

## **ACTION PLAN**

The Plan is an on-going process. It does not conclude when the Borough Planning Board adopts the Plan. A successful Plan is one that can be evaluated with tangible results.

From the beginning, the planning process focused on implementation. Moreover, the public meetings have involved an active participation from individuals that are likely to be involved in the implementation of the Plan.

The Action Plan is articulated for three time periods. The first time period focuses on short-range strategies. It identifies actions that can be accomplished in the next one or two years. These include such smaller projects as updating the land development ordinance, installing gateway treatments and plantings to show progress and to generate continued interest in implementing the Plan.

The second time frame illustrates the middle range strategies. It is anticipated that this could take two to five years to accomplish, and the necessary resources and funding that may be necessary. Middle range strategies represent more permanent changes and improvements.

The third time frame is the long-range strategy, which may take five to ten years to accomplish.

For each strategy, the persons/agencies/responsible for implementing the action are identified along with a suggested benchmark (time frame).

SUMMARY OF STRATEGIES, RESPONSIBLE PARTIES AND BENCHMARKS				
S = Short Range Strategy (1 year or less)				
M = Medium Range Strategy (2 – 5 years)				
L = Long Range Strategy ( 6 – 10 years)				
Strategy/Action	S	M	L	Responsibility
<b>Land Use</b>				
Revise the Borough's ordinances to be consistent with this Master Plan.	√			Borough Council
Update the Borough's Central District Design Manual. Include guidelines for parking lot development	√			Borough Council
Utilize the Design Manual during site plan review to encourage aesthetically pleasing design.	√			Planning and Zoning Board
Prepare grant applications for businesses to renovate, and upgrade their buildings in accordance with the design guidelines.		√	√	Borough Council, Planning Board, Planning Consultant
Prepare a Recreation and Open Space Plan in accordance with Green Acres Requirements to qualify for Planning Incentive Grants	√			Borough Council, Planning Board, Recreation Department
Consider the creation of a local open space tax to match funds received from Green Acres to create recreation and open space opportunities.	√	√		Borough Council, Planning Board, Recreation Department

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<b>Economic Development/Redevelopment</b>				
Authorize the Planning Board to undertake redevelopment study(ies)	√			Borough Council
Undertake redevelopment studies to determine if a(n) area(s) are in need of redevelopment.	√			Planning Board
Prepare a redevelopment plan for all areas determined to be in need of redevelopment.		√		Borough Council, Planning Board, Planning Consultant
Prepare conceptual streetscape improvement plan in any redevelopment efforts		√		Planning Consultant
Pursuant to the creation of redevelopment area(s), establish a tax abatement program for commercial business improvements and residential upgrades.		√		Borough Attorney, Borough Council
Focus economic activity in the Borough's economic centers including Bay Avenue and commercial waterfront areas. Recognize the unique character of each	√	√	√	Borough Council, Planning Board

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area and promote development that will strengthen and reinforce market niches.				
Promote the revitalization and aesthetic appearance of the Bay Avenue CBD through the public-private partnership between the Borough and the Business Improvement District (BID) with a focus on niche retail, specialty services, restaurants and entertainment uses. Consider the development of anchor uses to make the CBD a destination and attract shoppers as well as visitors.	√	√	√	Planning Board, BID, Borough Council
Apply for public and private community development grants	√			EDA, OSG, NPP, HUD, CDBG, DOT <sup>11</sup>
Encourage redevelopment in areas that need rehabilitation or improvement.	√	√	√	Borough Council, Planning Board
Work with the BID and the economic development committee to extend the existing peak summer season.	√	√	√	Business Improvement District, Highlands Business Partnership
Encourage select retail, marina and mixed-use development along the Sandy Hook Bay waterfront that takes advantage of extensive waterfront frontage and regional access. Target the corridor for uses that complement Bay Avenue rather than compete with it.	√	√		Business Improvement District, Highlands Business Partnership
Conduct a marketing study to identify market demand for new retail and restaurant uses.		√		Business Improvement District
Recruit locally owned businesses	√	√	√	Business Improvement District, Highlands Business Partnership
Expand the Farmers Market to include new services, i.e., arts and crafts.	√			Business Improvement District
Encourage local financial institutions to create or expand specialized loan packages for commercial development	√	√		Borough Council
Develop and make available information on various grants, loans, etc. for nonprofit organizations and businesses in the Center.		√		BID, PLANNING BOARD OSG, DEP, EDA, HUD
Investigate the creation of a revolving loan fund coordinated with the BID and the		√	√	EDA

