



**Inlet Neighborhood Action Strategy**

**Submitted to:**

**New Jersey Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit Program**

**New Jersey Department of Community Affairs**

**June 24, 2022**

**Submitted by:**

**Atlantic Cape Community College**

**Prepared by:**

**Rutala Associates**

## **Inlet Revitalization Action Strategy**

Funding for the Inlet Revitalization Action Strategy was provided by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (NJDCA). Atlantic Cape Community College spearheaded the Strategy in cooperation with the First Ward Civic Association lead by Libby Wills and a highly active and engaged Inlet Neighborhood Community Advisory Committee comprised of local stakeholders, business owners, and residents.

The Inlet Neighborhood Community Advisory Committee undertook the Inlet Revitalization Action Strategy in conjunction with consultants Rutala Associates. Rutala Associates acknowledges and expresses their gratitude to all the participants in the planning process including the Inlet Neighborhood Community Advisory Committee members and all those who attended the public forums, interviews, stakeholder meetings, and focus groups. Their ideas and feedback form the basis of this Strategy. The general principles, specific redevelopment strategies, and recommendations are the direct result of their involvement.

We also want to thank the many organizations that supported this effort. Special thanks to the Boys & Girls Club of Atlantic City for designing our logo and Michael Viscount, Esq., Fox and Rothchild for preparing the legal documents to establish the Inlet Community Development Corporation.

## **Inlet Neighborhood Community Advisory Committee**

Libbie Wills, President, First Ward Civic Association; Board Member, Atlantic City Community Fund;  
Board Member, Atlantic City Historic Preservation Commission

Stephanie Marshall, Inlet Resident; City Council Member, At-Large; Chairperson, Atlantic City Housing Authority

Arron Randolph, Inlet Resident; City Council Member, First Ward

Charity Jeffries, Inlet Resident

Gregory Wood, Business Owner, Fish Heads

Jean Muchanic, Executive Director, Absecon Lighthouse

Keith Groff, Inlet Resident, Business Owner

Mike Intrieri, Inlet Resident; Owner, North Beach Mini Golf

Tina Watson, Inlet Resident; Educator

Tina Notaro, Inlet Resident

Samera Bishop, Inlet Resident; Board Member, Atlantic County Mental Health Advisory Board

TJ Moynihan, Inlet Resident; Atlantic City Police Officer

Mary Ellen Solano, Inlet Resident

Karen Rosnick, Inlet Resident

## **Inlet Planning Team**

James M. Rutala, PP, AICP, MBA, CFM, Principal, Rutala Associates

Brian Kempf, PP, AICP, Planner, Rutala Associates

Mihir Rastogi, Planner, Rutala Associates

Jesse Nelson, Intern, Rutala Associates

Ani Karabashian, Intern, Rutala Associates

Michele Snyder, Intern, Rutala Associates

## **Atlantic Cape Community College**

Natalie Devonish, Vice President, Student Affairs and Enrollment Management; Inlet Resident

Victor Moreno, Senior Manager, Campus Operations and Community Outreach

# Section 1. Cover Page

## FORM NP-1: COVER PAGE FOR SUBMISSION OF A NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

Neighborhood: Inlet Neighborhood NJ Legislative District: NJ – 2

Eligible Municipality: Atlantic City Mayor: Marty Small, Sr.

Name of Applicant Organization: Atlantic Cape Community College

Name of CEO/Executive Director: Barbara Gaba, President

Address: 5100 Black Horse Pike

City: Mays Landing State: NJ Zip Code: 08330

NJ Charities Registration Number: NA

Contact Person for this Application: Jim Rutala, Rutala Associates

Phone: 609.743.0354 E-Mail: jmrutala@comcast.net

Cellphone  
(optional): \_\_\_\_\_

What is the time period for this Neighborhood Plan? 10 years  
(may not exceed Ten (10) years)

Did you partner with another organization to develop the Neighborhood Plan?	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	(if YES, complete NP-1 Page 2)
	NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

**Certification:** To the best of my knowledge and belief, the data in this application are true and correct. The governing body of the applicant has duly authorized the document.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Name** **Title**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature** **Date**

## Section 2. Executive Summary

The Inlet Neighborhood is located in the northeast section of Atlantic City. This neighborhood is surrounded on three sides by water with the Atlantic Ocean, Absecon Inlet, and Clam Creek forming its boundaries.

The Inlet Neighborhood is home to a diverse group of residents and filled with numerous community assets, landmarks, active organizations, and local businesses. Comprised of Census Tracts 19 and 25 along the Absecon Inlet, it is home to approximately 5,800 residents.

The Inlet includes major facilities such as the Ocean Casino Resort, Gardner's Basin Park, The Cove Condominium, Ocean Terrace apartments, Uptown School Complex, Flagship Resort, the Jeffries Towers Apartments, and housing of various typologies. It includes the following geographic area:

- Pacific Avenue to the Atlantic Ocean between Connecticut Avenue and the Absecon Inlet.
- Virginia Avenue to the Absecon Inlet between Pacific Avenue and Baltic Avenue.
- Massachusetts Avenue to the Absecon Inlet between Madison Avenue and Gardner's Basin.



**Inlet Neighborhood looking north with Ocean Casino Resort in the foreground**

The Inlet Neighborhood has been historically targeted for various urban renewal programs and projects. The neighborhood's proximity to major tourist destinations and existing residential communities has historically resulted in conflicts between planned resort and residential uses. Land speculation and demolitions associated with planned projects has resulted in the loss of many

buildings in the neighborhood. Despite these challenges, the neighborhood maintains a crucial community of residents and local businesses.

Nascent redevelopment efforts have been underway, including the development of new multifamily housing at 600 NoBe, the re-opening of Ocean Casino Resort, and the re-construction of the Absecon Inlet Seawall/Boardwalk. These investments, totaling in excess of one hundred million dollars, are anticipated to bring spin-off development to a long-overlooked Atlantic City neighborhood. The additional investment in renovations at Gardner's Basin and Absecon Lighthouse will bring further interest and visitation to the neighborhood.

A renewed effort to revitalize the neighborhoods in Atlantic City was initiated with the completion of the Johnson Report in 2018. The Report entitled "Atlantic City: Building a Foundation for a Shared Prosperity" stresses the importance of the neighborhoods and building effective partnerships between government, philanthropic organizations, and Anchor Institutions. This Strategy follows the recommendations of the Johnson Report. With the



strong support of City government; Atlantic Cape Community College, an active Atlantic City Anchor Institution, worked to organize the neighborhood and attracted funds from the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs to develop this Inlet Revitalization Action Strategy.

Inlet residents and business leaders have been collaborating cooperatively with local partners to develop the strategies included in this Strategy. For the last year, public meetings, focus groups, and individual interviews have occurred with the goal being to develop a Strategy that truly is the Inlet Neighborhood's Strategy. The strategies presented herein will help to transition the community, provide new economic opportunities, encourage home ownership, and improve the quality of life.

The Inlet Revitalization Action Strategy includes many community-endorsed initiatives that have been identified as critical for improving outcomes for neighborhood residents and businesses. Measurable outcomes are associated with each activity.

Over the next ten years, Atlantic Cape will work with the soon to be formed the Inlet Community Development Corporation (ICDC) to implement various actions that can be categorized into six areas:

- **Clean and Safe:** Unsanitary conditions and illicit activity are major issues effecting Atlantic City and the Inlet Neighborhood. Loitering and drug sales are all issues driving the public away from the neighborhood and disincentivizing investment and homeownership. Because many initiatives cannot proceed until these issues are addressed, making the neighborhood clean and safe is an important aspect of this Strategy.

- **Housing:** The Inlet Neighborhood consists of many vacant and abandoned properties that need repair or demolition and homes that need aesthetic improvements. Enhancing home ownership by mitigating vacant property rates, improving home aesthetics, and bringing non-compliant properties into compliance with the code is an important aspect of this Strategy.
- **Arts and Culture:** The Inlet Neighborhood has a unique history and diverse population. Enhancing the culture of the Inlet by preserving its history, celebrating its diversity, promoting the arts, enhancing parks, and establishing youth programs is an important aspect of this Strategy.
- **Economic Development:** As the Inlet Neighborhood consists of many locally owned small businesses, establishing strong support for businesses and enabling them to participate in conversations regarding issues that impact the area are important aspects of this Strategy.
- **Resiliency & Sustainability:** As Atlantic City and the Inlet Neighborhood constitute a barrier island community, implementing action to make the community more resilient and sustainable is an important aspect of this Strategy.
- **Human Capital:** Providing quality education and training for residents to become gainfully employed, advance their careers, and develop leadership capacity is an important aspect of this Strategy.

## Section 3. Organizational Information

### A. Organizational Profile

Atlantic Cape Community College (also known as Atlantic Cape) is a public community college that enrolls more than 6,000 students per academic year. Atlantic Cape offers 46-degree programs and 26 short term certificate programs to the citizens of Atlantic City and the surrounding areas that meet the local needs of the community at large. Additionally, Atlantic Cape has a strong workforce development program which prepares Atlantic City residents for various careers including casino games through its Casino Career Institute (CCI); health care through its Health Professions Institute (HPI); culinary through its Academy of Culinary Arts (ACA); retail, hospitality; customer service; and other opportunities. In partnership with the Atlantic City business and industry sectors, the college is an agile institution that provides real-time, in demand training for existing and emerging jobs. For example, the college is developing its curriculum to accommodate a more diverse workforce in new industries entering the Atlantic City market including Offshore Wind construction and maintenance jobs. The college works closely with the local One-Stop Operator and employers to train and upskill unemployed and underemployed workers.

Atlantic Cape began in Atlantic City and has continued its commitment to the City for over fifty years. In September 1966, the college opened to students in a facility rented from the Atlantic City High School. By 1967, there were over 1,000 enrolled students. In February 1968, the college was moved to the Mays Landing campus. By 1969, the number of enrolled students exceeded 2,000. On July 1, 1977, Atlantic Community College established the CCI to support the development of casinos in Atlantic City. Opening in 1978 in Atlantic City, it was the first gaming school in the United States

affiliated with a college. Officials from Atlantic County bought a former Atlantic City Electric building in Atlantic City in Spring 1982. After a \$4 million expansion project, the Charles D. Worthington Atlantic City Campus opened. The Atlantic City campus was expanded in 2014 by 20,000 square feet, creating the Caesar's Entertainment for Hospitality and Gaming Wing. The Worthington Atlantic City Campus provides a wide range of services to support students' educational goals. A \$3 million grant was recently secured that is funding an expansion to the Worthington Campus for an Offshore Wind Safety Training Center which will open in the Fall of 2022.

## Organization Programs

Atlantic Cape is committed to supporting the needs of local residents and students. The college has been an integral partner to Inlet Neighborhood and the Atlantic City community as a whole. Atlantic Cape has maintained a strong and involved presence in Atlantic City since its inception and has reaffirmed its commitment to the community with the establishment of the full-branch campus in 1984 along with its continued expansions.

### FORM NP-2: ORGANIZATION PROFILE (page 1)

#### 48. AGENCY INFORMATION

What was the organization's date of incorporation? 1964

What was the original purpose for which the organization was formed?  
To provide quality higher education accessible to the people who pursue it.

What is the organization's current mission statement?  
Atlantic Cape Community College creates opportunity by providing access to excellent programs and services that successfully meet students' educational goals.

Is the organization in "Good Standing" with the NJ Department of State?  
YES  NO

When did the organization file its current N.J. Charitable Registration and Investigation Act Report (CRI-300R)?  
Date: NA

Documents to be submitted as Attachment(s):

- "Certificate of Good Standing" certificate from State of New Jersey
- Copy of current NJ CRI-300R form

#### 48. BOARD OF DIRECTORS INFORMATION

Board Chairperson: Maria Mento

Date Appointed:

Term Expiration Date:

Number of Authorized Board Members: 15  
 Number of Current Board Members: 15  
 How frequently does the Board meet? Monthly

Is the Board involved with fundraising activities? YES  NO

If YES, when was the last activity conducted, for what purpose, and how much was raised?

**FORM NP-2: ORGANIZATION PROFILE**

**48. PERSONNEL – TOTAL AGENCY**

What is the current agency staffing level?

Full Time: 245  
 Part Time: 110  
 Volunteers: 10

Provide the following information regarding full-time staff employed by the organization in the past 5 years:

Year	Annual Employee Turnover Percentage	Leadership / Senior Staff Included?	Leadership / Senior Staff Included?	
			YES	NO
2014	7.91%	X		
2015	8.26%	X		
2016	5.43%	X		
2017	10.76%	X		
2018	4.93%	X		

For any year in which employee turnover percentage exceeded 20%, provide an explanation:

NA

When was the CEO/Executive Director hired? 2017

Documents to be submitted as Attachment(s):

- Resume for the CEO/Executive Director (attached)
- Organization Chart (attached)

**D. FINANCIAL INFORMATION**



What is the organization's fiscal year?

Start Date: July 1  
End Date: June 30

When was the organization's current year total budget approved by its Board of Directors? FY2022 \$36,278,365

Did the organization incur a deficit at the end of its most recent fiscal year? YES  NO

If YES, what is the amount, and how will the agency reduce/address the deficit?

When was Form 990 most recently completed and submitted to the IRS? 2019 - ACCC Foundation

When was the organization's most recent annual audit report (audited financial statement) completed? 2021

What was the time period covered in the audit report: July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021

Were there any internal control or compliance findings from the organization's most recent annual audit report? YES  NO

### B. Financial Resources

Atlantic Cape has not received any DCA grant funds in the past five years.

### C. Community Involvement

Atlantic Cape reaches and engages with the Inlet neighborhood community in a variety of ways. Partnering with many different community organizations throughout the neighborhood, Atlantic Cape supported the community during and prior to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Atlantic Cape donated personal protective equipment (PPE) to AtlantiCare and Shore Medical Center early in the pandemic and collaborated with several community organizations, including the Hispanic Association of Atlantic County and the Fellowship of Churches, to support community food distributions. Atlantic Cape again partnered with the Fellowship of Churches along with the City of Atlantic City's Mayors Office to conduct a community food distribution at the Worthington Atlantic City Campus. 700 meal kit boxes were distributed through coordination with Recovery Force's Easter Holiday Event on April 3, 2021. Recovery Force's Easter Holiday Event was supported by Atlantic Cape, where over 150 children enjoyed games, prizes, and Easter activities.

Atlantic Cape hosted the first Covid-19 vaccination site in Atlantic County at its Mays Landing Campus and hosted socially distanced outdoor events for the community. The Alumni Association

delivered cookies to staff at local hospitals while nursing students served their clinical rotations at the Mega Vaccination Site at the Atlantic City Convention Center. In addition, the Academy of Culinary Arts prepared several “cooking at home” videos for the community during lockdown. Atlantic Cape also participated in supporting Angels in Motion’s Valentine’s Day feeding outreach initiative in Atlantic City on February 13, 2021.

Victor Moreno, Manager of Community Outreach, joined the Anti-Hunger Strategy Groups of Atlantic City and Hamilton Township on behalf of Atlantic Cape to collaborate with community partners in assisting the community with food insecurity. Moreno also helped moderate a Virtual Information Session in Spanish with the Commission of Motor Vehicles, the Governor’s Office, and local community organizations regarding information on drivers’ licenses for undocumented individuals. In addition, Moreno was invited to participate as a member of the Atlantic City School District’s Early Childhood Advisory Council with the goal being to strengthen the Early Childhood Program and continue to build family and school partnerships. In an effort to attain this goal, the Early Childhood Department enlisted the support of community leaders, businesses, parents, and staff. Moreno was also elected to serve as the Secretary of the Hispanic Association of Atlantic County’s Executive Board for another year in 2021-2022.

Moreno and Karen McCormick, Assistant Director, Grant Program Operations, conducted a virtual presentation to Recovery Court Probation Officers in Atlantic County on May 18, 2021. Moreno also conducted 3 individual virtual presentations to the Recovery Court program participants on May 25, 2021, sharing information on the Atlantic City Works training program funded by the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority (CRDA). He shared the same information in both English and Spanish to the Gateway CAP Fatherhood Program in Atlantic City on May 27, 2021 and June 3, 2021.

