

Plan Endorsement Recommendation Report
City of Wildwood, Cape May County



New Jersey Office of Planning Advocacy
New Jersey Business Action Center
New Jersey Department of State

June 17, 2026

This document is a recommendation report prepared by the Office of Planning Advocacy (OPA) as staff to the State Planning Commission (SPC) based on input or partner agencies, City of Wildwood (City/Wildwood), Cape May County, and members of the public. OPA will post this report and other materials related to the Wildwood Plan Endorsement petition on our website. You can contact our office by email regarding petitions for Plan Endorsement by providing contact information, including name, organization, address, and e-mail address to ospmail@sos.nj.gov

Additional documentation submitted by the City can be found here:

<https://www.nj.gov/state/bac/planning/plan-endorsement/petitions/>

Cover graphic courtesy of the official City of Wildwood website:

<https://wildwoodnj.gov/>

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INTRODUCTION

The City of Wildwood (Wildwood/City) had a Regional Center designated by the State Planning Commission (SPC/Commission) on April 16, 1998, which was set to expire ten years later. The expiration of this Regional Center was extended via various extension approvals by legislation, executive orders, and/or State Planning Commission resolutions. The Regional Center designation ultimately expired on March 31, 2023.

The City initiated the Plan Endorsement (PE) process by submitting a letter to the NJ Office of Planning Advocacy (OPA) from the mayor dated August 14, 2019. The City participated in a prepetition meeting on March 20, 2020 with representatives from various state agencies. Wildwood's primary objectives for seeking Plan Endorsement and a new Regional Center designation are as follows:

- to continue to align its local planning goals and objectives with the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (State Plan/SDRP),
- to revitalize and redevelop the traditional commercial core (Pacific Avenue Corridor/CBD),
- to promote tourism, and
- to encourage economic investment.

The City anticipates that receiving Plan Endorsement will also facilitate State assistance for additional priorities, such as flood resiliency measures, traffic flow improvements, and projects in designated redevelopment areas.

This report contains findings and conclusions concerning consistency of the City's plans with the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (State Plan). The review of the petition is based on information submitted by the petitioner and information otherwise available to OPA.

The majority of the work performed by the City in pursuit of Plan Endorsement had taken place under the framework of the previous State Plan. A new State Plan, with two additional goals, was adopted by the SPC on December 17, 2025. This report will demonstrate that the City is generally consistent with all ten goals of the current State Plan, and that the Plan Implementation Agreement (PIA) prescribes actions to be taken by the municipality to address the intent of the new and updated goals.

The SPC, by adopting a resolution in support of Plan Endorsement of the City's plans, will demonstrate that the City is taking appropriate steps to plan for a sustainable future by addressing its infrastructure, economic development, housing, open space, environmental, and resiliency concerns.

PLAN ENDORSEMENT PETITION PROCESS

As stated previously, the City initiated the PE process on August 14, 2019. A prepetition meeting was held on March 20, 2020. The City appointed its Plan Endorsement Citizens' Advisory Committee via Resolution No. 348-9-21 on September 8, 2021. Submission of the City's Municipal Self-Assessment (MSA) was authorized by the City via Resolution No. 114-3-22 on March 9, 2022. OPA and respective State agency partners responded with an Opportunities and Constraints Report on July 3, 2025.

As part of the Plan Endorsement process, the City is required to complete Community Visioning sessions in accordance with the State Planning Rules, as outlined at N.J.A.C. 15:30-7.11. The City requested to waive the Community Visioning session per N.J.A.C. 15:30-7.6 and provided OPA with documentation of extensive public outreach completed between the years 2020 and 2025. The Executive Director of OPA granted the City to waive the Community Visioning requirements on January 23, 2026.

Throughout the months that followed the Community Visioning waiver, OPA collaborated with state agencies and produced a draft of proposed amendments to the State Plan Policy Map (SPPM), which include a new Regional Center boundary and a Core boundary. The City formally approved the proposed State Plan Policy Map amendments on May 13, 2026 via Resolution No. 222-5-26.

With Resolution No. 222-5-26, the City also formally approved of the draft Plan Implementation Agreement (PIA). The PIA includes items that OPA and other State agencies believe will help the City achieve greater consistency with the State Development and Redevelopment Plan and amendments to the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law, which both address State priorities for environmental justice and climate resiliency.

PLANNING MILESTONES

Event(s)	Date	Notes
Regional Center Designation	4/16/1998	Expired 3/31/2023
Master Plan	2007	
Sanitary Sewer Master Plan	April 2010	
Master Plan Reexamination	2017	
Housing Element/Fair Share Plan		In progress
Pacific Avenue Redevelopment Plan	10/20/21	
Municipal Self-Assessment	3/9/2022	Resolution No. 114-3-22
Open Space and Recreation Plan	2023	
Zoning Map	3/22/2023	
UEZ Preliminary Zone Development Plan	January 2025	UEZ Corporation of the Wildwoods (also includes North Wildwood, West Wildwood, and Wildwood Crest)
Opportunities and Constraints Report	7/3/2025	

LOCATION & REGIONAL CONTEXT

As per the City’s MSA:

Wildwood City is located in Cape May County in southeastern New Jersey, along the coast of the Atlantic Ocean. The City is a part of “The Wildwoods,” which is an island comprised of 3 municipalities: North Wildwood, Wildwood City, and Wildwood Crest, as well as portions of Lower Township on the southern tip of the island. The island has a cumulative land area of approximately 4.2 square miles.

