

III. Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory

A. Overview of Parks and Recreation in Middletown

The residents of Middletown are offered a wide variety of parks, recreational facilities, cultural facilities and programs. The community's needs are currently being met by the Middletown Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs (MDPRCA) and Monmouth County Parks at facilities in the Township, at school facilities and other facilities within the Township. Tables 6 and 7 provide a summary of the parks, recreation areas, open space and facilities within Middletown, and also indicate the park type category for each existing park. The tables provide a summary of the acreage as well as the facilities offered at each site. Table 6 identifies the properties owned by the Township and Table 7 identifies properties managed by the Monmouth County Park System, Middletown Schools, State and Federal facilities. Figures 1 illustrates the locations of the existing parks, facilities and open spaces.

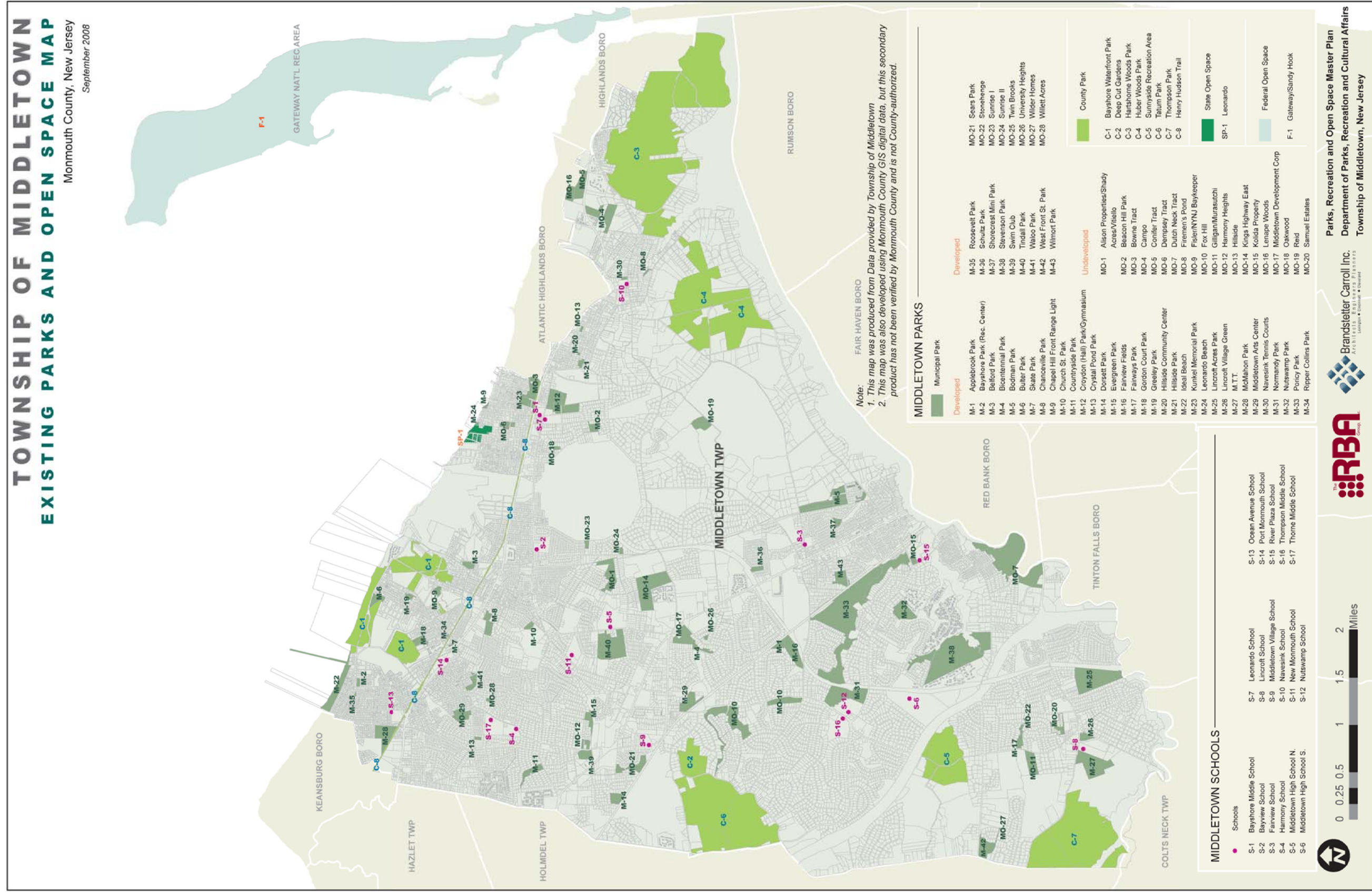
The remainder of this section describes the park classification system and provides a summary of the existing park and recreation system in the Township. A detailed qualitative assessment has been prepared for each Township operated park and recreation facility. Two forms were prepared for each facility with one including detailed facility assessment notations. The other form identifies the priority level and cost for needed improvements. The forms are included in a separate binder on file at the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs.

Table 6: Middletown Township Operated Parks, Recreation Facilities and Open Space Inventory

Township Owned or Leased Facilities
Middletown Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan
Parks and Recreation Resources Inventory

