

2026 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION

September 23, 2026

PREPARED BY THE:

CITY OF BRIGANTINE PLANNING BOARD

FOR THE

CITY OF BRIGANTINE, NEW JERSEY



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The original of this report was signed and
sealed in accordance with N.J.S.A. 45:14A-12

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September 23, 2026

**Mayor and Council
Planning Board Members
Municipal Officials, Commissions, and Committees
Residents of the City of Brigantine
Interested Parties,**

Following extensive community collaboration, data analysis, and public hearings, the City of Brigantine Planning Board is proud to present the 2026 Master Plan Reexamination. This document serves as our strategic roadmap for navigating the evolving opportunities and challenges facing our barrier island over the next decade.

Our focus has shifted toward balancing traditional growth with modern sustainability. While we remain deeply committed to preserving the distinct residential character of Brigantine, this updated plan prioritizes modern infrastructure resilience, coastal protections, and smart economic development in our commercial corridors.

By investing in smart infrastructure, protecting our vital natural beach ecosystems, and fostering a vibrant local business climate, we ensure that Brigantine adapts to the future while keeping its unique charm. Together, we will safeguard our community so that Brigantine remains “an island you’ll love for life” for generations to come.

Respectfully submitted,

**Michael Brindisi, Chairman
City of Brigantine Planning Board**

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Introductory Comments

1. The City of Brigantine is a coastal barrier-island resort community in Atlantic County, New Jersey. Its planning priorities reflect a balance between year-round residential quality of life, seasonal visitation, public access to beaches and bays, protection of natural resources, and continued investment in parks, recreation, utilities, and public safety.

B. Purpose and History of the Master Plan

1. This 2026 Master Plan Reexamination serves as the City's official review of prior planning assumptions, land use policies, development regulations, and current planning needs. It builds on earlier Master Plan adoptions and reexamination reports, addresses contemporary coastal and demographic conditions, and provides policy guidance for zoning, site plan review, subdivision review, infrastructure planning, conservation, housing, circulation, and economic development.

C. Periodic Reexamination Requirements

1. This Master Plan Reexamination Report is prepared pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89, requiring a general reexamination of the municipal Master Plan and development regulations at least every ten years, adoption by Planning Board resolution, and distribution to the Office of Planning Advocacy and the County Planning Board, with notice to adjoining municipalities. The statute also specifies the required content of the report.

D. Prior Planning Context

1. Brigantine's Master Plan Reexamination Report was previously adopted on September 28, 2016, addressing goals, demographics, land use, and coastal issues. That document was prepared by Maser Consultants. Following Superstorm Sandy, the city completed a Strategic Recovery Planning Report to guide rebuilding and resilience actions.
2. In February 2020, Brigantine adopted a Floodplain Management Plan (FMP) to strengthen flood risk reduction, CRS credit activities, and public information.

E. Scope of this Reexamination

1. This report evaluates progress since 2016, identifies changes in assumptions and policies, and recommends Master Plan and ordinance updates, including strategies related to smart growth, electric vehicle charging locations, storm resiliency, and sustainability as required by P.L. 2017, c.275.
2. The reexamination report shall state:
 - i. The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last reexamination report.
 - ii. To the extent to which such problems and objectives have been decreased or have increased subsequent to such date.
 - iii. The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for the Master Plan or development regulations as last revised with particular regard to the density, and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition and recycling of designated recycling materials and changes in State, County and Municipal policies and objectives.
 - iv. The specific changes recommended for the Master Plan or development regulations, if any, including the underlying objectives, policies, and standards, or whether a new plan or regulation should be prepared.
 - v. 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.12_1 et al) into the land use plan element of the municipal master plan and recommend changes if any in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality.
3. If a municipality fails to complete the required reexamination within the statutory time frame, N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89 provides that the absence of a reexamination report constitutes a rebuttable presumption that the municipal development regulations are no longer reasonable.

II. REEXAMINATION REPORT – PRIOR PROBLEMS AND OBJECTIVES AS OF 2016

- A. The 2016 report highlighted Brigantine’s barrier-island characteristics, demographic trends, and coastal vulnerability. It established objectives related to flood risk reduction, zoning clarity, housing needs associated with an aging population, circulation and parking, and post-Sandy recovery. Key problem statements and objectives included:
1. The economy and tourism of Brigantine is inexorably connected to Atlantic City and Atlantic County. Economy and tourism issues are generally shared across municipal boundaries in this interconnected area. The expansion of tourism increases the economy of other business sectors, and the entire region must become more tourist friendly.
 2. Aesthetic treatment is needed to improve street appeal, and gateways should be developed to create a “sense of arrival” and “sense of place”.
 3. The economy needs diversification. Various educational facilities and centers of learning have been proposed in Atlantic City. Brigantine should consider opportunities to provide services associated with or supplemental to these facilities. Any potential opportunity to provide new and differing services should be welcomed with open arms, as well as other diversification initiatives.
 4. The waterfront is underutilized. Public access to the waterfront needs to be improved. Pedestrian trails should be located along the Bayfront at street ends and activities such as kayak and boat rentals; boat launches and fishing areas should be added.
 5. Better pedestrian and bicycle friendly connections between the Beach and the shopping districts are needed, and an improved retail mix should be explored in both districts.
 6. The city needs to attract and keep new residents.
 7. An analysis of community vulnerability to natural disasters has been prepared and a series of resiliency goals and objectives developed. The mitigation projects listed in the Storm Damage Mitigation Project Report dated November 21, 2012 should be carried out.
 8. Coastal Flood Risk & Bulkheads. Promote consistent bulkhead heights and durable materials along bayfronts and other vulnerable reaches to reduce inundation and surge impacts.

9. Zoning Consistency. Maintain and clarify district regulations for Residential (R), Business (B) and Conservation (C) Districts and keep official maps current.
10. Housing & Demographics. Address the needs of a predominantly older resident population and seasonal housing stock.
11. Circulation & Parking. Manage seasonal congestion and optimize parking supply near commercial and waterfront areas.
12. Post Sandy Recovery. Implement strategic recovery capital projects and policy changes.

III. PROGRESS SINCE 2016 – EXTENT PROBLEMS/OBJECTIVES HAVE CHANGED

A. Flood Risk & Bulkhead Program

1. Brigantine adopted a Flood Management Plan in 2020 with an organized planning team, public involvement, and documented Sandy damages. The plan aligns community actions with CRS credit pathways. Bulkhead standards and financing mechanisms have been explored in redevelopment contexts.
2. Monitor the updates that have been proposed by the NJDEP under the NJPACT rules. These rules, while intended to protect shore communities from sea level rise, may have a significant impact on the ability to develop both residential and commercial properties on the island.

B. Zoning Maintenance

1. Atlantic County GIS maintains a digital zoning map for Brigantine.
2. Chapter 198 Land Use was updated in 2020 and reformatted in 2025 for easier access, understanding and usage.
3. Additional updates are anticipated including rezoning of the B6 District to incorporate the more residential character of the zone. Additional text updates are still warranted to embed resilience and EV policies into zone regulations.
4. Establish design/architectural standards for mixed-use commercial and residential development.

- i. As to residential standards, wall elevation modulation requirements should be added to the regulations to reduce or eliminate long uninterrupted wall planes.
 - ii. Similar design standards should be encouraged to maintain the character and aesthetics of the island's commercial districts.
- 5. Review short-term rental regulations related to bedroom count, parking supply, site plan review thresholds, and the operation of rental activity in residential districts.
 - i. Enhance Monitoring Capabilities: Maintain the internal administrative review system that audits platforms like Airbnb, VRBO, and Shore Summer Rentals to ensure all 1,024+ active rentals match official registrations.
 - ii. Update Parking Requirements: Establish a formal parking standard of one off-street vehicle space per four registered occupants for all new STR applications.
 - iii. Clarify Street Enforcement: Partner with local law enforcement to create clear guidelines for public street parking, addressing the regulatory gray area regarding legally parked guest vehicles.
 - iv. Track High-Density Properties: Implement targeted monitoring for high-density rental hubs, specifically tracking the 170 units associated with LA Sammana and Legacy to manage localized infrastructure impacts.
- 6. Ordinance Text Amendments & Clarifications
 - i. Standardize Relief Mechanisms: Amend the zoning ordinance to clarify that any requested relief from parking setbacks must be processed strictly as a variance, rather than through waivers or administrative exceptions.
 - ii. Refine Ambiguous Provisions: Review and rewrite Section 198-89.E to eliminate confusing terminology, specifically clarifying or removing the final sentence to ensure unambiguous enforcement.
 - iii. Comprehensive Code Cleanup: Conduct a systematic audit of the existing land use ordinance to identify, edit, and correct outdated, inconsistent, or poorly drafted sections.
 - iv. Development Review & Compliance Processes

- v. Integrate Floodplain Compliance: Establish a mandatory regulatory checkpoint during the building permit review process to verify strict compliance with all local, state, and federal floodplain management rules.
- vi. Clarify Scope of Approvals: Insert explicit language clarifying that planning or zoning board approval does not constitute a guarantee that the conceptual architectural design complies with the Uniform Construction Code (UCC).
- vii. Ensure Architectural Consistency: Implement a requirement ensuring that final construction drawings submitted for building permits remain substantially consistent with the architectural renderings and visual evidence presented during the public hearing.

C. Circulation & Regional Coordination

- 1. Atlantic County continues capital planning and regional coordination of transportation and resilience planning, offering alignment opportunities for Brigantine's circulation and evacuation strategies.
- 2. The city continues to review options for upgrading streets and parking options throughout the community.

D. Recovery & Resilience Programs

- 1. New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's (NJDEP) evolving Coastal Resilience Plan and Coastal Management Program (CMP) provides policy and funding context for local adaptation measures; CAFRA planning area guidance affects site design with impervious/vegetative cover limits.

IV. Significant Changes in Assumptions, Policies & Objectives

A. Demographics & Housing

1. The City of Brigantine is transitioning from a year-round residential community to a seasonal vacation destination, marked by a 32% decline in permanent population over thirty years alongside a rapidly aging demographic and stagnant housing growth. This structural shift underpins the planning directives outlined in the City of Brigantine Housing Element and Fair Share Plan, prepared by Tiffany Morrissey, P.P, AICP.

B. Demographic Profile

1. Population Decline: Total year-round residents declined from 12,594 in 2000 to 7,716 by 2020. This decline appears to reflect multiple factors, including regional employment changes, shifts in the housing market, increased seasonal and second-home ownership, demographic aging, and the long-term effects of coastal storm events such as Superstorm Sandy.
2. Aging Population: The median age spiked from 34.2 years in 1990 up to 56.8 years by 2020. The 55+ age cohort continues growing despite overall population loss.
3. Household Composition: Married couples comprise 42.47% of total households, while single-female households represent 30.99%. Multi-generational families account for just 2.6% of occupied homes.
4. Socioeconomics: The median household income sits at \$88,906. The city's poverty line impacts 9.4% of individuals, with seniors over 65 representing 10.7% of that total.

C. Housing Stock Characteristics

1. Occupancy Disconnection: Total units remained stable (9,294 units), but permanent year-round occupancy plunged to just 41%. The remaining 59% shifts heavily toward vacation rentals and seasonal properties.
2. Structural Types: Single-family detached structures represent the majority at 50.56% of the stock. Attached townhomes and two-unit properties constitute 13.51% and 9.38% respectively.
3. Age of Infrastructure: Over 30% of local housing infrastructure dates to building booms in the 1980s. Approximately 35% of all island structures are now 50 years of age or older.

4. Real Estate Values: The median housing value of \$485,000 vastly surpasses the wider Atlantic County benchmark of \$272,700. For tenants, the median gross monthly rent runs at \$1,499.

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V. 2026 GENERAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES STATEMENT

A. The following is a list of general goals as outlined in the MLUL:

1. To encourage municipal action to guide the appropriate use or development of all lands in a manner which will promote the public health, safety, morals and general welfare.
2. To secure safety from fire, flood, panic and other natural and manmade disasters.
3. To provide adequate light, air and open space.
4. To promote the establishment of appropriate population densities and concentrations that will contribute to the wellbeing of persons, neighborhoods, communities and regions and preservation of the environment.
5. To encourage the appropriate and efficient expenditure of public funds by the coordination of public development with land use policies.
6. To provide sufficient space in appropriate locations for a variety of residential, recreational, commercial and industrial uses, and open space, both public and private, according to their respective environmental requirements in order to meet the needs of all citizens.
7. To encourage the location and design of transportation routes that will promote the free flow of traffic while discouraging location of such facilities and routes, which result in congestion or blight.
8. To promote a desirable visual environment through creative development techniques and good civic design and arrangements.
9. To promote the conservation of historic sites and districts, open space, energy resources, and valuable natural resources and to prevent degradation of the environment through improper use of land.
10. To encourage adequate provision of affordable housing.
11. To promote conservation and wise use of all energy resources.
12. To promote the maximum practicable recovery and recycling of recyclable materials from municipal solid waste through the use of planning practices designed to incorporate the state Recycling Plan goals and to complement municipal recycling programs.

VI. RESOURCE INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT

A. Shore Protection.

1. The City of Brigantine continues its dedicated, long-term efforts to protect the island's shoreline, residents, and infrastructure through aggressive bulkhead maintenance and strategic partnerships. Since the 2016 Master Plan, the city has made substantial progress in upgrading its coastal defenses, ensuring greater structural resiliency against severe weather events and rising sea levels.
2. A primary focus has been the systematic modernization of the island's bulkhead systems. The city has successfully completed the replacement or reconstruction of approximately 90 percent of all municipal street-end bulkheads. These upgraded systems provide a robust secondary line of defense against tidal flooding and high-water events in vulnerable residential and commercial zones.
3. Complementing these efforts, the engineered seawall and concrete promenade at the north end of Brigantine Avenue continue to perform exceptionally well. This critical piece of infrastructure has significantly increased the level of storm and wave protection for properties in the northern section of the island, mitigating erosion and preventing structural damage during major coastal storms.
4. Recognizing that coastal protection requires a multi-tiered approach, the city maintains a close, collaborative relationship with both state and federal entities. Brigantine continues to work actively with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to secure funding, plan logistics, and execute ongoing beach replenishment projects. Moving forward, the city remains committed to these intergovernmental partnerships to ensure the continuous monitoring, maintenance, and long-term sustainability of our shoreline.

B. Regional Development

1. Casino Development
 - i. As of 2026, nine operational casino resorts anchor the Atlantic City gaming and hospitality market. Within the Marina District on Renaissance Point, the Borgata Hotel Casino & Spa remains a premier regional draw; its secondary hotel tower, formerly known as the Water Club, was completely renovated and rebranded as the MGM Tower. Adjacent to this property, Harrah's Resort continues

to operate its major hotel expansion and "The Pool" indoor entertainment dome north of Huron Avenue. While these existing Marina District facilities remain fully stabilized, further large-scale casino development on the remaining vacant acreage in this immediate sector has largely plateaued, shifting local economic focus toward continuous facility reinvestment and non-gaming amenities.

- ii. A critical component of Brigantine Island's accessibility remains the Atlantic City Expressway Connector (locally referred to as "The Tunnel"). The Connector provides an uninterrupted, direct roadway link from the Atlantic City Expressway through the Marina District straight to Brigantine. This network of flyovers and programmatic traffic connections seamlessly links U.S. Route 30 (White Horse Pike) with the Brigantine Bridge. This vital infrastructure continues to ensure efficient, high-capacity vehicular access to Brigantine for residents, seasonal visitors, commuting workers, and emergency management vehicles.
- iii. On the Atlantic City Boardwalk, the long-standing uncertainty surrounding the former Revel project has been resolved through its reopening as Ocean Casino Resort. The stabilization of this property and other nearby casino-resorts continues to support regional employment and tourism activity that benefits Brigantine residents, businesses, and visitors.

2. Regional Non-Casino Development

- i. Historically, non-casino development across Atlantic County has been tied closely to the health and expansion of the Atlantic City gaming market. U.S. Census Bureau data and historical building permit registries show that regional construction peaked drastically during the casino boom of the 1980s, when approximately 25,000 residential building permits were authorized between 1980 and 1988. A steep deceleration followed in the 1990s and 2000s, establishing a baseline of lower, more regulated growth. Over the last decade, regional residential permitting has stabilized at a moderate pace, initially spurred by a post-pandemic shift toward suburban and coastal housing, but currently constrained by elevated interest rates and localized zoning restrictions. Overall, countywide household growth patterns continue to mirror the long-standing projection from early regional planning initiatives: expansion persists over the long term, but at a significantly reduced and managed pace.