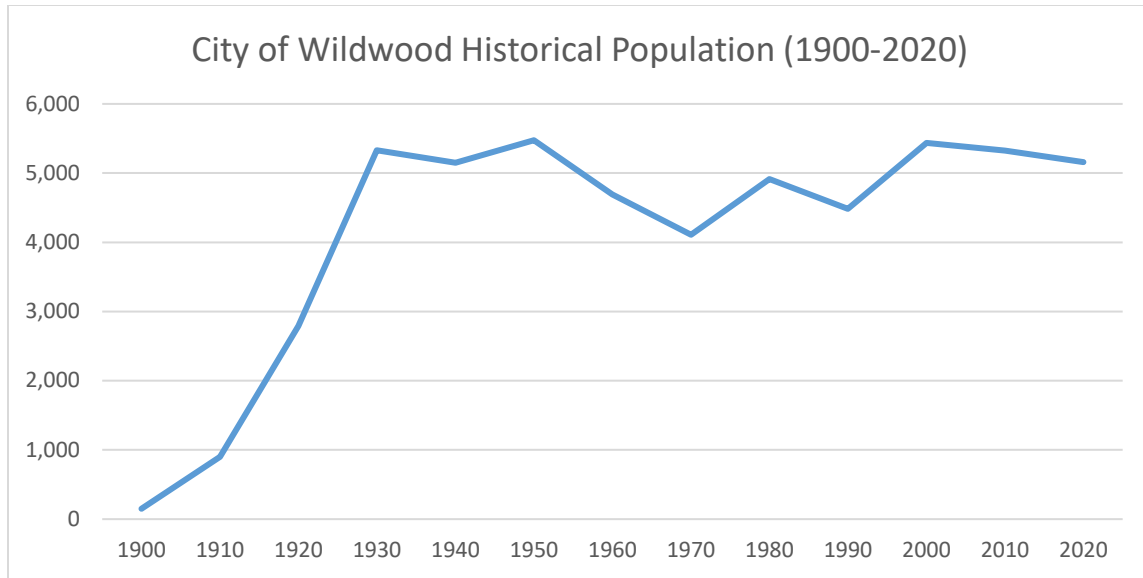
Wildwood City itself is approximately 1.65 square miles in size. As of the 2020 U.S. Census, the total year-round population was 5,157 persons. The local population grows substantially during the summer months; for example, according to the Cape May County Comprehensive Plan, the City’s summer population reached nearly 66,500 persons when projected for the year 2015.

	City of Wildwood	Cape May County	New Jersey
Land Area (Sq. Miles)	1.65	251.52	7,419
Population	5,157	95,263	9,88,994
Households	2,646	46,121	3,543,944
Average Household Size	1.93	2.08	2.62
Population Density (Persons/Sq. Mile)	3,346.5	378.75	1,291.9
Housing Units	6,553	97,798	3,816,432
Home Ownership Rate	43.5%	78.3%	63.9%
Median Household Income	\$75,222	\$97,249	\$104,294
Per Capita Income	\$50,752	\$55,694	\$54,253
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau Profiles, QuickFacts (2020 Decennial Census, 2024-2025 American Community Survey 1 & 5-Year Estimates)			

DEMOGRAPHICS AND WILDWOOD’S FUTURE

Wildwood was first incorporated as a borough in 1895. In 1912, Wildwood was reincorporated as a city, composed of the previously established borough and the neighboring Holly Beach City. The following chart, dating back to Wildwood’s borough era, shows that the total municipal population accelerated quickly through the 1930 Decennial Census, and has exhibited moderate fluctuations since then.

The City’s MSA cites a projection made by the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO), which expects a municipal population of 5,539 by the year 2030, a 7.4% increase over the 2020 Decennial Census population estimate. This forecasting relies on recent trends and does not consider locally specific conditions that may alter the course of the population trend.



Source: U.S. Decennial Censuses

INFRASTRUCTURE

Water and Sewer

The Wildwood City Water Department (PWSID #0514001) is a public community water system with a water supply firm capacity of 16.281 million gallons per day. According to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), as of April 17, 2024, the utility capacity exceeds daily, monthly, and yearly demand. The municipality obtains its potable water from wells at the Rio Grande Pumping Station, located on Route 47 in Middle Township, which draw water from the Holly Beach, Estuarine, Cohansey, and Kirkwood aquifers.

The Wildwood/Lower Region Wastewater Treatment Facility (NJPDES #NJ0053007), which is operated by the Cape May County Municipal Utilities Authority (CMCMUA), handles all sewerage from the municipality and is permitted to discharge to surface water.

Transportation and Circulation

The City is served by a gridiron network of roadways that provides local and regional access. A small stretch of State Route 47, which provides connection to the mainland, is maintained by NJ Department of Transportation (DOT). County Route 621 is maintained by Cape May County. As of 2010, Wildwood had a total of 32.38 miles of roadway, of which 29.93 were municipal, 2.37 miles were county, and 0.08 miles were state. NJ Transit services the area via its 313, 315, 316, 319, 510, and 552 bus routes. Trackless tramcars provide transportation along the length of the boardwalk.

