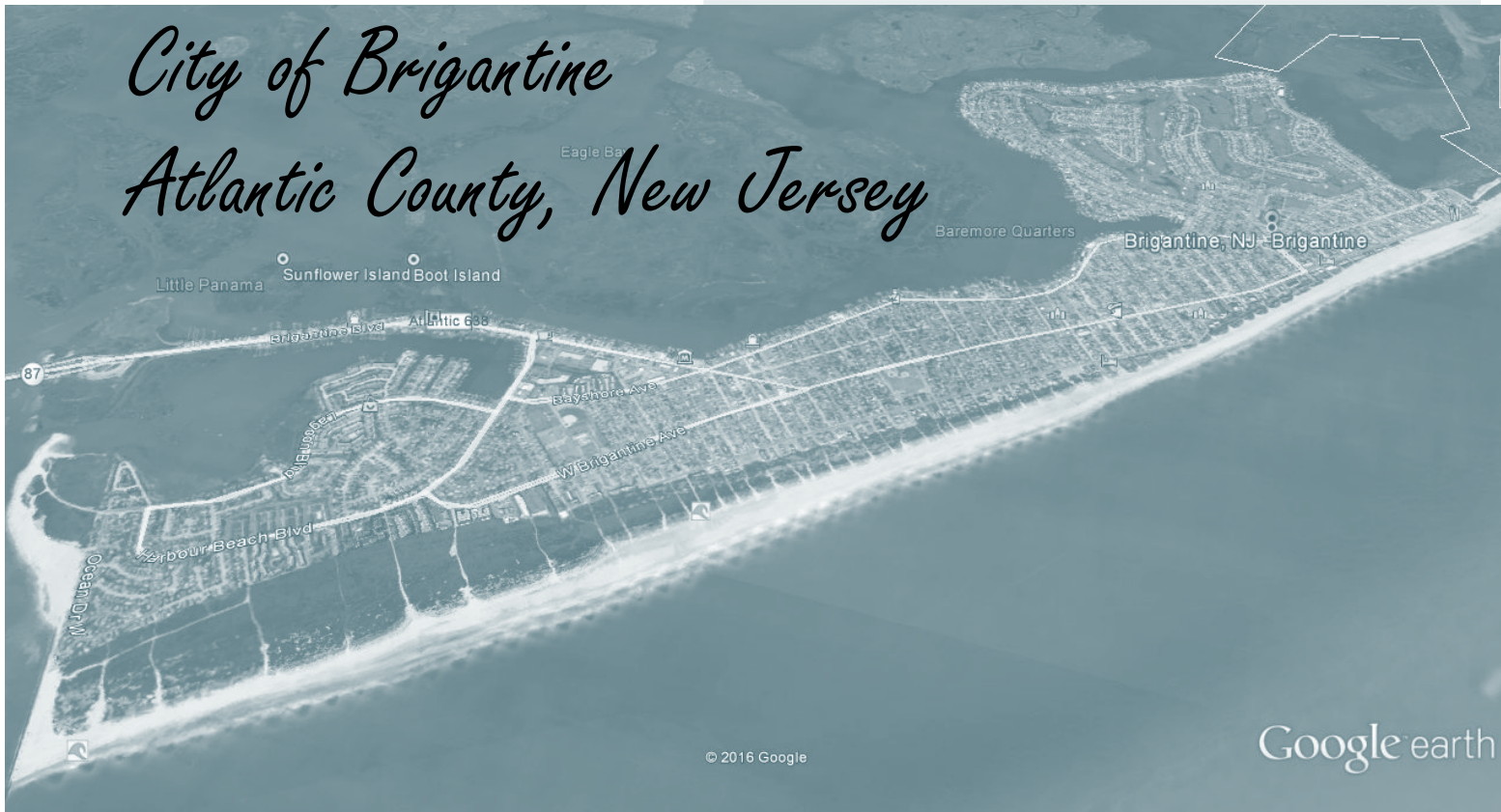


2016 Open Space and Recreation Plan



City of Brigantine Atlantic County, New Jersey



July XX, 2016

As Recommended by the Planning Board:

DATE

Adopted by the Governing Body:

DATE



2016 Open Space And Recreation Plan

City of Brigantine
Atlantic County, New Jersey



DRAFT

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MC Project No. 15001840A



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Brigantine is both a year round residential community, and a seasonal destination located in Atlantic County, New Jersey with a year round population of over 9,500. Access to a wide variety of recreational opportunities is an important, if not the most important component, of the City's seasonal and year round resident's enjoyment and lifestyle.

Recognizing the significance of recreation in the community, the City has set up a committee and retained the services of Maser Consulting P.A. to assist in preparing an Open Space and Recreation Master Plan. The purpose of the Open Space and Recreation Master Plan is to identify any potential needs and how best to address those needs. Needs are being identified through discussions with local officials, public input from Open Houses and comparing existing available recreational facilities with recognized standards for the provision of such facilities.

The findings of the Open Space and Recreation Plan are that the City currently owns and maintains approximately 480 acres of open space. This acreage exceeds the amount of open space that is recommended as a standard by various sources for a community the size of Brigantine, which is typically 3% of total land or acres. Unfortunately, these land percentage calculations do not take into account a season population density that skyrockets in the summer months. With the three major recreation destinations in Brigantine being the beach, the bay and the locally owned Golf Course, Brigantine has much to offer the recreation enthusiast.

The City has done a good job of providing a vast array of recreational opportunities for people of all ages, from the development of a Miniature Golf Course, Bocce and Tennis Courts, Roller Hockey Rinks, and the vast majority of Brigantine residents are within a five minute walk of City owned park or open space, while almost **all** residents are within a ten minute walk to destinations such as the beach, the bay or a playground.

The most pressing short term needs for recreational facilities in the Brigantine seem to be:

1. Additional recreation opportunities for both seasonal and year round residents
2. Improved access to Northern Beach Recreation opportunities
3. Improvements to make the Municipal Golf Course function better and be a financial resource
4. Improved Wayfinding and Signage
5. Improved Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail Network

Another potential need is the usage of the active field areas now and the potential to maintain healthy turf with extended usage with additional sports such as Lacrosse on the horizon. A field analysis is included in the report that looks at current field usage, suitable field usage and pros and cons to synthetic field installation.