Atlantic Cape participated in CAPE HOPE’s annual Spring Art Showcase in Rio Grande on May 1, 2021 and joined the Atlantic County’s Sherriff’s Office in their Hope One Atlantic County Spring Fling resource fair on May 6, 2021 at Central City Park in Atlantic City where information was provided regarding educational opportunities and career training programs. Dr. Natalie Devonish conducted a virtual information session for the parents of the Atlantic Community Charter School students on May 6, 2021, where the same information was provided. Devonish also conducted a 45-minute workshop titled “College Bound” to the Leaders in Training (LIT) Youth Employment Program in Atlantic City on June 3, 2021 and June 4, 2021.

Atlantic Cape hosted the Mexican Consulate on May 22, 2021 and May 23, 2021, at the Worthington Atlantic City Campus and sponsored the Supporting NJ Dreamers “DACA Hybrid Information Session” at the Worthington Atlantic City Campus on May 24, 2021. Atlantic Cape also participated in the first Asian Consulate Day at the Atlantic City Convention Center on June 2, 2021.

## **Section 4. Organizational Capacity and Experience**

### **A. Organizational Capacity**

Reporting to a 15 member of the Board of Trustees, President Barbara Gaba provides leadership regarding the Atlantic Cape’s community involvement. She is committed to continued engagement in Atlantic City. Atlantic Cape exhibits the capacity to provide administration to this grant. Atlantic Cape’s staff are qualified to maintain the budget for this grant and will provide all the required reporting.

Jean McAllister is the Chief of Staff of Atlantic Cape and is a seasoned leader with more than 25 years of service at Atlantic Cape and serves on the Board of Atlantic City's Metropolitan Business and Community Association, Atlantic County's Commission on Women, and on the Atlantic City's Boys & Girls Club event committee.

The College has a grant writing department led by Dr. Vanessa O'Brien-McMasters, Vice President, Institutional Effectiveness and Chief Strategy Officer. Grant compliance is managed through the college's staff led by the Leslie Jamison, Chief Financial Officer (CFO).

Dr. Natalie Devonish, the Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Manage will lead the project. To engage more in the City and meet with the community, the college recently hired a Community Outreach Senior Manager, Victor Moreno. Dr. Devonish was born and raised in Atlantic City and has been actively involved in the community her entire life. In addition to her managerial experience as the former Dean of the Worthington Campus, Dr. Devonish has served as the Operations Director for the Boys & Girls Club of Atlantic City; the President of Youth Exposure, Inc., a mentoring program for middle school students in Atlantic City; and the Community Outreach Specialist at an Atlantic City casino-hotel. Dr. Devonish and her team are well equipped to lead this neighborhood revitalization effort.

Victor Moreno assists the college with fulfilling its mission to service the community and provide affordable post-secondary education. Enthusiastic about community service, Mr. Moreno serves as Secretary of the Hispanic Association of Atlantic County's Executive Board. He has worked on numerous community service projects such as the Latino town hall meeting in Atlantic City, where he live-translated for Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver. On a continued quest to give back to the community, Mr. Moreno has helped to bring about significant, positive change in the community and individuals through advocacy initiatives, scholarship fundraising, and food drives. In addition, Mr. Moreno recently functioned as the Director of Operations to the 2019 Latino Festival.

## **B. Current Activities**

The college is an integral partner to the Inlet neighborhood and the Atlantic City community. Atlantic Cape actively partners with Atlantic City based non-profit groups, including La Casa Dominicana, to offer space for teaching English classes to Atlantic City residents. Atlantic Cape hosts meetings in response to the community's needs and its representatives serve as Board members to multiple Atlantic City associations such as the Metropolitan Business and Community Association (MBCA), the Atlantic City Boys & Girls Club, and at one time the Community Think Tank, which addressed issues effecting the citizens of the local wards surrounding Atlantic Cape. The Community Think Tank supported local underserved citizens with a holiday program and gifts for children and the Business Mentorship Program.

Atlantic Cape is a designated Anchor Institution for the City of Atlantic City by the State of New Jersey, for supporting the City and its initiatives in a variety of ways. Anchor Institutions are place-based organizations that persist in their communities over generations even in the face of substantial capital flight, serving as social glue and economic engines. Atlantic Cape continues to maintain this role through its current activities.

Atlantic Cape is serving Atlantic City's diverse population by offering beginning, intermediate and advanced levels of ESL (English as a second language) classes and services for non-native English-speaking students. Most classes are provided at no-cost to students thanks to annual federal and

state grant funding. The college offers Atlantic City residents daytime and evening credit and non-credit classes, tutoring, academic advising, and counseling. Additionally, scholarships are available to Atlantic City residents thanks to the generosity of community partners.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Atlantic Cape partnered with local churches and the Hispanic Alliance to conduct food drives at the Atlantic City campus. Several members of Atlantic Cape's staff volunteered during food distribution and are committed to serving the community in the same way if the need should resurface.

Atlantic Cape's Atlantic City campus continues to be a hub for community meetings. The college provides free office space to the Atlantic City Art Foundation, a growing non-profit that hosts community events and has completed over fifty murals throughout the City including many in the Inlet neighborhood. Atlantic City based religious groups are offered free computer training at the campus. Over the years, the college has played a pivotal role in many regional economic initiatives, from helping to staff new businesses, to working on major projects such as the development of the National Aviation Research & Technology Park. Additionally, the Worthington Atlantic City Campus has recently been working with the Atlantic City Community Fund to host workshops on community grant preparation and establishing non-profit organizations to energize neighborhood efforts.

### **C. Development and Service Delivery Capacity**

The Anchor Institutions and non-profit organizations that are working together in Inlet are equipped to leverage the renaissance of the neighborhood. This Inlet Revitalization Action Strategy identifies the roles and partnership that have been formed to execute the needed action.

To launch the planning process, the AtlantiCare Foundation introduced a home ownership program offering grants of up to \$10,000 to AtlantiCare employees who purchase and reside in Atlantic City homes. AtlantiCare is also offering credit counseling and home ownership transitional training to interested employees. If the program is successful, the goal of increasing the percentage of owner-occupied homes (now 26 percent City wide) will increase significantly. This program will have the impact of growing wealth for residents stemming from historical displacement and will result in better maintained properties and increased stability and safety for the neighborhood.

### **D. Capacity of Partners**

Atlantic Cape Community College has sufficient capacity to supervise and monitor the activities of its partners as demonstrated by its experience and many successful projects. There are many willing and committed partners of the Inlet Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy. Some of the major partners are discussed below.

City of Atlantic City provides CDBG and HOME funds for housing; provides support for neighborhood cleanups; provides the Small Business Academy; and maintains a strong partnership with the Mayor, City Council, Police Department, Public Works Department, Licenses & Inspections Department, and Planning Department.

First Ward Civic Association is led by Libby Wills, an active member of the Inlet Neighborhood Community Advisory Committee. The group meets monthly to discuss issues and opportunities in the Inlet section of the City.

Atlantic City Arts Foundation –The Atlantic City Arts Foundation provides diverse programs and partnerships which promote community pride and civic self-esteem through interaction with public art, including the City’s largest mural arts program. The 48 Blocks Atlantic City is the flagship program on the Foundation, which includes a city-wide art & cultural celebration.

Atlantic City Community Fund (ACCF) – is a tax-exempt charitable fund held in trust at the Community Foundation of South Jersey. ACCF’s purpose is to organize and mobilize Atlantic City’s capacity and resources to advance causes identified by and for the residents of Atlantic City.

Atlantic City Board of Education works jointly with the neighborhood on various projects and activities. The neighborhood leaders continue to collaborate directly with the principals of the schools that serve the Inlet neighborhood.

Atlantic City Police Athletic League is a community-based agency that is affiliated with the Atlantic City Police Department but run independently as a 501 C (3) non-profit organization. Administered by active Atlantic City Police Officers and highly qualified staff, assisted by local community leaders and private citizens, the Atlantic City Police Athletic League has provided education, recreation, and community service programs to the residents of Atlantic City and surrounding communities for over thirty years. Assisting those in need has always been an Atlantic City Athletic League priority., as demonstrated by their involvement with diverse populations.

Atlantic City Metropolitan Business and Citizen Association (MBCA) has grown to include in its membership all Atlantic City casinos, over 350 local businesses, 50 non-profit groups and over 100 citizens. MBCA is an all-inclusive organization that strives to serve and represent the Greater Atlantic City area. MBCA works for the betterment of the City’s neighborhoods and strives to be a constructive force to the society by working with and supporting other non-profit groups, supporting civic events, and awarding scholarships to local individuals.

Atlantic County Improvement Authority (ACIA) is the County’s redevelopment and economic development entity. ACIA has successfully completed housing rehabilitation for several years. ACIA has been working with the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority and the City in developing an abandoned properties program for the Inlet neighborhood.

Boys & Girls Club of Atlantic City (B&GC) provides resources for the development of young people from all backgrounds to realize their full potential as responsible and caring adults. The B&GC is rolling out a new STEAM Lab program this summer to prepare the City’s youth for careers beyond hospitality. The NRTC program may be targeted as a future funding source to continue this program to benefit the Inlet’s youth.

Chicken Bone Beach Historical Foundation works each year to keep the memories of Chicken Bone Beach alive by hosting free weekly jazz concerts. The foundation works hard to keep the cultural vibe of the beach alive and to pass that tradition down to younger generations. Henrietta Shelton founded the Chicken Bone Beach Historical Foundation in 1974.

Latin American Economic Development Association, Inc. (LAEDA), in partnership with the Atlantic City Mayor’s Office. Is hosting the Small Business Academy, a nine-week program to gain knowledge of how to effectively start and grow a business.

Leadership Studio of Atlantic City – strives to advance the physical, energetic, economic, and spiritual growth of the City’s residents through programming and partnerships.

MudGirls Studios is a non-profit organization which empowers disadvantaged women through making functional ceramic art and architectural tiles.

Reed's Organic Farm, operating under A Meaningful Purpose, Inc., is a non-profit organization that was established with the clear intent of assisting the local community. They aim to help the local community by creating a hub on a local farm that serves as an animal rescue, a platform for sustainable, organic farming, training and experiences for local youth, and an employer for individuals with special needs. A Meaningful Purpose, Inc. is currently operating at Reed's Organic Farm.

Shultz Hill Foundation n was established in 2002 to promote and support arts, history, and education in South Jersey. In an effort to foster appreciation and awareness, one of the primary goals of the Foundation is to provide educational scholarships, direct grants and funding for Arts, Historical and Musical programs.

Stockton University provides internships for neighborhood residents; provides educational and job training; and serves as an Anchor Institution in the City of Atlantic City.

Volunteers of America Delaware Valley (VOADV) is a 501I 3 non-profit social service agency that has been providing essential services to vulnerable individuals and communities since 1896. VOADV is characterized by its diversity of programming and assistance services and supported by a team of more than 400 qualified, mission-driven professionals that work tirelessly on behalf of their clients.

## **E. Lapsed Neighborhood Plans**

The City of Atlantic City was only recently approved for the Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit Program. Hence, this is the first NRTC Plan to be developed for the Inlet Neighborhood.

# **Section 5. Neighborhood Description and Statement of Need**

## **A. Neighborhood Description**

The Inlet Neighborhood consists of two census tracts (Census Tract 19 and 25). Census Tract 19 is a federally designated Opportunity Zone. The total land area is 0.52 square miles. The total population is 5,251, which is a twenty percent decrease from the 2000 Census total of 6,576.

*Atlantic City: Building A Foundation for A Shared Prosperity* was unveiled on September 20, 2018, by Governor Phil Murphy and Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver to provide a framework for the return of Atlantic City to local control. The report discusses the importance of neighborhood associations noting that “community engagement is the core element of legacy city revitalization.” Much of this Strategy is devoted to neighborhood-based decision making and implementation of community endorsed strategies. This planning effort is a means to implement the State Plan.

The City of Atlantic City is located in Atlantic County and data is provided on a county basis by the US Census as shown below. The median household income in Atlantic City is much less than the County total as demonstrated by Data.Census.gov which documents a median household income for Atlantic City in 2020 of \$29,526.



	Atlantic County	New Jersey
2016	\$55,456	\$73,702
2017	\$57,514	\$76,475
2018	\$59,989	\$79,363
2019	\$62,110	\$82,545

The Brookings Institute rates the Atlantic County area in their top three regions in the nation to have long term impacts from COVID-19, calling the region a “recession-vulnerable metro area” due to its heavy reliance on the leisure and hospitality sector.

**B. Conditions and Need for Revitalization**

Data Sources: US Census Bureau, 2000 Decennial Census (data matched to 2010 Census Tract boundaries), 2010 Decennial Census, 2020 Decennial Census, and 2014-18 ACS 5-Year Estimates; HUD, 2012-16 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy data (special tabulation of 2012-16 ACS 5-Year Estimates data)

**1. People**

The Inlet study area is a diverse area with Black (46.5%), White (20.9%), Hispanic (19.7%) and Asian (8.1%) as compared to all of Atlantic City which is 34% Black, 29.9% Hispanic, 16.2% White, and 16.1% Asian.

	Census Tract 19		Census Tract 25		Inlet		Atlantic City	
	Pop	%	Pop	%	Pop	%	Pop	%
Black or African American	633	47.8%	1,809	46.1%	2,442	46.5%	13,079	34.0%
White	278	21.0%	817	20.8%	1,095	20.9%	6,219	16.2%
Hispanic or Latino	295	22.3%	737	18.8%	1,032	19.7%	11,513	29.9%
Asian	50	3.8%	377	9.6%	427	8.1%	6,208	16.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native	3	0.2%	9	0.2%	12	0.2%	72	0.2%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	17	0.0%
Some Other Race	10	0.8%	25	0.6%	35	0.7%	263	0.7%
Population of two or more races	55	4.2%	153	3.9%	208	4.0%	1,126	2.9%
Total	1,324	100.0%	3,927	100.0%	5,251	100.0%	38,497	100.0%

The median age for Census tract 19 is 35 years old and for Census tract 25, it is 54 years old. The most vulnerable populations (aged 18 years and younger and aged 60 years and older) comprise over forty percent.

Census Tract	19	25
Total Households	913	2031
% Single Mother Headed HHs	3.3%	10.5%
Median Age	34.9	54.3
% Under Age 18	17.5%	16.4%
% Age 60 and Older	15.9%	31.4%

## 2. Income

The median household income in 2018 is set at \$21,600. This is only 27 percent of the New Jersey State median household income for the same year (\$79,363). The State poverty rate is 9.2 percent. In the Inlet, nearly 35 percent of the population is determined to be living under the poverty line.

Census Tract	19	25
Poverty Rate	36.5%	32.7%
Family Poverty Rate	32.4%	25.0%
Per Capita Income	\$21,826	\$21,407
Median Household Income	\$26,967	\$25,170

Census Tract	19	25	Total
Moderate Income HHs	130	310	440
Low Income HHs	350	1,160	1,510
Low & Mod Income HHs	480	1,470	1,950
Total Households	720	1,970	2,690
Percent HHs Low Income	48.6%	58.9%	56.1%
Percent HHs Low & Mod Income	66.7%	74.6%	72.5%



### 3. Education

About 80 percent of residents have a high school diploma or its equivalent and over 15 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher.

Census Tract	19	25
% age 25+ with HS Degree or Higher	82.4%	78.2%
% age 25+ with Bachelor's Degree or Higher	19.2%	15.2%

### 4. Housing

The Inlet has newer housing stock than most of the City, 80 percent of housing was built since 1960. Less than fifteen percent of the housing units in the Inlet are owner occupied.

Census Tract	19	25
Housing Units	1086	2419
Owner Occupied Units	59	327
Rental Occupied Units	665	1704
Vacant Units	362	388
Non-Seasonal Vacant Units	271	294
Homeownership Rate	8.1%	16.1%
Median Gross Rent	\$985	\$549
Median Home Value	\$263,300	\$141,300
Median Year Structure Built	1977	1986
% Housing Built before 1940	8.3%	4.7%
% Housing Built before 1960	20.3%	18.2%
% Single Family Detached	2.0%	15.5%
% Single Family Attached	4.3%	18.1%
% Multi-Family	90.4%	62.8%

### C. Evidence of Neighborhood Distress

The median household income in the Inlet in 2018 for Census Tract 19 was \$26,967 and in Tract 25 it was \$23,517. This compares to \$59,989.00 for Atlantic County and \$79,363.00 for the State of New Jersey.

