough discussions of recreation and related land use issues are included under the Land Use Plan Element (section 7.0) and the Open Space, Recreation and Conservation Plan Element (section 9.0) of this Comprehensive Master Plan Update.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

These objectives remain valid and a number are addressed in the May 2015 Business Task Force Report.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #30:

Study the feasibility of revising permitting uses in areas which presently prohibit commercial use.

2005 Report Status:

While growth of West Cape May's commercial base has been a recurring goal of Borough Planners, permitting commercial uses outside of designated commercial districts has implications for existing residential neighborhoods and currently undeveloped areas.

This objective is in conflict with Open Space Preservation objectives and Housing and Neighborhood Preservation objectives and is therefore no longer valid.

Again, a thorough discussion of land use issues is included under the Land Use Plan Element (section 7.0) of this Comprehensive Master Plan Update.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

This was not specifically referenced in the 2015 Reexamination Report. Therefore, there is no change from the 2005 Master Plan.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #31:

Develop a housing strategy which addresses the needs of both year-round and seasonal residents, providing density and choice of housing opportunities for all Borough residents.

2005 Report Status:

Given current real estate prices in the region, the ability of Borough Planners to influence the housing market in West Cape May is limited. This is especially true for affordable housing.

While cluster housing is a Smart Growth technique which merits consideration, providing for a variety of density and housing choice opportunities has the potential to conflict with objectives designed to maintain the rural character of the Borough and preserve open space. Additionally, addressing the needs of seasonal residents may conflict with the needs of year-round residents.

Finally, while balanced housing remains a concern for Borough Planners, specific objectives must be reviewed within the context of infrastructure, open space and general growth-related concerns.

As stated, a thorough discussion of Housing Conditions and related issues is included under the Housing Plan Element (section 8.0) of this Comprehensive Master Plan Update.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

No comments regarding this objective in the 2015 Reexamination Report. See affordable housing recommendations below. See also, borough's current Housing Plan Element and Fair Share Plan.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #32:

Encourage development and maintenance of affordable housing for all age groups, including manufactured homes and cluster housing.

2005 Report Status:

See prior comment.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

No comments regarding this objective in the 2015 Reexamination Report. See affordable housing recommendations below. See also borough's current Housing Plan Element and Fair Share Plan.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #33:

Preserve and protect existing neighborhoods and housing stock including existing older accommodations such as homes and guest homes whenever possible.

2005 Report Status:

The development pressures referenced in section 5.2.1 B herein continue to impact the Borough's existing neighborhoods and buildings as well as its open spaces. Following the trends in other local communities, developers/property owners in West Cape May are demolishing older, architecturally significant commercial buildings and residential houses and replacing them with modern structures of less architectural value.

The loss of these structures impacts the Borough's character and its attractiveness as a tourist destination. The preservation of existing farmlands continues to be viewed as a significant tool to achieve the objective of preserving the Borough's open spaces. Recent proposals to utilize existing municipal alleyways for bicycle paths met with considerable resident opposition, due to, variously:

- the loss of vehicular access and parking to make way for the proposed paths;
- the lack of connectivity between the proposed paths and other accessways in the Borough; and
- the cost of the proposed project.

As stated, thorough discussions of land use, housing and historic preservation recreation and related land use issues are included under the Land Use Plan Element (section 7.0), Housing Plan Element (section 8.0) and Historic Preservation Plan Element (section 10.0) herein.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

No comments regarding this objective in the 2015 Reexamination Report.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #34:

Preserve existing land uses which are unique to the Borough, including farmlands and historic alleyways.

2005 Report Status:

See prior comment.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

No comments regarding this objective in the 2015 Reexamination Report.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #35:

Create incentives for such preservation without engendering excessive governmental regulation of such structures.

2005 Report Status:

See prior comment.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

No comments regarding this objective in the 2015 Reexamination Report.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #36:

Encourage the architectural design of new development to complement and relate to the existing scale and architecture of the area involved.

2005 Report Status:

As discussed elsewhere in this section, developers / property owners in West Cape May are demolishing older, architecturally significant buildings and replacing them with modern structures of less architectural value. The loss of these structures continues to negatively impact the Borough's character and its attractiveness as a tourist destination.

Borough Planners view architectural design as a land use issue related to the historic character of the Borough. As such, a thorough discussion of this issue is included under the Land Use Plan Element (section 7.0) and the Historic Preservation Plan Element (section 10.0) of this Comprehensive Master Plan Update.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

No comments regarding this objective in the 2015 Reexamination Report.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #37:

Encourage a compatible mixture of residential and commercial development to maintain stability in property taxes.

2005 Report Status:

The lack of a significant commercial base in the Borough results in an over-reliance on residential property taxes to fund municipal services and education.

While Borough Planners do not seek to attract the type of commercial development which would negatively affect the identity and charm of West Cape May, a thriving commercial district with uses designed to support the existing tourist economy and provide business and employment opportunities to Borough residents remains a goal.

As stated, a thorough discussion of land use and related issues is included under the Land Use Plan Element (section 7.0) of this Comprehensive Master Plan Update.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

No comments regarding this objective in the 2015 Reexamination Report.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #38:

Permit home occupations and cottage industry in the residential zones with specific guidelines established.

2005 Report Status:

See prior comment.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

No comments regarding this objective in the 2015 Reexamination Report.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #39:

Inventory the Borough's housing stock to determine exact use or uses.

2005 Report Status:

A visual survey of the Borough's land uses was conducted as part of the Land Use Plan Element of this Comprehensive Master Plan Update. The results of such survey are included as the General Land Use Map herein.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

No comments regarding this objective in the 2015 Reexamination Report.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #40:

Promote the use of municipal parking facilities during emergency situations (flooding, hurricanes, snowstorms, etc.).

2005 Report Status:

Such a recommendation is appropriately addressed by the Borough's Emergency Management Coordinator and is therefore not properly addressed within the context of a Municipal Master Plan.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

Given the recommendation in the 2005 Master Plan, this objective was not included in 2015 Reexamination Report.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #41:

Pursue shared educational facilities.

2005 Report Status:

The intent of this Objective is not clear from this language. However, issues related to public education are appropriately addressed by the Borough's Board of Education. Such objectives are therefore not properly addressed within the context of a Municipal Master Plan.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

Given the recommendation in the 2005 Master Plan, this objective was not included in 2015 Reexamination Report.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #42:

Provide high level of service such as police protection, elderly support services, potable water, sewer and storm drain systems and improvements to educational facilities.

2005 Report Status:

Borough Policymakers continue to require the highest level of services practicable in order to serve the needs of the community and continue to support public safety personnel in their heroic tasks. Such objectives, while admirable, are therefore not properly addressed within the context of a Municipal Master Plan.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

Given the recommendation in the 2005 Master Plan, this objective was not included in 2015 Reexamination Report.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #43:

Actively support the fire department and rescue squad.

2005 Report Status:

See prior comment.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

Given the recommendation in the 2005 Master Plan, this objective was not included in 2015 Reexamination Report.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #44:

Explore the possibility of community health care with the cooperation of the County and/or surrounding communities.

2005 Report Status:

Such an objective is not properly addressed within the context of a Municipal Master Plan.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

Given the recommendation in the 2005 Master Plan, this objective was not included in 2015 Reexamination Report.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #45:

Encourage state-of-the-art energy conservation in materials and workmanship.

2005 Report Status:

The Municipal Land Use Law provides among its fifteen (15) guiding purposes of municipal land use regulation:

“To promote the conservation of...energy resources...”; and

“To promote utilization of renewable energy resources”.

Borough Planners reaffirm their commitment to these purposes.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

No comments regarding this objective in the 2015 Reexamination Report.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #46:

Establish developmental boundaries of the Borough for purposes of the State Master Plan, to enhance and ensure fair treatment for the Borough in the implementation of State environmental laws/regulations.

2005 Report Status:

The intent of this Objective is not clear from this language. However, Borough Planners have commenced discussion with OSG (Office of Smart Growth now Office of Planning Advocacy) staff related to Plan Endorsement, which is a cross-acceptance process whereby all relevant State agencies will recognize the Borough’s development regulations as being consistent with the State Plan.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

No comments regarding this objective in the 2015 Reexamination Report.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #47:

Encourage citizen groups and designated committees to identify historic points of interest and to develop walking and biking tours of the Borough.

2005 Report Status:

In 2004, the History Committee of West Cape May, in conjunction with local business groups, enacted a Cape May Trolley tour as a local form of public transit. Now operated by the Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts, this service is too new to gauge its effects on the Borough. However, it may be expected to provide some measure of relief for West Cape May’s traffic congestion and parking problems.

In April 2005, the Borough Commission empaneled a Community History Task Force to review historic preservation related issues in the Borough (section 10.5). Said Task Force has identified multiple points of historic interest in West Cape May. Similarly, in October 2005, the Borough Commission empaneled a Task Force on Alternative Transportation Modes whose mission is, in part, to promote bicycle safety and related issues.

The above notwithstanding, the development of such tours for West Cape May is an economic development issue more appropriately addressed within the context of an Economic Development Plan Element of a Municipal Master Plan. As discussed in section 3.7.3 herein, such an Element is beyond the budgetary scope of this Comprehensive Master Plan Update.

A thorough discussion of historic preservation is included under the Historic Preservation Plan Element (section 10.0) herein.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

No comments regarding this objective in 2015 Reexamination Report.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #48:

Use the Farmland Assessment Act to continue the economic viability of farming.

2005 Report Status:

Borough Policymakers recognize that the development pressures discussed under section 5.2.1 B herein have resulted in a trend toward conversion of existing farmland for residential subdivisions. Accordingly, and to protect farming in the Borough, Planners endorse the use of the Farmland Assessment Act as a tool to maintain West Cape May's farms as active, viable land uses. In order to advance this objective, the Borough Commission adopted a Right to Farm Ordinance, which protects farming activities as acceptable, recognized and "of-right".

2015 Report Status:

The preservation of existing farmlands is viewed as a significant tool to preserve open space. The most logical recreation planning option for the Borough is Open Space Acquisition and/or Farmland Preservation. The creation of recreational uses as a tool for preserving open space is also favored, but the funding for land acquisition impeded the maximization of this tool.

The developmental pressures impacting the Borough's natural resources jeopardized undeveloped open space, including agricultural open space, as well. Accordingly, the protection and preservation of the agricultural lands remains a serious concern.

The Borough's stance against building new infrastructure in agricultural areas and participation in the County Farmland Preservation Program have strengthened the protection for existing agricultural uses and prevented additional sprawl.

The Borough's participation in the County Farmland Preservation Program has thus far led to the preservation of 129 acres of farmland. Funding for this program is coordinated with the State Agriculture Development Committee's (SADC) County Planning Incentive Grant (PIG) Program.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #49:

N/A

2005 Report Status:

N/A.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

It is recommended that a new major goal called Sustainability be added. The following objectives which were recommended in the 2009 Sustainability Plan should be identified under the new sustainability goal.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #50:

See Section 2 of the MLUL.

2005 Report Status:

Reaffirmed.

2015 Reexamination Report Status:

Reaffirmed.

2.2 Recommendations from the 2015 Reexamination Report

The 2015 Master Plan Reexamination Report include the following new recommendations:

2015 Reexamination Report master Plan Recommendation #1: Sustainability

It is recommended that a new major goal called Sustainability be added. The following objectives which were recommended in the 2009 Sustainability Plan should be identified under the new sustainability goal.

