



Appendix E

Asbury Park

Mitigation Report

Date:

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Monmouth County

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Introduction

Asbury Park is a community that includes multiple types of destinations, including a vast and popular beachfront, multiple concert venues, fireworks, parades, and other festivals that attract large volumes of visitors during the summer and event periods. These concentrated traffic streams create congestion within Asbury Park as well as on roadways that provide access to regional travel routes such as NJ 71 (Main Street), NJ 33 (Corlies Avenue), CR 16 (Asbury Avenue), and Sunset Avenue. Multimodal access is provided via NJ TRANSIT's North Jersey Coast Line, NJ TRANSIT buses, and private charter buses. A grid system of roads allows drivers to easily identify alternate routes for ingress and egress. Scooters and bikes were available to move around the City before the COVID pandemic, providing an alternative to driving to individual destinations in the City.

Challenges to event and tourism related demand include limited parking near the beachfront and a tendency for drivers to circulate around looking for limited parking. Egress following major events, like concerts at the Stone Pony, as well as traffic diverting along residential streets to avoid congestion are some of the other existing challenges. However, the City is making use of innovative technologies to make visitors aware of their travel options and to communicate conditions in real-time. The City also has a full-time Transportation Manager whose role is to optimize the travel experience for visitors, residents, and workers into and around Asbury Park.

There are a number of transportation demand management (TDM) strategies that can address the issues identified in the Existing Conditions Report, improve visitor experience, and enhance quality of life for nearby residents. This purpose of this site-specific Mitigation Report is to identify TDM strategies that are currently in place, as well as provide recommendations for additional measures to address the existing issues identified above and improve the overall travel experience for visitors and nearby residents. The following sections outline the various strategies that can be applied in Asbury Park, as well as for other similar types of locations. Each TDM measure in the following sections is described briefly along with their 'playing card' and a backlit color:

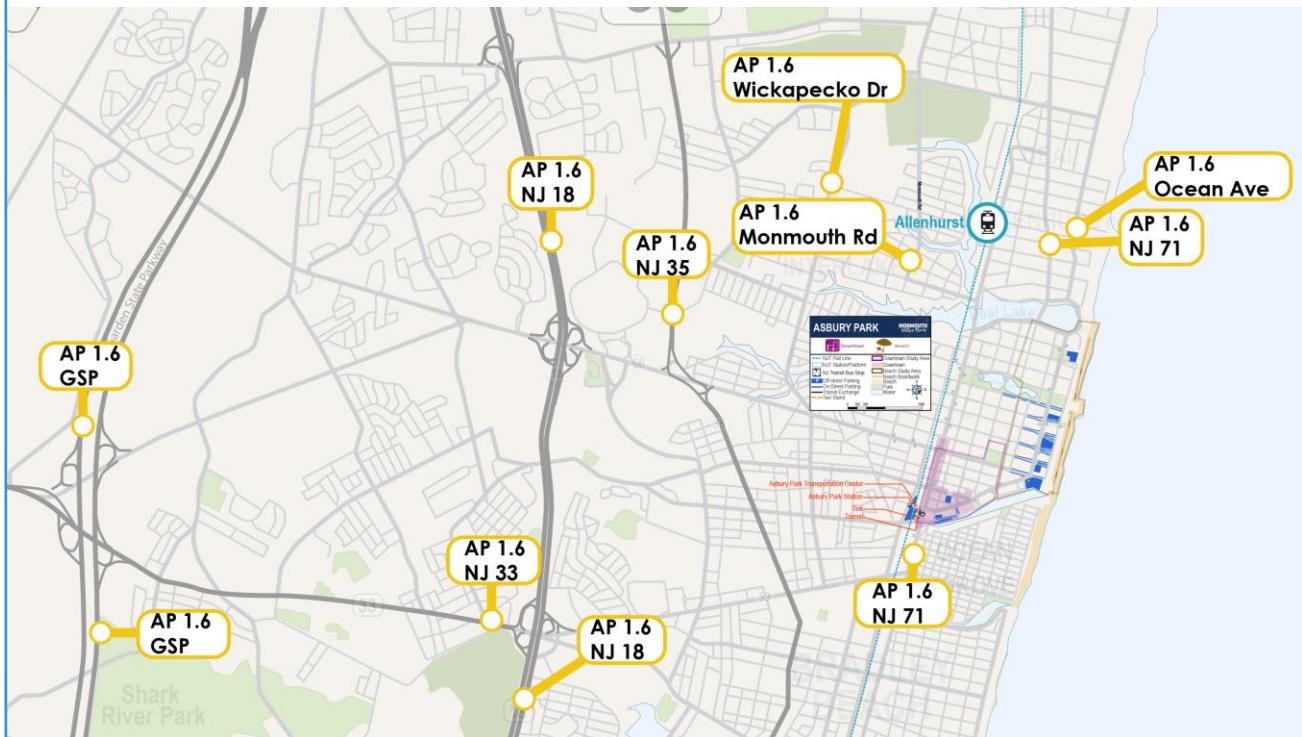
	A green backlit color indicates a TDM measure already in place		A yellow backlit color indicates a TDM measure recommended for consideration
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The strategies are organized into five categories: Communications, Traveler Behavior, Improve Existing Travel Options, Parking, and New Options, and are presented as a deck of cards. There is no single strategy that can solve all the transportation issues, and just like a card game, multiple cards (strategies) are needed for a "winning hand" (reduction in event and tourism related traffic congestion). A detailed description of the strategies is contained in the following sections.

