1999 Master Plan

Little Egg Harbor Township

Ocean County, New Jersey

ADOPTED BY RESOLUTION OF THE LITTLE EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD ON MAY 6, 1999

PREPARED FOR: LITTLE EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD

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Introduction

Little Egg Harbor Township is a 49.5 square mile municipality located in southeast Ocean County. Little Egg Harbor Township is bordered on the north and east by Stafford and Eagleswood Townships, on the south by the Little Egg Harbor and Great Bay and on the west by Bass River Township in Burlington County. The Borough of Tuckerton is located wholly within Little Egg Harbor Township in the southeastern sector of the Township.

The Township's most recent Master Plan was prepared and adopted by the Planning Board in December 1993. In 1982 and 1988, the Planning Board reexamined its Master Plan and Ordinances as part of a continuing planning process. The 1988 Reexamination Report was the foundation for various revisions to the Township Zoning Ordinance and the Zoning Map. The 1982 Master Plan revision consisted of the necessary amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and Map for consistency with the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan. Prior to the Pinelands revisions, Little Egg Harbor Township adopted a comprehensive Master Plan on June 20, 1978, with an amendment on December 20, 1978.

This document does not change or otherwise modify the Master Plan of the Township for the Pinelands portion of the Township as adopted in 1982. This Master Plan pertains only to the non-Pinelands area of the Township.

The Recreation Plan Element of the Master Plan adopted by the Planning Board on October 22, 1997 is not modified by this document and remains in full force and effect.

With the exception of the Housing Element, which is to be prepared and adopted as a separate document and the Recreation Plan, this Master Plan represents the complete guide to the use of lands within the Township in a manner which protects public health and promotes the general welfare.

Chapter 1: Historic Development

Little Egg Harbor Township was created by the New Jersey Legislature in 1841. The original municipal boundaries included a part of Long Beach Township and the area of Tuckerton Borough. During most of the latter half of the 1800's, Little Egg Harbor Township was part of Burlington County. Largely for political reasons, the boundary of Burlington and Ocean Counties was realigned by the State Legislature in 1891 to move Little Egg Harbor Township into Ocean County. Tuckers Beach, an area of Long Beach Township, was separated by the New Jersey Legislature from Little Egg Harbor in 1899. The area now known as Tuckerton Borough was incorporated as a separate municipality in 1901.

The Township's earliest settlers were Quakers who built a Meeting House in Tuckerton in 1702. In the late 18th century, Tuckerton was a major seaport for the eastern seaboard and became the nation's second port of entry to have a US Customs House. However, starting about 1825, with the opening of the Erie Canal and the construction of larger ships requiring deeper water, the port-related business of Tuckerton began to decline.

The Township began to develop a reputation as a resort community in the late 1880's. In that time, the railroad played a role in transporting summer visitors to the seasonal accommodations of their day. In the 1950's, the opening of the Garden State Parkway opened the area to development of summer homes in the Mystic Island area. While the Parkway continues to bring in many summer visitors, the toll road has also become a major commuter route transforming the character of the municipality into a year-round community. The development of Atlantic City as a casino gambling resort of national renown has brought major employment opportunities for many residents.

Chapter 2: Existing Land Use

The Existing Land Use Map, Figure One, portrays the current land use in Little Egg Harbor Township as of December 31, 1997. The map and Exhibit 1 were based on the Little Egg Harbor Township tax duplicates, which were finalized in December 31, 1997, and field checked. The most obvious characteristic of the existing land use in Little Egg Harbor Township is the amount of Federal and State lands, which are maintained for conservation purposes. The lands in Little Egg Harbor owned by the Federal government are a component of the Forsythe National Wildlife Management Refuge, which consists of 19,384 acres in Ocean County. The State lands consist of Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife parcels and Division of Parks and Forestry properties. The Parks and Forestry lands are part of the Bass River State Forest. Exhibit I depicts the existing land use acreage of Little Egg Harbor Township for 1998. Exhibit 2 provides a comparison of land use categories for 1977 and 1998. The latter exhibit shows how the land use in the municipality has changed during the last 20 years as population has increased. The information in the two exhibits is discussed below in further detail.

Land Use Analysis

Single Family Residential

Single family residential land use accounted for 2,216 acres in 1998, or 7% of the town's land area and 48% of all developed areas. The major areas of single family uses are the older and densely developed areas of Mystic Island and Parkertown and the newer larger-lot developments along Stage and Nugentown Roads. Little Egg Harbor also contains a major senior citizen development named Mystic Shores, which is north of the Mystic Island

area and has a main access roadway on Mathistown Road. Land devoted to single family residential land use more than doubled since the date of the last land use survey, increasing from 1,079 acres to the 2,216 acres.

Exhibit 1

Existing Land Use
Little Egg Harbor Township
1998

LAND USE	ACREAGE	PERCENT OF * DEVELOPED LAND	PERCENT OF TOTAL LAND
RESIDENTIAL SINGLE FAMILY	2,216	47.9	7.0
RESIDENTIAL MULTI-FAMILY	223	4.8	0.7
COMMERCIAL	292	6.3	0.9
INDUSTRIAL	247	5.3	0.8
SCHOOLS	162	3.5	0.5
RECREATION	171	3.7	0.5
SEMI-PUBLIC	37	0.8	0.1
STREETS AND ROADS	1,282	27.7	4.0
PUBLIC PROPERTY (FED., STATE, CTY, MUNICIPAL)	18,931	—	59.9
FARM QUALIFIED	391	—	1.2
VACANT	7,728	—	24.4
TOTAL	31,680	100.0	100.0

*Total Developed Area = 4,630 acres or 14.6% of the total area.

Multifamily Residential

Multifamily residences totaled 223 acres in 1998, which is less than 1% of the land area and about 5% of the developed lands. Multifamily development, defined as three or more units in a building, is located almost exclusively along Radio Road and Center Street. Many of these developments were constructed in the 1980's. They include Tavistock (not fully completed), Walnut Estates, Harbor House, Park Plaza (the senior apartments on Mathistown Road), and Holly Lake. Since 1977, multifamily land use increased from 14 acres to the current figure of 223 acres. The newest multifamily development, Royal Timbers on Center Street, is not included in the above figure since construction commenced after the tax assessment data was tabulated.

Commercial

Commercial land use accounted for less than 1% of total land area and 6% of developed lands in 1998 in Little Egg Harbor Township. Commercial uses are generally located along Route 9, Radio Road and North Green Street (County Route 539). This sector has grown by 90 acres, a 45% increase, since 1977. However, growth in commercial acreage had not kept pace with growth in residential acreage, which doubled over the same time period.

Industrial

Industrial land use, which comprised 247 acres in 1998, was devoted to mostly gravel operations. There are very few industrial uses in Little Egg Harbor, most of which are categorized as light industrial. Similar to the commercial-business sector there has been very little growth in the industrial land component over the past 20 years.

Exhibit 2

LAND USE ANALYSIS
LITTLE EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP
1977 TO 1998

LAND USE	1977 ACRES	1998 ACRES
RESIDENTIAL SINGLE FAMILY	1,079	2,216
RESIDENTIAL MULTI-FAMILY	14	223
COMMERCIAL	202	292
INDUSTRIAL	186	247
SCHOOLS	—	162
RECREATION	179	171
SEMI-PUBLIC	16	37
STREETS AND ROADS	1,145	1,282
PUBLIC PROPERTY (FED., STATE, CTY, MUNICIPAL)	8,091	18,931
FARM QUALIFIED	—	391
VACANT	20,768	7,728
TOTAL	31,680	31,680

Schools

The four schools in the Township are: Mitchell Elementary; Frog Pond Intermediate; Pinelands Regional Middle; and Pinelands Regional High School. Schools comprised 162 acres in 1998, or 3.5% of the total developed area of the Township.

Recreation

Recreational uses such as the Atlantis Golf Course (Ocean County), Mystic Ballfield, Parkertown Docks and Parkertown Park (Ocean County) comprised 171 acres in 1998, or 3.7% of the total developed area of the Township.

Semi public

Churches and other charitable land use accounted for 37 acres in 1998 or less than 1% of the developed land area.

Streets and Roads

Land devoted to public streets and roads throughout the Township comprised 1,282 acres in 1998, or 4% of all land area and 28% of all developed lands. The 1998 acreage is up only slightly from the 1977 figure.

Public Lands

Public lands, properties owned by Federal, State and municipal government for wildlife conservation and government facilities totaled 18,931 acres in 1998, or 60% of the Township. The State of New Jersey and the US Government own the bulk of these properties for wildlife conservation purposes. The public property in the northern part of the Township is primarily in the hands of the NJ Department of Environmental Protection, while the tidal marsh areas along the bay are owned by both the State and Federal agencies. Based on the last comprehensive land use survey, it appears that there have been significant land acquisitions during the past 20 years by the State and Federal governments.

Farmland Qualified Lands

Farmland qualified parcels are lots which have been determined by the Tax Assessor to meet all of the criteria for a farmland assessment and qualify for a lower property tax assessment. There were 10 farmland qualified parcels in Little Egg Harbor in 1998, which

totaled 391 acres. There were no farmland qualified lands noted in the 1977 land use survey.

Vacant

Vacant lands are privately owned parcels lacking building structures or developments. In 1998 there were 7,728 acres of vacant land, comprising 24% of the total land area of the municipality, compared to 20,768 acres in 1977. Much of this previously vacant land was acquired by the Federal and State governments over the past two decades. Some vacant land also was taken up by new development activity in the Township.

Chapter 3: Demographics

Population

The population of Little Egg Harbor Township increased by 57%, from 8,483 persons to 13,333, between 1980 and 1990. During this same time period, the population of Ocean County grew by 25%, while the State grew by 5%. In the 1990's, the population growth within the Township has slowed considerably. From 1990 to 1997, the Little Egg Harbor population grew 6%, slightly below the County rate of 8%, and slightly above the State rate of 4%. The latest population estimate of Little Egg Harbor Township, prepared by the Ocean County Planning Board in July 1997, indicated there are 14,146 persons living in the Township. The population growth trends for Little Egg Harbor Township, Ocean County, and the State of New Jersey for the years 1970 through 1997 are shown in Exhibit 3. Exhibit 4 provides a historical perspective of population trends in the Township, from 1930 to 1997.

Exhibit 3

Percent Population Growth: 1970-1997; Little Egg Harbor Township, Ocean County, and New Jersey