- Become involved in local coastal and bayshore management
- Encourage sustainable agriculture
 - Pursue Farmland Preservation
 - Promote environmental stewardship
- Conserve environmentally sensitive and non-buildable land
 - Create a Borough Open Space, Farmland and Historic Preservation Trust Fund
 - Pursue passive recreation open space opportunities
 - Support an environmentally sensitive approach to future development
- Extend the existing route of the Cape May shuttle/trolley
 - Connect the east end of Cape May to the Borough
- Encourage naturally functioning ecosystems
 - Plant native vegetation
 - Encourage sustainable landscaping
 - Encourage the Removal of Non-native Invasive Vegetation
- Minimize or eliminate the unnecessary use of potable water
 - Educate and encourage residents to use rain barrels for outdoor water use to eliminate potable water use for landscape irrigation.
 - Improve water efficiency by encouraging indoor water reduction.
- Recharge groundwater supply and prevent surface runoff
 - Develop and implement initiatives to use alternative pavement forms to assist in both groundwater and stormwater management.
 - Implement the usage of bioswales on a municipal level.
- Reduce contamination of water sources by individual landowners.
 - Eliminate the application of excessive fertilizer through soil testing.
- Pursue a regional approach to manage salinization problems.
- Decrease carbon footprint of West Cape May by 20%.
 - Maintain high carbon sequestering land uses.
 - Convert Borough's vehicle fleet to biodiesel fuel, natural gas or electric, as appropriate
 - Weatherize municipal buildings.
 - Encourage the use of energy efficient appliances and practices.
- Implement an energy conservation outreach program.
 - Continue to educate the community through displays at local fairs showing cost and energy savings.
 - Partner with local schools and nonprofit organizations to promote energy efficiency.
 - Solicit donations from local and national organizations.
- Reduce reliance on electrical energy.
 - Promote small solar panel installations
 - Encourage small wind systems.
 - Promote biomass conversion.
- Reduce overall waste and recycle as much municipal, business and household waste as possible.
 - Promote recycling.
 - Recycle a wider range of materials.
 - Prioritize source reduction.

- Educate residents about smart consumption and waste reduction.
- Encourage composting.
 - Increase contribution of non-traditional materials to MUA composting efforts.
 - Promote development of independent borough and regional compost centers.
- Enforce the construction and demolition recycling ordinance.
- Encourage green building practices within new developments as well as renovations.
- Maximize & maintain commercial areas while retaining its historic character and encouraging green building practices.

Some of the previous objectives are identified in other functional category goals and objectives. It is important however to identify these objectives under the overarching sustainability goal. It should be noted that these objectives complement the recommendation of the May 2015 Business Task Force Report.

2015 Reexamination Report master Plan Recommendation #2: 2015 Task Force Report

Recommendations were generated from the Community Business Task Force in their May 2015 Report. According to the Task Force Report, the recommendations were developed with the primary goal of “encouraging responsible growth in the commercial districts while preserving and enhancing the small-town character of West Cape May.” The recommendations emphasize beautification, walkability, improving visual impact, and encouraging more tourist traffic in the commercial districts. Recommendations included: aesthetic improvements and designs standards to make the commercial districts more cohesive; revising parking requirements to encourage business growth; altering sign regulations to include preferred styles and include incentives to improve signs borough-wide. This report is available in the office of the Borough Clerk.

2015 Reexamination Report master Plan Recommendation #3: Affordable Housing

The Borough of West Cape May adopted a Round 3 Housing Element/Fair Share Plan in 2008 and subsequently submitted the Plan to the Superior Court for review and approval. In 2010, the Court issued the Borough a Round 3 Judgement of Compliance and Repose (JOR), subject to satisfying several long-term conditions. In April 2012, a First Amendment to the Round 3 JOR was entered by the Court, which indicated that the Borough had satisfied all of the long term conditions of the JOR and granted the Borough a stay from having to further implement its already successful Accessory Apartment program unless the Borough was assigned a Round 3 number in the future that was greater than five units.

On March 10, 2015, the New Jersey Supreme Court issued In the Matter of the Adoption of N.J.A.C. 5:96 and 5:97 by the New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing, 221 N.J. 1 (2015), which held that the Council on Affordable Housing (“COAH”) was no longer functioning as originally intended under the Fair Housing Act (“FHA”). As a result, the Court held that trial courts, not COAH, will determine whether municipalities have met their constitutional affordable housing obligations. In response to the Supreme Court decision, the Borough filed a declaratory judgment action along with a motion for temporary immunity in court to ensure that immunity from all Mount Laurel lawsuits remains in place while the Borough prepares an amended Round 3 Housing Element and Fair Share Plan.

2015 Reexamination Report master Plan Recommendation #4: Dark Sky

In order to address light pollution and spillover, it is recommended that the Borough adopt a “dark sky” ordinance which will mitigate “light pollution”.

2015 Reexamination Report master Plan Recommendation #5: FEMA

The ordinance should be reviewed to determine whether or not revisions are necessary in response to the new FEMA flood maps and rules.

3.0 EXTENT THAT PROBLEMS & OBJECTIVES HAVE CHANGED AND RECOMMENDED MODIFICATIONS

Each of the major problems and objectives that were identified in the previous section were evaluated to determine the extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced, increased, or remained the same subsequent to the adoption of the previous Master Plan reexamination report in 2015, pursuant to N.J.A.C:40:55D-89b. Goals, problems, or objective whose relevance was reduced to the point of being no longer applicable are recommended to be removed from the current list of Borough objectives.

Goals, Problems, Objectives and Recommendations from previous Master Plan and studies that were evaluated for relevance at the time of preparation of the 2005 and 2015 Reexamination Report are listed by their 2005 description for brevity. Each Goal, Problem Area, Strategic Objective, Assumption, and Recommendation is evaluated as having no change, increased, or decreased below.

3.1 Strategic Objectives from Previous Master Plans and 2015 Reexamination Report

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #1:

Provide adequate municipal sanitary sewer, storm sewer and water service throughout the Borough.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The goals and objectives listed in the 2015 Master Plan Reexamination Report are reaffirmed.

Sewer:

The borough will continue to maintain and replace or upgrade what is existing rather than expanding the borough's water and sewer infrastructure, which could lead to overdevelopment. While there had been a request made to extend sewer along 2nd Avenue, the borough has determined that such an expansion is not warranted at the present time. No septic system failures have occurred in that area and there have been recent replacements of several systems.

Water:

While there is no immediate need to expand the borough's water, the borough will continue to monitor the effects of sea level rise and saltwater intrusion on wells to determine if environmental issues require that this be addressed. If wells fail the potential expansion of the water system will be reexamined. Given the recent increases in water usage, the Borough may want to review the long-term impacts on the Borough's water supply resulting from this demand. Properties along Stimpson Lane have access to public water, but some property owners continue to choose to use wells. There also are eight (8) properties along Third Avenue between Bayshore Avenue and West Road with no access to public water. This area continues to be identified by the Borough for the future potential expansion of the system.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #2:

Develop a strategy for expanding municipal sewer service to areas in the western portion of the Borough, which lie within the sewer service area but have no access to municipal sewer mains.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The goals and objectives listed in the 2015 Master Plan Reexamination Report are reaffirmed. See further clarification discussed above.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #3:

Continue to upgrade and extend the infrastructure network to service future residential development and to strengthen the economic future of the Borough.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The goals and objectives listed in the 2015 Master Plan Reexamination Report are reaffirmed. See further clarification discussed above.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #4:

Identify a supplier of safe water.

- ✓ **Reduced.**
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** This is no longer an issue. The desalinization plant has been upgraded per Cape May City. Except as noted above, while salt intrusion into wells is not a current issue, the borough will continue to monitor the effects of sea level rise and saltwater intrusion on wells to determine if this needs to be addressed.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #5:

Explore the possibility of expanding the sewerable area boundary to include houses currently prohibited from connecting to the municipal sewer service.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The goals and objectives listed in the 2015 Master Plan Reexamination Report are reaffirmed. See further clarification discussed above.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #6:

In areas not presently sewered, encourage innovative waste disposal systems.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The goals and objectives listed in the 2015 Master Plan Reexamination Report are reaffirmed. See further clarification discussed above.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #7:

In areas not presently sewered, encourage innovative waste disposal systems.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The goals and objectives listed in the 2015 Master Plan Reexamination are reaffirmed.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #8:

Encourage new growth within existing service capacity and characteristics of a growing resort economy. New development should be related to the capacity of existing services and a variety of services and facilities should be provided to serve existing and future residents.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The goals and objectives listed in the 2015 Master Plan Reexamination are reaffirmed.

The Borough also reaffirms its commitment to smart growth planning principles and sustainable development but is looking for limited growth within the capacity of the Borough's existing infrastructure.

Where appropriate, the Borough will explore the possibility of prioritizing redevelopment and infill development rather than new development on currently undeveloped lands that would require the expansion of the Borough's infrastructures systems.

In developing its land use planning policies, the Borough will take into consideration its changing demographics, including its lower population density, less full-time residents, and increased rentals.

The Borough should also evaluate the possibility of implementing regulations that limits the scale of new construction to be compatible with the scale of existing neighborhood development, increases restrictions on demolitions of existing dwellings and promotes the redevelopment and restoration of historic homes.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #9:

Develop a program to preserve and protect marshes, dense forests, stream corridors, and other open space throughout West Cape May to maintain the Borough's quality of life and to protect both manmade and natural environments (especially where the land and water meet, which is home to the largest number of wildlife species).

- ✓ **Increased.**
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The goals and objectives listed in the 2015 Master Plan Reexamination Report are reaffirmed.

The Borough should encourage private landowners and purchasers to preserve open space/land. This was done successfully with the private purchase of 10 lots on 2nd Avenue adjoining Higbee's wildlife management area. The Borough should explore other opportunities for similar private purchases and reservation of open space. The Borough should also encourage Cape May County to utilize open space funds within the Borough. For example, the County purchased a 200' x 150' lot as public open space and created a new public park: Pollinator Park at 3rd Avenue. The park incorporates sustainable design, as it does not get any city water, but uses rain barrels for irrigation.

Regarding the protection of marshes, the Borough should evaluate, and address as necessary, the issue of pool water drainage into storm drains that ultimately drain into wetlands and marshes in the Borough. With the increasing number of pools in the Borough, the amount of pool water potentially draining into marshes and ecologically sensitive areas will be of increasing concern.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #10:

Encourage development of recreational facilities, parks and cluster housing in selected areas to ensure adequate open space, which should be distributed and designed to provide a variety of uses for both year-round and seasonal residents.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The goals and objectives listed in the 2015 Master Plan Reexamination are reaffirmed.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #11:

Plan for parks and recreational areas as well as conservation for unforeseeable needs of the public in the future.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The goals and objectives listed in the 2015 Master Plan Reexamination are reaffirmed.

The Borough also should evaluate the need for an update to the Open Space, Recreation and Conservation Plan Element in the 2005 Master Plan.

The Borough is looking at a variety of opportunities to expand and improve its parks and recreation areas, including the possibility of a greenway and eco-park and a possible boardwalk at the end of Leaming Ave. The Borough should coordinate with the Environmental Commission on any such proposal.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #12:

Encourage the development of bike paths, walking paths and recreational areas for use by year-round and seasonal residents of the Borough.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** This continues to be an important objective of the Borough, and the goals and objectives listed in the 2015 Master Plan Reexamination Report are reaffirmed.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #13:

Explore the possibility of purchasing open space which could be designated as parklands within the Borough, including wetlands and areas along Cape Island Creek, Explore private and public funding for these purposes.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The goals and objectives listed in the 2015 Master Plan Reexamination Report are reaffirmed. The Borough should continue to encourage the sale/buying of open space/land by private landowners and purchasers.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #14:

Emphasize limited (utilization) of open space with a strategy including conservation of Borough owned property- but not limited to such.

- ✓ **Increased.**
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The Borough should undertake a new inventory of all Borough owned lots to protect what remains and, if appropriate, what can be used as open space, particularly those parcels that are wetlands, floodplains, or otherwise environmentally sensitive lands, and what can be put up for sale, or possibly used as for affordable housing consistent with the Borough's fourth-round housing plan.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #15:

Encourage dune and beach reconstruction south of Sunset Boulevard (possibly through joint municipal involvement).

- ✓ **Reduced.**
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** This is no longer relevant and should be removed as a goal.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #16:

Develop a municipal natural resource inventory, a factual description of the environmental variables that affect or limit development in the Borough.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The possible update of the ERI needs further review, which should be undertaken in conjunction with the Borough Environmental Commission.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #17:

Ensure the monitoring of closed landfills in Lower Township.

