

REPORT OF THE

**ATLANTIC CITY  
RESTART & RECOVERY  
WORKING GROUP**

MARCH 2021

To Submit to Governor Phil Murphy and  
Lieutenant Governor Sheila Oliver

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# Foreword from The Honorable Phil Murphy



State of New Jersey

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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PHILIP D. MURPHY  
Governor

March 15, 2021

This report from the Atlantic City Restart and Recovery Working Group underscores our Administration's commitment to equipping and preparing Atlantic City to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuring it emerges stronger and more resilient than when the pandemic started. It also demonstrates our determination to build on the great progress that was being made pre-pandemic to address the economic, health, and community-wellness issues facing Atlantic City.

From day one, Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver and I have shared the same philosophy: that New Jersey must stand alongside Atlantic City as a partner. When COVID-19 hit our state, this philosophy led us to quickly bring together the Atlantic City Working Group — the only one in the entire state focused solely on the success of one city and region.

I thank Lt. Governor Oliver and her dedicated team at the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs for leading this dynamic working group, which includes a diverse field of experts. I commend Casino Reinvestment Authority Executive Director Matt Doherty and Chamber of Commerce of South Jersey President Christina Renna for serving as co-chairs and for pulling together this ambitious report. Most importantly, I want to thank the working group members and state agencies for providing support and solutions for the post-COVID economic and community recovery of Atlantic City.

We intend to utilize the recommendations outlined in this report just as we have the recommendations found in the Atlantic City Transition Plan issued in 2018. Guided by a common passion for revitalizing Atlantic City and improving its residents' quality of life, the new partnerships and bonds formed through this working group will continue the positive trajectory toward a better and brighter future for Atlantic City.

I look forward to the contributions this working group will make toward ensuring a thriving Atlantic City for all people who live, work, and visit this iconic city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Phil Murphy".

Philip D. Murphy  
Governor

# Foreword from Co-Chairs

*Matthew J. Doherty and Christina M. Renna*

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Atlantic City has a unique opportunity to emerge from the Covid-19 Global Pandemic on strong footing, paving the way for an extremely bright future. Prior to the essential shutdown of the City's largest industry in March of 2020, we were seeing a significant upswing in Gross Gaming Revenue, with over \$3B being reported for 2019. Crime was being managed, neighborhoods were improving, social issues were being addressed, market rate housing was returning, and non-gaming economic development was starting to gain steam. We are now poised at a time where we can once again dedicate ourselves to the idea that Atlantic City can be a great place for both its residents and visitors.

Governor Murphy and Lieutenant Governor Oliver have pledged their heart and spirit to champion Atlantic City's move in the right direction and to become a beacon for success after this pandemic. This report begins that process, recommending how best to restart and recover as a city. Dozens of caring and thoughtful residents, business executives, non-profit leaders, and health experts have met and deliberated over the best way forward for Atlantic City, and their hard work is expressed in this report.

Covid-19 is a novel virus for humanity, thereby necessitating a novel way to determine how we advance Atlantic City forward into a successful future. From the past to the present, rebuilding the first-of-its-kind 126-year-old Boardwalk, to embracing and promoting the Blue Economy, this report outlines our recommendations for policy makers to endorse both today and into the future. Expanding on Jim Johnson's Report, Atlantic City: Building a Foundation for Shared Prosperity, we need to find a way to collaborate that benefits all stakeholders in the City.

The recommendations in this report are bold, common sense, within reach, and necessary. It is incumbent upon policy makers to find the resources and the resolve to fully implement this plan. Otherwise, we will miss a unique opportunity for Atlantic City, and fail to launch forward as we emerge from this pandemic.



# Executive Summary

***The Atlantic City Restart and Recovery Working Group*** was tasked with focusing on specific issues affecting Atlantic City in order to create recommendations as to how the City can rebuild economically and socially. Each subcommittee worked collaboratively to create viable solutions to the issues the City faces. In each subcommittee, it was evident that there is a need for all of the organizations within the City to work together and to create programs that promote collaboration. The City's services and programs are somewhat isolated, and bringing all of these together would help create a more comprehensive and unified strategy to help residents who are in need.

***The Restart and Recovery subcommittee*** developed recommendations to ensure the visual and commercial shortcomings that are present are addressed. There is a need to focus on the City's appearance to make certain Atlantic City is a place where people want to live and visit. The Boardwalk is the crown of the City, and it is the top priority of the committee to rebuild and redevelop this important feature. This would have impacts throughout the City as it would attract business, new housing opportunities, and employment opportunities as well as make Atlantic City more attractive to tourists and potential residents. To continue on this path, the subcommittee also recommends refreshing the structures and appearances along Atlantic Avenue and Pacific Avenue. These are the two main thoroughfares in Atlantic City, and if these were given a new and refreshing look it could give a new facade to the City. This was done in Baltimore Harbor and tremendous benefits were reaped by that City.

***The Workforce Development subcommittee*** developed priorities to ensure that residents of Atlantic City are equipped with the tools they need to be a part of the job force presently and for years to come. Residents need to be able to connect to WiFi at home in order to fulfill jobs in which employers seek to hire employees to work remotely, therefore the committee found a need to address the digital divide. Additionally, many community members may need training and help in navigating how to seek these remote jobs and/or other jobs in the area. The New Jersey Department of Labor should supply targeted relief to the City in order to provide these trainings, services, and more. Atlantic City currently has one of the highest unemployment rates in the country, and needs programming to train and educate the job force to prepare them for employment opportunities. For these same reasons, the Jobs Council should be reconvened by the Atlantic City's Project Office and the current job training programs should be expanded. In order to systematically keep track of all of these opportunities and projects, a database of these development efforts needs to be created and will produce a sense of working together. All of these recommendations build off of each other, yet the last recommendation focuses on something new: the Blue Economy. The Blue Economy is the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, such as wind or fishing, and this could help to diversify the economy so it is not as dependent on the casino industry. Local resources could be used and recycled for maximum benefit of the local resident population. These ideas should be promoted as Atlantic City has the unique features necessary to benefit from this concept. In all these endeavors, building generational wealth in historically marginalized communities is a paramount concern. This can be furthered by creating programs to support entrepreneurial growth, training and sustained technical assistance and will reduce the cycle of dependence on public welfare and charitable support.

***The Economic Diversification subcommittee*** focused on improving foundational issues that make a community attractive to new investment as well as help existing businesses to thrive. The group felt a vibrant, clean, safe community, with a business-friendly government and streamlined approval process will result in unlimited opportunities, including the attraction of entrepreneurs and new industries. The main strategy includes growing “Blue Economy” industries, the basis of which is the City’s greatest asset: the ocean.

***The Public Health and Wellness subcommittee*** focused on the marginalized people of Atlantic City and created recommendations for this population to promote health and wellness across the city of Atlantic City. The five key areas of focus are: homelessness, maternal/child health and infant mortality, mental health, substance use, and nutrition/obesity/diabetes. For all of these areas of focus, recommendations have been outlined with the goals being to present the best way to solve the most alarming problems in each area of focus, to identify the existing programs in place, and to create ways to work together. Working together is, again, key and would help to create a more comprehensive model of resources in Atlantic City as this is the most productive and effective path of the future.

***The Community Outreach subcommittee***, comprised of a diverse cross section of members from Atlantic City, met to discuss areas of the local community that could aid the Atlantic City community as it emerges from the grip of both a financial and health crisis. The sub-committee looked across the board in the areas of education & youth, health & wellness, housing, public safety, neighborhood quality of life, culture, arts and community events. As we explored needs within these areas, we found an overarching need to easily identify available resources and to connect residents to take advantage of those resources. The committee acknowledged that a bridge is needed between available programs and the residents that would benefit from them. The sub-committee also acknowledged the recommendations from the “Atlantic City: Building a Foundation For a Shared Prosperity” report to Governor Murphy by James Johnson, in 2018. The Jim Johnson report discussed the establishment of “A Community Collaboration Database”, which lined up with the bridge that the committee identified as a backbone needed for Atlantic City.

The subcommittee views the establishment of a community collaboration database as an important tool that can aid in bridging gaps within our community. Not only to connect resources to those needing them, but to also help identify areas needing additional support. The guiding principle on such a collaboration database, is that it must be led by an anchor institution committed to dedicating the needed resources to regularly maintain and support needed for this successful tool. One of the important steps of this initiative is for a full scope resource mapping system to identify the resources and collaborators that can make this tool a living document that is current and relevant to residents, parents, students, patients, job seekers and community organizations. Some efforts have already been tried or underway that could be allied or combined with, such as CRDA’s Engage AC and AtlantiCare/Horizon Social Service tracking Project. Other non-database efforts to collaborate between community organizations have also taken off such as the Community Networking Association (CNA) of Atlantic County. CNA and other collaborators will be critical for the success of the subcommittee’s recommended Community Collaboration Database.

# Committee Members

## ***Restart and Recovery***

**CHAIR: Judge Steven Perskie, City of Atlantic City Consultant**

**Committee Members:** Melonie Johnson, President, Borgata; Zenith Shah, City of Atlantic City; Anthony Swan, Interim Business Administrator, City of Atlantic City; Dave Rebuck, Director, Division of Gaming Enforcement; Steve Callender, President, Casino Association; Mayor Marty Small, City of Atlantic City; Kaleem Shabazz, Councilman, City of Atlantic City; Tom Bracken, President & CEO, NJ Chamber of Commerce; Phyllis Lacca, President, Masterpiece; Jim Allen, President, Hard Rock Casino; Christina Fuentes, Director of Small Business Services, NJEDA; Phyllis Lacca, Masterpiece; Tom Sykes, SOSH Architects

## ***Workforce Development***

**CHAIR: India Still, Deputy Executive Director, ACIPO**

**Committee Members:** Tom Hannon, Executive Director, Atlantic City Housing Authority; Gary Hill, Executive Director, Metropolitan Business & Citizen's Association (MBCA); Joseph Jingoli, Jingoli Construction; Honorable Vincent Mazzeo, Assemblymen, State of New Jersey, Second Congressional District; James Plousis, Chair, Casino Control Commission; Robert McDevitt, President, Local 54; Joseph Ingemi, Principal, Pinarus Technologies (new appointee); Howard Kyle, President, National Aviation Research and Technology Park (NARTP), Atlantic County; Francis Kuhn, Acting Executive Director of Atlantic County Workforce Development Board (new appointee); Honorable Jesse Kurtz, Councilman, City of Atlantic City; Honorable George Tibbett, Councilman, City of Atlantic City; Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo, NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development; Tara Colton, NJEDA; Dr. Natalie Devonish, Dean of Atlantic City Campus and Executive Director of Workforce Development, Atlantic Cape Community College; Anthony Swan, Esq., Business Administrator, City of Atlantic City; Jeff Crum, Chief Investment Officer, New Jersey Community Capital

## ***Economic Diversification***

**CHAIR: Elizabeth Terenik, Senior Project Manager, AC DEVCO**

**Committee Members:** Senator Chris Brown; Evan Sanchez, Orange Loop; Leslie Anderson, President & CEO, NJRA; Jim Rutula, Rutala Associates; Mike Chait, President, Greater Atlantic City Chamber; Jim Ferguson, Atlantic County; Donna Danielson, General Manager, Tanger Outlets; Jacques Howard, City of Atlantic City; Lauren Moore, Executive Director, Atlantic County Economic Alliance; Dr. Barbara Gaba, President, Atlantic Cape Community College; Toro Aboderin, CFO, City of Atlantic City

## **Public Health and Wellness**

**CHAIR: Dr. Wilson Washington, Jr., Director of Health and Human Services**

**Committee Members:** Dr. Kifle Mihrete, Health Officer, DHHS (City of Atlantic City) Father Kevin Mohan; Samantha Kiley, Head of Community Health & Wellness (AtlantiCare); Terri Schieder, Senior VP Population Health (AtlantiCare); Lori Herndon (assigned Samantha Kiley and Terri Schieder); Councilman Jesse Kurtz, 6th Ward Councilman (City of Atlantic City); Bishop Dr. Robert Hargrove, (Grace Family Church); Reverend Antonio Gandy (Trinity Church); Alexis Waiters, Director of HR (City of Atlantic City); Assemblyman John Armato, Atlantic County; Dr. Jon Regis, OBGYN Doctor (Reliance Medical); Laura Rodgers, Chief Program/External Relations Officer (Jewish Family Services); Clinton Walden, Zoning Official (City of Atlantic City); Jacques A. Howard, Asst. Director of Redevelopment (City of Atlantic City); Michael Epps, Director of Atlantic City Project Initiatives Office; Marc Starling, Assistant Director of Community Development Block Grant (City of Atlantic City); Forrest Gilmore, Department Head, Family Community Development (Atlantic County); Scott Evans, Fire Chief, Fire Dept. (City of Atlantic City); James Sarkos, Officer in Charge, Police Dept. (City of Atlantic City); Melissa Fox, Chief Operating Officer (Acenda, Inc.); Dylan Wulderk, Project Manager (AtlantiCare); Jennifer Farrell, Covid-19 Coordinator (Reliance Medical); Carol Harney, CEO (South Jersey Aids Alliance), Dr. Jonathan Gewirtz, OBGYN Doctor, Jennifer Plews, Program Director (Acenda, Inc.); Bridget Deficcio, Senior Vice President (Acenda, Inc.);

## **Community Outreach**

**CHAIR: Bert Lopez, President, Hispanic Association & Sr. External Affairs Manager, Atlantic City Electric**

**Committee Members:** Damen Tyner, Esq. Atlantic County Prosecutor, Atlantic County Prosecutors Office; Frank Blee, Director of Government Relations & Senior Services, AtlantiCare; Stephanie Koch, CEO Atlantic City Boys & Girls Club; Joyce Hagen, Executive Director, Atlantic City Arts Foundation; Libbie Wills, President, 1st Ward Civic Association; Steve Downey, Director, Atlantic City Beach Patrol; James Sarkos, Deputy Chief, Atlantic City Police Department; Reverend Latasha Milton, Senior Pastor, Asbury United Methodist; Reverend Collins A. Days, Sr., Pastor Second Baptist Church; Barry Caldwell, Superintendent, Atlantic City Public Schools; Amber Hamlett, CEO, Hamlett Consulting; Tom Lamaine, Chairman, Atlantic City Boardwalk Committee; Elijah Langford, Atlantic City Initiative Office

## **Special Acknowledgments**

- Patrick Quinlan, CPM, City of Atlantic City
- Donna Pless, Casino Reinvestment Development Authority
- Josephine Tanopo, Chamber of Commerce Southern New Jersey
- Alyssa Nazarak, Casino Reinvestment Development Authority



# I. Restart & Recovery

The *Restart and Recovery* subcommittee was tasked with focusing on the restart and recovery of the hardest hit sectors of Atlantic City's economy, including gaming and tourism.