The family poverty rate was 32.4 percent in Census Tract 19 and 25.0 percent in Census Tract 25, compared to 10.9 percent for Atlantic County and 7.6 percent for the State of New Jersey.

Atlantic City is considered one of the poorest communities in New Jersey, ranking 3 of 565 on the 2020 Municipal Revitalization Index. A high unemployment rate, several abandoned homes, and a high percentage of people living in poverty has impacted Atlantic City.

The Brookings Institute rates the Atlantic County area in their top three regions in the nation to have long term impacts from COVID-19, calling the region a "recession-vulnerable metro area" due to its heavy reliance on the leisure and hospitality sector.

The net taxable value of Atlantic County has dropped from \$47,827,529,564 in 2010 to \$30,431,638,147 in 2021. The net taxable value of the City of Atlantic City has dropped from \$20,480,854,452 in 2010 to \$2,429,533,483 in 2021. The ratable value of the casino hotels was removed from the ratable base in 2015 as a result of special PILOT legislation. To fund a basic level of municipal services, the effective tax rate has nearly double for \$2.365 in 2010 to \$3.487 in 2021, the fourth highest rate in Atlantic County with Egg Harbor City, Linwood, and Northfield having higher tax rates. The Atlantic City tax rate has dropped consistently over the past four years. The high property tax has been a severe strain on property owners in the City, contributing to tax liens, foregone repairs, and abandoned housing stock. Alternative funding, like NRTC dollars, are needed to address the City's housing needs and to encourage ratable growth.

#### **D. Photographs of Neighborhood Conditions**

Photographs are provided in the Attachments.

#### **E. Description of Other Plans**

The City has completed several planning efforts, some of which focus directly on the Inlet neighborhood, but the assumptions and visions communicated in the older plans need to be revisited and significantly revised. With the decline of the casino market in the late 2000s and early 2010s, many planned gaming and tourism projects failed to materialize. This has led the City and State to fundamentally re-assess the vision and plan for the resort community. More recently, the planning efforts have turned to focus on the City's residential neighborhoods and increasing the City's livability. The proposed Neighborhood Plan would dovetail with these efforts, which are currently being led by the State in cooperation with the City.

The State of New Jersey has adopted a large role in supporting community development in Atlantic City. The initiative began in earnest with the Building a Foundation for a Shared Prosperity report prepared by Special Counsel Jim Johnson. This report (known as the Johnson Report) alongside extensive stakeholder engagement, led to the creation of an Executive Council, Coordinating Council, and State Initiatives Office. This structure provides oversight, accountability, technical assistance, and considerable assistance and coordination of projects that build the City's neighborhoods, facilitate public-private partnerships, and improve the quality of life for residents.

**Atlantic City Master Plan, 1978** – The first master plan established after the casino referendum was passed. This document guided much of the development in the City following the legalization of gambling. Many of the developments resulting from this plan can still be found throughout the Inlet neighborhood. The main goals and objectives of the plan were to: accelerate development of casino hotels; enhance convention industry; expand tourism; expand retail opportunities; provide incentives for spin off growth; and promote balance by adding new housing, retail, and other commercial uses.

**Main Street Atlantic City: Downtown Revitalization Plan, 2007** – A detailed plan regarding the Atlantic Avenue Business District.

**Atlantic City Master Plan, 2008** – Comprehensive Master Plan with all appropriate elements which provides the foundation for zoning and planning throughout the City.

**Atlantic City Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, 2012** – A plan funded by the New Jersey Department of Transportation to develop bike and pedestrian safety improvement recommendations for the entire City.

**Tourism District Master Plan, 2012** – Completed by the CRDA to guide investments.

**Atlantic City Market Value Analysis, 2015** – The Market Value Analysis (MVA) is a tool designed to assist the private market and government officials to identify and comprehend the various elements of local real estate markets. It is based fundamentally on local administrative data sources. By using an MVA, public sector officials and private market actors can more precisely craft intervention strategies in weak markets and support sustainable growth in stronger market segments.

**Atlantic City Master Plan Reexamination, 2016** – This reexamination of the 2008 Master Plan which captured the decline of the casino industry, the significant decrease in property value, and the effects of Superstorm Sandy. Goals, objectives, and recommendations included: create attractive neighborhoods that are affordable and well-served to provide a high quality of life for the residents; strengthen and improve City-wide and neighborhood commercial districts as centers of employment, shopping, services, entertainment and education; integrate the design and use of the Boardwalk as the prime destination corridor connecting various destinations including the all-important beach to the City; and upgrade substandard properties in the City through code enforcement efforts, education, ordinance amendments and other initiatives.

**Atlantic Avenue Road Safety Assessment, 2019** – This assessment evaluated existing traffic and safety operations along a 2.64-mile corridor of Atlantic Avenue from Boston Avenue to New Hampshire Avenue. A total of 829 crashes occurred on Atlantic Avenue from 2013 to 2017. This report recommends a wide array of safety improvements along Atlantic Avenue including synchronized traffic signals, additional street lighting, clearly defined crosswalks, and bump outs at intersections.

**Atlantic City: Building A Foundation for a Shared Prosperity, 2018** – This plan was prepared by NJDCA to provide a guide for the revitalization of Atlantic City. This report discusses the importance of neighborhood associations noting that “community engagement is the core element of legacy city revitalization.” This plan has provided a renewed focus on the need to support neighborhood-based decision making and implementation of community endorsed strategies.

**Atlantic City: Restart and Recovery Working Group, 2021** – The Murphy Administration released a report from the Atlantic City Restart and Recovery Working Group that Governor Phil Murphy and Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver convened in the Summer of 2020 to examine the post-pandemic reality of Atlantic City and provide recommendations for how the City can recover economically and socially recover from COVID-19. The report will guide the continued work that the State of New Jersey, City of Atlantic City, and stakeholders are doing to revitalize Atlantic City and improve the quality of life for residents, businesses, and visitors.

The Working Group included representatives from Atlantic Cape, Rutala Associates, and Inlet Neighborhood Community Advisory Committee members, included five subcommittees that covered the areas of restart and recovery; workforce development; economic diversification, public health, and wellness; and community outreach. Each subcommittee worked to create solutions to issues exacerbated by the pandemic as part of a unified strategy to move Atlantic City into a successful future. Each section of the report details the recommendations put forth by each subcommittee. The report also includes guidance for six industries the Atlantic City region should target and information on the Blue Economy, which involves the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic and job growth.

The report provides a number of recommendations, including the following examples:

- Refresh the structures and appearances along Pacific Avenue by demolishing deteriorated buildings, adding greenery, improving lighting, rehabilitating storefronts, and relocating service yards and dumpsters;
- Continue the redesign and repurposing of Atlantic Avenue that is currently underway; Achieve 100 percent internet connectivity by using grant funding, such as federal dollars;
- Reconvene the Atlantic City Jobs Council to assess employer needs, create training and apprentice programs, establish a jobs database, and hold job fairs;
- Develop the Blue Economy as a solution to lessen the City’s dependence on casino gaming and tourism, while building on the City’s greatest asset, the Atlantic Ocean. The Blue Economy promotes renewable energy, coastal resiliency, fisheries, ecotourism, grey water recycling, smart technology waste management, and marine-based drones;
- Coordinate economic development and streamline the permitting and approval process for businesses;
- Create an early pregnancy outreach program that focuses on communities of color to educate mothers on critical health issues such as pre-natal vitamins, pregnancy complications, and pre-term labor;
- Develop a remote care monitoring program for pregnant women with a focus on hypertension, gestational diabetes, pre-term labor, tobacco cessation, alcohol, and drug use, and other high-risk pregnancy concerns;
- Build an online community collaboration database that lists all community services and citizen-led initiatives available in Atlantic City. Find an Anchor Institution to support and maintain the database so that it is kept up to date;
- Expand the Atlantic City Police Department’s Neighborhood Coordination Officer (NCO) community policing initiative; and
- Create more recreational programs for city youth and provide more sports fields/facilities.

**F. Municipal Support Letter**

Letter of support from Mayor Marty Small, Sr. is attached.

**Section 6. Neighborhood Assets**

**A. Neighborhood Assets**

**1. Community Assets**

**Medical**

AtlantiCare HealthPlex	1401 Atlantic Ave
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Crisis Center	1601 Atlantic Ave
Southern Jersey Family Medical Centers	1125 Atlantic Ave
Reliance Medical Group (Family Medicine)	1325 Baltic Ave
Psychiatric Pharmacogenomics (PGx)	16 S Rhode Island Ave
Island Medical Associates	16 S Rhode Island Ave

### Transportation

Atlantic City Train Station	1 Atlantic City Expressway
Atlantic City Bus Station	1901 Atlantic Avenue
NJ Transit Bus Service	Atlantic Avenue – Neighborhood Wide
Atlantic City Jitney Service	Pacific Avenue – Neighborhood Wide

Transportation: In addition to access to rail transit at the nearby Atlantic City Train Station, the Inlet Neighborhood has robust access to ground mass transportation. Fifteen separate New Jersey Transit bus lines serve the Inlet Neighborhood through 25 individual stops. Many of these stops are located on Atlantic Avenue. The Main Jitney Route and Route #3 both serve the Inlet Neighborhood. The Main Jitney Route runs along Pacific Avenue, while Route #3 passes through The Walk and Arkansas Avenue. The New Jersey Transit bus routes serving the neighborhood include: 319, 502, 504, 505, 507, 508, 509, 511, 514, 515, 551, 552, 553, 554, and 559.

### Education

Uptown School Complex	323 Madison Ave
Richmond Ave School	919 Atlantic Ave
Ciudad De Luz Education Enrichment LLC Home School Education Center	937 Atlantic Ave
Pennsylvania Avenue School	201 N Pennsylvania Ave

### Parks and Recreation

Oscar E. McClinton Waterfront Park	201 N New Hampshire Ave
Fisherman’s Park	Melrose Ave. and N. Massachusetts Ave.
Uptown Park	Madison Ave. and N. Massachusetts Ave.
Altman Playground	Euclid Ave. and N. St. Katherine Pl.
Gardners Basin	801 New Hampshire Avenue
Absecon Lighthouse Park	31 S Rhode Island Avenue

## Community

Oceanside I Family Success Center	201 Melrose Ave
Agape Community Youth Center	201 Atlantic Ave
Covenant House New Jersey	929 Atlantic Ave

## Celebrations & Events

Atlantic City Air Show	Atlantic City Beach
Atlantic City Marathon	City Wide
Chalk About AC	City Wide
48 Blocks	City Wide
Atlantic City Restaurant Week	City Wide
Juneteenth Event	Oscar McClinton Park
Summer Concert Series	Gardner's Basin
Live Well Farmer's Market	Absecon Lighthouse
Family Pumpkin Patch	Absecon Lighthouse
Light & Sound Healing Arts Festival	Absecon Lighthouse
"Love AC" Weekend	Absecon Lighthouse
Orange Loop Rock Fest	800 Atlantic Avenue

## Fire and Police Stations

Atlantic City Fire Department Station No. 1	900 Atlantic Ave
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## Retail/Commercial

Gilchrist Restaurant	804 N Rhode Island Avenue
Atlantic Avenue Business District	Throughout The Inlet
Boardwalk Merchants	Throughout The Inlet
Kelsey's	201 Melrose Avenue
Back Bay Ale House	800 N New Hampshire Avenue
Mel's Furniture	508 Atlantic Avenue
Tony Boloney's	300 Oriental Avenue
Cedar Market	101 N Rhode Island Avenue

Dockside Packing	336 N. Rhode Island Avenue
Hot Bagels & More	212 Pacific Avenue
Mousa Market	230 N New Jersey Avenue
Cedar Market	203 Melrose Avenue
One Stop Bait & Tackle	416 Atlantic Avenue
Many additional shops and eateries	Throughout the Inlet Neighborhood

**2. Regional Assets**

Atlantic City Boardwalk	Throughout The Inlet
Atlantic City Beach	Throughout The Inlet
Ocean Casino Resort	500 Boardwalk
Ovation Hall	500 Boardwalk
Atlantic City Historical Museum	600-698 Boardwalk
Atlantic City Aquarium	800 N New Hampshire Ave
Atlanticare	1401 Atlantic Ave

**3. Municipal Revitalization Priorities**

The Inlet Neighborhood has been historically targeted for various urban renewal programs and projects. The neighborhood’s proximity to major tourist destinations and existing residential communities has historically resulted in conflicts between planned resort and residential uses. Land speculation and demolitions associated with planned projects has resulted in the loss of many buildings in the neighborhood, particularly in Tract 19. Despite these challenges, the neighborhood maintains a crucial community of residents and local businesses. Nascent redevelopment efforts have been underway, including the development of new multifamily housing at 600 NoBe, the re-opening of Ocean Casino Resort, and the re-construction of the Absecon Inlet Seawall/Boardwalk. These investments, totaling in excess of one hundred million dollars, are anticipated to bring spin-off development to a long-overlooked City neighborhood. The additional investment in renovations at Gardner’s Basin and Absecon Lighthouse will bring further interest and visitation to the neighborhood.

The neighborhood planning process will bring together the neighborhood’s diverse communities of residents, civic leaders, and businesses to communicate an inclusive vision for the Inlet. It is anticipated that a future NRTC designation will generate funds to provide services in the neighborhood, including housing and amenities for all residents.

A portion of the Inlet Neighborhood has been federally designated as an Opportunity Zone. This area is bounded by Connecticut Avenue, Pacific Avenue, the Absecon Inlet, and the Atlantic Ocean.

In addition, much of the Inlet Neighborhood is in the Special Improvement District (SID), which provides for maintenance through the CRDA staff. The SID includes all of Atlantic Avenue and Pacific Avenue in the Inlet Neighborhood.

The City of Atlantic City was an active participant in the Inlet Revitalization Action Strategy planning process. Councilman Arron Randolph and Councilwoman Stephanie Marshal attended most public and neighborhood committee meetings. The City Licenses & Inspections Director Dale Finch and Officer in Charge Jim Sarkos attended neighborhood meetings. The City's Public Works Department sponsors all the neighborhood clean ups.

The City of Atlantic City continues to make significant investments in the Inlet Neighborhood. Some of the actions that the City has taken to help implement Inlet Revitalization Action Strategy include:

- Expedited and partially funded the reconstruction of the Boardwalk/Seawall in the Inlet.
- Active involvement in establishing an abandoned properties program.
- Demolished targeted buildings included on the list presented to City Council by the Inlet Neighborhood Community Advisory Committee.
- Established a Historic Preservation Commission which has supported the preservation and restoration of several historic buildings in the Inlet including the Connecticut Avenue Fire Station and the New York Avenue School.
- Converted all streetlights in the Inlet Neighborhood to brighter LED technology to improve public safety.
- Continues to fully fund neighborhood cleanups in the Inlet including paper shredding and roll off services.
- Secured funding for lighting, paving, and safety improvements on Atlantic Avenue.
- Constructing a \$10 million pump station on Georgia Avenue that serves an 800-acre area which includes the Inlet to help address nuisance flooding.
- Established a community policing unit and is planning to expand this effort.
- Investing over \$3 million in renovations to the aquarium, dredging and site improvements.
- Taking a leadership role in McClinton Park to provide better maintenance and programming.



## Oscar E. McClinton Waterfront Park



### Recent Investment

Investment in the Inlet neighborhood over the past five years include:

- Ocean Casino Resort – The Resort is constructing a new venue that will blend an entertaining bar, lounge, and gaming experience with sports wagering. Following last year’s \$15 million casino floor redesign, the \$4 million concept is scheduled to debut in the Summer of 2022 with trading management services provided in partnership with USBookmaking, a subsidiary of Elys Game Technology, Corp. The Resort is also investing \$75 million to finish 460 guest rooms and suites.
- Wind Safety Training Center – The Atlantic Cape’s new \$3 million Wind Safety Training Center will be located at Atlantic Cape’s Worthington Campus with a water rescue and sea survival training facility at Gardner’s Basin. This Training Center will provide certified basic training for employees working on the offshore wind projects.