STATE PLAN POLICY MAP

The City of Wildwood has agreed to the proposed amendments to the State Plan Policy Map. The previously adopted Regional Center covered the entire City of Wildwood as well as all or portions of several neighboring municipalities. This previously adopted Regional Center was a product of a joint Plan Endorsement petition from the City and some of its neighbors. The Regional Center boundary which is now proposed in Wildwood City covers a majority of the municipality’s land mass, and is inclusive of upland developed areas, areas targeted for redevelopment, critical evacuation routes, and the City’s inclusionary housing overlay zone. Not included within the proposed Regional Center boundary are those portions of the municipality which do not fall into any of these aforementioned categories, and are typified by low-lying and waterfront properties.

A Core is also proposed. Its boundary coincides with the City’s Pacific Avenue Redevelopment Zone (PARZ), a corridor which is slated for additional investment, and already features a concentration of commercial and cultural amenities.

A portion of the municipality is proposed to be mapped as the “Parks, Open Space, and Natural Areas” State Plan Policy Map feature, to best reflect existing conditions. This includes much of the oceanfront beach, and some municipal parkland. The remainder of the City will continue to be mapped as Planning Area 5B: Environmentally Sensitive/Barrier Islands.

This approach to mapping within the municipality conforms with the goals and objectives of the State Plan, as well as the City’s desire to facilitate its tourism industry while balancing the need for economic development with the preservation of the City’s neighborhoods and environmental resources.

Summary of Proposed Map Amendments

Planning Area	Label	Existing Acreage	Proposed Acreage	Change in Acreage*
PA 5B	Env. Sens/Barrier Island	930.76	839.85	-90.91
n/a	Parks/Open Space/Nat. Areas	0.00	109.14	+109.14
Center Designation		Past Acreage	Proposed Acreage	Change in Acreage
Regional Center		930.76	536.19	-394.57
Core		0.00	80.00	+80.00

*Please note the 18.23-acre discrepancy between the total acreage currently mapped on the State Plan Policy Map, and the total acreage in the proposed changes. This is due to a slight variation in the updated land use spatial data’s delineation of the municipality’s Atlantic beachfront.

Proposed State Plan Policy Map Wildwood City, Cape May County



Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community



0 0.5 1 MILES

This map is for information only and not for regulatory purposes.

April 2026

STATE PLAN GOALS REVIEW

Economic Development Goal: Promote Economic Growth that Benefits all Residents of New Jersey

Wildwood has been primarily dependent on its travel & tourism industry for most of the City's existence and has been working for decades to try and create an industry standard for seasonal tourism. Recently, the City has begun planning and developing to foster tourism interest for periods outside of peak-season. Peak tourism season for Wildwood has been approximately from mid-May to mid-October. The 2017 Master Plan Reexamination expanded on recommendations for economic growth when considering the history of the Wildwoods as a whole:

Recommendations for improvements to the lodging, restaurant, entertainment (nightlife), retail and other sectors addressed the need for more and more varied offerings in new or renovated structures for the Wildwoods to satisfy the needs of an increasingly sophisticated vacationing public and compete with other destinations featuring modern Resort Hotels with high concept public spaces, themed restaurants and other amenities.

Recognizing that tourism is vital to the economic wellbeing of the coast, the State designated about 381 acres of Wildwood as an Urban Enterprise Zone in 2002. Wildwood's UEZ is designed to encourage redevelopment and provide financial assistance and incentives for economic redevelopment projects within the City via offering businesses tax benefits, including a Sales Tax Purchase Exemption and Corporation Business Tax credits.

Housing Goal: Provide an Adequate Supply of Housing for Residents of All Ages and Incomes in Communities of Their Choosing That Meet Their Needs and Offer Ready Access to the Full Range of Supportive Goods and Services

In 2013, Wildwood adopted an Ordinance expanding the Inclusionary Housing Overlay Zone and establishing a Workforce Housing Overlay Zone to provide an opportunity for the development of low and moderate income housing in the City. The expansion of the City's Housing Overlay Zone was designed so that workers in Wildwood had adequate housing particularly working at low paying, seasonal jobs. The 2017 Master Plan Reexamination further recommended that the City explore the possibility of creating dormitory housing for seasonal workers under a Redevelopment Plan pursuant to the Citywide Rehabilitation designation.

Wildwood's history of Fair Share and Affordable Housing standards have changed over time. Initially, Wildwood was under a 2012 Consent Order which excluded them from Fair Share Housing Obligations. The details from this Consent Order relieved Wildwood of its obligation to prepare and adopt a Housing Element and Fair Share Plan as part of the 2017 Master Plan Reexamination. The 2012 Consent Order provides more pertinent details on the City's low-income housing standards:

Wildwood has a substantial number of year-round residents who are lower income, [Wildwood] shall have no further obligation to engage in Third Round (post-1999) fair share housing planning or adopt a Housing Element and Fair Share Plan that addresses Third Round (post-1999) obligations until such time as the standards with which [Wildwood] must comply have been established.

The City's current affordable housing standards are consistent with the principles of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan due to the dynamic nature the City is taking in order to provide

adequate housing to residents of all income and experience levels. The location of affordable housing Overlay Zones also consider the type of commute for the typical Wildwood worker.

The City is currently in the process of preparing a new Housing Plan Element and Fair Share Plan to meet their third round affordable housing obligations. According to the NJ Department of Community Affairs (DCA), Wildwood has a present need of 15 units and a total prospective need of 48 units as its fourth round obligation.

As a means to ensure housing that is being constructed in Wildwood is resilient and well-suited for the environmental challenges on a Barrier Island, the 2017 Master Plan Reexamination recommended that the City review and update municipal policies and regulations to ensure that the City is permitting, promoting and requiring appropriate measures to protect private development from rising sea levels and significant storm events.

