

Town of
RIVERHEAD

Comprehensive Plan Update

**Draft Generic Environmental
Impact Statement**

April 25, 2024



DRAFT GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (DGEIS)

**TOWN OF RIVERHEAD
2024 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

Town of Riverhead
Suffolk County, New York

SEQRA Classification: Type I Action

Lead Agency: Town of Riverhead Town Board
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Website where DGEIS can be viewed: <https://townofriverheadcomprehensiveplanupdate.com/draft-documents>

The Public Hearing is scheduled for **May 20, 2024** at **6:00 pm** at Riverhead Town Hall.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | | |
|-------------|---|--------------|
| 1.0. | Executive Summary | 1-1 |
| 1.1. | Introduction | 1-1 |
| 1.2. | Description of the Study Area | 1-2 |
| 1.3. | Description of the Proposed Action | 1-5 |
| 1.4. | Potential Build Out Scenario | 1-6 |
| 1.5. | Alternatives to the Proposed Action | 1-7 |
| 1.6. | Potential Adverse Impacts of the Proposed Action | 1-8 |
| 1.7. | Mitigation Measures | 1-17 |
| 1.8. | Involved and Interested Agencies | 1-17 |
| 1.9. | Required Approval and Review | 1-18 |
| 2.0. | Description of the Proposed Action | 2-1 |
| 2.1. | Project Location and Environmental Setting | 2-1 |
| 2.2. | Project History | 2-4 |
| 2.3. | Public Needs and Benefits | 2-5 |
| 2.4. | Public Involvement | 2-6 |
| 2.5. | Description of the Proposed Action | 2-6 |
| 2.5.1. | Vision | 2-6 |
| 2.5.2. | Goals | 2-7 |
| 2.5.3. | Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan | 2-10 |
| 2.5.4. | Land Use and Zoning Approach | 2-10 |
| 2.6. | Potential Build Out Scenario | 2-16 |
| 2.6.1. | Methodology | 2-17 |
| 2.6.2. | No Build Scenario (Existing Conditions) | 2-21 |
| 2.6.3. | Future without Action | 2-21 |
| 2.6.4. | Future with Action | 2-24 |
| 2.7. | Involved/Interested Agencies | 2-37 |
| 2.7.1. | Involved Agencies | 2-37 |
| 2.7.2. | Interested Agencies | 2-37 |
| 2.8. | Required Reviews and Approvals | 2-37 |
| 3.0. | Environmental setting, potential impacts, and mitigation | 2.8-1 |
| 3.1. | Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy | 3.1-1 |
| 3.1.1. | Existing Conditions | 3.1-1 |
| 3.1.2. | Potential Impacts | 3.1-17 |
| 3.1.3. | Mitigation Measures | 3.1-28 |

| | | |
|-------------|--|------------|
| 3.2. | Demographics, Housing, and Economic Conditions _____ | 3.2-1 |
| 3.2.1. | Existing Conditions _____ | 3.2-1 |
| 3.2.2. | Potential Impacts _____ | 3.2-18 |
| 3.2.3. | Mitigation Measures _____ | 3.2-38 |
| 3.3. | Historic and Scenic Resources _____ | 3.3-1 |
| 3.3.1. | Existing Conditions _____ | 3.3-1 |
| 3.3.2. | Potential Impacts _____ | 3.3-9 |
| 3.3.3. | Mitigation Measures _____ | 3.3-21 |
| 3.4. | Transportation and Mobility _____ | 3.4-1 |
| 3.4.1. | No Build Scenario (Existing Conditions) _____ | 3.4-1 |
| 3.4.2. | Potential Impacts of Proposed Action _____ | 3.4-14 |
| 3.4.3. | Mitigation Measures _____ | 3.4-26 |
| 3.5. | Community Facilities, Open Space, Parks, and Recreation _____ | 3.5-1 |
| 3.5.1. | Existing Conditions _____ | 3.5-1 |
| 3.5.2. | Potential Impacts _____ | 3.5-16 |
| 3.5.3. | Mitigation Measures _____ | 3.5-27 |
| 3.6. | Natural Features, Environmental Resources and Agricultural Lands _____ | 3.6-1 |
| 3.6.1. | Existing Conditions _____ | 3.6-1 |
| 3.6.2. | Potential Impacts _____ | 3.6-31 |
| 3.6.3. | Mitigation Measures _____ | 3.6-40 |
| 3.7. | Infrastructure and Utilities _____ | 3.7-1 |
| 3.7.1. | No Build Scenario (Existing Conditions) _____ | 3.7-1 |
| 3.7.2. | Potential Impacts of Proposed Action _____ | 3.7-11 |
| 3.7.3. | Mitigation Measures _____ | 3.7-26 |
| 4.0. | Other Environmental Impacts _____ | 4-1 |
| 4.1. | Unavoidable Adverse Environmental Impacts _____ | 4-1 |
| 4.2. | Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources _____ | 4-2 |
| 4.3. | Growth-Inducing, Cumulative, and Secondary Impacts _____ | 4-2 |
| 4.3.1. | Growth Inducement _____ | 4-2 |
| 4.3.2. | Cumulative Impacts _____ | 4-3 |
| 4.4. | Effects on the Use and Conservation of Energy _____ | 4-7 |
| 5.0. | Analysis of Alternatives _____ | 5-1 |
| 5.1. | No-Action Alternative: Build-out under Existing Comprehensive Plan and current Zoning Code _____ | 5-1 |
| 6.0. | Subsequent SEQR Actions _____ | 6-1 |

Figures

| | | |
|-------------|-------------------------|-----|
| Figure 1-1. | Regional Context | 1-3 |
| Figure 1-2. | Town of Riverhead..... | 1-4 |
| Figure 2-1. | Regional Context | 2-2 |
| Figure 2-2. | Town of Riverhead | 2-3 |

Figure 2-3. Zoning Approach..... 2-11

Figure 2-4. Proposed TDR 2-13

Figure 2-5. Build Out Analysis Constraints..... 2-19

Figure 2-6. Potential Development Sites..... 2-20

Figure 2-7. Potential Development Sites in Industrially Zoned Areas..... 2-27

Figure 2-8. Potential Development Sites in Proposed Assisted Living Overlay District 2-30

Figure 2-9. Potential Development Sites in CRC and PRC Districts 2-32

Figure 2-10. Potential Development Sites in RRA-OD 2-35

Figure 3.1-1. Existing Land Use..... 3.1-2

Figure 3.1-2. Existing Zoning..... 3.1-6

Figure 3.1-3. Overlay and Other Districts..... 3.1-11

Figure 3.1-4. Central Pine Barrens Core Preservation Area and Compatible Growth Area 3.1-16

Figure 3.2-1. Population in Riverhead and Suffolk County (2000 – 2020) 3.2-1

Figure 3.2-2. Projected Population Growth in Riverhead and Suffolk County (2010 –2055)..... 3.2-2

Figure 3.2-3. Age of the Population in Riverhead and Suffolk County (2020) 3.2-3

Figure 3.2-4. Population by Race and Ethnicity (2020)..... 3.2-4

Figure 3.2-5. Social Vulnerability Index (2020)..... 3.2-6

Figure 3.2-6. Potential Environmental Justice Areas (2021) 3.2-7

Figure 3.2-7. Year Structure Built 3.2-8

Figure 3.2-8. Occupations of Riverhead and Suffolk County Resident Population, 2021 3.2-14

Figure 3.2-9. Federal Opportunity Zones..... 3.2-16

Figure 3.3-1. Historic Districts and Landmarks..... 3.3-3

Figure 3.3-2. Archaeological Buffer Areas..... 3.3-7

Figure 3.3-3. Pyramid Law Example..... 3.3-17

Figure 3.3-4. Example of light industrial buildings that are compatible with surrounding agricultural landscape. 3.3-18

Figure 3.3-5. Assisted Living Overlay Development Scenario 3.3-19

Figure 3.4-1. Road Jurisdiction and Traffic Volumes 3.4-3

Figure 3.4-2. Significant Crash Locations 3.4-8

Figure 3.4-3. New York and Atlantic Railways..... 3.4-11

Figure 3.4-4. Average Number of Jobs Accessible Within 60 Minutes 3.4-12

Figure 3.5-1. Community Facilities 3.5-2

Figure 3.5-2. Fire and Ambulance Service Districts and Facilities 3.5-4

Figure 3.5-3. School Districts and Schools 3.5-8

Figure 3.5-4. K-12 Enrollment (2002-2022)..... 3.5-9

Figure 3.5-5. K-12 Enrollment Riverhead CSD..... 3.5-10

Figure 3.5-6. K-12 Enrollment Percentage of Race and Ethnicity (2002 – 2022) 3.5-11

Figure 3.5-7. Open Space, Parks, and Recreational Areas 3.5-13

Figure 3.6-1. Surface Waters, Wetlands, and Coastal Area Boundary 3.6-2

Figure 3.6-2. Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers 3.6-6

Figure 3.6-3. Groundwater Management and Protection..... 3.6-9

Figure 3.6-4. Significant Habitats 3.6-11

Figure 3.6-5. Central Pine Barrens Core Preservation Area and Compatible Growth Area..... 3.6-13

Figure 3.6-6. Slopes 3.6-15

Figure 3.6-7. Soils by Suitability for Agriculture 3.6-16

Figure 3.6-8. Protected and Unprotected Lands Used for Agriculture..... 3.6-20

Figure 3.6-9. Existing TDR Sending and Receiving Areas..... 3.6-23

| | |
|--|--------|
| Figure 3.6-10. Suffolk County Agricultural Districts | 3.6-26 |
| Figure 3.6-11. Shellfish Aquaculture in Riverhead | 3.6-29 |
| Figure 3.6-12. Proposed TDR Sending and Receiving Areas..... | 3.6-36 |
| Figure 3.7-1. Sewer Districts and Areas..... | 3.7-2 |
| Figure 3.7-2. Town of Riverhead Sanitation Districts | 3.7-4 |
| Figure 3.7-3. Water District..... | 3.7-6 |
| Figure 3.7-4. FEMA Special Flood Hazard Areas | 3.7-8 |
| Figure 3.7-5. Projected Sea Level Rise | 3.7-10 |

Tables

| | |
|--|--------|
| Table 1-1. Build-Out Analysis – Incremental Increase in Anticipated Development – 2035 | 1-7 |
| Table 2-1. Identified Potential Development Sites by Zoning District..... | 2-22 |
| Table 2-2. Projected Growth (2022-2025 in Potential Development Sites) | 2-23 |
| Table 2-3. Cluster Development Potential | 2-24 |
| Table 2-4. Summary of Build-out Analysis..... | 2-25 |
| Table 2-5. Proposed TDR Sending Areas | 2-26 |
| Table 2-6. Anticipated TDR Credits sold in Proposed Sending Areas | 2-26 |
| Table 2-7. Build-out Analysis of Industrially Zoned Areas | 2-28 |
| Table 2-8. Build-out Analysis of Assisted Living Overlay Zone..... | 2-29 |
| Table 2-9. Build-out Analysis of CRC and PRC Districts | 2-33 |
| Table 2-10. Build-out Analysis of RRA-OD..... | 2-34 |
| Table 2-11. Cluster Development Potential in RA-40 and RB-40..... | 2-36 |
| Table 3.1-1. Existing Land Use..... | 3.1-1 |
| Table 3.2-1. Recent Downtown Multifamily Projects | 3.2-9 |
| Table 3.2-2. Tenure in Riverhead, Neighboring Towns, and Suffolk County..... | 3.2-9 |
| Table 3.2-3. Distribution of Homeowner and Renter Households by Number of Bedrooms, 2021..... | 3.2-10 |
| Table 3.2-4. Distribution of Vacant Units, 2021 | 3.2-10 |
| Table 3.2-5. Town of Riverhead Per Capita Municipal Services Costs..... | 3.2-18 |
| Table 3.2-6. Anticipated Population Change – Comparison of Build-out Scenarios..... | 3.2-19 |
| Table 3.2-7. Build-Out Analysis – Incremental Increase in Anticipated Housing Development – 2035 | 3.2-22 |
| Table 3.2-8. Build-Out Analysis – Incremental Increase in All Anticipated Development – 2035..... | 3.2-30 |
| Table 3.2-9. Proposed Action: Estimated Fiscal Benefits with TDR..... | 3.2-35 |
| Table 3.2-10. Proposed Action: Estimated Fiscal Benefits without TDR | 3.2-37 |
| Table 3.2-11. Town of Riverhead Per Capita Costs..... | 3.2-38 |
| Table 3.3-1. Inventory of Local, State, and National Designated Landmarks in Riverhead | 3.3-4 |
| Table 3.4-1. Roadway Levels of Service – Capacity Analysis Results | 3.4-6 |
| Table 3.4-2. LIRR 2022 Annual Ridership Report | 3.4-10 |
| Table 3.4-3. Change in Ridership 2003 to 2019 Suffolk Transit Routes Serving Riverhead | 3.4-11 |
| Table 3.4-4. New Calverton Industrial District Existing Conditions (Trips)..... | 3.4-15 |
| Table 3.4-5. New Calverton Industrial District Existing Conditions (Parking)..... | 3.4-15 |
| Table 3.4-6. New Calverton Industrial District Proposed/Future Condition (Trips) | 3.4-16 |
| Table 3.4-7. Calverton Industrial District Proposed/Future Condition (Parking) | 3.4-16 |
| Table 3.4-8. Scattered IND A, IND B, & IND C to Light Industrial Existing Conditions (Trips)..... | 3.4-17 |
| Table 3.4-9. Scattered IND A, IND B, & IND C to Light Industrial Existing Conditions (Parking) | 3.4-17 |
| Table 3.4-10. Scattered IND A, IND B, and IND C to LI Proposed/Future Condition (Trips)..... | 3.4-17 |
| Table 3.4-11. Scattered IND A, IND B, and IND C to LI Proposed/Future Condition (Parking)..... | 3.4-18 |

| | |
|--|--------|
| Table 3.4-12. Assisted Living Overlay Zone Existing Conditions (Trips)..... | 3.4-19 |
| Table 3.4-13. Assisted Living Overlay Zone Existing Conditions (Parking)..... | 3.4-19 |
| Table 3.4-14. Assisted Living Overlay Zone Proposed/Future Condition (Trips) | 3.4-20 |
| Table 3.4-15. Assisted Living Overlay Zone Proposed/Future Condition (Parking) | 3.4-20 |
| Table 3.4-16. Commercial/Residential Campus Existing Conditions (Trips)..... | 3.4-20 |
| Table 3.4-17. Commercial/Residential Campus Existing Conditions (Parking) | 3.4-21 |
| Table 3.4-18. Commercial/Residential Campus Proposed/Future Condition (Trips)..... | 3.4-21 |
| Table 3.4-19. Commercial/Residential Campus Proposed/Future Condition (Parking) | 3.4-22 |
| Table 3.4-20. Peconic River Community Existing Conditions (Trips) | 3.4-22 |
| Table 3.4-21. Peconic River Community Existing Conditions (Parking) | 3.4-23 |
| Table 3.4-22. Peconic River Community Proposed/Future Condition (Trips)..... | 3.4-23 |
| Table 3.4-23. Peconic River Community Proposed/Future Condition (Parking)..... | 3.4-23 |
| Table 3.4-24. Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area Overlay District Existing Conditions (Trips)..... | 3.4-24 |
| Table 3.4-25. Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area Overlay District Existing Conditions (Parking)..... | 3.4-24 |
| Table 3.4-26. Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area Overlay District Proposed/Future Condition (Trips)..... | 3.4-24 |
| Table 3.4-27. Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area Overlay District Proposed/Future Condition (Parking)..... | 3.4-25 |
| Table 3.4-28. Full Build Out Existing Vs Proposed (Trips)..... | 3.4-25 |
| Table 3.4-29. Full Build Out Existing Vs Proposed (Parking) | 3.4-25 |
| Table 3.4-30. Anticipated Build Out Existing Vs Proposed (Trips) | 3.4-26 |
| Table 3.4-31. Anticipated Build Out Existing Vs Proposed (Parking) | 3.4-26 |
| Table 3.5-1. K-12 Enrollment (2002-2022) | 3.5-9 |
| Table 3.5-2. Student Enrollment Statistics (2022-2023 School Year) | 3.5-11 |
| Table 3.5-3. Cost to Educate Per Pupil | 3.5-12 |
| Table 3.5-4. Incremental Change in School Children – Future without Action vs. Future with Action | 3.5-22 |
| Table 3.5-5. Anticipated TDR Sold with Proposed Action | 3.5-23 |
| Table 3.5-6. Schoolchildren Generated in Riverhead CSD by Proposed Action | 3.5-24 |
| Table 3.6-1. Protected and Unprotected Land Used for Agriculture..... | 3.6-19 |
| Table 3.7-1. New Calverton Industrial District Existing Conditions Sanitary Wastewater Demand | 3.7-12 |
| Table 3.7-2. New Calverton Industrial District Proposed/Future Condition Sanitary Wastewater Demand..... | 3.7-13 |
| Table 3.7-3. Scattered IND A, IND B, & IND C to Light Industrial Existing Conditions Sanitary Wastewater Demand | 3.7-14 |
| Table 3.7-4. Scattered IND A, IND B, and IND C to LI Proposed/Future Condition Sanitary Wastewater Demand..... | 3.7-15 |
| Table 3.7-5. Assisted Living Overlay Zone Existing Conditions Sanitary Wastewater Demand..... | 3.7-16 |
| Table 3.7-6. Assisted Living Overlay Zone Proposed/Future Condition Sanitary Wastewater Demand | 3.7-17 |
| Table 3.7-7. Commercial/Residential Campus Existing Conditions Sanitary Wastewater Demand | 3.7-18 |
| Table 3.7-8. Commercial/Residential Campus Proposed/Future Condition Sanitary Wastewater Demand..... | 3.7-19 |
| Table 3.7-9. Peconic River Community Existing Conditions Sanitary Wastewater Demand | 3.7-20 |
| Table 3.7-10. Peconic River Community Proposed/Future Condition Sanitary Wastewater Demand..... | 3.7-20 |
| Table 3.7-11. Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area Overlay District Existing Conditions Sanitary Wastewater Demand..... | 3.7-21 |
| Table 3.7-12. Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area Overlay District Proposed/Future Condition Sanitary Wastewater Flow | 3.7-22 |
| Table 3.7-13. Full Build Out Existing Zoning vs Proposed Zoning - Sanitary Wastewater flow | 3.7-24 |
| Table 3.7-14. Anticipated Build Out Existing Zoning vs Proposed Zoning Sanitary Wastewater flow | 3.7-25 |
| Table 4-1. Pending Projects (Application Dates: 1/1/2021 - 3/13/2024) | 4-4 |

1.0. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1. Introduction

The Town of Riverhead proposes to adopt the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update ("Comprehensive Plan" and/or the "Proposed Action") A Comprehensive Plan is a document that has as its purpose: "the control of land uses for the benefit of the whole community" (NY Town Law §272-a). The Town's last Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2003. The 2024 Comprehensive Plan is intended to provide a framework to guide land use and policy decisions in the Town. As the gateway to the East End of Long Island, Riverhead is known for its scenic beauty, historic character, agricultural activity, and diverse range of businesses, cultural activities, and outdoor recreation opportunities. The policies that comprise the Comprehensive Plan are anticipated to guide the development of the Town for the next 10-20 years. The Comprehensive Plan is incorporated herein by reference¹.

The potential impacts resulting from the adoption of the Proposed Action are analyzed in this Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS). This DGEIS has been prepared in accordance with the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and its implementing regulations (6 NYCRR Part 617). The Town of Riverhead Town Board is the lead agency for this environmental review and other interested agencies are listed in Section 1.8 of this Chapter.

Under SEQRA, a "Generic" EIS, or GEIS, is prepared when a proposed action represents a comprehensive program having wide application and defining the range of future projects in the affected area. A GEIS, according to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) SEQRA handbook, is "a type of EIS that is more general than a site-specific EIS, and typically is used to consider broad-based actions or related groups of actions that agencies are likely to approve, fund, or directly undertake.... A Generic EIS differs from a site or project specific EIS by being more general or conceptual in nature...."

The DGEIS is intended to provide the Riverhead Town Board, the public, and interested and involved agencies with an understanding of the type of potential environmental impacts that may be associated with adoption of the Proposed Action. A key aspect of the environmental review process is the incorporation of public review and commentary into the decision-making process.

The DGEIS presents a comprehensive assessment of the potentially significant adverse impacts associated with the Proposed Action, identifies impacts which would likely require mitigation, and considers alternatives to the Proposed Action, which includes a No Action Alternative, a scenario in which the Comprehensive Plan is not adopted.

The steps in preparing and finalizing the DGEIS include:

- **Environmental Assessment Form (EAF)** – An EAF was prepared and submitted to the Riverhead Town Board in July 2023. The Board declared itself lead agency on July 18, 2023. The EAF provided preliminary analysis of the potential impacts associated with the Proposed Action. Following review, the Town Board determined that the Proposed Action had the potential for significant adverse environmental impacts and would require the preparation of a GEIS. Pursuant to this determination, the Town Board (SEQRA lead agency) issued a positive declaration for the Proposed Action on November 9, 2023 (see DGEIS Appendix 1).
- **Scope** – the Final Scope of the DGEIS was adopted by the Town Board on January 19, 2024 (see DGEIS Appendix 2), after a 30-day public comment period on the Draft Scope.

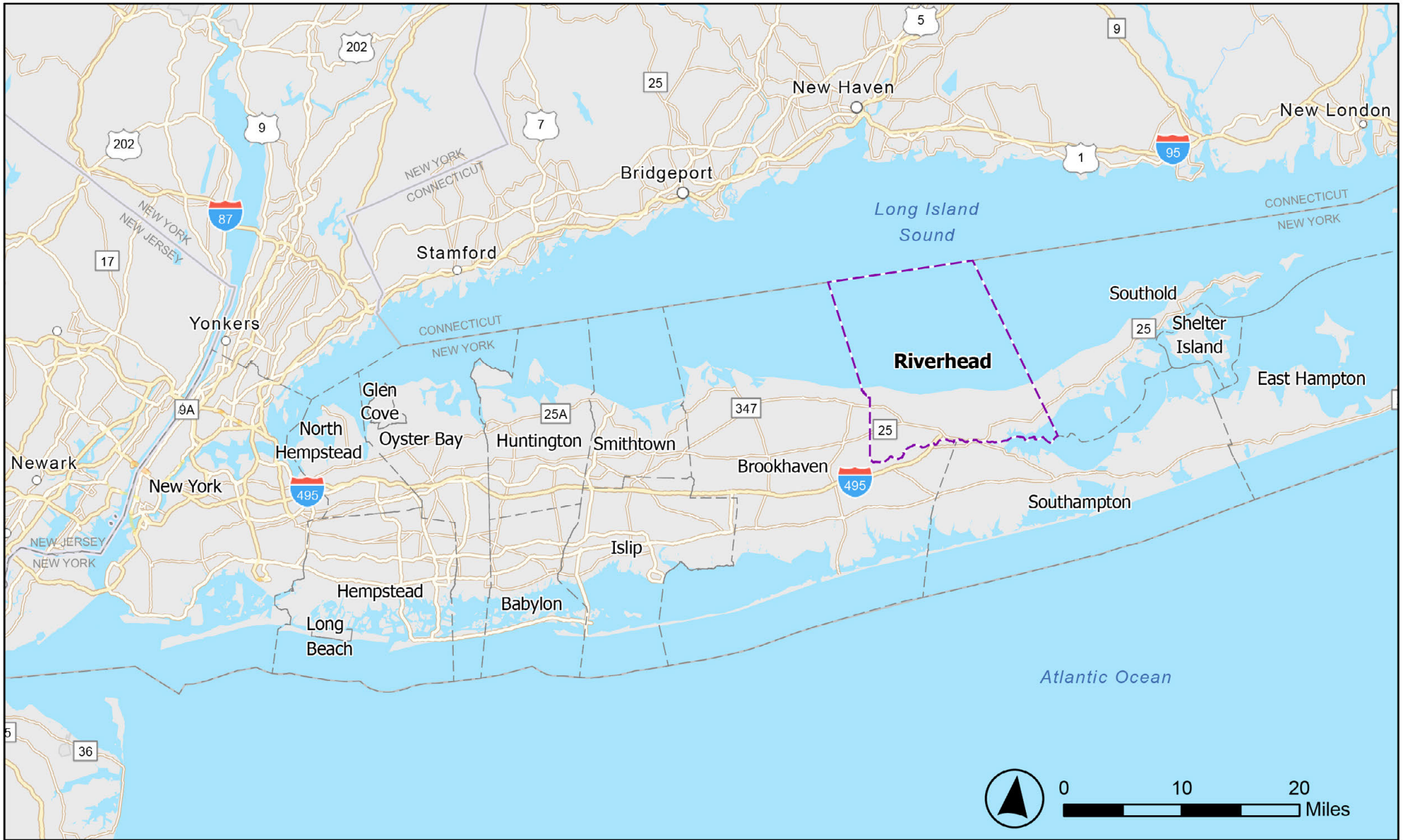
¹ The Draft 2024 Comprehensive Plan can be found here: <https://townofriverheadcomprehensiveplanupdate.com/>

- **DGEIS** – a draft document accepted by the Town Board and released for public and agency review and comment.
- **Public Review** – of at least 30 days, including a public hearing at which any individual, group or agency may comment on the DGEIS
- **Final DGEIS (FGEIS)** – acceptance and publication by the Town Board as Lead Agency, which incorporates relevant comments and responses, if any, made during the public review of the DGEIS.
- **Findings Statement** – adopted and passed by the Town Board as Lead Agency no sooner than 10 days, nor more than 30 days after publication of the FGEIS. The Findings Statement must: 1) consider the relevant environmental impacts, facts, and conclusions presented in the GEIS; 2) provide a rationale for the agencies decision; 3) certify that SEQR’s requirements have been met; and 4) certify that consistent with social, economic, and other essential considerations from among the reasonable alternatives available, the action is one that avoids or minimizes adverse environmental impacts to the maximum extent practicable, and that the adverse environmental impacts would be avoided or minimized to the maximum extent practicable.

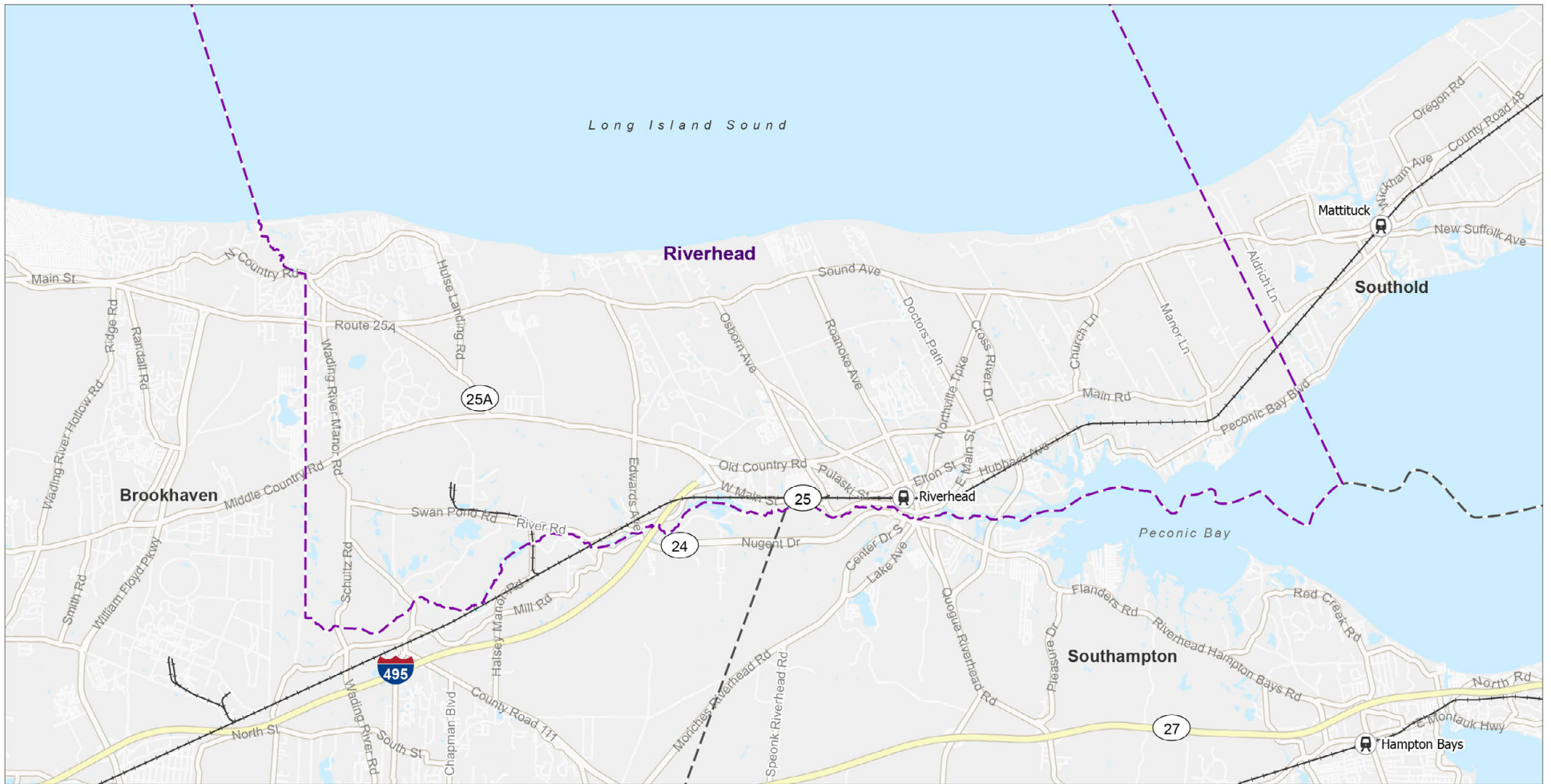
1.2. Description of the Study Area

The Comprehensive Plan covers the entire geographic area of the Town of Riverhead, situated on Long Island's eastern end in Suffolk County. Riverhead lies on the North Fork, bordered by Long Island Sound to the north and the Peconic Bay to the south, as shown in Figure 1-1. Riverhead encompasses nine hamlet areas, each with its own character and amenities, spanning over 41,000 acres or approximately 65 square miles. Agriculture dominates the land use, constituting 36.5% of the area, followed by residential (16%) and open space (12%). With over 20 miles of shoreline, Riverhead boasts scenic coastal areas, including the Long Island Sound waterfront with picturesque bluffs.

Riverhead is connected to neighboring communities and the New York Metropolitan Area via highways and the Long Island Railroad (LIRR). The Town of Riverhead is served by an interstate highway, two (2) highways under New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) Jurisdiction, several Suffolk County roads, and numerous local roads. The easternmost 1.5 miles of Interstate 495 Long Island Expressway, lies within the Town, having its terminus at a partial cloverleaf interchange known as Exit 73. There are 20 miles of New York State highway, 14 miles of Suffolk County roads, and 208 miles of Town of Riverhead roadway within the Town. The Riverhead train station is a 2.5-3 hour ride to Penn Station, with trains connecting to Manhattan via the Ronkonkoma line. Additional public transportation includes Suffolk Transit bus service and limited service by the Hampton Jitney. The Town of Riverhead, the full study area, is shown in Figure 1-2.



- Riverhead Town Boundary
- Long Island Town and City Boundaries
- State Boundary
- Freeway
- Highway
- Major Road



- Town of Riverhead Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- LIRR Train Station
- Railroad
- Highway
- Other Major Road
- Water

0 1 2 Miles



1.3. Description of the Proposed Action

The Proposed Action is the adoption of the Town of Riverhead Comprehensive Plan Update by the Town of Riverhead Town Board. The Comprehensive Plan is area-wide and intended to provide a framework to guide land use and policy decisions in the Town. The Comprehensive Plan provides a series of recommendations related to potential zoning changes, but no zoning amendments are proposed at this time. While the Plan is more specific with respect to certain zoning recommendations, the Proposed Action is generic in nature. Due to this generic nature, future development plans, which are not specific to the Comprehensive Plan and any future zoning code amendments, are subject to site-specific review under SEQR and would be handled by either the Town Board or Planning Board as part of future site-specific approvals (see Chapter 6.0 Subsequent SEQR Actions).

The Comprehensive Plan is a document that reflects the Town today and establishes the direction for the Town during the next 10-20 years. The plan is a guide to future municipal decisions on land use, zoning, housing, economic development, parks and open space, transportation, infrastructure, natural and cultural resources, and capital spending. It should enable the Town to influence decisions by state agencies and strengthen its ability to attract funding for projects that support the Plan. The Comprehensive Plan includes a set of zoning recommendations aimed at preserving and protecting the Town's sensitive lands, providing new opportunities for a variety of housing types, and enhancing the Town's industrial areas through reductions in floor area ratios and other dimensional modifications.

The Comprehensive Plan starts with a comprehensive vision and goals (Chapter 1) developed through input and outreach from the public. An analysis of land use and zoning (Chapter 2) in the Town follows the visions. The remaining Plan chapters include detailed recommendations in the following areas:

- Demographics and Housing (Chapter 3)
- Economic Development (Chapter 4)
- Transportation and Mobility (Chapter 5)
- Agricultural Lands (Chapter 6)
- Natural Features and Environmental Resources (Chapter 7)
- Open Space, Parks, and Recreation (Chapter 8)
- Scenic and Historic Resources (Chapter 9)
- Community Facilities (Chapter 10)
- Infrastructure and Utilities (Chapter 11)
- Sustainability and Resilience (Chapter 12)
- Future Land Use (Chapter 13)

Plan chapters 3 through 12 analyze relevant existing conditions, present Plan goals, and make recommendations. Plan Chapter 13 presents a detailed future land use and zoning approach. The Future Land Use Chapter is a critical component of the Comprehensive Plan in that it provides guidance for how the land use and zoning policies and strategies would be put into action. Land use and zoning recommendations are interspersed throughout the plan, as they can relate to many different topic areas. Plan Chapter 13 consolidates those recommendations into one place, with an emphasis on specific action steps and responsible parties, ensuring a systematic approach to achieving the plan's objectives and translating the outlined strategies into tangible results.

1.4. Potential Build Out Scenario

The DGEIS analyzes how the development related recommendations proposed in the Comprehensive Plan may impact the Town's environment. The "Build Out Analysis" presents a reasonable worst-case estimate of the potential mix of residential units and commercial/industrial gross floor area expected to be developed in the Future with the Proposed Action (adoption of Comprehensive Plan Update) within the next 10 years.

The build-out focuses on specific zoning changes proposed in Comprehensive Plan Chapter 13: Future Land Use Plan. It is important to note that the build-out analysis focuses on impacts from specific zoning changes that could be implemented after the completion of the Comprehensive Plan – without further study.

The Comprehensive Plan outlines potential zoning changes and recommendations needing further evaluation, which are not included in the build-out analysis due to the speculative nature of these changes. The analysis is conceptual, based on clearly stated assumptions, acknowledging that SEQR does not require speculation on specific future projects for potential zoning changes. Despite the absence of specific build-out figures for some recommendations, the GEIS ensures all proposals are at least qualitatively reviewed to identify any potential negative impacts.

The build-out analysis presents a comparison between the Future without Action scenario and the Future with Action scenario. The Future without Action scenario is the continuation of development under the 2003 Comprehensive Plan and existing zoning code, while the latter incorporates proposed zoning modifications and Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) changes. This comparison encompasses both residential and commercial unit types, providing insights into the overall transformation expected in the studied area.

Table 1-1 below provides a summary of these scenarios, identifying the incremental projected changes in residential and commercial development. Additionally, it offers separate analyses for build-out scenarios with and without the utilization of TDR credits. This breakdown allows for an understanding of the influence of zoning and TDR adjustments on the anticipated development landscape, emphasizing the significance of policy interventions in shaping future growth patterns. The subsequent discussion in this section provides more detail into the build-out for each of the proposed changes.

Table 1-1. Build-Out Analysis – Incremental Increase in Anticipated Development – 2035

| District | Anticipated Development | | | | Increment | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| | Future without Action | Future with Action | | | Without TDR | With TDR |
| | | Without TDR | With TDR | Required TDR Credits | | |
| Assisted Living Overlay District | 9 SF units 8,471 commercial | 9 SF Units 8,471 sq. ft. Commercial | 267 Assisted Living -8,471 sq. ft commercial | 123 Credits (62 SF units) | 0 SF Units | +267 AL Units -71 SF Units -8,471 sq. ft. commercial |
| RRA-OD | 210 MF units | 210 MF Units | 240 MF Units | 10 (5 SF units) | +0 MF Units | +30 MF Units -5 SF Units |
| CRC | 5 SF Units | + 43 TH Units | + 63 TH Units | 10 (5 SF units) | +43 TH Units -5 SF Units | +63 TH Units -10 SF Units |
| PRC | 1 SF Units | +4 Townhomes, -1 SF Unit | +4 Townhomes, -1 SF Unit | - | +4 TH Units -1 SF Unit | +4 TH Unit -1 SF Units |
| Industrial A, B, and C | 667,873 SF | | | | -250,452 sq. ft | -166,968 sq. ft |
| Total by Unit Type: | | | | | | |
| Single-Family (SF) Units | | | | | -6 SF Units | - 87 SF Units |
| Assisted Living (AL) Units | | | | | 0 AL Units | +267 AL Units |
| Multi-Family (MF) Units | | | | | 0 MF Units | +30 MF Units |
| Townhomes (TH) Units | | | | | +47 TH Units | +67 TH Units |
| Commercial (sq. ft.) | | | | | 0 sq. ft. | -8,471 sq. ft. |
| Industrial/Office (sq. ft.) | | | | | -250,452 sq. ft. | -166,968 sq. ft |

1.5. Alternatives to the Proposed Action

The alternative to the Proposed Action analyzed in this DGEIS is the No Action Alternative (see chapter 5.0 Analysis of Alternatives). SEQRA requires the examination of a No-Action alternative which assumes that the Comprehensive Plan would not be adopted, and development would continue within the Town under the 2003 Comprehensive Plan and existing Zoning Code.

Under the No Action Alternative, land use development would continue to be regulated by the existing Zoning, site plan, subdivision, and other land use regulations governing physical development in the Town of Riverhead. The Town would be expected to continue to grow in a manner consistent with current development. The Town would remain reactive to project applications and development would be guided by the 2003 Comprehensive Plan, the existing zoning code, and market forces. Acceptance of this alternative would not further the Town's goals as set forth in the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update and discussed in this DGEIS and would prevent the Town from achieving its vision for the future.

Without the adoption and implementation of the Proposed Action, many of the public benefits identified would not be realized including goals for managed growth and preservation of the natural environment and neighborhood character set forth in the Plan. While existing regulations may provide some level of protection for natural resources, agricultural lands, and the Town's historic character, the Proposed Action offers a structured approach for accommodating growth in appropriate areas while maintaining neighborhood character and preserving valuable resources. The implementation of the Proposed Action is expected to yield positive outcomes, including

the retention of Riverhead's distinctive scenic and historic qualities, the protection of sensitive lands and agriculture, the enhancement of community facilities, and the facilitation of managed and targeted growth.

1.6. Potential Adverse Impacts of the Proposed Action

The following provides a summary of the potentially significant adverse impacts of the Proposed Action, to be discussed in further detail in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3.1 Land Use, Zoning and Public Policy

Land Use

The land use recommendations for Riverhead aim to strike a balance between limiting industrial growth and maintaining economic development opportunities. By reducing allowable density in industrial districts while providing flexibility for building heights and incorporating opportunities for Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs), these recommendations promote appropriately scaled and designed development that minimizes adverse impacts on surrounding residential areas.

Policies address the need to Enhance the Route 58 Corridor to improve accessibility and create a more attractive destination. This includes providing flexible zoning to allow for adaptive reuse of vacant properties, revisiting commercial parking requirements, and implementing transportation improvements. Enhancing the Route 58 Corridor aims to improve accessibility and attractiveness without creating significant adverse land use impacts. Guiding responsible land use planning in hamlet centers aims to accommodate growth without adverse impacts on surrounding communities. By encouraging tailored zoning provisions and community engagement, Riverhead seeks to ensure that future development aligns with local needs and preserves the character of each hamlet, thereby avoiding adverse effects. In the Future without Action condition, land uses in the smaller hamlet areas are expected to remain largely consistent with existing conditions. Downtown policies may face scrutiny regarding their potential impact on historical integrity and infrastructure strain. By implementing these measures, the Plan ensures that growth is managed effectively, meets housing demands, and supports the economic vitality of the community without overwhelming infrastructure or altering the character of Downtown Riverhead negatively.

Policies regarding residential districts and housing in Riverhead are designed to tackle housing affordability, diversity, homeownership, and inclusivity. These recommendations prioritize community needs, promote sustainable development, and provide resources to support housing initiatives, aiming to have positive impacts on the community.

Recommendations for Agricultural Lands and the TDR Program aim to protect the Town's sensitive areas. The Comprehensive Plan's agricultural recommendations, through modern farming support and flexible TDR zoning, aim to secure economic and environmental sustainability, contrasting with the Future without Action scenario that risks agricultural conversion into residential areas and ignores vertical farming and zoning inconsistencies. The recommendations enhance the TDR program to protect nearly 2,000 acres of agricultural land by steering development to suitable areas, countering the Future without Action scenario's risk of sprawl and environmental harm due to unchecked development in sensitive regions. Additionally, the Plan's recommendations aim to diversify housing in transitional areas poised for growth and preserve sensitive regions through TDR credits, offering varied housing types and protecting riparian zones, unlike the Future without Action scenario which restricts housing to single-family homes and overlooks broader community needs.

Zoning

Zoning recommendations for many of the industrial districts include a reduction in allowable density of development, while providing flexibility for building heights, strengthening design standards, and incorporating opportunities for the purchase of TDRs. These recommendations are intended to provide for appropriately scaled and designed development in industrial areas aims, which minimize adverse impacts on surrounding residential areas.

The Proposed Action proposes several zoning changes in the downtown area, including the use of Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) in the Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Overlay District and the integration of design guidelines from the Pattern Book into the zoning code. Regarding TDR, the district allows for a higher intensity mix of uses, with various bonuses tied to community benefits, including TDR usage. As for the Pattern Book policy, it aims to ensure that future developments align with the desired aesthetic and scale of Downtown Riverhead, preserving its character and allure while facilitating growth and rejuvenation.

The recommendation for the BUS F district, which includes Tanger Outlets at Riverhead and nearby properties, aims to offer zoning flexibility to accommodate changing retail trends and encourage innovation in the area. This flexibility allows for experimentation with new concepts like pop-up shops, restaurants, and mixed-use developments, enhancing the vibrancy and adaptability of the shopping center while reducing barriers to creating a cohesive retail environment.

The Proposed Action recommends permitting assisted living facilities and continuing care retirement communities (CCRCs) near Peconic Bay Medical Center (PBMC) to address the needs of Riverhead's aging population. This involves slightly increasing the floor area ratio (FAR) using transfer of development rights (TDR) and limiting building coverage to 30%, creating a compact, campus-like environment. By strategically locating senior housing near downtown centers and medical facilities and implementing defined zoning regulations, the recommendation aims to improve healthcare access, offer specialized housing solutions, and preserve community character and infrastructure while promoting the preservation of sensitive lands through TDR usage.

The recommendations aim to maintain agriculture and the rural ambiance while managing environmental effects, promoting vertical farming in industrial districts, and allowing it in any district where agriculture is the primary use and development rights are intact, for productivity and mixed-use development without disrupting the landscape. They advocate for renewable energy on farms to support financial stability and energy sustainability, ensuring fair treatment and balanced agritourism to maintain community integrity. Conditional use permits are proposed to adapt to agricultural innovations and mitigate impacts, aligning with sustainable practices and community interests.

The Proposed Action seeks to enhance the TDR program by updating the transfer formula and identifying new receiving areas, designating RB-80 and RA-80 as sending districts to conserve nearly 2,000 acres and steer growth to less sensitive zones. This plan includes diversifying housing in the CRC and PRC districts through TDRs, allowing higher density townhouses in CRC and various residential types in PRC to support smart growth and preserve sensitive areas.

The Plan recommends incorporating new lodging facilities into the community while ensuring responsible development using TDR. "Golf Cottages" are proposed as accessory units on golf courses, aiming to provide short stay lodging while undergoing site-specific evaluations to mitigate potential impacts. Similarly, the proposal for agritourism resorts seeks to support tourism while preserving agricultural character, with provisions for substantial land preservation and individual project evaluations to ensure compatibility with surrounding areas.

Regulatory changes in Riverhead aim to refine the planning and development framework, ensuring clarity, consistency, and responsible land use. These changes, designed to minimize community and environmental impacts, include updating zoning regulations for clarity, addressing undefined land uses, streamlining processes for childcare facilities, modifying size restrictions and certain requirements for accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and promoting sustainable practices through enhanced cluster regulations and renewable energy initiatives. Additionally, they strengthen tree clearing and wetland conservation efforts, aligning with goals for sustainable development and diverse housing while preserving community and environmental integrity.

Public Policy

The Proposed Action (adoption of the Comprehensive Plan) puts in place a new public policy framework for the Town of Riverhead that modernizes the Town's approach to land use planning. It aligns with existing land use plans such as the Downtown Revitalization Initiative Strategic Investment Plan and the TOD Plan, as well as regional planning efforts like the Suffolk County Comprehensive Master Plan 2035. Given this strong alignment with other public policy documents, the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan is not expected to result in significant adverse impacts on public policy. Instead, it strengthens the Town's public policy position and provides a cohesive direction for future decision-making.

3.2 Demographics, Housing, and Economic Conditions

Demographics

The Draft 2024 Comprehensive Plan does not contain specific policies on demographics but discusses potential population changes due to recommended zoning alterations. The Future with Action scenario (Proposed Action) as presented in the Build-out, has the potential to result in an increase of approximately 267 units of assisted living, 30 units of multifamily housing, 67 townhomes, and a reduction of approximately 87 single-family homes as compared to the Future without Action scenario. This would result in an incremental increase of approximately 278 additional residents in the Town by 2035, if all developments utilize TDR. If TDR is not used, the anticipated population increase is projected to be an incremental increase of only 116 residents. The NYMTC² 2035 population projection for Riverhead is 40,009. The increase of 278 new residents by 2035 equates to a 0.69% increase in the Town's population, while an increase of 116 residents is only a 0.39% increase. This minor increase would not result in a significant adverse impact to the Town's demographics.

Housing

The Town of Riverhead aims to continue promoting housing affordability and availability while addressing potential challenges arising from mounting development pressure, such as strains on infrastructure and services. Strategies include monitoring short-term rentals to preserve year-round housing availability and advocating for regional cooperation to manage housing crises collectively, particularly in neighboring areas like Flanders/Riverside. By quantifying the impacts of short-term rental units and considering regulations to maintain housing stock for permanent residents, Riverhead can preserve housing affordability amidst evolving market dynamics. Additionally, Riverhead plans to encourage diverse housing types by eliminating minimum home size requirements, utilizing TDR, promoting adaptive reuse of buildings, and revising standards for ADUs to foster a flexible and sustainable housing landscape.

Additionally, the Comprehensive Plan acknowledges potential impacts on community services, infrastructure, transportation, and historic character resulting from proposed initiatives to encourage diverse housing types.

² Sources: NYMTC, 2022; NYMTC 2055 SED Forecasts, 2020; U.S. Decennial Census, 2010-2020; ACS 5-Year Estimates 2022

Strategies such as eliminating minimum home size requirements, utilizing Transfer of Development Rights (TDR), and promoting adaptive reuse of buildings require careful assessment to ensure compatibility with existing infrastructure and services. Furthermore, revisions to standards for ADUs aim to streamline the approval process and reduce barriers to new housing, potentially impacting community services and infrastructure. These initiatives necessitate further study to determine policy details and assess potential impacts prior to implementation.

Policies for residential districts and housing as a whole aim to address various aspects of housing affordability, diversity, homeownership, and inclusivity. Policies furthering these goals are anticipated to have positive impacts on the community because they prioritize community needs, promote sustainable development, and provide resources to support housing initiatives. Overall, the recommendations offer a comprehensive framework for sustainable housing development in Riverhead, with no foreseen negative impacts due to their balanced and community-focused approach.

The recommended zoning changes analyzed in the build-out have the potential by 20235, under the Future with Action scenario, to result in an incremental increase of approximately 267 units of assisted living, approximately 30 multifamily units, approximately 67 townhomes, and a reduction of approximately 87 single-family homes, as compared to the Future without Action scenario. This change would promote a variety of housing types, while promoting the preservation of the Town's sensitive lands through the use of TDR (143 TDR credits are needed to achieve the With TDR scenario), supporting the Town's goals of promoting the preservation of sensitive land while also providing a mix of housing types.

Economic Conditions

The Plan revises the development strategy for Enterprise Park at Calverton (EPCAL) to match local economic and community needs while addressing potential development impacts, emphasizing infrastructure and community preparedness. It aims to balance economic growth with the preservation of Riverhead's rural and residential areas by enhancing recreational opportunities, applying green building standards, and transitioning certain industrial areas to light industrial zones to promote environmental responsibility and minimize visual impacts.

The Comprehensive Plan emphasizes collaborating with local entities like the Business Improvement District (BID) and the Chamber of Commerce, along with neighboring communities, to spur economic development and sustainable growth. It underscores the importance of eco-friendly business practices and balancing tourism with Riverhead's rural appeal to enhance both attractiveness and residents' quality of life. The Plan advocates for sustainable industrial designs, resource conservation, and careful management of agritourism and short-term rental impacts through regulations and community involvement.

The impacts of the Comprehensive Plan's recommendations focus on zoning changes in industrial areas, large format retail, agricultural lands, lodging facilities, and the fiscal implications of these changes. For industrial areas, the Plan proposes reducing development density while providing flexibility in building heights and enhancing design standards. This is aimed at creating appropriately scaled development that minimizes adverse effects on nearby residential zones. The expected reduction in development space, along with measures like non-disturbance buffers and regulated outdoor storage, seeks to balance economic development with community aesthetics and environmental integrity. Vertical farming is encouraged across all zones to promote sustainable land use and revitalize underused spaces without negative impacts. In large format retail spaces like the BUS F district, the Plan allows for more flexible zoning to accommodate new retail trends, aiming to enhance vibrancy without compromising community well-being. Agricultural land recommendations aim to sustain farming activities and manage environmental impacts through policies like permitting vertical farming and renewable energy installations. These measures seek to diversify land use, support economic stability for

farmers, and promote sustainable practices without detracting from the area's rural character or imposing significant visual or environmental impacts.

Fiscal impacts are analyzed based on potential development changes, indicating that the proposed zoning adjustments would likely have a minimal to positive effect on local income, business income, wages, taxes, and job creation. Decreased industrial and commercial development is expected to slightly reduce property tax revenue but also lessen the demand for additional services. The development of residential areas, assisted living, and multifamily units under the Plan could generate significant economic benefits, outweighing the costs associated with servicing the incremental population increase. This analysis suggests that the recommended changes could provide a net fiscal benefit to the Town, enhancing economic and community well-being while ensuring sustainable growth and development practices.

3.3 Historic and Scenic Resources

Historic Resources

The Proposed Action is not expected to adversely affect Riverhead's historic resources, as the Comprehensive Plan focuses on preserving and enhancing the Town's historic heritage through conservation-focused strategies and stakeholder collaboration. It includes initiatives like public signage and educational programs to increase historic awareness without causing environmental harm, promotes new developments that are sensitive to the historical context, and supports adaptive reuse for economic revitalization. The Plan also introduces zoning mechanisms to protect historic areas and advocates for cluster development to maintain scenic and historic integrity.

The Plan proposes allowing increased residential density via TDR credits in the largely developed Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area, part of the Downtown Riverhead Historic District, noting its low potential for undiscovered archaeological artifacts.

Town and state review processes, including consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), would ensure that any future development considers the impact on historic and archeological resources, with the use of TDR credits playing a significant role in mitigating potential impacts on the historic built environment. By correspondence dated February 3, 2024, the SHPO has recognized that historic resources have been appropriately acknowledged and considered in the Comprehensive Plan, and no specific concerns were identified (See DGEIS Appendix 3).

Scenic Resources

According to NYSDEC's policy on assessing and mitigating visual and aesthetic impacts, the goal is to minimize potential impacts on visual or aesthetic quality through sensitive treatment or design that avoids significant impacts. The Comprehensive Plan aligns with this by promoting the protection of visual resources through conservation, preservation of historic resources, and the protection and expansion of parks and trails. In selecting sites for recommended rezonings, the Town focused on areas that are largely previously developed commercial or industrial sites, not close to identified visual resources, ensuring that proposed changes blend with the existing built nature of these areas and adhere to NYSDEC's objectives for visual resource protection.

The Plan's execution wouldn't alter the Town's current visual and aesthetic character directly but would serve as a guiding framework for future Town actions to protect and enhance scenic and historic resources, thereby benefiting aesthetic conditions overall. The Plan also proposes a study to identify scenic resources and significant views, potentially leading to a greater appreciation and awareness of these assets. Any future zoning amendments would undergo site-specific review under SEQR.

3.4 Transportation and Mobility

The Comprehensive Plan's analysis reveals that the recommended zoning changes would influence future transportation demands and land development in the Town. Specifically, the Plan's build-out scenario, anticipates modifications in zoning regulations to guide development or redevelopment. This scenario projects a shift in transportation system demand based on potential developments under current and recommended zoning, calculated through trip generation and parking demand analyses.

Proposed changes in specific districts, such as the New Calverton Industrial District and Light Industrial zones, aim to reduce allowable development densities. This is expected to lower the number of vehicle trips and reduce parking demand, contributing to less congested transportation networks. Introduction of an overlay zone would enable increased density near Peconic Bay Medical Center, potentially adding up to 267 assisted living units by 2035. While this increases trips compared to current zoning, the Comprehensive Plan suggests a net reduction in trip generation when considering full development potential. Density increases in these zones are projected to moderately increase vehicle trips and parking demand, yet not significantly impact local transportation infrastructure. Despite a slight increase in housing units and related trips from the application of TDR credits, impacts on the transportation system remain minimal.

Overall, the plan's proposed zoning changes are designed to manage growth sustainably, reducing overall trip generation and slightly increasing parking demand. Over the next decade, these changes are expected to generate only 56 additional trips and a 61-vehicle increase in parking demand, indicating minimal impact on the Town's transportation system and infrastructure requirements.

3.5 Community Facilities

Police, Fire, and EMS

The proposed recommended rezoning area changes would result in a reduction of industrial/office and commercial uses, as well as single-family residential development within more remote areas of Town. These reductions would off-set any potential increase in service from the addition of 267 units of assisted living, 67 townhomes, and 31 multifamily units as projected under the Future with Action condition. These units would also be more concentrated within developed portions of town in closer proximity to existing services. The proposed new development would generate approximately \$551,672 in additional tax dollars to the Town as compared to the Future without Action condition, including for the police department and fire and ambulance districts, to support any increase in services.

The introduction of assisted living near Peconic Bay Medical Center are expected to minimally increase service calls, these developments would be offset by additional tax income. New TDR Sending Areas are projected to decrease single-family home development, reducing future service demands and positively impacting community services. CRC and PRC district changes aim to diversify housing and preserve sensitive areas, with minimal expected increases in service calls due to the nature of new, centralized townhome developments. Tax revenue from these developments is anticipated to support any increased service needs. Adjustments to the TDR map for the Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area encourage multi-family developments with minimal anticipated impact on community services, balanced by additional tax revenue. Lodging facilities are encouraged through TDR utilization, with potential tourism-related demands on services to be mitigated through specific project evaluations. Overall, the rezoning is expected to decrease demand for industrial, office, and remote single-family developments, offsetting potential service increases from new assisted living, townhomes, and multi-family units. These developments, concentrated in developed areas, along with the projected tax revenue increase of approximately \$551,672, are expected to support any needed service expansions.

School District

The recommended rezoning area changes (Future with Action Scenario – with TDR) would result in a net reduction of 24 school children entering the Riverhead CSD when compared to development under existing zoning (Future without Action Scenario) if all future development were to utilize TDR to achieve increased density. Without the use of TDR, development in the recommended rezoning areas has the potential to result in approximately 25 additional school children entering the Riverhead CSD over the next ten years. The estimate of 25 school children is unlikely to be realized given that it is anticipated that the development community would utilize TDR to achieve increased development densities within the Assisted Living overlay District, RRA-OD, CRC and PRC districts. Therefore, it is more likely that the Proposed Action would generate less than 25 school children and potentially result in a net reduction of school children of up to 24 students. The recommended zoning changes also have the potential to result in a reduction of 208 school children in the Shoreham-Wading River CSD and Mattituck-Cutchogue UFSD. These projections include all school age children, and although most would attend Riverhead CSD, some may attend private school, and therefore this represents a conservative projection.

While it is possible that these proposed changes could have a slight increase in enrollment if no TDR credits were used, the build-out would occur in a phased manner over ten years and be spread across the seven Riverhead CSD schools and would not create a one-time or abrupt increase in the number of school aged children. This slow pace of increase allows the Riverhead CSD time to absorb the minimal number of additional school aged children that could be generated. Importantly, it is anticipated that the new development would also contribute between \$224,559 to \$697,548 in tax revenues to the Riverhead CSD. Considering the relatively small number of school children generated, the phased nature in which they would be expected to join the school system and the increased revenues accrued to the Riverhead CSD, no significant adverse impacts to schools are anticipated.

3.6 Open Space, Parks, and Recreation

The Comprehensive Plan advocates for the creation of new parks and open spaces, prioritizing environmentally sensitive and underserved areas, while also emphasizing the development of recreational facilities and enhancement of public spaces in Downtown Riverhead. The goal of PRC District modifications is to enable mixed residential, commercial, and recreational use, encouraging diverse housing through TDR while adhering to planning standards. Challenges in preserving open spaces and meeting NYSDEC regulations are addressed by designing guidelines for responsible growth that respect environmental standards and enhance community and development sustainability. To protect agricultural lands and open spaces, 70% of land in RA-40 and RB-40 zones is earmarked for preservation, with development focused on the remaining area. This strategy promotes efficient land use while ensuring the conservation of natural features, with a mandate to preserve 38 acres through cluster development, safeguarding open spaces in these zones. Analysis indicates a potential shift in the Town's makeup by 2035, with a slight increase in population and changes in residential and commercial structures, emphasizing townhomes, multi-family units, and assisted living facilities. Despite these developments, the impact on open space, parks, and recreation is deemed minimal due to strategic planning and regulations ensuring the addition of recreational resources and open spaces over the next decade. The anticipated modest population growth under the recommended actions by 2035 is not expected to significantly increase the demand for the Town's open spaces, parks, or recreational facilities, given the comprehensive planning and regulatory measures in place.

3.7 Natural Features, Environmental Resources, and Agriculture

Natural Features and Environmental Resources

The Comprehensive Plan articulates a proactive approach towards preserving the Town's natural resources and environmental assets. Strategies focus on adherence to the Central Pine Barrens Land Use Plan's standards, promoting the Pine Barrens Transfer of Development Rights program to limit development, and partnering with various entities for land acquisition within the Central Pine Barrens. These measures aim to preserve critical natural resources, ensuring long-term ecological integrity and water quality.

To safeguard water resources, the Plan introduces a Comprehensive Water Management Plan targeting nitrogen reduction and water quality improvement. Recommendations include the adoption of innovative wastewater treatment systems and enhanced enforcement of waste discharge regulations, aimed at reducing pollutants and ensuring sustainable drinking water sources. The encouragement of permeable barriers and incentives for eco-friendly systems also contribute to groundwater protection. Addressing the challenge of increased stormwater runoff and potential flooding, the Plan calls for updated stormwater management practices and revised impervious surface regulations. These actions are designed to reduce overflow and flooding risks, thereby enhancing the community's resilience to climate change impacts.

To combat coastal erosion, the Plan proposes clarifying Coastal Erosion Hazard Code regulations and utilizing Lidar data for effective monitoring. These measures are intended to protect coastal features and minimize erosion risks, ensuring the preservation of the Town's shoreline. Efforts to protect environmentally sensitive areas include conservation strategies such as wildlife corridor documentation and wetlands restoration partnerships. The Plan encourages eco-friendly landscaping and maintenance to enhance biodiversity and manage stormwater. Through public education and support for private property owners, it seeks to foster sustainable practices across the community. In addition to these, enhancing the Town's capacity for environmental conservation involves creating specialized positions and improving regulatory enforcement.

The recommended rezoning changes and Build-out Analysis in the Comprehensive Plan aim to balance development with environmental preservation. Modifications in PRC Districts would support diverse housing through TDRs while ensuring the protection of natural areas and adherence to NYSDEC regulations through specific design guidelines and thorough Planning Board reviews. Cluster development in RA-40 and RB-40 zones intends to safeguard 70% of land for open space, addressing the impact of agricultural land conversion. The analysis predicts a shift in land use that reduces industrial and commercial footprints while increasing residential and assisted living spaces, enhancing sewer and infrastructure access, and protecting sensitive lands through strategic development concentration. The recommended rezoning area changes are on balance protective of the Town's natural features, environmental features, and agricultural lands.

