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# **Borough of Carteret**

# **Municipal Public Access Plan**

Submitted by: Borough of Carteret

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Approved by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection:

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Adoption by the City

*{Date of Municipal Adoption}*

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Approval of this plan does not eliminate the need for any Federal, State, County or municipal permits, certifications, authorizations or other approvals that may be required by the Applicant, nor shall the approval of this plan obligate the Department to issue any permits, certifications, authorizations or other approvals required for any project described in this plan.

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## Introduction

The intent of this document is to provide a comprehensive Municipal Public Access Plan (MPAP) for the Borough of Carteret which lays out the Borough's vision for providing access to tidal waters and shorelines within the municipal boundary. This Municipal Public Access Plan (MPAP) was developed in accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:7E-8.11 in collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), and has been approved by the NJDEP. The development and implementation of this MPAP supports the policy of local determination of public access locations and facilities, while safeguarding regulatory flexibility and potential funding opportunities for Carteret.

Public rights of access to and use of the tidal shorelines and waters, including the ocean, bays, and tidal rivers, in New Jersey are founded in the Public Trust Doctrine. First set by the Roman Emperor Justinian around A.D. 500 as part of Roman civil law, the Public Trust Doctrine establishes the public's right to full use of the seashore as declared in the following quotation from Book II of the Institutes of Justinian:

*"By the law of nature these things are common to all mankind – the air, running water, the sea, and consequently the shores of the sea. No one, therefore, is forbidden to approach the seashore, provided that he respects habitations, monuments, and the buildings, which are not, like the sea, subject only to the law of nations."*

Influenced by Roman civil law, the tenets of public trust were maintained through English common Law and adopted by the original 13 colonies. Following the American Revolution, the royal right to tidelands was vested to the 13 new states, then to each subsequent state, and has remained a part of public policy into the present time. Through various judicial decisions, the right of use upheld by the Public Trust Doctrine has been incorporated into many state constitutions and statutes, allowing the public the right to all lands, water and resources held in the public trust by the state, including those in New Jersey.

The NJDEP adopted new rules governing public access on November 5, 2012 that enable municipalities to develop and adopt MPAPs to govern public access within their municipality. This MPAP consists of an inventory of public access locations, plus plans to preserve and enhance access based on community needs and State standards.

On March 10, 2015 representatives from the Borough of Carteret and CME Associates met to begin the public access planning process. This plan was then developed in collaboration with the NJDEP, Borough Engineer's office, CME Associates, Borough Planning Board, and Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve. The MPAP was presented to the Planning Board on **{date}** and was approved for submission to the NJDEP on **{date}**. Upon receiving approval from the NJDEP on **{date}**, the MPAP was incorporated into the **{specify element}** Element of the Master Plan by resolution on **{date}**. Incorporation into the Master Plan, and final approval of this MPAP by the NJDEP, was recognized by Public Notice in the NJDEP

Bulletin. All public access decisions made within Carteret Borough will be consistent with this plan.

### **Authority for Municipal Public Access Plans**

The authority for a municipality to develop a MPAP is derived from the Coastal Zone Management Rules, N.J.A.C. 7:7E, last amended by NJDEP on July 15, 2013. The premise of the authorization of Municipal Public Access Plans is that public access to tidal waters is fundamentally linked to local conditions. Municipalities have a better awareness and are more responsive to these conditions than a broader State “one size fits all” mandated public access plan.

The voluntary development of a MPAP by Carteret Borough enables the municipality to better plan, implement, maintain, and improve the provision of public access for its residents and visitors. The MPAP will be incorporated into the ***{specify element}*** Element of the municipality’s Master Plan, in accordance with the Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A 40:55D). The MPAP, as an official component of the municipal Master Plan, informs and/or identifies public access requirements associated with any proposed development or redevelopment project.

Upon approval of the MPAP by the Department and incorporation into the Master Plan, Carteret Borough will be responsible for ensuring that public access to tidal waterways along the municipality’s shorelines is provided in accordance to this plan. For each new public access project, Carteret Borough will provide NJDEP with a letter confirming its consistency with this MPAP. Any permit issued by the NJDEP will reflect this and ensure that public access requirements are satisfied in accordance to this plan. Per N.J.A.C. 7:7E -8.11(j)4, Carteret Borough is required to submit a progress report on plan implementation to NJDEP within five (5) years from date of plan adoption.

The sections of this plan as indicated below are prescribed by the Coastal Zone Management Rules, N.J.A.C. 7:7E, adopted by NJDEP on November 5, 2012. See Appendix 1.

### **State of New Jersey Public Access Goals**

Through the New Jersey Coastal Zone Management Rules (see N.J.A.C 7:7E-1.1 (c)), the State of New Jersey establishes a broad set of coastal protection goals, including the following specifically addressing public access.

- Effectively manage ocean and estuarine resources through sustainable recreational and commercial fisheries, as well as through the safe and environmentally sound use of coastal waters and beaches.
- Provide meaningful public access to and use of tidal waterways and their shores.
- Preserve public trust rights to tidal waterways and their shores.
- Preserve and enhance views of the coastal landscape to enrich aesthetic and cultural values and vital communities.
- The enhancement of public access by promoting adequate affordable public facilities and services.

- Create and enhance opportunities for public access to tidal waterways and their shores, on a non-discriminatory basis.
- Maintain all existing public access to, and along tidal waterways and their shores.
- Provide opportunities for public access to tidal waterways and their shores through new development.
- Provide public access that does not create conditions that may be reasonably expected to endanger public health and safety, damage the environment, or create significant homeland security vulnerability.

The Borough of Carteret Municipal Public Access Plan embraces and reflects these goals and will help preserve, protect, and enhance the public's ability to access the Public Trust lands.

## I. Municipal Public Access Vision

### A. Overview of Municipality

#### 1. *Municipal Description*

The Borough of Carteret is located along the Arthur Kill and Rahway River within the eastern portion of Middlesex County, New Jersey. The Borough of Carteret has a total year round population of 22,844 and does not experience population fluctuations. Carteret has long been identified as a river town that uses nearly all its waterfront for industrial purposes. This has provided Carteret with a major economic benefit by working with large industrial entities to efficiently use Carteret's waterfront along the Arthur Kill Waterway and Rahway River for transportation of goods and materials. Carteret is traversed by the New Jersey Turnpike giving it excellent transportation access for both industrial uses and Borough residents.

