

Beat: Miscellaneous

THE RISE AND FALL OF ATLANTIC CITY, THE AREA BEING ZONED FOR BIG CASINO-HOTELS

ALONG THE BOARDWALK EMPIRE

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USPA NEWS - On the Boardwalk now, there are plenty of empty spaces, the curtain is dropping for some of Atlantic City's casinos. The city got its start with the opening of a railroad in 1854. originally, the idea was to build a health retreat for the wealthy...

On the Boardwalk now, there are plenty of empty spaces, the curtain is dropping for some of Atlantic City's casinos. The city got its start with the opening of a railroad in 1854. originally, the idea was to build a health retreat for the wealthy, thought it was the working class from Philadelphia who really made the city into "America Famous Playground".

Authorities in Atlantic City ignored alcohol bans because it was good for business. The city was always a non-industry town, completely dependent on tourists, and keeping them happy. But when prohibition ended in 1933, there was less reason to come here.

Over the next few decades, Atlantic City began to fade, its hotels failed to keep up with their counterparts elsewhere. It was needed to draw the crowds back, so in 1976, New Jersey passed a law allowing casinos. And for a while, gambling worked.

For years, Atlantic City enjoyed the monopoly of gambling on the East Coast. But in mid-2000s, the city economy followed the nation's economy. Gamblers abandoned the city for new casinos in the region such as Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware.

The city's casinos started realizing they needed to offer more than just gambling if they still wanted visitors. They doubled down on expensive investments like additional hotel towers, restaurants, swimming pools, spas, shopping, nightclubs and concert venues.

Now, cash sales at non-gambling outlets within casinos represent a good percentage of revenue.

A large concert space at the end of the pier can hold 2,000 fans, as well as meetings or even a wedding. Casinos alone have become boring. Atlantic City has plenty of company in banking on non-gambling attractions as a way to reinvent itself, But some observers think that Atlantic City waited too long to shift its strategy. Even with extras, the city's casinos revenue continues to plunge as competition from casinos in neighboring states continued unabated.

Also, the elimination of a third of the city's casinos reduced competition and increased market share for the survivors. But still, the extras are helping.

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