The subcommittee decided it should spend some effort to evaluate how the present circumstances in Atlantic City were permitted to develop, in order to better prepare to evaluate and recommend potential initiatives for addressing the priorities.

The input from the subcommittee's members resulted in a consensus of the subcommittee recommending that focus should be maintained on the following elements of that history:

1. Atlantic City has benefited substantially when the focus of State government was targeted upon the needs of the City and the City's capacity to be an important element of the State's economy and reputation.
2. Atlantic City needs a diversified economic and social restructuring, depending upon the gaming industry to continue to modernize and meet ever-changing demands but also creating a broader-based visitor and tourist experience in the City, as well as affording the opportunity for the creation of new residential neighborhoods.
3. In addition to the imperative to focus on the visual and commercial shortcomings of the City's most recognizable and visited sites (the Boardwalk and Pacific and Atlantic Avenues), the compelling needs of the City's residential neighborhoods must also be addressed, as there are many sections of the City that are, for various reasons, no longer readily inhabitable.
4. The experience of the last several years with respect to the coordination of the efforts of the City, CRDA, and DCA has been extremely positive and must continue to form the basis of any efforts to restart and recover the City's economic and social fabric.
5. In order to effectuate the desired result of attracting new economic foundations and developing attractive neighborhoods, an overriding vision by the State, in partnership with the City, will continue to be needed. The State will need to decide that Atlantic City's future is important enough to the State to require the investment of many dollars and much political capital in order to create the overriding vision that will be required to produce the desired results.
6. The State should consider the opportunities that may be created by new initiatives, including the legalization of recreational use marijuana, as potential sources of political and financial support for the efforts to restart and recover Atlantic City.

The subcommittee also recognized that there are important projects already underway in the City. Neighborhood redevelopment plans are currently underway by groups in four areas of the City: Inlet, Midtown, Ducktown, and Chelsea. Each of these efforts is currently sponsored by organizations such as Atlantic County Economic Development Authority, ACDEVCO, Atlantic Cape Community College, etc. and their planning designs include a focus on the appearances and utilizations of Atlantic Avenue in their respective sections of the City.

In addition, plans for refreshing Atlantic Avenue are currently underway and include anticipated project developments for AtlantiCare, DCO energy, and the Trump Plaza site, modernization and upgrading of street lighting and camera coverages, new and synchronized traffic signaling, creation of bicycle and pedestrian paths, reduction of traffic lanes from 4 to 2, a new median area, with trees, seating facilities, and raised medians.

### **i. Redevelop and Restructure the Boardwalk**

The subcommittee discussed what singular and critically important initiative could be recommended as a powerful weapon in the effort to create the reality of a broad-based recognition, throughout the State and indeed the nation that we are really serious about doing

what needs to be done in Atlantic City. The subcommittee recommends that initiative should be the rebuilding and redevelopment of the Boardwalk. The Boardwalk is, more than any other single feature, the symbol of Atlantic City to the world – it is truly iconic. It is currently in an advanced state of disrepair, and in several places could well collapse in the near future. If the meteorologists are correct in predicting future costal storms, there is also the possibility

**The Boardwalk is, more than any other single feature, the symbol of Atlantic City to the world – it is truly iconic.**

that one of those storms could wipe out the Boardwalk in its present condition, unless it has been rebuilt, with disastrous and wide-spread negative implications for everything that we want to do to restart and recover Atlantic City. The engineering for rebuilding the Boardwalk is familiar and has already been employed to a substantial degree when recent prior repairs were made. A commitment by the State and the City to rebuild the Boardwalk in the next 2-3 years would immediately shine a very bright spotlight on Atlantic City throughout the State and even the nation, with the resulting conviction in all quarters that “they are really ALL IN” in the commitment to bring Atlantic City back. Most significantly, such a widely-held belief would be a very powerful incentive to stimulate the interests that the Committee is looking to attract: new business opportunities, new housing, employment opportunities, etc.

### **ii. Refresh the Structures and Appearances along Pacific Avenue**

The task force recognizes a need to refresh the structures and appearances along Pacific Avenue. The subcommittee focused on the demolition of Trump Plaza and the opportunity presented for the creation of an open zone linking the Walk, the Boardwalk, and Central Pier, as a potential for the development.

The subcommittee noted that plans are currently approved for the reshaping of Atlantic Avenue and the creation of an environmentally and visually attractive central area between the driving lanes, and the same treatment can and should be afforded on Pacific Avenue, with the addition of attractive greenery and modern and creative lighting. The Inner Harbor in Baltimore might well serve as a model for what needs to be done for Pacific Avenue, and the planners for the City and the State would be well-advised to consult with the responsible leaders in Baltimore for advice with regard to how to approach the needs in Atlantic City. In summary, the subcommittee emphatically recommends that the development and execution of a plan aimed at refreshing the appearances and the usages of Pacific Avenue and the properties along the street would be both a powerful incentive for the attraction of new commercial enterprises to the City and a dramatic and effective manner of sending a very powerful message from the State about its commitment to the restart and recovery of Atlantic City.

The plans to do so are outlined as follows:

- Demolition of deteriorated buildings
- Greening of vacant lots and parking areas
- Modern and creative lighting and tree planting along the street
- Upgrading of intersections, including crosswalks, signage, and signaling
- Improved lighting and street maintenance, with sidewalk upgrades
- New Jitney shelters with modern lighting and designs
- Rehabilitation of store fronts currently in use
- Relocation of service yards and dumpsters
- Strict enforcement of current signage regulations
- New lighting and enhanced façade for Boardwalk Hall
- Incentive program for attracting new businesses, such as technology and internet companies
- Continued and expanded support for AtlantiCare's development and expansion

### **iii. Redesign and Repurpose Atlantic Avenue**

While being very encouraged by the fact and nature of the planning that has been done to date, the subcommittee noted the fundamental importance of continuing code enforcement, to ensure that the properties along Atlantic Avenue have the appearance and the functions that would be consistent with redesigning Atlantic Avenue to become a new face of the City.

The subcommittee was informed about the current state of the planning that has raised approximately \$9 million to date, and with respect to which several additional grant applications are currently in process. The Subcommittee noted the importance of achieving compliance with existing requirements related to the qualifications of all of those who would propose to become involved with the redevelopment of Atlantic Avenue, as well as the need for careful attention to the project timelines and budgetary restrictions that would be involved.

The subcommittee understands the critical importance of the need for continuing attention to the maintenance of the improvements that are contemplated for Atlantic Avenue, observing that in many instances in the past, in Atlantic City and in other places, new infrastructures have been allowed to grow old and tired in appearance and in function. The subcommittee suggests that those responsible for the funding of the required improvements also give consideration to the need for planning for the required maintenance that will preserve the appearance and the functionality of the new improvements.

In summary, the subcommittee emphatically recommends to the committee the same findings that were previously submitted with respect to Pacific Avenue: that the development and execution of a plan aimed at refreshing the appearances and the usages of Atlantic Avenue and the properties along the street would be both a powerful incentive for the attraction of new commercial enterprises to the City and a dramatic and effective manner of sending a very powerful message from the State about its commitment to the restart and recovery of Atlantic City.

If both main thoroughfares of the City were redesigned and carefully maintained with a focus on safety, appearance, and functionality, the perceptions of all residents, visitors, and businesses in the City would unquestionably be a very enthusiastic welcoming of the New Atlantic City.

## II. Workforce & Development

The *Workforce and Development* subcommittee focused on exploring ways to provide jobs and training opportunities to Atlantic City residents in both existing sectors of the economy, as well as looked at new sectors of the City economy.

The subcommittee realized that improving workforce challenges in Atlantic City will require closing significant communication gaps and eliminating siloed information. More detailed information is needed from employers about current and forecasted job openings, skill sets required, and the impacts of the pandemic. Similarly, updated information is needed from the labor pool regarding their concerns with respect to their readiness for employment opportunities and the impact of the pandemic. But more importantly, the information garnered from these groups needs to be transmitted in real time from those who have knowledge of the needs, which can best happen when there is one entity acting as the point-of-contact.

Separate from gaining a better understanding of the employer-employee ecosystem, the subcommittee discussed the need for diversifying the local economy. To that end, the members resolved to maintain open dialogue with the Economic Diversification Subcommittee so that workforce readiness for any new developing projects and/or industries might be explored. The Atlantic County Economic Alliance in 2015 had already surveyed prospects for the County for lessening its dependence on the hospitality/tourism and casino industry. Although the pandemic has disrupted and shaken many assumptions, many core considerations of that study remain. Linkages between the goals of the City and the County need to be identified and aligned, and strategies adopted to provide for a unified approach.

The City is on track to play a major role in the development of the offshore wind industry. There is increasing interest in developing/nurturing other industries related to the marine environment, more specifically referred to as the Blue Economy, as well as manufacturing. The Workforce and Development subcommittee also recommended this opportunity.

Among this subcommittee, there is unanimous sentiment and a sense of urgency for:

1. Diversifying the Atlantic City economy;
2. Up-skilling and re-skilling the current and displaced workforce;
3. Promoting home ownership; and
4. Creating opportunities, eliminating barriers and providing support systems for the chronically underemployed groups, which include challenged youth and previously incarcerated individuals.

The demographics that are of discussion are the long term unemployed who suffer from historical structural inequality, lack workforce ready skills, and need social and emotional support as well as displaced workers who have transferable skills, share desires and fears, resist career change, and need up-skilling or re-skilling.

## **i. Address the Digital Divide**

Addressing the digital divide helps both the long term unemployed and newly displaced workers. The pandemic has highlighted the imperative to develop 100% connectivity for a vibrant and healthy community. New Jersey is ranked number one in the country in broadband access, yet Atlantic City has troubling statistics about the connectivity of residents. Certain communities do not have access or are unable to access WiFi for a variety of reasons and data is third party sourced and not complete, based on census tracts. Although Atlantic City is host to the Continent 8 data center and revenues are up on internet gaming, the School District scrambled and struggled to provide Chromebooks and hotspots to students who needed these resources for distance learning. It is important to understand that the connectivity issue is not limited to the presence or lack thereof of physical infrastructure, but rather also includes social concerns.

While certain published data indicates the availability of service through major internet service providers such as Comcast, it is not clear exactly how many households are without coverage or have access to coverage but have not signed up for it. Affordability may be a predominant reason for individuals not purchasing service. For these reasons, a study should be done to produce current data detailing the current infrastructure, internet adoption and use, proposed solutions, project timelines and costs to ideally achieving 100% connectivity. It should also investigate innovative approaches to teaching computer literacy and enhancing adoption and usage. Finally, consideration should be given to the role expanded broadband coverage can have in creating new work-from-home opportunities for residents, particularly those who have challenges with transportation, need flexible arrangements because of other family responsibilities or personal limitations, or who have been permanently displaced by the reduction in workforce needs related to the hospitality/tourism/casino industries.

There is a need to address the digital divide in order to increase work-from-home and remote options as well as to increase access to health services, education, employment opportunities.

There is a need to address the digital divide in order to increase work-from-home and remote options as well as to increase access to health services, education, employment opportunities. Increased connectivity will also enhance business opportunities across the City. The subcommittee recognizes the interdependence of these factors as integral to providing viable solutions for workforce development.

## **ii. Atlantic City's City Council needs to act**

A Resolution from the Council should acknowledge the far-reaching consequences to the health, resilience, and vibrancy of the community when citizens are unable to access the most basic information in an increasingly digital world. The Resolution should establish support for the use of Cares Act funding and other sources of emergency relief and grants available for infrastructure upgrades, express or implied, to be used for the expansion of broadband access as well as for the adoption, training and use. A first priority should be understanding the needs through a comprehensive data collection process.



### **iii. A household survey should be completed**

This survey would be used to determine who has access, the type of access, devices, attitudes toward adoption, challenges for adoption, and the skill level for use. This study could then be used by a Broadband Committee, as discussed next, to develop policy initiatives. This survey could serve as the foundational tool for action and it would illuminate to policy makers what needs to be done and in what locations. The study will shed light on what locations need help and what kind of help, and the programming has to use this knowledge to its advantage.

### **iv. A Broadband Committee Should be Developed**

Having current data and detailed information regarding gaps, challenges, and needs will place the City in prime position to take advantage of any possible federal, State, or private foundation grants and programs aimed at closing the digital divide.

This committee would oversee the study on Wifi access among Atlantic City residents, as previously stated. This should comprise a broad group of stakeholders representing government, business, education, healthcare, and the library. The Broadband Committee should, among other things, explore grant opportunities from private foundations, public-private partnerships, or other donor sources to fund broadband accessibility, adoption and usage. Having current data and detailed information regarding gaps, challenges, and needs will place the City in prime position to take

advantage of any possible federal, State, or private foundation grants and programs aimed at closing the digital divide.

The Broadband Committee should explore grant opportunities from private foundations, public-private partnerships, or other donor sources to fund broadband accessibility, adoption and usage. Having current data and detailed information regarding gaps, challenges and needs will place the City in prime position to take advantage of any possible federal, state or private foundation grants and programs aimed at closing the digital divide.

### **v. There is a Need to Prioritize, Plan, and Budget**

Without a set of priorities or planning, tasks can become overwhelming. This recommendation is imperative to the health of Atlantic City's economy and job force. It is therefore of the utmost importance that the Broadband Committee develop a distinct plan early on as to have guidelines in place to ensure the overarching goal of 100% connectivity becomes a reality.

### **vi. Utilize federal and state grant programs as well as private foundation grants**

Budgeting for projects such as this can be inherently difficult. However, there is a number of existing programs and grants available to utilize. The New Jersey Department of Labor should consider specific targeted relief for Atlantic County to support the County Workforce Development Board's efforts to train and place workers displaced into remote work positions.

Remote work or working from home can offer an alternative career solution for those workers who are properly trained in entrepreneurial services and have the appropriate technology to support this new enterprise. Currently the New Jersey Department of Labor provides a bi-weekly list of all of the remote work jobs that have been posted on-line, but the opportunities are not accessible to Atlantic County residents. This opportunity to work from home could offer an appealing alternative to some of the nearly 14,500 members of the Atlantic City labor force who have filed an initial unemployment claim in the last eight months. While this opportunity will not work for everyone, remote work, or working on-line could be a viable solution for qualified Atlantic City residents.

The NJDOL could provide targeted funding for the development of a sustainable program combining entrepreneurial training, computer literacy and financial literacy, coupled with funding support for technical assistance with hardware, software and bandwidth to deliver effective services on behalf of vetted employers.