1 – Communications

There are a number of potential communications options that can build upon the work already being done through the use of traffic apps to help Asbury Park visitors understand their options at key decision points in the journey (**Figure 1**).

Figure 1: Summary of Recommended Communications Strategies

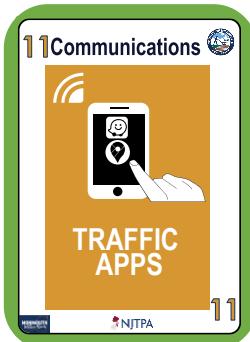


Nixle – Reverse-911 (AP 1.1)



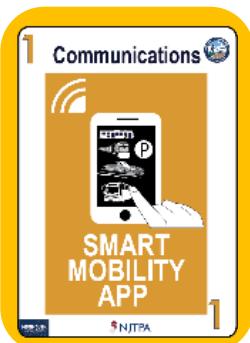
The City is a member of the Nixle "reverse-911" program which provides an opportunity to inform residents about upcoming peak travel days, incidents, and other urgent information. This system can be used to communicate issues regarding beach closures, planned road closures, and alternate routes.





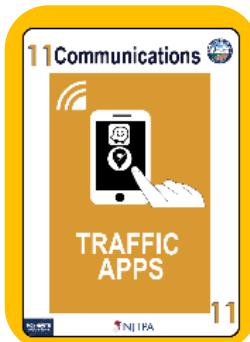
Feedback to Waze for Better Routing Decisions (AP 1.2)

City staff have also used social media to make Waze aware of congestion in the City on peak event days and have stated that this has influenced the navigation platform's routing decisions. See 1.4 Waze Partnerships for additional guidance regarding how to improve the use of Waze to manage traffic in Asbury Park.



Smartphone Apps (AP 1.3)

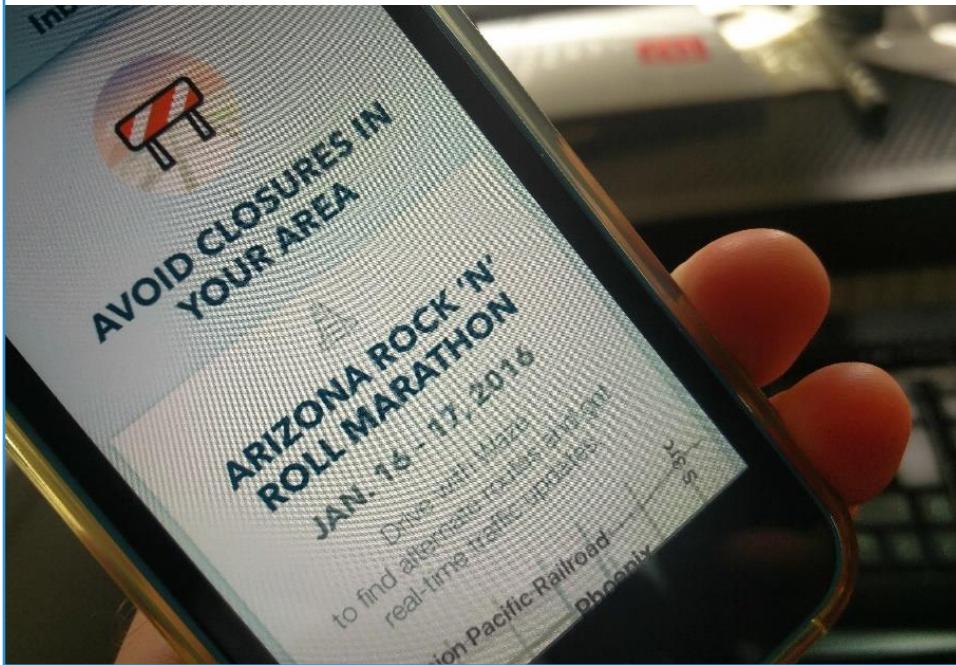
The City can consider smartphone apps to further supplement their communications methods. A dedicated app would provide a direct line of communication to visitors, residents, and workers, and can be used to provide messaging on incidents, parking availability, incentives, and upcoming special events.



WAZE Partnerships (AP 1.4)

There are options for communicating with Waze through social media, as noted in 1.2. Asbury Park has recently joined this program and the Waze Global Event Partners program as a municipal member. Membership in this program will allow the City to mark some streets as "closed" to disperse traffic volumes and prevent pass-through traffic in residential areas, for example, for peak seasonal traffic days, or during specific events. The program is truly a two-way partnership. The City can get information on traffic patterns and incidents, and they can provide information on roadway modifications and peak event day street closures. **Figure 2** shows a notification that was sent to all Waze users in a region regarding a street closure for a marathon.

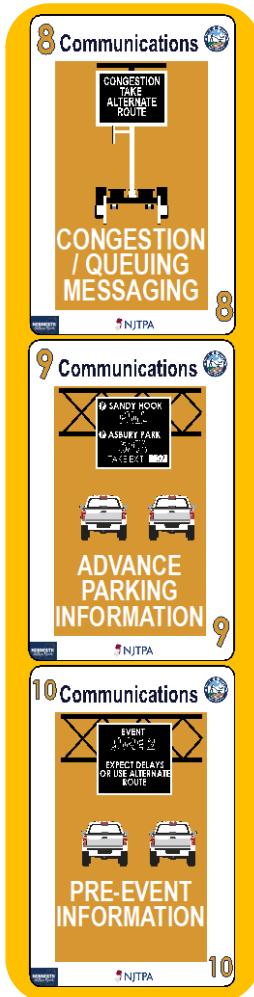
Figure 2: Screenshot of Waze Closure Notice



Social Media, Radio (AP 1.5)



A coordinated communications plan on social media, email distribution lists, the website, and local radio can improve the visitor experience by making visitors aware of available parking areas and peak congestion areas. This can also be used to communicate roadway modifications, alternate travel routes, and early arrival and late departure incentives. The benefit of this method of communication is that it has the potential to reach all travelers, not just those traveling to Asbury Park. This is also possible with the Waze platform, as described in AP 1.4.