- ✓ **Reduced.**
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** This is no longer an issue. There are no groundwater impacts from landfills in Lower Twp.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #18:

Develop a coordinated system for vehicular and pedestrian traffic and circulation that serves the needs of the community.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The design for the roundabout is complete and the construction of the project is to begin in Fall 2025. While there has been progress with the design and implementation of the roundabout, traffic, especially seasonal traffic, is an ongoing issue and concern.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #19:

Explore methods to decrease congestion along Broadway and other major arteries, especially during tourist season.

- ✓ **Reduced.**
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** There has been progress on this since the last reexamination. For example, four-way stops were installed. However, there is a need for another study along Broadway. While there has been progress, traffic, especially seasonal traffic, is an ongoing issue and concern.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #20:

Develop a strategy to reconstruct the poor surfaces of roads and streets. Encourage proper lighting in the commercial areas to enhance public safety.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** This objective remains the same, but areas of need and strategies have changed.

The Broadway-Myrtle-Perry roundabout project is still on schedule, but the Borough should monitor and coordinate with Cape May County on the status of this project and how the project schedule impacts the start of identified Sunset Boulevard projects.

Regarding lighting, the Borough is working with Atlantic City Electric to change Borough lighting to LED. An auditor for lighting has been assigned to this project and progress is continuing.

The Borough should continue to coordinate with the County on all relevant roadway and infrastructure projects.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #21:

Pursue the reduction of traffic speeds on Sunset Boulevard, Broad, Stimson, Leaming, Central and Park Boulevard. Pursue a traffic light at the intersection of Stimson and Broadway. Enhance public safety by changing Pearl Avenue to a one-way, west to east.

- ✓ **Increased.**
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** While this issue has increased since the last Master Plan Reexamination Report, it is actively being addressed. For example, there is a current sidewalk project on Central Avenue to Park Boulevard and Leaming Avenue.

Traffic along Central and Broadway is still an issue and, given the fact that the County has jurisdiction on these and other roads in the Borough, there is a need for the County to conduct a new traffic study. The Cape May Planning Department and the Borough Commissioners continue to be in contact and are working together to get this done. The Borough also is exploring lower speeds throughout Borough.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #22:

Develop a strategy to provide parking for commercial establishments along Broadway and elsewhere as appropriate (e.g. satellite parking provided by the Borough; use of municipal property for public parking lots).

- ✓ **Increased.**
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** This is a critical problem in the Borough.

Rather than expanding parking, efforts can be best focused on investigating alternative modes of transportation, such as micro transit.

It is noted that the Borough's zoning ordinance does not allow stand-alone parking lots. One option would be for the Borough to investigate targeted zoning options, such as overlay zoning or redevelopment, to create appropriately scaled and designed parking to serve the needs of the Borough's residents and businesses.

While the Borough should explore opportunities to create parking, the intent should not result in the Borough being a parking lot for the City of Cape May.

The Borough should also consider off-island parking options with some sort of shuttle service. The Borough should also consider the installation of parking meters in commercial areas to generate revenue and encourage the use of off-island parking.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #23:

Promote public transit and revitalization of the rail service.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** This goal is reaffirmed and all options to promote public transit should be explored.

It is noted that Cape May City has a shuttle, but it would be costly to bring it into the Borough. Alternatively, the Borough should encourage its residents to utilize Cape May Carts, which is a free ride service, and explore other micro transit options.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #24:

Explore the feasibility of paving Borough alleyways and permitting their use for local traffic and/or pedestrian and biking traffic.

- ✓ **Increased.**
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** While the need has increased it is actively being addressed by the Borough.

The Borough recognizes that its pedestrian network provides both an alternative to use of automobiles and an important amenity for residents and it should be expanded and improved where possible. For example, alleyways provide important pedestrian linkages but are also a great place for walking dogs.

All coverage of paths or alleyways should be made with pervious materials/pavers. The Borough also should explore the use of wayfinding signage in association with its pedestrian network and explore opportunities to partner with Cape May County on this.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #25:

Encourage low-impact commercial development in the C-1 zone, including development of galleries, shops, restaurants and other development which encourages the growth of a resort economy; provides employment opportunities to the citizens of the Borough; enhances the tax structure of the Borough and generally helps to commercialize the Borough without disrupting the rural character of the community.

- ✓ **Increased.**
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** This issue continues to be a critical planning concern and has become even more important since the 2015 Master Plan Reexamination Report.

The maintenance of sustainable commercial areas in West Cape May is a critical planning issue. The Borough supports the preservation of existing commercial uses, especially small businesses, and strives to attract new businesses into the Borough. In conjunction with this goal, the Borough's objective is to attract more year-round residents to utilize businesses that currently exist.

Recognizing the lengthening of the time people visit the Borough and surrounding areas in Cape May County, the Borough needs to plan for and provide year-round and visitor amenities.

The Borough should review how other municipalities support their local commercial development and how communities can make it appealing to start a business. Some characteristics of the Borough's business and commercial uses and key issues to consider in establishing the appropriate land use planning and zoning policy for the Borough include:

- The eclectic nature of the businesses and commercial enterprises in the Borough.
- The need to support long-standing businesses.
- The provision of unique and high-quality products for the West Cape May community (e.g. Cape May Lumber)
- Recognizing the existence of specialty shops as an important component of the Borough's commercial base.
- Need for a more cohesive aesthetically pleasing business district.
- Need for a convenience store.
- Engaging the West Cape May subcommittee of Cape May chamber in the development of a comprehensive business development plan.

When considering incentives for commercial development, the Borough should acknowledge the value/need to create more long-term rental options, potentially located above small businesses that may be created. The Borough has a significant need to create more long-term rental options, and a mixed-use development strategy could address this issue. This should include incentives that help prioritize that use over Airbnb type of uses.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #26:

Promote diversity in services and accommodation by maintaining a balance of small businesses, hotels and motels, guest homes and more creative accommodations and services along Sunset.

- ✓ **Increased.**
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The Borough needs to plan for and attract a variety of businesses to maintain a balance and wide range of businesses and services that are available to the Borough's residents and visitors.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #27:

Use Historic Preservation as a means by which small-scale, low impact commercial development can be promoted without disrupting the rural residential nature of the community.

- ✓ **Increased.**
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The Borough established an Historic Preservation Commission in 2007.

The Borough intends to add additional homes consistent with the Secretary of Interior's guidelines and Borough's design standards. In this regard, preservation of the Borough's historic character is key. Therefore, the Borough also should evaluate increasing the Historic District.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #28:

Encourage expansion of commercial use oriented toward the re-use of valuable historic buildings that do not disrupt the tranquility of the area.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The Borough should continue to focus on "low impact" commercial development, with corresponding low parking need.

Although there are several significant commercial uses on Broadway there is more residential on Broadway than commercial. Broadway is not necessarily the commercial "hub" for the Borough. Rather existing commercial uses are more prevalent and focused on Park and Sunset Boulevards. Therefore, Park and Sunset Boulevards represent the most logical opportunity for the location of shopping and services that support the community and should be the focus of commercial development and redevelopment.

Parking continues to be a key issue in connection with the viability of the Borough's commercial district. However, we note that the Borough's commercial districts are within reasonable walking distance for most residents. Parking and pedestrian mobility are addressed in more detail in the section on Traffic Safety, Circulation, and Parking and the recommendations in that section are incorporated and reiterated herein.

In addition, the Borough should reevaluate the zoning of the residential properties located in the block between West Perry Street and Myrtle Avenue east of Park Boulevard. The residential dwellings are in C3 district along with the two commercial uses on either end of the block. The only residential use permitted in the C3 District is mixed-use. As a result, residential property owners typically must obtain variances for any improvements. Options to be evaluated would be changing the zoning for these properties to R1, C1, or a new zone specifically designed for this area.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #29:

Create flexible development controls for the large vacant tracts so that the rural atmosphere can be encouraged.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The goals and objectives listed in the 2015 Master Plan Reexamination Report are reaffirmed.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #30:

Study the feasibility of revising permitting uses in areas which presently prohibit commercial use.

- ✓ **Increased.**
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The Borough notes that the "farm" land use types have become "multi-purpose" commercial attractions, with retail sales, entertainment and visitor attractions, as well as weddings and similar events, while also functioning in their traditional capacity.

The Borough supports an approach that balances the need to develop new uses that support existing agricultural uses while limiting impacts on surrounding residential areas. The Borough should further evaluate the "permitted uses" for these and other land use types. This may include maximizing potential viability of farm uses, but in a low impact manner.

In evaluating the appropriate land use planning and zoning approach for these multi-purpose agricultural uses, the Borough notes that the New Jersey Right to Farm Act allows certain uses ancillary to farming and a specified number of special events, but not necessarily provides a blanket approval for all types of uses

being provided at these locations. The Borough should also evaluate how other municipalities are regulating these uses.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #31:

Develop a housing strategy which addresses the needs of both year-round and seasonal residents, providing density and choice of housing opportunities for all Borough residents.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The Borough has a court-approved third round affordable housing plan and is currently working on its new fourth-round housing plan.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #32:

Encourage development and maintenance of affordable housing for all age groups, including manufactured homes and cluster housing.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The Borough has a court-approved third round affordable housing plan and is currently working on its new fourth-round housing plan.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #33:

Preserve and protect existing neighborhoods and housing stock including existing older accommodations such as homes and guest homes whenever possible.

- ✓ **Increased.**
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The preservation and protection of the Borough's existing residential neighborhoods, along with the historic character of the Borough, continues to be a critical issue for our community. An evaluation of the bulk and yard standards for each of the residential zone districts in the Borough should be a priority.

Any new development or redevelopment of existing structures should be consistent with the scale and characteristics of the existing neighborhood. Where appropriate, certain building characteristics, such as porches, etc., should be encouraged, especially if consistent the character of the buildings in the surrounding area.

It is noted that there was no Historic Preservation Commission at the time of the last comprehensive Master Plan in 2005. The HPC continues to play an important role in the preservation of the historic character of the Borough and the Planning Board shall continue to coordinate with the HPC on the correlation between the Borough's land use regulations and relevant and interrelated historic preservation goals and objectives. Historic buildings in the C1 District and along Sunset should be identified and evaluated for possible inclusion within an historic district, along with areas with historic resources in the outer parts of the Borough, such as along Fifth Avenue.

The Borough should also consider establishing standards and regulations and for Airbnb's and review how other communities regulate these uses.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #34:

Preserve existing land uses which are unique to the Borough, including farmlands and historic alleyways.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The objective is reaffirmed.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #35:

Create incentives for such preservation without engendering excessive governmental regulation of such structures.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The objective is reaffirmed.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #36:

Encourage the architectural design of new development to complement and relate to the existing scale and architecture of the area involved.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The Borough's efforts should focus on maintaining the Borough's existing architectural and historic character. Any new development should fit within the existing scale of the neighborhood. The Borough is not a "planned design" community, but it is important to sustain the Borough's architectural aesthetic and create a balance of old and new development design. See also the comments regarding the Historic Planning Commission and Historic District.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #37:

Encourage a compatible mixture of residential and commercial development to maintain stability in property taxes.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The objective is reaffirmed.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #38:

Permit home occupations and cottage industry in the residential zones with specific guidelines established.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The objective is reaffirmed.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #39:

Inventory the Borough's housing stock to determine exact use or uses.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** This will be addressed as part of the Borough's fourth-round affordable housing plan.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #40:

Promote the use of municipal parking facilities during emergency situations (flooding, hurricanes, snowstorms, etc.).

- ✓ **Reduced.**
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** Consistent with the recommendation in the 2015 Master Plan Reexamination Report, this is no longer relevant and should be removed.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #41:

Pursue shared educational facilities.

- ✓ **Reduced.**
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** Consistent with the recommendation in the 2015 Master Plan Reexamination Report, this is no longer relevant and should be removed.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #42:

Provide high level of service such as police protection, elderly support services, potable water, sewer and storm drain systems and improvements to educational facilities.

