REVIVING THE ESCAPE:

Preservation for the cause of progress in Atlantic City

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The accessibility of a summer resort is, with not a few, a matter of importance second only to the paramount consideration of health and pleasure; and herein lies the secret of Atlantic City's wonderful growth and popularity.

Heston, 1906

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

COMPREHENSIVE PROJECT REVIEW

Atlantic City is in danger of losing what remains of its character-defining architectural and urban assets in the wake of new developments that continue to rapidly change the physical landscape of the city. Despite recent publicity highlighting the city's dynamic history through HBO's production of *Boardwalk Empire*, local stakeholders and those with political clout could employ further the potential to leverage the extant fabric of the urban neighborhoods, instead of focusing on demolition and investment in new development as its predominant revitalization strategy.

While the city serves as a hedonistic retreat for millions of visitors, Atlantic City is home to about 40,000 year-round residents. Current investment and redevelopment efforts are directed with the tourist population in mind while the neighborhoods are overlooked. Preservation of the city's heritage has the capacity not only to enhance economic-development initiatives but also to strengthen existing communities – benefiting both the residential and tourism districts. By activating traditional spaces in the city while re-naturalizing key areas, this preservation plan addresses coastal threats and proposes ways in which the city can bolster its resilience to changes in the natural environment.

Despite the wide-spread destruction caused by 20th-century urban renewal, casino development, and coastal storms, a significant amount of historic properties survive – especially late 19th and early 20th urban fabric and landmark buildings. By leveraging these community resources to achieve sustainable community-development objectives, the preservation initiatives proposed by this studio feature and devise new uses for these remaining assets and the city's heritage.

The first section of this report details the preservation-planning process as undertaken by this studio and the resulting conservation plan. Through values-based planning, the studio analyzed Atlantic City's history, existing fabric and demographics, political landscape and site values, as well as comparable cities, in order to develop a statement of significance and preservation interventions. The second section presents ten projects that were created in response to this conservation plan, which include policy-, interpretation-, and design-based proposals. Through this plan, we seek to shed light on the power and potential of a preservation approach to realize sustainable development objectives and create livable, culturally-robust communities.

Come, then, ye who seek health, rest, or pleasure; come and fill your lungs with the ozone of the sea; come and promenade on the four-mile boardwalk planted within reach of the spray; come and sit in a rocking-chair and take a sun-bask in the open air or in one of the several Ocean Parlors; come before it gets too warm; and while ye may; come *now*.

Heston, 1892

CONTEXT + CONDITIONS

Shorpy

INTRODUCTION
WHY PRESERVATION, WHY ATLANTIC CITY?

Twenty-first century visitors to Atlantic City bear witness to a city that has strayed far from its roots as a premier seaside resort brimming with people. The bustle of activity has been relegated to the confines of casino floors. The shoreline has become obstructed as much by overzealous development as environmental remediation efforts. And residential neighborhoods are more reminiscent of empty lots than of the dense community clusters that once comprised the city mosaic. Gone is the sense of the "city" altogether, replaced by a fragmented assemblage of urban characteristics held captive by the accomplishments of the tourism and gaming industries. Under these circumstances, it appears that Atlantic City's identity simply crumbled under the weight of both internal and external pressures.

Yet that identity does, in fact, remain. Traces of Atlantic City's heritage can be found with a discerning eye, whether in the historic homes still standing in nearly vacant blocks or in the intangible values that percolate though the shore town's history. Though it may seem that Atlantic City's heritage is a thing of the past, its history may just be that powerful asset needed to help elevate the city to its future. As the Atlantic City enters into a new era in its history – evidenced by recent endeavors to address decades-old issues for a better place to live and play – there is an opportunity to use preservation as a tool for urban revitalization. However, first the tool must be developed and a better preservation agenda defined.

What remains of Atlantic City's past today is vulnerable to pressing economic needs and development agendas, and thus requires attention before more historic resources are lost. By addressing the urgent needs of historic preservation though values-based conservation planning, the city's complex cultural significance will be contextualized into a strategy for informing decision-making. The values-centered approach enables policy-makers and residents alike to comprehend the deeper meaning of their shared physical space and to imprint upon how the space is interpreted for future generations.

ABOUT THE STUDIO

The studio work was divided into two phases. Phase I was comprised of research and analysis, during which time the team worked in factions to cultivate a profound understanding of Atlantic City's history; the resources

which remain and what happened to those which have since been lost; the modern demographics and spatial socio-economic composition; and the current political and advocacy climate. During this initial phase, the studio also developed focused list of values (historic, social, physical, natural, and economic), articulated Atlantic City's statement of significance, refined the goals and objectives of our work, and created an overall strategy for activating a preservation agenda in Atlantic City through a preservation approach. Phase II built off of the preservation approach, introducing focused intervention plans designed independently by each of the studio team members. Together, the two phases reflect a cohesive conservation plan tailored to the idiosyncrasies of the city's past and current conditions that summons values restore and revitalize the identity of Atlantic City

Ultimately, the goal of this studio is to create a plan for preservation policy and planning for the City of Atlantic City that recognizes the cultural values of the city's historic environment and architecture and guides revitalization initiatives with respect to the cultural values evident in the historic built environment. By leveraging the city's existing cultural assets, this approach will realize the potential of historic preservation to mitigate social and economic inequities and strengthen Atlantic City's unique cultural identities and diverse ideologies to strategically repair and restore urban fabric. This will establish a framework for managing change and advocate for the role of preservation in managing urban change and adapting to 21st century demands.

"Revel"

THE ATLANTIC CITY EXPERIENCE
INTRODUCTION TO THE CONTEMPORARY CITY

At its core, Atlantic City is best characterized as a place of enduring dualities. Described by urbanist James Howard Kunstle as "one of [the] nation's great public spaces," the city was the first in America to be conceived and designed as a space for the public consumption of leisure and entertainment. Yet while Atlantic City thrived as the Queen of Resorts, the city also existed as a home to the many who labored on behalf of its visitor community. Positioning the needs of the tourist against the needs of the resident, the dual landscape of Atlantic City reveals a larger national narrative of social and economic juxtapositions, that have changed through history and are reflected in the old and new, large and small, and vacant and developed elements of the physical environment today.

Because Atlantic City was designed to be a tourist destination, the visitor experience comes to mind more readily than the residential. Conceived as a retreat for America's middle class, Atlantic City was built on the shortest possible line from Philadelphia to the shore. From both rail and car, visitors today enter Atlantic City and are immediately greeted by 'The Walk', which houses the new mega shopping outlet mall, Tanger Outlets.

Association of Energy Engineers

Wikipedia Commons

Since the city's first Boardwalk opened in 1870, the city has played host to millions of visitors who come for an opportunity to escape reality and indulge in fantasy.


CBS New York

Atlantic City, and more specifically its boardwalk, serves as a middle class utopia. Visitors have the opportunity to relax by the beach, peruse the stores along the Boardwalk, play arcade games on the piers, relax on the beach, get rich overnight, or even become the next Miss America.

Allusions to its former glory days as the "Playground of the World" can be found in this area, thanks in no small part to the popular hit television series, Boardwalk Empire, which has capitalized on the glamour and dark history of corruption in the city's not so distant past.
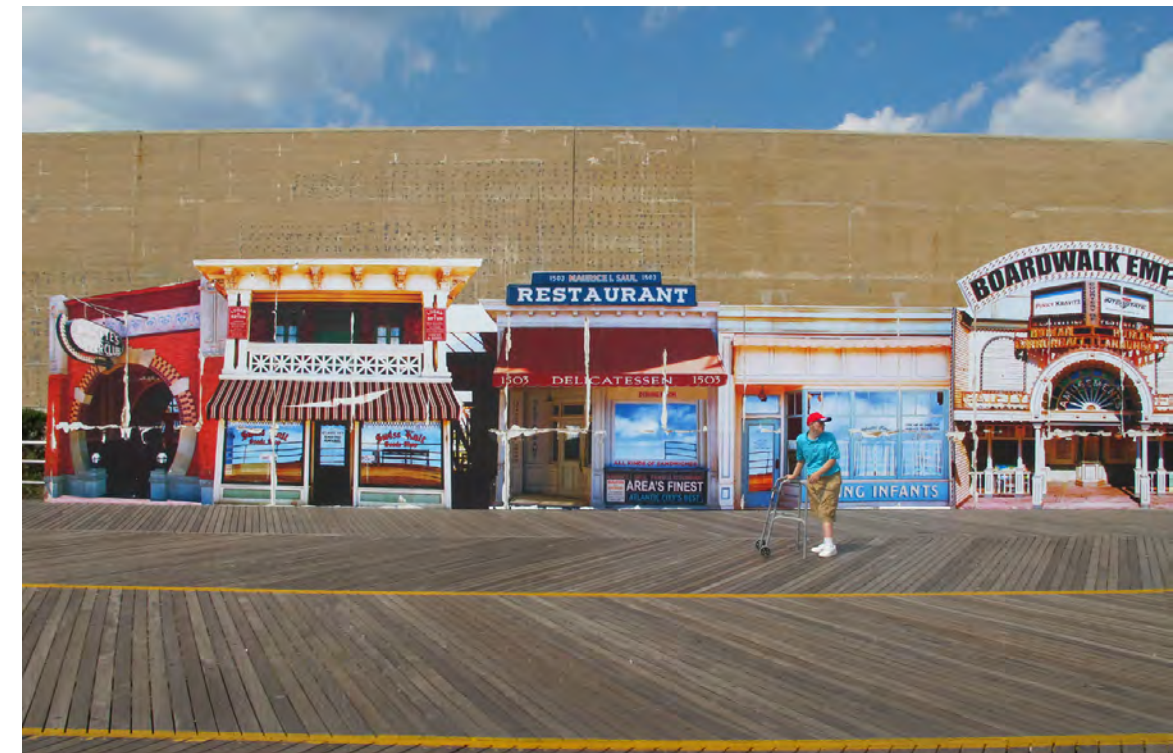
With casino revenues on the decline since 2006 and the Revel, the latest casino to be built, insolvent since before even opening to the public, investment entities are responding to the need to diversify the local economy. Family and business-friendly initiatives, such as The Artlantic, a new arts initiative, reflect this goal. This is in line with the city's history; for as long as the city has been a place for pleasure and vice, it has also marketed itself as a place for wholesome family fun.

All of these initiatives keep Atlantic City's legacy as a place for leisure and pleasure alive. But the advent of the casinos has changed where activities take place – Atlantic City used to be known for the public consumption of pleasure. The boxy design of the casinos, with interior walkways, negate the need for visitors to actually travel on the ground through the city. Visitors are therefore confined to the casino and entertainment areas along Pacific Avenue are bereft of pedestrian life.

Continued large-scale development and demolition further disintegrate Atlantic City's landscape, and threaten what remains of the traditional walkable pedestrian oriented city. Emptiness may come to mind when describing the city. So at this point you might be asking, why are we, a group of preservationists, doing a studio project on Atlantic City? What remains that is worth preserving?

Despite all of the changes to the landscape, an impressive amount of fabric remains in both tourist and residential areas. Atlantic City is still home to a wide variety of historic monumental architecture. This includes industrial wonders like the Atlantic City Convention Hall, also known as Boardwalk Hall (National Historic Site and Landmark), and Absecon Lighthouse (National Historic Site).

Historic Hotels such as the Dennis, which stand alongside the city's casinos and new commercial outlets, help to define the visitor experience. They lie south of the city's main artery, Atlantic Avenue, which informally divides the city into tourist and residential areas.
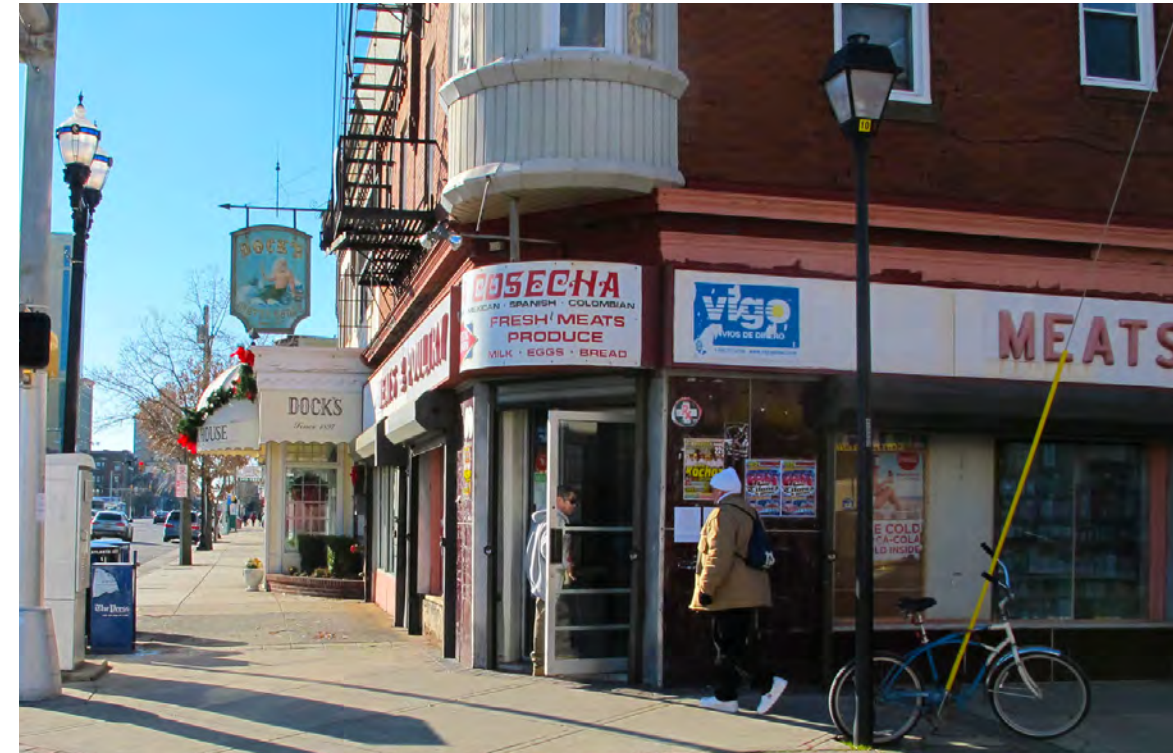
As one moves along this divider, commercial venues shrink and serve a more a local clientele. Distinct neighborhoods start to become apparent and longstanding neighborhood treasures can be found.

Like Atlantic City's monumental architecture, high proportion of the city's residential vernacular, built in the early 20th century, also retains its authenticity and integrity at all scales, evoking a unique sense of place as one moves through the city's diverse range of neighborhoods.

These residential vernacular form types include various types of detached houses, twins, rowhouses and alley houses.

Likewise, historic civic buildings like the preserved Carnegie Library, historic firehouses, schools, and churches continue to quietly exist across Atlantic City's landscape referencing a different time and place.

Collectively, these resources- well integrated into the urban fabric- speak to a shared yet diverse legacy of social life in Atlantic City. Their existence defies modern development and urges the consideration of preservation policy.

More importantly, along with the physical fabric, the cultural landscape has also survived in many areas. Reflecting a past where segregation was informally built into the way individuals navigated their city, Atlantic City's distinct neighborhoods live on in places like Chelsea Heights or Venice Park, a historically middle class African American neighborhood.

On a more sober note, this is also true in low income areas like the Northside. With the advent of public housing, Atlantic City today also shoulders more than its fair share of housing projects, which continue to tax the city's resources. These spaces reveal that the city's racial, social and economic geographical distribution remains unchanged in certain areas.

Of course, residential areas are not free from development. But the combination of old and new create striking contrasts in unexpected ways as one traverses through the city, serving as a physical example of the city's change over time. he enduring duality of Atlantic City's old and new fabric, as well as residential and tourist landscapes, create juxtapositions that give Atlantic City a unique sense of place.

SOSH

MAPPING ATLANTIC CITY
DEMOGRAPHICS AND SPATIAL CONDITIONS

Today, Atlantic City faces the very real threat of losing what remains of its historic fabric, both in residential and tourist areas to economic development, coastal sea level rise, and lack of stewardship. As the city continues to reinvent itself, it is imperative that preservation principles are embedded in the revitalization strategies that guide the future development of the city before it is too late. The historic character that lends the city its unique sense of place cannot be rebuilt once it is lost, but enough of the historic fabric remains to make a strong case for preservation. However, the remaining cultural assets must be contextualized within the modern composition of the Atlantic City in order to develop a meaningful preservation agenda that supports the past, present, and future.

The Mapping group was tasked with collecting data and developing a series of maps to both present and analyze Atlantic City's current state. These maps are meant to serve as a complement to the project's historical maps as well as the Land Use and Character Study.

Mapping was utilized because of its visual and spatial qualities. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) is an effective tool for analyzing and presenting data, as well as predicting events and prescribing future initiatives, all through a spatial framework. By using mapping as a medium, we were able to present not only information on Atlantic City's social, economic, environmental and built environment, but also demonstrate its geographic distribution across the city. Additionally, factors can be examined at different scales, from a granular investigation of changes building-by-building to looking at the city as a whole. Likewise, comparison across different scales is a feat GIS accomplishes easily through its presentation. In a simple map, for example, one can zoom in to closely examine a particular neighborhood's median income levels and see, by simply pulling back, how it compares to another neighborhood or the city as a whole. The strength of GIS is further amplified by the ability to layer multiple sets of data in the same map. In doing so, mapping allows for patterns to emerge and be identified; relationships between different factors, as they relate to each other and as they relate to space, become something that is easy to identify and more importantly, to communicate.

Mapping also allowed us to raise questions and considerations for the future of Atlantic City. Being able to comprehend the present-day conditions of Atlantic City through a geographic framework allows us to move beyond analysis to prescription, whether that be in the form of identifying cultural heritage areas in need of protection or areas suited for new development, etc. While our maps focus on understanding present-day conditions, they also serve as a starting point in helping us develop interventions for Atlantic City's future.

METHODOLOGY

ESRI's ArcGIS software was used for this mapping project. The data collected can be grouped as those pertaining to the quality of physical space and those pertaining to the characteristics of Atlantic City's residents. Together, these two categories of datasets present us with a series of impressions of Atlantic City's present-day conditions, from the city's physical layout and infrastructure to its relationship with the natural environment, to the socio-economic status of its residents.

Data concerning the qualities of space, such as the existing infrastructure and environmental conditions of Atlantic City, were pulled from the New Jersey DEP GIS database, FEMA, SOSH (a local architectural firm), the Casino Redevelopment Authority (CRDA), the National and State Registers of Historic Places, Open Street Map, Google Earth, Google Maps and Bing Maps. The data compiled can be separated into the following categories: political, infrastructure, heritage, and natural environment. The data used the following data sets:

Political // New Jersey state lines; Atlantic County boundaries; Atlantic City boundaries; Atlantic City tax parcels; Atlantic City Tourism District; Atlantic City neighborhoods; CRDA's top 10 buildings identified by demolition.

Infrastructure // Buildings (figure, ground); housing conditions; roads.

Heritage // Historic sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places and/or the New Jersey Register of Historic Places; sites identified as worthy of listing on either register.

Natural Environment // Shoreline; hydrology; elevation.

The majority of this data was downloaded directly in the form of GIS shapefiles. Upon opening in ArcGIS, these shapefiles were cleaned and formatted specifically for the Atlantic City area. However, when GIS-specific data was unavailable, data was manually converted from alternate forms into shapefiles. Some, such as the CRDA top 10 demolition list, Atlantic City tourism district and all heritage datasets were done by drawing polygons and points directly in ArcGIS. Others, such as the Figure/Ground Map, required the use of AutoCAD, a drafting software. A CAD file of Atlantic City's 2008 aerial view was acquired from SOSH, and post-2008 structures were added by referencing Bing and Google Maps. Additional modifications involved converting all building figures from a composition of lines into individual polygons before the file was imported into ArcGIS and georeferenced to its proper location.

Information pertaining to the qualities of Atlantic City's residents, such as their race and ethnicity, was taken from the 2010 Decennial Census as well as the 2013 data from the annual American Community Survey. Depending on the particular data being collected, the scale to which the data was available differed. The decision was made to always gather available data at the smallest scale possible. As such, the data gathered is a mix of those available at the census block level as well as the census block group level. For 2010 Decennial Census data, TIGER shapefiles drawn for 2010 census blocks were joined to table data pulled from American Factfinder through the United States Census Bureau. Data from the American Community Survey was pulled using SimplyMap, where shapefiles containing specific data tables were downloaded as shapefiles at the 2010 census block group level. The following data was collected for analysis:

Demographic Data // Age; educational attainment; education enrollment; median income; median rent; percent unemployment; population; race and ethnicity; percent of population living below the line of poverty; ratio of rent to owner; vacancy rates.

Depending on the particular dataset, different techniques were applied in order to analyze the information.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Alongside its neighbors Margate City, Ventnor City and Longport, much of the city is removed from the mainland and is located on Absecon Island, where it is mainly accessed by car along US Routes 40 and 30 as well as the Atlantic City Expressway. Situated along the New Jersey shore, the city's area totals approximately 17.037 square miles, of which 10.747 square miles is comprised of land and 6.290 square miles is comprised of water mass.
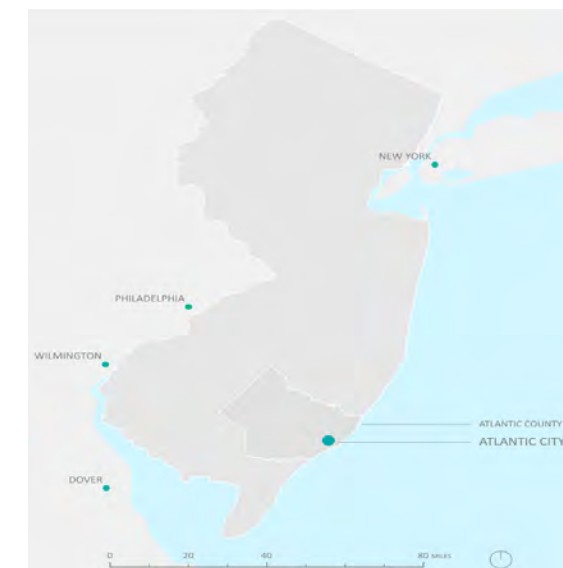
Map 1 // Location of Atlantic City in relation to Atlantic County, New Jersey state and nearby major cities.] Atlantic City is located in Atlantic County, New Jersey.

Map 2 // Project study area

Map 5 // civic, tourism, and commercial markers for navigating Atlantic City

For the purposes of this studio project, a study area was formed around the main areas of the city. This study area is bounded by the rivers of Absecon and Lakes Bay to the north, the Atlantic Ocean to the south, Absecon Inlet to the east and Ventnor City to the west. This area is home to Atlantic City's recently-formed Tourism District and includes 15 distinct neighborhoods, grouped into eleven areas. There are a number of key markers in the area, perhaps most noticeable being Atlantic City's numerous casinos and iconic boardwalk. Coming in from the Atlantic City Expressway, one is met immediately by the railroad station, a nod to Atlantic City's legacy as a railroad resort town. If one goes in a direct line from the railroad towards the boardwalk on Michigan Avenue, one passes through the recently created Tanger shopping outlets before hitting a slew of casinos along Pacific Avenue. There are also a number of recognized federal and state listed historic sites, such as Absecon Lighthouse and Boardwalk Hall. These sites can also be viewed via the Recognized Heritage Sites Map.

Map 3 // Atlantic City Tourism District, courtesy of CRDA

Map 4 // Neighborhoods boundaries, courtesy of CRDA

Map 6 // Recognized heritage sites around Atlantic City, from National and State Registers of Historic Places and CRDA.

Map 7 // Figure/Ground Map of Atlantic City. Original data illustrating the figure/ground of 2008 courtesy of SOSH, modified through Bing and Google Maps

The building arrangements in the Figure/Ground map reveals a lot about the contrast and juxtaposition of massing, scale, density and development patterns that currently exists in Atlantic City. Even without knowing what the buildings look like, their spatial layout within the city pattern can provide clues as to their building category and significance. What we are about to understand about Atlantic City's physical environment carries over into helping us make sense of its resident landscape.