**vii. The Atlantic City Initiatives Project Office should re-convene the Jobs Council which was created in Year 1 of the Implementation Plan, with the objective of the Council gaining independent 501(c)(3) status**

The fundamental workforce development issues facing Atlantic City have not changed in the last year. Communication gaps, long term unemployment and reliance on a singular industry were characteristics present before the pandemic. At best, the pandemic has only increased the severity of the issues. The Implementation Plan following the Johnson report called for the creation of an Employment Council composed of stakeholders representing industry, workforce training and education sectors. The strategies outlined in the Implementation Plan include, among other things: assessing employer needs; developing a plan to address the needs; creating training and apprentice programs; establishing a jobs database; holding job fairs; and creating cradle-to-career opportunities for Atlantic City residents. These strategies address the communication issues identified by the subcommittee and remain a viable solution. The subcommittee notes that staff changes within the organizations leading the Jobs Council Initiative contributed to the discontinuation of meetings. A model to follow is the Newark Economic Development Agency for workforce development, housing, and economic development, or the New Orleans Business Alliance. This Council would be charged with the following responsibilities in order to try and free the City of the fundamental issues previously discussed:

- Assess employer needs
- Create a plan to address needs
- Create training and apprentice programs
- Establish a jobs database
- Hold job fairs
- Create cradle-to-career opportunities for Atlantic City residents

The Atlantic City Initiatives Project Office should reaffirm stakeholder interest in participating in the Jobs Council and re-constitute the membership.

The Atlantic City Initiatives Project Office should reaffirm stakeholder interest in participating in the Jobs Council and re-constitute the membership. Once convened, the Jobs Council should consider the strategies outlined in the Implementation Plan and develop a plan forward.

## **viii. Develop a database of pipeline economic development projects in Atlantic City**

This will shed light on how the City economy can continue to diversify, support industries, and address workforce needs. There needs to be a greater sense of working together in Atlantic City, as Jim Johnson makes clear in his report, and developing this database will allow for different agencies and organizations to share their projects and hopefully create a more balanced and comprehensive approach to the workforce development issues in the City.

## **ix. Develop and Promote the Blue Economy in Atlantic City**

The Economic Diversification subcommittee has considered the Blue Economy as a possible solution to lessening the area's dependence on the hospitality, tourism and casino industries.

The Economic Diversification subcommittee has considered the Blue Economy as a possible solution to lessening the area's dependence on the hospitality, tourism and casino industries. It proposes that there are nascent industries already existing, such as fishing, and new industries such as offshore wind, which make Atlantic City a prime site to promote the Blue Economy.

The Blue Economy framework, in its pure sense, is not a typical growth approach to development. The concept is meant to be dynamic and non-linear and aims to be zero waste, where local resources are being used and recycled for maximum benefit of the local resident population. It also is cognizant of potential negative consequences and seeks to minimize the negative impacts of any development. Because of the framework's underlying principles related to the social benefits flowing to the local population, the Blue Economy offers a viable solution to ensuring that Atlantic City progresses on the path of a shared prosperity as outlined by Jim Johnson, former Special Counsel to Governor Murphy, in his report "Atlantic City: Building a Foundation for a Shared Prosperity."

To further pursue the concept of growing the Blue Economy, the Atlantic City Initiatives Project Office is exploring creating a stakeholder group similar to its STEM Pathways group, but based more closely on the Department of Labor's Industry Partnerships (Next Generation) model. Members of the Working Group subcommittees have acknowledged that a substantial amount of research and education needs to occur in conjunction with the development of a well coordinated strategy.

In all of these endeavors to diversify the Atlantic City economy, it is also important to include re-building and supporting the entrepreneurial base that once made Atlantic City the bustling city that it was. Access to capital and technical assistance is critical to the development of this sector and should not be concentrated in certain parts of the city, but evenly spread across neighborhoods. Neighborhoods suffering more blight should be prioritized for commercial development and historically marginalized populations should be targeted for programs providing easier access to capital, business development training and on-going technical assistance. Building generational wealth is critical to reducing the cycle of dependence on public services and charitable support.

## **x. Leverage Support for Existing Job Training**

There are a host of existing job training programs in Atlantic City designed for residents to take part in to secure jobs for residents and address the issue of training gaps. Below are several job training programs that, if supported greatly, could have a significant impact on the economy and job force in Atlantic City.

- a.) Summer Employment of 200 Challenged Youth aged 14-18 recommended by ACPD, Parole and Probation Board, Judiciary. Pay rate \$15.00. Partnered with Vision 2000 to oversee cleanup of streets, parks and vacant lots. Participants also attend personal growth and development seminars once per week. 100% attendance rate. Plan going forward is to request funding from CRDA to continue Saturday and after school hours programming for this cohort.
- b.) Workforce training program for anyone interested with co-sponsorship of CRDA and the NJ Department of Labor. Train throughout winter months in environmental services, housekeeping and culinary operations. These workers would fill positions normally taken by J-1 international students. Ideally a stipend offered while training would greatly contribute to the success of the program.
- c.) Housing subsidies, down payment assistance, loan guarantees, low interest loans for police, firemen, teachers, casino workers.
- d.) NJ STEM Pathways Network – creating an Atlantic City cohort for the statewide initiative that seeks to build a K-16-to-workforce STEM pipeline. This unites industry partners with K-12 education institutions, higher education institutions, and non-profits in a common strategy for building a workforce with STEM skills. The first project will be to conduct a STEM asset map to identify strengths, weaknesses, gaps, challenges, facilities, talent, and resources that are needed to support new or existing industries. Interested industry partners include Ørsted, AC Electric, South Jersey Industries, Exelon and AtlantiCare.
- e.) CRDA - \$300k sponsorship of the AC Boys and Girls Club STEAM program
- f.) The Fresh Start Program re-entry program. \$600k grant supports a counselor on-site three days per week to assist individuals with re-entry and wraparound support social services.
- g.) Easing of State regulations for licenses and key employee registrations to permit individuals with certain prior criminal histories to be employed in casino industry.

# III. Economic Diversification

The *Economic Diversification* subcommittee focused on how to diversify and develop new sectors of the Atlantic City economy so as not to be as dependent on the gaming industry moving forward. In addition, attention was paid to small minority owned businesses and how to provide technical assistance to improve the continuity of operations.

The subcommittee discussed how Atlantic City must chart a path to economic revitalization with particular focus on workforce development. Workforce development efforts should focus on six targeted industries and three supporting industries. Despite obstacles, there are five projects that can support these industries while providing workforce development opportunities, as outlined in appendix 1.

Facing a decline in the casino industry over the long-term and the short-term impact of the Covid-19 crisis, Atlantic City finds itself again at a crossroads. Atlantic City must chart a path to economic revitalization. However, this path must meet three criteria:

1. Shift emphasis away from the gaming and casinos;
2. Address chronic intergenerational poverty; and,
3. Fully integrate Atlantic City into the regional economy to end Atlantic City remaining a “one-off” in policy-making.

## **i. Make Atlantic City a place where people want to live and work**

Atlantic City has an abundance of natural resources: clean and free beaches, bayfront properties, and over 30 parks; as well as cultural, historic, and institutional attractions such as the Boardwalk, the arts, and casinos. It has great restaurants, concerts, and public transportation. The commercial districts have excellent structure: wide sidewalks, mixed use buildings, high walkability, and surrounding residential. The neighborhoods, each with their own deep history and culture, are made up of committed and caring residents.

Leveraging the beach and waterfront locations to increase value will result in less tax burden on the neighborhood residents.

However, low wages of the residents (median household income is \$27,786), the low homeownership rate (26%), coupled with absentee landlords and ineffective enforcement of codes has resulted in hundreds of abandoned and eyesore properties which cast blight in the commercial districts, residential neighborhoods, and our highly traveled tourist areas. The blighted and substandard

properties on the beach block and along the bayfront are an anomaly in a coastal community and taking action to improve the aesthetics, use, and quality of these properties is one of our top recommendations. Leveraging the beach and waterfront locations to increase value will result in less tax burden on the neighborhood residents.

Additionally, increasing home ownership results in improved condition of properties, increased wealth for residents and increased community engagement. It also helps residents avoid displacement as property values rise due to gentrification.



Here are some important actions that need to occur:

- Identify and approve developers that have the capacity to rehab and rebuild, and convey to them City and CRDA owned vacant properties
- Enforce all City and CRDA codes (zoning, property maintenance, fire, building, excessive use of services, abandoned properties) on privately owned blighted properties, starting with high visibility areas and those negatively affecting neighborhood quality of life
- Direct City/County CDBG funds for rehab of high visibility repairs on low/mod income owner occupied housing
- Leverage the City's Abandoned Property Act to hold property owners accountable to maintain their vacant property
- When necessary, use the City's Abandoned Property Act to hold a special tax sale and/or spot blight eminent domain privately owned abandoned properties
- Acknowledging subsidies are necessary until the private market corrects, create financial, zoning and code incentives (such as streamline process/more frequent land use hearings, reduced escrow and fees, increased density, reduced parking requirements)
- Create incentives for short term rentals in Tourism District, specifically on beach blocks between California Avenue and the Inlet, displacing high crime and nuisance properties
- Provide incentives for police officers to become homeowners in the City, thereby increasing home ownership and public safety
- Convert Atlantic City renters into homebuyers using City, County and State home ownership incentives, plus employer incentives, plus grants (NRTC and/or CRDA), with the goal to ward off displacement as others move into City and drive value up
- Attract City teachers, municipal workers, and other professionals to live in the City
- Lower the tax rate
- As part of the overall tourism marketing strategy, include the following assets:
  - o Cultural diversity
  - o International restaurants
  - o Public art
  - o Waterfront properties and recreation
  - o Parks, Gardner's Basin, Absecon Lighthouse

## **ii. Improve Public Safety**

In addition to the crime that exists in the City, there are a multitude of factors that contribute to an unsafe feeling. These revolve around the hyper-concentration of people with social service needs – primarily in the Tourism District -- for which we are failing to find long-term solutions. Social service programs that exist in the City (but not other municipalities or counties) attract non-residents for clean needles, shelter, and food programs. Atlantic City has become the place for others to send their most vulnerable and the result has negatively impacted our tourism economy and added pressure to municipal services, particularly the police department and public works.

Here are some important actions that need to occur:

- Move high visibility social services out of the Tourism District
- Create wrap around service facility in appropriate location
- Create/promote one information system to reduce duplication of services and the sharing of information to work toward long-term treatment and solutions
- Leverage the City's Abandoned Property Act to hold property owners accountable to maintain their vacant property
- Increase foot and bicycle patrols
- Add second community policing shift
- Add cameras on Pacific Avenue
- Create networks of neighborhood education and engagement around crime and code issues

### **iii. Prioritize Economic Development**

A foundation and network of economic development efforts needs to serve both businesses looking to locate in Atlantic City, as well as existing businesses.

A foundation and network of economic development efforts needs to serve both businesses looking to locate in Atlantic City, as well as existing businesses. The first challenge for a business that wants to come into Atlantic City is “who is in charge?” Random calls to the Mayor’s Office, CRDA, Atlantic County Economic Alliance, and the business community result in an uncoordinated response and potential new businesses falling through the cracks. All the committee

members recognize the importance of working collaboratively and as a team to welcome new business by positively promoting the City, explaining the processes, and helping them connect with those that will support their efforts. Further, to make a good first impression and provide information and resources, an on-line presence attracting development should be created.

Moreover, the existing business community is frustrated and intimidated by the permit and approval process in the City. Navigating any city hall for permits and approvals is challenging, however, Atlantic City applicants also have to deal with Tourism District regulations, confusion regarding jurisdiction, the lack of information and applications on-line, customer service shortfalls, Federal Flood Hazard rules and State Environmental Regulations. The most time consuming and thus costly aspect is having to go to several different offices and the uncertainty of the process and timing of approvals. The cost of obtaining approvals and construction costs are high relative to the end value, resulting in the lack of new investment. In addition, there is no intentional or coordinated effort in Atlantic City to attract new businesses and industries.

Here are some important actions that need to occur:

- Hire full time experienced staff functioning out of the Mayor’s office to promote economic development and provide service to all prospective developers.
- Dedicate a Permanent Source of Funding for Economic Development Efforts

- Create a Concierge Service in City Hall
- Assist businesses with the permit and approval process
- Responsibilities include coordinating activities with all City, CRDA, and other State agencies; resolve challenges facing developers.
- Would serve as the primary point of contact between developers and government agencies
- Work with site locators, major developers, and NJEDA to promote Atlantic City and to facilitate new and diversified development
- Establish an Atlantic City Open for Business Welcome Committee
- Identify contact persons at the Mayor's Office/City, CRDA, Chamber of Commerce, and Economic Alliance. As needed, bring in contacts from the same industry, and neighborhood CDC members.
- All members block one set morning or afternoon per month.
- As individuals are contacted by potential new businesses, they reach out to the others to schedule a virtual or in person meeting to provide guidance, encouragement, and information on getting through permits and approvals. This also provides an opportunity for the group to help shape the business idea to be more successful, as the group knows the local conditions and market forces.
- Create a development friendly website with City and CRDA info

#### **iv. Train Atlantic City workforce for existing non-tourism job openings**

Continue to connect Atlantic City residents to jobs and job training targeted to in the areas of healthcare, education, utility work, tech, and other non-tourism sectors. This initiative is being researched and specific recommendations will be provided by the Workforce Development Committee of the Atlantic City Restart and Recovery Group. Training and education should be provided within the City.

#### **v. Grow the Blue Economy**

Atlantic City would benefit from a diversification based on the Blue Economy, which utilizes the City's biggest asset—the ocean.

Atlantic City would benefit from a diversification based on the Blue Economy, which utilizes the City's biggest asset—the ocean. The World Bank defines the Blue Economy as the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods and jobs, and ocean ecosystem health. The Blue Economy is subdivided into the following

categories: Renewable Energy, Climate Change, Fisheries, Tourism, Maritime Transport, and Waste Management.

Atlantic City has all the essential ingredients to lead the transformation to a Blue Economy in New Jersey. The City has been a leader in clean energy hosting New Jersey's first wind farm, solar on many public buildings, a fleet of CNG fueled jitneys, over 20 electric vehicle charging stations, a CNG fueling station at the City's public works complex and much more. In the next few years, by working with the NJBPU, the City hopes to host a large micro grid to serve the AtlantiCare Medical Center and other critical facilities. Atlantic City also continues to be a national leader in tourism. Atlantic City is known globally for its amenities to service visitors whether they are traveling for business or pleasure.