- ✓ **Reduced.**
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** Consistent with the recommendation in the 2015 Master Plan Reexamination Report, this is no longer relevant and should be removed.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #43:

Actively support the fire department and rescue squad.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.

- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** While technically not part of the Master Plan, the Borough continues to support its Volunteer Fire Company, which has increased in membership!

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #44:

Explore the possibility of community health care with the cooperation of the County and/or surrounding communities.

- ✓ **Reduced.**
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** Consistent with the recommendation in the 2015 Master Plan Reexamination Report, this is no longer relevant and should be removed.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #45:

Encourage state-of-the-art energy conservation in materials and workmanship.

- ✓ **Reduced.**
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** Consistent with the intents and purposes of the MLUL, the Borough supports land use policies and regulations that promote the conservation of energy and the utilization of renewable energy resources.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #46:

Establish developmental boundaries of the Borough for purposes of the State Master Plan, to enhance and ensure fair treatment for the Borough in the implementation of State environmental laws/regulations.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The Borough's land use policies are consistent with the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. The Borough will be actively engaged in the cross acceptance and development of the new SDRP.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #47:

Encourage citizen groups and designated committees to identify historic points of interest and to develop walking and biking tours of the Borough.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** An update of the Borough's inventory of historic points of interest is needed.

The Borough should revisit this and possibly reconstitute the history committee. The Borough's Historic Preservation Commission, established in 2007, should be engaged in this effort, as well as its Environmental Commission.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #48:

Use the Farmland Assessment Act to continue the economic viability of farming.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The goals and objectives listed in the 2015 Master Plan Reexamination Report are reaffirmed.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #49:

NA

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** See the discussion below of the sustainability recommendations in 2015 Master Plan Reexamination Report.

Previous Master Plan Strategic Objective #50:

See Section 2 of the MLUL.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The objective is reaffirmed.

3.2 Recommendations from the 2015 Reexamination Report

2015 Reexamination Report Master Plan Recommendation #1: Sustainability

It is recommended that a new major goal called Sustainability be added. The following objectives which were recommended in the 2009 Sustainability Plan should be identified under the new sustainability goal.

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** Community sustainability remains an overarching planning goal for the Borough. While the Planning Board reaffirms the overall objective of sustainability, the specific recommendation included in the 2009 Sustainability Plan should be revisited and reevaluated in relation to our current understanding of the impacts of climate change on the Borough.

The Planning Board recommends that the Borough consider adopting a new Green Buildings and Environmental Sustainability Plan Element of the Master Plan that would replace the previous 2009 Sustainability Plan.

In addition, the Municipal Land Use Law has been amended to require that the Land Use Plan Element of the Master Plan shall include a Climate Change-Related Hazard Vulnerability Assessment (CCRHVA). If the Borough adopts a new or amended Land Use Plan Element it will include a CCRHVA.

The 2015 Master Plan Reexamination Report identified a wide range of objectives under the overarching goal of sustainability. However, as noted in the 2015 Master Plan Reexamination Report, sustainability touches on all aspects of the Borough's Master Plan. In fact, many of the objectives listed in the 2015 report under sustainability are addressed in the other recommendations included in this report.

The comprehensive land use policies of the Borough should be designed to collectively support and improve our community's sustainability and resiliency, and the Planning Board will continue to align its planning efforts to achieve these goals. When ultimately adopted by the Borough, the CCRHVA must describe its relationship to relevant elements of the Master Plan. In addition, any new Green Buildings and Sustainability Plan Element should also acknowledge and state its relationship to the rest of the Borough's Master.

Some specific sustainability issues to be addressed include:

- The Borough should continue to encourage use of rain barrels, particularly in its public parks.
- The Borough address spotted lantern fly invasiveness.
- Green Roofs: The Borough's existing ordinance allows for an increase in square footage if a certain amount of LEED points are achieved (27-10.8 Green Building Practices). The Borough should still encourage developers to build to LEED standards and use green building and site design. However, the Borough should review the coverage and FAR requirements that are allowed for the implementation of green roofs. This needs to be revisited to prevent potential over-development.
- The Planning Board also notes that not many new green roofs have been created, and the incentives may no longer be relevant. This may be due to the fact that green roofs and associated green building incentives are currently only allowed for residential dwellings. The Borough should consider allowing green roofs and green building techniques for commercial buildings and revising or eliminating the incentives for individual residential dwellings.

2015 Reexamination Report Master Plan Recommendation #2: Task Force Report

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The objective is reaffirmed.

2015 Reexamination Report Master Plan Recommendation #3: Affordable Housing

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.

- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The Borough has a court-approved third-round affordable housing plan and is currently working on its new fourth-round housing plan.

2015 Reexamination Report Master Plan Recommendation #4: Dark Sky

- ✓ **No Change.** Remains valid and reaffirmed.
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** The Planning Board reaffirms this goal and recommends that the Borough adopt a comprehensive dark sky ordinance.

2015 Reexamination Report Master Plan Recommendation #5: FEMA

- ✓ **Increased.**
- ✓ **Status/Recommendation:** Potential changes to FEMA at the federal level, proposed State flood plain regulations, and the impact of executive orders from the Governor, will need continuing monitoring by the Borough and further review and evaluation on their impact on the Borough's land use policies and zoning as appropriate. In particular, the Borough should evaluate its current building height requirements in relation with any proposed changes to the built floor elevation (BFE) requirements in the AE Zone.

In addition to flooding issues, the Borough is potentially subject to wildfires. The Borough should continue to monitor this issue and receive updates from the VFC and OEM on the probability of wildfire outbreak south of the canal. It is noted that West Cape May is on the national fire plan.

4.0 NEW RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to the Problem Areas, Strategic Objectives, Assumptions, and Recommendations from the previous master plans, 2005 Reexamination Report, and 2015 Reexamination Report which were reaffirmed as remaining valid in Section 3.0 of this report, new recommendations have been identified as part of this Reexamination Report.

4.1 Highlights from Resident's Survey

An online survey was conducted from March 14 to April 18, 2025, to gather input from West Cape May Borough residents on the progress that has been made toward some initiatives listed in previous plans and reports. The survey received a total of 164 responses and included topics such as environmental issues, placemaking, economic development, housing, transportation and mobility. The survey response summary is provided in the appendix.

Among environmental concerns, the top three issues identified were development of remaining open space (126 responses), overdevelopment, and flooding and stormwater management. Regarding access to the Borough's commercial areas, residents prioritized improvements to walking and biking safety (94 responses), followed by streetscape beautification and increased outdoor gathering and recreation spaces.

In terms of economic development, the highest priorities were preserving agricultural activities on farms and open spaces (103 responses), supporting small businesses, and improving and maintaining sidewalks and crosswalks. Most respondents indicated their housing needs were currently being met (107 responses) and found the variety of housing types sufficient. However, individual comments revealed concerns about the need for more affordable housing and the regulation of rental units. When asked about specific housing initiatives, residents ranked addressing "tear-downs" (72 responses) as the top priority, identifying a need for changes to the ordinance to prevent smaller homes from being torn down and replaced by new construction at the maximum possible dimensions. This concern was followed by housing affordability and providing aging-in-place options for older adults.

For transportation and mobility, the top concerns were improving bicycle infrastructure (116 responses), addressing speeding issues, and enhancing walkability through streetscape improvements. Residents expressed the highest satisfaction with Fire (142 responses), Police and EMS services.

These responses have been used to inform the updated Goals and Objectives. In addition, highlights from the survey indicate that the Borough should pursue a more comprehensive look at a variety of land use issues soon.

We recommend a full replacement of the Borough's Master Plan, or at the very least a new Land Use Plan Element, rather than another re-examination. This will allow the Borough to stay ahead of evolving concerns.

Recent issues with bicycle infrastructure, speeding, and multi-modal transportation trends, including the increasing use of golf carts, ride share etc., may also require a new Circulation Plan Element.

4.2 Land Use Ordinance Amendments

Sustainability Recommendations

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) has proposed the Resilient Environments and Landscapes (REAL) regulations, which aim to address climate change and rising sea level issues that will affect West Cape May's Zoning Ordinance.

We recommend that Resilient Environments and Landscapes (REAL) regulations should be incorporated as a goal.

Housing Recommendations

Short-term rentals, such as those brokered through companies like AirBnB and Vrbo, are currently permitted, although our community and stakeholder outreach process identified this as an issue within the Borough. It should be noted that New Jersey municipalities do have the authority to regulate short-term rentals through zoning ordinances. Some towns have outright banned short-term rentals, while others have imposed strict guidelines. The typical mechanism is to adopt an ordinance change that prohibits renting out any property in the Borough for less than 30 consecutive days. Nearby communities have also adopted similar ordinances for as low as 4 – 7 days, so as not to negatively impact tourism.

We recommend that the Borough investigate options for a similar ordinance change to regulate short-term rentals.

Neighborhood Design Recommendations

The Borough has been struggling to address development and redevelopment that does not fit into the character of West Cape May. This includes “tear-downs” as well as modifications to existing homes and businesses.

We recommend that the Borough revise standards to encourage contextual redevelopment that is at an appropriate scale relative to the predominant home sizes in each neighborhood. Contextual development and redevelopment should also focus on Traditional Neighborhood Design characteristics for new and modified homes that encourage front porches, parking in the rear or to the side (behind front setback lines), and other architectural elements that reflect West Cape May’s character and historical influences.

We recommend amending the current setback and height requirements for residential zones to allow an appropriate amount of pervious area, addressing concerns about inappropriately scaled development as well as flooding and stormwater management. This can be done by adjusting Floor Area Ratio (FAR) numbers to tailor development potential within each zone in a way that best respects the character of the neighborhoods. A maximum FAR should be established, and FAR bonuses may be permitted if the home incorporates design elements (such as those listed above) which are beneficial to the character of the neighborhood.

Impervious Surface (site area ratio) revisions may also be considered.



Figure 2 Examples of Traditional Residences in the Borough

5.0 EXTENT OF CHANGES IN THE ASSUMPTIONS, POLICIES & OBJECTIVES FORMING THE BASIS OF THE MASTER PLAN OR DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

The MLUL at N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89c provides that the reexamination report shall state:

The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis of the Master Plan and development regulations, as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition and recycling of designated recyclable materials and changes in State, County and municipal policy and objectives.

Since the last Reexamination Report in 2015, the following are the major trends and changes impacting assumptions, policies, and objectives that form the basis of the Master Plan and development regulations.

5.1 LOCAL TRENDS

5.1.1 Population Growth

According to decennial census data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, in contrast to much of the rest of the State of New Jersey, including Cape May County, which saw drastic post-World War II population growth, West Cape May Borough's population has remained relatively stable since 1940, with the exception of a nearly 15% increase between 1950 and 1960. Since 1960, the Borough's population has fluctuated between 1,000 and 1,100 residents, suggesting that the Borough, at its current density, is largely built-out. The Borough's population peaked in 2000 with a population of 1,095 and has since been declining over the past two decennial censuses. At the most recent census in 2020, there were 1,010 residents, a 1.4 percent decrease from the 1,024 residents in 2010, which was a 6.5 percent decrease from 2000. As discussed in the Housing section below, the decrease in population change does not reflect the overall increase in housing stock total, suggesting that population decrease may partially be accounted for by Borough homes being secondary residences and/or used for short-term vacation rentals.

