Great Day Gazette

The crown jewel of the Jersey Shore

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THE ATLANTIC CITY NEWS WE'VE ALL BEEN WAITING FOR

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HAPPY 100 YEARS TO THIS AC STAPLE

BE OPTIMISTIC

FROM THE MAYOR

Dear Atlantic City Residents and Guests,

The rave reviews from my January 23rd State of the City address are still coming in strong! From the moment the "Great Day Choir" hit the stage to perform "Optimistic" by *Sounds of Blackness* all the way through the grand reveal at the end for the city's new "Great Day Atlantic City" website, and everything in between, this really did turn out to be a powerful presentation.

My theme for 2025 is "Be Optimistic" which I feel perfectly summarizes where we are right now in Atlantic City. The future of Bader Field and the Atlantic City Aquarium are two examples of things that many people started doubting, but the Small administration stayed optimistic and both projects are taking the necessary steps forward. You can read more about these developments below in our newsletter. In fact, I have dedicated the majority of this newsletter to recap some of the biggest highlights from my presentation.

And I would like to take the rest of my Mayor's Message to thank some of the individuals who made this all happen, starting with my Department Directors and Assistant Directors, whose hard work on behalf of the taxpayers of Atlantic City is why we have so many positive updates to share. I want to single out our Public Information Office as well as our IT Department for spending countless hours putting this presentation together, along with my policy advisor, Judge Perskie and my Chief of Staff Ernest Coursey, who round out the State of the City team. I always say "relationships matter" and would be remiss if I did not recognize the State of New Jersey, the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA), the New Jersey Economic Development Authority and CRDA for our ongoing partnerships. I want to thank my family for their unwavering support in allowing me to live my dream. And last, but certainly not least, I want to thank the taxpayers of Atlantic City for believing in me and putting me in this position to change Atlantic City for the better.

It's a Great Day Here in the City of Atlantic City!

- Mayor Marty Small, Sr.

KEEP YOUR HEAD TO THE SKY

The first major announcement during the State of the City came in the form of a Bader Field update, when Mayor Small announced the City of Atlantic City received a signed financial commitment from DEEM Enterprises for its proposed $3.4 Billion Renaissance at Bader Field redevelopment plan. The proposal calls for Bader Field to transform into a sustainable motorsport living, entertainment and lifestyle hub. DEEM's financial proposal now gets vetted by both the City of Atlantic City and the State of New Jersey. If it passes the vetting process, the city can start working with DEEM on a redevelopment agreement. If the project moves forward, the city will initially get $100 Million for the sale of Bader Field and $15 Million for the construction of a community recreation center in Atlantic City.

Renovations to the Atlantic City Aquarium are complete, and the building looks better than it ever did, both on the inside and outside! During his presentation, Mayor Small announced the new grand reopening date for the aquarium, which will be:

March 24, 2025

Introducing 'Great Day Atlantic City'

The City of Atlantic City has officially launched its new website – Great Day Atlantic City – which is a community-driven initiative connecting investors, visitors and residents. The city is working with Lucky PR and Focused Studios to showcase the vibrancy, diversity and opportunities that make Atlantic City an exceptional place to live, work, visit and invest, all while highlighting the Small administration's commitment to the future.

You can visit **www.greatdayatlanticcity.com** NOW and subscribe to the email list for exclusive updates!

A BRIGHTER DAY TOMORROW WILL BRING

Mayor Small likes to say the Small administration is "Pavin' and Behavin'" which is the case in 2025 as he announced the upcoming citywide paving schedule:

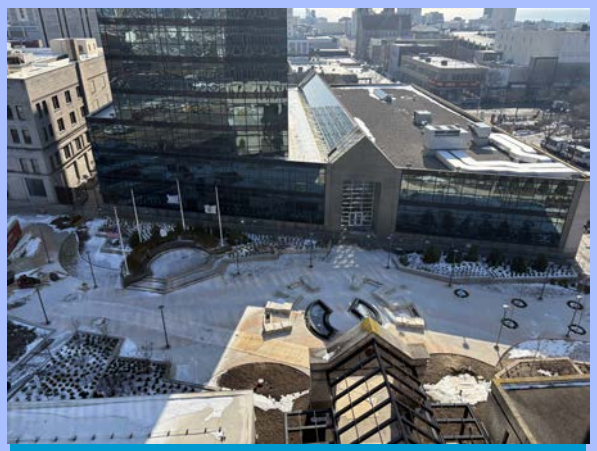
- Paving on Baltic Avenue from Maine to Missouri Avenues is scheduled for this spring
- Paving on MLK Blvd from Mediterranean Avenue to Route 30 is scheduled for this spring
- The next phase of Atlantic Avenue improvements, which includes the paving of Atlantic Avenue from Tennessee to Albany Avenues, is expected to be complete before the end of this year

