

DRAFT MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Plan Implementation Committee

FROM: Maura McManimon, Executive Director
Paul M. Drake, PP/AICP, Planning Director
Russel C. Like, Area Planner

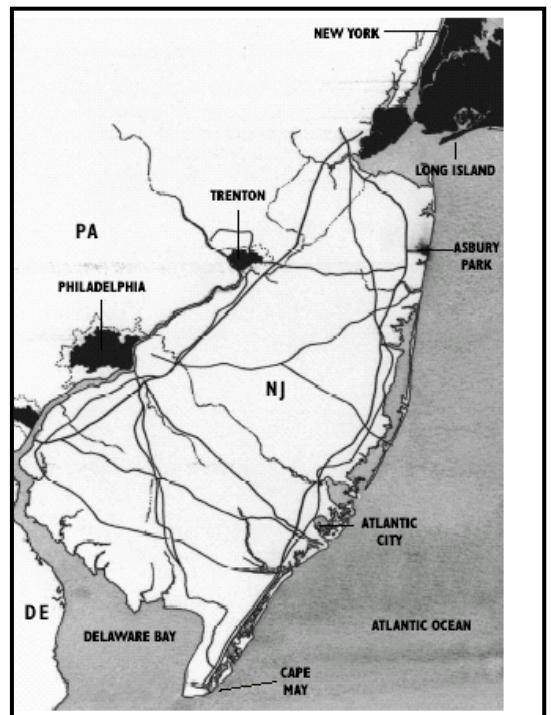
RE: Report recommending Initial Plan Endorsement for the City of Asbury Park, Monmouth County

Date: April 21, 2005

Introduction: In accordance with N.J.A.C. 5:85-7 et seq., the City of Asbury Park has requested Initial Plan Endorsement from the State Planning Commission. The following is a summary of the review of the petition based on information submitted by the petitioner¹ and information otherwise available to the Office of Smart Growth.

The City has also requested designation as an Urban Center. This would make Asbury Park the first Urban Center to be designated (and the second coastal urban center, after Atlantic City) since the original State Development and Redevelopment Plan in 1992, when the State Planning Commission designated eight Urban Centers. Asbury Park's request for Plan Endorsement and designation as an Urban Center is the first such request under the April 28, 2004 Plan Endorsement Guidelines.

Staff Recommendation: The City of Asbury Park's planning vision and documents are consistent with the State Plan as defined in the State Planning Rules. Therefore, the staff recommends Initial Plan Endorsement and designation of the City of Asbury Park as an Urban Center, subject to the inclusion of the recommended amendments to the Plan Implementation Agreement.



¹ Date of Pre-petition Meeting: 8/24/04
Date of Submittal: 9/28/04
OSG Incomplete: 10/28/04
Date Complete: 2/18/05
OSG Public Hearing (PIC): 4/27/05

Asbury Park's Vision and Plan

Location and Regional Context: Asbury Park is a fully developed municipality in Monmouth County, New Jersey and is currently undergoing a tremendous redevelopment effort after many decades of blight and urban decay. To guide the revitalization of the City, Asbury Park officials are currently preparing a new comprehensive master plan, and have completed several strategic plans to focus redevelopment efforts. These include a Central Business District Redevelopment Plan and a Waterfront Redevelopment Plan.

The City of Asbury Park is located in coastal Monmouth County, and is bordered by Neptune Township, Ocean Township, Interlaken Borough, and Loch Arbour Village. Of particular note is the designated center of Midtown Neptune in Neptune Township, which abuts the western border of Asbury Park. Asbury Park is located entirely in the Metropolitan Planning Area, PA1 (though the beach is identified on the preliminary State Plan Policy Map as parkland). See Map 1.

General Planning Statement: The City Master Plan is being updated and should be adopted by the City's Planning Board in the fall of 2005. This supplements the City's existing Master Plan. In 2002 and 2003, the NJDCA has awarded the City of Asbury Park a total of \$133,500 in planning grant funds to assist in its overall citywide strategic planning efforts and Plan Endorsement. In addition to the Master Plan update, the City Of Asbury Park has four redevelopment plans in various stages of implementation. These include:

- STARS Redevelopment Plan
- Waterfront Redevelopment Plan
- Central Business District Redevelopment Plan
- Scattered Site Redevelopment Plan

The City has supplied additional detail about each of these redevelopment plans. In general, the City's various redevelopment plans are consistent with the goals, strategies and policies of the State Plan. The City has supplied statements of consistency for all four redevelopment plans with the Petition for Initial Plan Endorsement of the City of Asbury Park; the municipal master plan; county master plan, and State Development and Redevelopment Plan.

Demographics: The 2000 Census reveals that the majority of the City's population is African- American (62.1%), with the balance represented by White Americans (24.7%) and Asian American and "other" ethnicities (13.1%). Asbury Park's demographic character differs from both Monmouth County and New Jersey as a whole. The City's percentage of African Americans is much higher than either Monmouth County (8.0%) or the State (13.6%). In 2000, more than one out of every five African Americans in Monmouth County resided in Asbury Park. Additionally, in 2000, the per capita income in Asbury Park was \$13,516, which is roughly half the Monmouth County per capita income of \$31,149 and a third of the State per capita income of \$47,589. Also in 2000, the average median household income in Asbury Park was \$23,081. This average is significantly less than the County average of \$64,271 and the State average of \$55,146.

Community Vision & Public Participation: The City of Asbury Park has taken a proactive approach to involving the community in the preparation of its various plans. The public participation process used during the preparation of the new City Master Plan helped to craft the detailed vision statement below:

"Within the next five to ten years, the City of Asbury Park will have seen the rewards of years of planning and preparation for the extensive redevelopment that will be taking place. The historic central business district will contain occupied commercial spaces housing goods and services to serve...the residents of the City as a whole. The CBD will be easily accessible to all residents of the City by way of enhanced pedestrian connections to the western side of the City through a better-utilized and more user-friendly James J. Howard Transportation

Center. Parking for the residents, merchants and shoppers in the CBD will be accommodated through a combination of clearly identified and user-friendly on-street parking strategy, as well as a new parking deck built by way of a public-private partnership. The CBD will also act as one of the gateways to the City's oceanfront and service the residents and visitors to that area as well as serve as a destination for the region.