<sup>11</sup> EDA – Economic Development Authority, OSG – Office of Smart Growth, NPP – Neighborhood Preservation Program, HUD – US Department of Housing and Urban Development, CDBG – Community Development Block Grants, DOT – New Jersey Department of Transportation

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Highlands Business Partnership and fund through local financial institutions to encourage small business development.				
Consider conducting a real estate market analysis to identify and capitalize on emerging market opportunities.	√	√		EDA, Monmouth County Economic Development Office

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<b>Commercial Development/Redevelopment Opportunities</b>				
Delineate potential redevelopment areas and prepare redevelopment studies to determine if the areas meet the redevelopment criteria.	√			Borough Council, Planning Board
Encourage new non-residential development projects through incentives such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Redevelopment powers</li> <li>• The Creation of a facade grant program</li> </ul>	√	√		Borough Council, Planning Board
Strengthen commercial districts, especially the Bay Avenue CBD, by encouraging a mix of uses that provide employment, retail opportunities, services and entertainment	√	√	√	Borough Council, Planning Board, BID, Highlands Business Partnership, EDA, OSG
Through redevelopment efforts, investigate mixed-use waterfront development opportunities that increase public access to the waterfront.	√	√	√	Borough Council, Planning Board, BID, Highlands Business Partnership, EDA, OSG
Solicit interest in Redevelopment via Request for Proposals.		√	√	Borough Council
Actively promote the waterfront as a place for restaurant, retail and entertainment activities.		√	√	Planning Board, Borough Council
Provide information to small businesses about developing business plans.		√	√	Borough, BID, Highlands Business Partnership
Apply for public and private community development grants	√	√	√	Borough, Independent Grant Writer, Borough Professionals
Develop a business development and retention program.		√	√	BID, Highlands Business Partnership
Encourage local financial institutions to create or expand specialized loan packages for commercial development		√	√	Borough Council, BID, Highlands Business Partnership
Provide for adequate parking to serve established commercial areas; incorporate adequate parking into new developments.	√	√	√	Planning Board, Zoning Board, Borough Council

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Enforce sign regulations.	√	√	√	Planning Board, Zoning Board, Code Enforcement Officer
Update ordinances to streamline the development review process for improvements such as change of uses	√			Borough Council, Planning Board
Apply for grants to promote community history and to emphasize gateways	√	√	√	
Require buffering around commercial properties to soften the visual and functional impact of their design and use.	√	√	√	Planning Board
Identify needed or “missing” businesses in the downtown.	√	√	√	BID, Highlands Business Partnership

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<b>Residential/Housing</b>				
Create a Floor Area Ratio ordinance to limit new development that would increase the intensity of neighborhood land and property use, and/or generate a high volume of traffic on local and collector streets.	√	√		Planning Board
Submit the Housing Plan for Substantive Certification from the Council on Affordable Housing.	√			Borough Council
Create a user friendly manual indicating the necessary steps for building in the floodplain.	√			BID
Promote infill development consistent with FEMA regulations and the user-friendly floodplain manual	√			Planning Board, Zoning Board, Construction Official
Increase the amount of owner-occupied housing in the Borough.	√	√	√	Borough Council and Housing Authority
Ensure the maintenance and preservation of residential properties through the strict enforcement of property maintenance guidelines.	√	√	√	Code Enforcement, Borough Council
Enforce the Borough's ordinances to protect and preserve the established residential character.	√	√	√	Code Enforcement,
Continue to monitor and address the need for a broad range of senior citizen housing including independent living, assisted living and congregate care housing.	√	√	√	Highlands Housing Authority