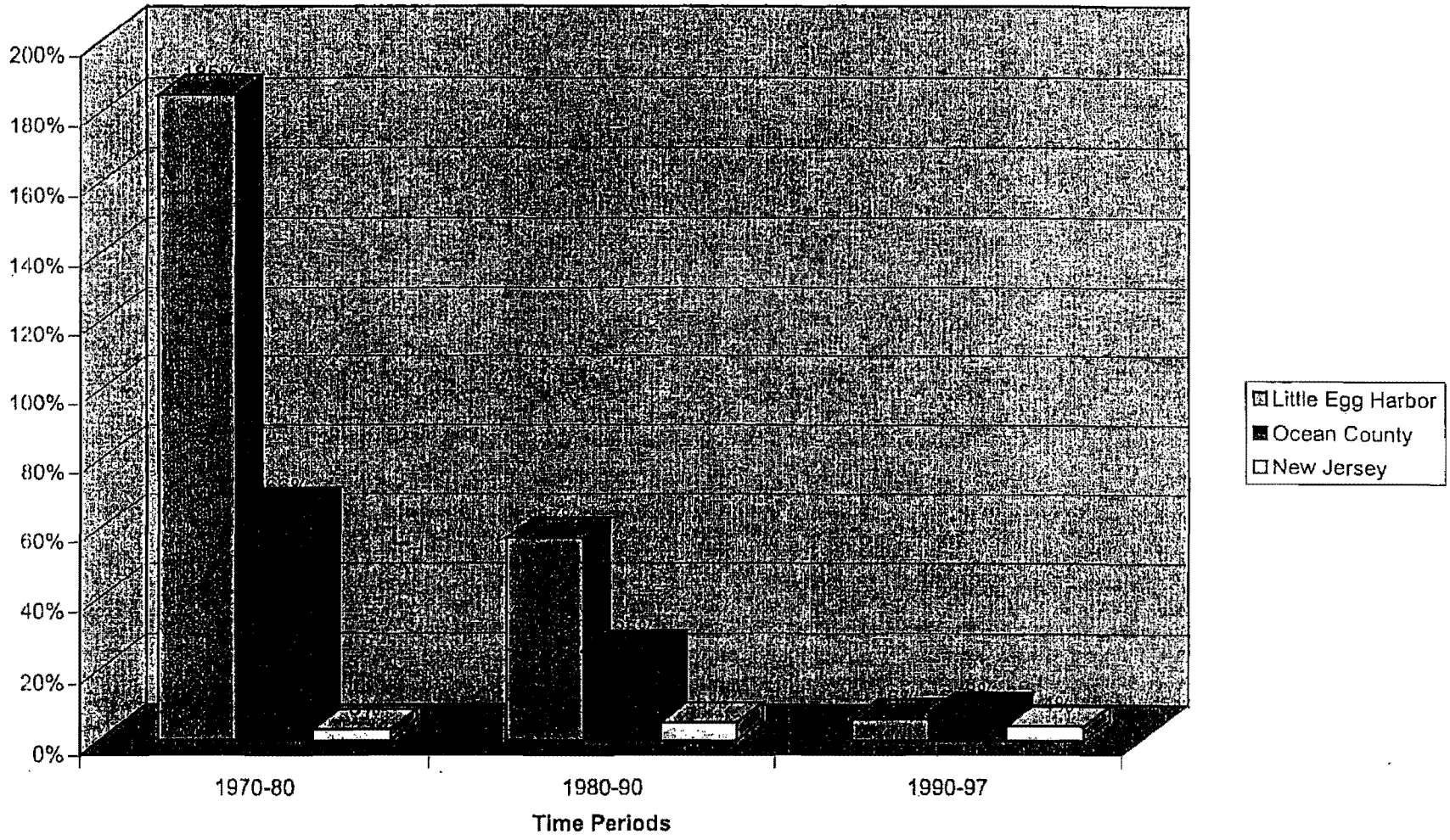
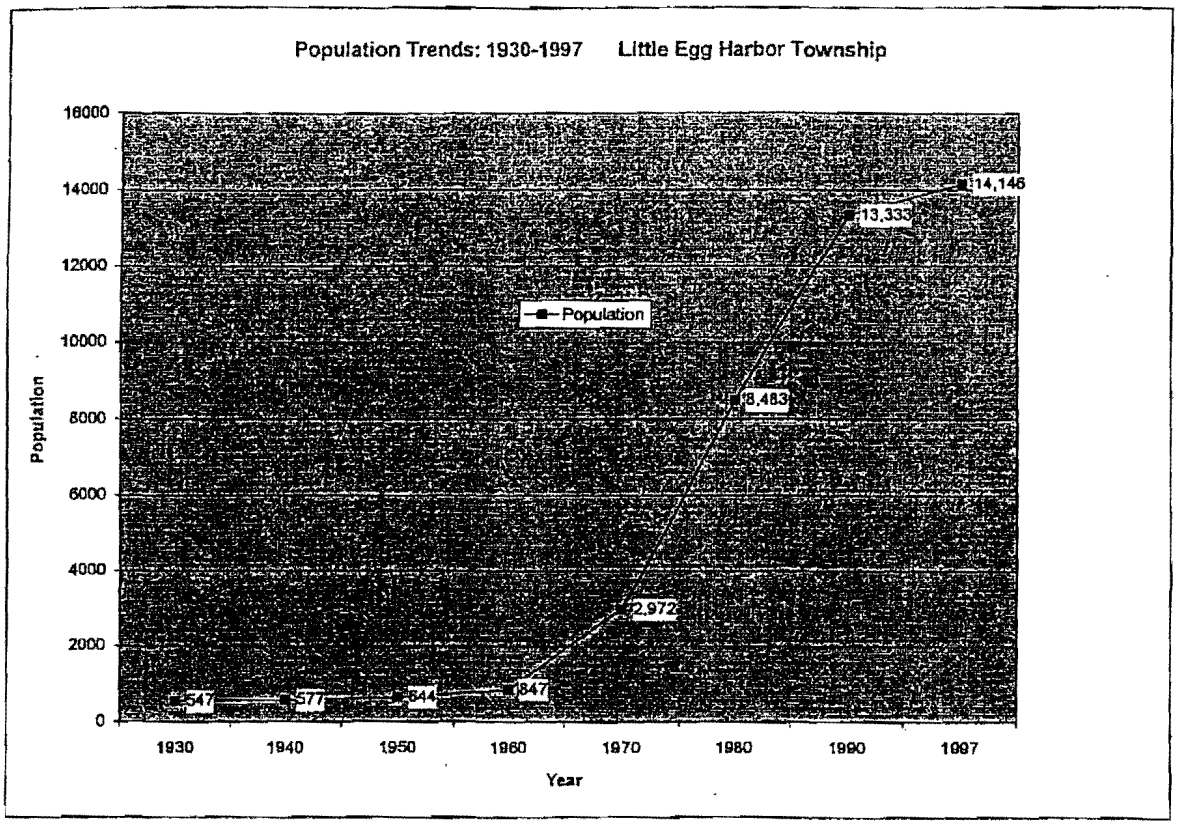


Exhibit 4



Source: Ocean County Planning Board and the US Census.

Age

The age distribution of the population of Little Egg Harbor Township and Ocean County in 1990 is depicted in Exhibit 5. The residents of Little Egg Harbor are slightly younger than the County average, based on a comparison of median age. The distribution of age groups changed little from 1980 to 1990, as shown in Exhibit 6. The local proportion of the working population, which supports the youth and elderly, is slightly higher than the County population. At the time of the 1990 Census, the working age population in Little Egg Harbor made up 58% of the local residents compared to 54% in the County.

Exhibit 5

AGE CHARACTERISTICS
LITTLE EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP AND OCEAN COUNTY
1990

AGE GROUP	LITTLE EGG NUMBER	HARBOR TWP PERCENT	OCEAN NUMBER	COUNTY PERCENT
<5 YEARS	1,044	7.8	28,816	6.7
5-17 YEARS	2,255	16.9	69,349	16.0
18-24 YEARS	1,022	7.7	34,378	7.9
25-44 YEARS	4,063	30.4	121,929	28.2
45-54 YEARS	1,305	9.8	39,066	9.0
55-59 YEARS	615	4.6	17,105	3.9
60-64 YEARS	761	5.7	22,152	5.1
65-74 YEARS	1,462	11.0	55,703	12.9
75-84 YEARS	651	4.9	35,892	8.3
85+ YEARS	155	1.2	8,853	2.0
TOTAL	13,333	100.0	43,3203	100.0
MEDIAN AGE	35.3		38.5	

Source: 1990 Census

Exhibit 6
AGE GROUP DISTRIBUTION
LITTLE EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP
1980 AND 1990

	PRESCHOOL		SCHOOL AGE		WORKING AGE		SR CITIZEN	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1980	584	7	1,571	18	4,845	57	1,483	18
1990	1,044	8	2,255	17	7,766	58	2,268	17

Source: 1980 and 1990 U.S. Census.

Households

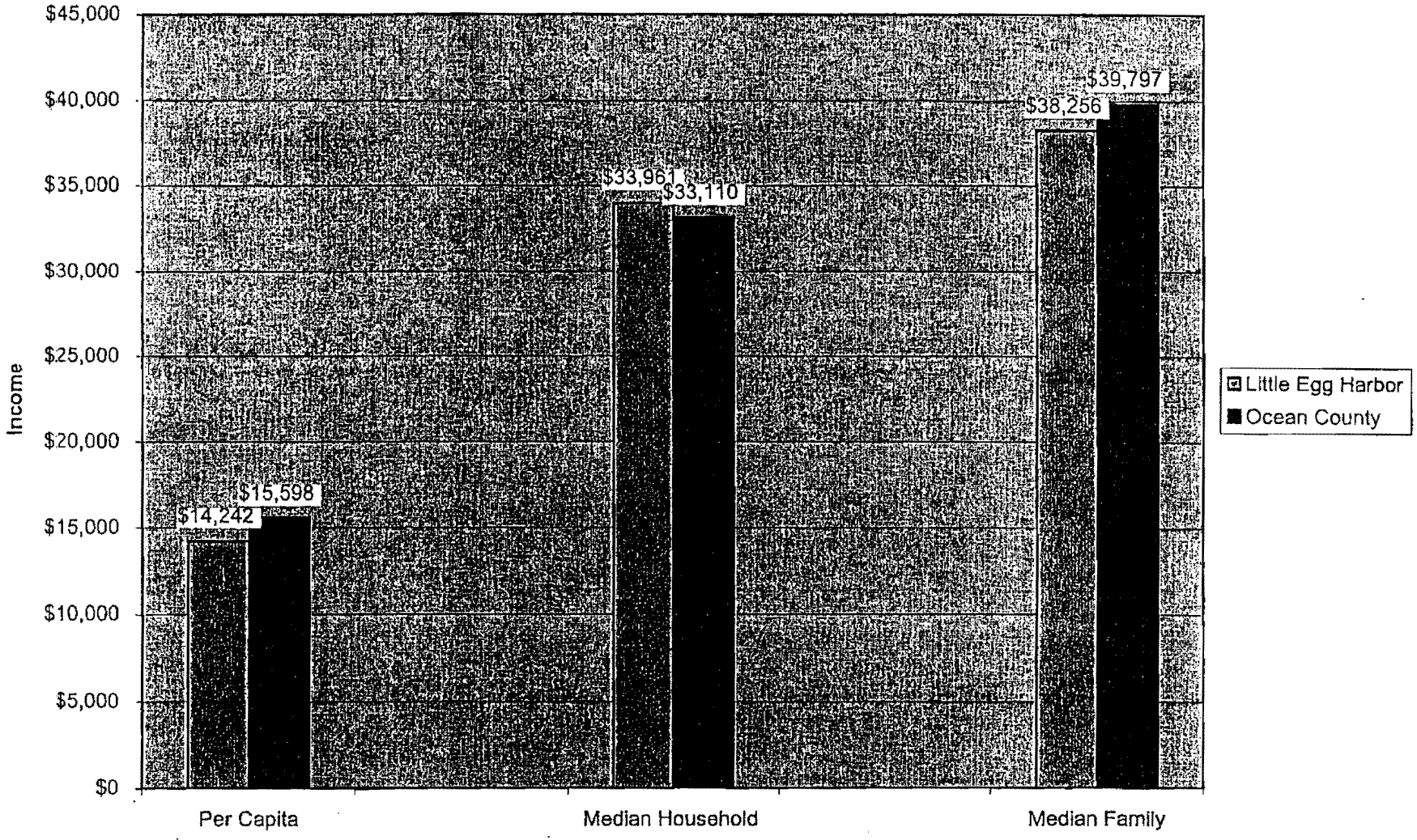
In 1990, there were 4,962 households in Little Egg Harbor Township. The average household size was 2.66 persons per household, slightly higher than the County average of 2.54 persons per household.

Income

The median income level of Little Egg Harbor Township families and households was very comparable to that of Ocean County in 1990. According to the Census, the 1990 Little Egg Harbor Township median household income was $33,961, the median family income was $38,256 and the per capita income was $14,242. Exhibit 7 compares the three measures of income for the Township and Ocean County.

Exhibit 7

Per Capita, Median Household and Family Income, 1990



Housing

Characteristics of the Housing Stock

From 1980 to 1990, total housing units in Little Egg Harbor Township increased by 45%, from 4,958 units to 7,194 units according to the Census. Year-round occupied housing units grew by an even-greater percentage, 59%, during the same time period. The percentage of vacant units, which includes seasonal units and homes for sale or rent, increased by 22%. However, the overall proportion of vacant housing stock decreased from 36% in 1980 to 31% in 1990, as shown in Exhibit #8.

Approximately 21% percent of the housing units were considered to be seasonal units by the US Census Bureau in 1990. Such housing, a total of 1,488 residences in 1990, represents potential for conversion to year-round housing. While some of the units may have been already converted to full-time use over the last eight years, the remaining units also could be converted to help accommodate future population growth. This conversion of seasonal units to year-round units represents an opportunity for the Township, since the Township would not have to build new housing units, new roads, or new utilities to accommodate new residents.