## ACCC: Sea Survival Training Structure at Gardner's Basin



- North Beach Mini Golf - The 18-hole North Beach Mini Golf Course is located at 120 Euclid Avenue and includes two levels, bike rentals and a pedestrian bridge to the Boardwalk.
- North Beach Marketing Cooperative – This marketing effort includes Ocean Casino Resort, Hard Rock Hotel & Casino and Resorts Casino Hotel as well as non-gaming entities Showboat Atlantic City, Steel Pier, Absecon Lighthouse, and various restaurants and bars along Tennessee Avenue. This effort has brought a new identity to the Inlet section of the City. The consortium started in 2019, when the properties were looking for a way to market the rebounding area.
- Michaels Organization – Michaels Organization recently received a Choice Neighborhoods Implementation planning grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to help redevelop Stanley Homes Village. As part of this project, Michaels is considering the redevelopment of a City owned property at Melrose and Connecticut.
- Pat Fasano – Mr. Fasano is a major real estate developer in Asbury Park, New Brunswick, and now in Atlantic City. Mr. Fasano has also purchased several lots in the southeast Inlet Neighborhood and plans to build single family and duplex housing.
- Argo AC, LLC has purchased 212, 214, and 225 Atlantic Avenue and renovated all units including the repair of the exterior wall surface that was subject to collapse. To upgrade the buildings to meet today's building codes, new fire suppression systems and safety doors were installed throughout. This 51-unit complex was partially vacant and had tenants living in substandard conditions. Today, these buildings present conditions favorable to market rentals and serve to stabilize the immediate neighborhood.
- Lighthouse Plaza, a 266-unit apartment building was recently sold, and internal and external renovations and enhancement are underway.
- Boraie Development – the developer of 600 North Beach (NoBe) is planning to build 700 North Beach on Atlantic Avenue, which consists of a high rise and 24 townhomes.

## 700 North Beach – Boraie in partnership with NJEDA



### B. Neighborhood Involvement

#### Community Organization Effectiveness

Atlantic Cape, the Inlet Neighborhood Community Advisory Committee, and the First Ward Civic Association have led a robust community engagement process for the development of this neighborhood plan, despite the difficult conditions resulting from the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Atlantic Cape hosted the following community improvement events and meetings:

February 13, 2021	Angels in Motion's Valentine Day feeding outreach initiative
April 3, 2021	Easter Holiday Event
April 10, 2021	Angels in Motion community feeding
May 1, 2021	CAPE HOPE's annual Spring Art Showcase
May 6, 2021	Hope One Atlantic County Spring Fling Resource Fair
May 6, 2021	Atlantic Charter Community School Parents information session
May 18, 2021	Recovery Court Probation Officers virtual presentation
May 22, 2021	Hosted Mexican Consulate
May 23, 2021	Hosted Mexican Consulate
May 24, 2021	Sponsored the Supporting NJ Dreamers "DACA Hybrid Information Session"
May 25, 2021	Individual presentations to Recovery Court program participants
May 27, 2021	Gateway CAP Fatherhood Program Presentation
June 2, 2021	Asian Consulate Day
June 3, 2021	Gateway CAP Fatherhood Program Presentation

#### Community Support and Engagement

A letter was sent to NJDCA from Mayor Marty Small Sr. on May 13, 2020, in full support of utilizing the NRTC process to revitalize the Inlet Neighborhood.

Stakeholder Interviews - Rutala Associates, which coordinated the public participation process, interviewed many stakeholders in Atlantic City. These individuals were identified by local leaders in government, community organization, and business/development.

- James Sarkos, Atlantic City Police Department, Officer in Charge
- Will Santiago, Atlantic City Police Department, Head of NCO Program
- Pat Fasano, Owner, Bourre
- Lance Landgraf, Planning Director, CRDA
- Rick Santoro, Director, Special Improvement District, CRDA
- Ralph Hunter, Founder, African American Museum of South Jersey
- Kimberly Holmes, Chief of Staff, New Jersey Dept. of Community Affairs
- Kaleem Shabazz, Councilman, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ward
- Marc Sterling, Director, CDBG Program
- Barbara Woolley-Dillon, Director, Atlantic City Planning & Development
- Gina Fischetti, Main Street New Jersey Program
- Pam Weintraub, Main Street New Jersey Program
- Sean Thompson, Main Street New Jersey Program
- Kate O'Malley, Atlantic City Arts Foundation
- Matt Doherty, Executive Director of the CRDA
- Uzo Ahiarakwe, PE, City Engineer for Atlantic City
- Nick Cangelosi, Michaels Organization
- Atlantic City Special Improvement District
- Evan Sanchez, Atlantic City Community Fund
- Michael Armstrong, Esq., Atlantic City Municipal Utilities Authority
- Art Ponzio, Ponzio Engineering
- Rick Riccardi, Marathon Engineering
- Tom Sykes, SOSH Architects
- Scott Evans, Atlantic City Fire Chief
- Dale Finch, Director, Licenses & Inspections
- Rocco Georgio, Licenses & Inspections
- Paul Jerkins, Director, Public Works
- John Lamey, Atlantic County Improvement Authority
- Michael Epps, Atlantic City Special Projects Office
- Michael Hauck, Tony Baloney's
- Jim Meyers, Truex Properties
- Michael Sommer, VP, Kushner Properties
- Tina Roberts – Tower Investments
- Waseem Boraie, President, Boraie Development, NoBe
- Roxanne Passarella CEO, Flagship Resort
- Bruce Ward, Inlet Resident
- Lisa Schall, Atlantic City Aquarium
- George Tibbitt, City Council President
- Karen Rosnick, Inlet Resident

The Inlet Neighborhood Community Advisory Committee has met every month starting on July 28, 2021. Additional public meetings were held on November 3, 2021, and June 8, 2022, to discuss the NRTC process and review the draft Strategy.

The First Ward Civic Association has held monthly meetings that were attended by the Steering Committee members and the Planning Team.

## **Organization Structure**

The Inlet Strategy will rely on a dedicated network of public and private sector partners to implement the recommendations. The recommendations, committee input, public meetings, and focus groups have culminated in a clear and specific agenda to address quality of life and economic opportunity in the neighborhood. The agenda cannot be accomplished unilaterally, and will require an unprecedented cooperation of agencies, businesses, and residents to succeed.

A Community Development Corporation (CDC) should be established to provide a strong neighborhood based organizational structure to implement this Strategy over the long term. A CDC is a non-profit entity that can serve as an agent through which grants, financing, and community development funds pass in order to improve the neighborhood. A community development corporation entails a full-time staff, budget, and resources to deliver services to the neighborhood and serves as a representative between the community and government. There are several distinct benefits of creating a non-profit specifically for the Inlet Neighborhood:

- a. A non-profit organization separate from business and government will provide accessibility and connectivity to address resident/business issues.
- b. A non-profit can qualify for special funding and financing that for-profit and government entities cannot.
- c. A distinct non-profit can focus exclusively on the issues facing the Inlet Neighborhood.
- d. A non-profit can hire staff and enlist volunteers to serve a variety of functions, including the provision of some resident and business services.
- e. A non-profit can serve as an organizing and driving force to address neighborhood needs from both the bottom-up and the top-down.
- f. The non-profit will be accountable to the neighborhood and the general public through Board representation, outside counsel, and representation of local leaders on the organization's board.

A CDC is an incorporated 501(c)(3) organization. 501(c)(3) is the code used by the Internal Revenue Service to exempt non-profit organizations from paying corporate taxes. A CDC has representatives of its community on its Board of Directors. CDCs undertake projects in housing, economic, and commercial development in coordination with human services, community organizing, community planning and a variety of other activities.

Community Development Corporations represent a truly integrated approach to neighborhood revitalization. They blend public and private resources to re-weave the physical and social fabric of the neighborhoods. Such efforts represent unique, comprehensive solutions for different types of neighborhoods. Projects are greater than “units built” or “clients served,” because of the amount of synergy created by the very efforts attached to such projects. Neighborhoods are stronger not just for the physical improvements added, but for the empowerment of the residents who control the work.

Ultimately, a CDC is an organization that is responsible for neighborhood improvement, increased economic vitality, and the overall implementation of an approved strategic revitalization plan for a

specific area. A CDC qualifies for Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit funds authorized the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs.

The Inlet Community Development Corporation (ICDC) will help to enable many of the implementation action items identified in this Strategy. The role of the non-profit would be to coordinate these efforts and maintain them in perpetuity. The non-profit will essentially execute the planning and listening functions of the neighborhood revitalization plan and allow for a continuous loop of feedback between residents, businesses, property owners, local leaders, and organizations. The purpose of the non-profit is to sustain the information and resources that have flowed to the Inlet throughout the neighborhood planning process.

The implementation ideas described on the following pages addresses major topic areas outlined in this Strategy: Capacity-building, economic development, human capital and planning and development. This includes a tentative schedule, deliverables, outcomes, evaluation metrics, potential partners, and estimated costs of implementing recommendations. This document will be updated and maintained as a living document once the Strategy is adopted, a non-profit is formed, and the corporation and its partners work to implement the Strategy's vision and recommendations.

## **Section 7. Proposed Vision, Strategies, Activities & Outcomes**

### **A. Vision Statement**

The Inlet Revitalization Action Strategy (Strategy) is a collaborative effort led by the Inlet Neighborhood Community Advisory Committee comprised of residents, community leaders, business owners and representatives from local institutions, the city, and the public at large.

The purpose of the Strategy is to improve the quality of life in the neighborhood. This resident-driven strategy is focused on planting the seeds for a broader transformation of local parks, schools, housing, and businesses. Over the past year, the process has brought together residents, community groups, local institutions, non-profits, city representatives, and local businesses to discuss how they envision their neighborhood improving over the next decade, and how they can work together to achieve their vision. This Strategy represents countless hours of work volunteered by resolute residents and stakeholders wishing to make the Inlet a better place to live, learn, play, and do business.

The overall goals of the proposed revitalization effort are to:

- Make the Inlet clean and safe;
- Improve housing in the Inlet for current and future residents;
- Preserve and celebrate Inlet's history, arts, and cultural legacy
- Promote Economic Development in the Inlet;
- Make the Inlet a resilient and sustainable neighborhood; and
- Assist the Inlet residents to embrace their full potential.

### **B. Strategies**

#### **Goal 1: Make The Inlet Clean & Safe**

Early on in the neighborhood planning process, public safety emerged as a primary, if not the primary neighborhood concern. City officials have been working to improve public safety for several years. For example, in 2019 the Neighborhood Coordination Officers (NCO) program was established, and two seasoned police officers were assigned to each of the City's six wards and four for homeless outreach.

Atlantic Avenue and Pacific Avenue business owners repeatedly raised the issue of people loitering on the sidewalk in front of their stores, intimidating patrons, and selling drugs. Many businessowners have installed cameras and have had the cameras connected to the Police Department's camera system. There is consensus that the local drug epidemic has reached a new level and that pervasive drug trade presents the most serious obstruction to the Inlet's and the City's revitalization. Recently, the City initiated a zero- tolerance policy for loitering and public drinking on Atlantic and Pacific Avenues.

Homelessness is another major issue throughout the City which is affecting the Inlet neighborhood. Community leaders and service providers note that Atlantic City does not have enough emergency homeless shelters to meet the local need. Moreover, people experiencing homelessness from other communities often relocate to Atlantic City, which places an additional strain on the existing homeless service providers and as well as on the public perception and lived experience of the Inlet neighborhood.

In 2021, there were 573 calls for police services in the Inlet study area. Of this total, 71 were Category I calls involving homicide, aggravated assault, burglary, robbery, rape, motor vehicle theft, arson, and theft. Most calls for police services in the Inlet neighborhood tend to come from apartment and condominium buildings which include:

1. Ocean Casino (500 Boardwalk)
2. Ocean View (101 Boardwalk)
3. Lighthouse Plaza (300 Atlantic Avenue)
4. Vermont Plaza (130 S. Vermont Avenue)
5. Jeffries Tower (227 N. Vermont Avenue)
6. Inlet Towers (220 N. New Hampshire Avenue)
7. Dollar General (621 Atlantic Avenue)

The Neighborhood Coordination Officers (NCO) program is the latest effort to advance the City's community policing strategy. The NCO program builds on the police department's community relations work which focuses on youth programs such as the Homework Completion Program, Cupcake with a Cop, and Holiday Basketball Game; adult programs such as Community Walks, Public Safety Health Fairs, and Community Care Meetings; and crime prevention. Also, the NCO program works in conjunction with the Atlantic City Citizens Advisory Board, whose purpose is to provide citizens with a regular channel for communicating with the police department and to facilitate problem-solving between the community and the police department.

Two NCOs are assigned to each ward. In many ways, the NCO program is policing as it should be – officers walking the beat, getting to know the people in their assigned neighborhoods, attending community meetings, visiting schools and businesses, addressing quality-of-life matters, and tracking crime trends. The NCO officers distribute their business cards to ward residents and

encourage people living and working in the ward to e-mail them or call them on their department-issued cell phones about their non-emergency concerns.

- 1. Support community policing and camera infrastructure on Pacific and Atlantic Avenues and in parks.** Crime in Atlantic City is a third of what it was five years ago, showing that Atlantic City's public safety and crime prevention strategies are effective. Technology, including Risk Terrain Modeling and Project Protect Atlantic City Together (P.A.C.T.), a camera-sharing program between the businesses and the City, have worked to reduce crime. P.A.C.T. is a \$12 million system which lets officers connect to cameras and access footage throughout the City. Over 1,400 cameras are virtually patrolled in the City's surveillance center. The expansion of this system to include cameras on Pacific and Atlantic Avenues in the Inlet neighborhood will expand this successful system, prevent crime, and increase safety. It is also recommended that this system be further expanded to include Gardner's Basin, McClinton Park, and Altman Park.
- 2. Mobilize a Neighborhood Watch Group.** Crime reduction proved to be a major priority at the public meetings. Neighborhood Watch programs have great potential to prevent crime and improve safety. To be effective, implementation will require collaborating with the Police Department to recruit and educate volunteers. To be effective and transparent, it is important that a neighborhood watch group has a visible presence on the streets, with reflective vests or other indicators that they are actively observing the neighborhood. Town watch signs should be posted around the patrol area to further deter crime and undesirable behavior.
- 3. Continue to organize annual neighborhood clean-ups.** Several neighborhood clean-ups were held thanks to the City's sponsorship and local participation. These events should be held semi-annually or quarterly to continue to build pride in the community and improve the appearance, health, and safety of the neighborhood. Vacant lots should be targeted for clean-up along with streets, alleys, parking lots and planters.
- 4. Monitor negligent property owners to address code violations.** Neighborhood disinvestment has resulted in vacant and dilapidated buildings that are in violation of code. The Inlet Neighborhood Community Advisory Committee has developed a list of properties that appear to be abandoned or in disrepair. The Committee is working with the City's Department of Licenses and Inspections to pressure negligent property owners to act, to have the property listed for demolition, or to have the property marked as abandoned. This code violation campaign should continue to provide a simple way for residents to flag problem properties and ensure that action results.
- 5. Improve street paving and sidewalk conditions.** The Inlet Neighborhood Community Advisory Committee should work with the City and CRDA to prioritize and fund improvements to streets and sidewalks and coordinate those improvements with property owners who may be required to replace sidewalks as part of a development project. The Committee has already been successful in prioritizing paving of Melrose Avenue and installing a solar speed sign on New Hampshire Avenue, which sign will prevent damage to vehicles and infrastructure caused by speeding.
- 6. Undertake façade and streetscape improvements.** Many of commercial buildings on Atlantic and Pacific Avenue were built in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and have faced over a century of weathering, repairs, and tenant fit outs. These buildings remain in varying degrees of



conditions, ranging from well-kept and decorated buildings to those with apparently damaged wood, masonry, broken/covered windows, and other signs of deterioration. A façade and streetscape improvement program, which can be funded through the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority, Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credits, and other economic development funds, could assist property owners in aesthetically improving building facades. A façade and streetscape improvement program would benefit all users of the neighborhood's commercial districts, making the neighborhood more desirable as a place to live and spend time and money. This could also have the effect of encouraging new tenants to establish businesses in the neighborhood.