More Variable Message Signs (VMSs) to Communicate Beach Closures and Parking Availability (AP 1.6)

Additional VMSs can be used to make drivers aware of parking unavailability or beach closures, so they can consider alternate options before driving to the waterfront in Asbury Park. One of the challenges in the street network is the difficulty in getting away from the waterfront once drivers enter. VMSs with "limited parking - turn right here" type messages can divert some of the approaches to the waterfront area.

2 – Travel Behavior

Asbury Park already has many assets that can be used to help change traveler behavior and to promote travel using other modes and/or to extend visits, such as its active and vibrant downtown, as well as scooter and bikeshare (**Figure 3**). The bikeshare program is currently not in operation but may be redesigned as a regional partnership with Long Branch and back in operation as early as 2022.

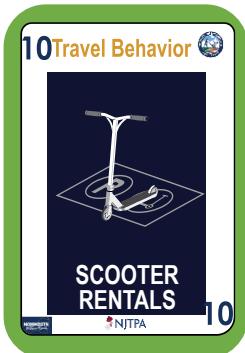
Figure 3: Summary of Travel Behavior Strategies



Early Arrivals and Late Departures (AP 2.1)

Asbury Park offers many attractions other than its major event venues and the beaches that frequently operate outside of peak periods, so some visitors already have a tendency to arrive in the area early and leave late. These visitors that arrive early and depart late are traveling outside the peak periods, so they do not contribute to congestion during the peak ingress and egress hours. This leads to a better travel experience for these visitors, who do not encounter peak period traffic volumes and congestion, and also for visitors that travel during the peak periods, since there is overall less visitor traffic at that time. In order to enhance the effectiveness of this strategy, the City could work with local business owners to provide information for visitors going to the beach or other events, indicating options for dining or shopping to encourage visitors to arrive

early or stay later.



Scooter Management (AP 2.2)

Scooters provide an excellent way for visitors and residents to move around the City without needing to drive a car. However, e-scooters needed to be managed effectively in order to ensure adequate coverage in popular areas, and to ensure that they are parked properly when not in use to avoid blocking sidewalks. Asbury Park conducted a trial of scooter rentals in the City in 2019. City staff indicate that scooters were well-utilized during the trial period, conducted in 2019, and they have not observed any issues with scooters being abandoned on street corners or interrupting pedestrian flow. Scooter parking areas are painted on sidewalks along Ocean Avenue in Asbury Park and appear to be used effectively (**Figure 4**).

Figure 4: Scooter Parking Area (source: Google Maps)



11 Travel Behavior

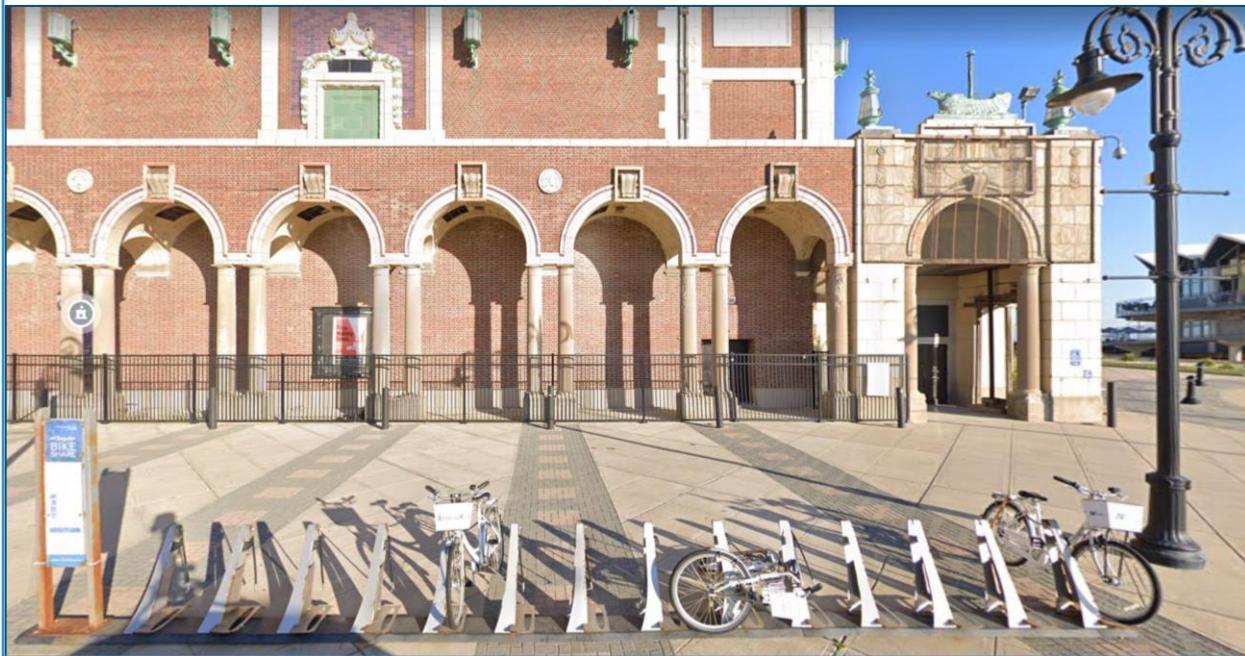
**BIKE
RENTALS**

11

Bike Rental Programs (AP 2.3)

In 2019 Asbury Park teamed with Zagster, Inc to launch a bikeshare program with a fleet of 30 cruiser bikes with baskets (Figure 5). Bikes were available for members who join either an annual subscription or use the bikes on a per-hour cost. Zagster is no longer in operation, however, the City plans to make bikes available again as early as 2022 and is currently working with Long Branch on a regional program. The program was previously supported by local sponsors Madison Marquette, iStar, The Asbury Hotel, and Home Drug Store.