Exhibit 8

TOTAL AND OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS
LITTLE EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP
1980 AND 1990

	1980 UNITS	1990 UNITS	PERCENT CHANGE, 1980-90
TOTAL HOUSING	4,958	7,194	45.1
OCCUPIED	3,131	4,962	58.5
VACANT	1,827	2,232	22.2

Source: 1980 and 1990 Census

Housing Type

In 1990, approximately 90% of the occupied housing units in Little Egg Harbor Township were single family detached units. The remaining 10% consisted of one unit attached, multiple dwellings (2+ units) and mobile homes. The two family or more housing type grew from 51 units in 1980 to 891 units in 1990, a 1600% increase, as shown in Exhibit 9.

Exhibit 9

TOTAL HOUSING UNITS
BY HOUSING TYPE
LITTLE EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP
1980 AND 1990

YEAR	SINGLE FAMILY		TWO FAMILY OR MORE		TOTAL
	#	%	#	%	
1980	4,907	99	51	1	4,958
1990	6,303	88	891	12	7,194

Source: 1980 and 1990 Census

Ownership Status

Exhibit 10 identifies occupied housing units in Little Egg Harbor Township. The data indicates that in 1990, 82% of all occupied housing units were owner occupied. Renters occupied most of the multifamily housing types at the time of the Census.

Exhibit 10

OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS
BY OWNERSHIP STATUS
AND UNITS IN STRUCTURE

LITTLE EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP

1990

UNIT TYPE	OWNER OCCUPIED	RENTER OCCUPIED	TOTAL
DETACHED UNITS	3,852	595	4,447
ONE UNIT (ATTACHED)	149	138	287
2 UNITS	13	31	44
3-4 UNITS	11	18	29
5+ UNITS	26	123	149
MOBILE HOME/TRAILER	5	1	6
TOTAL	4,056	904	4,962

SOURCE: 1990 Census

Building Permits

Exhibit 11 shows the trend in the issuance of building permits for new dwelling units in Little Egg Harbor. An average of 175 dwelling units have been authorized each year by building permit between the years 1980 and 1997. As shown in the chart, 1986 was the peak year for new dwelling units, with 633 new residential units authorized by building permits. In 1997, 227 dwelling units were authorized by building permits, which is higher than the annual average. Since 1990, almost all of the new housing units have been single family type units, according to data from the New Jersey Department of Labor and Community Affairs.

Based on the number of building permits issued for new housing for the years 1990 through 1997, the estimated number of housing units for Little Egg Harbor Township was 7,924 as of January 1, 1998.

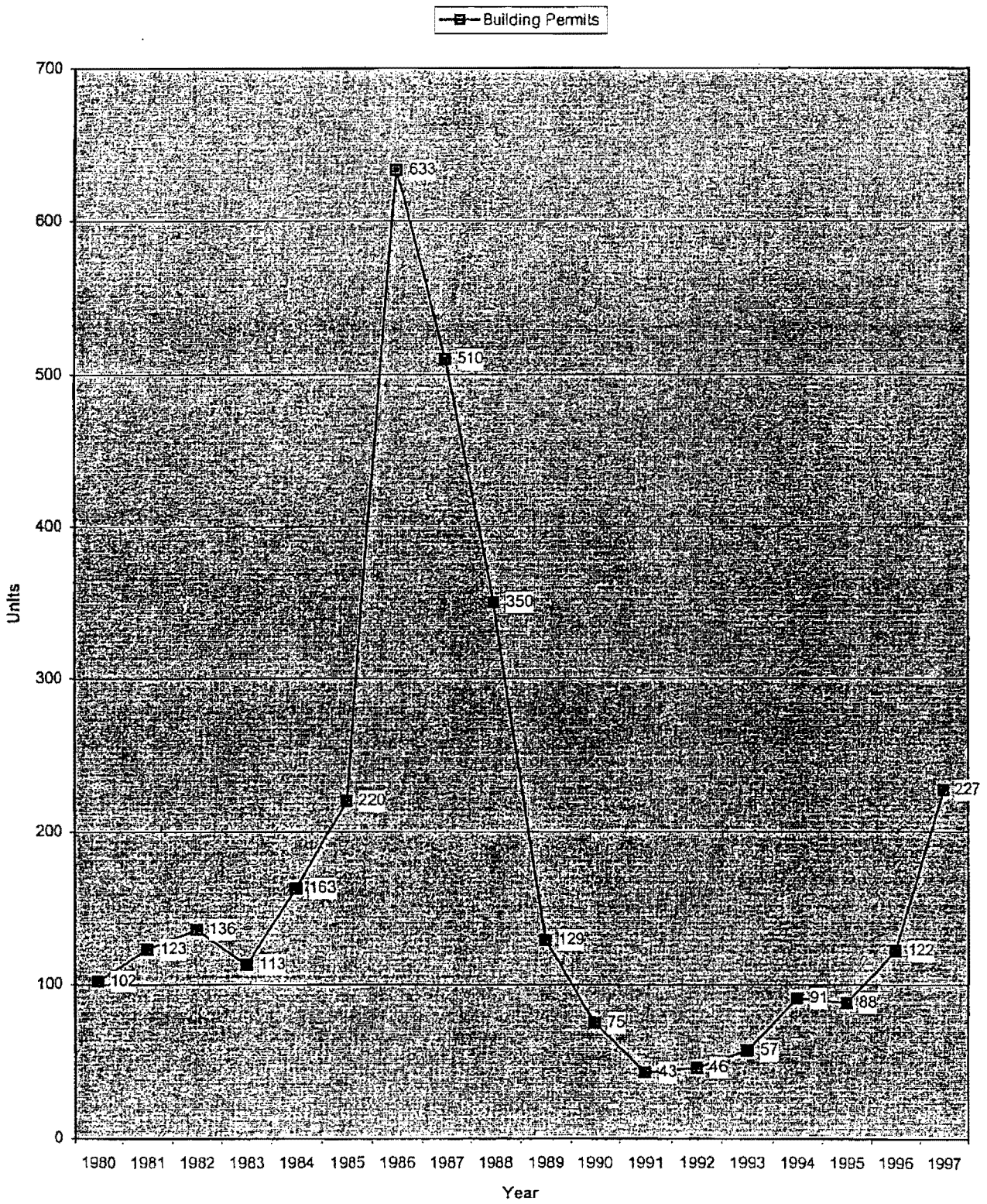
Future Population

Population projections prepared by the Ocean County Planning Board, but not officially adopted, indicate that Little Egg Harbor Township is expected to have a population of 15, 000 persons in the year 2000 and 17,500 by the year 2010. Since the population in 1997 was estmated to be over 14,000 persons, the year 2000 projection will likely be exceeded and the projected population of 17,500 in 2010 seems very conservative.

The Office of State Planning has also published population projections for Ocean County municipalities for the year 2010. The state figures, which were used in the Recreation and Open Space Element, forecast a population of 22,919 persons in 2010.

Exhibit 11

Residential Units Authorized by Building Permits, Little Egg Harbor Township: 1980-1997



For purposes of this plan a year 2004 population projection was calculated. The population projection for the year 2004 is based upon the average number of residential units authorized by building permits for the years 1980 through 1997 and an average household size of 2.66 persons per household from the 1990 Census. The building permits issued during the years 1986, 1987 and 1988 were removed from the computation of the average for 1980 – 1997 time period since an unusually large number of building permits were issued during these years. Building trends reveal that the Township housing stock has grown 2% per year over the past 18 years, excluding the years 1986 – 1988. The population projection assumes the Township will issue 115 permits per year over the next 6 years, for a total of 690 new dwellings. Based on a household multiplier of 2.66 persons per unit, an additional 1,835 persons should occupy these new units. The population projection is shown in Exhibit12.

Exhibit 12

CURRENT AND PROJECTED POPULATION
LITTLE EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP

YEAR	# PERSONS
1990	13,333
1998*	14,365
2004**	16,200

* Population Estimate from the Ocean County Planning Board.
** Population Projections prepared by Bay Pointe Engineering Associates, Inc., Feb.1999.

Chapter 4: Environmental Resources

Wetlands

One of the more significant regulatory developments in the State was the enactment of the Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act by the State of New Jersey in July 1987. Prior to 1987, property owners and developers had to comply with the regulations related to the Wetlands Act of 1970, which regulated activities only in tidally influenced wetlands. The Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act is a major modification in the planning and zoning approval process. The Act established a systematic review procedure for land use activities in and around freshwater wetlands under the purview of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. Freshwater wetlands area boundaries and their respective buffer requirements are determined in the field by state officials and wetlands experts on a case-by-case basis. It is useful, however, for planning purposes to provide an overall map of Little Egg Harbor Township showing the boundaries of the freshwater wetland areas, based on state maps. The location of wetlands and the statutory-established buffer areas is important, since this mapping shows areas off limits to development.

Figure 2 is a Wetlands Map compiled from NJ Department of Environmental Protection mapping in 1987. The NJDEP wetlands maps were prepared in 1986 by a consultant to the NJDEP from color infrared aerial photographs. The aerial photos are interpreted and verified by ground truthing. The maps are the most reliable and accurate data source available for wetlands on a statewide basis. They are, however, still only a planning tool and not a substitute for a site visit delineation, and NJDEP approval.

Wetlands are located throughout the Township along waterways such as the Wading River and Westcreek Creek in the Pinelands area, the Mill Branch and Gifford's Mill Branch of Tuckerton Creek, and tributaries to Parkers Run. The Giffords Mill Branch runs between Stage and Nugentown Road. The Mill Branch of the Tuckerton Creek is situated west of Route 539, generally parallel to the roadway.

Flood Prone Areas

Flood prone areas are lands that are subject to flooding due to storm surges, high tides, stormwater runoff, inadequate drainage facilities and other reasons. Flood prone areas are mapped by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and Figure 3 delineates these areas in Little Egg Harbor Township. Extensive portions of the Township lie within the flood prone area, particularly in the southern section, due to the low-lying nature of these areas. West of Route 9 and the Garden State Parkway, flood prone areas generally follow stream and creek corridors.

It is important to locate flood prone areas for planning purposes so that construction can be avoided or special restrictions can be attached to any approvals. Proper planning of flood prone areas can reduce or eliminate flood related risk to people and their property.

Developable Land

The existing land use study, discussed in the prior section, included an inventory of the privately owned vacant land in the Township. Privately owned vacant land consists of parcels which are available for future development because there are no improvements and because the property is not owned by a governmental agency. The existing land use study,

conducted in early 1998, revealed that there were 7,728 acres of privately owned vacant land. The proper planning of these areas is essential to the future of Little Egg Harbor Township. To determine the development potential of these vacant parcels, the vacant land map was overlaid with a map of the wetlands, which were mapped for the environmental resources section. Wetlands are the major constraint to development potential, since the Wetlands Act of 1970 and the Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act of 1987 prohibit construction in wetlands. The overlaying of the two maps produces a third map (Figure 4), which shows all developable lands. The map indicates the most significant concentrations of privately owned vacant developable lands of the Township. These include the Route 539 corridor and the area between Route 9, Leitz Boulevard and Mathistown Road. The developability analysis indicates that there are approximately 5,700 acres of privately – owned vacant developable land in Little Egg Harbor in 1998. The amount of land equals about 18% of the total land area of the Township, which is more land than has already been developed to date.

Development Approvals

In order to assess future needs of the Township, including schools and municipal services, research was undertaken to inventory "approved but unconstructed" projects (i.e. projects which have development approval but are not yet built or developed). A review of the Township Clerk's log of development applications, data from the Ocean County Planning Board (OCPB) and consultation with the Township Zoning Officer was performed to prepare an inventory of "outstanding undeveloped projects". The analysis of County approvals after January 1, 1990 indicates that approximately 118 lots were approved but not developed to date. These lots are not likely to be developed because of the outstanding

approvals. The review of undeveloped projects indicates that approvals granted in the late 1980's have a higher rate of inactivity. Analysis of the Township log of development applications reveals almost 700 lots had been approved but have not been developed. The majority of these approved lots are in the "Cranberry Creek" project, which consists of 510 lots, located on Route 9 in the PRC Zone. In summary, the estimated number of approved but undeveloped lots is in the magnitude of 550 to 600 Lots.

Chapter 5: Current Zoning

Current Zoning

The existing zoning plan of Little Egg Harbor Township includes a range of residential and commercial districts to accommodate a variety of housing types and businesses. This section highlights the types of zones in the Township by area and location. Exhibit 13 provides a listing of each zone district.

Residential

The residential zones range from the one unit per acre R-1A zone to the R-50 Zone, which permits a density of up to 7 units per net acre. Generally, the higher density residential zones are situated southwest of Tuckerton and the lower density residential zones are located between the Garden State Parkway, Route 539 and Route 9. The marsh areas along the Bay are zoned R-1A. However, most of this land is owned by the Federal Government. Approximately 18,000 acres in Little Egg Harbor Township are zoned for single family and multifamily residential use, representing 57% of the Township's total land area and 90% of the non-Pinelands area.