Heavy industrial and residential uses dominate Carteret's landscape in terms of existing land uses. Heavy industries include warehousing, distribution facilities, truck terminal facilities, large scale tank storage of gasoline and other materials, and wholesale offices. A majority of these facilities are located along the Arthur Kill waterfront and in west Carteret along the New Jersey Turnpike. Most of Carteret's residential and commercial uses are found between the New Jersey Turnpike and the industrial area that extends along the Arthur Kill. A majority of residential dwellings are in close proximity which results in medium to high density residential neighborhoods.

Over the past several years the Borough has been working to redevelop several of the major industrial areas to residential, commercial, mixed-use, and recreational uses along the waterfront. The Borough envisions a high density active waterfront that connects with existing neighborhoods and supports commercial and mixed use development. A ferry to Manhattan is envisioned and the Borough intends to create a comprehensive river-walk and greenway system. The Borough has already completed the first component of waterfront development in the form of the Carteret Waterfront Park. Many of the developments and amenities envisioned will be planned and constructed around the existing Waterfront Park.

The Borough has designated several areas along its waterfront as areas in need of redevelopment. The Borough's use of the area in need of redevelopment planning tool and redevelopment agreements with developers to clean contaminated sites along the waterfront has allowed the Borough to move forward with its vision. Currently, Carteret has an active waterfront park with numerous amenities that residents can access and a County Park along the Rahway River with amenities the public can access.

The Borough of Carteret is comprised of approximately 3,200 acres with 7 linear miles of major tidal waterways. The Rahway River has several tributaries or minor tidal waterways that include extensive wetlands along Carteret's northern border including the County Park and what is known as the Landfill Redevelopment Area Phase II. Additionally, Carteret has wetlands at its southern point, or Tufts Point, where the Arthur Kill flows south and then west along Port Reading. The Landfill Redevelopment Area and Tufts point are currently restricted to public access because of potential health hazards and are environmentally sensitive, but may have the potential for public access via conservation easements and elevated boardwalks. Historically, the Borough had approximately 9 miles of additional minor tidal waterways, but they have been channelized into underground culverts over the years and do not currently exist as surface water bodies for use by the public. The lands adjacent to the Arthur Kill Waterway are predominantly industrial, and include nearly a dozen properties on the Known Contaminated Site List, and several CKE and CEA groundwater contaminations area. They also include recorded NJPDES-regulated facilities and surface water discharge points. According to a document titled *Redevelopment Initiatives Spurring Economic Stimulus and Growth*, the Borough has in recent years successfully reactivated many of its abandoned industrial sites through redevelopment planning and incentives.

It is important to note that the Borough has estimated a total of \$53.1 million in public and private damages were caused by Superstorm Sandy. Of this total, approximately \$7.1 million in damages have been estimated at public properties and facilities. The Borough's Waterfront Park alone sustained over \$2 million in damages as a result of Superstorm Sandy. The Borough has taken several steps to mitigate future hazards and this Plan will assist the Borough in properly planning the waterfront to withstand existing coastal hazards and improve resiliency for future projects. It is anticipated that this Plan will work in tandem with a Getting to Resiliency report and a Coastal Vulnerabilities Assessment report to strengthen Carteret's resiliency to future storms.

## **2. Public Access Description**

Public Access in Carteret Borough is provided by the municipality at the Carteret Waterfront Park and by Middlesex County at Joseph Medwick Park. These two public access points offer a variety of facilities and amenities. The following table lists all amenities currently available at both public access points.

Public Access Amenities	
Carteret Waterfront Park	Joseph Medwick Park
Miniature Golf	Bike and Pedestrian Trails
Putting Green	Tennis Courts
Fitness Trail	Little League Fields
Pathways	Football Field
Garden	Soccer Field
Beach Volleyball	Nature Observation Decks
Bocce	Parking
Shuffleboard	Tot Lots
Chess	Bathrooms
Tot Lots	Benches
Gazebo	Waste Receptacles
Fishing Pier	Open Play Area
Boat Launch	Picnic Groves
Parking	
Bathrooms	
Benches	
Waste Receptacles	
Coin-operated viewing stations	

The Borough protects access to the Waterfront Park by maintaining ownership of the land and through the Green Acres Program. Carteret Waterfront Park maintenance costs are subsidized by boat launch permit fees. Middlesex County maintains Joseph Medwick Park as it is a County Park. Carteret adopted an ordinance to clean and eliminate sources of drift and debris that are obstacles or hazards to navigation of the Arthur Kill or Rahway River. Carteret also protects and maintains public access through Borough Code Section 182-3 which prohibits pollution of water or littering in public parks.

The Borough continues to invest in the Waterfront Park by repairing the damage afflicted by Superstorm Sandy, maintaining and adding amenities to the park, enhancing the quality of the waterfront and public access, and taking advantage of opportunities to redevelop the waterfront to expand the amount of waterfront area available to the public. The overall goal of this MPAP is to establish Carteret's plan to maintain existing public access, enhance the amenities offered at all existing public access locations to and along tidal waterways and their shores, and continue with waterfront redevelopment opportunities that increases public access along the Arthur Kill and Rahway River.

### **3. Map 1 Carteret Tidal Waterways and Lands**

This map shows all the tidal waterways within the municipality and all lands held by the municipality, and may be found in Appendix 3.

## **B. Municipal Public Access Goals and Objectives**

As part of the planning process, this MPAP has been reviewed and is consistent with the following goals/elements/policies established in Carteret's Master Plan:

### **1. Goals**

- "To provide sufficient space in appropriate locations for a variety of uses and open space, both public and private, in a manner compatible with the character of the Borough and the environment."
- "To promote conservation of ... open space...and valuable natural resources, and to prevent...degradation of the environment through improper use of land."
- "To ensure that any prospective development is responsive to the Borough's environmental features, and can be accommodated while preserving these physical characteristics. The Borough also seeks to balance recreational and preservation needs..."

### **2. Elements**

- The Land Use Plan in the 1998 Master Plan Re-Examination.