Agricultural Lands

The Comprehensive Plan details strategies for enhancing the Town's agricultural lands, aiming to improve the TDR program, increase its use, safeguard agricultural land, cultivate agricultural resilience and innovation, and support agritourism. These goals are expected to positively impact the preservation of community identity, agricultural heritage, and natural resources while promoting responsible development. Recommendations focus on strengthening the TDR program by expanding receiving areas to foster a robust market and encourage participation, with strategies for various districts to support this growth. These changes are expected to boost TDR credit sales, promoting sustainable development without harming the district's development potential. Adjusting the transfer formula to reflect current market and infrastructure realities aims to optimize TDR credit use, with periodic reviews to maintain balance between development incentives and conservation. The Comprehensive Plan also recommends a comprehensive approach to preserving agricultural land, prioritizing development rights purchases, and promoting cluster development to prevent agricultural land fragmentation.

Establishing a Community Preservation Fund (CPF) Management Division is intended to manage these efforts effectively. Recommendations address the need for agricultural resilience and innovation, proposing zoning flexibility for agricultural uses and renewable energy installations, aiming to support local farmers' economic vitality and sustainable agricultural practices. Finally, the Plan seeks to regulate agritourism by creating clear definitions and implementing a permitting process, balancing economic growth with community well-being and ensuring that agritourism activities operate sustainably without compromising the rural landscape or agricultural operations.

The Comprehensive Plan for Riverhead proposes enhancements to the TDR program and rezoning areas to foster responsible growth while conserving the Town's agricultural heritage. By expanding receiving areas and adjusting policies across various districts—including single-family, industrial, and specific community zones—the Plan aims to stimulate a healthier TDR market, anticipated to generate significant demand for TDR credits over the next decade. These strategic changes are designed to direct development in a manner that balances growth with preservation, ensuring the community's character and the sustainability of agricultural practices remain intact. Additionally, proposed zoning adjustments seek to support agricultural productivity and innovation through vertical farming, renewable energy initiatives, and agritourism, alongside regulatory reforms to maintain the rural landscape and facilitate adaptive land use. Collectively, these recommendations are expected to positively impact Riverhead's development trajectory, aligning with the Town's commitment to sustainable management and preservation of agricultural and environmental assets.

3.8 Infrastructure and Utilities

Sanitary Waste

The anticipated development over the next 10 years is based on growth projections provided by NYMTC (New York Metropolitan Transportation Council) specifically tailored to reflect the unique growth dynamics of the town. Accordingly, residential development is expected to increase by 9% and commercial / industrial development is expected to increase by 12%. As demonstrated in Chapter 3.7, build out under the recommended zoning changes would have a minimal impact of the production of sanitary waste. It is anticipated that the additional sanitary waste flows within or adjacent to the existing sewer districts will be accommodated through a combination of connections to the existing sewage treatment facilities and the planned expansion and modernization of those facilities. For development not within the sewer districts, methodologies including on site wastewater treatment for large developments and/or conventional septic systems are expected to be utilized.

Solid Waste

A large majority of the potential additional residential development that could occur should the proposed zoning amendments be adopted would take the form of multi-family residential buildings, which are considered commercial properties for solid waste collection purposes. The proposed zoning would allow for increased density in some zones, which would allow more residential units to be developed. Therefore, buildout under the proposed zoning would increase the production of solid waste by residential properties. In industrial zones, reduced development is projected based on the proposed zoning, which would also result in reduced solid waste. Finally, a small number of new residential units is projected, which would slightly increase the amount of solid water that is handled by the Town of Riverhead Refuse and Garbage District. commercial property owners must contract for private waste collection services within the Town of Riverhead, and any new industrial development under the current zoning will be subject to the same requirements. Disposition of solid waste will continue to be the responsibility of the individual commercial entities. The incremental increase in solid waste generated by the increased residential development allowable under the Future with Action scenario is not expected to have a significant impact.

Drinking Water

Insofar as the recommended zoning changes would result in less industrial and commercial development than under the current zoning, less water demand can be expected to be generated should the recommended changes be adopted. The recommended zoning changes have the potential to result in more residential development than under the current zoning which would result in a greater demand for water demand to be generated should the recommended changes be adopted which would be provided by the Riverhead Water District. The district indicates that ample supply is available to meet the demand.

Sea Level Rise and Floodplain Management

The policies contained in the Comprehensive Plan seek to address potential impacts related to future sea level rise and flooding. The Plan recommends the continuation of infrastructure improvements to mitigate flood impacts, the development of a resiliency plan to assess vulnerable locations and measures to mitigate coastal flooding and erosion. Further, as part of any future site-specific development project, properties located within areas of potential sea level rise or identified floodplains would be required to meet all applicable codes and mitigate risk as part of site-specific approvals and review under SEQR.

1.7. Mitigation Measures

The Proposed Action is generic in nature, designed to guide future development while preserving environmental integrity and community values. All future development would require site-specific review under SEQR, where mitigation measures might be identified and required. The Plan carefully aims to strike a balance between facilitating development in targeted areas and limiting it in others to ensure sustainable growth. As changes stemming from the Plan's adoption unfold over time, each development project would be evaluated under SEQR to assess and mitigate site-specific impacts appropriately. No significant adverse impacts are anticipated from the Plan's adoption, and thus, no site-specific or neighborhood-wide mitigation measures are necessary. . Future projects within Riverhead would require site specific analysis and SEQR review as noted in Chapter 6.o: Subsequent SEQR Actions, which sets forth further studies that may be necessary for comprehensive site-specific review. Site specific mitigation measures would be developed as appropriate during future site specific SEQR review of development actions.

1.8. Involved and Interested Agencies

Involved Agencies

Under SEQR, the lead agency is responsible for coordinating the SEQR review process, as well as discretionary decision making regarding the Proposed Action. For the DGEIS, the Town Board of the Town of Riverhead is the lead agency. As lead agency, the Town Board is responsible for preparing a determination of significance, determining the scope and adequacy of the DGEIS, coordinating the preparation of the Final GEIS, and preparing SEQR findings. The lead agency and the involved agencies have authority to fund, approve, or directly undertake some aspect of the Proposed Action. For this Proposed Action, there are no other involved agencies besides the Town Board.

Town of Riverhead Town Board (Lead Agency)
Town of Riverhead
4 West 2nd Street
Riverhead, NY 11901

Interested Agencies

Unlike an involved agency, interested agencies do not have the authority to fund, approve, or directly undertake some aspect of the Proposed Action. Instead, interested agencies may contribute relevant scoping topics, submit written comments during the DGEIS comment period, and comment on the DGEIS at public hearings. For this DGEIS, interested agencies include the following:

- Town of Riverhead, Planning Board, Edward Densieski, Chair
- Town of Riverhead Industrial Development Agency
- Town of Riverhead Departments
- Suffolk County Department of Planning, Lisa Broughton, Director of Water Quality and Energy
- Suffolk County Department of Health Services, Gregson H. Pigott, MD, MPH Commissioner
- Suffolk County Planning Commission (239-m Review)
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

1.9. Required Approval and Review

This DGEIS identifies and discusses all required approvals and reviews needed to adopt the Proposed Action. The Proposed Action would require the following approval and review:

TOWN OF RIVERHEAD BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- Adoption of the Comprehensive Plan Update

TOWN OF RIVERHEAD PLANNING BOARD

- Advisory review of Proposed Action

SUFFOLK COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

- Advisory review of the Proposed Action and DGEIS under GML Section 23

Following adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, the Town Board would be in a position to draft and adopt Zoning Code and Map Amendments in line with the Plan recommendations. Adoption of future Zoning Code and Map Amendments would require a public hearing on the draft amendments and subsequent review under SEQOR.

2.0. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

The Town of Riverhead Town Board proposes to adopt the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update (“Comprehensive Plan” and the “Proposed Action”) and has determined that a Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) would be prepared to assess the potential for significant adverse environmental impacts associated with adoption. This DGEIS has been prepared pursuant to the requirements of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) and its implementing regulations at 6 NYCRR Part 617.

A Comprehensive Plan is a document that has as its purpose: “the control of land uses for the benefit of the whole community” (NY Town Law §272-a). The Town’s last Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2003. The 2024 Comprehensive Plan is intended to provide a framework to guide land use and policy decisions in the Town. As the gateway to the East End of Long Island, Riverhead is known for its scenic beauty, historic character, agricultural activity, and diverse range of businesses, cultural activities, and outdoor recreation opportunities. The policies that comprise the Comprehensive Plan are anticipated to guide the development of the Town for the next 10-20 years. These policies and their implementation (proposed Zoning Text and Map Amendments), where applicable, would be the subject of the DGEIS.

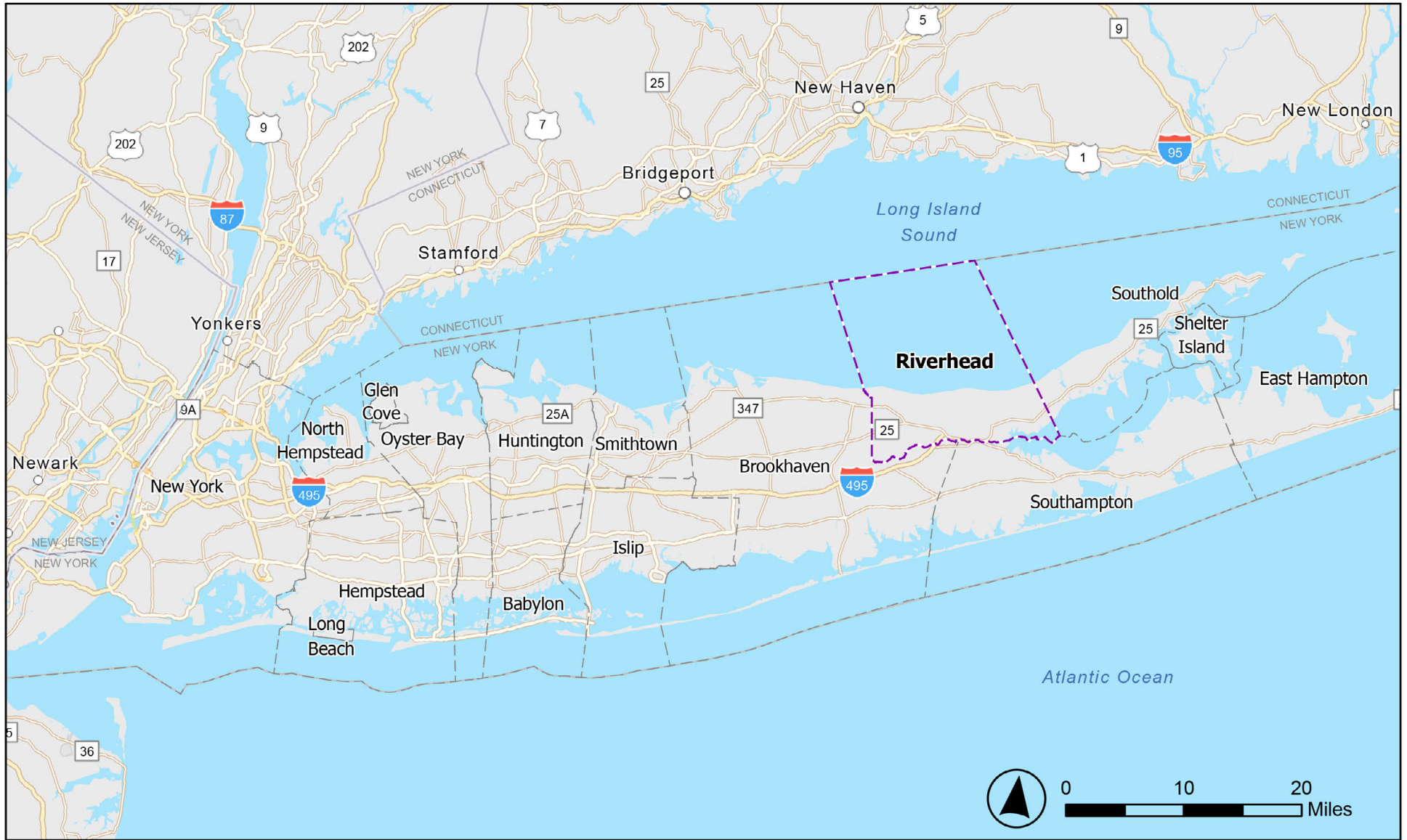
2.1. Project Location and Environmental Setting

The Comprehensive Plan extends over the entire geographic area of the Town of Riverhead. The Town of Riverhead is located on the eastern end of Long Island, New York, in Suffolk County, as shown in Figure 2-1. Geographically, Riverhead is situated on the North Fork of Long Island, bordered by Long Island Sound to the north and the Peconic Bay to the south. It is located to the east of the Town of Brookhaven, west of the Town of Southold, and north of the Town of Southampton. In 2020, Riverhead’s population was approximately 35,902 people. Riverhead’s population grew by 30% between 2000-2020, a much faster rate than Suffolk County (8%).³ As seen in Figure 2-2, the Town of Riverhead has nine hamlet areas, which are akin to neighborhoods, each with their own character, history, and their own unique set of amenities.

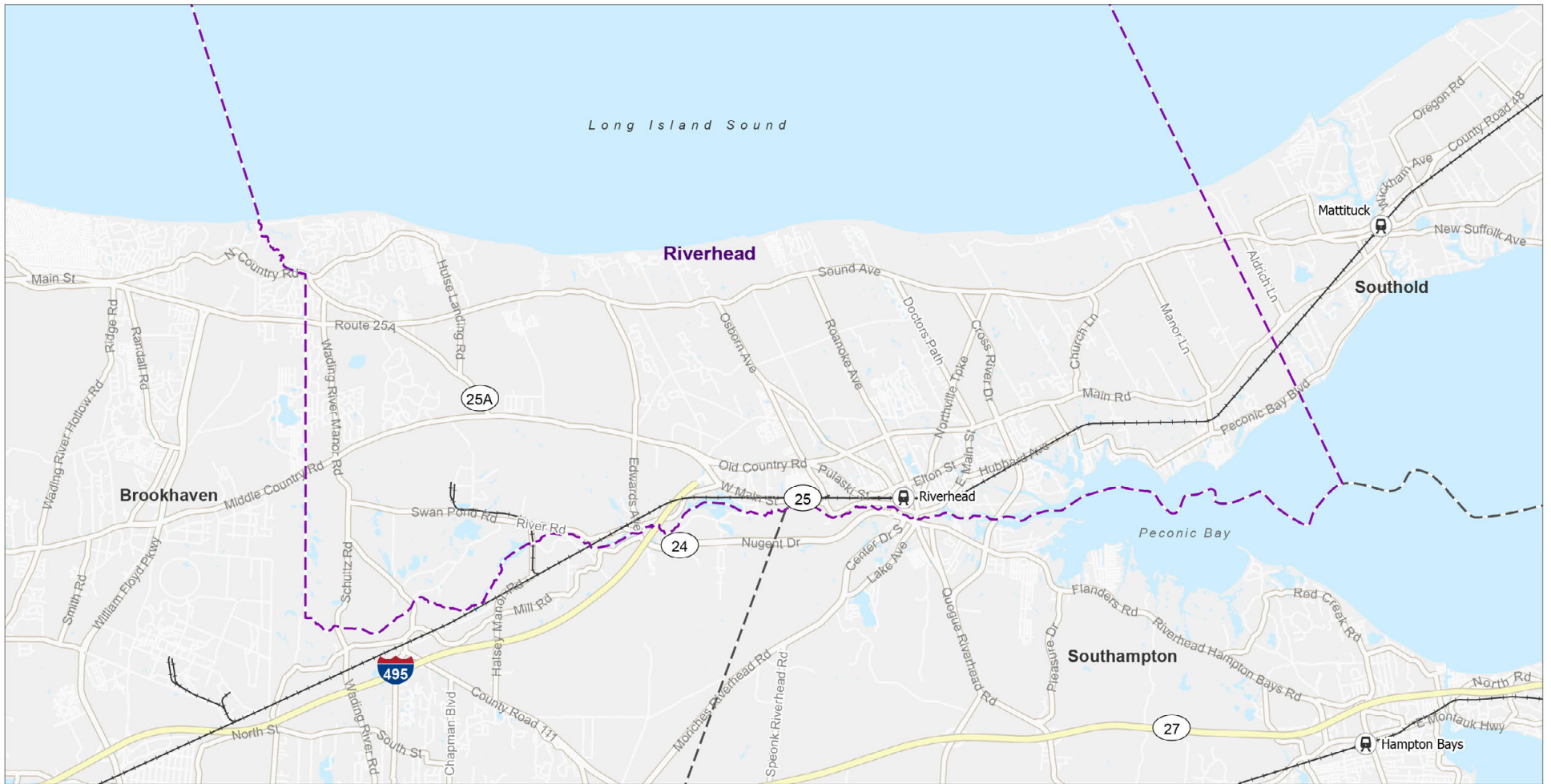
The Town’s land areas include over 41,000 acres, or approximately 65 square miles. As an agricultural community, farmland plays an essential role in the livelihood of residents, property owners, and businesspeople. Agriculture is the largest land use in Riverhead, making up 36.5% of Riverhead’s land area (approximately 15,000 acres). The next largest land use category is residential (16 percent) followed by open space (12%).

Riverhead is also a coastal community bounded by water on much of its perimeter. In addition to its waterfront along the Peconic Estuary system (which includes the Peconic River, Flanders Bay, and the Great Peconic Bay), Riverhead is bounded to the north by Long Island Sound. Riverhead has over 20 miles of shoreline, including one of the largest spans along the Long Island Sound. Many of the shoreline and coastal areas in Riverhead are scenic — particularly the Sound waterfront, with its picturesque bluffs — and all of them have distinctive plant and animal communities. Additionally, Riverhead has a variety of unique parks, recreational facilities, and beaches that are strung together by a network of wooded lanes, open space, and farmland.

³ U.S. Decennial Census (2000, 2010, 2020)



- Riverhead Town Boundary
- Long Island Town and City Boundaries
- State Boundary
- Freeway
- Highway
- Major Road



- Town of Riverhead Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- LIRR Train Station
- Railroad
- Highway
- Other Major Road
- Water

0 1 2 Miles



Riverhead is connected to neighboring communities and the New York Metropolitan Area via highways and the Long Island Railroad (LIRR). The Town of Riverhead is served by an interstate highway, two (2) highways under New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) Jurisdiction, several Suffolk County roads, and numerous local roads. The easternmost 1.5 miles of Interstate 495 Long Island Expressway, lies within the Town, having its terminus at a partial cloverleaf interchange known as Exit 73. There are 20 miles of New York State highway, 14 miles of Suffolk County roads, and 208 miles of Town of Riverhead roadway within the Town. The Riverhead train station is a 2.5-3 hour ride to Penn Station, with trains connecting to Manhattan via the Ronkonkoma line. Additional public transportation includes Suffolk Transit bus service and limited service by the Hampton Jitney.

2.2. Project History

The process of developing this Plan considered other planning initiatives undertaken by the Town, County, State, and other groups and agencies, including the following:

2.2.1.1. 2003 Comprehensive Plan Update

The most recent update of the Comprehensive Master Plan of the Town of Riverhead was completed in 2003. The 2003 Comprehensive Plan laid the foundation for Riverhead's long-term development, focusing on Downtown revitalization and serving as a framework for subsequent rezoning actions. The plan aimed to shape the Town's character, enhance economic vitality, and promote sustainable growth. The Comprehensive Plan was composed of 11 different elements, as expanded below:

1. **Land Use Element:** The "Proposed Land Use Plan" modified zoning patterns for farmland and open space preservation, emphasizing compact, pedestrian-friendly communities.
2. **Agriculture Element:** Collaboration with farmers aimed to support the agricultural industry, promoting farm business and farmland preservation while respecting property rights.
3. **Natural Resources Conservation Element:** Recognition of the integral role of natural resources in the Town's health, safety, and identity, with a focus on maintaining stream corridors, wetlands, and the aquifer.
4. **Scenic and Historic Resources Preservation Element:** Protection of historic hamlet centers, structures, and unique natural resource areas to maintain Riverhead as a desirable destination.
5. **Business Districts Element:** Promotion of planned commercial retail development, with downtown and hamlet centers as centers for specialty shopping.
6. **Economic Development Element:** Emphasis on capturing the emerging tourist industry and agritourism, promoting a diverse economic base, including office, industrial, and retail development.
7. **Housing Element:** Advocacy for workforce housing distribution throughout the Town, accessible via transit, and indistinguishable in quality from market-rate housing.
8. **Transportation Element:** Designation of Routes 25 and 58 as primary traffic corridors, road improvements with sensitivity to residential areas, and focus on transit, pedestrians, and bicycles in downtown and hamlet centers.
9. **Utility Service Element:** Recognition of the critical role of utility infrastructure, with efforts to expand while limiting negative impacts on the environment and historic resources.
10. **Parks and Recreation Element:** Expansion and improvement of parks to provide residents with exercise and recreational opportunities, contributing to the visual character and quality of life.

11. **Community Facilities Element:** Improvement and expansion of community facilities to protect public safety, enhance the quality of life, and seek efficient multiple-use opportunities.

2.2.1.2. Comprehensive Master Plan of 1973

The prior Comprehensive Master Plan of the Town of Riverhead was completed in 1973. It set forth several planning goals based on a far different vision of Riverhead than exists today. Particular attention was given to the growth expected by 1985, which was never realized. Planning policies were based on a population objective of 25,000 persons by 1978 and between 32,750 and 44,000 persons by 1985. The 1973 Plan identified the maximum potential population at 174,000. The 1973 Plan depended heavily on public infrastructure investment such as major highways and extensive sewerage. Little of that infrastructure was built.

The Long Island Expressway terminated at Route 58. None of the major highway network proposed to crisscross the Town was built. Farmland preservation as a planning tool was not envisioned. Major sewer lines and treatment facilities were not constructed.

2.2.1.3. Other Recent Plans and Projects

The process of developing the Comprehensive Plan Update considered other planning initiatives undertaken by the Town, County, State, and other groups, and agencies. Recommendations from these documents have been woven into the various chapters of the plan where applicable.

In 2012, the Town studied land uses along the Route 25A corridor in the Wading River hamlet, with zoning recommendations to guide community-supported development. The Town subsequently expanded the MRP Zoning Use District to guide development toward residential uses and away from large retail uses in the northwest part of town.

Downtown Riverhead has been the focus of strategic planning initiatives aimed at revitalization. Beginning with the 2016 Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Nomination Study, efforts were made to identify key areas for redevelopment and address abandoned properties. This study evolved with community input, leading to the addition of a Creative Placemaking Plan, fostering an environment for large-scale events, and enhancing the area's vibrancy. Subsequent plans like the 2020 Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Plan and the 2020 Downtown Parking Study aimed at stimulating redevelopment, initiating zoning amendments, and addressing parking demands driven by increased development.

Further initiatives included the 2022 Downtown Riverhead Activation Plan, focusing on connecting Main Street to the Peconic River, and the 2021 Riverhead Downtown Revitalization Initiative, which received a \$10 million grant from New York State. These efforts were supplemented by projects such as the Downtown Riverhead Pattern Book adoption, guiding new policies, and the Town Square Design project, engaging the community in designing a public gathering space. The First Mile/Last Mile MTA Pilot Study in 2022 aimed to enhance station accessibility, emphasizing alternative transportation modes around Riverhead Station. Together, these endeavors signify a comprehensive strategy to transform Downtown Riverhead into a vibrant and accessible community hub.

2.3. Public Needs and Benefits

As the gateway to the East End of Long Island, Riverhead is known for its scenic beauty, historic character, agricultural activity, and diverse range of businesses, cultural activities, and outdoor recreation opportunities. While the Town's location presents many opportunities, it also has its challenges such as increased development pressures, traffic, and other environmental impacts. One of the long-term challenges for the community would be to manage growth effectively and balance the needs of residents, businesses, and the environment. The

purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide a roadmap for future growth and development in the Town for the next 10 years.

2.4. Public Involvement

The Comprehensive Plan is a result of a robust public outreach process designed to identify, understand, and integrate the community's vision for the future development and preservation of Riverhead. This planning effort builds off research and public engagement completed by the Town and its previous consultant team between 2020 and 2022. The consultants, in coordination with the Town and a Steering Committee (formerly the Central Advisory Committee or "CAC") conducted public outreach and developed several documents which reported on existing conditions, trends, and goals. The public engagement program included the following in-person and virtual activities:

- 2 public workshops
- 4 Hamlet-focused public meetings
- 10 Topic-oriented public meetings
- A public survey with 467 submissions
- An online interactive map with approximately 110 comments
- Questionnaires to Town boards, commissions, committees, and civic groups with 11 responses out of 29 sent (See responses in DGEIS Appendix 4)
- Monthly meetings with Steering Committee
- Weekly meetings with Town Staff
- Briefings with Town Board
- 10 Focus Group Meetings (See list in DGEIS Appendix 4)
- Other targeted stakeholder outreach (i.e., department heads, business owners, and civic groups) (see DGEIS Appendix 4).

2.5. Description of the Proposed Action

2.5.1. Vision

The Vision Statement in the 2024 Comprehensive Plan is as follows:

"Our vision for the Town of Riverhead is a vibrant and sustainable community that balances economic growth, environmental stewardship, and quality of life for all residents. We envision a future where our downtown area is thriving with local businesses, cultural attractions, public art and recreational opportunities that cater to residents and visitors of all incomes, ages and abilities. We would continue to support farming and the agricultural sector, which provide economic opportunities and is central to the region's economy, natural beauty, and rural charm. We would strive to improve economic opportunities for our residents, but plan for the impacts of expanding tourism and economic development to ensure that adverse impacts are minimized, and that the community remains enjoyable for both residents and visitors.

We are a welcoming and inclusive town and would work to enhance those attributes so that all residents can continue to thrive and enjoy a high quality of life. We would continue to work collaboratively with our community partners to provide housing opportunities that are attainable for a range of income levels, quality education, and essential services, while preserving our rural character and promoting smart growth.

We must also build a sustainable future which supports the long-term wellbeing of our environment and our residents. We strive to become a model for sustainable development by incorporating innovative technologies, green infrastructure, and community-driven initiatives that address our environmental, social, and economic needs.”

2.5.2. Goals

The Comprehensive Plan encompasses a strategic roadmap for sustainable, inclusive, and resilient development, structured across 13 chapters. Chapters 1 and 2 serve as the foundational pillars, introducing the planning context and providing an overview of land use patterns and zoning. The subsequent chapters, from 3 to 12, outline specific goals aligned with community aspirations, each accompanied by a set of recommendations to guide the town's trajectory over the next decade and beyond. These goals are designed not only to foster growth but also to prioritize the enhancement of residential quality of life while safeguarding Riverhead's distinctive character. Chapter 13, titled "Future Land Use," serves as the culmination, offering a comprehensive overview of recommendations regarding potential changes in land use and zoning, thus providing a roadmap for the town's sustainable development and growth.

In addition, the Plan goals, as outlined in chapters 3 through 12 are as follows:

Demographics and Housing (Chapter 3)

1. Continue to promote housing affordability and the availability of quality affordable and workforce housing in Riverhead and throughout the region.
2. Encourage more diverse housing types to accommodate a wide range of income levels and to address evolving housing needs.
3. Support creation and protection of homeownership for workforce-income households.
4. Promote inclusive housing policies and accessible design standards to ensure that housing is available to people of all ages and abilities.

Economic Development (Chapter 4)

1. Reassess the development strategy for EPCAL to ensure the economic and community benefits of proposed projects align with local needs and that impacts are proactively addressed.
2. Encourage appropriately scaled and designed development in industrial areas that better aligns with the character and needs of the surrounding areas.
3. Emphasize Downtown Riverhead as the Town's civic, cultural, specialty shopping, and historic center.
4. Enhance the Route 58 Corridor to create a more attractive destination, improve accessibility, and cultivate a hospitable environment for regional and local traffic.
5. Guide responsible land use planning in hamlet centers.
6. Balance fiscal and community benefits when considering new development and zoning decisions.
7. Continue to work with local partners on economic development initiatives.
8. Promote sustainable economic growth and development and foster the creation of employment opportunities.
9. Achieve a harmonious blend of tourism and rural charm, making Riverhead an attractive destination while upholding residents' quality of life.
10. Promote more environmentally friendly business.

Transportation and Mobility (Chapter 5)

1. Alleviate congestion, elevate safety, and improve mobility on current infrastructure without excessive expansion.
2. Preserve and enhance historic and scenic corridors while improving traffic flow and safety.
3. Support economic growth at EPCAL through a well-defined transportation plan.
4. Foster increased use of public transportation.
5. Encourage safe and accessible pedestrian and bicycle transportation.
6. Coordinate transportation improvements with adjacent towns and other agencies.

Agricultural Lands (Chapter 6)

1. Improve the marketplace for the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program.
2. Increase the use of TDR through administrative improvements and access to new funding mechanisms.
3. Safeguard agricultural land through diverse approaches to preservation.
4. Cultivate agricultural resilience and innovation for a sustainable future.
5. Support agritourism as a sustainable income source, balancing economic growth and community well-being.
6. Promote Riverhead's agricultural industry and products.

Natural Features and Environmental Resources (Chapter 7)

1. Protect and preserve the ecological integrity of Riverhead's Central Pine Barrens area and the water quality of Long Island's sole source aquifer.
2. Protect the quality of ground water and surface waters throughout the Town.
3. Limit future increases in impervious surfaces and stormwater runoff to help reduce flood impacts and surface water pollution.
4. Conserve coastal features, including bluffs, shoreline, and dunes.
5. Protect and restore environmentally sensitive lands, wetlands, and marine habitats.
6. Encourage eco-friendly landscaping and maintenance techniques.
7. Increase the Town's administrative capacity for natural resource conservation efforts.

Open Space, Parks, and Recreation (Chapter 8)

1. Expand recreational opportunities to address additional community interests and needs.
2. Activate the Peconic Riverfront and other navigable waterways with recreation opportunities and good stewardship.
3. Encourage open space preservation and public access opportunities in new development.

Scenic and Historic Resources (Chapter 9)

1. Continue to identify, document, and promote public awareness of town's historic resources.
2. Protect scenic resources and views.
3. Ensure that design of new development is compatible with its surroundings and scenic and historic resources.
4. Protect historic resources from destruction or neglect and encourage their restoration and adaptive reuse.

Community Facilities (Chapter 10)

1. Enhance responsiveness and service quality of emergency services.
2. Strengthen community well-being through enhanced programming and facilities for all ages.
3. Support expansion of school district facilities to accommodate growing demand.
4. Increase options for affordable and accessible childcare.
5. Strengthen the Town's capacity to address diverse community health and human service needs.

Infrastructure and Utilities (Chapter 11)

1. Continue to meet emerging solid waste management challenges as disposal opportunities evolve
2. Improve the efficiency of the existing Town water supply system and ensure its ability to expand to address future demand.
3. Continue to protect groundwater through modern wastewater treatment strategies.
4. Coordinate with electric, natural gas, cellular telephone/wi-fi, cable TV, and internet service providers.

Sustainability and Resilience (Chapter 12)

1. Embrace renewable energy sources to achieve the State's targets of 70% renewable sources by 2030 and 100% zero-emission electricity by 2040.
2. Promote sustainable building practices, landscaping, and design.
3. Promote sustainable transportation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
4. Reduce waste and promote circular economy waste management practices.
5. Promote a green economy and green finance, technology, and jobs.
6. Mitigate the effects of flooding, sea level rise, and storm surge.
7. Ensure the safety of Riverhead residents, employees, and visitors in emergencies and strengthen the Town's emergency preparedness.

2.5.3. Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan

Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan, once approved, would be an incremental process. The first implementation step would be to update the Town's zoning regulations, Chapter 301 of the Town Code, to reflect all of the newly adopted goals and policies in the Comprehensive Plan. This is the linkage and consistency between the land use plan and the land use regulation that enables the Town to review and approve private development proposals with uniformity and effectiveness in conformity with state law.

Likewise, the land use policies of the Plan are to be incorporated into Town government's day-to-day decision-making and administration. New development applications such as subdivisions and site plans would be required to comply with the Plan's policies as expressed in the Town's zoning and subdivision regulations.

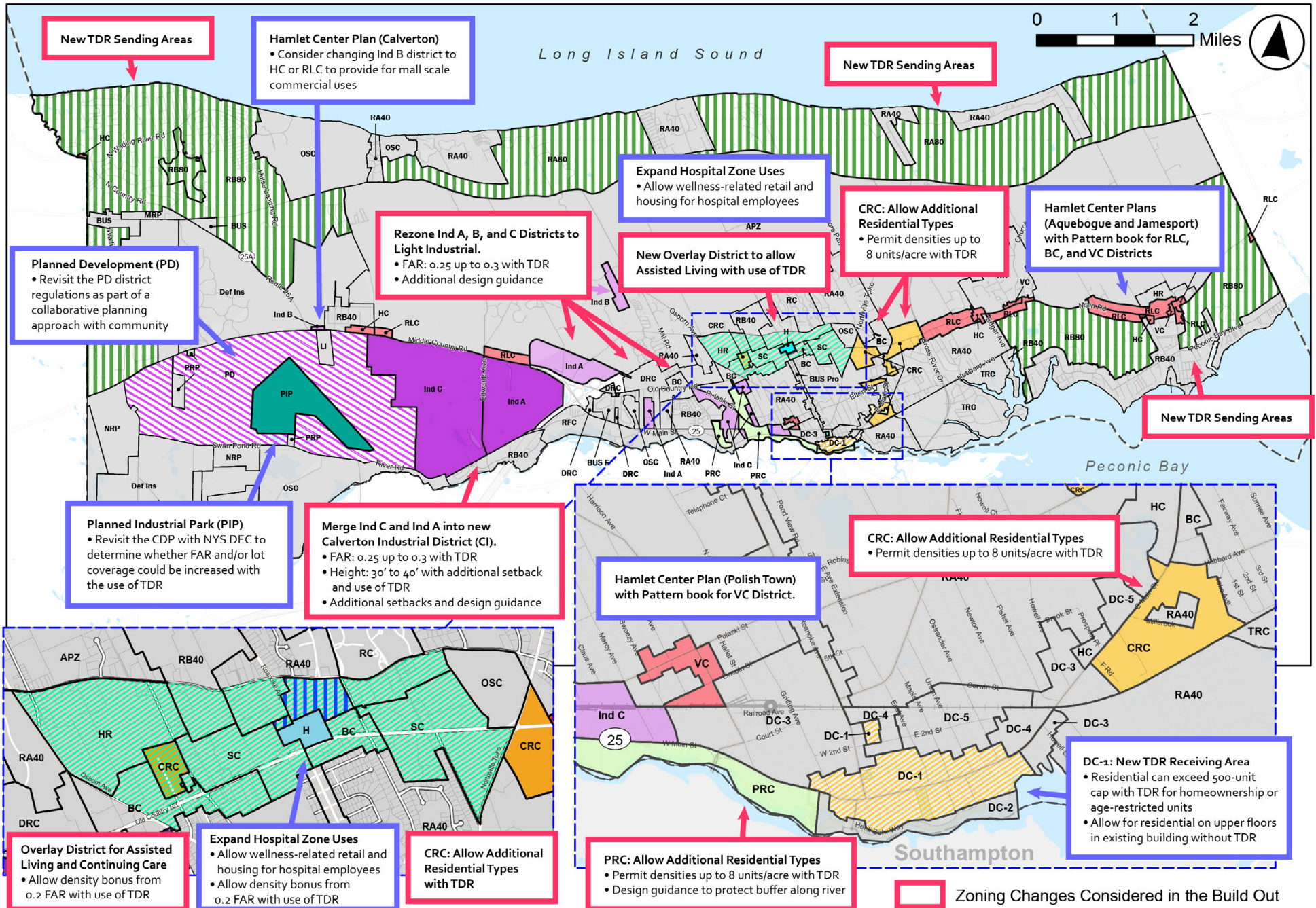
The Comprehensive Plan also makes some physical recommendations for new, expanded, or improved public facilities, such as parks, streets, and streetscape improvements. It is up to the Town to act on these recommendations as the need and budgetary circumstances allow, however. The actions of implementing the Plan do have to be reviewed in the current context for potential adverse impacts.

This GEIS would review the implementing recommendations of the Plan in this regard, identifying possible impacts, alternatives that achieve Plan objectives, measures to mitigate adverse impacts, and other elements listed in the Table of Contents.

2.5.4. Land Use and Zoning Approach

The zoning approach map shown in Figure 2-3 provides a high-level overview of the land use approach and potential zoning designations for different parts of the Town. The recommendations, which may include administrative changes, revisions to existing regulations, or potential changes to the zoning map, are discussed in detail in Plan Chapter 13: Future Land Use. Many of the zoning recommendations could be considered by the Town once this Comprehensive Plan is adopted. There are also recommendations that would require further study, discussion, and analysis. Figure 2-3 illustrates those zoning changes that could be implemented in the short term (red caption box), and those that require further study (blue caption box).

The Comprehensive Plan also includes many other recommendations for zoning changes and regulatory amendments. Most of these are minor changes that would be of limited significance and are not expected to have significant impacts – and therefore do not warrant a detailed analysis within the context of this GEIS. Regardless, any future amendments to the Town Code would require future review under SEQRA prior to adoption.



Many of the proposed zoning concepts are interwoven with Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) recommendations. The Town's TDR program is a land use planning tool designed to balance development needs with conservation goals. In essence, it allows property owners in designated "sending areas" with high conservation or historic value to transfer their development rights to other areas, known as "receiving areas," where development is encouraged or desired. By doing so, the sending areas are protected from overdevelopment or inappropriate land use, while the receiving areas can accommodate growth or redevelopment in a controlled manner. This mechanism helps preserve open spaces, environmentally sensitive lands, agricultural lands, and historic sites, while also promoting orderly and sustainable development in suitable locations within the town. The TDR program is interwoven into the zoning ordinance, which provides a map of sending and receiving districts and regulations that govern the specifics of the transfer process including criteria for eligible sending and receiving areas.

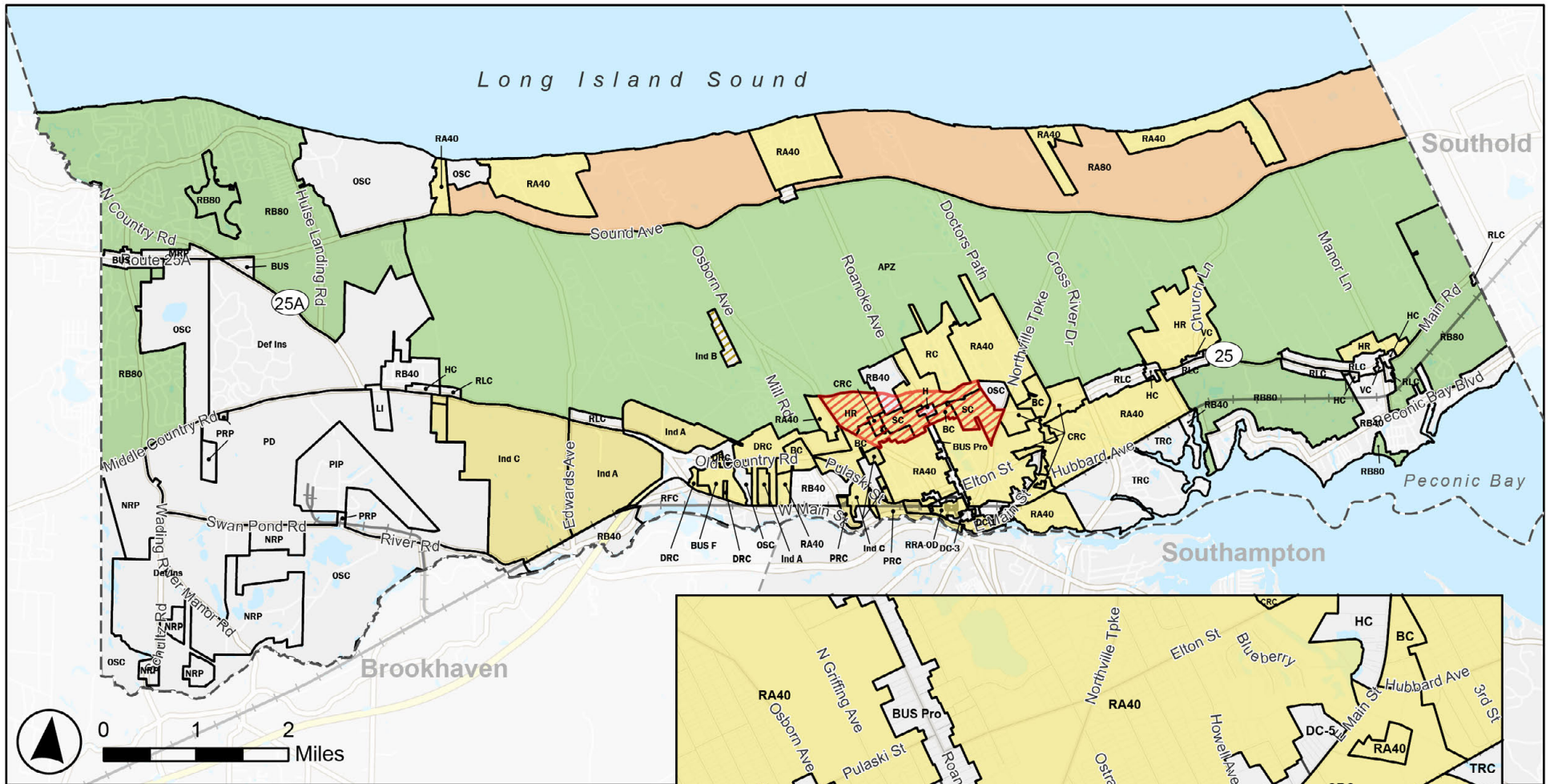
Meetings were held with the TDR Committee to identify additions to the TDR sending and receiving areas, to direct growth away from areas with unique natural value to areas that can better manage growth and density. Figure 2-4 shows the proposed new TDR sending and receiving areas. By designating specific zones for more intense development, Riverhead can ensure that growth occurs in a planned and controlled manner, preventing sprawl and preserving open space.

2.5.4.1. Proposed Zoning Changes

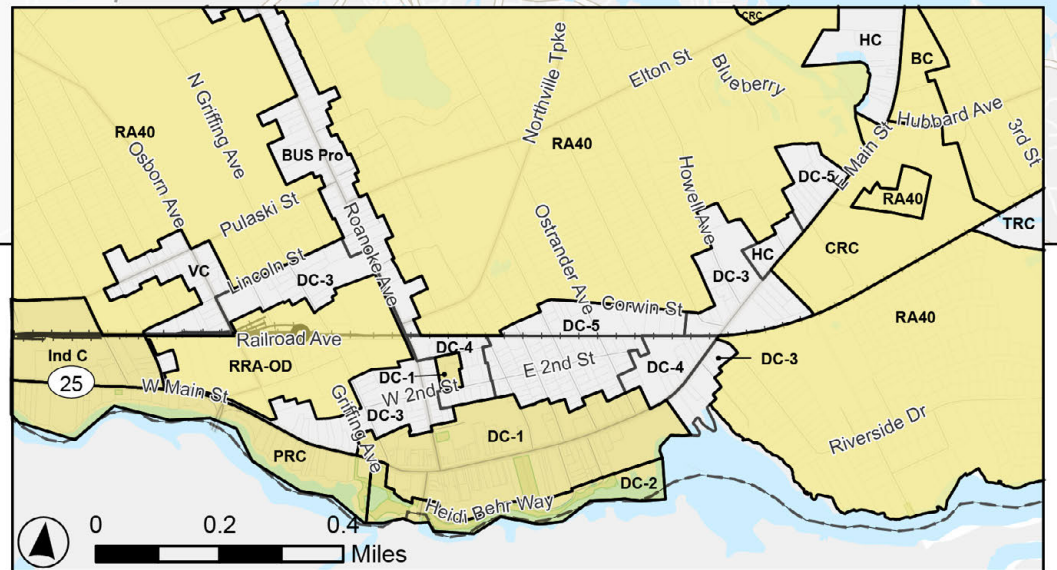
Proposed zoning changes that could be adopted following the adoption of this Comprehensive Plan include the following:

New Calverton Industrial District (CI) for IND A and IND C areas in Calverton (Zoning Change and TDR Map Change): This would effectively reduce allowable FAR from 0.4 to 0.25. Developments could achieve 0.3 with the use of TDR credits. TDR credits could also be used to increase building height. However, while some projects may take advantage of this flexibility, the provision for additional height is not expected to significantly alter the overall development potential and does not warrant detailed analysis within the context of this build-out assessment. Several other zoning changes are proposed which would serve to limit potential development such as changes to coverage, inclusion of a non-disturbance buffer, inclusion of a pyramid law to mitigate visual impacts, and removal of some heavy industrial uses. These changes are not expected to have a negative impact do not warrant detailed analysis within the context of this build-out assessment.

Change scattered IND A, IND B, and IND C sites to LI (Zoning Change and TDR Map Change): This would effectively reduce allowable FAR in these scattered districts from 0.4 to 0.25. Developments could achieve 0.3 with the use of TDR credits. TDR credits could also be used to increase building height and/or add a story of development (i.e., 0.6 FAR). However, while some projects may take advantage of this flexibility, the provision for additional height is not expected to significantly alter the overall development potential and does not warrant detailed analysis within the context of this build-out assessment. Several other zoning changes are proposed which would serve to limit potential development such as inclusion of design guidance and removal of some heavy industrial uses. These changes are not expected to have a negative impact do not warrant detailed analysis within the context of this build-out assessment.



- Proposed TDR Sending Districts
- Proposed TDR Receiving Districts
- Proposed TDR Sending and Receiving District
- Proposed Assisted Living Overlay Zone



Assisted Living Overlay Zone (Zoning Change and TDR Map Change): The Comprehensive Plan recommends the creation of an overlay zone in areas generally along Route 58 near the Peconic Bay Medical Center, but excluding the Hospital Zone (see proposed map). This zone which would allow assisted living and continuing care residential uses and higher densities of development with the use of TDR credits. The proposed area for this district has sewer infrastructure which can support higher population density and building intensity. The proposed facilities also have a much lower parking demand per square foot compared to commercial, which helps to foster a more sustainable and walkable environment. The proposed zoning recommendations provide for compact development types with a mix of 1-, 2-, and 3-story buildings, with more land utilized for setbacks and open space. In commercial districts (BC and SC), the proposed overlay zone would allow for an increase in FAR from 0.2 to 0.75 with the use of TDR credits (required for additional FAR only). Building coverage would be capped at 30% and residential density would be capped at 30 beds per acre. In other residential districts, the proposed overlay zone would allow for a maximum FAR of 0.5 with the use of TDR credits (required only for units above what is allowed as-of-right), provided sewer infrastructure is in place. Residential density would be capped at 15 beds per acre. It is also recommended that assisted living uses be allowed in industrial areas by special permit from the Town Board – limited to 15 units per acre. Impacts for facilities outside of the Assisted Living Overlay would be evaluated by the Town Board on a site-specific basis.

CRC Zone (Zoning Change and TDR Map Change): The CRC Zone is intended to allow for a variety of housing types; however, the existing zoning standards only permit one dwelling unit per acre (single-family). It would be reasonable to accommodate slightly higher densities in this area, given their proximity to the downtown core. While the precise density is yet to be determined, it is reasonable to consider a range of densities, such as 4-12 units per acre, depending on whether infrastructure is in place and if TDR credits are used. This would allow for the development of townhouses. The MFP district could be looked at as a comparable for recommended development types and densities. The bulk criteria for the CRC zone may need to be revised to ensure that the property can accommodate these housing types. It is acknowledged that sanitary requirements set by SCDHS may limit the development potential on sites without supporting infrastructure. The Town may also consider the use of TDRs for a density bonus when the development is of homeownership units.

PRC Zone (Zoning Change and TDR Map Change): The PRC Zone is intended to allow for “an array of residential, commercial and recreational uses.” However, no residential uses are specifically provided for in the zoning. The Plan proposes to allow residential uses at 4 units per acre, bonusable to 8 units per acre with the use of TDR, provided infrastructure is in place. This would allow for the development of townhouses or garden apartments. None of the existing PRC zones are currently adjacent to sewer infrastructure, therefore, it is unlikely that any existing districts could achieve densities higher than 4 units per acre given the density standards for non-sewered areas established by Suffolk County Department of Health Services. It is recommended that design guidance be put in place to push buildings away from the Peconic River and ensure that riparian areas are maintained. It is acknowledged that development in this district is further controlled by DEC.

RA-80 and RB-80 (TDR Map Change): This would include all RB-80 and RA-80 districts as sending areas for TDR. These areas have some large tracts of agricultural lands that should be considered for preservation. Areas in RA-80 north of Sound Ave are currently a receiving district, therefore, they are proposed to be both sending and receiving districts. This would provide flexibility for property owners and developers. It means that a property owner in a sending district can sell their development rights to a developer in a receiving district or vice versa, depending on their needs and the market demand.

Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area Overlay District (TDR Map Change): This district was adopted in 2021 and includes provisions for the use of TDR for community benefits. However, the TDR Map was never formally updated to be consistent with the adoption of RRA-OD. The build-out considers the potential use of TDR credits on remaining soft sites in this area.

This DGEIS provides a generic analysis of these potential Proposed Zoning Changes since no future site-specific developments are known at this time. All future Zoning Code or Map amendments would be required to comply with review under SEQRA prior to adoption.

Cluster Development Requirements (Zoning text change): Cluster development provisions in the APZ, RA-80, RB-80, and HR zones help to concentrate development on a small portion of the parcel to preserve the remainder of the property for agriculture or open space. The open space requirement is 70%. The Comprehensive Plan recommends that for these districts, cluster development should be mandatory for major subdivisions. It can remain optional for minor subdivisions, as there may not be a suitable quantity of land to set aside a meaningful amount of open space. The Planning Board should also be allowed to request a cluster development alternative in RA40 and RB40 to protect unique natural features and open space.

2.5.4.2. Zoning Changes That Require Further Study

- **Planned Industrial Park (PIP):** The plan discusses the potential to designate PIP as a receiving area, given the demand for industrial space in this area and the presence of supportive infrastructure. Any change to the Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) would require cooperation and approval of NYSDEC, who is an involved party.
- **Hospital District:** This plan supports Peconic Bay Medical Center’s long-term plans to expand its existing campus with wellness related retail and supportive housing on adjacent sites. However, any potential zoning changes would need to consider specific plans by Peconic Bay Medical Center once they are developed. Potential impacts would therefore be determined at a later point when specific zoning changes are proposed.
- **DC-1 District:** The Comprehensive Plan recommends several changes to this district such as adoption of the Pattern Book, revising the 500-unit cap, and allowing residential to adaptively reuse upper floors in pre-existing buildings. These zoning changes should be studied and implemented together in a cohesive manner.
- **Hamlet Centers:** The Comprehensive Plan recognizes that small zoning changes and the incorporation of design guidance may be appropriate for some of the Hamlet Centers. However, it is recommended that hamlet specific studies be conducted first to identify specific changes. Therefore, the analysis of impacts would need to wait until a study is conducted and detailed zoning recommendations are proposed.
- **Design Guidelines for Route 58:** Design guidelines are recommended for Route 58. Any analysis of impacts would need to wait until a study is conducted and detailed zoning recommendations are proposed.
- **Non-conforming uses:** The comprehensive plan addresses the need to adjust the zoning map in several areas to better align with existing uses and reduce non-conformity. It is acknowledged that zoning changes for these areas need further consideration by the Town and impacts would be considered once detailed recommendations are proposed.
- **Golf Cottages:** The Plan recommends allowing Golf Cottages as an accessory use on golf courses with the use of TDR credits.
- **Agritourism:** The Plan recommends allowing agritourism resort facilities, with the use of TDR credits, in appropriate locations, subject to design, development, and environmental standards.

The above zoning recommendations all require additional study to determine the scope and scale of any future potential zoning changes. If at such time as any Zoning Code and Map amendments are proposed, following the additional studies recommended in the Comprehensive Plan, these actions would be required to comply with review under SEQRA prior to adoption.

2.5.4.3. Changes to the TDR Transfer Formula

The transfer formula quantifies how development units in the sending district are realized in the receiving district. The current transfer formula is on a one-to-one basis, meaning that 1 TDR credit is equal to one residential unit in a receiving district regardless of unit size or type. A TDR credit is equal to 1 acre of land preserved. The TDR Toolbox developed by NYSERDA recommends a more dynamic approach. If the transfer occurs from a low-density area to a higher-density area, there may be a need to establish a transfer formula that equates the development right from one single-family home to more than one multifamily unit because the proportional infrastructure cost impacts of a multifamily unit are lower than for a single-family dwelling in a low-density area. The TDR Toolbox suggests that the transfer formula could be based on the average sizes of single-family homes compared to the average sizes of apartment units or comparative traffic generation rates. Sanitary sewer demand is also another metric to consider. The Comprehensive Plan proposes a transfer formula that considers both wastewater flow and traffic generation. The ratios incorporate feedback from the development community about the overall market for TDR's and what ratios would be reasonable from a financial perspective.

It is important to recognize that for the purposes of this build-out analysis, changes to the TDR transfer formula would not change the underlying density. Each zoning district has fixed density limits for receiving areas, irrespective of the TDR transfer formula. These limits are typically based on considerations such as infrastructure capacity, environmental constraints, or community preferences. Even if the TDR formula changes, the underlying density allowed in receiving areas may remain unchanged if it is already at the maximum permitted level set by zoning regulations.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of a TDR program relies on market demand and the willingness of property owners to participate in the program. Changes to the TDR transfer formula may affect the economic incentives for participation, but they do not alter the underlying market demand for development in receiving areas. If demand remains constant, changes to the TDR formula may not result in significant shifts in development density.

The transfer formula should not be a static document – it should be revisited in consultation with the TDR committee every 5 years, or as market conditions change, to ensure that they are appropriately calibrated to both maximize the use of TDR credits without overly incentivizing new development.

2.6. Potential Build Out Scenario

As discussed above, the DGEIS analyzes how the development related recommendations proposed in the Comprehensive Plan may impact the Town's environment. The "Build Out Analysis" presents a reasonable worst-case estimate of the potential mix of residential units and commercial/industrial gross floor area expected to be developed in the Future with the Proposed Action (adoption of Comprehensive Plan Update) within the next 10 years. While this view of the future would be only a projection of what could occur, these estimates facilitate reasonably conservative and meaningful analyses of how changes in development could impact the Town's environment and appropriate measures to mitigate any related impacts.

The build-out focuses on specific zoning changes proposed in Comprehensive Plan Chapter 13: Future Land Use Plan. It is important to note that this build-out analysis focuses on impacts from specific zoning changes that could be implemented after the completion of the Comprehensive Plan – without further study (see section above).

The Comprehensive Plan also discusses several zoning changes and other recommendations that would require further study, discussion, and analysis. Those topics are excluded from the build-out because it is impossible to

speculate on what the proposed zoning or other changes would be. According to the SEQR Handbook (2020)⁴, “[t]he SEQR review should consider the relative impacts based on the proposed changes. In other words, the analysis should compare the relative impacts of land use and development based on the existing zoning with those of the proposed zoning.” The analysis herein is based on this conceptual build-out and the assumptions used are clearly enumerated; however, it is important to note that SEQR does not require a lead agency to “speculate” about any specific future projects when analyzing potential zoning changes where none are known. While specific build-out figures may not be generated for some of the broad recommendations, it is important to acknowledge the GEIS reviews all recommendations qualitatively at a minimum, to ensure that potential negative impacts are identified.

The build-out analysis is intended to provide decision-makers and stakeholders with information about development scenarios or zoning changes that could have significant and far-reaching environmental impacts. Minor zoning changes, such as adjustments to coverage or other changes with a small threshold of significance, are not expected to significantly alter the overall development potential. Therefore, minor zoning adjustments proposed do not warrant detailed analysis within the context of this build-out assessment.

This build-out analysis looks at the development that could reasonably be accommodated under adoption of the zoning recommendations contained in the Comprehensive Plan Update. Three main future development scenarios are presented and analyzed:

1: No Build Scenario (Existing Conditions)

This scenario serves as a baseline against which other scenarios are compared. This scenario represents a hypothetical condition where no changes or new development activities occurs. It essentially reflects the continuation of current land uses, zoning regulations, infrastructure, and environmental conditions without any additional development or interventions.

2: Future without Action

This scenario represents a projection of what could happen in the next ten years if no changes are made. Essentially, it depicts a trajectory where the status quo persists, leading to outcomes determined solely by the passive continuation of present conditions. Evaluating this scenario alongside alternative development options or mitigation strategies can help inform decision-making processes and promote forward-looking approaches to address complex challenges and uncertainties.

3: Future with Action

This scenario projects the potential outcomes of the proposed zoning changes over the next 10-years. This number can be directly compared to the Future without Action Scenario. The scenario also provides two sub-scenarios. One which includes the build-out under proposed zoning – as-of-right, and a second which considers the build-out with changes to the TDR map.

2.6.1. Methodology

2.6.1.1. Identification of Potential Development Sites

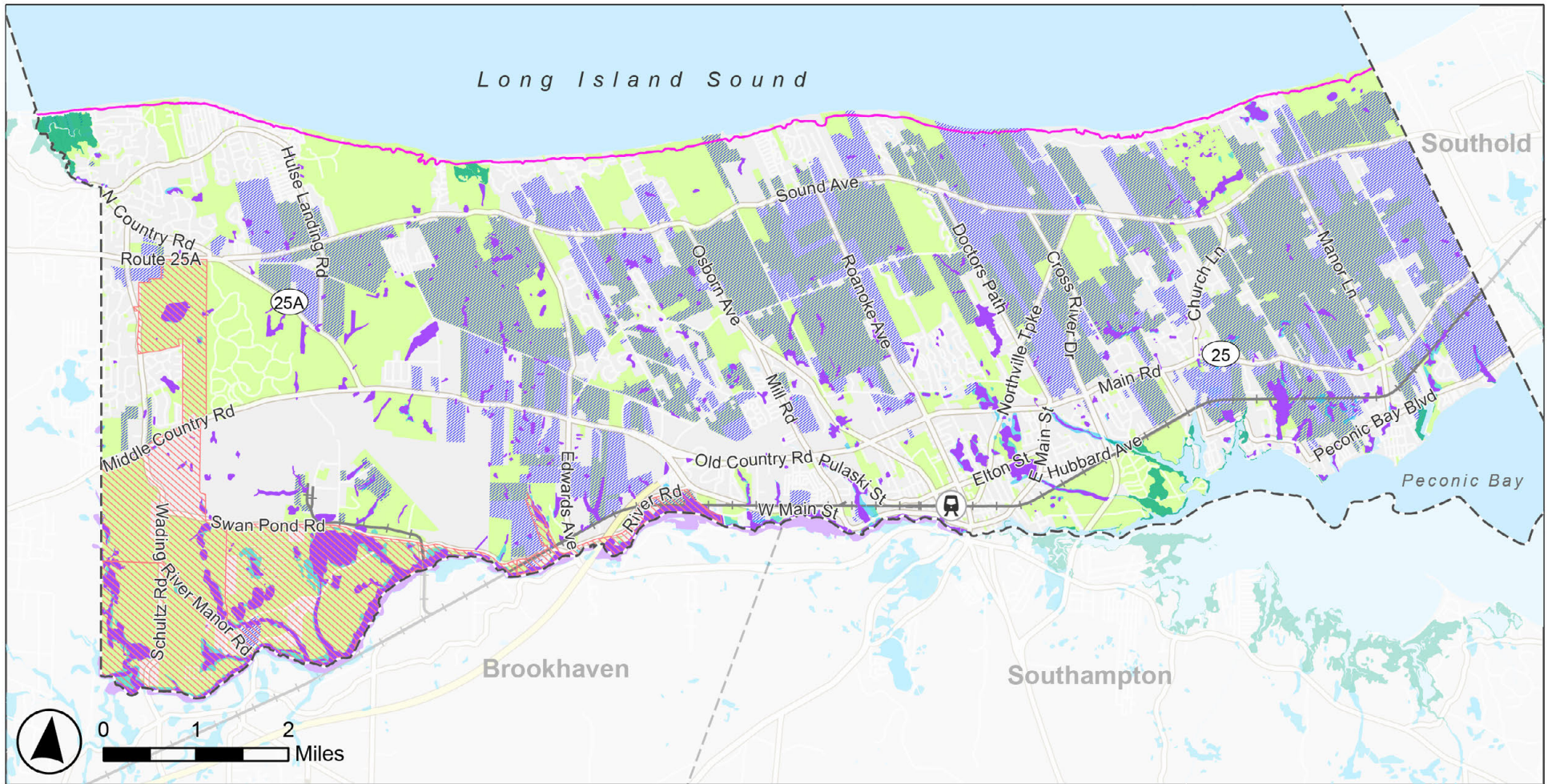
The build-out scenarios (Future without Action and Future with Action) are based on an identification of vacant and underutilized (or “potential development”) parcels in the Town. This build-out utilized a Geographic









⁴ https://extapps.dec.ny.gov/docs/permits_ej_operations_pdf/seqrhandbook.pdf

Information System (GIS) model to aid in the calculation of potential development sites, given the geographic size and number of parcels. Some sites may appear suitable for development based on spatial analysis alone yet may be substandard from a zoning perspective due to factors such as easements, environmental constraints, or legal encumbrances. Conversely, there are other sites that may be listed as not being potential sites that could, upon further examination, reveal themselves to be suitable candidates for development. Identified constraints to development are shown in Figure 2-5 and potential development sites are shown in Figure 2-6. These figures are meant to give a broad understanding of development potential, recognizing that complexities exist within the zoning landscape.