Figure 5: Bike Share Station (source: Google Maps)


12 Travel Behavior

**TRANSIT
SERVICE**

12

NJ TRANSIT (AP 2.4)

Asbury Park is served by NJ TRANSIT's North Jersey Coast Line that operates from Hoboken and New York City to Bay Head. However, due to a change at Long Branch one some trips between electric-powered and diesel-powered rail vehicles, there is limited direct service to Asbury Park and visitors must transfer, which can introduce long layovers. Hybrid locomotives on the Coast Line allow for direct, one-seat service; however that service is focused on weekday commuter travel. Asbury Park and the County could coordinate with NJ TRANSIT to evaluate the feasibility of more frequent, local direct weekend

service, with limited layover time at Long Branch. A survey of employees, residents, and visitors can be a starting point for quantifying the demand for this service to support the case for new or added service.

In addition, there are also four NJ TRANSIT buses (830, 832, 836, 837) that serve Asbury Park. However, weekend service on some routes is limited and the routes only serve the local area and would not be a viable option for most visitors.

For the summer 2021 season, NJ TRANSIT will offer a “Beach Package to customers and employees. This package includes round-trip rail transportation and a special beach admission ticket. In exchange, the City will offer a discounted beach admission ticket to NJ TRANSIT Beach Package ticket holders. This type of agreement will be marketed on both the NJ TRANSIT and Asbury Park website and social media channels. This type of agreement will benefit travelers by providing a transit link to Asbury Park, with incentives in the form of beach admission discounts. The shift from auto to transit will benefit passengers and those who continue to drive to Asbury Park by removing some of the vehicular traffic and parking demand on peak days.

3 – Improve Existing Travel Options

Asbury Park has a lot of advantages and is taking a proactive approach to active transportation through the development and implementation of a new network plan. This could be enhanced through the use of intelligent traffic lights and partial street closures to further enhance the non-vehicular feeling along the waterfront (**Figure 6**).

Figure 6:Summary of Improve Existing Options Strategies



Street Layout Conducive to Designated Areas, Flow Directions (AP 3.1)

The street network in Asbury Park is primarily composed of an orthogonal grid system. This provides flexibility in developing alternate routes, counter-flow, road closures, or other roadway optimization strategies. Traffic can also be diverted to alternate routes to relieve traffic on the most congested segments.

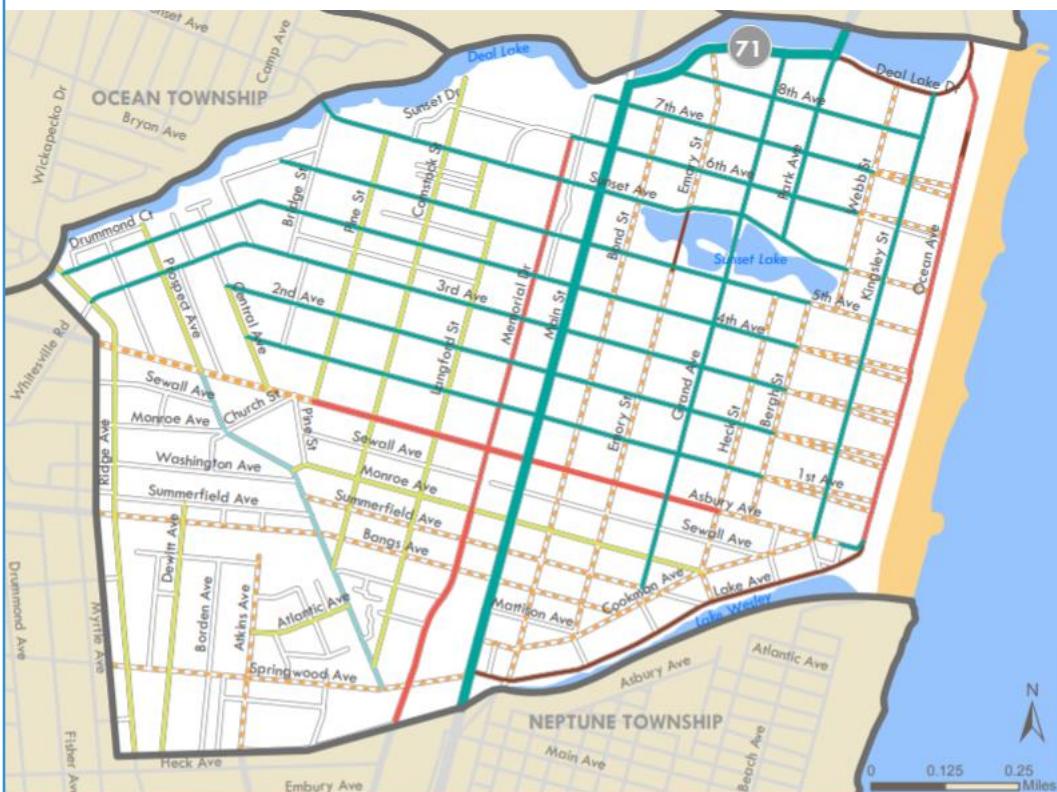
2 Improve Existing



Bike Infrastructure (AP 3.2)