The City will have implemented a jitney service to link the Transportation Center with the rest of the City including the CBD and entertainment areas at the waterfront. A CBD redevelopment plan has been written to help implement these goals. Main Street will become a destination as well. Building off of the success of CBD and waterfront redevelopment efforts, more business activity will be realized. A more pedestrian friendly environment will be created and design guidelines will have been used help to improve the overall appearance of the corridor. A Main Street redevelopment plan will be drafted in the fall of 2004 to address this area.

The waterfront will be nearing the completion of its vast redevelopment. A newly reconstructed boardwalk will add to the vibrancy of a renewed recreation area, the City's beachfront...The historic convention hall, casino and powerplant properties will have undergone a historic restoration....A number of mixed-use buildings will have been constructed and the occupants will help to add the activity in our renewed City...The City has adopted a Waterfront Redevelopment Plan and redeveloper agreement with a master developer to stimulate the redevelopment of the area. The Springwood Avenue corridor will be redeveloped and contain a variety of housing types to accommodate residents of all income levels...Redevelopment of scatted sites throughout the City will continue...Employment opportunities will increase as new commercial space is rehabilitated or developed throughout the City's business districts.

In order to implement this vision, the City is actively utilizing the NJ Local Redevelopment and Housing Law to prepare and implement its redevelopment plans. Redeveloper agreements spell out or are planned to spell out required contributions towards affordable housing or the provision of affordable housing in housing developments. An affordable housing committee has been formed by the Mayor and Council to address the need for affordable housing in the City while utilizing contributions from redevelopers.

Regarding aesthetics, the City has created design guidelines for the Waterfront Redevelopment Area, CBD Redevelopment Area and local historic districts...This vision for the City of Asbury Park can be found when one looks at the number of redevelopment plans and master plan of the City. In addition, the City is currently updating its master plan which will incorporate and "bring together" all of the redevelopment plans, land development regulations and community goals in one concrete document."

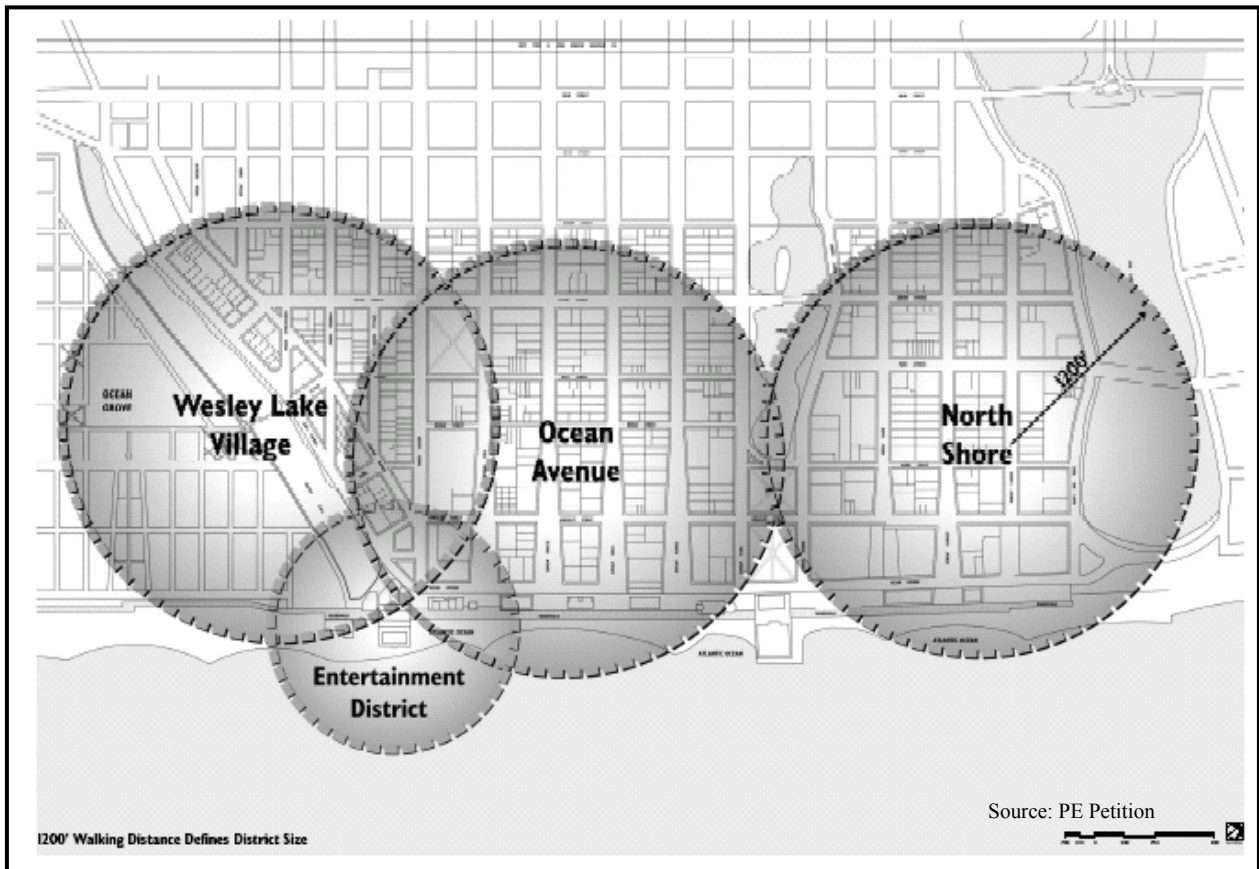
Analysis of Asbury Park's Vision and Plan

The purpose of the Plan Endorsement process is to increase the consistency among municipal, county, regional and State agency plans with each other and with the State Plan, and to facilitate the implementation of these plans. N.J.A.C. 5:85-7.1(b). Plans shall be endorsed only if they are internally consistent and demonstrate consistency with the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. N.J.A.C. 5:85-7.2(h). Consistency means that the State Planning Commission determined that a municipal plan is the same as or has the same effect as the provisions in the State Plan. In evaluating consistency, the Commission should consider all provisions of the State Plan with particular emphasis on: 1) Statewide goals and policies; 2) Planning Area policies and boundaries; 3) Critical Environmental Sites criteria and intent; and 4) delineation criteria and intent for a Center designation. N.J.A.C. 5:85-1.4. The analysis that follows is a simple one. It is predicated on the recognition that an investment in good planning will produce a desirable outcome.