The identification of potential development sites consisted of the following steps, which were conducted in GIS and further refined in consultation with Town staff:

- Identification and removal all parcels that are permanently preserved.
- Identification of all vacant parcels
- Identification of all non-preserved agricultural parcels (for presumed subdivision)
- Identification of underbuilt properties that could be subdivided
 - Properties > 3 acres on 1-acre zoning
 - Properties > 5 acres on 2-acre zoning
- Identification of other underutilized parcels in areas where zoning changes are proposed
- Identification of development projects in the pipeline.
- Subtraction of wetlands, steep slopes, other environmental features from parcels
- Removal of parcels that are unbuildable (i.e. very small parcel sizes, irregular parcel sizes, known environmental issues, other constraints)
- Removal of large vacant parcels in areas that are unlikely to be subdivided due to regulatory constraints (i.e. areas in Pine Barrens Core Area or in Coastal Erosion Hazard Area)



- | | |
|---|---|
|  Agricultural Land Use |  NY DEC Freshwater Wetlands |
|  Preserved/Protected Lands and Restricted Areas |  NY DEC Tidal Wetlands (Intertidal, Fresh, and High Marsh or Formerly connected) |
|  Preserved Agricultural Land |  Town of Riverhead Wetlands |
|  Pine Barrens Core Area |  Coastal Erosion Hazard Area |

2.6.1.2. Other Sites not Addressed in the Build-out

The Planned Development (PD) district at EPCAL is one notable consideration in the build-out analysis for this Plan. With its expansive size and strategic location, the EPCAL area holds promise for diverse forms of development, ranging from industrial, commercial, and recreational ventures. However, due to the variability inherent in the scale and nature of potential developments, contingent upon proposals and approvals by both the Town and relevant agencies, it is infeasible to accurately forecast the extent of potential development within this district. Consequently, the build-out analysis refrains from including the EPCAL area, recognizing the need for flexibility and adaptability in planning for this pivotal site.

Furthermore, the Comprehensive Plan does not propose any zoning changes for the PD district. Nevertheless, the plan does advocate for a thorough reevaluation of the district's vision through a collaborative planning process involving community stakeholders). By engaging in inclusive dialogue and soliciting input from residents, businesses, and other vested interests, Riverhead can ensure that any future development initiatives at EPCAL align with the community's values, needs, and aspirations. This proactive approach underscores the commitment to thoughtful, community-driven planning, aiming to optimize the potential of the EPCAL district while safeguarding the integrity and character of Riverhead as a whole. Finally, any future development or zoning changes proposed for the EPCAL area would be subject to Town Board, Planning Board, and other agency approvals as well as site-specific review under SEQR.

2.6.2. No Build Scenario (Existing Conditions)

In a build-out analysis, the "no build" scenario serves as the status quo, maintaining existing land use patterns as described in Chapter 3.1. This scenario essentially represents a continuation of current conditions without any new development or changes in land use regulations. While seemingly static, the no build scenario plays a role in establishing a baseline for anticipating future growth and development patterns within the town. By maintaining the existing conditions as a reference point, we can assess the potential impacts and implications of proposed development projects or policy changes. In essence, the no build scenario provides a benchmark against which alternative scenarios and potential impacts can be evaluated, aiding in informed decision-making and sustainable planning efforts for the community's future.

2.6.3. Future without Action

The Future without Action scenario involves assessing the potential development of identified sites based on existing zoning regulations and extrapolating future growth trends over the next 10 years (until 2035). This analysis aims to understand the maximum potential impact on the environment if zoning changes or other interventions are not taken to alter current development trajectories. This would help us to understand the basic question of how proposed changes compare to what would happen in a baseline scenario.

The first step in this process included the identification of potential development sites within the Town (previously discussed in the Methodology section). Table 2-1 provides the results of this analysis, separated into their respective zoning districts.

Table 2-1. Identified Potential Development Sites by Zoning District

| | Zoning District | | | | | | | | | | | | | | Total |
|---|-----------------|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|------|------|----|-----|-----|--------------|
| | APZ | CRC | DC-5 | HR | MRP | NRP | PRC | RA40 | RA80 | RB40 | RB80 | RC | RFC | RLC | |
| Agricultural Lands | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Single Family Units | 51 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 0 | 18 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 88 |
| Units in Subdividable Parcels | 1,078 | 0 | 0 | 44 | 59 | 0 | 0 | 255 | 375 | 111 | 475 | 0 | 6 | 31 | 2,434 |
| Units - Subtotal | 1,129 | 0 | 0 | 47 | 60 | 0 | 0 | 255 | 386 | 111 | 493 | 1 | 7 | 33 | 2,522 |
| Other Vacant and Subdividable Properties | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Single Family Units | 76 | 6 | 2 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 136 | 32 | 58 | 47 | 1 | 8 | 13 | 397 |
| Units in Subdividable Parcels | 166 | 32 | 17 | 40 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 99 | 109 | 103 | 69 | 0 | 2 | 14 | 655 |
| Units - Subtotal | 242 | 38 | 19 | 54 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 235 | 141 | 161 | 116 | 1 | 10 | 27 | 1,052 |
| Total Potential Units | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Single Family Units | 127 | 6 | 2 | 17 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 136 | 43 | 58 | 65 | 2 | 9 | 15 | 485 |
| Units in Subdividable Parcels | 1,244 | 32 | 17 | 84 | 63 | 0 | 0 | 354 | 484 | 214 | 544 | 0 | 8 | 45 | 3,089 |
| Total Potential Units | 1,371 | 38 | 19 | 101 | 64 | 0 | 4 | 490 | 527 | 272 | 609 | 2 | 17 | 60 | 3,574 |

The build-out analysis incorporates growth projections provided by NYMTC (New York Metropolitan Transportation Council), specifically tailored to reflect the unique growth dynamics of the Town. According to NYMTC forecasts, the expected growth rates for the period of 2022 to 2035 are as follows:

- Households: 12% growth
- Employment: 9% growth

These projections are derived from broader forecasts for Suffolk County, where the rate of change in households is estimated at 5.56%, and the change in employment is projected at 4.5%. However, Riverhead's growth trajectory exceeds the county average, with NYMTC's preliminary data suggesting a more robust growth rate for households and employment. The build-out analysis employs the more conservative growth projections for Riverhead to ensure a prudent estimation of future development potential. The estimates are also conservative because the projected growth period is from 2022-2035, and we are already in 2024. The analysis also assumes a correlation between the growth in households and the corresponding increase in housing units, as well as a proportional relationship between employment growth and expansion in commercial development (measured in gross square feet).

Table 2-2. Projected Growth (2022-2025 in Potential Development Sites)

| | Total | 12% Projected Growth (2022-2035) |
|---|-------|-------------------------------------|
| Agricultural Lands | | |
| Single Family Units | 88 | 11 |
| Units in Subdividable Parcels | 2,434 | 292 |
| Units - Subtotal | 2,522 | 303 |
| Other Vacant and Subdividable Properties | | |
| Single Family Units | 397 | 48 |
| Units in Subdividable Parcels | 655 | 79 |
| Units - Subtotal | 1,052 | 127 |
| Total Potential Units | | |
| Single Family Units | 485 | 58 |
| Units in Subdividable Parcels | 3,089 | 371 |
| Total Potential Units | 3,574 | 429 |

2.6.3.1. Preservation of Land Through Cluster Development

One essential tool used to preserve open space is cluster development set-asides. Cluster development is encouraged for subdivisions in the APZ, RA-80, RB-80, and HR zones. The cluster tool aims to preserve 70% of the land for agriculture or open space while concentrating development on the remainder of the property. These requirements are limited to properties of sufficient size (greater than 7 acres). As seen in Table 2-3, there are a total of 149 parcels of sufficient size in those three districts, over 90% of which are in agricultural lands. When considering projected growth in the town for the next 10 years, it is projected that approximately 18 parcels would be developed using this tool, which would result in 246 single family homes and the preservation of 392 acres of land. As discussed in the Future with Action Scenario, it is recommended the cluster development provision be mandatory instead of optional. The comprehensive plan also recommends that the Planning Board be allowed to request a cluster development alternative in RA40 and RB40 to protect unique natural features and open space.

Table 2-3. Cluster Development Potential

| | Cluster Development Opportunities (Maximum) | | | | Anticipated Development (12%) | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|--------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| | Parcels > 7 acres | Acres | Potential New Units | Preserved Land (70%) | Parcels > 7 acres | Acres | Potential New Units | Preserved Land (70%) |
| APZ | 78 | 2,375 | 1,054 | 1,662 | 9 | 285 | 126 | 199 |
| Agricultural Land | 75 | 2,306 | 1,026 | 1,614 | 9 | 277 | 123 | 194 |
| Other Subdividable | 3 | 69 | 28 | 49 | 0 | 8 | 3 | 6 |
| RA-80 | 20 | 968 | 433 | 678 | 2 | 116 | 52 | 81 |
| Agricultural Land | 17 | 813 | 365 | 569 | 2 | 98 | 44 | 68 |
| Other Subdividable | 3 | 155 | 68 | 109 | 0 | 19 | 8 | 13 |
| RB-80 | 44 | 1,176 | 512 | 823 | 5 | 141 | 61 | 99 |
| Agricultural Land | 37 | 1,053 | 466 | 737 | 4 | 126 | 56 | 88 |
| Other Subdividable | 7 | 123 | 46 | 86 | 1 | 15 | 6 | 10 |
| HR | 7 | 141 | 55 | 99 | 1 | 17 | 7 | 12 |
| Agricultural Land | 5 | 107 | 47 | 75 | 1 | 13 | 6 | 9 |
| Other Subdividable | 2 | 34 | 8 | 24 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 3 |
| Total Cluster Opportunities | | | | | | | | |
| Agricultural Lands Subtotal | 134 | 4,279 | 1904 | 2,995 | 16 | 513 | 228 | 359 |
| Other Subdividable Subtotal | 15 | 382 | 150 | 267 | 2 | 46 | 18 | 32 |
| Total Cluster Opportunities | 149 | 4,661 | 2054 | 3,263 | 18 | 559 | 246 | 392 |

2.6.4. Future with Action

2.6.4.1. Summary of Build-out Analysis

Table 2-4 below offers a comprehensive overview of the anticipated changes in the build-out analysis, comparing the "Future without Action" scenario, which represents the build-out under current zoning regulations, with the "Future with Action" scenario. The latter incorporates proposed zoning modifications and Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) changes as discussed further below. This comparison encompasses both residential and commercial unit types, providing insights into the overall transformation expected in the studied area.

The table delineates the cumulative impact of these scenarios, identifying the projected changes in residential and commercial developments. Additionally, it offers separate analyses for build-out scenarios with and without the utilization of TDR credits. This breakdown allows for a nuanced understanding of the influence of zoning and TDR adjustments on the anticipated development landscape, emphasizing the significance of policy interventions in shaping future growth patterns. The subsequent discussion in this section provides more detail into the build-out for each of the proposed changes.

Table 2-4. Summary of Build-out Analysis

| | Build-out under Current Zoning | | Anticipated Build-out under Proposed Land Use Plan | | | Incremental Change from Build-out under Current Zoning | |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|--|-----------------------|---------------------------|--|---|
| | Total Potential Dev't | Anticipated Dev't | No TDR | Full TDR | Required TDR Credits | No TDR | Full TDR |
| Assisted Living Overlay District | 71 units, 94,228 sq. ft. Commercial | 9 single-family units, 8,471 sq. ft. Commercial | 9 single-family units, 8,471 sq. ft. Commercial | 267 beds | 123 Credits (62 SF units) | - | -71 SF Units, +267 assisted units, -8,471 SF Commercial |
| RRA-OD | 210 multifamily units | 210 multifamily units | 210 multifamily units | 240 multifamily units | 10 credits (5 SF units) | 0 | +30 MF units -5 SF Units |
| CRC | 44 single-family units | 5 unit | 43 | 63 | 10 credits (5 SF units) | +43 TH Units -5 SF Units | +63 TH Units -10 SF Units |
| PRC | 4 single-family units | 1 unit | 4 | 4 | 0 | +4 TH Units -1 SF Unit | +4 TH Units -1 SF Unit |
| Industrial A, B, and C | 7,420,816 SF | 667,873 SF | 417,420 SF | 500,905 SF | 17 | -250,452 sq. ft. | -166,968 sq. ft. |
| Total Potential Development – by Land Use | | | | | | | |
| Single Family Units | 94 units | 88 Units | 38 units | - | - | -6 units | -87 units |
| Townhome/Garden Apartments | | 47 units | 67 units | 10 | +47 units | +67 units | |
| Multi-family Units | 210 units | 210 units | 240 units | 10 | - | +30 Units | |
| Assisted Living | | 0 | 267 units | 123 | 0 | +267 | |
| General Commercial | 8,471 SF | 8,471 SF | 0 | - | - | -8,471 sq. ft. | |
| Industrial/Office | 667,873 SF | 417,420 SF | 500,905 SF | 17 | -250,452 SF | -166,968 sq. ft. | |
| TDR Credits Purchased (in new receiving areas) | | | | 153 | | +160 | |

2.6.4.2. New TDR Sending Areas: RA-80 and RB-80

The calculation of the total number of potential TDR credits that could be achieved considered several key factors. First, as per Town Code, the minimum lot size requirement to be a candidate site for TDR credits is 7 acres. The intent of this requirement is to ensure that only sufficiently large parcels are considered. Town Code requires 43,560 square feet of developable land for each TDR credit. Applicants for TDR would have to demonstrate developable parcels on a site plan. For the purposes of this analysis, a conservative deduction of 15% was applied to account for limitations on actual buildable area within the site such as roads, steep slopes, and other natural features.

The TDR marketplace was looked at to estimate how many TDR credits could be expected to be purchased in the new sending areas over the next 10 years. In the last 10 years, 95 credits have been purchased, and 94.75 have been redeemed – used for the following uses/projects:

- 46 credits - Aged-restricted residential community- condos (Stoneleigh Woods)
- 40.725 credits - commercial
- 8 credits - residential (single-family)

Several of the zoning recommendations in this plan are aimed at making the TDR market more active. This includes potential revisions to the transfer formula and the creation of several new receiving areas for TDR credits. Therefore, it is conservative to estimate that 200 credits would be redeemed in the next 10 years which is more than two times what was redeemed in the prior 10 years. This number is also consistent – and slightly

more than the projected TDR demand from the new receiving districts proposed (discussed later), which are anticipated to generate demand for 160 TDR credits.

Table 2-5 below shows number of candidate parcels for TDR throughout the Town. As shown in Table 2-6, if the estimated demand of 200 TDR credits is split between the identified sending areas (APZ, RA-80, and RB-80), it is anticipated that 90 units total would be redeemed in the RA-80 and RB-80 districts combined, with 39 in RA-80 and 51 in RB-80.

Table 2-5. Proposed TDR Sending Areas

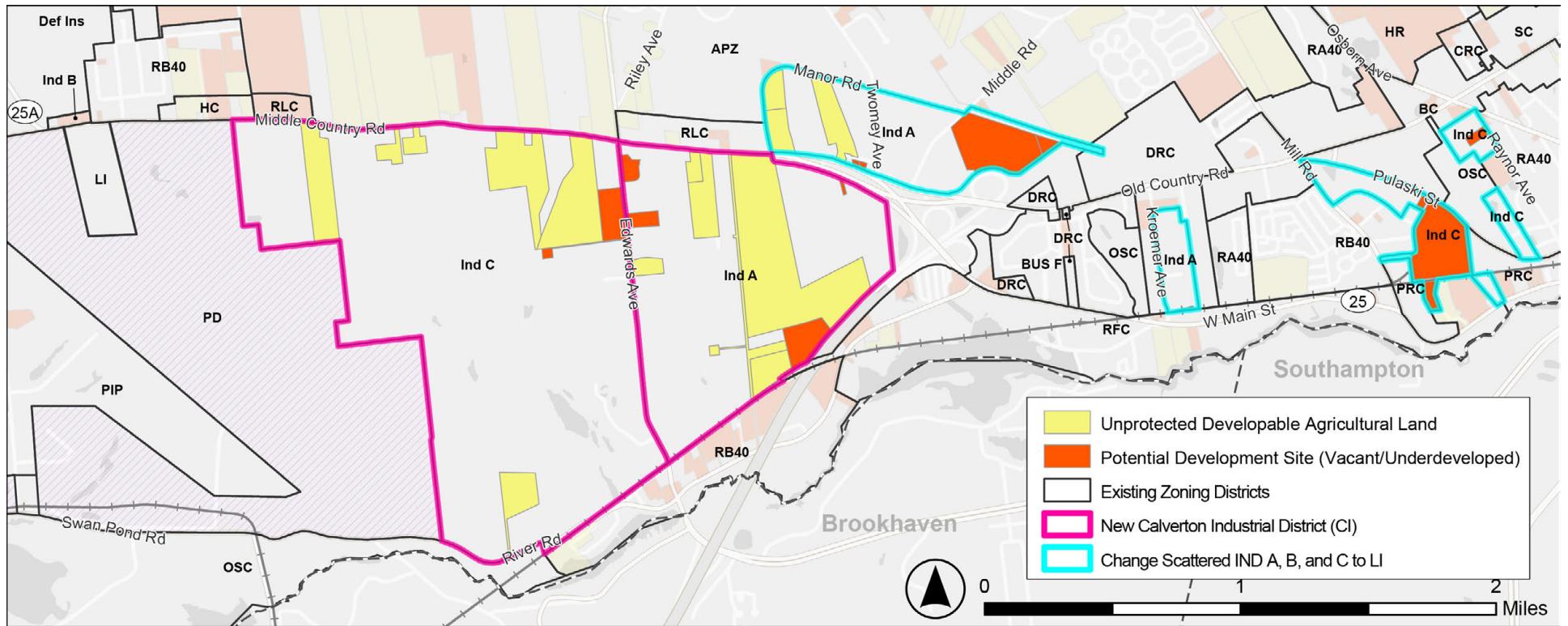
| | Total Acres | Potential Residential Units (Full Build-out) | Potential TDR Credits | Number of Parcels |
|--|--------------|--|-----------------------|-------------------|
| In Existing TDR Sending Areas (Future without Action) | | | | |
| APZ | 2,586 | 1,129 | 2,170 | 72 |
| In Proposed TDR Sending Areas | | | | |
| RA-80 | 879 | 386 | 772 | 17 |
| RB-80 | 1,118 | 493 | 987 | 35 |
| Subtotal for RA-80 and RB-80 | 1,997 | 879 | 1,759 | 52 |
| Total (With APZ) | 4,583 | 2,008 | 3,929 | 124 |

Table 2-6. Anticipated TDR Credits sold in Proposed Sending Areas

| | Build-out under Current Zoning | | Anticipated Build-out under Proposed Land Use Plan | | |
|-------|--------------------------------|------------------------|--|----------|----------------------|
| | Total Potential Dev't | Anticipated Dev't | No TDR | Full TDR | Required TDR Credits |
| RA-80 | 386 single-family units | 35 single-family units | 35 Units | 19 | 39 (sold) |
| RB-80 | 493 single-family units | 44 single-family units | 44 Units | 19 | 51 (sold) |

2.6.4.3. Zoning Recommendation: Modification to Industrial Districts

The Plan considers zoning changes for two discreet areas, 1) the IND A and IND C areas in the core Calverton area, and 2) scattered IND A, IND B, and IND C sites (as shown in Figure 2-7). While the recommendations for these two areas differ slightly, the broad bulk recommendations are the same. The zoning changes would reduce the floor area ratio (FAR) in all industrially zoned parcels from 0.4 to 0.25. TDR credits could be used to increase the FAR to 0.3. While TDR credits could be used to achieve additional height, this provision is not expected to significantly alter the overall development potential and does not warrant detailed analysis within the context of this build-out assessment.



The build-out analysis presented in Table 2-7 reveals that over the next decade, industrial districts in both areas discussed above are projected to generate approximately 668,000 square feet of development across 38 acres of land under the Future without Action Scenario (under existing zoning). With the proposed zoning changes, an estimated 417,000 square feet of development would be permitted as-of-right, representing a reduction of roughly 250,000 square feet compared to the Future without Scenario. Additionally, an anticipated 83,000 square feet of development is expected to be facilitated using TDR credits, enabling further density or height enhancements. Despite these allowances, the total expected development would amount to just over 500,000 square feet, still approximately 167,000 square feet less than the projected development under the existing zoning regulations. This build-out scenario would necessitate the acquisition of 17 TDR credits to meet the proposed development goals.

Table 2-7. Build-out Analysis of Industrially Zoned Areas

| | Future without Action Existing Zoning (0.4 FAR) | | Future with Action Proposed Zoning (0.25 FAR - 0.3 with TDR) | | | | Difference between Existing and Proposed Zoning | |
|------------------------------------|---|----------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| | Potential Dev't Area (Acres) | Potential Dev't Area (GSF) | Potential Built Area - As of Right (GSF) | Potential Built Area with TDR (GSF) | TDR Bonus (GSF) | TDR Credits Required | Potential Built Area - As of Right (GSF) | Potential Built Area - with TDR (GSF) |
| Calverton IND A and IND C | | | | | | | | |
| Sub-total | 317 | 5,515,953 | 3,447,471 | 4,136,965 | 689,494 | 138 | -2,068,482 | -1,378,988 |
| Anticipated Growth (9%) | 28.5 | 496,435.8 | 310,272.4 | 372,326.9 | 62,054.5 | 12.4 | -186,163.4 | -124,108.9 |
| IND A, B, C Scattered Sites | | | | | | | | |
| Sub-total | 109 | 1,904,863 | 1,190,540 | 1,428,648 | 238,108 | 48 | -714,324 | -476,216 |
| Anticipated Growth (9%) | 9.8 | 171,437.7 | 107,148.6 | 128,578.3 | 21,429.7 | 4.3 | -64,289.2 | -42,859.4 |
| All IND A, B, C | | | | | | | | |
| Total (100%) | 426 | 7,420,816 | 4,638,010 | 5,565,612 | 927,602 | 186 | -2,782,806 | -1,855,204 |
| Anticipated Growth (9%) | 38.3 | 667,873.4 | 417,420.9 | 500,905.1 | 83,484.2 | 16.7 | -250,452.5 | -166,968.4 |

2.6.4.4. Zoning Recommendation: Assisted Living Overlay District

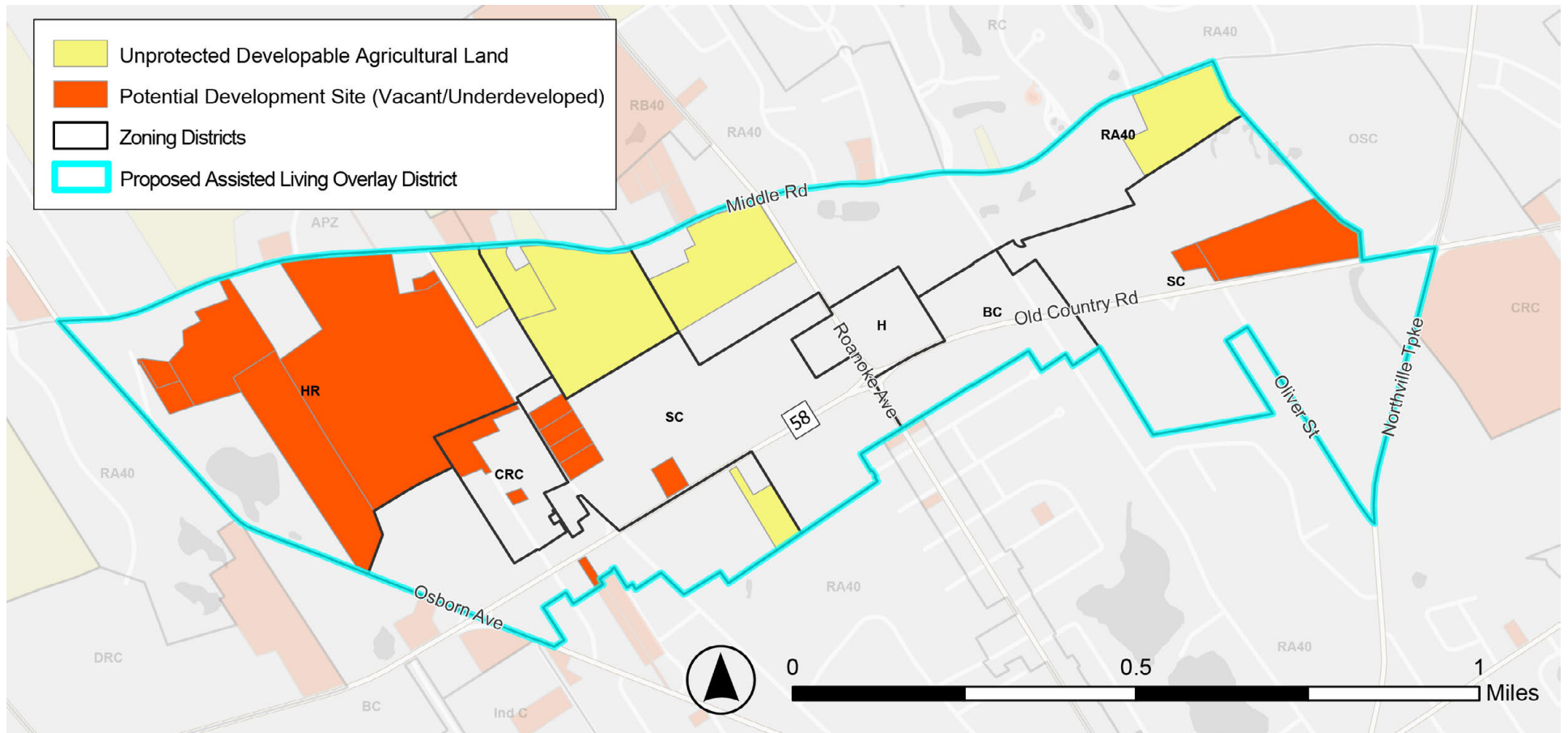
As previously discussed, the Assisted Living Overlay Zone would allow for an increase in density for assisted living or continuing care facilities with the use of TDR credits, provided sewer infrastructure is in place. In commercial districts along Route 58 (BC and SC), the proposed overlay zone would allow for an increase in FAR from 0.2 to 0.75, with residential capped at 30 beds per acre. In other districts, the proposed overlay zone would allow for a maximum FAR of 0.5 with residential density capped at 15 beds acre. TDR credits for the overlay district would only be required to achieve units beyond what is allowed as-of-right.

As shown in Figure 2-8 and Table 2-8 below, over the next 10 years, there is reasonably expected to be approximately 267 new assisted living units/beds in the district. This would necessitate the use of 123 TDR credits. The use of 123 credits equates to a reduction of 62 single-family units located in TDR sending areas. This scenario also includes a decrease of roughly 8,500 square feet of commercial development and 9 single-family homes compared to what would be built in the Future without Action scenario.

Table 2-8. Build-out Analysis of Assisted Living Overlay Zone

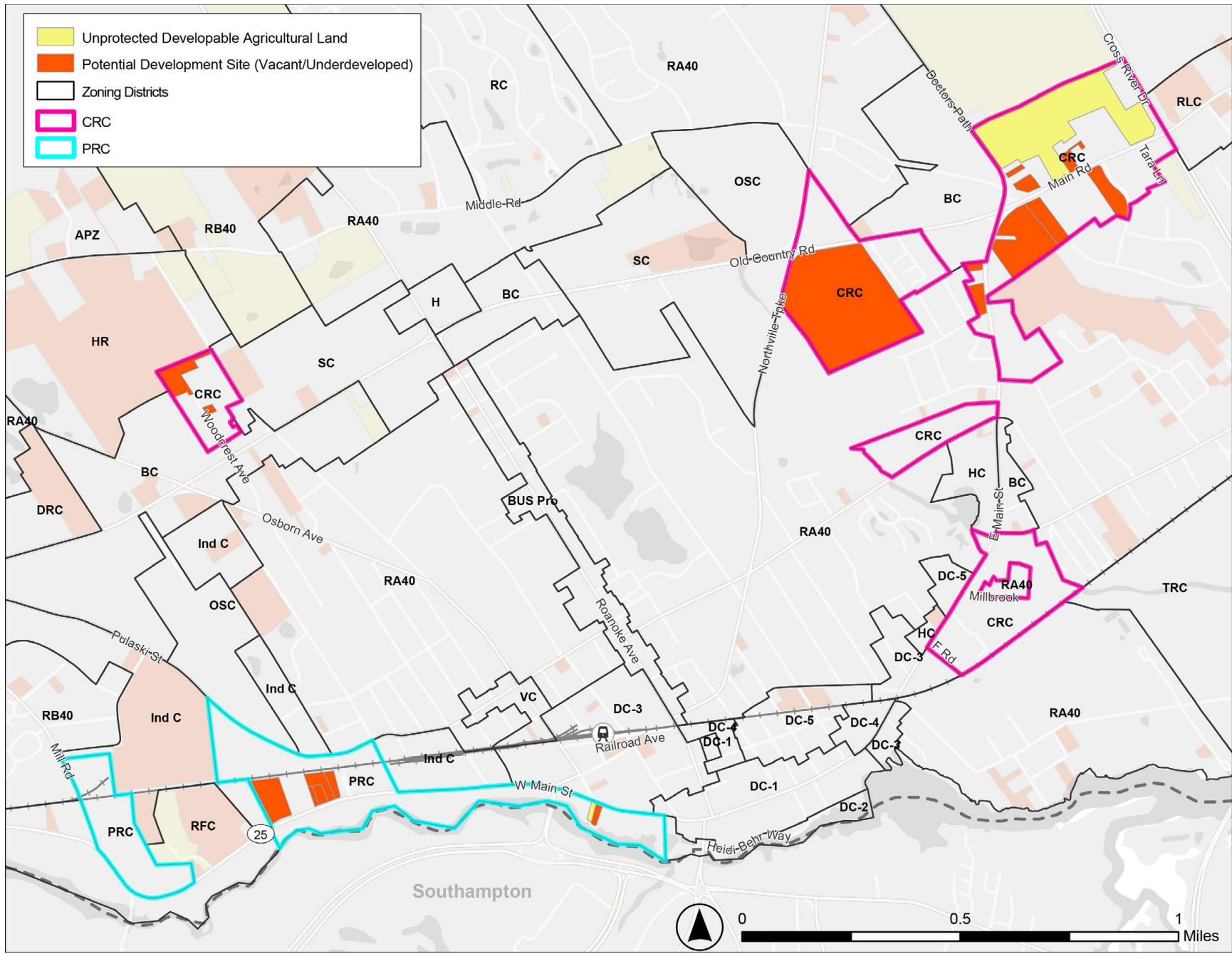
| District | Potential Development Sites (ac) | Development under Existing Zoning | | Development under Proposed Zoning | | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------------------|
| | Acres | Potential Res Units | Commercial GSF | Proposed FAR | Max Density (units/ac) | Max Built Area (GSF) | Max Units | TDR Credits Required |
| BC | 2.7 | | 17,579 | 0.75 | 30 | 87,895 | 80.7 | 23.4 |
| CRC | 3.3 | 3 | | 0.5 | 15 | 72,090 | 49.6 | 24.0 |
| HR | 75.6 | 32 | | 0.5 | 15 | 1,646,829 | 1,134.2 | 548.9 |
| RA40 | 17.9 | 16 | | 0.5 | 15 | 389,686 | 268.4 | 129.9 |
| RB40 | 22.9 | 20 | | 0.5 | 15 | 498,327 | 343.2 | 166.1 |
| SC | 11.7 | | 76,649 | 0.75 | 30 | 383,247 | 351.9 | 102.2 |
| Total | 134.1 | 71 | 94,228 | | 16.6 | 3,078,073 | 2,228 | 1,026 |
| Anticipated Build-out (12%) | 16.1 | 9 | 8,481* | - | - | 369,369 | 267 | 123 |

* - Anticipated build-out factor for commercial properties is 9%.



2.6.4.5. Zoning Recommendation: Modification to CRC and PRC Districts

For both CRC and PRC, the Plan proposes modest density increases, contingent upon the availability of infrastructure. In CRC, the suggested increase would transition from one dwelling unit per acre to 4 units per acre, potentially expanding to 12 units per acre with sewer installation and TDR credit utilization. For PRC Districts, the suggested increase would transition from one dwelling unit per acre to 4 units per acre with an allowance of 8 units with wastewater infrastructure and the use of TDR. Details regarding these adjustments would be determined at a later stage, with the analysis for CRC presuming an allowance of 8 units with wastewater infrastructure and an additional 4 units through TDR. Acknowledging the limited accessibility to sewer infrastructure for most parcels in both districts, it's anticipated that properties would need to implement on-site sewer treatment systems to qualify for the density bonus. The maximum build-out projection adopts a conservative approach, assuming all properties would be developed to the max density. Given the costly nature of on-site sewer provisions, it is likely that some properties would be developed at lower densities, at or below 4 units per acre, to standards stipulated by the Suffolk County Department of Health Services for non-sewered areas.



The build-out analysis depicted in Table 2-9 indicates that a plausible projection for the 2035 build-out in both the CRC and PRC districts is 47 townhouse units without the use of TDR, and 67 townhouse units with the TDR bonus. These scenarios would also have a reduction of 6 single family homes compared to what would be built in the Future without Action scenario. The Full TDR scenario exceeds the build-out under existing zoning (Future without Action) by 61 units. The scenario also assumes that 10 TDR credits are purchased, thereby helping to extinguish the development potential for residential development in a TDR sending district. It is important to note that this projection is a conservative estimate, given the assumption that all development on potential sites would be residential. The current zoning permits commercial uses as well. Therefore, these sites could alternatively be developed for commercial purposes rather than residential uses at the slightly higher densities proposed. As discussed above, this scenario also assumes that wastewater infrastructure would be provided at all development sites, which is very costly, and may be a limiting factor for many sites.

Table 2-9. Build-out Analysis of CRC and PRC Districts

| District | Potential Development Sites | | Development under Existing Zoning | Development under Proposed Zoning | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| | Parcels | Total Acres | Potential Units - As of Right | Potential Units - As of Right | Potential Additional Units with TDR | Total with TDR | Required TDR Credits |
| CRC | | | | | | | |
| Total | 11 | 40.8 | 44 | 326 | 163 | 489 | 82 |
| Anticipated Build-out (12%) | | 4.9 | 5.3 | 43 | 20 | 63 | 10 |
| PRC | | | | | | | |
| Total | 7 | 7.4 | 4 | 30 | 0 | 30 | 0 |
| Anticipated Build-out (12%) | | 0.9 | 0.5 | 4 | 0 | 4 | 0 |
| CRC and PRC | | | | | | | |
| Total (100%) | 18 | 48.2 | 48 | 356 | 163 | 519 | 82 |
| Anticipated Build-out (12%) | | | 6 | 47 | 20 | 67 | 10 |

2.6.4.6. TDR Map Change: Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area Overlay District (RRA-OD)

The Railroad Avenue Overlay District (RRA-OD) overlaps a portion of a DC-3 Zone in Downtown Riverhead. The RRA-OD allows for a maximum building coverage of 60% of the site, a maximum height of 50 feet, and a maximum FAR of 2 for projects on sites between 20,000 square feet and 60,000 square feet. If community benefits are provided, the district allows for a maximum FAR of 3. See the schedule of community benefits and possible bonuses in Section 301-151.7 of the Town Code.

A close analysis of candidate parcels in the RRA-OD eliminated several lots from consideration for future potential redevelopment. Many have already been developed or have proposals already in the approval process. Others contain facilities unlikely to be redeveloped such as the Riverhead Library and Suffolk County Government Buildings.

Within RRA-OD, 12 lots were identified as potential development sites. Ten of the lots are adjacent to one another and would likely be merged by a developer into a single project site of approximately 57,000 square feet. The other two lots are adjacent to one another and would likely be combined to form a second project site of approximately 48,000 square feet. As-of-right, the developers of the two-project sites described above could build a 115,000 square foot development and a 95,000 square foot development, respectively. If these

developments were all residential, that could result in an additional 210 residential units, assuming an average of 1,000 square feet per unit.

RRA-OD provides for the use of a variety of different means, or “community benefits” to achieve additional floor area. Because of the variety of bonuses available to developers within the RRA-OD, including provision of space for institutional or recreational uses, it is not feasible to calculate the additional residential units possible.

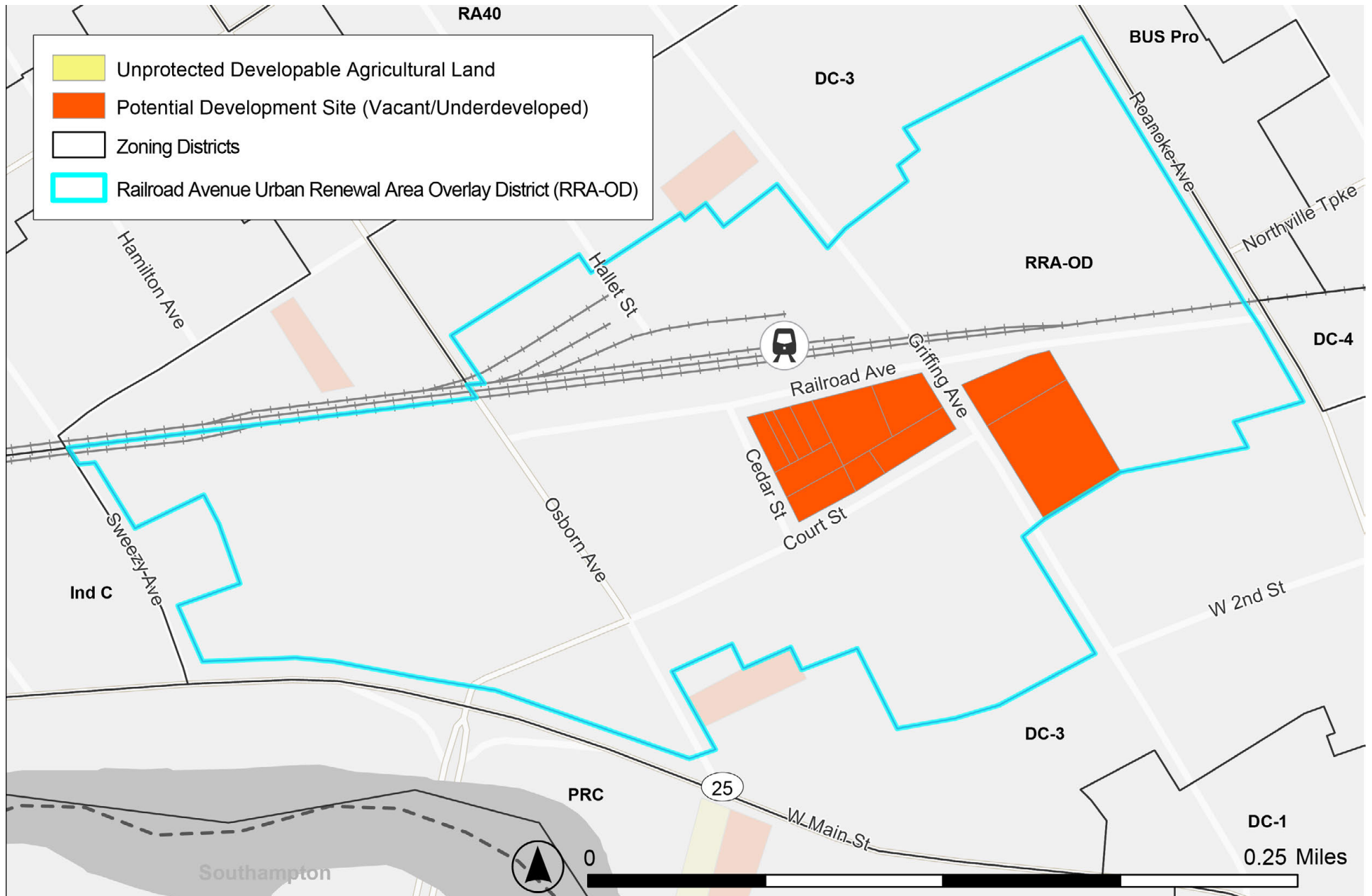
One such community benefit is the preservation of open space or agriculture through the purchase of TDR credits. The Town Code allows the use of TDR credits in the RRA-OD with the following requirements: for projects on sites that meet the minimum size of 20,000 square feet, the developer can apply up to five TDR credits, each providing a bonus of 3,000 square feet. For projects on sites larger than 60,000 square feet, a developer can apply up to ten TDR credits, each providing a bonus of 3,000 square feet. No sites greater than 60,000 square feet were identified for potential development in the RRA-OD, even when the parcels were combined.

In a scenario where developers take full advantage of the TDR bonus, the build out analysis identified an additional 15,000 square feet of built area on the two sites described above. The cumulative result would be an additional 30,000 square feet of built area in the RRA-OD and the application of a total of ten TDR credits. If these developments are residential, and assuming a residential unit is approximately 1,000 square feet, the build out in the RRA-OD with TDR credits could result in an additional 30 residential units. For this district, given the fact that most of the surrounding areas have been developed and it is an identified opportunity area for growth, we would expect both opportunity areas to be developed in the next 10 years. Therefore, it is reasonable, and conservative to use the full build-out projection rather than the 12% growth rate used for proposed zoning changes in other districts.

Table 2-10. Build-out Analysis of RRA-OD

| | Individual Lot Development Scenario | | | Merged Lot Development Scenario | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|-----------|---------|---------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| | Cluster 1 | Cluster 2 | Total | Cluster 1 | Cluster 2 | Total |
| Total Area | 57,341 | 47,631 | 104,972 | 57,341 | 47,631 | 104,972 |
| Total Parcels | 10 | 2 | 12 | 10 | 2 | 12 |
| As-of-Right Development (GSF) | 63,124 | 71,446 | 134,570 | 114,683 | 95,262 | 209,945 |
| Development + use of TDRs (GSF) | 63,124 | 86,446 | 149,570 | 129,683 | 110,262 | 239,945 |
| Net Development with TDR | 0 | 15,000 | 15,000 | 15,000 | 15,000 | 30,000 |
| Additional Units* | | 15 | 15 | 15 | 15 | 30 |
| TDR's required | 0 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 10 |

*- Assumption – It is impossible to speculate the unit mix and sizes, which would determine the total number of units. For this analysis, 1,000 SF was used as an average apartment size (including common areas), which assumes a mix 1-, 2-, and 3-br apartments.



2.6.4.7. Cluster Development Requirement in RA-40, and RB-40 zones

Cluster development requirements in the APZ, RA-80, and RB-80 zones aim to preserve 70% of the land for agriculture or open space while concentrating development on the remainder of the property. The comprehensive plan recommends that the Planning Board be allowed to request a cluster development alternative in RA40 and RB40 to protect unique natural features and open space. Candidate parcels would need to be of a sufficient size, set at 7 acres. As seen in Table 2-11, there are a total of 24 potential development parcels in both RA-40 and RB-40, totaling 453 acres. Just under 80% of those parcels are agricultural lands. When considering projected growth in the town for the next 10 years, it is anticipated that 3 of these parcels would be developed using this tool. The table shows that this recommendation would help to preserve 38 acres of land.

Table 2-11. Cluster Development Potential in RA-40 and RB-40

| | Cluster Development Opportunities (Maximum) | | | | Anticipated Development (12%) | | | |
|--|---|------------|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------|---------------------|----------------------|
| | Parcels > 7 acres | Acres | Potential New Units | Preserved Land (70%) | Parcels > 7 acres | Acres | Potential New Units | Preserved Land (70%) |
| RA-40 | 11 | 274 | 250 | 192 | 1 | 33 | 30 | 23 |
| Agricultural Land | 11 | 274 | 250 | 192 | 1 | 33 | 30 | 23 |
| Other Subdividable | 0 | | | - | - | - | - | - |
| RB-40 | 13 | 179 | 155 | 125 | 2 | 21 | 19 | 15 |
| Agricultural Land | 8 | 121 | 108 | 85 | 1 | 15 | 13 | 10 |
| Other Subdividable | 5 | 58 | 47 | 40 | 1 | 7 | 6 | 5 |
| RA-40/RB-40 Cluster Opportunities | | | | | | | | |
| Agricultural Lands Subtotal | 19 | 395 | 358 | 277 | 2 | 47 | 43 | 33 |
| Other Subdividable Subtotal | 5 | 58 | 47 | 40 | 1 | 7 | 6 | 5 |
| Total Cluster Opportunities | 24 | 453 | 405 | 317 | 3 | 54 | 49 | 38 |

2.7. Involved/Interested Agencies

2.7.1. Involved Agencies

Under SEQR, the lead agency is responsible for coordinating the SEQR review process, as well as discretionary decision making regarding the Proposed Action. For the DGEIS, the Town Board of the Town of Riverhead is the lead agency. As lead agency, the Town Board is responsible for preparing a determination of significance, determining the scope and adequacy of the DGEIS, coordinating the preparation of the Final GEIS, and preparing SEQR findings. The lead agency and the involved agencies have authority to fund, approve, or directly undertake some aspect of the Proposed Action. For this Proposed Action, there are no other involved agencies besides the Town Board.

Town of Riverhead Town Board (Lead Agency)
Town of Riverhead
4 West 2nd Street
Riverhead, NY 11901

2.7.2. Interested Agencies

Unlike an involved agency, interested agencies do not have the authority to fund, approve, or directly undertake some aspect of the Proposed Action. Instead, interested agencies may contribute relevant scoping topics, submit written comments during the DGEIS comment period, and comment on the DGEIS at public hearings. For this DGEIS, interested agencies include the following:

- Town of Riverhead, Planning Board, Edward Densieski, Chair
- Town of Riverhead Industrial Development Agency
- Town of Riverhead Departments
- Suffolk County Department of Planning, Lisa Broughton, Director of Water Quality and Energy
- Suffolk County Department of Health Services, Gregson H. Pigott, MD, MPH Commissioner
- Suffolk County Planning Commission (239-m Review)
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

2.8. Required Reviews and Approvals

This DGEIS identifies and discusses all required approvals and reviews needed to adopt the Proposed Action. The Proposed Action would require the following approval and review:

TOWN OF RIVERHEAD BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- Adoption of the Comprehensive Plan Update

TOWN OF RIVERHEAD PLANNING BOARD

- Advisory review of Proposed Action

SUFFOLK COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

- Advisory review of the Proposed Action and DGEIS under GML Section 23

Following adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, the Town Board would be in a position to draft and adopt Zoning Code and Map Amendments in line with the Plan recommendations. Adoption of future Zoning Code and Map Amendments would require a public hearing on the draft amendments and subsequent review under SEQR.

3.0. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING, POTENTIAL IMPACTS, AND MITIGATION

3.1. Land Use, Zoning, and Public Policy

This section examines Riverhead’s existing land use, zoning, and public policy. The potential impacts that could occur as a result of the adoption of the Proposed Action are explored here, and any necessary mitigation measures needed to mitigate potential impacts are identified.

3.1.1. Existing Conditions

A summary of the existing land use and zoning conditions in Riverhead is given below. For a more detailed overview of existing conditions, refer to Chapter 2 of the Draft 2024 Comprehensive Plan.⁵

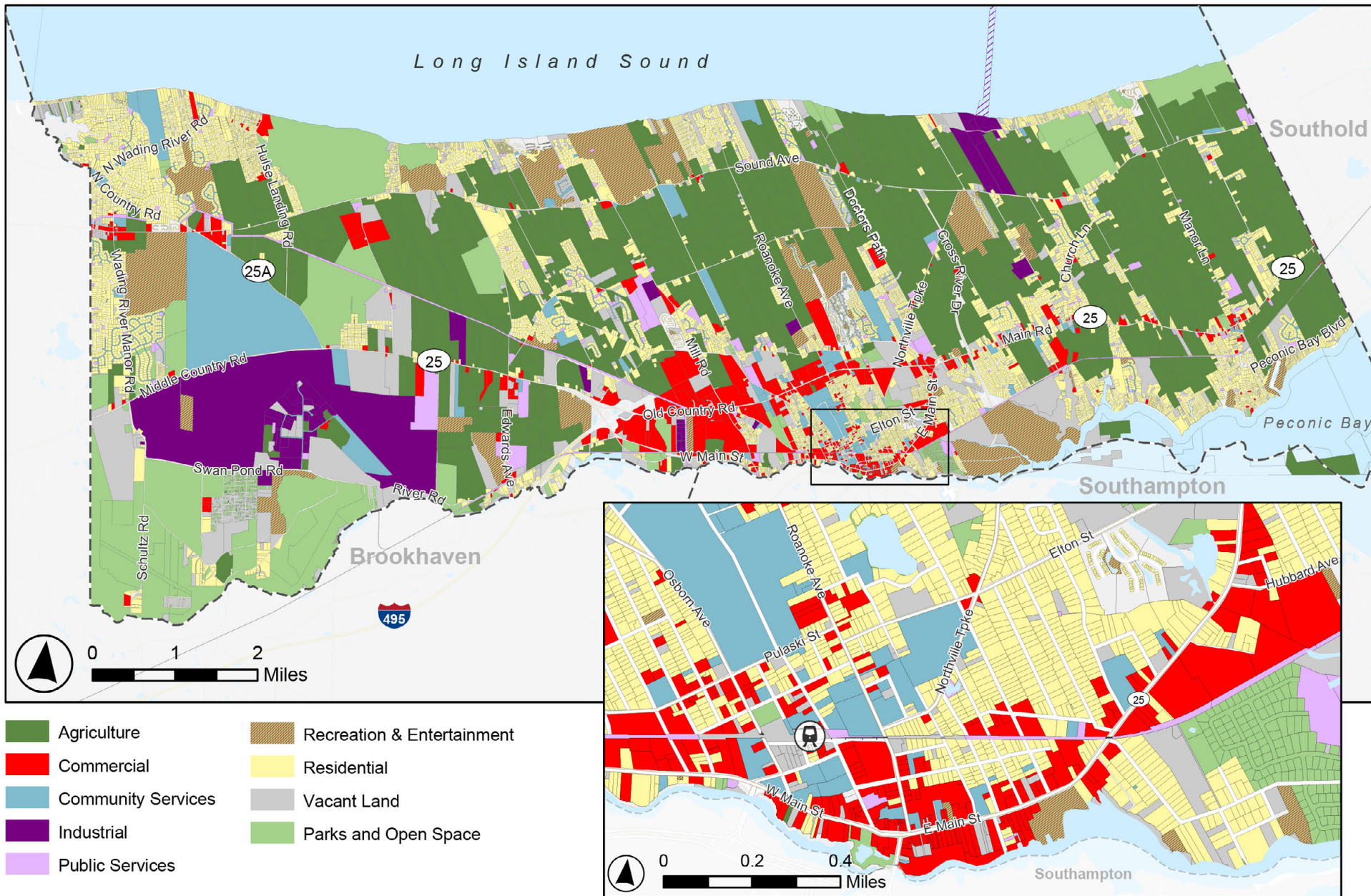
3.1.1.1. Land Use

The Town of Riverhead is located in Suffolk County in Long Island, New York, and is approximately 210 square miles in size. As seen in Table 3.1-1 below, the Town’s land areas include over 41,000 acres, or approximately 65 square miles. There are also almost 94,000 acres of land in the Town’s jurisdiction that are under water (e.g the Long Island Sound, Peconic River, and Peconic Bay). Agricultural use is the largest use comprising over 36% of Town lands. The next largest category is residential (16%) followed by open space. Most of the land use categories are not anticipated to change significantly. 9.5% of land is “vacant”, meaning it is unprotected, in private ownership and zoned for residential or commercial development. See Figure 3.1-1.

Table 3.1-1. Existing Land Use

| Use | Land Area (Acres) | % |
|--|-------------------|-------|
| Residential | 6,802 | 16.4% |
| Commercial | 1,985 | 4.8% |
| Industrial | 2,630 | 6.3% |
| Agricultural | 15,145 | 36.5% |
| Community Services | 2,216 | 5.3% |
| Public Services | 787 | 1.9% |
| Recreation & Entertainment | 2,834 | 6.8% |
| Open Space (Conservation Lands & Public Parks) | 5,141 | 12.4% |
| Vacant Land | 3,931 | 9.5% |
| Total | 41,471 | |

⁵ The Draft 2024 Comprehensive Plan can be found here: <https://townofriverheadcomprehensiveplanupdate.com/>



Distribution of Land Uses

This section presents an overview of the distribution of land use categories throughout Riverhead.

Residential Areas: Riverhead has various residential neighborhoods, including single-family homes, apartments, and condominiums. The Town offers a mix of housing options, from historic homes in the Downtown area to suburban-style neighborhoods and waterfront properties.

Commercial and Retail: The Town features several commercial areas, including:

- Downtown Riverhead, which serves as a central business district with a mix of shops, restaurants, and cultural institutions.
- Route 58 features numerous shopping centers, big-box stores, restaurants, and other retail establishments. Commercial and retail development has expanded significantly along this corridor since the prior Plan was completed.
- Tanger Outlets, a major shopping destination for the wider region, is home to a wide range of brand-name outlet stores and includes indoor and outdoor shopping areas.
- Other scattered commercial corridors, which feature local shops, restaurants, and service providers, are along Roanoke Avenue, West Main Street, Main Road, Middle Country Road, and Route 25A in Wading River.

Agriculture: Agriculture is an essential part of Riverhead's identity. The Town is home to farms, vineyards, and orchards, particularly in its eastern portion of Town. The Long Island Wine Country is known for its vineyards and wineries, making it a significant component of the local economy. It has also been a draw for tourists and wine enthusiasts. Further discussion of agriculture and agritourism can be found in DGEIS Chapter 3.6.

Waterfront and Marinas: Riverhead has a substantial waterfront area along the Peconic River and Flanders Bay, which features marinas, boat docks, and access to Peconic Bay. The waterfront is often used for recreational boating and fishing.

Industrial and Manufacturing: Some areas of Riverhead are designated for industrial and manufacturing purposes. These zones may include warehouses, manufacturing facilities, and other industrial establishments. Calverton also includes the EPCAL site which includes a range of businesses in industries such as manufacturing, technology, aviation, and warehousing. Calverton is also home to large-scale commercial solar energy production facilities that generate renewable energy.

Educational and Institutional: Riverhead has many educational institutions, healthcare facilities, and other institutional land uses. This includes facilities owned by the Town, Riverhead School District, Shoreham-Wading River School District, Riverhead Charter School, Eastern Suffolk BOCES, Suffolk County Community College, and other private and parochial schools, Peconic Bay Medical Center, Suffolk County Community college, religious institutions, and other cultural and historical institutions. A more detailed discussion of community facilities can be found in DGEIS Chapter 3.5.

Cultural and Entertainment Attractions: The Town has invested in cultural and entertainment attractions, with the revitalization of downtown Riverhead being a notable example. The Suffolk Theater, for instance, has become a cultural hub with live performances and events. Other notable attractions include the Long Island Aquarium, Vail-Leavitt Music Hall, and East End Arts.

Open Space and Parks: The Town has open space and parkland areas, including municipal, county and state-owned parks, nature preserves, and recreational spaces, which provide opportunities for outdoor activities and community gatherings. A description of parks is provided in DGEIS Chapter 3.5.

Historic Districts: Riverhead has designated historic districts, particularly in its downtown area, aimed at preserving and showcasing historic architecture and landmarks. A more detailed discussion of historic districts is provided in DGEIS Chapter 3.3.

3.1.1.2. Zoning

The following description provides a general overview of the Town's zoning districts as shown on Figure 3.1-2.

Residential Districts

Approximately 65% of the Town is zoned for single-family residential housing (Residence A-40 (RA40), RA80, RB40, RB80, APZ, and HR zoning use districts).

Residence A-80 (RA80) and Residence B-80 (RB80): These districts can generally be found in Jamesport, Wading River, and areas north of Sound Avenue. Both RA80 and RB80 generally allow for low-density residential at a 2-acre minimum lot size (80,000 SF). These districts have the same dimensional regulations; however, there may be some differences in other regulations such as permitted uses. The RA80 district allows for the use of TDR credits to increase density to 1 acre per lot (40,000 SF).

Agricultural Protection (APZ). The APZ zone covers a substantial amount of the Town and is broadly located in areas between Sound Avenue and Middle Road. This district is similar to RA80 with regard to dimensional regulations; it allows for low-density residential at a 2-acre minimum lot size (80,000 SF). This focus of this district is to maintain highly productive agricultural lands by limiting encroachment of nonagricultural development. It is the only district designated as a sending district for TDR credits.

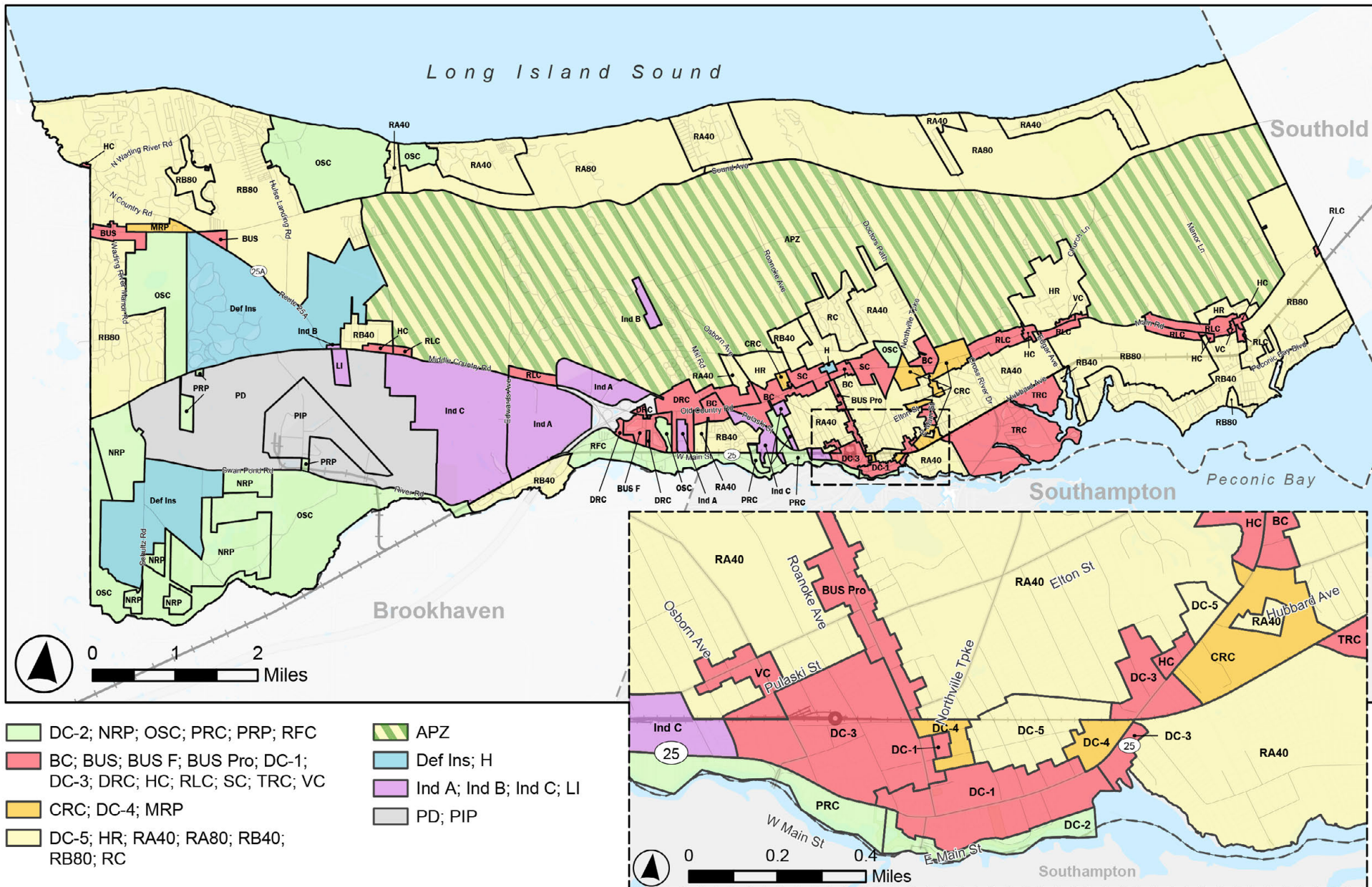
Residence A-40 (RA40) and Residence B-40 (RB40): Both districts generally allow for medium-density residential at a 1-acre minimum lot size (40,000 SF). These districts have the same dimensional regulations; however, there may be some differences in other regulations such as permitted uses. The RA40 district allows for the use of TDR credits to increase density to 0.5 acre per lot (20,000 SF), and it also has a workforce housing option that allows an increased development yield of 10%, provided that such additional development is reserved for workforce housing.

Hamlet Residential (HR): HR is generally located along Church Lane (Route 23) north of Route 58 and just north of the hamlet center in Jamesport (on Manor Lane). The district is similar to RA80 with regard to dimensional regulations. It allows for low-density residential at a 2-acre minimum lot size (80,000 SF) and allows for an increase to 1 acre per lot (40,000 SF) with the use of TDR credits.

Retirement Community (RC): This district is in one large area north of Middle Road. RC permits the construction of medium-density living accommodations for seniors and disabled older individuals with comfortable and safe housing in a congregate setting. The district is intended to be in areas near shopping, medical offices, public services, and public transportation. It provides for the use of TDR credits to increase development yield not to exceed 4 dwelling units per acre (40,000 SF). The minimum parcel area to be considered for inclusion within the Residence RC Zoning Use District is 15 acres

Multifamily Residential Professional Office Zone (MRP): This district is located in one area along Route 25A in Wading River. MRP provides for medium-density residential options such as multifamily condominiums and townhomes, as well as professional offices. The number of dwelling units permitted is variable, based on the

number of bedrooms per dwelling unit and the availability of water and sewer infrastructure. The maximum density is 4 units per acre, assuming one-bedroom units and the provision of necessary infrastructure.