# IV. Public Health & Wellness

The *Public Health and Wellness* subcommittee's goal was to assess the behaviors of marginalized people (homeless veterans, ex-convicts, drug users, mentally ill, sex workers, domestic violence victims, etc.) in Atlantic City and monitor their overall health status to solve emerging and enduring community health problems (e.g., community health profile and health status) as well as to improve equality in health, reduce health risks, promote healthy lifestyles and settings, and respond to the underlying determinants of health.

For many years, the City of Atlantic City has been an attraction for marginalized populations because its actual/perceived resources and reputation for providing emergency housing, social services, public health, mental health, substance use and medical services for individuals finding themselves in some form of despair (i.e., jobless, homeless, addiction, mental or physical/chronic health problems, etc.).

Historically, the Atlantic City Department of Health and Human Services (AC HHS) has attempted to provide essential environmental health, vital statistics, public health and other social services via a shared services agreement with the Atlantic County Health Department. However, there remains a gap in (the provision of) critical public health resources and social services within the City of Atlantic City that is aimed at improving the quality of life through prevention and treatment of diseases including mental health, substance use and physical health. A decentralized and fragmented public health program makes it very difficult to manage the proper surveillance of cases and health indicators as well as develop effective prevention programs to help promote healthy behaviors. Although public health connects us all, the ability of AC HHS to promote healthy lifestyles, address diseases and injury prevention; detect, prevent and respond to infectious diseases is severely compromised.

Because of the host of issues present, the subcommittee brainstormed, identified and prioritized five (5) major Public Health Concerns or Areas of Focus. Each of the five areas has recommendations as follows. The committee created a chart that is extremely helpful, located in appendix 5.

## i. Homelessness

Chronic homelessness is a complex systemic problem and a top public health concern for the City of Atlantic City.

Chronic homelessness is a complex systemic problem and a top public health concern for the City of Atlantic City. Homeless people suffer from a broad range of acute and chronic illnesses which drive other complexities. Based on the 2020 Point-In-Time Count report, New Jersey has roughly 8,864 homeless; Atlantic County has an average

of 443 people who are experiencing homelessness each year with approximately 318 (71.8%) in Atlantic City. In addition, roughly 67% of the homeless persons in Atlantic City have some type of disability. The most common disabilities included mental health (serious mental illness), substance use (addiction), and chronic health conditions (AIDS). Current resources in Atlantic City are (1) Atlantic City Rescue Mission (Adults/Families), (2) Covenant House (Youths), (3) Jewish Family Services (JFS).

The following are the subcommittee's recommendations:

- Identify homeless “Hot Spots” and reasons for “Hot Spots”
- Identify short- term options/protocols to address “Code Blue” season
- Develop an SOP for Code Blue, to efficiently coordinate strategic resources.
- Target, assess and map existing AC Homeless Resources/Service Providers
- Draft an RFP for a short-term/transitional housing solution
- Establish a Mayor’s Council on the Homeless
- Initiate and engage the State of New Jersey on housing legislation to create viable communities for the southern region.

## **ii. Improving Maternal/Child Health and Reducing Infant Mortality in Atlantic City**

Maternal and child health are major issues for African Americans women and others in communities of color within the City of Atlantic City.

Maternal and child health are major issues for African Americans women and others in communities of color within the City of Atlantic City. Most significant is the growing concerns around Infant Mortality. The Infant Mortality rates among African American women in the State of New Jersey is 9.6/1,000; Atlantic County 14.5/1,000; Atlantic City 21.3/1,000 (NJSHAD, 2013-2017). Many of these deaths are

preventable. Current resources available in Atlantic City are (1) Division of Family Services, (2) Healthy Women Healthy Programs, (3) NJ Parent Link, (4) AtlantiCare, and (5) Birthing Center – Galloway.

The following are the subcommittee's recommendations:

- a.) Create an Early Pregnancy Outreach Program
  - This should target African American Mothers and others in Communities of Color and educate mothers on issues such as pre-natal vitamins, congenital defects, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), pregnancy complications/impediments to a normal pregnancy, premature labor delivery, infant accidents, placenta and umbilical cord complications, respiratory stress, bacterial sepsis, and neonatal hemorrhage, etc.
  - Community outreach activities should be in place and young women should be reached prior to pregnancy.
- b.) Develop a Remote Care Monitoring Program
  - This should be for Pregnant Mothers with a focus on hypertension, gestational diabetes, pre-term labor, tobacco/smoking cessation, alcohol, drug use, and other high risks pregnancy concerns
- c.) Create a city/county application for expecting mothers for self-monitoring/empowerment



- d.) Develop a Reliance Medical Group Designated Media Campaign
  - There should be a focus on the OB/GYN and the Adult Medicine Office in Atlantic City
- e.) Develop a Grant Program aimed specifically for Doula Training.
  - This should offer Postpartum Certification and empower women on the childbirth continuum especially African American women and others in communities of color within the City of Atlantic City

### iii. Addressing Mental Health among Marginalized Populations in Atlantic City

Mental Health is one of the primary issues affecting at-risk populations, especially the homeless, in the City of Atlantic City. According to the National Institute of Health, the most common mental health illness antecedent to homelessness is severe mental illness (such as schizophrenia).

These vulnerable populations may also suffer from other mental health conditions such as bipolar and depression (Harvard Medical School, 2014). As the mentally ill person's disability breaks down, their ability to cope with their surroundings or the ability of others around them to cope with their behavior, becomes severely strained, leading to chronic homelessness due to an absence of appropriate therapeutic interventions and supportive alternative housing arrangements (NAP, 2020). The subcommittee identified several mental health treatment facilities in Atlantic City (AtlantiCare Behavioral, Destination Hope, Behavioral Health Centers of America, Atlantic City Rescue Mission, Enlightened Solutions Detox, and National Alliance on Mental Health Helpline [NAMI]).

There are an abundance of resources in Atlantic City, and if we map out existing resources on mental illness, homelessness, as well as in other sectors such as employment, job force training, and other social services there will be long-lasting positive effects.

It is noticeable that many of these subcommittees focus on recommendations that focus on the City working together. This is of paramount importance, and something that Jim Johnson made clear in his report as necessary. There are an abundance of resources in Atlantic City, and if we map out existing resources on mental illness, homelessness, as well as in other sectors such as employment, job force training, and other social services there will be long-lasting positive effects. If all of these recommendations are taken seriously and implemented, there will be a more comprehensive approach to helping all residents of Atlantic City.

The following are the subcommittee's recommendations:

- a.) Map Existing Resources
- b.) Establish Partnerships and Improve Coordination of Existing Resources
- c.) Identify Gaps in Resources needed by the At-Risk or Most Vulnerable Populations

#### **iv. Addressing Substance Use (to include needle sharing) among Marginalized Populations in Atlantic City**

Substance use (prescription/illicit/injection drugs) and addiction are some of the most dangerous and life threatening challenges faced by at-risk persons on the streets in the City of Atlantic City. There are several behavioral health treatment facilities that treat persons with various addictions in Atlantic City (AtlantiCare Behavioral, Destination Hope, Behavioral Health Centers of America, Atlantic City Rescue Mission, Enlightened Solutions Detox, and National Alliance on Mental Health Helpline).

The following are the subcommittee's recommendations:

- a.) Map existing resources
- b.) Establish partnerships and improve coordination of existing services
- c.) Identify gaps in resources needed by the "at-risk" or "most vulnerable" populations

#### **v. Improving Nutrition, Obesity and Diabetes among Marginalized Populations in Atlantic City**

The lack of programs to address the Food Desert, proper nutrition, diet, and physical activity among at-risk populations are the leading causes of overweight, obesity, diabetes and end-stage renal diseases in the City of Atlantic City.

The following are the subcommittee's recommendations:

- a.) Identify the extent of the problem.
- b.) Determine ways to address and eliminate the food desert.
- c.) Construct Health Education Program to conduct community outreach and teach healthy eating on a budget, diet and physical activities that will help to improve overall health.

# V. Community Outreach

The *Community Outreach* subcommittee focused on initiatives on Education/youth, Health & Wellness, Public Safety, Housing, Public Safety, Neighborhood Quality of Life as well as cultural, Arts & Community Events. The subcommittee review in health & Wellness included including maternal and prenatal/infant healthcare, addiction recovery, mental health). In Public Safety they noted the importance of working with law enforcement to improve community relations that are based upon mutual respect and trust (mobile policing, community policing).

The youth of Atlantic City are responsible for the future and the subcommittee recognized the importance of providing the youth with the tools they need to be successful, productive members of society.

The youth of Atlantic City are responsible for the future and the subcommittee recognized the importance of providing the youth with the tools they need to be successful, productive members of society. Some of the youth in this City are not fortunate enough to be provided with these tools at home and have to deal with unfortunate circumstances in their everyday lives. The programs we provide are critical to their development and we should not underscore the importance of youth activities and programs in all sectors.

Upon working together, the group has recognized a great need to push out the awareness of existing programs. In most of the categories focused upon, great resources are already available but are underutilized as the people of Atlantic City are not aware of these resources. There are also many programs that do great work that could be expanded to reach a greater number of residents. Due to the extensiveness of the programs in Atlantic City, the working group found it proactive to outline the existing programs that are underutilized, the existing programs in need of expansion, and the areas that are not covered by the previous two groups but are in need.

The following are the subcommittee's recommendations:

## **i. Make Residents More Aware of the Current Programs in Atlantic City**

### **a.) Education**

- Out of school youth – need to be aware of GED programs.
  - Parent centers are a good resource.
- Internet and connectivity affordability is a road block for education. Programs are in place to help this issue but many are unaware.

### **b.) Health and Wellness**

- There is a need for more outreach on services that are available including health services available regardless of ability to pay.

### **c.) Addiction and Substance Use Disorder (SUD)**

- Existing Programs that are in place are not widely shared. There needs to be a better effort to make folks aware. AtlantiCare / Volunteers of America are helping with services.

### **d.) Homelessness**

- Jewish Family Services, CRDA & Volunteers of America are resources currently helping this population.
- Federal grant is pending that will allow agencies to work side-by-side with at-risk population.

### **e.) Housing**

- We need to explore existing programs for Homeless prevention programs (rental / mortgage assistance, energy assistance programs, etc.)
  - Need to further explore existing or pending programs (CRDA mortgage programs / City and employer programs)
  - CRDA program looking to bring zero interest mortgages for City workers (fire/ police/ teachers/ Hard Rock employees) – most live in AC
- NJHMFA New home buyers' program offering up to \$10K.
- Chelsea Development Corp has held housing open houses for employees of casinos, AtlantiCare, SJ Gas.
- Energy insecurities is a major issue for AC residents and even greater with the Covid crisis.
- Residents are significantly falling behind on utility payments.
  - There are energy assistance programs, but many are not aware, and need more outreach.
  - Gaps in qualification for programs will also need to be addressed.

### **f.) Youth Programs**

- There are many programs but not enough awareness

## **ii. Expand Certain Existing Programs to Reach and Help More Atlantic City Residents**

### **a.) Education**

- Boys & girls club – 30 students provided training and offered jobs.
- There is a need to make the Public Library accessible and inviting for children and parents.
- Published Ratings for AC Schools and programs offered at our schools are an improved part in retaining and attracting new residents. AC Schools need improvements to raise the bar on ratings and available programs.
  - Need programs beyond STEM, such as arts and Music.
  - Parents as Teachers programs already in AC schools and effective.
  - Parent educators that speak the dominant language and are reflective of the community.

## **b.) Public Safety**

- There are currently three dedicated police officers that deal directly with SUD/homelessness. Good program that we may want to expand and support.
  - Improve community relations and engagement.
  - Citizen Review Board.
  - Body Cameras for all officers.
  - Early warning system to detect and head-off potential issues through administrative review.
  - NCRO Program
  - Police force should reflect the community (progress has been made in increasing minority representation).

## **c.) Youth Programs**

- Youth Work Program a good model program.
  - 200 youth (limited due to funding) – 14 to 17 (team leaders are young adults) with a focus at risk youth. Program has workshops in addition to work experience.
- Police explorers - Can this program be expanded?
- City had summer recreation programs. It would be good to bring that back these programs.

## **iii. Build A Community Collaboration Database**

Due to the great deal of organizations and needs in Atlantic City, a system needs to be in place to organize all of the services and citizen-led efforts. This is of paramount importance as a systematic approach in which the entire City works together is the key to long term success. There are an array of benefits that this effort would catalyze.

The purpose of this community collaboration database would be to build on and expand existing community strengths, facilitate community involvement, generate a shared awareness and understanding of community assets, increase capacity within communities, and road map to link residents to needed services and support.

Sector Specific Benefits would include:

1. Healthcare – as a referral tool to foster healthier communities (NOWPOW);
2. Education – to support student development and wraparound services (NCSET);
3. Government – help manage resources, community development, and planning;
4. Community – help community groups and organizations to plan and improve collaboration.

The starting point of this effort would be securing anchor institution(s) as “Lead Identify” stakeholders (such as Stockton University, Atlantic Cape College, CRDA, AtlantiCare, SJ Gas and or a mayor established business such as casinos). An anchor institution (or group of anchor institution) should work in partnership with key stakeholders such as other anchor institutions, neighborhood associations, non-profits, including community, cultural and arts organizations. There is also a need to start by determining the scope of work, identifying resources that can support this work, and determining funding needed.



There are many citizen-led efforts at community engagement in Atlantic City that operate in isolation. One of Atlantic City's anchor institutions should work with the civic groups to build a database of resources, events and opportunities like <http://collaborationtrenton.com/>. Buy-in from one or more anchor institutions is required to make this a reality. Dedicated resources are needed to succeed. There needs to be an open platform to allow for community updating and support.

The subcommittee recognizes that working together is an integral part of success, and a concept that Atlantic City has struggles with. Other subcommittees, such as the Workforce Development, have highlighted this need and created recommendations based upon this. We, too, are advocating for a database but the community outreach recommendation will be for a community collaboration database. If these two databases were created, they could work effectively in harmony with each other as they accomplish different short-term goals but with similar long-term goals. The community outreach database could identify citizen-led efforts and services to support education, health, and community development while the workforce development database could identify jobforce-related efforts. Together, they could ensure City members have access to all available resources in all sectors.

#### **iv. Focus on Creating New Programs in these Areas Which are Currently in Need of Assistance and Programming**

##### **a.) Education and Youth**

- Social and emotional programs needed for parents & students upon returning from Covid closures.
- Internships for HS students (need partners)
  - Vision 2000 – 200 jobs for youth with AC public works was a good start.
  - More outreach needed for businesses to become part of these programs.
  - 8-week internship with local companies – with finish product at the end, focus on STEM.

##### **b.) Housing**

- More middle-income housing is needed to draw more people to the City
- There may be a need for more low-income housing. However, we already have a good share: We need to balance the tax burden – need real estate that increase tax base.