1.1 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals and objectives, which serve as a guideline for the Brigantine Beach Open Space and Recreation Plan, are as follows:

GOALS

1. To satisfy the demands of the local and expanded seasonal population for open space and recreation opportunities and facilities.
2. To provide adequate open space and recreation facilities for all age groups and segments of the population.
3. To address the current recreation programs.

OBJECTIVES

1. Improvements to the municipally owned Golf Course
2. Improved multi modal (Bicycles and Pedestrian) transportation routes
3. Upgrade fields and recreation opportunities.
4. Improved access to north end recreation and open space areas
5. Improved Wayfinding and Signage

2. BACKGROUND

The following excerpt is from the 2010 City of Brigantine Master plan and is directed toward the Recreational elements in the community. This excerpt provides a snapshot of the thinking that has evolved over the years with regard to preservation and provision for Recreation and Open Space.

“The City of Brigantine continues to evolve with the needs of its residents. In addition to the previous facilities that have been improved upon, the need for a Bike Path through the community has arisen. The provision of a Bike Path affords Brigantine’s residents a safe means of recreation. In addition to its use as a recreational facility, a Bike Path can be used as a transportation system. This system will reduce residents’ dependence on the automobile and ultimately result in reduced emissions, reduced fossil fuel consumption, and reduced junkyard waste.

Along with the provision of outdoor recreation facilities, the City of Brigantine provides organized sports programs for its residents. The Community Education and Recreation (CER) department manages and allocates funding for these sports programs. Continued support of these programs should be encouraged.

In 1981, the City of Brigantine adopted the Dune Management Plan in an effort to preserve and protect the beach and reduce the loss of beach sand. The City further enhanced its policy on conserving environmentally sensitively lands in the 1992 Master Plan. In 1992 special consideration was given to ensure the protection of the beach and dune system, the back bay and wetlands system, and the golf course. The Planning Board subsequently made revisions to the land use ordinance and zoning map to enact the recommendations of the 1992 Master Plan. In addition to the measures taken by the City of Brigantine, further protection has been

instituted by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) (See Section I.3. for a thorough description of NJDEP Coastal Management programs).

The conservation plan adopted by the City of Brigantine should continue to protect and preserve the environmentally sensitive lands listed above. These resources attract a number of tourists to the resort. Proper management of these resources is essential to their preservation in the future.

1. Continued monitoring of the beach and dune system is required to properly determine the extent of both accretion and erosion that may be occurring over time.
2. Access points to the beach should be monitored to identify their impact on the development of the dune system. Access roads and dune walks should be upgraded in areas of stunted dune development.
3. Waterfront design controls should be reevaluated to assess their effectiveness in protecting the residential character and water's edge environment while fostering continued residential and commercial marinas land uses along the back bays. Issues to be examined should include waterfront viewsheds, public access, parking and intensity of marina use."

The 2016 Master Plan Committee in conjunction with the City's Planners has elaborated upon these ideas and developed a number of items relating to Tourism and Recreation and the interaction of the two.

1. **Tourism** - The Brigantine community recognizes it's attraction as a summer residence for the suburban populace of the Mid-Atlantic Region and encourages the continued development of family oriented tourism. Ideas that have been discussed to expand Brigantine as a destination:
 - a. Water Taxis connecting Brigantine to Gardner's Basin in Atlantic City.
 - b. Development of a theme and branding for the island, combined with the creation of an identifiable Wayfinding design and style. Potential ideas from mottos used previously included: Clean, Green, Safe and Quiet, and Just Stay Left.
 - c. Development of a regional tourism board that can market not only Brigantine but the entire shoreline.
 - d. Provision for Mooring and related Facilities to encourage boaters passing through the area to stop in Brigantine.
 - e. Preservation of public access to the water ways and look for opportunities to expand.
2. There does not seem to be any unified theming or development of safe vehicular and pedestrian interface in the entry area to the island and the core Lighthouse, with missing areas of sidewalks, parking in difficult locations, confused patterns, and random bike lanes.
3. **Recreation and Open Space**

Recommendations for Capital Improvements are as follows:

- a. Enhancements to the appearance and playability of the municipally owned Golf Course, to generate revenue for the City.
- b. Upgrade fields and recreation opportunities. Possibility of developing artificial turf field in the 42nd Street Park.

- c. Improved alternative transportation options for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- d. In October 2013, a Brigantine Beach Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan were completed. Portions of the ideas developed in the plan have been installed.
- e. Improved access to north end recreation and open space areas.

Below is a listing of comments from residents from the 2016 Open House Meetings related to the Recreation and Open Space elements:

1. Would like to see boardwalk.
2. Would like to see something to attract families and improve bocce ball courts.
3. We need to draw something that off islanders can't find elsewhere. Mariana's, Haunted House, Zipline, Nine-hole golf course.
4. Walking paths are definitely needed as it can be dangerous walking along sidewalks as many are in disrepair.
5. Limited use camping areas (tent only) southern end.
6. Development of an indoor flex-space recreational facility.
7. Re: Bicycle lanes – need more/well marked-really like the lane separated by planters for the central & lighthouse districts.
8. Amphitheater should be operated by professionals not City employees.
9. Make bike paths.
10. Outdoor stages/theaters would be wonderful.
11. Low impact walkway through Forsythe Wildlife Refuge with scenic overlooks!
12. More community events like football games on beach.
13. Outdoor stages/theaters would be wonderful.
14. An attraction at the north end of the town.
15. Do whatever is needed i.e., pay the original price back to the Feds, fill the area, develop the golf course.
16. Light up our water towers.
17. Recreation to include night market with street dining.
18. Make paths to the beach easier to walk on with planking or special mats. Important especially for seniors and those pushing wheelchairs and baby strollers.
19. Want to see Lacrosse fields.
20. Wildlife refuge is a huge asset and is underutilized.
21. Less use of our existing "green space".
22. Health clubs to include yoga studios, small scale preferred not planet fitness. Include Indoor rock climbing.
23. Like the idea of green pathways and bike lanes. Likes the ideas of water taxis and more shore-like signs so tourists know where everything is.
24. Potential way finding-signage on raised posts is charming; potential bus service-covered shelter is wonderful; potential taxi (to Atlantic City)-very interesting.
25. Eco & adventure tourism a plus if done ethically with the environment in mind. Be mindful of marine life, dunes, natural landscape, etc.

