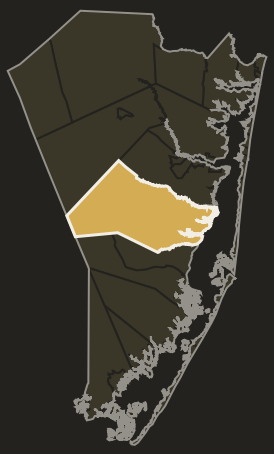
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AN IN DEPTH TOWN GUIDE

Living in Lacey, NJ

A short history, the sections of town, homes and taxes, where to shop and eat, things to do, and a moving checklist for your new home.



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This guide goes deeper than our website: the history, the sections of town, a moving checklist and worksheets for your visits. Keep it, mark it up, and call either of us with questions.

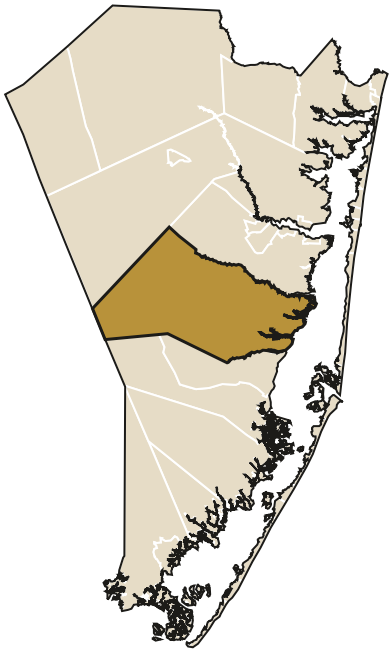
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AT A GLANCE

Lacey at a glance

County	Ocean
Population	About 28,700 (2020 census)
Size	About 100 square miles, about 83 of it land
Setting	Bayfront and lagoon neighborhoods east of the Parkway, Pine Barrens forest to the west
Main roads	Garden State Parkway Exit 74; U.S. Route 9; County Route 539 in the far west



Lacey in gold, in Ocean County

Lacey, Forked River and Lanoka Harbor

Forked River is not a separate town. It is a community inside Lacey Township, and many people use the name for the whole township. Forked River homes use the 08731 ZIP code.

Lanoka Harbor, at the north end of the township, is also part of Lacey and has its own ZIP code, 08734. Whichever name is on the mailing address, Lacey Township sets the property taxes and provides local services.

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A SHORT HISTORY

The story of Lacey

Lacey takes its name from General John Lacey, a Revolutionary War officer who in 1809 built Ferrago Forge on Cedar Creek, deep in the pines northwest of Forked River. A year later he cut a road from the forge to Forked River to ship his iron to the bay, and that road is still Lacey Road. Bay villages such as Forked River and Lanoka Harbor grew up along the shore.

Lacey Township was formed on March 23, 1871, from parts of Dover Township, now Toms River, and Union Township, now Barnegat. Railroads served the township into the mid 1900s, and part of the old Central Railroad line is now the Barnegat Branch Trail. In 1969 the Oyster Creek power plant came online and for decades was a major employer. Today Forked River's lagoons and marinas sit on the bay side, with state forest to the west.

KEY DATES

Timeline

1809	General John Lacey builds Ferrago Forge on Cedar Creek and soon cuts Lacey Road to Forked River.
1868	Forked River's first schoolhouse is built on Main Street, today the Old Schoolhouse Museum.
1871	Lacey Township is incorporated from parts of Dover and Union townships.
1969	The Oyster Creek generating station comes online in the township.

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SECTIONS OF TOWN

Bay towns on one side, pines on the other

Forked River. The center of the township along Route 9, called Main Street here, and Lacey Road, with town hall, the library and neighborhoods running down to the river and the bay.

The lagoon neighborhoods. Bayside streets east of Route 9 built along dredged lagoons off the Forked River and Barnegat Bay, many with docks behind the house.

Lanoka Harbor. The north end of the township, with its own ZIP code (08734), a mix of bayside and inland streets of ranches, capes and split levels.

Between Route 9 and the Parkway. Inland neighborhoods and adult communities on wooded lots, built over many decades.

The pines. About two thirds of the township west of the Parkway, mostly state forest and Pinelands land, with small settlements such as Bamber Lake.

> The Garden State Parkway divides Lacey in two. More than 95 percent of the homes are east of it, between the Parkway and Barnegat Bay. The land to the west, about two thirds of the township, is Pine Barrens under the Pinelands Commission. Some of the names you will hear:

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HOMES AND TAXES

What you will find

Lagoon and waterfront homes on the lagoons, the Forked River and Barnegat Bay.

Single family neighborhoods between the bay and the Parkway, built over many decades.