**7. Expand neighborhood maintenance efforts.** Trash on streets and sidewalks makes the wrong first impression to visitors and potential investors. Additionally, uncontained trash negatively affects the quality of life for Inlet Neighborhood residents. Recognizing that many of the residents and businesses consulted during the plan preparation indicated a need to keep the neighborhood clean. Listed below are a few ways to address the issue:

- Lobby the City and CRDA to provide additional trash and recycling containers.
- Encourage the City to coordinate with waste collection providers to pursue the most efficient means of trash collection (rear loaders, automated side loaders, front loaders).
- Encourage the City to consider trash/recycling pick-up routes so as to maximize efficiency for waste collectors and minimize exposure to the sight and odor of trash to residents and business owners.
- Educate residents and business owners on methods of disposing large items, appliances, batteries, electronics, yard waste, hazardous waste, and light bulbs.
- Identify popularly used public trash/recycling bins and ensure collection occurs as frequently as required to prevent overflow.
- Promote and enforce the requirement that trash totes be removed from the curbside by 5 pm on trash collection day, to reduce clutter on the streets.
- Work with the CRDA to complete periodic pressure washing of sidewalk.
- Work with the City to extend regular street sweeping services.

**8. Restrict Inappropriate Activities at the Maine Avenue beach and promenade area, and the Seawall.** The Maine Avenue beaches easily become overcrowded, and visitors bring large tents, host barbeques, play loud music, and occupy the space late into the night, which activity negatively impacts the surrounding neighborhood and results in noise complaints, debris, and general burden and bother to the public. Several recommendations have been made to reduce the impact of this activity on the Inlet neighborhood including:

- Install parking meters along N. Maine Avenue from Melrose to Caspian to encourage more frequent turnover of visitors.
- Restrict tents, barbeques, and loud music from the beach and promenade area and have the beach and promenade area patrolled to enforce these restrictions
- Enforce the hours that the public is permitted to access the beach and the Seawall area.
- Add lighting throughout the areas to deter illicit and unwanted activity.
- Install restrooms at the Seawall area to improve the general health, safety, and well-being of the public area.

**9. Design and implement a comprehensive CPTED program for the entire Inlet Neighborhood.** Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a multi-disciplinary approach of crime prevention that uses urban and architectural design and the

management of built and natural environments. CPTED strategies aim to reduce victimization, deter offender decisions that precede criminal acts, and build a sense of community among inhabitants so they can gain territorial control of areas, reduce crime, and minimize fear of crime. These improvements can include increased lighting, increased open space, security cameras and the removal of places for offenders to hide before and after they act. Residents, business owners, landscapers, architects, and others can adopt a “safer by design” approach to improve their community and reduce crime. The incorporation of CPTED techniques will be within appropriate means, will not use hostile architecture, and will not sterilize the community. CPTED techniques that can be implemented in the neighborhood include symbolic barriers, natural surveillance, and defensible ground. This strategy recommends that the City work through the local organizations to host CPTED training workshops for property owners and provide small grants to participants to implement CPTED tactics.

## **Goal 2: Improve housing in the Inlet for Current and Future Residents**



Homeownership is central to the revitalization of the Inlet Neighborhood. Less than twenty percent of the homes in The Inlet are owner occupied. With such a high percentage of rental properties, people come and go, often without getting to know their neighbors or becoming involved in the neighborhood. The Inlet community wants more of its residents to be vested in their homes and therefore vested in the community. Homeownership will deepen residents’ roots in the neighborhood and deepen their commitment to effecting positive change at home and in the neighborhood.

There is a supply of vacant and abandoned properties in the neighborhood that could be turned into homes while removing the negative externalities that these vacant and abandoned properties inflict on the neighborhood. During the community meetings, residents strongly endorsed homeownership. Residents felt that increased homeownership would benefit the whole community, as owner-occupants tend to take better care of their properties than absentee property owners.

- 1. Promote and incentivize homeownership.** The ICDC and partners can use a variety of incentive programs to enable the Inlet and City residents, especially participants in a homeownership education program, to purchase a home in the Inlet. These incentives could include matched savings accounts, down payment assistance, and other tools to hedge credit risk.
- 2. Pre-homeownership Outreach and Education for The Inlet Residents.** AtlantiCare has taken the lead on this issue and provides homeownership outreach activities. The Inlet Neighborhood Community Development Corporation should build on this foundation to provide educational services for Inlet residents so that they can begin considering the

possibility of homeownership in the neighborhood and understand the process through which that could become a reality. In addition to this initial outreach, there should be a structured homeownership education program for promising candidates to receive further homebuyer education and counseling in the hope of becoming homeownership ready.

- 3. Support ordinance revisions that require that rental units be inspected every two years to ensure compliance with building code requirements.** Rental unit inspections help ensure tenant safety and address unsafe conditions in housing units. Currently, the City's Rental Property ordinance does not address inspections. Only multifamily properties with three or more units are subject to State inspection every five years. Illegal units may not be inspected at all. Regular, more frequent inspections of rental units can address housing quality issues preemptively, or those that may go undisclosed.
- 4. Incentivize and encourage property owners to abate lead in neighborhood houses to help ensure that residents do not face above-normal exposure to lead, particularly in older buildings.** Lead exposure in residential buildings has well-documented health impacts for residents. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, 87 percent of homes built before 1940 contain lead-based paint. Lead is also found in pipes, dust, soil, and other household items. Lead can impact brain development, attacks the nervous system, and leads to other physical maladies. Addressing lead will reduce the risk of lead poisoning in Inlet children, many of whom are living in older housing stock. A program put in place to abate lead (such as through group/cooperative purchasing of services and coordinating dumpsters/demolition) could assist or defray costs of property owners seeking to abate lead.
- 5. Implement Atlantic City's Abandoned Properties Ordinance.** Through a concerted effort working with the City and the Inlet stakeholders the ICDC will implement the City's Abandoned Properties Ordinance in the neighborhood to create further opportunity for the acquisition and rehabilitation of abandoned homes. Implementing this Ordinance may require initial investment in public policy research and advocacy but promises significant returns for the neighborhood. By monitoring vacant properties and properties that are at risk of becoming vacant, a new housing supply can be established while also benefitting current homeowners. Abandoned Properties result in a strain on municipal budget, lost tax revenue, higher service costs, decreased value of adjacent properties, and higher insurance premiums on adjacent properties due to increased risk of damage. As such, eliminating abandoned properties will result in an increased quality of life for current Inlet neighborhood residents.
- 6. Create a Home Repair Grants Program.** A housing rehabilitation program should be established by the ICDC in which a resident-led committee will review applications from neighborhood homeowners and, potentially, small property owners, for funding to complete repairs or abate potential environmental health hazards on their properties using local contractors.

### Goal 3: Preserve and Celebrate the Inlet’s History, Arts, and Cultural Legacy

The Inlet is the only neighborhood in Atlantic City that is surrounded on three sides by water and the waterfront amenities in this neighborhood should be celebrated and enhanced. There are wonderful

attracting for the entire family. For children there is North Beach Mini Golf, Lucky Snake Arcade at Showboat, Serendipity3 at Ocean Casino Resort, the Aquarium at Gardner’s Basin, and the historic Absecon Lighthouse. The neighborhood also has a full array of adult fun including Sirens, Back Bay Ale House, Little Water Distillery, The Seed Brewery, and Westecunk Axe Throwing. In addition to several well-known eateries including Gilcrest, Tony Baloney’s, and Kelsey and Kim’s Southern Café to name a few. Add the parks, beaches, fishing pier, and Boardwalk and you can see that the Inlet has much to celebrate.

**1. Enhance Parks and Open Space.** A great deal of investment has been targeted to the Inlet Neighborhood in the past decade. The reconstruction of the Boardwalk/Seawall the envy of any waterfront community and the enhancements at Gardners Basin Park which includes dredging, bulkhead repairs, new restrooms, aquarium upgrades and site improvements will make this park a major attraction. Nevertheless, there are additional improvements needed throughout the Inlet Neighborhood.

- **Altman Park and Playground** – This 1.56-acre park is located at 101 Pacific Avenue, and it is part of a linear park system developed by the CRDA that extends from the Boardwalk to the Absecon Lighthouse. This park has fallen into disrepair and the tennis courts no longer have nets and are unusable. There are no restrooms, and the fencing and sidewalks are in disrepair. The Inlet CDC has developed a plan for revitalization of this park which includes utilizing Block 82, Lot 1 which is currently vacant, and it located between the park and the Boardwalk.

#### Altman Park and Vacant Block 82, Lot 1



This vacant parcel is City owned and on it is on the City’s Recreation and Open Space inventory. The goal is to revitalize Altman Playground to create a premier family friendly

recreation site. The vacant property can support additional parking, an expanded playground, volleyball court, pickleball courts, and renovated restroom facilities.



Vision – Altman Playground Rendering - 1



Vision – Altman Playground Rendering - 2

- **Oscar E. McClinton Waterfront Park** – This 4.4-acre park located at 201 N. New Hampshire Avenue was built by Atlantic County Government and has fallen into disrepair. The City is planning to assume responsibility for this park and this action is supported. The park should be restored to its original condition and programmed for use by the City's new recreation department.

- **Fisherman’s Park** – this park located on Melrose Avenue and has the potential of being expanded to include existing vacant land located on Massachusetts Avenue. While this waterfront park has a new bulkhead, there is no water access, and the incorporation of a boat ramp and kayak access would enhance this property and make it more of an attraction for local residents.
  - **Boardwalk and Promenade** – a significant investment has been made to reconstruct the Boardwalk from Rhode Island Avenue to Gardners Basin. This facility acts as open space for recreational use for the Inlet residents and a City attraction. Efforts should be made to enhance this facility by providing camera surveillance, bike repair stations, and other amenities. The area between Grammercy Place and Madison Avenue should be enhanced as well.
- 2. Reestablish the Inlet Hydrangea Trail.** It is recommended that the ICDC reestablish the hydrangea trail that once existed in the Inlet to add to the greening of the neighborhood and to encourage new planting throughout the neighborhood. The establishment of a garden club is recommended with the goal to make the Inlet a “Horticulturists Paradise.” This effort will set the Inlet apart from other neighborhoods while helping to make the area more sustainable. More specifically, the following actions can be taken:
- Build gardens throughout Gardner’s Basin that bloom from April to November.
  - Use sculptures, night lighting of plants and pathways to connect people to the back-bay area at night and during the day.
  - Encourage conservation through educating the public about ways to provide for the flora and fauna of the back-bay marine environment.
  - Organize in person and virtual garden tours.
    - Create internships for Stockton students in marine science, communications, education, and other fields to encourage online promotion of Gardner’s Basin activities and developments.
    - Encourage kite-flying events several times a year to bring multigenerational families to the area.
    - Join the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society as an Advocate to join a community of people that believes cultivating gardens can transform our work for the better. This kind of commitment can strengthen the community, create healthy living environments, and increase access to fresh food.
    - Organize monthly cleanups in the winter and early spring and weekly cleanups in the late spring, summer, and fall.
    - Coordinate activities with CRDA and the Atlantic City Public School calendars.
- 3. Support Arts and Cultural Events and Youth Programming in the Parks** – events may include music, theatre, and poetry readings. Additionally, other events could include ethnic and heritage celebrations that would highlight and celebrate the neighborhood’s diversity. Youth Programming in the Parks could include athletic, educational, and performing arts programs.
- 4. Support the creation of murals throughout the neighborhood.** There are plenty of canvases primed for creative transformation in the Inlet, such as vacant lots, blank walls, empty buildings, and a variety of other sites that could be beautified. Through the *48 Blocks Atlantic*

City effort, artists are welcomed to the community to transform sites throughout the City. The neighborhood should identify appropriate sites, obtain permission from the owner, and coordinate and encourage murals to revitalize the area.

5. **Encourage community gardens in existing public space.** The southern half of the state is filled with 92 so-called “food deserts” — areas such as Atlantic City where a substantial number of people with low incomes do not have easy access to supermarkets or large grocery stores. Food deserts, based on U.S. Census Bureau data, are defined as areas where at least 20 percent of families are at or below the federal poverty line, or make 20 percent less than the median family income in surrounding areas, and a third of the families in that area are a mile away from a supermarket in urban areas, or 10 miles away in rural areas. Atlantic City’s food deserts leave about 39,000 residents relying on closer, unhealthier options found at convenience stores or fast-food restaurants, replacing fresh produce and whole grains with foods high in sugar, fat, and sodium — all of which could lead to obesity and diet-related diseases such as diabetes and heart disease. AtlantiCare, has partnered with the Atlantic City Housing Authority and Urban Redevelopment Agency and the Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Atlantic County, to build six community gardens in Atlantic City. A 21-bed community garden has been established at the Absecon Lighthouse. Additional community gardens in Inlet would be a welcomed addition to the neighborhood.
6. **Organize events to boost foot traffic and promote businesses.** Community events already help define the Inlet Neighborhood. The North Beach Atlantic City marketing efforts have been tremendously successful in bringing people together and marketing the neighborhood and nearby casinos. These efforts should be reinforced and expanded. Specifically, local partners should seek to:
  - Work in cooperation with North Beach Atlantic City [www.atlanticcitynorthbeach.com](http://www.atlanticcitynorthbeach.com)
  - To provide concerts, farmers markets, and a wide variety of events to invite residents and visitors to rediscover the Inlet.
  - Leveraging Gardners Basin Park and Lighthouse Park by hosting neighborhood events.
  - Consider a holiday festival around Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter that would include special, live music and holiday lights.

#### **Goal 4: Promote Economic Development in the Inlet**

The Inlet has a number of commercial nodes, including Atlantic Avenue (Atlantic City’s Main Street), Pacific Avenue (the main access to beachfront casino hotels), Melrose Avenue and New Hampshire Avenue, and Gardner’s Basin.

Some of these commercial areas lack the design and beautification elements that make other competing shopping districts more attractive, while suffering from negative perceptions regarding public safety. This strategy will promote high quality local businesses and improve the commercial nodes in the neighborhood so that they achieve their full potential.

1. **Promote The Inlet as a Great Place to Live!** - The Inlet Neighborhood Community Advisory Committee has expressed interest in marketing the Inlet as a great place to live. Through a “Live in the Inlet” campaign, using social media, advertising, tours, incentives, promotions, and

other media, marketing and events, the Inlet will gain a reputation as a great place to live with excellent amenities such as parks, the Boardwalk, Gardner's Basin, and beaches, making it appealing to first- and second-time home buyers. In addition to the advertised amenities, the demonstrated civic pride will invite new residents. Moreover, new homeowners will bring business to commercial entities in the neighborhood.

2. **Develop an Inlet branding/marketing scheme and a buy local campaign.** Funds should be allocated to retain a branding and marketing consultant to develop a range of identity graphics that reflect the many facets of the Inlet's character. As a lower-cost alternative, the ICDC should engage local artists and college students to develop a graphic identity for Inlet. The graphic identity can be expressed through postcards, posters, and an Inlet web site. Online and print media should be supplemented by physical installations at the entrances to the neighborhood using the same graphic look. Given that the Inlet is home to well-known local businesses, the marketing campaign should incorporate a "buy local" initiative. The intent is to promote local business and encourage neighbors to discover new amenities, shop and dine in the Inlet.
3. **Promote the availability of tax abatement as a home construction/renovation incentive.** - The City of Atlantic City offers a five-year exemption and/or abatement for new construction and renovations of dwellings. A dwelling is defined as "Any building or part of a building used, to be used or held for use as a home or residence, including accessory buildings located on the same premises, together with the land upon which such building or buildings are erected and which may be necessary for the fair enjoyment thereof."

The entire City has been designated as an "area in need of rehabilitation" which allows the City to provide tax abatements. An application must be submitted to the Tax Assessor for the five-year exemption and/or abatement. The first \$25,000 in the Assessor's full and true value of home improvements for each dwelling unit primarily and directly affected by a home improvement in any single or multiple-dwelling property more than 20 years old and located in any area throughout the City of Atlantic City shall be exempt from taxation for a period of five years. Tax abatements may be made on the value by the Assessor on October 1 of any year following the date of the completion of the improvement to be true taxable value of the improvement and shall continue to be treated for each of the five tax years subsequent to the original determination by the Assessor. The abatement is provided on the change in assessed value of the improvement at a rate no tax payments on improvements in the first year, 20 percent in the second year, 40 percent in the third year, 60 percent in for the fourth year, and 80 percent in for the fifth year.