Business and Commercial

The business zones in the Township are the Highway Business (HB), General Business (GB), Neighborhood Business (NB), Special Business (SB) and Marine Commercial (MC). The zones are designed to address the different business types. The largest business zone by acreage is the GB zone, with 1,038 acres. The HB zone is along the southern segment of Route 9, while the GB zone is situated on Route 539 and the remaining sections of Route 9.

An Office/Professional Zone was established in the late 1980's along Mathistown Road to allow ratable development and preserve the aesthetic character of the properties fronting this roadway.

Industrial

There is only one type of industrial zone, the Light Industrial (LI) Zone. The two portions of this district are both located along Route 539. The LI Zone contains a total of 366 acres.

Planned Development Zones

The Township has two "planned development" zones, which allows some flexibility in the project layout, provision of community facilities and the location of open space. Each district requires a minimum of 100 acres for development. The two zones are the Planned Residential Development (PRD) and the Planned Retirement Community (PRC) zones. Mystic Shores was developed under the PRC provisions. The Planned Residential Development district is located on the east side of Route 539, just north of Tuckerton Borough. The PRC districts are situated in the southwest sector of the Township.

Pinelands

The northern portion of the Township, which is governed by the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP), comprises 37% of Little Egg Harbor Township, or 11,702 acres. The CMP has designated four (4) zone districts for this area, the majority of which are north of the Garden State Parkway. The largest zone district in land area is the Preservation Area, comprising 9,888 acres. The second largest zone is the Forest Area, with 1,431 acres.

Exhibit 13

ZONING DISTRICT ACREAGE
LITTLE EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP

Zone Districts	Acres	Percent of Total	Percent of Non-Pinelands Area
Forest Area	1,431	4.5	
Preservation Area	9,888	31.2	
Pinelands Village	149	0.5	
Forest Area Cluster	234	0.7	
R-1A Residential	11,056	34.9	55.3
R-400 Residential	175	0.6	0.9
R-200 Residential	2,570	8.1	12.9
R-150 Residential	110	0.3	0.6
R-100 Residential	636	2.0	3.2
R-75 Residential	296	0.9	1.5
R-75A Residential	652	2.1	3.3
R-70 Residential	32	0.1	0.2
R-50 Residential	1,365	4.3	6.8
Planned Resid.Commun.	664	2.1	3.3
Planned Resid. Dev.	281	0.9	1.4
Multi-Family	253	0.8	1.3
Neighborhood Business	17	0.1	0.1
General Business	1,038	3.3	5.2
Highway Business	128	0.4	0.6
Marine Commercial	80	0.3	0.4
Light Industry	366	1.2	1.8
Sr. Citizen/Gen. Business	4	0.0	0.0
Special Business	14	0.0	0.1
Waterfront Development	137	0.4	0.7
Office Professional	104	0.3	0.5
TOTAL	31,680	100.0	100.0

Source: Bay Pointe Engineering Associates, Inc., Nov. 1998

Chapter 6: Community Facilities/Open Space

Schools

The school system in Little Egg Harbor Township consists of two (2) schools for kindergarten through grade 6 and two (2) regional schools for grades 7 through 12. The elementary schools are under the jurisdiction of the Little Egg Harbor Township Board of Education. These include George J. Mitchell School (K-2) located on North Green Street, and Little Egg Harbor Intermediate School (grades 3-6) on Frog Pond Road. The Pinelands Regional School District operates the Pinelands Middle School (grades 7 and 8) and High School (grades 9-12), both situated in Little Egg Harbor Township. The Pinelands Regional School District includes Little Egg Harbor, Tuckerton and Eagleswood Townships. Exhibit 14 lists the capacities of the two Township school facilities and the enrollment in 1998. The comparison indicates that there is some available capacity in the existing building facilities for enrollment increases.

Exhibit 14

LITTLE EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP SCHOOL FACILITIES

SCHOOL NAME	GRADES	CAPACITY	ENROLLMENT
GEO. MITCHELL	K-2	843	653
L.E.H. INTERMEDIATE	3-6	1136	900
TOTAL		1979	1553

Source: Little Egg Harbor Board of Education, 3/31/98.

The Board of Education has proposed a 30,000 square foot addition to the Mitchell Elementary School, which will consist of twelve new classrooms. The classrooms are needed for a full time kindergarten program to begin in 1999. The proposal was approved as a bond issue question on the November 1998 ballot.

Library

A branch library of the Ocean County Library system is located at 290 Mathistown Road. The facility, which opened in April 1996, encompasses 10,000 sq. ft and contains 30,000 volumes. Patrons have exchange privileges with the main branch library in Toms River, as well as all other branches. The Little Egg Harbor Branch also carries 78 different periodicals and has a staff of 6 full-time employees and 8 part-time or student assistants. The Little Egg Harbor Branch is open 6 days a week, which includes two evenings. The Tuckerton Branch of the County Library system is located on Bay Avenue in Tuckerton, which is also accessible to Township residents.

Police Department

Little Egg Harbor Township has a fulltime police force consisting of 31 uniformed officers and 11 civilian employees. The police department is headquartered at the Township Building at 7 Gifford Lane. Based on the Federal Bureau of Investigation standard of 2.0 officers per 1,000 persons, the current manpower is sufficient on both a year-round and seasonal basis. The Township administration has determined the adequacy of the current department facilities should be reviewed and an evaluation is in the process of being completed. Additional information about future plans for the space and facility needs is provided in the Community Facility Plan.

Fire Protection

Three volunteer fire districts protect residences and businesses in Little Egg Harbor. The Stafford Township based Warren Grove Fire Company provides fire protection service to the northern portion of the Township. Fire companies in adjacent towns provide backup aid for the districts. The fire companies rely on contributions from the general public and assistance from the municipality. The three districts in Little Egg Harbor are West Tuckerton; Mystic Island and Parkertown. Each district has its own building, equipment and vehicles. Data concerning each fire company capabilities and workload is provided in Exhibit 15. The West Tuckerton Fire District building is located at the intersection of Gifford Lane and Route 9 by the Township Municipal Building. The Mystic Island Fire Company Station is situated on Radio Road near the Mystic Island Ballfield. The Parkertown Fire Company building is located on Railroad Avenue. As noted above, the Warren Grove Fire Company is situated in Stafford Township and provides volunteer fire protection services for the Warren Grove area, which includes portions of Stafford and Little Egg Harbor Townships.

Exhibit 15

FIRE DISTRICT PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT
LITTLE EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP
1998

	Mystic Island	West Tuckerton	Parkertown
Active Members	31	25	15
Responses	175	200*	65
Pumpers	1	1	2
Aerial trucks	1	1	0
Brush trucks	0	0	0
Water Rescue Vehicle	1	1	0
Command Vehicle	2	2	1
Tanker	1	1	2
Boats	3**	2	0
Siren summoning	yes	yes	yes
Tone alert summoning	yes	yes	yes

*Year to date, 11/98.
** One boat is a 24 ft fire boat; also the Company maintains two flood rescue vehicles

Source: Fire Company Chiefs, Fall 1998 and Jan. 1999.

First Aid

Emergency first aid services for Little Egg Harbor, Bass River, and Eagleswood Townships and Tuckerton Borough are provided by the Tuckerton First Aid Squad, a volunteer organization. The Tuckerton First Aid Squad facility is located on Great Bay Boulevard near Route 9 in Tuckerton Borough. The Squad had four ambulances, 41 active members and 21 members in training as of November 1998.

Senior Center

In October 1997, Little Egg Harbor Township opened a Senior Center on Radio Road near the intersection with Mathistown Road. The facility was funded through the Community Development Block Grant (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development). It serves primarily as a meeting center for senior citizen groups. Three part-time employees currently staff the facility. The Township has obtained additional federal funds to expand and improve the parking area for the building.

Municipal Building

The Township offices and meeting/court room are located at 7 Gifford Lane. Offices of the Township Clerk, Administrator, Tax Assessor and Tax Collector are situated in the current Municipal Building. The Construction Department, Zoning Officer and Finance Office are housed in two office trailers at the south end of the municipal building. Office space is needed to accommodate existing needs and additional space will be required for future growth. Office space for the municipal departments will become available if the Police Department relocates to new facilities from the lower level of the current building.

Department of Public Works

The Department of Public Works (DPW) facility is located on North Green Street, north of Frog Pond Road. The property is leased from a private individual and contains a building and storage facilities for the various activities of the DPW. This parcel has adequate area for the Department needs for the near future. The Department has a full-time staff of twenty employees and ten solid waste collection vehicles. The solid waste collection schedule includes twice weekly pickups during the summer and weekly pickups in the winter. Solid

waste is disposed at the Ocean County Landfill in Manchester Township. The Public Works Department also collects recyclables once or twice a month, depending on the type of material. Other functions of the Department of Public Works are: road maintenance; buildings and grounds maintenance; snow plowing; collection of brush, leaves, and white goods (large appliances such as washers and dryers); maintenance of its vehicles; and cleaning of storm drains.

Sewer/Water Utilities

The Little Egg Harbor Municipal Utilities Authority (LEHMUA) is responsible for the water and sewer services for the entire municipality. The MUA owns, operates and maintains a sewage collection system (i.e., sewer mains and pump stations) which ultimately discharges to the Ocean County Utilities Authority (OCUA) Southern Regional Sewer Treatment plant on Cedar Run Dock Road in Stafford Township. The plant design capacity is 20 million gallon per day (mgd) and the 1994 wastewater flow was 7 mgd. Projected 2010 flow is not expected to exceed the 20-mgd plant capacity. Therefore, there are no capacity restrictions for sewage flows from Little Egg Harbor Township anticipated in the foreseeable future.

The most critical issue for Little Egg Harbor Township in terms of sewer and water utilities is the consistency between the utility service areas and the development regulations of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and New Jersey Pinelands Commission. Municipal officials have worked for many years to change coastal zone (CAFRA) designations, which have served to constrained development of the North Green Street corridor.

A second issue is the financing of utility extensions to development areas. Currently, the Little Egg Harbor Township MUA relies on developer-financed utility extensions and does not fund extensions of improvements to designated growth areas.

In early 1998, the LEHMUA submitted an amendment request to the Ocean County Planning Board and the NJDEP to expand the sewer service area to include the proposed Sea Oaks development and the area north of Frog Pond Road to the Township Public Works facility. As of the date of this report, the request is pending at the State level.

Figure 5 depicts the existing active sewer service area, the approved sewer service area and the proposed service area expansion of Little Egg Harbor Township. The map coverage is limited to the non-Pinelands areas since the Land Use Plan addresses the area of the Township outside the jurisdiction of the Pinelands Commission. The existing active sewer service area is comprised of developed areas such as Mystic Island, West Tuckerton and Parkertown. In such areas most homes and businesses are connected to the sewer system. The approved sewer service area consists of lands in which there is limited availability to existing sanitary sewer lines. The approved sewer service area includes the properties along Route 539 and the undeveloped areas west of Tuckerton Borough. The proposed expansion of the sewer service area is the portion of the Township which is pending State approval. Sewer extensions and connections are not permitted in the proposed expansion area at this time.

The importance of monitoring sewer service areas is due to the direct linkage between the presence of sewer infrastructure and density. Future sewer service areas should be examined closely to insure consistency with the Land Use Plan. The Land Use Plan should dictate future sewer service areas, rather than the inverse.

Municipal Recreation and Open Space

Both Little Egg Harbor Township and the County operate recreational facilities in the Township. The two Township facilities consist of a ballfield and park facility on Radio Road across from the Mystic Island Fire Station and the Parkertown Docks, a municipally owned boat ramp and marina. The County Parks operates the Atlantis Golf Course, an 18-hole facility, and Parkertown Park, a bay beach and playground at the terminus of Dock Street. There are additional active recreational fields at the Little Egg Harbor and Pinelands Regional school sites. In the near future, the Township will commence construction of a community park in the Tuckerton Manor area near Route 539 and the Mitchell School. The State of New Jersey has properties in the Township which are considered part of the Bass River State Forest. However, these state lands are conservation areas and do not have any recreational improvements. The US Fish and Wildlife Service has designated areas within the existing Refuge property in the Township for migratory game bird and deer hunting.