Consistency Among Local, Regional and State Plans with State Plan:

The City's various redevelopment plans are all in agreement with the State Development and Redevelopment Plan, the Monmouth County Growth Management Plan, and, when applicable, the plans of neighboring municipalities. The City has provided additional detail on the relationship of each of its redevelopment plans to the plans of the county, state, and other municipal jurisdictions.

- **Cross-Acceptance**
The City has taken part in the Cross-Acceptance process and has reported to Monmouth County in regard to its recommendations on the State Development and Redevelopment Plan.
- **Asbury Park Transportation Improvement Study**
The City is currently working on a Transportation Improvement Study with the Monmouth County Planning Board.
- **Regional Planning-Monmouth County Planning Board**
In the near future, the Monmouth County Planning Board will begin the planning process for a \$390,000 regional coastal study being funded through a Smart Future Grant issued by NJDCA, Office of Smart Growth that will address issues pertaining to shore communities in the County. Asbury Park will be an active participant in the study.
- **Coordination activities with the Boards of Education**
The City administration has been actively working with the Board of Education to relocate offices, which must be moved in order to accommodate the waterfront redevelopment efforts. The City is also assisting in the identification of an appropriate site to locate a new "Model A" elementary school. Asbury Park is an Abbot District.



State Plan Goals and Policies:

The State Plan is made up of 8 Goals and Strategies and 19 Policies that complement a State Plan Policy Map. The following is a summary of three of the goals and six of the policies, which we have identified as the most significant as they relate to the Asbury Park Petition for Plan Endorsement.

GOAL 1: Revitalize the State's Cities and Towns

STRATEGY *Protect, preserve and develop the valuable human and economic assets in cities, towns and other urban areas. Plan to improve their livability and sustainability by investing public resources in accordance with current plan, which are consistent with the provisions of the State Plan. Leverage private investments in jobs and housing; provide comprehensive public services at lower costs and higher quality; and improve the natural and built environment. Incorporate ecological design through mechanisms such as solar access for heating and power generation. Level the playing field in such areas as financing services, infrastructure and regulation. Reduce the barriers which limit mobility and access of city residents, particularly the poor and minorities, to jobs, housing, services and open space within the region. Build*

on the assets of cities and towns such as their labor force, available land and buildings, strategic location and diverse populations.

Policy on Urban Revitalization - *Prepare strategic revitalization plans, neighborhood empowerment plans and urban complex strategic revitalization plans that promote revitalization, economic development and infrastructure investments, coordinate revitalization planning among organizations and governments, support housing programs and adaptive reuse, improve access to waterfront areas, public open space and parks, and develop human resources with investments in public health, education, work force readiness and public safety in cities and towns.*

Policy on Public Investment Priorities It is the intent of the State Plan that the full amount of growth projected for the state should be accommodated. Plan Strategies recommend guiding this growth to Centers and other areas identified within Endorsed Plans where infrastructure exists or is planned and where it can be provided efficiently, either with private or public dollars. (Designated Centers are included in the category of communities with Endorsed Plans.) Public investment priorities guide

the investment of public dollars to support and carry out these Plan Strategies.

Policy on Transportation Improve transportation systems by coordinating transportation and land-use planning; integrating transportation systems; developing and enhancing alternative modes of transportation; improving management structures and techniques; and utilizing transportation as an economic development tool.

ANALYSIS: Asbury Park is a classic example of a place where smart growth planning principles are being applied to *revitalize the State's cities and towns*. The City's plan demonstrates that it is dedicated to the goals and objectives of the State Plan. Over the past two decades, the city has suffered from decay and disinvestment. Remnants of prior failed revitalization efforts are evident in the city in the form of half-completed buildings that dot the landscape. Under the various redevelopment plans, a once-thriving resort community has a strategy to bring back the days when the beach and the boardwalk attracted throngs of summer visitors. Asbury Park was first planned by James Bradley in 1877 to include a well-defined grid street pattern that took advantage of such natural open features as Wesley Lake, Sunset Lake, and the Atlantic Ocean. For decades, Asbury Park's boardwalk and elaborate hotels attracted visitors to this part of the shore. City landmarks like the Palace, the Convention Center and the Paramount Theater became synonymous with summer fun. The Stone Pony, one of Asbury's Park's most famous landmarks, hosted the rise of New Jersey's own Bruce Springsteen to super-stardom as he sang songs like *Jersey Girl* and *Born in the USA*.



Source: PE Petition

BIRD'S-EYE VIEW SHOWING CONVENTION HALL AND PAVILION

The City master plan and redevelopment plans seek to capitalize upon Asbury Park's ideal oceanside location, as well as hearkening back to the City's glory days as a premier beach resort. The Waterfront Redevelopment Plan is the linchpin of the City's efforts to achieve a renaissance and once again become a thriving tourist destination. Furthermore, the Waterfront Redevelopment Plan – along with several other redevelopment plans that the City has in progress – is crafted in accordance with Smart Growth principles such as mixed-use pedestrian oriented designs that will also *improve access to waterfront areas, public open space and parks*. By adhering to State Plan Policies, the City is anticipating that it will achieve Plan Endorsement and that consequently the public investment priority system will be available to help the city implement its plan.

As part of its planning efforts, Asbury Park has evaluated its transportation and circulation, including mass transit, pedestrian and bicycle mobility, “gateway” options and Context Sensitive Design, and goods movements and truck routes. The City has also worked to coordinate its plans with the NJTPA Regional Plan. The City's Waterfront Redevelopment Plan and the Central Business District Redevelopment Plan will foster development around Asbury Park's James J. Howard Transportation Center. The Transportation Center provides bus and rail service to the City and the region. Housing and commercial development is planned in a fashion that will provide incentives for mass transit use and lessen automobile travel.

Pedestrian improvements, such as wider sidewalks, lighting, street furniture, and traffic calming, are discussed in both the Waterfront and Central Business District Redevelopment Plans. At only 1.6 square miles in size, Asbury Park is already, geographically, a very walkable city. Simple improvements, such as widening/repairing/connecting of sidewalks, pedestrian crossing signs and signals, restriping (and addition) of crosswalks, implementation of other traffic calming techniques, and provision of pedestrian amenities, should be made throughout the City where necessary; these improvements would create a friendly pedestrian environment and improve the perception of the City as a safe and enjoyable place to walk. This issue is discussed in more detail below in the discussion of the 'walkability audit' of the City's Southwest Quadrant.