4. **Reduce the lookback period for Substantial Improvement** – Section 132-6 of the City Code defines Substantial Improvement as:

Any reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition, or other improvement of a structure during a five-year period, the cost of which equals or exceeds 50 percent of the market value of the structure before the start of construction of the improvement. This term includes structures which have incurred substantial damage, regardless of the actual repair work performed. The term does not, however, include either: [Amended 5-21-2014 by Ord. No. 25-2014]



- a. Any project for improvement of a structure to correct existing violations of state or local health, sanitary or safety code specifications which have been identified by the local code enforcement officer and which are the minimum necessary to assure safe living conditions; or
- b. Any alteration of a historic structure, provided that the alteration will not preclude the structure's continued designation as a historic structure.

In order to encourage home improvements, the five-year period should be reduced to one year thereby reducing the potential for home improvements to be delayed due to this requirement.

5. **Provide business counseling and seed funding.** The Inlet is home to many local established businesses. The Inlet and Atlantic City as a whole would benefit from having a business development point-person who assists new or prospective businesses to connect with the City administration, existing business services, and provide information to businesses about incentives and other initiatives. This individual would help new businesses navigate various aspects of development, and potentially provide micro-loans or other seed funding to benefit businesses needing marginal assistance. The organization of local businesses into a hyper-local chamber of commerce or involving them with the ICDC would further build local support and capacity to advocate for the neighborhood. This should be one of the responsibilities of the ICDC Coordinator.
6. **Remove all barriers to develop the Caspian Pointe site** – The Caspian Pointe site is a privately owned parcel surrounded by public properties. The City owns the Captain Starns site and the waterfront promenade to the north, Caspian Avenue forms the boundary to the east and Gardner’s Basin Park is located to the south. A major priority for the City and CRDA should be to remove all barriers to develop the Caspian Pointe site. This parcel is in the Gardner’s Basin zoning district. Permitted uses are limited to retail sales; restaurants and bars, creating a barrier for achieving the best use of the site and the zone. The uses should be expanded to leverage this sites potential.
7. **Redevelopment of the CRDA vacant properties.** The CRDA has land banked various properties that are prime for development and with the proper development the properties will energize the Inlet Neighborhood. Consistent with our recommendation that single family and duplex home development be encouraged in the Southeast Inlet it is recommended that the CRDA provide a public auction of their properties in this area. Targeted areas include:
  - The entire block bounded by Massachusetts, Atlantic, Rhode Island, and Pacific Avenues – approximately one-third of this block including the entire Pacific Avenue frontage is controlled by CRDA.
  - The entire block bounded by Metropolitan, Pacific, Rhode Island, and Oriental Avenues – this block is entirely owned by CRDA except for two small lots.
  - Pacific Avenue frontage between Massachusetts and Metropolitan Avenue.
  - Scattered lots in the block bounded by Ventnor, Atlantic, New Hampshire, Pacific Avenues – scattered lots in addition to the Lighthouse Park are owned by CRDA.
  - Scattered lots in the block bounded by Congress, Atlantic, Massachusetts, and Pacific Avenues.

### **CRDA Owned Properties in the Inlet Neighborhood**



- Promote Complete Streets Improvements in the Inlet to provide safer access for pedestrians and bicyclists.** For the last several years, the City has been actively in improving pedestrian safety and implementing “complete streets” design approaches in the neighborhood, with a particular emphasis on Atlantic Avenue. Atlantic Avenue is the most dangerous street in Southern New Jersey with over 800 bike and pedestrian accidents in a three-year period.

Throughout the community meetings in this planning process, residents reaffirmed the importance of improving pedestrian safety and taking a complete streets approach to the

neighborhood. They noted that the number of accidents made pedestrian safety a particularly important priority for the neighborhood. They also recognized that complete streets approaches would make neighborhood business corridors more attractive for patrons.

This strategy aims to continue improving pedestrian safety and implementing complete streets design improvements in the neighborhood. These complete streets improvements will take a more comprehensive approach to the design of the streets, and more equally incorporate the needs of all users of the streets – especially pedestrians, but also cyclists and public transit riders.

They will enhance both the appearance and functionality of the streets and create broad benefits to the neighborhood. Complete Streets Improvements include:

- Install and enhance crosswalks and other pedestrian infrastructure throughout the neighborhood, including solar powered traffic and walk signals, enhanced lighting and signage, sidewalk repairs, pedestrian bump outs, ADA compliant curb cuts, and “daylighting” techniques at corners with crosswalks, so that vehicles do not park too close to crosswalks, reducing motorist and pedestrian visibility at those crossings.
- Improve bicycle lanes, turning lanes, street paint and other bicycle infrastructure; add bicycle racks near commercial businesses and public facilities to promote bicycle travel; install signage on sidewalks requiring bicyclists to dismount and walk where bicycle travel might prevent a hazard to pedestrians.
- Improve the functionality and safety of bicycle and pedestrian paths on all the streets in the Inlet.
- Beautify streets by adding landscaping and trees to create an attractive pedestrian experience

#### 9. Renovate the Absecon Lighthouse.

Absecon Lighthouse has stood at the mouth of the Absecon Inlet for over 150 years. While no longer in service as an active navigational aid, the lighthouse remains as a landmark and tourist destination in Atlantic City. In recent years, the Inlet Public/Private Association (IPPA) has operated and maintained the lighthouse under a lease with NJDEP, Division of Parks & Forestry. Over 26,000 visitors tour the lighthouse each year. As part of their ongoing maintenance the IPPA sought to repaint the brick light tower in 2017. After many years of moisture infiltration, significant biological growth was evident on interior surfaces and the existing saturated brick masonry made exterior painting impossible.



In response, the IPPA engaged the architectural services to investigate the sources of the moisture infiltration and other areas of building distress. The preliminary investigation uncovered several areas of building fabric deterioration and structural movement in the lantern walkway that are collectively

contributing to water infiltration in the tower that will require more than \$3 million in repairs. The State should fund the improvements to Absecon Lighthouse immediately, before additional damage and costs are incurred.

**10. Encourage pop-up eateries in the Inlet.** Pop-up eateries are a modern way to activate vacant spaces and to attract new visitors to an area. There are local non-profits who are interested in operating pop-up eateries in Atlantic City. The Inlet Neighborhood is an ideal location given its walkability, close proximity to Boardwalk, Lighthouse, parks, and waterfront.

**11. Use historic preservation as an economic development tool.** Historic preservation has been used as an economic development tool for communities across the world. Neighborhood historic preservation – including the placement of buildings and neighborhoods on the National and State Registers of Historic Places – brings attention to areas with significant, historic, and cultural contributions and support economic development through heritage tourism.

In 1979, a historic resources survey identified many buildings in the neighborhood (particularly between Artic and Pacific Avenues) that could be eligible for listing on the New Jersey Register of Historic Places as part of a neighborhood district.

The City recently established a historic preservation commission, and the City became a Certified Local Government. The enabling ordinance was crafted to allow for new development and prevent regulatory hurdles to redevelopment and rehabilitation. Participation in historic preservation activities may provide financing opportunities for building rehabilitations and history projects undertaken by area non-profits.

The following properties have been identified as historically significant in or near the Inlet Neighborhood:

**Absecon Lighthouse (1857)**

Location: Vermont & Pacific Avenues

Owner: State of New Jersey

Operator: Inlet Public/Private Association

National Status: National Register of Historic Places, 1/25/71 (NR Reference No. 71000492;  
State Register 9/11/70

**Garden Pier (1912, 1952-54, 1980s)**

Location: New Jersey Avenue & Boardwalk

Owner: Tower Development

Notes: Surveyed in 1980 (2-page survey)

**Atlantic City Fire Station #1 (1896, 1913)**

Location: 519 Atlantic Avenue

Owner: Alpha Investments

Certificate of Eligibility – 4/20/2018

**Price Memorial AME Church (1857)**

Location: 525 Atlantic Avenue

Owner: Price Memorial AME Church

USCG Station Atlantic City (1938)  
Location: 900 Beach Thorofare  
Owner: United States Government  
SHPO Opinion – 7/16/07

An additional building that may have historic significance include:

New Jersey Avenue School  
Location: 35 New Jersey Avenue



Atlantic City School, New Jersey Ave. March 1990. Press photo

**12. Support Smart Cities Technology.** A Smart City is a municipality that uses information and communications technology to increase operational efficiency, share information with the public and improve both the quality of government services and citizen welfare. Atlantic City has already started to employ Smart City Technology for crime prevention in a very cost-effective manner; however, there are many other applications for this technology. It is recommended that this technology be used to synchronize traffic signals, to improve trash and recycling collection, to provide information to residents and visitors, leverage new business development, and possible to create a City-wide Broadband System. We have learned from COVID-19 to combine the best of remote working, education, and healthcare with the benefits of physical interaction. Not every meeting or healthcare appointment needs to be in-person, but we also need physical interactions. Workers do not have to go to the office every day. School have learned from techniques that were used successfully during the pandemic and can adopt a hybrid on in-person and remote learning and communication. The options are endless if every resident has affordable access to the internet.

## **Goal 5: Make the Inlet a Resilient and Sustainable Neighborhood**

As a barrier island city, resiliency and sustainability are immensely important. Climate change will continue to impact living conditions in Atlantic City. The City is undertaking significant infrastructure improvements that will help protect the Inlet Neighborhood. The \$13 million Baltic Avenue Canal project drains most of the neighborhood and improves stormwater conditions in the Inlet. Nevertheless, all neighborhoods must take action to reduce their carbon footprint and to improve energy efficiency. A variety of State and Federal programs are available to reduce the cost of these energy improvements.

The implementation of new shore protection measures in the neighborhood will undoubtedly make the Inlet more resilient to future flooding. The following actionable recommendations are proposed to enhance resiliency, sustainability, and adaptation in the neighborhood:

- 1. Develop the Inlet with flexibility for future protection.** As of 2021, the Tentatively Selected Plan for the USACE's Back Bay Coastal Storm Risk Management study includes a bay closure that extends from the Inlet westward along Route 30 towards Absecon and Pleasantville. When constructed, this transformative project will be the single most significant structural intervention to protect Atlantic City from storm surge. The project is still in design and details are subject to change. However, it is likely that the Inlet's reconstructed bulkhead and Boardwalk will remain in situ whereas more dramatic floodwalls are planned for the area surrounding Gardner's Basin. Though the project will not be constructed for a number of years, the City should retain maximum flexibility with bulkheads and smaller infrastructure improvements to ensure a consistent level of protection and tie-ins to the Back Bay project. Similarly, the City should continue to seek independent mitigation solutions for the Inlet that can be constructed and provide protection independent of the Back Bay project. A flood gate to protect the Port of Atlantic City should be considered.
- 2. Consider a long-term plan and innovative solutions to address oceanfront beach erosion.** The Inlet beach from the Inlet Jetty to Ocean Casino Resort has historically suffered from severe erosion in a manner similar to other north end beaches in the South Jersey barrier islands. Though the City continues to partner with the Army Corps and State to complete periodic beachfills on a regular basis since 2004, more permanent mitigation measures are needed to ensure that the shoreline does not recede further. An expansive technical analysis is underway by the Army Corps to develop actionable and potentially novel implementation strategies to arrest erosion in this section of beach. The City and the ICDC should continue to actively participate in the study and review of various options.
- 3. Work with the Army Corps to continue to provide beach nourishment along the Seawall.** The City should pursue discussions with the Army Corps to expand the beach nourishment program to the Inlet section between Madison Avenue and Caspian Avenue. Beach restoration in this area would provide for added protection in a very vulnerable area while providing restored beaches for the Inlet Neighborhood.
- 4. Continue efforts to mitigate repetitive loss properties and require the design and construction of structures to maximum feasible levels of protection from flooding.** Though many of the neighborhood's repetitive loss structures have been mitigated, a few buildings in the neighborhood remain vulnerable to low-level flooding conditions, inundation,

and flood damage. The City should continue to sponsor FEMA grant applications for property owners who wish to elevate their homes. With sea level rise increasing water levels in Atlantic City, future flood risk will be more pronounced relative to existing flood risk. To account for this heightened risk, buildings in the neighborhood should be constructed to the maximum permitted design flood elevations. This will ensure that new buildings in the Inlet will withstand future storm surge events and nuisance floods.

5. **Install landscaping and small-scale green infrastructure interventions to detain stormwater, increase habitat for flora and fauna, and provide aesthetic and public health benefits.** Using existing public open spaces and vacant private open spaces to plant native plants such as seaside golden rod, beach plums, beach rose, bayberry, and cedar will help to bolster the ecological resilience of the neighborhood and provide protection against the elements. As vacant lands are developed, “water squares” and subsurface bio-retention should be used to detain runoff that would have otherwise infiltrated in smaller lots. This will also reduce the amount of stormwater entering the City’s drainage system. The land development regulations should encourage the use of grasscrete and permeable pavement and offer lot coverage credit when permeable pavement is used.
6. **Monitor and maintain existing infrastructure to ensure a long useful life.** The new shoreline protection projects in Atlantic City will require maintenance and monitoring to ensure that they are in operable shape and are withstanding hydrodynamic forces and settlement. Additionally, more mundane aspects of City infrastructure like catch basins and backflow preventers also require regular inspection to ensure they are functioning. Fostering a culture of preventative maintenance and ownership of infrastructure will ensure that the useful life of existing infrastructure can be maximized and that funds for maintenance can be proactively sought and budgeted. Neighbors and community groups are best positioned to notice and respond to issues that need to be addressed, such as debris in storm drains.
7. **Bury future utility lines.** As recommended in the Resilient NJ Report, all future utilities should be buried to reduce the potential of power outages and the long-term cost of electric utility maintenance. The Inlet is a prime location to implement this policy since vast areas are undeveloped.
8. **Regularly Dredge the Port of Atlantic City.** Clam Thorofare and the various basins should be dredged on a regular basis to ensure that outlet structures can operate as designed. This area has not been dredged for decades, until now, as a result of the improvements to Gardners Basin and the interest of the offshore wind industry. The City has secured all the necessary permits for dredging in this area. Federal, State, and private funding should be pursued to advance this effort and to allow the area to operate efficiently.
9. **Maintain the Stormwater Management and Protection Systems.** A concerted effort must be made to maintain the Seawall, pump stations, storm drains, and outlet structures. The City has a sophisticated flood protection system that requires constant maintenance. The ICDC can assist in this effort by coordinating regularly scheduled neighborhood cleanups to collect litter before it enters the stormwater system.

**10. Make the Inlet a model for energy efficiency.** Energy use accounts for half of Atlantic City's greenhouse gas emissions, which means that energy efficiency and renewable energy represent a huge opportunity to reduce the City's carbon footprint. The Inlet is the home of the new offshore wind industry's operations and maintenance centers, an offshore wind and water training center, the renovated Aquarium which hosts many environmental programs, and new electric vehicle charging stations at Gardner's Basin. With these facilities there is a great opportunity to provide tours and expand energy efficiency education opportunities. The ICDC can encourage new development to include solar and energy efficient techniques in their design. Programs can be established to assist existing homeowners make energy upgrades.

**10. Assist homeowners, investors, and other owners to bring properties into flood compliance, thereby reducing flood insurance costs, increasing property values, and leading to a stronger neighborhood.** Building renovations are capital intensive and often complicated in older buildings such as those found in Inlet. Property owners may opt to pass these costs on to tenants, resulting in higher rents. Grants that address home elevation are available to reduce the costs and ensure that the Inlet remains affordable as the housing stock is improved.

#### **Goal 6: Assist the Inlet Residents to Embrace Their Full Potential**

During the community meetings, there was consensus that the Inlet residents themselves are their own greatest asset, and residents expressed a desire to use the energy and momentum built by the planning process and direct it into action. This occurred as the neighborhood committee began campaigning to have the properties that are detractors in the neighborhood demolished and to increase code enforcement.

This strategy calls for investment in community organizing, community leadership, and community improvement efforts. It also proposes the development of some form of a business association to function as a formal vehicle for community-led organizing, advocacy, and initiative.