### **3. Policies**

- "Major Land Use Issues Currently Facing the Municipality" section of the Borough's 1998 Master Plan Re-examination Report recognizes "waterfront development for recreation purposes" and "coordination with county planning efforts within the Arthur Kill Strategic Planning Area" as recommendations for future development within the Borough. The Report recommends the Borough "Develop a policy concerning the establishment of greenways along the Rahway River and Arthur Kill waterfront in accordance with the recommendations contained in the Middlesex County Open Space Plan. Coordinate and balance the preservation of these important watersheds with the use of the waterfront for both public recreation and future industrial and commercial development."
- The section entitled "Changes at the County Level" reiterates goals and recommendations found in Middlesex County's 1995 released Phase III Growth Management Strategy Report that relate to the redevelopment and environmental mitigation along the Borough's waterfront. It recommends that "The Arthur Kill shoreline would benefit from the redevelopment of underutilized...sites. Redevelopment planning also needs to address environmental concerns regarding past contamination of land, water, and air quality along the shoreline." This section of the Re-examination Report indicates



that the Growth Management Strategy Report and County Open Space Plan propose greenway trail routes along the County's waterways, including that of Carteret. The greenways would connect to the Joseph Medwick Park, water-fronting parks in other municipalities, and properties along the Arthur Kill Waterway.

In addition to those goals outlined within the Master Plan and the three State required goals below, Carteret establishes the following as goals specifically for public access:

1. All existing public access shall be maintained to the maximum extent practicable;
2. Maintain safe and adequate access locations for fishing;
3. Provide clear informative signage for access locations;
4. Develop a high density, high impact, resilient, and active waterfront;
5. Create a continuous boardwalk or pathway along the Arthur Kill where feasible; and
6. Ensure redevelopment of the waterfront includes an easement or other mechanism to preserve public access along the waterfront.

## II. Existing Public Access

### A. Public Access Locations

**Map 2 Carteret Public Access Locations**, identifies an inventory of all public access locations within Carteret and whether they are currently utilized or restricted. See **Table 1** which provides detailed information on attributes and activities for each location. Table 1 and Map 2 may be found in Appendix 3.

Currently, Carteret only has two major waterway access points. The Carteret Waterfront Park located on the Arthur Kill Waterway and Joseph Medwick Park located in the northwestern portion of the Borough along the Rahway River.

### B. Improved Public Access Locations

**Map 3 Carteret Preferred Public Access Locations**, provides an inventory of the preferred, existing and proposed, public access locations that afford access to public trust lands and waters. Map 3 may be found in Appendix 3.

#### 1. Carteret Waterfront Park

The Carteret Waterfront Park is located on Waterfront Access Road in the southeast corner of the Borough along the Arthur Kill Waterway. The park includes many amenities and activities such as a fishing pier, boat launch, mini-golf course, parking, and fitness trail.

## IMPROVEMENTS

The Carteret Waterfront Park contains adequate signage that identifies the location through a Green Acres sign and a memorial. Also a sign located at the intersection of Waterfront Access Road and Peter J Sica Industrial Highway provides way-finding for visitors to the area. Additional signage can be found throughout the park including the rules of the pier, descriptions on the fitness trail, and plans to upgrade the park with a marina. These signs also include rules in Spanish. There are no signs regarding swimming in the Arthur Kill Waterway.

Parking can be found adjacent to the northern border of the park and includes approximately 80 parking spaces of which 2 are handicap spaces. The park is easily accessed via pathways from the parking lot directly into the park and fishing pier. The park has adequate parking for all visitors including those with boat trailers and there is no duration for either parking lot. Additional parking is proposed as part of the marina improvements to the park.

There are restroom facilities located in the northern portion of the park right above the tot lot and below the main parking lot. The facilities have both men's and women's rooms and are easily accessible to all park visitors.

The entire park is handicap accessible with all pathways graded properly to allow access from the parking lot into the pier and from the parking lot onto the pathways that provide access throughout the entire park area.



### **2. Joseph Medwick Park**

Joseph Medwick Park is located in the northwest portion of the Township west of the New Jersey Turnpike along the Rahway River. The park is owned and maintained by Middlesex County and provides valuable public access to Carteret residents and all visitors. Joseph Medwick Park is comprised of 88 acres and boasts numerous facilities such as a synthetic and natural grass little league fields, tennis courts, a synthetic and natural grass football/soccer field, open playing areas, two playgrounds, two comfort stations, picnic groves, and

bike/walkways. The Park's key feature is two nature observation decks overlooking the Rahway River.

### IMPROVEMENTS

Joseph Medwick Park contains adequate signage throughout the park including signs that indicate the location, rules of the park and athletic fields, and other informational/historical signs. There are no way-finding signs indicating the location of other amenities throughout the park. It is recommended the County improve the park by adding way-finding signage.

Parking can be found in two separate locations within the park boundaries. One is located in the western portion of the park, immediately adjacent to the athletic fields and is accessed by Pauline Street. The second parking lot is located in the eastern portion of the park, adjacent to the picnic grove areas, and is accessed by Post Boulevard. The park has a total of 224 parking spaces including several handicap parking spaces. Both parking lots are within the park and within walking distance of all amenities. Depending on where visitors access the park, some amenities are further than others but still accessible by walking the park trail. There is no duration on parking in either lot.

The restroom facilities are located adjacent to both parking lots and within walking distance to all amenities in the park. Additional restrooms are not necessary. The entire park is handicap accessible with all pathways graded for handicap access and paths leading to all amenities within the park.



### **C. Limitations to Public Access**

The following limitations to public access in Carteret currently exist:

- The vast majority of Carteret's waterfront is occupied by industrial facilities, including facilities currently not in use;
- Several vacant waterfront properties are contaminated from past industrial uses or landfills which pose a hazard to public health;

- Industrial uses fronting the waterways generally rely on lands adjacent to waterways for shipping and other functional purposes which limits the amount of waterfront area to be used for public access;
- Some waterfront properties are environmentally sensitive wetlands and if used by the public would pose a potential environmental threat to local wildlife; and
- Many of Carteret's waterways are potentially a public health hazard.

### **1. *Temporary Restrictions***

Only one of the current public access facilities, Joseph Medwick County Park, is regulated by park hours which are from dawn to dusk year round. Carteret Waterfront Park is open 24 hours a day. Fishing is allowed at Carteret Waterfront Park but is restricted by a sign that states all crabs or shellfish caught must be put back and never eaten because of potential health hazards. Also there are guidelines for floating docks and boats during the warmer months.