In addition to bicycle prioritization at crossing locations, there is also dedicated bike infrastructure at many locations and a plan to extend the bike network to include nearly all streets in the City. This includes bike lanes, buffered or separated bike lanes, bike boulevards, advisory bike lanes, shared-use paths, and shared lane markings (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Proposed Bike Network for Asbury Park (Source: Asbury Park Plan for Walking and Biking)



MAP 10 - Proposed Bicycle Network

Proposed Bicycle Network

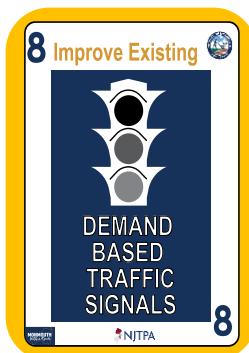
- Bicycle Lane
- Buffered or Separated Bicycle Lane
- Bicycle Boulevard
- Advisory Bicycle Lane
- Shared-use Path
- Shared Lane Markings

Asbury Park's invaluable advantage in creating a strong bicycle network lies in the existing width of many of the City's roadways. Without significant investment, more than ten municipal roadways are capable of supporting bicycle lanes with a simple re-striping.



Two-Way Bike Lanes (AP 3.3)

The Asbury Park Plan for Walking and Biking includes recommendations to install a two-way bike lane along Asbury, Memorial, and Ocean Avenues, to further increase bike usage along these corridors. This would provide dedicated right-of-way for bike travel in each direction, and reduce conflicts between bicycles, pedestrians, and vehicles. These lanes are also proposed as buffered or separated bike lanes so they are kept apart from vehicular traffic.



Intelligent Signals (AP 3.4)

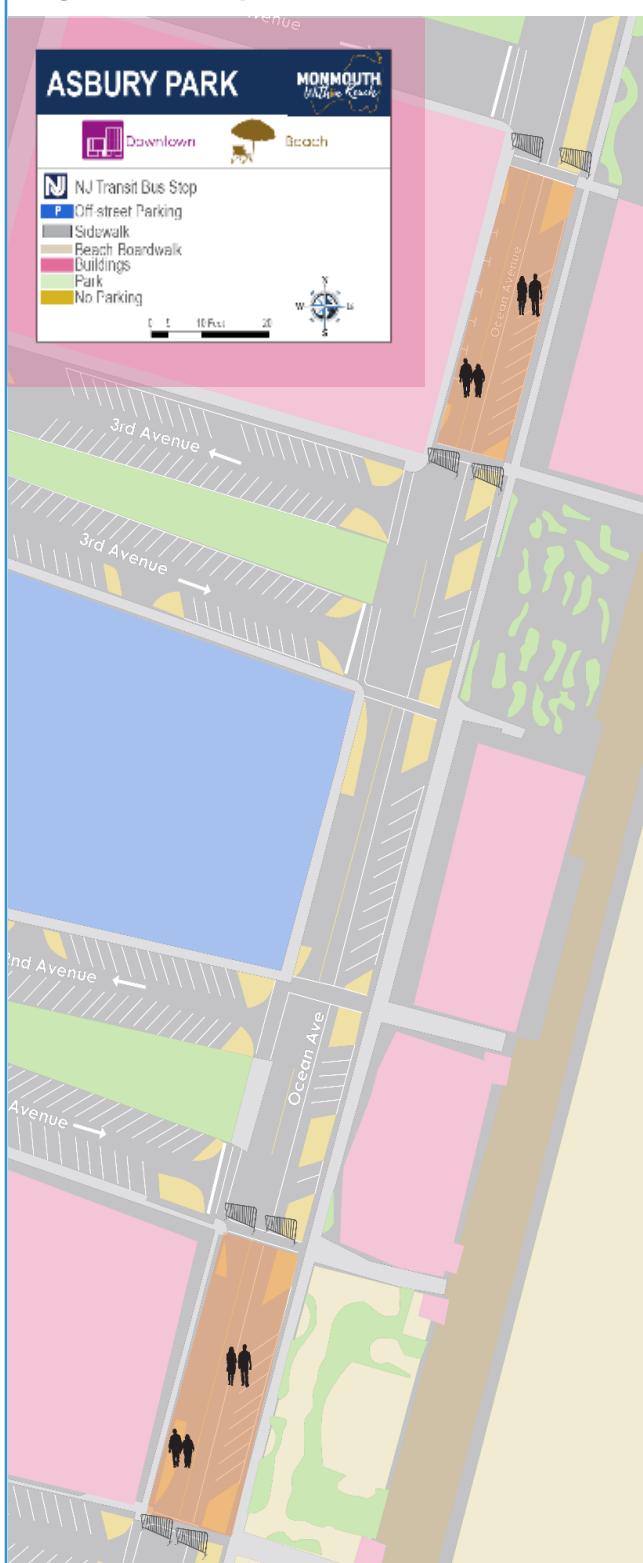
A system of interconnected, intelligent signal controllers would allow for dedicated event-day signal timing, with overrides during the peak periods. This would allow traffic management staff to focus on other activities, such as managing traffic patterns, allowing public safety staff to reallocate resources to activities such as pedestrian management instead of signal box operation. The City should coordinate with the County and NJDOT, which have resources and experience in implementing advanced signal systems including adaptive and coordinated signals.