Year	West Cape May Borough		Cape May County		New Jersey	
	Population	% Change	Population	% Change	Population	% Change
2023	934	-7.5%	95,236	0.0%	9,267,014	-0.2%
2020	1,010	-1.4%	95,263	-2.1%	9,288,994	5.7%
2010	1,024	-6.5%	97,265	-4.9%	8,791,894	4.5%
2000	1,095	6.7%	102,326	7.6%	8,414,350	8.9%
1990	1,026	-6.0%	95,089	15.6%	7,730,188	5.0%
1980	1,091	8.6%	82,266	38.1%	7,365,011	2.7%
1970	1,005	-2.4%	59,554	22.7%	7,171,112	18.2%
1960	1,030	14.8%	48,555	30.8%	6,066,782	25.5%
1950	897	-4.0%	37,131	28.4%	4,835,329	16.2%
1940	934	-	28,919	-	4,160,165	-

Table 3 Change in Population: 1940 to 2023⁶

5.1.2 Demographics

The data looks at total population data trends as well as changes in population of races between 2010 and 2020. During this period, West Cape May Borough's change in population trends is vastly different from the State and County

⁶ U.S. Census Bureau New Jersey Population Trends 1790 to 2000 (1940 to 2000); U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census Data H1 Housing Units (2010 to 2020); U.S. Census Bureau 5-Year American Community Survey Data Estimates DP05 Demographic and Housing Estimates (2022)

population change. Notably, populations in two or more race categories increase by over one hundred percent for the borough and over 200% for the County and the State.

Diving into individual race data for the 2010 and 2020 period, the White population in the Borough saw an increase of less than one percent. However, the State and County saw a decline here (15.21% and 6.68% respectively). A significant decline was observed in the Black or African American alone population, with the Borough seeing a 42.7% loss between 2010 and 2020. The County also faced a decline of 21.86%, while the State saw an increase of 1.24% during this period. A largely positive trend was observed for the American Indian and Alaska Native alone population, with a 62.5% increase in the Borough, closely mimicking a 76.3% increase in the State and a 23.41% increase in the County. Both Asian alone and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone population saw an increase of 100% in the Borough. The Borough's trends differ significantly from the County and State. While the Asian population increased by 30.92% in the State, the County experienced a slower rise of 8.87% between 2010 and 2020. The Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone population saw an increase of 16.1% in the State while the County observed a decline of 22.2%.

Year	West Cape May Borough		Cape May County		New Jersey	
	Population	Change	Population	Change	Population	Change
Total Population						
2020	1,010	-1.37%	95,263	-2.06%	9,288,994	5.65%
2010	1,024	--	97,265	--	8,791,894	--
Total Population of one race						
2020	971	-3.86%	89,588	-6.10%	8,385,500	-1.94%
2010	1,010	--	95,408	--	8,551,591	--
Total Population of two or more races						
2020	39	178.57%	5,675	205.60%	903,494	275.98%
2010	14	--	1,857	--	240,303	--
White						
2020	880	0.11%	81,536	-6.68%	5,112,280	-15.21%
2010	879	--	87,369	--	6,029,248	--
Black or African American alone						
2020	51	-42.70%	3,567	-21.86%	1,219,770	1.24%
2010	89	--	4,565	--	1,204,826	--
American Indian and Alaska Native alone						
2020	13	62.50%	253	23.41%	51,186	76.35%
2010	8	--	205	--	29,026	--
Asian alone						
2020	4	100.00%	908	8.87%	950,090	30.92%
2010	2	--	834	--	725,726	--
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone						
2020	2	100.00%	28	-22.22%	3,533	16.10%
2010	0	--	36	--	3,043	--
Some Other Race alone						
2020	21	-34.38%	3,296	37.39%	1,048,641	87.35%
2010	32	--	2,399	--	559,722	--

Table 4 Decennial Change in Population: 2010 - 2020⁷

The “Some other Race” category is defined by the US Census Bureau as all other responses that are not included in White, Black or African American, American Indian and Alaska Native alone, Asian alone, and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone. This population saw a decline in the Borough by about 34.4%, while the State and County saw an increase of 87.35% and 37.39% respectively. According to Decennial U.S. Census Bureau data, the number of housing units within the Borough increased from 1,043 to 1,107 between 2010 and 2020. This represents a 6.14% increase, which is a significantly higher percentage increase in housing units for the County (1.32%). However, it is relatively close to the increase rate in housing units for the State (5.84%).

5.1.3 Housing

Year	West Cape May Borough		Cape May County		New Jersey	
	# Housing Units	% Change	# Housing Units	% Change	# Housing Units	% Change
2020	1,107	6.14%	99,606	1.32%	3,761,229	5.84%
2010	1,043	-	98,309	-	3,553,562	-

Table 5 Change in Housing Units: 2010 to 2020

According to 5-year American Community Survey data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, the percentage of Borough housing units that were occupied as of 2023 (43.0%) was slightly lower than the County (44.5%). Notably, the number of housing units in 2023 (1,032), has reduced from 2020 (1,137). The 2023 percent occupied housing units in the Borough was slightly higher than the 2020 (40.7%) and 2016 (39.1%) percentages. The Borough and County’s occupied housing units were significantly lower than the State (92.1%).

Note that due to the relatively small number of Borough residents and the correspondingly relatively high margin of error, the data for some American Community Survey Data Estimates should be used with caution. Discrepancies between housing units as listed in table 5 when compared to table 6 are due to the data being from different surveys (ACS vs. Decennial).

Year	West Cape May Borough		Cape May County		New Jersey	
	# Housing Units	% Occupied	# Housing Units	% Occupied	# Housing Units	% Occupied
2023	1,032	43.0%	99,625	44.5%	3,775,842	92.1%
2020	1,137	40.7%	99,394	40.9%	3,628,732	90.2%
2016	1,062	39.1%	98,900	40.5%	3,586,442	89.1%

Table 6 Occupancy Rate

The percentage of occupied housing units in the Borough that are owner-occupied (84.0% in 2022) was 4.7 percent higher than the rate in the County (79.3%) and over twenty (20) percent higher than the State (63.7%). This trend was largely consistent in 2020 and 2016. Notably, in 2016, the percentage of owner occupied, and renter occupied housing units are the same for West Cape May Borough and Cape May County. (Note: due to population margin of errors should be considered).

⁷ U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census Data P1 Race (2010 to 2020)

Year	West Cape May Borough		Cape May County		New Jersey	
	% Owner Occupied	% Renter Occupied	% Owner Occupied	% Renter Occupied	% Owner Occupied	% Renter Occupied
2023	84.0%	16.0%	79.3%	20.7%	63.7%	36.3%
2020	85.3%	14.7%	78.0%	22.0%	64.0%	36.0%
2016	76.4%	23.3%	76.4%	23.6%	64.1%	35.9%

Table 7. Owner and Rental Rates of Occupied Housing Units

5.2 REGULATORY CHANGES IN STATE, COUNTY, AND MUNICIPAL POLICIES AND OBJECTIVES

5.2.1 State

5.2.1.1 Climate Change Hazard Vulnerability Assessment

On February 4, 2021, New Jersey enacted Senate Bill (S-2607) amending the required components for municipal master plans in New Jersey to incorporate climate change risks and adaptation strategies. Specifically, the Land Use Element of any Master Plan adopted after the bill's passage must include a climate change and extreme weather vulnerability assessment as well as natural hazard mitigation strategies.

The requirements for such an assessment are set forth in the Bill and include:

1. Identification of climate change-related natural hazards that are anticipated to impact the Borough.
2. A build-out analysis projecting future development in the Borough with a focus on areas that exhibit a high level of vulnerability and risk.
3. An assessment of threats and vulnerabilities resulting from climate change-related hazards.
4. Identification of critical facilities necessary for evacuation purposes and for sustaining quality of life during a natural disaster.
5. An evaluation of the impact of climate change related hazards on the other elements of the master plan.
6. Strategies and design standards that will reduce or avoid the risks associated with the identified climate change related hazards.
7. A policy statement on the relationship of the vulnerability assessment with any existing or proposed natural hazard mitigation plan, floodplain management plan, comprehensive emergency management plan, emergency response plan, post-disaster recovery plan, or capital improvement plan.

These new statutory provisions require a step-by-step analysis to identify and evaluate the impact of climate change-related natural hazards on the Borough and establish the necessary foundation to develop and implement a land use planning strategy that minimizes the costs and risks associated with climate change-related hazards and the associated impacts on the community and its residents.

5.2.1.2 Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

In 2019, the New Jersey State Legislature adopted Senate Bill 606 (P.L. 2019, Chapter 267), which made amendments to the Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. 40:55d-1 et. seq.) and the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:12a-1 et. seq.), intended to encourage municipalities to consider Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure as part of the Master Plan, periodic Reexamination of the Master Plan, and redevelopment plans.⁸

In the Land Use Plan and Circulation Plan Elements it is required to show the existing and proposed location of public electric vehicle charging infrastructure. The Green Buildings and Environmentally Sustainability Plan Element is required

⁸ Senate, No. 2607; P.L. 2021, CHAPTER <https://pub.njleg.gov/bills/2020/AL21/6_.PDF>

to consider, encourage, and promote the development of public electric charging infrastructure appropriate for their development, including but not limited to, commercial districts, areas proximate to public transportation and transit facilities and transportation corridors, and public rest stops.

Redevelopment plans must now address the development of public electric vehicle charging infrastructure in appropriate locations and proposed locations for public electric vehicle charging infrastructure within the project area in a manner that appropriately connects with an essential public charging network.⁹

5.2.1.3 Changes to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (LRHL)

In 2019, the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et seq.; LRHL) was amended to provide for both a non-condemnation and condemnation redevelopment area designation, as well as to redefine the criteria and procedures for designating an area in need of redevelopment and rehabilitation, including an update to notice requirements during the redevelopment area designation process.

Additionally, the LRHL was amended in 2019 to include additional criterion for designation as an area in need of redevelopment under the terms of N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-S(b). The additional provision enables designation as an area in need of redevelopment when the discontinuation or abandonment of buildings used for retail, shopping malls and office parks, or buildings with significant vacancies has persisted for at least two consecutive years. N.J.S.A. 40A:12AS(b) now reads as follows:

“b. The discontinuance of the use of a building or buildings previously used for commercial, retail, shopping malls or plazas, office parks, manufacturing, or industrial purposes; the abandonment of such building or buildings; significant vacancies of such building or buildings for at least two consecutive years; or the same being allowed to fall into so great a state of disrepair as to be untenable.”

In addition to the amendments to the LRHL that have been described above, it is noted that in 2015 the New Jersey Supreme Court ruled in 62-64 Main Street LLC, et al. v. Mayor and Council of the City of Hackensack, 221 N.J. 129 (2015) found that a property does not need to negatively affect the surrounding properties in order to be considered “blighted” and, thus, eligible for redevelopment. The New Jersey Supreme Court in its decision in Kevin Malanga v. Township of West Orange (A-45-21) (086087) also clarified that the required findings concerning criterion “d” in Section 5 of the LRHL must include proof of a current problem, such as “dilapidation,” “obsolescence,” or “overcrowding” and a showing that these conditions result in an actual detriment or harm to the health, safety, and welfare of the community.

5.2.1.4 Cannabis Legislation

In 2021, legislation was signed into law legalizing and regulating cannabis use and possession for adults 21 years and older. Municipalities had until August 21, 2021 to take actions to: either prohibit or limit the number of cannabis establishments, distributors, or delivery services; and, in the event that the municipality opts to not prohibit such uses, regulate the location, manner and times of operation and establish civil penalties for violation of ordinances. West Cape May regulates Cannabis in the Borough with the adoption of Ordinance 603-21, permitting six marketplace classes of licensed business subject to the provisions of the Act and regulations of the Borough.

5.2.1.5 Coastal Areas Facility Review Act (CAFRA)

The Coastal Areas Facility Review Act, updated in 2016, is an enforceable measure presented by the New Jersey Coastal Management Program (NJCMP) under the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The aim of this act is to regulate development including but not limited to construction and enlargement of buildings within the identified CAFRA zone. The CAFRA area is divided into zone with varying levels of regulatory requirements and thresholds for each zone. As mentioned earlier, West Cape May Borough lies entirely within the CAFRA zone. The CAFRA provides general provisions, interpretations and definitions, permitting regulations, development restrictions in coastal areas, environmental protection measures, and establishes a framework for managing coastal resources through the New Jersey Coastal and Ocean Protection Council.