3. BRIGANTINE PUBLIC RECREATION FACILITIES:

Brigantine currently has three main recreation facilities centers, one at 42nd Street South Sports Complex and one at 24th Street South, and the Links Municipal Golf Course with various other opportunities for recreation, such as beach volleyball, or nature appreciation, scattered throughout other areas of the island.

The total active recreational area on the island is a total of 22.4 acres.

42nd Street South Sports Complex (Walter Bew Stadium) includes:

- Football Field (1, lighted)
- All-purpose field/practice area
- Sports buildings/Concession Stand (3)
- Men's softball field (lighted)
- Street Hockey rinks (2, lighted)
- Tennis Courts (8, lighted)
- Basketball Court
- Bocce (4 courts)
- Skateboard park
- Miniature Golf Course
- Dog Park (1)
- On-site parking (207 spaces)

26th Street South Sports Complex includes:

- Little League Baseball Fields (2)
- Basketball Courts (1)
- Soccer Field (All-purpose field area)
- Playground/Tot Lot (Shark Park)
- Picnic Area and gazebo
- Round House sports building including refreshment stand, restrooms and storage areas.
- Onsite parking (80 spaces)

Additional Recreation

There is an additional basketball court located at 14th and Revere Boulevard adjacent to the Municipal complex and across Revere Boulevard from this site is the recently developed Haneman Park. This facility is designed for passive recreation and is improved with walkways, grassed areas, a gazebo, park benches and a decorative fountain. This area has been utilized in recent years for a morning Farmers Market and as an event space, with the ability to provide electricity.

The City has a public boat launching facility along Bayshore Avenue near 5th Street South. This facility provides for the launching of two boats and has parking for up to 16 cars and 11 cars with boat trailers. The spaces are by permit only. Also located at the site is a gazebo and sitting area adjacent to the bulkhead.

Brigantine continues to maintain the City Dock, a bay swimming area located at 26th Street South and Bayshore Avenue. The facility provides a bay beach area, a picnic area, a playground and separate swimming areas for younger and inexperienced swimmers and the more accomplished swimmers. Also located on the site is an

equipment storage building with vending machines and lifeguard locker rooms. During the summer months the area is lifeguard protected.

Public Playgrounds

There is an additional play area developed in the northern area of the City at East Shore Drive & Travers that provides recreation within walking distance of the North End and Golf Course areas.

Senior Center

Atlantic County Seniors Centers are dedicated to providing services that enhance the educational, social and recreational lives of our seniors. Activities may include Bingo, Exercise, Mahjong, Pinochle, Trips, Yoga and more. Atlantic County provides transportation for seniors to the senior centers and to medical visits and shopping. Senior Citizens age 60 and older and their spouses can attend the Brigantine Senior Center. The Center hours are 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Each day a balanced lunch is served without cost. Meals are planned by a qualified nutritionist to supply at least one third of the day's nutritional requirements. The address and phone number is: Brigantine Beach Community Center, 265 42nd Street, Brigantine, NJ 08203; (609) 266-2891.

Golf Course

The Municipal Golf Course was created in 1927 as an 18 hole facility on approximately 150 acres of conserved Open Space by the Island Development Company, and eventually purchased by the City with Green Acres funding assistance in 2002, with the deed restriction that the site is to remain open space and recreation. At the present time the Atlantic County Improvement Authority (ACIA) has responsibility for the day to day maintenance and management of the course, with assistance from the City of Brigantine's Public Works Department.

The level of usage of the course, as an average number of golfers by active months (April to October) during a 4 year average rounds per month (not including 2013 because of Sandy), is:

April	1,871
May	3,138
Jun	3,174
Jul	4,171
Aug	3,890
Sep	3,092
Oct	1,835

*Saturday is by far the busiest...200+ during peak times.
Weekday vary wildly, can be 40, can be 180*

After Superstorm Sandy, the City and County were allowed to go onto the site to clean and clear all of the drainage ditches which provide stormwater management for the surrounding residential neighborhoods, but not the deeper ponds. It is understood that there are around 10 ponds within the golf course that eventually drain to 4 floodgates (12th Street North, Jenkins, North Shore and the Elks Lodge areas). While this system has worked for the last years, there is concern that some of the pond areas are silting in and encouraging the growth of invasive species, such as fragmites. As part of the

improvements the golf course would like to dredge the ponds and have applied to the State DEP for a permit to do so.

The course had a Preliminary Master Plan for proposed improvements dated February 2014, and done by Stephen Kay / Doug Smith Golf Course Design, LLC., 665 St Andrews Drive, Egg Harbor City, NJ, which will be elucidated in the Recommendations Section of this plan.

Bikelanes

The City has installed sections of a bikelane system over the past years along Brigantine Boulevard, and portions of a striped and painted lane can also be seen on Harbor Beach Boulevard, but as of 2016 the bikelanes are an incomplete and fragmented circulation system.

Passive Recreation

Passive Recreational opportunities also abound in Brigantine with the northern end of the island being an enormous area of open beach and wildlife refuge.

North Brigantine Beach East Beach Avenue and 14th Street North, Brigantine, NJ

There are few opportunities to explore relatively undisturbed beach in New Jersey, and North Brigantine Beach is one of them. Over two miles of sandy beach and salt marsh are home to species common in coastal marine habitats including gulls, minnows, sand crabs and diamondback terrapins. The large, two-story viewing platform is a wonderful place to camp out during spring and fall migration season and provides an excellent vantage point from which to scan for sea birds and marine mammals. The undeveloped shrub/scrub habitat between the fore-dune and the platform attracts passerine species and small mammals. This is a popular beach for surf fishing through most of the year.

The Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge protects more than 47,000 acres of southern New Jersey coastal habitats which is actively managed for migratory birds. The refuge's location in one of the Atlantic Flyway's most active flight paths makes it an important link in seasonal bird migration. Its value for the protection of water birds and their habitat continues to increase as people develop the New Jersey shore for our own use. The Brigantine Division (established in 1939) is located approximately 10 miles (16 km) north of Atlantic City along the south bank of the mouth of the Mullica River.