Adult community homes in age restricted communities such as Sea Breeze at Lacey and Pheasant Run.

Wooded lots on the Pinelands side of the township, where Pinelands rules shape what can be built.

Worth knowing: Lacey's lagoon communities and the neighborhoods near Barnegat Bay are subject to tidal flooding, and many waterfront homes sit in FEMA flood zones. Lenders require flood insurance in those zones, and New Jersey sellers must disclose a home's flood zone and flood history. West of the Parkway, Pinelands rules limit building. We check the flood zone, elevation and land use rules for every Lacey home before it is priced.

Property taxes

1.771%
2025 effective tax rate, as a share of market value

$7,902
2025 average residential tax bill

A home worth $450,000 on today's market would pay roughly $7,970 a year at Lacey's 2025 effective rate. Your actual bill depends on your assessment, so we pull the real tax record for any home you are considering.

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GROCERIES, DINING AND SHOPPING

Where Lacey shops and eats

Route 9 is Lacey's main street, running through Forked River and Lanoka Harbor, and most everyday shopping, including two supermarkets, is right along it.

Grocery stores

IN TOWN	**ShopRite** Route 9 at First Street, Lacey (Lanoka Harbor)
IN TOWN	**ALDI** 300 North Main Street, Lacey (Forked River)
SOUTH	**ShopRite** 501 Route 9, Ocean Township (Waretown mailing address)
SOUTH	**Acme** 912 West Bay Avenue, Barnegat
NORTHWEST	**Stop & Shop** 400 Lacey Road, Manchester (Whiting mailing address)

Checked October 2026. Stores open, close and move, so call ahead before a first trip.

Dining

Route 9 (Main Street) in Forked River. The township's main street, with most of its places to eat and everyday shopping.

Lacey Road. The east and west road through the center of town, with more casual places to eat near Route 9.

Downtown Toms River: North on Route 9 to Main Street and Washington Street, the downtown of the county seat, with restaurants near Huddy Park and the river.

Beach Haven: South on Route 9, then east on Route 72 across the bay to Long Beach Island, where Bay Village is the heart of downtown Beach Haven, with restaurants and shops close by.

Shopping

Route 9 is Lacey's shopping road, through Forked River and Lanoka Harbor. For a mall, the Ocean County Mall, the only enclosed mall in Ocean County, is north on Hooper Avenue in Toms River.

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GETTING AROUND

Roads and commuting

The Garden State Parkway crosses Lacey with Exit 74, signed for Forked River and Waretown, and the Forked River Service Area near milepost 76. Route 9 runs north and south through the developed east side toward Toms River and Barnegat, and most daily shopping is along it. County Route 539 crosses the far western pines. NJ Transit's 559 bus runs to Atlantic City, and Ocean Ride provides local service. There is no rail service in the township. The nearest train station is Bay Head, at the end of the North Jersey Coast Line.

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THINGS TO DO

Things to do in and around Lacey

Double Trouble State Park. Pine Barrens land along Cedar Creek, mostly in Lacey, with a restored cranberry village and a nature trail. The main entrance is on the Berkeley Township side.

Forked River State Marina. A state run marina on the Forked River with 125 boat slips, a short run to Barnegat Bay.

Barnegat Branch Trail. A walking and biking trail on the old Central Railroad of New Jersey line, running through Lacey on its way between Barnegat and Toms River.

Old Schoolhouse Museum. Forked River's first school, built in 1868 at 126 South Main Street and run as a museum by the Historical Society of Lacey. Open Saturday mornings from mid June through Labor Day and by appointment.

Gille Park. The township's main park in Forked River, beside the police department, with ball fields, courts and a playground.

Clune Park. A township park on Beach Boulevard in Forked River.

Ocean County Library, Lacey Branch. The township's public library branch at 10 East Lacey Road in Forked River.

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MOVING CHECKLIST

Setting up your home in Lacey

Tick each one off as you go. Most of these take one phone call or a few minutes online.

- [ ] **Township municipal building.** Lacey Township Municipal Building, 818 West Lacey Road, Forked River, NJ 08731.609-693-1100. https://www.laceytownship.org

- [ ] **Property taxes.** Tax office phone 609-693-1100 ext. 2210. The tax office is in the municipal building at 818 West Lacey Road, and taxes can also be paid online through the township website. New Jersey property taxes are paid quarterly, due February 1, May 1, August 1 and November 1, with a 10 day grace period before interest is charged back to the due date. Not receiving a bill does not change the due date, so new owners should confirm with the tax office where bills will be sent.

- [ ] **Water and sewer.** Lacey Municipal Utilities Authority (water and sewer). 833-998-4751 (pay by phone). The Lacey MUA supplies drinking water and sewer service and bills separately from the township. Homes in the pines and some older areas may be on private wells or septic, so confirm with the seller. Contact the MUA through laceymua.com to arrange a final reading and transfer the account.