SOCIAL CONTEXT: RESIDENT LANDSCAPE
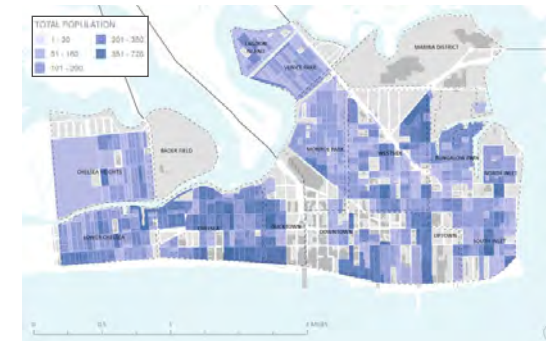
Population Distribution

Atlantic City's resident population, as of the 2010 Decennial Census, totals approximately 39,558 individuals. When mapped and layered with the figure/ground map, the distinction between residential and commercial areas becomes quite apparent. Casino and shopping-heavy areas, such as the Marina District and the main entranceway into Atlantic City, covering the

railroad station to the Tanger Outlets down to a cluster of casinos, report resident populations of 0.

The patterns seen when mapping population numbers correspond accordingly when the number of housing units in the city is mapped. In residential areas, a high percentage of the population appears to reside in the Chelsea and Ducktown neighborhoods, as well as parts of Westside, Downtown and the South Inlet. Middle class neighborhoods such as Chelsea Heights and Venice Park, as well as parts of Monroe Park, tend to house smaller populations. Additionally, the effect of large-scale demolitions, such as in the South Inlet, can be seen in the range of population numbers reported block by block.

Race and Ethnicity

When resident characteristics are mapped instead by reported race and ethnicity, clear patterns emerge about who lives where. Just as distinctions between resident and commercial areas were quite apparent in

Map 8 // Population distribution across Atlantic City, as of 2010. Census block level data courtesy of the 2010 US Decennial Census

Map 9 // Number of household units across Atlantic City, as of 2010. Census block level data courtesy of the 2010 US Decennial Census


Map 10 // Race and ethnicity distribution across Atlantic City, 2010. Census block group level (CBGL) data courtesy of 2010 US Decennial Census.

the previous map, here distinctions between different racial groups are quite stark (*see table, following page*). As of the 2010 Decennial Census, African-Americans and Hispanics make up approximately two-thirds of the city's population. The majority of African-Americans appear to live in the north and east sections of the city, in historically African-American neighborhoods. A dividing line can almost be drawn along Bacharach Boulevard, where

the former railroad station used to exist, echoing the continuation of racial division. However, there are small signs of change. In Venice Park, a historically middle class African-American neighborhood, a small but sizeable number of residents identify as either White or Hispanic. The influence of development in changing racial makeup can be seen in areas like the North Inlet, where a new urbanist development was recently completed.
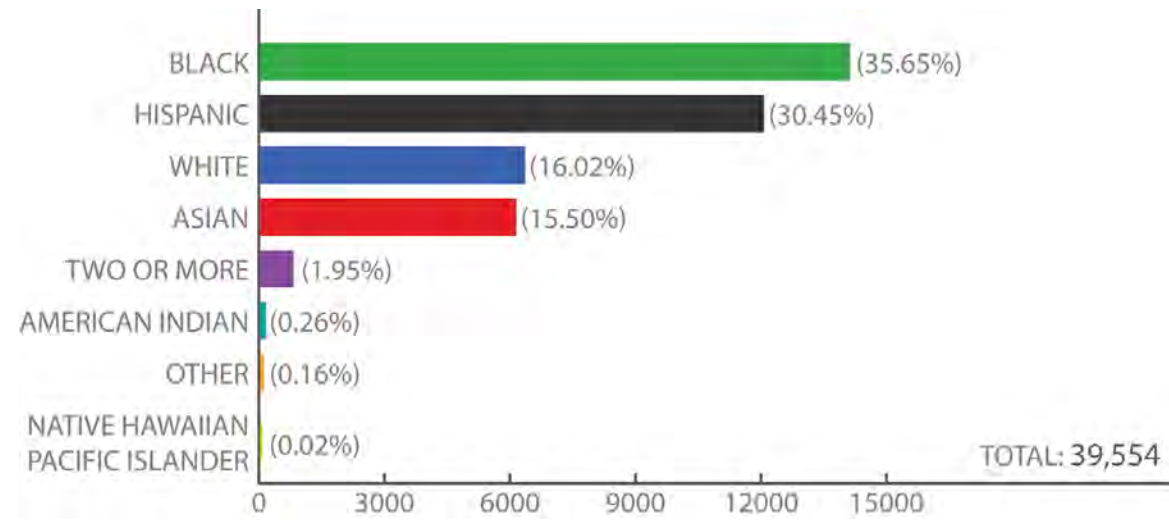
Table 1 // Race and ethnic distribution in Atlantic City. Information courtesy of US Census Bureau, 2010 Decennial Census

The neighborhoods of Chelsea and Ducktown, both historically white neighborhoods, appear to be the most racially mixed areas of the city, with a high percentage of Hispanic and Asian residents. Chelsea Heights and Lower Chelsea, both middle class neighborhoods, retain a high percentage of white residents but also show signs of increasing racial diversity, with Chelsea Heights in particular showing interesting signs of clustering of both African-American and Hispanic residents.
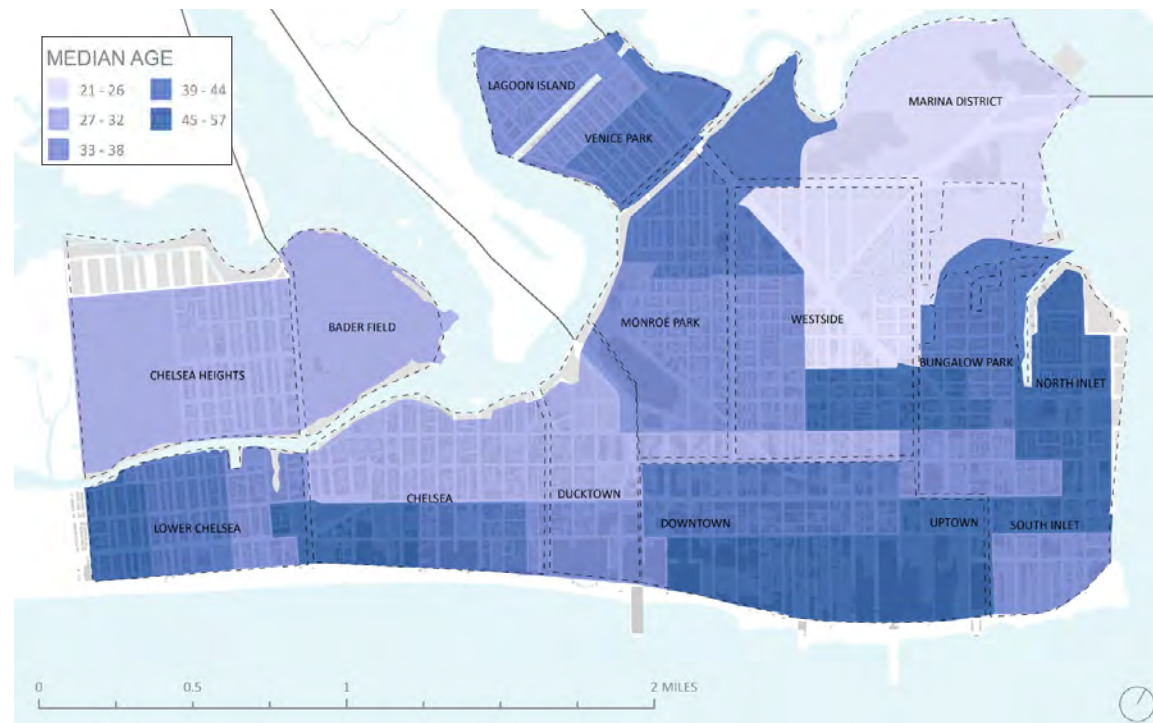
Map 11 // Median age across Atlantic City, 2013. Mapped at the census block group level. Information courtesy of US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2013, pulled through SimplyMap.
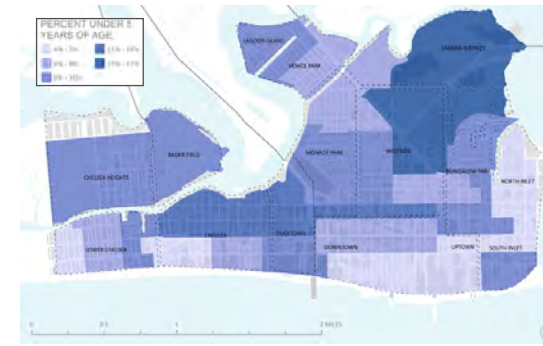
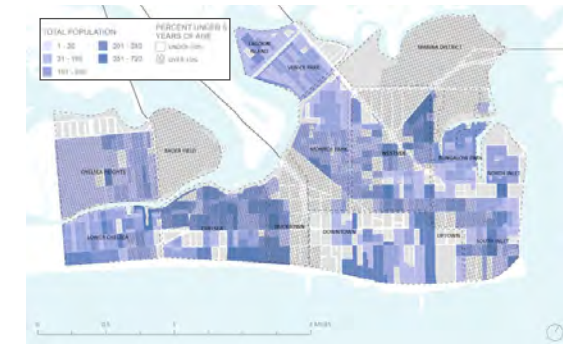Map 12 // Percent under the age of 5, 2013. CBGL data from ACS 2013 and SimplyMap.

Age

Like many of the other maps have shown, clear distinctions emerge when age characteristics are mapped. Areas that have seen significant change in its racial makeup, such as Ducktown or Chelsea, report lower median ages and a higher percentage of children under the age of 5, suggesting an emergence of new, younger social groups. Additionally, there are pockets, such as in the northern part of the West Side that both remain largely African American and have a very sizeable youth population. Finally, when layered directly with data on Atlantic City's population distribution, it is clear that areas with a high percentage of youth under the age of 5 cluster in high population density areas.

On the other hand, areas that have largely retained their traditional social makeup tend to have the highest percentage of residents over the age of 65. The area of

Map 14 // Percent over the age of 65, 2013. CBGL from ACS 2013 and SimplyMap.

Map 13 // Percent under the age of 5 by population distribution, CBGL data ,ACS 2013 and US 2010 Census.

Lower Chelsea that is still predominantly made up of Caucasians records the highest percentage of residents over the age of 65 and likewise reports a median age between 50 and 57. This is likewise true for certain areas in the traditionally African-American section of the city, such as the North Inlet and the southern portion of the West Side.

Education Level

For the most part, areas that have a higher median age and percentage of residents over the age of 65, such as Bungalow Park, Chelsea, Lower Chelsea, Downtown and Venice Park tend to have a higher percentage of residents with a bachelor's degree. The exception to this is Ducktown, which has a relatively young population and a higher percentage of residents under the age of 5, but boasts one of the highest percentage of residents with a bachelor's degree.
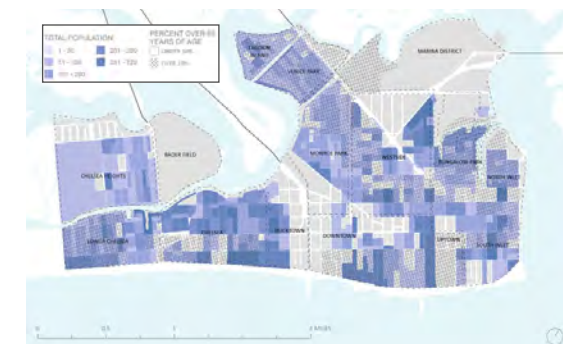
Map 15 // Percent over the age of 65 by population distribution, CBGL data, ACS 2013 and US 2010 Census.
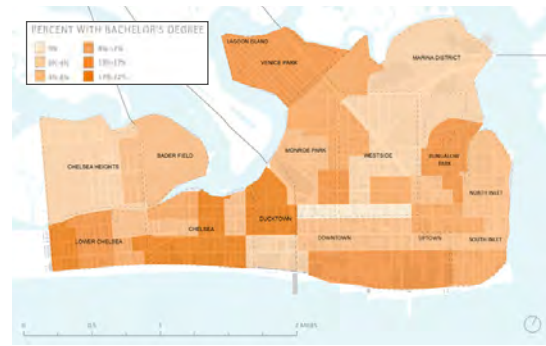
Map 16 // Level of educational attainment, CBGL data courtesy of US Census Bureau ACS 2013, SimplyMap..

Map 17 // Median income distribution, 2013. CBGL from ACS 2013, SimplyMap.

Map 18 // The percentage of people living in poverty across Atlantic City, 2013. ACS 2013, SimplyMap.

Map 19 // Median income distribution by areas with high poverty. CBGL from ACS 2013, SimplyMap.

Income Levels and Poverty

In terms of income levels, Atlantic City ranges from areas with a low median income level of approximately $14,000 (North Inlet) to areas topping $91,000 (Chelsea Heights and Venice Park).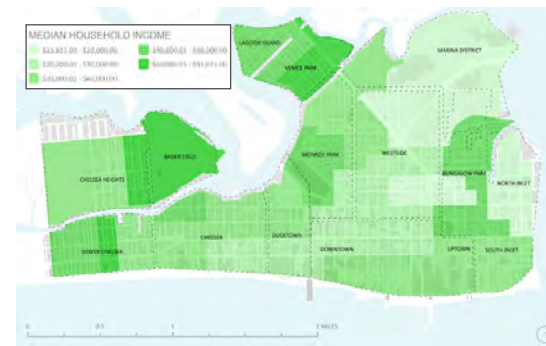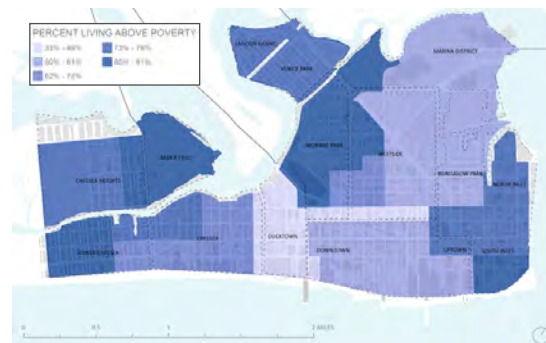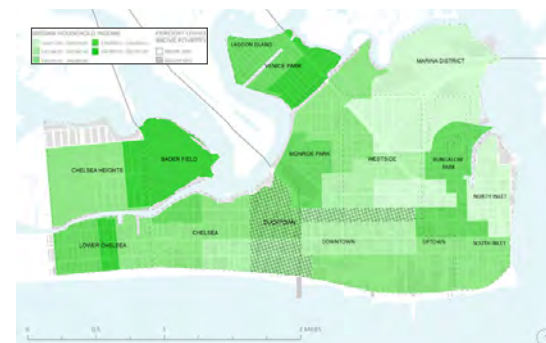 The average for the city as a whole however, tends toward the lower end, with a large number of census groups reporting in the lower three brackets for median income levels. This holds true when mapping the percent living in poverty. While traditional middle class areas such as Venice Park, Chelsea Heights and Lower Chelsea do exist, the majority of the city suffers from high rates of poverty and low-income levels. Ducktown, despite an income range that lies directly in

the median range (and one of the highest percentages of residents with a bachelor's degree), has a high proportion of residents below the poverty line.

Vacancy

A large number of these neighborhoods also suffer from high vacancy rates, some even upwards of 76% to 100%. Higher vacancy rates tend to be centered along the shoreline, even in middle class neighborhoods like Lower Chelsea and in the North Inlet. When layered with data on the number of household units, particularly along the shore, high vacancy concentrates in areas with a high number of household units. The exception is two
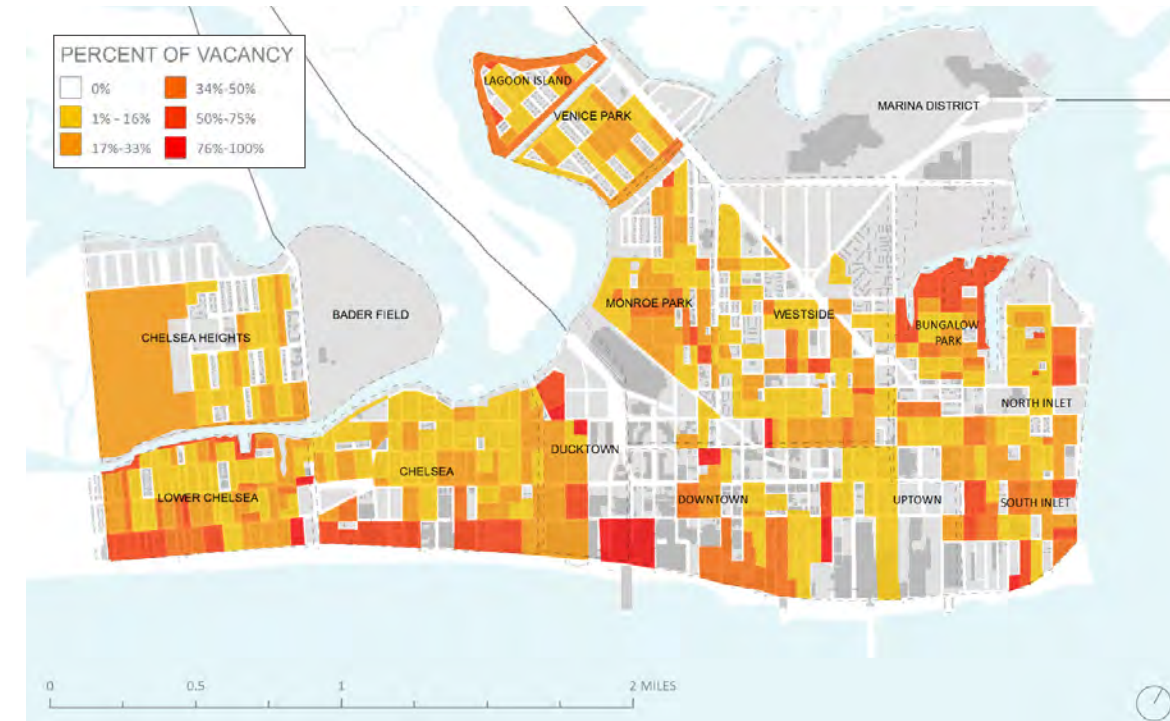
Map 20 // Vacancy rates across Atlantic City, 2010. Mapped at the census block level. Information courtesy of US Census Bureau, 2010 Decennial Census.
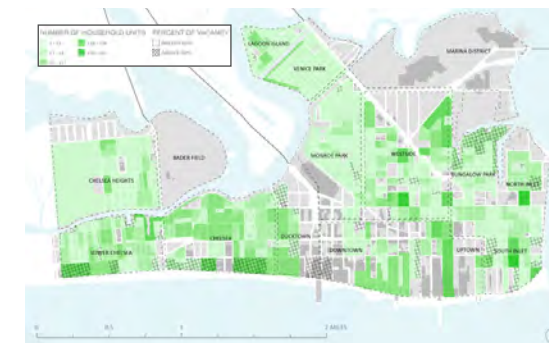
Map 21 // Household units by vacancy rate. Mapped at the census block level. Information courtesy of US Census Bureau, 2010 Decennial Census.
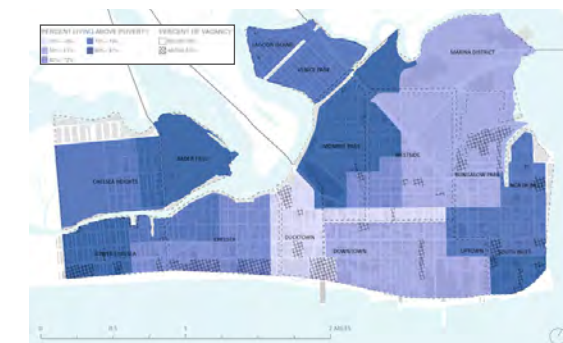
Map 22 // Percent living above poverty by vacancy rate. Mapped at the CBGL. Information courtesy of US Census Bureau, ACS 2013 and 2010 Decennial Census.

census blocks along the shoreline in the Ducktown and Downtown neighborhoods; while high vacancy rates are reported here, the actual household units reported for residents is 0, and as the figure ground map shows, this area is home to several casinos. The other area with a cluster of high vacancy rates is in Bungalow Park. While previous maps have shown that this area, a slightly older,

predominately African American neighborhood, has relatively higher income levels than the majority of the city, as the overlay of the percent living above poverty by the vacancy rate shows, approximately 40% to 50% of the resident in this area live below the poverty line, which may account for the cluster of high vacancy rates along Bungalow Park's inlet.

The data becomes more interesting when one maps the proportion of homeowners to renters residing in occupied housing. In many areas with low vacancy rates, such as Chelsea, almost 100% of all residents are renters. Certain areas enjoy both a low vacancy rate and high homeownership, such as the middle class neighborhood

of Venice Park. There are then areas, such as Lower Chelsea's stretch of blocks along the shore, that have both high vacancy rates and high percentages of homeowner occupancy. While it is unclear what accounts for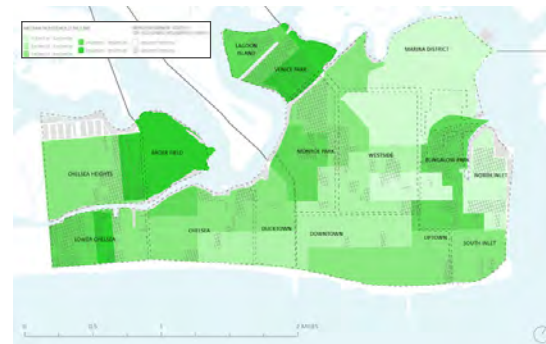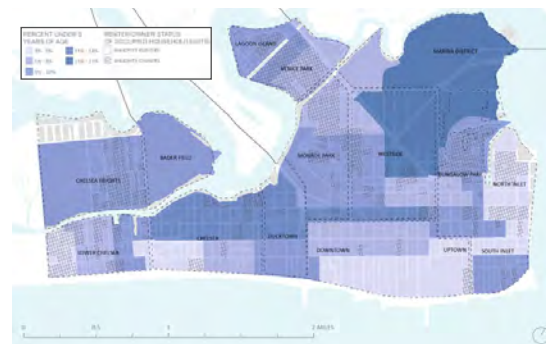 this interesting correlation, it is clear that overall, while certain area enjoy high rates of homeownership, the city as a whole is dominated by a renter market, a potential weakness for the city's sustainability.

Map 23 // Proportion of renters to homeowners in occupied housing, 2010.

Map 24 // Percent of vacancy by proportion of renters to homeowners in occupied housing.

Map 25 // Median income by proportion of renters to homeowners in occupied housing.

Map 26 // Median age by proportion of renters to homeowners in occupied housing.

Map 27 // Percent under the age of five by proportion of renters to homeowners in occupied housing.
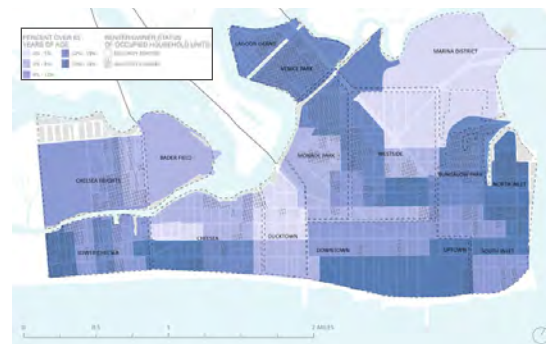
Map 28 // Percent over the age of 65 by proportion of renters to homeowners in occupied housing.

LOOKING AHEAD

While our map topics were chosen to address the current state and needs of Atlantic City, three in particular are key for this studio's mission concerning the future of Atlantic City's preservation: Figure/Ground, Recognized Heritage Sites, and FEMA Flood Insurance. These maps enable us to assess the feasibility of our preservation plans as well as the sustainability of their outcome. As discussed previously, the first map tells us what is there in terms of the building blocks, the second points out which areas contain historic assets, and the last indicates which of these areas will be affected by the rise of sea level in the future.

By providing a detailed look at the massing, scale, density and development patterns currently existing in Atlantic City, the Figure/Ground map allows us to understand what remains and make predictions about what might be endangered. For example, in the Westside neighborhood, groups and fragments of rowhouses are intersected by large clusters of new urbanist development, which tells us that the vernacular in that area may not be deemed valuable if they keep getting demolished and replaced.

Preservation planning requires knowing if there are enough historic assets to be dealt with. The Heritage Sites map, which locates the city's 25 registered properties, lets us know what is already considered to have historic value and whether or not it has survived to today. Knowing that a historic building can serve as a catalyst to protecting the cultural values of its environment, the map can inform group members to choose their project area for intervention accordingly.