- ii. In the commercial and retail sectors, development has shifted from raw footprint expansion to the revitalization and stabilization of key regional corridors. Established hubs like the Festival at Hamilton shopping center on the Black Horse Pike (U.S. Route 40/322), alongside adjacent retail clusters in Hamilton and Egg Harbor Townships, have matured into stabilized commercial corridors. Rather than massive greenfield retail construction, modern regional commercial growth is defined by adaptive reuse, the expansion of medical and logistical facilities, and warehousing projects leveraging the region's major transportation arteries.
- iii. Crucially, this moderate pace of regional growth is the intentional result of proactive, multi-municipal land use strategies. Several mainland "growth area" communities have continued their efforts to limit dense residential sprawl. Through ongoing coordination with the New Jersey Pinelands Commission, both Hamilton and Egg Harbor Townships maintain strict updates to their municipal land development ordinances. These regulations enforce reduced permitted densities and leverage growth-management mechanisms, such as density transfers and clustering, to preserve open space and protect environmentally sensitive areas. Because the Atlantic City casino market has transitioned into a mature phase focused on reinvesting in its existing nine properties rather than constructing brand-new mega-resorts, the regional real estate environment remains steady, controlled, and heavily insulated from the volatile boom-and-bust cycles of past decades.

C. Potable Water Supply

1. The City of Brigantine Water Department maintains and operates a self-contained municipal water distribution system that provides clean, high-quality potable water to the entire island. The physical distribution network consists of the following baseline assets:
2. Water Mains: Approximately 53 miles of water mains, ranging in size from 4 inches to 12 inches in diameter.
3. Supply Wells: Five active wells ranging from 800 to 850 feet deep. These wells draw groundwater from the Atlantic City 800-foot sand aquifer (part of the regional Kirkwood aquifer system), requiring no water purchases from outside purveyors.
4. Storage Facilities: Three water towers providing an aggregate storage capacity of 2,250,000 gallons to maintain proper system pressure and supply reserves.

5. System Fixtures: A comprehensive network of 439 fire hydrants for emergency fire protection and 6,499 water meters tracking active service connections.
6. Water Allocation and Seasonal Consumption Patterns. Because Brigantine experiences an influx of seasonal residents and tourists, the utility experiences a distinct divergence between summer peak demand and winter base demand. Historically, the "summer period" is defined as the 92 high-volume days encompassing June, July, and August, while the "base period" encompasses the remaining 273 days from September through May.

To manage this variation, the City's monthly water withdrawal permit has been progressively adjusted by state regulators over several decades:

- i. 1991 baseline: Permitted withdrawal was restricted to 111.6 million gallons per month.
- ii. Pre-2010 expansion: Increased to 115.0 million gallons per month. During this historical window, peak summer demand occasionally stressed limits, exceeding the 115-million-gallon threshold three times—culminating in an all-time historical peak of 121.37 million gallons in July 2002.
- iii. Current Operational Standard: To safely accommodate peak seasonal demand and prevent further overages, the NJDEP Bureau of Water Allocation formalized an increased allocation permit of 127.5 million gallons per month.
- iv. This current 127.5-million-gallon standard provides a secure buffer for the city. Contemporary summer usage averages approximately 5.73 million gallons per day (MGD), while base winter consumption drops to roughly 1.94 MGD. This ensures the municipal system remains fully compliant with state environmental regulations while comfortably satisfying the community's domestic and emergency fire-suppression needs.

D. Sanitary Sewer System.

1. The municipal sanitary sewer system operates in parallel with the potable water network to manage wastewater across the island. To secure long-term utility compliance, protect local water quality, and manage seasonal surges, the city actively modernizes its collection infrastructure while maintaining its strategic, regional treatment model.

2. **Collection System and Pumping Infrastructure.** The island-wide collection network consists of approximately 53 miles of sanitary sewer mains. To overcome the island's flat coastal topography and maintain proper gravity flow velocity, the city operates and maintains seven strategically located sewer pump stations across various municipal sections.
3. To protect these low-elevation assets from coastal storms and power grid failures, the city has executed a targeted facility upgrade program. Backed by structured financing via the New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust (Water Bank), recent capital improvements have focused on structural flood proofing, mechanical pump overhauls, and the installation of dedicated stationary emergency generators at vulnerable nodes—including the South End Pumping Station (Harbor Beach Boulevard) and the A Station Pumping Station. These upgrades ensure continuous, uninterrupted collection capabilities during severe flooding and high-water weather events.
4. **Regional Treatment and Intermunicipal Transmission.** Once wastewater is collected into the local network, it is funneled into major transmission mains that cross beneath the Absecon Inlet via specialized force mains to the mainland.
5. To protect the structural integrity of this critical connection, the Atlantic County Utilities Authority (ACUA) completed a massive \$2.1 million pipeline replacement project that fully updated the primary 24-inch intermunicipal force main carrying Brigantine's effluent to the mainland.
6. Treatment processes are managed entirely by the ACUA at the City Island Wastewater Treatment Facility in Atlantic City. Originally designed in 1978 to provide multi-stage primary and secondary clarifying treatment, the regional facility operates with an expansive maximum capacity of 40 million gallons per day (MGD). On a regional scale, the ACUA plant processes an average total baseline flow of approximately 26.4 to 29.0 MGD countywide. Brigantine's contributing share varies substantially by season; the island generates an average daily base flow of roughly 1.5 to 2.2 MGD during winter periods, which surges dynamically alongside peak tourist occupancy during the summer months.
7. **Infiltration and Inflow (I&I) Mitigation Strategies.** Because Brigantine sits at a low coastal elevation with a high groundwater table, preventing Infiltration and Inflow (I&I) remains a critical municipal operational directive. Inflow occurs when extraneous stormwater enters the sanitary sewer through direct sources like manhole covers or illicit residential

sump-pump connections, while infiltration happens when groundwater seeps into old, cracked subterranean pipes.

8. To prevent this excess water from overwhelming the system and incurring unnecessary regional processing fees from the ACUA, the City deploys a comprehensive, three-pronged I&I mitigation framework:
 - i. Acoustic and Video Pipe Diagnostic Inspections: The Public Works department conducts routine Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) internal pipeline inspections to pinpoint root intrusions, joint offsets, and structural cracks before failures occur.
 - ii. Targeted Slip-Lining and Main Rehabilitation: Rather than executing disruptive trench excavations, the city utilizes cured-in-place pipe (CIPP) slip-lining technology to seamlessly seal old, vitrified clay or concrete sewer mains internally, creating an impermeable barrier against groundwater seepage.
 - iii. Manhole Frame and Cover Modernization: Low-lying manhole structures in flood-prone streets are systematically fitted with watertight, sealed bolt-down inserts and gasketed covers to prevent surface tidal flooding or heavy stormwater pooling from flooding the sanitary collection system.

E. Transportation and Circulation

1. The foundational transportation and circulation framework within the City of Brigantine has remained structurally stable for several decades, with regional connectivity anchored by a single major engineering achievement. The most significant modern enhancement to the island's external traffic flow remains the Atlantic City Expressway Connector (locally referred to as "The Tunnel"). This critical bridge, highway, and tunnel network seamlessly links the Atlantic City Expressway (ACE) directly to the Peter J. Haneman Memorial Bridge (Brigantine Bridge), establishing a high-capacity vehicular pipeline to and from the mainland.
2. Beyond providing an uninterrupted corridor to the Expressway, the Connector's multi-tiered design includes critical fly-over ramps and interchanges that deliver immediate, efficient access to U.S. Route 30 (White Horse Pike), Route 87, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. This network ensures direct, streamlined routing from Brigantine to central Atlantic City employment hubs, regional healthcare assets, the Atlantic City Convention Center, and the city's coastal gaming properties.

3. On the island itself, internal transportation and circulation layouts have experienced no fundamental structural modifications or major thoroughfare re-alignments. Instead, the City's modern planning focus has shifted away from raw roadway expansion toward localized corridor optimization, multi-modal resiliency, and targeted accessibility updates.
4. Evacuation Route Planning and Emergency Management.
 - i. Because the Peter J. Haneman Memorial Bridge operates as the sole means of vehicular ingress and egress for the municipality, it represents the single most critical asset in the city's emergency management portfolio. The Brigantine Office of Emergency Management (OEM) maintains a continuously updated coastal evacuation plan coordinated directly with the Atlantic County OEM, the New Jersey State Police, and the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT).
 - ii. In the event of an impending tropical storm, severe nor'easter, or mandatory island evacuation order, the Haneman Bridge and Route 87 corridors are designated to transition into a dynamically managed contraflow (one-way outbound) traffic pattern if necessary. The City has established formalized protocols for high-water staging, emergency vehicle priority access lanes, and real-time electronic signage deployments at key island intersections to direct motorists efficiently onto the Atlantic City Expressway Connector and U.S. Route 30, minimizing bottlenecks during time-sensitive operations.
5. Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Complete Streets Initiatives. To cultivate a safer, more sustainable environment for seasonal tourists and year-round residents, the city has prioritized multi-modal infrastructure enhancements through an updated local Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. Grounded in statewide Complete Streets design principles, recent capital improvement campaigns have moved beyond basic pavement maintenance to actively expand the island's dedicated cycling network.

The city has formalized and striped continuous designated bicycle lanes along major thoroughfares, including prominent segments of Brigantine Boulevard (County Road 638) from 30th Street to the North End Seawall, as well as along Harbor Beach Boulevard. Complementing these on-street lanes, pedestrian infrastructure updates include the systematic installation of high-visibility crosswalks, rapid-flashing pedestrian beacons at high-volume beach access intersections, and ongoing ADA-compliant concrete

curb-ramp retrofits along the Brigantine Avenue corridor to improve walkability for all demographics.

6. **Public Transit and Commuter Accessibility.** Public transportation links remain indispensable for Brigantine's commuting workforce, particularly those traveling to employment centers in Atlantic City's hospitality, gaming, and healthcare sectors. Fixed-route transit service on the island is anchored by NJ Transit Route 501, which provides daily local bus service running the length of the Brigantine Avenue corridor.

The NJ Transit 501 route delivers direct, continuous transport from the northern end of the island down into Atlantic City, making key stops at major regional destinations including the Borgata Casino in the Marina District and the Atlantic City Bus Terminal. To enhance micro-mobility, the city supports localized transit integration by ensuring public bus stops are directly linked to the pedestrian sidewalk grid and encouraging regional multi-modal coordination, such as smartphone-enabled tracking via NJ Transit's digital tools to streamline transit use for the contemporary commuting population.

F. Public Services

1. **Fire Department.** The City of Brigantine Fire Department & Emergency Medical Services operates as a career-driven public safety agency. It provides comprehensive fire suppression, emergency medicine, and specialized hazard response across the entire barrier island.
 - i. **Personnel and Cross-Training Standards.** The department maintains a highly qualified full-time roster consisting of 38 professional firefighters, one Fire Official, and the Chief of the Department. The entire force operates out of a singular, centralized public safety facility collocated within the Municipal Complex at 1417 West Brigantine Avenue.
 - ii. To optimize operational efficiency and maximize resource utility on a barrier island, the department enforces strict cross-training mandates:
 - a. **Fire & EMS Baseline:** 100 percent of active personnel are dual-certified minimally as Level 1 Firefighters and Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT-Basic), guaranteeing that every responding apparatus carries professional life-support capabilities.

- b. Marine Search & Rescue: Due to the severe risks associated with local coastal waters and surrounding inlets, 31 percent of the firefighting staff are triple-cross-trained as specialized members of the Public Safety Search and Rescue Diver Team.
- c. Code Enforcement: 34 percent of the department's members hold dual certifications as licensed fire inspectors. These individuals directly assist the Bureau of Fire Prevention with mandatory life-hazard use and commercial rental safety inspections throughout the city.
- d. Specialized Apparatus and Fleet Asset Allocation. The department allocates its specialized emergency response fleet to handle traditional structural blazes, vehicular collisions, and complex marine emergencies:
 - 1. Fire Suppression: Three Pumper Apparatus (Engines) and one 75-foot Quintuple Aerial Apparatus (Quint) designed to serve a dual role as both a structural engine and a high-reach ladder truck.
 - 2. Emergency Medical Services: Three specialized Type III modular ambulances configured for high-capacity local response, along with one rapid interim patient transport vehicle optimized for extricating victims from off-road, marsh, or beach locations to awaiting highway ambulances.
 - 3. Water Rescue Operations: One 16-foot inflatable pontoon boat (Zodiac), one personal watercraft (Jet Ski), and a dedicated 8-foot by 20-foot specialized transport trailer outfitted specifically for rapid dive deployment, water search, and recovery operations.
- iii. Regional Containment and Mutual Aid Framework. For low-frequency, high-risk emergencies, the department works within strict regional frameworks. Hazardous materials (HAZMAT) incidents are handled strictly on an

initial stabilization and containment basis. If an advanced chemical or hazardous spill occurs, the city activates specialized regional units through broader county networks.

- iv. The Brigantine Fire Department manages its local dispatch tracking via a central communications system that handles all emergency reporting and fire alarms. To ensure continuous emergency coverage during multi-alarm events or large-scale coastal crises, the city is a full participant in the Atlantic County Mutual Aid Agreement. This formal pact guarantees immediate, reciprocal backup and specialized asset sharing from mainland municipal fire departments and neighboring regional emergency forces.

G. Police Department¹

1. The City of Brigantine Police Department serves as the primary law enforcement agency for the island, providing continuous public safety services, traffic enforcement, and specialized crisis-response capabilities.
2. Personnel Logistics and Fleet Management
 - i. The department maintains a full-time, professional force composed of 35 sworn law enforcement officers. To maintain high visibility and ensure rapid emergency dispatch times across the island's unique coastal topography, this baseline staff is supplemented by seasonal Special Law Enforcement Officers (SLEO Class I and II) during peak summer tourism months. The department's transportation and tactical deployment operations are supported by a versatile 22-vehicle fleet
3. Operations and Service Demand Volume. Reflecting the seasonal shifts of a coastal resort community, the department manages a substantial operational workload, answering an average of 21,000 calls for service annually. This expansive call log encompasses a diverse array of community needs and enforcement requirements, including:
 - i. Public escort support and specialized administrative security details.

- ii. Targeted vehicular stops, traffic safety enforcement, and proactive Patrol Division operations.
 - iii. Property checks, commercial burglary investigations, and domestic response assignments.
 - 4. Specialized Tactical and Marine Teams. To address high-risk and low-frequency emergency situations effectively, the department funds and trains two distinct internal specialty units:
 - i. Special Response Team (SRT): Operating as a highly trained, multi-jurisdictional tactical branch, the Brigantine SRT consists of six designated Brigantine officers who undergo intensive operational training. This unit is specifically activated to execute high-risk narcotics search warrants, manage barricaded subjects or hostage negotiation scenarios, perform difficult high-threat vehicle stops, and resolve complex emergencies that exceed standard patrol capabilities. The team trains approximately 24 days per year and mandates strict quarterly firearms and physical fitness standards to maintain active status.
 - ii. Police Dive Team: Functioning in close coordination with regional emergency management and the Fire Department's water rescue assets, this specialized sub-unit maintains localized capabilities for underwater search, evidence recovery, and marine incident management within the challenging channels and inlets surrounding the island.
-

H. Education System

1. Present Enrollment

- i. The demographic landscape of the Brigantine Public School District has undergone a fundamental transformation, transitioning from a dual-facility model to a fully consolidated educational framework. This restructuring was driven by structural, long-term contractions in the island's student-age population.
- 2. Facility Consolidation and Institutional Adaptation. Historically, the school district operated two distinct, adjacent facilities to serve its student base:

- i. Brigantine Elementary School: Housed Kindergarten through 4th grade, with a baseline enrollment of 446 students at the end of the 2008–2009 academic year.
- ii. Brigantine North Middle School: Housed 5th through 8th grade, with an enrollment of 374 students during the same period.
- iii. Together with Special Education classes, this brought the district's 2009 baseline population to 820 enrolled students.
- iv. However, as persistent multi-decade enrollment declines intensified, dropping below 500 students, the district implemented an aggressive consolidation plan. The two standalone operations were permanently merged into a singular integrated facility: the Brigantine Community School, located at 301 E. Evans Boulevard. Today, this unified campus efficiently encompasses all local public education offerings from pre-kindergarten through 8th grade under a single administrative and operational schedule.

3. Long-Term Enrollment Projections vs. Contemporary Reality

- i. The contraction of Brigantine's student body progressed far more rapidly than earliest demographic models anticipated. In November 2000, regional forecasting by *The Helfgott Group, Inc.* predicted a minor, manageable down-turn over the initial five-year horizon, projecting a modest shift from 1,226 students down to 1,188 students by 2006.
- ii. In reality, the actual pace of decline scaled exponentially due to a shifting local real estate market, a significant rise in non-resident secondary homeowners, and broader statewide reductions in birth rates.
- iii. 2009 Historical Reference: 820 Students, split across two school operations.
- iv. 2019 Consolidation Threshold: Under 500 Students, prompting a unified facility merger.
- v. 2026 Current Enrollment: 380 Students actively registered at the Brigantine Community School.

- vi. This persistent trajectory represents a 69 percent reduction in overall student enrollment since 2000. While the current unified building structure boasts an exceptional 7:1 student-to-teacher ratio and yields operational efficiencies in transportation and staffing costs, the ongoing contraction remains a critical element for local master planning.
- vii. Future land-use decisions and community programming must continually adjust to this smaller family demographic, while proactively managing municipal educational facilities to safeguard against potential regional consolidation mandates by the state.