Both the Waterfront Redevelopment Plan and the Central Business District Streetscape Improvement Plan call for the installation of bicycle racks throughout the redevelopment areas in order to encourage bicycling. As noted above, the City's Fall 2004/Spring 2005 Road Improvement Program includes the installation of new bikeway signage and striping along Deal Lake Drive, Grand Avenue, Cookman Avenue and Bangs Avenue.

Asbury Park is a place worthy of public reinvestment in accordance with the state plan's goal of revitalizing our cities and towns. To achieve this reinvestment, we all must be cognizant of the initial investment made by the city in conceiving and implementing its plans. One way in which the State of New Jersey can be of assistance is by fostering a level playing field wherein the City is treated fairly, equitably, and reasonably with regard to financing services, infrastructure and regulation.

GOAL 2: Conserve the State's Natural Resources and Systems

STRATEGY: Conserve the state's natural resources and systems as capital assets of the public by promoting ecologically sound development and redevelopment in the Metropolitan and Suburban Planning Areas, accommodating environmentally designed development and redevelopment in Centers in the Fringe, Rural and Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas, and by restoring the integrity of natural systems in areas where they have been degraded or damaged. Plan, design, invest in and manage the development and redevelopment of

Centers and the use of land, water, soil, plant and animal resources to maintain biodiversity and the viability of ecological systems. Maximize the ability of natural systems to control runoff and flooding, and to improve air and water quality and supply.

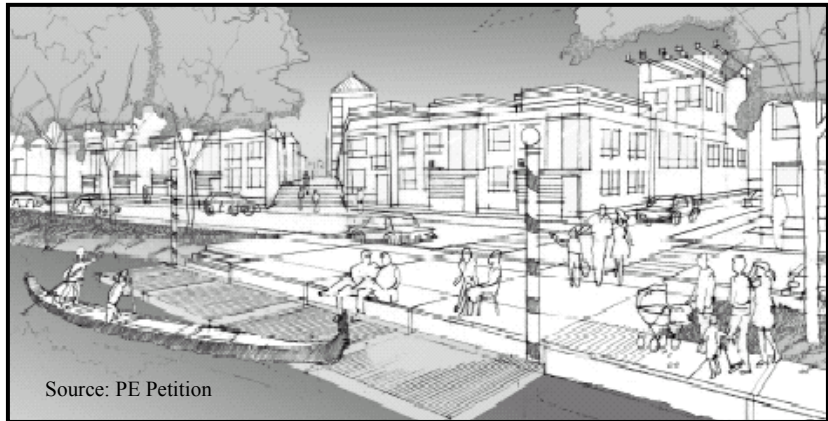
Policy on Coastal Resources Acknowledge the statutory treatment of the coastal area under federal and state legislation, coordinate efforts to establish a comprehensive coastal management program with local planning efforts, undertake a regional capacity analysis, protect vital ecological areas and promote recreational opportunities.

ANALYSIS: Based on the following text that was taken in part from the April 2005 "Consistency Review and Comments on the Petition for Initial Plan Endorsement" prepared by the NJDEP, it is evident that the Asbury Park petition for Initial Plan Endorsement will meet the goal to *Conserve the State's Natural Resources and Systems* and strategy as well as the *Policy on Coastal Resources*. The text supplied by DEP's Consistency Review follows:

"In March 2004 the NJDEP issued a CAFRA permit to allow for the redevelopment of the oceanfront area of the City based on the Waterfront Redevelopment Plan. The CAFRA permit included the following administrative condition: "The permittee shall within 6 months of receiving this CAFRA permit, provide proof to the Program that an application for plan endorsement has been submitted to the Office of Smart Growth." Should the City be granted Initial Plan Endorsement, it is eligible to become a CAFRA Urban Center. This would allow for development of the Waterfront Redevelopment Area as envisioned in the Waterfront Redevelopment Plan. Until the City of Asbury Park obtains plan endorsement (and subsequent designation as a CAFRA Urban Center) construction activities are limited to 80% impervious cover in both the prime renewal and infill areas of the Waterfront Redevelopment Area.

The CAFRA permit grants permission to: construct 3,164 dwelling units and 450,000 square feet of commercial space; upgrade the storm sewer system; as well as upgrade and rehabilitate the sewer lines within the prime renewal area; rehabilitate the boardwalk, Casino Convention Hall and Powerhouse historic structures; and reestablish private and public beach clubs subject to conditions. The permit is authorized under and in compliance with the Coastal Zone Management Act Rules as amended on January 20, 2004, and was issued on March 26, 2004.

The CAFRA permit for the Waterfront Redevelopment Area covers an area bounded by the Boardwalk and Atlantic Ocean to the east, Grand Avenue to the west, Deal Lake to the north and Wesley Lake to the south. Because a CAFRA permit represents and incorporates numerous Department programs and concerns, the issuance of the permit to Asbury Park to redevelop the oceanfront of the City in accordance with the Waterfront Redevelopment Plan and the conditions of the permit is in itself a statement of consistency with the Department's policies and programs, and with the policy objectives of the Coastal Metropolitan Planning Area.



Source: PE Petition

The City is fully developed, and redevelopment is now taking place on abandoned and underutilized lands throughout the City. The Waterfront Redevelopment Plan is the City's ambitious effort to rebuild the City's oceanfront. The plan seeks to build on the existing infrastructure systems with up to 3,164 new housing units. The new units will be in 2 to 3 story townhouse buildings, and apartment buildings between 3 and 8 stories tall. Housing density in the redevelopment area will be 27 units per acre.

The Waterfront Redevelopment Plan proposes to restore the Asbury Park oceanfront and boardwalk and reconnect the City to the oceanfront area. The City is replanting 5% of the land area (2.09 acres) with trees, and the City will also establish a tree-planting ordinance citywide based on a landscaping plan developed to comply with the CAFRA permit. The Waterfront Redevelopment Plan calls for the creation of dunes at the northern end of the city waterfront, and enhancement of existing dunes. This is approved as part of the CAFRA permit. A new boardwalk will parallel the new dunes, connecting to the existing boardwalk, reclaiming the waterfront vista in this area.

Deal Lake, the northern boundary of the City, is delineated as a Critical Environmental Site. The Waterfront Redevelopment Plan includes the installation of BaySaver stormwater management devices, upgrades of collection pipes and the stabilization of outlets in Deal Lake, as well as Sunset and Lily Lakes. The City, through compliance with the Municipal Stormwater Regulation program, is also proposing to improve water quality in the lakes through better stormwater management in the rest of the City.