### **2. *Permanent Restrictions***

- Much of the waterfront property along the Arthur Kill Waterway is known to be contaminated. According to data available in the United States Environmental Protection Agency's EnviroMapper tool, The Rahway River and Arthur Kill Waterway are considered Impaired Streams and Waterways, which means that they are not suitable for recreational swimming, fishing, and cannot be used as drinking water.
- Lands fronting the Rahway River are nearly all wetlands. Public access facilities on these lands may be allowable if they can be permitted by the DEP as water dependent uses.
- Both parks do not allow swimming at any time in either river. No signs indicate this but due to environmental, health hazard, and large commercial shipping concerns swimming in either river is hazardous to park patrons.
- No bikes, skateboards, or rollerblades are permitted on the fishing pier in the waterfront park.
- 2 poles maximum per fisherman on the fishing pier.
- A county permit is required to use any fields in Joseph Medwick Park.
- Rules of the athletic fields include no metal spikes, no smoking, no pets on fields, and no marking of the field.

### **3. *Restricted from Public Access***

The following areas are restricted to public access because they either create conditions that endanger public health and safety or will damage the environment.

- Tufts Point wetlands;

- Rahway River wetlands;
- Landfill areas along the Rahway River to the Northeast of the Borough; and
- Private industrial complexes.

### III. Community Needs Assessment

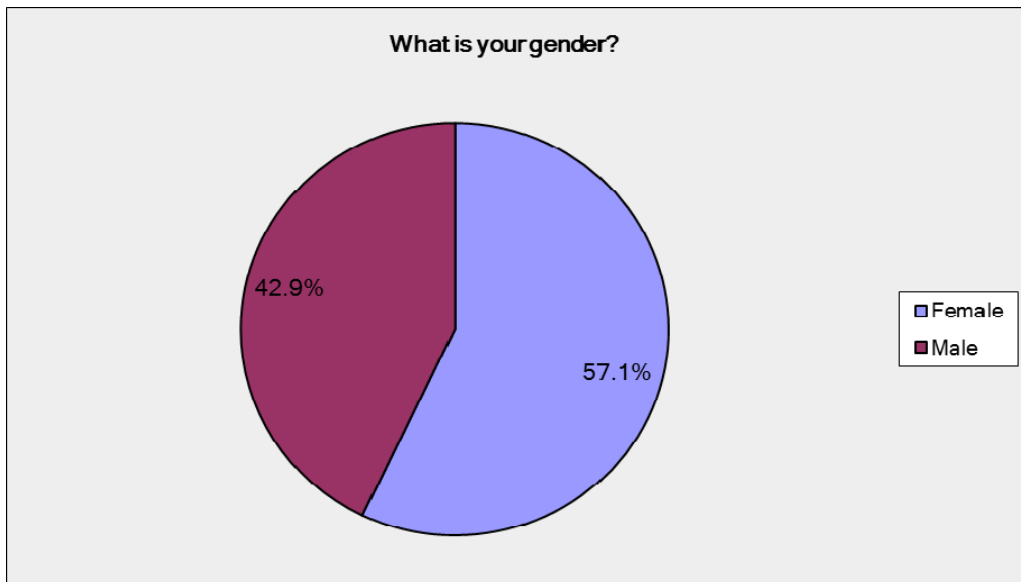
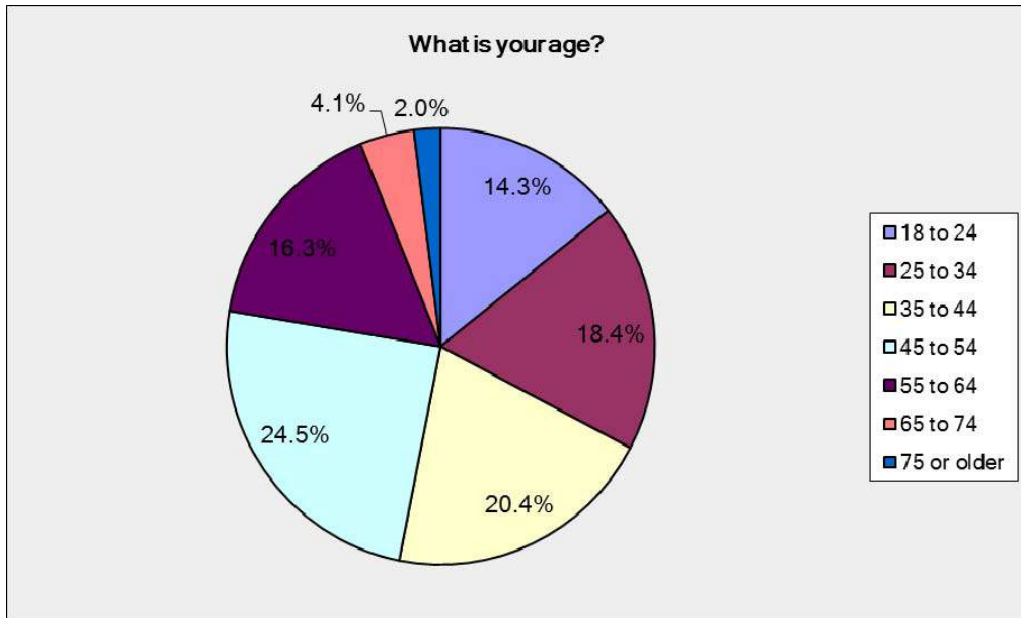
The Borough of Carteret has performed a community needs assessment. The methods and results are described in the following section.

A public survey was utilized to acquire input from the community on Carteret's public access facilities along the waterfront. The link to the survey was placed on the Borough's website and social media outlets. All of the information and input was very helpful in assessing the community's needs, identifying satisfied and unsatisfied public access needs, and acquiring the public's potential alternatives to satisfy unmet needs.

#### **Survey Results**

The public survey was conducted to gain more local and empirical knowledge of public access use and issues. The survey was posted on the Borough website and social media outlets from May 3, 2015 to June 10, 2015. A total of 50 responses were collected from the survey. It is important to note the methodology used does not provide a good sample size of the entire Borough and therefore the survey results cannot be relied upon to infer or support any firm conclusions. However, the survey responses provide a general overview of how the respondents use waterfront access areas, and offers their ideas on potential improvements to existing access areas in the Borough. The results of the survey are shown in detail below.