**1. Improve neighborhood group outreach and engagement.** The Inlet Neighborhood has an active association that holds monthly meetings to keep the community informed and engaged. The First Ward Civic Association has excellent leadership and a long history of community involvement. It is important that this organization continue to grow and engage with the residents. Ways to expand the reach of the First Ward Civic Association and the ICDC includes:

- Sharing community meeting dates, locations, and agendas through the City and CRDA calendars and the media.
- Circulating a monthly newsletter and distributing it electronically and at all Civic Association and Inlet CDC meetings.
- New residents should be welcomed and engaged by the association.
- Each new business should be celebrated with a local ribbon cutting or similar event to welcome positive change.
- Meeting where people live and providing refreshments to encourage attendance.

**2. Promote ways for youth to express pride in the neighborhood creatively.** The ICDC should engage school children to participate in this poster contests held in conjunction with a neighborhood clean-up. This effort should continue to build pride in the neighborhood's



ongoing revitalization. The ICDC can collaborate with the schools to coordinate an effort to engage the students to participate in this and other events. Engaging students in the neighborhood revitalization will build lasting pride in the Inlet as the students will carry their newfound pride in the years to come.

- 3. Expand the capacity of neighborhood groups and encourage them to have a louder voice in the community.** The *Atlantic City: Building A Foundation For A Shared Prosperity* states “Community engagement is a core element of legacy city revitalization.” Funding from the Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit Program must be managed by the neighborhood-based non-profit organization. The ICDC will be established to qualify for these funds, have 501c3 status, and comply with the requirements of a non-profit. There is also the potential for staff funding as well.
- 4. Implement Placemaking Strategies to maintain an authentic sense of place.** Placemaking speaks to the character, style, and aspirations of the neighborhood. The Inlet has a rich history which can be enhanced to contribute to a sense of place. The history of the Inlet includes a hydrangea trail that flourished prior to the casino era. There is an effort to reestablish the hydrangea trail and to make the Inlet a horticulturist paradise. This effort includes engaging the neighborhood and establishing a garden club to launch this effort. This effort is only one strategy that will be used in the placemaking initiative. Another is to install signage as you enter the Inlet to welcome all the neighborhood and announce that you are entering a special place. Creating a sense of place will foster feelings of connectedness among the residents and business owners in the Inlet, contributing to an increased quality of life and caretaking of the neighborhood. The increased general quality of life in the area will attract new businesses and residents.
- 5. Encourage and provide workforce training and adult education.** The education achievement gap in Inlet compared to that of the surrounding area is significant and may be hampering opportunities for residents to seek better jobs. The neighborhood should seek funding for adult education and workforce training tailored to the needs of residents. Empowering residents to acquire GEDs, gain job-ready skills for existing and prospective industries in the Atlantic City area, and pursue higher education if desired would greatly assist residents in achieving better jobs, higher incomes, and greater opportunities for families and households. Education classes can take place in the Uptown Complex or at the nearby Stockton University or Atlantic Cape Community College. The Atlantic Cape Community College is one of the County colleges approved to offer free college credits to qualifying residents. Atlantic Cape Community College’s program will fund the cost of tuition and approved education fees. The residents of the Inlet should be encouraged to take advantage of this extraordinary offering.
- 6. Work with the neighborhood, city, and regional institutional employers such as the Federal Aviation Administration, the casino and offshore wind industries, AtlantiCare, and others to pursue mentorship and apprenticeship opportunities for Inlet students.** The Inlet and surrounding area are home to large institutional employers that anchor economic development in the region. Working with these anchors can provide residents with quality job opportunities and guidance in pursuing careers, vocations, and higher education. Anchor institutions often have philanthropic operations with which the neighborhood can build relations to fund neighborhood initiatives. Strengthening the ties between these institutions through mentorships, internships, and apprenticeships can be mutually beneficial for both the

institution (who are supplied with young, local workers with significant potential) and the neighborhood (where young residents live and may eventually choose to settle).

7. **The CRDA should be encouraged to continue to invest in the youth of Atlantic City by providing youth programs, training, and recreational opportunities.** The Inlet is a young neighborhood comprised of families with children. Youth programs, such as after school programs, sports teams, tutoring, and the like can provide youth opportunities for education and extracurricular activities that may not already be available owing to the extent of poverty in the neighborhood.
8. **Develop a neighborhood scholarship program to assist Inlet students in attaining higher education.** A neighborhood scholarship or mutual aid program supported by local institutions and businesses can demonstrate the neighborhood's support and investment in students living in the neighborhood.
9. **Provide opportunities for adults to undertake physical fitness, including the addition of public park/recreation amenities or a non-profit gym.** Inlet lacks adequate recreation facilities for adult residents, such as gyms or fitness centers. Though various social clubs and organizations exist throughout the neighborhood, locations set aside expressly for physical activity are virtually non-existent. A community recreation or fitness center can provide adult residents a place to exercise during inclement weather.
10. **Enhance lines of communication and working relationship between the City (including police, city workers, and other departments) and the Inlet community in order to foster responsiveness and resident engagement.** Developing lines of communication with merchants, residents, visitors, first responders, and other public-facing workers will help city operations in the neighborhood run smoothly and increase the quality of life for residents.

### **Land Use Recommendations**

In order to implement several of the recommendations contained in this Strategy, various changes to the existing land use regulations are required. This section will document those changes.

1. **Simplify and liberalize zoning in the Inlet.**

- a. **Remove lower density residential uses as “conditional” uses and add them as permitted uses.** Vast tracts of vacant land in the Southeast Inlet have been consolidated in order to support future higher-density developments such as hotels and apartment buildings. Market conditions have not supported the addition of such large-scale uses in the neighborhood in recent years and it is unlikely that development scenarios envisioned in the Tourism District Master Plan will be realized anytime soon. While the high-intensity uses should be retained as permitted uses, other uses – such as single-family dwellings, duplex, and pop-up uses – should be supported and encouraged while market conditions in Atlantic City improve and demand for larger-scale developments increase. While the high-density uses should be retained as permitted uses, low-density uses such as single-family dwellings, duplexes, accessory dwellings, and pop-up uses should be permitted, supported, and encouraged until and after market conditions in Atlantic City improve and demand for larger-scale developments increases. The City’s Land Use Development ordinance should be revised to eliminate any barriers to low-density development in this area.
- b. **Support infill with contextual development adjacent to existing structures.** The Northeast Inlet has experienced historic demolition, and lot consolidation to support urban renewal initiatives and large-scale developments. This has led to large expanses of vacant land and small clusters of “hold-out” properties, such as the rowhomes along Oriental Avenue and Dewey Place. Atlantic City’s market has not supported the types of developments that urban renewal initiatives anticipated. As a result, instead of demolishing existing structures and consolidating the brownfield lots with adjacent vacant lots to create space for large-scale development, new infill development adjacent to existing structures should match existing buildings. For example, presently, a typical 20’ x 80’ lot in the LH-2 district needs several variances in order to construct a building of any type. In-kind, infill development should be made possible with minimal need for variances.
- c. **Make the CRDA and municipal zoning codes consistent and clear, especially as it relates to permitted uses.** The seven CRDA zoning districts permit nearly 50 discrete uses. A number of uses are undefined within the municipal zoning code and numerous others are duplicative or contradictory. Atlantic City’s zoning code in Chapter 163 of its ordinance contains over a dozen categories of uses and one hundred sub-categories of uses based on zone. These uses should be radically simplified and reconsidered, particularly in the Inlet. Examples of uses that can be modified include:

- i. In the CRDA Tourism District, “Passive recreation space” is permitted only in the Open Space zone, whereas recreation uses are permitted only in the Beach, Gardner’s Basin, and Resort Commercial zones. Public parks/playgrounds/community centers; however, are permitted only conditionally in the Gardner’s Basin, LH-1, LH-2, and Resort Commercial zones. Parks are permitted separately, and only in the Absecon Inlet, LH-1, LH-2, and Resort Commercial zones.
  - ii. Special event facilities, seating/entertainment, houses of worship, concerts/temporary venues, and entertainment are functionally similar uses permitted under widely divergent conditions in areas within the Tourism District. Provisions for indoor and outdoor large event spaces should be flexible, yet consistently defined for the Inlet Neighborhood.
  - iii. The CRDA Tourism District rules stipulates that food trucks are conditionally permitted only in the Resort Commercial zone, whereas “pop-up uses” (which are defined to include food trucks), are permitted in the Absecon Inlet, LH-1 and LH-2, and Resort Commercial Districts. In addition to removing “food trucks” as a separate permitted use, the rules should be revised to permit pop-up uses in the Gardner’s Basin and Beach districts as well.
  - iv. Cultural uses, educational uses, historic tourist attractions, institutional uses, lighthouse, government uses, and parks/playgrounds/community center are each thematically separate and defined (or in the case of cultural uses, undefined) uses found in the CRDA Tourism District rules. These uses should be combined and permitted throughout the Inlet Neighborhood.
  - v. In the CRDA Tourism District rules, restaurants are permitted as an accessory use to bars and craft breweries/distilleries which are only permitted in the Absecon Inlet or Resort Commercial District. Restaurants, however, are permitted in all districts except the Open Space district, and craft breweries/distilleries cannot be considered accessory uses. Restaurants should be permitted to have bars and craft breweries/distilleries as accessory or principal uses, thus allowing those uses throughout the District. Additionally, catering services should be permitted as an accessory use to restaurant or event uses.
- d. Decrease the number of separate zoning districts in the Inlet neighborhood.** Given that economic development and livability are imperative to the growth of the Inlet as a neighborhood, the numerous and overlapping zoning districts should be consolidated, simplified, and made consistent with previous recommendations contained in this Strategy. The number of overall zoning districts should be broadly reduced.
- i. There is little functional need for the Absecon Inlet district, which essentially regulates only two private parcels in addition to City-owned waterfront space. The Lighthouse District should be expanded northward to include the existing Absecon Inlet district, or the Gardner’s Basin district should be expanded southward to include the existing Absecon Inlet district.

- ii. Currently the Resort Commercial District includes only the land beneath the Ocean Casino Resort. Given the diversity of uses permitted with this district, the Resort Commercial district should be expanded to include the Inlet area.
  - iii. The LH-1 and LH-2 districts and RM-1 and RM-2 districts should be combined in the Inlet area and made consistent with each other owing to the types of similar permitted uses and scales. New zoning standards for these districts should be developed to facilitate infill and projects of various types and sizes.
- e. **Promote “everyday” uses in the Inlet.** The Inlet’s current zoning produces tension between tourism and residential communities. Some attempt has been made with existing zoning to reconcile these occasionally tension-inflicting uses. However, this has resulted in a zoning program that is simultaneously liberal, yet extremely restrictive. With office spaces permitted only in the Resort Commercial zone, there is little opportunity for entrepreneurs and small businesses to set up non-retail or food and beverage uses in the Inlet Neighborhood. Promoting a vast array of commercial uses in conjunction with mixed types of residences can support the development of a “whole” community, where residents and tourists alike can meet their everyday needs within the neighborhood itself.

### C. NRTC Investment as a Catalyst

The strategies identified above focus on neighborhood development at all levels from the redevelopment of properties in the neighborhood to providing education and mutual aid opportunities for residents. A major tenet of this Strategy is to set the stage for economic development through both tangible and non-tangible assistance to residents and businesses. The recommended activities have been implemented successfully in other communities and are well within the capacity of potential partners and non-profits. The Inlet’s existing businesses, religious institutions, and Atlantic City Anchor Institutions (South Jersey Gas, Stockton University, Atlantic Cape, and AtlantiCare) have shown support for the program and have affirmed their assistance in implementing the Strategy.

Many of our partners, have already become engaged with the Inlet neighborhood and its agenda. For example, the Atlantic County Improvement Authority has attended many meetings with City, neighborhoods, and CRDA representatives to develop an abandon properties and housing rehabilitation program.

Atlantic Cape Community College brings a high degree of experience to this effort. Atlantic Cape Community College demonstrates strong commitment to improving the Inlet neighborhood and making this Strategy a model for other communities to follow. The tax credit program, through the provision of crucial financial resources, serves as leverage for the initial implementation of projects identified in this Inlet Strategy.

## Section 8. Participatory Planning Requirements

The Inlet Revitalization Action Strategy was created with a foundation of diverse participation and support from the community. The planning process reflects significant public participation that consisted of community residents and stakeholders such as local businesses, property owners,

nonprofit organizations, and City officials. The community outreach effort for this Strategy was extensive. See Attachment M.

### **Inlet Neighborhood Community Advisory Committee**

To ensure the planning process directed attention to each focus area equally, Atlantic Cape formed a formal Neighborhood Committee in July 2020 made up of 14 representatives. The members of the committee are well-respected figures in the community and have built a trusted relationship with the residents. Neighborhood Committee members were chosen to provide representation during the planning process and to expand outreach efforts to each member's considerable network. They were responsible for promoting our online meeting to specific residents with interest in focused area topics through online emails, social media platforms, and word-of-mouth. Neighborhood Committee members were responsible for leading meetings, providing insight into area focus area topics, directing the planning process to helpful networks, and helping to set the agenda for the implementation of this Strategy. The Neighborhood Committee meets monthly to provide input and guidance and consists of the following individuals: Libbie Wills, Stephanie Marshall, Arron Randolph, Charity Jeffries, Gregory Wood, Jean Muchanic, Keith Groff, Mike Intrieri, Tina Watson, Tina Notaro, Samera Bishop, TJ Moynihan, Mary Ellen Solano, and Karen Rosnick.

### **Community Meetings**

Community input included many public meetings and workshops as summarized in the Attachments.

### **Public Officials**

Before formally starting the planning process, a letter was sent to City officials to introduce the organization, and this planned efforts. Official notice was sent on July 14, 2020, to several City departments, including the Mayor's Office, the Business Administrator, the Clerk, City Council members, Department of Licenses & Inspections and the Department of Planning and Development. Atlantic City's Police Chief, Deputy Chiefs, Captains, Lieutenants, and Neighborhood Coordination Officers also participated throughout the planning process, offering important insight, and building connections with community members. In addition, the City Council representatives provided important input on several focus topics and served as members of the Neighborhood Committee. This is demonstrated by the attached letter of support provided in Attachment O.

### **Associations & Community Groups**

The planning process was supported by several local associations and community groups. Representatives from the First Ward Civic Association, Boys & Girls Club of Atlantic City, Atlantic City Housing Authority, Atlantic Cape, Stockton University, and South Jersey Gas have made meaningful contributions throughout the process. Their input and continued support is essential to meeting the goals of this Strategy.

Letters of support were provided by Chris A. Brown; County Executive Dennis Levinson; Councilman Kaleem Shabazz; Atlantic Cape Community College President Barbara Gaba; Father Jon Thomas, Pastor Parish of Saint Monica; Mark Callazzo, President, Alpha Funding Solutions, LLC; Evan Sanchez, Co-Founder, Authentic City Partners; and Gary Hill, Executive Director, Metropolitan

Business & Citizens Association. Letters of support from nonprofits, local organizations, businesses, and individuals are provided in Attachment P.

As demonstrated in the attached letter, Mayor Marty Small Sr. has expressed his strong support of the Inlet Neighborhood planning effort and the implementation of this Strategy.

The Inlet Strategy is posted on the Atlantic Cape website at: [Inlet Neighborhood Revitalization \(atlantic.edu\)](http://atlantic.edu)

## Implementation

### 1. Secure Funding through the Neighborhood Revitalization Tax Credit Program

The NRTC is designed to foster the revitalization of New Jersey's distressed neighborhoods. NRTC offers business entities tax credit against various New Jersey state taxes. Credits are provided to business entities that invest in the revitalization of low- and moderate-income neighborhoods in eligible cities. Sixty percent of the tax credit funds must be used for activities related to the development of housing and economic development. The remaining balance may be used for complementary activities such as the provision of assistance to small businesses, infrastructure, removing barriers to self-sufficiency, and promoting the integration of mixed-income neighborhoods. A total of \$15 million per year is available in tax credits.

NRTC funds are used by neighborhood-based non-profit organizations that have approval from NJDCA for a Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy for the neighborhood it serves. The funds must be used by the eligible organizations for projects and activities that will implement the goals and strategies of the approved Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy. Given the recent designation of Atlantic City as a NRTC eligible community, a new urgency exists for developing this the Inlet Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy.

### 2. Utilize the Opportunity Zone Designation as a Catalyst for Improvements

Opportunity Zones are low- and moderate-income areas (defined by Census Tracts) in which qualifying investments are subject to preferential tax treatment as a method of spurring economic development in distressed areas. Opportunity Zones were designated as part of the 2018 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which gave States the ability to designate a certain number of Census tracts. The ocean front portion of the Inlet Neighborhood was designated one of four Opportunity Zones in Atlantic City and one of eight in Atlantic County.