The extensive effect of Hurricane Sandy, illustrated through its impressive storm surge elevation point on the FEMA Flood Insurance map, has made the issue of natural disasters one of the top priorities to consider in preservation planning. The map shows high risk flood zones Atlantic City, where new insurance standards are currently in effect. The new insurance policy can cause problems for historic buildings that are not up to code by limiting their budget for future repairs.

The sustainability of any preservation outcome will rely

on how well the project responses to uncontrollable changes and deals with protecting historic assets from potential water damages.

Map 7 Review // Recognized heritage sites around Atlantic City, from National and State Registers of Historic Places and CRDA.

Map 8 Review // Figure/Ground Map of Atlantic City. Original data illustrating the figure/ground 2008 courtesy of SOSH, modified through Bing and Google Maps
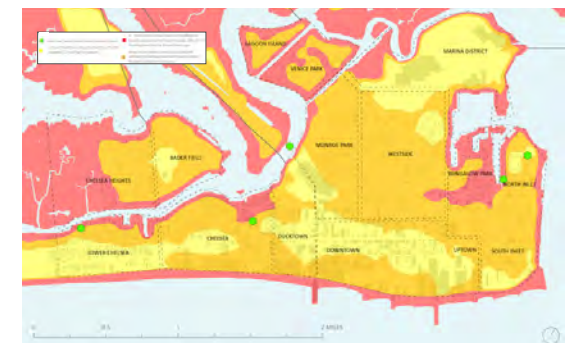
Map 29 // FEMA Flood insurance designations and Hurricane Sandy elevation points for Atlantic City. Information courtesy of FEMA.

It is a refuge thrown up by the continent building sea. Fashion took a caprice and shook it out of the fold of her flounce. A railroad laid a wager to find the shortest distance from Penn's treaty elm to the Atlantic Ocean, it dashed into the water and a city emerged from its train as a consequence of the manœuvre.

Heston, 1894

S I G N I F I C A N C E

HISTORIC NARRATIVE
BEHIND THE FANTASY

What is Atlantic City? Popular notions aided by sensational media accounts represent the city in turn as a historic respite, a roaring den of vice, and a contemporary outdated gambling mecca. Yet Atlantic City's more comprehensive and compelling identity can be found beyond the popular conceptions attributed to the seaside town. It is truly a palimpsest of character defining themes that wrought the trajectory of the city for over three centuries of development. Land use, transportation, tourism and economy, politics, environment, and values: These themes, or agents of urban growth, comprise the layers of the significance that express the identity of Atlantic City. To understand any city, we must understand first where it came from. The true Atlantic City is not the sum of its hackneyed-term parts, but a dynamic amalgamation of historical development variables that define what the city has been, what it is today, and how it can be transformed in the future.

DEFINING THE CONTEXT: HISTORIC THEMES

Throughout its history, Atlantic City has thrived on its ability to manufacture and profit from "an easily consumed and widely shared fantasy".1 Shortly after the first installation of the boardwalk in 1870, thousands of weary working-class urbanites began to flock to the city to escape the smog, noise, congestion and unrelenting work environments that left them feeling like cogs in the industrial machine. Capitalizing on visitors' desire to be "better than they were" entrepreneurs soon began to commodify fantasy and desire, offering middle-class guests an irresistible otherness made possible by popular culture and the latest technology.2 From saltwater taffy and bathhouses to Isaac Forrester's "Epicycloidal Diversion," a four wheeled rotating contraption that was the forerunner of the Ferris Wheel, visitors could let down their guards and live out their dreams for little more than the coast of a train ticket. What distinguishes Atlantic City from other "mass resorts" like Coney Island and nearby Cape May, however, is its duality – a juxtaposition of a manufactured leisure-scape and an inhabited city. By the 1920s as Prohibition raided America's liquor cabinet, the combination of public desire and private interest made Atlantic City ripe for political corruption. With prohibition largely unenforced, the city quickly became "Playground of the World," as racketeers and political bosses turned a blind eye to illegal liquor, gambling, and prostitution. However, by the middle of the 20th century, Atlantic City began to become enveloped by poverty, crime and corruption and experienced an economic decline that still affects the city today.

By the 1960s, the once grand hotels that were built during the city's heyday were suffering from the decline in tourism and many were either shut down or demolished, including the iconic Traymore and Marlborough-Blenheim hotels. As the grim reality of the city's problems worsened, politicians and voters looked back to escapism and fantasy in an effort to revitalize the city. In 1976, New Jersey voters approved casino gambling for Atlantic City and almost immediately, hotel owners and developers began constructing glimmering towers and high-rises along the boardwalk. While the referendum filled the coffers of land developers and casino owners, it did little to solve many of the urban problems that plagued the city since the mid-twentieth century. Rather, in many cases it intensified the problems, reinforcing socioeconomic divisions throughout the city by creating a startling contrast between tourism intensive areas and adjacent impoverished neighborhoods.

Throughout its history, Atlantic City's development was largely influenced by the themes of economic and racial tension, environmental threats, and the desire for the immediacy of escapism and fantasy. With the creation of middle class utopia, built on the principles of consumption, capitalism, and popular culture, Atlantic City has continue to be shaped by human desire, resulting in an increasingly wider break between private and public interests.

A Middle Class Utopia

As the industrialization of America continued and the Civil War ended, the middle class began to see extraordinary benefits with inexpensive transportation, shorter workweeks, and higher living standards.3 Dr. Jonathan Pitney's promotion of the location of Absecon Island, and its proximity for a health resort to Philadelphians, created a new venue for middle class enjoyment. The ideas of consumption, capitalism, and popular culture were offspring of the Industrial era and this paradise would become a product for middle-class Americans to consumer competition among businesses and railroads allowed Atlantic City to thrive and be affordable to the conventional American. In order to sell to these potential visitors, businessmen wanted to appeal to their desires. The clashing goals of a dual family resort and pleasure resort would not work; the juxtaposition was too strong. Overall, the middle-class never sought morality in Atlantic City and instead participated in the ills targeted by the Progressive Movement and Prohibition. In Atlantic City, the average Joe could be king and the plain Jane could be beautiful. Symbolic of the entire endeavor, the rolling chair allowed regular people to be wheeled around the boardwalk, not even lifting their feet to walk along its planks.4 The developers of Atlantic City had created a middle class utopia where escapism was the main objective. This theme is remains present through all areas of Atlantic City's story, however a modern epilogue twists the traditional middle class impact. In the twilight of Atlantic City's heyday, the middle class began to abandon the seaside resort and this demographic has yet to embrace the city as it once did. A significant facet of the city's current struggles is the need to reclaim the middle class, both in terms of visitors and permanent residents.

A City of Contrasts: Racial and Social Division

The racial tensions of America, the beginnings of Atlantic City, and the early-twentieth century Progressive Movement set the framework for a place of societal contrast. Developed as a summer oasis for Middle Class, White Philadelphians, African Americans built and ran the town after migrating during the 1870s following the Civil War. Representing most of the hotel and service staff, the racial tensions with Whites caused a predicament for the city's entrepreneurs. The Black population provided the resort town with the labor needed to run during the season but their presence was often displeasing to visitors. Blacks typically chose to abide by the boundaries set forth during slavery and did not question the de facto segregation of Atlantic City. As their population continued to grow, the formed their own areas for relaxation, primarily bathing at Missouri Avenue and buying property north of Atlantic Avenue.5 During the offseason, "Moonlight Excursion" became a common name for the use of the resort town by its African American residents and visitors.6 In the early years of the twentieth century, restrictions on African Americans began to spring up in Atlantic City with the onset of the Progressive Movement. Like the Jim Crow laws of the South, different soda and water fountains became visible. Atlantic Avenue became known as "The Great Divide" where Blacks lived on the Northside and Whites lived south of the street, Today this "Great Divide" still permeates Atlantic City, as it delineates the different racial neighborhoods, African Americans now represent 36% of the population, while Whites constitute 16%.7 Their discrimination is present throughout Atlantic City's history and develops the ongoing theme of the differing African American experience in Atlantic City.8

Natural Versus Built Environment

To the initial inhabitants of Absecon Island, Atlantic City's success in becoming "The Playground of the World" would have been quite the surprise. Described by one local as "a sandpatch, a desolation, a swamp, a mosquito territory, where you not build a city, or if you could, no one would go there," Jonathan Pitney's idea was mocked with its stamping as "Pitney's Folly."9 The businessmen who fell for Pitney's persuasion soon regretted their decision to invest in a railroad to the island; the environment was not well suited for development. The shoreline, ocean views, and pleasant weather would guarantee the summer visitors but the built environment could never

have the same security. Roughly 150 years later, the situation is the same. Atlantic City has seen numerous storms, destruction, and weathering. Hurricanes and erosion are the most hazardous natural forces and for the Atlantic City Boardwalk, the natural environment has not been kind. The natural environment of Atlantic City will always threaten its built environment and has been a theme of the city since its inception.

DEVELOPMENT FACTORS

Core to comprehending the present identity of Atlantic City and potential moving forward is an understanding the trajectory of the city's evolution over three centuries. The development through the six aforementioned eras has been guided by a series of triggers, catalysts of development that weave in and out of the city's history, inciting change. Though there are numerous factors that have elicited growth and decline over the years, the events that shaped the city can be abridged under the six predominant variables: (1) transportation; (2) land use and development; (3) tourism culture and economic development; (4) local politics; (5) environmental influences; and (6) social, cultural, and historical values. Taken together, these variables describe the rise and

fall of Atlantic City's history and provide insight into the significant aspects of the urban resort worth preserving for future generations.

Transportation

The island's symbolic shift from Absecon to Atlantic City occurred with the advent of the railroad to the south Jersey shoreline. After the Camden and Atlantic Railroad Company were granted a charter in 1852, Absecon Island's remote virgin land would be altered entirely. The railroad company, under the leadership of Dr. Jonathan Pitney and Richard Osborne, quickly purchased as much land as they could on the island. Briefly halted by the state to prevent a monopoly, they formed the Camden-Atlantic Land Company in order to purchase more land. The railroad was built across the state of New Jersey and connected the big city of Philadelphia to the remote, sandy terrain of Absecon Island.10

In 1875, the railroad would have new competition with one of their own. Samuel Richards broke from the Camden and Atlantic Railroad after disagreement over Atlantic City's future and retrieved the charter for the Philadelphia-Atlantic City Railway Company. With the

tracks constructed fast, the new railroad tickets were sold at half the price of their competitor. Atlantic City development boomed because of the cheap tickets and rise in visitors. In 1883, the railroad was sold to the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company.11 Following the success of railroad competition, another railroad came to Atlantic City. Even cheaper than the other two, the West Jersey and Atlantic Railroad was half the price of Richards' railroad. Once again, visiting Atlantic City was cheaper and easier than ever before.12

Following World War II, the rise of the automobile signaled the end of passenger railroad popularity. Thus began a national transition into automobile and suburb culture, which had unfortunate effects on the economy of Atlantic City. Rather than choosing to vacation in resort town, cars allowed Americans to go anywhere without reliance on the train.13 This was further exacerbated by the rise of air travel in the 1960s and 1970s, creating affordable travel to truly exotic locations for the first time. As less money poured in to the economy, the hotels, infrastructure, and attractions became second-rate. Development slowed and the city was in the beginnings of the downward spiral that continues to today.

Land Use and Development

In order for the development of Atlantic City to begin, the sand dunes were leveled, the ponds and nesting grounds removed, and the vegetation cleared. Richard Osborne then divided the land into a grid, with each plot neatly squared off to be sold. The grid had the names of the each state in order for the newly termed "Atlantic City" to appeal to the nation. On July 1, 1854, the railroad opened and special visitors taken to the new town. They stayed at the United States Hotel, also owned by the railroad, even though the building was still under construction.14 For the first twenty years of the city, the town was slow to develop, and infrastructure was lacking. The Civil War, an insect plague, and an economic recession tested the appeal of the town to developers.

The construction of the Boardwalk, numerous hotels, and the piers would become the foundation for the "The Playground of the World" era of Atlantic City. During this

time Landmarks like the Convention Hall was opened, as were several theatres like the Apollo, Globe, and the Woods. 15 As Atlantic City began its decline in the latter half of the twentieth century, development ceased as widespread clearance began. When the hotels that once served as the city's primary economic generators failed to draw visitors, the large architectural feats were torn down, leaving large swathes of open space. The situation continued into the 1970s and 1980s with piecemeal demolitions that created gaping holes in once dense blocks. Demolitions continue to this day, but the city began rebuilding after the legalization of casinos. Development once again took on a monumental scale with casinos along the Boardwalk. Though some of the few remaining hotels from the heyday were adapted for modern casino use, most of the hotels along the shore today are new construction. Unions demanded a law that casinos always be new construction because it provides more jobs than rehabilitation.

Tourism Culture and Economic Development

Tourism is the primary reason for the city's development into an urban oasis and it remains the city's most prevailing economic asset. The roots of tourism culture can be traced back to the early-nineteenth century, before the hilly dune landscape was leveled for urban habitation. The earliest known inn on Absecon Island is said to have been the business venture of Leeds's wife Millicent, established as a boarding house and tavern around 1815.16 The island did not have need for competitive ventures until after the conception of Atlantic City as a seaside resort nearly fifty years later. The second hotel on the island, the "Grand" United States Hotel, was constructed in 1854 by the Camden and Atlantic Railroad to support the resort environs envisioned by Pitney and Osborne.17 The 600-room hotel located in the South Inlet section of the island was a stark departure from the quaint boarding house run by the Leeds family; the new hotel reflected the grand aspirations of the city founders and would set the tone for the many hotels to come.

In a guidebook from 1906, historian Alfred M. Heston reported a staggering 749 hotels and boardinghouses

operating within city limits.18 The inns spread throughout the city; however, the hotels along the Boardwalk provide the most compelling glimpse into the culture of excess on which the tourism industry thrived in the city's prime – and the incredible loss of built heritage to would follow soon after. In the early years of the twentieth century, hotel architecture along the Boardwalk introduced lodgings that intentionally played into the city ethos of wonder and entertainment. The spectrum of sizes and designs, ranging from the Queen Anne style Marlborough Hotel, the Moorish-style of the Blenheim annex, to the seventeen-story, Art Deco Traymore Hotel, expounded the overall air of eclecticism intended to astound, to mesmerize, and, most importantly, attract business.

Yet hotels alone cannot encapsulate the scope of tourism culture in Atlantic City. The Boardwalk elevated the visitor experience, functioning as a stage "upon which there was a temporary suspension of disbelief; behavior which was exaggerated, even ridiculous in everyday life was expected."19 In a city once described as a kind of cultural thermometer for the tastes, fantasies, and aspirations of the people of the industrial Northeast… an important record of the American way of life,"20 the Boardwalk and the amusement piers extensions captured the essence of escapism, encouraging tourists to become more than themselves – if only for a brief moment in time.

While the Boardwalk has remained a constant feature of the Atlantic City experience, the lavish hotels became early casualties of the mid-twentieth century economic downturn. Unable to capture the tourist revenue that once inspired and sustained the city, and haunted by talk of casino legalization as a means of increasing state tax revenue, the majority of the Boardwalk's landmark hotels were demolished in the 1970s.21 The Traymore Hotel, for example, was torn down in 1972, the very same year that the State of New Jersey authorized the first study into the viability of legalizing gambling. Most of the Boardwalk's monolithic hotels followed the Traymore's fate soon after. A select few, such as Chalfonte-Haddon Hall and the Claridge Hotel, found second lives as casino hotel adaptations; yet, the principal legacy of the 1976

Gambling Referendum was the opportunity it carved for developers to erect new, modern casino resorts. The loss of Atlantic City's iconic hotels was fueled by the need to cultivate a new niche market for tourism and associated revenue. While it succeeded in reversing the downward spiral of the economy post-1950, the decision to appeal to tourists via casino attractions forever altered the physical and cultural landscape of the city.

Local Politics

From the beginnings of Atlantic City to the present day, savvy businessmen and bosses have ruled the city and established its reputation for political corruption. During the Mid-nineteenth century, Dr. Jonathan Pitney, a resident of Absecon Island, saw the coastal area as the idea setting for a health resort and pitched the idea to wealthy railroad tycoons. Successful with his persuasion, in 1852 the Camden and Atlantic Company received the first charter for a railroad connecting Philadelphia and Atlantic City.22 Thus, Atlantic City was founded by businessmen, rather than the ordinary people, and set the precedent for the city's politics revolving around making money. Through the next fifty years, the city developed through investment from a mixture of speculating entrepreneurs. They would lay the groundwork for the "heyday era" of Atlantic City after building the hotels, amusements, and the boardwalk.

One of these entrepreneurs was Louis Kuehnle, later known as the "Commodore," he ran a small hotel on Atlantic Avenue owned by his father. By 1905, Kuehnle was extremely wealthy and a social leader. Called "The Republican Boss Era of Atlantic City," the reign of the bosses began with Kuehnle in 1900. A reform movement during 1908 and 1912, focused on the social ills of Atlantic City, dismantled him from his boss position after a sentencing for grafting in 1912.23 Following Kuehnle, the next boss was Enoch L. "Nucky" Johnson. Now depicted in HBO's Boardwalk Empire, Johnson ruled Atlantic City during the majority of its "heyday" era. The city thrived off prohibition, as people came to Atlantic City for alcohol and excitement, both of which Johnson was eager to supply. With the repeal of prohibition, Atlantic City started floundering and so did Johnson.

He led until a tax evasion scandal forced him out of his position in 1941 and Frank S. "Hap" Farley stepped in to take over.

As New Jersey state senator for over 30 years, Farley proved a persuasive voice and champion for development in Atlantic City. Apart from his advocacy for legislating construction of the Garden State Parkway – which became known as "Farley's Folly" amongst northern New Jersey politicians – Farley successfully promoted local projects including the Atlantic City Expressway, the Atlantic City Marina, and the Richard Stockton State College.24 It was even the republican Farley who negotiated a $600 thousand contribution to Atlantic City for hosting the 1964 Democratic National Convention. As a legislator, Farley held considerable sway over development and decision-making to the benefit of Atlantic City; however, his tenure was marked by "bootlegging connections" and corruption allegations.25

Atlantic City ended its seventy-year "Republican Boss Era" in 1971 with the defeat of Farley at the hands of democrat Joseph McGahn, but the political corruption would continue well on into the future – several politicians have been imprisoned since the 1976 casino legalization

for various sentences of corruption. 26 However, the casino's emergence in Atlantic City sparked broader political implications for the state of New Jersey. Prior to 1976, state politics and funds were concentrated in the northern half of New Jersey above the capital of Trenton. As Atlantic City grew into a significant income generator with the arrival of legalized gambling, political attention shifted south and gave more weight – and funding – to historically overlooked cities. State attention on Atlantic prevails today, with the state-run Casino Reinvestment Development Authority controlling much of the city politics, presiding over the entire tourism district of Atlantic City and consequently orienting the investment around tourism and development.

Environmental Influences

As the "Playground of the World," Atlantic City's coastal situation provides the amenities that tourists need during the summer months. Unfortunately, the beautiful views, ocean waves, and acres of sand also mean that Atlantic City faces unforeseeable hazards each year. Since the development of the city, hurricanes have been causing havoc and destruction to the boardwalk and its structures. In 1870, the first boardwalk of Atlantic City, constructed of wood, was built one mile along the shore and was rebuilt four times because of the numerous storms that hit. In 1882, Colonel George Howard aimed to open the first amusement pier, unfortunately, it was destroyed by a storm shortly after construction finished, rebuilt, and then destroyed again by a ship collision. Finally, in 1884, another entrepreneur named James R. Applegate built a successful amusement pier. Roughly a decade later, the boardwalk was rebuilt for a fifth time, stretching four miles along the beach now and reinforced with concrete and steel.27

Overtime, Atlantic City was learning to adapt to the storms that would frequently threaten its precious boardwalk. As a coastal city, hurricanes and large storms are a yearly threat to the stability of Atlantic City and its environment. The 1943, the Army Corps of Engineers conducted the first environmental erosion studies in order to study the effects of severe hurricanes in Atlantic City.28 One year later, a major hurricane damaged the boardwalk severely

and both the Steel Pier and Heinz Pier were partially destroyed. In 1962, a large winter storm hit Atlantic City, submerged more than half of Absecon Island and three people lost their lives. 29 In 1966, Hurricane Alma brought 4.5 tidal waves to Atlantic City. In 1985, Hurricane Gloria hit Atlantic City and forced 11 casinos to close. Now, hurricanes seem ever more prevalent, and the cost even more detrimental. In 2001, Hurricane Irene caused the casinos of Atlantic City to shut down completely. One year later, Hurricane Sandy would be the deadliest hurricane in New Jersey history. Thankfully, Atlantic City had less damage because of the dune restoration project and only a portion of the boardwalk was destroyed.30 Overall, Hurricane Sandy had a lasting presence on the boardwalks of the northeast and shows that coastal cities like Atlantic City will need to prepare for the unexpected.

Large hurricanes are not the only problem, however, as smaller storms frequently lead to erosion and damage. In January 2012, a half-mile of Atlantic City's beach closed for four months in order to fill in cliffs that resulted from numerous small storms. Five months prior, after Hurricane Irene, that same land had been replenished with sand at high cost to the city's taxpayers.31 The weathering from smaller storms and trapped storm water causes this continual erosion along the shoreline. Even with the absence of powerful hurricanes, the city's shoreline is an expensive burden that will remain a challenge to upkeep.

Social, Cultural, and Historical Values

Changes in the social composition of city served as a powerful influence in the evolution of the physical environment over time. These include a variegating overall population, distinct neighborhood compositions encouraging the creation of an ethnical mosaic, racially segregated public spaces, and heated political divisions. But even more, shared values are in turn perpetuated or forgotten, depending on decisions made by the people of Atlantic City over time. The social, cultural, and historic values of Atlantic City are best understood not in insolation, but through their contributions to the historical eras of the city's past.

HISTORIC EVOLUTION

Historical sketches tend to pigeonhole the events in Atlantic City's past into one of two roughly defined categories, either the "Heyday" era from roughly 1915 to 1955, or the "Decline and Gambling" era from 1955 to present day.32 This system of classification, however, fails to accurately capture the more idiosyncratic tones and trends that define the City's heritage but are inevitably lost amid the broad nature of the two categories. Early settlement and development history, for example, is entirely unclassified – though essential to understanding foundational significance. In order to better define the historical trajectory of the urban resort, Atlantic City's historical timeline should instead be understood as six historical eras of development: (1) Early Settlement, 1695-1850; (2) Boosters, Promoters, and Speculative Development, 1850-1915; (3) Playground of the World, 1915-1955; (4) Decline and Demolition, 1955-1975; (5) Vegas on the Atlantic, 1975-1984; and (6) Regulation, Reinvestment, and Reinvention, 1984-present. These eras expand upon the standard two-tier system of historical classification, and serve to highlight historically overlooked aspects of Atlantic City's heritage.

Early Settlement (1695-1850)

The first era encompasses the years of steady but sparse development on Absecon Island that predated the creation of Atlantic City after 1850. Though the city was not typically considered "founded" until the 1850s, the island saw its earliest investment in 1695, when Thomas Budd purchased land at the price of four cents per acre to establish a Quaker farmstead.33 Despite Budd's early venture into the wild landscape, Jeremiah Leeds is generally recognized as the first official settler in 1785.34 The Leeds family became a family of firsts, credited with the construction of the first permanent structure with the cedar log Leeds Plantation House, which once stood at the point where the modern Atlantic City Expressway ends. The Leeds family also began the first known business venture, a boarding house and tavern – coincidentally, the earliest inn on the soon to become tourism-dependent island – run by Leeds's widow Millicent. According to the historical
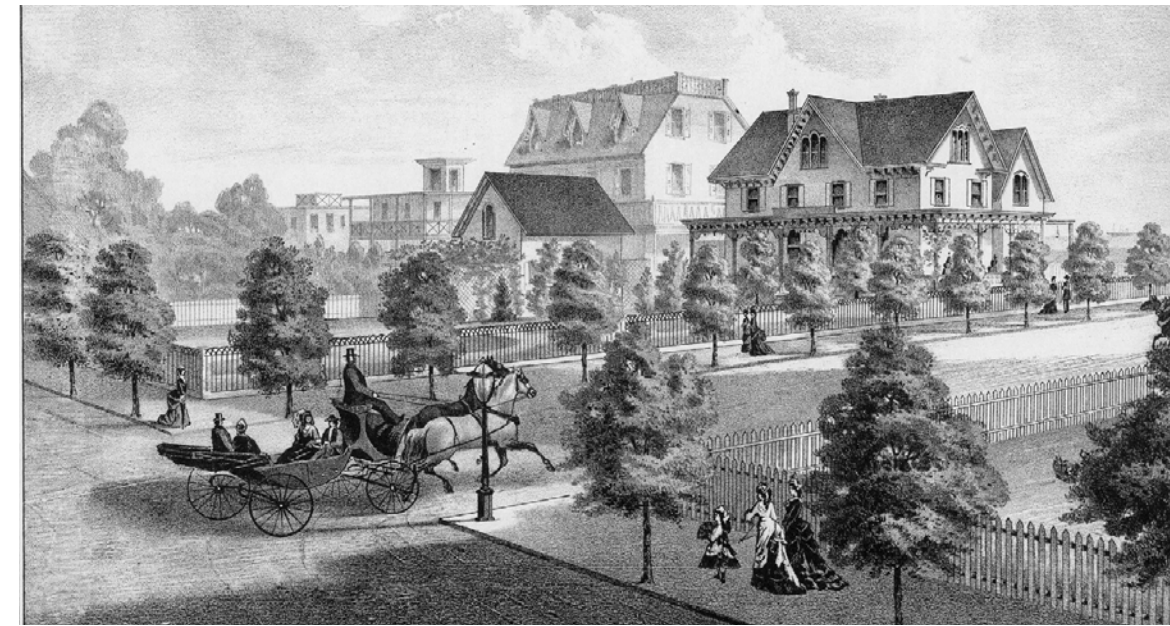
marker denoting the now extinct Leeds Plantation, the earliest era of Atlantic City's growth was predicated on the activities of Leeds' ten children, who developed the small town of seven houses that stood when Absecon Island was re-discovered by the acknowledged founder, Dr. Jonathan Pitney.