Infrastructure Goal: Economic Opportunity through Nation Leading Infrastructure

Being a Barrier Island falling under the jurisdiction of NJDEP's Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Rules as well as Coastal Area Facility Review Act (CAFRA) regulations, Wildwood City has a unique set of challenges when considering public facilities and infrastructure. While many of these issues relate to water management, some other causes for concern include hardiness to adverse weather, bridge systems, and stormwater collectors.

Provide financial incentives for jurisdictions to cooperate in providing public infrastructure – In recent history, Wildwood has been coordinating efforts with neighboring municipalities to improve several island-wide elements. These coordinated efforts include the 2012 Wildwoods Transportation Improvement Study as well as the 2020 island-wide bulkhead ordinance. These efforts aim to improve island-wide infrastructure for tourists and residents alike. Additionally, The Wildwood Business Improvement District continues to work with the City to improve existing services and provide additional enhancements and focus to businesses in Wildwood.

Support investment decisions that are associated with comprehensive master planning processes at all levels of government – The 2017 Master Plan Reexamination reaffirmed several goals and objectives in the 2007 Comprehensive Master Plan Update. While being general to an extent, the 2007 Plan's goals include the efficient expenditure of public funds as a means to spur public development with land use policies. This funding expenditure has taken several forms of investment throughout the City since 2007. One form of investment was the Pacific Avenue Streetscaping project, which aimed to spur private investment on the Pacific Avenue corridor. Additionally, public investment projects on the Beach and Boardwalk have proven to be pivotal for the commercial development of Wildwood. The 2007 Master Plan Update recognized the importance of the Beach and Boardwalk to the City's economy—and that of the Wildwoods in general—and stated that “ensuring a stable place of business is of utmost importance to the business community” Projects to replace segments of the Boardwalk, acquiring privately-owned beach areas to convert to public beaches, and installing a beach dune system and a beach bicycle path are all recommendations within the 2017 Master Plan Reexamination.

Encourage the use of an infrastructure needs assessment process by all levels of government – In February 2021, Cape May County published a Comprehensive Bridge Replacement and Improvement Plan. The plan identified issues with three of the bridges used to access the Wildwoods and outlined how each of the bridges was to be rehabilitated or replaced in order to maintain the safety of infrastructure to commuters

into the Wildwoods. The rehabilitation/replacement projected timelines and costs vary depending on which bridge is being improved. Projected replacement timelines can begin as early as 2023 and last as long as until 2038. The projected costs for each replacement project fall in the range of \$53,500,000 to \$243,000,000. For the time being, Cape May County and the Wildwoods have undertaken rehabilitation efforts to prepare for the anticipated bridge replacement. These efforts include: The Ocean Drive (CR621) Improvements and Bridge Replacement Project as well as a \$1.2 Million dollar grant as part of the State's 2020 Local Bridges Future Needs (LBFN) program.

Revitalization and Recentering Goal: Revitalize and Recenter the State's Underutilized Developed Areas

While being economically driven by seasonal tourism, Wildwood is developing for year-round attraction with the year-round population in mind. More sustainable and environmentally-friendly development is a major point of consideration for Wildwood moving forward due to the exemplary nature of "green" infrastructure's effect on the quality of life for residents.

Being a barrier island, Wildwood must focus its growth towards vertical development rather than expanding further outward. The viability of Wildwood's revitalization is directly related to the benefits provided as a Designated Center. With the prior Center designation, Wildwood was able to coordinate with other State agencies with a high rate of success. For example, the 2007 Master Plan laid the framework for the exploration of a "Wildwood Rule" within the CZM Rules. This specific CZM rule was imagined to help Wildwood get the most use and development opportunities from the Center designation as a means to facilitate Wildwood's economic renaissance while protecting its neighborhoods and natural resources. The designated Center's priorities outlined in the SDRP are all factors that fuel the revitalization efforts of Wildwood.

Specifically, priority to Infrastructure Maintenance and Repair has been a driver for Wildwood in their resilient planning efforts. Wildwood has been working towards the following revitalization goals as well:

Find ways to deliver public services and facilities at lower cost and higher quality – Through programs like Wildwood's Park Revitalization program, Wildwood's residents have more appealing community spaces to share. In addition to open spaces, development of community centers like the Byrne Center foster more community involvement.

Expand and modernize urban infrastructure – Through a series of state-aided projects, Wildwood is improving infrastructure specifically when it comes to water management, therefore preserving the City's livability for all residents. Lower to moderate income residents should not have to consider damaging forces of flooding when choosing a place to live.

Integrate all residents into the urban economy – By residential districts surrounding effective commercial districts rather than commercial lots being sprawled along highway corridors, residents are no longer subjected to blighted store fronts and have a clear idea where the City's economy is driven from. In addition to revitalization, Wildwood is taking steps towards Resiliency in the wake of superstorms of recent history. In November 2016, NJDEP awarded the City a \$12.4 million Flood Hazard Risk Reduction & Resiliency Grant for construction of a stormwater piping and pump system to address flooding in the section of Wildwood bounded by Ocean Avenue, New Jersey Avenue, Schellenger Avenue and Cresse Avenue. This grant reward was based on the publication in 2010 of the City's Storm Sewer Master Plan and a Sanitary Sewer Master Plan.