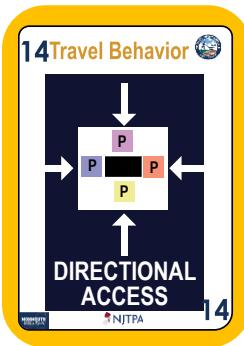


Street Closures for Business Expansions - Consider Impacts to Deliveries (AP 3.5)

Street closures allow for the creation of temporary pedestrian plazas, and these have been successful in increasing visits to businesses in many communities. One challenge is that closures may restrict delivery access. However, deliveries should be staged outside of typical peak periods. These typical peak periods can be communicated to businesses in advance, based on historical visitation trends, so that they can work with vendors to schedule deliveries on off-peak days/hours. The two-way couplets to access parking between Kingsbury Street and Ocean Avenue create some challenges in restricting traffic but specific blocks may be possible such as between 3rd Avenue and 4th Avenue (**Figure 8**) and adjacent to the Stone Pony between 1st Avenue and 2nd Avenue.

Figure 8: Example of Street Closures





Parking Zones (AP 3.6)

Parking for specific parking lots appears to be visitor-friendly, but it encourages drivers to create crossing traffic streams on-site, and this can result in congestion. Instead, parking "tiers" would provide more operational flexibility and can also allow for roadway closures in the City, as well as the ability to oversell. With this type of system, the parking destinations would be split up into several "tiers". A tier is simply a cluster of parking areas with the same color designation, for the purposes of event planning ("blue tier" with multiple blue lots). There can be different tiers based on pricing structures, proximity to destinations, availability of valet services, or other distinctions, however, the intent is to specify clusters of parking lots, rather than specific parking lots, to minimize crossing traffic streams through the center of the City.

A visitor approaching from the south with a blue parking permit would be able to park in a "blue" tiered lot near the south end of the City, while a blue permit holder approaching from the north would be able to park in a lot near the north end of the City. By creating tiers of parking, visitors would not be forced to cross through the center of the City to approach their "one" targeted lot. This would reduce traffic and congestion in the central parts of the City.

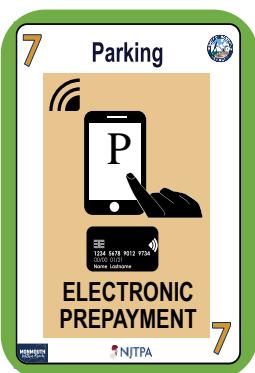
4 – Parking

Asbury Park currently charges for parking in off-street lots as well as on-street. Parking fees could be enhanced through designated ridehailing/taxi pick-up/drop-off areas and improved curbside management (**Figure 9**).

Figure 9: Summary of Parking Strategies



Charge for Parking (AP 4.1)



There is a fee to park at most parking destinations in Asbury Park. This provides an incentive to carpool, and an opportunity to influence traveler behavior by adjusting the parking rate for peak days and peak times. Strategies include differential pricing by time (during peak periods), by location, alternative mode incentives, and the option to set up a season-long permit for regular visitors, residents, and workers.



Viply to Sell Beach Parking (AP 4.2)

The City partners with Viply, an entry point access app, to sell season-long and daily beach access passes. This is an efficient alternative to on-site payment methods that could potentially be extended through a partnership with private parking lots as part of beach access, leading to shorter queues on entry, and guaranteed parking for visitors, which would reduce the volume of drivers circulating around the street network, looking for parking.



New Parking Deck (AP 4.3)

A new parking deck is being planned behind the Empress Hotel near the beach on the south side of town. This will create a consolidated parking space near the Waterfront. The additional parking will provide additional options for visitors traveling to the beachfront, but it may also generate more congestion in the surrounding roadways during ingress and egress periods. Pre-paid parking permits and occupancy sensors may be a consideration for this deck to control the volume of traffic approaching this location.



Designated Pick-Up/Drop-Off Areas (AP 4.4)

Clearly communicated pick-up and drop-off areas for buses and ridehail vehicles would keep these vehicles out of the major traffic streams in the City and would allow for dedicated pedestrian and vehicle queuing areas, ideally, in an off-street location. Geofencing can be used to funnel passengers and vehicles to this area to reduce the conflicts with ridehail activities taking place close to the waterfront, since that requires drivers to drive into and out of the roads closest to the waterfront. One suggestion is to use the on-street parking at 3rd Street as Ridehail pickup and drop off (**Figure 10**). This lot was selected because:

- It is centrally located near many Asbury Park attractions
- It has sufficient space for queuing of vehicles and pedestrians
- There are multiple access points to this area, which allows for separate entry and exit locations
- The angled parking configuration in this area allows for multiple simultaneous pick-up locations

Figure 10: Potential Ridehail Lot



Curbside Management (AP 4.5)

Curbside management policies would allow for dynamic pricing during events, enabling more curb space for pick-up and drop-off activities, and may serve as an incentive to carpool. This type of management policy may include higher parking rates for longer-duration stays on streets where meters are available, such as Ocean Avenue and Kingsley Street. A time-of-stay pricing model would encourage some visitors to find parking in off-street parking areas, leaving these spaces available for shorter-duration trips, and allowing each space to be used by multiple vehicles per day ().

An example would be to use 4th Avenue southbound as a peak period curbside management zone in partnership with the use of 4th Avenue northbound between Kingsley Street and Ocean Avenue for ridehail pick up and drop off (**Figure 12**).



Figure 11: Curbside management practices can streamline curbside space for deliveries, parking vehicles, and other users. (Source: Coord)



Presentando Smart Zones!

Introducing Smart Zones!

On February 1st, the City of Nashville began piloting new paid, curbside loading spaces for delivery drivers called Smart Zones.