I. Recreational Facilities

1. Local Recreational Facilities

- i. The City of Brigantine maintains a comprehensive system of passive parks, active athletic complexes, and waterfront recreational assets designed to fulfill the needs of year-round residents and a shifting seasonal population. Since the baseline assessment in 1992, when the total inventory of dedicated municipal recreational space was 22.2 acres, targeted open space expansions have increased this baseline.
- ii. The addition of the Tot Lot Playground adjacent to the municipal golf course added approximately 10,500 square feet of recreational area. This change, combined with recent passive park delineations and public access points, brings the total dedicated municipal recreational acreage on the island to 22.4 acres.
- iii. Central Active Recreation Complexes
- iv. The vast majority of the island's active, organized athletic programming is concentrated within two primary multi-sport hubs:
 - a. 26th Street Sports Complex (Sidd Kerr Complex). Located at 26th Street South and West Brigantine Avenue, this facility acts as the core hub for youth baseball, soccer, and neighborhood daytime play. Asset inventory includes:
 - i. Baseball Fields: Two fully maintained Little League baseball diamonds.

- ii. Basketball Court: One open-air hardcourt unit.
- iii. Multi-Purpose Field: One large athletic turf sector configured primarily for soccer and all-purpose youth sports training.
- iv. Shark Park Playground: A signature community-built playground and tot lot asset. Originally erected in 1999, the facility underwent a complete community-led reconstruction to modernize its equipment, surfaces, and safety standards.
- v. Passive/Support Amenities: Dedicated picnic areas, a shade gazebo,
- vi. Parking Infrastructure: On-site surface parking accommodating up to 80 vehicles.

b. 44th Street South Recreational Complex (Walter Bew Stadium). Situated at 44th Street South and Bayshore Avenue, this complex serves as the city's premier lighted stadium venue and high-capacity sports facility. Asset inventory includes:

- i. Walter Bew Stadium Football Field: One primary turf football field equipped with commercial sports lighting.
- ii. Multi-Purpose Field: One unlighted open turf practice area for flexible field-sport utilization.
- iii. Softball Field: One regulation men's softball field outfitted with high-intensity sports lighting.
- iv. Street Hockey Rinks: Two outdoor street hockey rinks equipped with sports lighting for evening league play.
- v. Tennis & Pickleball Courts: Eight lighted courts. To accommodate shifting national sports demographics, the city has restriped and adapted portions of these courts for dedicated pickleball play.

- vi. Basketball Court: One regulation outdoor hardcourt layout.
- vii. Skateboard Park: A dedicated concrete/modular extreme sports park designed for skateboards and inline skates.
- viii. Facility Buildings: Three independent sports-support structures encompassing equipment, locker rooms, public restrooms, and a centralized league concession stand.
- ix. Parking Infrastructure: High-capacity on-site parking providing 207 designated spaces.

2. Localized Neighborhood Parks and Passive Areas

- i. 14th Street & Revere Boulevard Park Hub: Serving the inner-island residential grid, this neighborhood outpost maintains an outdoor basketball court.
- ii. Peter J. Haneman Park: Located directly across Revere Boulevard from the 14th Street court, this pocket park is strictly dedicated to passive recreation and community aesthetics. The site is improved with paved pedestrian walkways, manicured turf lawns, park benches, a centerpiece gazebo, and a decorative water fountain.

3. Waterfront and Maritime Public Access Assets

- i. Public Boat Launch Facility: Located along Bayshore Avenue near 5th Street South, this coastal transit resource provides dual concrete launch ramps for motorized watercraft. To manage high seasonal demand, parking for the 16 standard vehicle spaces and 11 vehicle-and-boat-trailer spaces is regulated strictly via a municipal permit system. The site features a scenic bulkhead sitting area and an architectural viewing gazebo.
- ii. The City Dock Bay Swimming Area: Located at 26th Street South and Bayshore Avenue, this unique bayside asset provides a calm-water alternative to the ocean beaches. The facility includes a designated bay beach area, picnic tables, and a specialized beachfront playground. The swimming zone is divided into distinct shallow zones for

younger/inexperienced swimmers and deeper channels for advanced lap swimming. The site features a permanent utility storage facility, lifeguard locker rooms, and automated vending machines. During summer operational windows, the entire bay swimming enclave is fully protected by the Brigantine City Beach Patrol.

4. Island-Wide Multi-Modal Bikeway System

- i. The city has successfully completed the planning, grant funding, and phase-one execution of its municipal Bikeway System. Funded in part by state and regional Green Acres infrastructure allocations, this initiative has integrated continuous, clearly striped bicycle corridors across the island's primary avenues. This connects residential sectors directly to the 26th and 44th Street athletic hubs, beach access points, and commercial shopping zones.

5. Community Education and Recreation (CER) Programs

- i. The administration, scheduling, and operational management of Brigantine's recreational assets are handled by the centralized Community Education and Recreation (CER) Department. Established to streamline municipal programming, the CER functions as the core coordinating body for all public recreational activities.

- a. Year-Round Athletic Leagues: The CER office maintains direct oversight of youth and adult sports clinics, tournaments, and leagues. This is done in tandem with local volunteer sports associations, managing year-round programming for basketball, baseball, softball, soccer, volleyball, and football.
- b. Facility Allocation Coordination: To eliminate scheduling conflicts, the CER department acts as the clearinghouse for all public property scheduling. This includes the outdoor sports grids at the 26th and 44th Street fields, as well as all indoor community recreation, gymnasium events, and winter leagues hosted within

the consolidated Brigantine Community School campus.

- c. Community Education and Registration
Modernization: Beyond physical sports, the CER serves as a civic learning hub, offering diverse educational workshops, fitness courses (such as yoga and Pilates), and self-improvement classes for all age groups. To improve resident access, the department has transitioned to an online utility utilizing the Brigantine RecDesk Platform, enabling digital registrations, automated activity calendars, and contactless fee processing.

VII. LAND USE INVENTORY

A. Constitutional and Statutory Foundation.

1. The Land Use Plan element serves as the core foundation of the City of Brigantine Master Plan and provides the legal basis for the municipal Zoning Ordinance. In strict compliance with the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL), N.J.S.A. 40:55D-28, a valid municipal Master Plan must include a land use plan element alongside a statement of objectives, principles, assumptions, policies, and standards. The primary purpose of this element is to map and analyze existing land use configurations while guiding future growth, development, and resource preservation.
2. Much of the foundational historical framework in this section is derived from the comprehensive 2010 Master Plan, developed by Lance B. Landgraf, Jr., AICP, P.P., and adopted on February 23, 2011. Because the City of Brigantine is a mature, structurally stabilized barrier island community that has been largely built out for decades, the future land use pattern is projected to replicate existing configurations. Future development activity will primarily focus on localized, adaptive redevelopment, flood-resilient infill construction, and the preservation of critical coastal assets rather than outward greenfield expansion.
3. To maintain a highly accurate municipal baseline, changes in land-use distribution are continuously monitored and cross-analyzed using two core data sets:
 - i. Local property tax classifications and parcel shapefiles maintained by the Brigantine Tax Assessor's Office.
 - ii. High-resolution regional aerial photography and Geographic Information System (GIS) Land Use/Land Cover (LULC) data layers monitored by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP).

B. Historical Macro Land Use Patterns

1. The gross land mass of Brigantine Island is categorized into three major functional groups: Residential, Commercial, and Conservation/Recreation.
2. While residential uses dominate the buildable and developable dry land areas of the island, environmental conservation and recreational zones comprise the overwhelming majority of the total geographic acreage within the municipal boundary. This includes the extensive protective beach and

dune systems along the eastern oceanfront, the expansive Absecon Wildlife Management Area across the western back-bay wetlands, and the North Brigantine State Nature Area anchoring the northern tip of the island.

3. The distribution of total municipal acreage across these three core designations highlights Brigantine's structure as a residential community surrounded by globally significant, highly protected maritime ecosystems:
 - i. Residential Districts (18.0% of Gross Area): The ten dedicated residential zones cover an aggregate footprint of 1,297.15 acres. This sector forms the bedrock of the year-round neighborhood fabric and seasonal housing supply, accounting for approximately 92 percent of all developable land on the island.
 - ii. Commercial Districts (1.5% of Gross Area): All five specialized business and commercial zones (B-1, B-1A, B-2, B-3, and B-6) encompass a combined total of only 114.37 acres. These zones are strictly consolidated along central corridors to provide neighborhood retail, dining, and professional maritime services without encroaching into residential areas.
 - iii. Conservation & Recreation Districts (80.5% of Gross Area): The expansive C-1 and C-2 Conservation Zones combined with the municipal Links at Brigantine Beach golf course encompass 5,439.66 acres of the city's gross geographic footprint. By maintaining over four-fifths of its total acreage under strict conservation controls, the city protects its residential and commercial core from severe wave actions and structural storm surges while satisfying strict state-level environmental protections.

C. Residential Land Use Analysis

1. The residential housing stock of Brigantine is fully built out and falls into three primary structural categories:
 - i. Low-Medium Density Residential (1 to 4 Dwelling Units). This classification represents the dominant housing type and the largest portion of the housing stock in Brigantine. It is comprised of single-family detached dwellings (SFD), duplexes (DPL), triplexes (TRI), and quadraplexes (QUAD).

- a. The R-2 and R-2A single-family zones represent the core of this tier, accounting for nearly half (632.94 acres) of the entire 1,297-acre residential category. These neighborhoods maintain a base lot size requirement ranging from 4,500 to 5,400 square feet, which translates to a maximum permitted density range of 8.07 to 9.68 units per acre (roughly 10 units per acre). This serves as the baseline density standard across the majority of the island's single-family detached neighborhoods, including the low-density R-2 tracts surrounding the municipal golf course.
- ii. Medium-High Density Residential (Townhouses).
Comprising the second largest portion of the local housing stock, this category primarily features townhouses (TWN) and planned attached multi-unit configurations. These options bridge the transition between traditional single-family grids and higher-density coastal complexes.
- iii. High Density Residential (Condominiums / Garden Apartments). This classification constitutes the smallest overall portion of Brigantine's housing stock. It includes multi-family apartments, multi-story condominiums, and high-density complexes. The highest concentration of these high-density residential units is located within the South End Planning Area, while specialized high-density multifamily housing, such as the R-6 zone, is integrated smoothly into portions of the Lagoon Area.

D. Municipal Zoning Districts and Regulations

1. The table below outlines the City's seventeen foundational zoning classifications, providing a comprehensive audit of minimum lot area, minimum lot width, maximum density, and standard minimum site sizes for planned multi-family configurations. This chart is from the 2016 Master Plan prepared by Maser Consulting, no changes to the zoning classifications have occurred since that time.
2. For the purposes of the municipal zoning map, the legal boundary of the C-1 Conservation District along the oceanfront is established to remain fully consistent with the Development Restriction Line formalized by municipal Ordinance #28 of 1981.

Brigantine Municipal Zoning Properties

Zone	Zone Description	Use	Base Lot Size	Min Lot Size	Min Density	Max Density	Revision Date	FAR	Total Acres
B1	Business*	COMMERCIAL	Various		0.00	0.00	June 1996	0.40	46.33
B-1A	Business*	COMMERCIAL	Various		0.00	0.00	June 1996	0.40	14.13
B2	Business*	COMMERCIAL	Various		0.00	0.00	June 1996	0.40	23.85
B3	Village Square*	COMMERCIAL	Various		0.00	0.00	June 1996	0.40	19.58
B6	Business*	COMMERCIAL	Various		0.00	0.00	June 1996	0.40	10.48
C1	Conservation District - Beaches, Dunes, Wet	WETLANDS			0.00	0.00	June 1996	0.00	5277.41
C2	Conservation District - Golf Courses/Countr	CONSERVATION			0.00	0.00	June 1996	0.00	162.25
R1	Residential Single Family	RESIDENTIAL	6,000 sf		7.26	7.26	June 1996	0.00	195.24
R2	Residential Single Family	RESIDENTIAL	4,500 sf		9.68	9.68	June 1996	0.00	334.99
R-2A	Residential Single Family	RESIDENTIAL	5,400 sf		8.07	8.07	June 1996	0.00	297.95
R3	Single Family Attached (Townhouse)**	RESIDENTIAL	5,400 sf	3,600 sf	8.07	12.10	June 1996	0.00	191.39
R-3B	Residential**	RESIDENTIAL	5,400 sf	4,500 sf	8.07	9.68	June 1996	0.00	21.22
R4	Residential**	RESIDENTIAL	5,400 sf	4,050 sf	8.07	10.76	June 1996	0.00	55.75
R5	Residential (Townhouse)	RESIDENTIAL	4 acres (Townhouse)		40.00	40.00	June 1996	0.00	14.47
R6	Residential	RESIDENTIAL	6,000 sf	4 acres (Townhouse)	7.26	40.00	June 1996	0.00	108.98
R7	Residential	RESIDENTIAL	6,000 sf	4 acres (Townhouse)	7.26	40.00	June 1996	0.00	50.13
R8	Residential Marine**	RESIDENTIAL	5,400 sf	4,500 sf	8.07	9.68	June 1996	0.00	27.03

The 2010 zoning updates reflect zoning changes as per revision date on the source map received from each municipality. Brigantine: 10/25/2010.

Note: For the purpose of this zoning map it is the intent that the C-1 Conservation District limit along the ocean front be consistent with the Development Restriction Line established by Ordinance #28 of 1981.

*Minimum Lot Sizes Depend on the Establishment

**Minimum Lot Size Based on Single One Family Housing

E. Commercial Corridor Redevelopment and Rehabilitation Areas

- As a mature, built-out barrier island, the City of Brigantine focuses its future economic growth on the adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of its existing 114.37 acres of commercial zones rather than outward expansion. To protect the municipal tax base, the City Council maintains a strict legislative position opposing the rezoning of commercial properties solely into residential uses.
- Commercial District Infill and Rehabilitation. Sections of the B-1 and B-2 commercial corridors along Brigantine Avenue exhibit signs of functional obsolescence, underutilized square footage, or structural deterioration. The city utilizes an "Area in Need of Rehabilitation" framework across these commercial nodes. This status allows the municipality to:
 - Grant short-term tax exemptions or abatements for commercial property improvements.
 - Stimulate modern, flood-resilient commercial infill and modernization.
 - Prevent the loss of essential commercial storefronts to speculative residential conversion.

Figure VII.A.1 Brigantine Zoning Map

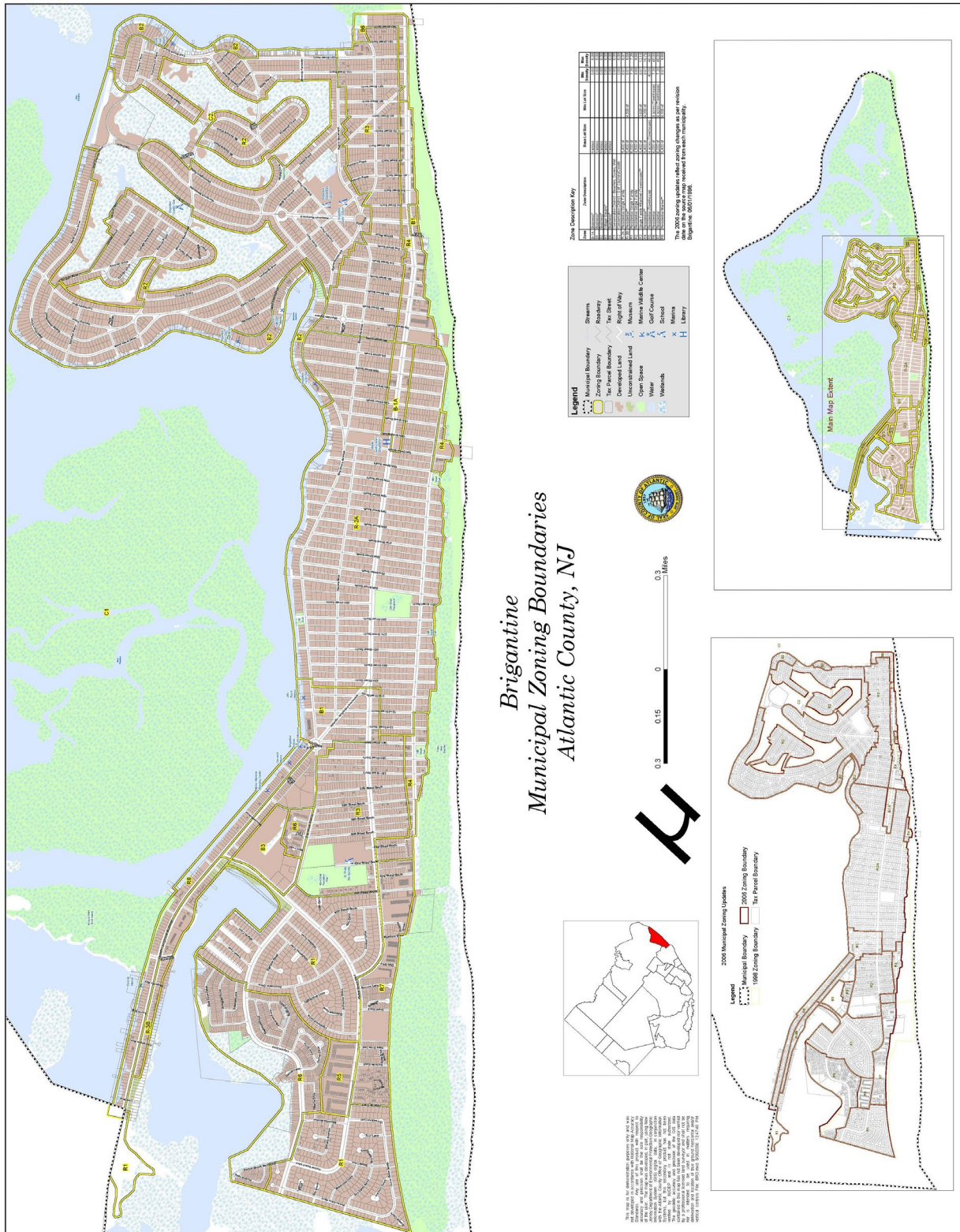


Figure VII.A.2 (from 2016 Master Plan)