##### **c.) Neighborhood Quality of Life**

- Need to do a better job at keeping the streets clean.
- Explore programs to address repairs and beautification.
- Public works overworked due to irresponsible visitors / too much trash in the boardwalk and surrounding areas.
- Volunteers explore for cleaning – utilize youth.
- Street repairs need to be addressed timely.
- Advocate for more public work resources.
- More community / neighborhood events.
- Playgrounds and areas for exercise.
  - Upkeep of the playgrounds.
  - Community engagement around upkeep

#### **d.) Public Safety**

- Need to increase the perception of the City as a safe place to visit, work and live
  - Need to build confidence that the Boardwalk is safe especially at night
  - Enforcement of 10 p.m. closing of beach/parks (seawall)
  - Need more police officers (adds to safety)

#### **e.) Health and Wellness**

- Mental health is viewed as a big need and one that go hand in hand with improved quality of life.

#### **f.) Youth Programs**

- Transportation is a need for some of your youth to get to programs.
- More recreational programs needed (organized sports).
  - A good model program is Stay Hungry Basketball Program in Venice Park which is working very well and has great participation including girl teams.
- More sports fields needed. Soccer fields are heavily used.
  - Field potential at Maryland Avenue and Brigantine Boulevard (not used)
- Need a place (website) for parents to get information on programs their children can join.
  - Website has been done but not kept.
  - Need funding to have dedicated resources.
- Gang intervention and prevention- work, sports are important components, but other intervention programs are needed (AtlantiCare applied for a grant for gang intervention).
- New sports programs need to be explored (What is already being offered?)
- Extracurricular programs at the schools are lacking. Should explore what can be done to restore.

#### **g.) Cultural, Arts & Community Events**

- Need to foster our rich cultural heritage in our City.
- Some organizations are doing events (Latino Festival, Chinese New Year, India Kumbh Mela, etc.) but there needs to be coordination to promote these events. More funding and support are important to help elevate our cultural events.
- More city-wide events that attract visitors to our City and position the city as a cultural destination.

# Appendix I: Joseph Ingemi of Atlantic County Alliance's Focus Plan

## Six Targeted Industries

There are six targeted industries on which Atlantic City should focus in order to ensure that its residents have access to the high-paying jobs and careers that these industries offer. Not every industry listed will locate in Atlantic City. However, as noted sustainable economic development is a regional effort. It will be the responsibility of decision-makers to develop policies that allow Atlantic City residents to gain access to these jobs, both in terms of logistics and readiness

### • Advanced Manufacturing

Advanced manufacturing refers to manufacturing processes that involved the use of technology and tools to design and fabricate products. New Jersey's economic development efforts have placed a big emphasis on expanding advanced manufacturing in the state. Manufacturing offers a wide-range of positions to include but not limited to:

- Machine operators;
- Technicians;
- Tooling experts, machinists; and,
- Engineers.

Atlantic County is the home to many small manufacturing firms. Many of these firms were having difficulty finding employees prior to Covid.

In-progress initiatives:

- Atlantic Cape Community College (ACCC) offers an associate's degree in engineering.
- Atlantic City High School (ACHS) offers a textile manufacturing curriculum.
- Atlantic County Institute of Technology (ACIT) offers a comprehensive manufacturing and engineering curriculum coupled with internships.
- Atlantic County Workforce Development Board (WDB) in partnership with the Atlantic County Economic Alliance (ACEA) has created the Manufacturing and Engineering (MEF) Forum to conduct requirements analysis, especially in terms of training, with manufacturing stakeholders.
- Carpenters Union has partnered with ACHS for apprenticeships.

Proposed:

- Our Lady Star of the Seas (OLSS) is planning to create an on-campus makerspace for the community. This facility will provide access to 3-D printers and laser cutters for k-8 education, adult training, use by entrepreneurs, and service to other small businesses. This space will familiarize stakeholders with manufacturing processes.
- WDB is developing a “champions” program. This program will provide a company or companies within an industry, such as advanced manufacturing, consulting support to integrate state on-the-job training and apprenticeship programs in the design of company-level training.
- WDB is working with NJ EDA to provide students and guidance counselors visits to manufacturing firms to learn more about the nature of the work and opportunities.

## • Aviation/Aerospace

Aviation and aerospace has the potential to be Atlantic County’s lead industry. Atlantic City International Airport (ACY), the National Aviation Research and Technology Park (NARTP), and the FAA Hughes Technical Center (Tech Center) create an aviation cluster that forms the nucleus of the much larger aviation triangle with the Cape May County Drone Testing Center and Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst (JBMDL). This industry includes but is not limited to the following jobs:

- Airplane mechanics;
- Airline employees;
- Drone operators;
- Engineers;
- Researchers; and,
- Logistics personnel.

In-progress initiatives:

- ACCC offers an associate’s degree in aviation that includes the ability to receive a pilot’s license.
- ACCC, ACIT, and ACHS offer drone classes and certifications.
- ACEA is working with the OLSS and Atlantic City Boys and Girls Club (ACBGC) to design and implement a drone and aviation curriculum for grades K-8.
- ACIT has expanded its aviation academy to include the Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (ERAU) curriculum.

Proposed:

- ACCC integrates its aviation, hospitality, and safety programs to create a flight attendants academy.
- District level high schools to include ACHS adopt ERAU curriculum.
- WDB and the ACEA are working to develop the Drone Conservation Corps (DCC). This organization, modeled after FDR’s Civilian Conservation Corps, would provide experience to individuals from high school age to adults in the operation of drones in conducting environmental studies.
- WDB is developing a “champions” program. This program will provide a company or companies within an industry, such as aviation, consulting support to integrate state on-the-job training and apprenticeship programs in the design of company-level training.

## • Life Sciences

Life sciences includes a variety of fields built around biochemistry. Agriculture, pharmaceuticals, and healthcare tend to be those fields most associated with life sciences in New Jersey and Atlantic County. However, there are three related fields that offer growth opportunities, especially for Atlantic City:

**Aquaculture:** Fisheries are a hidden industry in Atlantic City. Nationally, there is both a demand for freshly caught seafood products coupled with a trend for more environmentally sustainable practices. This creates an opportunity for growth within Atlantic City.

**Marine Research & Development:** The ocean is Atlantic City's biggest asset. Atlantic City can serve as a center for ocean research, climate change, and environmental science. Atlantic City in conjunction with institutions such as Stockton University can develop and implement best practices and the use of technology for marine conservation and advancement of the "Blue Economy".[1]

**Veterinary medicine:** The United States is critically short veterinary practitioners. Veterinarians and veterinarian technicians are key workers in maintaining public health. They provide healthcare to companion animals, thus, preventing the spread of zoonotic disease. They also play a key role in protecting our food chain and in conservation.

In-Progress:

- ACEA is working with the Ag Board and the Ducktown Revitalization Corporation to bring a Reading Terminal Market-type entity to Atlantic City. This entity would integrate Atlantic City with regional agricultural supply chains and provide training for community gardening groups.
- ACEA is working with the Atlantic County 4-H to create a county-wide marine science club. This club will be both virtual and live. It will utilize Rutgers online curriculum to learn more about oceans and watersheds. Additionally, the Mullica River and the Greater Egg Harbor Watershed Ambassadors will provide learning projects for participants.
- WDB is working with the Atlantic City Aquarium and the Atlantic County Agricultural Board (Ag Board) to allow the Rutgers Master Gardener to maintain the grounds at Gardener's Basin and provide training and certification for individuals that desire a career in landscaping.

Proposed:

- ACEA and WDB is working to revitalize the Atlantic City Aquarium to transform it into a learning institution. Appendix I provides the educational plan. Appendix II provides the overall plan to include follow-up notes.
- ACEA is working to bring the CASE curriculum to area high schools. The CASE curriculum is a USDA-supported life science-intensive curriculum for high school students. Rutgers assists in the delivery of this curriculum in New Jersey.
- ACEA is working to expand marine science curriculum in high schools.

## • **Advanced Destination**

Atlantic City is still a resort. However, traditional casino gaming faces competition from other states as well as a lack of interest by millennials. Millennials seek experiences different than previous generations. Two areas that provide experiences beyond casino gambling include:

**E-gaming:** E-gaming is the elevation of multi-player video games into the realm of sporting events. E-gaming is a global phenomenon. It not only creates a demand for players but also creates a demand for tournament venues and IT support. Atlantic Cape Community College is expanding program options to include E-sports with concentrations in game design and development, as well as E-sports management. In the future, there may be a role for wagering on e-gaming events.

**Farm-to-Table:** There is a national trend towards awareness of food sources that is driving farm-to-table dining options. The juxtaposition of South Jersey farming with Atlantic City as a destination makes farm-to-table a realistic option for Atlantic City dining. Atlantic City Cape Community College offers courses involving Farm to Table.

In-Progress:

- ACBGC is working with e-gaming experts to create a curriculum that teaches technology skills through e-gaming.
- ACEA brought Continent to support e-gaming tournaments in Atlantic City.
- ACEA works with e-gaming experts to find innovative ways to make Atlantic City a center for e-gaming.
- ACEA is working with the Ag Board and a neighborhood revitalization corporation to bring a Reading Terminal Market-type entity to Atlantic City. This entity would integrate Atlantic City with regional agricultural supply chains and provide training for community gardening groups.

Proposed:

- NJ EDA and e-gaming experts are exploring the possibility of wagering on e-games.
- Three Supporting Industries
- Targeted industries will create demand for supporting industries. The targeted industries listed above as well a generalized economic growth will drive the following industries:

## • **IT Support/Cybersecurity**

All industries are becoming digital, especially, the targeted industries in Atlantic County. This trend will create higher demand for IT workers. Additionally, as industries become more digital, they become vulnerable to cyber-attacks and thus, create demands for cybersecurity workers. Currently, Atlantic Cape Community College offers a variety of IT Support, Administration and Cybersecurity courses through their workforce development department. The increased demand will drive the need for the following jobs:

- Cybersecurity analysts;
- Cybersecurity engineers;
- Developers;
- IT Auditors;
- Project Managers; and,
- System administrators.



In-progress:

- ACBGC is implementing a comprehensive STEM program to include information technology.

Proposed:

- The makerspace at OLSS includes a small business cybersecurity clinic. This clinic would provide cybersecurity to small businesses in the community and thus, allow them to safely expand their digital footprint. Additionally, it can be used as a source of internships to train cybersecurity professionals. This concept was outlined in the thought paper found in Appendix III.[2] More importantly, the Solarium Commission ([www.solarium.gov](http://www.solarium.gov)), an entity to create a strategy for the US Government in the realm of cybersecurity recommend Government in the realm of cybersecurity recommended the creation of small business cybersecurity clinics.

**Logistics:** The under-utilization of ACY coupled with an increased use of online retail nationally creates the potential for Atlantic County to be a hub for logistics. Increasing logistics operations would create demand for:

- Planners;
- Truck drivers; and,
- Warehouse workers.

In-progress:

- ACEA continues to work with SJTA to make the necessary infrastructure improvements to ACY to further facilitate air cargo.

**Utilities:** Economic growth drives demand for utilities. Of particular note in the utility industry is off-shore wind. New Jersey is located in an area that is optimal for off-shore wind turbines. This industry will create demand for the following jobs:

- Operators;
- Millwrights; and
- Engineers.

In-progress:

- ACEA continue to work with Ørsted to ensure that their workforce requirement and supply chain needs are met.
- Carpenters Union has partnered with ACHS for apprenticeships.
- WDB continues to coordinate line worker training at the Atlantic County training facility with the IBEW.

Proposed:

- WDB is exploring ways to integrate drone use into line worker training.

## **Four Obstacles:**

- Despite the potential for Atlantic City to share in the benefits that come with the listed industries, the following four obstacles stand in the way:

**Awareness:** There is a general lack of awareness of the programs in existence that provide workforce support both by constituents and social services organizations.

## **Career Counseling:**

- Within programs, there is a deficit of guidance. Participants are not informed of opportunities. Additionally, there is not the necessary follow-up past the participation in a given program.
- Upon program completion, individuals are left to themselves to determine how to apply the skills or certifications gained. Relationships between programs and providers must be established.

**Internet Access:** The Covid crisis revealed the digital divide that exists nationally. In Atlantic County, the issue is economic rather than technological. The WDB is working with civic organizations to utilize the Comcast Internet Essentials program to deliver affordable high-speed internet to qualified individuals and families. Appendix IV provides a description of this proposal.

**Transportation:** There is a lack of transportation between the mainland and Absecon Island. This has created a culture of isolation in Atlantic City and may prevent Atlantic City residents the ability to take advantage of opportunities throughout South Jersey.

**Five Priority Projects:** This committee should focus on tangible projects in Atlantic City, utilizing existing assets, that support listed industries and initiatives. These projects include the following:

- Aquarium Revitalization;
- Drone Conservation Corp;
- Flight Attendant Academy; and
- Veterinary Technician Program; and,
- Makerspace with small business cyber-security clinic.

**Conclusion:** This economic diversification sub-committee holds great promise. By focusing on specific projects that provide workforce development opportunities and support targeted and supporting industries, Atlantic City will be positioned to benefit. However, of equal importance is managing the expectations and addressing obstacles to progress.

# Appendix II: Developing Marine Science and Technology Industry

## Overview

This document outlines the educational component for developing Atlantic County (NJ)'s marine science and technology (MST) industry with Atlantic City, and specifically, the Atlantic City Aquarium, as the core.

## Background

- Atlantic County has committed to diversifying its economy away from strictly tourism and gambling to more advanced industries based on inherent strengths. This diversification includes aviation, advanced manufacturing, and agricultural technology. These high-tech industries will spur the development of infrastructure and human capital that coupled with the county's proximity to the ocean create the opportunity to develop marine sciences and technology.
- Such an industry would be ideal for Atlantic City. The city needs to move away from its sole reliance on the casino industry. MST could provide the needed diversification along with investment and high-paying jobs.
- To begin the transition, initiatives are required that raise awareness of MST and begin the process of developing the required workforce skills.

## Solution

The solution for raising MST awareness and developing the required workforce skills consists of a 5-part educational outreach plan.

### I. Environmental Education Outreach

- Environmental education outreach refers to a partnership between both the Mullica River Watershed and the Greater Egg Harbor Watershed Ambassador Programs and the Atlantic City Aquarium. The ambassadors can utilize the aquarium as a teaching venue for students and youth groups and to conduct online sessions. The ambassadors can also use the aquarium to facilitate workshops for green infrastructure projects such as rain barrels. Additionally, some property outside the aquarium could be set aside as special purpose learning gardens such as a pollinator garden or a rain garden. As the program matures, an area of the aquarium can be set aside as a classroom with smart technology, audio-visual equipment, and a permanent watershed model.