To use a Smart Zone, book time using Coord Driver, an iPhone/Android app. Payment is required via the app.


Signs for Smart Zones look like this

[Available on the App Store](#)
[Get it on Google Play](#)

Lugares de Smart Zones (límite de 2 Hr.)

- Church St.,**
 - entre 4th Ave y Printers Alley (lado sureste)
 - entre 3rd Ave y Printers Alley (lado sureste)
- Union St.,**
 - entre 2nd Ave y 3rd Ave. (lado sur)
 - entre 4th Ave y Printers Alley (lado sur)
 - entre Rep. John Lewis Way y Arcade Alley (lado sur)
- Rep. John Lewis Way,**
 - entre Union y el Arcادe (lado sur oeste)
 - entre Church y el Arcadde (lado sur oeste)
- 2nd Ave.,**
 - entre Broadway y Commerce (lado noreste)

\$ Precios*

15 Minutos = \$1.00
30 Minutos = \$2.00
1 Hora = \$4.00
2 Horas = \$8.00

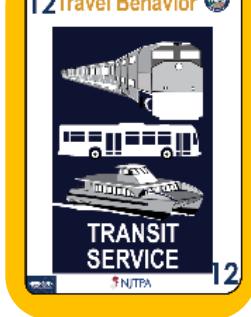
*Estas son las tarifas mínimas. Se puede aplicar tarifas más altas en las horas pico.

Mande "NASH" a (855) 545-0622 para descargar la app

Figure 12: Curbside Management on 4th Avenue



Free and Fee Shuttles (AP 4.6)



People have been noted parking west of the railway tracks at on street parking areas and walking into the beach area, so a downtown parking circulator shuttle could help encourage this by making it easier to get between the parking and the beach or downtown. The cost of shuttles can be partially offset by partnerships with private businesses to operate these shuttles. These businesses would benefit from additional foot traffic and the community would benefit by having additional parking supply in a remote location, and more dispersed traffic patterns. Some cities have shuttles sponsored by local business groups or the downtown merchants association or as part of a summer service by the local transit agency while others may allow services to be provided by private groups on a "by donation" basis.

One set of merchants on Anna Maria Island in Florida provided an electric cart shuttle to bring people closer to their businesses (located on a fishing pier) and then extended that as a service to a small local area.

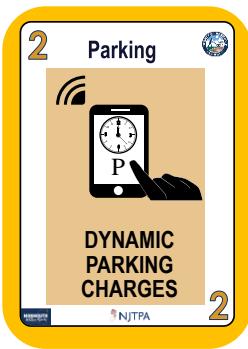
This has been done in the past in Asbury Park between the boardwalk and downtown by The Free Ride using electric carts and can possibly be extended to benefit other businesses and visitors to the City (**Figure 13**). Discussions with the municipality suggested that the service would have benefited from improved operating information for users, including signs, and the development of an app.

Figure 13: Potential Parking/ Circulator Shuttle



Option to Get People Away from Waterfront Parking (AP 4.7)

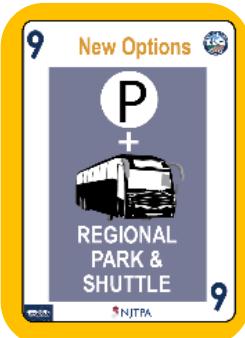
The City should explore creating more designated parking areas away from the waterfront to disperse travel demand, and avoid having people driving around, looking for the few available parking spaces. There are a number of off-site parking options on the routes travelers are taking to Asbury Park. Signage at the closest exits to these locations would help divert some of the traffic to these park and ride facilities. Recommended sites are shown in Section 5.



Dynamic Parking Charges (AP 4.8)

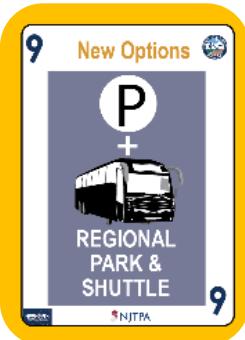
We understand the City has partnerships with several parking payment providers, including the Asbury PARK app and a Parkmobile app. For event operations, a provider should have the ability to provide real-time utilization, dynamic pricing, and app and web-based presence. This provider should be supported with messaging throughout the City and on online communications channels. This would allow travelers to find available parking areas and reduce the number of vehicles circulating around the waterfront looking for limited parking spaces. It can also be used to develop a historical database of parking supply, so that in the future recommendations can be made on the best arrival times to find parking in specific lots or parts of the City (for example, parking fills up at 11:00 AM on Memorial Day weekend). Visitors can then choose to arrive early or look for alternate parking areas.

5 – New Options



Bus Service from New York City (AP 5.1)

Bus service is offered by private operators from New York City. These services show that there is a demand for travel to Asbury Park by bus. However, the bus service is not direct because it makes multiple stops before reaching Asbury Park. Consider whether a more direct bus service could be created like that which is in place for Atlantic City. A framework for providing this direct bus service and communicating this option to visitors would also be needed. Consideration could be given to whether this may also be possible from other locations. Also, this travel option can be communicated to visitors on a dedicated travel app, website, or other form of communication.