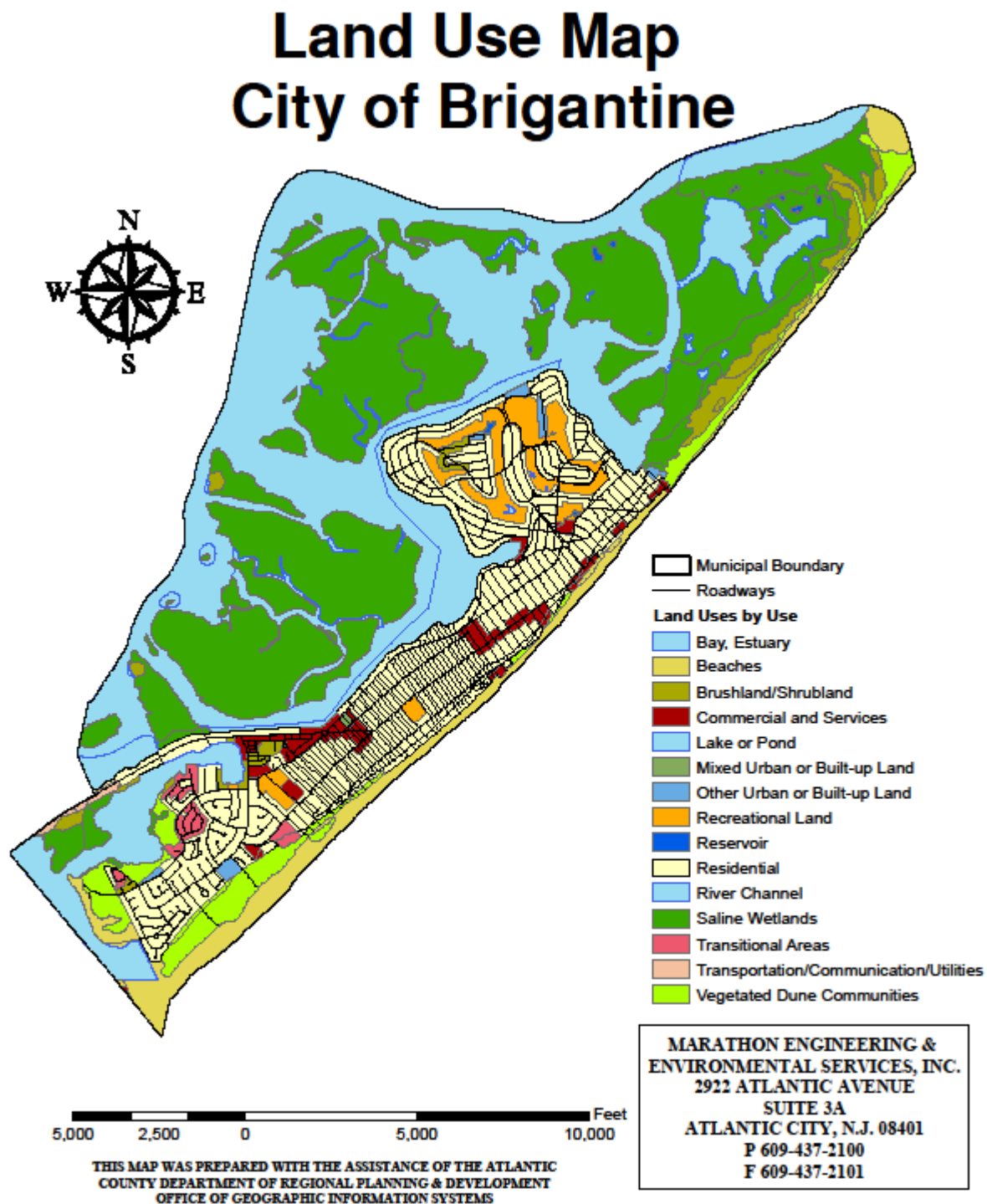
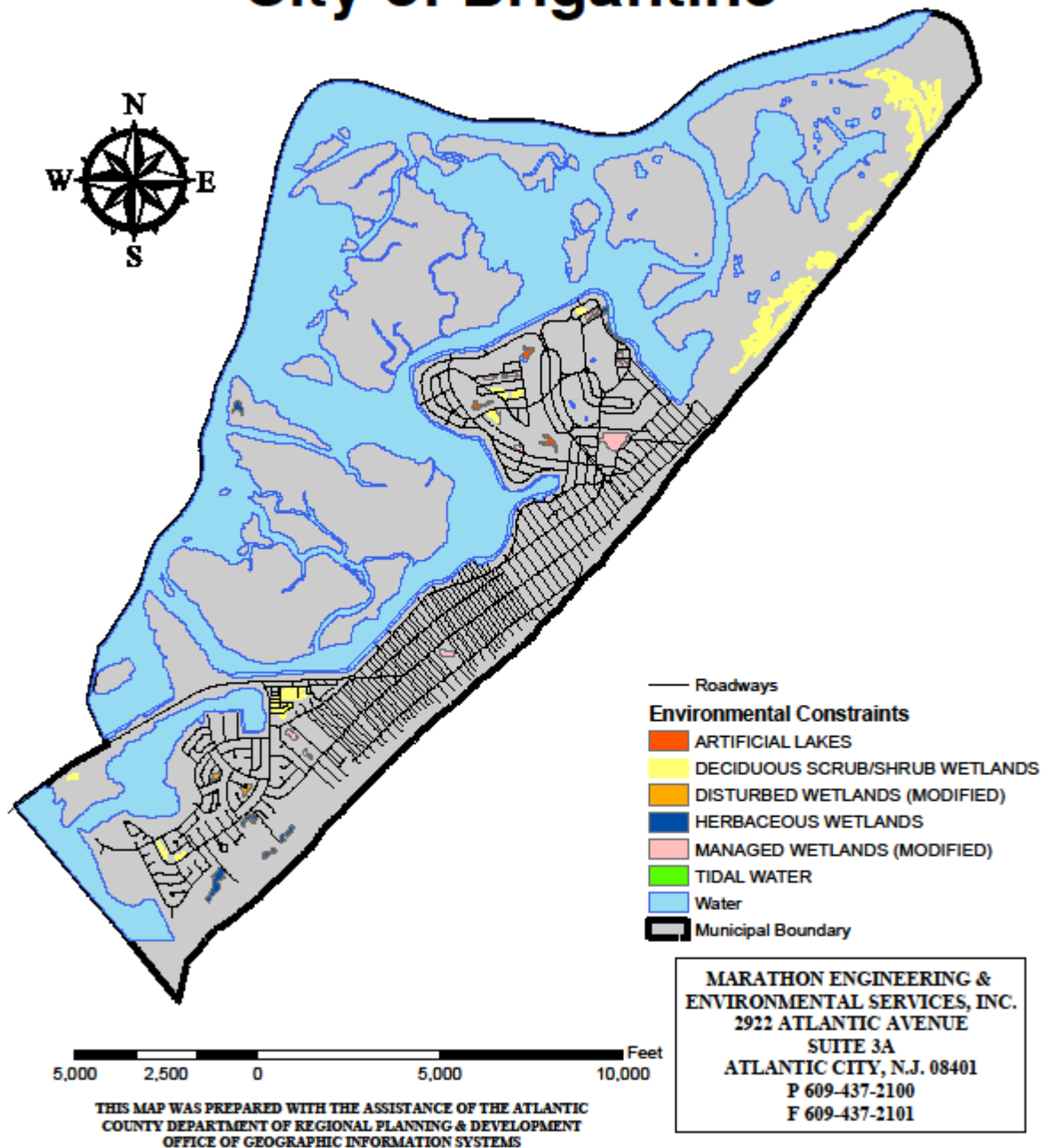


Figure VII.A.3 (from 2016 Master Plan)

Environmental Constraints Map City of Brigantine



3. Commercial Businesses

For purposes of the 2026 land use inventory, Commercial Business uses include office, professional service, restaurant, retail, personal service, hospitality-support, and other visitor- and resident-serving establishments located within the City's established business districts. These uses continue to represent the predominant form of commercial activity in Brigantine and remain concentrated in three principal areas: the Lighthouse Central Business District, the City Hall Central Business District, and the North End Commercial Spine. The 2026 Master Plan emphasizes reinvestment, rehabilitation, façade and streetscape improvement, pedestrian safety, parking management, flood-resilient building design, and protection of the commercial tax base within these existing corridors rather than expansion of commercial zoning into established residential neighborhoods or environmentally sensitive lands.

i. Lighthouse Central Business District.

The Lighthouse Central Business District includes the commercial area along Atlantic Brigantine Boulevard extending from the Brigantine Towne Center toward the retail and civic area surrounding the Brigantine Lighthouse. This corridor remains one of the City's most visible gateways and should continue to be strengthened through coordinated signage, landscaping, lighting, façade improvements, pedestrian connections, outdoor gathering spaces, and context-sensitive redevelopment. Future improvements should reinforce the lighthouse as a community landmark while improving walkability, business visibility, traffic circulation, and the overall sense of arrival for residents and visitors entering the island.

ii. City Hall Central Business District.

The City Hall Central Business District includes the Brigantine Avenue commercial spine generally extending from approximately 15th Street South to 8th Street South, together with the municipal complex and surrounding civic uses. This district functions as Brigantine's central civic and neighborhood business area. The 2026 Master Plan recommends continued support for small businesses, professional offices, restaurants, services, compatible mixed-use activity, safe pedestrian crossings, ADA accessibility, public parking management, and streetscape upgrades that

connect City Hall, nearby neighborhoods, beach access routes, and commercial storefronts.

iii. North End Commercial Spine.

The North End Commercial Spine includes the commercial strip along Brigantine Avenue generally extending from Roosevelt Boulevard to 15th Street North. This area provides neighborhood-serving retail, service, and visitor-oriented activity for the northern portion of the island and should be maintained as a limited commercial corridor that complements nearby residential neighborhoods. Future land use and zoning decisions should encourage reinvestment in existing commercial properties, improved site design, safer access and parking circulation, enhanced bicycle and pedestrian connections, and flood-resilient rehabilitation while discouraging the loss of viable commercial frontage to purely residential conversion.

iv. Marina and Waterfront Commercial (Water-Dependent Business)

For purposes of the 2026 land use inventory, Marina and Waterfront Commercial uses include marinas, boat slips, marine service operations, yacht club activity, waterfront hospitality-support uses, water-dependent recreation, boat launching, docking, storage, repair, and related commercial activities that require or directly benefit from access to the bay, lagoon, inlet, or other navigable waters. These uses remain an important part of Brigantine's coastal economy and identity, but they must be managed carefully because they are located in areas subject to flood hazard, sea-level rise, storm surge, bulkhead maintenance needs, public access considerations, and NJDEP coastal permitting requirements. The 2026 Master Plan supports the continued rehabilitation and modernization of existing marina and waterfront commercial properties where such improvements preserve maritime function, improve public safety, protect water quality, maintain or enhance waterfront access, provide adequate parking and circulation, and incorporate flood-resilient design.

v. Motels, Hotels, and Visitor-Serving Lodging

For purposes of the 2026 land use inventory, Motels, Hotels, and Visitor-Serving Lodging include traditional lodging establishments, existing hotel and motel properties, small-scale visitor accommodations, and compatible lodging or hospitality-support

uses located in appropriate commercial or mixed-use settings. Brigantine's lodging inventory is limited when compared with the size of its seasonal visitor population, and the local tourism economy is increasingly influenced by second homes, seasonal occupancy, and short-term rentals. The 2026 Master Plan therefore recommends that lodging and visitor-serving uses be evaluated as part of a broader tourism, parking, public safety, and neighborhood compatibility strategy. New or rehabilitated lodging should be directed to suitable commercial or mixed-use areas, comply with floodplain and coastal design standards, provide adequate parking and loading, protect pedestrian safety, and avoid adverse impacts on established residential neighborhoods.

vi. Commercial Land Area and Policy Direction

Commercial lands represent a small share of Brigantine's developed land area and are concentrated within established corridors rather than dispersed throughout residential neighborhoods. Because these areas support the local tax base, provide goods and services for residents and visitors, and contribute to Brigantine's identity as a coastal resort community, the 2026 Master Plan recommends maintaining viable commercial frontage, discouraging conversion of active commercial properties to purely residential use, and encouraging reinvestment, adaptive reuse, façade improvement, pedestrian safety, parking management, and resilient site design within existing business districts.

4. The third land use category evaluated in the 2026 land use inventory is Recreational Land Use. Recreational lands include municipal parks, athletic fields, playgrounds, neighborhood recreation areas, bikeway and pedestrian recreation facilities, bayfront public access facilities, boat launch areas, the City Dock, bay swimming area, and other public recreation assets that serve both year-round residents and the City's larger seasonal population. Active recreational facilities continue to represent a relatively small share of the developed land area, but they provide an essential public function because Brigantine is a built-out barrier island with limited opportunities for new parkland acquisition. The 2026 Master Plan therefore emphasizes maintenance, modernization, ADA accessibility, senior-friendly and family-oriented programming, bicycle and pedestrian connections, resilient design of outdoor facilities, and continued coordination through the Community Education and Recreation Department.

5. The fourth major land use category evaluated in the 2026 land use inventory is Conservation Land Use. Conservation lands include coastal wetlands, beaches, dunes, back-bay marshes, waterfront conservation areas, public open space, the municipal golf course/open space area, and other lands whose primary function is environmental protection, storm protection, habitat preservation, passive recreation, or public access. These lands remain the dominant land use within the municipal boundary and are central to Brigantine's identity, ecological value, flood protection strategy, and long-term resilience.

Coastal wetlands and back-bay marshes continue to account for the largest portion of Brigantine's land area. These resources include portions of the Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge, state-owned tidal marshes, the Absecon Wildlife Management Area, and other wetlands, waterways, and marsh islands that are subject to federal, state, and local environmental regulations. The Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge protects more than 48,000 acres of southern New Jersey coastal habitat, and its wetland and salt-marsh systems form part of a regionally significant Atlantic Flyway habitat network. Within Brigantine, these wetlands provide flood storage, wave attenuation, habitat, water-quality protection, carbon sequestration, scenic value, and eco-tourism opportunities. Future land use policy should continue to avoid disturbance of wetlands and marsh areas except where necessary for permitted public access, environmental restoration, shoreline stabilization, utility maintenance, or water-dependent public purposes.

The remaining conservation and open-space areas include the beach and dune system, the North End natural area, back-bay waterfront lands, public access points, passive open-space areas, and the Links at Brigantine Beach golf course/open space area. These lands should continue to be managed as part of a connected coastal resiliency network. The beach and dune system provides the City's primary oceanfront defense against storm surge, wave run-up, and erosion, while the back-bay marshes and waterfront lands help reduce flooding from tidal and storm events. Conservation policy should therefore emphasize dune protection, beach replenishment coordination, native vegetation, public access management, resilient bulkheads where appropriate, habitat protection, stormwater quality, and consistency with NJDEP coastal and wetlands permitting requirements.

For purposes of the 2026 Master Plan, Brigantine should be understood as a substantially developed barrier-island community embedded within a larger conservation landscape. The developable portion of the City is largely occupied by established residential neighborhoods, commercial corridors, public facilities, utilities, and recreation areas. Remaining vacant

or underutilized parcels are limited and are frequently constrained by flood hazard, wetlands adjacency, coastal permitting requirements, access limitations, infrastructure considerations, or neighborhood compatibility concerns. Future development should therefore be directed toward appropriate infill, rehabilitation, adaptive reuse, and resilient redevelopment rather than expansion into wetlands, dunes, marshes, conservation areas, or other environmentally sensitive lands.

The 2026 Master Plan recommends continued protection of conservation lands through zoning, land development review, floodplain management, open-space stewardship, public education, beach and dune management, wetland protection, and intergovernmental coordination with NJDEP, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Atlantic County, and other applicable agencies. Conservation lands should not be viewed as vacant land available for development; rather, they are critical public assets that support storm protection, biodiversity, recreation, tourism, property values, and quality of life. Maintaining this conservation framework is essential to preserving Brigantine's character as a coastal residential and resort community while adapting to sea-level rise, increased coastal storm risk, and evolving state coastal regulations.