Climate Change Goal: Effectively Address the Adverse Impacts of Global Climate Change

As this is a new SDRP goal, OPA will be developing new guidance in the coming months and years. For the time being, the City has committed to several relevant items in the PIA, including C1 (Develop, adopt, and implement a Climate Change-Related Hazard Vulnerability Assessment (CCRHVA) that meets the requirements of the MLUL per P.L.2021, c.6.), C2 (Review and update the Flood Damage Protection Ordinance with the current NJ Model Ordinance (revised 2020) at in order to stay compliant with NFIP), and C3 (Review the Blue Acres Program and see if it might be an option for the non-mitigated repetitive loss properties in the community.). Also relevant is M1 (Update the Community Facilities Plan.).

Natural and Water Resources Goal: Protect, Maintain, and Restore the State's Natural and Water Resources and Ecosystems

Wildwood has been working towards this vision for years. All of Wildwood's beaches are public and provide a tourist destination for New Jersey residents and tourists from all over the world. The preparation of restoring dunes in Wildwood has begun in conjunction with neighboring municipalities as well as the US Army Corps of Engineers and NJDEP. Development in Wildwood has been monitored and influenced by the City's Master Plan Update in 2007 and with the publication of the 2017 Master Plan Reexamination, and the City has taken the necessary steps to ensure up-to-date development standards and practices.

Pollution and Environmental Clean-Up Goal: Protect the Environment; Prevent and Clean Up Pollution

Wildwood has been implementing different policies in an effort to reduce automobile use by residents and tourists. The Wildwoods Boardwalk Special Improvement District Management Corporation continues to operate the Boardwalk 'Sightseer' Tram Car from 16th Street in North Wildwood to Cresse Avenue at the Wildwood/Wildwood Crest border. This travel alternative has been reducing the dependency on automobiles for short trips in the Wildwoods for years, eliminating potential pollution by automobiles. Also, the revitalization of the City's parks has provided the City with an opportunity to trim native trees of invasive species and create a healthier ecosystem for the City's open spaces as a whole.

The 2007 Master Plan Update recommended that the City adopt the following sustainable building standards for new construction:

- Maximize the use of "Green Power" and energy efficiency for all mechanical building systems for new developments in the City.
- Maximize the use of environmentally-friendly, LEED building systems and technologies in all projects.
- As part of the Centralized Parking Plan detailed under the 2007 Master Plan Update's Circulation Plan Element, institute a shuttle (mass transit) system to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled.

In November 2020, a draft Redevelopment Plan for the Bayside/Back Bay Redevelopment Area outlined the remediation of a former landfill as a means to clean up pollution. The remediation of the former landfill will provide the City with appropriate land for development. The Plan Vision from the Redevelopment Plan draft expands on these remediation efforts:

This Redevelopment Plan provides for the effective transformation of the former municipal landfill that has long been vacant and underutilized, into a new residential community that

incorporates neighborhood scale commercial uses that will be an asset to the City.

Historic and Scenic Resources Goal: Protect, Enhance, and Improve Access to Areas with Exceptional Archeological, Historic, Cultural, Scenic, Open Space, and Recreational Value

While Wildwood has a number of historic places registered on the state level, there are also two Historic Districts within the City. One district is The Atlantic City Railroad Cape May Division Historic District. Nationally registered in 2005, the district includes the Cape May Division of the Atlantic City Railroad that ran from the Winslow Junction to Cape May City with branches to Ocean City, Sea Isle city, Stone Harbor, and Wildwood. The second historic district within the City is the Wildwoods Shore Resort Historic District. Designated as a historic district in 2003, the Resort Historic District includes parcels in a span of over 40 blocks. This district starts in southern Wildwood City and continues southwest into Wildwood Crest, spanning from Andrews Avenue to Pittsburgh Avenue.

Being on a barrier island, preservation of Wildwood's historic value presents a unique set of issues due to potential sea level rise. The 2017 Reexamination recommended that special architectural consideration be required to address the additional vertical surfaces created between the ground and the bottom of existing structures. Architectural treatments for such surfaces should be consistent with the materials, colors and patterns of the existing structure in order to preserve the architectural style of individual buildings.

As noted in the CZM Rules, Wildwood City has a responsibility to maintain uninterrupted views from the City's Boardwalk to the ocean as a means to protect the significant open space/scenic space of the City. This responsibility is recognized in the 2017 Master Plan Reexamination's reaffirmation of the 2007 Master Plan Update's policy "to ensure the continued unobstructed view from the Boardwalk to the Beach and to the Ocean and to ensure continued use of the Beach and Ocean by bathers...[promoting] the Beach as a natural resource."

The City has agreed to the aforementioned proposed changes which will place 109.14 acres in "Parks, Open Space, & Natural Areas" on the State Plan Policy Map.

Equity Goal: Implement Equitable Planning Practices to Promote Thriving Communities for all New Jerseyans

As this is a new SDRP goal, OPA will be developing new guidance in the coming months and years. For the time being, the City has committed to several relevant items in the PIA, including N2 (Coordinate robust public engagement in all municipal planning initiatives.). Because the Equity Goal is conceptualized as a crosscutting goal, opportunities to integrate the promotion of equity in planning will be pursued in future biennial reviews.

Comprehensive Planning Goal: Foster Sound and Integrated Planning and Implementation at all Levels Statewide

Through this Plan Endorsement process, the City is seeking integrated planning with state agencies. The continuation of regional center designation in the PA-5B Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area/Barrier Island planning area is consistent with the goals of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. The proposed growth and goals for growth on an economic, residential, and community level are also consistent with the SDRP. Additionally, the City is taking specific and focused efforts to increase resiliency within Wildwood.