Almost 90% of Forsythe Refuge is tidal [salt marsh](#), interspersed with shallow coves and bays. Each year thousands of [ducks](#) and [geese](#), [wading birds](#) and [shorebirds](#) concentrate here during spring and fall migration, making the Refuge a good site for [birdwatching](#), nature photography and related activities. More than 3,000 acres (12 km²) of the Refuge are woodlands with a wide variety of tree and plant species, thus also providing vital habitat for a variety of upland species such as [songbirds](#), [woodcock](#), [white-tailed deer](#) and [box turtles](#).

Primary access to this refuge is by automobile and bicycle. While there are no specific guided programs, visitors may drive an eight-mile (13 km) long trail over dams guided by a brochure which points out the various features. Foot travelers can walk one of four trails which range from 1/4 mile (0.4 km) to 4 miles (6.4 km) in length.

4. OPEN SPACE INVENTORY

The following is a listing of Recreation and Open Space as filed with the State of New Jersey, and referred to as a Recreation and Open Space Inventory (ROSI):

All lands held for recreation and conservation purposes are described by their block and lot identification numbers as shown on current official tax maps and to a current, legible, official map of Brigantine and current tax maps. The official map for this ROSI is named ONCE Inventory MI12 and is dated April 21, 2010.

DEVELOPED AND PARTIALLY DEVELOPED LANDS HELD FOR RECREATION AND CONSERVATION PURPOSES						
KEY	MUNICIPALITY	NAME	BLOCK	LOT	ACRES	FUNDING
1	Brigantine	42 nd Street Recreation Field	3901 3602	23 26	13.2	Non-Funded
2	Brigantine	16 th Street Parking Lot	1403	1	0.58	Funded
3	Brigantine	15 th Street Basketball Court	1506	7	0.27	Non-Funded
4	Brigantine	Haneman Park	2008	1 & 2	0.5	Non-Funded
5	Brigantine	26 th Street Recreation Field	2105	4	5.5	Non-Funded
6	Brigantine	26 th Street Parking Lot	2301	1 & 6	0.5	Funded
7	Brigantine	City Dock	2601 2602	8 & 9 1	0.6	Non-Funded
8	Brigantine	Veteran's memorial	2909	1	0.25	Non-Funded
9	Brigantine	35 th Street Parking Lot	3303	1	0.8	Funded
10	Brigantine	Casa Drive Parking Lot	4702	2	0.16	Non-Funded
11	Brigantine	6 th Street So. Boat Ramp & Fishing Pier	6705	1-11	1.5	Funded
12	Brigantine	East Shore Drive Tot Lot	8101	1	0.2	Non-Funded
13	Brigantine	Conservation/Passive Recreation Area	8102	1.13	3.5	Non-Funded
14	Brigantine	6 th Street So. 15 th Street North. Boat Storage Boat/ Observation Tower	8425	p/o 1	1.5	Non-Funded
15	Brigantine	Golf Course	8501	1	149.21	Funded

Subtotal of acres 178.27 acres
 Total Acres developed and partially developed lands 178.27 acres

WHOLLY UNDEVELOPED LANDS HELD FOR RECREATION AND CONSERVATION PURPOSES						
KEY	MUNICIPALITY	NAME	BLOCK	LOT	ACRES	FUNDING
A	Brigantine	Public Beach Area	101.03	1	132±	Non-Funded
B	Brigantine	Public Beach Area	101.02	1	60±	Non-Funded
C	Brigantine	Public Beach Area	101.01	1	47±	Non-Funded
D	Brigantine	Conservation Area	801	1.01	0.78	Non-Funded
E	Brigantine	Conservation Area	1001	5	0.22	Non-Funded
F	Brigantine	Conservation Area	1402	4	0.05	Non-Funded
G	Brigantine	Conservation Area	2303	7.02	0.06	Non-Funded
H	Brigantine	Conservation Area	2304	1.01	0.13	Non-Funded
I	Brigantine	Conservation Area/Public Beach Area	3502	11.01	0.24	Non-Funded
J	Brigantine	Conservation Area/Public Beach Area	3502	11.02	2.3	Non-Funded
K	Brigantine	Conservation Area/Public Beach Area	3502	11.03	0.07	Non-Funded
L	Brigantine	Conservation Area/Public Beach Area	3502	12	37±	Non-Funded
M	Brigantine	Public Area (Wetlands)	3503	1	1.7±	Non-Funded
N	Brigantine	Public Beach Area	8425	p/o 1	30±	Non-Funded

Subtotal of acres 311.55 acres
 Total Acres of wholly undeveloped lands 311.55 acres

5. RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Brigantine provides and supports a wide variety of recreational sports and activities for both year round residents and seasonal visitors. The Recreation Department sponsors many activities, camps, leagues, and events, as can be found on the Brigantine Beach official website and listed below:

5.1 BRIGANTINE COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND RECREATION PROGRAMS

Arts & Crafts	Time for Tots
Recreational Baseball	Buddy Basketball
Recreational Soccer	Junior Girls Basketball
Recreational Softball	Junior Boys Basketball
Camp Brigantine	Playground Program
Theatre Camp	Basketball Camp
Tennis	

Swimming

Bayshore Ave. & 26th St. So.

Open July to Labor Day during daylight hours. Lifeguard on duty.