Boosters, Promoters, and Speculative Development (1850-1915)

Convinced that Absecon Island could become Philadelphia's answer to Cape May, Pitney launched an effort in 1852 to secure railroad access and large-scale investment to develop Leeds' small family respite into a booming seaside resort.35 According to local historian A. L. English, "There seems to be little doubt that Dr. Pitney was the real founder of Atlantic City, the spirit that first appreciated its wonderful curative powers, and placed effectively before capitalists its attractions as a watering-place."36 His vision was helped to fruition by a partnership with former Pennsylvania Railroad Chief Engineer, Richard Osborne, who worked in turn as an engineer, planner, and early promoter of the fledging resort.37 Together, Pitney and Osborne succeeded in establishing the charter for the Camden and Atlantic Railroad, which would convey tourists directly from Camden to Absecon Island. The Camden and Atlantic Land Company was chartered the following year to aid in the extensive land acquisitions required to construct the railroad.38 1853 and 1854 would become vastly significant years for Atlantic City's development; the two years alone bore witness to Osborne's design of the city and extant grid, the grand opening of the city's first modern inn, the United States Hotel, the application of a new city moniker conceived by Pitney himself, the municipal charter for Atlantic City, and the inaugural run of the Camden and Atlantic Railroad. Having been granted the foundation for future growth as middle-class respite – referred to as "the future lungs of Philadelphia" by Osborne – Atlantic City began its rise toward its widely acknowledged golden age in the twentieth-century.39 The official founding of the city was soon followed by the first iteration of the Boardwalk in 1870, the first known amusement pier in 1882, and the introduction of the rolling chairs – a nearly century old tradition by the time

they were discontinued in the 1970s – in 1887. This era also saw the inception of monumental architecture such as the Marlborough Hotel in 1902 its Blenheim annex in 1906, brought to the Boardwalk by Philadelphian architect William Price. Toward the close of the Boosters era, the annual population had risen 95% since 1850, reaching over 66,000 permanent residents by 1915.40

Playground of the World (1915-1955)

Atlantic City's heyday is typically defined as the period from 1915 to 1955, during which time the city had grown into the marketing nicknames America's Playground and the Playground of the World. The very factors that catalyzed the city's rapid growth also enabled its access to the urban middle-class, allowing the average visitor to vacation on the fifth version of the Boardwalk as elites. According to historical Charles E. Funnell, Atlantic City in its heyday offered "the illusion of social mobility," allowing visitors to detach from their lives and escape into the contrived landscape of pleasure and excess.41 This sentiment was kept heightened with sensational displays and enthralling feats of architecture, engineering, and entertainment, meant to capture the excitement of the nearly 16 million visitors in 1936 alone.42 The culture of luxury, excess, and capitalism was also immortalized in this era by the game Monopoly. In 1929, local teacher Ruth Hoskins added Atlantic City street names to a version of the game of "Finance" for instructional purposes at the local Friends School.4344 The Atlantic City nomenclature stuck, and was preserved in the Parker Brothers' acquisition of "Monopoly" in 1935.

This period also notably promulgated a mixture of conflicting ethos. During Atlantic City's heyday, a legally sanctioned moral code coexisted with the bootlegging, gambling, corruption, and vice which carried on prolifically behind closed doors. It was an era of inclusion, encouraging middle-class Americans to indulge in leisure activities once reserved for the wealthy elite; yet it was also the era in which segregation was formalized, relegating African Americans to a single slice of beach around 1930 known as Chicken Bone Beach, and renaming avenues running parallel to the shore in

the northeast section of the city to differentiate from the white populated sections in the southwest. If the period previous foretold impending prosperity, the lavish culture of contradictions in this era harbingered its decline.

The 1940s proved the penultimate decade of prominence for the seaside resort, ushering in the last vestiges of notoriety with the Ice Capades, the introduction of widespread electric culture and "push-button" living, and even the inaugural duet of Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis's first joint performance at the 500 club in 1946.45 The United States Army briefly took over the city from 1942 to 1944, transforming the tourist town into "Camp Boardwalk," an army base on the beach that turned hotels into hospitals and barracks, and the beach into a training field.46 However, while the army's brief tenure served as a powerful financial generator at the time, the effects were less a lasting economic impact than a last gasp.47 With the nation's highest per capita debt of $389 reported in 1936, enduring hardships left over from the Depression, and the repeal of Prohibition – an act injurious to one of the city's largest economic drivers – Atlantic City fell precipitously toward demise, permanently ending its reputation as the Playground of the World.48

Decline and Demolition (1955-1975)

Following its golden era of prosperity, Atlantic City entered into a brief – yet rapid – era of regression. Poor economic conditions generated from the hubris of its heyday were subsequently exacerbated by trends of the of late 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. As visitor rates sank due to nascent air travel, which brought exotic destinations into direct competition with the accessible resort town, white flight substantially decreased the permanent population of the city to approximately 47,859 in 1970.49 Efforts to stimulate the economy through tourism floundered as well, with visitor rates dropping from 475,000 to 225,000 throughout the 1970s.50 And though heritage was marginally acknowledged with the 1971 nomination of the Absecon Lighthouse to the National Register of Historic Places, this era also brought about widespread demolition of built heritage. The most notable losses to the landscape included the majestic architecture along

the boardwalk; once significant revenue generators, the massive hotels no longer served the economic climate and were thus cleared in anticipation of future development. In the span of a decade, Atlantic City lost the Marlborough Hotel and Blenheim Annex, the Traymore Hotel, the Breakers Hotel, and the St. Charles Hotel.

Vegas on the Atlantic (1975-1983)

Economic redemption came in 1976 with the Gambling Referendum; after twenty years of swift urban, social, and economic decline, Atlantic City seized the opportunity to revitalize through the legalization of casinos. In most historical narratives, this era is simply categorized under the umbrella of the post-decline years that include all events from the introduction of the Gambling Referendum to the present day. However, there is a clear demarcation between the tone of the city in the early years of casino growth and its contemporary identity. The few years following the Referendum were marked by development in abandon, with considerable demolition continuing from the previous era now extending to piecemeal parcel demolition throughout the city. Smaller tokens of local heritage that had survived the demolition in the former era were cleared for the new construction of modern casino complexes and auxiliary building along the Boardwalk. Scant oversight in the development of these perceived economic saviors led to an era of large growth without accountability. In reality, the casinos did not save Atlantic City; they merely created a new Atlantic City.51

Even as the city reached its lowest point in the 1970s, not all stakeholders agreed with bringing gambling – albeit, legal gambling – back to Atlantic City. The New Jersey Counsel of Churches waged a strong campaign against casinos, supported by acute concerns raised by the State Attorney General and the U.S. Attorney for New Jersey.52 In the end, pressing need for swift economic redemption overrode the opposition. With the Gambling Referendum thus in place, the city was forced to grapple with the demands of the burgeoning new industry that, in time, would come to define the identity of modern Atlantic City. Redevelopment
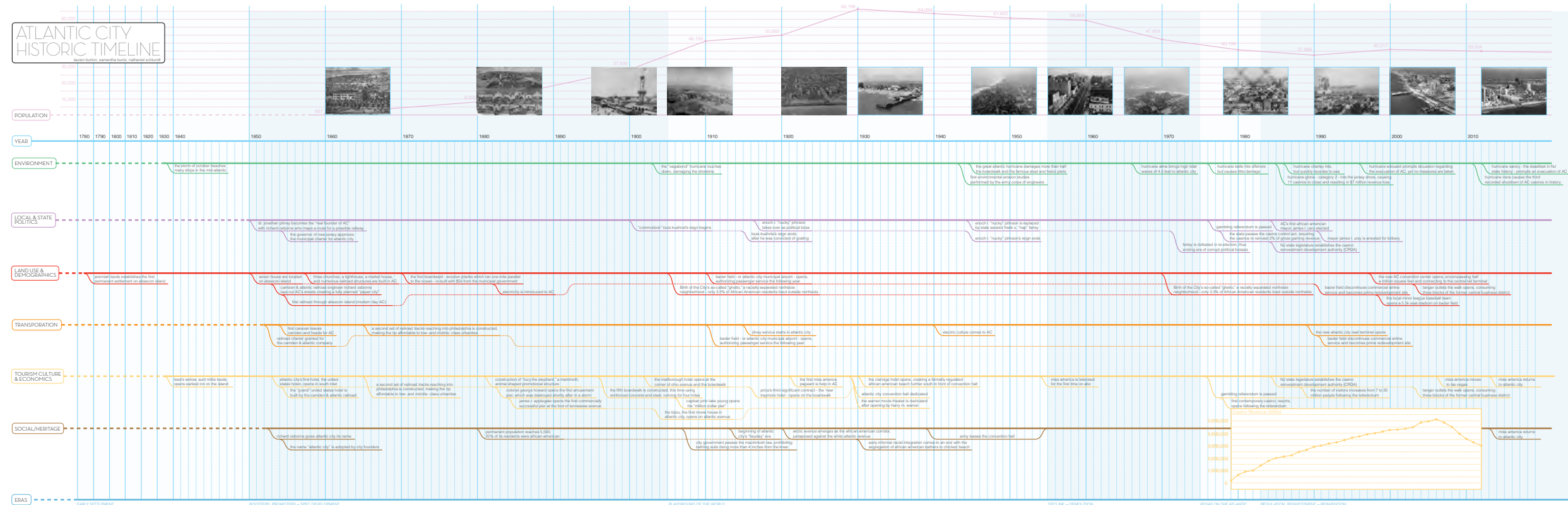
Map Name // Description of what the map says. For example, this map shows the three forms of interventions from the preservation approach and identifies focus areas for independent projects

initiatives were tabled as casino-driven development projects took precedence, and the very thing that was supposed to save Atlantic City drove a wedge further in the crevasse between the Boardwalk and the rest of the city.53 Regulations intended to preserve the integrity of the new industry only contributed to the massive growth of casino development. For instance, casinos are "permitted to have permitted to have 60,000 square feet of casino space for the first 500 rooms. For each 100 rooms thereafter, they qualify for an additional 10,000 square feet of casino space up to a maximum of 200,000 square feet."54 The result was a snowball of development with casinos seeking to maximize revenue through larger gaming floors, only possible through building larger and larger hotels.

Such mandates came to Atlantic City with the 1977 Casino Control Act. The state at this time also required casinos to reinvest 2% of the gross gaming revenue in the local environment to help mitigate the effects of mass development.55 However, the first casinos – including Resorts in 1978, Caesar's Boardwalk Regency in 1979, and the new Claridge Hotel in 1981 (all of which represented historic hotel conversions in one form or another, as opposed to new constructions) began operating through loopholes that begat a generally unregulated climate until 1984.

Regulation, Reinvestment, and Reinvention
(1984-Present)

In 1984, the same year that the city elected its first African American Mayor, the state of New Jersey took control over the city's laissez-faire approach to casino regulation with the formal establishment of the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority (CRDA). Prior to the CRDA, casinos failed to dutifully reinvest the sanctioned 2% of gross revenue into the local economy. The CRDA amended the 1977 requirement to become either pay 2.5% of its gaming revenues to the state or provide a 1.25% investment to the local community. With the new requirement strictly regulated, all casinos since 1984 have chosen the avenue of reinvestment.56 As Atlantic City attempts to recover from the deleterious effects of past events, the one most evident aspect of the most contemporary era is a sense of reinvention. The focus of new development has adopted a more civic tone, anticipating the preferences of a new generation of tourists in order to restore the prominence of a bygone era with the new slogan "Do AC." Notable recent projects include the construction of a new rail terminal in 1989, a new convention center in 1997, and an outlet shopping center in 2003. Reinvestment funds have also supported a range of civic art projects, including the ARTlantic program that uses vacant land as blank canvases for art and landscaping installations.

More than 160 years after its official founding – and over 300 years since the original investor – Atlantic City is on the cusp of another reinvention. Like before, the city seeks to entice visitors, elevate the economy, and stimulate nationwide relevance. However, the Atlantic City of the twenty-first century has centuries of experience on which to base decisions moving forward. In this modern era, heritage is not only an essential value to be preserved: it is also the key to the successful redevelopment of the city.

BEYOND THE CONTEXT

The internal functions of Atlantic City's built environment, social structure, and economic pursuits are what distinguish the city from all other seaside destinations and emphasize the unique heritage requiring consideration and conservation. However, Atlantic City's history is buoyed by an external context that permeates its own idiosyncrasies and exceeds the city's spatial connection to Philadelphia and its economic and political ties to the major cities of the northeast. Certain themes – such as social inequity, middle-class aspirations, and leisure – speak to a prevailing national narrative. Atlantic City reflects the very best and worst of American penchants, hyperbolizing the tendencies of the average citizen as it strove to become a terminus of reality while struggling to contain its own urban truths. It is in this sense that Atlantic City is far greater than the sum of its parts, as it symbolizes the evolution of American ethos from the Victorians to the Millennials.

HISTORIC MAPS

Fire insurance maps, biographical atlases, lot plans, and aerial photographs help to illustrate the physical change of Atlantic City throughout the years as alluded to in the historic narrative.57 These visual aids show the growth of the city from Atlantic Avenue to the Atlantic Ocean as well as the historic fabric that still remains from each period of time. They also demonstrate the impact of Urban Renewal through wholesale demolition, and the creation of a "new" Atlantic City by the multiplying casinos. The first set of maps shows the city as a whole, while the second set magnifies the transformation of the South Inlet neighborhood, arguably the area that saw the most change over time in Atlantic City.

Transitioning through the maps from 1877 to 1952 illuminates the increasing density of Atlantic City through the first three historical eras. Development moves away from the commercial corridor, Atlantic Avenue, to the shore, a place for retrieve and escapism with the Boardwalk, amusement piers, bathhouses, and ocean. The 1877 biographical atlas by Woolman and Rose is the first map of Atlantic City that includes buildings and parcels.58 The figure ground provides visual proof that the foundation of the city began from Atlantic Avenue because of the Camden and Atlantic Rail Road. The commercial corridor was the central hub for activity with storefronts, hotels, municipal buildings, and some private residences. The map depicts Richard Osborn's 1853 grid plan, stemming from that of Philadelphia, as

well as the streets named after states to further Atlantic City's appeal to the nation. The grid continues as dashed lines into the ocean, indicating future development plans for expansion. Two parallel lines that follow the shore denote one of the first versions of the mile long Boardwalk. The enlargement of the South Inlet shows Absecon Lighthouse close to shore. This area was once known as Atlantic City's prominent "Uptown," a prime location for wealthy Philadelphian real estate and where the first hotel stood, the United States Hotel stood.

Sanborn's 1886 fire insurance map demonstrates the shift of development away from Atlantic Avenue to the shore.59 The changes from 1877 map indicate the growing tourism industry in Atlantic City. Hotels and bathhouses spring up along the boardwalk and newly built amusements piers with opera houses and skating rinks provide further escapism. A. H. Mueller's 1900 lot plans map illustrates not only the growing built environment, but also the expanding terrain.60 Between the 1886 and 1900 maps, the shoreline along the South Inlet extends further into the ocean. Absecon Lighthouse is now no longer along the shoreline, but three blocks back. The Historic High Water Lines map, a compilation of the ever-changing water lines emphasizes this evolution. As proposed by the 1877 map, the streets are lengthened and more area is available for development. The fifth version of the Boardwalk, constructed in 1896, runs for four miles and adheres to the new shoreline. Since 1886, additional houses are built to fill in the gaps between Atlantic Avenue and the shore.
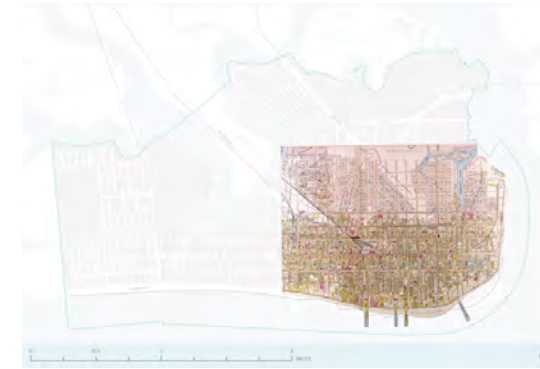
1877// Woolman & Rose Atlas Map

1886 // Sanborn Fire Insurance Map

1900 // A.H. Mueller Lot Plans Map

1924 // A.H. Mueller Atlas Map

1952 // Sanborn Fire Insurance Map

1970 // Historic Aerial

1995 // Historic Aerial

2013 // Google Maps Aerial

Historic High Water Lines

1852 — 1866 — 1872 —
1884 — 1900 — Absecon Lighthouse ●

1877 // South Inlet

1924 // South Inlet

1970 // South Inlet

2013 // South Inlet
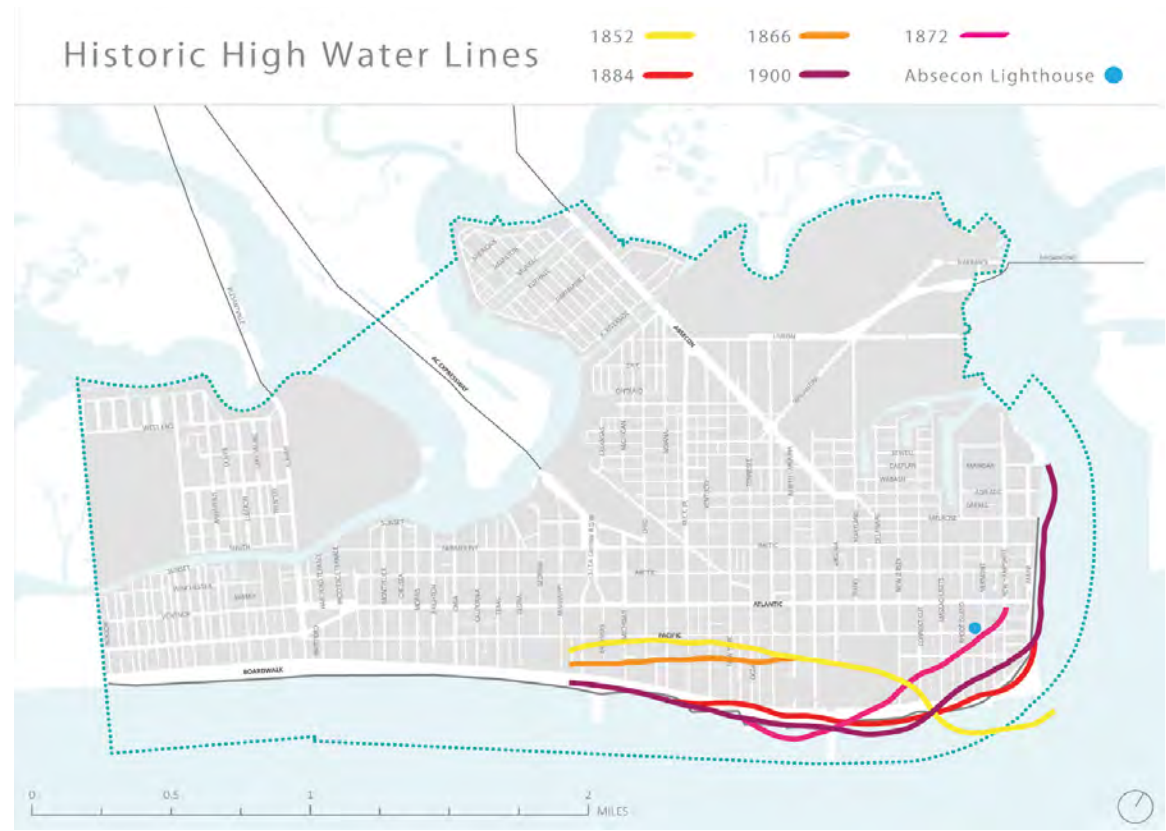
The 1924 lot plans map again by A. H. Mueller depicts the growing duality of the city as a manufactured leisure-scape and an inhabited city.61 Representative of the "Playground of the World" era, this map shows the most amusement piers out of all ten maps. While piers have come and gone due to hurricanes and fires over the last several decades, they have remained a prominent attraction for the middle class utopia. The increasing year-round population is evident through the multiplying housing stock. The planned lot parcels, also shown in the 1900 map, denotes developer expectations for more residents and vacation homes. Sanborn's 1952 fire insurance map continues to convey this growth in addition to new public housing projects.62 The map indicates the expanding boundaries of Atlantic City past Sovereign Avenue to include the Chelsea neighborhood. Just before the end of the era in 1955, it is the final map to represent Atlantic City in its heyday.

The remaining series of maps in the collection are aerials from 1970 to 2013 and demonstrate the last three historical eras that left just as much as mark on the city as the first three. The 1970 aerial highlights the scars left behind from Urban Renewal, specifically its call for demolition.63 The image is a true representation of its era, Decline and Demolition. Beginning with the 1976 Gambling Referendum, casinos start to pop up along the boardwalk, at first in the older hotels, but then as newly constructed behemoths. The block long masses for tourist entertainment as well as city reinvention and reinvestment are viewable in the 1995 aerial.64 It also shows the new Atlantic City Rail Terminal and Bader field no longer as an airport. The 2013 aerial illuminates continued efforts for economic development with the new Atlantic City Convention Center, the baseball stadium on Bader Field, the Tanger Outlets, and ARTlantic.65 The impact of Hurricane Sandy on the northern portion of the Boardwalk and the subsequent reconstruction progress is also visible. The South Inlet close-up reveals the latest casino development, the Revel.

END NOTES

21   "Group in Jersey Will Study Casino Gambling Feasibility," The New York Times, (21 November 1970).

22   Johnson, Boardwalk Empire, 1-8.

23   Paulsson, The Social Anxieties, 2.

24   Donald Linky, "Atlantic City, New Jersey Governors and Casino Gaming," Eagleton Institute of Politics, (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University), 16.

25   Ibid, 17.

26   Johnson, Boardwalk Empire.

27   Levi, et. al., 17-20.

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29   "March 1962 Storm," The Atlantic City Experience, accessed September 30, 2013.

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31   Emily Previti, "Atlantic City Officials Close Beaches after Erosion Carves Steep Cliffs into Shoreline," Press of Atlantic City, January 25, 2012.

32   Simon; and "The Built Environment of Atlantic City," from Beach, Boardwalk, and Boulevard: Signs and Symbols of Atlantic City, University of Pennsylvania Studio, 1979, (University of Pennsylvania Architectural Archives: Venturi Scott Brown Collection, 225.V1.F.8001.09).

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34   Atlantic County Government, "Absecon and Absecon Island," (Atlantic City, NJ: Department of Administration, 2010).

35   Charles E. Funnell, "Virgin Strand: Atlantic City, New Jersey as a Mass Resort and Cultural Symbol," dissertation, (Philadelphia, PA: The University of Pennsylvania, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, 1973): 3.

36   A. L. English, History of Atlantic City, New Jersey, (Philadelphia, PA: Dickson & Gilling Publishers, Printers, and Binders, 1884).