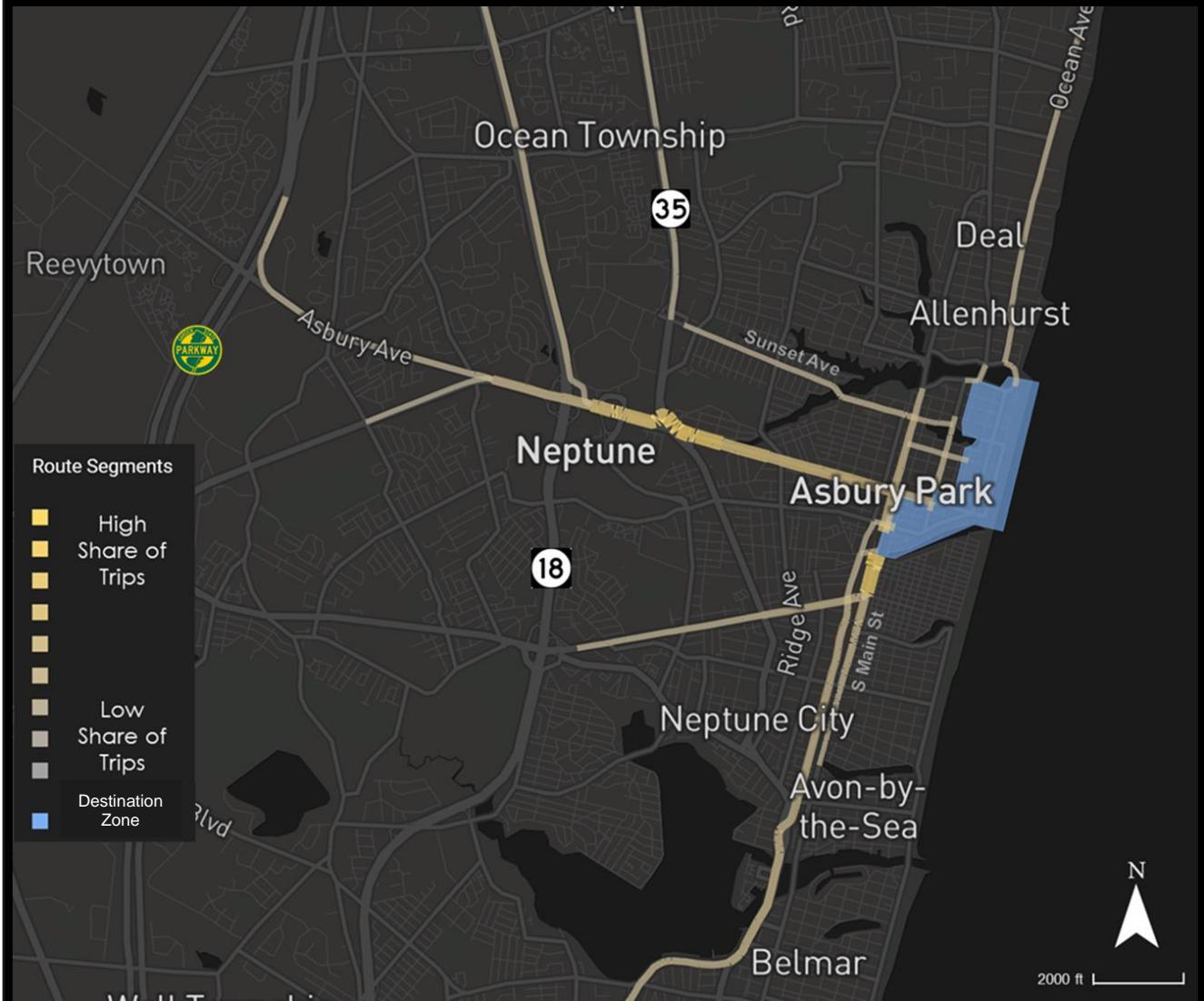


Park-and-Ride (AP 5.2)

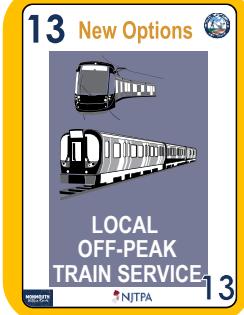
Asbury Park could consider working with private parking owners to identify potential park and ride options along the routes visitors take to Asbury Park. Suitable satellite parking locations would have a sizable parking supply (typically over 100 spaces), and they would be located along a major route that travelers have historically used to approach Asbury Park ().

The use of offsite parking would require the provision of shuttle services, information and signage and parking locations within Asbury Park. A starting point maybe to examine parking partnerships in the communities adjacent to Asbury Park along the identified routes into the city and working with NJ TRANSIT or a private operator to provide shuttle services.

Figure 14: Roadways that Experience 5% or More of Traffic Destined to Asbury Park



Intra-County Rail Service (AP 5.3)



Given the nature of recreational based demand within the County and a rail service geared to commuters, there may be an opportunity to coordinate with NJ TRANSIT explore the feasibility of utilizing the tracks between Red Bank and Bay Head for the creation of an interurban coach in non-peak hours or LRT time-separated service to provide intra-county services during weekdays and weekends when the service into Newark is not required. This would create a new way to get around the county without the need for a vehicle.

Figure 15: Intra-County Rail Service Route



Conclusion and Implementation

Asbury Park is a community that includes multiple types of destinations, including a vast and popular beachfront, multiple concert venues, fireworks, parades, and other festivals that attract large volumes of visitors during the summer and event periods. Municipal staff are forward-thinking and are already pursuing measures such as e-scooters, bikeshare, improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and off-site parking opportunities. The recommendations presented in this report would build off what the City is already doing to help reduce peak congestion and provide more opportunities for visitors to travel to, from, and within Asbury Park without a car.

A summary implementation matrix is provided below which depicts each strategy based on its complexity to implement as well as its effectiveness (see **Figure 16**). The matrix can be used by decision makers to help select strategies to pursue as funding for or interest in certain strategies arise.

Figure 16: Asbury Park Implementation Matrix