## **II. Expanding School District Curriculum**

- To build interest, MST should be introduced to primary and secondary school curricula. The New Jersey Marine Education Association ( <https://njmarineed.wildapricot.org/>) assists with this goal. The association can share best practices, recommendations for courses, and teacher training. Introductory meetings should be scheduled between Atlantic County public and private schools and the association to create a course of action for expanding MST offerings.

## **III. Landscape and Design Training**

- The Atlantic City Aquarium sits on several acres of under-utilized. This land could be used for career development purposes. Specifically, the Rutgers Master Gardener program can be given oversight of the gardens. In turn, the Master Gardener can train and certify individuals, to include displaced workers, as landscapers.

## **IV. Marine Technology Challenges**

- Educational outreach should include non-classroom activities. Underwater robotics competitions like the Seaperch competition (<https://www.seaperch.org/>) offer such learning opportunities.
- Atlantic County schools and youth groups should be encouraged to take part in these competitions. The Atlantic City Aquarium can serve as an awards venue.

## **V. Long-Term Initiatives**

- As the educational outreach becomes established, more initiatives can be taken. These include the following:
  - o Aquarium Volunteer Program
  - o The Atlantic City aquarium can implement a volunteer program for students, youth, and adults that allows for training and certification in careers related to marine science and aquarium maintenance.

## **Drone Conservation Corps (DCC)**

The DCC was outlined in the report, *Increasing Drone Utilization in Atlantic County*. In summary, the DCC would provide internships, co-ops, and entry level jobs for individuals to build experience as drone operators. The DCC would focus on habitat surveys and other environmental projects in partnership with federal, state, and county agencies along with non-profits.

Next Steps - The following steps should be taken:

- Coordinate a meeting with Atlantic City Aquarium Director to begin educational outreach programs and garden initiative.
- Coordinate a meeting to include NJ Marine Education Association, local Seaperch representatives, county public and private school administrators, and youth groups to discuss expanding marine science curricula and holding an underwater robotics competition.
- Develop plans for other aspects of aquarium-centric economic development to include:
  - o Revitalization of the Atlantic City Aquarium itself to focus on local and sustainable exhibits such as: the watershed and Pinelands, local fisheries, and alternative energy.
- Creation of Marine Science and Technology Innovation Center to encourage investment in the use of technology such as robotics, sensors, artificial intelligence, and data analytics to enhance marine-based activity. The center could include a testing facility, business incubators, accelerators, and a training component.

# Appendix III

Job Level	Skills and Certifications
Pre-requisites	High School Diploma/GED: High School-level biology, chemistry, and math
Field Technician	On-the-Job Training, boating and water safety
Field Leader/Environmental Engineer	Bachelor's/Master's degree: life sciences, environmental sciences, or environmental engineering
Researcher/Scientist	Master's/PhD: marine sciences

*Blue Carbon Jobs Chart*

Job Level	Skills and Certifications
Pre-requisites	High School Diploma/GED: High School-level biology, chemistry, and math
Fisherman	On-the-Job Training/Apprenticeship, boating and water safety. commercial fisherman's license
Boat Captain	Captain's license, business/management training
Researcher/Scientist/Engineer	Bachelor's/Master's/PhD: marine science, environmental engineering

*Fisheries Job Chart*



Job Level	Skills and Certifications
Pre-requisites	High School Diploma/GED: High School-level biology, chemistry, physics, and math
Installation and maintenance	On-the-Job training, apprenticeship, carpentry, plumbing, electrical, HVAC repair
Engineer	Bachelor's/Master's degree: engineering (civil, electrical, environmental, industrial, or mechanical)

*Waste Management Jobs Chart*

Job Level	Skills and Certifications
Pre-requisites	High School Diploma/GED: High School-level coding
Operator	On-the-job training, apprenticeship, drone license, photography, mission planning, coding
Maintenance	On-the job training, apprentice ship, coding, mechanics certification
Engineer	Bachelor's/Master's degree: engineering (electrical, mechanical), computer science

*Marine-based drone jobs chart*

Job Level	Skills and Certifications
Pre-requisites	High School Diploma/GED: mathematics
Field Technician	Bachelor's degree: data science, computer science, mathematics
Field Leader/Environmental Engineer	Master's/PhD: mathematics, data science, computer science

*Data analytics jobs chart*

# Appendix IV: Economic Diversification Working Group's Ideas for the Blue Economy

## Renewable Energy

Atlantic City has already attracted renewable energy companies. Off-shore wind companies are planning to build wind turbines off the shore of Atlantic City.

These gains should be consolidated by the State of New Jersey locating the Wind Institute in Atlantic City. The Wind Institute will drive research and development and provide worker training for the wind industry.

Based on the goals and criteria set forth in the Wind Council Report, as well as the State's efforts and resources committed to date to diversify the economy, Atlantic City is the ideal location for the WIND Institute. It is important that the WIND Institute be in one location to have the desired impact.

The Report states that the WIND Institute should be located near current or planned offshore wind activities and this is one reason Atlantic City is the logical choice to host the Institute. Atlantic City has the largest planned offshore wind project in the US - Ocean Wind - 15 miles off our coast. Furthermore, multiple lease areas off New Jersey's coast will support future offshore wind projects. Orsted's Garden State lease area is located off the coast of Cape May County and Atlantic Shore's lease area abuts Ocean Wind.

Both Ocean Wind and Atlantic Shores have located offices in Atlantic City and Ocean Wind has received approval from the City's Planning Board to locate their Operations & Maintenance Center in the City.

Available property means the City also has space to grow to accommodate changing workforce development needs. Atlantic Cape Community College, with its proven track record, stands ready to work with other local providers to meet the workforce development needs of the Blue Economy. In addition, the City has world class facilities, including a convention center, to offer seminars and conferences on offshore wind and workforce development.

Stockton University and Atlantic Cape Community College are anchor institutions in the City of Atlantic City that provide offshore wind research and workforce development services. Stockton has already partnered with both Ocean Wind and Atlantic Shores on research projects and these partnerships are only expected to grow.

The City quest to host the WIND Institute was leveraged in 2018 when the New Jersey Economic Development Authority awarded a grant to the City to support a feasibility study to locate the Coastal Resiliency Institute in Atlantic City. This study provided strong support for not only locating the WIND Institute in Atlantic City, but more all-encompassing targeting the Blue Economy to our ocean resources for economic growth and diversification and improved livelihoods and jobs.

By locating the WIND Institute and all its facets in Atlantic City, the City will have the critical mass necessary to bring about profound and lasting change and lead the Blue Economy transformation that will diversity our City and State economy.

In addition, Atlantic City would benefit in a variety of ways by investing in more solar energy by retrofitting public buildings and affordable housing developments. This would reduce the City's carbon footprint, create jobs, and cut costs. Casino hotels, with flat roofs and high energy use also provide great opportunity to advance the industry and brand Atlantic City as green.

Finally, Atlantic City should invest in electric car charging stations located throughout the City. The goal would be to reduce the City's carbon footprint and encourage private investment in electric cars.

The appendix contains the jobs and skills associated with renewable energy.

## **Climate Change and Coastal Resiliency**

Atlantic City is a leader in coastal resiliency, with over \$80 million in investments in coastal protection fully funded and underway. With state-of-the-art canal providing storm water protection, an incredible seawall/Boardwalk in the Inlet, and protection projects underway throughout the City-Atlantic City is leading the way in coastal protection.

Atlantic City is looking to the future, and recently teamed up with Stockton University and the New Jersey Economic Development Authority to complete a feasibility study to develop a Coastal Resiliency Institute. Stockton University's top project in the State's capital plan is the construction of a Coastal Resiliency Institute to provide research and training on climate changes to build on its successful Coastal Research Center.

Atlantic City should explore the concept of coastal carbon sequestration, also known as blue carbon. Coastal areas play a critical role in absorbing carbon from the atmosphere. Ecosystems such as saltwater marshes, mango groves, and seagrass beds, serve as carbon sinks.

Atlantic City could benefit from expanding its saltwater marshes as well as other ecosystems that absorb carbon. The possibility of selling carbon offsets to finance this initiative should be explored. Figure one shows the potential job levels as well as necessary skills.

## Fisheries

The waterways of Atlantic City thrive with economic activity including the traditional water dependent uses such as: charter boats, kayak rentals, marinas, waterfront restaurants, public open space, and residential boat slips. However, the most significant and impactful, yet often overlooked activity is the \$27.8 million per year commercial fishing industry. The economic benefits of the Atlantic City commercial fishing industry are significant and have the potential to grow. The mid-Atlantic fisheries are considered one of the best managed, sustainable and productive, per the Marine Stewardship Council certifications received by the Atlantic City commercial fishing companies.

The Atlantic City Inlet hosts twenty four (24) commercial clam and quahog boats directly employ 500 people, including:

- 150 fisherman, dock workers and office workers in Atlantic City
- 300 processing plant employees handling the harvest that comes in to Atlantic City
- 50 positions supporting the fishing and processing activities

In addition, there are hundreds of indirect jobs resulting from the need for trucking, boat fuel, food, and boat maintenance for the Atlantic City Port. TMT alone has over 100 New Jersey vendors that provide products and services to support their operation.

Despite the significant economic impact, the area comprised of Clam Creek, Gardner's Basin, Delta Basin and Snug Harbor, has not been dredged in decades. This has resulted in an average of \$1M in damage annually to the commercial fishing boats such as bent propellers and sand infiltration in rudder bearings; The relocation of commercial fishing boats to docks out of State. In the past ten (10) years alone, one commercial fishing company has relocated five (5) boats and a second company relocated three (3) boats because of their inability to access the port safely and economically. City, State and Federal agencies must work together to complete a comprehensive dredging project in the Atlantic City Inlet.

Some other potential strategies, to be discussed in more detail with the industry include:

- Community supported fisheries where organizations and individuals pay a membership or subscription and receive a portion of the weekly catch. As of 2012, there were 30 community supported fisheries nationwide. These entities support small fishing outfits, provide traceability of seafood, and discourage overfishing since revenue is not based on amount caught.
- Implementation of regenerative ocean farming, such as the system developed by Green Wave ( [www.greenwave.org](http://www.greenwave.org) ). The Green Wave system yields seaweed and shellfish with zero inputs and a low-cost. The Green Wave system also provides the added benefits of creating a carbon sink and storm surge protection.

## **Tourism**

Tourism is already a major industry in Atlantic City. It is critical to reorient tourism around the environment and conservation, called nature or eco-tourism. The other Blue Economy areas listed in this document provide attractions for tourism in addition to increasing sustainability. The focal point of this Blue Economy tourism industry should be the Atlantic City Aquarium, an underutilized facility in a prime location in Gardner's Basin, a Green Acres and National Park site.

## **Waste Management**

Atlantic City can integrate waste management into its Blue Economy initiatives in two ways:

- Atlantic City can introduce grey water recycling, where non-pathogenic, used water is utilized for non-consumption purposes. Grey water utilization should be made mandatory for all public facilities and voluntary for private entities.
- Atlantic City should introduce smart technology into buildings and housing, where sensors and data analytics reduces waste and energy use. Smart technology should be mandatory for all public facilities and voluntary for private entities. Such an initiative aligns with the Atlantic City Airport smart airport initiative.

One area to showcase grey water recycling and smart building waste reduction (as well as boost tourism) is to develop marketing and incentives for the casino industry to move to adopt waste reduction policies and technology.

## **Support Industries**

Two industries have the potential to grow in support of the above listed industries. These are marine-based drones and data analytics.

## **Drones**

Atlantic County has made great strides in building out its aerial drone industry. These efforts have created a foundation for branching into marine-based drones. Like aerial drones, marine-based drones provide reconnaissance and analysis. However, the marine-based drones do so on or under the surface of the water. Such devices can do everything from surveying the base of off-shore wind turbines to analyzing the health of a seagrass bed. Atlantic City should work to attract marine-based drone research and development, start-ups, and established companies. The ultimate goal would be to create an incubator and/or accelerator for the industry in the City similar to the smart airport incubator at the Atlantic City Airport.

## **Data Analytics**

Data analytics, the collection and analysis of large amounts of data, is proving critical in many fields. The marine sciences and the Blue Economy are no different. Data analytics will provide the basis for continued progress in ensuring the sustainable use of our oceans. Figure Seven shows the jobs and necessary skills in data analytics.

# Appendix V: Atlantic City Economic Recovery

## Atlantic City Economic Recovery

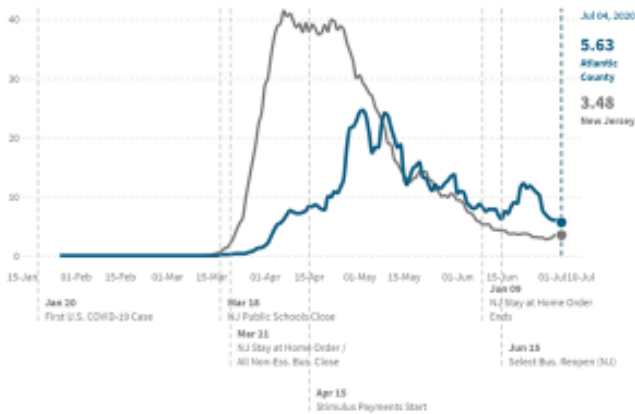
DRAFT – PRE-DECISIONAL – CONFIDENTIAL

July 14, 2020

### COVID-19 case counts and death rates are slightly higher in Atlantic county than New Jersey overall

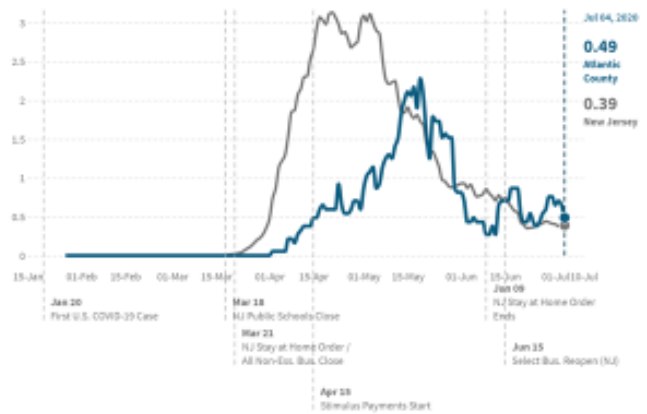
COVID-19 cases since January 15, 2020

Daily cases per 100K people



In Atlantic County, on July 4, 2020, there were 5.63 newly reported COVID-19 cases per 100,000 people, compared to 3.48 for New Jersey overall.