Federal Open Space

The US Fish and Wildlife Service, in conjunction with the Trust for Public Land, has selected certain areas of the Township for acquisition for the Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge. The Refuge was established to conserve land for wildlife habitat, recreation and ecological purposes. As noted in the Land Use section, the Federal government purchased a significant amount of property during the 1980's and 1990's for the Edwin Forsythe Wildlife Refuge. The US Fish and Wildlife Service continues to acquire properties south of the Parkway on both sides of Route 539. The acquisition program is scheduled to occur over a fifteen-year time period and works with willing sellers. The US government pays an annual fee in lieu of taxes to the municipality. In 1996, the payment was almost $12,000.

Little Egg Harbor Township should communicate with the US Fish and Wildlife Service concerning the Municipality's Land Use Plan, thereby discouraging acquisition of upland parcels for open space in commercial and industrial zones.

Chapter 7: Economic Analysis

Labor Force and Employment

The resident labor force of Little Egg Harbor Township numbered 6,682 persons in 1997. Approximately 480 persons were unemployed, contributing to a local unemployment rate of 7.2%. This exceeds the County unemployment rate of 5.4% and the state unemployment rate of 5.1%. Labor force statistics for Little Egg Harbor Township are shown in Exhibit 16.

Exhibit #16

LABOR FORCE ESTIMATE
LITTLE EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP
1997

	POTENTIAL LABOR FORCE	# OF EMPLOYED RESIDENTS	UNEMPLOY-MENT	UNEMPLOY. RATE
LITTLE EGG HARBOR TWP	6,682	6,202	480	7.2%
OCEAN COUNTY	211,299	199,958	11,341	5.4%

Source: Ocean County Department of Planning, 1997.

According to 1990 Census data, 5,627 persons 16 years and over were employed in Little Egg Harbor Township. Approximately 28% of local employees worked in technical, sales, and administrative support jobs. Service occupations employed 23% of the labor force. Other leading occupations included managerial and professional specialty (20%), precision production and craft occupations (15%) and operators, fabricators and laborers (12%).

The industries, which employed Township residents, are relatively well diversified. The retail trade industry employed 15% of the labor force and was the largest single industry employer of Township workers. The second largest employment industry was construction, providing jobs to 10% of the work force, closely followed by professional services, and entertainment and recreation services.

Covered employment data for Little Egg Harbor Township in 1996 is provided in Exhibit 17. Covered employment is defined as employment which is "covered" by New Jersey unemployment insurance, and refers to jobs existing within the Township. The covered employment information is considered the most reliable data source of employment within municipalities. The exhibit indicates that 1,170 persons were employed in jobs located in Little Egg Harbor Township by 101 private and public sector employers. The private sector covered employment was 581 jobs in 1996, up 32% from 440 private sector covered jobs in 1990.

Exhibit 17

COVERED EMPLOYMENT
LITTLE EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP
1996

EMPLOYMENT SECTOR	EMPLOYERS	EMPLOYEES
PRIVATE	97	581
PUBLIC	4	589
TOTAL	101	1,170

Source: New Jersey Department of Labor.

Tax Base

Exhibit 18 compares the number of parcels and assessed valuation of each property class for the years 1977 and 1998. The data show that the assessed valuation of the Township grew approximately six fold during this time period, while the number of parcels increased approximately 40%. In 1998, the residential sector provided 83% of the municipal tax revenues, compared to 81% in 1977. Therefore the Township is more dependent in 1998 than in 1977 on residential parcels for tax revenues. The residential land use sector creates considerably more municipal costs, due to education expenses, than the other types of land uses.

Exhibit 18

REAL PROPERTY VALUATION
LITTLE EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP
1977 AND 1998

Class	1998			1977		
	# Parcels	% Total Valuation	Assessed Valuation	# Parcels	% Total Valuation	Assessed Valuation
Vacant	2,575	10.2	$81,251,100	2,661	13.81	$16,133,400
Residential	7,467	82.84	$661,783,829	4,559	80.9	$94,542,300
Farm Qual.	13	0.02	$198,545	0	0	$0
Commercial	143	6.6	$52,917,900	72	5.28	$6,173,300
Industrial	2	0.04	$291,800	1	0.01	$14,100
Apartment	2	0.3	$2,425,000	0	0	$0
Total	10,202	100	$798,868,174	7,293	100	$116,863,100

Sources: 1978 Little Egg Harbor Township Master Plan and the Little Egg Harbor Township Tax Assessor's Office, 1998.

Chapter 8: Circulation

Existing Transportation Network

Functional Classification

Little Egg Harbor Township has an extensive network of freeways, arterials, secondary arterials, collector and local roads to provide vehicular circulation. This section describes the existing road network in Little Egg Harbor Township by functional classification and describes proposed and needed road improvements. The functional classification of the existing roadway network in Little Egg Harbor Township is shown in Figure 6.

Expressway

An expressway is a principal arterial designed to carry regional traffic or through traffic. An expressway is a limited access road, carrying large volumes of traffic at higher sustained speeds over longer distances. The Garden State Parkway (GSP) is classified as a toll expressway and is operated by the NJ Highway Authority. The GSP provides a north-south travel route and extends from the New York South to Cape May. The GSP has one exit (#58) in Little Egg Harbor Township, located at North Green Street (Ocean County Route 539).

The New Jersey Department of Transportation has performed traffic counts for the Garden State Parkway at the New Gretna Toll Plaza, which is just south of Exit 58. Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) volumes during December 1993, 1994 and 1995 were approximately 37,000 vehicles. Traffic volumes during the summer months, especially during weekends,

are higher than the above cited figure. (Traffic figures for the summer months are not available from the Highway Authority.)

Minor Arterial

Minor arterials also carry regional traffic volumes. They act as feeders to and from freeways and serve as carriers between major regional traffic generators. Little Egg Harbor Township has one rural minor arterial, Route 9, which is under the jurisdiction of the New Jersey Department of Transportation. Route 9 has at-grade intersections and provides direct land access to adjacent parcels. Route 9 serves the southern sector of the Township, is a two lane route and provides land access to much of the year-round retail commercial and service establishments of the Township. Traffic counts, performed by the Ocean County Engineering Department in August 1997, indicate a volume of over 18,000 vehicles per day at Route 9 near the Great Bay Boulevard intersection.

Major Collector Roads

Collector roads "collect" traffic volumes from local streets and may be the direct access road to a major residential development. Typically, collector roads are under Municipal or County jurisdiction. North Green Street (Ocean County Route 539) and Radio Road are classified as major collectors in Little Egg Harbor. A traffic count of North Green Street at Nugentown Road in July 1995 by the County Engineer's office revealed a traffic volume of almost 9,800 vehicles per day. Radio Road, near Mathistown Road, carried over 11,200 vehicles per day in April 1997. The recommended Ocean County right-of-way width of major collectors is sixty-six (66) feet. A list of roads maintained by Ocean County within the Township is provided in Exhibit 19.

Minor Collector

A minor collector also collects traffic and channels the vehicles to major collectors or arterials. These roads have lower volumes of traffic than major collectors and more access points than do major collectors. The minor collectors in Little Egg Harbor Township are: Thomas Avenue; Railroad Avenue; Nugentown Road (portion); Otis Bog Road (portion); Giffordtown Lane; Oak Lane; Mathistown Road; Center Street; Twin Lakes Boulevard; Stafford Forge Road; and Great Bay Boulevard (portion). The recommended right-of-way width of minor collectors is sixty (60) feet.

Exhibit 19

OCEAN COUNTY ROADS

LITTLE EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP

ROAD NO.	ROAD NAME	MILEAGE
1	Tuckerton-Warren Grove-Whiting Rd.*	9.7
2	Mathistown Road	1.83
6	Giffordtown Lane	0.67
8	Nugentown Road	1.6
10	Walnut Street and Dock Road	0.9
12	Parkertown Drive	0.26
25	Radio Road	4.64
29	Thomas Avenue	2.1
35	Railroad Avenue and Portion of Wood St.	1.69
99	Stafford Forge Road	1.0
103	Center Street	2.29
*539	North Green Street	

Source: 1994 Official Listing of Ocean County Roads, Ocean County Board of Chosen Freeholders.

Local Roads

The major function of local streets is land access. Local roads should be designed to minimize "through" traffic. The pattern of local streets should serve visitors, delivery trucks, school buses, municipal vehicles as well as the local residents. In a residential development, the right-of-way width of a new local road will be governed by the New Jersey Residential Site Improvement Standards (RSIS).

Exhibit 20

Roadway Classification
Little Egg Harbor Township

Functional Classification	Roadway Name	Segment	Jurisdiction	Length (Miles)	Right-of-way Width
Expressway	Garden State Parkway	---	N.J. Highway Authority	4.09	650' - 850'
Minor Arterial	Route 9	---	State of N.J.	2.8	66'
Major Collector	Radio Road	Tuckerton line to Great Bay	Ocean County	4.64	50'-100'
Major Collector	Route 539	Tuckerton line to Stafford line	Ocean County	9.7	66'
Major Collector	Mathistown Road	Route 9 to Radio Road	Ocean County	1.83	55'
Minor Collector	Center Street	Mathistown Rd. to Tuckerton	Ocean County	1.63	46.5' – 60'
Minor Collector	Nugentown Road	Otis Bog Rd. to Route 539	Ocean County	1.46	33' – 46.5'
Minor Collector	Otis Bog Road	Nugentown Rd. to Route 9	Little Egg Harbor Township	1.56	33'
Minor Collector	Great Bay Boulevard	Tuckerton line to Big Thorofare	Little Egg Harbor Township	1.04	100'
Minor Collector	Thomas Avenue	Route 539 to Eagleswood line	Ocean County	2.1	33'-60'
Minor Collector	Forge Road	Route 539 to Eagleswood line	Ocean County	1	33'
Minor Collector	Twin Lakes Blvd.	---	Little Egg Harbor Township	1.94	60'

Public Transportation

There is no passenger rail line service in Little Egg Harbor Township. No plans exist for such service in the near future. Bus transit is limited to a daily service along Route 9 between Atlantic City and Toms River on Line 559.

Ocean County Area Transportation (OCAT) operates many bus routes throughout the County during the weekdays. The buses provide service to residents for shopping and doctor visits. The buses stop at supermarkets, convenience stores, the municipal building and Mystic Shores. The OC6 bus route, operated by OCAT, maintains a Monday through Friday schedule from Little Egg Harbor Township north along Route 9 to the Southern Ocean County Hospital.

Existing Circulation Problems

Problem Intersections

The problem intersections, ranked by the highest number of accidents over the past 12 months (10/1/97 through 9/30/98) are as follows:

Oak Street and Center Street – 7 accidents;

Route 9, Oak Lane/Giffordtown Road – 6 accidents;

Mathistown Road and Radio Road – 5 accidents; and

Radio Road and Oak Lane – 4 accidents.

Police records indicate that there were a total of 251 accidents in the Township during calendar year 1997. In comparison, the Police Department recorded 137 accidents in 1976.

While some of the accidents occur in parking lots, at commercial establishments, or result from other factors such as weather, the majority of the accidents involve other vehicles on the roadways. A high number of accidents signals the need for some type of improvement, such as a stop light or better pavement markings. However, three of the four problem intersections already have a traffic signal or blinking light, and the number of accidents do not appear particularly high. The reasons for traffic accidents at these locations should be furthered examined with the purpose of determining whether any additional intersection improvements are in order. As all of the intersections listed above involve other jurisdictions (i.e. County or State), the Township's ability to make improvements is limited. In terms of accidents in parking lots and accessing commercial properties, the Police Department should be consulted prior to the approval of a non-residential development application for traffic safety comments.

Other Intersections

Route 9 and Mathistown Road: Mathistown Road is the primary route for many residents commuting to Atlantic City to access Route 9 for the trip to work. The Police Department indicates this intersection is not subject to the typical AM/PM peaks in traffic, due to the impact of shift schedules in Atlantic City casinos. The intersection at Route 9 should be monitored for possible improvements.

North Green Street Intersections: Traffic volumes will continue to increase on North Green Street between the Garden State Parkway and Route 9 in Tuckerton Borough. This will make it difficult for vehicles to make turns from side streets on to Route 539. For example, the Police Department has noted that school buses and automobiles frequently queue

heavily on Nugentown Road at the end of the school day for left turns onto North Green Street. These locations need to be monitored and action taken as warranted.