Site ID.	Facility Name	Park Type	Total Acres	Developed Acres	OUTDOOR FACILITIES															INDOOR FACILITIES					Other Facilities and Comments					
					Tennis Courts	Baseball/ Softball Fields	Volleyball Courts	Football Fields	Soccer Fields	Basketball Courts	Play-ground	Paved Trails (Miles)	Unpaved Trails (Miles)	Skate Park	Roller Hockey Rink	Dog Park (Acres)	Picnic Area	Picnic Shelter	Outdoor Swimming Pool	Beach	Restrooms	Concession Buildings	Gym	Fitness Center		Classroom / Multi-Purpose Room				
M-1	Applebrook Park	Neighborhood	5.65	5.65		1						1																	Pottery Room, Daycare, Kitchen, Game Room & Computer Lab	
M-2	Bayshore Park (Recreation Center)	Mini-Park	2.1	2.1						1	1									4		1								
M-3	Belford Park	Neighborhood	4.8	4.8		1					1																			
M-4	Bicentennial Park	Neighborhood	4.6	4.6																										
M-5	Bodman Park	Community	41.2	41.2	3	4	1		5	2	1							1	1					3	1					
M-6	Butler Park	Neighborhood	6.07	6.07		1																								
M-7	Skate Park	Special Use	0.7	0.7												1														
M-8	Chanceville Park	Neighborhood	10.7	10.7		1					1																			
M-9	Chapel Hill Front Range Light	Special Use	1.2	1.2																										
M-10	Church Street Park	Mini-Park	3.5	3.5																										
M-11	Countryside Park	Neighborhood	10.3	10.3							1																			
M-12	Croydon (Hall) Park	Community	35	35		4		1																						
M-12	Croydon Hall Administration	Special Use																						2			7		Conference Room (1)	
M-12	Croydon Hall Gymnasium	Special Use																						4		1	1			
M-12	Middletown Senior Center	Special Use																						5			1		Cafeteria (2); Bocce Ball Court (1); picnic tables (12); Computer Lab and Game Room	
M-13	Crystal Pond Park	Mini-Park	1.6	1.6																										
M-14	Dorsett Park	Neighborhood	9.1	9.1	2	1			1	1	1	1												1					Handball Courts (2); Picnic Tables (6)	
M-15	Evergreen Park	Neighborhood	8	8		1			1	1	1																			
M-16	Fairview Fields	Community	20.9	20.9		1			4				1																	
M-17	Fairways Park	Mini-Park	5.5	5.5	2																									
M-18	Gordon Court Park	Neighborhood	7.4	7.4		1					1	1																		
M-19	Greeley Park	Mini-Park	2.9	2.9							1	1																		
M-20	Hillside Community Center	Special Use	0.6	0.6																				2		1		1	Gym doubles as Multi-purpose room	
M-21	Hillside Park	Mini-Park	2.9	2.9	2	1					1	1																		
M-22	Ideal Beach	Special Use	31.2	31.2																					1					
M-23	Kunkel Memorial Park	Neighborhood	21	21	3	1					2	1																		
M-24	Leonardo Beach	Special Use	1.2	0.3																					1					
M-25	Lincroft Acres Park	Community	58.3	58.3					2		1		1													1			Portolet (1)	
M-26	Lincroft Village Green	Mini-Park	5.9	5.9								1																	Bocce Ball Court (1)	
M-27	M.T.T.	Community	39.7	39.7		8					1	1	1													1				
M-28	McMahon Park	Community	23.66	23.66	2	4					2	1																		
M-29	Middletown Arts Center	Special Use	14.7	14.7									1																	
M-30	Navesink Tennis Courts (Leased)	Mini-Park	1.2	1.2	2																									
M-31	Normandy Park	Community	39.9	39.9	4	1	2				2	1	1																	
M-32	Nutswamp Park	Community	19.5	19.5		4		1			1	1	1																	Picnic Tables (9)
M-33	Poricy Park	Community	182.5	182.5									2																	Picnic Tables (20); Bee Keeper/Wildlife Cages (2); Murray Farmhouse; Nature Center
M-34	Ripper Collins Park	Mini-Park	0.3	0.3																										
M-35	Roosevelt Park	Mini-Park	0.5	0.5									1																	
M-36	Schultz Park (Crestview)	Mini-Park	4.2	4.2							1	1	1																	
M-37	Shorecrest Mini Park	Mini Park	3.8	3.8																										
M-38	Stevenson Park	Community	132.5	132.5																										Boat Launch; Picnic Tables (2)
M-39	Swim and Tennis Club	Special Use	10	10	5		1				1	1																		Shuffleboard Courts (2); Tennis Practice Wall (1); Picnic Tables (19)
M-40	Tindall Park	Community	50.1	50.1	16						2	1	1																	Mini-Golf Building (1); Miniature Golf (1); Picnic Tables (10); Ropes Challenge Course
M-41	Waloo Park	Mini-Park	7	7																										
M-42	West Front Street Park	Neighborhood	18	18					2																					
M-43	Wilmort Park	Neighborhood	12.6	12.6		1					1	1		1																Portolet
MO-1	Alison Properties/Shady Acres/Vitiello	Open Space	23	0																										
MO-2	Beacon Hill Park	Open Space	4.9	0																										
MO-3	Bowne Tract	Open Space	16.36	1.3																										
MO-4	Campo	Open Space	25.1	0																										

Figure 1: Existing Parks and Open Space Map



B. Parks and Recreation Classification System

The purpose of developing a park and recreation classification system for a community is to evaluate the total recreation opportunities that are being made available to the public. Too often, a community will “meet the standard” in terms of acreage, but it may meet this provision through only a few parks that do not provide for the entire community. Therefore, a system of parks should be developed that provides a combination of local space such as mini-parks, neighborhood parks and community parks with county-wide space such as linear parks, county parks and support by regional or state parks.

The parks and recreation facilities inventory on Tables 6 and 7 identified each park by its park type category and also listed the number of specific facilities that are located within each park. Table 8 defines each park by its typical size and service area of each category, population served by each park, typical features and facilities, and the desirable characteristics of each park in these categories. The categories and descriptions were adapted from the Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines that was published by the National Recreation and Parks Association, in 1987 and 1995.

A park system is generally reviewed and analyzed as a composite of recreation areas, each existing to meet a particular public need. Based on a review of national and regional standards, a parks and recreation area classification system has been developed to reflect the actual conditions and opportunities for the Township of Middletown.

Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory

Table 8: Recommended Park and Recreation Area Classification System

PARK TYPE	TYPICAL SIZE and SERVICE AREA	ACRES/1,000 POPULATION	TYPICAL FEATURES/FACILITIES	DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS
LOCAL SPACE:				
1. Mini-Park (MP)	+/- 1 Acre 1/8 – 1/2 Mile Service Radius	0.5 Acre/1,000	Typical facilities may include playgrounds, small multi-use court area, and benches.	Most often provided in association with school facilities. May also provide as needed to serve high density neighborhoods where children do not have adequate yard space.
2. Neighborhood Park (NP)	5-15 Acres 1/2-1.0 mile service radius. To serve a population up to 5,000	2.0 Acres/1,000	Suited for intense development. Typical facilities include field games, court games, playground apparatus, small pools, small neighborhood centers, drinking fountains, and restrooms.	Easily accessible to neighborhood population (safe walking and bike distance) May be developed as park/school facility or in conjunction with service agency facility. May not be needed in areas served by “community”, “county” or “regional” parks.

Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory

PARK TYPE	TYPICAL SIZE and SERVICE AREA	ACRES/1,000 POPULATION	TYPICAL FEATURES/FACILITIES	DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS
3. Community Parks (CmP)	25-50+ Acres 1.0-2.0 mile service radius To serve several neighborhoods with populations up to 20,000+.	2.5 Acres/1,000	Typical facilities include all listed for Neighborhood Parks plus; major swimming pool, field or court game complex, major recreation or community center, etc. May be an area of natural quality for picnicking, walking, etc.	Capable of providing a range of intensive recreational; or, provides one or two activities that attract users from multi-neighborhood area. Park should ideally be located at or near a school. May meet needs of neighborhood park for users within a 1-mile radius.
4. Linear Park (LP)	N/A	N/A	Area developed for one or more varying modes of recreational travel (pleasure driving, hiking, walking, jogging, biking, etc.). May also include active play areas, fitness courses, picnicking areas, etc.	Built or natural corridors, such as utility rights-of-way, bluff lines, creek beds, and roads that link other components of the park system or other community facilities (schools, libraries, etc.) with park areas.
5. Special Use-Local (SUL)	Serves community-wide area.	N/A	Area for specialized or single purpose recreational activities, such as golf courses, plazas in commercial areas, major pools, riverfront park areas, indoor facilities, etc.	Area should be located to meet the special needs of the intended use.

Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory

PARK TYPE	TYPICAL SIZE and SERVICE AREA	ACRES/1,000 POPULATION	TYPICAL FEATURES/FACILITIES	DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS
B. COUNTY SPACE				
6. County Parks (CoP)	200 + Acres 5-6 mile service radius To serve most of the County.	5.0 Acres/1,000	County operated large properties that contain some active recreation facilities and a large percentage of natural or geographical features. Target size of 200 or more acres with 25% developed for active recreation.	Capable of providing a range of intensive recreational facilities; Should include unique natural areas with ecological interest. May meet needs of neighborhood and/or community park for users within a 2-mile radius.
<p>In addition to these categories, the Monmouth County park System further categorizes their lands as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Parks • Recreation Areas • Special use Areas • Conservation Areas • Greenways • Open Lands • Golf Courses • Unclassified Areas <p>Refer to the Monmouth County Open Space Plan for definitions.</p>				

Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory

PARK TYPE	TYPICAL SIZE and SERVICE AREA	ACRES/1,000 POPULATION	TYPICAL FEATURES/FACILITIES	DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS
C. MULTI-COUNTY/REGIONAL SPACE				
7. Nature Parks (NaP)	Size as needed to protect the resource.		<p>Majority of park to remain in its natural state.</p> <p>Facilities should support nature education activity including: habitat enhancement, trails, nature centers, interpretive signage, parking and restrooms.</p> <p>The park should be of sufficient size to protect the natural resource and provide a buffer from offsite conditions.</p>	<p>Should include unique natural areas with ecological interest.</p> <p>Typical size should be over 50 acres for management efficiency.</p>

Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory

PARK TYPE	TYPICAL SIZE and SERVICE AREA	ACRES/1,000 POPULATION	TYPICAL FEATURES/FACILITIES	DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS
8. Regional or State Park (SP)	500 + Acres 30 + mile service radius To serve several counties or region of the state.		State or multi-county agency operated park with large size. Attracts visitors from multiple countries. Contains some active facilities but primarily large areas of natural environments. Main attractions could include a lodge, outstanding natural features, historical features, trail system or other unique characteristics.	Includes unique natural, cultural or ecological features.

Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory

C. County Parks

The Township has the tremendous benefit of having several high quality parks operated by the Monmouth County Park System within its boundary. These are the result of land donations over a long period of time. The Monmouth County Park System has about 2,131 acres of park land within the Township of Middletown. These are shown on Table 7 and indicated on Figure 1. The largest site is Hartshorne Woods Park at 787 acres. The other parks include Thompson Park, Tatum Park, Huber Woods Park, Bayshore Waterfront Park, Deep Cut Gardens, Sunnyside Recreation Area, and 4.5 miles of the 22 mile Henry Hudson Trail. These parks provide over 38 miles of paved and unpaved trails, 4 tennis courts, 5 soccer fields, an off-leash dog area, a beach, horticultural gardens, an environmental center, fishing lakes and other opportunities.

D. Community Parks

Middletown Township provides 11 Community Parks encompassing 643 acres. These are the main parks serving the Township residents. The parks are the following:

1.	Bodman Park	41.2 acres
2.	Croydon Hall Park	35 acres
3.	Fairview Fields	20.9 acres
4.	Lincroft Acres Park	58.3 acres
5.	M.T.T. Park (Middletown Thompson Park)	39.7 acres
6.	McMahon Park	23.62 acres
7.	Normandy Park	39.9 acres
8.	Nutswamp Park	19.5 acres
9.	Poricy Park	182.5 acres
10.	Stevenson Park	132.5 acres
11.	Tindall Park	50.1 acres

E. Neighborhood Parks

Middletown Township provides 11 Neighborhood Parks encompassing 112.6 acres. The Neighborhood Parks are the following:

1.	Belford Park	4.8 acres
2.	Bicentennial Park	4.6 acres
3.	Butler Park	6.07 acres
4.	Chanceville Park	10.7 acres
5.	Countryside Park	10.3 acres

Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory

6.	Dorsett Park	9.1 acres
7.	Evergreen Park	8 acres
8.	Gordon Court Park	7.4 acres
9.	Kunkel Memorial Park	21 acres
10.	West Front Street Park	18 acres
11.	Wilmort Park	12.6 acres

F. Mini-Parks

Mini-Parks are the small parks close to home with primarily smaller playgrounds and some open space. The Mini-Parks are the following:

1.	Bayshore Park	2.1 acres
2.	Church Street Park	3.5 acres
3.	Crystal Pond Park	1.6 acres
4.	Fairways Park	5.5 acres
5.	Greeley Park	2.9 acres
6.	Hillside Park	2.9 acres
7.	Lincroft Village Green	5.9 acres
8.	Navesink Tennis Courts	1.2 acres (leased)
9.	Ripper Collins Park	0.3 acres
10.	Roosevelt Park	0.5 acres
11.	Schultz Park	4.2 acres
12.	Shorecrest Mini-Park	3.8 acres
13.	Waloo Park	7 acres

G. Special Use Parks

Special Use Parks provide specific activities. These parks include the following:

1. Skate Park
2. Middletown Senior Center
3. Croydon Hall Gym and Administration Building
4. Hillside Recreation Center
5. Tanya Keller Bayshore Recreation Center
6. Ideal Beach
7. Leonardo Beach

Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory

- 8. Middletown Arts Center
- 9. Middletown Swim and Tennis Club

H. Township Open Space

The Township of Middletown currently owns 29 parcels of land reserved as open space. These parcels total 413.36 acres. These are identified on Table 6 and illustrated on Figure 1.

1.	Alison Properties/Shady Acres/Vitiello	23 acres
2.	Beacon Hill Park	4.9 acres
3.	Bowne Tract	16.36 acres
4.	Campo	25.1 acres
5.	Conifer Tract	15.8 acres
6.	Dempsey Tract	2.7 acres
7.	Dutch Neck Tract	90.3 acres
8.	Firemen's Pond	1.3 acres
9.	Fisler/NYNJ Baykeeper	3.9 acres
10.	Fox Hill	59.5 acres
11.	Gilligan/Muratsuchi	15.1 acres
12.	Harmony Heights	4.9 acres
13.	Hillside	1.1 acres
14.	Kings Highway East	50.4 acres
15.	Kolida Property	3.6 acres
16.	Lenape Woods	8.5 acres
17.	Middletown Development Corp	17.1 acres
18.	Oakwood Park	2.2 acres
19.	Reid	13.1 acres
20.	Samuel Estates	7.6 acres
21.	Sears Park	13.8 acres
22.	Stonehenge	2.8 acres
23.	Sunrise I	2.6 acres
24.	Sunrise II	1.8 acres
25.	Swimming River Corridor	10.6 acres
26.	Twin Brooks	1.2 acres
27.	University Heights	0.7 acres
28.	Wilder Homes	1.1 acres
29.	Willett Acres	12.3 acres

Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory

I. Middletown Schools Sites

The Middletown Board of Education has approximately 419 acres of land at 17 sites. These include two high schools, three middle schools, and 12 elementary schools. These sites have 213.5 acres of land for recreational use. These sites contain 33 baseball/softball fields, 25 soccer fields, 11 basketball courts, 12 playgrounds, and several gyms that are used by the community.

J. State and Federal Areas

The Township is also fortunate to have some State and Federal Parks in the area. The State of New Jersey operates Leonardo State Marina and the Federal Government operates 2044 acres at the Gateway National Recreation Area.