DEVELOPMENT ON THE RISE

Kentucky Avenue Townhouses (Trax Partners)

Connecticut Avenue Waterfront Townhouses (Zoubeck)

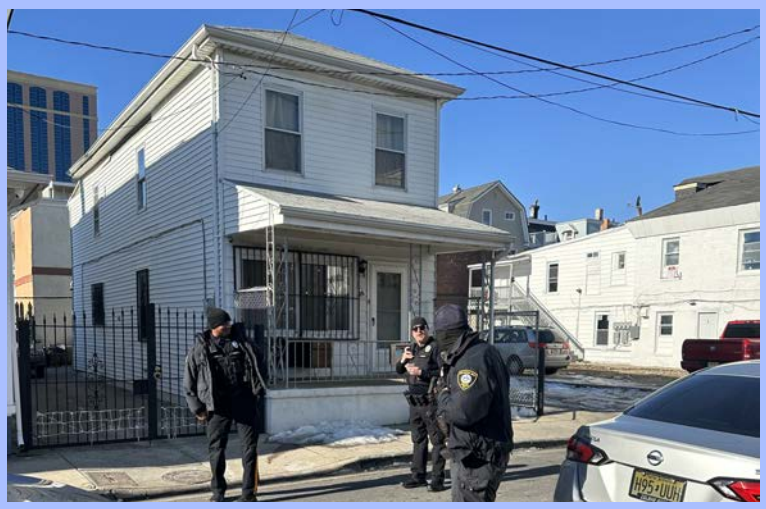
Mayor Small announced some very exciting development projects either under construction now or where construction is about to get started! K Hovnanian Homes is building 261 townhouses along Pacific Avenue from the Boardwalk to New Hampshire Avenue. Also in the Inlet neighborhood, Kushner Development plans to build 180 units at Caspian Point. The Chicken Bone Beach Foundation plans to reconfigure Dante Hall into an expanded cultural and performing arts center. In the Orange Loop, expect exciting projects like the Container Park, The Top Hat Boutique, Surf Lodge and more. Resorts Casino Hotel is expanding LandShark Bar & Grille while the Days Inn near the Tropicana will be fully renovated with new shops along the Boardwalk. The Showboat is adding a bowling alley, expanding Lucky Snake Arcade and adding dining options thanks to an NJEDA grant, while Ocean Casino Resort will be constructing a two-story, indoor mini golf course and bar called Oceans 18.



The following projects are expected to be complete this spring:

- City Hall Courtyard & Parking Lot
- Pop Lloyd Stadium
- Venice Park Second Bridge
- Boardwalk Reconstruction (Bellevue to Arkansas Ave)
- Dog Park at Altman Park
- Army Corps Beach Replenishment

DON'T GIVE UP AND DON'T GIVE IN



Crime is down in Atlantic City by 8.6-percent.

The Atlantic City Police Department also reported a decrease in calls for service by 15-percent in 2024. Some reasons Mayor Small cited for this positive shift include a stronger police presence on the Boardwalk and in higher-crime areas such as Florida and Bellevue Avenue. The Atlantic City Police Department also plans to increase patrols this year on Atlantic Avenue, Pacific Avenue and at Renaissance Plaza. Over the last few years, there has also been a decrease in crime in Back Maryland and Stanley Holmes Village, both areas that have become a focus of Atlantic City's One Neighborhood Evolution Anti-Violence unit.

Other News & Notes

A 6th straight decrease for Atlantic City taxpayers is expected in 2025!