At its core, the Act recognizes the state's coastal areas as unique and irreplaceable environmental resources, while acknowledging the challenges posed by existing development and the need to balance economic aspirations with environmental protection. Environmental protection under CAFRA requires projects to minimize adverse impacts on air, water, and natural resources while ensuring proper waste management and public safety. Projects must protect unique land types and historic areas, aligning with West Cape May's historic coastal character.

⁹ Senate, No. 2607; P.L. 2021, CHAPTER <https://pub.njleg.gov/bills/2020/AL21/6_.PDF>

Central to CAFRA's implementation is its permitting system, which requires mandatory permits for development on beaches and dunes, with specific requirements based on distance from the mean high-water line and different thresholds for residential and commercial developments. To support coastal protection efforts, the Act establishes the "Shore Protection Fund," which provides essential funding for monitoring, restoration, and engineering research, with a specific allocation of 2% of annual deposits dedicated to Coastal Protection Technical Assistance.

The Act includes robust enforcement mechanisms, authorizing the DEP to issue compliance orders and civil actions, with potential penalties up to \$25,000 per violation per day. These enforcement efforts are supported by the "Cooperative Coastal Monitoring, Restoration and Enforcement Fund." To ensure ongoing oversight and adaptive management, CAFRA established the New Jersey Coastal and Ocean Protection Council, a 9-member body that includes both public and government representatives. This council is mandated to implement an ecosystem-based management approach and must conduct regular public hearings and submit biennial reports, ensuring continuous evaluation and improvement of coastal management practices.

5.2.2. County

The Cape May County Comprehensive Plan, adopted on January 20, 2022, represents the county's sixth iteration and replacing all prior versions. The plan outlines a broad vision for the County's future, emphasizing regional coordination and sustainable growth that preserves the county's unique character. The plan prioritizes sustainability, resilience, and equity, addressing climate change and environmental considerations, which aligns with West Cape May's focus on environmental preservation, sustainable growth, infrastructure resilience, and climate impact mitigation.

Cape May County's Farmland Preservation Plan was updated in 2022, building on the 2019 version. This plan also incorporates climate resilience and preserving the county's rural character while balancing agriculture and tourism through strategic infrastructure and open space preservation.

In 2023, the County updated its Creative Placemaking Plan aiming to enhance community identity through public art and design standards, integrating natural and cultural landscapes into the county's Open Spaces Program. The plan promotes a clear program identity and community engagement, aligning with the county's broader preservation and development goals. Additionally, Cape May County is advancing transportation initiatives in alignment with the SJTPO's "Forward 2050" plan, enhancing mobility and infrastructure through projects like the 17.2-mile bike path and the South Jersey trail network, supporting both connectivity and environmental goals.

5.2.3 Municipal

West Cape May Borough adopted an ordinance in 2023 to prohibit illicit connections to the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System in accordance with the New Jersey Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Regulations, which is an enforceable policy under the Coastal Zone Management Act.

Beyond this zoning ordinance update, West Cape May Borough does not have plans for major policy or regulatory objectives.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THE INCORPORATION OF REDEVELOPMENT PLANS

The MLUL at N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89e provides that the reexamination report shall state:

The recommendations of the planning board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law", P.L. 1992, c.79 (C.40A:12A-1 et seq.) into the land use plan element of the municipal master plan, and recommended changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.

Borough does not have any current Redevelopment Plans.

DRAFT

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THE APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS FOR PUBLIC ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE

The MLUL at N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89f provides that the reexamination report shall state:

The recommendations of the planning board concerning locations appropriate for the development of public electric vehicle infrastructure, including but not limited to, commercial districts and, areas proximate to public transportation and transit facilities and transportation corridors, and public rest stops; and recommended changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary or appropriate for the development of public electric vehicle infrastructure.

In 2019, the New Jersey State Legislature adopted Senate Bill 606 (P.L. 2019, Chapter 267), which made amendments to the Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1 et. seq.) and the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1 et. seq.), intended to encourage municipalities to consider Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure as part of the master plan, periodic reexamination of the master plan, and redevelopment plans. In addition, Senate Bill 3223 (P.L. 2021, Chapter 171) mandates Electric Vehicle spaces as permitted in all zones.

The Borough adopted Ordinance #608-22 which establishes requirements for the Electric Vehicle Supply/Service Equipment (EVSE) and Make-Ready Parking Spaces in the Borough based on the State's model ordinance. This ordinance establishes electric vehicle standards for new development, providing requirements for new EVSE and Make-Ready Parking Spaces, minimum parking requirements pursuant to West Cape May code and reasonable standards for all new EVSE and Make-Ready Spaces.

Currently, there are two (2) public electric vehicle charging points within the Borough according to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's statewide inventory of alternative fueled vehicle fueling stations.¹⁰

¹⁰ NJDEP Bureau of GIS Alternative Fueled Vehicle Stations for New Jersey: <https://gisdata-njdep.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/njdep::alternative-fueled-vehicle-fueling-stations-for-new-jersey/explore?location=39.781177%2C-75.000818%2C13.73>

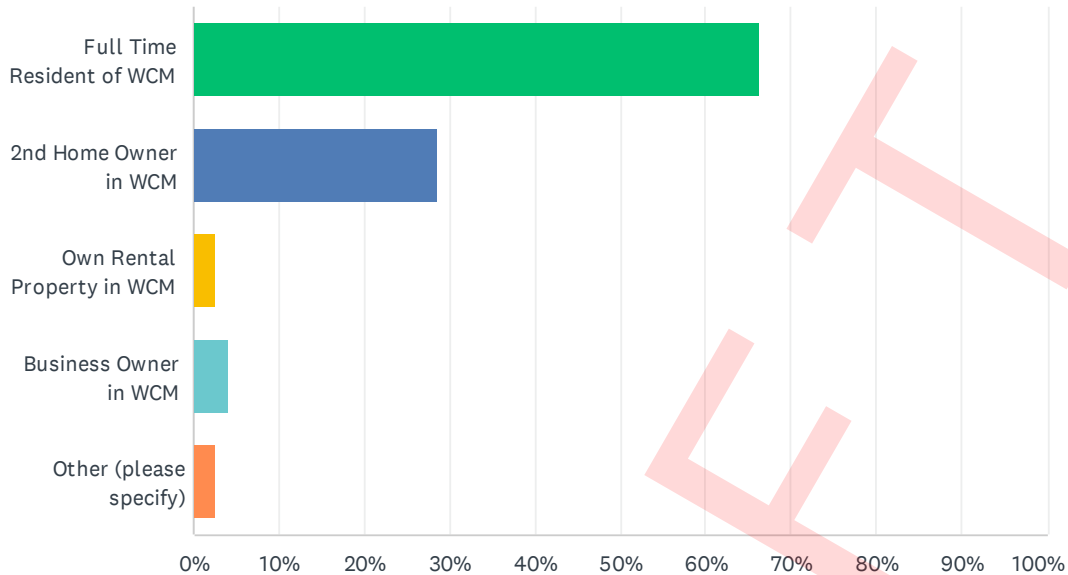
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**Appendix A:
Public Survey**



Q1 Do you live, work, and/or do business in West Cape May?(select all that apply)

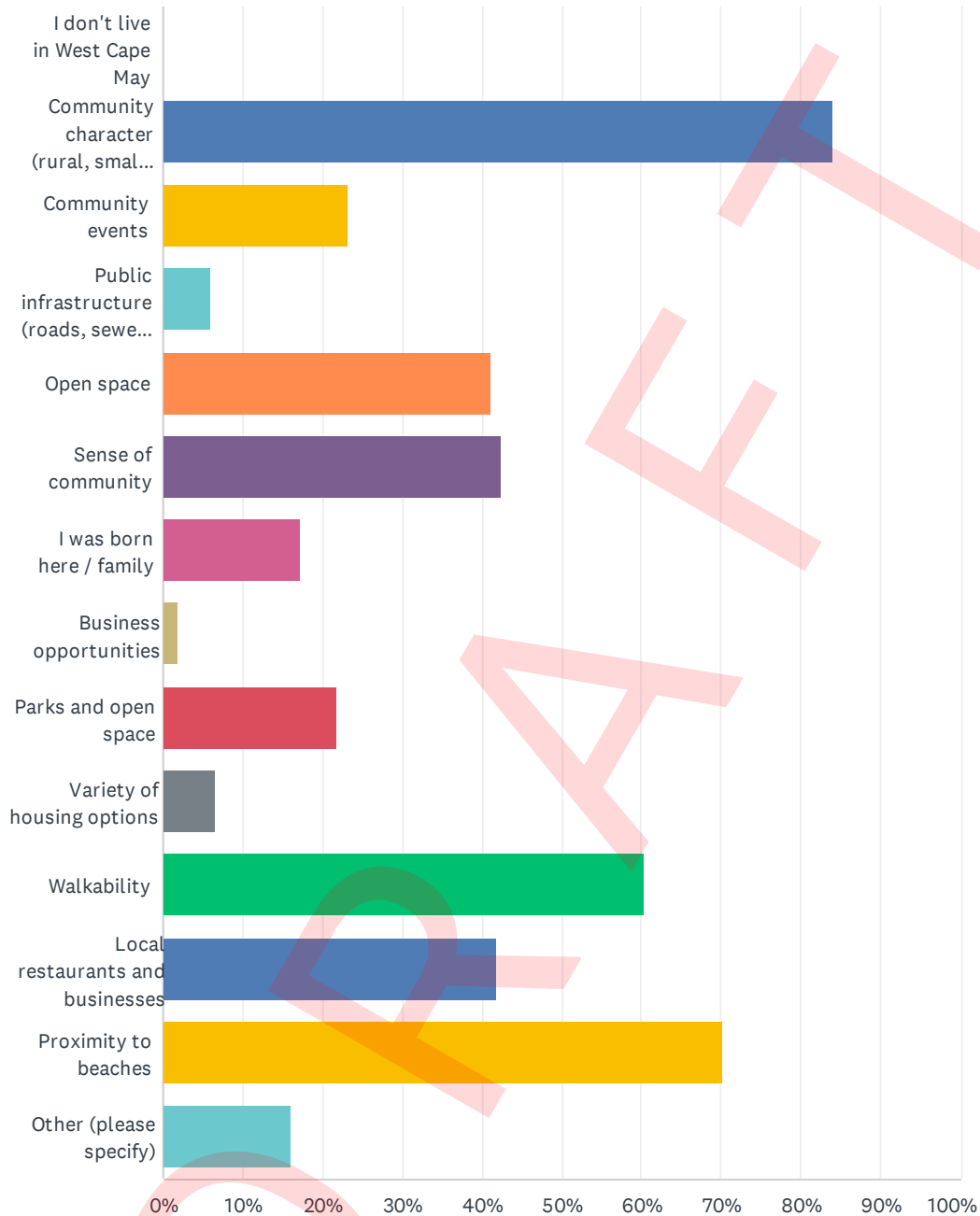
Answered: 151 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Full Time Resident of WCM	66.23%	100
2nd Home Owner in WCM	28.48%	43
Own Rental Property in WCM	2.65%	4
Business Owner in WCM	3.97%	6
Other (please specify)	2.65%	4
Total Respondents: 151		

Q2 What attracted you to become a resident/property owner/business owner in West Cape May? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 151 Skipped: 0