Public Playgrounds

East Shore Drive & Travers

Recreational Leagues and Clubs using Brigantine Beach facilities:

SPRING

Baseball (around 70 participants per season)

- T-Ball Division (5 year olds)
- Coach Pitch Division (6 & 7 year olds)
- Farm Division (8 & 9 year olds)
- Minor League (10-11-12 year olds)
- Major League (10-11-12 year old)
- Sr. Baseball League (13-14-15 year old)
- Challenger Division (8-18 years old)
- Connie Mack League (13-15 years old)
- Stan Musial (18 and Up)

Girls Softball (around 50 participants per season)

- Sugar & Spice (7-8 years old)
- Pre-Teen (9-11 years old)
- Jr. Division (12-14 years old)
- Sr. Division (15-18 years old)
- Traveling Teams

Adult Softball
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men's 35+ League • Ladies 18+ League
Select Soccer (around 70 participants per season)
Tennis Clinic
Adult Aerobics

SUMMER
Youth Recreation Camp (6-week program for Grades K-8)
Baseball Tournaments
Girls Softball Tournaments
Adult Aerobics

FALL
Jr. Football
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Midget League (6 & 7 year old) • Pee Wee League (8 & 9 year olds) • Jr. League (10 & 11 year olds) • Sr. League (12 & 13 year olds)
Football Cheerleading
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Midget Instructional (Grades 1 & 2) • Pee Wee Squad (Grades 3 & 4) • Jr. Squad Grades (5 & 6) • Sr. Squad Grades (7 & 8)
Soccer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Division • B Division • C Division • D Division
Select Soccer (Boys & Girls Ages 9 through 14)
Fall Girls Softball
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 & Under Division • 12 & Under Division • 14 & Under Division • 17 & Under Division
Adult Aerobics
Tennis Clinic

WINTER
Boys & Girls Basketball
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional 3 & 4 • Grades 5 & 6 • Grades 7 & 8
Basketball Cheerleading
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional (Grades 1 & 2) • Grades 3 & 4
Competition Cheerleading (Grades 3-8)
Roller Hockey
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rink Rat Division (Grades 1-3) • Midget Intramural (Grades 4-6) • Midget Travel (9-11 years of age) • Jr. Travel (12-14 years of age) • Sr. Travel (15-17 years of age)
Wrestling (Grades 1-8)
Indoor Select Soccer
Adult Basketball
Adult Volleyball
Adult Aerobics
Adult Jujitsu

5.2 EVENTS

Brigantine holds public events throughout the year; in particular it was noted to have held Beach Volleyball Tournaments and the Brigantine Triathlon noted below:

The Brigantine Triathlon attracts over 750 competitors each year, from more than 20 different states. It's open to individuals and three-member relay teams that must endure a quarter mile swim, an 11 mile bike, followed by a 4 mile run.

5.3 PASSIVE RECREATION

Passive Recreational opportunities also abound in Brigantine with the northern end of the island being an open beach and wildlife refuge. There are few opportunities to explore relatively undisturbed beach in New Jersey, and North Brigantine Beach is one of them. Over two miles of sandy beach and salt marsh are home to species common in coastal marine habitats including gulls, minnows, sand crabs and diamondback terrapins. The large, two-story viewing platform is a wonderful place to camp out during spring and fall migration season and provides an excellent vantage point from which to scan for sea birds and marine mammals. The undeveloped shrub/scrub habitat between the fore-dune and the platform attracts passerine species and small mammals. This is a popular beach for surf fishing through most of the year. Visit in early spring to see endangered Piping Plovers arriving and establishing nesting territories along the beach.

5.4 THROUGH THE SEASONS

Winter: Winter provides opportunities to observe diving ducks such as Long-tailed Duck, Scoters, Loons, Double Crested and occasionally Great Cormorant. Small flocks of Sanderlings work the surf. Winter is the best time to scan for Bonaparte's gull and other seasonal rarities over the ocean.

Spring: Spring brings opportunities to observe migratory and local birds, particularly shorebirds. Nesting Piping Plover may be observed from the beach, beginning in mid-March. Look for various sandpiper species stopping over, as well as songbirds such as Common Yellowthroat and Yellow Warbler in the shrubs. Glossy Ibis, egrets and herons return to the marsh in late April and early May.

Summer: Diamondback terrapins nest on the bay-side beaches. Surf fishing is good for striped bass, bluefish, summer flounder, kingfish, skate, smooth dogfish and croaker. Pods of bottlenose dolphin can be seen close to shore. Shorebirds dart along the surf line after invertebrates. Piping Plover, Black Skimmer, American Oystercatcher and Least Tern are among endangered species nesting on the beach. Osprey carry fish to their nestlings. At dusk, ghost crabs and Clapper Rails become active.

Fall: Monarch butterflies stop to nectar on the seaside goldenrod as they journey South. Shorebird migrants such as Least and Semipalmated Sandpiper, Semipalmated and Black-bellied Plover, Dowitchers and occasionally Marbled Godwits feed along the rack line and mudflats. Watch for Peregrine Falcons and other raptors overhead, and for Royal and Caspian Terns amongst flocks of Forster's and Common Tern. Northern Gannets and Brown Pelicans pass further offshore.

6. RESOURCE ASSESEMENT

6.1 PARK CLASSIFICATIONS SYSTEM



A standard for a Parks and Open Space Classification System has been developed to include park function, intended design, use resource characteristics and preferred location. When developing a Park and Recreation Master Plan, recognition should be given first to the provision of open space for basic park and recreation needs. Any special use parks should extend beyond the minimum acreage needed for traditional park use.

An important point to consider is that a park and recreation system should provide a number of different parks. The facilities contained in each park site are based on the geographic location, demographics, economic base and available size. A single large park site does not satisfy the specific needs of the individual neighborhoods, although the standard average requirements may have been satisfied.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE CLASSIFICATIONS

Classification	General Description	Location Criteria	Size Criteria
Mini	Used to address limited, isolated or unique recreational needs.	Less than a 1/4 mile distance	Between 2,500 sq. ft. and one acre in size
Neighborhood	The basic unit to the park system and serves as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. Concentrates on both informal active and passive recreation.	1/4 to 1/2 mile distance and uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers.	5 to 10 acres.
Community	Serves broader purpose than neighborhood park. Focus is on meeting community-based recreational needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.	Usually serves two or more neighborhoods and 1/2 to 3 mile distance.	Usually between 30 to 50 acres.
Large Urban	Serves a broader purpose than community parks. Focus is on meeting community-based recreational needs, as well as preserving open spaces.	Determined by the quality and suitability of the scale.	As needed to accommodate desired uses. Usually a minimum of 50 acres.
Natural Resource Area	Lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, unique landscapes, open space and visual aesthetics/buffering.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Variable.
Greenways	Effectively tie park system components together to form a continuous park environment.	Resource availability and opportunity.	Variable.
Sports Complex	Consolidates heavily programmed athletic fields and associated facilities to larger and fewer sites strategically located throughout the community.	Strategically located community-wide facilities.	Determined by projected demand. Usually a minimum of 25 acres.
Special Use	Covers a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward single-purpose use.	Variable - dependent on specific use.	Variable.