Proposed development growth areas within Wildwood are centrally located and should foster positive impacts for neighboring municipalities as well. The City's redevelopment goals reduce regional conflicts, and increase development capacity in appropriate areas of existing infrastructure. With the City's anticipated growth in year-round tourism population, there will need to be a coordinated effort to meet the demand for effective commercial districts and appealing destinations for those traveling. The City's 2017 Master Plan Reexamination, related planning documents, and local ordinances are built around meeting this demand while preserving specifically sensitive areas for a barrier island. Local efforts have the underlying focus of directing growth to areas most in need for the City to realize its long-term goals while maintaining a focus on developing with resiliency in mind.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENT

The City of Wildwood formally approved the PIA on May 13, 2026 via Resolution No. 222-5-26. See attached PIA.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on the work the City of Wildwood has supplied, actions taken to date, and tasks committed to complete, it is OPA's recommendation that the NJ State Planning Commission grant the City of Wildwood Plan Endorsement.

Wildwood City Planning & Implementation Agreement

#	Topic	Req (*)	Activity	Local Effort	Assistance	Timeframe	Comments
A1	Administrative	*	One year from endorsement and biennially thereafter, report to the SPC about the status of your planning efforts, ordinance adoption and other accomplishments from the PIA.	Planning Board and governing body	OPA	Continuous, see comments.	First year = Annual Report then Biennial Reports for the next 8 years on PIA action status.
A2	Administrative	*	After adoption, the municipality shall submit any new or modified land use ordinance or other planning document.	Planning Board and governing body	OPA	Include in biennial report.	
B1	Public Info & Community Engagement	*	Begin participating in the Sustainable Jersey program by engaging a Green Team and recruiting capable volunteer residents and others to support actions committed to by the municipality.	Governing body, Green Team	OPA, SJ	ongoing	Wildwood City is NOT registered with Sustainable Jersey. Many PE actions could be undertaken by a Green Team and gain significant points for Bronze or even Silver certification and maybe even a Gold Star. If no Green Team, could an environmental Commission or equivalent serve?
B2	Public Info & Community Engagement	*	Many actions would benefit from public engagement including education about issues, resident assistance with actions, participation in decision making and support for a path to resiliency and sustainability. An early action should be a public forum(s) designed to recruit short and long-term public engagement, sharing information/goals, highlighting opportunities for participation, volunteerism and meaningful involvement in community planning and decision making.	Governing body, Planning Board, Green Team, chamber (s), churches, schools, other local and regional organizations as partners/invitees.	OPA, DEP, local groups & regional NGOs/universities	Year 1 and periodically thereafter to update/engage residents on progress on key issues.	Forum(s) should be designed with a well developed outreach element to ensure equitable inclusion and meaningful turnout and facilitated to maximize results.
C1	Climate Resilience Planning	*	Develop, adopt, and implement a climate change-related hazard vulnerability assessment (CCRHVA) that meets the requirements of the MLUL per P.L.2021, c.6.	All municipal hands should be engaged.	OPA, SJTPO, DEP, SJ, Cape May County	1-4 years	Wildwood City has NOT compiled a Draft Vulnerability Assessment. The municipality should review its existing data, maps, HMP Annex and assessments and compile any additional data into a final assessment and strategy to satisfy the requirements for the CCRHVA in the MLUL per NJDEP. Expand on the local annex to the county HMP to include climate impacts for temperature, precipitation, flooding, heat island, and vulnerability of public and private potable wells, pump stations and wastewater treatment. o Identify and document any utility sites, facilities, equipment, conveyance piping, overhead utility lines, etc. that may be vulnerable to climate impacts or other environmental hazards. o Confirm the condition and capacity of these utility sites, facilities, equipment, etc. o DEP strongly advises against new utility development in areas identified as vulnerable to natural hazards in current and projected condition. Findings from the CCRHVA should guide strategies and actions to increase resilience and reduce risk moving forward. Rutgers is currently preparing a Vulnerability Assessment and CCRVA for Wildwood.
C2	Climate Resilience Planning	*	Review and update the Flood Damage Protection Ordinance with the current NJ Model Ordinance (revised 2020) at in order to stay compliant with NFIP.	Planning Board and governing Body	DEP	1-4, contingent on DEP assistance	Date of Flood Loss ordinance? (Ecode360) NJDEP updated the model ordinance in December 2020 to be compliant with NFIP. The model ordinance provided by NJDEP can be found at: https://www.nj.gov/dep/floodcontrol/modelord.htm
C3	Climate Resilience Planning	*	Review the Blue Acres Program and see if it might be an option for the Non-mitigated repetitive loss properties in the community.	Governing Body	DEP, OEM, FEMA		Check HMP for # Repetitive loss properties and Severe Repetitive Loss property, # NFIP properties; # claims etc. (132 NFIP policies with 101 losses during participation).
D1	Land Use	*	Review plans and ordinances and remove impediments to, and encourage, green design throughout the community. Make necessary modifications to ensure that innovative and sustainable construction alternatives and materials (such as green roofs) are permitted. Consider approving incentives for using innovative roofing alternatives and materials.	Planning Board and governing Body	OPA, NJDEP technical assistance	1-3 years	Sustainable Jersey points and support
D2	Land Use	*	Review and update Master Plan and all associated elements to consider climate resiliency and socially vulnerable populations.	Planning Board and governing Body	DEP, Sustainable NJ	1-4 years after CCRHVA	Sustainable Jersey points and support. Address MLUL requirements.
D3	Land Use	*	The municipality shall enhance its zoning regulations and building codes to encourage building outside of the flood zone and to minimize construction in flood prone areas to reconstruction of existing buildings. Flood zone area new construction or redevelopment of existing buildings should avoid high density concentration and areas of severe flooding. Placement of critical facilities and utilities in flood zones should be avoided whenever possible. Affordable housing should be sited to avoid flood zone and hazardous areas.	Planning Board	DEP (Bureau of Climate Resilience Planning)	1-3 years After CCRHVA	Wildwood City's flood damage prevention ordinance was last amended on 7/12/2017, as per Ecode360. The municipality follows all regulations set forth by the NJDEP with regards to flood hazard area regulation, wetlands, etc. It does not site or recommend siting any affordable housing projects within a flood zone or a hazardous area.
D4	Land Use	*	Consider adopting an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance in residential zones	Planning Board	OPA/SJ		
D5	Land Use	*	Update the Open Space & Recreation Plan (OSRP). Explore open space and recreation opportunities with the State and County. Explore purchases of additional properties for active recreation, preservation and flood protection.	Work with County	Green Acres Funding and County as applicable.	1-3 years after CCRHVA	Wildwood City adopted an OSRP in 2023. Petitioner will work closely with Green Acres, local advisory committee, County, County Improvement Authority and property owners to negotiate the purchase of properties to be permanent open space.