F. Planning Areas

To better understand development patterns in Brigantine, land uses have been evaluated by geographic planning area. Six planning areas have been identified, each with a distinct land use pattern, identity, and set of residential neighborhood or business district characteristics. These are the same Planning Areas from the 2010 Master Plan.

1. Lagoon Residential Planning Area

The Lagoon Residential Planning Area is the first neighborhood area encountered when entering Brigantine from the Peter J. Haneman Memorial Bridge and Atlantic Brigantine Boulevard. Centered around St. Georges Thorofare, the lagoon system, Sea King Lagoon, and Conch Lagoon, this planning area contains a mix of low- and medium-density residential development, including single-family homes, duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, and other attached residential forms. Many properties have a direct relationship to the water through lagoon frontage, bay views, boating access, bulkheads, or proximity to marina and waterfront amenities. The street pattern remains largely curvilinear and follows the water's edge, distinguishing this area from the more traditional grid pattern found in other portions of the island. For the 2026 Master Plan, the Lagoon Residential Planning Area should continue to be managed as an established coastal residential neighborhood where

reinvestment, rehabilitation, flood-resilient construction, bulkhead maintenance, stormwater management, parking, and protection of waterfront character are priority planning objectives. Future development and redevelopment should remain compatible with existing residential densities, coastal hazard conditions, environmental constraints, and neighborhood character while preserving access to the bay, lagoon, and inlet resources that define this portion of Brigantine.

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Figure VII.B

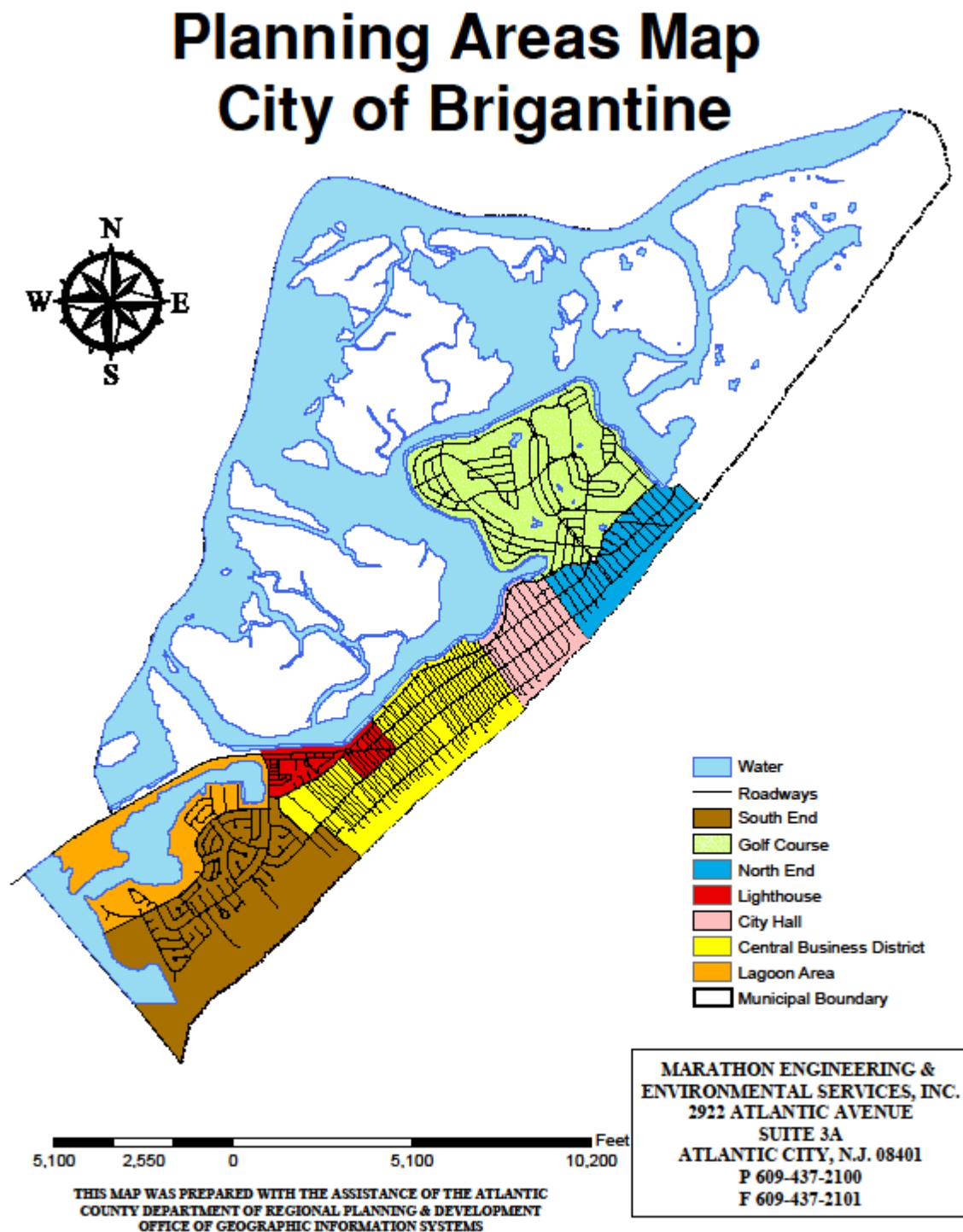
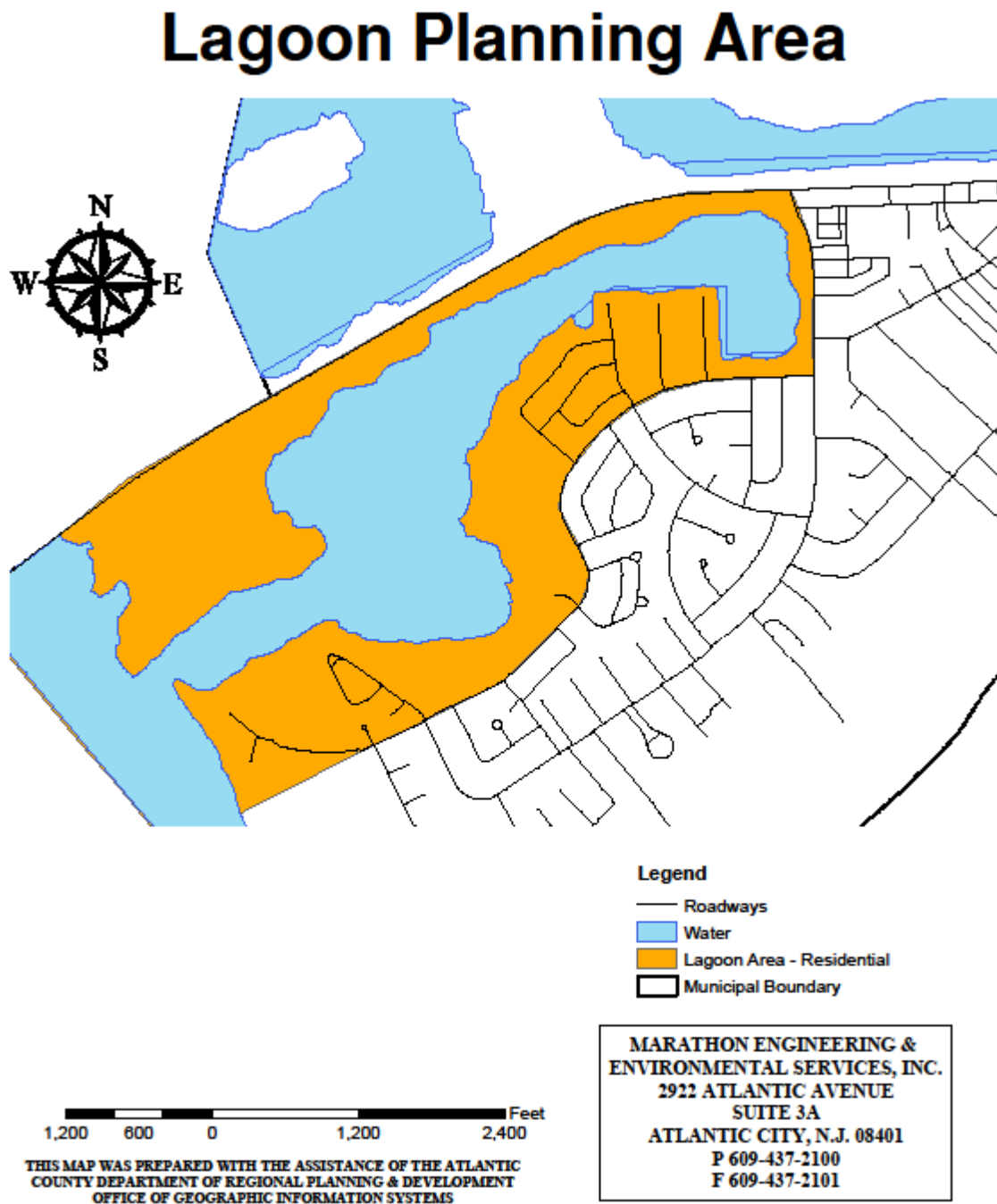


Figure VII.B.1.



2. Lighthouse Central Business District Planning Area

The Lighthouse Central Business District Planning Area includes the commercial and mixed-use corridor along Atlantic Brigantine Boulevard between Harbor Beach Boulevard and 30th Street South. It is anchored by the Brigantine Towne Center on the west and the commercial area surrounding the Brigantine Lighthouse on the east. Because this corridor is one of the first developed areas encountered after entering the island, it should continue to function as a primary gateway, neighborhood business district, and visitor-serving commercial area.

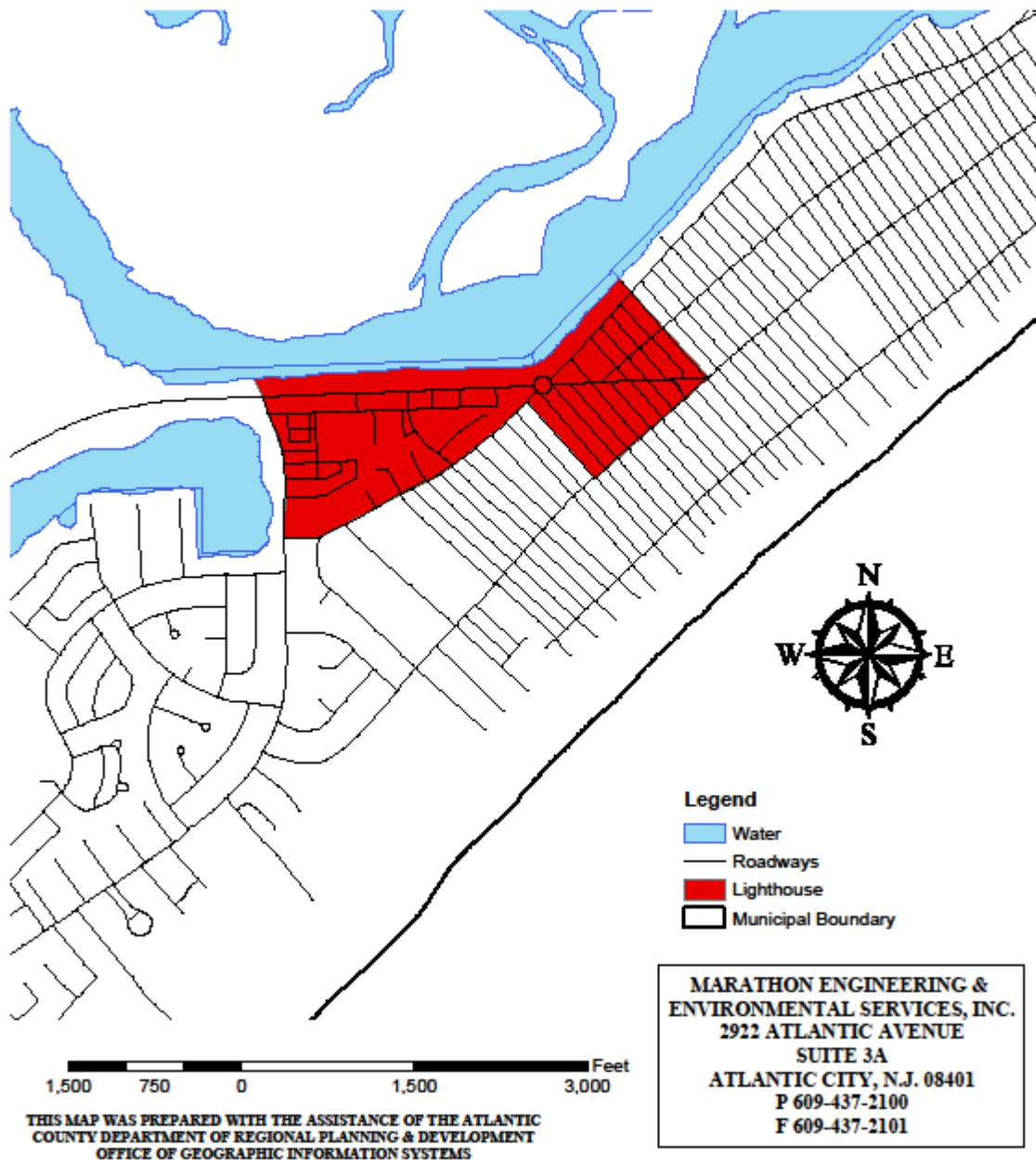
The older portion of the district is organized around the Brigantine Lighthouse and Brigantine Circle and contains a mix of commercial, office, service, civic, and residential uses. The lighthouse remains an important landmark and source of civic identity, but the traffic circle and surrounding roadway pattern continue to limit pedestrian comfort, business visibility, and the creation of a traditional main-street environment. The 2026 Master Plan therefore recommends coordinated streetscape, signage, lighting, landscaping, crosswalk, traffic-calming, and façade improvements that reinforce the lighthouse as a community landmark while improving walkability and the sense of arrival.

At the western end of the planning area, the Brigantine Towne Center remains the largest planned commercial center in the corridor. The center continues to provide supermarket, retail, service, professional offices, and convenience-oriented uses that serve residents, seasonal occupants, and visitors. Future improvements should emphasize tenant flexibility, building and façade modernization, pedestrian connections to surrounding neighborhoods, safe internal circulation, improved bicycle access, landscaping, stormwater management, flood-resilient site design, and better visual integration with the Atlantic Brigantine Boulevard gateway.

The residential housing stock within and adjacent to the Lighthouse Central Business District Planning Area includes single-family dwellings, attached dwellings, townhouses, and apartments. Future redevelopment should preserve the commercial function of the corridor while allowing compatible residential or mixed-use activity where appropriate. New construction, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse should be designed to protect nearby residential neighborhoods, provide adequate parking and access, improve pedestrian safety, comply with floodplain and coastal design requirements, and strengthen the district as a compact, attractive, and economically viable gateway business area.