Commercial Districts

Downtown Center (DC): The DC district is divided into five categories (DC-1 thru DC-5) in order to balance downtown land uses and development patterns with the historic and natural context of the area. DC Districts are intended to limit sprawl and protect open space; develop the downtown as a cultural, civic, and tourist center by creating a high-density of mixed uses; increase public access to the waterfront; promote transit, pedestrian, and bicycle use; preserve historic resources; and provide community facilities.

- **Downtown Center 1: Main Street (DC-1):** DC-1 allows a variety of commercial and cultural uses found in a downtown core area. It also permits professional offices, residential units on upper floors, B&Bs, and townhouses. Prohibited uses include office buildings only, flea markets, gas stations, car washes, and drive thru windows.
- **Downtown Center 2: Waterfront (DC-2):** This district allows marinas, resorts, and retail stores, while hotels, inns, B&Bs, and indoor recreation are allowed by special permit. It is zoned for areas along the Peconic River near the downtown core area.
- **Downtown Center 3: Office (DC-3):** This district is similar to DC-1 but with lower intensities. It complements the State Supreme Court of Suffolk County Complex by allowing a moderate intensity mix of uses, with ground-floor offices and retail and a greater mix of housing types. The Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area (RRA-OD) is an overlay district allowing for a higher-intensity mix of uses in DC-3, emphasizing ground-floor offices and retail, along with residential spaces on upper floors for larger sites, with site plans reviewed by the Town Board. RRA-OD is discussed further in this section.
- **Downtown Center 4: Office/Residential Transition (DC-4):** This district permits professional and public offices, single-family units, townhouses, places of worship, and funeral homes, while retail and personal services are prohibited. Professional offices, B&Bs, day care, and nursery schools are allowed by special permit.
- **Downtown Center 5: Residential (DC-5):** DC-5 provides for a downtown residential neighborhood with permitted uses including live/workspaces and home occupations.

Hamlet Center (HC): HC districts are located along Main Road in Aquebogue and Jamesport and along Route 25 in Calverton. This district provides for small clusters of shops and professional services in a rural setting, with a residential character. Development is meant to be pedestrian-friendly, small-scale, and clustered in a campus-style pattern. HC is intended to have larger front and side setbacks and more landscaping than the Village Center (VC) district. Apartments are permitted on upper floors.

Village Center (VC): VC districts are in hamlet center areas in Polishtown, Aquebogue, and Jamesport. The purpose of VC is to encourage “Main Street” style commercial nodes with small shops, restaurants, and professional services following a traditional pattern of development and design in a compact, pedestrian-oriented setting.

Business Center (BC): BC encourages single, freestanding roadside commercial uses, primarily along Route 58, between the existing Destination Retail Center (DRC) and Shopping Center (SC) districts. Preservation credits (TDR) may be used to increase the development yield, with sewer infrastructure.

Shopping Center (SC): SC allows for moderate-sized convenience shopping centers, mainly on Route 58, in central locations that are accessible from adjacent neighborhoods. Retail development is intended to be arranged in a shopping center layout, with large-scale stores complemented by ancillary small-scale stores. Professional office buildings are intended to be arranged in a campus-style layout. Strip or freestanding development is discouraged. TDR credits can be used to increase the allowable development yield.

Destination Retail Center (DRC): DRC provides for large regional retail centers along Route 58 while linking development to open space protected in the Agriculture Protection (APZ) district. Development is intended to have a campus-style layout, with no strip or freestanding businesses permitted.

Commercial/Residential Campus (CRC): CRC aims to provide for office development as well as additional housing alternatives which are near service and arterial roads. The district permits housing types that are more dense than single-family homes; the dimensional regulations effectively increase the maximum density to 2 units per acre (with the use of TDR). CRC is primarily located in areas around East Main Street between the Downtown core and Route 58.

Manufacturer's Outlet Center (BUS F): This district, located adjacent to the I-495 interchange/terminus, includes most of Tanger Outlets Riverhead. BUS F provides for outlet centers and their customary accessory and attending uses at sites that are appropriate due to their location relative to public infrastructure, and which are accessible to arterial roadway networks.

Riverfront Corridor (RFC): RFC provides for a mix of residential, commercial, and recreational uses that are in harmony with the ecologically sensitive areas of the Peconic River. It allows for single-family homes, river-related retail uses, and non-motorized open space uses.

Peconic River Community (PRC): This district, located along West Main Street, west of the downtown core, provides for an array of commercial, and recreational uses while preserving the ecological resources along the Peconic River. While the stated intent of this district includes residential uses, no residential uses are permitted.

Rural Corridor (RLC): This district allows a very limited range of roadside shops and services that are compatible with the agricultural and rural setting along major arterial roads, such as Route 25, leading into downtown Riverhead and areas zoned Hamlet Center (HC) or Village Center (VC).

Business (PB): This district, which provides for a variety of professional office uses, is mapped along Roanoke Avenue to provide a transitional area between Route 58, the downtown area, and adjacent residential areas.

Rural Neighborhood Business (CR): This district is limited to a small area along Sound Avenue and Route 25A in Wading River. It allows small clusters of shops and professional offices oriented to residents. The scale and design of new development in CR are intended to complement the Town's rural character and preserve and enhance natural open space areas and habitat. Where lot sizes and depths permit, development is intended to be clustered in a campus-style pattern.

Tourism/Resort Campus (TRC): Mapped on Indian Island County Park and Indian Island Golf Course, TRC provides opportunities for overnight accommodations and recreational amenities in a campus setting with significant open space preserves.

Hospital (H): The H district is mapped for lands owned by the Peconic Bay Medical Center. It is designed to optimize the hospital's services and meet the growing needs of the Riverhead community. Site plans in the H district are reviewed by the Town Board.

Industrial A (Ind A): Ind A allows for industrial and warehousing uses, primarily north and west of the terminus of the Long Island Expressway. IND A is intended to allow heavier uses than the Industrial C (Ind C) district.

Industrial B (Ind B): This district is found in two locations in the Town. While the zoning code provides for a variety of general industrial uses, no lot, yard, bulk, and height requirements are specified.

Industrial C (Ind C): Ind C allows for a mix of light industrial, warehouse development, recreational uses, and office campuses in the area between Enterprise Park and the terminus of the Long Island Expressway. It is also zoned for several scattered sites in more developed areas between Calverton and downtown. Ind C is intended

for moderate-sized businesses and also allows and encourages commercial recreation businesses. The use of generous landscaping and open space buffers is intended to help protect the rural appearance and minimize views of development from the expressway and arterial roads.

Light Industrial (LI): This district encourages the development of employment-creating enterprises within buildings in an industrial park setting in accordance with modern development standards.

Planned Industrial Park (PIP): PIP provides for industrial and office development in a comprehensively planned and designed environment. It encompasses the bulk of the former Grumman facilities, sometimes referred to as the "industrial core" or the Burman Subdivision.

Open Space Conservation (OSC): OSC provides for conservation and preservation of lands, whether in public or private ownership, which are areas of significant environmental importance and are wholly exempt or have nontaxable status. Robert Cushman Murphy County Park, Sawmill Creek, Andrew Sabin Nature Preserve, Schiff Scout Reservation, and Wildwood State Park are mapped within this district.

Def Ins: This district is zoned for Calverton National Cemetery and other properties on Route 25A. This zoning district is not explicitly described in the Town's zoning code.

Planned Recreational Park (PRP): This district is mapped for some portions of the former Naval Weapons Industrial Reserve Plant at Calverton. PRP allows for commercial recreation complexes within a regulatory framework which allows flexibility both in the use and design of these facilities in a single location.

Natural Resources Protection (NRP): This area is known as the "Pine Barrens Protection Zone." The Pine Barrens provide vegetation, wildlife habitats, and areas for groundwater supply located over a sole source aquifer. The zoning is intended to encourage clustering to create open and minimize disturbances.

Overlay Districts

The following description provides a general overview of the Town's overlay districts as shown on Figure 3.1-3.

Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area (RRA-OD): This district was intended to spur investment in the DC-3 district to build off recent investments in the DC-1 area. The overlay district was formed in recognition of the existing blighted conditions and the unique obstacles facing the area. The area also has access to several resources such as the Suffolk County Supreme Court Complex, Riverhead Town Hall, LIRR Station, Riverhead Public Library, Railroad Museum, and Riverhead Historic Society Museum. The overlay district permits a higher-intensity mix of uses, with ground-floor offices and retail and residential on upper floors for larger sites. Site plans in the Urban Renewal Area are reviewed by the Town Board.

Arts District: This overlay district is mapped in the central business district to help with the revitalization of the downtown area. It allows for unused floor space on upper floors to be used for art and cultural resources, together with living accommodations for artists.

Downtown Riverfront Overlay: This overlay district aims to promote waterfront development that enhances recreation and tourism, and to manage land uses so that the district becomes a people-friendly civic area with active uses, additional entertainment facilities and events, specialty retail, and restaurants. The use, dimensional and other requirements for the underlying zoning use district apply, But development is subject to consistency with an adopted Downtown Pattern Book (not yet codified).

Pine Barrens Overlay District: This district was designed to provide additional restrictions to protect the Pine Barrens Core and Compatible Growth Areas.

Community Benefit District (CBD): CBD is, in effect, a floating zone that would permit clustered multifamily rental dwelling units. Permission for use of this district requires the concurrent construction of on-site community center and nonresidential use(s). This district is only permitted on lots larger than 10 acres situated on State or County arterial roadways.

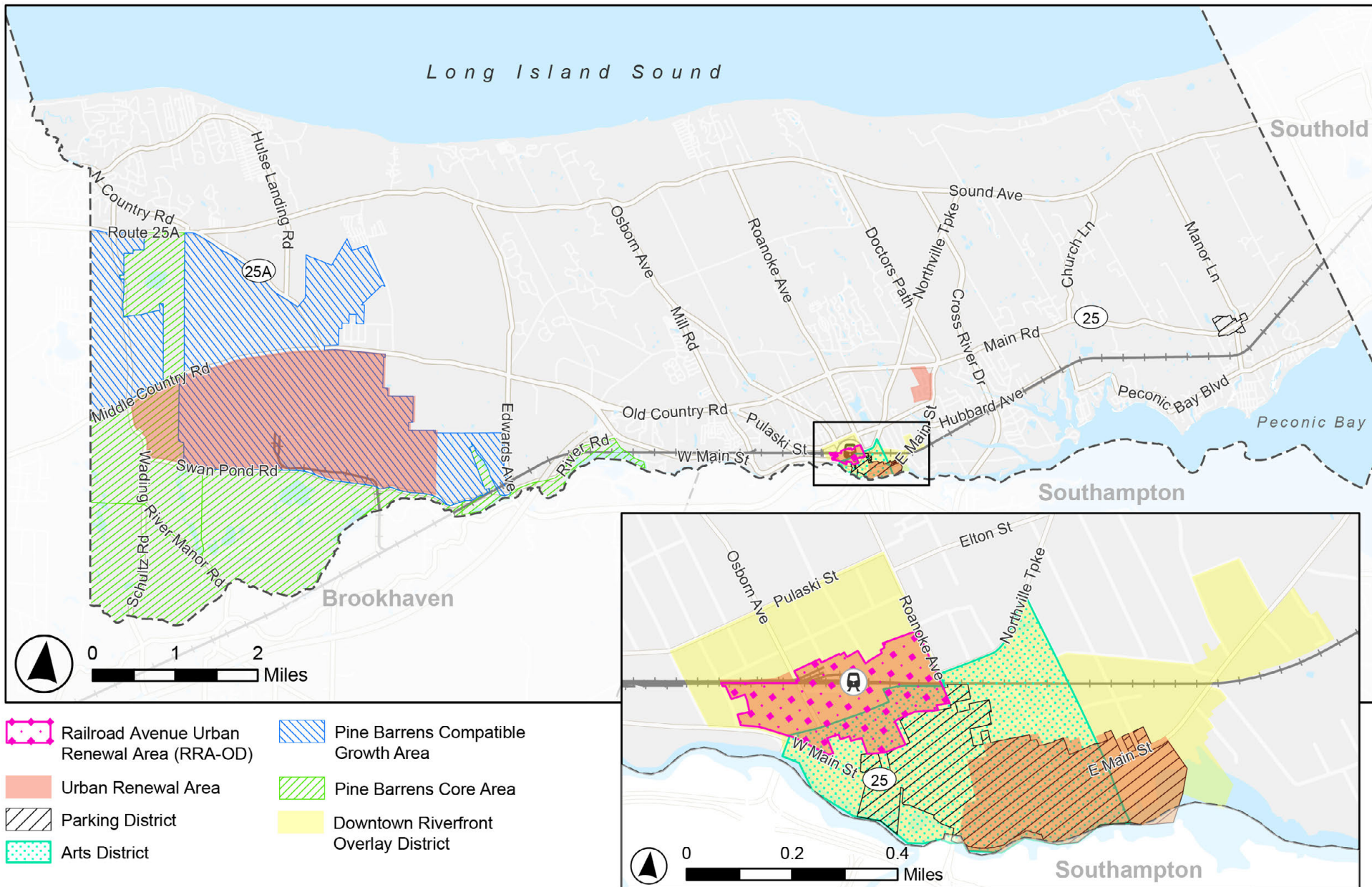
Other Districts

The following description provides a general overview of other districts as shown on Figure 3.1-3.

Federal Opportunity Zone: A portion of downtown (Census Tract 1698) is in a Federal Opportunity Zone, along with portions of Calverton and Manorville including the EPCAL property. The Opportunity Zone program uses federal income tax incentives to spur economic development by allowing taxpayers to defer capital gains by reinvesting those gains into communities designated as “qualified opportunity zones.”

While the Federal Opportunity Zone designation provides funding opportunities and developer interest in the downtown Riverhead area, the existing 500-unit cap for the DC-1 zoning area limits new growth. With a strong push for development and a Federal Opportunity Zone in play, investors and developers need predictability in the process and to know whether they can or cannot build.

Parking District: The Riverhead Parking District No. 1 is an official Town Special District, a taxing jurisdiction that levies taxes on all property owners within the district. Properties within a parking district do not have to provide off-street parking. The purpose of the district is to create additional parking spaces that serve the downtown area. The Town Board serves as the regulating board of the district.



3.1.1.3. Public Policy

The following presents a summary of existing public policy documents related to Town land use and zoning:

Riverhead Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) (2022): The Town of Riverhead was selected in 2021 to receive \$10M through the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI). The planning process included the development of a Strategic Investment Plan which was the result of a six-month planning process of public engagement, visioning, and identifying a portfolio of projects which have the greatest positive benefit for the Town. The specific projects chosen by New York State to be funded through the DRI support several identified goals such as enhancing streetscapes and public gathering spaces, expanding arts and cultural activity, and increasing housing and business opportunities. The selected projects included creating a new Town Square, enhancing Peconic Park with an adaptive playground and amphitheater, enhancing the pedestrian realm along Main Street, building a new Town rowing facility, implementing a public art program, expanding the Suffolk Theater, building a new entrance and welcome center for the library, and creating a mixed-use development at Griffing Avenue.

Downtown Riverhead Pattern Book (2021): The Downtown Riverhead Pattern Book serves as a directive for policies and projects within the Main Street (DC-1) Zoning Use District, shaped by resident and stakeholder input to establish an ideal vision for Downtown Riverhead. Aimed at preserving the Town's unique character while accommodating redevelopment, the book outlines parameters for building siting, massing, public realm enhancement, and resiliency policies. One key recommendation is the reduction of Main Street building heights from 5 to 4 stories. The Town is advised to secure funding for a sea level rise resiliency plan and focus on creating a mix of uses, including cultural and recreational destinations, local food and beverage, hospitality, postsecondary education, office spaces, and various living options. Additional recommendations encompass traffic calming, special events programming, and updates to the Town's Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program. Despite existing TDR benefits in the DC-1 Zoning Use District, local developers question the feasibility of TDR for Downtown infill. The proposal includes the development of a new Town square within the next five years, acting as a central gathering space connecting Main Street and the Peconic River.⁶

Riverhead Parking Plan Preliminary Recommendations (2020): The study highlighted that the Parking District oversees the majority (55%) of the Study Area's parking assets, presenting an opportunity for system-wide management. Variability in parking demand and timed regulations emphasized the need for tailored management strategies. During peak demand, over 600 private spaces (33%) were vacant, indicating potential for shared parking. Lack of alternative transportation options and limited parking enforcement staff underscored challenges. On-street parking capacity was underutilized in key locations, suggesting the potential for targeted management strategies. With several hundred dwelling units expected to be constructed in the next five years, the study's recommendations called for prioritizing spaces for customers and visitors in centrally located facilities, updating enforcement efforts to better monitor and manage parking demand, establishing regulations for incoming developments to address residential parking demand, and enhancing alternative transportation amenities to alleviate parking demand.

Peconic Estuary Partnership 2020 Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (2020): PEP's 2020 *Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP)* is a strategic framework for protecting and restoring the Peconic Estuary of eastern Long Island.⁷ The 250-square mile estuary comprises Great Peconic Bay, Little Peconic Bay, Gardiners Bay, and a hundred other bays, harbors, and tributaries. Altogether, the estuary's

⁶ Urban Design Associates, Downtown Riverhead Pattern Book, 2021, last accessed on April 11, 2021 at <https://riverheadny.municipalone.com/files/documents/FinalPatternBook2021-01-141505092833011421AM.pdf>

⁷ CCMP Implementation Actions 2020-2024 Update, [CCMP Implementation Actions 2020-2024 Update - Long Island Sound Study](#)

shoreline totals more than 450 miles, and its watershed includes Brookhaven, East Hampton, Southampton, Riverhead, Southold, and Shelter Island.

The CCMP includes several recommendations relevant to this comprehensive planning effort:

- Enhance PEP's organizational structure, operational practices, and financial positions to support successful implementation the Plan. Empower local communities to support estuary health, including underrepresented groups.
- Help local communities take meaningful, well-informed action to prepare for and adapt to climate change impacts; identify and prioritize sustainable projects; conserve and protect habitats; acquire tools and databases related to goals; protect and restore coastal ecosystems; and collaborate on coastal and ocean acidification monitoring and research.
- Protect areas from degradation by identifying water quality in ground and surface waters. Communicate with local governments to increase understanding of negative impacts from legacy, current, and future nutrient inputs.
- Expand scientific understanding of the Peconic Estuary ecosystem and deliver information that supports management decision-making.
- Restore and protect key habitats and watershed biodiversity.⁸

Transit-Oriented Development Plan (2020): In 2020, the Town developed the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Plan for the Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area, targeting the train station parking lot for redevelopment. This involved reviewing the zoning code and proposing amendments to encourage redevelopment. Subsequently, the TOD Overlay District (DC-3 Zoning Use District) was implemented to promote TOD development, pedestrian-friendly spaces, and active ground-floor uses, allowing additional density for properties over one acre with community benefits. Following an RFQ Process in March 2021, a developer was chosen for the Railroad Avenue URA project, set to replace the 2-acre parking lot with over 200 apartments, office and retail spaces, a restaurant area, and a museum space.⁹

Peconic River/Route 25 Corridor BOA Study (2016): The Town of Riverhead Town Board prepared a Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Nomination Study, which included the Downtown area. The primary purpose of the New York State BOA Program is to conduct a community-supported planning process for area-wide brownfield redevelopment. Goals of the study were to overcome several obstacles preventing redevelopment/revitalization; to identify key strategic/ areas where redevelopment/preservation would act as catalysts for revitalization of the area as a whole; and to address numerous abandoned properties as well as underutilized sites that have not achieved their highest potential. The Town aims to promote its appeal as a cultural, historic, and entertainment destination along the riverfront and its surrounding wine/agritourism industry.¹⁰

Route 25A-Wading River Planning and Zoning Report (2012): This report recommended expanding the MRP Zoning Use District along Route 25A from Brookhaven Town Line on the west to North Country Road on the east. The MRP Zone replaced approximately 16.4 acres of the BUS CR Zone. The projected build-out results in about 35,720 sf of professional office and 64,800 sf of multifamily (or 36 dwelling units), for a total of 100,520 sf. The projected overall building square footage under the proposed zoning is less than the existing zoning. Also,

⁸ Peconic Estuary Partnership, *2020 Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan*, 2020, last accessed on April 11, 2021 at <https://indd.adobe.com/view/201ca273-3278-44ee-b907-a8308ec3d4a5>

⁹ Town of Riverhead Town Board, *Town of Riverhead Transit Oriented Development Plan for the Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area*, 2020.

¹⁰ Town of Riverhead, *Town of Riverhead Peconic River/Route 25 Corridor Step II BOA Nomination Study*, 2016, last accessed on April 11, 2021 at <https://docs.dos.ny.gov/opd/boa/RiverheadBOA.pdf>

there is a difference in the types of uses that could be built under both zoning scenarios. The MRP Zone excludes retail uses and therefore eliminated up to 142,877 sf of retail space but would still allow for the capture of 200,000 sf for future retail growth.

DC-1 Bulk Study (2009): This study aimed to evaluate the existing DC-1 zoning regulations concerning building height, lot coverage, floor area, and private parking within the DC-1 Zoning Use District. Assessing current conditions and projecting a future Build-out scenario, the study outlined goals such as developing tourist and specialty shopping niches, preserving downtown's historic character, and promoting a mix of uses. Recommendations included constructing pedestrian walkways, rezoning specific areas for better land use alignment (though not all implemented), and establishing different building height expectations for the DC-1 and proposed DC-3 areas. Anticipating five-story buildings in the DC-1 district and three-story structures in the proposed DC-3 area, the study focused on enhancing gateways, expanding parking facilities, and integrating walkable, attractive parking lots with downtown buildings.

Town of Riverhead Comprehensive Plan Update (2003): The 2003 Comprehensive Plan established a long-term framework for the Town and provided the basis for subsequent rezoning actions. The plan emphasizes on the revitalization of the downtown area as a critical focus in the overall improvement of the Town. The Downtown was to be primarily developed as an entertainment, tourism, and cultural center. The "Proposed Land Use Plan" modified existing zoning patterns and boundaries to bring about farmland and open space preservation and create compact, well-planned pedestrian- and transportation-friendly communities. The vision was to provide growth management techniques to limit both residential and commercial sprawl to protect open space and farmland, while concentrating development into compact nodes. This plan also highlighted maintaining and preserving the Town's natural and scenic areas, including stream corridors, wetlands, the Central Pine Barrens region, and aquifers.¹¹

Framework for the Future – Suffolk County's Comprehensive Master Plan 2035¹²: Published in June 2015, the Suffolk County Master Plan sets up the framework for the County's future by identifying three themes and six critical county-wide priorities requiring regional policy solutions. The three themes or planning principles embodied in the Plan are to revitalize the economy, rebuild downtowns and infrastructure, and reclaim quality of groundwater, surface water, and terrestrial resources. This plan focused on regional priorities and did not provide Town specific recommendations. However, the trends and recommendations apply to Riverhead. Notably, this plan recognizes the need for Transit Oriented Development and advises the use of incentives for mixed-use buildings around LIRR stations in order to promote walkable communities and diversified housing.

Suffolk County Comprehensive Water Resources Management Plan (2015): This plan provides an analysis of the County's water quality, quantity, availability, and challenges. It sets goals in four significant categories: groundwater resource management, drinking water supply, surface water resource management, and wastewater management.

Suffolk County Subwatersheds Wastewater Plan (2020)¹³: The Suffolk County Subwatersheds Wastewater Plan (SWP) was developed in response to the Comprehensive Water Resources Management Plan as part of the

¹¹ Town of Riverhead Comprehensive Plan, 2003,

<https://www.townofriverheadny.gov/pview.aspx?id=18809&catid=0>

¹² <https://www.thefoggiestidea.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Suffolk-County-Master-Plan-DRAFT-June-2015-Small.pdf>

¹³ Suffolk County New York, Department of Health Services, Division of Environmental Quality, Subwatersheds Wastewater Plan, July 2020, <https://suffolkcountyny.gov/Portals/0/formsdocs/planning/CEQ/2020/SWP%20FINAL%20July%202020.pdf>

Reclaim Our Water initiative. Wastewater management options and recommendations explored in the SWP include connection of parcels to community sewers by expanding existing sewer districts or creating new sewer districts where possible, upgrading cesspools or conventional on-site sewage disposal systems to Innovative and Alternative Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (I/A OWTS), and requiring nitrogen-reducing technology on all new construction countywide. The plan indicates where nitrogen loads originate and how to minimize loadings and provides parcel-level recommendations for land preservation.

Long Island Nitrogen Action Plan (LINAP): Through a Partnership between NYS DEC, the Long Island Regional Planning Council (LIRPC), and Suffolk and Nassau Counties, LINAP aims to reduce nitrogen levels in Long Island’s surface and ground waters. The Program was launched in 2015 and has four overarching goals:¹⁴

- Assess nitrogen pollution in Long Island waters,
- Identify sources of nitrogen to surface waters and groundwater,
- Establish nitrogen reduction endpoints (ecological endpoints are desirable conditions in surface waters),
- Develop an implementation plan to achieve reductions.

Ongoing initiatives of LINAP include the Nitrogen Smart Communities Program, septic incentive programs, development of alternative wastewater treatment systems, improvements to wastewater and sewer systems, groundwater monitoring, studying the sustainability of the aquifer, and sub-watershed planning to assess the amount of nitrogen discharged into waters.

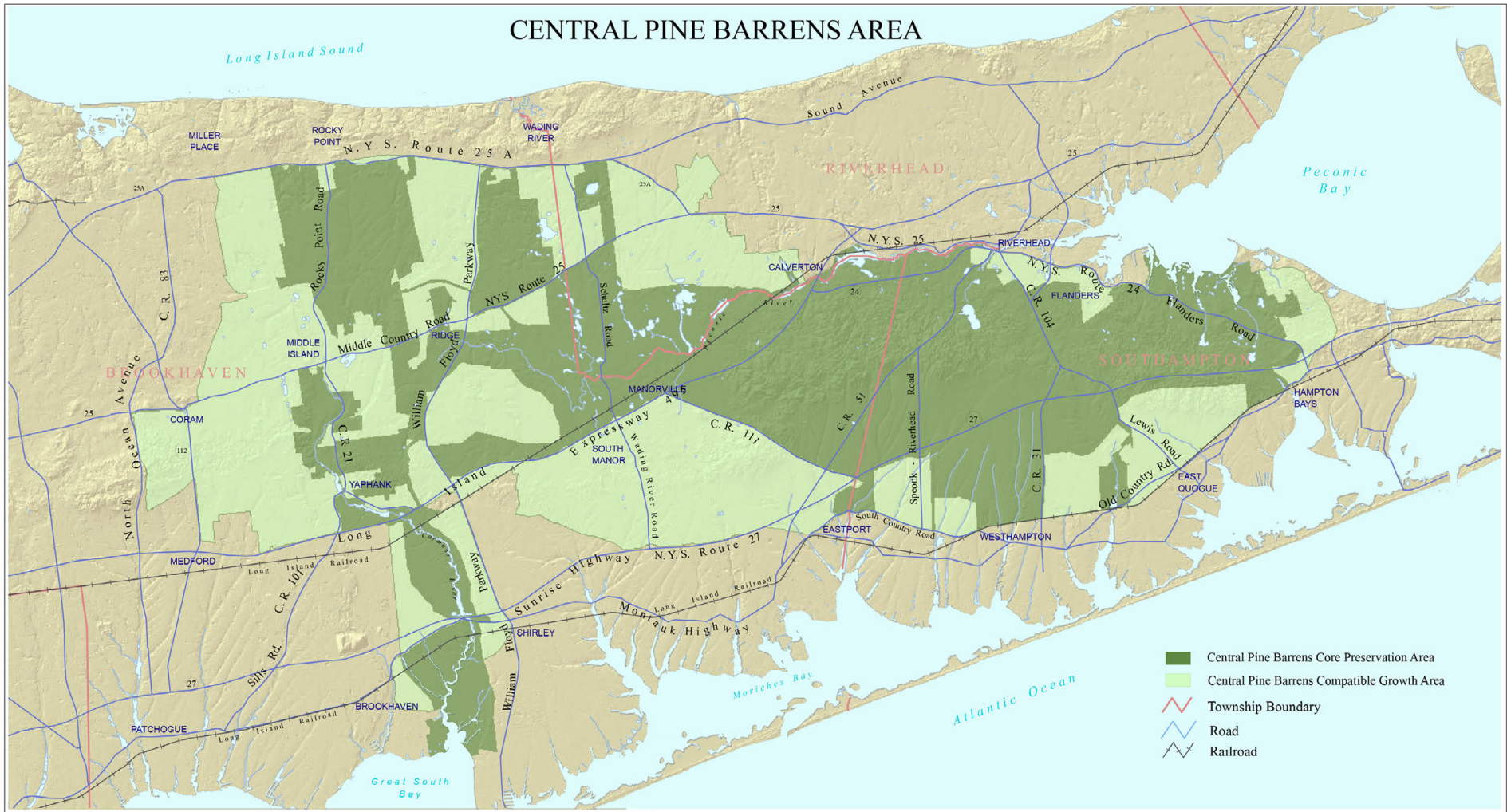
Central Pine Barrens Commission Comprehensive Land Use Plan: Established in 1993, the Central Pine Barrens Commission operates under the mandate of the Long Island Pine Barrens Protection Act, requiring the development of a Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) with a five-year review cycle. The inaugural CLUP was crafted in 1995, and proposed amendments to chapters 4-6 are anticipated for adoption in 2024.¹⁵

The CLUP identifies two regions within the Central Pine Barrens — the Core Preservation Area and the Compatible Growth Area (See Figure 3.1-4). The Core Preservation Area consists of 55,000 acres (4,720 in Riverhead), in which all new development is essentially prohibited, with limited expansion of existing agricultural uses being permitted. The Compatible Growth Area consists of 47,500 acres (5,484 in Riverhead), in which appropriate patterns of compatible residential, commercial, agricultural, and industrial development are permitted. The Calverton redevelopment policy under section 9.2 of the CLUP recognizes that economic development on the former Calverton Naval Industrial Reserve Plant property, known as EPCAL, is a public improvement and is not considered “development,” as defined in the Pine Barrens Protection Act. This policy effectively exempts the area from additional restrictions on development that are otherwise imposed on areas within the Core Preservation Area.

The CLUP includes a strategy for the public acquisition of private vacant property in the Core Preservation Area, with a goal of purchasing 75% of the remaining privately owned vacant land. To this end, a type of development rights transfer program called the Pine Barrens Credit (PBC) program has been created. Property owners in the Core Preservation Area may transfer the right to develop a parcel in the Core to another parcel outside the Pine Barrens region.

¹⁴ New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), Long Island Nitrogen Action Plan (LINAP), <https://dec.ny.gov/nature/waterbodies/oceans-estuaries/linap>

¹⁵ Central Pine Barrens Joint Planning & Policy Commission, Central Pine Barrens Comprehensive Land Use Plan, <https://pb.state.ny.us/public-information/comprehensive-land-use-plan/>



Note: This map is intended for general reference only and is not to be used for surveying, legal interpretation of jurisdictional boundaries, or other precise purposes. Information shown on this map may contain defects, errors, and/or omissions. Refer to NY's ECL Article 57-0107 (10), (11) and (12) for the official description of the Central Pine Barrens boundaries. Prepared by Commission Staff (ac), January 25, 2016.

**CENTRAL PINE BARRENS
JOINT PLANNING AND POLICY COMMISSION**

Carrie Meek Gallagher, Chairwoman
 Steven Bellone, Member
 Edward P. Romaine, Member
 Jay H. Schneiderman, Member
 Sean M. Walter, Member



3.1.2. Potential Impacts

3.1.2.1. Land Use

This section provides a discussion of the potential land use changes that could occur as a result of the Proposed Action (Future with Action Scenario) as compared to the Future without Action Condition as described in DGEIS Chapter 2. Many of the land use changes would be influenced by zoning changes which are discussed further under Section 3.1.2.2 below.

Industrial Areas

The land use recommendations for Riverhead aim to strike a balance between limiting industrial growth and maintaining economic development opportunities. By reducing allowable density in industrial districts while providing flexibility for building heights and incorporating opportunities for Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs), these recommendations promote appropriately scaled and designed development that minimizes adverse impacts on surrounding residential areas. For instance, the reduction in allowable density from 0.4 floor area ratio (FAR) to 0.25 FAR, with potential increases to 0.3 FAR through TDR credits, would result in a significant reduction (approximately 166,968 square feet – see DGEIS Chapter 2) in total development compared to the Future without Action Scenario. Despite the allowances, total development would be approximately 167,000 square feet less than under current regulations, preserving sensitive areas in the Town and requiring the use of TDR credits.

Moreover, recommendations such as increasing building heights, implementing non-disturbance buffers, permitting outdoor storage with strict regulations, transitioning some industrial districts to light industrial, better defining uses, and encouraging vertical farming in all industrial zones contribute to a more balanced approach. These measures not only accommodate evolving industry needs and attract a wider range of businesses but also enhance visual appeal, minimize environmental impacts, and promote sustainable land use practices. Incorporation of increased setbacks and a pyramid law that mitigates visual impacts from buildings respond to concerns about adverse impacts on the community. See discussion of visual impacts in DGEIS Chapter 3.3.

Anticipated development under the Future without Action condition is expected to be more haphazard in nature, driven only by market forces and private development community preferences, as opposed to in line with the Town's strategic vision as laid out in the Comprehensive Plan and recommended zoning ordinance modifications. Additionally, other incongruous land uses would continue in many industrial areas such as heavy industrial in the Calverton area and non-enclosed uses in industrial areas closer to the downtown area.

The Comprehensive Plan suggests the Town undertake a new plan for the PD district within EPCAL to rectify past unsuccessful development attempts and align future endeavors with community preferences. Through an inclusive study involving residents and environmental agencies, the Town aims to establish a collective vision that harmonizes economic viability with environmental priorities. The recommendations prioritize stakeholder involvement, address community concerns, and ensure a balanced approach to economic development and environmental conservation, thereby mitigating adverse effects on the community. While no immediate land use impacts are expected, future zoning changes may result from the area's development plans, influencing its long-term development trajectory.

Commercial Corridors

Policies address the need to enhance the Route 58 Corridor to improve accessibility and create a more attractive destination. This includes providing flexible zoning to allow for adaptive reuse of vacant properties, revisiting commercial parking requirements, and implementing transportation improvements. Enhancing the Route 58

Corridor aims to improve accessibility and attractiveness without creating significant adverse land use impacts. By revitalizing businesses, promoting infill development, and improving transportation infrastructure, Riverhead seeks to create a more vibrant commercial hub while minimizing adverse effects on surrounding areas.

In the Future without Action condition, it is likely the existing commercial development pattern with large parking areas, minimal landscaping, and auto-oriented layouts would continue within the corridor. Absent recommendations that are aimed at enhancing the appearance of this corridor, aesthetic conditions would be expected to continue to deteriorate.

Hamlet Areas

Policies include encouraging hamlet studies, balancing growth and greenery, and tailoring zoning provisions to support residential and commercial development. Guiding responsible land use planning in hamlet centers aims to accommodate growth without adverse impacts on surrounding communities. By encouraging tailored zoning provisions and community engagement, Riverhead seeks to ensure that future development aligns with local needs and preserves the character of each hamlet, thereby avoiding adverse effects. In the Future without Action condition, land uses in the smaller hamlet areas are expected to remain largely consistent with existing conditions.

Manufacturer's Outlet Center

The recommendation for the BUS F district, encompassing Tanger Outlets at Riverhead and adjacent properties, seeks to provide zoning flexibility to accommodate evolving retail trends and foster innovation in the area. By allowing for experimentation with new concepts like pop-up shops, restaurants, and mixed-use developments, the policy aims to enhance the vibrancy and adaptability of the shopping center while reducing barriers to creating a unified retail environment. This flexibility is balanced with the need to uphold broader land use goals and ensure public health, safety, and welfare through engagement with stakeholders and careful regulation. Ultimately, the recommendation promotes economic resilience and revitalization without compromising the overall well-being of the community. It would not have an adverse impact as it supports the adaptation of retail spaces to changing market dynamics while maintaining a cohesive and planned environment, benefiting both businesses and residents by fostering innovation and economic growth.

In the absence of zoning flexibility, in the Future without Action scenario, economic revitalization is stifled. The Future without Action scenario fails to address emerging retail demands, leaving properties vulnerable to online competition and risking increased vacancies.

Hospital District

The Plan recommends the expansion of the existing hospital zone to include adjacent properties owned by Peconic Bay Medical Center (PBMC) and amend the Hospital District to allow for various wellness-related uses and housing for hospital staff. Given the proximity to residential areas, the current 1.5 FAR in the H District may not be suitable, prompting consideration for establishing a second Hospital District with lower density to ensure compatibility. These suggestions align with PBMC's long-term vision and the Town's goal to support quality healthcare accessibility, though detailed plans are pending, with zoning changes anticipated and environmental review required once proposals are submitted for review. This alternative is superior to the Future without Action scenario as PBMC would not have the ability to expand its services and offerings to the community.

Assisted Living

The Comprehensive Plan proposes allowing assisted living facilities and continuing care retirement communities (CCRCs) near PBMC to cater to Riverhead's aging population. Senior housing near downtown centers and medical facilities ensures optimal access to emergency response services, with assisted living facilities in other areas to be evaluated by the Town Board on a site-specific basis as special permit uses. Defined zoning regulations and density adjustments based on sewer infrastructure ensure responsible, tailored development, addressing seniors' needs, improving healthcare access, offering specialized housing solutions, and preserving community character and infrastructure. This change also provides an additional market for the use of TDRs, promoting the preservation of sensitive lands in the Town.

In the Future without Action scenario, new assisted living facilities and CCRCs would not be permitted, and sensitive lands would not be preserved using TDR credits. Under the Future with Action condition additional housing options would be created and sensitive open space and agricultural lands could be preserved using TDR.

Downtown

The Comprehensive Plan recommends several policies which affect future land use in the downtown area. A future study would be needed for the Town to reassess the 500-unit cap on residential use to provide new opportunities for homeownership and age-restricted living. While implementation of this policy would require further consideration and study, the intent is to promote appropriately scaled development that addresses housing needs while providing a new market for the use of TDR credits. By implementing these measures, the policy ensures that growth is managed effectively, meets housing demands, and supports the economic vitality of the community without overwhelming infrastructure or altering the character of Downtown Riverhead negatively. However, potential impacts of this regulatory change would need to be assessed if it is considered by the Town. In the Future without Action scenario, future development would be stifled as the 500-unit cap limits any future development, including the organic expansion of businesses, residential spaces, and amenities. After the current development projects in the pipeline are complete, the area would be expected to remain as is, unless there is more commercial development or demolition and redevelopment of existing sites.

The Future with Action scenario provides for slightly higher intensity of uses in the Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Overlay District (RRA-OD) with the use of TDR. This land use change is consistent with existing zoning regulations but was never formalized in the TDR map. In the Future with Action scenario, this change would allow for a maximum of 30 new multi-family units, with the use of 10 TDR credits. Potential impacts are offset by the need to improve housing opportunities as well as the need to improve the market for TDR – thereby helping to preserve other sensitive areas in the Town. In the Future without Action scenario, future development would be limited, with the loss of the market for an additional 10 TDR credits.

The Comprehensive Plan addresses the need to formally adopt the Downtown Pattern Book into the Zoning Code. The Pattern Book provides design guidance to ensure future developments align with the desired aesthetic and scale of the area. By adjusting dimensional standards to reduce the size of new buildings and alleviate worries regarding height and density, the policy safeguards the historical integrity and pedestrian-friendly ambiance of Main Street. By enforcing these design standards, the policy ensures that new construction blends seamlessly with the existing architectural landscape, preserving Downtown Riverhead's character and allure while facilitating growth and rejuvenation. Ultimately, this approach enriches the community's well-being and appeal without compromising its distinctive identity. This policy would not have a significant adverse impact on land use as it aims to enhance the area's attractiveness and livability while preserving its unique charm and historical significance, thus benefiting residents, visitors, and businesses alike. The Future without Action scenario fails to address the need to better guide development in the downtown and future development could be inconsistent with expressed community preferences.

Residential Districts

Policies regarding residential districts and housing in Riverhead are designed to tackle housing affordability, diversity, homeownership, and inclusivity. These recommendations prioritize community needs, promote sustainable development, and provide resources to support housing initiatives, aiming to have positive impacts on the community. Measures such as regular monitoring of housing dynamics, addressing the impact of short-term rentals, and promoting workforce housing compatibility ensure accessibility to housing for residents while maintaining economic benefits from tourism. Additionally, initiatives to remove minimum home size requirements, utilize TDR for new housing types, and establish accessible design standards foster flexibility, innovation, and inclusivity in housing design, addressing changing housing needs without adverse impacts on the community.

Furthermore, recommendations to facilitate access to home improvement funding for low-income senior residents, permit residential health-care facilities in specified zones, and establish accessible design standards contribute to a more equitable and accessible housing environment. By embracing diverse housing types, promoting adaptive reuse of existing structures, and enhancing accessibility for all community members, Riverhead's comprehensive framework for sustainable housing development aims to foster a more inclusive and vibrant community without adverse consequences.

In the Future without Action scenario, the issues discussed above would not be addressed. This scenario fails to address expressed community needs for housing.

Agricultural Lands

The recommendations for agricultural lands aim to foster economic stability and agricultural sustainability by supporting modern and emerging farming practices, providing some flexibility for new revenue streams, and helping to manage environmental impacts. The policies and zoning regulations, partially through TDR, would help to sustain agricultural lands as long term uses in the community. In the Future without Action scenario, the issues discussed above would not be addressed, it is anticipated that more agricultural uses would be developed in residential subdivisions. The Future without Action condition also does not address vertical farming or inconsistencies in the Zoning Code where certain farming uses should be allowed but are not.

TDR Program

The recommendations propose improvements to the TDR program, including revisiting the transfer formula, creating new receiving areas, and implementing administrative changes to make it more attractive for property owners and developers. Designating RB-80 and RA-80 districts as TDR sending districts would allow for the preservation of just under 2,000 acres of agricultural lands, supporting smart growth strategies by directing development away from sensitive areas toward lands suitable for residential and commercial growth.

If these recommendations were not implemented (i.e. the Future without Action scenario), development would likely continue under current zoning regulations, potentially leading to increased sprawl, loss of agricultural lands, and environmental degradation. Failure to designate sending districts could result in the continued unchecked development of sensitive areas, undermining efforts to preserve natural resources and maintain the rural character of the region.

CRC and PRC Districts

Recommendations for these two districts serve to enhance housing options in transitional areas that can support growth, while providing a new market for the purchase of TDR credits, helping to preserve other sensitive areas of Town. The Future with Action scenario would allow for a diversity of housing types including townhomes at

slightly higher densities, provided infrastructure is available. Additional guidance for the PRC district would be provided to maintain the environmental integrity of riparian areas along the Peconic River. In the Future without Action scenario, these areas would only permit single-family homes, failing to address the need for additional housing and ownership types in the community.

3.1.2.2. Zoning

Zoning recommendations are made throughout several chapters of the plan and are summarized in Comprehensive Plan Chapter 13: Future Land Use and Implementation and DGEIS Chapter 2.

Industrial Areas

Zoning recommendations for many of the industrial districts include a reduction in allowable density of development, while providing flexibility for building heights, strengthening design standards, and incorporating opportunities for the purchase of TDRs. These recommendations are intended to provide for appropriately scaled and designed development in industrial areas, which minimize adverse impacts on surrounding residential areas. A summary of specific zoning recommendations is provided below:

- **Reduction in allowable density:** It is recommended that many of the IND A, B, and C districts reduce the allowable development density from 0.4 FAR to 0.25 FAR with the potential to increase to 0.3 with the use of TDR credits. This change would reduce the total amount of development compared to what is currently permitted. The Future with Action Scenario shows that over the next decade, industrial districts in the discussed areas are expected to develop 668,000 square feet across 38 acres under existing zoning. With proposed changes, about 417,000 square feet of development would be permitted, a reduction of roughly 250,000 square feet. An additional 83,000 square feet of development is anticipated with the use of TDR credits. Despite these allowances, total development would be just over 500,000 square feet, about 167,000 square feet less than under current regulations and would also require the use of 17 TDR credits, helping to preserve other sensitive areas in Town.
- **Building Height:** The proposal to increase building heights in industrial areas aims to accommodate modern industries' evolving needs while maximizing land use efficiency. By allowing taller buildings, the town can attract a wider range of businesses, including those requiring advanced manufacturing or research facilities. Implementing a pyramid height law and utilizing transfer of development rights (TDR) ensures that taller buildings are setback adequately to minimize visual impacts and maintain consistency with surrounding properties, and an increase in height would not affect the maximum building lot coverage, thus safeguarding the community's aesthetic values.
- **Non-Disturbance Buffer:** Including a non-disturbance buffer in industrial districts aims to enhance the visual appeal of road-fronting properties while minimizing visual impacts from industrial activities. By requiring a landscaped transition yard along property lines, excluding certain features like parking areas, the town can mitigate visual nuisances and maintain the aesthetic quality of the surrounding environment, ultimately benefiting the Riverhead community.
- **Outdoor Storage:** Permitting outdoor storage as an accessory use in industrial districts, subject to specific regulations, aims to balance economic needs with visual aesthetics and environmental concerns. By outlining clear guidelines for outdoor storage dimensions, materials, and screening requirements, the town can ensure that such activities do not detract from the overall quality of life for residents. Limiting the area of outdoor storage and enforcing strict regulations prevent misuse or excessive clutter, thus preserving the community's visual and environmental integrity.
- **Light Industrial:** It is also recommended that some of the existing industrial districts closer to the downtown core transition into light industrial, to better monitor performance standards. It is recommended that light industrial district standards be strengthened which would also help to reduce the potential for impacts from future development.
- **Vertical farming:** Vertical farming should be permitted in all industrial zones, enabling the cultivation of

crops in a vertically stacked system, which minimizes agricultural land footprint. This promotes mixed-use development by integrating industrial, agricultural, and commercial activities, fostering vibrant and resilient communities. Permitting vertical farming can revitalize vacant or underutilized industrial spaces, promoting adaptive reuse and productive use of idle properties. This recommendation would not have an adverse impact as it encourages sustainable land use practices, revitalizes underused areas, and promotes economic activity without compromising community well-being.

Downtown

The Comprehensive Plan recommends several zoning changes in the downtown area.

- Use of TDR in Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Overlay District: The district provides for a higher-intensity mix of uses, with ground-floor offices and retail and residential on upper floors for larger sites within the area. It also provides for various bonuses with the provision of community benefits, such as a density increase or parking reduction. One community benefit is the use of TDR, where each credit allows for an additional 3,000 square feet of floor area – up to a maximum determined by the property size. However, the TDR Map was never formally updated to be consistent with the adoption of RRA-OD. Therefore, it is recommended that the TDR map be updated to recognize the inclusion of TDR in this area. As shown in Future with Action scenario, this change would allow for a maximum of 30 new multi-family units, With the use of 10 TDR credits. Potential impacts are offset by the need to improve housing opportunities as well as the need to improve the market for TDR – thereby helping to preserve other sensitive areas in the Town.
- Pattern Book: This policy aims to integrate the design guidelines established in the pattern book for Downtown Riverhead into the zoning code, ensuring that future developments align with the desired aesthetic and scale of the area. By adjusting dimensional standards to reduce the size of new buildings and alleviate worries regarding height and density, the policy safeguards the historical integrity and pedestrian-friendly ambiance of Main Street. By enforcing these design standards, the policy ensures that new constructions blend seamlessly with the existing architectural landscape, preserving Downtown Riverhead's character and allure while facilitating growth and rejuvenation. Ultimately, this approach enriches the community's well-being and appeal without compromising its distinctive identity. This policy would not have an adverse impact on the community as it aims to enhance the area's attractiveness and livability while preserving its unique charm and historical significance, thus benefiting residents, visitors, and businesses alike.

Manufacturer's Outlet Center

The recommendation for the BUS F district, encompassing Tanger Outlets at Riverhead and adjacent properties, seeks to provide zoning flexibility to accommodate evolving retail trends and foster innovation in the area. By allowing for experimentation with new concepts like pop-up shops, restaurants, and mixed-use developments, the policy aims to enhance the vibrancy and adaptability of the shopping center while reducing barriers to creating a unified retail environment. This flexibility is balanced with the need to uphold broader land use goals and ensure public health, safety, and welfare through engagement with stakeholders and careful regulation. Ultimately, the recommendation promotes economic resilience and revitalization without compromising the overall well-being of the community. It would not have an adverse impact as it supports the adaptation of retail spaces to changing market dynamics while maintaining a cohesive and planned environment, benefiting both businesses and residents by fostering innovation and economic growth.

Assisted Living

The Comprehensive Plan recommends allowing assisted living facilities and continuing care retirement communities (CCRCs) near Peconic Bay Medical Center (PBMC) to support Riverhead's aging population. By slightly increasing the floor area ratio (FAR) using transfer of development rights (TDR) and limiting building

coverage to 30%, the district would foster a compact, campus-like environment with a mix of 1-, 2-, and 3-story buildings. Strategically locating senior housing near downtown centers and medical facilities ensures optimal access to emergency response services. Additionally, it is recommended that assisted living facilities be a special permit use in other areas, to be evaluated by the town board in a site-specific manner. Implementing defined zoning regulations and adjusting densities based on sewer infrastructure ensures responsible, tailored development. This recommendation addresses seniors' needs, improves healthcare access, and offers specialized housing solutions while preserving community character and infrastructure. It also provides an additional market for the use of TDRs, helping to promote the preservation of other sensitive lands in Town. As shown in the Future with Action Scenario, over the next decade, adoption of this district would generate an estimated 267 new assisted living units/beds, requiring 123 TDR credits. The use of 123 TDR credits equates to 62 single family units. There would also be a reduction of 9 single-family units and approximately 8,500 square feet in commercial development compared to the Future without Action scenario.

Residential Districts

Policies for residential districts and housing as a whole aim to address various aspects of housing affordability, diversity, homeownership, and inclusivity. Policies furthering these goals are anticipated to have positive impacts on the community because they prioritize community needs, promote sustainable development, and provide resources to support housing initiatives. Overall, the recommendations offer a comprehensive framework for sustainable housing development in Riverhead, with no foreseen adverse impacts due to their balanced and community-focused approach.

- **Housing affordability:** Recommendations include regular monitoring of housing dynamics, reviewing housing policies, and addressing the impact of short-term rentals on the housing stock. By promoting housing affordability and monitoring short-term rentals, the town ensures that housing remains accessible to residents while addressing the potential impact of vacation rentals on the local housing stock. This approach allows for the maintenance of year-round housing availability without compromising economic benefits from tourism. Additionally, initiatives to identify funding sources and ensure compatibility of workforce housing with the neighborhood further reinforce the town's commitment to balanced development.
- **Housing diversity:** Recommendations include removing minimum home size requirements, utilizing TDR for new housing types such as townhomes and garden apartments, allowing adaptive reuse of buildings for residential purposes in the downtown area, and evaluating the 500-unit cap for the DC-1 District. These policies aim to encourage flexibility and innovation in housing design, promote adaptive reuse of existing structures, revise standards for accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and prioritize construction quality and sustainability. By embracing diverse housing types and fostering inclusivity, Riverhead aims to address the changing housing needs of its residents without adverse impacts on the community.
- **Accessible design standards:** Recommendations include facilitating access to home improvement funding for low-income senior residents, permitting residential health-care facilities in specified zones such as assisted-care and continuing care facilities, and establishing accessible design standards. These recommendations are designed to enhance the inclusivity of housing options and improve accessibility for all community members. By prioritizing community needs, promoting sustainable development, and providing resources to support housing initiatives, these policies are expected to positively impact the community by fostering a more equitable and accessible housing environment without adverse consequences.

Agricultural Lands

Recommendations for agricultural lands below seek to sustain agricultural activities, preserving the rural character, and managing environmental impacts:

Vertical Farming in Industrial zones: Allowing vertical farming in industrial zones can diversify land use, promoting mixed-use development and revitalizing underutilized areas. By reducing the footprint needed for agriculture and encouraging adaptive reuse of vacant industrial properties, this policy fosters vibrant and resilient communities without compromising existing infrastructure or community character.

Vertical Farming in Other Districts: Permitting vertical farming in any district where agriculture is the primary use on farms with development rights intact can enhance agricultural productivity and support modern farming practices without significantly altering the visual landscape. By offering new revenue streams for farmers and utilizing existing agricultural infrastructure, this policy promotes economic stability and agricultural sustainability while ensuring responsible land use and preserving the rural character of the area. Implementation of this recommendation would need associated regulatory direction for the total size, setbacks, landscaping, etc. that would be required. A vertical farm would have to conform to bulk standards and additional standards could apply, potentially with revised design standards. Flexibility should be provided for the adaptive reuse of agricultural buildings such as when these facilities are integrated into existing farm infrastructure. These regulatory changes would help to mitigate potential visual impacts.

Renewable Energy: Providing flexibility for renewable energy facilities on agricultural properties with development rights intact supports farmers' financial stability and advances renewable energy integration without detracting from the agricultural landscape. By allowing percentage based solar or wind as accessory uses to primary agricultural activities, this policy fosters dual-purpose land utilization, enhances energy sustainability, and aligns with state agricultural policies without imposing adverse visual or environmental impacts on the community.

Farm Activities: Treating farms equally with regard to farm operations regulation ensures consistency and fairness across agricultural districts. By allowing farm operations as accessory uses on parcels with frontage on Sound Avenue, this policy promotes uniformity in agricultural regulation and supports farming activities without creating disparities or undue burdens on farmers.

Agritourism: Balancing the benefits of agritourism with potential impacts on agricultural operations and community integrity, this policy seeks to regulate agritourism activities responsibly. By implementing permitting processes, size restrictions, and transparent regulations developed in collaboration with stakeholders, this policy supports local farmers, manages traffic and safety concerns, and preserves the rural character of agricultural communities.

Conditional Use Permits: Introducing conditional use permits offers flexibility to accommodate evolving agricultural demands and technologies while mitigating potential impacts. By allowing the evaluation of agricultural activities on a case-by-case basis with conditions imposed for mitigation, this policy ensures responsiveness to changing agricultural needs and promotes sustainable agricultural practices in harmony with community interests and regulations. Conditional use permits would be a helpful tool since the Town cannot predict future innovations in the farming industry.

TDR Program

TDR Program: Several recommendations address how the TDR program can be improved to make it a more attractive tool for property owners and developers. One initiative would be to revisit the transfer formula to improve the demand for TDR Credits; another involves creating new receiving areas for TDR credits. Several other TDR recommendations are administrative in nature. The plan also highlights policy and code changes to help to preserve more agricultural lands during subdivisions. Specific areas identified for inclusion in the TDR map include the following:

The Plan recommends designating all RB-80 and RA-80 districts (includes Laurel and Jamesport south of Main Road, Baiting Hollow, Northville, and Riverhead north of Sound Avenue, and in Wading River) as TDR sending districts, as these areas have large tracts of agricultural lands that should be eligible for preservation through TDR. As shown in Section 2, this change would allow for the preservation, through TDR of just under 2,000 acres. This change would have a positive impact by supporting smart growth strategies that direct development away from sensitive areas and towards lands that can accommodate additional residential and commercial growth.

CRC and PRC Districts

Recommendations for these two districts serve to enhance housing options in transitional areas that can support growth, while providing a new market for the purchase of TDR credits, helping to preserve other sensitive areas of Town.

- **CRC Zone:** The CRC Zone aims to accommodate various housing types but currently permits only single-family dwellings, limiting housing diversity. Allowing slightly higher densities, ranging from 4-12 units per acre depending on infrastructure and TDR credits, facilitates the development of townhouses and promotes density. Revisions to bulk criteria ensure property suitability for diverse housing types, with consideration for sanitary requirements and potential density bonuses through TDRs for homeownership units. As discussed in the Proposed Action, this zoning change would result in an increase in 43 Townhomes without the use of TDR and 63 townhomes with the use of TDR. These scenarios would also result in a decrease of 5 single family units from the Future without Action scenario. Utilizing TDR to achieve 63 units would also result in a decrease of 5 single family units from TDR sending areas.
- **Peconic River Community (PRC) Districts:** The PRC Zone intends to support a mix of residential, commercial, and recreational uses, yet lacks specific provisions for residential development. Permitting residential uses with TDRs, up to 4 units per acre with infrastructure, fosters diverse housing typologies like townhouses and garden apartments, aligning with planning principles. Design guidance ensures preservation of riparian areas and aligns development with NYSDEC regulations, promoting responsible growth while maintaining environmental integrity. By enhancing housing diversity and aligning with regulatory standards, this policy positively impacts community livability and development sustainability. The Future with Action scenario shows that this zoning change would result in an increase in 4 Townhomes and a decrease in 1 single family home compared to the Future without Action scenario.

Lodging Facilities

The Plan recommends the zoning code accommodate new types of lodging facilities within the community while ensuring responsible development and mitigating potential adverse impacts. They both propose leveraging Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) as a mechanism to regulate and manage development density. Additionally, both recommendations emphasize the importance of site-specific evaluations to address individual project impacts and ensure compatibility with surrounding areas.

- **Golf Cottages:** The Plan recommends permitting "Golf Cottages" as an accessory use on golf courses across all zoning districts, provided TDR credits are utilized. These cottages, limited to one bedroom per unit and not exceeding 600 square feet, aim to provide short-stay lodging for golfers and visitors. While recognizing potential limitations due to sanitary requirements and the need for suitable screening, individual projects would be evaluated for site-specific impacts. This approach ensures that the introduction of golf cottages complements the recreational function of golf courses without posing adverse impacts on surrounding areas.
- **Agritourism Resort:** Given the high demand for hotel space in the North Fork and the Town's aim to support tourism, the proposal suggests permitting agritourism resorts in suitable locations. These resorts combine agricultural experiences with recreational activities and accommodations, catering to

diverse preferences. By incorporating design, development, and environmental standards, the Town aims to balance agritourism support with land conservation objectives. Leveraging demand for these facilities, provisions would require substantial land preservation and TDR credit redemption, ensuring responsible development. Individual project evaluations would ensure site-specific considerations, mitigating potential adverse impacts on surrounding areas and preserving the agricultural character of the community. This recommendation was also made in the Town's 2003 Comprehensive Plan.

Other Regulatory Changes

The following recommendations all focus on enhancing the regulatory framework and planning processes within Riverhead to ensure responsible development and land use practices. They share the common goal of promoting clarity, consistency, and compatibility in zoning regulations, while also emphasizing the importance of site-specific evaluations to mitigate adverse impacts on the community and environment.

- **Use Schedule:** Incorporating a comprehensive list of permissible land uses for each zoning district fosters clarity and consistency, aiding property owners, developers, and the public in understanding allowable activities. By categorizing uses based on intensity, the Town ensures appropriate siting within zoning districts, promoting compatibility and efficient land use. Individual projects would be evaluated for impacts in a site-specific manner, mitigating any adverse effects on the community.
- **Define Land Uses That Are Not Addressed:** Specific definitions for uses not currently outlined in the zoning code alleviate confusion and inconsistency, providing a reference for compliance and ensuring uniformity. Aligning with Standard Industrial Code classifications enhances clarity and regulatory effectiveness. Evaluating individual projects on a site-specific basis ensures compatibility and minimizes adverse impacts.
- **Split-Zoned Lots:** Clarifying regulations for split-zoned lots resolves interpretation issues and promotes regulatory consistency. By determining prevailing regulations or considering parcel elimination, the Town ensures clear guidance for property owners and developers. Site-specific evaluations guarantee that decisions support community goals without adverse effects.
- **Review Dimensional Regulations:** Periodic review and adjustment of zoning regulations ensure alignment with intended development objectives and community needs. Addressing discrepancies between regulations and housing goals fosters diverse housing options without compromising community integrity. Site-specific evaluations mitigate adverse impacts, promoting responsible development.
- **Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs):** Modifying size restrictions and certain requirements to make the process less burdensome on applicants while maintaining regulatory intent. Aligning regulations with current needs and standards ensures compliance without adverse effects on the community. Individual project evaluations guarantee compatibility and safety.
- **Childcare Facilities:** Reviewing zoning regulations for childcare facilities reduces barriers to access while ensuring safety and compatibility. By permitting in-home daycare and clarifying permissible uses, the Town supports community needs without negative repercussions. Site-specific evaluations ensure responsible implementation.
- **Cluster Regulations:** Enhancing subdivision and cluster regulations promotes open space preservation while accommodating development needs. Incorporating flexible options, such as in-lieu payments or linear greenways, balances conservation and development goals. Site-specific evaluations safeguard against adverse community impacts.
- **Accessible Design Standards:** Updating design standards promotes inclusivity and accessibility, supporting diverse community needs. Integrating comprehensive standards ensures equitable access without compromising community integrity. Site-specific application guarantees compliance and minimizes adverse effects.
- **Revisit Housing Standards:** Reviewing housing standards enhances regulatory alignment with building

codes and sustainability goals. Strengthening construction quality and sustainability standards promotes responsible development without adverse impacts. Site-specific evaluations ensure compliance and community resilience.