37   Thomas R. Winpenny, "The Engineer as Promoter: Richard B. Osborne, the Camden and Atlantic Railroad, and the Creation of Atlantic City," in Essays in Economic and Business History, vol. 22, (Mount Pleasant, MI: Central Michigan University, 2004): 301-312.

38   Ibid.

39   Funnell, 1973:4.

40   Harriet Newburger, Anita Sands, et al., Atlantic City: Past as Prologue (Philadelphia, PA: Community Affairs Department, Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, 2009).

41   Funnell, 1973:52.

42   Ibid.

43   N.B.: "Finance" was a game made popular by college students for understanding basic economic theories. The game of itself was a derivative of "The Landlord's Game," patented in 1904 by Elizabeth Magie Phillips. The muddled origins of the iconic Parker Brothers game led to several lawsuits at the end of the 20th century where early contributors to the evolution of the game fought – in keeping with the spirit of the game – for a share of Monopoly's profits.

44   Burton H. Wolfe, "The Monopolization of Monopoly: Ruth Hoskins," (San Francisco, CA: San Francisco Bay Guardian, 1976).

45   Robert E. Ruffolo, Jr. and William H. Sokolic, Images of America: Atlantic City Revisited, (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2006); and Levi, et. al, Atlantic City, 125 Years of Ocean Madness, 1994:25.

46   Ibid.

47   Levi, et. al., 1994:110.

48   Jonathan Van Meter, The Last Good Time, (New York, NY: Crown Publishers, 2003).

49   "The Built Environment of Atlantic City," 1979; and Simon.

50   Ruffolo and Sokolic, 2006.

51   Laura Spina, Interview, 15 October 2013 (Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia City Planning Commission, 2013).

52   Joseph Rubenstein, "Casino Gambling in Atlantic City: Issues of Development and Redevelopment" in Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, vol. 474, (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications and the American Academy of Political and Social Science, July 1984), 64.

53   Ibid, 65.

54   New Jersey Casino Control Commission, "Casino Gambling in New Jersey: a Report to the National Gambling Impact Study Commission," (Atlantic City, NJ: January 1998), 15.

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56   Casino Reinvestment Development Authority, "History," (State of New Jersey, 2012).

END NOTES

57   Methodology

Understanding the need for a visual representation that demonstrates the evolution of Atlantic City as a whole, a series of historic maps and aerials were collected with the help of Pam Richter from the Heston Room of the Atlantic City Archives, SOSH Architects, and intensive online searching. For efficiency, only ten maps were chosen to highlight these changes. The selection was based on the availability and quality of maps, a decade to two decades gap between maps, and the maps that would exhibit the most change over time. Only maps that showed a figure ground with buildings were used such that the collection could aid in determining the age of structures and potential for historic designation. This proved to be essential for the Character Area Study as well as individual intervention projects.

Once obtained, the maps were edited using various techniques in Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator to provide a consistent display of the collection. All maps were scaled and stretched to be in proportion with the Atlantic City studio's base map. Any distracting and unnecessary features in the maps (legends, map titles, water masses) were removed. Some maps needed special attention because of their original format. The 1886 and 1952 maps were split up into several dozen block-by-block sheets, and thus were stitched together to create one single and all-inclusive map. The 1924 map is a series of edited photographs of the original A. H. Mueller map, which was also divided into sections that were stitched together.

58   Rose, Theodore F. and C. H. Woolman. Atlantic City, 1877. 1878. David Rumsey Historical Map Collection.

59   Sanborn Map and Publishing Co. Atlantic City, New Jersey. 1886. Rutgers University Special Collections.

60   Mueller, A. H. Atlantic City. 1900. Rutgers University Special Collections.

61   Mueller, A. H. Atlas of Absecon Island, N.J. Volume One Embracing The City of Atlantic City and City of Brigantine. 1924. Atlantic City Archives.

62   Sanborn Map Company. Insurance Maps of Atlantic City, New Jersey. 1952. Rutgers University Special Collections.

63   HistoricAerials. Aerial Photograph. 1970. HistoricAerials.com.

64   HistoricAerials. Aerial Photograph. 1995. HistoricAerials.com.

65   GoogleMaps. Aerial Photograph. 2013. Maps.Google.com.

CHARACTER STUDY
DEPICTING THE CITY

The character study project framework's (CSP) implementation in Atlantic City is part of an effort to understand the history of the built environment and development patterns which will guide a larger conservation plan. The collected data provides detailed information on the existing urban fabric where there is currently a lack documentation and analysis of the historic built environment. Understanding the development patterns in the city and the historic built environment's place in those patterns will aid in leveraging historic structures as assets in the planning process.

GOALS

he character study analysis process is a promising new model for gathering information for a historic resource survey. The Character Study Project (CSP) is designed to address immediate practical needs as well as long-term strategic issues in the planning and preservation fields by (1) collecting and analyzing block-scale data about the historic urban environment, (2) integrating this data into existing planning and policy frameworks, and (3) completing survey work within tight timeframes and budgets.

The Character Study has four primary goals:

1. Create a database of categorized existing building typologies

2. Integrate with planning databases and inform public decision-making;

3. Enable evidence-based prioritization of future preservation efforts by providing a baseline of information on the historical character of the built environment; and

4. Develop a replicable, resource-efficient methodology that can be used in other towns, cities, and regions.

 In addition to identifying historic resources, the CSP framework further defines land use, characteristics of neighborhoods in Atlantic City, and discrepancies between city, state, and federal documentation of historic resources and land use versus the conditions on the ground. Once there is an understanding of what exists, the historic resources may be leveraged as social, economic, and cultural assets for revitalization efforts.

METHODOLOGY

A character study works at the block level by categorizing the built environment into a typology framework through an initial windshield survey. This data is then entered in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) so the information can be spatially analyzed. Specific patterns of density and development become prevalent during this process.

The Atlantic city character study began as an analysis of the existing housing stock located throughout the city as a reaction to the sense that historic neighborhoods and housing stock with high integrity existed, but was not documented or analyzed. An initial windshield survey identified three broad categories of housing.

TYPOLOGY LIST

This housing analysis evolved into a full-scale categorization of the built environment. The following typology list was created to categorize the existing built environment:

A. Detached-Single Family

01 - Large Lot, Large House
This category includes historic ocean side cottages and other large single family homes of both historic and contemporary styles.

02 - Small Lot
Densely built single-family homes situated on small lots. Includes historic and contemporary types.

03 - Bungalow
One-story, single-family homes.

04 - New Urbanist
A comptemporary style that quotes historic, dense neighborhoods and styles from the early 20th Century. Often includes a front porch, a garage located on a back alley and a zero street frontage.

B. Attached

05 - Late 19th Century Twins
Semi-detached housing with two units sharing a party wall. Usually contains a front porch.

06 - New Urbanist Twins
Semi-detached housing with two units sharing a party wall. Usually contains a front porch and built with modern materials such as vinyl siding.

07 - New Urbanist Rowhouses
Attached rows of single-family homes, which quote historic rowhouse types using modern materials and usually contain a front porch.

08 - Late 19th Century Rowhouses
Attached rows of single-family homes, usually containing a continuous front porch.

09 - Alley Houses
Attached rows of single-family homes, located on the interior of a block, facing an alley with a shared space in between two rows.

C. Low Rise Apartment Buildings

10 - Interior Entrance
Apartment buildings, which contain one main entrance on the exterior and individual entrances to apartments on a interior hallway.

11 - Tract Housing
Type of housing where multiple, similar, attached homes are built on one tract of land.

12 - Exterior Entrance
Apartment buildings that contain multiple entrances on the exterior face of the building.

13 - Public Housing
Housing built by the city for low-income populations.

14 - Multi-Family Flats
Apartments are stacked on top of each other in a detached house and usually containing verandas on each level. They contain separate exterior entrances for separate units. Many of the front porches have been filled in to accommodate multiple entrances or alterations.

15 - Multi-Family Basement Apt
Usually a single-family home with an apartment in the basement and an entrance on the ground level.

D. Other

16 - Mixed Use
Residential apartment units existing above ground floor retail. Much of this type includes small scale neighborhood commercial.

17 - Civic
Buildings that serve a public function such as post offices, fire stations, schools as well as landmarks such as the Convention Hall.

18 - Church
Buildings used for religious purposes ranging from historic to comtemporary styles. They are usually monumental in scale and design.

19 - Modern Hotel
High rise hotels built to accommodate for casino visitors built since 1976.

20 - Historic Hotel
High rise hotels built in the late 19th and early 20th Century to accommodate for tourists.

21 - Casino
Large, self contained buildings often with a hotel attached situated along the Boardwalk. Some, such as Caesars and Trump, contain sky walks that attach to parking garages. There are also older casinos that do not dominate an entire block.

22 - Park
Public recreational space.

23 - Vacant lot
Empty piece of land with no built structures.

24 - Commercial
Includes some small scale commercial, ranging from one to three stories as well as high rise office buildings and malls.

25 - Parking Lot
Lot used for vehicular parking.
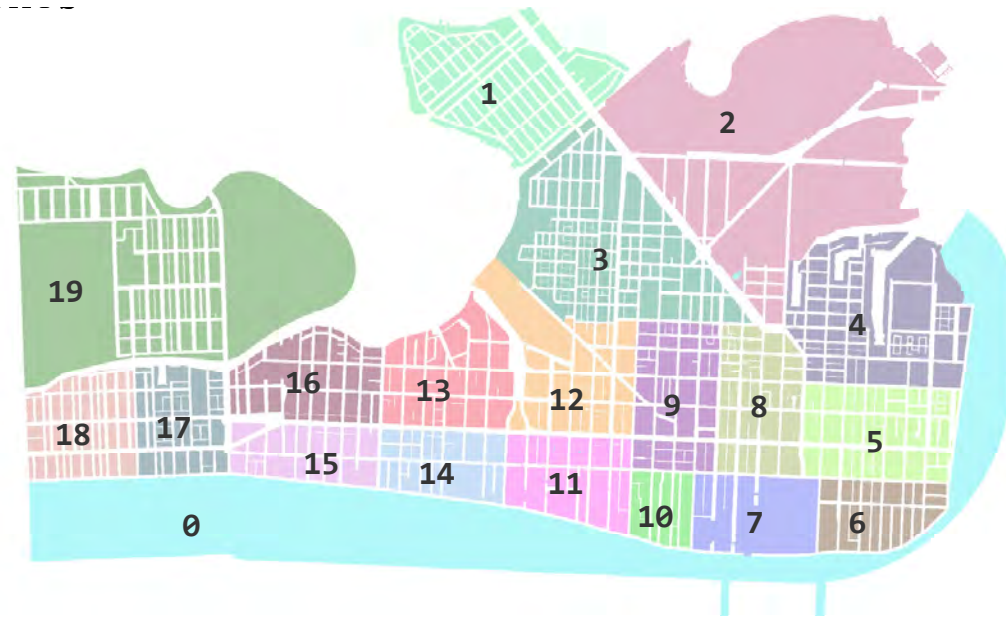
Zone Map // The 19 zones of Atlantic City

DATA COLLECTION

The CSP system is normally compiled at the neighborhood level, so its implementation at the city level was more complex and time consuming. While the CSP typology is normally limited to a clear typology from the start as neighborhoods normally contain an overall character and are limited in geographic scale, CSP at the city-level encompasses the entire range of housing, commercial, institutional, and open space form types and spans a larger geographic area. In order streamline the process Google Maps and Bing Maps in combination with the windshield survey results are utilized to gather the block level data. Every section of the city was broken down into 19 large zones with around 800 blocks in each and then down to individual parcels.

A list of addresses, owner and parcel information was downloaded from the U.S. Census website and imported into GIS. The GIS data was then exported into Excel for a more streamlined data entry system. Then, each form type in the CSP typology was assigned a unique number and entered into a master excel file. Finally, the excel file was re-linked to GIS to complete a final typology map of unique numbers associated with all individual parcels.

Each unique number was assigned with a color in GIS in an effort to spatially analyze the data.
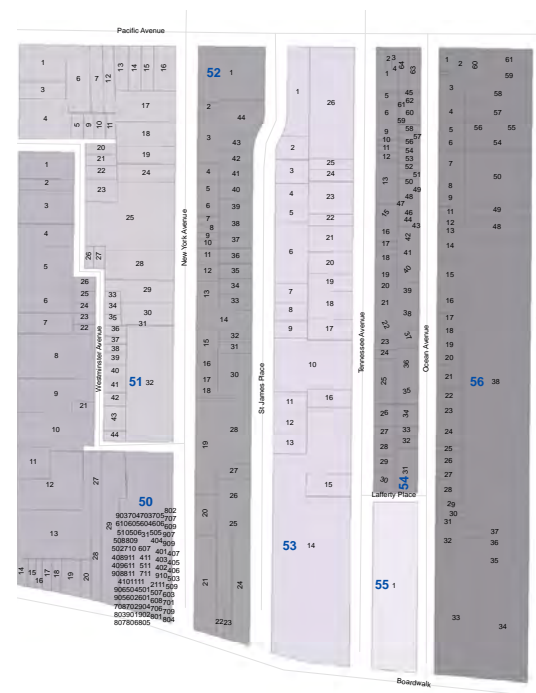
Zone 10.1 // Example

FINAL MAP

The Character study has revealed that current land use maps and characterizations of the city as a location with little historic fabric dedicated to Casinos, belies the diversity of form types and use on the ground.

Overall Character Study Map // Final map showing the 26 typologies across Atlantic City from Windshield Survey.

KEY

1	5	9	13	17	21	25	
2	6	10	14	18	22	26	
3	7	11	15	19	23	NoData	
4	8	12	16	20	24		

Existing Land Use Map // Official Atlantic City Master Plan Concept of Existing Land Uses

KEY

|			
MTM - Marine Tidal Marsh		R-1 - Single family Detached	
BEACH - Beach		R-2 - Single Family Detached	
AC - Area Commercial		R-3 - Single Family Detached (Townhouse)	
CBD - Central Business District		RM-1 - Multi-Family Walkup Apartments	
NC-1 - Neighborhood Commercial 1		RM-2 - Multi-Family Lowrise Apartments	
NC-2 - Neighborhood Commercial 1		RM-3 - Multi-Family Midrise Apartments	
MC - Marine Commercial		RM-4 - Multi-Family Highrise Apartments	
HW-C - Highway Commercial		RMC-4 - Multi-Family Highrise Apartments Commercial	
HC - Heavy Commercial		NE INLET - Northeast Inlet Redevelopment Area	
RS - Resort Service		HNRA - Huron North Redevelopment Area	
RS-C - Resort Commercial Development		SIRA - Southwest Inlet Redevelopment Area	
L-1 - Light Industrial		UURT - Uptown Urban Renewal Area	
TRS - Transportation			

EXISTING LAND USES

There is a large discrepancy between the existing land use map and the character study analysis. Areas in Atlantic City are much more diverse than initially indicated by the Master Plan map above. This is especially true in the dense neighborhoods, where there is more variety of form types than the colors indicate. This map also does not take into account the large swaths of vacant land plaguing the city.

The existence of this map is a clear indicator that the map is outdated and provides reasoning behind the argument in favor a new land use map. Our windshield survey and resulting map attempts to alleviate the discrepancies between the existing landscape and the master plan map.
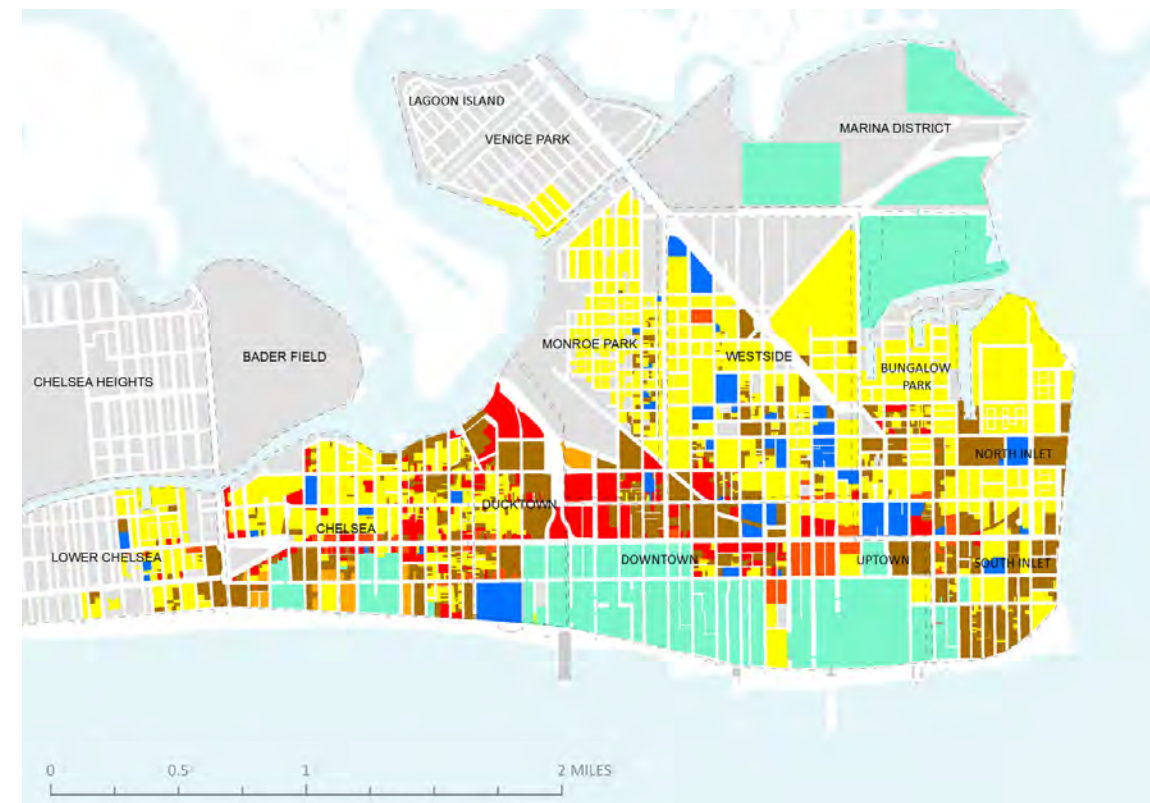
Updated Land Use Map // Map of reduced Overall Character Study Map into more general categories depicting existing land uses.

KEY

Residential		Casino	
Commercial		MixedUse	
Hotel		VacantLand	
Institutional		NoData	

EXPLANATION OF FINAL MAP

The reduced version of the character studies map, titled Land Use Map, reveals the broad development and use patterns throughout the city. The character studies map also refines the current land use map, where Euclidian zoning districts are strictly defined. As described earlier, there is a distinct boundary along Atlantic Avenue which separates the Casinos from the more residential neighborhoods. However, Atlantic Avenue is not a static boundary, the Euclidian style zones are blurred along the edges. Casinos and hotels dominate the Downtown and Uptown neighborhoods below Atlantic Avenue, but there is still an interspersing of residential and mixed use fabric, particularly in the Chelsea neighborhood and the South Inlet. Residential neighborhoods are positioned above Atlantic Avenue including Monroe Park, Westside, Bungalow Park, Venice Park, and the North Inlet. Lower Chelsea, towards the southern end of Absecon Island is also primarily residential. While most of Ducktown is residential, there is a large portion dedicated to an Outlet Mall in the north. The map also reveals a commercial corridor characterized by neighborhood scale mixed use and commercial types along Atlantic Avenue, spanning Chelsea, Ducktown, and portion of the Downtown and Uptown neighborhoods.
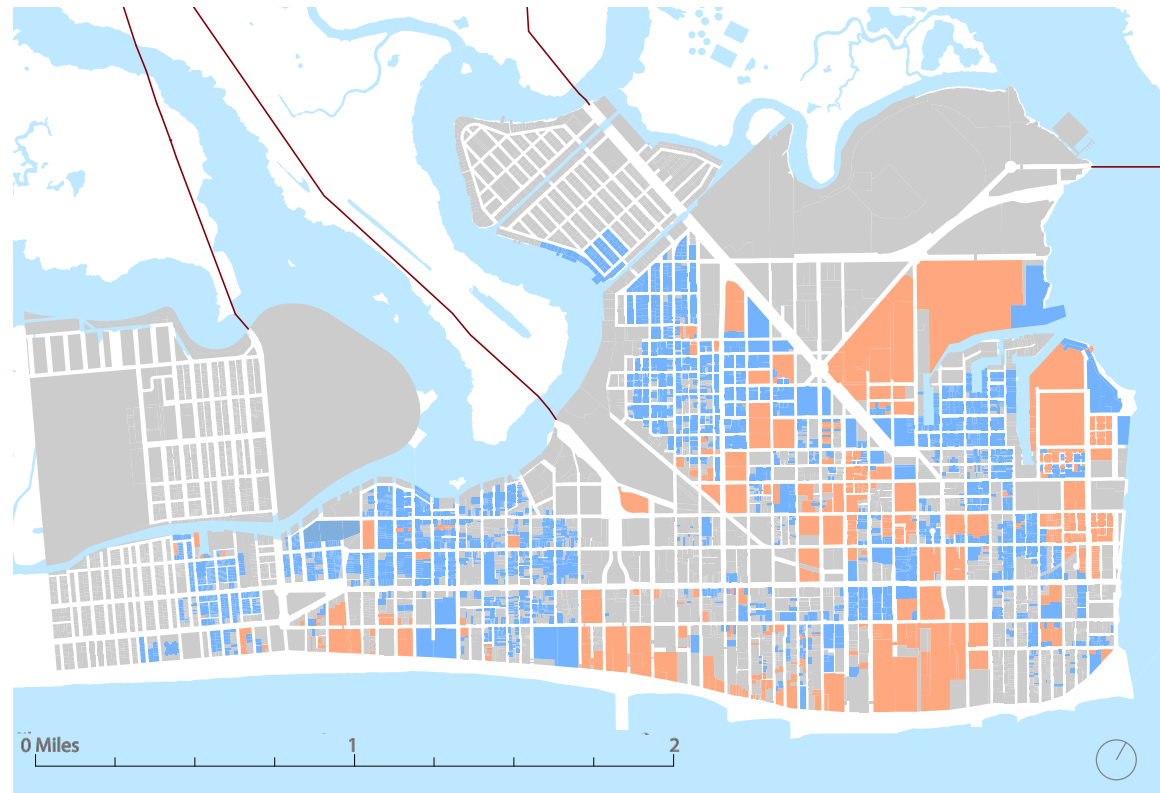
Historic vs. Contemporary Map // Map juxtaposing properties built before 1960 and after 1960.

KEY

- ■ BUILT BEFORE 1960
- ■ BUILT AFTER 1960
- ■ NO DATA

RESULTS

The results of the character study prove that there are areas of Atlantic City with a high level of integrity. The Chelsea Neighborhood and Portions of Ducktown are full of late 19th century residential fabric including Twins and Rowhouses with a high concentration of multifamily form types. These types have been added to over time, but their general use and form has remained intact. There is also a high degree of integrity in Lower Chelsea, where there is an abundance of late 19th and early 20th century housing stock, with a concentration of detached housing form types.