D6	Land Use	*	Add appropriate Overlay Zones to Zoning Ordinance/Map.	Planning Board	County	1-3 years after Plan Endorsement	The municipality's zoning ordinance should be updated to include overlays that address stormwater management, aquifer recharge, 100 year and 500 year flood zones, and critical habitat and habitat corridors. This includes a CES overlay for structures in the 100 year and 500 year flood zone and environmentally sensitive areas (ESA).
D8	Land Use	*	Vacant Land Inventory	Governing body, planning board	DCA, OPA, DEP		Rutgers is currently preparing a Vulnerability Assessment and CCRVA for Wildwood. This would be included as part of this work.
E1	Energy	*	• Public EV charging infrastructure feasibility and supporting ordinances	Planning Board, Governing Body & Green Team	BPU, DEP, SJ possible \$\$	1-2 years	Sustainable Jersey points and support
E2	Energy	*	Make your town EV Friendly (choose 3) *update zoning ordinances to require pre-wiring for EV chargers as part of a redevelopment plan or for a specific zone(1-2 yrs.); *Adopt a PEV ordinance to include regulation and design standards for EVSE, EV parking spaces and design guidelines for installation of EVSE (1-2 yrs.); * Training for local officials and require local first responders to participate in education on PE and EVSE(1-2 yrs.); *Incentivize EV ready by reducing or waiving permit fees and providing recognition for businesses/entities that do it (2-3 yrs.); * Commitment from 3 or more partners for workplace or multi-family chargers (2-5 yrs.).	Planning Board, Governing Body & Green Team	BPU, DEP, SJ possible \$\$, SJTPO	(Endorsed communities must do at least 3)	Sustainable Jersey points and support
E3	Energy	*	Develop a community GHG Reduction Action Plan, including GHG reduction targets. GHG reduction actions should be incorporated into land use element of master plan. 1) Conduct Local Government Energy Audit (LGEA) of municipal facilities and operations, at a minimum, and community-wide audits, if feasible, and 2) using the results of these audits, develop action plans for reducing municipal energy consumption and GHG emissions - use NJ's 2020 GHG emissions reduction target as a goal	Planning Board, Governing Body & Green Team	BPU Clean Energy Program provides funding for municipal energy audits: (http://www.njcleanenergy.com/commercial-industrial/programs/local-government-energy-audit/local-government-energy-audit , SJTPO	Timeline as provided PE guidelines (2 years with phasing)	see DVRPC report
E4	Energy	*	Energy Tracking & Management - establish energy use baselines, tracking, mgt & reporting systems	Governing Body		Year 1	https://www.sustainablejersey.com/actions/#open/action/482
E5	Energy	*	Greening the municipal fleet: • Fleet Inventory and target for green fleet conversion.	Governing Body	Sustainable Jersey points and support	must do year 1	
E6	Energy	*	Renewable Energy Generation: *Onsite Solar or *Geothermal system or *buy electric from a renewable source or *community solar project or *Renewable Energy Aggregation	Governing Body	BPU, DEP, SJ possible \$\$	must do 3 within 4 years	Sustainable Jersey points and support
E7	Energy	*	Implement energy efficiency measure for facilities	Governing Body	BPU, DEP, SJ possible \$\$		Sustainable Jersey points and support
E8	Energy	*	Greening the municipal fleet: * Trip optimization software * Proper vehicle maintenance * Driver training *purchase electric vehicles to achieve 20% reduction in fuel use w/in 4 years.	Governing Body	BPU, DEP, SJ possible \$\$	recommended	Sustainable Jersey points and support
E9	Energy	*	Greening the municipal fleet: • purchase electric vehicles to achieve 20% reduction in fuel use w/in 4 years.	Governing Body	BPU, DEP, SJ possible \$\$	must initiate by yr. 2 (can be multi-year)	Sustainable Jersey points and support
F1	Conservation	*	Tree Protection Ordinance, Tree Risk Assessment Plan as needed. Consider NJUCG accreditation.	Planning Board, Governing Body & Green Team	DEP - Bureau of Sustainability; NJDEP Parks and Forestry; NJ Forest Fire Service; Sustainable Jersey	2-3 years	Compare to Woolwich (https://ecode360.com/14140851) or Haddonfield (https://ecode360.com/10200060). Also, NJDEP Urban and Community Forestry guidelines are here: https://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/forest/community/Information_for_Municipalities.html
F2	Conservation	*	Adopt a wellhead protection ordinance in addition to the Environmentally Critical Area protection with specifics to protect water quality and public health.	Planning Board, Governing Body & Green Team	DEP	2-3 years	Sample provided
F3	Conservation	*	Develop and adopt a Water Conservation Ordinance that is mutually agreeable to the municipality and DEP	Planning Board, Governing Body & Green Team	DEP	2-3 years	Sample provided
F5	Conservation	*	Review and update as necessary the Natural Resource Inventory, including climate change observations and concerns as they are relevant. DEP can assist with identifying what to update.	Planning Board, Governing Body & Green Team	DEP, County	3-5 years after CCRHVA	Incorporate findings from the CCRHVA, and CES overlays as appropriate.
F6	Conservation	*	Review and update as necessary the inventory of contaminated sites, identify if any of these Known Contaminated Sites (KCS) are within the proposed center and/or are vulnerable to climate change.	Planning Board, Governing Body & Green Team		1-3 years After CCRHVA	Review and update with climate impact considerations, findings from the CCRHVA, and CES overlays as appropriate.