- **Solar Facilities:** Limiting solar facilities to established standards ensures predictability and conformity with existing development patterns. Allowing solar on farms supports renewable energy goals without adverse effects on agricultural production. Site-specific evaluations address visual and environmental concerns, ensuring responsible implementation.
- **Battery Storage Facilities:** Ensuring compatibility and safety of battery storage facilities minimizes adverse impacts on surrounding areas. Adhering to evolving safety guidelines and ongoing monitoring guarantees responsible deployment without negative repercussions. Site-specific evaluations address community concerns and promote sustainable energy practices.
- **Green Building:** Enhancing building codes with green standards fosters energy efficiency and sustainability without adverse effects on development. Establishing project-specific thresholds and incentives ensures compliance with sustainability goals. Site-specific evaluations promote responsible construction practices.
- **Strengthen Enforcement of Tree Clearing:** Improved monitoring and enforcement of tree clearing regulations promote sustainable development without adverse impacts on Riverhead's forests. Ensuring compliance safeguards against environmental degradation and preserves community resources. Site-specific evaluations address individual project impacts, promoting responsible land management.
- **Wetlands Inventory:** Updating the wetland inventory supports effective conservation and land use planning without adverse effects on development. Providing accurate and up-to-date information ensures informed decision-making and responsible development practices. Site-specific evaluations guarantee regulatory compliance and environmental protection.

Conclusion

As assessed above, the Comprehensive Plan and recommended rezonings and zoning ordinance modifications and resultant potential land use changes are not anticipated to have significant adverse impacts. Accordingly, to the extent that future zone change implementation is consistent with zoning framework and unit projections discussed within this document, future SEQR review would be able to occur in a streamlined fashion with the extent of the review linked to the consistency of the action with the adopted Comprehensive Plan policies and recommended rezonings discussed within this DGEIS. However, some aspects of the conceptual development program require more detailed design information to inform a SEQR analysis and would therefore be subject to future detailed SEQR review at the time those details are available, and those developments are proposed. See DGEIS Chapter 6.o Subsequent SEQR Actions.

3.1.2.3. Public Policy

The Proposed Action (adoption of the Comprehensive Plan) puts in place a new public policy framework for the Town of Riverhead that modernizes the Town's approach to land use planning. The Comprehensive Plan is consistent with the land use and public policy plans that are currently in place in the Town including the Town's 2021 Downtown Revitalization Initiative Strategic Investment Plan, The Downtown Pattern Book, and the 2020 TOD Plan among others. The Comprehensive Plan and recommended rezonings and zoning code modifications are also consistent and compatible with regional planning efforts including Suffolk County Comprehensive Master Plan 2035; the goals of that plan including revitalizing the economy, rebuilding downtowns and infrastructure, and reclaiming quality of groundwater, surface water, and terrestrial resources. The Comprehensive Plan goals are also consistent with and supportive of the County water resources plans. These are all themes strongly represented in the Town's Comprehensive Plan with its focus on downtown revitalization and sustainability as set forth in the Sustainability and Resiliency Plan element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Considering the strong alignment between the Comprehensive Plan and other applicable public policy documents, no potential significant adverse impacts to public policy would occur as a result of the Proposed Action. Itself a public policy action, the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan strengthens the public policy position of the Town and provides Town officials with a cohesive policy direction by which the Town can be steered.

3.1.3. Mitigation Measures

As discussed in the preceding chapter, the Comprehensive Plan recommends policies that would change land use, zoning, and public policy in the Town. The Comprehensive Plan Update and proposed zoning changes represent a comprehensive strategy to guide sustainable growth and development in Riverhead while preserving the Town's natural resources and community character. Through various zoning recommendations and regulatory changes, the plan aims to balance economic development with environmental considerations, promoting clarity, consistency, and compatibility in land use decisions. Policies are tailored to address specific areas such as industrial zones, commercial corridors, downtown districts, hamlet areas, agricultural lands, and lodging facilities, ensuring that each segment of the community's needs and priorities is adequately addressed.

Development would occur in both the Future without Action and Future with Action conditions. The Plan seeks to balance implementation of measures that promote development in certain areas with those that reduce development in others. The changes which result from the adoption of the Plan would happen over time and development projects would be subject to SEQR which would evaluate site-specific conditions to mitigate adverse impacts. Based on these factors and the analysis presented in this chapter, no significant adverse impacts to land use, zoning, and public policy are anticipated as a result of the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan and therefore no further mitigation methods are proposed for these aspects.

3.2. Demographics, Housing, and Economic Conditions

The following sets forth an examination of demographics, housing, and economic conditions within Riverhead. The potential impacts that could occur as a result of the adoption of the Riverhead Comprehensive Plan Update (“Comprehensive Plan”) are explored, and any necessary mitigation measures needed to mitigate potential impacts are identified.

3.2.1. Existing Conditions

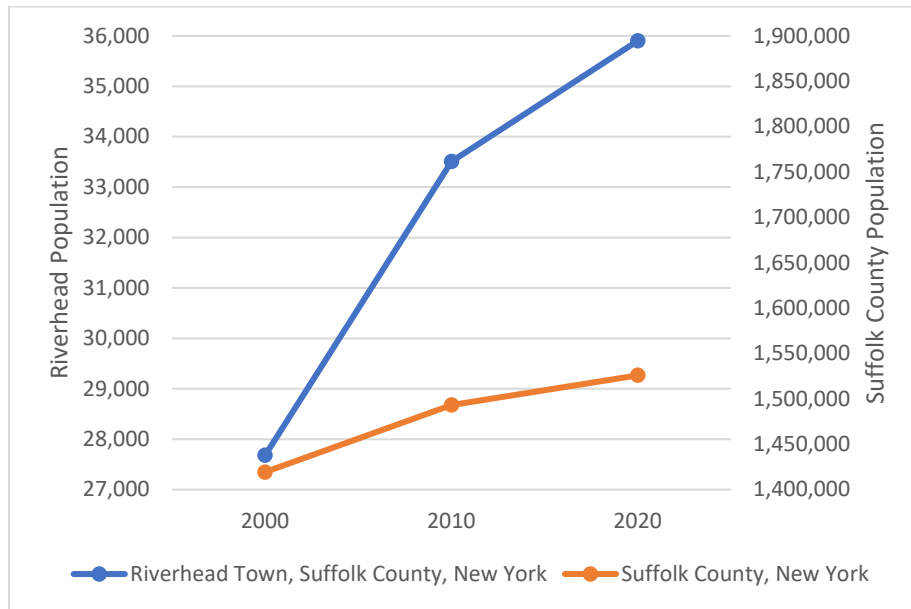
A summary of the existing community demographic, housing, and economic conditions is given below. For a more detailed overview of existing conditions, refer to Chapters 3 and 4 of the Draft 2024 Comprehensive Plan.¹⁶

3.2.1.1. Demographics

Population Growth

In 2020, Riverhead’s population was 35,902 people. This represents growth of 30% between 2000-2020, a much greater rate than Suffolk County (8%) (see Figure 3.2-1). However, the rate of growth for both geographies slowed after 2010, with ACS 2021 estimates suggesting that the population has stabilized, or potentially begun to decline slightly, in both the Town and County. The data may partially reflect trends from the COVID pandemic, where there was a population shift from more dense urban areas to more rural areas. However, during the pandemic, many part-time owners became permanent residents.

Figure 3.2-1. Population in Riverhead and Suffolk County (2000 – 2020)



Sources: U.S. Decennial Census (2000-2020)

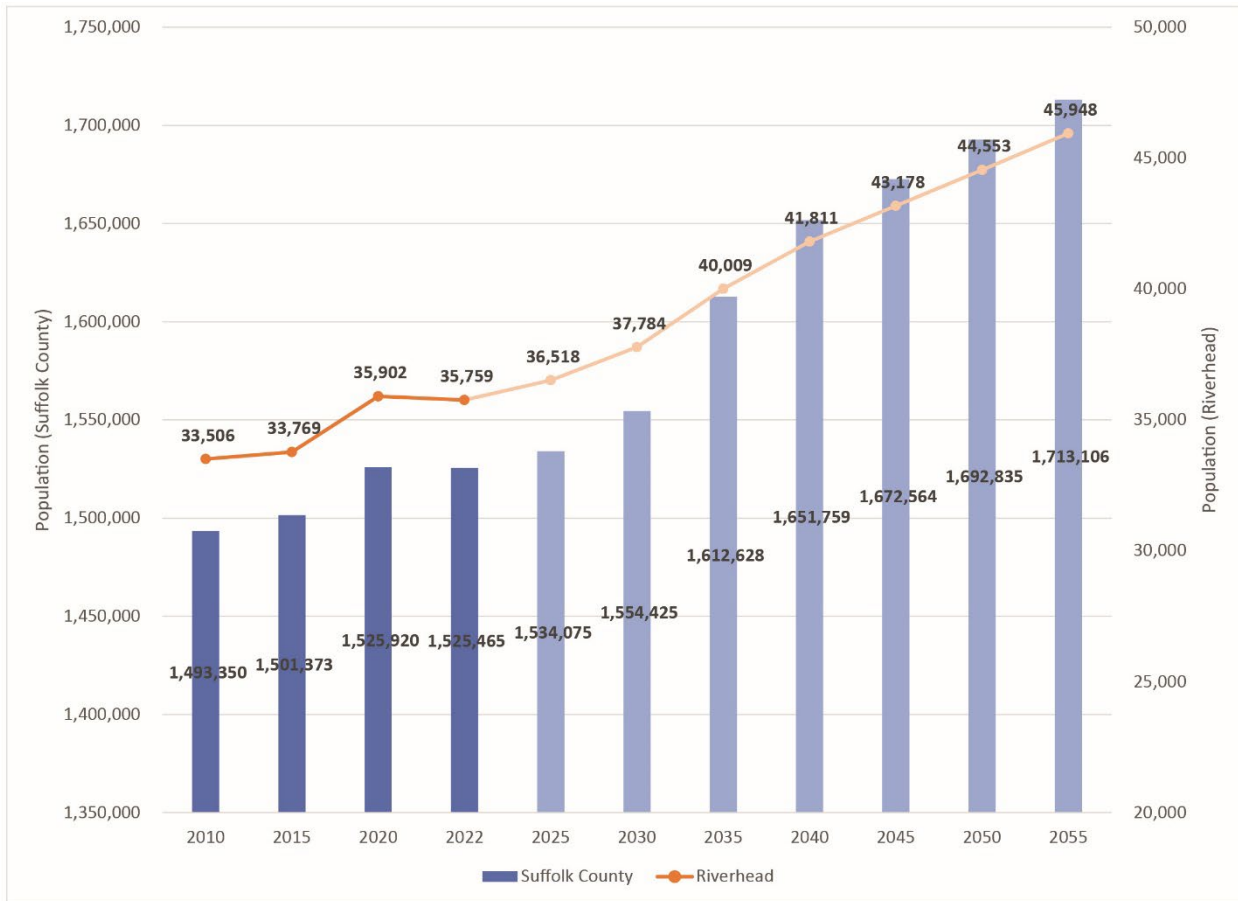
¹⁶ The Draft 2024 Comprehensive Plan can be found here: <https://townofriverheadcomprehensiveplanupdate.com/>

Projected Population Growth

The New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) projects population growth for the region, including Suffolk County. The most recent NYMTC forecasts to 2055, adopted in October 2020, were created with the full cooperation of the Suffolk County Department of Economic Development and Planning, and reflect the significant changes in land use throughout the County. Further, the forecasts consider all known development in the pipeline as of 2020 for the County, including Riverhead.

NYMTC’s 2020 estimates projects that Suffolk County’s population would grow 14% from 2010 to 2055. If Riverhead’s population were to grow at the same rate from its 2010 population, the Town would expect to see a population of about 35,756 by 2035. In the 2020 Decennial Census, the County’s actual population was somewhat higher (about 1.7% greater) than projected, while Riverhead’s population was 6.6% greater than projected. Riverhead’s population has recently grown faster than the County. If trends hold, these factors suggest a higher-than-projected long-term population. Therefore, as shown in Figure 3.2-2, NYMTC issued revised projections for Suffolk County and Riverhead which now project a population of 40,009 residents by 2035.

Figure 3.2-2. Projected Population Growth in Riverhead and Suffolk County (2010 –2055)



Sources: NYMTC, 2022*; NYMTC 2055 SED Forecasts, 2020; U.S. Decennial Census, 2010-2020; ACS 5-Year Estimates 2015 and 2022

*Note: The projected population for Riverhead is estimated by using the most recent NYMTC numbers for Suffolk County, which include observations until 2022, determining Riverhead’s share of the Suffolk County population from 2010-2022, and using a function to trend the change in share through 2055. The trended share was then applied to the County totals from 2025 to 2055.

Age

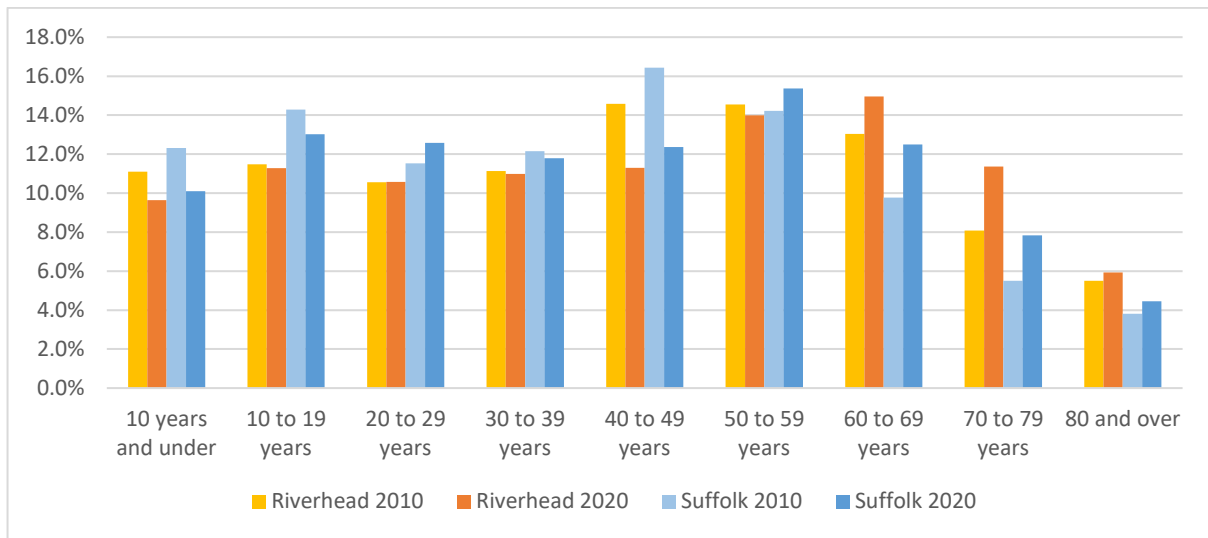
Riverhead’s population is aging and has a larger share of residents over 60 than the County (see Figure 3.2-3). The median age in Riverhead in 2020 was 46.9 years, up from 44 years in 2010. While the County’s population is also aging, its median age is younger at 42 years, up from 38.9 in 2010.

In 2020, 32% of the Town was over 60, up from 26% in 2010. This is due to aging in place and in-migration of retirees. Suffolk County is also aging, although a smaller portion of its population is over 60 (25% in 2020 and 19% in 2010). The data suggest that there would be an increasing need for senior housing as long-term residents age out of their homes.

As a percent increase, the over-60 population grew by 30% in Riverhead and 33% in the County from 2010 to 2020. During this period, the Town saw the largest growth in the population aged 70-79 years old (plus 1,370 people) and the greatest decrease in the population aged 40-49 years (minus 833 people). This pattern is consistent with the County.

The percentage of children as a share of Riverhead’s total population is declining. In 2020, people 19 years old and under made up 21% of the population, versus 23% in 2010. The County shows the same pattern, but a larger proportion of its population is under 19.

Figure 3.2-3. Age of the Population in Riverhead and Suffolk County (2020)

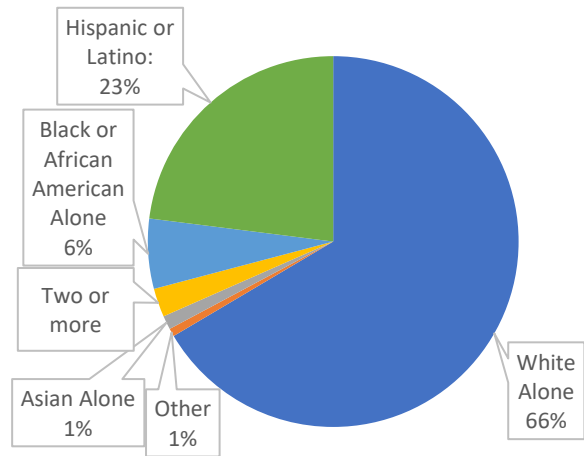


Sources: U.S. Decennial Census (2010-2020)

Diversity

In terms of race and ethnicity, Riverhead’s population is about a third minority¹⁷ and two-thirds White Alone (see Figure 3.2-4). The Town’s population has seen a 49% increase in its minority population (about 3,900 people) from 2010-2020. Riverhead’s Hispanic population made up the majority of the growth, increasing by 78% (from about 4,600 to 8,300 people) during this period.

Figure 3.2-4. Population by Race and Ethnicity (2020)



Income

The 2021 median household income in Riverhead was \$80,595, about \$31,000 below, or 72% of the County’s \$111,660. While the Town’s median household income has historically been lower, the gap has grown. Moreover, while Suffolk County’s median household income experienced a modest increase of about \$6,400 between 2010 and 2021, Riverhead’s median household income decreased by about \$4,400 when adjusted for inflation.

Households

The average household size in Riverhead is 2.5, smaller than Suffolk County’s 3.0; the average household size of both remained stable between 2000 and 2021. Riverhead has a higher percentage of non-family households¹⁸ than surrounding communities. In 2021, non-family households comprised about 35% of all households in the Town, compared with about 27% for the County.

Educational Attainment

In Riverhead, 12% of the population over 25 years old has less than a high school education, a larger percentage than in Suffolk County (9.6%). The County has a higher proportion of people with a high school diploma or equivalent, some college, a bachelor’s degree, master’s degree, professional degree, or doctorate. Riverhead’s share of the population with less than a high school diploma or equivalency has increased from 11% to 12% between 2010 and 2020, with a slight decline in the percentage attaining higher levels of education. The County experienced the opposite trend.

Language Spoken at Home

Of Riverhead’s population five years and older, about 17%, or 5,800 people, speak a language other than English at home. Of these, a majority speak Spanish at home (62%, 3,600 people). About half of those who speak another language at home speak English less than “very well” (47%, 2,700 people). Riverhead’s other language and Spanish-speaking groups increased from 2010 to 2021, by 19% and 20%, respectively. At the same time, the population who speak English less than “very well” has decreased by 13%.

¹⁷ “Minority population” refers to Hispanic or Latino people of all races, and all races of Not Hispanic or Latino people that are not White Alone, according to decennial census categories.

¹⁸ “Non-Family Household” is defined in the U.S. Census as a household that consists of a householder living alone (one-person household) or where the householder shares the home exclusively with people to whom they is not related.

Social Vulnerability

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) created the social vulnerability index to help jurisdictions plan for and respond to public health emergencies and natural disasters. The index factors in 16 different census characteristics to determine the level of vulnerability. Vulnerable areas may have characteristics such as high percentage of population aged 65 and older, high poverty rates, overcrowded housing, or lack of access to transportation. Figure 3.2-5 shows the social vulnerability index for Riverhead and Long Island census tracts. The data indicates that some areas of Riverhead have more vulnerable populations.

Potential Environmental Justice Areas

NYSDEC defines Potential Environmental Justice Areas as, “a minority or low-income community that may bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal programs and policies.”¹⁹ During the environmental permitting and SEQR process of proposed projects within PEJAs, there are enhanced public participation requirements, additional requirements for projects that would have at least one significant adverse environmental impact, and dispute resolution opportunities. Environmental justice is also considered for some grant programs. The purpose of this policy is to promote environmental justice, which DEC defines as, “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Fair treatment means that no group of people, including a racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal programs and policies.”²⁰

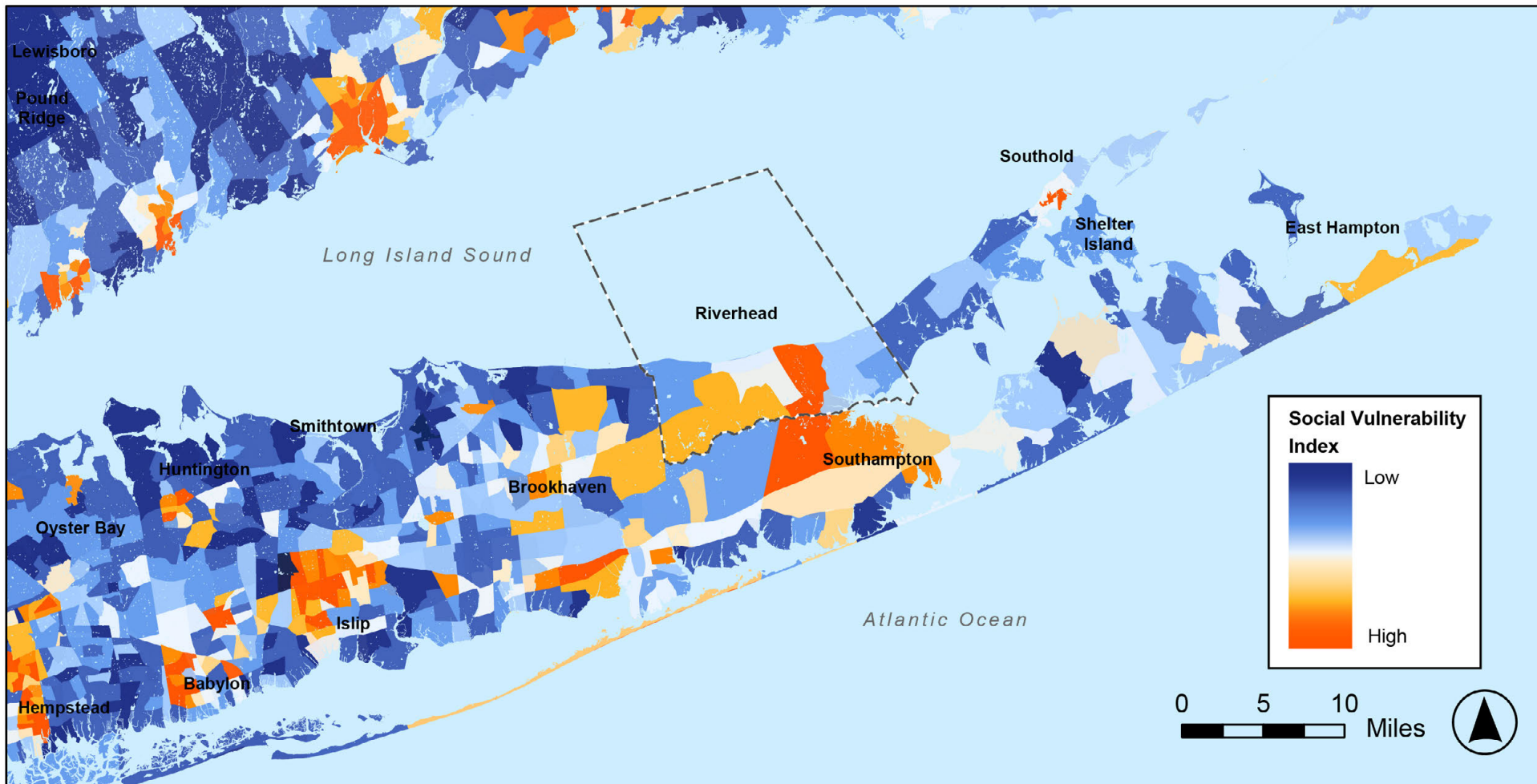
Areas of Riverhead that met this criterion are highlighted in Figure 3.2-6. PEJAs are determined by NYDEC using U.S. Census Block groups of 250-500 households each that meet the following criteria:²¹

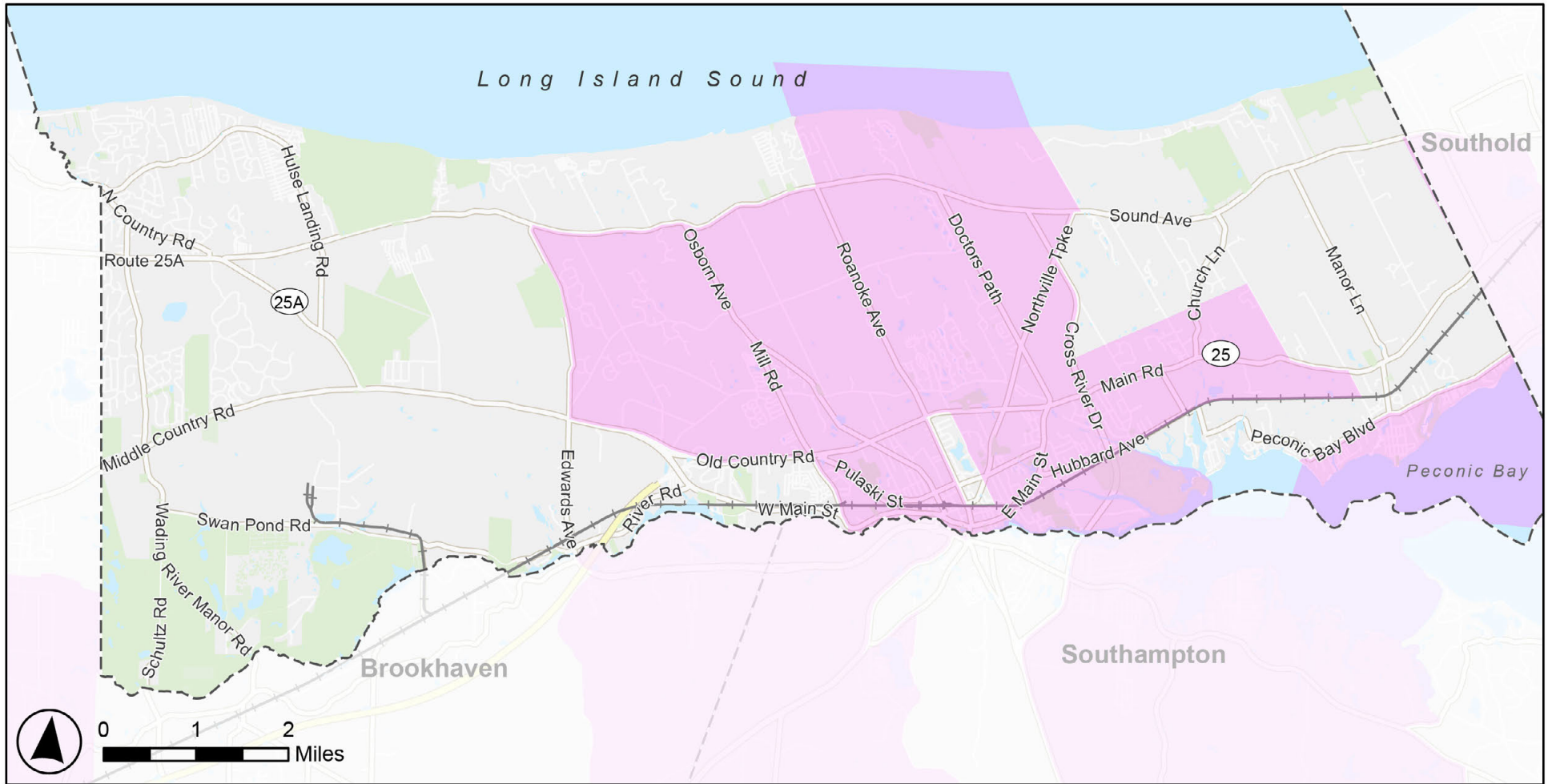
1. At least 52.42% of the population in an urban area reported themselves to be members of minority groups; or
2. At least 26.28% of the population in a rural area reported themselves to be members of minority groups; or
3. At least 22.82% of the population in an urban or rural area had household incomes below the federal poverty level.

¹⁹ New York Department of Environmental Conservation, Office of Environmental Justice, “Commissioner Policy 29, Environmental Justice And Permitting,” <https://dec.ny.gov/regulatory/guidance-and-policy-documents/commissioner-policy-29-environmental-justice-and-permitting>

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ New York Department of Environmental Conservation, Office of Environmental Justice, “Potential Environmental Justice Areas,” <https://dec.ny.gov/get-involved/environmental-justice/gis-tools>





Potential Environmental Justice Area

TOWN OF RIVERHEAD DGEIS
 Comprehensive Plan Update

Figure 3.2-6. Potential Environmental Justice Areas (2021)
 Sources: NYSDEC, US Census Bureau, Town of Riverhead, NYS GIS, USGS, BFJ Planning

3.2.1.2. Housing

Housing Types

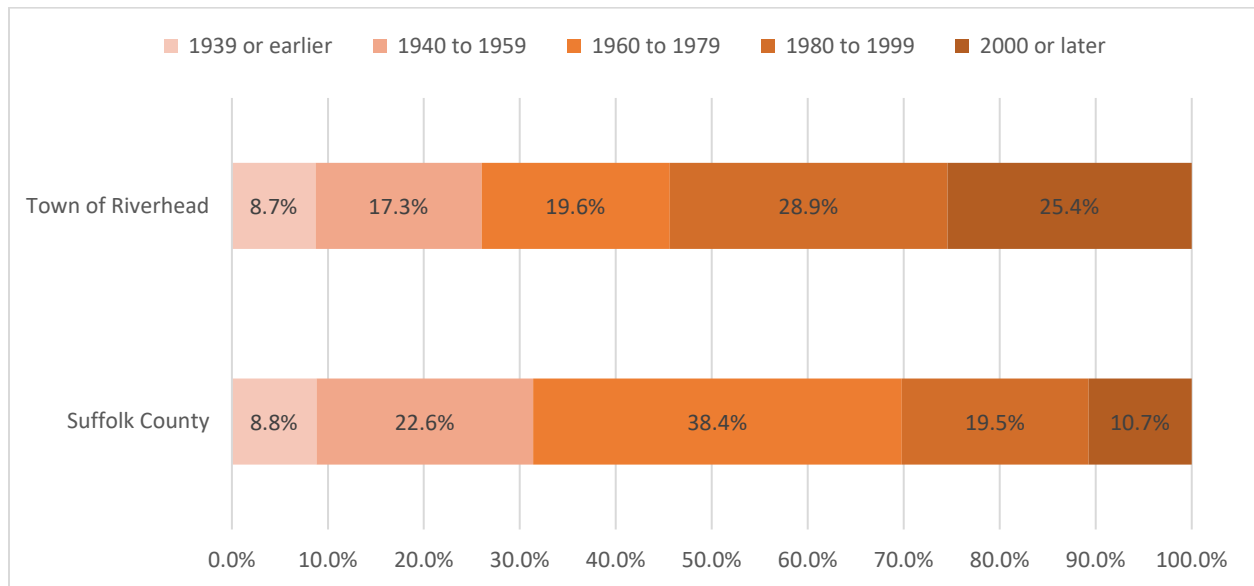
Single-family detached homes make up the largest share of housing in Riverhead (69% of total housing units in 2021). According to the ACS, between 2000 and 2021, the Town saw a 27% increase in this housing type (added 2,435 homes for a total of 11,383). Mobile and manufactured homes make up the second largest share of housing in Riverhead after single-family detached homes (2,343 units, or 14.2% of total housing stock in 2021). The number of these homes in the Town grew by 30% (about 538 units) over 20 years, roughly 40% of the County’s increase in that category. The Census differentiates between mobile and manufactured homes strictly by date of construction, with the former produced before June 15, 1976, and the latter after that date. Within the industry, mobile homes have non-permanent foundations with land leased from park owners, while manufactured homes have permanent foundations and the land is also held by the homeowner. As of January 2024, of the 2,343 total mobile and manufactured homes, 1,513 were age-restricted manufactured homes, while the remainder were mobile homes, both all ages and senior.

In Riverhead, the share of single-family attached, 2-family, and 3-4 family homes increased substantially. Single-family attached homes nearly quintupled (from 187 units to 984 units) while the number of 2-4 family homes almost doubled (from 487 units to 838 units). Growth in these housing types was much faster in the Town than in the County as a whole.

Recent Housing Development

Since the Town’s 2003 Comprehensive Plan, the housing market has shown significant growth and change. Over one-quarter of Riverhead’s current housing stock was built after 2000, compared with just over 10% for Suffolk County during the same period. See Figure 3.2-7.

Figure 3.2-7. Year Structure Built



Source: US Census Bureau, ACS, 2017-2021 5-Year Estimate

Housing in Downtown Area

There are several recently completed and ongoing initiatives and programs designed to revitalize Downtown Riverhead with new investment in housing and the public realm. The Pattern Book for the downtown area

estimates net new development could essentially double built square footage in Downtown Riverhead and accommodate about 1,200 rental apartments (assuming a 50/50 mix of 1- and 2-bedrooms). As shown Table 3.2-1 below, over 900 new multifamily units have recently been built or proposed for Riverhead’s downtown.

Table 3.2-1. Recent Downtown Multifamily Projects

| Project | Status | # of Apartments |
|--------------------------|--|-----------------|
| DC-1 District | | |
| Summerwind | Constructed | 52 |
| Woolworth | Constructed | 19 |
| Peconic Crossing | Constructed | 45 |
| Riverview Lofts | Constructed | 116 |
| 203/213 E. Main St. | Approved, but not yet constructed | 165 |
| Suffolk Theater Addition | Preliminary approval by Town Board | 28 |
| Zenith Building | Site plan application approved by Town Board | 9 |
| 331 E. Main Street | Constructed | 36 |
| Landmarks of Riverhead | Site plan application under review by Town Board | 45 |
| Barth’s Drug Store | Site plan application under review by Town Board | 1 |
| DC-1 – Subtotal | | 516 |
| DC-3 District/RRA-OD | | |
| 205 Osborn Ave | Under Construction | 37 |
| The Vue | Preliminary approval by Town Board | 133 |
| TOD Apartment Building | Site plan application under review by Town Board | 243 |
| DC-3/RRA-OD– Subtotal | | 413 |
| Total | | 929 |

Source: Town of Riverhead, as of February 14, 2024

While there has been a significant amount of growth, there is a 500-unit cap on residential units allowed in the core area zoned DC-1. This cap has effectively been reached, so new development in the core area is unlikely to occur unless this restriction is changed.

Recent planning initiatives, including the Railroad Avenue URA TOD development (2021), the Pattern Book (2021), the Downtown Riverfront Activation Plan, and the DRI Strategic Investment Plan (2022), would continue to feed investment and development in Downtown Riverhead. A portion of the downtown is in a Federal Opportunity Zone (Census Tract 1698), along with portions of Calverton and Manorville including the EPCAL property. The Opportunity Zone program uses Federal income tax incentives to spur economic development by allowing taxpayers to defer capital gains by reinvesting those gains into communities designated as “qualified opportunity zones.”

Tenure

As seen in Table 3.2-2 below, Riverhead has a higher percentage of renter-occupied homes (24%) versus surrounding towns and the County as a whole (22%). Affordability is a significant factor influencing homeownership. Higher housing prices or a lower median income in Riverhead compared with surrounding areas could make it more challenging for residents to afford homes, resulting in lower homeownership rates.

Table 3.2-2. Tenure in Riverhead, Neighboring Towns, and Suffolk County

| Location | Total Housing Units | Owner-occupied | | Renter-occupied | |
|------------------|---------------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| | | Number | % | Number | % |
| Riverhead | 13,879 | 10,523 | 75.8% | 3,356 | 24.2% |
| Southampton | 25,806 | 19,841 | 76.9% | 5,965 | 23.1% |
| Southold | 10010 | 7,897 | 78.9% | 2,113 | 21.1% |

3.2 Demographics, Housing, and Economic Conditions

| | | | | | |
|----------------|---------|---------|-------|---------|-------|
| Brookhaven | 167,187 | 12,9935 | 77.7% | 37,252 | 22.3% |
| Suffolk County | 516,872 | 405,016 | 78.4% | 111,856 | 21.6% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Decennial Census

For renters, the distribution of home sizes (i.e., 1-bedroom, 2-bedroom, 3-bedroom, and 4+ bedroom) is comparable to the County overall. For homeowners, the Town has a higher proportion of 2-bedroom homes and a lower percentage of 4+ bedroom homes compared with the County. This is consistent with the demographic data which shows that the average household size in Riverhead is smaller. If the Town's population consists of more single individuals, couples, or smaller families, there could be a higher demand for 2-bedroom homes. Riverhead also has a downtown area with smaller lots and apartments, which is denser than the County as a whole.

Table 3.2-3. Distribution of Homeowner and Renter Households by Number of Bedrooms, 2021

| | | Town of Riverhead | Suffolk County |
|-----------------|------|-------------------|----------------|
| Homeowner: 1BD | 1BD | 4.7% | 3.3% |
| Homeowner: 2BD | 2BD | 25.7% | 13.4% |
| Homeowner: 3BD | 3BD | 44.1% | 41.3% |
| Homeowner: 4+BD | 4+BD | 25.4% | 41.9% |
| Renter: 1BD | 1BD | 32.7% | 37.7% |
| Renter: 2BD | 2BD | 30.4% | 30.6% |
| Renter: 3BD | 3BD | 23.5% | 21.2% |
| Renter: 4+BD | 4+BD | 13.4% | 10.5% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS, 2017-2021 5-Year Estimate

Vacancy

In 2021, the Town's housing vacancy rate was about 16% (2,665 vacant units out of 16,540 total units). This does not mean that all of these units are available for lease or sale; only about 11% of units in Riverhead are on the market as shown in Table 3.2-4. The greatest share of vacant units (61%) are being held for seasonal or occasional use—a similar percentage to the County as a whole, but a smaller share than Southampton and Southold.

Table 3.2-4. Distribution of Vacant Units, 2021

| | Riverhead | Brookhaven | Southampton | Southold | Suffolk County |
|---|-----------|------------|-------------|----------|----------------|
| Total Vacant Units | 2,665 | 13,024 | 20,356 | 5,865 | 72,781 |
| For rent | 4.3% | 9.3% | 0.8% | 2.2% | 4.9% |
| Rented, not occupied | 1.2% | 3.1% | 0.1% | 0.5% | 1.5% |
| For sale only | 6.2% | 9.0% | 1.8% | 3.1% | 5.9% |
| Sold, not occupied | 12.6% | 9.4% | 1.0% | 3.0% | 4.3% |
| For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use | 60.8% | 31.7% | 93.3% | 85.6% | 63.5% |
| For migrant workers | 0.0% | 0.6% | 0.0% | 0.2% | 0.2% |
| Other vacant | 14.9% | 36.9% | 3.0% | 5.5% | 19.8% |

Source: US Census ACS 2017-2021

Sales Market

In 2021, Riverhead's Median Housing Value for owner-occupied units was \$389,600, which is less than the County's value of \$436,300. Riverhead has substantially more housing valued below \$200,000 than the County (17% and 6.1% respectively), while the Town has a smaller share of housing valued at \$1 million or greater, at 3.7% and 5.9%, respectively.

Home Prices

While Census data for housing value provides a consistent baseline of the values of all units, current realtor reports and real estate listings provide context in what has been a volatile market during the COVID pandemic. Median sale prices for homes in Riverhead have grown from roughly \$300,000 in early 2019 to \$565,000 by year end 2023²². These increasing costs have made it increasingly difficult for first-time homebuyers to enter the market.

During the COVID pandemic, the real estate market on the East End, including Riverhead, experienced significant migration from urban centers like Manhattan and Brooklyn, as people sought more spacious living quarters. The number of sales and median home prices surged, with the median price on the North Fork jumping by 24% in 2020 to a record \$805,000. This trend has continued through 2022, with sales on the North Fork peaking in number at 527. While the Hamptons saw dramatic increases in home sales and prices, with the total home sales volume skyrocketing by 34% from 2019 to 2020, the North Fork, including Riverhead, did not witness the same level of price increase. Through 2023, Riverhead's housing market remains more affordable than some of its more affluent neighboring areas.

Rental Market

The rental market in Riverhead has experienced notable changes over the past two decades. From 2000 to 2020, there was a significant increase (20%) in the number of renter-occupied units. Despite this growth, the Town stands out for its rent affordability compared with its surrounding areas. The median gross rent in the Town was \$1,576 in 2021, noticeably lower than the \$1,895 median rent in Suffolk County.²³ Further emphasizing its relative affordability, Riverhead has the lowest median gross rent when compared with other towns in the East End, which include some of the most expensive zip codes in the country.

Affordability challenges still exist for many Riverhead residents, however. More than half (56%) of the renters in the Town spend over 30% of their income on overall housing costs, a threshold commonly used to define housing affordability, while 20% spend more than half of their income on rent.

Short-Term Rentals

Regionally, short-term rentals have contributed to significant loss of year-round residential properties. As noted, 61% of Riverhead's vacant units are held for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. This is similar to the County as a whole, where 64% of vacant units are held for such purposes. However, in the towns of Southampton and Southold, a full 93% and 86%, respectively, of vacant units are for seasonal use. The implications are that the majority of potential new permanent residents on the East End would be competing for the limited amount of available housing – often in Riverhead and Brookhaven – which would likely drive up rents throughout the area.

New construction is not alleviating the pressure. Between 2000 and 2021, the number of housing units in Suffolk County increased by 56,000 units; of these, 30% were new rentals while 12% were new units for seasonal use. In

²² Source: Based on Redfin calculations of home data from MLS and/or public records.

²³ American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau, 2021

the same period in Riverhead, 1,396 net new units were constructed, of which 26% were new rentals and 29% were for seasonal use.

Riverhead's 2016–2017 rental ordinance was amended to ban short-term rentals for 29 days or less. For rentals 30 days or more a rental permit from the Town is required. However, enforcement is difficult, with lesser stay rentals still occurring in Riverhead.

Affordable Housing

The number of affordable housing units in the Town is substantially higher than nearby communities; Riverhead has 884 designated income-restricted units, compared with about 504 such units for the four other East End towns combined. Riverhead's income-restricted units are a subset of the approximately 2,334 designated affordable rental units in the Town.²⁴ The Market Trends Analysis developed by AKRF found that the total existing and proposed affordable housing meets the forecasted 10% demand in both 2030 and 2040.

Long Island Workforce Housing Act

The Long Island Workforce Housing Act requires housing developers who propose developments with 5 or more units at the maximum allowable residential density to set aside at least 10% of the units in exchange for a density bonus. Under the Act, "Affordable workforce housing" is defined as housing for individuals and families at or below 130% of the AMI for the Nassau-Suffolk primary statistical area. For a family of four in 2022, AMI was \$146,400, and the average from 2018-2022 was \$128,720. In August 2022, Riverhead adopted a local law incorporating the provisions of the Long Island Workforce Housing Act into the Town Code. As adopted locally, bonuses can be a "density increase of 10% over the otherwise maximum allowable residential density pursuant to a yield map approved by the Planning Board in connection with a major residential subdivision proposing five or more residential lots, or 10% over the allowable floor area ratio if part of a mixed-use development site plan application." Developments in the RA40 Zoning Use District have a different set of regulations. There, the Planning Board and/or Town Board, when reviewing the application, would determine whether the developer should provide the affordable housing units in the approved development, in another development in the Town, or if they should pay a fee in lieu of constructing the affordable units. These fees could go into the Town's planned Affordable Housing Trust and Agency Fund, which was designated to be administered by the Community Development Department and used to facilitate new or rehabilitated affordable housing. It is important to note that this fund still needs to be formally established by the Town.

3.2.1.3. Economic Conditions

This section is a summary of Chapter 4: Economic Conditions and Development of the Draft 2024 Comprehensive Plan.

Jobs

There are 17,160 jobs in the Town; most of which are in Calverton or the downtown. About 19% of jobs are held by Riverhead residents, while 81% commute into town. While most workers come from surrounding areas in Suffolk County, 6.5% of workers live in NYC.

Job growth in the past 20 years has been strong overall. Even with cyclical fluctuations in employment, there was a 23% increase in jobs in Riverhead between 2002-2021, compared with only 4.5% growth in the County.

²⁴ Market Trends Analysis, AKRF, 2022.

Between 2002 and 2021, sectors that have shown the most growth are retail, accommodation/food services, construction, educational services, and manufacturing.

The most common jobs in Riverhead over the past 20 years have been retail, followed by health care and social assistance and educational services. However, the overall share of local employment by industry has shifted over time. The following industries make up greater shares of employment than 20 years ago: retail; accommodation and food services; construction; manufacturing; arts, entertainment & recreation; professional, scientific & technical services; and to a lesser extent, management of companies & enterprises and transportation & warehousing.

Employed residents

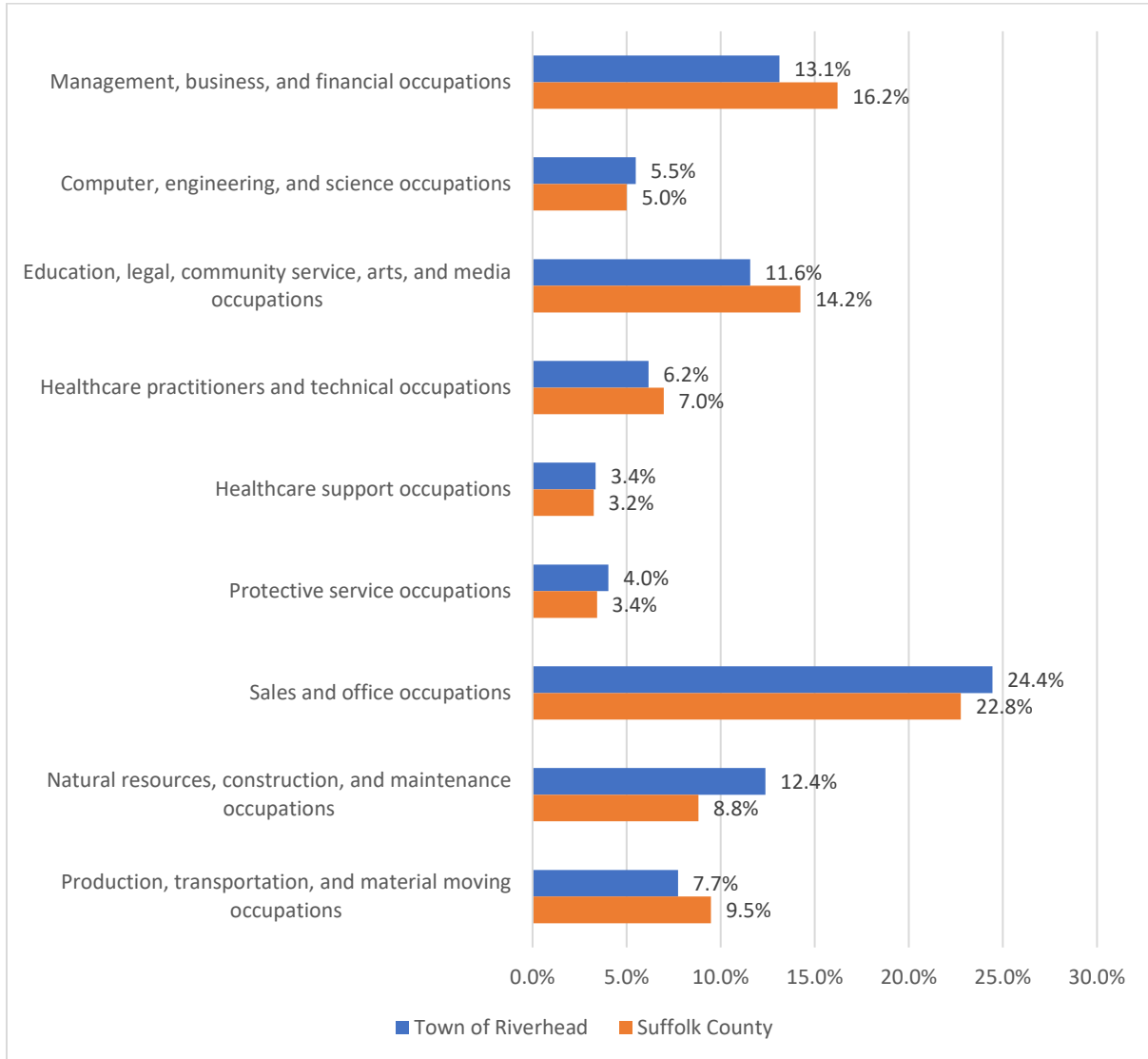
The New York Department of Labor estimated annual average resident employment in Riverhead at 16,278, the highest local employment has been since 2008. Some 21% of employed Riverhead residents work in the Town, 16% in Brookhaven, 15% in NYC, and 10% in Southampton.

After peaking in 2020, the unemployment rate throughout Suffolk County has decreased. As of 2022, the local area unemployment rates are lower than they were in 2019, the pre-pandemic economic peak of the last decade. At 3.6%, Riverhead's unemployment rate is, and consistently has been, slightly higher than the surrounding communities and Suffolk County as a whole.

Occupations

There are many different occupations within a single industry; for example, a person can work as a custodian within the financial industry. To better understand the types of jobs performed by Riverhead residents, occupation data from the Census Bureau's ACS is shown in Figure 3.2-8. For both the Town and the County, sales and office occupations were most common, followed by management, business, and financial occupations. However, Riverhead residents were more likely than Suffolk County residents overall to work in sales, natural resources, construction & maintenance, protective services, and healthcare support occupations – all of which are typically lower-paying fields.

Figure 3.2-8. Occupations of Riverhead and Suffolk County Resident Population, 2021



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS, 2017-2021 5-Year Estimate

Industry Clusters

Employment in Riverhead is diverse. Key sectors include retail, health care, accommodation and food services, and education.

The commercial corridor along Route 58, featuring major retail establishments and Tanger Outlets, has been a significant source of jobs, drawing employees from within Riverhead and neighboring areas.

The hospitality sector plays a crucial role in Riverhead's employment, driven by the Town's appeal as a tourist destination. Hotels, restaurants, and other service-oriented businesses cater to the influx of visitors to attractions like the Long Island Aquarium and Exhibition Center. Additionally, the Town's position within the North Fork wine and craft beverage region has created employment opportunities in the flourishing local wineries and breweries, ranging from vineyard management to tasting room staff.

Healthcare is another prominent sector, with Peconic Bay Medical Center serving as a major regional healthcare provider and employer.

Empire State Development (ESD) has identified advanced manufacturing, biotech & life sciences, cleantech & renewable energy, craft beverage, tourism, and agribusiness as priority growth industries on Long Island. Riverhead already has a solid foundation in tourism and agribusiness as well as a strengthened position in advanced manufacturing.

Fiscal Conditions and Tax Base

According to commercial tax data received from the assessor's office, the average commercial property in Riverhead is assessed at \$52,136 per parcel, with an average tax payment of \$28,021. Retail land uses are seven of the 14 above-average taxpayers, including the top four. Commercial residential properties are also above-average contributors to Riverhead's tax revenues, including manufactured housing parks, hotels, apartment buildings, and [vacation] cottages. Vacant commercial properties and small, single-use buildings round out the highest contributors to the tax base on a per-parcel basis.

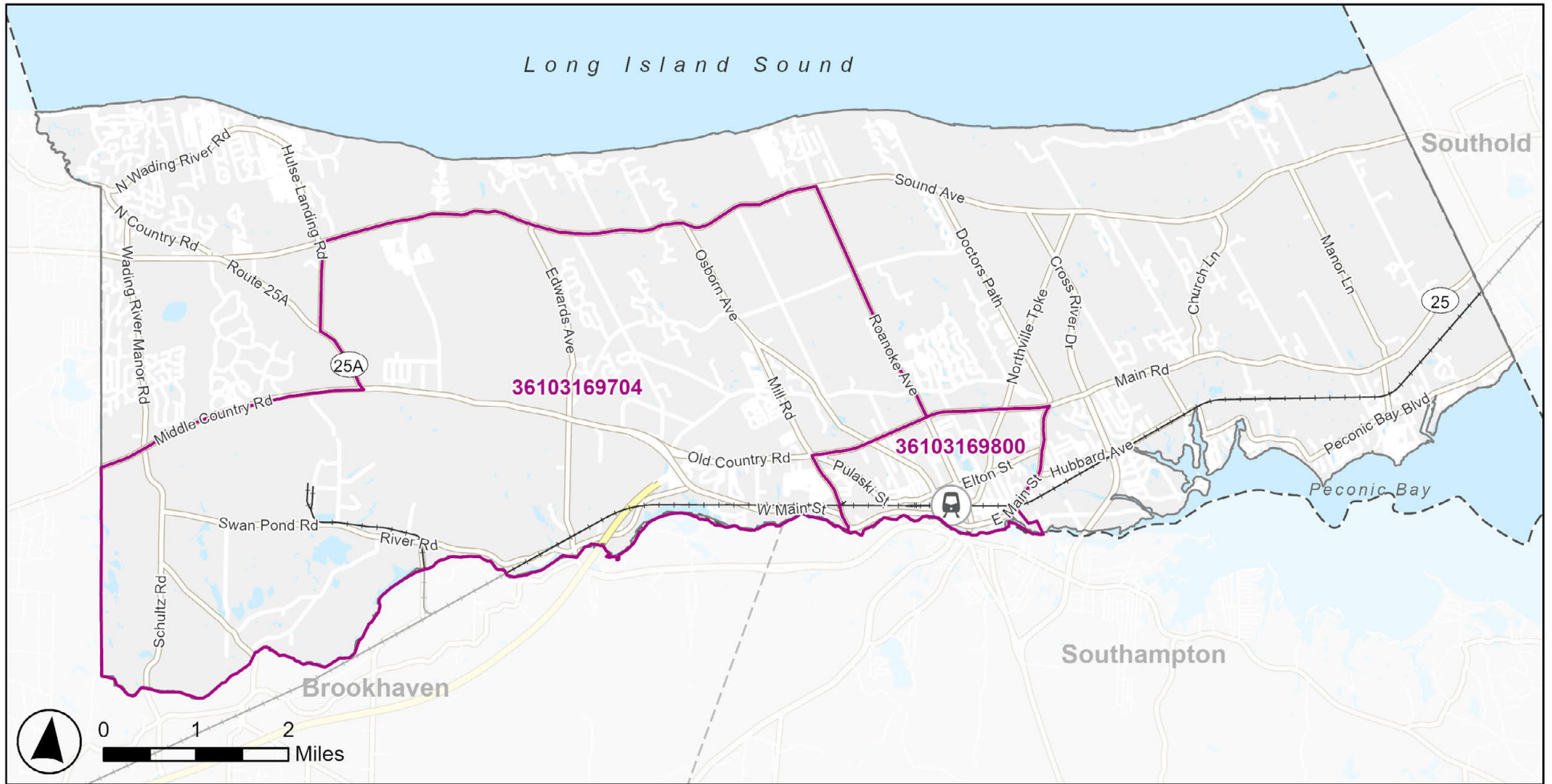
Federal Opportunity Zones

Opportunity Zones are designated census tracts in Calverton and Downtown Riverhead (see Figure 3.2-9). This designation helps to encourage investment in low-income and rural communities defined as having a poverty rate of at least 20% and median family income no greater than 80% of area median income (AMI).

Tourism

As the gateway to the North and South Forks, Riverhead is uniquely situated to capture tourists who would otherwise go farther east. The Town offers a unique blend of attractions that appeal to a variety of interests. Tourists visit farmstands to buy local produce and local wineries to sample wines, enjoy scenic landscapes, and experience the charm of the countryside. For those interested in craft beverages, the Town's breweries and tasting rooms provide an authentic taste of the region.

The Town has several regional attractions, including Tanger Outlets, which attract shoppers from across Long Island and beyond. Route 58 hosts several major retail destinations, including big-box stores, furniture outlets, and automobile dealerships. Attractions like the Long Island Aquarium, Splish Splash, Island Water Park, and Scott's Pointe offer family-friendly fun, complementing the area's natural beauty. The Riverhead Raceway hosts regular racing events and draws crowds of spectators. The Suffolk Theater also hosts a diverse array of performances, including live music, theatrical productions, comedy shows, and special events.



 Opportunity Zone

Retail Environment

The retail landscape in Riverhead has several strengths, including prominent retail destinations like Tanger Outlets, Route 58, and the downtown area. Additionally, the Town benefits from tourism, attracting visitors who contribute to the local economy. However, weaknesses persist, particularly in the downtown area, where retail offerings fail to adequately serve residents, potentially hindering local patronage.

Nevertheless, Riverhead has opportunities for growth and revitalization. These include redevelopment or adaptive reuse of vacant retail spaces along Route 58, introduction of new residential developments in the downtown area, and expansion of outdoor dining options to meet unmet retail demand. Furthermore, the Town is a gateway to both the North and South Forks, positioning it to capitalize on the trend of "close to home" tourism. Despite these opportunities, threats loom, such as the decline of brick-and-mortar retail due to growing online shopping, competition between Route 58 and downtown, and the presence of big box stores and shopping malls that may divert consumer spending from local businesses.

Retail Real Estate

In February 2023, retail real estate listings in Riverhead were concentrated in the downtown on Main Street and on Route 58. Some 180,134 square feet of retail space in the Town was listed for lease on Loopnet.com. The largest of these listings was Serota Plaza, with 55,210 sf of retail space. The average listing price was \$25 per sf. The highest asking price was 20 W. Main Street, with a 2023 asking rent of \$42 per sf, significantly higher than other downtown listings that averaged \$19.50 per sf.

Pandemic-Related Concerns

Some economic challenges were brought to light by the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the vitality of small businesses, farm workforce reductions, and delayed capital improvements. Notably, downtown businesses faced vacancies, and the relocation of employment centers to remote work settings presented uncertainties about the future of office spaces. The shift to online shopping, initially driven by the pandemic, has raised questions about sustained market demand. Moreover, the uncertain future of department stores, aging strip commercial malls, and large-scale retailers, became a crucial issue.

Outdoor dining emerged as a lifeline for many establishments during the pandemic, leading to the Town Board's authorization of a permanent waiver for downtown zoning limitations on outdoor dining. While this measure supported businesses, ongoing challenges such as litter, pedestrian safety, and noise necessitate vigilant monitoring. Retail industry leaders suggest that the pandemic fostered innovative solutions, including curbside pickup, providing more experiential retail experiences, and ways to make the in-person retail experience more desirable.

Downtown

Downtown Riverhead has many core assets, including an attractive waterfront, lively main street corridor, entertainment venues, and cultural institutions. Recent planning initiatives, investments, and programs have promoted downtown revitalization, including the Railroad Avenue URA TOD development (2021), the Pattern Book (2021), the Downtown Riverfront Activation Plan, and the DRI Strategic Investment Plan (2022). According to the Pattern Book, potential new development could effectively double the built square footage in downtown Riverhead. In the past few years, over 900 new multifamily units have been built or proposed for Riverhead's downtown. See Chapter 3 for details on recent multifamily projects.

In addition, there are several planned public space improvements for the downtown area in various stages of development, including:

- Improved pedestrian and bicycle connections between the downtown and the train station.
- Creation of a new Town Square to connect the downtown to the riverfront.
- Development of new active recreation uses along the waterfront, like a playground, amphitheater, and boathouse. The Town received grant funding for design of these projects and has contracted firms to start the design process.
- Other traffic calming techniques on Main Street.

Town of Riverhead Budget

The 2020 adopted Town of Riverhead budget²⁵ was \$100,048,100, with \$51,813,150 being funded through property taxes. Based on a review of tax assessment data provided by the Town of Riverhead, approximately 74% of the annual tax levy is generated by residential property taxes. Table 3.2-5 below provides a breakdown of municipal costs and provides a per capita cost of providing services to Town residents of approximately \$1,063²⁶ per resident.

Table 3.2-5. Town of Riverhead Per Capita Municipal Services Costs

| 2022 Town of Riverhead Budget | |
|---|--|
| Town of Riverhead | Municipal Costs |
| General Fund | \$40,489,138 |
| Highway Fund | \$6,354,801 |
| Lighting District | \$1,177,264 |
| Water District | \$1,409,360 |
| Sewer Districts | \$520,477 |
| Ambulance District | \$1,545,221 |
| Total (excluding Public Parking District and Business Improvement District): | \$51,496,261 |
| | Percent of budget paid by residential tax levy 74% |
| | 2022 Riverhead Population 35,834 |
| | Per capita cost \$1,063.44 |

Source: Town of Riverhead 2022 Adopted Budget, 2022 US Census ACS Population data, Town of Riverhead Tax Assessment data.

3.2.2. Potential Impacts

This section provides an analysis of the potential impacts that could occur as a result of the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan Update.

²⁵ <https://www.townofriverheadny.gov/files/documents/2022AdoptedBudget95810575111721AM.pdf>

²⁶ This is a generic analysis and is based on tax assessments for the Riverhead Fire and Ambulance Districts, Riverhead Water and Sewer Districts, and Riverhead Library District. The Town has over 60 assessment districts and given the generic nature of the analysis it is impossible to determine the specific costs based on variations in tax assessments based on location.

3.2.2.1. Demographics

The Draft 2024 Comprehensive Plan does not contain any specific plan policies related to demographics. The following presents a discussion of the projected population increase that could occur as a result of the recommended zoning changes.