The Waterfront Redevelopment Plan provides numerous opportunities for public access to the oceanfront through the enhancement of existing access points and the creation of new public paths and spaces. The CAFRA permit ensures that these measures will be implemented. Public parking along the streets will be reconfigured to increase the amount of public parking available.

Development of the Waterfront Redevelopment Area includes the upgrading of stormwater, water supply, wastewater, and street systems. Repair and upgrading the aging wastewater collection system will reduce

water loss and require less treatment. Installing new and upgraded stormwater infrastructure will reduce pollution due to runoff, and increased water quality will contribute to the revitalization of the City's oceanfront."

GOAL 6: Provide Adequate Housing at a Reasonable Cost

STRATEGY Provide adequate housing at a reasonable cost through public/private partnerships that create and maintain a broad choice of attractive, affordable, ecologically designed housing, particularly for those most in need. Create and maintain housing in the Metropolitan and Suburban Planning Areas and in Centers in the Fringe, Rural and Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas, at densities which support transit and reduce commuting time and costs, and at locations easily accessible, preferably on foot, to employment, retail, services, cultural, civic and recreational opportunities. Support regional and community-based housing initiatives and remove unnecessary regulatory and financial barriers to the delivery of housing at appropriate locations.

Policy on Housing - Preserve and expand the supply of safe, decent and reasonably priced housing by balancing land uses, housing types and housing costs and by improving access between jobs and housing. Promote low- and moderate-income and affordable housing through code enforcement, housing subsidies, community-wide housing approaches and coordinated efforts with the New Jersey Council on Affordable Housing.

Policy on Design Mix uses and activities as closely and as thoroughly as possible; develop, adopt and implement design guidelines; create spatially defined, visually appealing and functionally efficient places in ways that establish an identity; design circulation systems to promote connectivity; maintain an appropriate scale in the built environment; and redesign areas of sprawl.

ANALYSIS: The City Of Asbury Park did not have a COAH obligation through the first two rounds. However, given the recently adopted third round methodology which includes the "growth share" approach (for every 8 market rate units constructed, 1 affordable unit should be constructed, and for every 25 jobs created in a municipality [based on gross square footage of non-residential development] 1 affordable unit should be constructed) the City may face an affordable housing obligation under the COAH guidelines in the future.

The need for affordable housing in the City of Asbury Park is clear. The City's per capita income (\$13,516) is less than half that of Monmouth County (\$31,149) and 30% of that of the State (\$47,589). Nearly one third (29.3%) of the City's families reported incomes below the poverty level. In 2000, Asbury Park contained a total of 6,754 households. A total of 432 owner-occupied households, comprising 44.8% of owner occupants, were spending over 30% of their incomes on housing costs. According to the State affordability threshold for housing as a percentage of income, not more than 28% of gross income should be allocated to housing costs. Among renter occupants, a total of 2,641 households, or 50.8%, were spending over 30% of their incomes on rent. According to the State affordability threshold for housing as a percentage of income for tenants, not more than 30% of gross income should be allocated for rent. These figures indicate that although the City may already contain a significant number of affordable housing units (as indicated through prior rounds of COAH rules), the need for decent, affordable housing in the City remains. Given the growth share approach adopted by COAH, additional affordable units will need to be constructed to meet obligations under the third round methodology.

In general, the affordable housing policies of the City are:

1. To increase the supply of affordable housing opportunities for owners and renters;
2. To assure that proposed development projects include the maximum feasible number of affordable units;
3. To assist cost-burdened homeowners in abating code violations and maintaining their homes;
4. To prevent the displacement of families;
5. To develop a pool of informed potential home-buyers; and

6. To encourage responsible ownership.

The City has taken steps to provide affordable housing through these policies. Under the Waterfront Redeveloper's Agreement, the City of Asbury Park will receive 7 million dollars in funds to be utilized for affordable housing and community initiatives. In the Agreement, the Master Developer and the City agreed to create a source of funding for affordable housing and community initiatives outside the Prime Renewal area. The Master Developer will contribute monies, which are to be granted or loaned by the City. The City may also use a portion of the funds to assist projects or group activities promoting economic development and community initiatives in the City; however, affordable housing will remain a priority for the use of the funds.

The Council has established a subcommittee to work on affordable housing matters. The subcommittee reports back to the Mayor and full Council. The Affordable Housing Subcommittee's current task involves the evaluation of the suitability of City-owned properties for affordable housing. The subcommittee has established the goal of providing the maximum number of affordable units on the available City owned land.

Much of this land is located within the STARS Redevelopment Area. The Subcommittee has developed different development scenarios for available parcels and considered acquisition of vacant parcels and structures to provide additional opportunities to create affordable housing. Preliminary estimates indicate that utilization of the City owned parcels in this area could yield approximately 35 affordable housing units, consisting mainly of apartments in mixed-use buildings and/or two-family townhouse structures.

The City recognizes the need for a formal affordable housing strategy. As such, the City has amended its scope of work under existing Smart Growth and Smart Futures Planning Grant awards to emphasize the development of affordable housing policies and strategies. The Planning Grants will fund a Municipal Strategic Revitalization Plan. As proposed by the City, included in the Plan will be an affordable housing component, which promotes the redevelopment of underutilized properties while maintaining housing opportunities for existing residents. Sub-elements should include, but not be limited to:

- A summary of existing conditions;
- Estimated affordable housing need;
- Affordable housing targets;
- Feasibility of creating an "Affordable Housing Commission" to provide ongoing oversight and policy direction for the City's affordable housing activities;
- Recommendations for inclusionary zoning techniques; and
- Recommendations for funding affordable housing opportunities.

In recognition of the growth share approach in COAH's third round rules, the City is taking steps to create new affordable housing units. The City has recently negotiated a redeveloper agreement with Ingerman Affordable Housing, Inc. for properties located along Springwood Avenue. Springwood Avenue was an Urban Renewal Area under prior redevelopment statutes. An order was entered in Monmouth County Superior Court on December 15, 2004, determining that the property initially designated as an Urban Renewal Area for the purposes of the Asbury Shores Project is now designated as an area in need of redevelopment. The City is currently drafting a Redevelopment Plan for the Area. Pursuant to the Agreement, Ingerman must construct a minimum of 70 affordable housing units consisting of no less than 30 two bedroom units, 30 three bedroom units and no more than 10 one bedroom units.