K. Geographic Distribution of Parks

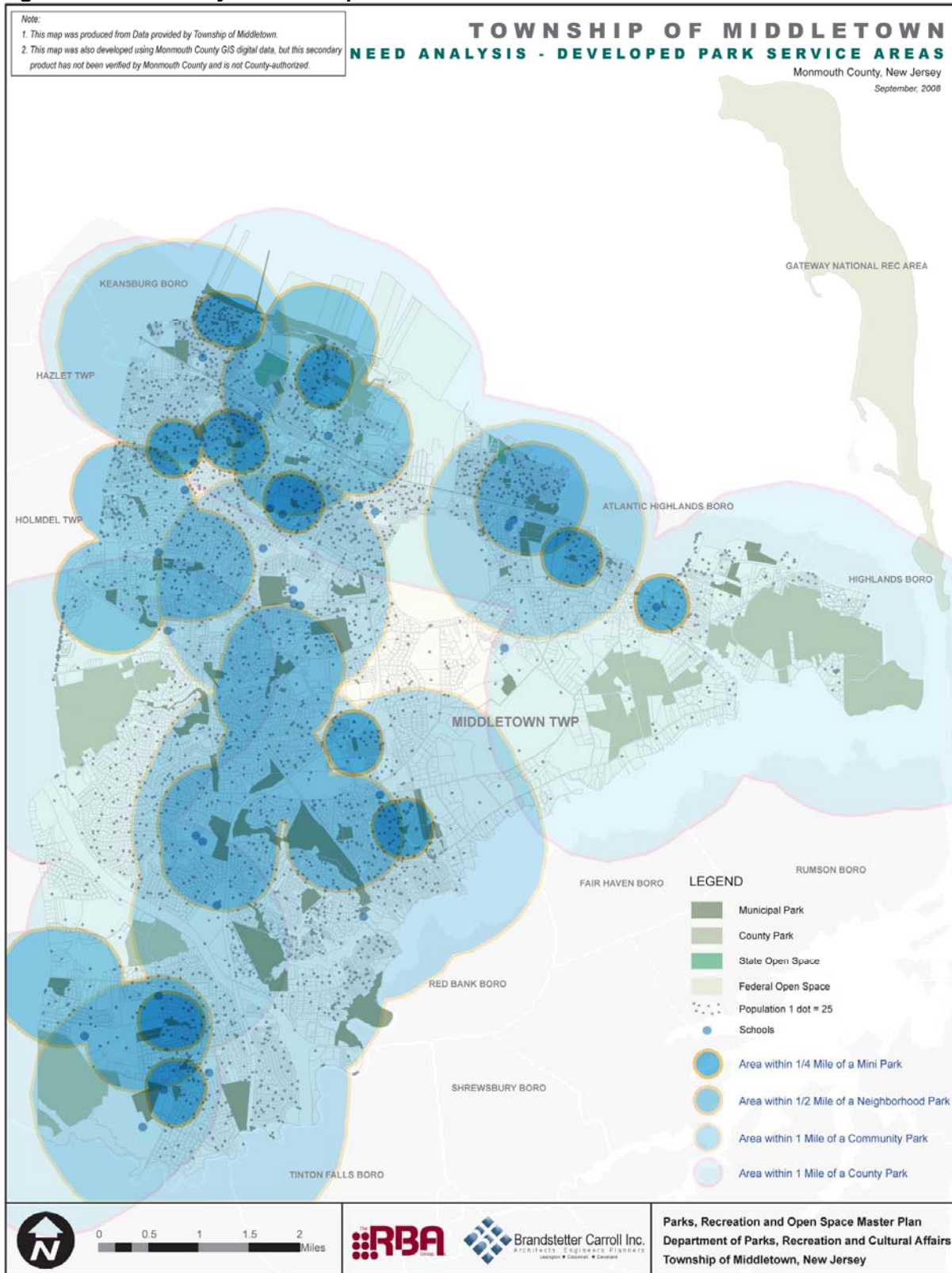
Figure 2, the Needs Analysis - Developed Park Service Areas map, illustrates the existing parks, open spaces and schools and identifies the service areas for each of the various types of parks. The darkest blue small circles indicate areas within a quarter mile of a mini-park. The medium blue circles indicate area within a half mile of a neighborhood park. The larger light blue circles indicate area within one mile of a community park. The largest and lightest blue circles indicate areas within one mile of a county park. This map also identifies the population density with the small dots which each represent 25 people.

This figure illustrates that the community is fairly well served by community parks and county parks except for a small area in the Chapel Hill area south of the U.S. Naval Reservation. The figure also identifies that the area serviced by mini-parks, neighborhood parks, or community parks are spread throughout the study area and identifies some gaps in few Township areas.

A review of the map also illustrates one area which is not well serviced by mini or neighborhood parks south of Tatum Park in the Oak Hill area. Tatum County Park would serve some of this area as close-to-home park space.

Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory

Figure 2: Needs Analysis - Developed Park Services Areas



Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory

L. Geographic Distribution of Facilities

A series of maps were prepared to identify gaps in services by indicating the location of various recreation facilities throughout the Township. The following is a discussion of each of the maps in Figures 3-11 for various facilities.

Figure 3, Facilities Map-Picnic Shelter/Playgrounds, identifies the locations of these types of facilities throughout the Township. The parks outlined in the pink color are locations of picnic shelters and the dark blue parks are those with playgrounds. There is also a small blue dot that are the schools with playgrounds. This indicates that there are very few locations where picnic shelters are provided. Playgrounds are fairly well distributed through the community with the exception along the southwestern boundary and north of the Garden State Parkway and south of Tatum Park in the Oak Hill neighborhood.

Figure 4 identifies parks with paved and unpaved trails. Parks with paved trails are indicated with a solid dark blue color and the parks with unpaved trails are outlined in a medium blue color. This figure indicates the trails provide better service in the southern and eastern extremes of the Township, but the Monmouth County Park System's Henry Hudson trail provides good access through the northern portion of the Township.

Figure 5 identifies the location of indoor basketball courts. These are operated by the Township or school gyms that are used for recreation programs. The figure indicates that the Township operated facilities are all in the northern portion of the Township and even two of those, at the Tonya Keller Bayshore Recreation Center and the Hillside Recreation Center, are not true gymnasiums, but large multi-purpose rooms. The only true gym offered by the Township would be the Croydon Hall Gymnasium. The primary schools that are used are the middle schools.

Figure 6 identifies parks and schools with outdoor basketball courts. The schools with outdoor courts are highlighted with the yellow boundary around the dot and the orange solid shapes indicated parks with outdoor basketball courts. The figure shows that these are fairly well distributed, especially in the central portion of the Township. There are fewer facilities southwest of the Garden State Parkway.

Figure 7 identifies the parks with baseball and softball fields. Fields are identified at schools with the circles with the red outline and the solid red shapes are the parks with baseball and softball fields. This figure shows a fairly good distribution of ball fields throughout the Township.

Figure 8 identifies the parks and schools with soccer fields with the school fields with the soccer fields indicated with the yellow circle and the solid shapes being the parks with soccer fields. This figure illustrates a fairly good distribution of soccer fields locations throughout the Township and it is noted that most of the parks with soccer fields are located in the southern half.

Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory

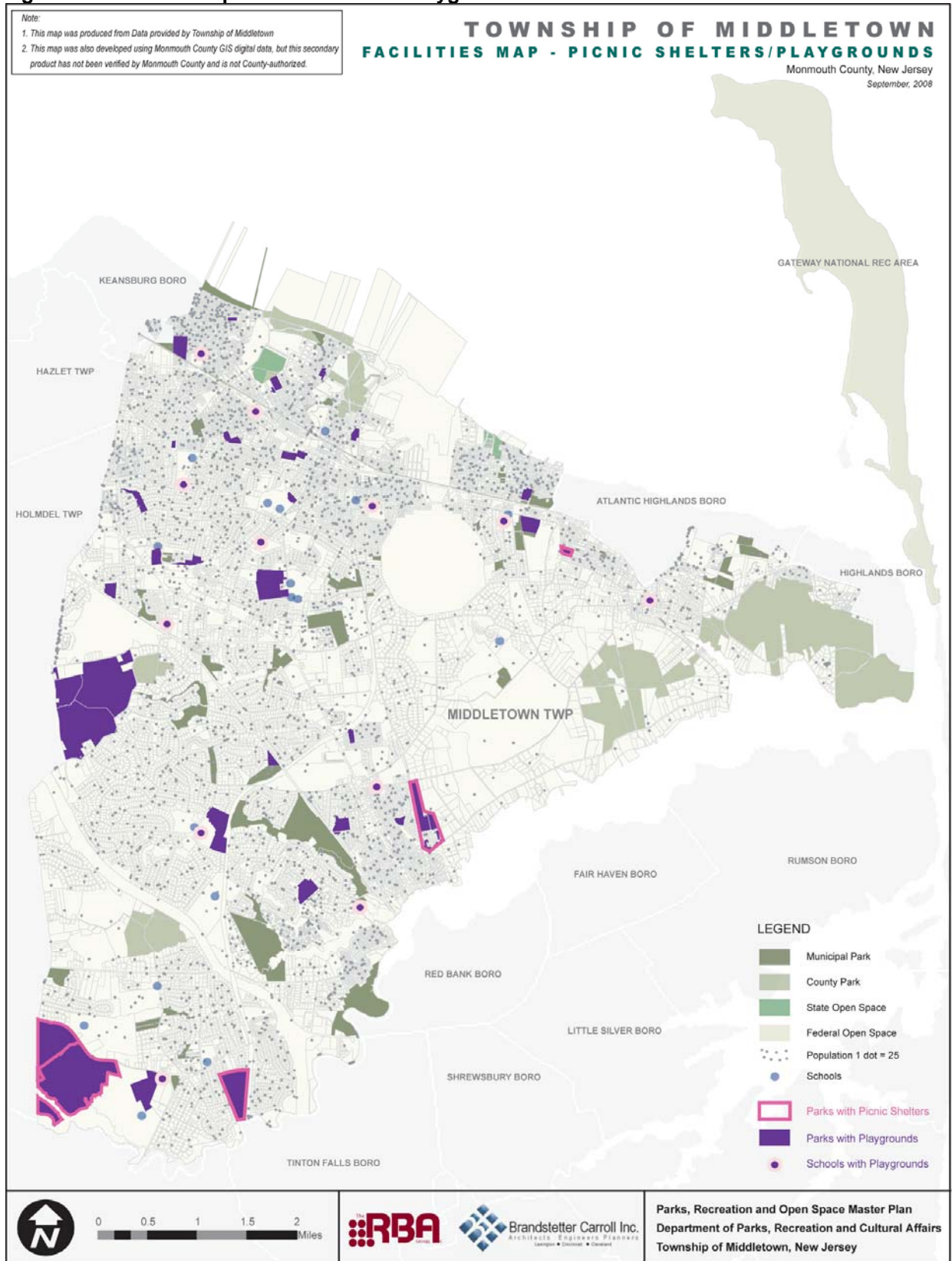
Figure 9 identifies the parks and schools with football fields with the schools with football fields indicated with blue circle with the yellow dot in the center and the yellow shapes are the parks with football fields. These are primarily the North and South High School fields and the football field and Croydon Hall and the River Plaza Fields at Nutswamp Park. These are the two main geographic areas where football fields are needed for the Pop Warner Football Organizations.

Figure 10 identifies the parks with tennis courts. These are also fairly well distributed throughout the Township as identified by the orange sites on the map.

Figure 11 identifies the parks with roller hockey rinks which include Kunkel Park in the northeast, McMahon Park in the northwest and Normandy Park in the south central. These are well distributed in the Township.

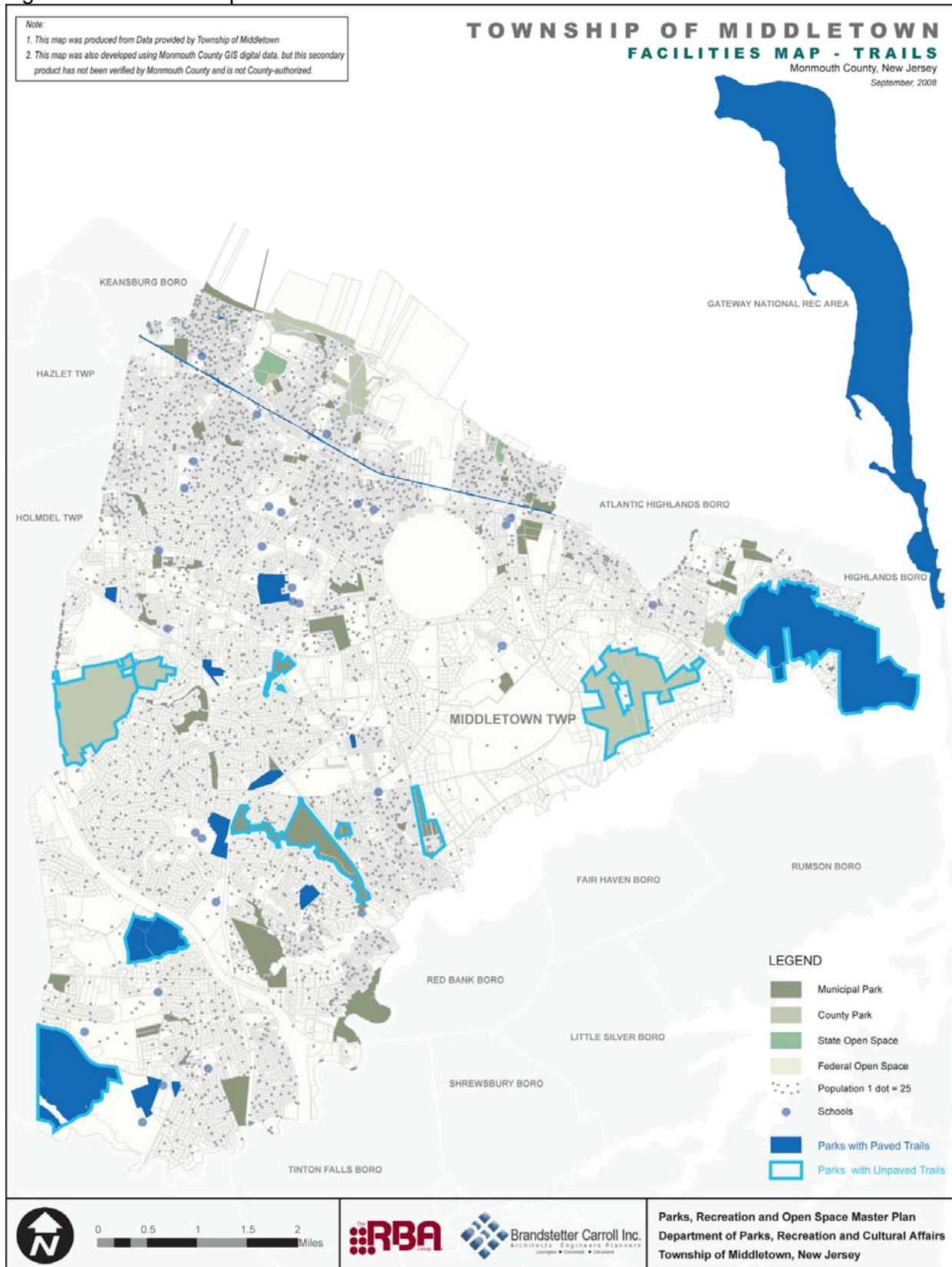
Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory

Figure 3: Facilities Map - Picnic Shelters/Playgrounds



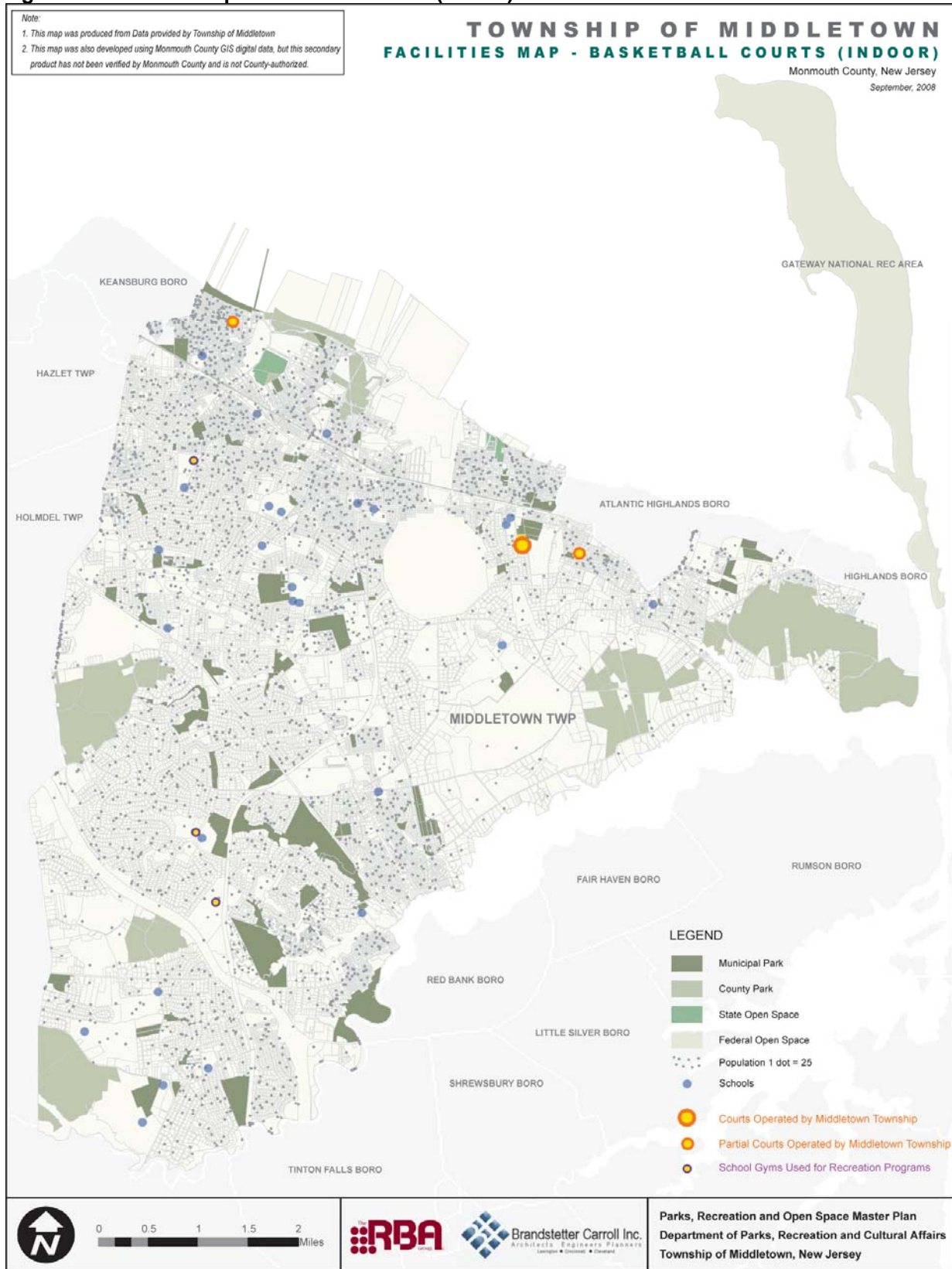
Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory

Figure 4: Facilities Map – Trails



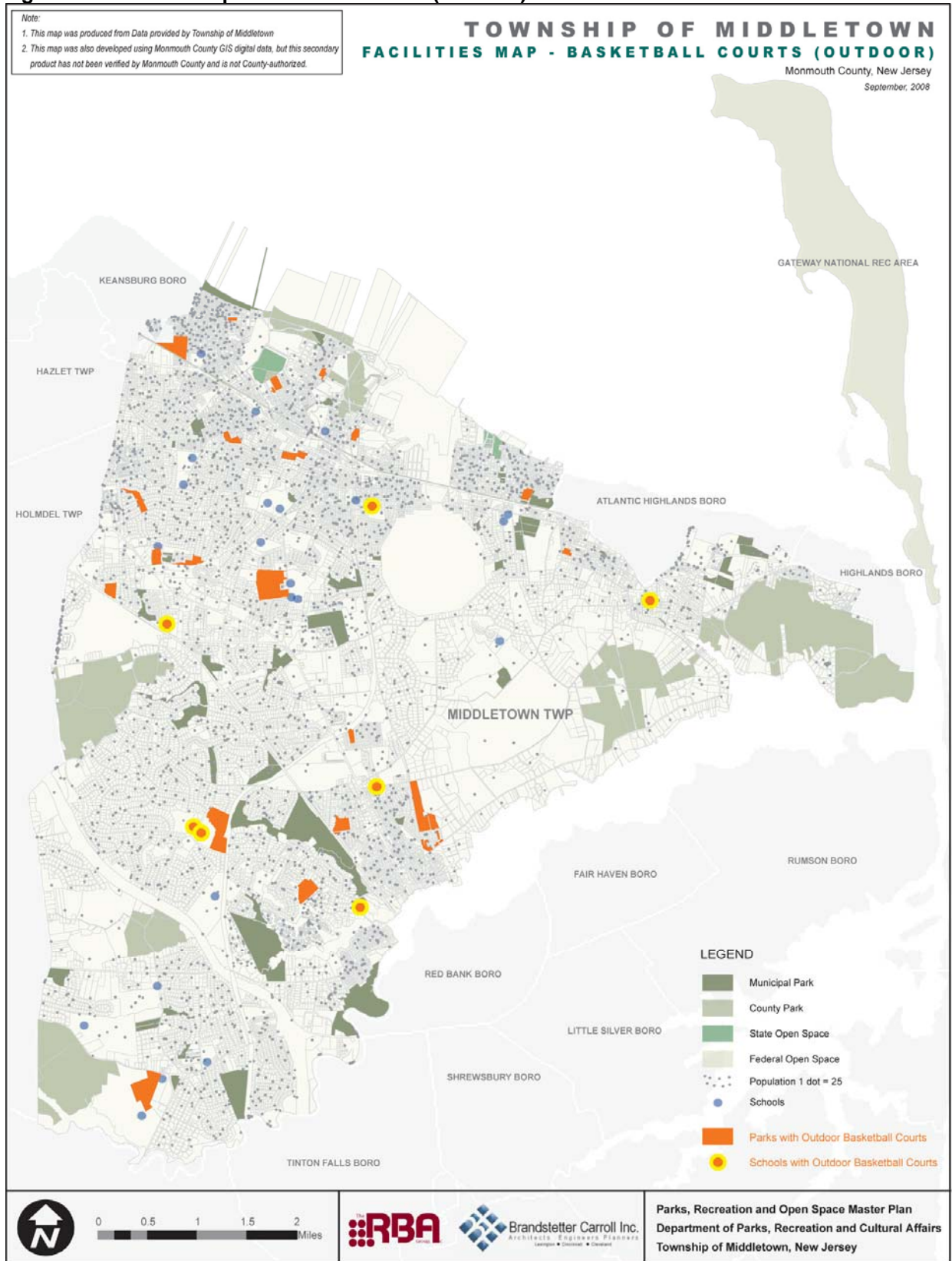
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Figure 5: Facilities Map - Basketball Courts (Indoor)