6.2 MINI-PARKS

A mini-park is a small recreation area designed to address limited, isolated or unique recreational needs. The size devoted to a mini-park generally ranges from 2,500 to 10,000 square feet. Mini-parks are intended to service sub-neighborhoods areas and therefore should be centrally located and within a quarter mile distance from those areas intended to be serviced. Mini-parks can be located as independent entities or as part of a larger park complex. The mini-parks should be secured for the protection of the users. Benches should be carefully placed for ease of supervision of the children. A drinking fountain should be available if possible. Separate playground equipment areas, geared to preschool children aged 2-5 and school-aged children aged 5-12, should be provided.

6.3 NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

The neighborhood park remains the basic unit of the park system that serves as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. The focus of the neighborhood park is on informal active and passive recreation. Designed primarily to serve children under 14 years of age, the neighborhood park should have additional features to interest teenagers

and adults. The trend in recent years is for neighborhood parks to become the center of activity for the wide variety of needs expressed by all residents. The more diversified interest of today's recreation consumer challenge the facility planner to provide for a broader program, with more attention devoted to multiple uses by different age groups.

The neighborhood park has a minimum service radius that will seldom exceed one half mile, with most of the attendance originating within a quarter mile distance. It should be located close to the center of the area to be served and away from heavily-traveled streets and other barriers and should be easily and safely accessible.

In order to have the desired features, the neighborhood park would normally require a minimum of five acres. The particular facilities required will depend on the nature of the neighborhood, with space being allocated according to needs.

Typically, neighborhood parks range in size from 5 to 10 acres and service a neighborhood within a radius of one half mile.

6.4 COMMUNITY PARKS

Community parks serve a broader purpose than a neighborhood park. The community park should meet the community-based recreational needs as well as preserve unique and valuable landscapes and open spaces. The community facility should incorporate a variety of active and passive recreation uses. Primary requisites are athletic fields and courts for organized sports in conjunction with indoor spaces for various sports, activities and programs.

The community park should be located with ½ to 3 miles of residents in its service area, depending upon population density and ease of access. Community parks usually service two or more neighborhoods. Since the park should be located away from residential areas, the predominant means of access will be via vehicles, which will necessitate on-site parking facilities.

A community park and playground facility typically requires between 30 and 50 acres. At least two-thirds of that area should be developed and allocated for active recreation purposes.

6.5 LARGE URBAN/SUBURBAN PARKS

Large urban/suburban parks serve a broader purpose than community parks and are used when community and neighborhood parks are not adequate to serve the needs of the community. The focus is on meeting community based recreational needs, in addition to preserving unique landscapes, open spaces and natural features. The location of large parks is usually determined by the availability, quality and suitability of the site. These types of parks usually serve an entire community. The minimum acreage to accommodate a large urban park is 50 acres.

6.6 NATURAL RESOURCE AREAS

Natural resource areas are lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space, and visual aesthetics/buggering. These lands consist of

either individual sites exhibiting natural resources or lands that are unsuitable for development but offer natural resource potential.

Resource availability and opportunity are the primary factors determining location and size. Resource quality is the primary determinate when it comes to selecting a site for preservation. The practical limit of acreage set aside under this classification lies in resource quality, availability, community development considerations and acquisition costs.

6.7 GREENWAYS

Greenways serve a number of important functions. They tie park components together to form a cohesive park, recreation and open space system. They emphasize harmony with the natural environment. Greenways allow for uninterrupted and safe pedestrian movement between parks throughout the community. They provide people with a resource based outdoor recreational opportunity and experience.

In many aspects, greenways and natural resource areas have much in common. Both preserve natural resources and provide connections between larger habitat areas, open space and corridors for wildlife. The primary distinction between the two is that greenways emphasize use (i.e. park trails) to a greater extent than natural resource areas.

Land availability and opportunity are the primary factors determining location and width of the greenway corridor. "Natural" greenways generally follow suitable areas such as stream courses. "Man-made" greenways are corridors that are built as part of development projects or during renovation of old development areas. Frequently, abandoned railroad right-of-ways are converted to greenways. Although corridor width can be as little as 25' in a subdivision, 50' is usually considered the minimum.

6.8 SPECIAL USE

Special use areas and facilities are public parks and open space areas not usually associated with the other five types of park facilities. They commonly have a unique function or are identified by a dominant feature or activity. They include parkways, beaches, swimming pools, public play areas, historical sites, floodplains and public open space features, which serve and benefit the entire community.

7. COMMUNITY NEEDS ANALYSIS

The 2010 Master Plan provided the following table of Recreational Facilities in the City of Brigantine as described in the Recreational Facility Inventory. To determine the capacity of City recreational facilities, the following summary was prepared. The summary compares the facilities offered in Brigantine in 2010 with a recommended parks and recreation ratio.

ANALYSIS OF RECREATIONAL CAPACITY							
FACILITY	UNITS	RECOMMENDED RATIO		EXISTING RATIO		CAPACITY PERCENT	RECOMMENDED SERVICE RADIUS
		UNITS	PERSONS	UNITS	PERSONS		
Basketball Courts	3	1	5,000	1	4,212	118.6%	0.25-0.5 mile
Tennis Courts	8	1	2,000	1	1,580	126.6%	0.25-0.5 mile
Volleyball Courts	11	1	5,000	1	1,149	435.0%	0.25-0.5 mile
Baseball Fields	3	1	5,000	1	4,214	118.6%	0.25-0.5 mile
Football Fields	1	1	20,000	1	12,643	158.2%	15-30 min travel
Soccer Fields	1	1	10,000	2	12,643	79.1%	1-2 miles
Softball Fields	1	1	5,000	2	12,643	39.5%	0.25-0.5 mile
Tot Lots*	1	1	1,000	2	12,643	7.9%	0.25-0.5 mile
Bocce Courts	2	No Standard		1	6,322	---	No Standard

*Source: Standard derived from a variety of municipalities.

Source: National Recreation and Parks Association, *Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines*. Alexandria, Virginia: NRPA, 1983.