COVID-19 deaths in Atlantic County since January 15, 2020



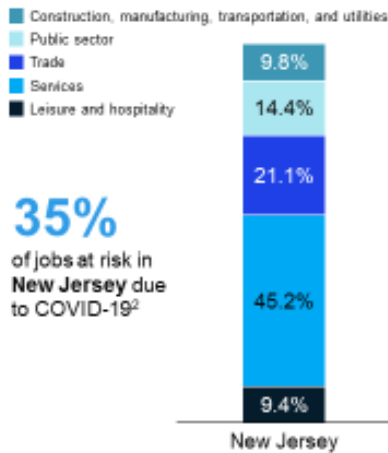
In Atlantic County, on July 4, 2020, there were 0.49 newly reported COVID-19 deaths per 100,000 people, compared to 0.39 for New Jersey overall.

PRELIMINARY, PRE-DECISIONAL, AND DELIBERATIVE. BASED ON INPUT PROVIDED BY STATE AGENCY LEADERS AND STAFF, TO DATE, AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE. CONTENT IS DESCRIPTIVE ONLY AND IS NOT MEANT TO CONSTITUTE LEGAL, CLINICAL, OR POLICY ADVICE. 2

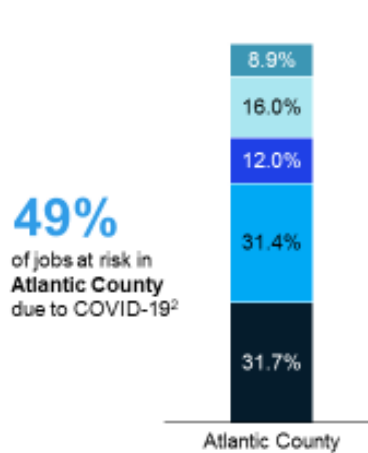


## The economic challenges are particularly poignant in Atlantic County due to the concentration of leisure and hospitality sectors

Structure of New Jersey economy by broad sector employment, 2019



Structure of Atlantic County economy by broad sector employment, 2019



1. Services include: education and health care; financial, information, professional and business, and other  
 2. Jobs at high risk of furlough or layoff due to COVID-19 related shutdowns or changes in consumer behavior  
 PRELIMINARY, PRE-DECISIONAL, AND DELIBERATIVE. BASED ON INPUT PROVIDED BY STATE AGENCY LEADERS AND STAFF, TO DATE, AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE. CONTENT IS DESCRIPTIVE ONLY AND IS NOT MEANT TO CONSTITUTE LEGAL, CLINICAL, OR POLICY ADVICE.

Atlantic City is 3<sup>rd</sup> most vulnerable economy amongst US metro areas due to COVID.

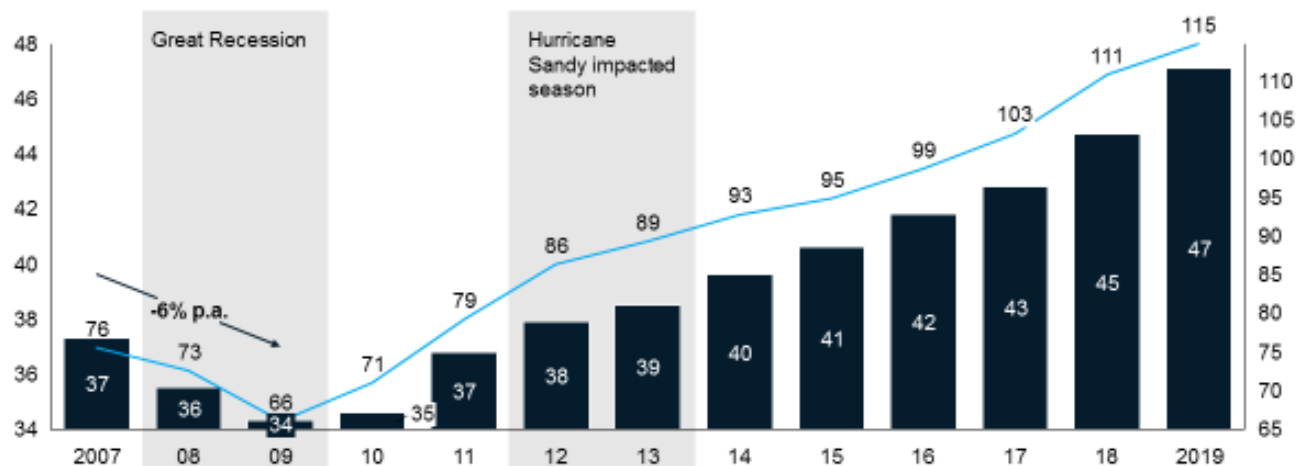
The tourism industry is particularly hard to safeguard because of the high density tourism attractions, retail locations, restaurants, and crowded public beaches.

Casinos prove a challenge to restart given the high number of interactions between staff and customers and their large indoor common areas

Source: Brookings, US Bureau of Labor Statistics, McKinsey IQ2 Labor cube <sup>3</sup>

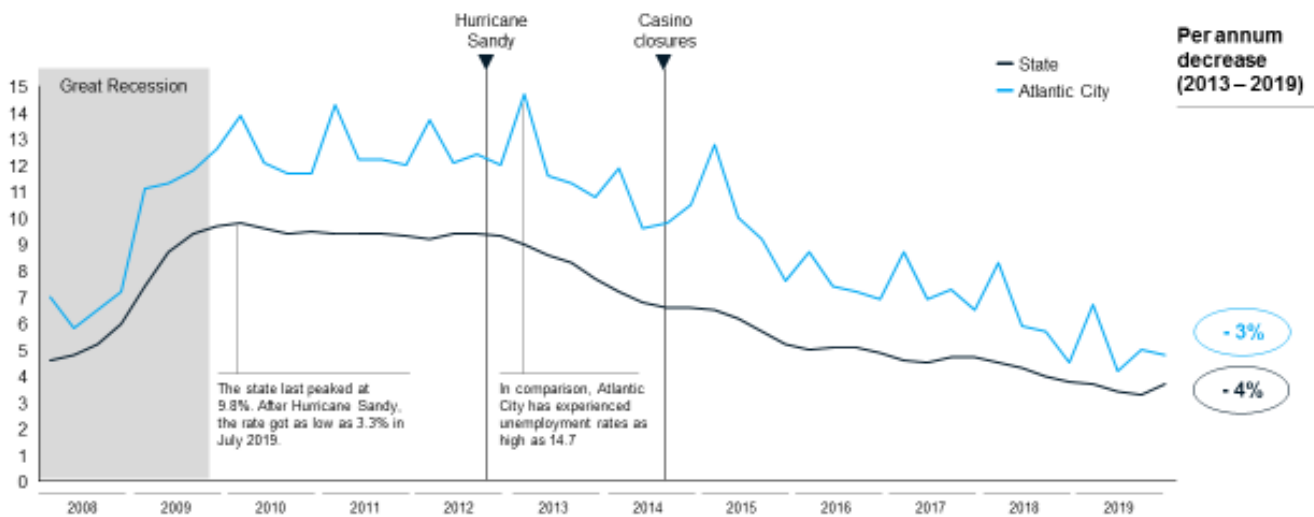
## Historically, New Jersey tourism has been resilient after a crisis... Millions of dollars

Visitation and visitor spending in New Jersey



Source: Tourism Economics  
 PRELIMINARY, PRE-DECISIONAL, AND DELIBERATIVE. BASED ON INPUT PROVIDED BY STATE AGENCY LEADERS AND STAFF, TO DATE, AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE. CONTENT IS DESCRIPTIVE ONLY AND IS NOT MEANT TO CONSTITUTE LEGAL, CLINICAL, OR POLICY ADVICE. <sup>4</sup>

**...although Atlantic City entered the pandemic with greater economic challenges and has historically struggled to recover as quickly as the state**  
Atlantic City and New Jersey unemployment rate



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

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**Summer months typically generate outsized economic activity for Atlantic City, with a 5% increase in total employment in 2019, driven by leisure and hospitality**

Change in Atlantic City employment Jan-Apr vs. May-Aug 2019

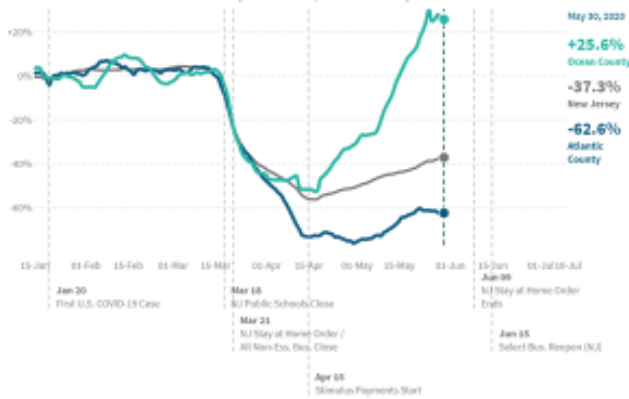
Industry	Level change, thousands	% change	Share of total gain
Total	6.7	5.1%	100%
Retail trade	0.4	2.5%	5.6%
Professional and Business Services	0.5	5.0%	7.8%
Construction	0.6	11.4%	8.6%
<b>Leisure and hospitality</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>13.3%</b>	<b>80.6%</b>
Casinos Accommodation	1.7	7.2%	25.4%
Non-Casinos Accommodation	1.1	39.1%	16.8%
Food Services and Drinking Places	1.7	14.1%	25.4%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	0.9	38.9%	13.1%
Government	-0.8	-3.9%	-12.3%

Source: Southern New Jersey Economic Review, U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

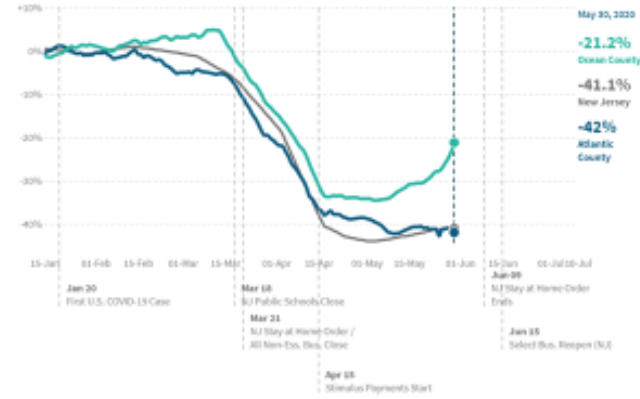
PRELIMINARY, PRE-DECISIONAL, AND DELIBERATIVE. BASED ON INPUT PROVIDED BY STATE AGENCY LEADERS AND STAFF, TO DATE, AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE. CONTENT IS DESCRIPTIVE ONLY AND IS NOT MEANT TO CONSTITUTE LEGAL, CLINICAL, OR POLICY ADVICE.

# Atlantic County's low-income workers in the restaurant and hotel industries have not seen the summer rebound experienced in neighboring Ocean County

**Low-income workers<sup>1</sup> in restaurant and hotel industry**  
Percent change in employment relative to January 20, 2020 baseline



**Low-income workers<sup>1</sup> in retail industry**  
Percent change in employment relative to January 20, 2020 baseline



1. Median annual, after-tax income of ~\$26,000  
Source: Opportunity Insights

PRELIMINARY, PRE-DECISIONAL, AND DELIBERATIVE. BASED ON INPUT PROVIDED BY STATE AGENCY LEADERS AND STAFF, TO DATE, AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE. CONTENT IS DESCRIPTIVE ONLY AND IS NOT MEANT TO CONSTITUTE LEGAL, CLINICAL, OR POLICY ADVICE.

## The Southern New Jersey Economic Review estimates that Atlantic City and Ocean City could lose \$2-5B in real GDP due to tourism industry losses

The Southern New Jersey Economic Review projected a loss of \$2-5B in real GDP for the tourism driven shore cities

### Economic Impact of COVID-19 Benchmarks

Selected Historically Significant Declines in Regional/Metro Area Real GDP

	Real GDP decline		Period
	\$ Billions	%	
Great recession & financial crisis	-\$2.0	-0.6%	2009
Hurricane Katrina (August 2005)	-\$4.7	-5.7%	2006
Casino closures (Fall 2014)	-\$0.5	-2.7%	2015
Hurricane Sandy (August 2012)	-\$0.2	-0.8%	2013

While the rest of the shore will likely experience less severe declines, the realized loss in GDP will be similarly dependent on the speed of restart and 'COVID-19 Drag' i.e., the percentage of economic output lost after a return to the new normal

Source: Southern New Jersey Economic Review (April 2020), U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

### Estimated real GDP loss in Atlantic City and Ocean City in 2020

Speed of restart	"COVID-19 Drag" following restart		
	Small (5% decline)	Moderate (15% decline)	Significant (25% decline)
<b>Fast: mid-June (2 summer weeks lost)</b>			
\$ decline	-\$2	-\$3	-\$4
% decline	-12%	-18%	-24%
<b>Moderate: mid-July (6 summer weeks lost)</b>			
\$ decline	-\$3	-\$4	-\$5
% decline	-16%	-21%	-26%
<b>Slow: mid-August (10 summer weeks lost)</b>			
\$ decline	-\$4	-\$5	-\$5
% decline	-21%	-25%	-28%

Model assumes 40% decline in output for 10 week period between mid-March and end of May

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## COVID-19 effect on NJ's tax revenue have also created challenges for the State's overall fiscal position

Millions of Dollars

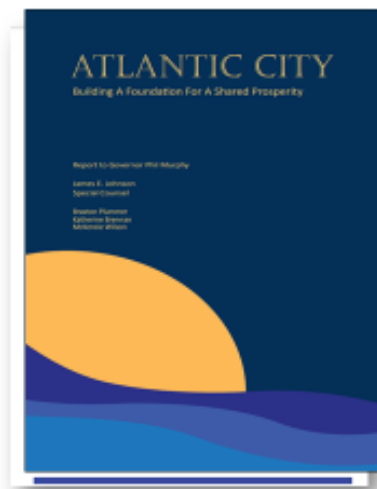
	FY 2020 GBM	FY20 Revised May 22	FY 2020 Change	FY 2021 GBM	FY21 Revised May 22	FY 2021 Change
Gross Income Tax	16,801.5	15,890.6	-910.9	17,795.3	13,840.4	-3,954.9
Sales Tax	10,406.5	9,276.0	-1,130.5	10,774.0	9,246.5	-1,527.5
Corporation Business Tax	3,897.0	3,445.1	-451.9	3,831.0	2,603.3	-1,227.7
Other Revenues	8,360.1	8,121.5	238.6	8,761.2	8,264.3	-496.9
<b>Total Budget Revenues</b>	<b>39,465.1</b>	<b>36,733.2</b>	<b>-2,731.9</b>	<b>41,161.5</b>	<b>33,954.5</b>	<b>-7,207.0</b>