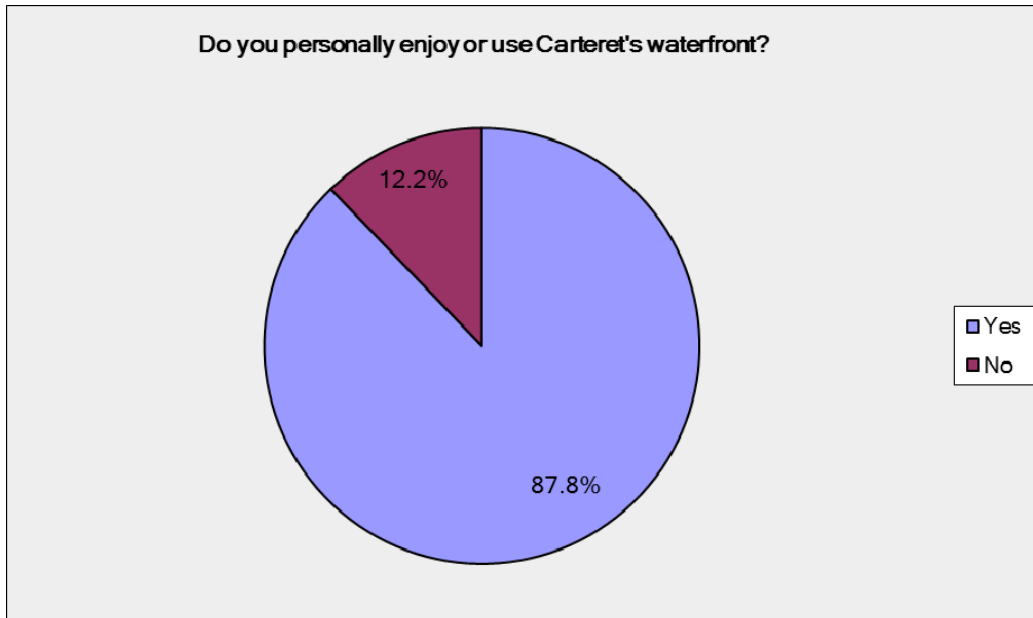
Questions 1 and 2 of the survey pertained to demographics. The first two questions asked all participants, of which 49 participants answered, their age and gender. The following charts display the results of Questions 1 and 2.



As displayed above, the age groups with the most responses are respondents aged 45 to 54 and 35 to 44 years old. The age range of respondents is well distributed with the exception of those aged 65 years or older. For gender, approximately 57 percent of respondents were female and 43% of respondents were male.

***Question 3: Do you personally enjoy or use Carteret's waterfront?***

Question 3 was asked to gauge how many respondents actively use Carteret's waterfront access. As the graph below shows, a majority of 88% of the 49 respondents whom answered the question actively enjoy or use the Borough's waterfront access locations.



35 of the respondents offered comments as to how they enjoy the waterfront or which amenities they enjoy or use. Many respondents gave multiple answers while others gave a single answer. For analytical purposes, activities were grouped by similarity which created some overlap. Understanding how the public currently uses the waterfront is important because it helps identify how to improve public access without taking away what is currently enjoyed. The following is a breakdown of all participant responses placed into several categories:

<b>Walking/Trails/Boardwalk</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Passive Recreation</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Attending Festivals or Events</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Miniature Golf</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Boating/Sailing/Kayaking</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Exercise/Biking/Volleyball</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Fishing or Crabbing</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Take Kids to Playground or Park</b>	<b>4</b>

A majority of the respondents enjoyed or used the waterfront by walking the Waterfront Park's trails and dock or Joseph Medwick Park's trails, passive recreation, and attending festivals or events. Passive recreation includes activities such as enjoying the park, boat watching, enjoying the sunset or view, bird watching, or sitting on benches. The Festivals or events include the Fourth of July celebration and fireworks among other events.

Although this is a very small sample of how Borough residents use public access areas, the survey shows that respondents enjoy a wide variety of activities along Carteret's waterfront with a majority using it for walking or other passive recreation.

**Question 4: What are the strengths of Carteret's waterfront access? Weaknesses?**

This question was posed to get an idea of what is important to residents and what can improve for waterfront access in Carteret. 40 participants answered this question. The following list displays common strengths and weaknesses given by participants.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Beautiful view, scenery, and overall park area	Becomes dirty from fishing activities which can limit passive recreational users
Location and having access to waterfront	Lack of additional waterfront access areas
Live Entertainment and Festivals	Low visibility to both access areas. Too isolated and surrounded by industrial uses
Everyone can enjoy it and it's clean	Not enough security or police presence
Miniature Golf and Friendly Staff	No food, drink, or refreshments
Sufficient Parking for boat trailers and vehicles	Fishing too close to boat ramp
Free Municipal Boat Ramp	Boat ramp too steep
Room for expansion such as ferry/marina	
Recent improvements to waterfront park	

Other weaknesses mentioned include bathrooms should be accessible at all hours, bathrooms should be upgraded, and need additional activities in the park.

**Question 5: What activities would you like to see along Carteret's waterfront?**

This question was asked to build on the weaknesses question to identify options to potentially mitigate perceived weaknesses for Carteret's waterfront access areas. 38 respondents answered this question and the following responses were collected.

- Lengthened running trails along waterfront;
- Construct a ferry terminal and marina;
- Picnic area with groves;
- Food vendors or food trucks;
- Bicycle access and parking;
- Restaurants, bars, and stores;
- Waterfront yoga studio;
- Cruise ship terminal;
- More concerts, festivals, and events;
- Shaded areas;
- Boat and kayak rentals;
- Tennis courts;
- Additional lighting;
- Fishing boat service; and
- Water fountains and running water to wash hands.



***Question 6: How can the community's access to the waterfront be improved?***

The purpose of this question was to identify any additional waterfront access areas and how to improve existing access to the waterfront. 34 respondents answered this question. Some of the responses for this question were already mentioned under previous questions. The following is a sample of responses for Question 6 not previously mentioned.

- Create bike paths similar to Manhattan;
- Waterfront hiking/biking trails;
- More way-finding signage to let the public know there is waterfront access;
- Local shuttle buses;
- More welcoming entrance for waterfront park;
- Increased landscaping;
- Better police presence;
- 24 hour waterfront access; and
- Motorcycle parking.