7.1 ACREAGE NEEDS

Recreation needs are directly related to population levels and the recreation facilities available to serve that population. As a first step in determining open space and recreation needs, population levels for Brigantine were determined. The 2014 population for the City according to the Census Bureau was 9,500.

A variety of standards have been developed over the years throughout the country to gauge the need for recreation and open space. Nationally, the population ratio method is the best known and most used for determining park and recreation space standards. It is simple to use and easily updated. It should not be used as an absolute guideline but as a flexible planning tool in dedication of a percentage of the total land within a community for recreation use. Both of these methods are used below to estimate the need for acres of recreation and open space.

POPULATION RATIO METHOD

Standards for minimum acceptable levels of recreation facilities have been developed by various organizations, which relate the number of acres and type of facilities to population levels. At the municipal level, New Jersey Green Acres recommends 8 acres

of open space per 1,000 persons. Additional acreage is recommended at the County, State and Federal levels (i.e., regional parks). Municipal open space should be in the form of playgrounds, neighborhood parks, playfields and community parks. In general, large natural areas and school recreation facilities would not be included in this total, and school recreation facilities should not be included in this total. While the schools in many municipalities have active working relations with the towns, their control of access and availability make it difficult to include and quantify.

With a population of 9,600 and a minimum of 8 acres of open space per 1,000 persons, Brigantine should have approximately 80 acres of municipal open space. The Borough currently has 178 acres that can be classified as playgrounds and developed parks, and open space, or approximately 223 % of the standard.

AREA PERCENTAGE METHOD

Another standard for open space relates to the percent of total developed and developable land area in a municipality that should be in open space owned by the municipality. The New Jersey Statewide Comprehensive Recreation Plan recommends 3%. In Brigantine this amounts to about 7 acres, currently the town has 311 acres of open space.

Additional acreage is held in regional open space (County, State and Federal).

7.2 FACILITY NEEDS

The National Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines for facility needs are an additional method in determining the general recreational needs of a community. These standards are based on the required facilities for a given population. The National Recreation and Park Association Standards for specific facilities have been widely accepted and are used as guidelines for recreation development. The existing recreation facilities in Brigantine on town property were compared to the national standards, as indicated on the National Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines as one of several methods in determining the current recreational statue of the town. However, since the quantity of recreation facilities are based on generic national standards, it is important to note that these quantities must be modified as necessary based on the specific recreation needs of Brigantine and it's residents.

The National Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines were applied to the current population of Brigantine to determine either the deficiency or excess of park and recreation facilities, based upon the total number of existing facilities for the town. By comparing the number of existing facilities with the recommended number of facilities, a general determination of what specific recreation facilities are adequate, deficient, or absent, within the municipality can be determined. The results are only relative to facility quantity and do not consider location, quality, etc. of any facility.

These standards should only be used when assessing the specific recreation needs of the community as a general guideline. A consensus is that the facility standards are useful as guidelines, but that a community should determine what mix of facilities best meets its specific needs. Both the old population-based guidelines and the new spatially-based guidelines are provided for comparison.

POPULATION BASED OPEN SPACE GUIDELINES			
TYPE OF RECREATION	QUANTITY PER POPULATION	RECOMMENDED	PRESENTLY
Basketball Courts	1 per 5,000	2	8
Adult Baseball	1 per 5,000	2	1
Youth Baseball	1 per 5,000	2	4
Football Field	1 per 5,000	2	1
Soccer Fields	1 per 5,000	2	2
Tennis Courts	1 per 2,000	5	8
Volleyball Courts	1 per 5,000	2	4 Beach
Handball	1 per 20,000	1	0
Golf Course	1 per 50,000	1	1
Community Center	1 per 20,000	1	1
Bocce Courts	1 per 2,000	5	4

Notes: Horseshoes and Shuffleboard Courts discussed would be apportioned at roughly 1 per 5,000 residents

The City of Brigantine also has facilities not directly listed, such as a skate park and Dog Park area, as well as a Miniature Golf located in the 42nd Street Recreation area that is leased to a private vendor on a seasonal base.

According to the 1990 guidelines Brigantine currently has minimal shortages of available recreation and in some cases significantly more (Basketball Courts: have 8, recommended 2; or Tennis Courts: have 8, recommended 5) than recommended.

7.3 COMMUNITY NEEDS ANALYSIS

Since each community is different, direct comparison to national standards is not always an accurate assessment of the actual recreational needs of a community. This is where a Community Needs Analysis becomes a valuable tool in refining the recreational needs of a given community. The Community Needs Analysis is an important adjunct to the results obtained by comparison to the NRPA standards.

In Brigantine, community recreation needs were identified through interviews and meetings with City officials, administrators and volunteers involved in the City's recreation program. Maser Consulting P.A. staff met with the CER Director. Data was provided on the sports programs offered by the Borough as well as number of participants and teams.

Brigantine has active participation of anywhere from 70 to 100 youths in any organized sports, including soccer, baseball, softball, tennis and basketball, with upwards of 260 participants in each season.

Due to the high participation levels, all athletic fields in the City are committed to organized team sports almost every day for most of the year. The only down time fields receive is from December through February. This can lead to overuse of fields and deteriorating field conditions.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

Recreation is an important component of City resident's lifestyle and the town has a wealth of active and passive recreational opportunities available to both residents and seasonal visitors. As stated earlier, the City has continually worked to provide these amenities and to develop new ones over the years. The objectives can now serve as a guideline for the Recommendations for Capital Improvements and are as follows:

OBJECTIVES

1. Enhancements to the appearance and playability of the municipally owned Golf Course
2. Upgrade fields and recreation opportunities.
3. Improved alternative transportation options for pedestrians and bicyclists
4. Improved access to north end recreation and open space areas
5. Improved Wayfinding, and Identification Signage

8.1 ENHANCEMENTS TO THE APPEARANCE AND PLAYABILITY OF THE MUNICIPALLY OWNED GOLF COURSE:

The present golf course is considered a good value for the rate paid. As was noted in the Facilities portion of this Plan; the ponds and drainage ditches around the edges of the property have filled in with silt significantly reducing the pace at which the course is able to drain, be it rainfall or tidal flooding. The grasses surrounding the drainage ditches were not there originally, but have grown in as silt has remained after storms.