- [ ] **Electric.** Jersey Central Power and Light (JCP&L), a FirstEnergy company. Outage line 1-888-544-4877.

- [ ] **Gas.** New Jersey Natural Gas. 1-800-221-0051 (customer service); 1-800-427-5325 (gas leaks, 24 hours).

- [ ] **Trash and recycling.** Find your pickup days on the township's Solid Waste and Recycling Calendar or through Recycle Coach, both linked from the Trash and Recycling page of the township website. Public Works: 609-693-1100 ext. 2301.

- [ ] **Driver's license and voting.** New Jersey law (N.J.S.A. 39:3-36) requires drivers to report a new address to the Motor Vehicle Commission within one week, and the MVC prefers that you do it online. To register to vote or update your address, use the state's online voter registration or send a paper form to the Ocean County Commissioner of Registration or Superintendent of Elections. Registration closes 21 days before an election. The Ocean County Clerk handles vote by mail ballots.

- [ ] **Flood zone.** Look up any address on the FEMA Flood Map Service Center at msc.fema.gov. New Jersey sellers must disclose a home's flood zone and flood history. Flood zones matter most in the lagoon neighborhoods and along the Forked River and Barnegat Bay; ask for the elevation certificate on any waterfront home. Lacey joined FEMA's Community Rating System in 1992, but the state's 2019 hazard mitigation plan lists its participation as rescinded, so ask the township about its current status.

- [ ] **Library.** Ocean County Library, Lacey Branch, 10 East Lacey Road, Forked River, NJ 08731.

Checked October 2026. Phone numbers and schedules change, so confirm with each office.

WHEN YOU SELL

The certificate every sale needs

New Jersey requires a Certificate of Smoke Alarm and Carbon Monoxide Alarm Compliance before a one or two family home is sold (N.J.A.C. 5:70-2.3), issued by the local fire official after an inspection. Since February 3, 2025 (P.L. 2025, c.19), a portable fire extinguisher is no longer part of this certificate for one and two family homes. We could not confirm from an official township source whether Lacey requires a separate resale certificate of occupancy or inspection, so confirm with the township's code enforcement office (609-693-1100 ext. 2249) or building department at 124 South Main Street before listing.

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QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK

Questions people ask us about Lacey

Is Forked River its own town?

No. Forked River is an unincorporated community within Lacey Township, and it uses the 08731 ZIP code. Many people use the name for the whole township. Lacey Township sets property taxes and provides local services for Forked River homes.

What Garden State Parkway exit is Lacey?

Exit 74, signed for Forked River and Waretown. The Forked River Service Area is just north of it, near milepost 76. Route 9 also runs through the township.

What happened to the Oyster Creek nuclear plant?

Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station in Lacey went online in 1969 and was the oldest operating nuclear plant in the country when it closed in September 2018. The plant is being decommissioned. For years it paid a large share of the township's budget through taxes.

Do homes in Lacey flood?

Some do. Lacey's lagoon communities and neighborhoods near Barnegat Bay are subject to tidal flooding from hurricanes and winter storms, and many are in FEMA flood zones. We check the flood zone and elevation for every address.

Where is the closest grocery store to Lacey?

Lacey has its own supermarkets on Route 9: a ShopRite in Lanoka Harbor and an ALDI in Forked River. Just south on Route 9, there are a ShopRite in Waretown and an Acme in Barnegat, and there is a Stop & Shop on Lacey Road in Whiting, west of the Parkway.

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TO FILL IN ON YOUR VISITS

Touring the sections of town

Drive or walk each part of town at different times of day. Note the streets you liked, the traffic, the water and anything to ask us about.

Forked River	
The lagoon neighborhoods	
Lanoka Harbor	
Between Route 9 and the Parkway	
The pines	

Is Lacey right for you?

HOW WELL DOES THE TOWN FIT?	GREAT FIT	OKAY	NOT A FIT
Getting to work and family	☐	☐	☐
Groceries and everyday errands	☐	☐	☐
Restaurants and things to do	☐	☐	☐
Parks and time outdoors	☐	☐	☐
Being on or near the water	☐	☐	☐
Flood zone and insurance	☐	☐	☐
Property taxes	☐	☐	☐
The kinds of homes available	☐	☐	☐
Traffic and summer crowds	☐	☐	☐
How it feels on the streets you saw	☐	☐	☐

Streets or homes to look at again

Questions to ask us

TALK IT THROUGH

Call or text either of us

Thinking about moving to Lacey, or selling a home there? Call or text either of us. We will tell you what we know about the town, honestly, and help you plan the next step.



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More guides and our town guides at **franasilk.com**

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