***Question 7: Is there adequate signage near waterfront areas? Is there adequate directional signage in Carteret to bring visitors to waterfront areas?***

This question addresses how well signage is able to direct both visitors and residents to waterfront access areas in the Borough. 40 respondents answered this question with 13 answering that the signage is adequate and 27 responding that signage is not adequate. The following suggestions were offered by respondents:

- Place way-finding signs by the NJ Turnpike toll plaza;
- More way-finding signage throughout the Borough including signs when entering the Borough to direct visitors and residents to the waterfront locations;
- Signs, information guides, or directories on restaurants and businesses in the Borough;
- Way-finding signs to Joseph Medwick Park and where parking is located;
- Signs are needed on Roosevelt Avenue; and
- Better directions during events.

***Question 8: Do you have any recommendations to improve safety along the waterfront?***

33 respondents answered this question. The following comments were collected from this question.

- Security cameras or patrols for the Waterfront Park especially near the second bridge;
- Foot patrols by police;

- Install more lighting;
- Volunteer watch group;
- Security station;
- Do not allow fisherman to fish near boat launch; and
- Install a stop sign at the top of the access road to the Waterfront Park;

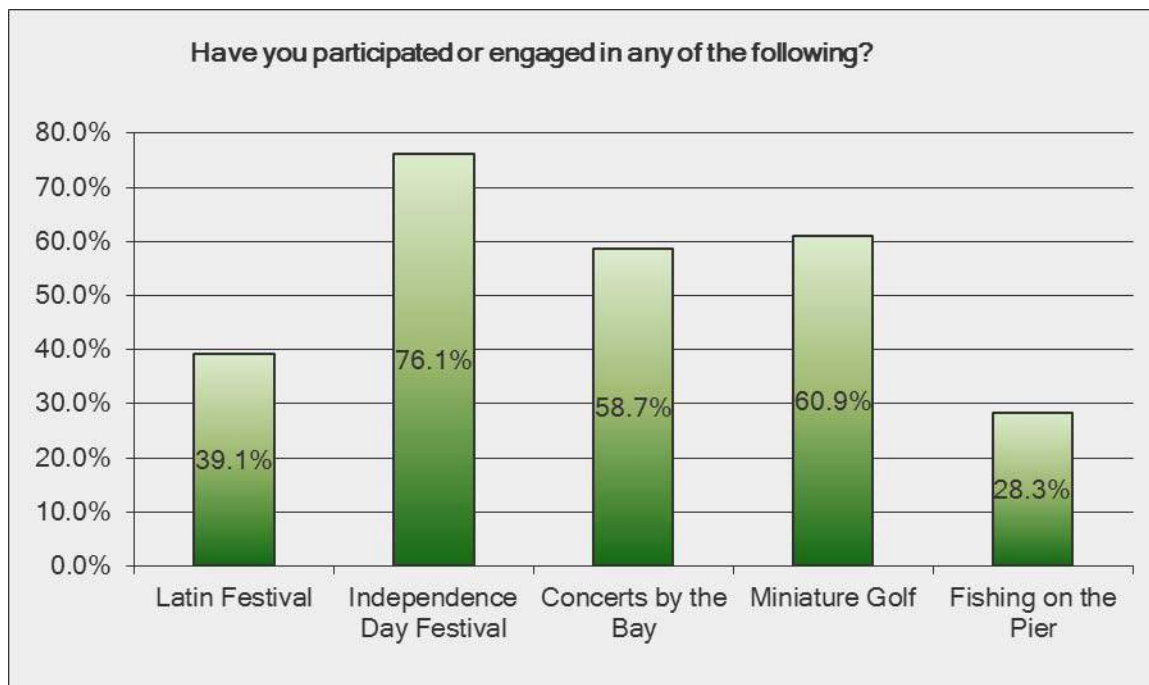
**Question 9: Is there sufficient bicycle infrastructure to public areas along the waterfront?**

34 respondents answered this question. 19 answered there is sufficient bicycle access with 15 saying there is not. The following suggestions were provided by respondents regarding bicycle access.

- Bike lane along the waterfront;
- Bike lanes on streets that lead to any waterfront access area; and
- Increased bike parking.

**Question 10: Have you participated or engaged in any of the following?**

The purpose of this question was to gauge how many respondents attended festivals, events, or participated in activities at the waterfront park. 46 respondents answered the question. Below are the results of all 46 respondents.



### ***Question 11: Any questions or additional comments?***

The purpose of this question was to identify any other thoughts, comments, or questions any of the respondents had regarding waterfront public access. The following comments were provided.

- Repave the roads;
- Add coffee shops, bars, and restaurants to attract more visitors;
- Provide a walking bridge crossing from Roosevelt Avenue over the Industrial Highway to the waterfront park;
- More activities and events for teenagers; and
- Plant more trees.

### **Summarization of Findings**

Several themes have emerged from the public involvement process. The following list identifies those themes, needs, and other items of note discussed during the process. It is important to note that the items listed below are recurring issues that were discussed throughout the public participation process. However, the list is by no means an exhaustive list of all identified needs with regards to waterfront access.

- Waterfront access areas are used for a variety of uses, reasons, and activities;
- More activities are requested especially for children and teenagers;
- Public waterfront areas are not easily accessible, well known, or easy to get to;
- There is a need for increased police presence and other security measures;
- Fishing can pose safety and cleaning concerns which can affect the enjoyment of others;
- There is a need for food, drinks, and refreshments at waterfront access areas;
- Many enjoy the festivals held at the Waterfront Park and more festivals are requested;
- There is a need for a ferry and a marina;
- There is a need for more way-finding signage to the waterfront;
- Bike access via bike lanes and bike parking are needed; and
- Development of restaurants and retail near the waterfront is desired.