Figure VII.B.2

Lighthouse Planning Area



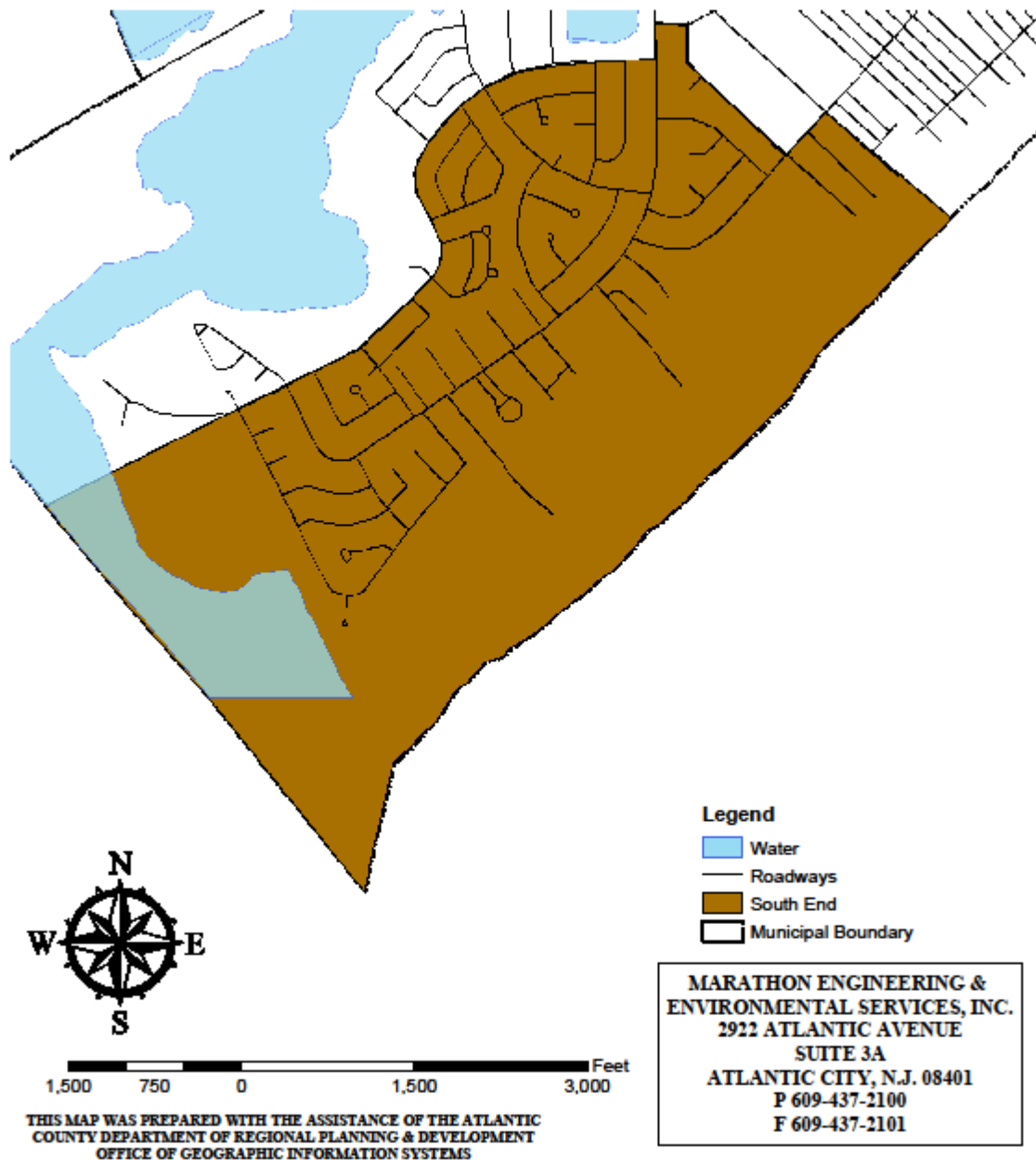
3. South End Residential Planning Area

The South End Residential Planning Area is located at the southern end of Brigantine between Absecon Inlet, the Lagoon Residential Planning Area, the Central Residential Planning Area, and the oceanfront beach. It is one of the more recently developed portions of the City and contains a broad mix of residential forms, including single-family dwellings, attached dwellings, townhouses, condominiums, and other multi-family residential development. The area was originally characterized by larger tracts and zoning that allowed medium-high and high-density residential development, which contributed to the concentration of townhouse and multi-family projects now found in the South End. Like the Lagoon Residential Planning Area, the street pattern is largely curvilinear and reflects the area's relationship to the inlet, beach, and surrounding coastal setting.

For purposes of the 2026 Master Plan, the South End should continue to be managed as an established residential planning area with a range of densities and housing types. The Seapoint neighborhood remains among the lower-density portions of the South End, while the townhouse and multi-family developments near the beachfront represent some of the highest-density residential areas in Brigantine. Future redevelopment should maintain the established residential character of each subarea, avoid unnecessary increases in density, and ensure that new construction, reconstruction, and rehabilitation are compatible with existing neighborhood patterns. Particular attention should be given to flood-resilient construction, parking, access, building height, lot coverage, stormwater management, pedestrian safety, dune and beach protection, and compatibility with adjacent residential properties and public beach access routes.

Figure
II.B.3

South End Planning Area



4. Central Residential Planning Area

The Central Residential Planning Area extends generally from 44th Street South to 16th Street South and is bounded by the oceanfront beach, the South End Residential Planning Area, the Lighthouse Central Business District Planning Area, and the City Hall Central Business District Planning Area. This area remains one of Brigantine's most established residential neighborhoods and is characterized primarily by single-family dwellings arranged within a traditional grid street pattern. The 26th Street South Recreational Complex and the 44th Street South Recreational Complex/Walter Bew Stadium are important public recreation anchors within this planning area and should continue to serve both nearby residents and the larger seasonal community. For purposes of the 2026 Master Plan, the Central Residential Planning Area should continue to be managed to preserve its existing residential character, maintain appropriate low-density development patterns, support reinvestment and rehabilitation of existing homes, improve pedestrian and bicycle connections to parks, beach access points, and nearby commercial corridors, and ensure that new construction and reconstruction address flood resiliency, parking, lot coverage, building height, stormwater management, and compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods.

5. City Hall Central Business District Planning Area

The City Hall Central Business District Planning Area is located generally between 16th Street South and 6th Street South and is bounded by the Central Residential Planning Area to the south and the North End Mixed Planning Area to the north. This centrally located district includes Brigantine City Hall and the municipal complex, together with the Brigantine Avenue commercial spine, surrounding residential blocks, multi-family residential properties, public lands, and nearby beach-oriented uses. Like the Central Residential and North End planning areas, the street pattern is primarily organized on a traditional grid, which supports walkability, neighborhood access, and connections between civic, commercial, residential, and beachfront destinations.

The housing stock in this planning area is generally similar to the Central Residential Planning Area and consists primarily of single-family dwellings, with limited areas of multi-family residential development and attached housing. For purposes of the 2026 Master Plan, the residential portions of the district should continue to be managed to preserve established neighborhood character, maintain appropriate residential densities, and ensure that infill construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse remain compatible with surrounding homes. Particular

attention should be given to building height, lot coverage, parking, access, stormwater management, flood-resilient construction, and protection of pedestrian connections to City Hall, commercial storefronts, public facilities, and beach access routes.

The heart of this planning area is the City Hall Central Business District spine along Brigantine Avenue. This corridor functions as Brigantine's central civic and neighborhood business district, combining municipal offices, small-scale retail, restaurants, personal and professional services, visitor-serving uses, and nearby residential neighborhoods. The 2026 Master Plan recommends continued reinvestment in this corridor through façade and building rehabilitation, compatible mixed-use activity, small-business support, improved signage and wayfinding, pedestrian safety improvements, ADA accessibility, public parking management, bicycle connections, lighting, landscaping, and streetscape upgrades that strengthen the connection between City Hall, surrounding neighborhoods, beach access points, and commercial storefronts.

The beachfront resort property at 1400–1500 Ocean Avenue, historically known as the Brigantine Inn and now operating as Legacy Vacation Resorts Brigantine Beach, remains an important lodging and tourism asset because it provides beachfront accommodation within walking distance of the City Hall business district, beach access, restaurants, services, and civic facilities. Future improvements to this and similar visitor-serving properties should support continued tourism activity while addressing parking, loading, pedestrian safety, floodplain compliance, coastal design standards, building rehabilitation, emergency access, neighborhood compatibility, and year-round economic benefits. The property should be evaluated for substantial rehabilitation or redevelopment where improvements would advance these planning objectives.

Figure VII.B.4

Central Planning Area

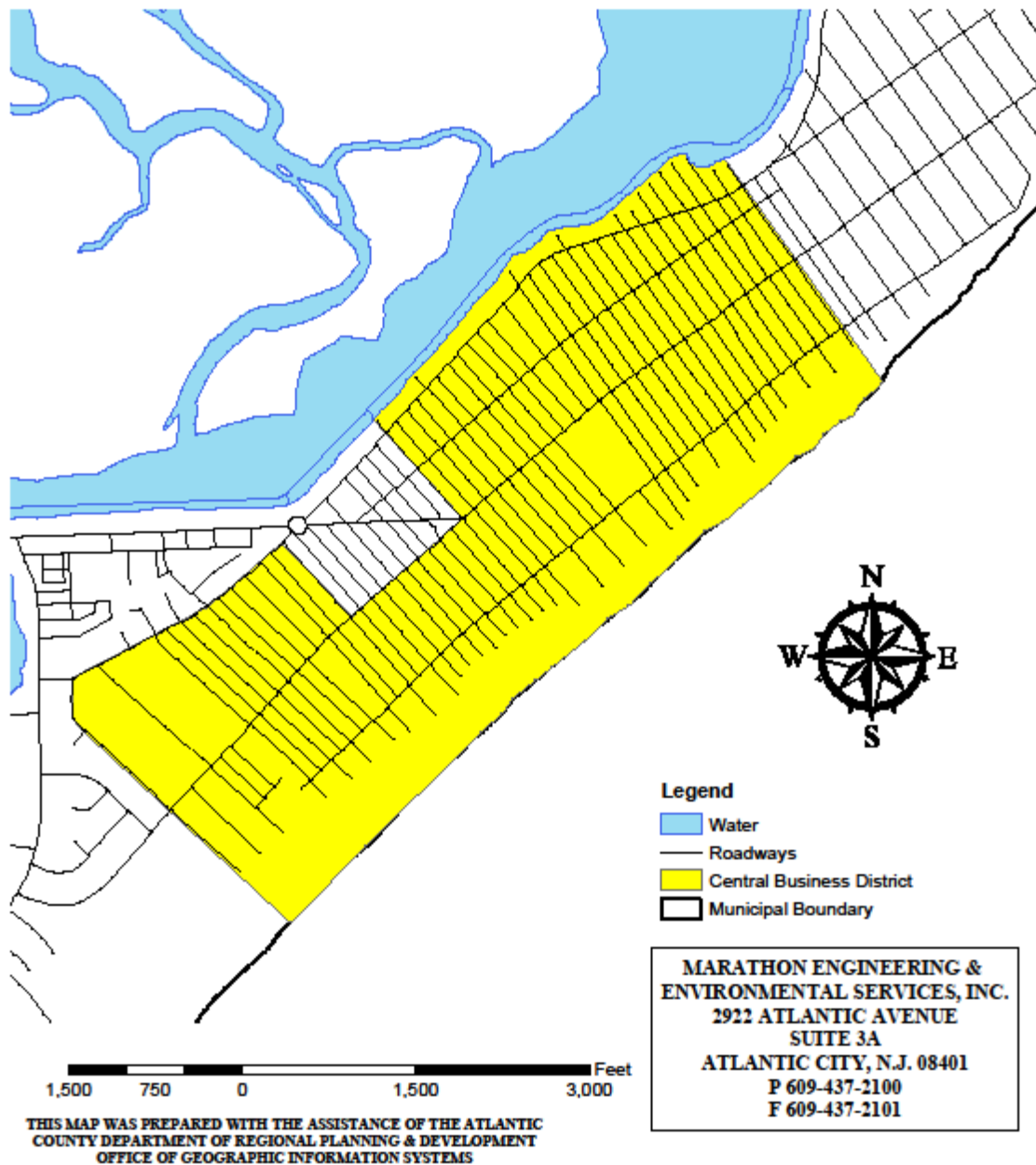
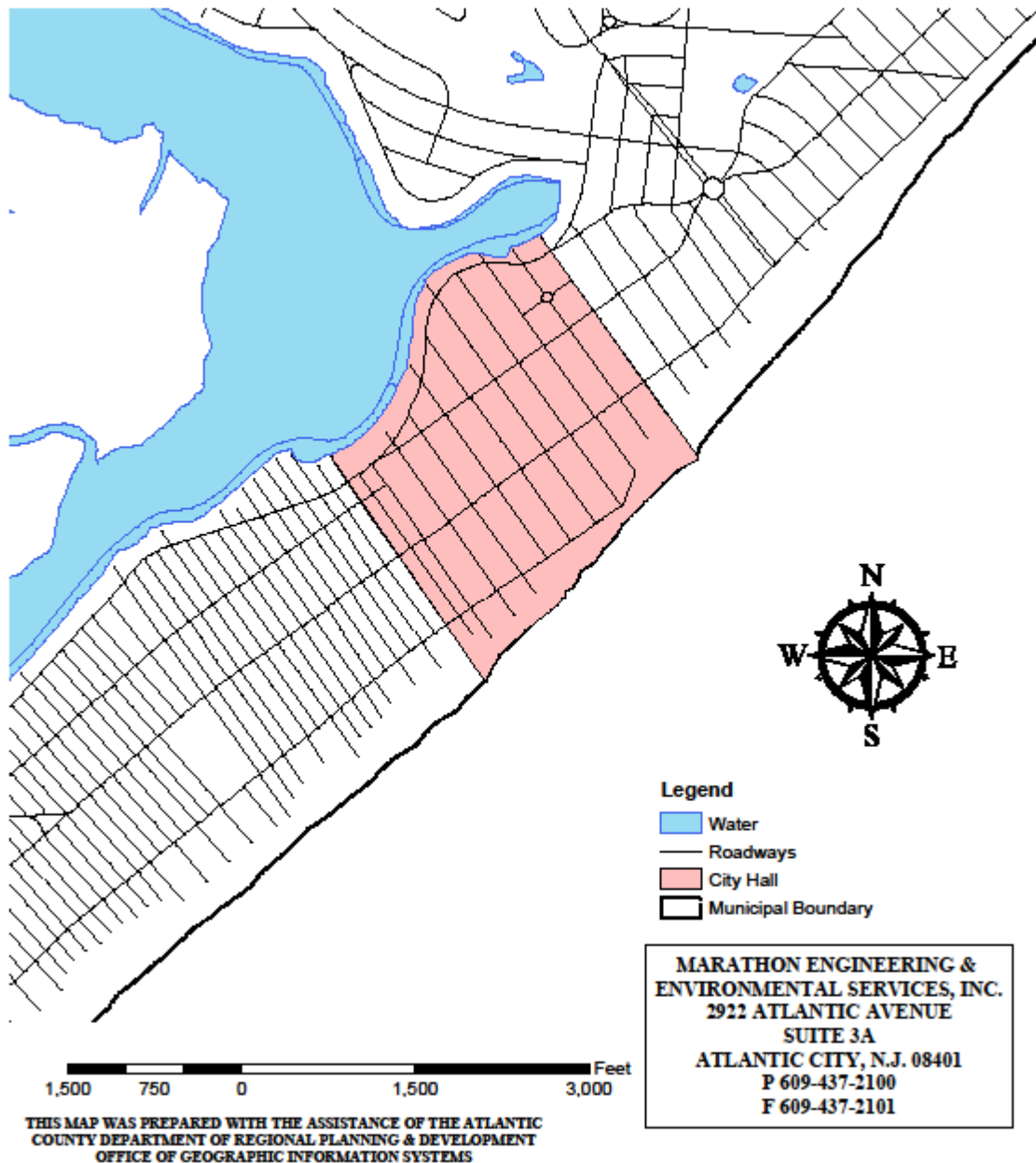


Figure VII.B.5

City Hall Planning Area



6. North End Mixed Planning Area

The North End Mixed Planning Area is located generally between 6th Street South and 15th Street North and is bounded by the oceanfront beach, the City Hall Central Business District Planning Area, the Golf Course Residential Planning Area, and conservation lands associated with the northern portion of the island. This planning area contains a mix of one- and two-family dwellings, multi-family residential development near the beach blocks, neighborhood-serving commercial uses, and environmentally sensitive open-space and conservation areas. A limited commercial and retail spine extends along Brigantine Avenue from Roosevelt Boulevard to 15th Street North and should continue to provide small-scale goods, services, restaurants, and visitor-oriented activity for nearby residents and seasonal users. The street network is primarily organized in a traditional grid pattern, but it transitions to a more curvilinear layout where the area connects with the Golf Course Residential Planning Area and the island's northern conservation landscape. For purposes of the 2026 Master Plan, the North End should be managed as a mixed residential, commercial, and conservation planning area where future development and redevelopment preserve established neighborhood character, maintain the existing commercial frontage, protect beach and dune resources, improve pedestrian and bicycle access, address seasonal parking demand, and incorporate flood-resilient construction, stormwater management, and compatibility with adjacent residential and environmentally sensitive areas.

The North End also includes environmentally sensitive areas that are zoned for conservation, and future land use decisions should continue to protect those resources while maintaining compatible residential and limited commercial uses.