Population

The Future with Action scenario (Proposed Action) as presented in the Build-out Analysis in Chapter 2.0, has the potential to result in an increase of approximately 267 units of assisted living, 30 units of multifamily housing, 67 townhomes, and a reduction of approximately 87 single-family homes as compared to the Future without Action scenario. As shown in Table 3.2-6, this would result in an incremental increase of approximately 278 additional residents in the Town by 2035, if all developments utilize TDR. If TDR is not used, the anticipated population increase is projected to be an incremental increase of only 116 residents. The NYMTC²⁷ 2035 population projection for Riverhead is 40,009. The increase of 278 new residents by 2035 equates to a 0.69% increase in the Town’s population, while an increase of 116 residents is only a 0.39% increase. This minor increase would not result in a significant adverse impact on the Town’s ability to provide adequate community and municipal services and adequate open space, parks, and recreational services to Town residents.

Table 3.2-6. Anticipated Population Change – Comparison of Build-out Scenarios

| District | Increment | | Multiplier ¹ | Population | |
|----------------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Without TDR | With TDR | | Without TDR | With TDR |
| Single-Family (SF) Units | -6 SF Units | - 87 SF Units | 2.847 | -18 | -248 |
| Assisted Living (AL) Units | 0 AL Units | +267 AL Units | 1 | 0 | +267 |
| Multi-Family (MF) Units | 0 MF Units | +30 MF Units | 2.238 | 0 | +68 |
| Townhomes (TH) Units | +47 TH Units | +67 TH Units | 2.847 | +134 | +191 |
| Total | | | | +116 | +278 |

Assumptions:

1. *Who Moves into New York Housing – 2015 Residential Demographic Multipliers. By Econsult Solutions. 2.847 persons per household for single-family and townhomes, 2.238 persons per household for multifamily housing. Assisted living individual units typically accommodate one resident per unit, although there can be exceptions to accommodate couples or shared living arrangements.*

Additionally, as described more fully under Section 3.2.2.3 below, the proposed new development would generate between approximately \$416,068, without TDR to \$1.29 million, with TDR in additional tax dollars in local taxes as compared to the Future without Action condition to support any increase in services. Additionally, any future development would be evaluated during future project approvals and site-specific review under SEQR to ensure adequate provision of Town services. For these reasons, the Proposed Action would not result in significant adverse impacts resulting from an increase in population.

²⁷ Sources: NYMTC, 2022; NYMTC 2055 SED Forecasts, 2020; U.S. Decennial Census, 2010-2020; ACS 5-Year Estimates 2022

3.2.2.2. Housing

Discussion of Comprehensive Plan Policies and Impacts

Chapter 3 of the Comprehensive Plan presents goals and recommendations related to housing. The following presents a summary of the chapter recommendations under each proposed goal, followed by a discussion of potential impacts

Goal 1. Continue to promote housing affordability and the availability of quality affordable and workforce housing in Riverhead and throughout the region.

Riverhead has historically served as a primary provider of affordable and workforce housing within the East End, counteracting the escalating development costs prevalent elsewhere in the region. Recognizing the looming threat to attainable housing options due to mounting development pressure, the town is poised to undertake a comprehensive approach to safeguard housing accessibility. This multifaceted strategy involves regular monitoring of housing dynamics, exploration of diverse funding sources for workforce housing, and advocacy for regional cooperation to tackle the housing crisis collectively.

However, as Riverhead endeavors to fortify its housing landscape, it must confront potential repercussions on community infrastructure, traffic congestion, and regional services. The prospect of substantial housing development in neighboring areas, particularly in Flanders/Riverside, presents complex challenges that necessitate collaborative planning between Riverhead and Southampton. To mitigate adverse impacts, strategies may include the establishment of a regional inter-municipal planning working group to facilitate coordinated development efforts to address potential impacts.

Moreover, Riverhead must remain vigilant in monitoring short-term rentals and other market factors that impact housing costs by commercializing the use of residential properties. The proliferation of short-term rentals can disrupt the availability of year-round housing, exacerbating affordability challenges for full-time residents. By quantifying the numbers and impacts of short-term rental units on neighborhoods and considering regulations to maintain housing stock for permanent residents, Riverhead can preserve its housing affordability amidst evolving market dynamics.

Goal 2. Encourage more diverse housing types to accommodate a wide range of income levels and to address evolving housing needs.

To address housing challenges such as overcrowding and affordability, Riverhead proposes several recommendations aimed at enhancing housing flexibility and promoting diverse options. The first recommendation in this goal involves eliminating minimum home size requirements in residential districts, recognizing that existing building code standards ensure safety and habitability, rendering additional size restrictions unnecessary. This move allows for greater design flexibility and innovation, facilitating the development of diverse and affordable housing options tailored to the community's evolving needs. Minimum home size requirements would still be maintained by the building code to ensure health and safety of all housing facilities.

Additionally, the Town plans to utilize TDR to permit slightly higher densities in designated areas, such as the CRC and PRC zones, contingent upon the availability of infrastructure, particularly sewer. By incentivizing developers with TDR credits and providing design guidance to ensure compliance with environmental regulations, Riverhead aims to foster the development of townhouses and garden apartments while preserving riparian areas. Modifications to TDR ratios are also proposed to increase the attractiveness of preservation credits for developers, thereby diversifying housing stock in receiving areas throughout the town.

Furthermore, Riverhead intends to promote adaptive reuse of buildings for residential purposes in the DC-1 District, particularly historic buildings, by exempting them from the 500-unit cap. This initiative seeks to

encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of existing structures, aligning with broader goals of historic preservation and sustainable development. Moreover, revisions to standards for ADUs are proposed reduce barriers to new housing, such as eliminating the requirement for a three-year certificate of occupancy for accessory buildings to receive an ADU permit. These measures collectively aim to foster a more flexible and sustainable housing landscape in Riverhead.

These initiatives require further study as policy details are determined in the future. Potential impacts to community services, infrastructure, transportation and historic character would need to be assessed prior to any future policy changes.

Goal 3. Support creation and protection of homeownership for workforce income households.

Riverhead acknowledges the importance of providing reasonably priced homeownership options, particularly for young individuals and families aiming to build wealth and attain economic stability. To facilitate this goal, the Town proposes various strategies aimed at assisting first-time homebuyers. One approach involves leveraging resources and incentives to support condominium development in downtown and hamlet centers, offering contextually compatible homeownership opportunities. By collaborating with governmental agencies, financial institutions, and nonprofits, Riverhead aims to identify financing options and connect workforce households with low-interest loans or reduced down payments, thereby facilitating homeownership for those facing financial barriers.

Moreover, Riverhead encourages the use of existing funding programs such as the Affordable Homeownership Development (AHOD) Program and State of New York Mortgage Agency (SONYMA) to enhance access to affordable homeownership opportunities. These initiatives provide grants, low-cost mortgages, and down payment assistance to support first-time homebuyers. Additionally, the town considers long-term options like using Community Preservation Fund (CPF) funds to offset costs for first-time homebuyers, albeit this requires a ballot referendum and is not accessible until 2030.

Furthermore, Riverhead aims to revise policies and procedures to effectively utilize the Affordable Housing Fund to support first-time homebuyers. This involves establishing eligibility criteria, such as income guidelines, and offering down payment assistance, closing cost assistance, or reduced-interest loans to eligible applicants. Additionally, the town plans to prioritize providing information and resources on its website for first-time homebuyers, streamlining the application process and ensuring equitable access to support services.

Goal 4. Promote inclusive housing policies and accessible design standards to ensure that housing is available to people of all ages and abilities.

Riverhead recognizes the pressing need to address the housing and care requirements of its aging population, comprising 24% of residents over 65 years of age. To cater to this demographic, the Town proposes several recommendations aimed at providing suitable housing options and necessary medical services. One strategy involves continuing to support the Community Development Department's program, which offers home improvement funding for low-income senior residents. By rehabilitating units and enhancing their quality of life, this initiative not only benefits senior households but also potentially boosts property values and tax revenue for the town.

Moreover, Riverhead intends to allow the development of residential health care facilities, including "continuum of care" housing, in designated zones such as the Residence RC zone and areas near the Peconic Bay Medical Center. These facilities enable seniors to receive the necessary health and personal care while maintaining their independence, contributing to aging in place. Additionally, the town plans to collaborate with Suffolk County and community partners to regulate and support sober homes and group homes, ensuring safe housing for individuals recovering from addiction and those with disabilities.

Furthermore, Riverhead aims to develop Accessible Design Standards to create an inclusive environment that accommodates the needs of individuals with disabilities. These standards would cover various aspects such as physical infrastructure, signage, public transportation, and technology, promoting equal access and participation for everyone. Additionally, the Town proposes expanding and amending the Hospital zone to accommodate housing for hospital staff, aligning with the hospital's long-term plans and promoting accessibility to quality healthcare services.

Discussion of Impacts from Recommended Rezoning Areas

Policies for residential districts and housing as a whole aim to address various aspects of housing affordability, diversity, homeownership, and inclusivity. Policies furthering these goals are anticipated to have positive impacts on the community because they prioritize community needs, promote sustainable development, and provide resources to support housing initiatives. Overall, the recommendations offer a comprehensive framework for sustainable housing development in Riverhead, with no foreseen negative impacts due to their balanced and community-focused approach.

As summarized in Table 3.2-7, below and as presented in detail in the Build-out Analysis in Chapter 2.0, the Future with Action scenario has the potential by 2035 to result in an incremental increase of approximately 267 units of assisted living, 30 multifamily units, 67 townhomes, and a reduction of approximately 87 single-family homes, as compared to the Future without Action scenario.

Table 3.2-7. Build-Out Analysis – Incremental Increase in Anticipated Housing Development – 2035

| District | Anticipated Development | | | | Increment | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | Future without Action | Future with Action | | | Without TDR | With TDR |
| | | Without TDR | With TDR | Required TDR Credits | | |
| Assisted Living Overlay District | 9 SF units 8,471 commercial | 9 SF Units 8,471 sq. ft. Commercial | 267 Assisted Living | 123 Credits (62 SF units) | 0 SF Units | +267 AL Units -71 SF Units |
| RRA-OD | 210 MF units | 210 MF Units | 240 MF Units | 10 (5 SF units) | +0 MF Units | +30 MF Units -5 SF Units |
| CRC | 5 SF Units | + 43 TH Units | + 63 TH Units | 10 (5 SF units) | +43 TH Units -5 SF Units | +63 TH Units -10 SF Units |
| PRC | 1 SF Units | +4 Townhomes, -1 SF Unit | +4 Townhomes, -1 SF Unit | - | +4 TH Units -1 SF Unit | +4 TH Unit -1 SF Units |
| Total by Unit Type: | | | | | | |
| Single-Family (SF) Units | | | | | -6 SF Units | - 87 SF Units |
| Assisted Living (AL) Units | | | | | 0 AL Units | +267 AL Units |
| Multi-Family (MF) Units | | | | | 0 MF Units | +30 MF Units |
| Townhomes (TH) Units | | | | | +47 TH Units | +67 TH Units |

Source: BFJ Planning, 2024; Town of Riverhead, 2024.

The following section discusses potential impacts from specific rezoning areas which help to address the aforementioned policies

Downtown

Use of TDR in Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Overlay District: It is recommended that the TDR map be updated to recognize the inclusion of TDR in this area. As shown in the Future with Action scenario, this change would

allow for a maximum of 30 additional multi-family units, with the use of 10 TDR credits, as compared to the Future without Action scenario (see Table 3.2-7). Potential impacts, as discussed in other chapters, are offset by the need to improve housing opportunities as well as the need to improve the market for TDR – thereby helping to preserve other sensitive areas in the Town. Individual projects would be evaluated for impacts in a site-specific manner, mitigating any adverse effects on the community. Further, as demonstrated by the housing data presented above, there is a need for a diversity of housing options and additional supply in Riverhead and these recommended changes seek to address these needs.

Assisted Living

The Comprehensive Plan recommends allowing assisted living facilities and continuing care retirement communities (CCRCs) near Peconic Bay Medical Center (PBMC) to support Riverhead's aging population. Strategically locating senior housing near downtown centers and medical facilities ensures optimal access to emergency response services. Additionally, it is recommended that assisted living facilities be a special permit use in other areas, to be evaluated by the Town Board on a site-specific manner. Implementing defined zoning regulations and adjusting densities based on sewer infrastructure ensures responsible, tailored development. This recommendation addresses seniors' needs, improves healthcare access, and offers specialized housing solutions while preserving community character and infrastructure. It also provides an additional market for the use of TDRs, helping to promote the preservation of other sensitive lands in Town.

As shown in the Future with Action Scenario, over the next decade, adoption of this district would generate an estimated 267 new assisted living units/beds, requiring 123 TDR credits. The construction of 267 units of assisted living would result in a corresponding reduction of 71 new single-family homes in other areas of the Town. However, development of assisted living housing is expected to make additional housing units available as seniors vacate their homes in favor of assisted living. As demonstrated by the demographic data presented above, Riverhead has an aging population and a demonstrated need for additional senior housing. The recommended zoning changes provide an opportunity to development additional senior housing, while balancing impacts to community facilities and services by the corresponding reduction of single-family homes combined with the preservation of the Town's sensitive lands. In addition, individual projects would be evaluated for impacts in a site-specific manner as part of special permit review and site-specific review under SEQOR, mitigating any potentially significant adverse environmental impacts.

TDR Program

The Plan recommends designating all RB-80 and RA-80 districts (includes Laurel and Jamesport south of Main Road, Baiting Hollow, Northville, and Riverhead north of Sound Avenue, and in Wading River) as TDR sending districts, as these areas have large tracts of agricultural lands that should be eligible for preservation through TDR. As shown in Chapter 2.0, this change would allow for the preservation, through TDR, of just under 2,000 acres of sensitive land. This change would have a positive impact by supporting smart growth strategies that direct development away from sensitive areas and towards lands that can accommodate additional residential and commercial growth.

CRC and PRC Districts

Recommendations for these two districts serve to enhance housing options in transitional areas that can support growth, while providing a new market for the purchase of TDR credits, helping to preserve other sensitive areas of Town. The CRC Zone aims to accommodate various housing types but currently permits only single-family dwellings, limiting housing diversity. Allowing slightly higher densities, ranging from 4-12 units per acre depending on infrastructure and TDR credits, facilitates the development of townhouses and promotes density. The PRC Zone intends to support a mix of residential, commercial, and recreational uses, yet lacks specific provisions for residential development. Permitting residential uses with TDRs, up to 4 units per acre with

infrastructure, fosters diverse housing typologies like townhouses and garden apartments, aligning with urban planning principles. As shown in the Future with Action Scenario, over the next decade, adoption of these zoning changes would generate between 47 to 67 new townhome units, depending on the use of TDR. As demonstrated by the housing data presented above, there is a need for a diversity of housing options and additional supply in Riverhead and these recommended changes seek to address these needs.

Further, design guidance ensures preservation of riparian areas and aligns development with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) regulations, promoting responsible growth while maintaining environmental integrity. By enhancing housing diversity and aligning with regulatory standards, the recommended zoning changes positively impact community livability and development sustainability. In addition, individual projects would be evaluated for impacts in a site-specific manner as part of site plan review and site-specific review under SEQOR, mitigating any potentially significant adverse environmental impacts.

Other Regulatory Changes

The following recommendations focus on enhancing the regulatory framework and planning processes within Riverhead to ensure responsible development and land use practices. They share the common goal of promoting clarity, consistency, and compatibility in zoning regulations, while also emphasizing the importance of site-specific evaluations to mitigate adverse impacts on the community and environment. None of the recommendations are anticipated to result in a significant change in density in and of themselves. Individual projects would be evaluated for impacts in a site-specific manner, mitigating any adverse effects on the community.

- Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs): Modifying size restrictions and certain requirements to make the process less burdensome on applicants while maintaining regulatory intent. Aligning regulations with current needs and standards ensures compliance without adverse effects on the community. Individual project evaluations guarantee compatibility and safety.
- Accessible Design Standards: Updating design standards promotes inclusivity and accessibility, supporting diverse community needs. Integrating comprehensive standards ensures equitable access without compromising community integrity. Site-specific application guarantees compliance and minimizes negative effects.
- Revisit Housing Standards: Reviewing housing standards enhances regulatory alignment with building codes and sustainability goals. Strengthening construction quality and sustainability standards promotes responsible development without adverse impacts. Site-specific evaluations ensure compliance and community resilience.

3.2.2.3. Economic Conditions

Discussion of Comprehensive Plan Policies and Impacts

Chapter 4 of the Comprehensive Plan presents goals and recommendations related to economic conditions and development. The following presents a summary of the chapter recommendations under each proposed goal and a discussion of potential impacts.

Goal 1. Reassess the development strategy for EPCAL to ensure the economic and community benefits of proposed projects align with local needs and that impacts are proactively addressed.

Riverhead recognizes the vast economic potential of its industrially zoned areas, particularly Enterprise Park at Calverton (EPCAL), which is well-suited for office, industrial, and commercial recreation uses due to its central location and existing infrastructure. To capitalize on these opportunities, the town intends to continue promoting economic development in the EPCAL area while implementing measures to address potential negative impacts. This includes revisiting zoning regulations for the Planned Development (PD) district, which

offers flexibility in land uses, to ensure alignment with community preferences and concerns. Recent amendments, such as eliminating air cargo activities, highlight the need for careful evaluation and adjustment of development regulations to foster community support.

The Plan recommends the Town undertake a comprehensive feasibility study and subsequent planning involving residents, state agencies like the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), and other stakeholders to formulate a collective vision for EPCAL's development. This study would identify economically viable uses, explore subdivision plans, and address environmental considerations, enhancing the town's eligibility for grant funding and ensuring a collaborative planning approach that reflects community interests. By engaging various stakeholders, Riverhead seeks to develop a clear roadmap for EPCAL's development that balances economic growth with environmental sustainability and community well-being.

However, addressing potential impacts of increased development at EPCAL remains a significant concern for the community. Key issues include ensuring that roads, utilities, and public services can accommodate the anticipated demand, particularly considering past development proposals that faced challenges. Proactively establishing a plan for roadway improvements and exploring public transportation options to serve industrial areas are crucial steps to mitigate congestion and infrastructure strain. Additionally, activating existing rail spurs for freight and/or passenger service, as discussed in Chapter 5 of the Plan, could offer alternative transportation solutions, and alleviate pressure on road networks. Balancing economic development with infrastructure readiness and community needs would be essential to realize EPCAL's potential while maintaining quality of life for residents.

Goal 2. Encourage appropriately scaled and designed development in industrial areas that better aligns with the character and needs of the surrounding areas.

Riverhead recognizes the importance of balancing economic development with the preservation of its rural and residential landscape. To achieve this, the town aims to promote additional recreational opportunities in strategic locations such as Calverton, Route 58, and downtown. By expanding the presence of commercial recreational activities, including both indoor and outdoor options, Riverhead can stimulate economic growth, create employment opportunities, and establish itself as a destination for entertainment and leisure.

In line with the goal of minimizing potential impacts on surrounding areas, Riverhead proposes to reduce the allowable density of industrial development while providing flexibility for building heights. The Comprehensive Plan recommends lowering the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) from 0.4 to 0.25, with the potential for slight increases to 0.3 using Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) credits. Additionally, the plan suggests allowing slightly higher building heights (up to 40 feet) in industrial districts with the use of TDR, provided that aesthetic impacts are mitigated through pyramid height law, setbacks, and design considerations.

Furthermore, Riverhead seeks to strengthen design standards for industrial development to promote aesthetics, green building practices, and architectural harmony with the town's rural character. By aligning zoning strategies with the goal of preserving setbacks, managing heights, and encouraging sustainable practices, the town aims to incentivize developers to prioritize quality and environmental stewardship. Additionally, the Plan recommends transitioning existing industrial districts in sensitive areas into light industrial zones with specific design and landscaping requirements to minimize visual and environmental impacts. This gradual shift aims to ensure that industrial activities are conducted in a manner that is safe, environmentally responsible, and compatible with surrounding land uses.

Goal 3. Emphasize downtown Riverhead as the Town's civic, cultural, specialty shopping, and historic center.

Riverhead's downtown area holds significant potential for economic revitalization, given its diverse assets and regional attractions. The recent Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) Strategic Investment Plan identified various issues and opportunities, including vacant properties, riverfront access, and the need for public realm improvements, including Complete Streets. To capitalize on these opportunities, the town aims to continue advancing the vision, goals, and strategies established in the DRI Strategic Investment Plan, which were crafted through collaborative efforts with the community.

One key focus area is to make the Peconic River a central feature of downtown Riverhead's identity by enhancing connections, activities, and development along its waterfront. Strategies include improving pedestrian connections, creating a new Town Square to connect Main Street to the riverfront, and establishing a shared mobility path along Heidi Behr Way. These initiatives aim to enhance the riverfront experience and attract visitors to the downtown area.

Another priority is to activate underutilized and blighted properties to create new catalysts for downtown revitalization. By transforming vacant and blighted properties into vibrant spaces, Riverhead seeks to attract new businesses and residents, thereby improving the downtown environment and fostering economic growth. Strategies include placemaking initiatives, exploring development opportunities on Town-owned parking lots, and developing mixed-use destinations on vacant sites around the Town Square.

Furthermore, the town emphasizes the importance of engaging the diverse local community and organizations to address social and environmental justice needs. With a focus on inclusivity, Riverhead aims to ensure that the downtown is welcoming to everyone, regardless of age, race, or socioeconomic status. This involves creating new programs and activities that cater to the needs and interests of all populations, fostering a sense of belonging and community cohesion.

Implementing these recommendations may have several potential impacts, including increased economic activity, job creation, and improved quality of life for residents. Revitalizing downtown areas and enhancing public spaces can attract new businesses, residents, and visitors, boosting local commerce and tourism. Additionally, fostering inclusivity and community engagement can strengthen social cohesion and civic pride, contributing to a more vibrant and resilient downtown environment. However, successful implementation would require continued careful planning, stakeholder collaboration, and ongoing monitoring to address any challenges or concerns that may arise during the revitalization process.

Goal 4. Enhance the Route 58 Corridor to create a more attractive destination, improve accessibility, and cultivate a hospitable environment for regional and local traffic.

The Route 58 Corridor, a crucial commercial hub for both Riverhead and the broader East End region, requires strategic revitalization efforts to address its current challenges and maximize its economic potential. One key recommendation involves promoting business revitalization through placemaking, beautification, and transportation improvements. By implementing design guidelines that emphasize aesthetics, walkability, and compatibility with the town's scale, the corridor can undergo a transformation that enhances its appeal and functionality. Additionally, incorporating features like landscaped medians, improved bus pull-out areas, and pedestrian infrastructure would further contribute to a more inviting and efficient corridor environment, as outlined in Chapter 5.

Furthermore, the establishment of a flexible zoning framework is proposed to facilitate the repurposing of vacant and underutilized properties along Route 58. This approach aims to encourage infill development and adaptive reuse, which can effectively support economic growth while minimizing sprawl. Zoning flexibility would allow for the introduction of new businesses, housing options, and amenities, thereby revitalizing the corridor and maintaining its distinct character. For instance, vacant big box retail spaces could be repurposed into office complexes, commercial recreation, or other commercial development, attracting office workers and visitors who would patronize other retail establishments in the area.

Implementing these recommendations has the potential to yield significant positive impacts on the Route 58 Corridor and the surrounding community. Revitalizing the corridor through placemaking initiatives and flexible zoning policies can stimulate economic activity, attract investment, and create a more vibrant commercial center. Moreover, improvements to transportation infrastructure and parking requirements can enhance accessibility, promote pedestrian-friendly environments, and foster sustainable development practices.

Goal 5. Guide responsible land use planning in hamlet centers.

The Town aims to enhance its hamlet-oriented commercial areas by coordinating economic development efforts and engaging with residents to create strategic plans for growth and development. One key recommendation involves encouraging the creation of hamlet studies for Aquebogue, Jamesport, Calverton, and Polish Town. These studies would involve collaboration with residents to develop design guidelines or pattern books that outline specific requirements for new development. By examining the unique needs and priorities of each hamlet area, the studies can ensure that future development aligns with the local context, addressing factors such as allowable land uses, building design, transportation improvements, and public space opportunities.

Another recommendation focuses on balancing growth and greenery along the West Main Street gateway, particularly in areas closely connected to downtown Riverhead. The existing development pattern along West Main Street includes a mix of uses but lacks cohesion and consistency with the surrounding built environment. To address this, the Town proposes tailoring zoning provisions to encourage a balanced blend of residential and small-scale commercial endeavors, while also implementing a greenbelt program to enhance the Peconic River waterfront area. These adjustments aim to create a seamless green corridor that not only enhances the aesthetic appeal of the area but also promotes wildlife habitats, recreational opportunities, and environmental sustainability consistent with NYSDEC Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers (WSRR) regulations.

Implementing these recommendations has the potential to yield significant positive impacts on the Town's hamlet-oriented commercial areas and the West Main Street gateway. By developing strategic plans for growth and development, the Town can ensure that future development aligns with the unique characteristics and aspirations of each hamlet, fostering vibrant and sustainable communities. Moreover, balancing growth with greenery along the West Main Street gateway can enhance the area's appeal, promote environmental stewardship, and improve the overall quality of life for residents and visitors alike. However, it's essential to carefully consider the potential challenges and trade-offs associated with zoning adjustments and development initiatives, including impacts on traffic patterns, infrastructure demands, and community character.

Goal 6. Balance fiscal and community benefits when considering new development and zoning decisions.

Riverhead recognizes the importance of achieving a sustainable balance between economic development and land preservation. While commercial and industrial development can provide significant tax revenue and support essential public services, the preservation of open land is crucial for protecting the environment, maintaining the Town's unique character, and promoting a healthy living environment. To strike this balance, the Town aims to encourage smart growth that respects natural resources, minimizes environmental impact, and supports a diverse local economy. By pursuing economic development initiatives strategically and preserving key landscapes, Riverhead can ensure long-term fiscal health and sustainability while preserving its natural beauty and cultural heritage.

To guide development decisions effectively, the Town proposes establishing a fiscal framework for evaluating development proposals and zoning decisions. This framework would provide a standardized method for assessing tax revenues, infrastructure costs, and other financial factors associated with major projects. By considering the fiscal implications upfront, the Town can make more informed decisions that align with its long-term fiscal goals and sustainability objectives. Furthermore, developing this framework in collaboration with the assessor's office would enhance transparency and accountability in the decision-making process, providing clear

guidelines for evaluating proposals and promoting a predictable environment for developers and the community.

Collaboration with the Industrial Development Agency (IDA) presents an opportunity for Riverhead to maximize both fiscal and community benefits. By working closely with the IDA, the Town can ensure that economic incentives provided to businesses result in substantial returns for the Town's treasury while also addressing community needs and priorities. Transparent negotiations, well-defined performance metrics, and regular assessments of economic impact can help strike this balance, fostering a partnership that supports the Town's long-term growth and quality of life. Through collaboration with the IDA, Riverhead can incorporate community-focused objectives into development projects, such as workforce housing and infrastructure improvements, ensuring that economic development initiatives align with the broader vision for sustainable growth and the well-being of its residents.

Goal 7. Continue to work with local partners on economic development initiatives.

Riverhead recognizes the importance of collaboration with the Business Improvement District (BID) and the Chamber of Commerce to drive economic development initiatives. These organizations play integral roles in enhancing the downtown area's physical and commercial aspects and advocating for local businesses. By continuing to work closely with the BID and the Chamber of Commerce, Riverhead can capitalize on their collective expertise, resources, and community engagement to foster growth and prosperity in the town.

Additionally, given Riverhead's strategic location as the gateway to the North and South Forks, the town aims to foster cross-jurisdictional coordination with neighboring communities. Collaborating on economic development efforts with neighboring towns, businesses, and nonprofit agencies can unlock new opportunities for sustainable growth and enhance the overall economic well-being of the area. One approach could involve the participation in a North Fork Cooperative, a collaborative platform where joint strategies for sustainable economic growth can be designed and executed, promoting tourism, consumer spending, and economic resilience across the region.

Furthermore, Riverhead seeks to actively market development and redevelopment sites aligned with the town's vision for growth and prosperity. By establishing a unique Riverhead brand that emphasizes the town's heritage and aspirations, developing comprehensive marketing materials, and highlighting its status as a Federal Opportunity Zone and emerging brewery capital, Riverhead can attract investors, businesses, and visitors. However, potential impacts should be carefully considered, including the need to balance economic development with preserving the town's character, managing growth sustainably, and addressing any concerns from local stakeholders about changes to the community's landscape and identity.

Goal 8. Promote sustainable economic growth and development and foster the creation of employment opportunities.

Investing in workforce development is identified as a crucial component of Riverhead's economic growth strategy. The town aims to collaborate with local educational institutions and workforce development agencies to provide training programs and resources that align with the expected job growth in emerging industries. Partnerships with institutions like Suffolk County Community College and Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) would facilitate the development of continuing education and certificate programs tailored to the needs of industries such as health care and senior services. These programs would offer achievement levels corresponding to industry qualification requirements, enabling students to enhance their earning potential as they progress through the training.

Furthermore, Riverhead intends to promote apprenticeship programs and partnerships between local businesses and educational institutions to create a skilled workforce pipeline. By collaborating with entities like Peconic Bay Medical Center (PBMC), the town aims to establish apprenticeship programs that provide hands-

on experience and training in alignment with the specific needs of local industries. These initiatives would ensure that the training provided is directly relevant to the demands of the job market, equipping residents with the skills needed for gainful employment and career advancement.

Goal 9. Achieve a harmonious blend of tourism and rural charm, making Riverhead an attractive destination while upholding residents' quality of life.

Riverhead recognizes the value of agritourism in providing alternative income for local farms and aims to support these activities while mitigating negative impacts such as traffic and noise. Clear definitions of agritourism activities would be established in regulations to differentiate genuine agricultural experiences from commercial events with limited agricultural relevance. Additionally, the town plans to enhance monitoring efforts to minimize adverse impacts by implementing a permitting process and transparent regulations addressing private event spaces and their size to mitigate concerns related to traffic congestion and safety hazards.

Furthermore, Riverhead seeks to strike a balance between promoting agritourism and addressing the concerns of permanent residents regarding short-term rentals. While the town acknowledges the economic benefits of allowing short-term rentals in certain areas to sustain local businesses and tourism, potential impacts such as increased traffic, noise, and safety issues must be carefully considered. To address these concerns, regulations on short-term rentals would be regularly reviewed and adjusted as necessary, with a focus on community engagement and ensuring the well-being of residents and the overall community.

Goal 10. Promote more environmentally friendly business.

Encouraging industries to adopt environmentally friendly practices, such as recycling, waste reduction, and energy efficiency measures, is a critical recommendation to safeguard Riverhead's environment and enhance its long-term resilience. By promoting these eco-friendly initiatives, the town can conserve resources, mitigate environmental degradation, and contribute to overall sustainability. Similarly, promoting sustainable design in industrial and business zones, incorporating features like natural vegetation and effective stormwater management systems, can further reduce environmental footprints, enhance water quality, and preserve ecological health. Embracing these practices aligns with Riverhead's sustainability goals and values, promoting a balance between economic development and environmental stewardship.

Discussion of Impacts from Recommended Rezoning Areas

The Comprehensive Plan outlines strategies to balance economic development with environmental conservation and community needs. By reassessing development strategies, promoting appropriately scaled development, and revitalizing key areas like downtown and the Route 58 corridor, Riverhead aims to foster sustainable growth and enhance quality of life. Without these changes, there's a risk of overlooking community needs, hindering economic vitality, and compromising environmental sustainability.

As summarized in Table 3.2-8 below and as presented in detail in the Build-out Analysis in Chapter 2.0, the Future with Action scenario has the potential by 2035 to result in an incremental increase of approximately 267 units of assisted living, 30 multifamily units, 67 townhomes, and a reduction of approximately 87 single-family homes, 8,471 sq. ft. of commercial, and 166,968 sq. ft. of industrial/office if TDR is used, as compared to the Future without Action scenario.

Table 3.2-8. Build-Out Analysis – Incremental Increase in All Anticipated Development – 2035

| District | Anticipated Development | | | | Increment | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| | Future without Action | Future with Action | | | Without TDR | With TDR |
| | | Without TDR | With TDR | Required TDR Credits | | |
| Assisted Living Overlay District | 9 SF units 8,471 commercial | 9 SF Units 8,471 sq. ft. Commercial | 267 Assisted Living -8,471 sq. ft. commercial | 123 Credits (62 SF units) | 0 SF Units | +267 AL Units -71 SF Units -8,471 sq. ft. commercial |
| RRA-OD | 210 MF units | 210 MF Units | 240 MF Units | 10 (5 SF units) | +0 MF Units | +30 MF Units -5 SF Units |
| CRC | 5 SF Units | + 43 TH Units | + 63 TH Units | 10 (5 SF units) | +43 TH Units -5 SF Units | +63 TH Units -10 SF Units |
| PRC | 1 SF Units | +4 Townhomes, -1 SF Unit | +4 Townhomes, -1 SF Unit | - | +4 TH Units -1 SF Unit | +4 TH Unit -1 SF Units |
| Industrial A, B, and C | 667,873 SF | | | | -250,452 sq. ft | -166,968 sq. ft |
| Total by Type: | | | | | | |
| Single-Family (SF) Units | | | | | -6 SF Units | - 87 SF Units |
| Assisted Living (AL) Units | | | | | 0 AL Units | +267 AL Units |
| Multi-Family (MF) Units | | | | | 0 MF Units | +30 MF Units |
| Townhomes (TH) Units | | | | | +47 TH Units | +67 TH Units |
| Commercial (sq. ft.) | | | | | 0 sq. ft. | -8,471 sq. ft. |
| Industrial/Office (sq. ft.) | | | | | -250,452 sq. ft. | -166,968 sq. ft |

The following section discusses potential impacts from specific rezoning recommendations that address identified goals.

Industrial Areas

Zoning recommendations for many of the industrial districts include a reduction in allowable density of development, while providing flexibility for building heights, strengthening design standards, and incorporating opportunities for the purchase of TDRs. These recommendations are intended to provide for appropriately scaled and designed development in industrial areas, which minimize negative impacts on surrounding residential areas. A summary of specific zoning recommendations is provided below:

- **Reduction in allowable density:** It is recommended that many of the IND A, B, and C districts reduce the allowable development density from 0.4 FAR to 0.25 FAR with the potential to increase to 0.3 with the use of TDR credits. This change would reduce the total amount of development compared to what is currently permitted. The Future with Action Scenario shows that over the next decade, industrial districts in the discussed areas are expected to develop 668,000 square feet across 38 acres under existing zoning. With proposed changes, about 417,000 square feet of development would be permitted, a reduction of roughly 250,000 square feet. An additional 83,000 square feet of development is anticipated with the use of TDR credits. Despite these allowances, total development would be just over 500,000 square feet, about 167,000 square feet less than under current regulations and would also require the use of 17 TDR credits, helping to preserve other sensitive areas in Town.
- **Building Height:** The proposal to increase building heights in industrial areas aims to accommodate modern industries' evolving needs while maximizing land use efficiency. By allowing taller buildings, the town can attract a wider range of businesses, including those requiring advanced manufacturing or research facilities. Implementing a pyramid height law and using TDR ensures that taller buildings are

setback adequately to minimize visual impacts and maintain consistency with surrounding properties, thus safeguarding the community's aesthetic values.

- **Non-Disturbance Buffer:** Including a non-disturbance buffer in industrial districts aims to enhance the visual appeal of road-fronting properties while minimizing visual impacts from industrial activities. By requiring a landscaped transition yard along property lines, excluding certain features like parking areas, the town can mitigate visual nuisances and maintain the aesthetic quality of the surrounding environment, ultimately benefiting the Riverhead community.
- **Outdoor Storage:** Permitting outdoor storage as an accessory use in industrial districts, subject to specific regulations, aims to balance economic needs with visual aesthetics and environmental concerns. By outlining clear guidelines for outdoor storage dimensions, materials, and screening requirements, the town can ensure that such activities do not detract from the overall quality of life for residents. Limiting the area of outdoor storage and enforcing strict regulations prevent misuse or excessive clutter, thus preserving the community's visual and environmental integrity.
- **Light Industrial:** It is also recommended that some of the existing industrial districts closer to the downtown core transition into light industrial, to better monitor performance standards. It is recommended that light industrial district standards be strengthened which would also help to reduce the potential for impacts from future development.
- **Vertical farming:** Vertical farming should be permitted in all industrial zones, enabling the cultivation of crops in a vertically stacked system, which minimizes agricultural land footprint. This promotes mixed-use development by integrating industrial, agricultural, and commercial activities, fostering vibrant and resilient communities. Permitting vertical farming can revitalize vacant or underutilized industrial spaces, promoting adaptive reuse and productive use of idle properties. This recommendation would not have an adverse negative impact as it encourages sustainable land use practices, revitalizes underused areas, and promotes economic activity without compromising community well-being.

Manufacturer's Outlet Center

The recommendation for the BUS F district, encompassing Tanger Outlets at Riverhead and adjacent properties, seeks to provide zoning flexibility to accommodate evolving retail trends and foster innovation in the area. By allowing for experimentation with new concepts like pop-up shops, restaurants, and mixed-use developments, the policy aims to enhance the vibrancy and adaptability of the shopping center while reducing barriers to creating a unified retail environment. This flexibility is balanced with the need to uphold broader land use goals and ensure public health, safety, and welfare through engagement with stakeholders and careful regulation. Ultimately, the recommendation promotes economic resilience and revitalization without compromising the overall well-being of the community. It would not have a negative impact as it supports the adaptation of retail spaces to changing market dynamics while maintaining a cohesive and planned environment, benefiting both businesses and residents by fostering innovation and economic growth.

Agricultural Lands

Recommendations for agricultural lands below seek to sustain agricultural activities, preserving the rural character, and managing environmental impacts:

- **Vertical Farming In Industrial zones:** Allowing vertical farming in industrial zones can diversify land use, promoting mixed-use development and revitalizing underutilized areas. By reducing the footprint needed for agriculture and encouraging adaptive reuse of vacant industrial properties, this policy fosters vibrant and resilient communities without compromising existing infrastructure or community character.
- **Vertical Farming in Other Districts:** Permitting vertical farming in any district where agriculture is the primary use on farms with development rights intact can enhance agricultural productivity and support modern farming practices without significantly altering the visual landscape. By offering new revenue

streams for farmers and utilizing existing agricultural infrastructure, this policy promotes economic stability and agricultural sustainability while ensuring responsible land use and preserving the rural character of the area. Implementation of this recommendation would need associated regulatory direction for the total size, setbacks, landscaping, etc. that would be required. A vertical farm would have to conform to bulk standards and additional standards could apply, potentially with revised design standards. Flexibility should be provided for the adaptive reuse of agricultural buildings such as when these facilities are integrated into existing farm infrastructure. These regulatory changes would help to mitigate potential visual impacts.

- **Renewable Energy:** Providing flexibility for renewable energy facilities on agricultural properties with development rights still intact, supports farmers' financial stability and advances renewable energy integration without detracting from the agricultural landscape. By allowing solar or wind as accessory uses to primary agricultural activities, this policy fosters dual-purpose land utilization, enhances energy sustainability, and aligns with state agricultural policies without imposing adverse visual or environmental impacts on the community.
- **Farm Activities:** Treating farms equally with regard to farm operations regulation ensures consistency and fairness across agricultural areas. By allowing farm operations as accessory uses on parcels where farming is the principal use, this policy promotes uniformity in agricultural regulation and supports farming activities without creating disparities or undue burdens on farmers.
- **Agritourism:** Balancing the benefits of agritourism with potential impacts on agricultural operations and community integrity, this policy seeks to regulate agritourism activities responsibly. By implementing permitting processes, size restrictions, and transparent regulations developed in collaboration with stakeholders, and consultation with New York State Agriculture and Markets, this policy supports local farmers, manages traffic and safety concerns, and preserves the rural character of agricultural communities.
- **Conditional Use Permits:** Introducing conditional use permits offers flexibility to accommodate evolving agricultural demands and technologies while mitigating potential impacts. By allowing the evaluation of new agricultural activities on a case-by-case basis with conditions imposed for mitigation, this policy ensures responsiveness to changing agricultural needs and promotes sustainable agricultural practices in harmony with community interests and regulations.

Lodging Facilities

The Plan recommends the zoning code accommodate new types of lodging facilities within the community while ensuring responsible development and mitigating potential negative impacts. They both propose leveraging Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) as a mechanism to regulate and manage development density. Additionally, both recommendations emphasize the importance of site-specific evaluations to address individual project impacts and ensure compatibility with surrounding areas.

- **Golf Cottages:** The Plan recommends permitting "Golf Cottages" as an accessory use on golf courses across all zoning districts, provided TDR credits are utilized. These cottages, limited to one bedroom per unit and not exceeding 600 square feet, aim to provide short-stay lodging for golfers and visitors. While recognizing potential limitations due to sanitary requirements and the need for suitable screening, individual projects would be evaluated for site-specific impacts. This approach ensures that the introduction of golf cottages complements the recreational function of golf courses without posing adverse impacts on surrounding areas.
- **Agritourism Resort:** Given the high demand for hotel space in the North Fork and the Town's aim to support tourism, the proposal suggests permitting agritourism resorts in suitable locations. These resorts combine agricultural experiences with recreational activities and accommodations, catering to diverse preferences. By incorporating design, development, and environmental standards, the Town aims to balance agritourism support with land conservation objectives. Leveraging demand for these facilities, provisions would require substantial land preservation and TDR credit redemption, ensuring

responsible development. Individual project evaluations would ensure site-specific considerations, mitigating potential adverse impacts on surrounding areas and preserving the agricultural character of the community.

Fiscal Impact

The following presents a generic assessment of potential fiscal impacts associated with the incremental increase in development that could occur because of the recommended rezoning changes, if adopted.

Industrial and Commercial Areas

The incremental change in development under the Future with Action condition as compared to the Future without Action condition is a decrease in approximately 166,968 square feet of industrial/office development and a decrease of approximately 8,471 square feet of commercial development. The decrease in industrial/commercial are attributable to the decrease in FAR described above. The 166,968 square feet would be a net reduction spread out across many industrial sites, since future industrial/office development would be subject to reduced FAR. The decrease in commercial development is attributable to potential future development of assisted living units. The loss of industrial and commercial development could potentially result in a small reduction in property taxes but would also result in a corresponding decrease in the need for additional services. Therefore, the slight reduction in industrial and commercial development anticipated under the Future with Action Condition would have minimal fiscal impact.

Residential Areas – Assisted Living, CRC, PRC and RRA-OD

The incremental increase in the Future with Action scenario, with the use of TDR is estimated to result in an incremental increase of approximately 267 units of assisted living, 30 multifamily units, 67 townhomes, and a reduction of approximately 87 single-family homes, as compared to the Future without Action scenario. Residential construction is an economic engine for the local economy, which provides new income and jobs for residents as well as additional revenue for local governments. Included below is a summary of the estimated economic benefits of multifamily residential, assisted living, townhomes, and single-family construction for a typical metropolitan area (see Table 3.2-9). The model utilized to estimate the economic benefits was created by the National Association of Home builders (NAHB)²⁸.

As shown in Table 3.2-9 below, the recommended zoning changes with the use of TDR have the potential to result in one-year impacts (direct, indirect, and induced) of approximately \$28.99 million in local income, approximately \$9 million in local business income, approximately \$19.9 million in local wages and salaries, approximately \$5.85 million in local taxes, and approximately 399 jobs during the construction period. This fiscal benefit would be spread out over the 10-year period as individual projects are constructed. Once future projects have been completed under the recommended zoning changes, the potential ongoing, annual effect of the residential development (direct, indirect, and induced) would consist of approximately \$7 million in local income, approximately \$1.66 million in local business income, approximately \$5.36 million in local wages and salaries, approximately \$1.3 million in local taxes, and approximately 177 jobs. Assuming all new development occurs within the Riverhead CSD, Riverhead Fire and Ambulance Districts, Riverhead Water and Sewer Districts and the Riverhead Library District, of the local taxes generated on an annual basis, approximately \$697,548 would

²⁸ National Association of Home Builders, 2015. "The Economic Impact of Home Building in a Typical Local Area: Income, Jobs and Taxes Generated." For purposes of this analysis, townhomes are categorized as single-family units, and assisted living units are categorized as multifamily.

go to the Riverhead CSD²⁹ (RCSD), approximately \$551,672 would go to the Town³⁰, and approximately \$10,390 to the County.

²⁹ For properties located within the Riverhead CSD, approximately 54% of local property taxes go to the school district, approximately 42% to the Town, approximately 0.8% to the County, and approximately 2.5% to the State and MTA. <https://www.townofriverheadny.gov/files/documents/2022-23TaxRates1505043041030823PM.pdf>

³⁰ The Town includes the General Fund, Highway Fund, Street Lighting District, Riverhead Water and Sewer Districts, Ambulance District, Public Parking, and BID.

Table 3.2-9. Proposed Action: Estimated Fiscal Benefits with TDR

| WITH TDR | | | | | |
|--|---------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Units | Local Income | Local Business Owners' Income | Local Wages and Salaries | Local Taxes (Inc. Fees, Etc.) | Local Jobs Supported |
| Multifamily and Assisted Living | | | | | |
| One Year Impacts of Proposed Residential Development (Direct, Indirect, and Induced) | | | | | |
| 297 | \$34,728,210 | \$10,752,885 | \$23,974,731 | \$6,567,264 | 478 |
| Ongoing, Annual Effect of Residential Development | | | | | |
| 297 | \$7,842,582 | \$1,850,310 | \$5,990,193 | \$1,495,395 | 131 |
| | | | RCSD | \$807,088.8 | |
| | | | Town, Water, Sewer, etc | \$638,305.2 | |
| | | | County | \$12,022.6 | |
| | | | State, MTA | \$37,978.3 | |
| Townhomes | | | | | |
| One Year Impacts of Proposed Residential Development (Direct, Indirect, and Induced) | | | | | |
| 67 | \$19,209,436 | \$5,766,154 | \$13,443,349 | \$2,250,262 | 264 |
| Ongoing, Annual Effect of Residential Development | | | | | |
| 67 | \$2,741,573 | \$618,008 | \$2,123,230 | \$679,916 | 47 |
| | | | RCSD | \$366,961.7 | |
| | | | Town, Water, Sewer, etc | \$290,220.27 | |
| | | | County | \$5,466.37 | |
| | | | State, MTA | \$17,267.7 | |
| Single-Family | | | | | |
| One Year Impacts of Proposed Residential Development (Direct, Indirect, and Induced) | | | | | |
| -87 | -\$24,943,596 | -\$7,487,394 | -\$17,456,289 | -\$2,921,982 | 343 |
| Ongoing, Annual Effect of Residential Development | | | | | |
| -87 | -\$3,559,953 | -\$802,488 | -\$2,757,030 | -\$882,876 | 60.03 |
| | | | RCSD | \$476,502.4 | |
| | | | Town, Water, Sewer, etc | \$376,853.19 | |
| | | | County | \$7,098.12 | |
| | | | State, MTA | \$22,422.2 | |
| Incremental Impact | | | | | |
| One Year Impacts of Proposed Residential Development (Direct, Indirect, and Induced) | | | | | |
| | \$28,994,050 | \$9,031,645 | \$19,961,791 | \$5,895,544 | 399 |
| Ongoing, Annual Effect of Residential Development | | | | | |
| | \$7,024,202 | \$1,665,830 | \$5,356,393 | \$1,292,435 | 117 |
| | | | RCSD | \$697,548.1 | |
| | | | Town, Water, Sewer, etc | \$551,672.32 | |
| | | | County | \$10,390.88 | |
| | | | State, MTA | \$32,823.7 | |

The incremental increase in the Future with Action scenario, without the use of TDR is estimated to result in an incremental increase of approximately 47 townhomes, and a reduction of approximately 6 single-family homes, as compared to the Future without Action scenario

As shown in Table 3.2-10 below, the recommended zoning changes without the use of TDR have the potential to result in one-year impacts (direct, indirect, and induced) of approximately \$11.75 million in local income, approximately \$3.5 million in local business income, approximately \$8.2 million in local wages and salaries,

approximately \$1.37 million in local taxes, and approximately 162 jobs during the construction period. This fiscal benefit would be spread out over the 10-year period as individual projects are constructed. Once future projects have been completed under the recommended zoning changes, the potential ongoing, annual effect of the residential development (direct, indirect, and induced) would consist of approximately \$1.67 million in local income, approximately \$378,184 in local business income, approximately \$1.3 million in local wages and salaries, approximately \$416,068 in local taxes, and approximately 28 jobs. Assuming all new development occurs within the Riverhead CSD, Riverhead Fire and Ambulance Districts, Riverhead Water and Sewer Districts and the Riverhead Library District, of the local taxes generated on an annual basis, approximately \$224,559 would go to the Riverhead CSD³¹ (RCSD), approximately \$177,597 would go to the Town³², and approximately \$3,345 to the County.

³¹ For properties located within the Riverhead CSD, approximately 54% of local property taxes go to the school district, approximately 42% to the Town, approximately 0.8% to the County, and approximately 2.5% to the State and MTA. <https://www.townofriverheadny.gov/files/documents/2022-23TaxRates1505043041030823PM.pdf>

³² The Town includes the General Fund, Highway Fund, Street Lighting District, Riverhead Water and Sewer Districts, Ambulance District, Public Parking, and BID.

Table 3.2-10. Proposed Action: Estimated Fiscal Benefits without TDR

| WITHOUT TDR | | | | | |
|--|--------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Units | Local Income | Local Business Owners' Income | Local Wages and Salaries | Local Taxes (Inc. Fees, Etc.) | Local Jobs Supported |
| Townhomes | | | | | |
| One Year Impacts of Proposed Residential Development (Direct, Indirect, and Induced) | | | | | |
| 47 | \$13,475,276 | \$4,044,914 | \$9,430,409 | \$1,578,542 | 185 |
| Ongoing, Annual Effect of Residential Development | | | | | |
| 47 | \$1,923,193 | \$433,528 | \$1,489,430 | \$476,956 | 32 |
| | | | RCS D | \$257,421 | |
| | | | Town, Water, Sewer, etc | \$203,587 | |
| | | | County | \$3,835 | |
| | | | State, MTA | \$12,113 | |
| Single-Family | | | | | |
| One Year Impacts of Proposed Residential Development (Direct, Indirect, and Induced) | | | | | |
| 6 | \$1,720,248 | \$516,372 | \$1,203,882 | \$201,516 | 24 |
| Ongoing, Annual Effect of Residential Development | | | | | |
| 6 | \$245,514 | \$55,344 | \$190,140 | \$60,888 | 4 |
| | | | RCS D | \$32,862 | |
| | | | Town, Water, Sewer, etc | \$25,990 | |
| | | | County | \$490 | |
| | | | State, MTA | \$1,546 | |
| Combined Incremental Impact | | | | | |
| One Year Impacts of Proposed Residential Development (Direct, Indirect, and Induced) | | | | | |
| | \$11,755,028 | \$3,528,542 | \$8,226,527 | \$1,377,026 | 162 |
| Ongoing, Annual Effect of Residential Development | | | | | |
| | \$1,677,679 | \$378,184 | \$1,299,290 | \$416,068 | 28 |
| | | | RCS D | \$224,559 | |
| | | | Town, Water, Sewer, etc | \$177,597 | |
| | | | County | \$3,345 | |
| | | | State, MTA | \$10,567 | |

The Future with Action condition with or without the use of TDR would both have a positive fiscal impact. As shown in Table 3.2-11 below, the cost to the Town of an additional 278 residents with the use of TDR and 116 without the use of TDR under the Future with Action scenario, is approximately \$295,636 and \$123,359, respectively. As demonstrated above, the Future with Action scenario has the potential to generate approximately \$551,672 in Town taxes with the use of TDR and approximately \$177,597 in Town taxes without the use of TDR under the Future with Action Condition. This is a net fiscal benefit to the Town (including police, fire, water, sewer, library and Town General and Highway Fund) of approximately \$54,238 (without TDR) to \$256,036 (with TDR). Since the taxes projected are greater than the cost to provide services, the recommended rezoning changes are anticipated to have a positive fiscal impact to the Town. The impact to the Riverhead CSD is discussed in DGEIS Chapter 3.5.

Table 3.2-11. Town of Riverhead Per Capita Costs

| 2022 Town of Riverhead Budget | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Town of Riverhead | Municipal Costs |
| General Fund | \$40,489,138 |
| Highway Fund | \$6,354,801 |
| Lighting District | \$1,177,264 |
| Water District | \$1,409,360 |
| Sewer Districts | \$520,477 |
| Ambulance District | \$1,545,221 |
| Total: | \$51,496,261 |
| | Percent of budget paid by residential tax levy 74% |
| | 2022 Riverhead Population 35,834 |
| | Per capita cost \$1,063.44 |
| | Incremental population increase with TDR 278 |
| | Cost to Town from New Residents with TDR \$295,635.73 |
| | Incremental population increase with TDR 116 |
| | Cost to Town from New Residents with TDR \$123,358.79 |

Source: Town of Riverhead 2022 Adopted Budget.

The above analysis was made on a series of assumptions since no future site specific developments are proposed at this time. If the recommended zoning changes are adopted, and at such time any future site-specific development project submit for site-specific approvals, such approvals process would require site-specific review under SEQR, including an analysis of any potential fiscal impacts.

3.2.3. Mitigation Measures

Overall, the Comprehensive Plan's recommendations related to housing and economic conditions are anticipated to benefit the community without significant adverse environmental impacts, pending thorough SEQR review for future development proposals.

Regarding potential fiscal impacts due to population increases resulting from the recommended rezonings, these impacts are not anticipated to be significant due to the phased nature in which population increases would occur. Additionally, any potential impacts would be minimized due to the net fiscal benefit accruing to the Town, community services providers and Riverhead CSD. In consideration of the foregoing, potential significant adverse impacts to housing and economic conditions resources are not anticipated.

3.3. Historic and Scenic Resources

The following sets forth an examination of scenic and historic resources within Riverhead. The potential impacts that could occur as a result of the adoption of the Riverhead Comprehensive Plan Update ("Comprehensive Plan") are explored, and any necessary mitigation measures needed to mitigate potential impacts are identified.

3.3.1. Existing Conditions

A summary of the existing community historic and scenic resource conditions is given below. For a more detailed overview of existing conditions, refer to Chapter 9 of the Comprehensive Plan. This chapter is not a definitive collection of historic resources and information, but rather an indication of the kind of information available.

Riverhead's identity is shaped by its historic and cultural resources—historic districts, archaeological sites, agricultural landscapes, and scenic corridors. Municipal services and community organizations are crucial in safeguarding and enhancing these assets, ensuring they remain integral to the fabric of daily life in the Town.

3.3.1.1. Historic Resources

Riverhead has a variety of significant scenic and historic resources ranging from expansive views of working agricultural landscapes to scenic roadways like Sound Avenue, the historic structures and property of the Hallock Homestead, the scenic bluffs along Long Island Sound, historic communities like Jamesport, and the historic buildings and compact layout of downtown Riverhead. These features reflect the richness and diversity of the East End's historic, cultural, and natural landscape.

The Corchougs, one of 13 Algonquin tribes originally inhabiting Long Island, lived within today's limits of Riverhead, with villages found in places now called Aquebogue, Cutchogue, Mattituck, and Hashamomuk.³³ These locations at the head of the Peconic River gave the Corchougs access to both freshwater and saltwater landings.

In the 1640s, European settlers began to arrive in the area. European settlers from Southold purchased the main portion of Riverhead from the Corchougs Native Americans as part the "Aquebogue Purchase" in 1649³⁴ and by 1671, there was also a small settlement in Wading River.³⁵ Prior to the Revolutionary War, Colonial settlers established farms for both local consumption and trade. They also laid out roads (including King's Highway from Southold to Wading River by 1710), and established a County jail, courthouse, and seat in Riverhead. In 1792, Riverhead separated from Southold and gained its current status as the official county seat of Suffolk County.

Riverhead continued to grow into a thriving agricultural community in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, with cauliflower and duck production becoming economic staples. Beginning after the Civil War, eastern Long Island became a popular summer destination for families eager to escape New York City during the hottest months of the year. Tourism was facilitated by train service to the East End. Waves of immigrants including those from Ireland, eastern Europe (especially Poland and Ukraine), and Black migrants from the south, have influenced Riverhead's cultural identity and historical development.

Since World War II, Riverhead has evolved from a primarily agricultural community into a suburban area with residential and commercial development. Construction of the Long Island Expressway (LIE) made Riverhead easily accessible to the rest of the New York metropolitan region, facilitating car tourism, truck farming, and

³³ Hood, Peter. *A History of North Sea Beach Colony*; the Bicentennial Book Committee. *Riverhead Bicentennial Album*.

³⁴ History of Suffolk County, New York, 1.

³⁵ The Riverhead Story, 9; *Long Island, A History of Two Great Counties, Nassau and Suffolk*, 1949, 183-184.

new development pressures. Riverhead has remained the center of Long Island's agricultural industry and tourism has grown due to proximity to the Hamptons and the Long Island Wine Country.

Historic buildings, sites, structures, and landscapes help to establish the sense of place and community character that visitors and residents cherish. Historic landmarks and districts are designated at the local, state, and national level.

Local Landmarks

According to the most recent inventory updated in March 2023, Riverhead's Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) has officially designated 62 buildings and sites as Town Landmarks (two of which have been demolished or destroyed). See Figure 3.3-1. This inventory can be referred to in Table 3.3-1.

Local Historic Districts and Heritage Area

Riverhead has four designated local historic districts (see Figure 3.3-1). These historic districts include 373 qualifying structures. The Town has one locally designated heritage area. The historic districts and area are listed below. For more information, see Chapter 9 of the Draft 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update.

1. Downtown Riverhead Historic District
2. Jamesport Hamlet Historic District
3. South Jamesport Historic District
4. Wading River Historic District
5. Bell Town Heritage Area

State and National Register Individual Historic Landmarks

There are 12 State and National Register listed properties in Riverhead, listed below. For more information, see the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update.

1. United States Post Office-Riverhead, 23 West Second Street
2. Vail-Leavitt Music Hall, 18 Peconic Avenue
3. Hallock Homestead, 6038 Sound Avenue, Northville
4. Suffolk County Historical Society Building, 300 Main Street
5. Hallock-Bilunas Farmstead, 733 Herricks Lane, Northville
6. Jamesport Meeting House, 1590 Main Road, Jamesport
7. Benjamin King Woodhull House, 126 Sound Road, Wading River
8. Jedediah Hawkins House, 400 South Jamesport Avenue, Jamesport
9. Tuthill-Lapham House, 324 Sound Road, Wading River
10. Daniel and Henry Tuthill Farm Complex, 1146 Main Road, Aquebogue
11. Harrison Downs House & Farm, 5793 Sound Avenue, Northville
12. Wading River Radio Station, 408 North Side Road

Numerous eligible properties are also located within Riverhead; these properties are not included in this assessment and are available for review on the database maintained by New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYS OPRHP).