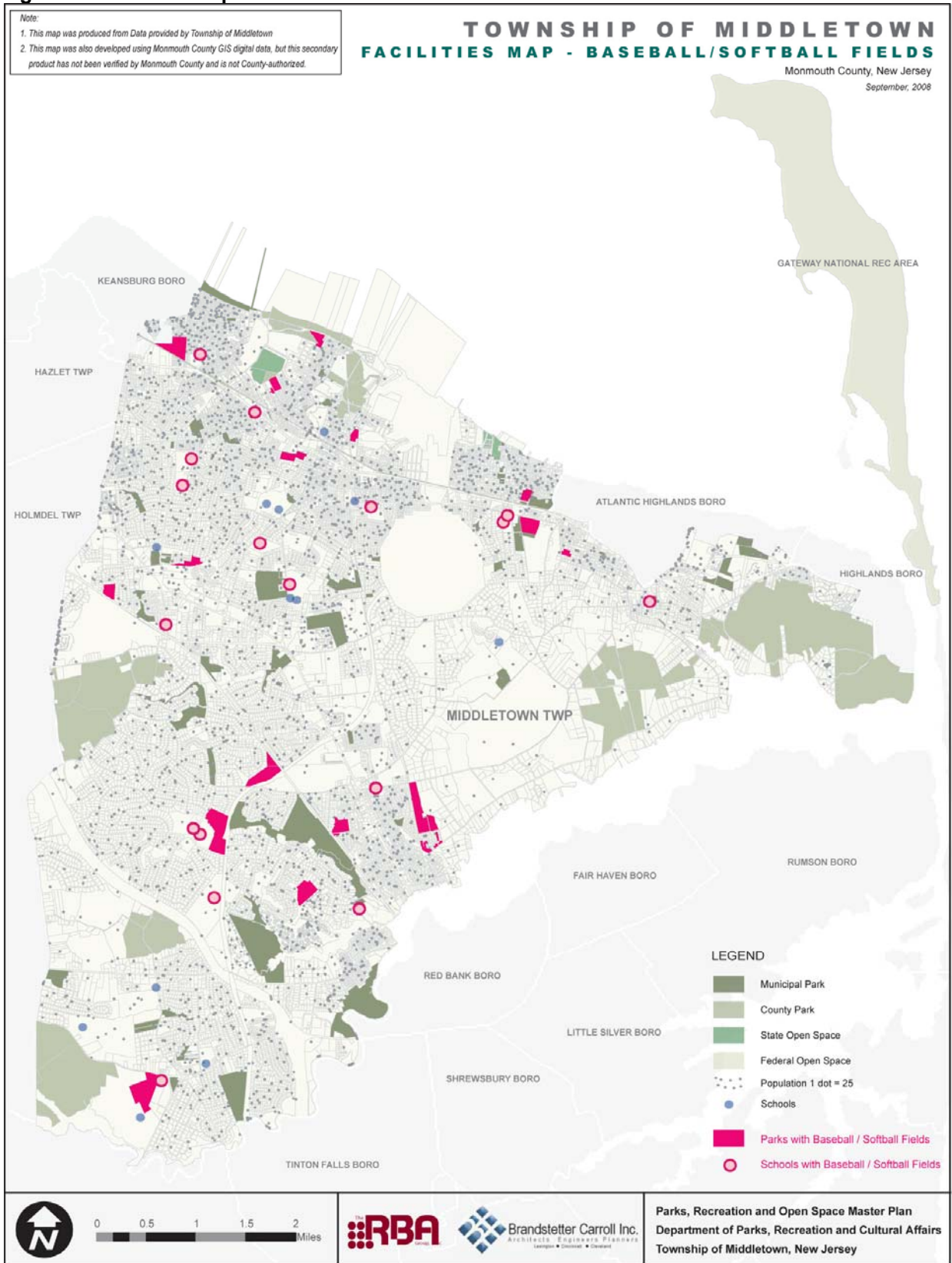
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Figure 6: Facilities Map - Basketball Courts (Outdoor)



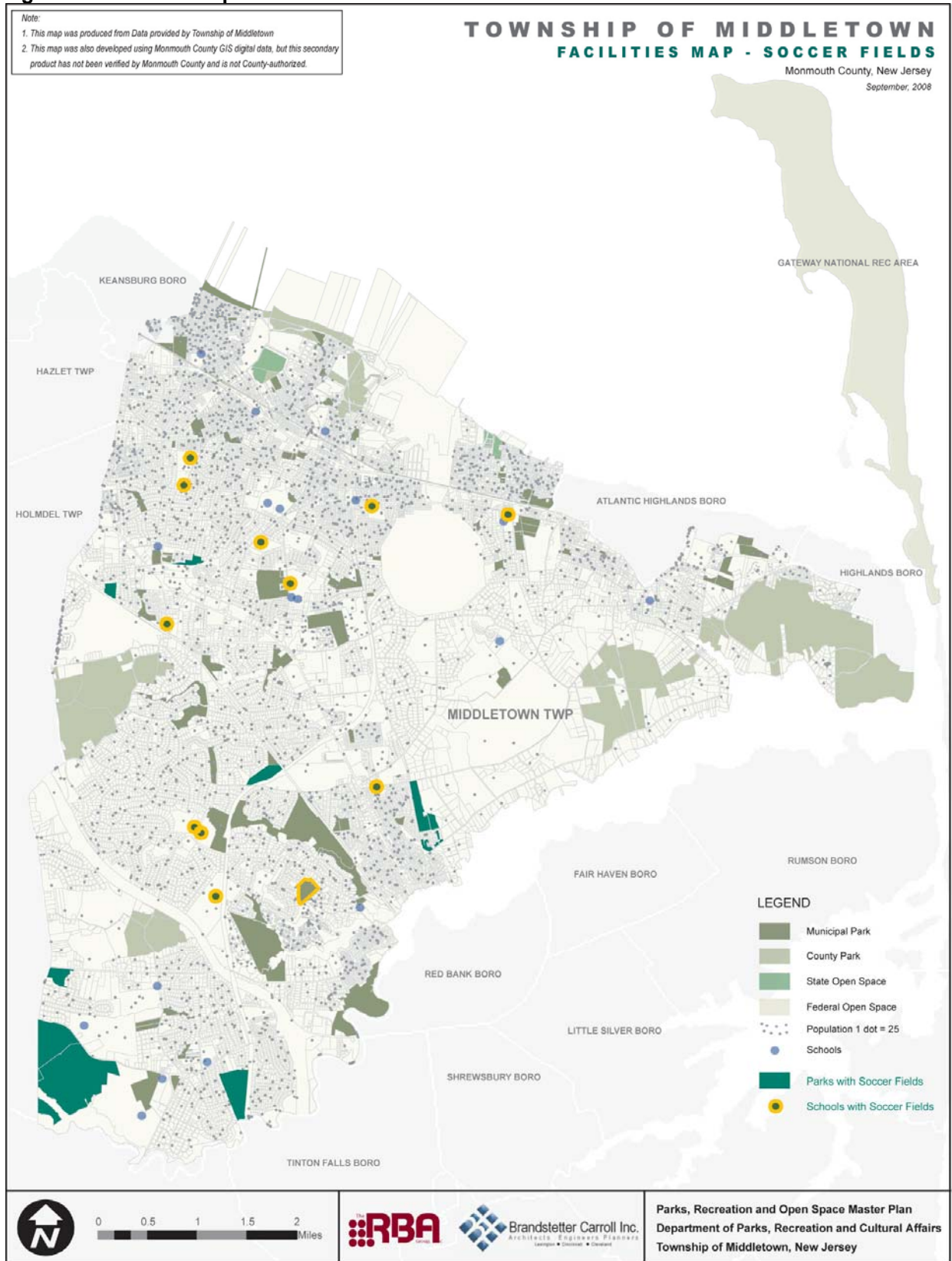
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Figure 7: Facilities Map - Baseball/Softball Fields