Figure VII.B.6

North End Planning Area

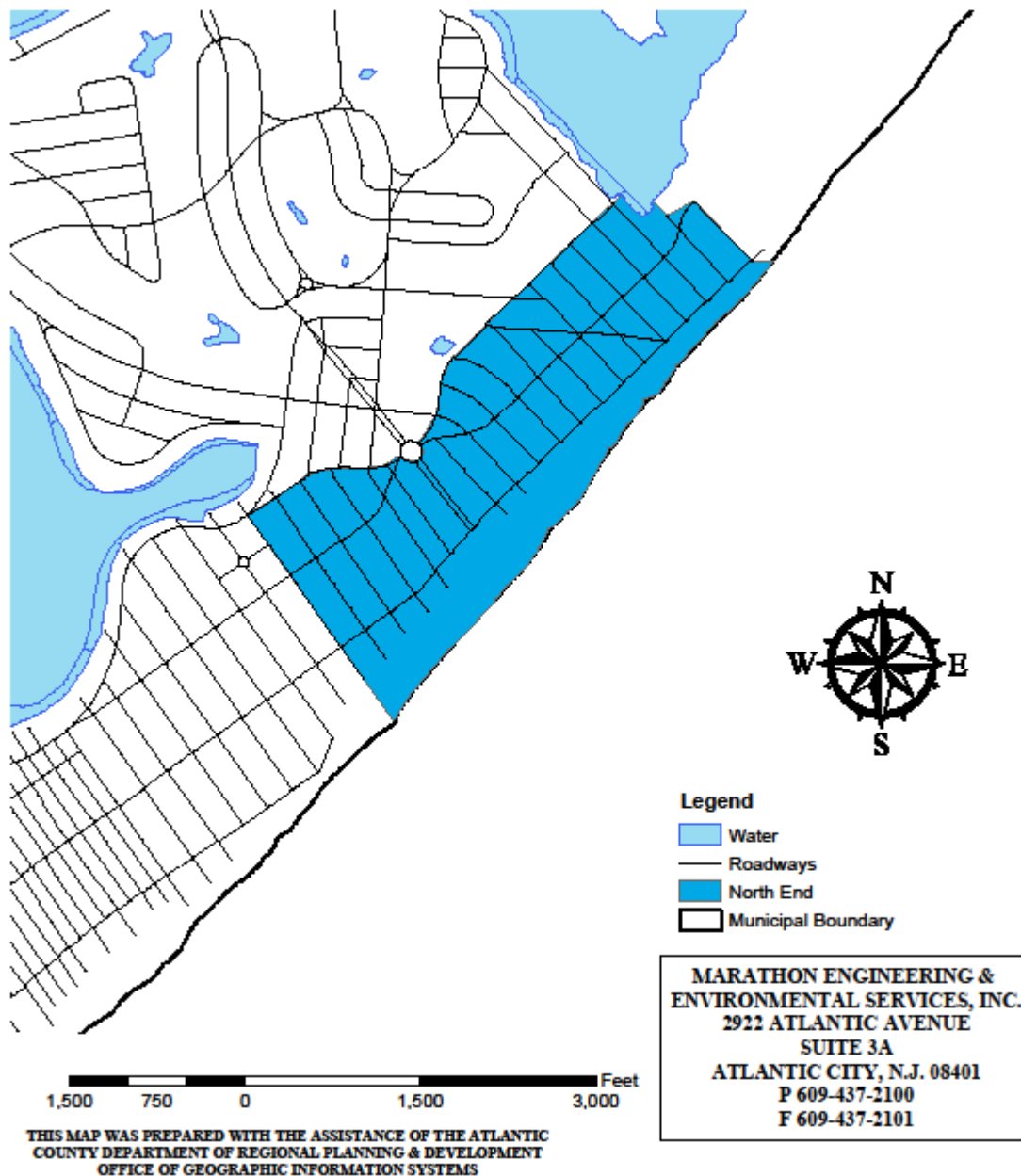
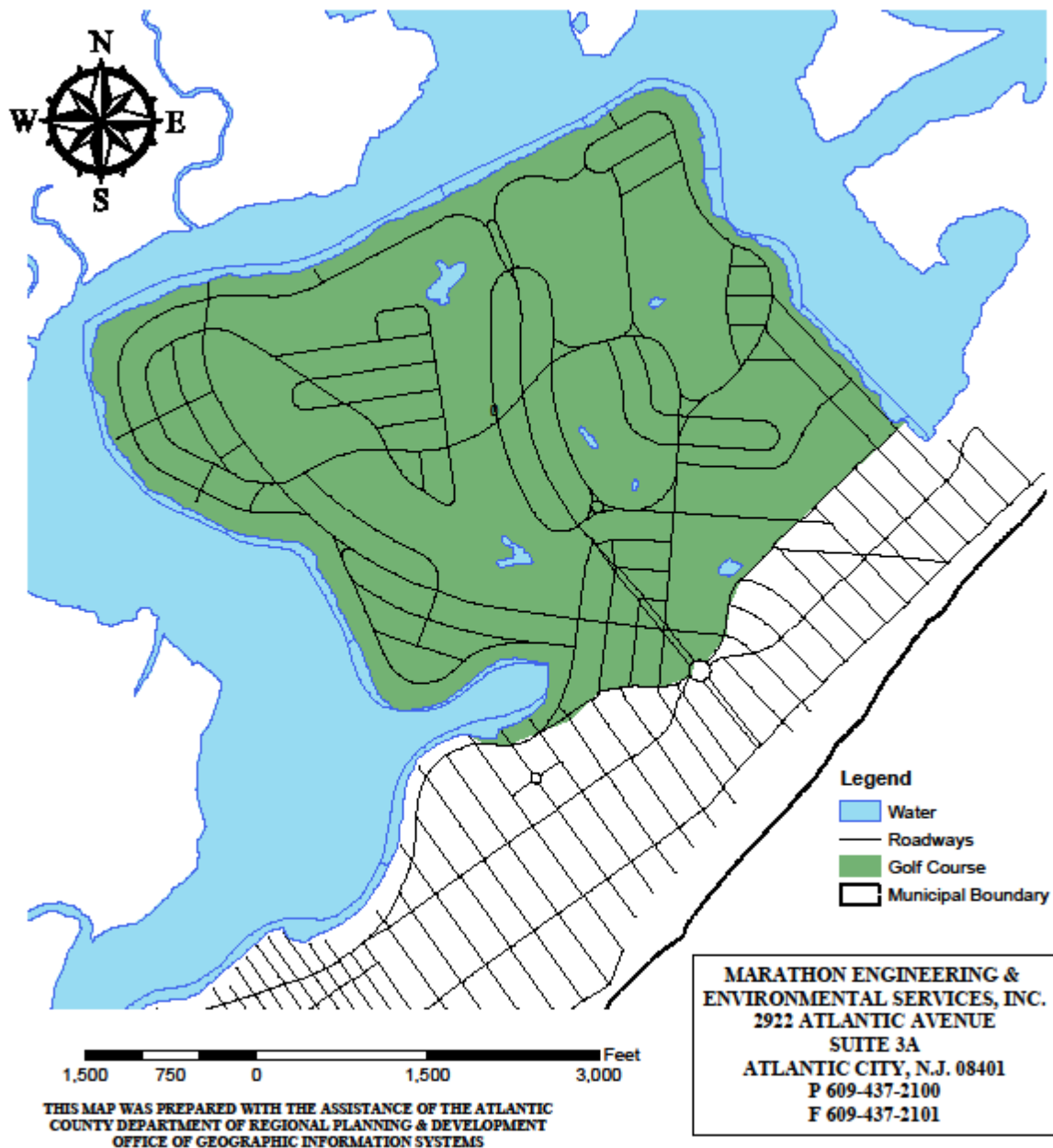


Figure VII.B.7

Golf Course Planning Area



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7. Golf Course Residential Planning Area

The Golf Course Residential Planning Area is located generally between 6th Street South and 12th Street North and is bounded by the City Hall Central Business District Planning Area, the North End Mixed Planning Area, back-bay and marsh areas, and the Brigantine Golf Links. This planning area is characterized primarily by single-family residential neighborhoods arranged in a curvilinear street pattern that follows the edge of the golf course, bayfront, lagoons, and conservation lands. Water-related commercial and marina-oriented uses are limited and should remain compatible with the surrounding residential setting. The Brigantine Golf Links remains the focal point of the planning area and should continue to be protected as an important public recreation, open-space, stormwater, and community identity asset. For purposes of the 2026 Master Plan, future land use policy in this area should preserve established single-family neighborhood character, discourage expansion of incompatible multi-family development, support flood-resilient rehabilitation and reconstruction, maintain safe access and parking, protect water views and waterfront conditions, and ensure that any improvements to public facilities or recreational assets remain compatible with the surrounding residential and conservation context.

The former Brigantine Country Club property at the north end of Roosevelt Boulevard has been incorporated into the surrounding residential pattern, while the municipal golf course now operates as Brigantine Golf Links and remains one of the City's most significant recreation and open-space resources. In 2026, the City is resuming direct management of Brigantine Golf Links and advancing long-range improvements, including irrigation, cart path, clubhouse, tee, and bunker enhancements. These improvements should be supported where they strengthen the course as a public recreation destination, maintain open-space value, improve accessibility and operational resiliency, and avoid adverse impacts on adjacent residential neighborhoods, wetlands, back-bay resources, and conservation lands. The city has recently initiated plans to replace the existing club house with a fully functional club house and 200 seat event space.

VIII. MASTER PLAN COMPONENTS

A. Housing Plan

The 2026 Master Plan incorporates the recently completed City of Brigantine Housing Element and Fair Share Plan, adopted in 2025 and amended in 2026, prepared by Tiffany A. Morrissey, P.P., AICP. The Housing Element and Fair Share Plan updates the City's housing policy framework in response to the 2024 amendments to the Fair Housing Act, the abolition of COAH, and the establishment of the Fourth-Round affordable housing process. The plan identifies Brigantine's Fourth-Round affordable housing obligation as a Present Need of 13 units and a Prospective Need of 19 units, as calculated by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs and fixed by the Court. The plan also confirms that Brigantine remains a fully developed barrier island community with limited vacant land and a Realistic Development Potential of 0 for the Fourth Round.

The demographic data in the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan demonstrates that Brigantine's housing and land use policies must respond to a smaller, older, and more seasonal year-round population. The City's year-round population declined from 12,594 residents in 2000 to 7,716 residents in 2020, while the median age increased from 34.2 years in 1990 to 56.8 years in 2020. The Housing Element also identifies a stable but seasonally oriented housing stock, with approximately 9,294 total housing units, only 41 percent of which are occupied on a year-round basis and approximately 59 percent associated with seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. Single-family detached dwellings remain the predominant housing type, comprising approximately 50.56 percent of the housing stock, while attached townhouses and two-unit dwellings account for additional portions of the residential inventory.

These demographic and housing conditions support the 2026 Master Plan's continued emphasis on preserving established single-family neighborhoods, maintaining appropriate residential densities, encouraging rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of existing housing, and addressing the needs of older residents, seasonal households, and lower- and moderate-income households. The Master Plan should continue to coordinate zoning and land use policy with the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan by supporting affordable housing compliance mechanisms, rehabilitation opportunities, overlay zoning and mandatory set-aside provisions where applicable, and land use strategies that are compatible with Brigantine's built-out coastal environment, flood hazard conditions, infrastructure capacity, and community character.

B. Circulation Plan

The 2026 Circulation Plan recognizes that Brigantine remains a mature barrier-island community with a substantially smaller year-round population than in prior planning periods. Demographic data incorporated into the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan prepared by Tiffany A. Morrissey, P.P., AICP, documents that Brigantine's year-round population declined from 12,594 residents in 2000 to 7,716 residents in 2020. This reduction changes the assumptions underlying prior circulation planning: routine year-round traffic volumes, school-related travel, and daily commuter patterns are lower than when earlier Master Plans anticipated continued population growth.

However, the decline in permanent population has not eliminated circulation constraints. Brigantine continues to function as a seasonal resort community with a large share of seasonal, recreational, and occasional-use housing units. As a result, traffic demand remains highly seasonal, with peak summer periods, beach activity, short-term rentals, special events, service deliveries, and visitor trips continuing to place concentrated pressure on the island's roadway network, parking supply, public transit connections, and emergency access routes.

Regional access to Brigantine is provided through the Atlantic City Expressway, U.S. Route 40/322, U.S. Route 30, U.S. Route 9, the Garden State Parkway, and the Atlantic City Expressway Connector. These regional routes ultimately channel traffic to Brigantine Boulevard/Route 87 and the Peter J. Haneman Memorial Bridge, which remain the sole vehicular means of ingress and egress for the municipality. This single-access condition continues to be the central circulation and emergency management issue for the City.

The Atlantic City Expressway Connector and Atlantic City Tunnel, opened in 2001, continue to provide improved regional access by allowing more direct movement between the Atlantic City Expressway, the Marina District, U.S. Route 30, and the Brigantine Bridge. These improvements remain important to Brigantine's accessibility for residents, seasonal visitors, employees, emergency responders, and evacuation traffic. The City should continue to coordinate with Atlantic County, Atlantic City, NJDOT, NJ Transit, and emergency management agencies to preserve the capacity, reliability, and resiliency of this regional connection.

Because Brigantine's planning challenge is now defined less by permanent population growth and more by seasonal occupancy, visitor demand, aging demographics, and coastal hazard vulnerability, the 2026 Master Plan shifts circulation policy from roadway expansion to system management and resilience. The City should continue to monitor traffic conditions along Brigantine Boulevard and at the bridge approaches; improve bicycle, pedestrian, and transit

connections between residential neighborhoods, commercial corridors, recreation facilities, bayfront access points, and beach entrances; manage seasonal parking demand; and maintain clear evacuation and emergency access protocols. Future circulation improvements should be targeted, context-sensitive, and coordinated with land use policy so that Brigantine can serve a reduced year-round population while safely accommodating seasonal peaks and emergency conditions.

C. Utility Service Plan

Utility services in the City of Brigantine continue to be managed through the Department of Public Works and the City's municipal water and sanitary sewer systems. The 2026 Master Plan recognizes that Brigantine's utility planning context has changed substantially since prior planning cycles. The City's year-round population has declined from 12,594 residents in 2000 to 7,716 residents in 2020, while the housing stock remains heavily influenced by seasonal, recreational, and occasional-use occupancy. As a result, utility service planning must balance lower year-round base demand with significant summer peak demand, visitor occupancy, short-term rental activity, beach tourism, and emergency service needs.

Brigantine's potable water system is supplied by municipal wells drawing from the Atlantic City 800-foot Sand aquifer and is supported by three water towers that provide storage, pressure, and fire-flow capacity. Although the decline in permanent population has reduced routine year-round consumption pressures, the city must continue to plan for seasonal surges and long-term aquifer protection. Water conservation, leak detection, system monitoring, meter modernization, and continued compliance with New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection water allocation requirements should remain central utility policies. These measures are particularly important because Brigantine is a barrier island community dependent on groundwater resources that must be protected from over-withdrawal, saltwater intrusion, and climate-related stress.

The sanitary sewer system similarly serves the entire developed portion of the City and must remain reliable during both ordinary operating conditions and peak seasonal periods. Future utility planning should continue to prioritize rehabilitation of aging water and sewer infrastructure, infiltration and inflow reduction, pump station resiliency, emergency backup power, floodproofing of low-elevation facilities, and coordination with regional wastewater treatment providers. Land use regulations, redevelopment approvals, and building permit reviews should continue to incorporate water-efficient fixtures, resilient utility connections, flood-resistant design, and other conservation strategies at both the systemwide and individual property levels. These policies will allow Brigantine to serve a smaller year-round population while maintaining sufficient capacity,

reliability, and environmental protection during summer peaks and coastal storm events.

D. Community Facilities Plan

The 2026 Master Plan recognizes that Brigantine's community facilities must continue to serve both a reduced year-round population and a substantially larger seasonal population. Core municipal functions, including administration, police, fire, emergency medical services, emergency management, and public works coordination, continue to be centered in and around the municipal complex at Brigantine City Hall. The 1995 City Hall expansion remains an important public investment that accommodates municipal employees and public safety operations, while the former Central School continues to provide a community-serving civic use as the Brigantine branch of the Atlantic County Library.

Since prior Master Plan cycles, Brigantine's permanent population as noted in prior sections, has declined substantially, from 12,594 residents in 2000 to 7,716 residents in 2020. This demographic shift reduces some year-round service demands but does not reduce the need for high-quality, island-based public facilities. The city remains a mature, fully developed barrier-island community where future growth will occur primarily through infill, rehabilitation, redevelopment, renovation of existing dwellings, and seasonal-to-year-round occupancy changes rather than large-scale new subdivision activity. Accordingly, the 2026 community facilities policy should focus on maintaining existing facilities, modernizing public buildings and communications systems, improving accessibility, supporting resilient operations, and ensuring that public buildings can function during coastal storm and emergency conditions.

Public safety staffing and facility planning should be evaluated in relation to both the smaller year-round population and the City's peak-season service burden. Although traditional public service multipliers based only on permanent population may suggest lower staffing needs, Brigantine's police, fire, EMS, emergency management, beach, bay, rental, traffic, and special-event responsibilities increase significantly during the summer and during coastal storm events. The City should therefore continue to maintain staffing, equipment, dispatch, emergency power, communications, and facility capacity at levels appropriate for a seasonal resort barrier island with a single primary vehicular access route. Future community facility improvements should prioritize public safety readiness, storm-resilient municipal operations, ADA accessibility, energy efficiency, technology upgrades, public works storage and staging needs, and coordination among City departments, Atlantic County, NJDOT, NJ Transit, emergency management agencies, and regional utility providers.

E. Recreational Facilities Plan

The 2026 Recreational Facilities Plan recognizes that Brigantine's park, recreation, beach, bayfront, athletic, and community programming system serves two distinct populations: a smaller year-round resident base and a much larger seasonal population. The City's permanent population has declined substantially since prior Master Plan cycles, while the median age has increased and the share of seasonal, recreational, and occasional-use housing remains significant. As a result, recreation planning should no longer be based solely on traditional population-to-acreage ratios. Instead, the City should evaluate recreation needs based on seasonal use, age distribution, public access, facility condition, waterfront demand, and the role of recreation in supporting public health, tourism, and quality of life.