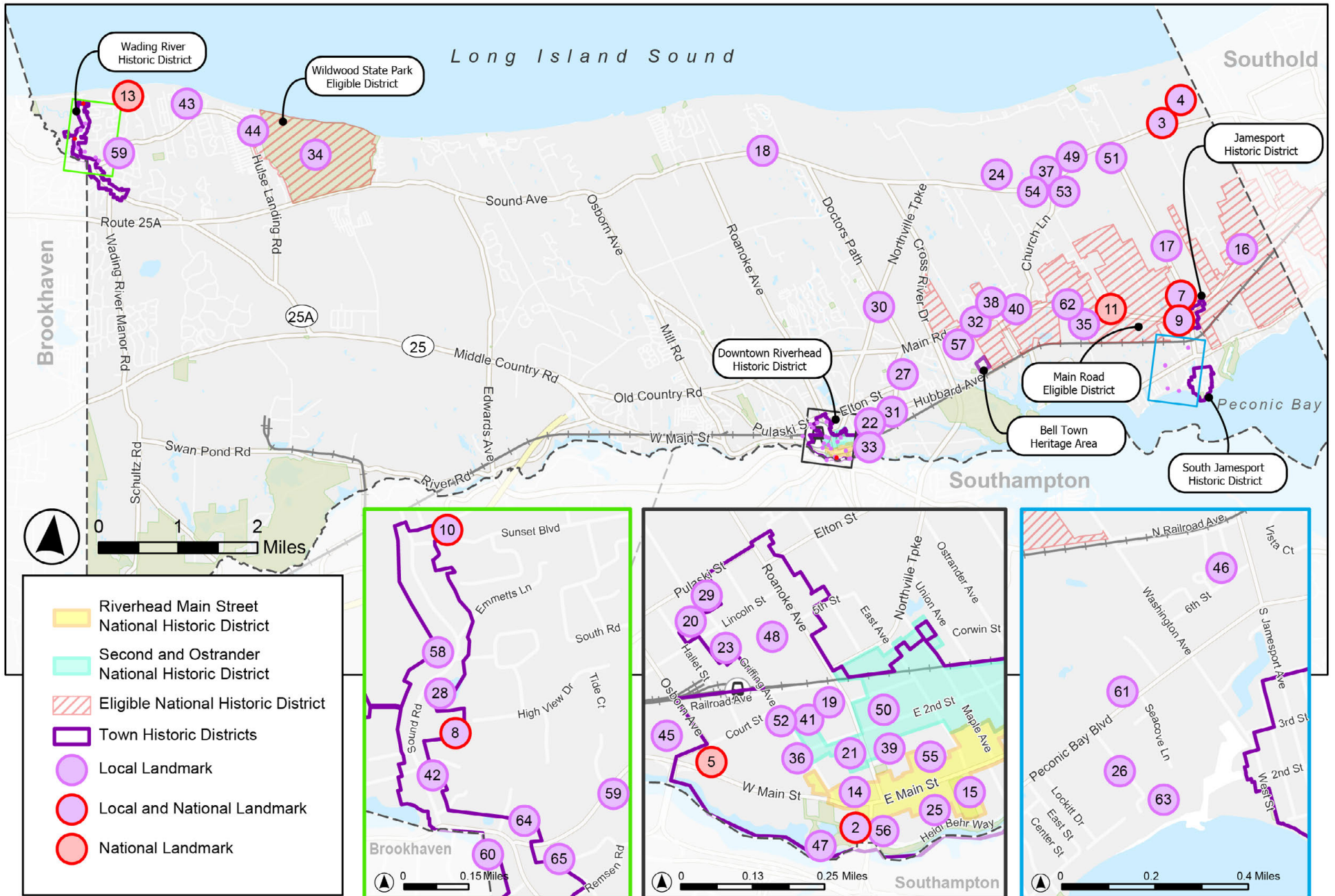


Table 3.3-1. Inventory of Local, State, and National Designated Landmarks in Riverhead

| Map ID | Landmark | Address | Built Date | Local Listing | National Listing |
|--------|--|----------------------------|---|---------------|------------------|
| 1 | United States Post Office-Riverhead | 23 W Second St | c. 1929 | N/A | 1989 |
| 2 | Vail-Leavitt Music Hall | 18 Peconic Ave | 1881 | 1979 | 1983 |
| 3 | Hallock Homestead | 6038 Sound Ave | c. 1765 and 19th century additions | 2005 | 1984 |
| 4 | Eugene Hallock House | 6142 Sound Ave | 1859 | 2005 | 1984 |
| 5 | Suffolk County Historical Society Building | 300 W Main St | 1930-1931 | N/A | 1994 |
| 6 | Hallock-Bilunas Farmstead | 733 Herricks Ln | 1880 house, late 19th - early 20th century outbuildings | N/A | 2003 |
| 7 | Jamesport Meeting House | 1590 Main Rd | 1731 | 1979 | 2009 |
| 8 | Benjamin King Woodhull House | 126 Sound Rd | mid-18th century, and enlarged circa 1843 | 1982 | 2008 |
| 9 | Jedediah Hawkins House | 400 S Jamesport Ave | 1864 | 2003 | 2008 |
| 10 | Tuthill-Lapham House (Friendly Hall) | 324 Sound Rd | c. 1820, and additions 1838, 1869, and the 1920s | 1982 | 2009 |
| 11 | Daniel and Henry Tuthill Farm Complex | 1146 Main Rd | c. 1890 | N/A | 2015 |
| 12 | Harrison Downs House & Farm | 5793 Sound Ave | c. 1874, early 20th century outbuildings | N/A | 2016 |
| 13 | Wading River Radio Station | 408 North Side Rd | 1912 | N/A | 2018 |
| 14 | Bank Building | 34-38-42 W Main St | 1892 | 1981 | NA |
| 15 | Benjamin House and Barn, Fresh Pond School House | 141 E Main St | c. 1860 1822 | 1976 | NA |
| 16 | Capt. Austin Penny House | 2014 Main Rd | c. 1872 | 2004 | NA |
| 17 | Captain Dimon House (Jamesport Manor) | 370 Manor Ln | Late 18th-Mid 19th Century, Rebuilt 2007 | 2000 | NA |
| 18 | Centerville Chapel | 3718 Sound Ave | 1888 | 1976 | NA |
| 19 | Charles Hallett House | 218 Griffing Ave | Mid-Late 19th Century | 1985 | NA |
| 20 | Conklin House | 216 Lincoln St | Late 19th Century | 1994 | NA |
| 21 | Corwin-Davis-McGrath House (Old Riverhead News Building) | 215 Roanoke Ave | Early-Mid 19th Century | 1983 | NA |
| 22 | Corwin-Terry House ("East Lawn") | 536-540 E Main St | 1855 | 1988 | NA |
| 23 | Corwin-Young House | 445 Griffing Ave | 1891 | unknown | NA |
| 24 | David Wells House | 5120 Sound Ave | c. 1790 | 1987 | NA |
| 25 | Davis-Corwin House | 133 E Main St | c. 1840 | 1976 | NA |
| 26 | District # 10 School | 86 Winds Way | 1872 | 2003 | NA |
| 27 | Elks Lodge | 1239 E Main St | 1921 | 2017 | NA |
| 28 | Ellsworth Tuthill House ("1812 House") | 144 Sound Rd | 1812 | 1982 | NA |
| 29 | Everett Conklin House | 206 Lincoln St | 1892 | unknown | NA |
| 30 | Fletcher Booker Homestead | 1185-87-89 Northville Tpke | 1939 | 2007 | NA |
| 31 | Granite Stone from "Octagon" Jail | 200 Howell Ave | 1854 | 1981 | NA |
| 32 | Griffing-Wells House | 396 Main Rd | 1758 | 2006 | NA |

| | | | | | |
|----|--|------------------------|-----------------------|---------|----|
| 33 | Howell House | 533 E Main St | 1929 | 2004 | NA |
| 34 | Irving Hulse House | 790 Hulse Landing Rd | 1822 | 1981 | NA |
| 35 | J. Victor Wilson Barn | 977 Main Rd | 1908 | 2017 | NA |
| 36 | Jeremiah Edwards House | 193 Griffing Ave | c. 1870 | 1976 | NA |
| 37 | John Luce House | 5298 Sound Ave | c. 1800 | 1988 | NA |
| 38 | Luther Moore house | 486 Main Rd | c. 1865 | 2007 | NA |
| 39 | Meyer House | 18 1st St | c. 1890 | unknown | NA |
| 40 | Modern Snack Bar Sign | 628 Main Rd | 1956 | 2007 | NA |
| 41 | Moore-Barnes House | 224 Griffing Ave | Mid-Late 19th Century | 1982 | NA |
| 42 | Oliver's Hill Cemetery | Sound Rd | 1696 | 2006 | NA |
| 43 | Paine Family House Site and Cemetery | 2730 N Wading River Rd | 18th Century | 2007 | NA |
| 44 | Paul Hulse House | 3060 N Wading River Rd | c. 1812 | 1983 | NA |
| 45 | Perkins Carriage House (a.k.a., the Yellow Barn) | 330 Court St | c. 1880 | 2017 | NA |
| 46 | Peters-Kimmel Cottage | 11 Kimmel Ln | 1911 | 2011 | NA |
| 47 | Pump House | 73-79 Peconic Ave | pre-1900 | 1979 | NA |
| NA | Reeve/Corwin House (Roswell Corwin)* | Main Rd | c. 1700 | 1977 | NA |
| 48 | Roanoke Avenue School | 573 Roanoke Ave | 1924 | 2005 | NA |
| 49 | Salem Wells House | 5412 Sound Ave | c. 1760 | 1988 | NA |
| 50 | Second Street Fire House | 24 E Second St | 1931 | 2017 | NA |
| 51 | Sheldon Downs House & District #11 School | 941 Manor Ln | 1860 & 1834 | unknown | NA |
| 52 | Slade-Hallett House | 214 Griffing Ave | Mid-Late 19th Century | 1982 | NA |
| 53 | Sound Avenue Congregational Church | 5267 Sound Ave | 1904 | 1981 | NA |
| 54 | Sound Avenue Hall | 5268 Sound Ave | 1831 | 1981 | NA |
| 55 | Suffolk Theater | 118 E Main St | 1933 | 2004 | NA |
| 56 | Taft Candy Store | 48-52 Peconic Ave | 1898 | 1988 | NA |
| 57 | The Witch's Hat | 347 Main Rd | c. 1927 | 1987 | NA |
| 58 | Tuthill-Davis House | 179 Sound Rd | c. 1790 | 1982 | NA |
| 59 | Wading River Cemetery | 2289 N Wading River Rd | 1849 | 2006 | NA |
| 60 | Wading River Congregational Church | 2057-2059 N Country Rd | 1837 | 1981 | NA |
| 61 | Washington Young House | 890 Peconic Bay Blvd | c. 1880 | 2005 | NA |
| 62 | Wells-Hutchinson House | 939 Main Rd | c. 1770 | 1988 | NA |
| 63 | Wilbur-Fanning House | 73 Winds Way | c. 1790/1836 | 1982 | NA |
| 64 | Zophar Miller Cottage | 2078 N Wading River Rd | 1832 | 1982 | NA |
| 65 | Zophar Miller Homestead | 2098 N Wading River Rd | 1799 | 1982 | NA |

*Demolished

Sources: Riverhead Landmarks Commission, 2023; New York State Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHS) Cultural Resource Information System (CRIS); National Register of Historic Places, 2023

State and National Register Historic Districts

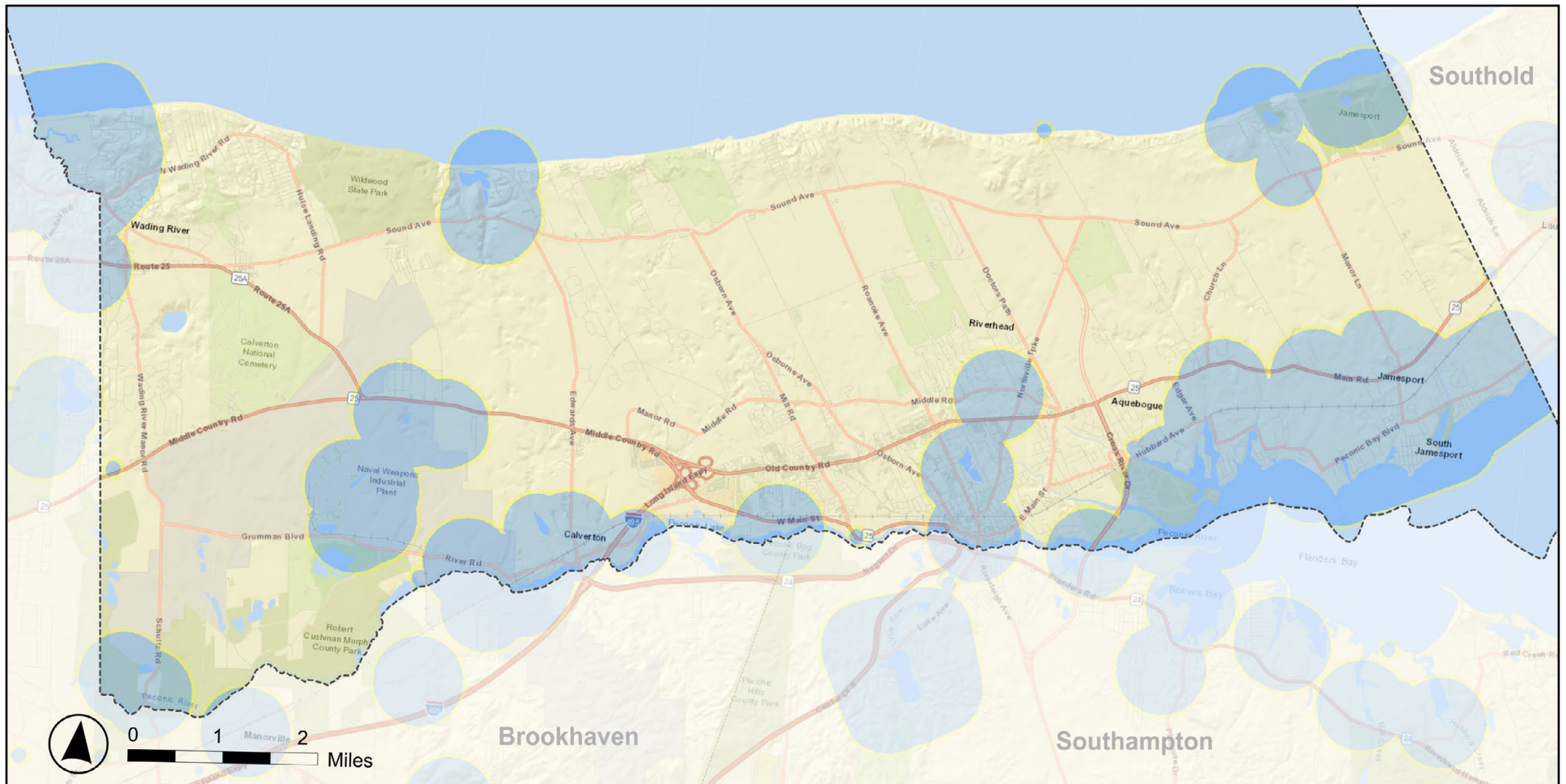
Two historic districts in the Town are listed on the State and National Register of Historic Places, and two are determined eligible for listing. National Register districts in Riverhead include approximately 175 contributing resources.

- **Riverhead Main Street Historic District (listed):** Riverhead Main Street Historic District includes 61 properties (contributing and non-contributing) along Main Street, between Griffing and Union Avenues. The historic district covers the densest portion of the commercial corridor and is characterized by two- to four-story commercial buildings with ground-floor storefronts.
- **Second and Ostrander Historic District (listed):** The Second and Ostrander Historic District includes 147 properties (129 contributing and 18 non-contributing) in a residential area immediately north of the downtown commercial corridor. Developed from 1837 to 1940, the area was home to both wealthy and working-class residents and it now includes a variety of building styles and sizes.
- **Main Road Historic District (eligible):** Main Road Historic District includes 273 properties along a 6-mile segment of the semi-rural Main Road, or NYS Route 25, in Aquebogue, Jamesport, and Laurel, including parts of Southold Town in the hamlet of Laurel. The historic district is determined State and National Register eligible due to its associations with the region's agricultural and social history.
- **Wildwood State Park Historic District (eligible):** The 600-acre Wildwood State Park is located in the western portion of Riverhead and is determined State and National Register eligible, for its intact landscape design and park architecture and for its associations with the early development of Wading River. A portion of Wildwood was originally owned by Ronald Mitchell, who had planned on building a private estate there. Another section (known as the Driftwood Manor) was owned by Joseph Robin. The only original portion of the manor that still stands today is the Carriage House, located on the eastern boundary of the park.

Archaeological Sites

Due to its location along the Peconic River and Flanders Bay, Riverhead was — in pre-Colonial times — an attractive fishing, hunting, and gathering area for Native Americans. Many archeological sites have been identified since the 19th century and are recorded by the NYS OPRHP. The most significant archeological site in Riverhead may be the 3,000-year-old Native American burial site at Sharper's Hill in Jamesport. Figure 3.3-2 below presents buffer areas around recorded archaeological resource as identified by the SHPO's Cultural Resource Information System (CRIS) mapper³⁶. Locations within these areas may not be archaeologically sensitive, and locations outside these areas may be archaeologically sensitive; however, these areas are suggestive of areas that could have potential for archeological sensitivity.

³⁶ <https://parks.ny.gov/shpo/online-tools/cris/>



 Archaeological Buffer Areas

Historic Property Watch List

The LPC maintains a “Watch List” of threatened buildings to encourage their restoration. Several buildings previously on the list have been restored, in part as the result of LPC efforts. The current watch list consists of the following properties:

- 178 Main Road (corner of Route 105)
- 1117 Main Road (Leslie Alexander)
- 57 South Jamesport Avenue (Albert Young House)
- 1368 Sound Avenue (Irving Hulse House)
- 1997 Main Road, Laurel (AJG13 LLC)
- 1129 West Main Street, Perkins Generating Plant
- 1884 Sound Avenue
- 29 East Second Street
- 214 Griffing Avenue (Town-owned)

3.3.1.2. Scenic Resources

Riverhead’s scenic character helps maintain the Town’s economic vitality and overall quality-of-life. The following scenic resources within Riverhead include natural and built features that are distinctive and integral to the community’s unique character.

Shorelines, Rivers, Streams, Ponds, and Wetlands

Views of and access to water bodies are important in defining Riverhead as a coastal community. Major water bodies and their shorelines or banks serve as scenic vistas, including Long Island Sound, Flanders Bay, Great Peconic Bay, and the Peconic River. The picturesque bluffs along Long Island Sound are part of the natural landscape and give a unique feeling to the northern part of Riverhead.

The Peconic River is a major scenic feature in Riverhead's landscape. It contributes to the character of the Pine Barrens region as well as downtown Riverhead, and the Town's name and identity is closely tied to the Peconic. Under New York State's Wild, Scenic, and Recreational Rivers Act (WSRR), portions of the Peconic River in Riverhead are designated as "scenic," "recreational," and "community." More information about WSRR designations and a map are provided in Chapter 3.6 of the DGEIS. Most new development along the riverfront is strictly limited, but recreational trails and paths are permitted.

Vegetation

Wooded areas, such as the Pine Barrens, contribute to the Town’s natural character. There are mature trees throughout Riverhead, including notable stands along Sound Avenue. Areas with significant expanses of native vegetation can be found in woodlands, wetlands, and meadows. Native plants are valuable not only from an ecological point of view but also as historic elements of the Town's landscape.

Agricultural Landscapes

Agricultural lands include cultivated fields, vineyards and orchards, pastures, greenhouses, barns and other farm structures, and farm stands. These areas can be found throughout Riverhead; however, the main farming belt is within the APZ zone in the central part of Town between Sound Avenue and Middle Road. Agricultural lands are also commonly found outside of this “belt” north of Sound Avenue within the RA-80 zone and south of Route 25 in Aquebogue and Jamesport within the RB-80 zone. Views of working agricultural land are integral to

Riverhead's rural identity and play an important role in attracting tourists. The aesthetic value of these views needs to be balanced with the economic values of working farms.

Scenic and Historic Corridors

Scenic corridors are roads, streams, trails, and other linear paths that are characterized by an exceptional visual quality along the sides of the corridor. Many factors may contribute to their visual quality: views of agricultural landscapes; forested tree cover; the presence of historical sites; and vistas of bluffs, wetlands, water bodies, or other natural features. These corridors attract visitors for driving, walking, biking, or traveling through Riverhead's scenic landscape. These corridors are the vantage points from which most people — residents and visitors alike — experience Riverhead's rural landscape.

In 1975, in honor of the Bicentennial and Long Island's role in the American Revolution, the New York State Assembly and the Riverhead Town Board established the Sound Avenue Scenic and Historic Corridor. However, this State designation does not include any meaningful regulatory protection. According to the LPC, nearly 40% of the 90-plus historic resources identified in a 1975 survey have been demolished or moved. Moreover, the LPC believes that a new survey would likely identify many more historic structures overlooked in that early survey which focused mainly on pre-1900 homes, not early 20th century homes and not agricultural buildings.

Scenic and Historic Corridors are not defined in the Town Code, and their preservation relies on other policies including zoning, landmark and historic district designations, and TDR. Following the adoption of the 2003 Comprehensive Plan, the Town added the Rural Corridor (RLC) zoning district, the Agriculture Protection Zone (APZ), and the Residence A-80 (RA80) zone to the Town code and map. Among their other purposes, these districts help to preserve vistas and the Town's rural character. RLC provides some restrictions along Route 25, and RA80 specifically provides protections for the Sound Avenue Corridor. The APZ and RA80 zones limit development density and play essential roles in the TDR program, with the intent of preserving open space and agriculture.

Historic Structures and Sites

Older homes, barns, and churches, whether found on individual sites or in small clusters, can contribute to scenic views, particularly in rural areas and along scenic corridors. For example, a historic home or church situated at a crossroads can endow that place with a special character. An old farmhouse, cemetery, or stone wall adds to the rural character of a farm as much as the presence of cultivated fields or grazing farm animals.

3.3.2. Potential Impacts

This section provides an analysis of the potential impacts that could occur as a result of the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan Update.

3.3.2.1. Historic Resources

Comprehensive Plan Policies

It is anticipated that no significant adverse impacts are likely to occur as a result of the Proposed Action on the historic resources of Riverhead. Chapter 9 of the Comprehensive Plan provides several recommendations which would improve historic resource protection methods, including the following (note – the following goals and recommendations follow the numbering contained in the Comprehensive Plan):

Goal 1: Continue to identify, document, and promote public awareness of the town's historic resources.

This goal identifies measures, many of which would require collaboration with the LPC, Suffolk County Historical Society, and other preservation organizations. This collaborative effort should involve targeted educational initiatives, public outreach, and interpretative signage to ensure Riverhead's rich history remains celebrated and integrated into the community's identity. Updating the comprehensive survey of historic resources, including individual buildings, groups of buildings, and sites, would supplement the list of officially designated town landmarks, maintaining a comprehensive inventory for preservation efforts.

An integrated public signage program is recommended to enhance recognition and appreciation of historic sites and structures throughout Riverhead. Providing educational materials and technical assistance to historic and designated landmark property owners would support efforts to maintain and preserve these properties correctly. This support includes encouraging property owners to consider designation on local, state, and national registers, accessing funding, tax incentives, and educational resources for property maintenance.

These recommendations aim to celebrate and preserve Riverhead's rich history. No potential negative environmental impacts were identified.

Goal 2. Protect scenic resources and views.

A priority within this goal is to identify locations with scenic resources and significant views throughout the town through a comprehensive study initiated by the Town Board and a designated committee. This study would help define scenic resources and develop mechanisms for their preservation, including natural features, agricultural lands, and open spaces. Secondly, the plan emphasizes the importance of integrating scenic preservation into the Town Code and site plan review processes. This involves strengthening zoning regulations, implementing design guidelines to protect views, and considering scenic qualities during subdivision reviews, particularly for developments along key corridors like Sound Avenue.

These recommendations are not anticipated to have negative impacts on historic resources due to their focus on thoughtful land-use policies and responsible development practices.

Goal 3. Ensure that design of new development is compatible with its surroundings and scenic and historic resources.

One of the priority recommendations within this goal is to adopt the Downtown Pattern Book into the zoning code, providing clear guidance for developers, architects, and the community to design buildings that preserve and enhance the unique character of the downtown district. Secondly, the plan proposes developing design standards for historic hamlet center areas to ensure any development aligns with the area's scenic and historic characteristics. These guidelines would prioritize compatibility in scale, architectural design, and scenic vistas, requiring collaboration among residents, stakeholders, design professionals, and Town officials.

Moreover, the plan recommends defining terms related to massing, size, and building arrangement in design regulations, ensuring clarity and consistency in development outcomes. It also suggests establishing design standards and guidelines for subdivisions and site plans to protect scenic views and historic resources, creating predictability for applicants, and clarifying the focus of review boards. Additionally, the plan advocates for improved coordination between the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) and Architectural Review Board (ARB) review processes by having a common member, promoting joint meetings for major projects in historic districts and leveraging expertise from relevant town departments to inform decision-making.

These recommendations are not anticipated to have negative impacts on historic resources due to their emphasis on sustainable design practices and preservation of historic neighborhood fabric. By encouraging thoughtful site planning and architectural diversity, new development is envisioned to enhance, rather than detract from, Riverhead's distinctive charm. The proposed design standards for historic areas prioritize compatibility with scenic vistas and architectural design, ensuring that development respects the natural and cultural landscapes.

Goal 4. Protect historic resources from destruction or neglect and encourage the restoration and adaptive reuse of historic structures.

Robust preservation policies and regulations are recommended to safeguard historic structures, ensuring their integral role in the town's cultural fabric. Additionally, adaptive reuse is highlighted as a key strategy, not only preserving architectural integrity but also contributing to economic revitalization. The plan proposes exploring incentive programs, streamlined approval processes, and collaboration with developers to foster responsible and innovative repurposing of historic properties, striking a harmonious balance between preservation and progress.

To effectively achieve preservation goals, the plan recommends maintaining the watch list and map of buildings with potential for landmark preservation that have not been designated. This watch list, maintained by the LPC, aims to encourage restoration efforts and prevent the destruction of threatened buildings. The plan suggests referring alteration, construction, and demolition permit applications for watch list resources to the LPC for recommendation. The Building Department should use NYSHPO resources, such as CRIS, and consult with the Planning Department to know the designation status of structures. Additionally, proposed measures to prevent demolition of historic structures include requiring referral of demolition permit applications to the LPC for review, particularly for structures over 75 years old and those on the watch list. Coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is also emphasized to evaluate properties designated or eligible for landmark designation before issuance of demolition permits.

These recommendations are not anticipated to have negative impacts on historic resources as they focus primarily on preserving existing structures rather than promoting new construction. By preventing demolition of historic buildings and encouraging adaptive reuse, the plan aims to minimize environmental impacts associated with new development. Additionally, the plan's emphasis on coordination with SHPO ensures that evaluation of properties for demolition considers potential environmental impacts, further mitigating adverse effects on the environment.

Discussion of Historic Resource Recommendations Impacts

Through a detailed focus on the preservation and promotion of Riverhead's historic heritage, the Comprehensive Plan aims to minimize adverse environmental impacts by predominantly emphasizing the conservation of existing structures and landscapes. Efforts to identify, document, and raise awareness of historic resources involve collaboration with local stakeholders, fostering community engagement, developing integrated public signage programs and providing educational materials.

Moreover, the plan's emphasis on ensuring compatibility of new developments with surroundings and historic resources aligns with principles of sustainable development, fostering responsible growth without compromising environmental integrity. Measures to protect historic resources from destruction or neglect, coupled with incentives for adaptive reuse, promote economic revitalization without necessitating large-scale environmental interventions. By establishing a regulatory framework for preservation and facilitating access to funding and resources, the plan enables proactive conservation efforts while mitigating potential environmental impacts associated with new development initiatives.

The Downtown Pattern Book is a comprehensive guide for developers, architects, and the community, offering clear directives on how to design buildings that both preserve and enhance the distinctive character of the downtown. This document outlines principles for proper building siting and massing, the enhancement of public spaces, and policy recommendations related to resilience and adaptability. The Pattern Book helps minimize visual disruptions and maintains the overall scenic quality of Riverhead's downtown. The Pattern Book's emphasis on enhancing the public realm and promoting resiliency can contribute to environmental sustainability efforts. For instance, incorporating design elements that prioritize factors like flood mitigation

and sustainable transportation options can help create a more environmentally resilient community. While the Downtown Pattern Book is already being used, it would continue to ensure that design of new development is compatible with its surroundings and scenic and historic resources by being adopted into the Town's zoning code.

The Plan proposes the development of pattern books for Main Road, Sound Avenue, Jamesport, Aquebogue, Polish Town, and other areas. These design guidelines would be intended to guide future development so that it is more compatible with existing and historical development patterns. Historic districts and sites would be considered as part of these studies. Further, as part of the SEQR process, the Town requested a review of the draft Comprehensive Plan from OPRHP's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to determine if the Proposed Action would have an impact on the Town's historic resources. By correspondence dated February 3, 2024, SHPO recognized that historic resources have been appropriately acknowledged and considered in the Comprehensive Plan (See DGEIS Appendix 3). No specific concerns were identified.

The impacts from the Comprehensive Plan's historic resources recommendations are anticipated to have a beneficial impact on historic resource protection and would not constitute significant adverse environmental impacts for the purposes of SEQR.

Discussion of Impacts from Recommended Rezoning Areas

According to OPRHP, several State/National Historic Resources listed or eligible for listing have been inventoried within the boundaries of and within a 500 foot buffer from recommended rezoning areas associated with the Proposed Action. Several recommended rezoning areas are also located on or within 500 feet of a potential site on the Town Historic Register Sites, as shown in Figure 3.3-1.

The Proposed Action includes the creation of sending areas in RA-80 and RB-80 zones. These areas contain several historic resources. This action would have a positive impact by providing property owners with an alternative option for preserving their historic properties while still allowing for some level of development potential. This mechanism effectively reduces development pressure on historic properties within the sending area. By designating areas with significant historic resources as sending areas, property owners are incentivized to transfer development rights to designated receiving areas, where development is more suitable or desired.

The proposed change to require cluster development for major subdivisions on large parcels in APZ, RA-80, RB-80, and HR would also have a positive impact on historic resources. The Planning Board should also be allowed to request a cluster development alternative in RA₄₀ and RB₄₀. Cluster development requirements can help preserve historic resources by encouraging the consolidation of built structures into smaller, more compact areas while leaving larger portions of the land undeveloped or in its natural state. This approach allows for the preservation of scenic vistas, natural features, and open spaces that contribute to the aesthetic appeal of the area and do not unduly impact historic resources.

The proposed TDR changes in the Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area Overlay District would allow for a small amount of additional residential density with the use of TDR credits. This overlay district is within the Downtown Riverhead Historic District, which includes 219 resources. The local district encompasses the State and National Register of Historic Places Main Street Historic District. The RRA-OD district is nearly completely developed and remaining sites identified as opportunities have been previously developed or disturbed. It is therefore unlikely that any archeological artifacts remain within this area. However, development of properties within the archeologically sensitive areas may require the preparation of a Phase IA Archeological Survey Report and if necessary a Phase IB Cultural Resources Inventory.

As identified in Figure 3.3-2, portions of the Recommended Rezoning Areas are located within archaeological buffer areas as mapped by SHPO. Several of the Recommended Rezoning Areas, including the Assisted Living

Overlay Zone, RRA-OD, CRC, and PRC, are in developed settings, in areas that have already been significantly disturbed by past land development, particularly in the area surrounding downtown Riverhead and in the proposed CI district. This disturbance would have significantly affected the integrity of any archeological resources within a few feet of the surface, including destroying and/or displacing any prehistoric archeological resources that may have once existed in this area prior to development and redevelopment as downtown. Some of the proposed RA-80 and RB-80 sending districts intersect with archeological buffer areas. Mapping these areas as TDR sending districts would have a positive impact by providing property owners with an alternative option for preserving their properties while still allowing for some level of development potential. This mechanism effectively reduces development pressure on these properties within the sending are and is more protective of any potential archeological resources than existing zoning.

Any future site-specific development would be required to perform an independent examination of potential impacts on historic and archaeological resources as part of project approvals and site-specific review under SEQR. If state approvals are needed, an applicant for development in these areas would be required to consult with SHPO to determine appropriate further studies and mitigation measures as applicable. Town review and consideration of these requirements during site specific review would also occur. This is currently required for development in these areas under existing zoning.

The surrounding area is largely developed or has development projects in the pipeline. Allowing for additional development would help to create a more cohesive and visually appealing built environment, consistent with the historic built environment. Potential impacts on historic resources would also be mitigated by the use of TDR credits, which would be required for any increases in residential density. As shown in the build out analysis, this change has the potential to add a maximum of 30 new units to the downtown area, while utilizing 10 TDR credits. Any small potential impact to scenic resources would be mitigated by the preservation of other lands which are sensitive with regard to historic resources.

As noted above, the Town requested a review of the draft Comprehensive Plan from SHPO to determine if the Proposed Action would have an impact on the Town's historic resources. By correspondence dated February 3, 2024, SHPO recognized that historic resources have been appropriately acknowledged and considered in the Comprehensive Plan (See DGEIS Appendix 3). No specific concerns were identified.

3.3.2.2. Scenic Resources

According to the NYSDEC Assessing and Mitigating Visual and Aesthetic Impacts policy, the focus of a visual/scenic resources assessment should be the potential for significant impairment of visual or aesthetic quality of resources and the first objective should be to minimize the potential for impacts through sensitive treatment of resources or designing/dimensioning that avoids potential significant impacts. The Comprehensive Plan promotes the protection of visual resources through policies that embrace conservation, preservation of historic resources, and the expansion and protection of parks and trails. In siting the recommended rezonings, the Town chose to focus largely on previously developed commercial or industrial areas that are not near the visual resources identified in Section 3.3.1. Further, the proposed changes do not starkly contrast with the existing built nature of the proposed rezoning areas. Thus, inherent traits of the plan and envisioned rezoning development program are consistent with the NYSDEC policy objectives with respect to protection of visual resources.

Comprehensive Plan Policies

The Comprehensive Plan seeks to preserve and promote Riverhead's scenic resources. The Comprehensive Plan includes the following goals and recommendations related to scenic resources (note – the following goals and recommendations follow the numbering contained in the Comprehensive Plan):

Goal 1: Continue to identify, document, and promote public awareness of the town's historic resources.

This goal identifies measures, many of which would require collaboration with the LPC, Suffolk County Historical Society, and other preservation organizations. This collaborative effort should involve targeted educational initiatives, public outreach, and interpretative signage to ensure Riverhead's rich history remains celebrated and integrated into the community's identity. Updating the comprehensive survey of historic resources, including individual buildings, groups of buildings, and sites, would supplement the list of officially designated town landmarks, maintaining a comprehensive inventory for preservation efforts.

An integrated public signage program is recommended to enhance recognition and appreciation of historic sites and structures throughout Riverhead. Providing educational materials and technical assistance to historic and designated landmark property owners would support efforts to maintain and preserve these properties correctly. These recommendations aim to celebrate and preserve Riverhead's rich history. No potential negative impacts on scenic resources were identified.

Goal 2. Protect scenic resources and views.

A priority within this goal is to identify locations with scenic resources and significant views throughout the town through a comprehensive study initiated by the Town Board and a designated committee. This study would help define scenic resources and develop mechanisms for their preservation, including natural features, agricultural lands, and open spaces. Secondly, the plan emphasizes the importance of integrating scenic preservation into the Town Code and site plan review processes. This involves strengthening zoning regulations, implementing design guidelines to protect views, and considering scenic qualities during subdivision reviews, particularly for developments along key corridors like Sound Avenue. Furthermore, the Comprehensive Plan advocates for coordination between scenic initiatives and other community enhancement programs. Additionally, the plan underscores the importance of enforcing exterior lighting code violations to preserve Riverhead's rural character and night sky visibility.

These recommendations are anticipated to have minimal to no negative environmental impacts on scenic resources due to their focus on thoughtful land-use policies and responsible development practices. By identifying scenic resources and significant views and integrating protective measures into development regulations, the plan aims to strike a balance between growth and preservation while minimizing adverse ecological effects. Additionally, the coordination of scenic preservation initiatives with other community enhancement programs ensures a holistic approach to environmental stewardship.

Goal 3. Ensure that design of new development is compatible with its surroundings and scenic and historic resources.

One of the priority recommendations within this goal is to adopt the Downtown Pattern Book into the zoning code, providing clear guidance for developers, architects, and the community to design buildings that preserve and enhance the unique character of the downtown. Secondly, the plan proposes developing design standards for historic hamlet center areas to ensure any development aligns with the area's scenic and historic characteristics. These guidelines would prioritize compatibility in scale, architectural heritage, and scenic vistas, requiring collaboration among residents, stakeholders, design professionals, and Town officials. Additionally, the plan advocates for improved coordination between the Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) and Architectural Review Board (ARB) review processes by having a common member, promoting joint meetings for major projects in historic districts, and leveraging expertise from relevant Town departments to inform decision-making.

These recommendations are not anticipated to have negative environmental impacts due to their emphasis on sustainable design practices and building design that is complementary to the historic built environment. The

proposed design standards for historic areas prioritize compatibility with scenic vistas and architectural design, ensuring that development respects the natural and cultural landscapes.

Goal 4. Protect historic resources from destruction or neglect and encourage the restoration and adaptive reuse of historic structures.

The plan advocates for robust preservation policies to safeguard historic structures and promote their importance in the town's cultural identity. It highlights adaptive reuse as a strategy to preserve architectural integrity while fostering economic revitalization. Additionally, the plan proposes the maintenance of the watch list and map of buildings with potential for landmark preservation, aiming to encourage restoration efforts and prevent demolition. Measures to prevent demolition of historic structures include referral of permit applications to the LPC for review, particularly for buildings over 75 years old, with coordination emphasized with the State Historic Preservation Office for evaluation before demolition permits are issued.

These recommendations are not anticipated to have negative impacts on scenic resources as they focus primarily on preserving existing structures rather than promoting new construction. By preventing demolition of historic buildings and encouraging adaptive reuse, the plan aims to minimize environmental impacts associated with new development. Additionally, the plan's emphasis on coordination with the SHPO ensures that evaluation of properties for demolition considers potential environmental impacts, further mitigating adverse effects on the environment.

Discussion of Scenic Resource Recommendations Impacts

A fundamental goal of this comprehensive plan is to proactively protect and enhance Riverhead's scenic resources and views. The Comprehensive Plan recommendations comprehensively address Riverhead's commitment to preserving its scenic vistas and historic heritage, proposing measures to protect and enhance these assets while ensuring sustainable development and economic vitality for residents and visitors alike. While the Town's existing visual and aesthetic character would not be modified as a direct result of the Comprehensive Plan, this cohesive strategy would help to guide future Town actions in a manner that protects and enhances scenic and historic resources, resulting in an overall benefit to aesthetic conditions.

The Comprehensive Plan recommendations address the need to protect scenic resources and views. Undertaking a study to identify scenic resources and significant views, as proposed in the Plan, may lead to increased awareness and appreciation of these assets. However, the identification and documentation process could potentially reveal vulnerabilities or areas of concern, prompting the need for more stringent regulations or development restrictions in certain locations.

Continuing to protect scenic corridors through zoning regulations may enhance the visual appeal of these areas and safeguard their ecological integrity. Nevertheless, stricter zoning requirements could potentially limit development opportunities or impose additional costs on landowners seeking to develop or modify their properties. If the zoning is amended in the future, it would be subject to site specific review by SEQR.

The Plan proposes the development of pattern books for Main Road, Sound Avenue, Jamesport, Aquebogue, Polish Town, and other areas. These design guidelines would be intended to guide future development so that it is more compatible with existing development patterns. These studies would create more predictability for applicants, by clarifying appropriate design treatments deemed as appropriate by the community.

The Plan also proposes the creation of design guidance for the Route 58 corridor, which plays a crucial role in shaping Riverhead's image and serves as a gateway for residents and visitors alike. Design guidelines would provide a clear and cohesive vision for the corridor's development, promoting a harmonious and attractive streetscape that aligns with the Town's character and values. The guidelines would promote the use of landscaping to soften the built environment, enhance walkability, and contribute to a more inviting atmosphere. They would also address

parking lot design to minimize the visual impact of large parking areas. The impacts from the Comprehensive Plan's scenic resources recommendations are generally accepted as beneficial for the community and would not constitute significant adverse environmental impacts for the purposes of SEQR.

Recommended Rezoning Areas

This section provides a general assessment of how the recommended rezonings and zoning ordinance modifications could impact the visual resources identified in this chapter. SEQR law specifies that an action may have a significant impact on the environment when it causes "...impairment of the character or quality of important...aesthetic resources..." (617.7(c)(1)(v)). Visual resources may be negatively impacted when an action:

- Clears vegetation that contributed to natural aesthetic character of an area.
- Permits buildings of a significantly larger size than existing development.
- Eliminates or reduces buffers between different use types.
- Neglects the street interface between commercial developments and the public.
- Causes unnecessary light pollution by utilizing lighting that exceeds the needs of the site

New Calverton Industrial District (CI) for IND A and IND C areas in Calverton (Zoning Change and TDR Map Change):

The Proposed Action for this area would largely reduce the allowable built density in these industrial areas and increase setbacks. It would also restrict some of the heavier industrial uses allowed in IND A but not IND C. Both of these changes would have a positive impact on scenic resources.

The new zoning district would have a reduced floor area ratio (FAR) from 0.4 which is currently permitted. FAR is anticipated to be reduced to 0.25 with the potential to increase to 0.3 with the use of TDR credits. Reducing the FAR would help to encourage more efficient and compact developments with more land utilized for setbacks and open space. As shown in the build-out analysis, this decrease in FAR is anticipated to result in a decrease of 167,000-250,000 square feet (SF) of industrial development potential under the Future with the Proposed Action Scenario, as compared to the Future without Action Scenario over the next 10 years. This district also provides for the use of TDR credits, which would help to preserve scenic resources in more sensitive areas of the town.

For areas currently in IND C, the front yard setback would be increased from 30 feet to 100 feet. Several other zoning changes are proposed which would serve to limit potential development such as reductions in allowable impervious coverage, inclusion of a non-disturbance buffer, and removal of some heavy industrial uses. These changes are all anticipated to have a positive impact on the scenic quality.

The proposed zoning would allow for a slight increase in building height, potentially from 30 feet to 40 feet, with the use of TDR credits. This change was made to allow for the development of modern industrial and office spaces which require slightly taller buildings. In order to address the potential for visual impacts, this district is proposed to include a pyramid height law, which limits the scale of a building as it approaches property lines. Figure 3.3-3 shows a pyramid slope of 0.3. In this scenario, a 40-foot-tall building would need to be set back 133 feet. As can be seen in the figure, the visual height of this setback building would be less imposing than the height of a single-family building in the Town's most restrictive residential district. TDR credits would also be required to achieve heights over 30 feet to a maximum of 40 feet (either for single story or 2+ story buildings that exceed 30 feet). This provision would help protect scenic resources in the Town's TDR sending districts.

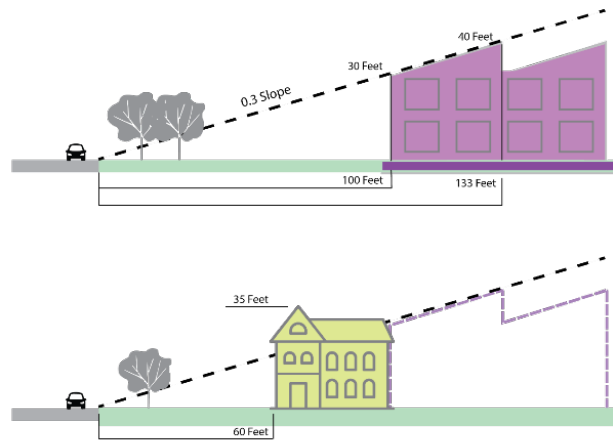


Figure 3.3-3. Pyramid Law Example

It is recommended that this district include a non-disturbance buffer on road fronting properties. This would be a 50-foot transition yard from the property line that is landscaped apart from signs, lighting, a driveway, and sidewalks. Parking areas should not be located within this transition yard.

In summary, most of the zoning recommendations are beneficial with regard to scenic resources. While some additional height is allowed, additional setbacks are provided to mitigate any impacts on scenic quality. For individual projects, the Town would have an opportunity to minimize potential for visual or aesthetic impacts during the site plan review process and subsequent site-specific review under SEQR.

Change scattered IND A, IND B, and IND C sites to LI (Zoning Change and TDR Map Change):

The Proposed Action for this area would rezone many of the industrial areas in more developed portions of the Town to Light Industrial (LI). With regard to visual impacts, this zoning change would be a positive impact to surrounding areas, as it provides for industrial uses that are compatible in a more developed context. In LI, industrial uses are generally required to be within enclosed buildings. The zoning change would also reduce the overall bulk of potential buildings. FAR would be reduced from 0.4 to 0.25 with the potential to increase to 0.3 with the use of TDR credits.

The LI district currently provides slightly taller buildings (35 feet / 2 stories) than what is permitted in existing IND A, B, and C districts (30 feet). Allowing for 2-story buildings with TDR promotes more efficient and compact developments with more land utilized for setbacks and open space, thereby helping to mitigate visual impacts. See Figure 3.3-4.

For individual projects, the Town would have an opportunity to minimize potential for visual or aesthetic impacts during the site plan review process and site-specific review under SEQR. The Plan also recommends that guidelines be developed for LI to ensure future development incorporates elements that harmonize with the built environment and limits visual impacts from roads, such as facades, materials, and landscaping.

Figure 3.3-4. Example of light industrial buildings that are compatible with surrounding agricultural landscape



Assisted Living Overlay Zone (Zoning Change and TDR Map Change):

The Assisted Living Overlay Zone is proposed to provide for specialized care and support services for seniors, allowing them to age in place with dignity and comfort. As discussed in the TDR Recommendations, these uses are proposed to be allowed in parts of Route 58 near the Peconic Bay Medical Center. This is an area that has existing infrastructure to accommodate new development. This zoning change would provide for a mix of 1-, 2-, and 3-story buildings in a compact campus like environment that are built close together, so they are easier to access for pedestrians.

The visual quality of this thoroughfare can vary along its length, with sections characterized by commercial developments, signage, and parking lots. While efforts to enhance streetscaping and landscaping have been made in some areas, Route 58 still faces challenges in maintaining a cohesive visual aesthetic due to its commercial nature and ongoing development. It is anticipated that if properly designed, new development could help to improve the visual quality of the corridor. For individual projects, the Town would have an opportunity to minimize potential for visual or aesthetic impacts during the site plan review process.

Figure 3.3-5, below provides a development scenario where assisted living uses, with the use of TDR credits, could achieve a 0.75 FAR at 30% building coverage. In the scenario shown below, on a 3.6 acre lot, a developer could build a mix of 2- and 3- story buildings, capped at 108 units. The extra square footage required would require the use of 27 TDR credits. This provision would help protect scenic resources in the Town's TDR sending districts.

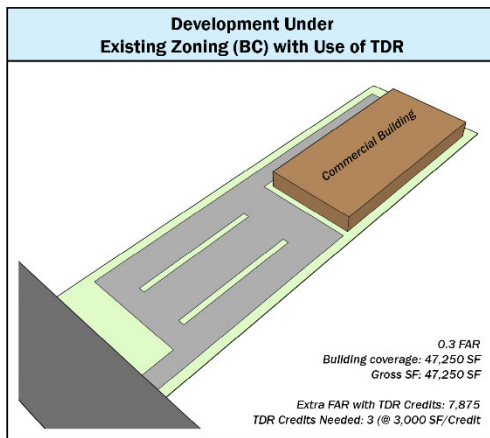
Figure 3.3-5. Assisted Living Overlay Development Scenario

Assisted Living Overlay - Development Scenario with Proposed Zoning Changes



3.6 acre area (2 parcels) in BC (225' x 700')

| Dimensional Regulations | Existing BC Zoning | | Proposed Assisted Living Overlay + TDR |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| | BC | With Use of TDR | |
| Min Lot Area (sf) | 20,000 | | |
| Min Lot Width | 100' | | |
| Max Building Coverage | 25% | 30% | |
| Max FAR (with sewer) | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.75 |
| Impervious Coverage | 75% | | |
| Yards (Front/Side/Rear) | 50'/15'/25' | | |
| Max Height | 35feet | 35 feet 50 feet with TDR credits | |
| Max Residential Density | N/A | 30 units/acre | |



For individual projects, the Town would have an opportunity to minimize potential for visual or aesthetic impacts during the site plan review process and site-specific review under SEQR.

CRC Zone (Zoning Change and TDR Map Change):

The CRC Zone is intended to allow for a variety of housing types; however, the existing zoning standards only permit one dwelling unit per acre (single-family). It would be reasonable to accommodate slightly higher densities in this area – given their proximity to the downtown. It is acknowledged that sanitary requirements set by Suffolk County Department of Health Services (SCDHS) may limit the development potential on sites without supporting infrastructure. The Proposed Action recommends increasing density to 4 units per acre as of right. An additional 4 units could be achieved if sewer infrastructure were provided. For individual projects, the Town would have an opportunity to minimize potential for visual or aesthetic impacts during the site plan review process and site-specific review under SEQR.

Slightly increasing the density in these areas would help to address the missing middle housing by providing more diverse housing opportunities in appropriate areas. This approach not only helps fill the housing gap but also promotes efficient land use, supports local businesses, and fosters a more vibrant and sustainable community. In consideration of the above, any potential for impacts to visual resources are off-set by the benefit of providing for new housing opportunities. For individual projects, the Town would have an opportunity to

minimize potential for visual or aesthetic impacts during the site plan review process and site-specific review under SEQR.

PRC Zone (Zoning Change and TDR Map Change):

The PRC Zone is intended to allow for "an array of residential, commercial and recreational uses." However, no residential uses are specifically provided for in the current zoning. Allowing for townhouse and garden apartments would provide for the development of "missing" middle-housing typologies such as townhouses and garden apartments.

The Peconic River is a major scenic feature in Riverhead's landscape. It contributes to the character of the Pine Barrens region as well as downtown Riverhead, and the Town's name and identity is closely tied to the Peconic. The proposed changes to the PRC district would include design guidance to push buildings away from the Peconic River and ensure that riparian areas are maintained. The design guidance could also help to mitigate visual impacts from the street.

West Main Street faces challenges such as aging infrastructure, vacant storefronts, and inconsistent building maintenance, which can impact its overall visual quality. Providing for new development types would help to encourage investment in the corridor, which would have positive impacts on visual quality. Any potential for adverse impacts to visual resources are off-set by the benefit of providing for new housing opportunities. For individual projects, the Town would have an opportunity to minimize potential for visual or aesthetic impacts during the site plan review process and site-specific review under SEQR.

RA-8o and RB-8o (TDR Map Change):

Designating these two zoning districts as sending districts would have a positive impact on scenic resources. The sending areas are generally locations with significant conservation value, such as areas with scenic landscapes, agricultural lands, or environmentally sensitive habitats. By incentivizing property owners in these areas to transfer their development rights to designated receiving areas, development pressures are reduced, preserving the natural and cultural heritage of the sending area. This preservation effort can result in enhanced visual quality by maintaining scenic vistas, protecting historic structures, and safeguarding ecologically significant landscapes from incompatible development.

Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area Overlay District (TDR Map Change):

This zoning would provide for the use of TDR credits to achieve higher residential densities. This zoning change is not anticipated to have an impact on scenic resources. The surrounding area is developed with multi-family buildings. Allowing for additional development would help to create more cohesive and visually appealing built environment and would support the downtown economy. As shown in the build out analysis, this change has the potential to add a maximum of 30 new units to the downtown area, while utilizing 10 TDR credits. Any small potential impact to scenic resources would be off-set by the preservation of other lands which are more sensitive with regard to scenic resources. For individual projects, the Town would have an opportunity to minimize potential for visual or aesthetic impacts during the site plan review process and site-specific review under SEQR.

Cluster Development Requirements (Zoning text change):

This change is proposed to have a positive impact on scenic resources. Cluster development requirements can help preserve scenic resources by encouraging the consolidation of built structures into smaller, more compact areas while leaving larger portions of the land undeveloped or in its natural state. By clustering homes and buildings together, developers can minimize the overall footprint of development, thereby reducing the visual impact on surrounding landscapes. This approach allows for the preservation of scenic vistas, natural features, and open spaces that contribute to the aesthetic appeal of the area.

3.3.3. Mitigation Measures

3.3.3.1. Historic Resources

The proposed recommendations and zoning changes discussed herein are not site specific. The adoption of the Proposed Action, in and of itself, would not result in any new development or construction. Any future development projects proposed in the vicinity of historic resources must undergo project-specific review that includes assessment of impacts to historic resources, as applicable on a site-specific basis under SEQR. This review would ensure that any potentially adverse significant impacts to historic resources are adequately addressed and mitigated to the maximum extent practicable.

Finally, any projects involving state or federal permitting, funding, or licensing, would undergo a more rigorous review for potential impacts to architectural and archaeological resources in accordance with the state or National Historic Preservation Laws (e.g., Sections 106 and 14.09 review). The Town is committed to managing these issues and ensuring that future development resulting from implementation of the Proposed Action would consider potential impacts to historic and archaeological resources during the site plan approval process. If resources are present and it is identified that the potential for adverse impacts may occur, mitigation measures would be established between the applicant and the involved agencies. These measures would describe approaches for avoiding, minimizing, or mitigating potential adverse impacts to cultural resources. These mitigation measures could be formalized between the applicant and the OPRHP and/or provided as conditions of approval issued by the Town. With these measures in place, significant adverse impact would be avoided.

3.3.3.2. Scenic Resources

As outlined above, the Comprehensive Plan includes several recommendations intended to protect, preserve and improve the historic and scenic resources of the Town. Advancement of proposed land-use policies would require collaboration with stakeholders to ensure that protective measures are in place strike a balance between growth and preservation, fostering a resilient and visually appealing environment for all residents and visitors alike.

The proposed recommendations are not site specific. The adoption of the Proposed Action, in and of itself, would not result in any new development or construction. Further, the Proposed Action seeks to improve protections on scenic resources. Future development projects in an area where scenic resources are present would require separate site-specific SEQR analysis as part of project approvals. Such projects should employ mitigation measures if it is identified during project specific review that adverse impacts may occur. Mitigation measures should be applied on a case-by-case basis to minimize potential adverse impacts to these resources. These mitigation measures would be formalized between the applicant and the involved regulatory agencies (such as NYSDEC, NYS OPRHP) and/or provided as conditions of approval issued by the Town. With these measures in place, significant adverse impacts to visual and aesthetic resources would be avoided.

3.4. Transportation and Mobility

This section of the DGEIS investigates the potential impact on the Town's transportation system that could take place as a result of the adoption of the policies recommended in the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is essentially a policy document, which contains a series of recommendations pertaining to an extensive number of issues that are intended to provide guidance to the Town regarding the nature and intensity of growth within the Town over the next ten years. As such, the recommendations in the Plan do not have a direct impact on the transportation system, insofar as the Plan does not in and of itself propose new development projects, specific changes to the transportation infrastructure, or new or modified transportation projects. Rather, by influencing the nature and intensity of potential future development within the Town, the proposed comprehensive plan policies can conceivably have an impact on the transportation system. Most significantly, the Plan contains recommendations regarding changes to the zoning code, which, if implemented could modify the way properties might be developed in the future, and in turn would influence the impact that such development would have on the environment in general, including the transportation system. The DGEIS analyzes how the development related recommendations proposed in the Comprehensive Plan might affect the Town's environment. Toward this end, a "Build Out Analysis" has been developed that presents a reasonable worst-case estimate of the potential mix of residential units and commercial/ industrial gross floor area expected to be developed in the Future with the Proposed Action (adoption of Comprehensive Plan Update) within the next 10 years. While this view of the future would be only a projection of what could occur, these estimates would facilitate reasonably conservative and meaningful analyses of how changes in cumulative development could impact the Town's environment and appropriate measures to mitigate any related impacts.

The following sections provide a description of the existing transportation system, including general physical and operational characteristics, and a qualitative examination of the potential transportation impacts that might occur as a result of the recommended changes in the nature and / or intensity of development in the Town, should the recommendations be adopted and should the affected properties be developed under the existing or recommended future code.

3.4.1. No Build Scenario (Existing Conditions)

3.4.1.1. Streets and Highways

Riverhead has a comprehensive roadway network exceeding 200 miles, encompassing a segment of I-495 (the Long Island Expressway (LIE), two New York State highways, several Suffolk County roads, and extensive Town roadways. Noteworthy State highways include NY25, spanning the Town's entire length, and NY25A in western Riverhead. Key County roads are CR43 (Northville Turnpike), CR105 (Cross River Drive), and CR58 (Old Country Road); along with a portion of CR54 (Hulse Landing Road) north of Sound Avenue, and a portion of CR73 (Roanoke Avenue) between East Main Street and Middle Road. Additionally, Peconic Avenue, a short stretch of CR63 between Main Street and the Town line at the Peconic River, holds significance just south of downtown. Prominent Town roads such as Sound Avenue, Middle Road, Edwards Avenue, Doctors Path, and Peconic Bay Boulevard contribute to the extensive network. The following section provides an overview of major roadway facilities, incorporating available recent and historic traffic volume information. Figure 3.4-1 shows major roads in Riverhead classified by jurisdiction, as well as information regarding traffic flows on each facility.

A description of the roadways shown in Figure 3.4-1 is provided below with information on the growth in traffic volumes over the last decade. It is noted that, as part of the long-term transportation planning study conducted by NYSDOT in the early 2000s, traffic volumes in Riverhead were generally estimated to increase by 47%, or approximately 2.3% per year, from 2000 to 2020.³⁷ However, as discussed below, while some roadways experienced traffic growth approaching the predicted rate, most did not. Note that the comparison for each area is based on the year DOT collected the data, which may vary slightly.

I-495 Long Island Expressway (LIE)

The LIE is a six-lane east-west interstate highway that traverses most of Long Island and terminates in Riverhead. Interchange 72 (NY25), and Interchange 73 (CR58), are within the Town's borders. Travelers from the west use the LIE to reach Riverhead and Southold. The LIE was originally planned to terminate at CR48, a concept which has long since been abandoned. Since 2003, traffic volumes on the LIE in Riverhead have increased by 1.5% per year.

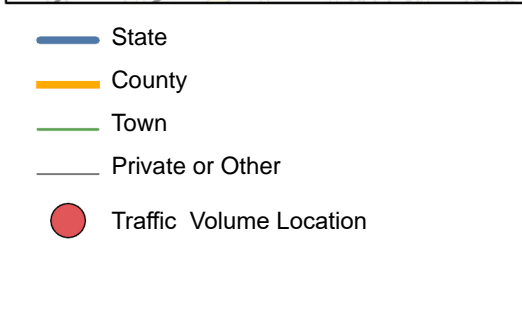
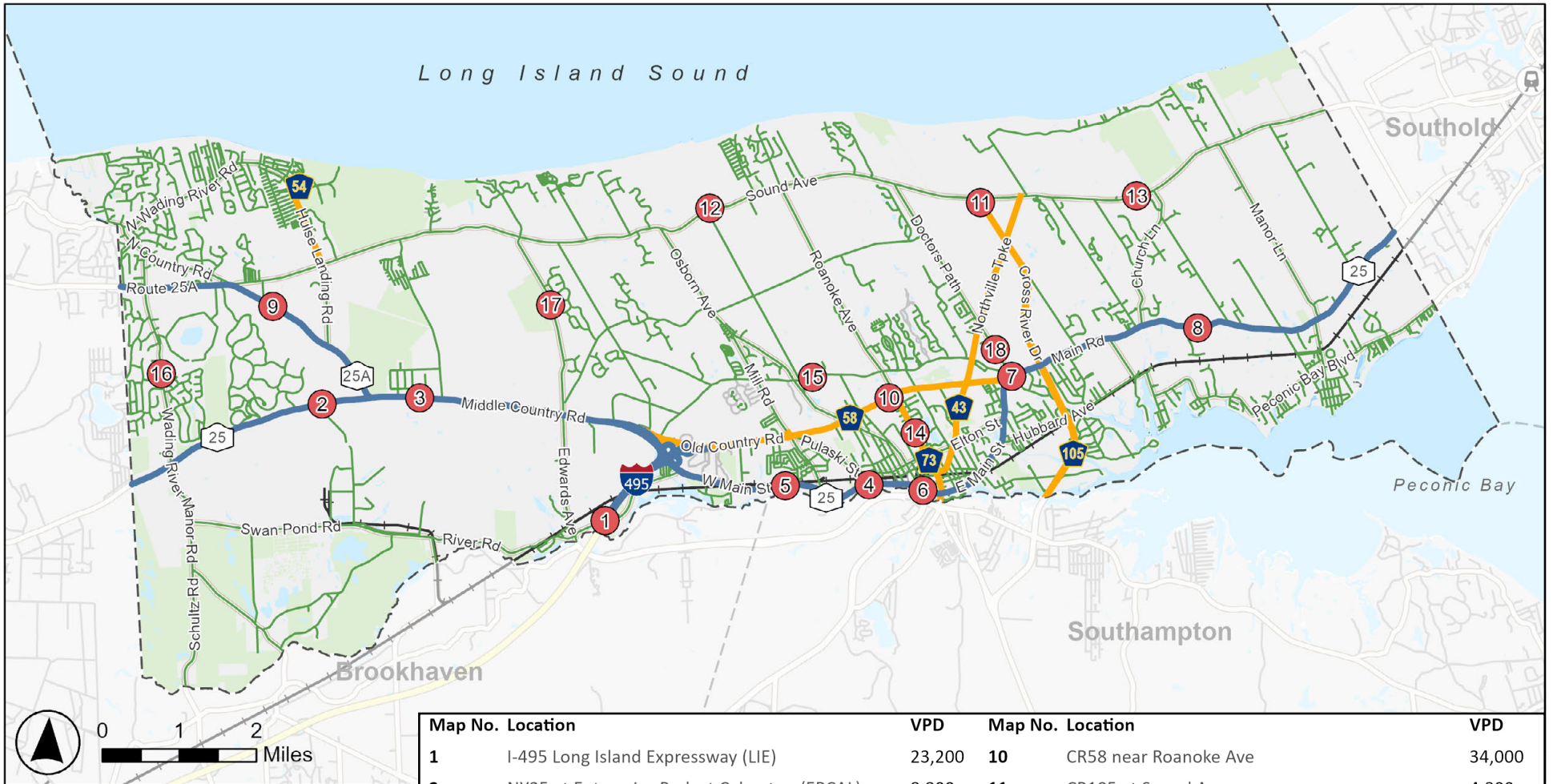
New York State Route 25 (NY25)

NY 25 spans from the Edward M. Koch Bridge in Queens to Orient Point, covering the entire length of Riverhead with two lanes—one in each direction. This road, connecting the western border to the LIE, provides access to Calverton National Cemetery in the west and Splish-Splash Water Park in the east. West of the LIE, development is relatively sparse on NY25, but it offers entry to the former Grumman Naval Weapons Research facility, now known as Enterprise Park at Calverton (EPCAL). Since 2013, traffic volumes on this NY25 section have increased by less than 0.5% per year.

From the LIE to CR105, the road provides access to more developed areas such as the Tanger Factory Outlet Center, running parallel to the Peconic River, and passing through downtown Riverhead as Main Street. Traffic volumes have been relatively steady since 2013, with signs of increased demands post-Covid-19 disruptions. Just west of downtown, traffic uses CR94 to cross the Peconic River, heading east and south via NY24 and CR51, where the Suffolk County Courts and County Center are situated.

East of downtown, NY25 connects CR58 to CR105, experiencing congestion seasonally, especially in summer, due to traffic to and from the eastern North Fork. With additional traffic from CR58, Annual Average Daily Trips (AADT) rose significantly to 22,600 vehicles per day (vpd) as of 2022. Beyond CR105 to the eastern Southold border, NY25 passes through agricultural land interspersed with residences, the Jamesport hamlet center, farm stands, and some commercial development. Traffic volumes decrease to 13,000vpd at the Southold town line.