Problem Roads

Stage Road: The Little Egg Harbor Police Department has requested NJDOT approval for the reduction of the 45-MPH speed limit for the western segment of Stage Road due to sun glare problems for east bound traffic.

Pedestrians and Bicycling

Pedestrian's use many roads that lack sidewalks. Some of the pedestrians are schoolchildren walking to a bus stop or to school. An inventory of road segments in the Township without sidewalks should be performed and segments should be ranked by priority for future construction in the Capital Improvement Plan. A funding mechanism must also be developed. Little Egg Harbor has no existing bike paths.

Chapter 9: Goals and Objectives

General Purposes

The following represent the general purposes of the 1999 Master Plan:

a. To guide decision-makers in the Township of Little Egg Harbor in the appropriate use of lands within the Township to promote the public health, safety morals and general welfare;

b. To minimize the development conflicts with the development and general welfare of neighboring municipalities, Ocean County, and the State as a whole;

c. To promote the establishment of appropriate population densities and concentrations that will contribute to the well-being of persons, neighborhoods, the community and region and preservation of the environment;

d. To encourage the appropriate and efficient expenditure of public funds by the coordination of public development with land use policies;

e. To provide sufficient space in appropriate locations for a variety of residential, recreational, commercial and industrial uses and open space, both public and private, according to their respective environmental requirements in order to meet the needs of all citizens;

f. To encourage the location and design of transportation routes which will promote the free flow of traffic while discouraging location of such facilities and routes which result in congestion or blight;

g. To promote a desirable visual environment through conservation and preservation of valuable natural features;

h. To promote the conservation of open space and valuable natural resources and to prevent urban sprawl and degradation of the environment that would occur the through the improper use of land; and,

i. To encourage coordination of the various public and private procedures and activities shaping land development with a view of lessening costs of such development and to the more efficient use of land.

j. The Township Committee and the Planning Board should coordinate efforts with the Little Egg Harbor Municipal Utilities Authority to extend sewer service to commercial and business areas.

k. Little Egg Harbor Township should develop a specific plan of sidewalk extensions to improve the safety of pedestrians and school children. The priority in sidewalk improvement should begin with new development. Sidewalk improvements in existing neighborhoods and within two miles of school locations area also very important. The source of funds for sidewalk extensions in existing neighborhoods must be determined before such a program can be initiated.

Goals and Objectives

The following are the underlying goals and objectives of the 1999 Master Plan:

a. To reduce permitted residential densities, where appropriate, consistent with planning efforts aimed at minimizing the fiscal impacts of new residential development;

b. To concentrate new residential and commercial development in planned centers or other growth corridors where infrastructure is available or comprehensively planned;

c. To adopt land use regulations that will capitalize upon and promote the Tuckerton Seaport project;

d. To adopt land use regulations that encourage a better balance among residential, commercial and industrial land uses so as to promote improved municipal fiscal planning efforts;

e. To promote better coordination and consistency between State and Municipal planning efforts;

f. To coordinate with the N.J. Highway Authority and County to continually improve the roadway system of the Township and to plan for anticipated changes brought on by growth and development;

g. To promote bikeways and pedestrian walkways as a means of recreation and to lessen reliance on the automobile as the sole means of transportation; and

h. To promote land use policies and regulations that encourage economic development and redevelopment that improve the Township's property tax base.

Chapter 10: Land Use Plan

The purpose of the Land Use Plan is to serve as a guide for the Township's land use (zoning) decisions. The Land Use Plan represents the culmination of the master planning process and brings together all of the background studies and other Plan elements, including the goals and objectives of the Master Plan. The Land Use Plan Summary, Figure 8, contains the 1999 Little Egg Harbor Township Land Use Plan. Exhibit 21 quantifies the acreage of each proposed land use category.

The scope of the Land Use Plan Element covers only the non-Pinelands section of Little Egg Harbor Township. There are no land use recommendations concerning future land use of any land areas governed by the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (PCMP).

The various land use categories comprising the Land Use Plan are as follows:

Preservation Residential

Large tracts of land in Little Egg Harbor Township are classified as freshwater and tidal wetlands or are owned by the Federal government for wildlife conservation. There are also similar tracts owned by the State of New Jersey as part of the Bass River State Forest. Development of these lands is highly unlikely in the foreseeable future. The density of the tracts should reflect this reality. The preservation residential land use category has been established in recognition of the environmental sensitivity and public ownership of these areas. The preservation residential areas are primarily located in the eastern and southern most portions of the Township. Land uses in this category will be limited to parks, open space, recreation, government uses and single family dwellings. The density recommendation of the Land Use Plan is a minimum lot size of 5 acres.

The preservation residential land use category will be the largest, in terms of total area, in the non-Pinelands portion of Little Egg Harbor Township and contains approximately 8,373 acres.

Low Density Residential

The low density residential land use category is intended for areas where detached single family dwellings would be permitted at densities ranging from one dwelling unit per two to five acres. The areas are generally the more remote areas of the Township with significant environmental sensitivity, lack of suitable access and/or infrastructure to permit more intense development within the timeframes of this Master Plan.

The primary low density residential areas include: the area generally bounded by Stage Road on the north, Otis Bog Road on the east and Route 9 on the south; the areas generally west of North Green Street and north of Nugentown Road to the Tuckerton Creek; the area east of North Green Street bounded on the south by Parkertown Drive and on the north by the Garden State Parkway.

The low density residential category comprises approximately 3,244 acres.

Medium Density Residential

The medium density residential land use category is intended primarily for detached single family dwellings at densities ranging from one to four dwelling units per acre. Such areas generally have suitable access and infrastructure capable of supporting a somewhat higher intensity of residential development. Such areas would provide for minimum lot sizes ranging from 7,500 square feet to one acre.

This designation covers a substantial portion of existing areas of the Township developed as residential, but also provides for substantial infill development.

It is the intention of this Land Use Plan, in the medium density land use areas, to recommend upgrades in residential zoning classification (i.e. reduce permitted densities), where appropriate, based on the land use pattern and access to utilities and infrastructure.

This land use category contains approximately 2,808 acres or 14.1% of the non-Pinelands portion of the Township.

High Density Residential

The high density residential category is intended exclusively for existing developed areas in the Mystic Island section of the Township. Such areas are generally developed with detached single family dwellings on lots of 5,000 square feet and densities of 5 dwelling units per acre or greater. This land use category contains 2,091 acres or 10.5% of the non-Pinelands portion of the Township.

Multi-Family Residential

The multi-family residential land use category is intended to provide areas for development of multi-family housing at densities in excess of five dwelling units per acre. This designation is intended to be limited to areas of existing multi-family development or areas where there are development approvals for multi-family development. This land use category contains 208 acres or 1.4% of the non-Pinelands portion of the Township.

It is also recommended that conditional uses in the Multi-Family residential areas, as well as all residential areas, be updated to specify life care, assisted living, nursing homes, residential health care, and adult day care uses to address the residential and health needs of senior citizens.

Commercial/Business

The commercial and business areas are primarily located along Route 9, North Green Street and Mathistown Road. Three general types of commercial/business are proposed for the areas so designated matching current zoning (i.e. Highway Business, General Business, and Neighborhood/Special Business). "Highway Commercial" type uses are intended for that portion of the commercial/business designated area along Route 9, generally west of Otis Bog Road. The largest portion of the commercial/business designated area is intended for "General Business" uses along most of the remaining Route 9 and Route 539 corridors. The "Neighborhood/Special Business" type uses are intended for smaller or more unique business situations.

The Commercial/Business land use category now contains an area along Mathistown Road, from Route 9 to the LEHMUA water tower, which is currently designated for "Office-Professional" uses. The Office Professional land use designation is too limiting in terms of economic development a land use category for this gateway corridor to the Township. The subject area is designated for Commercial/Business in the 1999 Master Plan to provide for an expanded range of business uses.

It is also recommended that the conditional uses in the highway and general commercial areas be updated to specify life care, assisted living, nursing homes, residential health care and adult day care uses to address the health needs of the senior citizen population. The senior care uses will provide a low impact land use for the Township consistent with this comprehensive Master Plan revision.

Light Industry

There is one area in Little Egg Harbor Township designated for Light Industry. It is a triangular tract located between Rt. 539, Old North Green Street and the Garden State Parkway. The area corresponds to the existing light industrial zone. The 1999 Land Use Plan recommends elimination of the Light Industry designation at the Township Public Works Yard since Light Industry is inconsistent with the surrounding land uses and land plan designations.

Parks/Recreation

The Parks/Recreation designation is intended to include all areas of the Township that are improved and utilized for recreation and open space, or planned for such future use, consistent with the Recreation Plan Element adopted by the Planning Board on October 22, 1997.

Public Lands

The Public Lands designation includes all lands owned and maintained by the municipality and the Board of Education.

Planned Adult Community

There are four areas in the Land Use Plan, designated for planned retirement communities. Three of the areas are a continuation of previous land use policies. One area is the completed Mystic Shores development in the vicinity of Mathistown Road. The second is the vacant tract on the south side of Route 9, east of Mathistown Road, known as the "Cranberry Creek" adult residential development. The original Cranberry Creek development approval included 510 homes and a shopping center at this location approximately 8 to 10 years ago. The approval was recently amended by the Planning Board to reduce the number of residential units. The Land Use Plan provides for the western section, presently zoned for Planned Community, and presently owned by the Federal Government, to be revised to a very low density residential designation. The third area is situated on the west side of Route 539 between Railroad Avenue and Frog Pond Road. The Sea Oaks Golf Course is currently under development on the tract. Upon receipt of the necessary sewer extension and other approvals, a residential community is contemplated at this location. The fourth Planned Adult Community is located between Radio Road and Center Street in the vicinity of the Tall Timbers development. The Planning Board recently granted an amended approval for this tract to allow an adult community.

Waterfront Development

The Waterfront land use designation includes certain lands, appropriate for commercial and residential water-related uses. The Waterfront category will provide commercial areas tailored for waterfront and marine-type uses. The areas in this category are intended to match the existing locations of the WFD Waterfront Development and Marine Commercial zones. No revisions are proposed in this land use category.

Exhibit 21

Land Use Plan Acreage
Little Egg Harbor Township

Land Use Category	Acres	Percent of Total
Preservation Residential	8,373	42.0
Low Density Residential	3,244	16.2
Medium Density Residential	2,808	14.1
High Density Residential	2,091	10.5
Multifamily Residential	208	1.4
Business/Commercial	1,381	6.9
Light Industry	321	1.6
Parks/Recreation	272	1.4
Public	181	0.9
Planned Adult Community	882	4.4
Waterfront Development	137	0.7
Total	19,898*	100.0

* Non-Pinelands Area of the Township.

Chapter 11: Community Facilities Plan

Figure 8, the Community Facilities Plan, shows the locations of existing and proposed facilities within the Township serving the public. Except as otherwise noted below, the community facilities are existing facilities.

Municipal Building/Criminal Justice Complex

The Township Committee has retained an architect to advise the Township on the feasibility of constructing new Police Department and courtroom facilities on a lot adjacent to the municipal building. The Department is in need of larger office quarters, additional storage areas and a secure parking area.

Recreation and Open Space

The Little Egg Harbor Township Planning Board adopted a Recreation Plan Element on October 22, 1997 addressing the existing and future recreation and open space needs of the Township. The Recreation Plan recommended that the Township acquire a community park, of at least 50 acres, for active and passive recreation purposes in a central location. The Recreation Plan included a list of potential sites, each of which would achieve the goals of the Plan. Subsequently Little Egg Harbor Township acquired a 117.6 acre site west of Route 539, in the Tuckerton Manor area, and received a low interest loan from the Green Acres program to develop the tract for active recreation. The site, shown on the Community Facilities Plan, abuts the Mitchell Elementary School. The facility is intended for cross utilization. The Community Facilities Plan also identifies a proposed Ocean County recreation acquisition site near Playhouse Road.

Bikeways

A proposed bikeway is indicated along the entire 5.8 mile length of Great Bay Boulevard. The Township has submitted an application to the NJ Department of Transportation for a grant from the NJ Transportation Trust Fund to construct a bikeway on the westerly side of the roadway.

A second bikeway is proposed from Nugentown Road to Tuckerton Manor Boulevard, the site of the proposed Township community park. The bikeway location is proposed in the right-of-way of Lake Street, which is a paper street parallel to North Green Street. (The Atlantic Electric utility right-of-way is situated within the Township's right-of-way.) The Township Engineer recently submitted an application for NJ Department of Transportation funding to construct this one mile bikeway. The bikeway will provide bicycle access from the Pinelands Regional Schools to the new park without additional road crossings.