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<b>Circulation/Parking</b>				
Apply for Transit Friendly Village Designation with the NJ DOT	√			Borough Council, Planning Board
Utilize the Business Improvement District as a parking lease facilitator	√			Borough Council, BID
Evaluate and implement methods of providing adequate parking to serve existing development and proposed redevelopment, i.e., conduct a parking study.	√	√	√	Borough Council, Planning Board
Coordinate maintenance and improvement actions with neighboring communities and Monmouth County.	√	√	√	Borough Council, Borough Engineer
Improve public access to the waterfront.	√	√	√	Planning Board, NJ DEP
Provide clear signage to direct visitors and residents to parking.	√			Borough Council, BID
Connect the downtown to the waterfront by encouraging entertainment activities, recreation and commerce.		√	√	BID, Highlands Business Partnership
Locate parking away from the waterfront	√	√	√	Planning Board

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<b>Community Facilities and Utility Infrastructure</b>				
Improve stormwater management along the bayfront, roads, and intersections through effective infrastructure maintenance and replacement.		√	√	Borough Council
Create stormwater management plan.	√			Planning Board
Preserve and upgrade the existing utility infrastructure including water, stormwater management and wastewater treatment. Continue rehabilitation programs while pursuing selected replacement and expansion projects in order to accommodate growth and redevelopment.	√	√	√	TOMSA
Continue to investigate the consolidation and privatization of municipal services.		√	√	Borough Council

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Continue trash reduction, reuse and recycling efforts in cooperation with appropriate county, regional and state agencies.	√	√	√	Monmouth County, NJ DEP
Study and periodically review future service needs and implementation methods.		√	√	Borough Council, Borough Engineer
Implement recently adopted NJDEP stormwater regulations.	√			Borough Council, Borough Engineer

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<b>Community Identity</b>				
Establish an icon or logo for the downtown.	√			Borough Council, BID
Incorporate Highlands logo onto downtown way finding signs.		√		BID
Develop and effectively communicate a strong and appealing identity for the Borough.	√	√	√	BID
Create attractive, memorable gateways at the principal entrances to the Borough through upgraded land uses, streetscape improvements and signage.	√	√	√	Borough Council, BID
Recognize excellent building and landscape design with awards.	√	√	√	Borough Council
Publish information regarding Borough regulation issues and agendas on the Borough website.	√	√	√	Borough Council
Build upon Sandy Hook Bay as an established destination to strengthen the “identity” of the Borough.		√	√	Borough Council, BID, NJ DOT NJ DEP OSG
Link the downtown to the waterfront through any redevelopment efforts.		√	√	Planning Board, Borough Council
Publish an easy to use destination guide that lists events and places of interest to market the downtown	√	√		BID, Highlands Business Partnership, EDA

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<b>Open Space/Recreation/Design</b>				
Prepare a Recreation and Open Space Plan in accordance with Green Acres Requirements.	√			Recreation Department
Utilizing the Recreation and Open Space Plan as the basis, apply for Green Acres Funding.		√		Recreation Department
Provide adequate park, open space, and recreational facilities for all Borough residents.	√	√	√	Recreation Department
Cooperate with public and quasi-public institutions to utilize and maintain their undeveloped land for open space or recreation.	√	√	√	Borough Council
Consider enhancing regulations to assure that quality open space is provided and maintained as redevelopment occurs.	√	√		Borough Council, Planning Board
Encourage the use of low maintenance, hard-wearing materials in parks and public places.	√	√	√	Borough Council, Planning Board
Encourage the use of high quality landscape design to enhance dramatic views of the bay, to develop civic space and public art, and to develop, screen and integrate development.	√	√	√	Planning Board, BID