G1	Transportation & Circulation	*	Incorporate Complete and Green Streets policy and Implementation Plan into the Circulation Element of the Master Plan. All new transportation projects that impact any Right-of-Way made within the municipality will be consistent with this plan and the adopted Complete Streets Policy.	Planning Board, Governing Body & Green Team	NJDOT, SJ, SJTPO	2-3 years	Samples provided
G2	Transportation & Circulation	*	Update the Circulation Element of Master Plan to address opportunities for shared parking, goods movement, improvements to bicycle and pedestrian access and transit, along with continued growth in the community. In particular, reduce congestion and ensure that non-vehicular transportation is encouraged.	Planning Board, Governing Body & Green Team	NJDOT, SJTPO	3 years	Wildwood City last engaged in a reexamination and update to its Master Plan in 2022. The next master plan should include an updated Circulation Element.
I1	Infrastructure	*	Review and update as necessary Utilities Element of the Master Plan. Confirm the condition and capacity of the stormwater drainage system and water supply. Incorporate climate change implications.	Governing Body, Planning Board, Municipal utilities authority	NJ American Water, DEP	1-3 years after CCRHVA	New utility lines and associated infrastructure should be planned to avoid flood prone areas and existing utility infrastructure currently in or projected to be flood prone in the future should be addressed.
I2	Infrastructure	*	Confirm that the County has submitted a WMP with a local Chapter and a new FWSA map pursuant to 7:15-4.2 (c)	County with municipal	NJDEP		Wildwood City was included in the 2013 Cape May County WMP.
I3	Infrastructure	*	Evaluate and update regularly the Stormwater Management Plan and Ordinance for consistency with the current Stormwater Management Rules. Be sure to submit MS-4 Permit reports each May.	Engineer, Governing Body and Planning Board	DEP and Cape May County technical assistance	1-2 years	
I4	Infrastructure	*	Adopt an Impervious Surface Reduction Ordinance. Incorporate expected increases in precipitation and temperature related to adverse impacts of climate change into an impervious surface reduction ordinance. Include measures to manage stormwater on-site rather than as runoff ; Future redevelopment projects shall incorporate means to minimize and/or reduce new and/or existing impervious surfaces.	Governing body	NJDEP		
I5	Infrastructure/ Utilities	*	Initiate conversations with the county about a regional wastewater plant out of the flood zone	Governing Body, Planning Board, Municipal utilities authority	NJDEP		
J1	Sustainability	*	Develop green building and sustainable design guidelines for new development - consider requiring "green buildings" (LEED, Green Globes) in redevelopment areas, to the extent practicable.	Planning Board, Governing Body & Green Team	SJ, OPA		Sustainable Jersey points and support
J2	Sustainability	*	Streamline zoning code and permitting requirements to encourage solar and geothermal.	Planning Board, Governing Body & Green Team	DEP, BPU, SJ	1-2 year	Sustainable Jersey points and support
K1	Economic Development	*	Prepare an economic sustainability plan working regionally as appropriate.		OPA, SJTPO, DEP, SJ		
L1	Historic Resources	*	Review and update Historic Preservation Inventory. Historic structures should be protected with enhanced stormwater management plans and flood minimization plans.	Governing Body	SHPO, County	Report on progress in biennial review	Review the NJ Historical Commission's (NJ Department of State) grant program at http://www.nj.gov/state/divisions/historical/grants . Work with SHPO to develop planning documents some guidance is provided at : https://www.nj.gov/dep/hpo/images/_MULT_DG_32_v2_ID14078r.pdf
M1	Planning	*	Update the Community Facilities Plan	Planning Board	DCA Local Planning Services	3 years	
N1	Environmental Justice & Equity	*	Follow the requirements of EO23 pursuant to NJDEP guidelines to review, identify, and update documents as necessary.	Planning Board, Governing Body	NJDEP	1-3 years after provision of guidance	Monitor for changes in municipality that may warrant more environmental justice actions in the future.
N2	Environmental Justice & Equity	*	Coordinate robust public engagement in all municipal planning initiatives.	Planning Board, Governing Body	OPA	ongoing	