However, there are areas that do not immediately come off as "historic" due to a greater diversity of form types, but which still retain small pockets of intact fabric. In the North Inlet, all housing types are represented with varying degrees of integrity. This ranges from large swathes of New Urbanist types, built recently, to historic types like rowhouses and apartment buildings. The South Inlet is characterized by large swathes of vacant land and "missing" teeth rowhouses or stand alone detached housing on a lot. Although this neighborhood does not immediately appear historic, due to the large swathes of vacant land, there is still a sprinkling of historic fabric throughout, including entire rows of intact rowhouses.
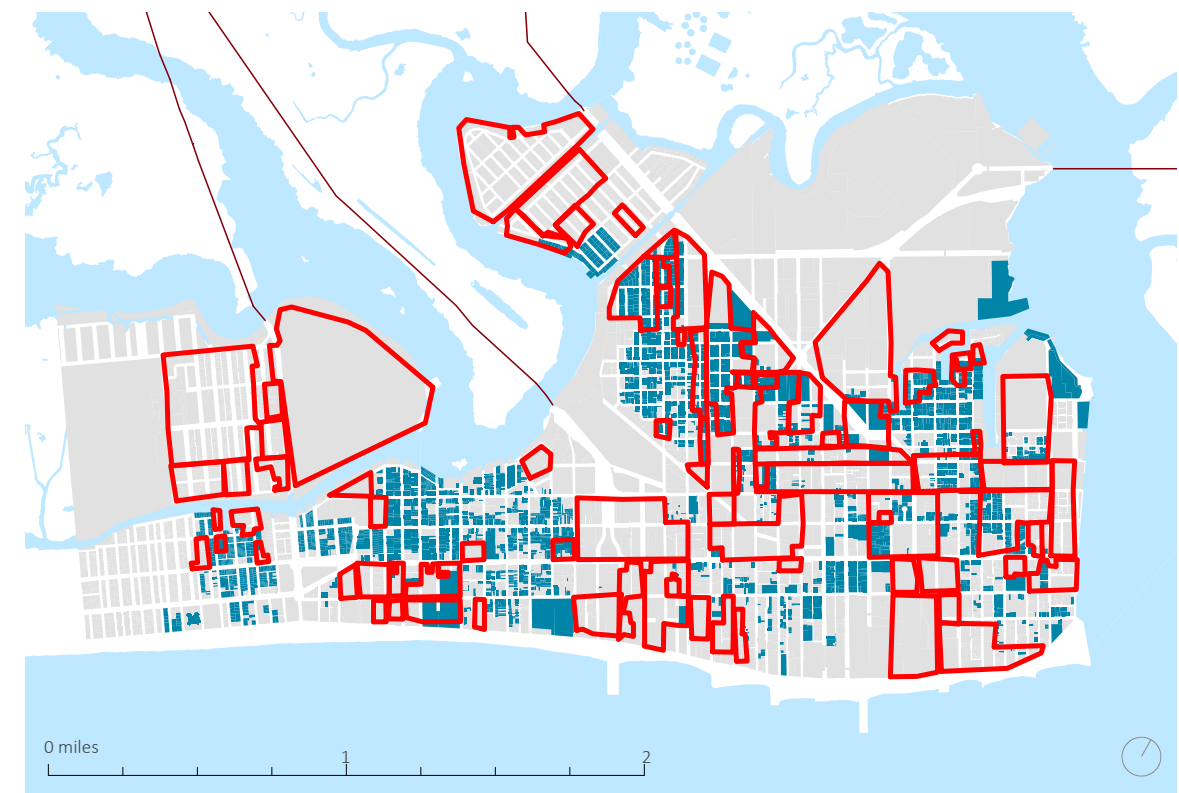
FEMA vs. Character Study // Map of Historic Properties versus the Post-Hurricane Sandy FEMA Windshield Survey

KEY

- ▭ FEMA SURVEY: NO HISTORIC PRPERTIES
- ■ BUILT BEFORE 1960

AREAS OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

An overlay of the post-hurricane Sandy FEMA windshield survey of Atlantic City overlayed on the character study survey reveals that there are large gaps in the existing data on historic structures. These gaps in data bely the breadth of historic structures in Atlantic City, especially in its residential neighborhoods. According to the results of the character study, the areas which indicate "No Historic Properties" often contain historic properties.

Areas outlined by FEMA in Lower Chelsea, Chelsea, and Ducktown are mostly accurate, but towards the Northern end of the city there are more conflicts with the character study findings. These discrepancies call for a reassessment and re-documentation of what is considered "historic" in the city in order to more accurately portray the conditions on the ground.

The last two pages of this section depict the historic resources on the ground in Atlantic City. They are in the areas of highest integrity such as Ducktown, Chelsea and Lower Chelsea as well as some area of higher complexity in the North and South Inlets.

Ducktown // Historic Mixed Use

South Inlet // Missing Teeth Rowhomes and Detached Housing

Ducktown // Historic Twins

Chelsea // Historic Twins

South Inlet // Intact Rowhomes

Uptown // Alley Houses

Lower Chelsea // Detached Housing

North Inlet // Historic Rowhomes

ENABLING ENVIRONMENT
WHAT'S POSSIBLE?

Policy, planning and legislation set the framework that shape how cities are formed. The mechanisms of governance structure the rules that dictate how decision makers are allowed to operate within each unique place, creating a complicated web of inputs and outputs that ultimately determine whether cities grow and thrive or stagnate and die. Atlantic City is riddled with challenges stemming from its struggle to adapt to the needs of modern society while balancing its regional significance to visitors within the needs of the local community. To create a conservation plan to guide future development in Atlantic City in manner that protects its remaining heritage assets, we must first understand the socio-economic and political forces that govern the city, policies and regulations, and the motivations of different stakeholders. Understanding this framework reveals to us what is possible given the unique context of Atlantic City, the city of enduring dualities, allowing us to work with the existing framework and show how preservation can speak to the needs of the existing stakeholders.

METHODOLOGY

Our approach to understanding the political infrastructure of Atlantic City is three-pronged. We first reviewed the existing regulations that currently impact development within the built environment, conducting secondary research on master plans, policies, protections, initiatives and strategies that development authorities have adopted. We then supplemented this information with media accounts of development practice in the city, national/state historic designations, demolition lists, and other sources of data to see if reality reflects or diverges from policy and planning. Thirdly, we conducted stakeholder interviews with different organizations and representatives of the community to understand various perspectives from different ends of the development spectrum, differing objectives and how these disparate groups interact to shape the city.

Stakeholder Interviews

Casino Reinvestment Development Authority

Tourism District Public Safety Task Force

Atlantic City Alliance

Main Street Atlantic City

Housing Authority & Urban Redevelopment Agency

The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey, William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy

Atlantic City Arts Commission

African American Heritage Museum of Southern NJ

Atlantic City Business and Community Association

Irish Pub

Formica Bros. Bakery

Princeton Antiques

Las Vegas Planning Office

Cumberland County, Department of Planning

Atlantic City Stakeholder Context

In order to map the various stakeholders, we categorized them into top-down verses bottom-up organizations. Beyond that distinction, the stakeholders also exist along the horizontal axis of those that are based physically outside of Atlantic City by concentrate on issues in it, to those that are based in Atlantic City but have an outward focus.

Top Down
↓

AC

Outside Looking In ——————————— Inside Looking Out

↑
Bottom Up
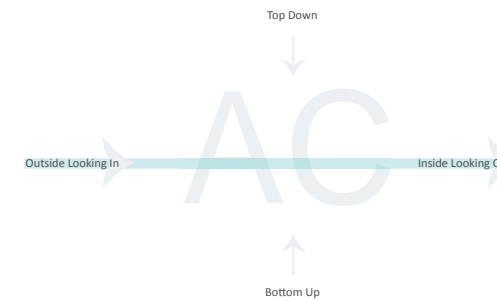
In addition to their placement along the two axees, the font size of each organization demonstrates our perception of their power.

The following descriptions are introduced in groupings of different organization's influence and associations:

State Interests // In 1976 the State legislation known as the gambling referendum pivotally altered the political structure of the city, introducing the casinos and, along with them, increased State regulation. Today, the dominant entities in Atlantic City are the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority, the State of New Jersey government, and the private Casinos. The CRDA was established in 1984 to reinvest a portion of casino revenue towards community development both locally and state-wide; to date they report reinvesting $1.8 billion in improvement projects statewide, $1.5 billion of which they invested in Atlantic City alone. The CRDA operates as a NJ State authority and is closely in line with the objectives of the State Governor's office, whose interest in Atlantic City is to capitalize on the gaming and tourism industry and turn Atlantic City into a center for economic growth and job creation for the entire state.

Casino Reinvestment Development Authority
Tourism District Public Safety Task Force
Atlantic County Improvement Authority   Atlantic City Alliance
Atlantic City Convention and Visitor Authority
NJ DEP Historic Preservation Office   Casinos
State of NJ Governor's Office
City of Atlantic City Government
Housing Authority and Urban Redevelopment Agency

Main Street Atlantic City
Metropolitan Business & Citizens Association
Schultz-Hill Foundation

Stockton College
Atlantic Cape Community College   Polaris Development Group L.L.C.
African American Heritage Museum of Southern New Jersey   Atlantic City Arts Commission
Atlantic City Business and Community Association

Atlantic City Historic Waterfront Association
Venice Park Civic Association
Other Civic Associations

Stakeholder Map // This diagram identifies the stakeholders involved in Atlantic City and demonstrates their influence and power.

CRDA Affiliates // These organizations focus mostly on the Tourism District. Since crime has no boundaries, the Public Safety Task Force functions throughout the city to change the perception of safety in Atlantic City. The have a "clean & safe" mission which includes working with the CRDA's safety ambassadors, improving street lighting and landscaping, and tracking crime for strategic planning. The Convention and Visitor Authority focuses on bringing in new visitors through publicizing convention opportunities, while the Alliance is trying to broaden the visitor-base by advertising alternative tourist attractions other than the casinos, specifically to areas between DC and Boston. Funded by the CRDA and City grants, Main Street Atlantic City facilitates conversations with the small business on Atlantic Avenue and is working towards creating a cultural mecca downtown.

External Ally // The Atlantic County Improvement Authority offers 20 year low-interest loans for the rehabilitation of the floors about retail shops, which Main Street Atlantic City is hoping to use on Atlantic Avenue. The State Historic Preservation Office has identified properties in Atlantic City that are on the State or National Register or that have their opinion for nomination.

City Entities // The City government operates under a mayor-council structure of elected officials, and the housing authority and redevelopment agency is an independent city agency that is in charge of slum clearance and redevelopment projects, and has been involved in over $2 billion worth of development projects in Atlantic City since the 1960s. The City has lost jurisdiction over development in significant portions of the city since the expansion of the CRDA and the adoption of the Tourism District Master Plan, which covers roughly 50% of the municipal area and includes the vast majority of the city's recognized cultural assets. Overall, the city representatives were difficult to reach for contributions to the project. Our own experience reinforced with conversations with various stakeholder groups have indicated that the City has not been very involved in the current revitalization and redevelopment efforts taking place.

Vertical Integration // The Metropolitan Business & Citizens Association is a nonprofit, grass-roots organization that includes businesses in AC and South Jersey and includes in its membership 12 casinos, over 500 local businesses, 60 nonprofits and 100 citizens. They provide a forum for businesses, citizens and the government to come together.

Academic Institutions // Stockton College and Atlantic Cape Community College are two higher academic institutions that have existing presence in the city, and are looking to expand their footprint. They could potentially serve as educational anchors for further diversification and revitalization of the city's institutional presence.

Art Advocates // The Schultz-Hill Foundation is a nonprofit that promotes and supports arts and education in South Jersey. They provide scholarships, grants for arts, and historical and musical programs. Schultz and Hill are also officers of the MBCA. The Polaris Development Group is a consulting firm that seeks to establish economic development in urban communities through public-private partnerships projects that foster community enrichment. They have partnered with the CRDA and the Free Public Library on historic festivals and mural projects. The Atlantic City Arts Commission is an advisory body appointed by the City Council to promote arts in Atlantic City. The African-American Heritage Museum of Southern New Jersey has partnered with the CRDA to showcase a portion of its 11,000 piece collection of artifacts as an exhibit in the Arts Garage in Atlantic City, exhibiting local cultural history and advocating for the black community in the South Jersey region.

Grassroots Organizations // Grassroots organizations are comprised of various neighborhoods based civic associations that discuss affairs specific to each community, as well as groups that have concerns more comprehensive of larger areas within the city such as the Metropolitan Business and Citizens Association, the Atlantic City Business and Community Association, and Atlantic City Main Street. They primarily advocate for the residents and local community needs. Smaller grass roots entities lack organization and resources, preventing them from effectively advocating and

influencing development patterns in the city. Through our conversations, we found that there is a significant impression within urban city residents that casino revenue is primarily being invested across the state, and the impact is not reaching inner city residents.

KEY FINDINGS

Observations from our analysis of the existing regulatory policies and stakeholder interviews can be summarized by the following main points.

1. The city government has been ineffective in managing the built environment of Atlantic City resulting in a state takeover of planning and redevelopment responsibilities that prioritize regional and state objectives over local needs.

The presence of the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority and other state agencies has created noticeable tension between the City and the State. We heard from various stakeholders that the CRDA has overstepped its jurisdiction and taken on responsibilities unfounded in its original mandate of managing the reinvestment of casino funds. This perception corresponds to the approval of the Tourism District Legislation in April 2011 which expanded the CRDA's role in planning, zoning and other land use controls to implement the Tourism District Master Plan within the Tourism District, which occupies roughly 50% of municipal land and contains what the Atlantic City Alliance considers 99% of the attractions the city has to offer.

Granting regulatory and planning authority to the State over the city's assets has generated some resentment between the city's elected officials and the state authorities. Mayor Lorenzo Langford opposed elements of the Tourism District Master Plan, and city residents cited that they felt violated by the State taking away power from the Mayor and Council they voted for.[1] This sentiment encapsulates the dual opposing forces that define the current governance structure in Atlantic City today. The New Jersey Governor's interest in Atlantic City to develop a regional anchor of economic growth and job creation through dramatic investment in the gaming and tourism infrastructure shapes the State's agenda in

the city.[2] Decisions based on this strategy emphasizing regional economic development are made with little to no consideration of local priorities. Community groups cited that their most pressing needs have gone unaddressed and that the state authorities have prioritized the tourists over the permanent residents who are not seeing any benefit from these investments. There is widespread local perception that investments are bypassing Atlantic City and flowing elsewhere in the State of New Jersey.

Weakness and ineptitude of the city government were cited as reasons the State takeover occurred. One of the major issues challenging the city is the lack of code enforcement; mentioned by multiple stakeholders, the lack of code enforcement has resulted in rampant disinvestment in properties within municipal boundaries, leading to vacant and dilapidated structures creating blight and associated problems plaguing the built landscape. Overcrowding and absentee ownership were also cited as major issues due to the lack of code enforcement. Local government corruption is also widely published in the news; five of Atlantic City's past nine mayors were charged with corruption and several members of the Atlantic City Council were imprisoned for various charges.[3] These weaknesses of the municipal government may have contributed to the expansion of the State's role in redevelopment efforts.

Stakeholders mentioned that issues of accountability further exacerbated the culture of redevelopment in the city as it became unclear whether certain responsibilities fell within the City or the State. Stakeholders mentioned that the community did not hold the State and City accountable for not addressing their needs, due to lack of unity on opinion, organization and ability to put together a concerted effort and voice to be heard.

2. There are no local preservation institutions or laws.

In the city, no preservation policies have been enacted. The small section about preservation in the City's master plan, adopted in September 2008, is only included because it is mandated by the State, and it is ineffectual. What it does include is a listing of state and national register properties, a brief listing of 69 properties that may have historic value as determined by the Karabashian

Eddington Planning Group, and SHPO recommendations to establish a certified local government.[4] Though there are state- and nationally-designated buildings throughout the city, no regulatory teeth accompany this distinction.

3. The major collaborative effort between the City government and the CRDA is the demolition and repurposing program outlined in the CRDA Master Plan.

Within the preservation section of the City's master plan is also a list of objectives, one of which clearly states to discourage unnecessary demolition – but this is contradicted by the actions of the City. The Tourism District Act authorizes the CRDA to manage and regulate land use throughout the Tourism District. Within CRDA's master plan of February 2012, which was mandated to be completed within one year of the establishment of the Tourism District, there is a section about the demolition and repurposing program – an initiative in which the CRDA and the City work in concert. State law allows the City to order the demolition of buildings and permits the City to accept donations or loans from casinos and the CRDA to pay for such demolitions. As of 2012, the CRDA has provided in excess of $3 million in grant funds for this effort.[5]

The Walk // MonopolyCity.com

Through this program, the CRDA uses demolition as a tool for revitalization. An example of demolition on major thoroughfares can be seen in the creation of The Walk, which houses the Tanger Outlets. Built to connect the train station and Convention Center to the casinos and the boardwalk, this development required widening of Mississippi Avenue and demolition of the existing fabric along this corridor. It ignores the character of the neighborhoods adjacent to it; there are no floors above

these retail spaces for offices or housing, as there are on the existing main street of Atlantic Avenue.

Within CRDA's master plan are a few projects that are in line with preservation and CRDA has informally expressed support for expanding activities to save or redevelop some key commercial properties. In the area of the Walk there is a proposed Art District, which will create artist studio spaces, galleries and theaters. There is also a Façade Improvement program for Atlantic Avenue, in partnership with Main Street Atlantic City and the Atlantic County Improvement Authority, including right-of-way improvements. CRDA created design guidelines for this street and for the Boardwalk that speak to renovation and other physical enhancements. Additionally, there is a section about the importance of creating a historic presence on Kentucky Avenue – which is where Club Harlem was located in the heyday of Atlantic City. This past summer was the 3rd Annual Historical Kentucky Avenue Renaissance Festival, which was created in partnership with the Polaris Development Group and the Free Public Library. The Polaris Development Group is currently creating a mural project for a blank wall that exists on the Avenue.

Proposed Rendering of Atlantic Avenue / MRDA

Still, because of the demolition and repurposing program, there is an existing perception in Atlantic City that renovation is too costly and that a better investment is demolition.

4. The city political landscape and governance structures are fragmented; community groups and residents lack a unified voice.

Stakeholders reported that many of the community groups are handicapped by their lack of organization and education and are frequently understaffed and underfunded. One group mentioned that many community organizations were "stuck in 1985"; this was corroborated with our own experience in finding that many community groups and civic associations do not have any form of internet presence or email contact.

Further exacerbating this phenomenon, Atlantic City residents themselves may not be unified in their priorities. Conversations with stakeholders revealed that the majority of community groups and residents are in agreement over what the problems are, but there is a lack of agreement in how to resolve these issues. Often these views may be divided along racial lines, and differences in how white and black residents experience the city are apparent and may present an opportunity for more in depth research. Conversation with the District Commander of the Public Safety Task Force revealed that most violent crime occurs outside of the Tourism District, and through his interaction with many of the black residents in the north side neighborhoods he found that many black residents have never even been to the boardwalk. This realization highlights the level of disparity experienced by the residents themselves, which, in conjunction with the fragmented and uncoordinated existing efforts of the neighborhood groups, contribute to the difficulty in developing a unified community presence.

Stakeholders listed primary concerns as a shortage of quality jobs, low education levels, shortage of housing at varying incomes, safety, and business recruitment and retention, which seemed to be issues that stakeholders were in agreement on across the board.

5. The city needs sustainable economic development that balances local community and regional priorities.

The economic downturn and other trends that have led to the economic distress experienced in Atlantic City have demonstrated the need to diversify the local economy away from the casino gambling industry, to embrace a more family-based business economy and to encourage sustainable business development that can provide

more permanent, quality employment opportunities for Atlantic City residents. According to the Census records, Atlantic City is well above the state average in poverty, and well below the state average in terms of many economic indicators such as high school and college graduation levels, income, and home ownership.[6] Stakeholders also mentioned that Atlantic City has a relatively high proportion of publically subsidized housing units, and thus a high population of low-income residents which further tax the city's resources and contribute to the high unemployment rate and other urban problems. Further the Atlantic City casino industry has been steadily losing revenue since its peak of $5.2 billion dollars in 2006, declining by over 40% to less than $3 billion in 2012,[7] due to regional competition from the legalization of casino gambling in neighboring states and the expected cannibalization of revenue due to the advent of online gambling.

Different stakeholders are united by the problems facing Atlantic City and acknowledge the local community's need for sustainable jobs, safety and housing, though they feel that the State is focused primarily on building up the tourism industry and investing in big business as a means to revitalize Atlantic City -- investments that do not benefit the local residents by providing sustainable growth opportunities for them. Residents fear displacement as redevelopment practices raise property value without creating a corresponding rise in income level.

Multiple stakeholders also made reference to a surprising development that followed desegregation and urban renewal: prior to desegregation and redevelopment schemes in the city, the north side African American neighborhoods were largely self-sufficient with their own local community businesses, pubs, shops, restaurants and other necessities that created a functioning self-sustaining community. When segregation ended, and Atlantic City underwent redevelopment in the 1970's, these businesses in the north side were lost. The District Commander noted that the majority of crime today occurs outside of the Tourism District in these neighborhoods that no longer boast commercial activity, insinuating the link between crime and the lack of community anchors that shape a vibrant and healthy neighborhood.

Stakeholders are unsatisfied with the state of investment in Atlantic City and feel that the needs of the permanent residents have gone unanswered. One stakeholder affirmed that this preference towards meeting tourist demand is evidenced in how the CRDA chose to complete The Walk before investing in improvements downtown.

6. Opportunities for preservation exist – but only parts of the policy/advocacy infrastructure are in place.

One group expressed that the community regrets not having an organization that was devoted to historic preservation during the period of large scale redevelopment, specifically with the function of procuring funds. Since rehabilitation was perceived as more expensive, the choice was made to demolish and construct anew than to rehab the existing properties, like Club Harlem and the Breakers Hotel. The community needs an advocate of preservation to seek out available

funding and provide funding assistance for local property owners, as there are no regulatory protections in place for preservation otherwise in Atlantic City.

The well-known case of Historic Boardwalk Hall LLC v. the Commissioner also shaped development practice and the ability to obtain Historic Tax Credits locally and nationally. Boardwalk Hall LLC was denied the issuance of tax credits due to the finding that the private equity that was brought on in the development partnership was found to not have a legitimate stake in the success of the project, leading to doubt that they were a legitimate partner because the development relationship indicated that the private investor was insulated from all risk of the project and stood to gain no upside from the deal, and that "meaningful intent to share in the profits and losses of investment" was not present.[8] Moving forward, this decision has impacted the way in which developers structure partnerships for Federal Historic Tax Credit

Historic Boardwalk Hall // Rutgers University

projects, which should lead to more aligned incentives and a greater stake in the actual success of a project by the private investor.

7. There is a lack of recognition that historic preservation dovetails with current citywide initiatives.

In conversations with various stakeholders, there seem to be active initiatives in place such as creative place-making initiatives and the Clean & Safe campaign that focus on improving the environment of Atlantic City and may offer opportunities for historic preservation. The problem is there is a lack of awareness of the synergistic potential between preservation and these programs. From the bottom-up community groups as well as the top-down agencies that work with the community, there is not a strong sense that the community values preservation of built heritage over other existing social values. One group revealed that there is an "it's good enough" mentality where existing conditions meet the needs of the local residents and they do not see a need to improve the existing fabric. When asked about what they care about, they respond with the need for sustainable economic development and public safety, as well as the use of art and creative place-making as means of revitalization. Developing an Atlantic City Mural Program and Art on the Boardwalk are examples of current activities taking place to foster civic pride and revitalize neighborhoods in Atlantic City.

From the public safety standpoint, the District Commander reported that Atlantic City is affected by a higher perceived crime rate disproportionate to the amount of actual crime in the city. The perception of crime and the unsafe environment is enough to limit economic development potential, so the CRDA has adopted a rigorous Clean & Safe campaign, modeled off of University City and Center City in Philadelphia and Times Square in New York, adapting elements of George Kelling's "Broken Windows" theory designed to deter additional crime and improve the perception the Atlantic City as a safe and desirable place.

Multiple groups also cited attracting young people with future investment potential to Atlantic City as a major objective -- not just to visit for the day, but to live and

work. These groups believe that in order to do so public safety, diversified local businesses and the physical environment must be improved. There appears to be a lack of awareness that many of these goals are in line with the benefits realized from sound historic preservation practice. Historic preservation of neighborhood and urban character can foster community pride, and the use of preservation-minded design-standards can guide the creation of a clean and safe environment and achieve goals of neighborhood beautification and façade improvement in a more meaningful and enduring way. Emphasizing preservation and rehabilitation creates jobs and often uses locally sourced materials and construction practices, which provides additional residual economic value to the community in which the practice is taking place. One stakeholder rightfully mentioned that façade improvement is important but not any more than improving the substance behind the façade, emphasizing the importance of attracting quality tenants, businesses and property owners. Maintaining a balance of new and old fabric provides more opportunities for small businesses and young people to inhabit these spaces, as mixed development is more accommodating to varying income levels.

NEXT STEPS

In conclusion, many of the current City improvement objectives are in line with the socio-economic benefits of historic preservation practice. The missing links are education, advocacy and communication, which allow these movements to work together to achieve the same goals.

It is important to note that these findings were assembled during Mayor Lorenzo Langford's administration. On November 12, 2013, Don Guardian was elected as the new Mayor and has the potential to change Atlantic City's political landscape and correct the aforementioned shortcomings. Once complete, this preservation plan should be distributed to the CRDA and the newly formed Atlantic City Department of Planning and Development for feasible application.