## **IV. Implementation Plan**

Carteret has created an Implementation Plan composed of Priorities, Preservation of Public Access Locations, Signage, Proposed Access Improvements and Facilities, and Municipal Tools for Implementation as described in the following section:

## **A. Priorities**

The Borough of Carteret developed the following priorities:

### **1. *Maintain Existing Public Access***

The Borough of Carteret has the unique advantage of having waterfront access on two separate tidal rivers. Historically, this advantage has taken the form of industrial uses using the Arthur Kill Waterway as ports to help the flow of goods for individual businesses and/or operations. Industrial based businesses are still an important part of both Carteret's local economy and history, but there has been a shift towards other uses besides industrial along the waterfront such as public access, recreational, commercial, and even residential. The Borough of Carteret is committed to maintaining the Borough's two public access areas along the waterfront. This includes continuous and consistent maintenance, cleaning, and overall upkeep for Carteret Waterfront Park and ensuring the County maintains Joseph Medwick Park. The following are recommendations for Carteret Waterfront Park in terms of maintenance:

- Provide additional tables on the dock and fishing pier for fisherman to prepare bait and other fishing activities to avoid use of benches for such activities;
- Manage and replace vegetation as needed;
- Plant more trees for shade;
- Carteret adopted an ordinance to clean and eliminate sources of drift and debris that are obstacles or hazards to navigation of the Arthur Kill or Rahway River; and
- Carteret protects and maintains public access through Borough Code Section 182-3 which prohibits pollution of water or littering in public parks.

### **2. *Planned Enhancement to Public Access Locations and/or Facilities***

There are numerous planned enhancements for Carteret's Waterfront Park including the addition of a marina, a ferry service to New York, and overall expansion of the Waterfront Park which is planned to include residential, commercial, and entertainment uses near or along the waterfront and proposed ferry. Concept plans have been prepared by numerous firms. Melillo and Bauer Associates have put together a conceptual master plan of all the concept plans including the marina and ferry into one image shown in Appendix 4.

As shown there are many amenities and land uses planned, but public access to the waterfront remains a key component of the plan. Carteret is committed to providing public access to the waterfront while also providing a high density active waterfront through residential, retail, office, and parking uses.

Middlesex County currently does not have any planned enhancements for Joseph Medwick Park.

## **B. Preservation of Public Access Locations**

The Borough of Carteret has developed the following preservation and conservation measures:

### **1. *Preservation Measures***

Both Joseph Medwick Park and the Carteret Waterfront Park are under the Green Acres Program and are on the Borough's ROSI. Both parks and their respective waterfront access areas are preserved under the ROSI in perpetuity.

### **2. *Conservation Easements***

Currently, there are three proposed conservation easements for public access areas in Carteret along the Arthur Kill Waterway that will protect and preserve public access. One proposed conservation easement is located south of Carteret Waterfront Park on the US Metals property, which is commonly known as parcels 6, 6A, and 7. The Borough's planned waterfront walkway will run along these parcels. Two proposed conservation easements are north of Carteret Waterfront Park up to Noes Creek. The easements are on the DuPont and Basin properties and will allow for a planned extension of the waterfront walkway, as well as other amenities, to be accessed following remediation efforts.

### **3. *Resiliency Measures***

During Superstorm Sandy the Borough of Carteret sustained a major amount of damage including damage to the amenities located in Joseph Medwick Park and the Carteret Waterfront Park. Flooding damaged the pier, trails, and other amenities in both locations. The improvements installed to repair damage from Superstorm Sandy took into account resiliency measures such as the breakwater pier at Carteret Waterfront Park. All new planned development near Carteret Waterfront Park will be built with resiliency in mind. All structures will be constructed above the base flood elevation to avoid future flood damage.

## **C. Signage**

The Borough of Carteret has provided the following signage:

- Both of Carteret's waterfront access areas have signage informing visitors that the park is a preserved area under the Green Acres Program;
- Carteret Waterfront Park has signage for all rules including no bikes, skateboards, rollerblades, no cutting bait on deck, no littering, keep bait tables clean after use, two poles maximum per fisherman, and do not eat anything caught in the waterway;
- Additionally, the municipal boat launch has a caution sign to warn boaters of large commercial vessels and guidelines for floating docks;
- The fishing pier at the Waterfront Park has information plaques near sight-seeing areas for visitors; and

- Joseph Medwick Park has signage delineating the rules of the park including field use regulations, astroturf rules, and times for field use.

It is recommended the Borough add signage in the following areas:

- Install signage to not allow fishing near the municipal boat launch;
- Install numerous way-finding signage and directories throughout the Borough, including where visitors enter Carteret, to provide information of Carteret's waterfront access areas to both visitors and residents. Also if directories are installed, they could include entertainment information and options in Carteret.

## D. Proposed Access Improvements and Facilities

In addition to the many planned enhancements to Carteret Waterfront Park, extensions to the existing Waterfront Park to increase public access continuity have been suggested. The following improvements and facilities are proposed.

### 1. ***Extension of Carteret Waterfront Park Trail (South)***

A plan has been proposed by MKW Associates to extend the waterfront fitness trail at the end of Waterfront Park further south along the Arthur Kill Waterway. The extension will provide additional running areas along the waterfront. Carteret plans to preserve the trail for public use through either conservation or preservation methods.

### 2. ***Extension of Carteret Waterfront Park Trail (North)***

The planned enhancements for Carteret Waterfront Park include extending the waterfront walkway from the municipal boat launch north along the Arthur Kill and terminating once crossing over Noes Creek. Carteret proposes extending the waterfront walkway further along the Arthur Kill to provide additional public access to the waterfront. No plans have been prepared to show how far north the extension will go, but the waterfront walkway will be preserved for public access.

### 3. ***Landfill Redevelopment Area Phase II***

A redevelopment plan has been prepared for the area marked number eight in the image below.



The plan permits the following uses:

- Retail shopping centers including mixed use with office and service commercial uses such as banks with drive-thru;
- Hotels, motels, and inns;
- Business, professional, and government offices;
- Theaters, auditoriums, and restaurants;
- Automotive dealerships;
- Research, experimental, and testing laboratories;
- Wholesale offices and showrooms with accessory storage of goods;
- Screened storage and material processing;
- Warehousing; and
- Light industrial manufacturing.

The redevelopment plan allows for a variety of uses, but public access along the Rahway River is not specifically mentioned. Carteret envisions working with any prospective developers to discuss the feasibility of providing a waterfront walkway, or granting an easement to the Borough to provide public access for future the redevelopment area and the general public.

## **E. Municipal Tools for Implementation**

Carteret has the following tools for the maintenance, enhancement, and development of public access locations:

### **1. *Maintenance Tools***

The Borough of Carteret has hired a landscaping service to be responsible for maintenance of Carteret Waterfront Park. Joseph Medwick Park is a county park and maintenance is therefore handled by Middlesex County. Maintenance will continue to be completed by the landscaping service.

### **2. *Enhancement Tools***

The Borough of Carteret has delineated the Carteret Waterfront Park area as in need of redevelopment and has an associated redevelopment plan for the redevelopment area. These redevelopment tools make it possible to implement enhancements and development to the waterfront area with associated public access.