For the first time in a decade, Atlantic City's ratable base is growing

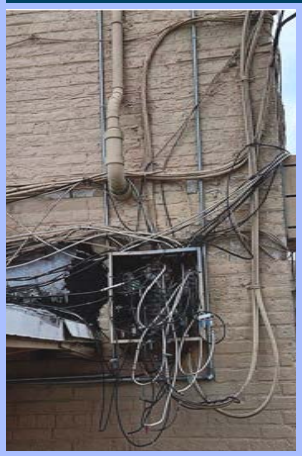
The average home value in Atlantic City based on *Zillow* data was up 13.7% in 2024

Atlantic City Youth and Senior Services, and the Recreation division look forward to introducing even more new programs this year

The city will look into a land use amendment to permit food trucks to operate in central locations

The L&I Department will develop regulations for property maintenance regarding low-voltage wires and unused satellite dishes -->

The City of Atlantic City's Homeless Outreach team has helped more than 300 homeless individuals since last March get much needed services. The team's Community Aides sweep the Atlantic City Boardwalk and the entire city on a daily basis. Atlantic City's Community Block Grant Development (CDBG) Office is contributing $1.8 Million in 2025 to mitigate homelessness in Atlantic City by 20-percent. Following the success of the city's Hope Work Initiative, which employs homeless individuals with the city's Public Works Department, Health and Human Services plans to continue and build upon this program this year.



Mayor Small announced the city is committing $500K for small and minority owned businesses. Free programs for residents like the Small Business Academy for future entrepreneurs are making a return this year. Assistant Director of Economic Development Bruce Weekes is working to introduce several programs to encourage economic growth in the city, including one aimed at attracting more businesses along Atlantic Avenue. The CDBG Office launched a Small Business Grant Program to provide critical working capital to businesses impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic (see graphic on Page 6).

AND IN OTHER CITY NEWS...

Throughout 2025, the City of Atlantic City is celebrating the 100th anniversary of All Wars Memorial Building, also known as Soldiers Home. The festivities began on January 31st with the unveiling of the 100th anniversary banner in the building's lobby, followed the next day by the Soldiers Home birthday party and Black History Month Expo, free to the entire community. The banner was designed by local artist Kenneth Faulk. The yearlong celebration is a partnership between the City of Atlantic City, the Midtown CDC and other organizations. Details on future events, including a Memorial Day ceremony and a 100th Anniversary Gala, will be announced soon.

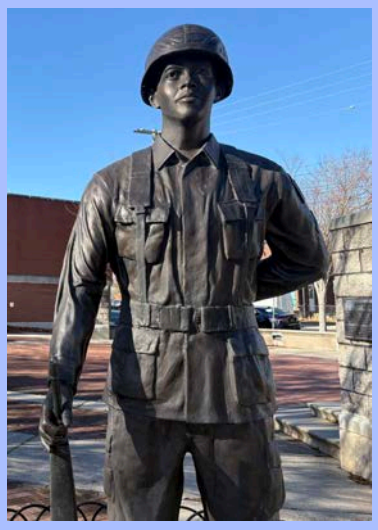
BLACK HISTORY MONTH

The City of Atlantic City proudly celebrates Black History Month and the contributions made by Black Americans. Throughout February, there will be a display on the first floor of City Hall highlighting some of these contributions, as well as an HBCU display in the lobby, open to the public. The Atlantic City Senior Services division will be bringing Atlantic City residents ages 55 and older to Philadelphia at the end of the month to see the movie Summer of Soul, while the Atlantic City Reentry Services division brought Atlantic City youth on a free trip to the African American Museum in Washington, D.C. to kick off the month (pictured to the left).

Mayor Small and Judah Dorrington, who is the liaison of the Mayor's Office of LGBTQ+ Affairs, were honored to take part in the ribbon-cutting for the *ByrdCage*, Atlantic City's new LGBTQ+ owned and operated bar located at 3426 Atlantic Avenue. This is Atlantic City's first full-time LGBTQ+ friendly space in the city since 2004!

City Council passed a resolution recognizing the Atlantic City Vikings football team on their successful 2024 season, which featured a deep playoff run. Vikings coach Keenan Wright and his staff then presented the Atlantic City Recreation division with a plaque recognizing all the work AC Rec does for all youth, including the Vikings' football players when they aren't on the field. One example was AC Rec brought the team on a paintball trip during their bye week.

AC Rec Director Michael Griffin and AC Rec Assistant Director Eric Rembert were in attendance to accept the plaque.



Free events for Atlantic City residents ages 55 and older in February include Billiards, Bowling, Bingo, a new Third Thursday crafts program and more. There will also be trips to Philadelphia's Reading Terminal Market and the aforementioned Black History Month film.

To sign up for any of these programs or trips, call the Atlantic City Senor services division at 609-347-5458 and visit www.acnj.gov for more details.

Can We Say Be Optimistic?!

APPLY NOW
at
www.acnj.gov

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