Source: State of New Jersey

These numbers are estimates and subject to change

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## The 2018 Atlantic City Transition Report provides a rich starting point to fuel Atlantic City's recovery



Source: State of New Jersey, Special Report to Governor Phil Murphy

### Key recommendation areas

**Build capacity of municipal government** (e.g., trainings for municipal employees, increasing data management and collection, bolstering planning & development efforts - e.g., focus on catalytic projects and neighborhood-based investments)

**Invest in public health**, starting with a needs assessment to identify and prioritize disparities

**Improve public safety** (e.g., providing implicit bias and de-escalation training, establishing citizen advisory board)

**Develop and strengthen the economy** (e.g., promote Atlantic City as a Destination, support small businesses, policy focus on millennials and entrepreneurs, career pathways for high schoolers)

**Support local youth** (e.g., high quality after school and summer programs, expand internship programs)

**Bolster civic infrastructure and neighborhood associations** (e.g., build database of resources, events and opportunities)

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# Appendix VI: Public Health & Wellness Problems & Solutions

		Social Service/Prevention	
Health Problem(s)	Statistics	Current Assistance/ Shelters	How can we help?
<p><b>Homelessness</b></p> <p><i>Causes:</i> Structural factors, poverty, housing, system failure, personal circumstances, domestic violence</p>	<p>New jersey: 8864 Atlantic County: 334 Atlantic City: 318 (PIT 2019)</p>	<p>Atlantic City Rescue Mission Covenant House (Youth)</p>	<p>Providing Healthy solutions (Health Promotion &amp; Education), &amp;, Social Service, Collaborating with partners</p>
<p><b>Maternal and Child Health Infant Mortality</b></p> <p><i>Causes:</i> Congenital defects, Preterm birth and low birth weight, Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), pregnancy complications, Infant accidents, placenta and umbilical cord complications, respiratory stress, bacterial sepsis, neonatal hemorrhage</p>	<p>Infant mortality rate/live birth (Blacks) New Jersey: 9.6/1,000 Atlantic County: 14.5/1,000 Atlantic City: 21.3/1,000 (NJSHAD 2013-2017)</p>	<p>Division of Family Services (FHS) Heathy Women Healthy Programs NJ Parent Link</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint approach (Public Health and partners) to address the social, behavioral and health risk factors through Health Promotion,</li> <li>• Education &amp; counseling on Tobacco/Smoking cessation, Alcohol, drug use.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Mental health</b></p> <p><i>Causes:</i> Inherited traits (certain gene from blood relatives), Environmental exposure before birth (environmental stressors, inflammatory conditions, toxins, alcohol or drugs, while in the womb), Brain chemistry (Neurotransmitters are naturally occurring brain chemicals when impaired)</p>	<p>Mental Health Mortality New Jersey:3,501 Atlantic County: 156 Atlantic City: 22 White (high deaths)</p>	<p>There are several Mental Health Treatment centers in Atlantic City. AtlantiCare Behavioral, Destination Hope, Behavioral Health Centers of America, Atlantic City Rescue Mission, Enlightened Solutions Detox, National Alliance on Mental Health Helpline (NAMI), etc.,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interventions to support families, parenting and in the early years</li> <li>• Targeted programs</li> <li>• Parental support for those “at risk” with prenatal mental health problems</li> <li>• Parenting: Families and schools together,</li> <li>• Child and young people interventions: Children having parents with metal health problems/ use drugs/alcohol</li> <li>• Adult approaches: Provide bereavement counseling, support unemployed working age adults, increase metal health literacy</li> </ul>
<p><b>Substance Use</b></p> <p><i>Causes:</i> Behavioral and social pressures (The Cycle of Triggers and Cravings, for performance, self-medication, Environmental Concerns (Family circumstances, the we Learn, Peer Pressure, Biological and Psychological contributors (Developmental</p>	<p>Substance Use – Drug-Induced Deaths Atlantic City: 158 Youth: (18-24): 3 Adult: (25-80): 155</p>	<p>AtlantiCare Health Services Mission Healthcare John Brooks Recovery Center AtlantiCare Behavioral Health Services Atlantic Prevention Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decriminalizing drug possession and investing in treatment and harm reduction services can provide several major benefits for public health, including reducing the number of people incarcerated;</li> <li>• Increasing uptake into drug treatment; reducing criminal justice costs and redirecting resources from criminal justice to health systems;</li> </ul>



<p><b>Stage, Genes, Gender, Stress, Mental health)</b></p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redirecting law enforcement resources to prevent serious and violent crime; addressing racial disparities in drug law enforcement, incarceration, and related health characteristics and outcomes;</li> <li>• Minimizing stigma and creating a social, cultural, and policy climate in which people who use drugs are less fearful of seeking and accessing treatment, using harm reduction services, and receiving HIV/AIDS services; and</li> <li>• Protecting people from the wide-ranging and debilitating consequences of a criminal conviction.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Needle Exchange/Sharing</b></p> <p>Why does needle sharing occur?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy access</li> <li>• They figure it's worth the risk</li> <li>• Neurology (taking risks)</li> <li>• Lack of education</li> </ul>	<p><b>Statistics:</b></p> <p>Atlantic City (Only):  Syringe Out 43,063  Syringe In: 20,527  Return rate: 48%</p>	<p>South Jersey AIDS Alliance, Atlantic City</p>	<p>Our Service may include (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Syringe exchange (new needles in exchange for used needles)</li> <li>• STD, HIV and Hepatitis C Testing at most Needle Exchange sites</li> <li>• Screenings, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)</li> <li>• Referrals: Mental health, detox, substance use and Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) for HIV Prevention</li> <li>• Opioid overdose prevention (naloxone kits and training)</li> <li>• Safer sex supplies and hygiene kits</li> <li>• Fentanyl test strips</li> </ul>

<b>Unemployment</b>	TBD	TBD	TBD
<b>Social Services</b>	TBD	TBD	TBD
<b>COVID-19</b>	TBD	TBD	TBD

Submitted by:

*Wilson J. Washington, Jr.*

Dr. Wilson J. Washington, Jr.

Chairman, Public Health & Wellness Subcommittee

Director, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)

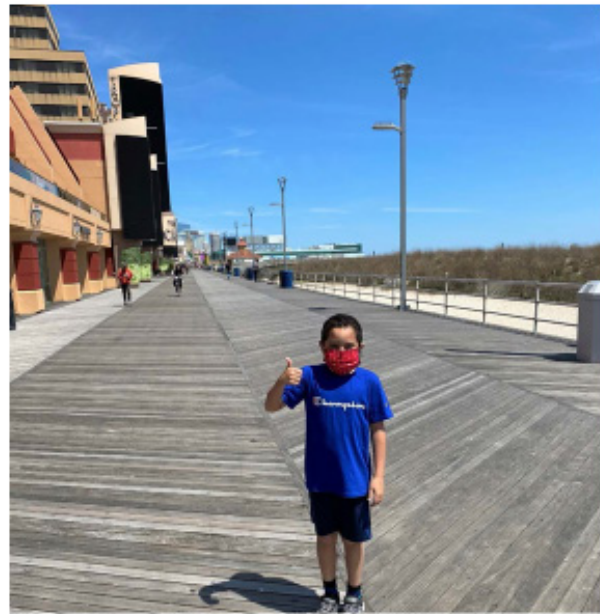
City of Atlantic City, New Jersey

# Appendix VII: Atlantic City Community Outreach

## Community

### OUTREACH SUBCOMMITTEE

GOVERNOR MURPHY'S  
ATLANTIC CITY RESTART &  
RECOVERY WORK GROUP



## Our Team

Bert Lopez, President Hispanic Association & Sr. External Affairs Manager Atlantic City Electric  
Damen Tyner, Esq. Atlantic County Prosecutor, Atlantic County Prosecutors Office  
Frank Blee, Director of Government Relations & Senior Services, AtlantiCare  
Stephanie Koch, CEO Atlantic City Boys & Girls Club  
Joyce Hagen, Executive Director, Atlantic City Arts Foundation  
Libbie Wills, President, 1st Ward Civic Association  
Steve Downey, Director, Atlantic City Beach Patrol  
James Sarkos, Deputy Chief, Atlantic City Police Department  
Reverend Latasha Milton, Senior Pastor, Asbury United Methodist  
Reverend Collins A. Days, Sr., Pastor Second Baptist Church  
Barry Caldwell, Superintendent, Atlantic City Public Schools  
Amber Hamlett, CEO, Hamlett Consulting  
Tom Lamaine, Chairman, Atlantic City Boardwalk Committee  
Elijah Langford, Atlantic City Initiative Office



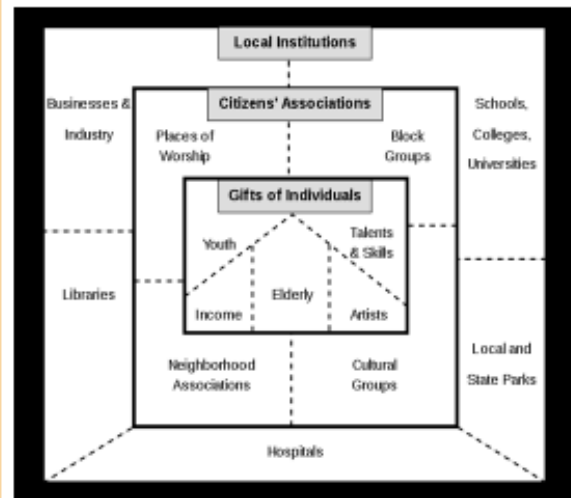
## Community Collaboration Database: An Essential Tool



## Community Collaboration Database : Concept

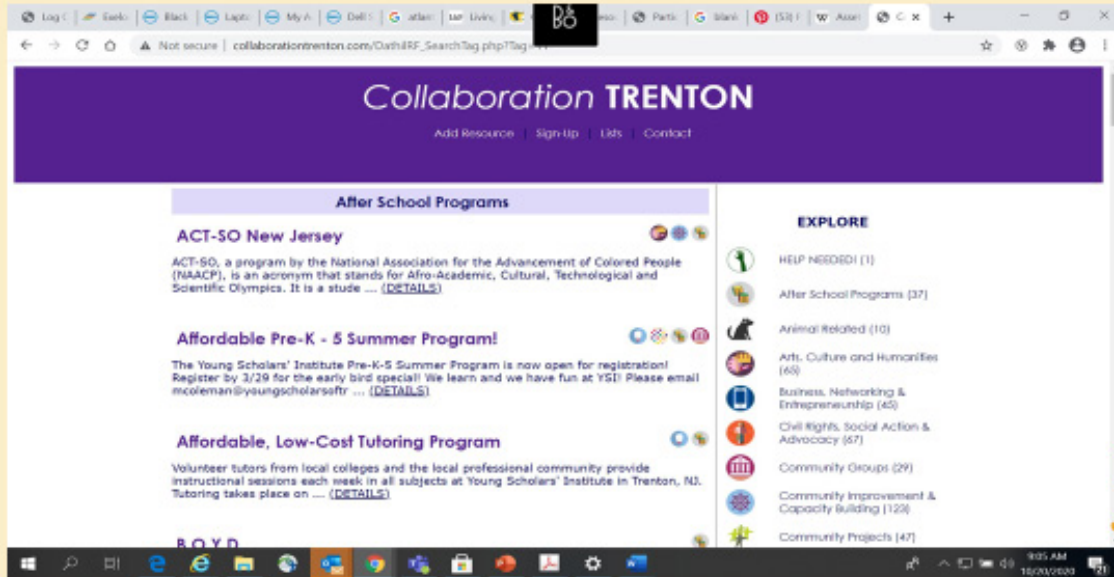
**Part of Jim Johnson Recommendation:**  
*Build A Community Collaboration Database. There are many citizen-led efforts at community engagement in Atlantic City that operate in isolation. One of Atlantic City's anchor institutions should work with the civic groups to build a database of resources, events and opportunities like <http://collaborationrenton.com/>*

- Buy-in from one or more anchor institution required - Dedicated resources are needed to succeed
- Needs to be an open platform to allow for community updating and support



4

## Community Collaboration Database : Concept



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Collaboration TRENTON website. The header is purple with the site name and navigation links: Add Resource, Sign Up, Lists, and Contact. Below the header, there are two main sections. On the left, under 'After School Programs', there are three program listings: 'ACT-SO New Jersey', 'Affordable Pre-K - 5 Summer Program!', and 'Affordable, Low-Cost Tutoring Program'. Each listing includes a brief description and a 'DETAILS' link. On the right, under 'EXPLORE', there is a list of categories with counts: HELP NEEDED! (1), After School Programs (37), Animal Related (10), Arts, Culture and Humanities (65), Business, Networking & Entrepreneurship (42), Civil Rights, Social Action & Advocacy (67), Community Groups (29), Community Improvement & Capacity Building (122), and Community Projects (47). A large orange number '5' is overlaid on the right side of the screenshot.

## Community Collaboration Database : Benefits

### Community Benefit

- Build on and expand existing community strengths
- Facilitate community involvement
- Generate a shared awareness and understanding of community assets
- Increase capacity within communities
- Road Map to link residents to needed services and support

### Sector Specific Benefits

- Healthcare - as a referral tool to foster healthier communities (NOWPOW)
- Education – to support student development and wraparound services (NCSET)
- Government - Help manage resources, community development, and planning

6



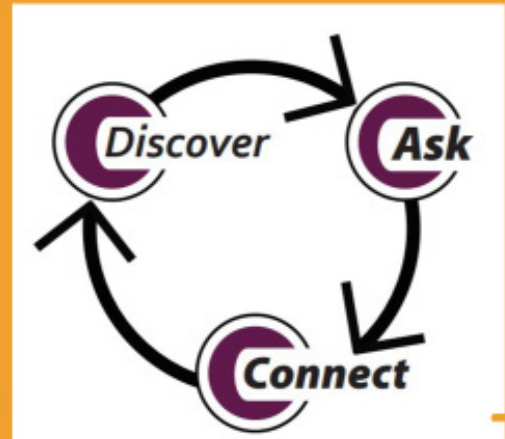
## Community Collaboration Database : Starting Point

–Secure Anchor Institution(s) as Lead

Identify stakeholders

- *Atlantic County Heritage Commission*
- *Stockton*
- *Atlantic Cape*
- *CRDA*
- *Atlanticare*
- *SJ Gas*
- *Casinos*
- *Neighborhood Associations, non-profits, including Community Cultural & Arts Organizations*

- Determine scope of work
- Identify resources that can support this work
- Determine funding needed



## Cultural, Arts & Community Events



- Support / Fund Cultural Celebrations
- Expend Arts throughout the City (murals/ anti-graffiti programs)
- Leverage Cultural Heritage for Marketing of the City

1  
3