The course had a Preliminary Master Plan for proposed improvements dated February 2014, and done by Stephen Kay / Doug Smith Golf Course Design, LLC. 665 St Andrews Drive, Egg Harbor City, NJ. This Master Plan made recommendations to provide improved drainage with the raising of the existing cartways in areas, widening of fairways, and rebuilding of tees and bunkers. These drawings were accompanied by a Preliminary Construction Cost Estimate broken down by hole and by possible improvements.

Based upon this assessment the greatest need that the Golf Course has initially is for multiple Drainage Improvements.

Opening up of all of the ditches surrounding the course as well as removing the build-up of silt from the existing basins will make a significant difference in the conditions the course is able to offer. This same process will also make a difference for property owners adjacent to the course as their land will be drained more efficiently as well.

The City and Course Manager have tentatively identified holes that are in most need of renovations, but no work has been authorized or timing planned.

One of the other items mentioned in relationship to the Golf Course, is the Club House area. It was stated that the intention is to move the golf shop down to where the cart barn is located, and to renovate the Club House with a new kitchen and expanded seating facilities to accommodate larger events such as weddings and receptions in an expanded space with nicer atmosphere.

8.2 UPGRADED FIELDS AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES.

As the City of Brigantine is an island there is limited ability to expand and to create new facilities and recreational opportunities, therefore in the near future the City may need to look at how to make the existing acreage more efficient with the addition of new sports, such as Lacrosse demanding field time. One method of achieving this is to change some of the existing turf field areas, in particularly those with Sports Lighting, into Synthetic Turf.

The most appropriate and logical field to convert to a Synthetic Turf Field, is the present 'Walter Bew Stadium' Football Field in 42nd Street Park. This natural turf field has Sports Lighting and the layout could be expanded to accommodate a full size Soccer Field (225' wide x 360' long), and a Lacrosse Field, as well as a Football Field 185' x 360' with sidelines. The Addendum portion of this plan has an explanation of the cost differential of the Natural Turf and the Synthetic Turf, which indicate that while the initial cost of the Synthetic Field is higher, the playability after weather events, and the ability to use the field for any number of sporting events can make up for the cost within a few years.

The City may want to consider providing fencing around the new turf field, and there is provision for a ¼ mile rubberized trail / track around the area that can be used by seniors and parents with strollers and small children on bikes, safely. This becomes a popular amenity during morning and off hours, and serves other user groups than just organized sports organizations.

A rough cost estimate for this type of facility for budgeting purposes is \$850,000.00

The other amenity that was discussed relating to this facility would be a restroom / concession building at the parking lot end of the field. That could potentially make this facility self-sustaining.

8.3 IMPROVED ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS FOR PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLISTS

The City of Brigantine in 2013 worked with Michael Baker Jr. Inc. to develop the Brigantine Beach Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan for the island. A review of this document provides background information and recommendations, and it would be good to revisit the plan and to work toward safe transportation options. By phasing the improvements to complete the planning, design and installation of a Bikelane system that will allow for safe routes of travel to and from the various recreation facilities and destinations scattered throughout the island.

The system should allow access to the North End Conservation areas, to the Beaches along the Atlantic Ocean and the internal recreation areas at 42nd and 26th Streets. This system should also include safe routes to schools, and connections to the two main Commercial Centers at the Lighthouse and the Central Business District. Many of the streets throughout the City are of ample width to accommodate a bike lane and with the designation of these lanes it often results in reductions to the speed of traffic. It is understood that Atlantic County is looking at improvement options for Brigantine Avenue where a "Street diet" will possibly look to reduce the two lane in each direction sections, to a one lane in each direction and a center turning lane, thereby leaving more area for alternative transportation options.

Part of this Design should also be an evaluation of pedestrian safety and movements throughout the island and to look for opportunities to provide integrated means of alternative transportation. Better designation of restricted areas such as Painted/colored crosswalks or street sections, and closing down streets to automobile traffic at varying times to allow for pedestrians and bikes to temporarily have the road, could be done to improve the visibility and effectiveness of other means of getting around.

The existing Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan should be revisited, as there are elements of traffic flow and usage which will potentially change, but the overall concepts of providing a looping system of safe bicycle and pedestrian routes is worth further investigation and potential funding.

8.3 IMPROVED ACCESS TO NORTH END ECO RECREATION, BEACH AND NATURAL AREAS

The northern end of Brigantine Island offers an entirely different recreational experience as it is a large protected refuge known as the North Brigantine State Natural Area, administered by the City and the State. There is four wheel drive access and a dog beach in this area, as well as, large preserved natural wetlands. At the present time there is only stone and shell parking area and a two story overlook platform in this area.

The present access to the North End Beach and Natural Area is from the corner of 14th Street and E. Beach Ave. The intent of this recommendation came from suggestions at the Open House that asked whether it was possible to provide some Wayfinding for those unfamiliar with this area and a more attractive entry way to one of Brigantine's most unique recreational amenities.



As can be seen above there is a pump station on the public property at the northeast corner of 14th and E. Beach that could be made into an entry to the Natural Area and Beach Access.

This site could provide an interactive educational opportunity to explain to Eco Tourists young and old, the natural processes of wind and water that dominate this strand, and the forms of vegetation and animal life adapted to live in the harsh environment. Through the use of creative Wayfinding and Environmental displays, native plants, natural materials, and interactive water features a useful space could be made that would also provide a gateway to the beach and nature.

The cost for this park is estimated to be: \$200,000 to \$400,000.00.

8.4 IMPROVED WAYFINDING AND IDENTIFICATION SIGNAGE

Branding and marketing - Wayfinding Signage



While the City has one main visual monument, the Lighthouse on the entrance road into the City, there does not seem to be any real consistency of signage, and while in analysis the City has a wealth of public spaces, from parks and recreation centers, to playing fields and renovated passive parks, there needs to be a more uniform sense of place, and one way to create this is through Wayfinding. A combination of effective directional signage and information about the islands environment and history placed strategically around the island, would go a long way to creating a unified feeling and theme for the community.

Appendix A

Authorizing Resolutions

Resolution No. XX-2016, Month XX, 2016

Resolution No. XXX-2016, Month XX, 2016

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Appendix C

Photos