END NOTES

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Analysis
Elements of the City

Atlantic City contains strong values that are integral to its current character and future prospects. It is a city of adaptability and resilience, enduring through changing consumer preferences and environmental disasters. These values can be broken up into site values and character defining elements that represent the core of Atlantic City. These values are broken down from the statement of significance and the character defining elements represent how these values are reflected in the landscape.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

At its core, Atlantic City is best characterized as a place of enduring dualities. Described by urbanist James Howard Kunstle as "one of [the] nation's great public spaces," the city was the first in America to be conceived and designed as a space for the public consumption of leisure and entertainment. Yet while Atlantic City thrived as the Queen of Resorts, the city also existed as a home to the many who labored on behalf of its visitor community. Positioning the needs of the tourist against the needs of the resident, the dual landscape of Atlantic City reveals a larger national narrative of social and economic juxtapositions.

Built on the shortest possible line from Philadelphia to the shore, Atlantic City was traditionally the destination spot for America's middle class. Since the city's first Boardwalk opened in 1870, the city has played host to millions of visitors who come for an opportunity to escape reality and indulge in fantasy. Similar to the dual landscape the city maintains between tourism and residential, the city has traditionally balanced yet another duality, defining itself as both the resort for family-based, wholesome entertainment as well as for pleasure and vice. Today, while mention of Atlantic City may predominantly convey images of the Borgata or Trump Taj Mahal, it continues to actively seek this balance, recently launching the Artlantic, a new arts initiative, and developing a family and business-friendly shopping and convention center.

One might be tempted to assume, given the city's recent history of large-scale casino development and accompanying demolition, that the city retains little of its traditional physical fabric. Yet just as Atlantic City perpetuates its dual cultural landscapes, it still boasts a wide variety of historic monumental architecture. This includes churches like St. Nicholas of Toletine Church, industrial wonders like the Atlantic City Convention Hall (also a National Historic Landmark), memorials such as the World War I Memorial, as well as the Absecon Lighthouse and Madison Hotel.

As the place where fantasy and reality interplay, the boardwalk serves as a middle class utopia. Visitors have the opportunity to relax by the beach, see world-class performances, get rich over night, enjoy the nightlife, or even become the next Miss America. Its reputation as the "Playground of the World" started during in the 1920s when business owners turned their backs against Prohibition laws and the city as a whole thrived. Many would come to identify Atlantic City with this era as it is famously depicted in the HBO series, Boardwalk Empire.

This continuity in physical fabric is paralleled in the residents' cultural landscape. Reflecting a past where segregation was informally built into the way individuals navigated the city, the continued existence of Atlantic City's distinct neighborhoods, such as the Northside, a historically African American working class area, reveal that the city's racial, social and economic geographical distribution remains remarkably unchanged. Additionally, a high proportion of the city's residential vernacular, built in the early 20th century, retains authenticity and integrity. Neighborhood-scale development is divided from casinos, hotels, and entertainment venues by the city's main artery, Atlantic Avenue. This division has lent to the conservation of the residential vernacular form types including twins, rowhouses, alleyhouses, and various types of detached residential fabric. Likewise, while expanded, the original grid layout remains largely intact and allows one to clearly see the city's origins as a planned railroad-dependent scheme.

Development patterns of these grid blocks illustrate rapid migration of activities towards the shoreline despite threats of natural disasters and unsuitable soil. The city's resilience is best demonstrated by its ability to recover from hurricanes and reclaim its most-valued assets: the boardwalk and access to the beach.

Thus, Atlantic City can be viewed simultaneously as a lesson in continuity and adaptability. From its creation during the railroad era to its heyday as the Nation's Playground, its period of economic and social decline to a time of casino development and finally to today as it undergoes a period of reflection and reinvention, Atlantic City has proven adaptable, changing how it responds to evolving circumstances. Yet it does so while retaining a structure and paradigm inside of which it adapts. This duality lies at the essence of Atlantic City and ultimately lends itself to a greater narrative about American urban development. lends itself to a greater narrative about American urban development.

Economic Value //

The large casinos remain the largest industry present in the city and the largest employers. They are also the largest tourist attraction and draw to the city.

Over the past decade, Atlantic City has become a place of large-scale reinvestment by CRDA and other large government agencies. These reinvestment strategies have been directed at casino construction and art installations to attract new visitors to the city.

Enduring through decline and scare reinvestment directed towards the year round residents; strong local entrepreneurship still persists in Atlantic City. Local businesses in Duck Town and Little Italy have remained open and thriving places of community since the beginning of the 20th century.

Historic Value //

The location for Atlantic City was chosen based on its proximity to Philadelphia. A straight line was drawn between Philadelphia to the eastern coast, and this became the location for this historic city. A railroad legacy and its connection to Philadelphia remain as one of Atlantic City's core values.

Atlantic City is also the place the first boardwalk in US built in 1870 that wraps around the city, spanning over four miles. It has remained a place of social interaction, economy and fun since its creation. The connection between the casinos and the rest of the city may remain fragmented; their connection to the boardwalk remains strong and vibrant.

Atlantic City has long been called the 'Nation's Playground' and has also represented a place where visitors come to escape from reality. It has become a middle class resort destination and a place for both pleasure and vice within the walls of the casinos.

Through many eras of change, Atlantic City has adapted and survived. Moving from an era of the Nation's

Playground through a period of economic decline, it has always reinvested and survived. Atlantic City has proven adaptable to revolving change and circumstances.

Environmental Value //

Atlantic City is an island surrounded by a rich eco-system in its wetlands, shore and ocean. They contribute to a rich eco-system embracing the city.

Atlantic City has always been a resort coastal town attracting visitors with its wide beaches and many casinos. Throughout the changing landscape, the beach and wide boardwalk has remained the city's best asset. Throughout the seasons, it always attracts a different array of visitors and maintains a strong connection to human activity.

Social Value //

Atlantic City is a city built with enduring dualities between its permanent residents and rotating visitors. The co-existence of the city and the resorts still represents a constant tension.

Reflecting a past where segregation divided the city, the current residential fabric still represents this history. Atlantic City's distinct neighborhoods, such as the Northside, a historically African American working class area, still represent the city's unchanged racial distribution.

Built Environment //

The Boardwalk and recently constructed Artlantic Park represent investments designed for production and consumption of entertainment. They have been conceived and designed as a creation of spaces for social interaction and the beautification of the city.

The city still boasts a wide array of historic monumental architecture that still defines the landscape of the city. This includes the Atlantic City Convention Hall that still standing watch over the boardwalk and the Absecon Lighthouse that still keeps watch over its shores.

Places of the most historic integrity remain in the dense residential neighborhoods of Chelsea, South Side and Duck Town. They have escaped the destruction and redevelopment eras in the boardwalk district and persist as testaments to early 20th century construction. They represent another duality in landscape opposing the large casino development along the shore.

Casinos and Hotels //

The duality of Atlantic City is reflected in its landscape represented by omnipresent casinos and hotels. The succession of hotel designs from the early 20th century to modern additions represents new periods of reinvestment and reinvention. Nearly every remaining historic hotel has experienced a new layer of construction to adapt to a new time and use.

Boardwalk //

Another small-scale commercial hub in Atlantic City is one of its most ubiquitous features, the boardwalk. Four miles wrap around the city from Lower Chelsea to the North Inlet, and still represents one of Atlantic City's most time-honored assets. It draws thousands of visitors to its wooden planks each year and is the best way to attracts visitors from the depths of the casinos. It symbolizes the theme of escapism and spectacle inherent to Atlantic City, which could be further capitalized on.

Vacant Land //

Over the past decade, Atlantic City has with stood through a period of demolition and disinvestment in its South Inlet. Widespread vacant plots of land now dominate the landscape with only small pieces of residential and commercial fabric remaining. The vacant parcels represent a large opportunity for change and reinvestment. But there are still remnants of historic fabric represented through several intact rows of attached homes and stand-alone detached homes.

Atlantic Avenue //

The main economic corridor along Atlantic Avenue is the best opportunity to build up the city's economic base as it connects to both the neighborhoods and the casinos. The corridor represents an opportunity to funnel people out from the tourist-oriented Outlet Mall. With future plans for investment and new facade elements, Atlantic Avenue can transform into a thriving shopping and dining corridor.

Chelsea and Ducktown Neighborhoods //

The dense neighborhoods of Chelsea and Ducktown have withstood changes to the rotating economic base and diverse visitors. They were untouched by the hand of urban renewal demolition of the South Inlet and stand as testaments to wave of expansion during the early twentieth century. These neighborhoods represent high levels of historic integrity in a city that has experienced many periods of change and decline.
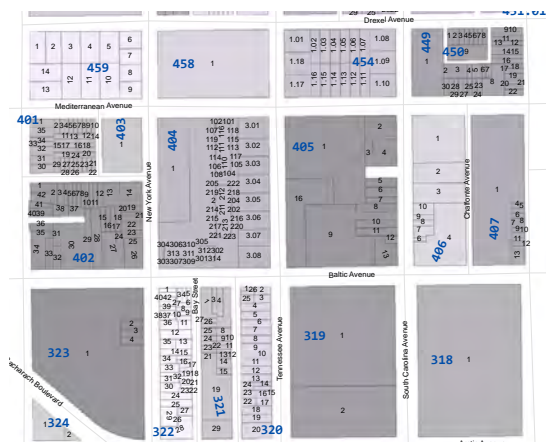

Coastal Environment //

The presence of the coast has directly shaped the way Atlantic City has evolved. It is an island surrounded on all edges by water. The beach environment, inlet waterfront and the back bays all represent the different ways the city interacts with the water. The coast also represents the resiliency of the city. After the super storm Sandy ravaged the city, the residents worked to bring the city back to life.

Landmark Buildings //

The Convention Hall, the Carnegie Library, Absecon Lighthouse, and the many churches of Atlantic City have survived the waves of change and reinvention throughout the city. They remain as large benchmarks representing the grand past of Atlantic City. These landmark buildings changed the landscape of the city when constructed and define its character.

North Inlet and Lower Chelsea Areas //

The area of the North Inlet and Lower Chelsea represent new investments that have recently been poured into Atlantic City. New urbanist housing in the North Inlet represents a place of high owner occupied housing surrounded by an area of high renter dwellings. Lower Chelsea is a place of stability and owner occupancy. It represents an opportunity for a future historic district to protect its integrity.

Urban Patterns //

The existence of the grid pattern is one of the strongest elements in Atlantic City. The 19th century grid organizes the city into defined sections and remains relatively intact. It has been filled in over time by small streets and alley ways. Only small alterations were made to allow for the Railroad lines and new traffic pattern such as the traffic circle on Albany Ave.

FINDINGS
ANALYSIS TAKEAWAYS

The analysis phase of our research sought to establish a better understanding of the factors that have driven the development of Atlantic City and created an environment where history is underappreciated and largely unrecognized. Using the historic narrative, character study, and enabling environment research, the studio distilled these factors into a list of site values that most greatly speak to the enduring character and inherent assets of the city. These values were then used to develop a statement of significance that acted as a framework for guiding our planning process and defining the overall objectives.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Before developing a set of recommendation for the preservation plan of Atlantic City, the studio conducted a SWOT analysis – identifying Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats – as a way to better inform our planning process and define our overall objectives. The SWOT analysis seeks to identify the primary factors affecting an overall objective, dividing them into internal factors – the strengths and weaknesses affecting the internal system – and external factors – the opportunities and threats that are external to the system. Considering the case of Atlantic City, the internal issues were understood as challenges that must be dealt with on an ongoing basis and problems for which the local government and community have a large degree of control in shaping. The two external factors, opportunities and threats, are largely outside of the control of city government and local community and comprise of economic, regulatory, and environmental factors.

The strengths the studio identified all relate to the existing historic fabric and speak to the Statement of Significance and Site Values that were developed during the synthesis of the initial research. Using the character study and maps that were created during the documentation of the city, four major features were identified as major character defining elements – existing commercial corridors, the Boardwalk, the stock of unique historic buildings, and the overall geographic layout of the city (ease of access, proximity to large metropolitan areas, etc).

While the strengths focused on individual physical features of the city, the weaknesses fell into two general categories: negative aspects of city planning and regulatory shortcomings within the local government. The former category identified problems related longstanding social divides (particularly racial and economic), the growing divide between the casino district and the town and residential areas, and the lack of planning for destructive climatic events. The latter category identified absence of a historic preservation framework, due in part to the lack of local control and disproportional influence of CRDA.

Concerning the external factors affecting the city, great opportunity is present in larger preservation initiatives like Main Street Redevelopment programs and the implementation of greater preservation policy. The external threats facing Atlantic City come mostly from greater market forces and development patterns, such as the increased competition from new casinos in the region and other seaside resorts along the coast. The city is also threatened by the continued erosion of the shoreline, a phenomenon that has only worsened due to the effects of climate change and recent severe weather events like Hurricane Sandy.

In addition to informing overall objectives, the SWOT analysis also helped to provide a framework for identifying relevant precedent studies for the next phase of the analysis. These precedent studies were meant to analyze the way other cities confronted similar challenges and serve as case studies in moving forward with a preservation agenda.

Existing commercial corridor	
Boardwalk	Reuse of existing historic buildings
Unique historic buildings	Main Street redevelopment
Geographic layout (access, proximity)	Enacting preservation policy
STRENGTHS	**OPPORTUNITIES**
WEAKNESSES	**THREATS**
Racial and social divisions	CRDA demolition list; other demolitions
Storms	Casino competition (other cities)
Divide between town and casinos; town and the walk	Shoreline erosion / climate change
Lack of local control, CRDA domination	Continued state takeover of local jurisdiction
Building Condition	Competition with other seaside resorts
Absense of historic preservation framework	Reputation of Atlantic City

Atlantic City is not the first urban site struggling to become a steward of its heritage values while the needs of a contemporary living city and its people require increasing political and financial attention - and it is not likely to be the last. There exists a large syndicate of cities that have confronted similar challenges that serve as case studies for how to begin developing a preservation agenda for Atlantic City that elevates its substantial historical values while simultaneously improving the quality of life in the city for residents and visitors.

The precedent study began with a list of twelve distinct characteristics that contribute to the myriad of issues and opportunities in Atlantic City today:

1. Coastal resiliency problems defined as struggles with the impacts of the proximity of the site to bodies of water, including hurricanes, flooding, and general erosion and weathering.

2. Dark or conflicting histories that reflect a legacy of social and cultural tensions, which complicate the historical interpretation of the site.

3. Disintegration or loss of built heritage due to over-development, neglect, or lack of awareness for the need to preserve.

4. Dominant economy or economies from the past or in the present that produce a dependency wherein the city is vulnerable to the vacillations of a certain industry.

5. Downtown revitalization or urban renewal projects conducted at a large scale by municipal or state government to attempt to improve conditions of the urban landscape.

6 National significance to the middle class defined as a substantial contribution to the historical narrative of middle class aspirations, activities, or ethos.

7. Political complications, either past or present, which manifest as barriers to both urban revitalization and heritage conservation.

8. Historical railway access town that expanded rapidly in response to the accessibility between the nascent town and an existing urban core.

9. Seasonal or leisure resort town principally known for a certain amusement and emphasizing the needs of day-trippers or vacationers.

10. Social and economic disparity in modern times that, whether a continuation of historic trends or a contemporary construct, that contributes to a fractured society.

11. Tourism district developed in contemporary times to activate historic sites and attract outside interest in the city.

12. Urban malaise or population loss that reveals considerable economic and social disinvestment and undermines efforts to preserve heritage.

In order to examine how other cities have grappled with similar conditions, a matrix of fifteen comparable cities was developed to discern overlapping characteristics (*right*). These ranged from modern gambling towns to seaside resorts, seasonal cities to post-industrial urban sites; and though seemingly dissimilar as a group, all of the cities considered for the precedent study exhibited at least five of the twelve characteristics of Atlantic City and expressed attempts to mitigate the negative impacts and leverage existing assets.

The sites were then mapped to assess the spatial arrangement of the fifteen comparables to ensure that the final case study group reflected strong geographic diversity (*below*). In the end, the final seven chosen

Legend: ○ = Absent · ◐ = Semi-Present · ● = Present

City	Coastal Resiliency Problems	Conflicting Histories OR Dark History	Disintegration OR Loss of Built Heritage	Dominant Economy / Economies	Downtown Revitalization OR Urban Renewal	National Significance to Middle Class	Political Complications (Historic or Present)	Railway Access Towns (Historic)	Seasonal OR Leisure Resort	Social and Economic Disparity	Tourism District (Present)	Urban Malaise OR Population Loss
GALVESTON, TX	●	◐	○	●	◐	○	○	●	◐	◐	●	●
WILDWOOD, NJ	●	◐	○	●	○	◐	○	●	●	●	●	○
NIAGARA FALLS, NY	○	○	○	●	●	○	○	●	●	●	●	●
BRIGHTON BEACH, UK	●	○	○	●	●	○	●	●	◐	○	●	◐
NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	○	○
NEW ORLEANS, LA	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	○	●	●	●	●
UNIVERSITY CITY, PHILA., PA	●	◐	●	○	●	●	○	●	○	●	●	●
CONEY ISLAND, BKLYN, NY	○	●	○	○	●	●	●	○	●	○	●	○
ORLANDO, FL	○	●	○	●	○	○	●	○	◐	○	●	○
CAPE MAY, NJ	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	●	●	○	●	○
BEACON, NY	●	○	●	●	●	○	●	●	○	●	●	●
LAS VEGAS, NV	○	●	◐	●	○	○	●	○	●	●	●	●
LONG BEACH, NY	●	○	○	○	●	◐	○	●	◐	○	●	◐
VIRGINIA BEACH, VA	●	○	○	○	●	○	○	●	●	○	●	○
MYRTLE BEACH, SC	●	○	○	◐	●	○	○	●	○	○	●	○
ATLANTIC CITY, NJ	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

comparables comprise a qualitatively and spatially diverse collection of sites from which we could begin to evaluate how other cities met similar challenges and ultimately develop a dossier of best practices for the treatment of historic preservation in historic urban locales (*below*).
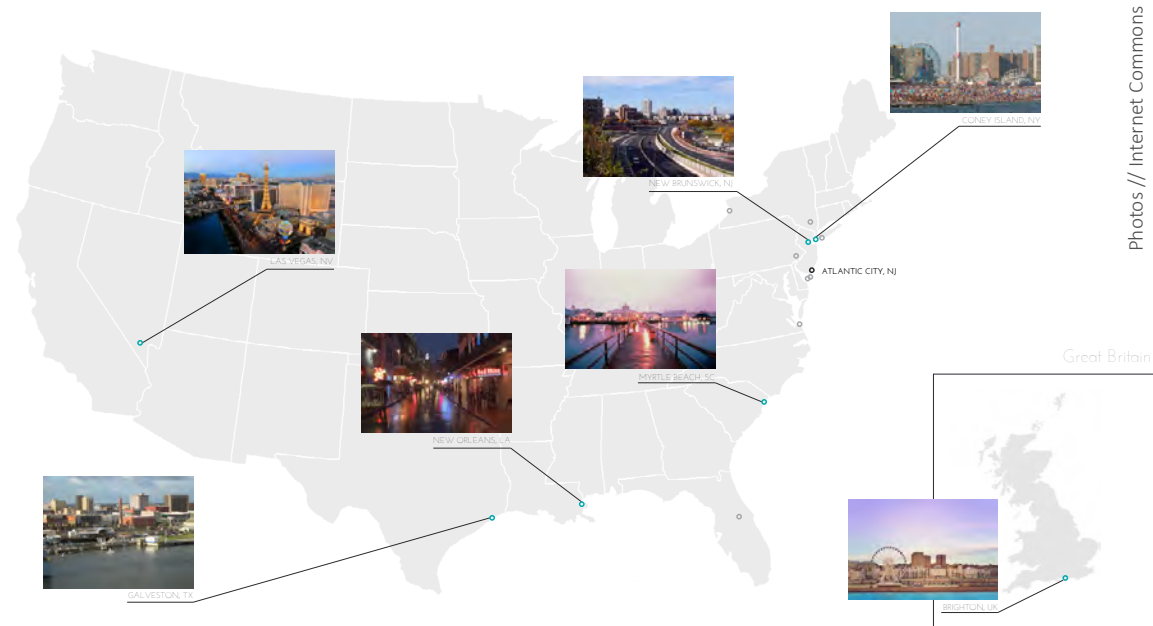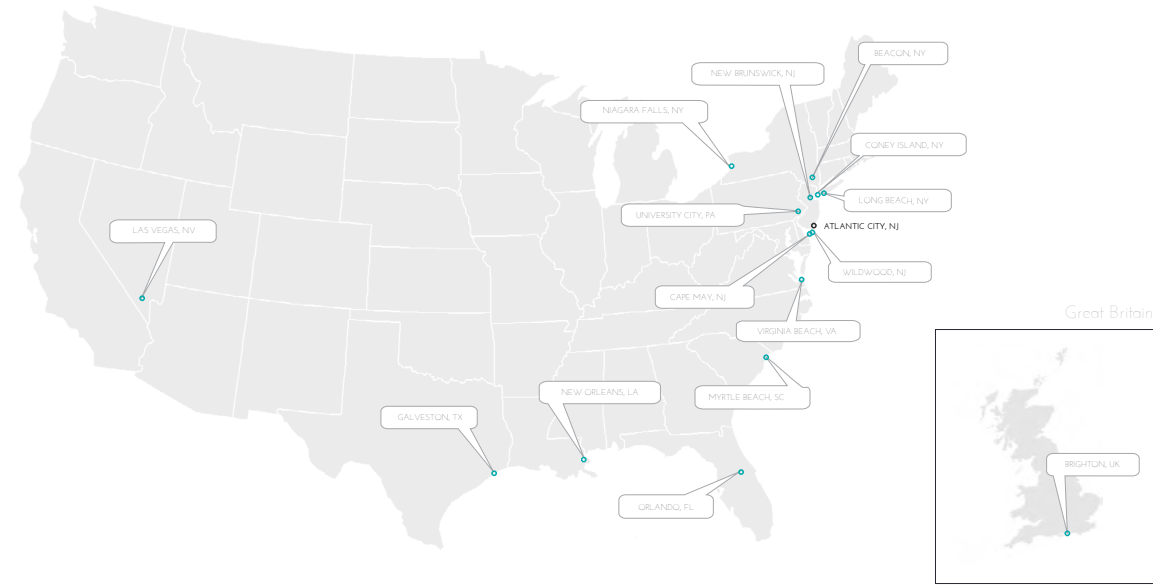
Photos // Internet Commons

Brighton // Great Britain

Initially founded as a fishing village known as Brighthelmston, Brighton outgrew its modest character in the middle of the eighteenth century when the royal family popularized the concept of a "restorative retreat." By the turn of the nineteenth century, Brighton was already known as the top British seaside resort, with a thriving tourism industry catering to London's elite (including Queen Victoria and her entourage) and an ever-growing population. Yet with the advent of the London to Brighton Railway in 1841, the resort became host to larger crowds of middle-class visitors from the urban core. Post World War II, development in Brighton shifted from fashionable beachfront hotels to affordable housing complexes in response to increasing changes in the city's demographics. Although substantial disinvestment, coastal storms, and a reputation as the "drug death capital of the United Kingdom" have all contributed to urban decline and the disintegration of built heritage, the city remains a top seaside destination today.

Shared Characteristics | Brighton's contemporary history closes parallels that of Atlantic City. After years at the height of their respective nation's popularity, both resort towns began a sharp decline following World War II that elicited social, economic, and urban issues that detracted from heritage preservation needs. Physical development responses to intangible social problems in recent years, spurred by the need to bolster the tourism industry and eradicate urban malaise, have left both Brighton and Atlantic City vulnerable to continued degradation of the historic building stock.

Preservation Best Practices | Despite this vulnerability, the Brighton and Hove City Council actively supports historic preservation in conjunction with its more traditional public realm initiatives. In 2003, the "Heritage" branch of the local government — the British version of a local Historic Commission — adopted a ten-year Conservation Strategy that required approval as well from the City Council's Environment Committee. This document serves as a comprehensive management plan for city's 34 defined Conservation Areas and an extensive list of locally-designated properties that the city first began compiling in 1990. The strong emphasis on cultural resource management in a seaside town with all the markings of a contemporary city makes Brighton a strong model for developing a preservation agenda in Atlantic City.