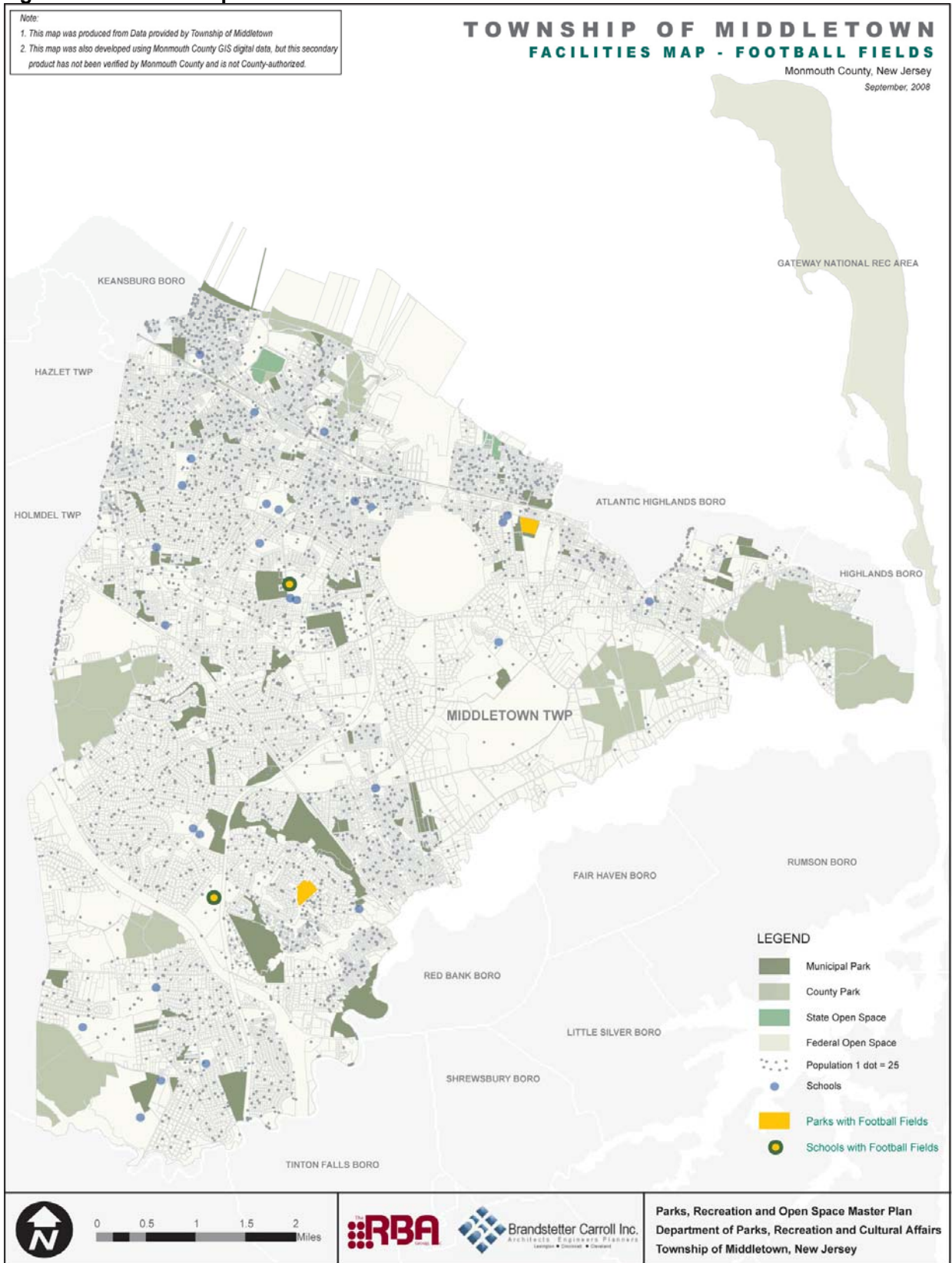
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Figure 8: Facilities Map - Soccer Fields



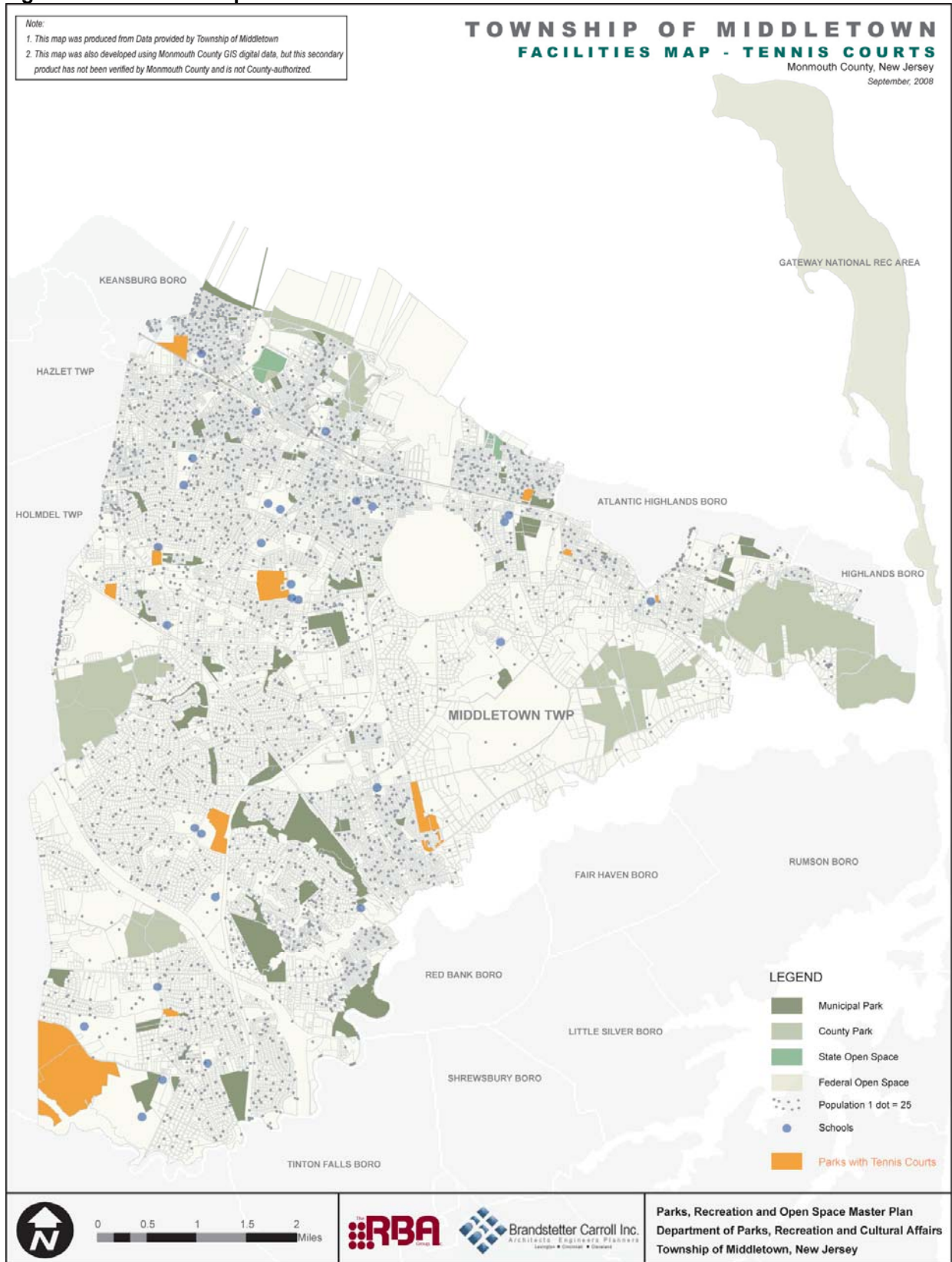
Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory

Figure 9: Facilities Map - Football Fields



Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory

Figure 10: Facilities Map - Tennis Courts



Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory

Figure 11: Facilities Map - Roller Hockey Rink