Both bikeways are indicated on Figure 8.

Chapter 12: Economic Plan

Employment Projections

Little Egg Harbor is expected to add new jobs at a similar rate of employment growth experienced during the 1990's. In 1992, the NJ Office of State Planning prepared an unofficial employment projection for the Township. The State projected Little Egg Harbor would have 891 private sector jobs in 2010, equal to 3.6% employment growth per year. In the 1990's, Township employment actually grew 4.6%, from 440 private sector jobs in 1990 to 581 private sector jobs in 1996. The State's projection is probably reasonably accurate, since it forecasts conservative, yet realistic growth in private employment. If the State's projection holds, Little Egg Harbor should add approximately 16 private sector jobs each year through the year 2010.

It is apparent from the economic analysis in Chapter 7 that a critical issue facing the Township is not lack of employment opportunities for its residents but the creation of ratable development to support municipal services. The Township should take the necessary steps to generate municipal tax revenues with minimal cost. No one single business or enterprise will bring in the needed revenue. The Township should seek to diversify the commercial and industrial base to produce a stable stream of revenue. In 1998, the assessed value of residential property in the Township, as a percentage of total assessed value of property, was approximately equal to that for Ocean County as a whole, that is, approximately 83%. However, many municipalities in Ocean County have significant populations of senior citizens who do not generate educational costs, and therefore contribute to the ratable tax base. Therefore, senior citizen development is a land use compatible with the Township's goal of increasing ratables.

Other potential business/ratable strategies include the following:

1. <u>Ecotourism</u>

   The bays, inlets and meadows in Little Egg Harbor Township are a tremendous asset as recreational sites for boating, fishing, hunting, bird watching, and crabbing and

other "ecological" activities. Waterfront properties, with and without slips, are valuable commodities. Sites, which provide access to water and nature-oriented activities should be promoted. For example bird watching, is a very important tourist activity in Cape May and generates tourist revenues, visitors and demand for overnight accommodations, etc. Enterprises which capitalize upon the natural environment without diminishing its value are to be encouraged.

2. **Seaport Related Businesses**

The development of the Tuckerton Seaport will bring visitors to the area. Tourism will generate the need for ancillary or "spin-off" businesses, such as restaurants, gas stations, gift shops, bed and breakfasts, and possibly hotels or motels. Parking near the Seaport facility may be in short supply and may create the need for a shuttle bus between remote parking in the Township and the Seaport. The permitted uses in the Zoning Ordinance in the appropriate business districts should be examined to address these possibilities.

3. **Back Office for Atlantic City Casinos**

The proximity of the Township to Atlantic City, as well as the availability of relatively inexpensive vacant land, offers the Township an opportunity to promote itself as a viable location for "back-office" operations (e.g. computer systems and accounting departments) or warehouses related to the Atlantic City casinos. Marketing materials can be prepared and distributed to realtors, economic development agencies and chamber of commerce groups to increase the Township's exposure for such development.

4. <u>Assisted Living, Senior Housing and Senior Health Care Facilities</u>

The need for senior citizen housing in New Jersey has been well documented. Senior citizen developments such as single family retirement communities, assisted living facilities and nursing homes generate tax revenues without the corresponding increase in services, since the developments do not generate any schoolchildren. Little Egg Harbor already has several senior developments including the Seacrest Village project, the Pyramid nursing home, Mystic Shores, and the senior apartments on Mathistown Road. These facilities are a strong base for future ancillary senior facilities.

5. <u>Cost Sharing Agreements with Adjacent Municipalities</u>

One method of reducing the tax burden is to reduce expenses. Typically, municipalities are not able to reduce expenses alone, since many services are mandatory and other reductions are not viable. In the 1990's, the State of New Jersey has encouraged municipalities to reduce expenses and improve service by entering into Interlocal Service Agreements, which involve formal and informal agreements among municipalities, school districts and local public authorities to share resources. The State currently provides grant and loan funding of up to $25,000 per municipality through its "Interlocal Services Aid" program to pay for feasibility studies for implementation of joint services, such as joint assessment and collection of taxes; joint maintenance of roads, public works and beaches; joint building, housing and plumbing code inspection and enforcement; and joint risk management services, to name a few. In the Spring of 1999, the State Legislature is expected to authorize two new initiatives that will increase funding from $500,000

to $34 million for this purpose. The Regional Efficiency Development Incentives (REDI) program is expected to contain $9 million for feasibility studies and transitional costs associated with merging services, such as upgrading communications equipment. The Legislature is expected to allocate an additional $25 million for a State aid program, the Regional Efficiency Aid Program (REAP). Under REAP, residents of municipalities that share services would receive annual tax rebates.

The concept of shared services is not new. For nearly two decades, legislation has permitted municipalities and local governments to establish shared services. School districts, such as Pinelands Regional, have participated in regionalization efforts. Many municipalities already pool their insurance to reduce some expenses. With the new state aid program, the Township may find it valuable to contract out staff or services to an adjoining municipality or, conversely arrange for another municipality to provide the same to Little Egg Harbor Township.

6. **Business Development Study Group**

A study group should be formed comprised of representatives of the Township Committee, Planning Board, Municipal Utility Authority (MUA), and the Economic Growth Group. The study group should examine various ways of attracting ratable development to areas where such development is contemplated pursuant to the Master Plan, including Route 539 Corridor and the West Tuckerton areas. Incentives to attract ratable development to be examined could include the extension of sewer and water facilities into these areas and tax abatement/exemption strategies under the "Long Term Tax Exemption Law" and the "Local Redevelopment and Housing Law."

Chapter 13: Circulation Plan

The Circulation Plan is the community's strategy to address future transportation needs for all vehicular trips within the context of the current road network and the projected development trends. The Circulation Plan also serves to separate local and through trips, provide for pedestrian and bicycle circulation and anticipate the need for traffic improvements. An effective Circulation Plan foresees future transportation system needs and schedules the necessary improvements in a timely manner. Typically, traffic improvements are reactive to safety and congestion problems because there is a time lag between the identification and the actual resolution of the problem.

The Circulation Plan of the Township of Little Egg Harbor Township (Figure 10) provides a classification of existing roadways, proposed roadways and future intersection improvements.

Proposed Roadways and Improvements

New Jersey Highway Authority

The New Jersey Highway Authority (NJHA) operates and maintains the Garden State Parkway. The Authority plans to widen the Parkway from milepost 30 to milepost 80 in the near future. The plans are currently in the engineering design phase and will include a third lane in each direction. According to Ocean County officials, the plans will not include any change to the number of access ramps at exit 58, North Green Street (Route 539).

The "main line" Parkway widening is currently in the design phase. NJ Highway Authority officials are willing to discuss any municipal concerns about improvements at the interchange such as the number of access ramps, access ramp widening and turning lanes to and from North Green Street and the Parkway. The Ocean County Engineer's office is coordinating design and permitting issues with several municipalities for additional access ramps at various Ocean County interchanges.

New Jersey Department of Transportation

The New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) has investigated the traffic congestion along Route 9 and has advanced proposals to the Borough of Tuckerton and the Township of Little Egg Harbor to improve the intersections of the State Highway at Route 539 and Great Bay Boulevard. However, no specific construction plans for either intersection have been approved or endorsed by all parties.

The New Jersey Department of Transportation has convened a Study Group to examine various traffic congestion issues for the segment of Route 9 from Toms River to, and including, Little Egg Harbor Township. The group, which includes the Ocean County Engineering and Planning Departments and representatives of the affected municipalities along the Route 9 corridor, has been meeting for over a year, reviewing population and traffic forecasts and discussing potential means of improving traffic circulation. NJDOT

established the group to obtain municipal input concerning general and specific projects to relieve congestion on Route 9, such as intersection improvements, bypasses, parallel routes and park and ride facilities. Little Egg Harbor Township officials should continue to attend such meetings and provide input.

Ocean County

Ocean County plans to modify the curve of Giffordtown Road just south of Nugentown Road at a future date. In addition, Ocean County is planning the future reconstruction of both Mathistown Road and Center Street. A timetable for improvement has not yet been announced. In addition, Ocean County is planning the future reconstruction of both Mathistown Road and Center Street.

Modification of the Tuckerton By-Pass

The concept of a Route 9 by-pass road around Tuckerton was incorporated into the 1979 Master Plan. Since 1978, Ocean County and the State of New Jersey have constructed several improvements associated with this by-pass roadway. The improvements include: modification of Giffordtown Road; the signalization of the Route 9/Giffordtown Road intersection; and construction of Railroad Avenue. The Ocean County Engineering Department also pursued the feasibility of this new roadway about ten years ago. The feasibility analysis analyzed the viability of several alternate alignments for the segment between Nugentown Road and Route 539, which crosses Tuckerton Creek. The Ocean County Engineering Department analysis determined that permitting and construction constraints resulting from the Tuckerton Creek stream and wetland corridor rendered a by-

pass route unfeasible. As a result, the Ocean County Engineer's Office has removed the bypass from the County's capital improvement plans.

One proposal, which surfaced in discussion with the Ocean County Engineer during the preparation of the current Master Plan, is for the by-pass to utilize existing roads in Little Egg Harbor Township and Tuckerton Borough. Additional improvements could be made to Giffordtown and Nugentown Roads, which already link Route 9, west of Tuckerton, to Route 539. The continuation of the roadway from the Nugentown Road – Route 539 intersection to Railroad Avenue does not appear feasible since a direct connection is blocked by the Greenwood Cemetery. Therefore, at this time, it is unlikely that a major Route 9 by-pass will be constructed.

Municipal

The Circulation Plan contains several proposals for improvements to the local roadways in the circulation system.

Otis Bog Road: Otis Bog Road from Nugentown Road to Route 9 south to Center Street, is designated a future minor collector running generally parallel to Mathistown Road, consistent with the 1978 Master Plan. A minimum right-of-way width of sixty (60) feet should be reserved as part of any development application traversed by the project alignment.

Poor Man's Parkway: Poor Man's Parkway, which parallels the Garden State Parkway from North Green Street to the municipal boundary, is within the right-of-way of the Parkway. A proposed local road is shown along the Parkway to indicate the Township's position that the road should remain open for the future and be replaced if the Highway Authority should impact the existing roadway. A minimum right-of-way of 50 feet is recommended.

Frog Pond Road: Frog Pond Road can be expected to function as a minor collector in the future based on potential development along this roadway. A minimum right-of-way width of 60 feet is recommended.

Hickory Lane: Hickory Lane is designated as a future minor collector with a minimum right-of-way width of 60 feet. The purpose of this designation is to reserve adequate right-of-way from future development on the north side of the roadway. As a minor collector, Hickory Lane may serve as an emergency by-pass of the downtown Tuckerton area due to its connection to Railroad Avenue.

Future intersection improvements: Future intersection improvements are shown in Figure 10 to indicate intersections which will need improvements based on future growth. Some of the intersections will require signalization, as volumes warrant, or as widening is required to accommodate increased traffic. For example, Mathistown Road at Route 9 should be improved to provide a separate right hand turning lane for northbound Route 9 traffic. In addition, the State should consider a left hand turning lane for Route 9 southbound traffic onto Mathistown Road. Other intersections identified for future improvements are: Oak Lane at Center Street and Radio Road; North Green Street at Nugentown Road; and Frog Pond Road at Parkers Road near Parkertown.

Transportation Policies

Park and Ride Facility

Park and ride facilities meet the parking needs of carpooling and bus commuters. Typically, the facilities are strategically situated to intercept commuters at convenient locations. The demand for such facilities should be investigated for the work trips to the north on the Garden State Parkway and work trips to the south (i.e. Atlantic City) via Route 9 and the GSP. A facility at or near the Route 539 Garden State Parkway interchange appears to be the most logical but needs to be studied in more detail. Other locations for Atlantic City commuters could be investigated.

An inquiry of the NJ Highway Authority in March 1999 indicated that the Authority has no active plans for a park-and-ride facility at Interchange 58. In addition the Authority has minimal surplus property at this location. The Highway Authority will work with Little Egg Harbor officials to investigate the feasibility of such a facility within existing Authority property or examine other potential locations at Interchange 58.