## **F. Implementation**

Carteret has created an Implementation Schedule as follows:

### **1. *Existing Maintenance***

Existing maintenance will continue to be carried out on an ongoing basis. The Borough will consider increasing the required maintenance as new public waterfront facilities become available.

**2. *Enhancements to Existing Locations***

Plans for the enhancements to Carteret's existing Waterfront Park have been in place for several years. The Borough is still in the process of obtaining the necessary permits to implement the planned marina and ferry service. Additionally, the Borough is looking for potential developers to implement the redevelopment plan for the Waterfront Park area. It is unknown how long the permitting and bidding process will take for all the planned enhancements, and an implementation schedule will be prepared by a prospective developer after the permitting and bidding processes have been completed.

**3. *Proposed Locations and Facilities***

No implementation schedule is available for the proposed extensions of the waterfront fitness trail and waterfront walkway extensions to the north and south of Carteret Waterfront Park. A plan exists for the waterfront fitness trail extension to the south but the implementation schedule will not be known until the Borough reaches a redevelopment agreement with a developer. Additionally, further permitting will be required to extend the fitness trail.

**G. Army Corps of Engineers Requirements for Shore Protection Projects**

The proposed marina and ferry projects for the Waterfront Park will meet all ACOE requirements. The Borough and NJDEP have been in close contact regarding both projects and are committed to ensure their proper implementation and coordination with the ACOE.

## **VI. Resolution of Incorporation**

Carteret has approved a resolution for the incorporation of the MPAP. See Appendix 2 for the final resolution.



**APPENDIX 1**  
**Municipal Public Access Plans**  
**Required Sections per NJAC 8.11 (e)**

1. (e) 1 Statement describing overall **goal of the MPAP** and the **administrative mechanisms** (for example, conservation restrictions, easements, ordinances) that either are already in place, or that shall be put in place to ensure that the municipality will meet public access goals
2. (e) 2 Statement of **Consistency with...Master Plan**
3. (e) 3 Public access **needs assessment** that evaluates:
  - existing access locations and capacities
  - practical limitations (esp. parking and bathrooms)
  - alternatives to address any limitations determined to exist
  - need for additional locations
4. (e) 4 **Digital Map and Inventory** identifying...:
  - tidal waterways within municipality and adjacent lands held by municipality
  - existing and proposed public access ways
  - proposed public access facilities
  - identified facilities compliant with ADA
5. (e) 5 **Implementation strategy**
  - forms of proposed public access responsive to needs assessment (i)
  - comprehensive list of specific public access projects and initiatives with implementation schedule (ii)
  - proposed tools to implement the plan, including (iii)
    - i.adoption or amendment of muni ordinances
    - ii.uses of monetary compensation (Public Access Fund), if any
  - proposed modifications to existing plans, ordinances & programs to implement MPAP (iv)
  - proposed compliance with ACOE requirements for shore protection projects [see 8.11(r)] (v)
  - cost of implementing, constructing and maintaining the access facilities proposed in the plan and specifies how this cost will be funded (vi)
  - implementation schedule (vii)
  - ordinances in place/to be adopted re signage requirements (viii)
  - measures to permanently protect public access per MPAP (ix)
  - examples/models of easements/restrictions for permanent protections (x)
  - draft resolution incorporating DEP-approved MPAP into a MP element (xi)

**APPENDIX 2**  
**Model Resolution for Incorporating MPAP into Master Plan**

Resolution # \_\_\_\_\_

Title: A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE MUNICIPAL PUBLIC ACCESS PLAN

WHEREAS, the *{municipality name}* Municipal Public Access Plan was submitted to the Township Council and reviewed at the regular meeting of *{date}*, and

WHEREAS, the governing body has approved the plan as submitted,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the *{municipality governing body}* of *{municipality name}*, the "*{municipality name}* Municipal Public Access Plan," a copy of which is attached, is hereby approved.

FURTHER RESOLVED a copy of the plan shall be sent to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection for review and approval in accordance with N.J.A.C.7.7 and 7.7E.

I hereby certify the foregoing to be a resolution adopted by the *{governing body}* at a meeting held on *{date}*.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Municipal Clerk

**APPENDIX 3**  
**Maps and Table**

***Table 1 Carteret Public Access Location Amenities***

ID	Status	Signs	Parking	Parking Spaces	Street Access	Swimming	Fishing	Pier	Boat Launch	Marina	Park	Food/ Drink	Restroom	Seats	HC Access	Shoreline	Access Type
1	Utilized	Yes	No Fee	80	Waterfront Access Road	Restricted	No Shellfish	Yes	Yes	Proposed	Yes	Under construction	Yes	Yes	Yes	Riverfront	Physical & Visual
2	Utilized	Yes	No Fee	224	Pauline Street and Post Blvd.	Restricted	None	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Riverfront	Physical & Visual
3	Restricted	Yes	None	0	NJ Turnpike	Restricted	None	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Riverfront	Visual

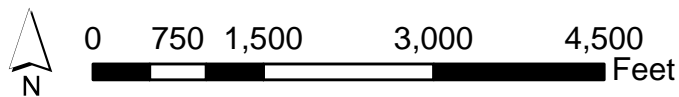


**Legend**

Map 1: Carteret Tidal Waterways and Lands  
Borough of Carteret, Middlesex County, NJ

Tidal Waterways and Streams

Borough Owned Waterfront







**Legend**

**Public Access Locations**

**RESTRICTED UTILIZED**

● RESTRICTED

● UTILIZED

Existing Public Access

Map 2: Existing Public Access Locations  
Borough of Carteret, Middlesex County, NJ

0 750 1,500 3,000 4,500 Feet

N







**Legend**

**Public Access Locations**

- Restricted
- Utilized

**Proposed Public Access Locations**

- Landfill Redevelopment Area Phase II
- North Extension of Carteret Waterfront Park Trail
- South Extension of Carteret Waterfront Park Trail
- Waterfront Redevelopment Area

Map 3: Public Access Location Improvements  
Borough of Carteret, Middlesex County, NJ

0 750 1,500 3,000 4,500 Feet

N



**APPENDIX 4**  
**Waterfront Redevelopment Area Concept Plan**  
**Prepared by Melillo & Bauer**