Also along Springwood Avenue, the City is in negotiations with another developer who would build-out the remainder of the redevelopment area. While only preliminary numbers of units have been generated at this point, the City will utilize the growth share approach to determine the number of affordable units that must be constructed. It is currently anticipated that 8 affordable units would be built.

The City is also negotiating with another potential developer who is proposing to redevelop an old Salvation Army property located at the intersection of 5th Avenue and Kingsley Street. The property is located within the Waterfront Redevelopment Area. The Mayor and Council are taking the position that the developer must build affordable housing units on-site, with the number of units to be determined using the growth share approach. Under the terms of the current development scenario, the development must include 15 affordable units under the growth share approach.

The City also maintains partnerships with non-profit agencies that construct affordable housing. These include Interfaith Neighbors, Inc. and the Monmouth Housing Alliance. The City meets monthly with Interfaith and often transfers land and structures for 1 dollar via the “nominal fee” statute. In return, qualified, income-eligible households are able to purchase the newly built or rehabilitated properties at prices significantly below market value. The City has worked with the Monmouth Housing Alliance by selling land at below market value and sharing in the costs associated with remediation of unforeseen environmental conditions of a site. Preliminary discussions are underway with the Housing Alliance to transfer two additional parcels.

The City is actively seeking redevelopers who would participate in its Scattered Site Redevelopment Program. The City has two Scattered Sites Redevelopment Plans, which were submitted with the initial petition documents. An objective of both of the Scattered Sites Plans is to “Create new opportunities for affordable housing in the City”.

The City is currently seeking redevelopers for 16 existing structures and properties within the Scattered Site program. The total number of affordable units envisioned through the rehabilitation of these 16 properties is 11. The City is also currently beginning a Scattered Sites Phase II program. Phase II will involve additional properties for the creation of affordable housing units.

The Asbury Park Housing Authority also has plans to draft a Washington Avenue Redevelopment Plan. Washington Avenue is a prospective Redevelopment Area within the City for which no redevelopment plan has been drafted. The Housing Authority wishes to take the lead on drafting the plan. Preliminary estimates indicate that approximately 100 affordable units can be built within the redevelopment area.

It is estimated that pursuant to COAH’s growth share approach an additional affordable housing obligation of approximately 400 will exist if the Waterfront Redevelopment Area achieves full build-out at 3,164 units over approximately the next decade. The City is taking the steps outlined above to fulfill this obligation. A summary of the number of new affordable units anticipated for construction in the next 3 to 4 years is as follows

Developer/Development	Number of units
Housing Authority/Washington Avenue	100
Ingerman/Springwood	70
Somerset Development/Springwood	8
Salvation Army Property	15
Scattered Sites	11
Non-Profits	10
Total Anticipated over next 3-4 years	214

Source: Asbury Park PE Petition

Given the current pace of development in the City, it is anticipated that approximately 700 new residential units will be ready for construction in the Waterfront Redevelopment Area alone by 2007. The remainder of any units constructed will be scattered throughout the City and is anticipated to be approximately 100 given

approved and pending development applications. When the affordable units estimated above are constructed, they will more than satisfy the City's obligation under the growth share approach for existing development anticipated by 2007.

To accommodate future affordable housing needs as determined by the growth share approach, the City must prepare an affordable housing strategy as discussed above. Options for creating additional affordable housing opportunities must be examined and implemented where feasible. Options may include but not be limited to:

- Zoning for Inclusionary Development;
- City Sponsored 100% Affordable Program;
- Alternative Living Arrangements (group homes, transitional facilities);
- Accessory Apartments;
- Buy Down Program;
- Elder Cottage Housing Opportunities (ECHO Housing Units);
- Assisted Living Residences;
- City Sponsored Rental Programs;
- Affordable Housing Partnership Programs;
- Extension of Expiring Controls;
- Continued Use of the RCA Program; and
- Development Fees.

Changes to the Planning Area.

The entire City of Asbury Park remains in the Metropolitan Planning Area (PA1) and the City supports this delineation. A mapping change was identified for Asbury Park on the preliminary State Plan Policy Map for Cross-acceptance III for a beachfront area that is shown as parkland. Except for this area, and the proposed Urban Center designation and the CES discussed below, no other State Plan Policy map changes are requested. The boundaries of the Urban Center are proposed to be coterminous with the municipal boundary.

Designation and Criteria of Critical Environmental Sites.

A Critical Environmental Site (CES) overlay boundary already exists along Deal Lake. A new CES boundary is recommended to occur along Wesley Lake so that the continued planning of the city will appropriately consider these environmental resources.

Urban Center Designation.

Asbury Park has requested designation as an Urban Center in accordance with the State Plan. Eight municipalities were designated as Urban Centers with the adoption of the first State Plan in 1992. These include: Atlantic City, Camden, Elizabeth, Jersey City, Newark, New Brunswick, Paterson and Trenton.

Asbury Park's request for an Urban Center designation has come through the Plan Endorsement process and the City will be required to prepare and abide by a Plan Implementation Agreement. Although from a planning and design perspective the City's plan is comprehensive, the full implementation of its plan can not be realized unless it receives an Urban Center designation, since Asbury Park is subject to a regulatory standard in the Coastal Zone Management Rules according to which only an Urban Center is permitted a 90% impervious cover limit. Given its location in the Metropolitan Planning Area, PA1, and its current lack of an Urban Center designation, Asbury Park is now allowed a maximum impervious cover of 80%. The urban design plan for the revitalization of Asbury Park, as a whole, therefore cannot move forward unless the City is

granted the flexibility to approach a 90% impervious cover limit on a per-site basis. In effect, the CAFRA permit process is currently structured to require an Urban Center designation so that Asbury Park may move forward with its renaissance.

If the City obtains Plan Endorsement and Urban Center designation, it can become a designated “CAFRA Urban Center.” This would allow for the planned design buildout of the Waterfront Redevelopment Area as envisioned in the City’s Waterfront Redevelopment Plan.