Traffic Calming

As a result of increased traffic, planners, public officials and citizens have looked for innovative methods to mitigate traffic congestion. One technique, which has received considerable recent attention because it is diametrically opposite to traditional traffic engineering, is "traffic calming". Traffic calming describes types of circulation improvements that slow traffic to improve pedestrian safety. The traditional engineering

approach advocates wider lanes and roadways, which increase speeds and volumes. Traffic calming involves vertical and horizontal changes to the roadway that change the character of street to slow traffic. For example, traffic calming may include "humps" which raise the entire curb-to-curb section of the road for a length of 20-25 feet, similar to a speed bump, to slow traffic. A "choker" narrows the road to a width of 12 to 20 feet to force vehicles to decrease their speed. Traffic calming techniques can be used in residential neighborhoods to slow traffic and increase safety for pedestrians and cyclists. Such techniques should be reviewed by Township officials and considered for future municipal development standards.

Bike Paths

Consideration should be given to construction of bike paths along existing roads, which connect residential areas to recreational facilities and schools, along scenic routes and within new residential developments. A bike path can be a level shoulder, a sidewalk-type route along a street, a separate route on a utility easement, or a former railroad right-of-way. Routes for bike paths can be constructed on existing roads. Municipalities also can mandate bike paths as on-site improvements for development projects. The Ocean County Transportation Plan for the Year 2000 identifies a proposed bikeway along County Route 539, starting at State Highway Route 9 and continuing north through the Township. The State of New Jersey has increased funding of bikeway construction in recent years to assist municipalities in the effort to provide new bikeways.

Chapter 14: Relation of Master Plan to Other Plans

Plan Policy Statement

1. State Policies

   a. State Development and Redevelopment Plan

The State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP) was adopted by the State Planning Commission on June 12, 1992 to guide State agencies and local governments in public actions that affect growth and development. The State Plan identifies goals and strategies to address statewide planning objectives regarding land use, housing, economic development, transportation, natural resource conservation, agriculture, recreation, public facilities and intergovernmental coordination. The goals and strategies of the Plan are applied in a Resource Planning and Management structure consisting of Centers and Planning Areas. The geographic locations (centers) and the planning areas are geographically delineated by the State Planning Commission for the entire state.

The intended purpose of the SDRP is to guide the capital investment and allocation of resources of State agencies. Therefore, the Plan affects the funding of utility infrastructure, State roads, all types of grants and open space acquisition assistance. The Governor has instructed all State agencies by Executive Order to utilize the State Master Plan in decision-making. As a result of the Governor's order, the Plan has been used to guide permitting decisions, especially by the Department of Environmental Protection.

A review of the Resource Planning and Management maps of the SDRP indicates that Little Egg Harbor Township is within two Planning Areas: the Rural Planning Area (Planning Area 4) and the Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area (Planning Area 5). The maps also identify two town centers: Mystic Island and Nugentown. Identification of centers does not mean the Township has already received town center status. Center designation is obtained by submitting a petition to the Office of State Planning, accompanied by a detailed planning document. The planning documents must delineate a community development boundary to distinguish the growth area(s). The benefits of center designation include expedited permits and priority in State grant programs.

b. **Cross Acceptance Status**

In September 1998, the Ocean County Planning Board published a draft "Ocean County Cross Acceptance Report" and held two public hearings for public comment on the document. The Cross Acceptance Report is a summary of the concerns expressed by municipalities and citizens of Ocean County concerning the proposed revisions to the SDRP. The County Planning Board indicates, in the Cross-Acceptance Report, that the planning designation of the Route 539 Corridor is an outstanding issue from the first round of cross-acceptance. As detailed below, the Township has worked with two adjacent municipalities to address this issue.

The Township participated with Tuckerton Borough and Eagleswood Township in a joint Center Designation petition for a Tuckerton Town Center and Village

Center at Parkertown/West Creek. The Tuckerton "town center" includes portions of Tuckerton Borough and Little Egg Harbor Township. The "village center" includes the areas of Parkertown and West Creek (Eagleswood Township) within a village. The Ocean County Planning Board coordinated the petition, based on submissions by each of the participants and a series of meetings over a 12 to 15 month time period. The joint group reached consensus on the community development boundary of the two centers. These boundary of the centers are shown in Figure 7, The Land Use Plan. The petition has been included in the Ocean County Cross Acceptance Report. The Office of State Planning has promised an expedited review of the petition.

c. **Proposed Coastal Area Facility Review Act Rules**

In December 1998, the NJDEP published proposed rules to modify the method in which development intensity is determined for purposes of Coastal Area Facility Review Act (CAFRA) Permits. The existing rules provide for a site specific analysis of a series of factors within the various coastal regions to determine the level of allowable impervious coverage. The proposed rule establishes that the level of the allowable impervious coverage of certain CAFRA –regulated development will be based upon the location of the tract in a SDRP planning area or coastal center as designated pursuant to the SDRP or on an interim basis. The current as well as the proposed regulations limit impervious coverage of proposed regulated development as the primary means to control development intensity. Within a coastal center residential and non-residential CAFRA development, projects may have an impervious coverage of up to 70%. CAFRA regulated development outside of the community development

boundary of a coastal town cannot exceed 1% impervious coverage in Planning Areas Four and Five.

The coastal center maps, published by the DEP, propose two (2) coastal centers for Little Egg Harbor Township: Tuckerton/Nugentown coastal town and Mystic Island coastal town. The proposed centers differ from the joint center petition submitted to the Office of State Planning in the cross-acceptance process. The difference in the areas will have to be reconciled in the Township's discussion with the Office of State Planning concerning the town and village center petition.

d. **Pinelands**

The Land Use Plan Element, discussed herein, has not designated future land uses for the section of Little Egg Harbor Township within the jurisdiction of the Pinelands Commission. The Pinelands portion of the Township is all of the lands north of the Parkway and a portion of Bass River State Forest, which extends south of the Parkway in the Nugentown area. The Land Use Plan does not modify proposed land use within the jurisdictional area of the Pinelands Commission. Revisions to the Pinelands zones will occur at some future date, as necessary.

The Pinelands Commission has planning advisory authority over lands outside of its direct jurisdiction but within the "Pinelands National Reserve." The latter term represents the geographic area recognized by the Federal Government in the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978. The boundary of the "National

Reserve" encompasses the entire remainder of the Township. The Pinelands Commission has provided planning designations for Reserve areas in its Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP). For example, portions of the Route 539 and Route 9 Corridors are designated as a Regional Growth district. The Pinelands Commission defines a Regional Growth District as an area "to encourage appropriate patterns of compatible residential, commercial and industrial development...in order to accommodate regional growth influences... while protecting the Pinelands environment." Development of such areas is critical to the planning designations of the overall Pinelands Plan because Regional Growth districts absorb growth pressures that otherwise may threaten the Pinelands ecosystem. The significance of the Pinelands Commission planning for areas in Little Egg Harbor Township in the Pinelands National Reserve is that the CMP provides a regional planning basis for the applicable land use designations, in the Township Land Use Plan and Town Center petition. The State Plan, which was adopted after the CMP, does not reflect the Regional Growth designations of the CMP.

e. **Residential Site Improvement Standards**

On June 3, 1997 the Residential Site Improvement Standards (RSIS) became effective for all municipalities and utility authorities in New Jersey. The RSIS regulations are a set of minimum technical standards, applicable only to residential development, which address road widths, pavement specifications, curb and sidewalk construction, sewer and water utilities and stormwater management. Landscaping and shade trees are not included in the RSIS at this time. The rules preempt existing municipal improvement requirements for the

stated purpose of reducing housing costs by limiting site improvement costs via uniform and minimum standards.

According to the NJ Department of Community Affairs, no local action is required to resolve any conflicts between the RSIS and the improvement standards of Township. It is recommended that specific conflicting standards in the Township's Land Development Ordinances, if any, be deleted and replaced with a reference to the RSIS subchapter and paragraph. The advantages of such an ordinance revision are: 1) the standards which are superseded are removed to reduce confusion and misinformation and 2) the ordinance will not have to be updated with future revisions or updates of the technical provisions of the RSIS.

f. **Fair Housing Act/ Council on Affordable Housing**

Since the adoption of the Master Plan and Re-examination Report in 1988, the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) has adopted "Low and Moderate Income Housing Need" figures for the 1993-1999 cycle. The need numbers supersede the housing need identified in any previous planning documents.

The 1993-1999 indigenous housing need figure for Little Egg Harbor Township is 32 units and the total calculated need is 225 units. COAH will be publishing housing need estimates shortly, which will govern the 1999-2005 cycle.

The Planning Board intends to complete a Housing Element at a future date.

2. Ocean County Master Plan

The Ocean County Comprehensive Master Plan was adopted in December 1988 to guide the future development of Ocean County. The County Master Plan reviews population, housing and economic data, environmental resources, land use and other significant information and provides a comprehensive land use and policy plan. The General Development Plan designates several land use types and densities for Little Egg Harbor Township. The Mystic Island area is designated for Suburban Density Development (five units or more per acre). The West Tuckerton, Route 539 (southern segment), Mathistown Road corridor and Parkertown areas area designated for Medium density (2-4 units per acre). Stream corridors such as Parker's Creek, Gifford Branch, Mill Branch, Willis Creek, branches of the Westecunk creek and tidal meadows areas are designated for preservation. The proposed Land Use Plan of the Little Egg Harbor Township is consistent with the Ocean County Comprehensive Master Plan.

3. Contiguous Municipalities

Little Egg Harbor Township shares land boundaries with Eagleswood Township, Tuckerton Borough and Bass River Township.

a. Eagleswood Township

The current land use planning of Eagleswood Township is generally consistent with the proposed Little Egg Harbor Township Land Use Plan. The land bordering Little Egg Harbor Township in Eagleswood is zoned residential, commercial and industrial. The abutting Eagleswood residential zones require similar minimum lot areas as Little Egg Harbor. The commercial zone in Eagleswood parallels Route 9 as does the commercial area in Little Egg Harbor.

Eagleswood has an industrial district along the Garden State Parkway, which abuts a low-density residential area in Little Egg Harbor Township, and therefore is an inconsistent land use designation. The inconsistency is mitigated by the fact that the areas are separated by a wetlands corridor.

b. **Tuckerton Borough**

Tuckerton Borough is completely enclosed by Little Egg Harbor Township, except for the portion of Tuckerton fronting the bayside. The Tuckerton Borough planning is generally consistent with the proposed Little Egg Harbor Township Land Use Plan. The abutting residential areas in both municipalities are similar in density. The Tuckerton business districts are consistent with the business/commercial designated areas in Little Egg Harbor Township. One exception is a Little Egg Harbor Township business/commercial land use on Oak Lane, which abuts a medium density area of Tuckerton Borough. The conflict may be mitigated by the fact that a wetlands corridor traverses the rear of the Little Egg Harbor business area. Because the wetlands area may not be developed, it acts as a buffer between future commercial development along Oak Lane and the medium residential density area of Tuckerton.

c. **Bass River Township**

The entire western boundary of Little Egg Harbor Township is shared with Bass River Township, which is a municipality within Burlington County. The land use planning in Bass River Township is generally compatible with the Little Egg Harbor Township Land Use Plan. For example, the majority of the area which abuts Little Egg Harbor, south of the Garden State Parkway and north of Route 9,

is in the Preservation District of the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan. The minimum lot size in the Bass River Preservation District is 3.2 acres. The Little Egg Harbor area adjacent to the Preservation district is designated in the proposed Land Use Plan for low-density residential land use. A non-Pinelands Rural Development district in Bass River is located between Route 9 and the aforementioned Preservation area. This is contiguous with a low density residential zone in Little Egg Harbor. In the eastern sector of Bass River Township, south of Route 9, the prevailing zoning is Coastal Wetlands. This district is also a low intensity zone, which permits single family dwellings in non-wetlands areas on a minimum lot area of 3.2 acres, allowing alternate or innovative on-site sewage disposal. The abutting area of Little Egg Harbor Township, separated by Ballanger Creek, is designated for medium density and low density residential land use.

4. **Solid Waste Management and Recycling**

As detailed in Chapter 6 (Community Facilities/Open Space), Little Egg Harbor Township has implemented solid waste and recycling efforts consistent with the Source Separation and Recycling Act enacted by the State in 1987. The Township has also implemented recycling and solid waste planning efforts consistent with the Ocean County Solid Waste Management Plan.

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FIGURE 7
LAND USE PLAN
TOWNSHIP
OF
LITTLE EGG HARBOR

Ocean County, New Jersey