Coney Island // New York

The settlement history of Coney Island can be traced back to 1609, when English sea explorer Henry Hudson made landfall on the small peninsula in 1609, one day before he found the island of Manhattan. Deriving its name for the Dutch Conyne Eylandt meaning "Rabbit Island," the island was known mostly as a rabbit hunting ground until 1823, when the Coney Island Bridge Company constructed "the first artificial connection between the mainland and the island," making it accessible to holidaymakers from Manhattan. Because of its location — easily accessibly from Manhattan, yet far enough away to provide a sense of escape — the Island gained popularity in the 1830s and 1840s, when the construction of carriage roads greatly reduced travel time for the weekend visitor. With the construction of the Coney Island Hotel in 1829, followed quickly by the Brighton Hotel, Manhattan Beach Hotel, and the Oriental Hotel, the island grew alongside Manhattan as the premier resort town for the budding metropolis. By 1865, the first electrified railroad reached Coney Island and made the location accessible to day-trippers, a development that would radically shape the course of its development. Between the 1870s and 1900, the island transformed from a quiet seaside town into an entertainment mecca, as entrepreneurs rushed in feed the public appetite for pleasure by constructing a series of amusement parks, including Luna Park, Dreamland, and Steeplechase Park. The popularity of Coney Island began to fall after World War II, when the advent of air conditioning and the automobile began offer more convenient forms of escape to weary urbanites. The economy continued to decline through the 1980s, but is now in the midst of a revival, spurred by public, private and community initiatives. In the 1990s, the addition of brand new attractions such as KeySpan Park and Coney Island Park revived interest in the struggling destination

town by offering a variety of events, from the annual Mermaid Parade and Siren Festival, to mini-marathons and summertime concerts. With the development of the Coney Island Development Corporation, which implemented a comprehensive plan and created a coordinated economic development strategy, the Island has again regained popularity, though some question whether the plan favors retail and high-rise residential development over outdoor amusements.

Shared Characteristics | After World War II, both Coney Island and Atlantic City suffered from the changing patterns of American life. With the growth of suburbia and the introduction of luxuries such as air conditioning and swimming pools, interest in traveling to Oceanside resort towns diminished and by 1960, both experienced near collapse due to hotel vacancy and a lack of investment. Like Atlantic City, Coney Island has recently seen an interest in redevelopment by public, private, and community organizations. Instrumental in its redevelopment was the Coney Island Development Corporation, which has transformed the island through its rezoning and the completion of a number of transformative projects, including the construction of the new Steeplechase Plaza and the restoration of historic amusement rides like the B&B Carousal.

Preservation Best Practices | Much of the redevelopment of Coney Island was controlled by the CIDC until 2013, when the corporation dissolved after 10 years of service. While the city began the redevelopment with projects that seemed to favor preservation, like the purchase and restoration of the B&B Carousel in 2005, the plan was later altered in favor of retail and high-rise residential development. While the developer's retail plan resembled that of the existing city, the residential components called for massive high-rise developments that "skewered the heart of the city." As a result, the final plan features greatly reduced outdoor amusement zones surrounded by high-rise towers and shopping-mall type retail development. Additionally, none of the historic buildings that are currently up for landmark status are being preserved, and the rezoning placed high-density residential areas throughout already congested areas of the island. While the CIDC has revived the

area economically with the addition of new attractions and diverse planning, it came at the expense of a lager preservation initiative that incorporated more than a few token landmarks.

Galveston // Texas

Despite a flurry of European exploration activity in the 16th and 17th centuries, Galveston was not officially founded until Spanish colonists reclaimed the land for Governor Bernardo de Galvez in 1786. Its first settlement, however, consisted entirely of pirates and profiteers led by Jean Lafitte who used the island as a renegade base from 1816 to 1821. After the United States Navy drove out the pirates, Galveston was incorporated in 1825 as a key port city for the state of Texas. A direct urban competitor to New Orleans, the city gained notoriety in the middle of the 19th century as the largest slave market west of Louisiana and one of the largest cotton ports in the nation. Yet at the same time the port city also became a haven for immigrants, and soon the growing population was augmented by large numbers of German transplants in particular. The years of growth and prosperity ended abruptly with the Hurricane of 1900, which still holds the record of the nation's deadliest natural disaster and succeeded in damaging the Galveston's standing as leading U.S. city. The city was hit once again in 2008 by Hurricane Ike, which caused substantial damage and initiated a new era of rebuilding and reinvestment.

Shared Characteristics | During the 1940s and 1950s, Galveston's thriving – if not legal – gambling industry assumed a reputation as a city of vice, not unlike Atlantic City around the same time. The city entered soon after into a period of decline, with fifty years of population loss and mounting social and economic problems made worse by the withdrawal of military investment after World War II. Coastal storms and flooding compound the existing urban issues, exacerbating the dropping population and widening the socioeconomic divide. While historic preservation remains a clear objective of the local government despite prevailing urban tensions, the barrier island of Galveston has lost a significant number of historic homes in its lower-income districts

due to severe flooding. More economically stable neighborhoods with historic district designations are the focus of substantial restoration activity; however, neighborhoods without the means to restore have experienced significant clearance of built heritage from the middle of the twentieth century.

Preservation Best Practices | The city's most prominent heritage steward is the Galveston Historic Foundation, one of the largest non-profit organizations in the nation. The organization is frequently lauded by conservation agencies such as the National Trust for Historic Preservation for its efforts, and its revolving fund has been instrumental in the restoration of the city's historic fabric and protection of built heritage against environmental disasters. The nonprofit also guides urban development around the joint priorities of heritage and environmental conservation, notably operating a Community Housing Development Organization subsidiary that uses federal funds to rehabilitate historic buildings for low-income housing.

Las Vegas // Nevada

Although the city of Las Vegas had a brief life as both a Mormon settlement and a farming community, it was not formally established until 1905, with the completion of the main railway linking Southern California with Salt Lake City. From its earliest years, Las Vegas was known for its liberalized laws that attracted temporary residence to the city. In 1912, divorce laws were relaxed, allowing a "quickie" divorce to be attained after only six weeks of residency. These short-term residents often stayed at "dude ranches," which are said to be the forerunners of the sprawling Strip hotels. However, with the proliferation of the railroad system, the city became less important as a stopover for the shipment of goods to the rest of the country. In March 1931, gambling – which had been taking place illegally for years- was officially legalized by state legislature, but it wasn't until 1935, when the city completed the construction of the Hoover Dam – that tourism took off as the city's primary industry. The outbreak of World War II brought major development to the city in the 1940s, due to the introduction of the defense industry to the valley. The isolated location,

along with plentiful water and inexpensive energy, made Las Vegas as ideal site for military defense, most notably the Manhattan Project. After the close of the war, the city turned back to the gambling industry, which was managed or funded mostly by organized crime figures such as Benjamin "Bugsy" Siegel and Meyer Lansky. In the 1980s and 1990s the development of the strip expanded to the south and downtown Las Vegas, which has maintained its 1950s feel, began to suffer. Recently, the city has made efforts to attract additional business to the area to encourage commercial growth, especially during the daylight hours. In addition to the Fremont East Entertainment District, a development that is meant to attract additional non-gambling visitors to the downtown area, the city successfully lured the IRS and Zappos to relocate to the downtown area, the latter of which occupies the old city hall.

Shared Characteristics | Although Las Vegas legalized gambling nearly 50 years earlier than Atlantic City, both cities had established reputations as cities of vice by the 1940s. Perhaps because of the early adoption of gambling, Las Vegas did not experience the period of economic decline and population loss following the withdrawal of military investment after World War II. Regardless, because of the rapid development of the south end of the strip in the 1980s, Las Vegas has seen the need to diversify their appeal to reinvigorate their downtown area. While both cities have made a concerted effort to expand the types of entertainment offered in an effort to appeal both to gambling and non-gambling visitors, its application as a form of historic preservation in Las Vegas is unique, as its historic building stock consists of casinos and hotels that maintain the old 1950s Las Vegas feel.

Preservation Best Practices | The city of Las Vegas Redevelopment Agency (RDA) was created in 1986 to help revitalize the downtown area. Although the RDA is legally a separate entity from the city government, the council members sit of its board and provide input on the projects it undertakes. The main goal of the RDA is to promote the redevelopment of Downtown Las Vegas and the surrounding older commercial districts by working with developers, property owners and the community

to reinvigorate areas experiencing urban decay. Their most successful project has been the Fremont Street Experience, a pedestrian mall, which incorporates many of the older casinos from the 1940s and 1950s while hosting free concerts and events throughout the year.

Myrtle Beach // South Carolina

Roughly 17 square miles and located along the South Carolina coast, Myrtle Beach's beginnings as a resort town started around the turn of the century. Myrtle Beach became a popular destination after the Seashore and Conway Railroad began construction in 1899. Burroughs and Collins Company built the first hotel, the Seaside Inn, in 1901. The town continued to develop under Simeon B. Chapin and other businessmen who built the Ocean Forest Hotel and the golf course Pine Lakes International. In 1938, the city formerly known as New Town was incorporated as Myrtle Beach. An air force base was built in the 1940s and the city began to grow with golf courses, amusement parks, hotels, and more along "The Grand Strand." In addition, Coastal Carolina University was established. Well into the present, the city has remained a popular tourist destination with a growing population of residents.

Shared Characteristics | Myrtle Beach as a resort destination grew with the construction of the railroad, supported by the capitalist-driven pursuits of speculative development and boosterism. The boardwalk and built environment have undergone several iterations because due to environmental challenges, such as Hurricanes Hazel and Hugo. The town thrives off the tourism industry but contains a large population of permanent residents.

Preservation Best Practices | Demolition began in earnest the 1940s with the historic Chesterfield Inn, setting an ominous tone for subsequent approaches to heritage management moving forward. The beach town has lost a vast number of significant sites since then due to neglect, economic priorities, and tensions from private ownership versus public welfare. In recent times, prominent city landmarks including the Pavilion and the boardwalk have been demolished. Like Atlantic City, the city lacks the preservation policies to protect

these structures. However, there is a palpable increase in attention to conservation — though mostly for the purpose of preserving the heritage tourism industry as opposed to heritage itself — with the 2005 restoration of the Myrtle Beach Train Depot. There is also an attempt to highlight the city's historical diversity, as seen through the Historic Myrtle Beach Colored School Museum and Education Center.

New Brunswick // New Jersey

In 1730, New Brunswick was officially founded by England, years after the Lenni-Lenape tribe and Dutch settlers claimed the land for their own. The town at the core of Middlesex County grew into a thriving hub as a key grain transportation center and a strategic stop en route from New York to Pennsylvania. New Brunswick developed into a leading industrial city by the middle of the 19th century. Though host to several manufactories, it was the establishment of a bandages business by entrepreneurial brothers Robert and James Johnson in 1885 that left an indelible mark on the city; Johnson & Johnson has been headquartered in New Brunswick ever since. Aside from the corporate giants that define the city today, New Brunswick is also best known as the backdrop to Rutgers University, which was founded in 1766 as Queen's College.

Shared Characteristics | Economic and social disparity, ethnic diversity, middle class significance, and extensive urban redevelopment are all common themes to both Atlantic City and New Brunswick. Furthermore, in New Brunswick students act symbolize the tourists in the rhetoric of Atlantic City's struggle to serve conflicting needs of visitors against the needs of permanent residents. Yet in recent years, New Brunswick has been able to pull out of its decline. The city's model for regeneration — brandished by the New Brunswick Development Company (DEVCO) — has already caught the attention of Atlantic City officials, who currently view New Brunswick as a powerful precedent for rebuilding the economy and repairing social tensions in the shore town.

Preservation Best Practices | New Brunswick has lost much of its built heritage via past urban renewal projects

and modern day revitalization projects. In the effort to reinvigorate the economy and compete with other American cities, New Brunswick has emphasized new development over restoration and contemporary design over preservation. This process has enabled the city to rebound from its past decline and it is now in a more secure position to consider appropriate preservation processes; however, it suggests a method of urban revitalization which mandates that heritage conservation be suspended while the economy stabilizes. New Brunswick is an important precedent for recognizing that many still conceive historic preservation a secondary concern in the course of reviving cities. If the city is a comprehensive entity in which all parts must function for the city to thrive, then acknowledging, experiencing, and preserving Atlantic City's heritage must be tantamount to economic and social reform.

New Orleans // Louisiana

French explorers first settled New Orleans in 1718 and soon set about populating the swampland with prisoners and slaves to support the growth of the nascent city. With the rapid transition from bayou to urban core depending heavily on the exploitation of slave labor, New Orleans grew into a juxtaposition of extreme wealth and abject poverty. Ethnic and economic disparities proliferated throughout the city's history, fracturing the city's culture between its diverse populations. While this created socioeconomic and racial tensions that persist today, it also gave rise to strong representations of heritage throughout the city that speak to the multicultural nature of its people. A thoroughly metropolitan city today, growth and resource management in New Orleans has been hampered in recent years by the devastating impact of 2005's Hurricane Katrina. Six years later, the city is still working to mitigate the coastal storm's destruction, aided by substantial federal investment and local initiatives.

Shared Characteristics | New Orleans socioeconomic and racial issues closely compare to those in Atlantic City, and both cities have endured significance population decreases. New Orleans, however, appears to be at a different stage in the process of reinvestment and

redevelopment, no doubt spurred by the drastic losses incurred by Hurricane Katrina. While the two cities share many qualitative characteristics, New Orleans has what Atlantic City does not — nationwide attention. Much of the city's restoration (and associated historic resource management agenda) has been encouraged by projects and funding from agencies and organizations outside of the city.

Preservation Best Practices | Many properties in New Orleans have been awarded top preservation honors for individual site restoration projects post-Katrina, such as National Trust's Preservation Honor Award for the General Services Administration's work on the U.S. Customs House in 2013. But large-scale conservation rests primarily in the hands of smaller non-profit organizations. The Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans is a critical advocate for the city's built heritage, notable for its support of underserved populations through such programs as Operation Comeback, Rebuilding Together, and Home Again. Also, one uncommon ally can be found in the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority, which contributes to conservation through the Lot Next Door ordinance, preserving and promoting the stability of neighborhood character by reducing vacancy.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

When taken in concert, these seven cities reveal key patterns in the social, economic, and political decision-making that directly influence the care of historic resources. What is most notable is that Atlantic City exhibits nearly all of the common themes that pertain to conservation in urban spaces - both those that serve as liabilities to the cultural landscape and those that are poised to support better heritage stewardship in the future.

The precedent study showed that historic preservation was exacerbated in cities which exhibited a disengaged local government with respect to cultural resource management. Other factors, such as a lack of contingency planning for environmental disasters, a stringent prioritization of other urban reforms without the incorporation of preservation, a clear dependence on any single economy, attraction, or institution and

Said a conservative old capitalist: "Call it a sand-patch, a desolation, a swamp, a mosquito territory, but do not talk to me about any city in a such a place as that. In the first place, you can't build a city there, and, in the second place, if you did, you couldn't get anybody to go there."

Heston, 1894

PRESERVATION APPROACH

APPROACH

Based on our statement of significance and to achieve our established preservation goal, the following key objectives encompass the desired outcomes of the individual implementations. Each project aims to address at least one of these points.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Because of the current lack of preservation policies, we endeavor to establish a regulatory framework to implement preservation to protect valuable historic resources. By reactivating historic urban assets, we aim to enhance traditional circulation and walk-ability in the city. Policies also encompass supporting a diversified economy, creating an educational framework for stakeholders to embrace preservation and understand the available incentives and opportunities for application, and establishing an institutional capacity to champion and manage preservation efforts in the city.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT THROUGH EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY

Though residents of Atlantic City feel a sense of place-attachment, a gap exists in their desire to protect their physical resources. In order to bridge that gap, we seek to dovetail preservation outcomes with existing revitalization initiatives; reinforce the connection between current residents and their past by engaging communities in the heritage of their city; and foster community interest in and commitment to the physical environment.

PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE REMAINING HISTORIC ASSETS OF THE CITY

In addition to promoting the historic assets of the city by celebrating the uniqueness of each community, we seek to bring investment back to the neighborhoods and the historic downtown. By discouraging unnecessary demolition and encouraging the rehabilitation of existing buildings in new development patterns, we will highlight and protect areas with high architectural integrity.
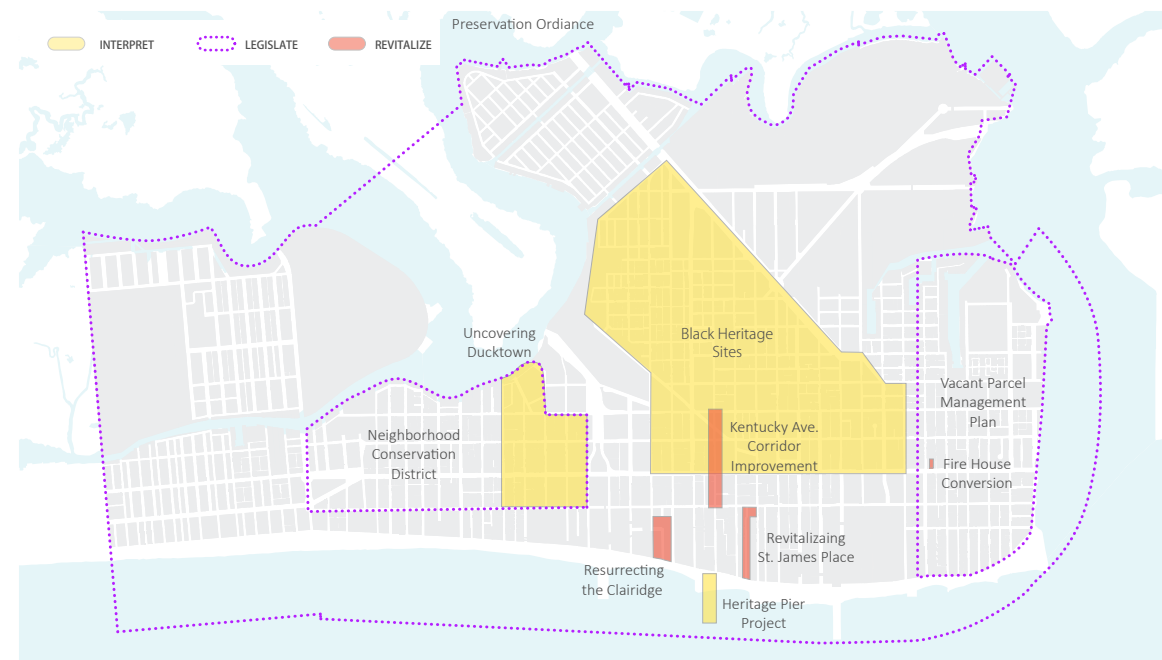
INTERVENTIONS

The following pages of this report propose interventions emboldened by the studio's analysis of Atlantic City. The ten projects help to visualize the application of the preservation approach through a range of scales – including city, neighborhood, block, or building/resource – and three lenses: policy, interpretation and design. Together, the interventions envision how Atlantic City's heritage may be experienced by residents, visitors, and policy-makers in the future in an effort to reverse the city's current state and counteract its modern reputation. This index provides an abstract of each project.

POLICY-BASED INTERVENTIONS

Historic Preservation Ordinance // Maggie Smith

Despite its hidden wealth of historically significant sites, Atlantic City currently lacks a local law that aids in preserving its remaining historic fabric. Enacting a Historic Preservation Ordinance will generate community awareness and encourage the protection of the city's cultural resources. The ordinance will create and define the Historic Preservation Commission as regulatory, such that they will have the authority to prevent further demolition of the dwindling historic built environment.

Neighborhood Conservation District // Lee Riccetti

A Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD) in Atlantic City will respond to the need for protection of the historic built environment while avoiding being overly restrictive. The NCD will cover the Chelsea neighborhood from Texas Avenue to Albany Avenue in order to preserve the existing historic housing stock that would not necessarily qualify for historic designation under a local ordinance or National Register district. The district will function as a zoning overlay containing a set of optional incentivized guidelines for rehabilitation work and new construction, which attempt to preserve neighborhood scale and character.

Vacant Parcel Management Plan // Amanda Mazie

This project will explore the possibilities for the vacant parcels in the South Inlet area of Atlantic City that has experienced a period of rapid decline and demolition. Through exploration of past and current landscape conditions, I will create tangible goals for future improvement. Beginning with mapping the current typology of vacant land and open space, I will set up a list of recommendations for future commercial and residential development sites and parks.

INTERPRETATION-BASED INTERVENTIONS

African American Heritage Site Trail // Lauren Burton

Throughout its development, prosperity, and decline, African Americans have held a distinguished presence among Atlantic City's built environment. Today, as the place still struggles with its dual nature as a resort town and inhabited city, the preservation and interpretation of its distinct Black history remains essential. Through a HistoryPin virtual tour, Atlantic City's Black Heritage Sites are easily accessible to the everyday visitor or citizen. A combination of google maps, historic photographs, and informative descriptions, express to viewers the evolution of Atlantic City's African American landscapes.

Heritage Pier Development // Sam Kuntz

Atlantic City's piers have, since 1882, served as a historical record of the city's development innovations and aspirations. Development interests are once again percolating for these sites; however, only four of the seven original sites retain any historic integrity. As modern investors seek to reuse the historic pier sites, it is crucial that some semblance of their past nature be preserved for the public benefit. The Heritage Piers Project expands the public realm through an interpretive reconstruction of the world's first amusement pier where the iconic Boardwalk meets Kentucky Avenue. By simultaneously

addressing the needs of the contemporary city to bring energy and investment to the Boardwalk and the social imperative to make heritage more visible and accessible in modern times, the new pier will become an adaptable and dynamic historic installation for both residents and visitors.

Uncovering Ducktown // Reina Chano

Known in its heyday as Atlantic City's Italian American neighborhood, the Ducktown neighborhood balances both a rich history and historic fabric with changes to its social makeup, making it perhaps the best example of resilience in Atlantic City. This individual project seeks to document Ducktown's change over time through interviews with current and former residents, documentation of its physical landscape and a mapping analysis. In doing so, this project aims to present ideas for how Ducktown's history can be interpreted and communicated towards the gain of both its residents and visitors.

DESIGN-BASED INTERVENTIONS

Firehouse Conversion // Parima Sukosi

By creating a new landscape that isolates itself from its surroundings, CDRA's Art Playground also alienates its surrounding community. As a result, the locals deem art programs as trivial when they cannot feel its impact. I find this to be extremely problematic considering that art should be without barrier and is there to inspire, and that there are many cases where art and design serves as the main tool for neighborhood revitalization. The reuse of the firehouse into an artist co-op and gallery will become a cooperative approach to promoting art: rotating exhibits and art markets will attract tourists while local residents can benefit from workshops held by the artists in residence.

Resurrecting the Claridge // Nate Shlundt

The skyline of Atlantic City today is dominated by the towering casino hotel complexes built after the 1974 casino referendum, which heralded in massive redevelopment along the iconic seaside Boardwalk.

But recently, as casinos have struggled to sustain their immense empires, many have had to consolidate, sell off, or demolish parts of their properties to respond to the changing economic climate. Using the historic Claridge Hotel, a building recently sold by Bally's Casino, this project seeks to use preservation as a tool for reactivation and resurrection. The plan will examine design opportunities and suggest urban strategies that can inform future development that is both environmentally and economically responsive to the changing urban landscape of Atlantic City.

Revitalizing St. James Place // Rachel Isacoff

This plan seeks to encourage new development and resilient design on St. James Place while preserving the character of the street. St. James Place connects Pacific Avenue to the Boardwalk at a point between two nodes of casinos, lending itself to family-oriented entertainment. While preserving the Irish Pub and rehabilitating the Knights of Columbus Hotel, the Flanders Hotel and remaining sea-side boardinghouses, the large vacant parcel near Pacific Avenue will transform into a market, like that of Reading Terminal in Philadelphia. Additionally, the parking lot adjacent to the Boardwalk between St. James Place and Tennessee Avenue will be converted into a stormwater park – reestablishing Atlantic City as the world's playground.

Kentucky Avenue Corridor Improvement // Di Gao

This project aims to revitalize the historic Kentucky Avenue corridor between Baltic and Pacific Avenues through a combination of temporary and permanent arts and music based installations. Recognizing that Kentucky Avenue has historic cultural significance to the local community for its legendary music venues and night life which made it a regional epicenter of culture and entertainment during the first half of the 20th century, this project proposes to outline a strategic plan for the phased redevelopment of this iconic street so that it can once again contribute to the local economy with the establishment of an anchor entertainment venue and other local food, culture, and heritage draws to the street.

Year after year, summer after summer, this strange commingling of the young and the old, the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the grave and the gay, goes on in Atlantic City; and so until the end of time, generation after generation, the charmed voice of the sea will draw men to its sands and to its surf.

Heston, 1892

FUTURE IDENTITY

And while the bronze deepens on the cheek, and the pulse bounds more vigorously, and the step grows more elastic, there is no thought of yearning for other scenes, but rather of frequent regret that the vacation must soon end.

Heston, 1892

A P P E N D I X