The Importance of a Design Framework: The urban design plan that is proposed will meet the regulatory standards for impervious surface in the Coastal zone management regulations. However, it should be noted that an impervious surface standard alone would not produce the types of quality human and natural environments envisioned in the State Plan. The primary philosophy of the State Plan is that growth should be focused in centers, which are designed as neighborhoods for people. Asbury Park’s plan demonstrates that the City is committed to providing a sound, physical design framework for its residents and visitors. This design approach is consistent with the State Plan and exceeds the compliance expectations. The following excerpt from the State Plan addresses the importance of a design framework:

Centers are complex, richly textured living communities, where a physical framework of buildings, infrastructure and open spaces actively supports the economy and civil society. Traditional compact communities have evolved (and continue to evolve) over long periods of time, demonstrating a frequently overlooked capacity for adapting to changing – and sometimes adverse – circumstances. A community’s ability to respond positively to changing conditions is in part attributable to the basic soundness of its *physical framework*, which – unlike the uni-dimensional, single purpose developments typical of suburban sprawl – is designed to support a wide diversity of uses and activities for a wide diversity of users. Such a flexible physical framework accommodates change with much greater ease than the automobile dependent, single-use and single-purpose products of sprawl development.

The challenge in planning for new Centers is to create the physical frameworks, which foster these qualities of flexibility and diversity in an increasingly specialized development environment geared to delivering single-purpose products. The task of managing existing compact communities – of coping with existing market realities and changing consumer demand – without damaging the physical framework and slowly losing these unique qualities, poses the same challenges.

Planning and designing new Centers is not an easy task. Nevertheless, the potential rewards are considerable, while the downside of not developing in Centers is also significant. Yet new Centers are unlikely to happen if municipalities take no proactive steps in that direction. This means involving the private sector (developers, land owners, residents) in visioning, in adopting detailed regulating plans that establish basic street alignments, reserve choice locations for major public uses and establish neighborhood character, and in implementing these plans consistently. Proactive municipal planning with the active participation of interested parties offers a much higher level of predictability to developers and other stakeholders than the current norm.

Flexible Application of Center Designation Criteria: The State Plan created both the hierarchy of centers and the Center Designation Criteria, which establish certain basic thresholds of land area, population, employment and densities for the various categories of Center. These criteria are intended to be applied flexibly. For example, population fluctuations in seasonal communities should be taken into account, as should disparities between daytime and nighttime populations. Density criteria are relevant primarily to new Centers and to the growth areas of existing Centers, and are less relevant to the built-up portions of existing Centers, except when conditions influencing development change significantly (e.g. central sewer is provided for the first time) and infill and redevelopment opportunities are viable and locally sought. Designation

criteria refer to conditions in the Center’s planning horizon year (e.g. 2020 rather than current population), and while the State Plan’s horizon year forms the primary basis for long range planning, municipalities and counties should be aware of the consequences of these planning decisions in the years beyond 2020.

The challenge in developing Center guidelines is to achieve a balance between the diverse and often competing interests of a Center’s many users and stakeholders. Centers – and Center design – should strive to promote the interest of the community as a whole and optimize State Plan goals, rather than seeking to maximize any of them. If any single interest, (whether affordable housing, or wetlands protection or economic development), no matter how deserving on its own, achieves primacy at the expense of all the others, this most delicate balance is lost and the community as a whole stands to lose.

The criteria for designating Urban Centers are shown in Table 1. These guidelines have not yet been applied to a proposed Urban Center. Based on these guidelines, the present population for Asbury Park is below the 40,000-population threshold. Also, Asbury Park does not currently have a significant employment base. However, it should also be considered that Census 2000 data indicates that Asbury Park serves as a significant exporter of service sector jobs to other parts of the region. The mean travel time to work for residents of Asbury Park is 26 minutes. Asbury Park does meet several of the criteria for an Urban Center, as it far exceeds the gross population density and gross housing density requirements of these guidelines, both at present and in the future based on the proposed revitalization plans. Table 2 compares Asbury Park to several existing Urban Centers and other neighboring municipalities. As Table 2 clearly shows, the population density of Asbury Park already exceeds that of such existing Urban Centers as Atlantic City, New Brunswick, and Trenton.

Table 1. Criteria for Urban Center Designation for the Year 2020

	Urban Center	Asbury Park 2000	Asbury Park 2020	#Δ	%Δ
Area (in square miles)	NA	1.43	1.43	0	0
Population	>40,000	16,930	26,442	9,512	64
Gross Population Density (people/square mile)	>7,500	11,842	18,490	6,648	64
Housing	NA	7,744	11,694	3,950	
Gross Housing Density (dwelling units/acre)	>4	8.1	12.7	+4.6	64
Employment	>40,000	3,914	4,664	750	19
Jobs: Housing Ratio	>1:1	1:2	1:2.4		
Source: Development and Redevelopment Plan, U.S. Census, Monmouth County Cross-Acceptance Report					

Table 2 Geographic area		2000 Population	Housing units	Area in square miles			Density per square mile of land area	
				Total area	Water area	Land area	Population	Housing units
Atlantic City	Atlantic County	40,517	20,219	17.35	6.00	11.35	3,569.80	1,781.40
New Brunswick City	Middlesex County	48,573	13,893	5.75	0.52	5.23	9,293.50	2,658.10
Asbury Park City	Monmouth County	16,930	7,744	1.60	0.17	1.43	11,842.00	5,416.70
Long Branch City	Monmouth County	31,340	13,983	6.19	0.97	5.22	6,008.60	2,680.90
Seaside Heights Borough	Ocean County	3,155	2,840	0.76	0.15	0.61	5,162.20	4,646.80
Red Bank Borough	Monmouth County	11,844	5,450	2.16	0.37	1.78	6,639.10	3,055.00
Trenton City	Mercer County	85,403	33,843	8.15	0.49	7.66	11,153.60	4,419.90

Criteria for Designating Urban Centers

Eight Urban Centers have been identified by the State Planning Commission. They all meet the following criteria:

- 1. It is fully developed, with an infrastructure network serving its region; and*
- 2. It has a population of more than 40,000; and*
- 3. It has a population density exceeding 7,500 persons per square mile; and*
- 4. It has an employment base of more than 40,000 jobs; and*
- 5. It has a job-to-dwelling ratio of 1:1 or higher; and*
- 6. It serves as the primary focus for commercial, industrial, office and residential uses in the Metropolitan Area, providing the widest range of jobs, housing, governmental, educational and cultural facilities in the region and providing the most intense level of transportation infrastructure in the State; or*
- 7. In lieu of all the above, a history of population and employment levels that are consistent with the above six criteria; and*
- 8. In conjunction with either of the above two options (criteria 1-6 or 7), the municipal boundary of the Urban Center is used in the application of the criteria and serves as the boundary of the Urban Center.*

Source: NJ State Development and Redevelopment Plan

Asbury Park is fully developed with an infrastructure network serving the region. By 2020, it is not projected to attain a population of 40,000 people year round. However, with summer visitors increasing due to the revitalization efforts, this value will be exceeded on a seasonal basis. Asbury Park significantly exceeds the population density values for an Urban Center.