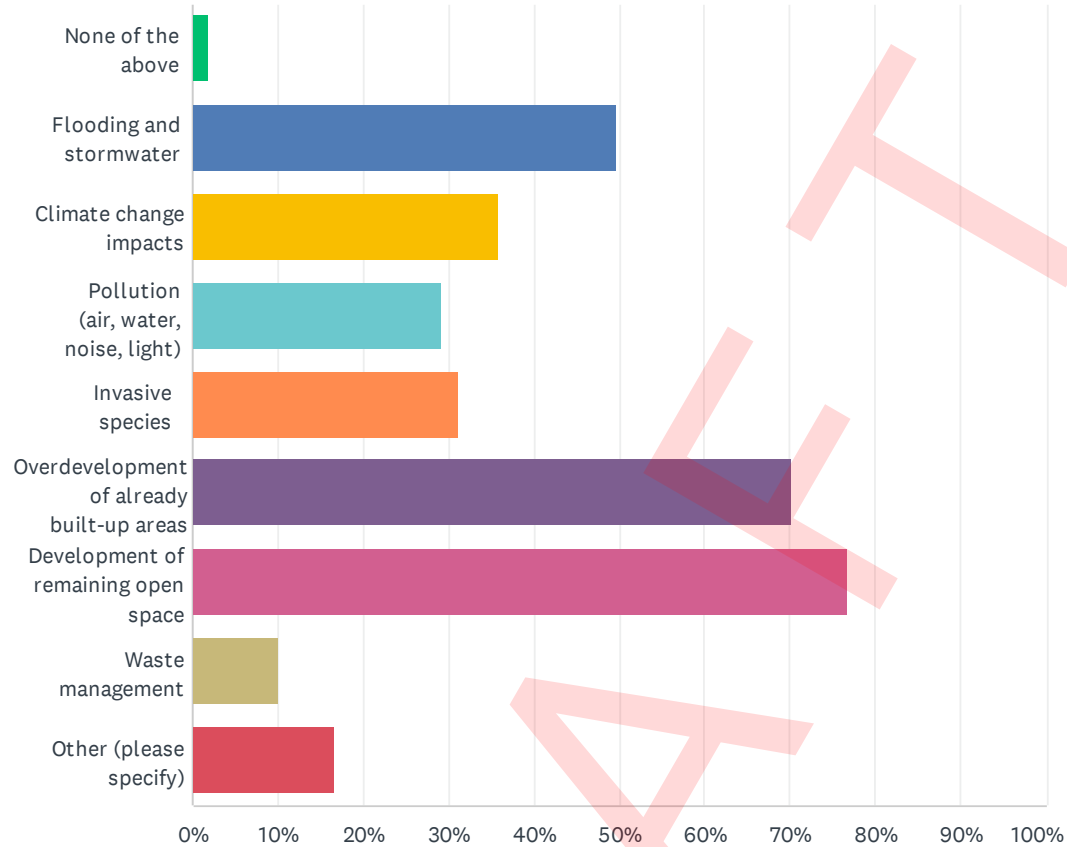


West Cape May Master Plan Re-Exam Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I don't live in West Cape May	0.00%	0
Community character (rural, small town, historic)	84.11%	127
Community events	23.18%	35
Public infrastructure (roads, sewer, etc.)	5.96%	9
Open space	41.06%	62
Sense of community	42.38%	64
I was born here / family	17.22%	26
Business opportunities	1.99%	3
Parks and open space	21.85%	33
Variety of housing options	6.62%	10
Walkability	60.26%	91
Local restaurants and businesses	41.72%	63
Proximity to beaches	70.20%	106
Other (please specify)	15.89%	24
Total Respondents: 151		

Q3 Which of the following environmental issues are you most concerned about in West Cape May?(Select all that apply)

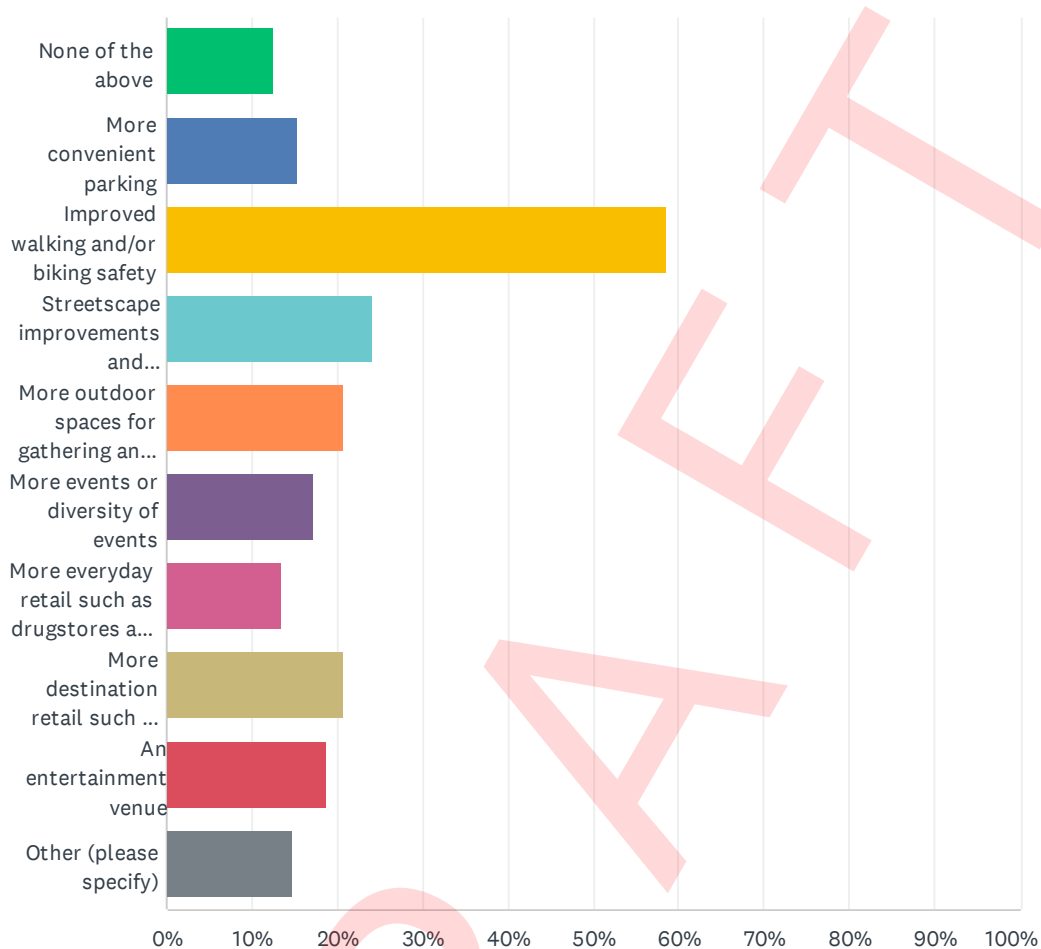
Answered: 151 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	1.99%	3
Flooding and stormwater	49.67%	75
Climate change impacts	35.76%	54
Pollution (air, water, noise, light)	29.14%	44
Invasive species	31.13%	47
Overdevelopment of already built-up areas	70.20%	106
Development of remaining open space	76.82%	116
Waste management	9.93%	15
Other (please specify)	16.56%	25
Total Respondents: 151		

Q4 I would frequent the WCM Commercial Areas (Broadway, Park Ave, Sunset Blvd) or other non-residential areas in West Cape May more often if there were (select top 3)

Answered: 150 Skipped: 1

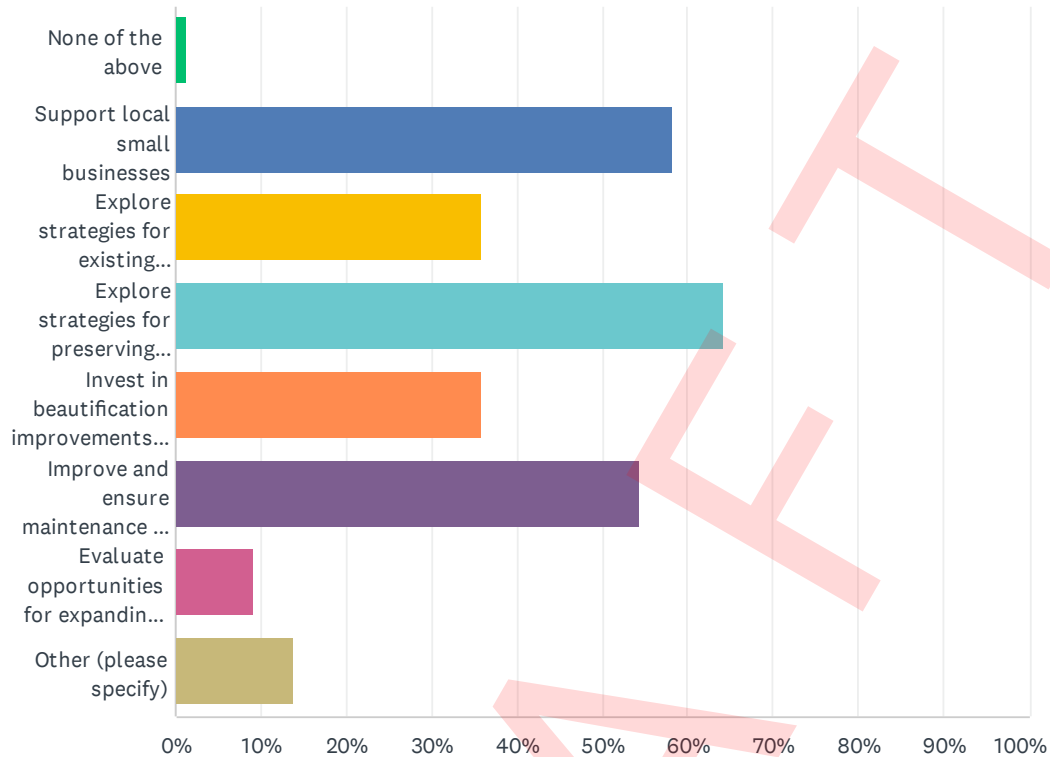


West Cape May Master Plan Re-Exam Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	12.67%	19
More convenient parking	15.33%	23
Improved walking and/or biking safety	58.67%	88
Streetscape improvements and beautification	24.00%	36
More outdoor spaces for gathering and recreation	20.67%	31
More events or diversity of events	17.33%	26
More everyday retail such as drugstores and hardware	13.33%	20
More destination retail such as boutiques and music stores	20.67%	31
An entertainment venue	18.67%	28
Other (please specify)	14.67%	22
Total Respondents: 150		

Q5 What economic development initiatives should the Borough prioritize? (Select all that apply)

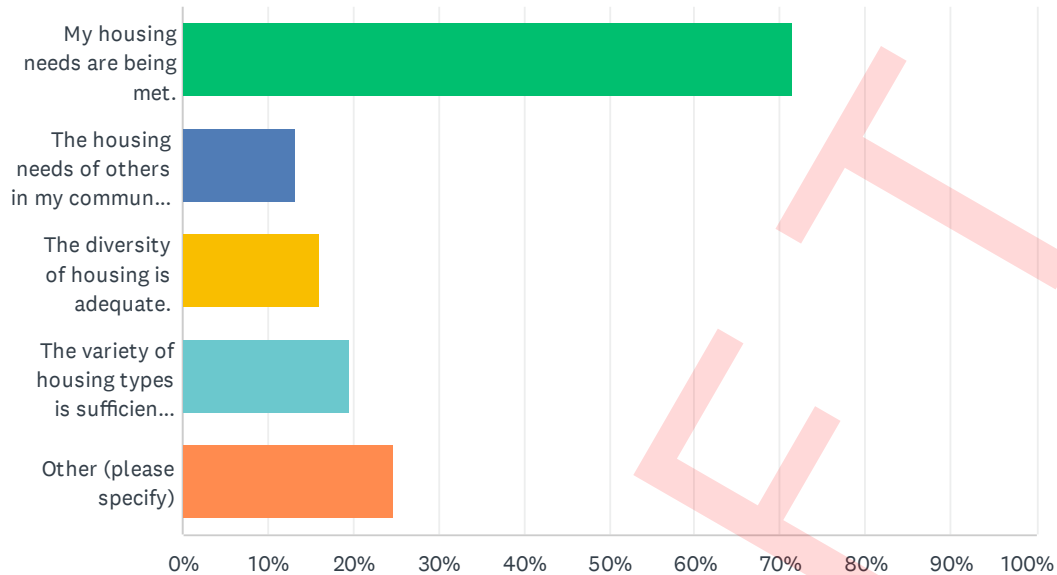
Answered: 151 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	1.32%	2
Support local small businesses	58.28%	88
Explore strategies for existing business attraction/retention	35.76%	54
Explore strategies for preserving agricultural activities on our farms and open space	64.24%	97
Invest in beautification improvements along the streetscape	35.76%	54
Improve and ensure maintenance of sidewalks and crosswalks	54.30%	82
Evaluate opportunities for expanding parking or a parking study	9.27%	14
Other (please specify)	13.91%	21
Total Respondents: 151		