Based on current conditions, Brigantine continues to provide a strong inventory of active and passive recreational facilities relative to its reduced year-round population. The 26th Street Sports Complex, 44th Street South Recreational Complex/Walter Bew Stadium, Shark Park, neighborhood parks, bay swimming area, boat launch, beach access points, bikeway facilities, and Community Education and Recreation programming collectively provide substantial recreational capacity. However, the continued shift toward an older permanent population and a large seasonal population requires the City to evaluate recreation capacity more broadly than organized sports fields alone.

The 1992 Master Plan identified a need for additional outdoor recreation opportunities for Brigantine's senior community. That need remains relevant in 2026 because the City's median age has increased substantially and older adults represent a growing share of year-round residents. Existing improvements, including bocce courts, walking areas, passive parks, benches, gazebos, waterfront viewing areas, and CER-sponsored fitness and educational programs, should continue to be maintained and expanded where appropriate. Future improvements should emphasize low-impact recreation, shade, seating, accessible walking routes, pickleball, bocce, wellness programming, ADA-compliant access, and safe connections between neighborhoods, parks, the beach, bayfront facilities, and commercial areas.

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities remain a key component of the recreation system as well as the transportation network. The city should continue to improve its bikeway and pedestrian connections so that residents, seasonal visitors, employees, and students can safely travel between residential neighborhoods, the Brigantine Avenue commercial corridor, public schools, athletic complexes, beach entrances, bayfront access points, the municipal complex, and the golf course area. These improvements support recreation, reduce short local

automobile trips, improve public health, and advance the Master Plan's circulation, sustainability, and resiliency objectives.

The Community Education and Recreation (CER) Department should continue to serve as the coordinating agency for recreation programming, facility scheduling, youth and adult sports, senior activities, fitness classes, educational programs, and community events. Continued support of CER programming is recommended, with particular attention to seasonal demand management, online registration, equitable facility access, coordination with the Brigantine Community School, and programming that serves children, families, older adults, year-round residents, seasonal residents, and visitors. Future recreation planning should prioritize maintenance and modernization of existing facilities, resiliency of outdoor recreation assets, protection of waterfront and beach access, expanded passive recreation opportunities, and continued coordination among CER, Public Works, public safety agencies, the school district, and community organizations.

F. Conservation Plan

The protection and stewardship of the island's natural systems remain a top priority for the City of Brigantine. The City's environmental policy began with the landmark 1981 Dune Management Plan, which established the foundational oceanfront Development Restriction Line to prevent dune degradation and mitigate sand loss.

This protective framework was expanded in the 1992 Master Plan, which introduced strict zoning modifications to shield the island's three primary environmental assets: the Atlantic oceanfront beach and dune system, the interior back-bay wetland ecosystem, and the open space footprint of the municipal golf course.

Today, these local ordinances work in tandem with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Coastal Zone Management Rules (N.J.A.C. 7:7) to form a multi-layered regulatory shield. Proper management of these coastal assets is legally required to ensure the city's long-term survival against rising sea levels, while preserving the eco-tourism appeal that sustains the local resort economy.

Strategic Conservation Objectives. To maintain environmental compliance and community resiliency, the city enforces the following four operational directives:

1. **Continuous Beach and Dune Morphological Monitoring:** The City partners with the Stockton University Coastal Research Center (CRC) to conduct semi-annual beach profile surveys. These studies track localized sand erosion and accretion trends, providing the empirical

data required to plan federal beach replenishment cycles with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

2. **Pedestrian Access and Dune Integrity Management:** Public access points, 4x4 multi-use vehicle ramps, and pedestrian timber dune walkovers are continually monitored to prevent foot-traffic degradation of native dune vegetation (such as American beach grass). The City prioritizes upgrading walkways in areas showing signs of stunted dune growth or wind-driven blowouts, utilizing sand fencing and strategic vegetative planting to stabilize the protective barrier matrix.
3. **Resilient Waterfront Design Controls and Marina Preservation:** The City continuously evaluates its waterfront bulk regulations to protect the delicate water's edge environment along the back bays while supporting traditional maritime commerce. Current land-use evaluations focus on balancing commercial marina expansion with the preservation of public waterfront viewsheds, expanded public access corridors, mandatory on-site parking minimums, and strict structural flood-proofing requirements.

G. Economic Development Plan

As described in the Land Use Inventory, Brigantine's economic development strategy should continue to focus on its established commercial centers: the Lighthouse Central Business District, the City Hall Central Business District, and the North End Commercial Spine. The 2026 Master Plan recognizes that the island's year-round population has declined while seasonal occupancy, visitor activity, short-term rentals, beach use, and second-home ownership continue to shape the local economy. Accordingly, economic development policy should emphasize year-round business stability, seasonal demand management, commercial corridor reinvestment, and protection of the commercial tax base rather than expansion into residential neighborhoods or environmentally sensitive areas.

The City should continue to promote a cohesive design identity for its business districts, including nautical, coastal, and barrier-island themes that reinforce Brigantine's sense of place. Streetscape, lighting, landscaping, wayfinding, pedestrian safety, façade, outdoor dining, and public-space improvements should be coordinated across the commercial corridors so that residents and visitors experience attractive, walkable, and recognizable business areas. Public grants, county and state funding programs, private reinvestment, and partnerships with local merchants should be pursued to support these improvements.

The Planning Board should continue to evaluate uniform signage, façade, architectural, lighting, and property maintenance standards for the commercial

districts. Input should be sought from the Chamber of Commerce, property owners, merchants, residents, and City officials so that design standards support business visibility while maintaining Brigantine's coastal community character. The city should also make local businesses aware of available funding, technical assistance, and improvement programs that may support signage, façade, accessibility, flood-resiliency, energy-efficiency, and streetscape upgrades.

Tourism-related lodging and visitor-serving uses should be evaluated in a manner that supports the local economy while protecting neighborhood character and public safety. Bed and Breakfast Inns, small-scale lodging, adaptive reuse of appropriate commercial or mixed-use properties, and visitor-oriented services may be appropriate where they are compatible with surrounding land uses, parking supply, floodplain requirements, access, and neighborhood impacts. Any expansion of lodging or tourism-oriented uses should be coordinated with short-term rental regulation, parking management, pedestrian access, emergency services, and protection of year-round residential quality of life.

Brigantine's barrier-island setting remains one of its strongest economic assets. The City should continue to promote eco-tourism, public waterfront access, beach and bay recreation, environmental education, nature observation, biking, walking, boating, fishing, and low-impact visitor experiences that are compatible with protected dunes, beaches, wetlands, conservation lands, and the North End natural area. Future economic development initiatives should strengthen the connection between the commercial districts, beach entrances, bayfront access points, recreational facilities, and conservation areas while ensuring that improvements remain resilient to flooding, sea-level rise, coastal storms, and seasonal peak demand. By pairing commercial revitalization with environmental stewardship, Brigantine can support a stronger year-round business climate while preserving the natural amenities that define the island's identity.

H. Recycling Program

The 2026 Master Plan continues to support Brigantine's recycling program as an essential component of municipal solid-waste management, environmental protection, and consistency with the Atlantic County recycling framework. Recycling services should continue to serve both the reduced year-round population and the substantially larger seasonal population generated by beach tourism, second homes, short-term rentals, and visitor activity. Curbside recycling collection of designated materials, including paper, cardboard, glass, metal, and accepted plastics, should remain coordinated with Atlantic County requirements and communicated clearly to residents, property owners, tenants, rental managers, and visitors.

In addition to curbside collection, the City should continue to maintain and publicize access to its municipal recycling collection center at 3605 Bayshore

Avenue. The center provides an important supplemental disposal and recycling option for residents and property owners, particularly during seasonal turnover periods, post-storm cleanup, property maintenance, and higher-volume summer weekends. The City should periodically review collection-center hours, accepted materials, signage, site circulation, and staffing needs to ensure that the facility remains accessible, efficient, and consistent with county and state recycling requirements.

Because Brigantine's permanent population has declined while seasonal occupancy remains substantial, recycling education and compliance must be designed for a changing audience. The City should continue to encourage recycling among year-round residents, seasonal residents, short-term rental occupants, day visitors, beach users, commercial establishments, and property managers. Outreach should emphasize simple collection schedules, acceptable materials, contamination reduction, storm debris separation, bulky-waste procedures, and the proper disposal of materials that are not accepted in curbside recycling.

To improve participation and reduce contamination, recycling information should be distributed through multiple channels, including the City website, social media, utility or tax mailings, beach-tag and rental-license communications, real estate offices, short-term rental platforms, condominium and homeowners' associations, local newspapers, and signage at beach entrances, public facilities, and the recycling center. Real estate offices, rental agents, and property owners should be encouraged to provide recycling instructions in rental units and seasonal welcome materials. The City should also coordinate recycling outreach with Public Works, Atlantic County, schools, community organizations, and local businesses so that recycling practices remain visible, convenient, and effective throughout the year and during summer peak periods.

IX. MASTER PLAN COMPARISONS

A. Atlantic City Master Plan

The City of Brigantine Master Plan update incorporates and aligns with the evolving planning goals of the neighboring City of Atlantic City. Rather than relying on outdated 1980s or 1990s re-examination baselines, this update evaluates structural shifts formalized by the Atlantic City Master Plan and Land Use Plan Elements managed in tandem with the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority (CRDA).

Contemporary regional planning in Atlantic City shifts focus away from isolated gaming expansion to champion long-term economic diversification, neighborhood stabilization, infrastructure resiliency, and the expansion of permanent workforce housing. Key modern alignment points across our shared borders include:

1. **Regional Hospitality & Economic Uplift:** Atlantic City's master policy emphasizes maintaining and expanding its premier resort and seaside destination character. It supports non-gaming economic drivers and retail proposal and the expansion of localized hospitality districts.
2. **Housing Stock & Workforce Integration:** Modern updates from the Atlantic City Planning & Development frameworks actively leverage federal Annual Action Plans and CRDA zoning updates. These initiatives incentivize new multi-family luxury and workforce housing options within regions like the Marina District. This strategy builds an integrated regional core, encouraging service-sector employees and professional staff to live and work locally within the county area.
3. **The City of Brigantine Master Plan update is structurally calibrated to remain fully compatible with these neighboring municipal benchmarks.** By aligning our land-use frameworks, Brigantine preserves its own distinct, low-density residential community footprint while directly benefiting from and smoothly accommodating the regional transit, evacuation, workforce, and economic demands generated by Atlantic City's ongoing revitalization.

B. Atlantic County Master Plan

To ensure consistency across jurisdictional lines, the city has reviewed and adopted the overarching regional growth, sustainability, and environmental policies enforced by the Atlantic County Department of Regional Planning & Economic Development.

The City of Brigantine actively addresses and supports every core planning goal identified within the Atlantic County Master Plan, aligning its municipal ordinances with regional benchmarks in the following areas:

1. Infrastructure and Utility Management: Coordinating local sewer collection with the Atlantic County Utilities Authority (ACUA) Regional treatment facilities.
2. Transportation and Circulation Resiliency: Partnering on county corridor management along Brigantine Boulevard (County Road 638) and regional evacuation routing.
3. Coastal Environmental Preservation: Cooperating on waterfront management, dune protection, and flood mitigation frameworks overseen by state and county emergency management.
4. Farmland Protection Exemption. The singular county planning objective that the City of Brigantine does not address within this document is the goal of Farmland Protection. Because Brigantine is a completely built-out coastal barrier island composed strictly of residential neighborhoods, commercial zones, and protected marine conservation areas (such as the North Brigantine State Nature Area), there are no agricultural zones or active farming operations within the municipality. Consequently, the regional farmland preservation element is legally and geographically not applicable to the City of Brigantine's land-use inventory.

C. Coastal Zone Management

The City of Brigantine Master Plan update provides a policy framework designed to comply with the Coastal Area Facility Review Act (CAFRA), N.J.S.A. 13:19-1, and the formalized New Jersey Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Rules (N.J.A.C. 7:7).

Evolution of Policy Alignment. During early planning cycles, a comprehensive statutory review confirmed that the 1992 Brigantine Master Plan operated in structural conformance with seven (7) of the eight (8) core basic policy objectives set forth by the state's coastal management frameworks. The remaining policy vector concerned the active development and economic capitalization of underutilized waterfront property.

To achieve complete institutional alignment with modern state environmental and economic guidelines, the 2026 Master Plan update has been fully adapted to encourage residential, commercial, and

recreational mixed-use redevelopment across the developed waterfront. This approach transforms a historical point of divergence into an active municipal planning objective.

Regulated Waterfront Mixed-Use Frameworks. By embedding mixed-use waterfront redevelopment directly into the city's land-use priorities, the municipality capitalizes on its built-out coastal topography while strictly observing the environmental limitations enforced by the NJDEP Division of Land Resource Protection. Future development along the island's coastal edges, commercial nodes, and maritime corridors must comply with the following structural parameters:

1. Strategic Infill and Economic Vitality: Directing high-density mixed-use footprints toward established commercial zones (such as B-1 and B-6) and designated redevelopment areas along the back bay. This strategy preserves adjacent sensitive marine ecosystems while activating the local tax base.
2. Structural Flood-Resiliency and Freeboard Mandates: Integrating waterfront residential and commercial spaces with strict climate-resiliency engineering. All new construction or substantial modifications within the CAFRA-regulated coastal zone must abide by state-mandated flood hazard rules, including elevating structures at least two feet above the base flood elevation (BFE).
3. Preservation of Public Access and Marine Assets: Ensuring that any commercial or residential revitalization projects along the water's edge actively protect or enhance public access to the waterfront, docking amenities, and maritime recreational corridors, fully satisfying the requirements of N.J.A.C. 7:7-16.11

D. State Development and Redevelopment Plan

The 2026 Master Plan recognizes that the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) identify the City of Brigantine as an Environmentally Sensitive Barrier Island Planning Area (PA5B). This designation reflects the city's fully developed barrier-island setting, its extensive beach, dune, bayfront, wetland, and conservation resources, and the need to direct future growth toward compatible infill, redevelopment, resiliency, and public infrastructure improvements rather than outward expansion. The 2025 SDRP update emphasizes coordinated land use, transportation, housing, infrastructure, environmental protection, historic and scenic resource preservation, economic development, and climate adaptation; accordingly, Brigantine's 2026 Master Plan incorporates these priorities through updated policies for historic preservation, growth management, public transportation, bay and waterfront access, potable

water supply, sanitary sewer service, natural hazard mitigation, coastal resilience, and intergovernmental coordination. These policies are intended to reinforce the existing character of Brigantine's residential neighborhoods and commercial corridors, protect sensitive coastal resources, maintain public access to the waterfront, support resilient utility and evacuation systems, and coordinate local planning with county, state, and federal agencies.

E. COAH/Affordable Housing

The City of Brigantine's affordable housing policies have been updated to reflect the recently completed Housing Element and Fair Share Plan and Land Use Element prepared by Tiffany Morrissey, P.P., AICP. These companion planning documents replace the prior reliance on the Council on Affordable Housing framework and provide the current basis for addressing the City's affordable housing obligation, including rehabilitation opportunities, realistic development potential, land use consistency, and implementation strategies appropriate for Brigantine's built-out barrier-island context.

F. State Highway Access Management Plan

The 2026 Master Plan recognizes that New Jersey Route 87 remains the only State highway segment within the City of Brigantine and functions as the principal roadway connection between the island, the Peter J. Haneman Memorial Bridge, Atlantic City, and the regional highway network. Although the State highway mileage within Brigantine is limited, Route 87 is critical to daily access, seasonal visitor movement, public transit, emergency response, evacuation planning, and the continued operation of Brigantine's commercial corridors. Properties, driveways, streets, subdivisions, changes in use, redevelopment projects, or site improvements that front on or take access from Route 87 must continue to comply with the New Jersey Department of Transportation State Highway Access Management Code, N.J.A.C. 16:47, including applicable access permits, driveway controls, traffic impact review, level-of-service standards, and coordination with NJDOT. Future land use, circulation, and redevelopment decisions along Route 87 should therefore emphasize safe access spacing, shared or consolidated driveways where appropriate, pedestrian and bicycle safety, transit accessibility, storm evacuation reliability, and coordination among the City, Atlantic County, NJDOT, NJ Transit, and emergency management agencies.

G. Atlantic County Transportation Authority Master Plan

The 2026 Master Plan has reviewed the Atlantic County Master Plan and regional transportation policies to confirm continued consistency between Brigantine's circulation system and countywide transportation objectives. Brigantine's transportation priorities are closely tied to regional access through

Route 87, Brigantine Boulevard, the Peter J. Haneman Memorial Bridge, the Atlantic City Expressway Connector, U.S. Route 30, NJ Transit service, and Atlantic County emergency management and capital planning. Because Brigantine is a fully developed barrier-island community with a reduced year-round population but substantial seasonal traffic demand, the City's circulation policies should continue to emphasize safe and efficient access, evacuation reliability, public transit coordination, bicycle and pedestrian connections, parking management, and resiliency of critical transportation infrastructure. These objectives are consistent with Atlantic County's broader goals for coordinated regional mobility, multimodal transportation, congestion management, emergency evacuation, infrastructure maintenance, and support for tourism, employment, and coastal community access.