Asbury Park offers - or will offer, following implementation of the redevelopment plans - one of the more diverse mixtures of industry, commerce, residences and cultural facilities found in any central place. Like many Urban Centers, it has suffered decline, yet still contains many jobs and households. It is home to a large pool of skilled and

presently unskilled labor that could, with appropriate investment, become among the State's most valuable human resource assets. Historically, public agencies at all levels have invested heavily in Asbury Park. The Urban Center has an intense service fabric that, with repair that must occur anyway, offers a solid foundation for new growth in the future.

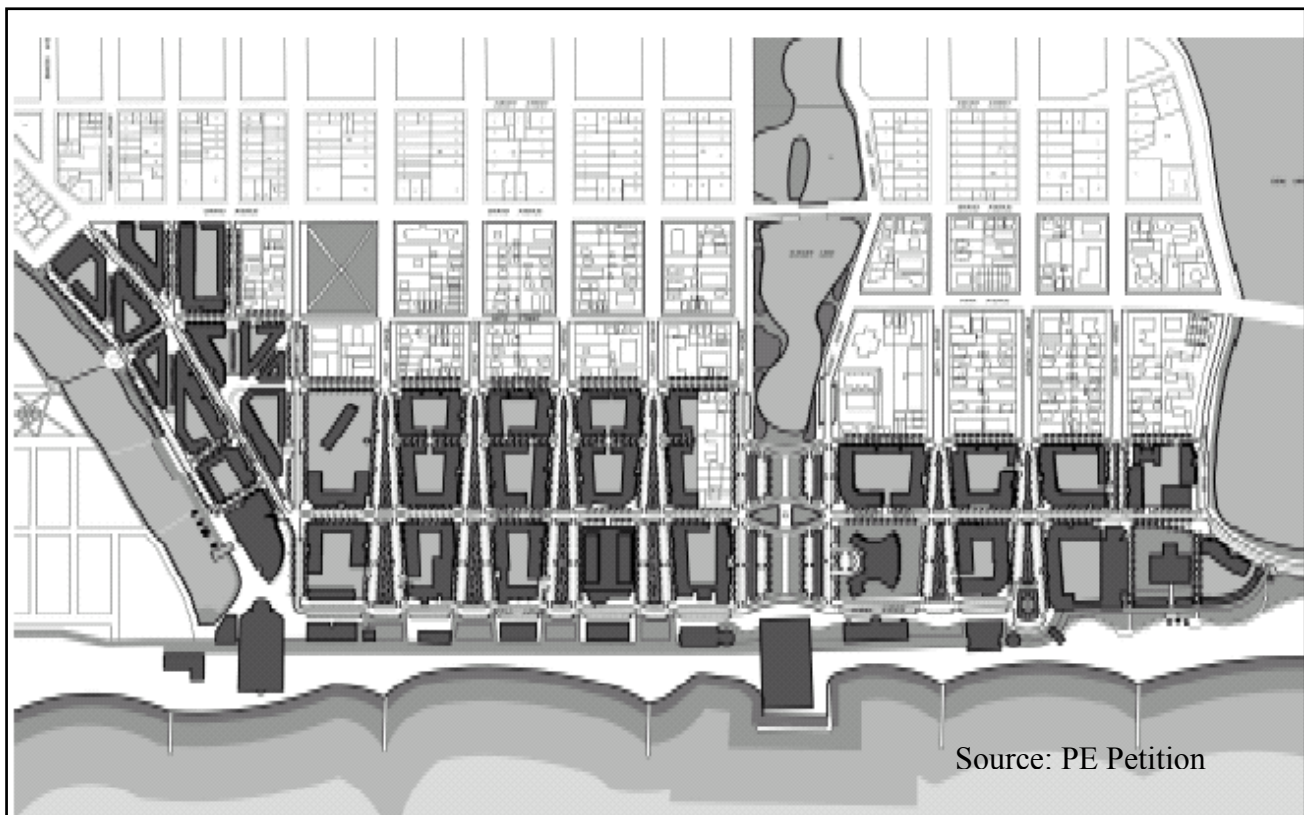
Asbury Park anchors growth in the metropolitan areas of Monmouth County, and its influence extends throughout New Jersey. The revitalization efforts will have a distinct central business district and many neighborhoods, many of which may have Cores of shopping and community services. The urban design plan will be compact compared to surrounding suburban communities and serve as the hub for communication and transportation networks in the region.

Additionally, the very concept of redevelopment in an underutilized, older urban place like Asbury Park is in accordance with the goals and policies of the State Plan. Finally, there are several factors which favor the status of "urban center" for Asbury Park – specifically: its long history as a major tourist center; the presence of substantial infrastructure in the City; and the likelihood that the prospective redevelopment, combined with the renewed presence of tourists in the city in-season, will push the gross population and employment numbers of Asbury Park towards the level of a smaller urban center such as New Brunswick (at least during the summer months). Asbury Park already meets the density requirements for an Urban Center, and by 2020, the City is expected to attain a density that far exceeds the guidelines for an Urban Center.

Conclusion

Recognizing the City of Asbury Park's tremendous planning efforts, the Office of Smart Growth recommends that the State Planning Commission endorse the City's Vision and Plan. It is apparent that the City has crossed a threshold after years of false starts in its efforts to revitalize itself. This effort now seems to be taking hold and private investors and local, county and state officials have all lent their support. The integration and coordination of planning efforts is at the heart of the State Plan.

Endorsing Asbury Park's Vision and Plan is intended to help forge a lasting partnership between the Commission and the City. However, this commitment is a two-way street, as embodied in the Plan Implementation Agreement. Additional planning and design work will still be required on the part of the City. From the documents submitted, it is evident that the desire of the City to succeed is real and the SPC should support these planning efforts.



PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENT

A draft Plan Implementation Agreement (PIA) is attached. The PIA will be finalized upon adoption by the State Planning Commission.