Q6 What statements about housing needs do you agree with? (select all that apply)

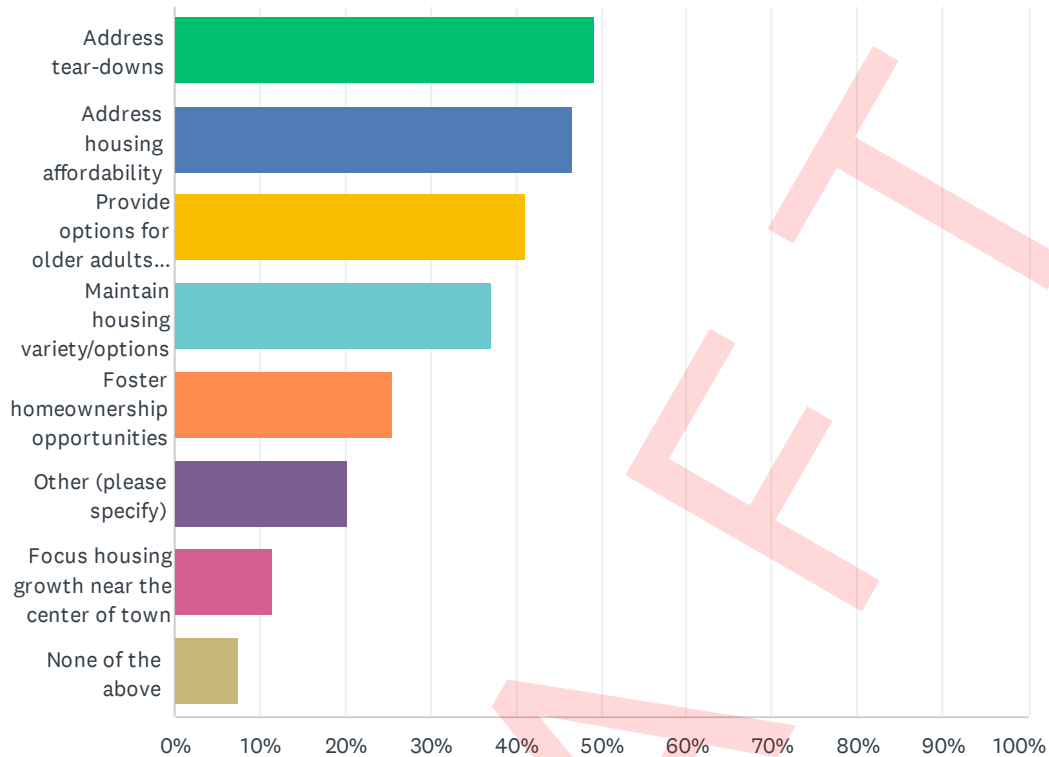
Answered: 137 Skipped: 14



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
My housing needs are being met.	71.53%	98
The housing needs of others in my community are being met.	13.14%	18
The diversity of housing is adequate.	16.06%	22
The variety of housing types is sufficient for the needs of the community.	19.71%	27
Other (please specify)	24.82%	34
Total Respondents: 137		

Q7 What housing initiatives should West Cape May prioritize?(Select all that apply)

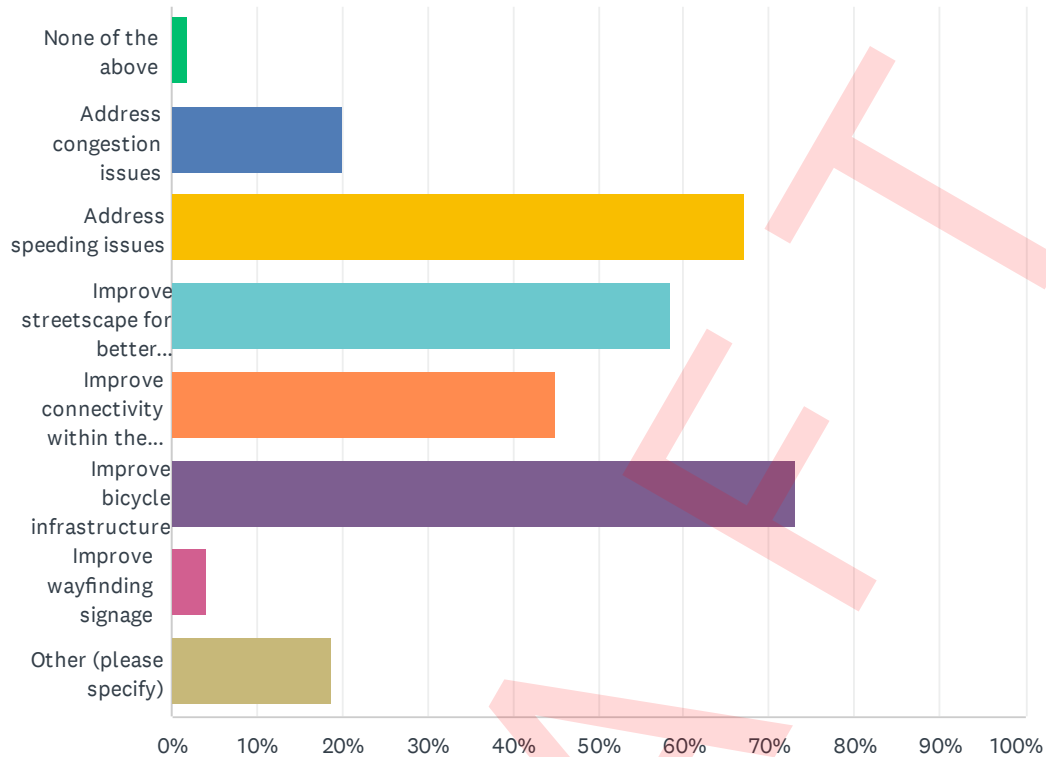
Answered: 148 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Address tear-downs	49.32%	73
Address housing affordability	46.62%	69
Provide options for older adults to age in place	41.22%	61
Maintain housing variety/options	37.16%	55
Foster homeownership opportunities	25.68%	38
Other (please specify)	20.27%	30
Focus housing growth near the center of town	11.49%	17
None of the above	7.43%	11
Total Respondents: 148		

Q8 What transportation and mobility initiatives should West Cape May prioritize?(Select all that apply)

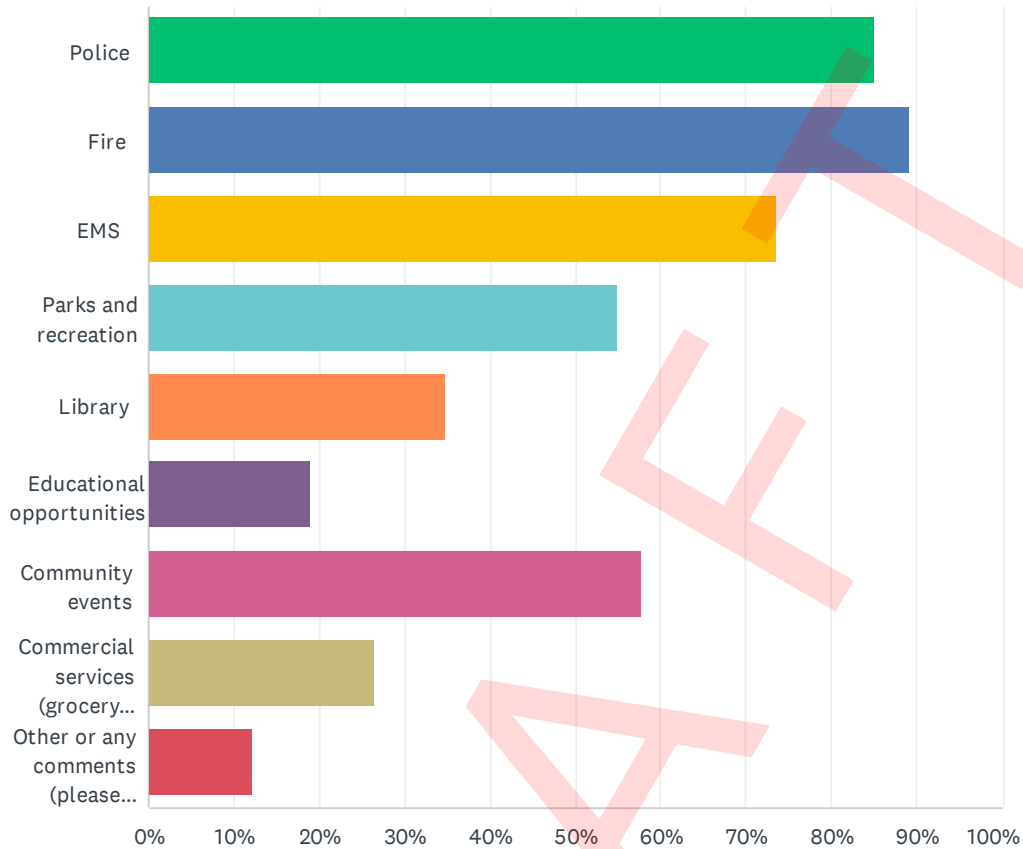
Answered: 149 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	2.01%	3
Address congestion issues	20.13%	30
Address speeding issues	67.11%	100
Improve streetscape for better walkability (sidewalks, street trees, street lights, landscaping, etc.)	58.39%	87
Improve connectivity within the trail network and to priority destinations	44.97%	67
Improve bicycle infrastructure	73.15%	109
Improve wayfinding signage	4.03%	6
Other (please specify)	18.79%	28
Total Respondents: 149		

Q9 Which of the following community services and facilities are you satisfied with? (Select all that apply)

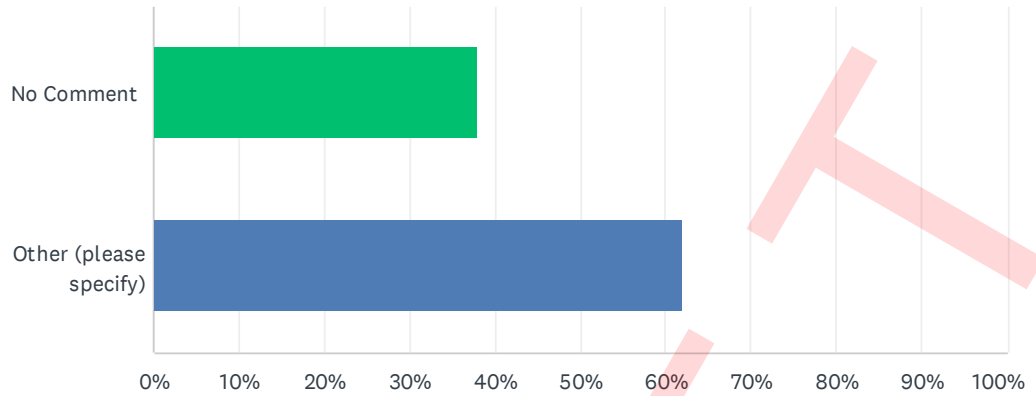
Answered: 147 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Police	85.03%	125
Fire	89.12%	131
EMS	73.47%	108
Parks and recreation	55.10%	81
Library	34.69%	51
Educational opportunities	19.05%	28
Community events	57.82%	85
Commercial services (grocery stores, etc.)	26.53%	39
Other or any comments (please specify)	12.24%	18
Total Respondents: 147		

Q10 Do you have any additional comments regarding West Cape May Borough and considerations for the Master Plan Reexamination?

Answered: 142 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
No Comment		38.03%	54
Other (please specify)		61.97%	88
TOTAL			142