Opportunity Zones work through investors placing money in Qualified Opportunity Funds, which are “any investment vehicle[s] which is organized as a corporation or a partnership for the purpose of investing in qualified opportunity zone property (other than another qualified opportunity fund) that holds at least 90 percent of its assets in qualified opportunity zone property.” In other words, the opportunity zone property, such as a neighborhood small business or development project, is the investment in which an investor puts his or her money. In return, the investor receives capital gains tax deferral through 2026, a 10 to 15 percent step-up in tax basis after five and seven years, and no taxes on appreciation.

The upshot of an Opportunity Zone designation for the Inlet is that investing directly in the neighborhood becomes more desirable for investors. The tax deferments are essentially incentives

to reinvest capital gains in projects in low-income areas such as the Inlet. Shovel-ready projects and those that could be mobilized in the short term should be identified and promoted to potential Opportunity Fund investors.

### **3. Utilize the NJEDA Aspire Program**

The NJ Aspire Tax Credit replaced the Economic Redevelopment and Growth Program. The program is a competitive tax credit grant with a program cap and per-project cap to support strategic real estate investments. In Atlantic City, commercial projects can receive awards up to 50 percent of project costs up to a cap of \$60 million. To be eligible for Aspire support, a project must:

- Demonstrate through the IMPLAN Model that revenues to the State exceed tax credit award by threshold ratios.
- Show that without the incentive, the redevelopment project is not economically feasible.
- Include a developer who has an equity participation of at least 20 percent of the total cost.
- Meet specific cost thresholds of \$5 million.
- The developer must have letter of support for project from governing body and must enter into a Community Benefits Agreement with the City if the project cost is \$10 million or more.
- Maximum 10-year eligibility period
- Project developers must pay prevailing wage on all construction and for all building services for the duration of the eligibility period.

Projects that meet certain criteria can be designated as “Transformative Projects.” No more than two Transformative Project awards can be made within a single municipality. Primarily retail projects are not eligible for Transformative Project awards. To be designated as a Transformative Project, a project must involve a minimum investment of \$100 million and include renovation or construction of more than 500,000 square feet of office or industrial space; or 250,000 square feet of film production space; or 1,000 residential units if it does not include any commercial component. If a project includes a minimum of 100,000 square of commercial space, it may also qualify as a transformative project if it includes at least 250 residential units. Transformative projects qualify for tax credit awards equal to up to 40 percent of project costs up to a cap of \$350 million.

### **4. Consider using the NJEDA Historic Property Reinvestment Program**

The Historic Property Reinvestment Program is a \$50 million competitive tax credit program to leverage the federal historic tax credit program to support rehabilitation projects of identified historic properties. To receive tax credits through the Historic Property Reinvestment Program, a project must:

- Demonstrate that without the tax credit, the project is not economically feasible.
- Prove that a project financing gap exists, and the tax credit award being considered for the project is equal to or less than the project financing gap.
- Not have commenced any construction or rehabilitation activity at the site of the rehabilitation project prior to applying and not commence any construction or rehabilitation activity until the execution of the Rehabilitation Agreement (with certain limited exceptions).
- Include business entity contributed equity of at least 20 percent of the total project costs; or 10 percent of the total project costs, if located in a government-restricted municipality.



- Meet minimum cost requirements where the cost of rehabilitation for the selected rehabilitation period cannot be less than the greater of the adjusted basis of the structure or \$5,000.
- For a residential project, the structure must serve a residential rental purpose and also contain at least four dwelling units.
- Be a rehabilitation project.

Qualified Project is defined as a property located in the State of New Jersey that is an income producing property, and that is:

- Individually listed, or located in a district listed on the National Register of Historic Places or the New Jersey Register of Historic Places; or
- Individually identified or registered, or located in a district identified or registered, for protection as a significant historic resource by a municipality in accordance with criteria for identification or registration that has been approved by the Officer as suitable for substantially achieving the purpose of preserving and rehabilitating buildings of historic significance within the jurisdiction of the municipality. If located within a district the property must be contributing to the historic significance of the district.

Award Size

- 45 percent of the cost of rehabilitation up to a maximum of \$8 million, for rehabilitation projects located within a qualified incentive tract or a government-restricted municipality like Atlantic City.

Award size is based on the cost of rehabilitation (eligible costs)

## **5. Utilize USEDA Food Desert Funding**

Atlantic City is Ranked the #2 food desert in the State of New Jersey. The Food Desert Relief Act directs the NJEDA to address the food security needs of communities across New Jersey by providing up to \$40 million per year for six years in tax credits, loans, grants, and/or technical assistance to increase access to nutritious foods and develop new approaches to alleviate food deserts.

## **6. Maximize the use of NJEDA funding for business improvements and new tenants**

Two NJEDA economic development programs have been expanded to help existing business in the Inlet. The first program provides grants of up to 50 percent of the project costs, to a maximum of \$20,000, for improvements made to the first floor of any business. The second program offers reimbursement of 15 percent of the annual lease payments for two years to for-profit businesses and non-profit organizations in the target area that lease between 500 and 5,000 square feet of new or additional market-rate, first floor office or retail space for a minimum of five years. An applicant leasing over 5,000 square feet can be eligible, but the grant will only incentivize the first 5,000 square feet.

## **7. Use Redevelopment as a Tool to Encourage Desired Improvements**

Designating an area as one in need of redevelopment or rehabilitation qualifies a property or group of properties for property tax abatements. When used purposefully, these designations spur the revitalization of targeted sites and allow the City to receive more tax revenue than it would with an existing site. The site's redeveloper, in turn would also forego the cost of a full tax assessment for a

certain number of years. This tool can be used in the Inlet to target sites for redevelopment. In the Tourism District, this must occur with the consent of the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority.

#### **8. Define clear data to gauge the Inlet Neighborhood's progress**

Developing clear metrics including timeframes and goals and tying those goals to equity and well-being for The Inlet residents.

#### **9. Recreational Programming Support**

CRDA should continue to invest in the youth of Atlantic City for youth programs, training, and recreational opportunities.

#### **10. Funding for Abandoned Property Compliance**

CRDA, working with the City, should take control of vacant and abandoned homes and rehabilitate them.

#### **11. Funding for Homeownership**

NJ Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency and NJ Community Capital may provide first-time homebuyer mortgages as well as down payment and closing cost assistance.

#### **12. Funding for Energy Assistance**

The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program provides grants in varying amounts based on a household's income size, type of fuel, and type of dwelling, with no pay back required. The Universal Service Fund also helps make energy bills more affordable for low-income customers ([www.energyassistance.nj.gov](http://www.energyassistance.nj.gov)). Eligible customers may also receive financial assistance through Helping Hands, a program funded by Atlantic City Electric, providing \$1 million annually to help struggling customers meet their energy needs. These funds are dispersed each year to low-income residents through the Affordable Housing Alliance, New Jersey SHARES, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Camden, and the People for People Foundation.

#### **13. Funding Opportunities**

**Bank Contributions** - The Community Reinvestment Act or "CRA" is a federal regulation that was first passed in 1977. It is designed to encourage insured financial institutions (i.e., banks) to help meet the credit and community development needs of all income levels in the communities where they operate. The CRA requires banks to demonstrate their performance in meeting the needs of everyone in their community. All banks are periodically evaluated by their federal banking regulator to ensure that their lending is meeting the needs and is inclusive of all income levels in their markets. Larger banks must also show how they support their communities through community development services and qualified investments. Non-profit organizations are important partners in bank community development. Non-profits understand the areas of need in a community and are on the front line of meeting those needs through their own programs and services. Banks often partner with and support local non-profits as part of their overall CRA strategy. The following banks are located in the Atlantic City area and assist non-profits.

**OceanFirst Foundation** ([www.oceanfirstfdn.org](http://www.oceanfirstfdn.org))

OceanFirst Foundation provides grants that help families, organizations, schools, and communities in southern New Jersey. The project must fit within their four core priority areas: Health and Wellness, Housing, Improving Quality of Life, and Youth Development and Education.

### **Wells Fargo Bank**

Wells Fargo Bank collaborates with community organizations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), local governments, and other stakeholders to deliver capital, credit, financial education, and other solutions that meet the needs of our customers and communities and, ultimately, help make our economy stronger. Some of Wells Fargo Bank's key initiatives include:

- The Wells Fargo NeighborhoodLIFT program supports sustainable homeownership and help stabilize low- to moderate-income neighborhoods by providing down payment assistance and homebuyer education in collaboration with NeighborWorks® America and local non-profit housing organizations.
- Wells Fargo Works for Small Business® provides a wide range of resources, guidance, and services that help entrepreneurs take the next step toward their goals.
- The Hands on Banking program and its Spanish-language counterpart, El Futuro en tus Manos® is a free and fun money management program that teaches people in different stages of life the basics of responsible money management. Two of our newest programs include Hands on Banking for Military and Hands on Banking for Seniors.
- Wells Fargo Community Lending and Investment supports economic development by investing debt and equity capital in in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods with limited access to traditional financial services.
- CommunityWINS<sup>SM</sup>Community Wins Opens Dialog (Working/Investing in Neighborhood Stabilization) in collaboration with the U.S. Conference of Mayors provides \$3 million over 3 years to non-profits and cities that support neighborhood revitalization, economic development, and job creation initiatives.
- The Wells Fargo Works for Small Business®: Diverse Community Capital program provides diverse-owned small businesses with access to capital, technical assistance, business planning and other tools and resources.

### **TD Bank**

- Community Sponsorship - Sometimes, communities and the non-profits that serve them need a onetime boost to reach a specific goal or they want to offer an educational or entertainment series that enriches their neighborhood and expands their community's connections. From Maine to Florida, TD Bank sponsors events, programs, projects, and activities that make a positive local impact, investing in the places and people.
- Housing for Everyone Competition

- **Non-profit Resource Training Fund** - Non-profit organizations are often the backbone of a community, providing necessary services like job placement, meal delivery and training that would not be available otherwise. Their employees, who are dedicated to their organization's mission—can spend long hours performing a variety of tasks, sometimes reaching outside of their own professional knowledge and experiences. Through the Non-Profit Resource Training Fund, eligible community-based organizations can receive grants of up to \$1,000 for employees to attend approved classes and receive the education they need to help themselves and their programs succeed.

### **PNC Bank**

PNC Foundation has been supporting non-profit organizations for decades. The Foundation exists to establish partnerships with community-based non-profit organizations in order to enhance educational opportunities for children and to promote the growth of targeted communities through economic development initiatives. PNC Foundation concentrates its charitable giving on non-profit organizations focusing on the following areas:

- **Education**—the Foundation provides sponsorship to less-fortunate children, ages 0-5; and to programs that focus in the areas of math, science, financial education and also provide direct services to children in their classroom; professional development to teachers; family engagement, etc.
- **Economic Development & Community Services**— sponsorship is provided to community development initiatives that promote the growth of targeted low-and moderate-income communities and/or provide services to these communities, such as job training programs, early learning, and educational enrichment programs for children in low-and moderate-income families.
- **Affordable Housing and Community Development** – grants are provided to non-profits that provide transitional housing and/or counseling services; as well as non-profit organizations that provide services for small businesses.
- **Revitalization and Stabilization of Low-and Moderate-Income Areas** – support is given to organizations that help stabilize communities.
- **Arts & Culture** – grants are provided for cultural enrichment programs.

### **Bank of America**

In 2019, the Bank of America Charitable Foundation issued two requests for proposals on the priority focus area of economic mobility:

- The first will focus on the on the needs of individuals and families by investing in workforce development & education and basic needs.
- The second will focus on the needs of the community by addressing economic development and social progress by investing affordable housing, revitalization, arts, and the environment.

### **Reinvestment Fund**

*Healthy Food Financing Initiative* ([www.investinginfood.com](http://www.investinginfood.com))

Targeted grants are available for eligible projects or partnerships that seek to improve access to healthy food in underserved areas. Approximately \$1.4 million will be available to fund applications under this program. Grant awards range from \$25,000-\$250,000.

### **USA Today**

*A Community Thrives* ([www.act.usatoday.com](http://www.act.usatoday.com))

A Community Thrives empowers communities to take on local challenges and share the issues important to them around education, wellness, and culture on a national platform. USA Today does more than just provide grant money to local organizations. They promote ideas and communities.

### **Geraldine Dodge Foundation** ([www.grdodge.org](http://www.grdodge.org))

The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation supports arts, education, environment, informed communities, and poetry to connect communities and influence social change to achieve an equitable New Jersey.

### **New Jersey Community Capital** ([www.newjerseycommunitycapital.org](http://www.newjerseycommunitycapital.org))

New Jersey Community Capital is a non-profit community development financial institution that provides innovative financing and technical assistance to foster the creation of quality homes, educational facilities, and employment opportunities in underserved communities of New Jersey.

## **14. Building Momentum: Partnerships and Resource Development**

Throughout the life span of a community development project or organization, it is important to always be focused on partnership and resource (financial and otherwise) development. The following are some contacts and informational resources that may help that process:

### **Elected Officials Directory and Legislative Information**

<http://www.montclair.edu/newsinfo/findofficial.html>

<http://congress.org/congressorg/officials/state>

These online resources provide information about State and local elected officials and current legislative issues.

### **New Jersey Economic Development Authority (EDA)**

PO Box 990

Trenton, NJ 08625-0990

Phone (609) 292-1800

<http://www.njeda.com/notforprofits.asp>

This State entity provides low-interest loans and other resources to help businesses and non-profit agencies get the capital they need to invest and expand in New Jersey.

### **New Jersey Economic Development Directory**

[http://www.ecodevdirectory.com/new\\_jersey.htm](http://www.ecodevdirectory.com/new_jersey.htm)

If your issues are focused on or related to urban or economic revitalization, this site can help you find existing economic development agencies.

State of New Jersey Grant Resources <http://www.state.nj.us/grants.html>

This Web page provides information on types of grant programs offered by the State of New Jersey.

### **Council of New Jersey Grantmakers**

315 West State Street (Office)

101 West State Street (Mailing)  
Trenton, NJ 08608  
Phone 609-341-2022 Fax 609-777-1096  
[www.cnjg.org](http://www.cnjg.org)  
E-mail: [brambo@tesc.edu](mailto:brambo@tesc.edu)

This is a regional association of Grantmakers in New Jersey. Additional information about the forum can be found at [http://givingforum.org/about/profile\\_newjersey.html](http://givingforum.org/about/profile_newjersey.html)

### **Fannie Mae Foundation**

Phone 202-274-8057  
[grants@fanniemaefoundation.org](mailto:grants@fanniemaefoundation.org) <http://www.fanniemaefoundation.org/grants/grants.shtml>  
The Fannie Mae Foundation awards grants to non-profit organizations that create affordable homeownership and housing opportunities in cities, towns, and rural areas across the United States.

### **Ford Foundation**

320 East 43 Street New York, NY 10017  
<http://www.fordfound.org/about/guideline.cfm>  
One of the areas of interest for this national Grantmaker is its Asset Building and Community Development Program.

## **Section 9. Attachments**

- € a. Signed certification on Form NP-1 (Applicant Organization only)
- € b. "Certificate of Good Standing" from State of NJ
- € c. Copy of current NJ Charitable Registration and Investigation Act (CRI – 300R) form
- € d. List of current members of the Board of Directors, as January 1, 2021
- € e. Resume for Executive Director
- € f. Organizational Chart
- € g. Organization's total budget for the current year, with funding sources listed (Applicant Organization only)
- € h. Copy of the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting at which the organization's current year total budget was approved (Applicant Organization only)
- € i. Copy of the three (3) most recent annual audit reports for the organization (Applicant Organization only)

- € j. Copy of the corrective action plan related to internal control or compliance findings from the organization’s most recent annual audit report, if applicable (Applicant Organization only)
- € k. Incorporation Documents
- € l. Neighborhood maps (At least one of the maps must be “plain,” showing streets and street names.)
- m. Evidence of community outreach & engagement efforts
- n. Inlet Neighborhood Photos
- o. Evidence of local government support
- p. Evidence of nonprofit organizations support