³⁷ The Long Island Transportation Plan to Manage Congestion (LITP 2000) – New York State Department of Transportation, April 20, 2002.



| Map No. | Location | VPD | Map No. | Location | VPD |
|---------|--|--------|---------|--|--------|
| 1 | I-495 Long Island Expressway (LIE) | 23,200 | 10 | CR58 near Roanoke Ave | 34,000 |
| 2 | NY25 at Enterprise Park at Calverton (EPCAL) | 8,800 | 11 | CR105 at Sound Ave | 4,800 |
| 3 | NY25 West of NY25A | 16,300 | 12 | Sound Ave west of CR105 | 18,000 |
| 4 | NY25 east of Mill Rd | 16,100 | 13 | Sound Ave east of CR105 | 15,000 |
| 5 | NY25 west of Mill Rd | 8,000 | 14 | CR73 (Roanoke Ave) south of CR58 Roundabout | 8,000 |
| 6 | NY25 east of CR94 | 9,500 | 15 | Middle Rd btw Doctor's Path and LIE | 5,000 |
| 7 | NY25 at CR58 | 22,600 | 16 | Wading River-Manorville Road btw LIE and NY25A | 8,500 |
| 8 | NY25 EB towards Southold Town Line | 13,000 | 17 | Edwards Avenue btw LIE and Sound Avenue | 4,000 |
| 9 | NY25A btw NY25 and Sound Ave | 7,600 | 18 | Doctor's Path north of CR58 | 2,800 |

New York State Route 25A (NY25A)

NY25A is a two-lane State highway stretching from the western border of Riverhead (shared with Brookhaven) to NY25, primarily passing through agricultural landscapes with the entrance to Calverton National Cemetery along its route. Bike lanes are incorporated into the facility. The East Wind Hotel and spa complex, including the Shoppes at East Wind, are at the intersection of NY25a at Sound Avenue. Traffic volumes decreased slightly between 2022, and 2023, although the intersection of 25A and Wading River-Manor Road continues to experience significant congestion.

Suffolk County Route 58 (CR58)

Route 58, an east-west Suffolk County roadway, spans from the eastern terminus of the LIE to NY25, east of downtown Riverhead. This densely developed corridor features various commercial properties and experiences congestion during peak hours, with the western part carrying higher traffic volumes than the LIE. In 2022, AADT exceeded 34,000 vpd near Roanoke Avenue, while volumes to the east were somewhat lower. The current configuration includes two lanes in each direction, turning lanes, and sections of a center two-way left-turn lane, but lacks shoulders, deceleration lanes, or bus turnouts. Design compromises also led to utility poles being placed in sidewalks, often violating the ADA accessibility guidelines.

County Road 105 (CR105, Cross River Drive)

CR105 is a major north-south, limited-access Suffolk County highway that extends from the Southampton town line to Sound Avenue. The portion of the road in Riverhead provides four lanes, two in each direction. Development is agricultural in nature, and traffic volumes are low, except during the peak summer season, when tourist traffic causes delays on CR105 at its intersections with NY25 and Sound Avenue. Speeds tend to be high. Between 2013 and 2022 traffic volumes increased by approximately 1.5% per year.

Sound Avenue

Sound Avenue is a two-lane east-west Town roadway that extends the length of Riverhead, parallel to Long Island Sound. East of the Southold town line, the roadway becomes CR48 (Middle Road) under the jurisdiction of SCDPW and continues to the east until it terminates in Greenport, where it joins NY25 as the only major roadway to Orient Point. Since 2014, traffic volumes have been increasing on Sound Avenue by approximately 2% per year, based on NYSDOT data. This is a higher rate of growth than shown on other roadways within the Town. Sound Avenue experiences significant congestion during seasonal periods (typically late September through October), due in part to tourism to the East End, as well as travel to and from points east.

Although the existing right-of-way is 66 feet wide, the pavement is between 28 and 30 feet wide for most of its length. Few sidewalks and shoulder areas are provided.

Roanoke Avenue (CR73 & Town of Riverhead Jurisdiction)

CR73 Roanoke Avenue is a two-lane north-south Town roadway that extends from Main Street to Sound Avenue. Roanoke Avenue intersects with CR58 at an intersection that was converted to a two-lane roundabout by Suffolk County since the time of the 2003 Master Plan. The Roanoke Avenue right-of-way is under the jurisdiction of the SCDPW from its intersection with East Main Street to the intersection with Middle Road. North of Middle Road, the roadway is under the jurisdiction of the Town. The crash rate at the roundabout is among the highest in Riverhead, although crash severity is low, as is common at roundabouts.

Middle Road

Middle Road is a two-lane east-west Town roadway that extends about 4.75 miles between its dead-end western terminus north of Old County Road to its eastern terminus at Doctor's Path, just north of NY25. Middle Road can be accessed from NY25 via Manor Road. Existing traffic volumes are relatively low. Drivers familiar with the area use Middle Road as a bypass route to CR58. Depending on location, Middle Road experienced between 3,000 and 5,000 vpd in 2022, a slight increase since 2013.

Wading River-Manorville Road

This two-lane, north-south roadway in the western portion of the Town provides access to the LIE and points south from the north shore of Riverhead, the hamlet of Wading River, and the residential development along its length. The intersection with NYS 25A is reported to have issues with congestion. Access to EPCAL from the LIE can also be made via NY25 and Grumman Boulevard. Traffic volumes have increased approximately 2% per year since 2014.

Edwards Avenue

Edwards Avenue extends from the LIE to points north in the western portion of the Town (Calverton). It has intersections with the LIE, NY25 and Sound Avenue, Riley Avenue, and several residential neighborhoods. Edwards Avenue becomes CR94 (Nugent Drive) at the intersection with River Road. Many vehicles use Edwards Avenue to access Sound Avenue during tourist season, to avoid congestion further east. Edwards Avenue experienced growth in traffic volumes of approximately 1% per year since 2013. For NY25 at Edwards Avenue, NYSDOT has a design-stage improvement project to add left turn lanes at all approaches, widen the intersection, and align the roadway's north-south orientation as it crosses NY25 (NYSDOT Statewide Traffic Improvement Plan PIN o810.01). Improvements at this intersection are anticipated to be completed during the 2024 construction season, per a May 2023 correspondence with NYSDOT. In that same memo, the NYSDOT stated this intersection is being prioritized over safety enhancement projects at other intersections in Southold and East Hampton.

Doctor's Path

Doctor's Path is a two-lane north-south roadway that extends from NY25 to Sound Avenue. Doctor's Path intersects with NY25, CR58, and Middle Road at one of the more complex intersections in the Town. NYSDOT last made improvements to the intersection more than 20 years ago. The 2022 AADT was approximately 2,800 vpd, basically unchanged since 2014.

3.4.1.2. Existing Roadway Capacity and Level of Service

Traffic data from State, County and Town roadways in Riverhead was collected and analyzed to determine whether the roadway capacity supports current and future needs. The data, sourced from transportation agencies and studies, was normalized for seasonality. Planning-level capacity analyses were conducted for all roadways for which data was available. In almost all cases, the existing facilities are adequately sized to handle forecasted traffic demand. Capacity analyses results for selected major roadways are presented in Table 3.4-1. Traffic volume data along with capacity analyses results for all roads included in the capacity analysis study for all roadways are provided in DGEIS Appendix 5 of this report.

The determination that roadways have ample capacity pertains to planning-level analyses focused on determining whether there is adequate lane capacity to meet average annual traffic demand. These analyses do not account for daily peak hours or seasonal variations in demand. Consequently, positive results from the analyses do not rule out the potential need for local improvements in intersection capacity, traffic control

adjustments, or safety enhancements. However, they do provide assurance that extensive roadway widenings are not considered likely.

Table 3.4-1. Roadway Levels of Service – Capacity Analysis Results

| Roadway Levels of Service – Capacity Analysis Results | | |
|---|------------|-----|
| Street Name | Direction | LOS |
| CR-58, LIE to Roanoke Ave | Eastbound | A-C |
| | Westbound | A-C |
| CR-58, Roanoke Ave to NY25. | Eastbound | A-C |
| | Westbound | A-C |
| CR-105, NY25 to CR-43 | Northbound | A-C |
| | Southbound | A-C |
| CR-43, CR-105 to Sound Ave | Eastbound | A-C |
| | Westbound | A-C |
| Sound Ave, west of CR43 | Eastbound | A-C |
| | Westbound | A-C |
| Sound Ave, east of CR43 | Eastbound | A-C |
| | Westbound | A-C |
| NYS-25, LIE to Mill Rd. | Eastbound | A-C |
| | Westbound | A-C |
| NYS-25, west of South Jamesport Ave | Eastbound | A-C |
| | Westbound | A-C |
| NYS-25, east of South Jamesport Ave | Eastbound | A-C |
| | Westbound | A-C |

Exceptions to this generalization exist, such as the section of NY25 between Wading River Road and Manor Lane, which would come under considerable demand pressure as the EPCAL property is built out. There is also recurring peak hour congestion at major intersection locations on CR58 from I-495 to the Roanoke Avenue traffic circle, which is due to the level of development in the surrounding area, the number of access points, traffic signal timing, and its role as one of three routes to the North Fork, including the Cross Sound Ferry terminal. It is noted that SCDPW recently completed a study of signal operations on CR58, the results of which will be utilized to optimize signal programming to improve congested conditions.

Long Island’s North Fork, including Riverhead’s agricultural district mostly associated with Sound Avenue, is an increasingly popular and continually evolving attraction for large numbers of tourists and visitors. Wineries, vineyards, and conventional agricultural and agritourism uses continue to thrive, while breweries and distillers of spirits have also become popular. These attractions draw large numbers of visitors during the good weather months, beginning in springtime during the strawberry season and extending well into the fall and early Christmas season. This activity is not limited to Riverhead, as the Town’s roadways serve as the critical access to similar tourist attractions to the east.

3.4.1.3. Traffic Safety

Roadways on Long Island experience higher crash rates than other areas in New York State, and this trend extends to Riverhead. Utilizing NYSDOT’s newly implemented Crash Location and Engineering Analysis Repository (CLEAR) system, locations with the highest number of crashes in the Town were identified (see Figure 3.4-2). Crash data was analyzed from for 5 years from January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2022. These locations primarily consist of intersections where at least one, if not both, approach roadways are either Suffolk County or New York State roadways. This aligns with expectations, as the County and State facilities, known for their substantial traffic volumes, play a prominent role in the Town. Locations of note include the following:

- **CR58/Old Country Road at CR73/Roanoke Avenue (Roundabout) – 323 crashes.** This is a high total number of crashes (average of nearly 65 per year); however, as expected at roundabouts, most crashes are low-severity (i.e., merging or lane-changing types of crashes) which result in minimal personal injuries, as opposed to conventional intersections, where right-angle crashes with potentially serious injuries can be the most dominant crash severity. Crash severity analysis indicates that only 15% of crashes resulted in injury.
- **CR58 at Mill Road – 142 crashes.** Nearly 40% of the crashes are rear-end collisions, typically the most dominant crash type at signalized intersections. Injury rate was 27%.
- **CR58 at Kroemer Avenue – 107 crashes.** Right-angle collisions are the most frequent type, which could indicate insufficient traffic signal clearance (yellow and all-red) intervals.
- **NY25 at CR105– 101 crashes.** As noted, this intersection has insufficient traffic capacity. Injury rate was 27%.
- **CR58 and CR43/Northville Turnpike– 98 crashes.** Crash totals have increased the last two years; however, they are not high when the total intersection volume is considered. Injury rate was 36%.

Other locations where Town roads intersect and have the highest crash totals, are on Sound Avenue:

- **Sound Avenue at CR 43/Northville Turnpike – 64 crashes.** This intersection saw 13 crashes per year, including 25% injury crashes, and one fatality. Rear end crashes were most frequent.
- **Sound Avenue at NY 25A – 39 crashes.** This location saw 8 crashes per year, including 31% injury crashes. Rear end crashes were most frequent. These locations were considered in the recommendations developed for this Plan to improve safety for all transportation system users.



3.4.1.4. Public Transportation

The two major elements of the public transportation system serving Riverhead are commuter rail service provided by the MTA's Long Island Railroad (LIRR), and bus service provided by Suffolk County Transit (SCT). The LIRR has been providing commuter rail service to the North Fork for more than 150 years and is the only commuter rail service on Long Island. Due to system constraints and lack of demand, service has been traditionally sparse in Riverhead. At one point, service to the North Fork was completely discontinued, although it has been since restored.

Though technically not considered public transportation, the Town is also served by the Hampton Jitney, a private luxury bus service, and by various ride sharing services including Uber and Lyft, and private taxi services. The Hampton Jitney provides bus service between Orient Point and Manhattan, as well as service to JFK and LaGuardia International Airports in New York City, and MacArthur airport in Islip. Ride-sharing services and taxis provide alternative means of transportation for travelers in the Town, although their impact on the transportation system is difficult to assess, and as private entities, the Town has little influence over the services provided.

Long Island Railroad

The Main Line of the LIRR runs from Long Island City in the west to Greenport in the east, passing through Riverhead. It is electrified west of Ronkonkoma, with 24-hour service to Penn and Grand Central Stations. East of Ronkonkoma, the segment is served by diesel-electric trains, most of which terminate at Ronkonkoma, requiring customers traveling west of Ronkonkoma to transfer there. Three eastbound and four westbound trains travel each weekday between Ronkonkoma and Greenport, and one additional round trip is scheduled between Ronkonkoma and Riverhead (formerly Yaphank) each weekday. Weekend service consists of four round-trips each day between Ronkonkoma and Greenport. On Fridays during the summer, the eastbound trip to Riverhead is extended to Greenport, and one additional evening trip runs from Greenport to Jamaica, running express between Ronkonkoma and Jamaica.

The Greenport Branch has by far the lowest ridership among LIRR services for which data are available. In 2018, the LIRR's second-least-used service (the West Hempstead Branch) had more than 14 times as many riders as the Greenport Branch. That year, Greenport Branch riders accounted for 0.08% of LIRR ridership overall. A study conducted by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) indicated that the most common means of access to the Riverhead station is by shared ride, with 64% of passengers being dropped off, carpooling, or using a rideshare (taxi/TNC) service (2012-2014 data). Some 21% of riders walked to the station, and 9% drove alone. The high percentage of shared rides suggest that most riders are generally vehicle-dependent; however, the high percentage of walkers also suggests that the station area is walkable. Just 4% of all passengers accessed the station via public transit and 2% took a bike.

The LIRR finished 2022 with ridership growth, rebounding from previous declining trends due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Total ridership in 2022 was 52.5 million customers, 50% above 2021's 35 million ridership. Commutation ridership increased nearly 118% with 21.1 million passengers, while non-commutation ridership grew 24% to 31.5 million passengers. However, total ridership remains well below pre-pandemic levels. Table 3.4-2 shows changes in ridership by branch from 2021 to 2022. As indicated, ridership on the Greenport branch, which serves Riverhead, experienced the slowest growth of all branches. This is in keeping with the slower rate of growth in non-commuters than in commuters, since the Greenport branch likely serves a larger proportion of recreational riders than the other commuter-oriented branches.

Table 3.4-2. LIRR 2022 Annual Ridership Report

| RIDERSHIP BY BRANCH | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| Branch | ANNUAL RIDERSHIP | | |
| | 2022 | 2021 | % Change |
| Babylon | 10,514,026 | 7,034,569 | 49.5% ▲ |
| City Zone | 5,672,913 | 4,010,110 | 41.5% ▲ |
| Far Rockaway | 4,095,562 | 2,794,801 | 46.5% ▲ |
| Greenport | 66,207 | 50,365 | 31.6% ▲ |
| Hempstead | 2,778,998 | 1,751,358 | 58.7% ▲ |
| Long Beach | 2,749,871 | 1,848,569 | 48.8% ▲ |
| Montauk | 1,662,936 | 1,128,803 | 47.3% ▲ |
| Oyster Bay | 854,728 | 514,605 | 66.1% ▲ |
| Port Jefferson | 9,428,532 | 6,271,150 | 50.3% ▲ |
| Port Washington | 8,321,271 | 5,229,282 | 59.1% ▲ |
| Ronkonkoma | 5,783,041 | 4,024,559 | 43.7% ▲ |
| West Hempstead | 612,358 | 378,577 | 61.8% ▲ |
| Total | 52,540,522 | 35,036,746 | 50.0% |

▲ Increase ▼ Decrease ● No Change

* Ridership data is based on ticket sales.
 ** Port Jefferson branch includes ridership from Huntington Branch.

Source: LIRR 2022 Annual Ridership Report

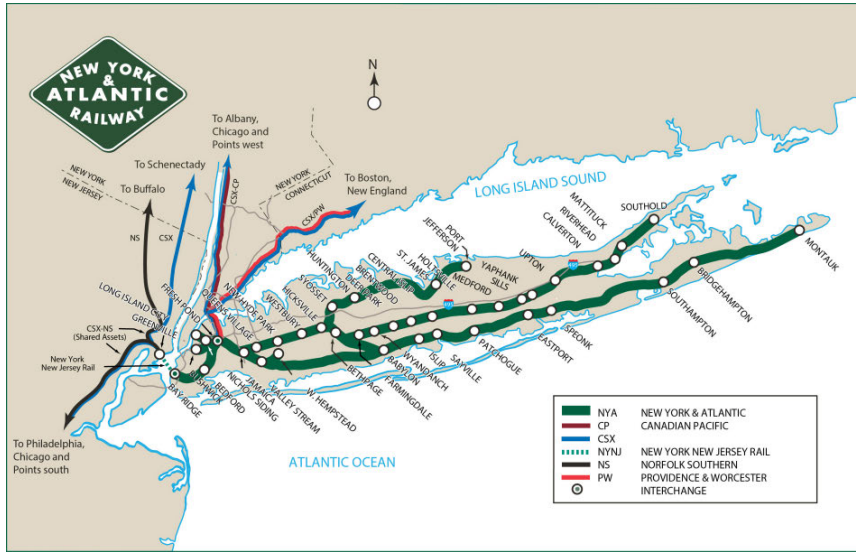
Additional significant changes to the LIRR system since 2003 include:

- In 2012, the LIRR started adding a second track along the formerly single-tracked section of the Main Line between Farmingdale and Ronkonkoma stations to increase track capacity and allow for enhanced service options. The project was completed in September 2018.
- In January 2023, MTA/LIRR completed the East Side Access project, which extended the LIRR tracks from Sunnyside in Queens to Grand Central Terminal on the east side of Manhattan.
- A third track was built on the Main Line between Floral Park and Hicksville, completed in October 2022.

Freight Rail

In 1997, freight service was franchised on a 20-year term to the New York and Atlantic Railway (NYA), a short-line railroad owned by the Anacostia and Pacific Co. It has its own equipment and crews but uses the rail facilities of the LIRR. Freight service operates to the end of the West Hempstead Branch, to Huntington on the Port Jefferson Branch, to Bridgehampton on the Montauk Branch, and to Riverhead on the Main Line (see Figure 3.4-3). Sparse data is available regarding freight shipping on the LIRR at EPCAL, although the Eastern Fence Corp installed a small private spur and anecdotally continues to use the spur to ship raw and finished materials.

Figure 3-4-3. New York and Atlantic Railways



Source: New York & Atlantic Railway

Suffolk County Transit

Suffolk County Transit (SCT) is the provider of public bus services in the County, including in Riverhead. Prior to 2023, SCT operated four routes in the Town: the S-58, S-62, S-66, and S-92, as well as the S-8A feeder, which served as a circulator to connect communities to the main bus routes. Some SCT bus routes have been running the same paths since SCT took over management of transit services in 1980, and many of these routes were run for decades before that by private operators. Suffolk County Accessible Transportation (SCAT) provides permanently or temporarily disabled passengers (and their companions) curb-to-curb public bus service to any location within 0.75 miles of a Suffolk County public bus route. Reservations must be made one to seven days in advance of the trip.

Most U.S. transit agencies have seen declining transit ridership over the past decade, and in the 10 years prior to 2021, ridership on SCT’s fixed route services had declined by about 25%. However, from 2003 through 2019, most major routes serving Riverhead saw growth in ridership, as shown in Table 3.4-3. In addition, the Covid 19 pandemic had devastating impact on ridership on all public transportation systems, although due to demographic factors, commuter rail systems were more severely affected than bus transit systems in general.

Table 3-4-3. Change in Ridership 2003 to 2019 Suffolk Transit Routes Serving Riverhead

| Suffolk Transit Ridership | | | |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Route | 2003 | 2019 | Change |
| S-58 | 169,130 | 197,997 | 28,867 |
| S-62 | 115,067 | 104,533 | -10,534 |
| S-66 | 166,954 | 216,051 | 49,097 |
| S-92 | 280,717 | 372,846 | 92,129 |
| 8A | 38,753 | 33,291 | -5,462 |
| Total | 770,621 | 924,718 | 154,097 |

Trip lengths were long on the major routes, with service largely provided on an hourly basis with limited or no service on Sundays. The S92, with service extending from Montauk Point to Orient Point, was the most heavily used Suffolk Transit route on eastern Long Island, with nearly 373,000 riders using the route in 2019.

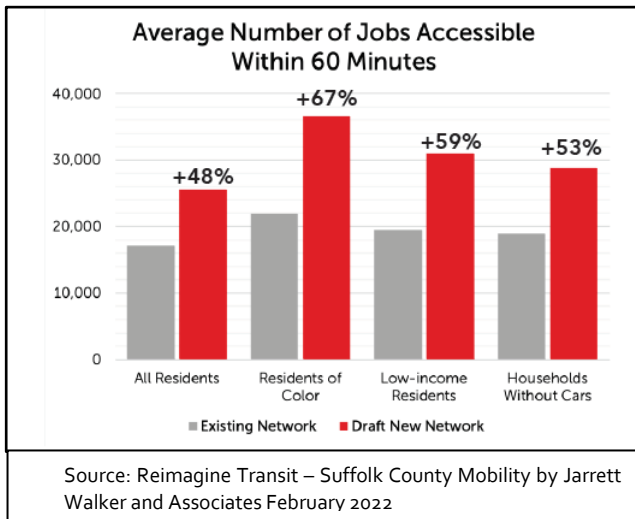
Notwithstanding the growth in ridership in general, daily boardings and alighting at nearly all stops in Riverhead were low, with the most popular stops being the County Center, Peconic Avenue, and the LIRR station.

A new bus network was released by SCT, which included changes to route alignments, although system changes are not limited to new route alignments. Under the new system, the entire network would operate seven days a week, while weekday hours of operation would be extended system wide. Compared with the existing network, there are many more routes that run every 30 minutes. The new system would offer timed connections at seven locations across the County to reduce wait times, strengthen connections to the LIRR, and get people to their destinations faster. This includes Riverhead at the Suffolk County Center where Routes 58, 66, and 92 would be timed to meet.

Route 92 undergoes a minor realignment, simplifying deviations for Routes 92 and 8A. The proposed schedule offers increased service frequency for Peconic Bay Medical Center, and timed connections between Routes 58, 66, and 92 at the County Center.

Sunday service is available on all routes, and more frequent nighttime service is offered. The implementation of the new network is expected to increase by 2,000 the number of jobs in Riverhead reachable by bus within 60 minutes (see Figure 3.4-4). The network also envisions creating seven new transit hubs at LIRR stations, facilitating timed connections between bus routes and LIRR trains. Additionally, a flexible service is being piloted in the Southampton area to cover areas with low ridership.

Figure 3.4-4. Average Number of Jobs Accessible Within 60 Minutes



3.4.1.5. Pedestrians and Bicycles

Pedestrian facilities in the Town vary based on location, adjacent development, and responsible agencies. Downtown, commercial centers, and hamlet areas, especially on State and County roads, typically have sidewalks. Less built-up and agricultural regions may lack pedestrian facilities, reflecting a common condition in communities across the country.

The major agencies, SCDPW and NYSDOT, prioritize pedestrian and bicycle travel when improving facilities, requiring compliant sidewalks for developed properties along their roadways. However, current conditions vary. For instance, CR58 generally has continuous sidewalks on one side or the other, as does Peconic Avenue from the Peconic River to Main Street. North of CR58, little sidewalk is provided on Roanoke Avenue, where roadside development is primarily residential and office uses, and would clearly benefit from improved pedestrian facilities. On NY25 and NY25A, similar conditions prevail. Built-up areas see some pedestrian accommodations, and less intensely developed areas see little or none. In addition, while a detailed inventory of these facilities was not conducted, field observations indicate that a substantial amount of the existing pedestrian facilities do not appear to comply with current accessibility guidelines, including lack of compliant pedestrian ramps, non-standard sidewalk widths, the presence of obstructions that are not appropriately treated, lack of turning areas, and the lack of pedestrian accommodation on traffic signal equipment.

Pedestrian facilities on Town roads generally follow the same patterns, although with a much greater degree of non-compliance with current standards. Town standards do not include a requirement for sidewalks, and sidewalks on Town roads are somewhat less robust than on roadways under the jurisdiction of the two major agencies.

Bicycles

Bicycle facilities within Riverhead include two New York State Bicycle Routes, 24 and 25, which provide wide shoulders for cyclists. Bike Route 25 extends from Orient Point on the eastern tip of the North Fork westward through Riverhead, to-Smithtown. This route primarily travels along State Route 25 east of Riverhead and on smaller/local roads to the west. Bike Route 24 connects Bike Route 25 to Old Riverhead Road, just north of State Route 25. In addition, there are numerous connecting routes and the recently opened Vietnam Veterans Memorial Recreation Trail at EPCAL, a continuous 10-mile loop using the security road around the perimeter of the site. Bike racks are provided at numerous Town beach, park, marina, and community center locations.

The North Shore Rail Trail, formerly known as the Rails to Trails Recreational Path, is a 10-mile multi-use recreational path completed in 2022. It runs along the former Wading River railway corridor in Brookhaven. From its eastern endpoint on Wading River Manor Road, the trail runs west from the hamlet of Wading River to the border between the hamlets of Mount Sinai and Port Jefferson Station.

In 2019, the Town completed the EPCAL Alternative Transportation Path, which loops around the 2,900-acre EPCAL site and links to the 65-acre recreational facility on the western portion of the park. The trail utilizes the perimeter road that was once used by Grumman Corporation personnel for security during its more than 40 years of operation.

In 2021, Bethpage Ride, a bike-sharing program operated by Pedal Share, began operating in four communities on Long Island, including Riverhead. The system includes 22 stations with a total of 100 bicycles. Bikes are available for rental during warm weather months. Bike racks are located at the EPCAL recreational trail, as well as at the former Town Hall (200 Howell Avenue), the train station, and in Downtown Riverhead

3.4.1.6. Summary

Based on the forgoing, it can be seen that while the transportation system within the Town of Riverhead has largely has ample capacity to accommodate growth, although there are locations on the roadway system that experience congestion for a variety of reasons. Public transportation is largely underutilized, and service is such that a significant growth in demand can be reasonably expected to be accommodated without the need to increase service.

With respect to vehicular traffic, as stated above, the roadway system in general has the capacity to accommodate existing demand, and is expected to continue to do so under either the current or proposed modified development scenarios. In addition, neither NYSDOT nor SCDPW has plans for any capacity improvements on their facilities within the Town. That being said, there are some existing areas of concern.

- Commercial development along CR58 and the associated proliferation of curb cuts and access points on that major commercial corridor results in recurring peak hour capacity deficiencies. While these deficiencies are currently within acceptable performance parameters, continued growth in traffic volumes would raise the likelihood that spot improvements would be necessary to improve performance.
- In the downtown area, the intersection of NY25 at Peconic Avenue / Roanoke Avenue currently experiences congestion and delay, largely due to the misalignment of the northbound (Peconic Avenue) and southbound (Roanoke Avenue) approaches. This misalignment results in the need to accommodate the turning movement demands through an inefficient signal-timing pattern, resulting in increased delays. If the intersection was property aligned, it is likely that the intersection could accommodate the existing vehicular demand with significantly reduced delays, since the inefficient timing pattern could be eliminated.
- On NY25 in Calverton, major roadway improvements were identified as being required to accommodate increased traffic resulting from the development of the EPCAL property. While the most recent development scenario is no longer being considered, development of some nature is inevitable, and is considered economically beneficial to the Town. At such time as the nature of future development of this property becomes clearer, the Comprehensive Plan recommends that the previously developed mitigation plan be revisited to ensure that appropriate mitigation can be put in place to ensure satisfactory traffic operations.
- In the rural agricultural and hamlet corridors along Sound Avenue and Main Road east of CR105, recurring seasonal congestion is common due to activities associated with agriculture related tourism. The seasonal nature of these activities is such that, for the majority of the year, the capacity of the affected roadways is more than ample to accommodate typical existing and future demand, and no significant roadway or capacity improvements are needed, beyond possible localized intersection or safety improvements. In recent years, the Town has implemented special events traffic control measures to manage traffic and congestion, especially on Sound Avenue. These measures have largely been effective in improving flow, with the added benefit of preserving the rural agricultural nature of the affected corridors. Continuation and enhancement of these strategies is recommended in the Comprehensive Plan.

3.4.2. Potential Impacts of Proposed Action

3.4.2.1. Comprehensive Plan Policies

As previously stated, the impact of the Plan's recommendations on the transportation system is largely related to the change in the potential demand that would be generated by development or redevelopment off properties within the Town under either the existing zoning or the recommended zoning, referred to elsewhere in this document as the Build Out analysis.

The build-out focuses on specific zoning changes proposed in Chapter 13: Future Land Use Plan. It is important to note that this build-out analysis focuses on impacts from specific zoning changes that could be implemented after the completion of the Comprehensive Plan – without further study.

In order to estimate the impact of the proposed Build Out scenario on the transportation system due to the Plans actions, the effect of the proposed zoning changes on the number of trips generated by the zoning

changes has been calculated, based on the Build Out analysis contained in Chapter 2.0: Description of the Proposed Action.

A parking demand analysis was also performed for each of the recommended zoning changes. The results of the analyses are described in detail in the following sections.

Discussion of Impacts from Recommended Rezoning Areas

New Calverton Industrial District (CI)

Future without Action

This area is approximately 317 acres of property that is currently located in the Industrial A (Ind A) Zoning Use District and in the Industrial C (Ind C) Zoning Use District. Under the current regulations 0.40 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) can be developed. Based on the current zoning approximately 5,515,953 Gross Floor Area (GFA) can be constructed if every property is fully developed. It is assumed that only 9% of the potential development would occur in the next ten years. Based on the existing regulations that translates to 496,435 (GFA). Note that these calculations are based on potential development in districts where zoning is proposed to change and does not include planned or proposed projects under review. In order to express this zoning change in terms of potential impact on the transportation system, a trip generation analysis was performed. The trip generation for the existing (Future without Action) conditions is based on industry standard data compiled by the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) in the 11th edition of the Trip Generation Manual. Based on the allowable uses permitted in IND A and IND C, Land Use Code (LUC) 150 Warehousing was selected. Although the zoning allows a wide range of potential land uses, LUC 150 was selected as representing a reasonable average estimation of possible trip making because it is higher than many industrial land uses but lower than some warehouse uses. Accordingly, a full build out of this area under existing conditions could be expected to generate 8,753 daily weekday trips, and the assumed build out at 9% is expected to generate 823 daily weekday trips. This information is presented in Table 3.4-4 below.

Table 3.4-4. New Calverton Industrial District Existing Conditions (Trips)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Daily Weekday Trips |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| Full Build Out | 5,515,953 SF | 150: Warehousing | 8,753 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 496,435.80 SF | 150: Warehousing | 823 |

Table 3.4-5. New Calverton Industrial District Existing Conditions (Parking)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Average Peak Parking Demand |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Full Build Out | 5,515,953 SF | 150: Warehousing | 2,041 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 496,435.80 SF | 150: Warehousing | 184 |

Future with Action

As part of the zoning changes recommended by the comprehensive plan the properties currently zoned IND A and IND C in Calverton would be added to a new zoning district, the New Calverton Industrial District (CI). This zoning district would reduce the amount of allowable FAR from 0.40 to 0.25. In addition, developments could achieve a FAR of 0.30 with the use of TDR credits. Trip generation estimates were performed for both scenarios. As this change represents a reduction in potential development density, this change would result in a reduction

in potential trip generation when compared to the existing condition. This zoning district is largely served by NY25, which has been noted as requiring improvements resulting from development at EPCAL. Table 3.4-6 below illustrates the expected reduction in weekday trips compared to the existing conditions.

Table 3.4-6. New Calverton Industrial District Proposed/Future Condition (Trips)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Daily Weekday Trips | Difference From Existing |
|--|---------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| No TDR Credits Utilized (0.25 FAR) | | | | |
| Full Build Out | 3,447,471 SF | 150: Warehousing | 5,485 | -3,268 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 310,272.40 SF | 150: Warehousing | 264 | -559 |
| Max TDR Credits Utilized (0.30 FAR) | | | | |
| Full Build Out | 4,136,965 SF | 150: Warehousing | 6,575 | -2,179 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 372,326.90 SF | 150: Warehousing | 627 | -196 |

Table 3.4-7. Calverton Industrial District Proposed/Future Condition (Parking)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Average Peak Parking Demand | Difference From Existing |
|--|---------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| No TDR Credits Utilized (0.25 FAR) | | | | |
| Full Build Out | 3,447,471 SF | 150: Warehousing | 1,276 | -765 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 310,272.40 SF | 150: Warehousing | 115 | -69 |
| Max TDR Credits Utilized (0.30 FAR) | | | | |
| Full Build Out | 4,136,965 SF | 150: Warehousing | 1,531 | -510 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 372,326.90 SF | 150: Warehousing | 138 | -46 |

As shown in Table 3.4-7, the average peak parking demand under the proposed zoning is expected to generate fewer vehicles when compared to the existing zoning.

Insofar as the Future with Action Scenario would result in fewer vehicle trips than the Future without Action scenario, the Future with Action scenario has a beneficial impact when compared to the Future without Action scenario, and no mitigation is required. It is noted that the full development of the EPCAL property, regardless of which scenario is considered, would continue to require capacity improvements to accommodate future traffic.

Scattered IND A, IND B, & IND C to Light Industrial (LI)

Future without Action

This area is approximately 109 acres of property that is currently located in the Industrial A (Ind A) Zoning Use District, Industrial B (IND B) Zoning Use District, and Industrial C (Ind C) Zoning Use District. These properties are scattered around the Town, and thus the impact of traffic generated by development of these properties would likewise be dispersed to various roadway facilities. Under the current regulations 0.40 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) can be developed. Based on the current zoning approximately 1,904,863 Gross Floor Area (GFA) can be constructed if every property is fully developed. It is assumed that only 9% of the potential development would

occur in the next ten years. Based on the existing regulations that translates to 171,437.7 (GFA). The trip generation for the existing conditions is based on industry standard data compiled by the institute of transportation engineers (ITE) in the 11th edition of the Trip Generation Manual. Based on the allowable uses permitted in the LI zoning district, land use code 140 Manufacturing was selected. Accordingly, a full build out of this area under existing conditions is expected to generate 9,048 daily weekday trips. The assumed build out is expected to generate 814 daily weekday trips. This information is presented in Table 3.4-8. Table 3.4-9 provides the expected average parking demand under current zoning regulations.

Table 3.4-8. Scattered IND A, IND B, & IND C to Light Industrial Existing Conditions (Trips)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Daily Weekday Trips |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| Full Build Out | 1,904,863 SF | 140: Manufacturing | 9,048 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 171,437.70 SF | 140: Manufacturing | 814 |

Table 3.4-9. Scattered IND A, IND B, & IND C to Light Industrial Existing Conditions (Parking)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Average Peak Parking Demand |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Full Build Out | 1,904,863 SF | 140: Manufacturing | 1,752 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 171,437.70 SF | 140: Manufacturing | 158 |

Future with Action

As part of the zoning changes recommended by the comprehensive plan the scattered properties currently zoned IND A, IND B, and IND C would be rezoned into the Light Industrial (LI) zoning district. This change would reduce the amount of allowable FAR from 0.40 to 0.25. Developments could achieve a FAR of 0.30 with the use of TDR credits. As this change represents a reduction in potential development density, this change would result in a reduction in potential trip generation if the area was fully developed when compared to the existing condition. Table 3.4-10, shown below illustrates the expected reduction in weekday trips compared to the existing conditions.

Table 3.4-10. Scattered IND A, IND B, and IND C to LI Proposed/Future Condition (Trips)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Daily Weekday Trips | Difference From Existing |
|--|---------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| No TDR Credits Utilized (0.25 FAR) | | | | |
| Full Build Out | 1,190,540 SF | 140: Manufacturing | 5,655 | -3,393 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 107,148.60 SF | 140: Manufacturing | 509 | -305 |
| Max TDR Credits Utilized (0.30 FAR) | | | | |
| Full Build Out | 1,428,648 SF | 140: Manufacturing | 6,786 | -2,262 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 128,578.30 SF | 140: Manufacturing | 611 | -203 |

Table 3.4-11. Scattered IND A, IND B, and IND C to LI Proposed/Future Condition (Parking)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Average Peak Parking Demand | Difference From Existing |
|--|---------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| No TDR Credits Utilized (0.25 FAR) | | | | |
| Full Build Out | 1,190,540 SF | 140: Manufacturing | 1,095 | -657 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 107,148.60 SF | 140: Manufacturing | 99 | -59 |
| Max TDR Credits Utilized (0.30 FAR) | | | | |
| Full Build Out | 1,428,648 SF | 140: Manufacturing | 1,314 | -438 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 128,578.30 SF | 140: Manufacturing | 118 | -40 |

As shown in Table 3.4-11 above, the average peak parking demand under the proposed zoning is expected to generate fewer vehicles when compared to the existing zoning.

Insofar as the Future with Action Scenario would result in fewer vehicle trips than the Future without Action scenario, the Future with Action scenario has a beneficial impact when compared to the Future without Action scenario, and no mitigation is required.

Assisted Living Overlay Zone

Future without Action

The Comprehensive Plan recommends the creation of an overlay zone in areas generally along Route 58 near the Peconic Bay Medical Center. This overlay zone would allow for an increase in density for assisted living or continuing care facilities with the use of TDR credits, if sewer infrastructure is in place. The area in question is approximately 134.1 acres in size and contains properties with a variety of zoning districts. These include the Business Center (BC) Zoning Use District, Commercial/Residential Campus (CRC) Zoning Use District, Hamlet Residential (HR) Zoning Use District, Residence A-40 (RA40) Zoning Use District, Residence B-40 (RB40) Zoning Use District, and Shopping Center (SC) Zoning Use District. Traffic impact of development of these properties would largely be centered on CR58. As discussed above, intersections on CR58 experience recurring congestion due to demand generated by the commercial developments.

Based on the existing zoning regulations a full build out of the overlay district would include 94,228 SF of additional commercial space and 71 residential units. The trip generation projections for the existing conditions is based on industry standard data compiled by the ITE in the 11th edition of the Trip Generation Manual. The residential apartment units were assessed with ITE land use code 220 Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise). ITE considers low-rise to be apartment building with four or fewer floors. Under the full build out condition the commercial space trip generation was calculated using land use code 821: shopping plaza (40-150 k), non-supermarket. For the anticipated build out over the next 10 years land use code 822 strip retail plaza (<40k) was utilized. The results of the trip generation are presented in Table 3.4-12 below. The Average peak parking demand under existing zoning regulations is provided in Table 3.4-13.

Table 3.4-12. Assisted Living Overlay Zone Existing Conditions (Trips)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Daily Weekday Trips |
|-----------------------|-----------|--|----------------------|
| Full Build Out | 71 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise) | 530 |
| | 94,228 SF | 821: Shopping Plaza (40-150k) Non- Supermarket | 6362 Total: 6,892 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 9 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise) | 61 |
| | 8,481 SF | 822: Strip Retail Plaza (<40k) | 588 Total: 649 |

Table 3.4-13. Assisted Living Overlay Zone Existing Conditions (Parking)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Average Peak Parking Demand |
|-----------------------|-----------|--|-----------------------------|
| Full Build Out | 71 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise) | 88 |
| | 94,228 SF | 821: Shopping Plaza (40-150k) Non- Supermarket | 293 Total: 381 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 9 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise) | 11 |
| | 8,481 SF | 822: Strip Retail Plaza (<40k) | 25 Total: 35 |

Future with Action

The Comprehensive Plan recommends the creation of an overlay zone in areas generally along Route 58 near the Peconic Bay Medical Center. This overlay zone would allow for an increase in density for assisted living or continuing care facilities with the use of TDR credits, if sewer infrastructure is in place. In commercial districts along Route 58 (BC and SC), the proposed overlay zone would allow for an increase in FAR from 0.2 to 0.75, with residential capped at 30 beds per acre. In other districts, the proposed overlay zone would allow for a maximum FAR of 0.5 with residential density capped at 15 beds acre. TDR credits for the overlay district would only be required to achieve units beyond what is allowed as-of-right. Based on the modifications it is expected that 267 assisted living units/beds would be added in the next 10 years. The full build out of the Assisted Living Overlay Zone, utilizing the maximum possible TDR credits would add 2,228 beds. The weekday daily trips for the 267 units/beds would result in an increase when compared with the development possible under the existing zoning regulations. However, the full build out of 2,228 units/bed would result in a reduction in trip generation compared to the existing zoning. This is presented in Table 3.4-14 below.

Table 3.4-14. Assisted Living Overlay Zone Proposed/Future Condition (Trips)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Daily Weekday Trips | Difference From Existing |
|-----------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Full Build Out | 2,228 Units | 254: Assisted Living | 5,793 | -1,099 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 267 Units | 254: Assisted Living | 694 | 45 |

Table 3.4-15. Assisted Living Overlay Zone Proposed/Future Condition (Parking)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Average Peak Parking Demand | Difference From Existing |
|-----------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Full Build Out | 2,228 Units | 254: Assisted Living | 891 | 510 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 267 Units | 254: Assisted Living | 107 | 72 |

As shown in Table 3.4-15 above, the average peak parking demand under the proposed zoning is expected to generate more vehicles when compared to the existing zoning.

Insofar as the Future with Action Scenario would result in fewer vehicle trips than the Future without Action scenario, the Future with Action scenario has a beneficial impact when compared to the Future without Action scenario, and no mitigation is required.

Commercial/Residential Campus (CRC)

Future without Action

This area is approximately 40.8 acres of property that is currently located in the Commercial/Residential Campus (CRC) Zoning Use District. Impact of development of the properties would largely be centered on CR58. Based on the current zoning approximately 44 residential units can be constructed if every property is fully developed. It is assumed that only 12% of the potential development would occur in the next few years. Based on the existing regulations that translates to 5.3 residential units. The trip generation for the existing conditions is based on industry standard data compiled by the institute of transportation engineers (ITE) in the 11th edition of the Trip Generation Manual. Based on the allowable uses permitted in the CRC zoning district, land use code 220 Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise) was selected. Accordingly, a full build out of this area under existing conditions is expected to generate 357 daily weekday trips. The assumed build out is expected to generate 36 daily weekday trips. This information is presented below in Table 3.4-16. The average peak parking demand is provided in Table 3.4-17, below.

Table 3.4-16. Commercial/Residential Campus Existing Conditions (Trips)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Daily Weekday Trips |
|-----------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Full Build Out | 44 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise) | 357 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 5.3 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise) | 36 |

Table 3.4-17. Commercial/Residential Campus Existing Conditions (Parking)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Average Peak Parking Demand |
|-----------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Full Build Out | 44 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise) | 55 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 5.3 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise) | 7 |

Future with Action

The Comprehensive Plan proposes an increase in density from one dwelling unit per acre to 4 units per acre, bonusable to 12 units per acre with the use of TDR, provided infrastructure is in place. The analysis for CRC presumes an allowance of 8 units with wastewater infrastructure and an additional 4 units through TDR for a total of 12 units per acre. Acknowledging the limited accessibility to sewer infrastructure for most parcels in this district, it's anticipated that properties would need to implement on-site sewer treatment systems to qualify for the density bonus. Given the costly nature of on-site sewer provisions, it is likely that some properties would be developed at lower densities, at or below 4 units per acre, to standards stipulated by the Suffolk County Department of Health Services for non-sewered areas. These changes would allow for 326 residential units without TDR credits and 489 if all TDR credit are utilized. Table 3.4-18 below, shows the potential increase in trip generation compared to the existing zoning.

Table 3.4-18. Commercial/Residential Campus Proposed/Future Condition (Trips)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Daily Weekday Trips | Difference From Existing |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| No TDR Credits Utilized | | | | |
| Full Build Out | 326 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low Rise) | 2,197 | 1,840 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 43 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low Rise) | 351 | 315 |
| Max TDR Credits Utilized | | | | |
| Full Build Out | 489 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low Rise) | 3,210 | 2,853 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 63 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low Rise) | 425 | 389 |

Table 3.4-19. Commercial/Residential Campus Proposed/Future Condition (Parking)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Average Peak Parking Demand | Difference From Existing |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| No TDR Credits Utilized | | | | |
| Full Build Out | 326 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low Rise) | 399 | 344 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 43 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low Rise) | 54 | 47 |
| Max TDR Credits Utilized | | | | |
| Full Build Out | 489 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low Rise) | 596 | 541 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 63 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low Rise) | 78 | 71 |

Per Table 3.4-19 above the changes in zoning are expected to generate additional parking demand compared to the existing zoning.

As discussed above, the Future with Action Scenario would result in slightly more vehicle trips than the Future without Action scenario. However, the incremental increase (47 trips and 71 parking spaces) is minor and is therefore not likely to result in the need of capacity improvements on adjacent roadways.

Peconic River Community (PRC)

Future without Action

This area is approximately 7.4 acres of property that is currently located in the Peconic River Community Zoning Use District, which lies along the Peconic River and is served by NY25. Based on the current zoning approximately 4 residential units can be constructed if every property is fully developed. It is assumed that only 12% of the potential development would occur in the next few years. Based on the existing regulations that translates to 0.5 residential units. The trip generation for the existing conditions is based on industry standard data compiled by the ITE in the 11th edition of the Trip Generation Manual. Based on the allowable uses permitted in the PRC zoning district, land use code 220 Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise) was selected. Accordingly, a full build out of this area under existing conditions is expected to generate 27 daily weekday trips. The assumed build out in the next 10 years is expected to generate three daily weekday trips. This information is presented in Table 3.4-20 below. The average peak parking demand is provided in Table 3.4-21.

Table 3.4-20. Peconic River Community Existing Conditions (Trips)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Daily Weekday Trips |
|-----------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Full Build Out | 4 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise) | 27 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 0.5 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise) | 3 |

Table 3.4-21. Peconic River Community Existing Conditions (Parking)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Average Peak Parking Demand |
|-----------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Full Build Out | 4 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise) | 5 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 0.5 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise) | 1 |

Future with Action

The Comprehensive Plan proposes an increase in density from one dwelling unit per 2 acres to 4 units per acre, bonusable to 8 units per acre with the use of TDR, provided infrastructure is in place. This would allow for the development of townhouses or garden apartments. None of the existing PRC zones are currently adjacent to sewer infrastructure, therefore, it is unlikely that any existing districts could achieve densities higher than 4 units per acre given the density standards for non-sewered areas established by Suffolk County Department of Health Services. It is acknowledged that development in this district is further controlled by DEC. The increase in density would allow 30 additional residential units if the area is fully developed. The trip generation for this increase as well as the assumed 10 year build out are provided in Table 3.4-22 below.

Table 3.4-22. Peconic River Community Proposed/Future Condition (Trips)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Daily Weekday Trips | Difference From Existing |
|-----------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Full Build Out | 30 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low Rise) | 202 | 175 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 3.6 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low Rise) | 24 | 21 |

Table 3.4-23. Peconic River Community Proposed/Future Condition (Parking)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Average Peak Parking Demand | Difference From Existing |
|-----------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Full Build Out | 30 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low Rise) | 38 | 33 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 3.6 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low Rise) | 5 | 4 |

The changes in zoning are expected to slightly increase the average peak parking demand compared to the existing zoning as shown in Table 3.4-23 above.

As discussed above, the Future with Action Scenario would result in slightly more vehicle trips than the Future without Action scenario. However, the incremental increase (21 trips and 4 parking spaces) is minor and is therefore not likely to result in the need of capacity improvements on adjacent roadways.

Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area Overlay District (RRA-OD)

Future without Action

The RRA-OD district was adopted in 2021 and includes provisions for the use of TDR for community benefits. However, the TDR Map was never formally updated to be consistent with the adoption of RRA-OD. The FAR

under the existing zoning regulations ranges from 2 to 3 dependent on the size of the lot and whether or not certain community benefits would be provided. Based on the layout of the existing lots it is assumed that multiple lots would be merged into multiple larger developments, which would allow the properties to be developed at the higher density. Based on the existing as of right zoning approximately 210 residential units (assuming 1000 sf per unit) can be developed. The trip generation for the existing conditions is based on industry standard data compiled by the institute of transportation engineers (ITE) in the 11th edition of the Trip Generation Manual. For the potential 210 residential units land use code 220 Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise) was selected. The 210 apartments are expected to generate 1421 weekday daily trips, as seen in Table 3.4-24 below. The average peak parking is provided in Table 3.4-25.

Table 3.4-24. Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area Overlay District Existing Conditions (Trips)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Daily Weekday Trips |
|----------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Full Build Out | 210 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise) | 1,421 |

Table 3.4-25. Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area Overlay District Existing Conditions (Parking)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Average Peak Parking Demand |
|----------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Full Build Out | 210 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low-Rise) | 258 |

Future with Action

This district was adopted in 2021 and includes provisions for the use of TDR for community benefits. However, the TDR Map was never formally updated to be consistent with the adoption of RRA-OD. The build-out considers the potential use of TDR credits on remaining soft sites in this area. RRA-OD provides for the use of a variety of different means, or “community benefits” to achieve additional floor area. One such community benefit is the preservation of open space or agriculture through the purchase of TDR credits. The Town Code allows the use of TDR credits in the RRA-OD with the following requirements. For projects on sites that meet the minimum size of 20,000 square feet, the developer can apply up to five TDR credits, each providing a bonus of 3,000 square feet. For projects on sites larger than 60,000 square feet, a developer can apply up to ten TDR credits, each providing a bonus of 3,000 square feet. No sites greater than 60,000 square feet were identified for potential development in the RRA-OD, even when the parcels were combined. The cumulative result would be an additional 30,000 square feet of built area in the RRA-OD and the application of a total of ten TDR credits. If these developments are residential, and assuming a residential unit is approximately 1,000 square feet, the build out in the RRA-OD with TDR credits could result in an additional 30 residential units. The additional residential units would generate additional trips compared as seen in Table 3.4-26.

Table 3.4-26. Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area Overlay District Proposed/Future Condition (Trips)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Daily Weekday Trips | Difference From Existing |
|----------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Full Build Out | 240 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low Rise) | 1,614 | 193 |

Table 3.4-27. Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area Overlay District Proposed/Future Condition (Parking)

| Condition | Size | ITE Land Use Code / Description | Average Peak Parking Demand | Difference From Existing |
|----------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Full Build Out | 240 Units | 220: Multifamily Housing (Low Rise) | 295 | 37 |

The changes in zoning are expected to slightly increase the average peak parking demand compared to the existing zoning as shown in Table 3.4-27 above.

As discussed above, the Future with Action Scenario would result in slightly more vehicle trips than the Future without Action scenario. However, the incremental increase (193 trips and 37 parking spaces) is minor and is therefore not likely to result in the need of capacity improvements on adjacent roadways.

Summary

From an overall perspective, considering a full build out of all of the changes to the zoning regulations are expected to reduce the number of trips (-2,318 trips) assuming that the maximum number of TDR credits are utilized. A summary table of the differences between the expected trip generation from the existing zoning regulations compared to the proposed zoning changes is presented in Table 3.4-28. Respectively, the differences in parking generation are presented in Table 3.4-29.

Table 3.4-28. Full Build Out Existing Vs Proposed (Trips)

| Condition | CI | LI | AL-OD | CRC | PRC | RRA-OD | Total |
|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|------------|------------|---------------|
| Existing Full Build Out | 8,753 | 9,048 | 6,892 | 357 | 27 | 1,421 | 26,498 |
| Proposed Full Build Out | 6,575 | 6,786 | 5,793 | 3,210 | 202 | 1,614 | 24,180 |
| Change | -2,178 | -2,262 | -1,099 | 2,853 | 175 | 193 | -2,318 |

Table 3.4-29. Full Build Out Existing Vs Proposed (Parking)

| Condition | CI | LI | AL-OD | CRC | PRC | RRA-OD | Total |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Existing Full Build Out | 2,041 | 1,752 | 381 | 55 | 5 | 258 | 4,492 |
| Proposed Full Build Out | 1,531 | 1,314 | 891 | 596 | 38 | 295 | 4,665 |
| Change | -510 | -438 | 510 | 541 | 33 | 37 | 173 |

The anticipated development over the next 10 years is based on growth projections provided by NYMTC (New York Metropolitan Transportation Council) specifically tailored to reflect the unique growth dynamics of the town. Accordingly, residential development is expected to increase by 9% and commercial / industrial development is expected to increase by 12%. The proposed changes in zoning are expected to generate 56 additional trips over the next 10 years as shown in Table 3.4-30. Additionally, the average parking demand is expected to increase by 61 vehicles over the next 10 years, this information is depicted in Table 3.4-31.

Table 3.4-30. Anticipated Build Out Existing Vs Proposed (Trips)

| Condition | CI | LI | AL-OD | CRC | PRC | RRA-OD | Total |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|------------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| Existing Full Build Out | 823 | 814 | 649 | 36 | 3 | N/A | 2,325 |
| Proposed Full Build Out | 627 | 611 | 694 | 425 | 24 | N/A | 2,381 |
| Change | -196 | -203 | 45 | 389 | 21 | 0 | 56 |

Table 3.4-31. Anticipated Build Out Existing Vs Proposed (Parking)

| Condition | CI | LI | AL-OD | CRC | PRC | RRA-OD | Total |
|-------------------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Existing Full Build Out | 184 | 158 | 35 | 7 | 1 | N/A | 385 |
| Proposed Full Build Out | 138 | 118 | 107 | 78 | 5 | N/A | 446 |
| Change | -46 | -40 | 72 | 71 | 4 | 0 | 61 |

As a result of the zoning changes proposed by the plan there is not expected to be a significant impact during the 10 years or during a full build out over the next 30 years.

3.4.3. Mitigation Measures

As the zoning changes proposed by the plan would only generate a minimal amount of traffic in the near term and would actually result in reduced traffic demand over the long term, no mitigation measures specific to the changes in zoning are considered necessary. Similarly, the public transportation system has ample capacity to accommodate demand under either scenario.

3.5. Community Facilities, Open Space, Parks, and Recreation

The following sets forth an examination of community facilities, open space, parks, and recreational resources within Riverhead. The potential impacts that could occur as a result of the adoption of the Riverhead Comprehensive Plan Update ("Comprehensive Plan") are explored, and any necessary mitigation measures needed to mitigate potential impacts are identified.

3.5.1. Existing Conditions

A summary of the existing community facilities, open space, parks, and recreation conditions is given below. For a more detailed overview of existing conditions, refer to Chapters 8 and 10 of the Draft 2024 Comprehensive Plan.³⁸

3.5.1.1. Community Facilities

Community facilities, including Town-owned facilities, public safety facilities, community centers, libraries, healthcare institutions, and schools are described in this section and their locations mapped in Figure 3.5-1.

Municipal Facilities and Services

In 2023, Riverhead moved its Town Hall to a downtown location on Second Street. The Justice Court is anticipated to move from the building it shared with the Police Department at 210 Howell Avenue into the former Town Hall building at 200 Howell Avenue. Other Town facilities include Town Hall West at 1295 Pulaski Street, the Highway Department, Municipal Garages, and the Parks and Recreation Department shown in Figure 3.5-1. In addition, the Town-owned Henry Pfeiffer Building, located on Grumman Boulevard, is leased to a non-profit organization, East End Disabilities; The Town thus has discretion to determine its future use and potential long-term plans.

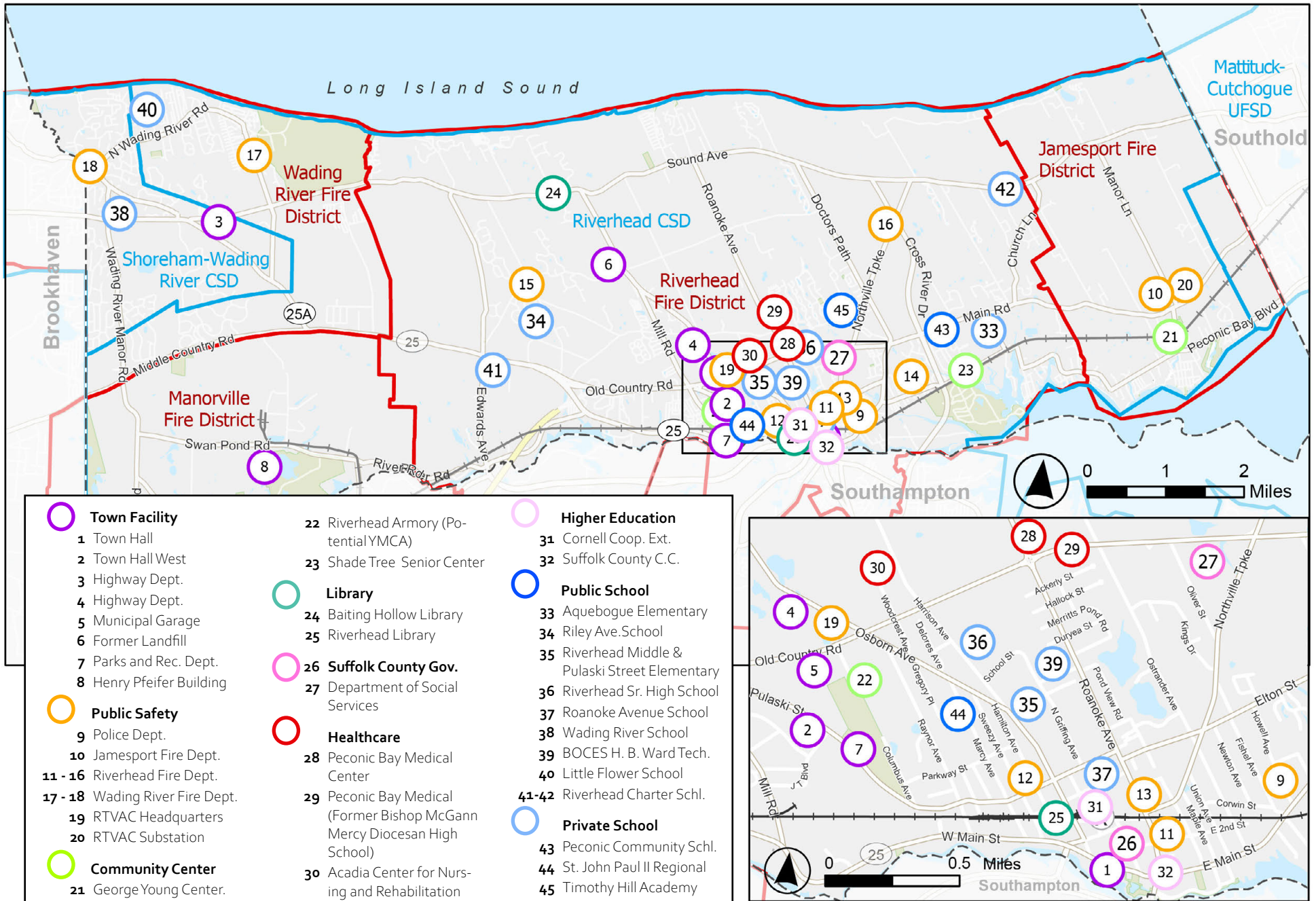
Public Safety

As part of the Comprehensive Plan process, the Town reached out to the Town's service providers. Correspondence related to this coordination can be found in DGEIS Appendix 4.

Police Department

The Police Department serves an essential role in public safety and crime prevention and is also involved with many public service efforts. According to the Department, crime and overall police calls decreased during the pandemic. The crime rate is low and has been improving over time. The most prevalent crimes are minor offenses, such as larceny, petty larceny, and criminal mischief.

³⁸ The Draft 2024 Comprehensive Plan can be found here:
<https://townofriverheadcomprehensiveplanupdate.com/>



As of 2023, the Police Department consists of 95 Full Time Sworn Officers and 16 dispatchers. Expansion of the police force and staff is planned for 2024 and anticipated in the future as Riverhead's population and call volume grow. The Department has the following divisions and bureaus: Patrol, Detective, Juvenile Aid, School Resource, Marine and Fire Investigations. The Police Department anticipates expanding into the former Justice Court on Howell Avenue in 2024.

Emergency Response

Riverhead's emergency response section on its website provides a general guide for residents in times of crisis.

Suffolk County's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) oversees the County's reaction to both natural and human-made crises. OEM staff handle the creation of the Comprehensive All-Hazards Emergency Management Plan; run the County's Emergency Operation Center (EOC); and collaborate with local, state, and federal authorities on shelter management, resource planning, and emergency response and recovery efforts.

The New York State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) addresses hazard mitigation planning and risk assessment to reduce vulnerabilities and enhance preparedness; outlines the state's policies, authorities, and organizational structure for immediate emergency response; and focuses on long-term recovery efforts to restore and rebuild communities affected by disasters for sustained resilience.

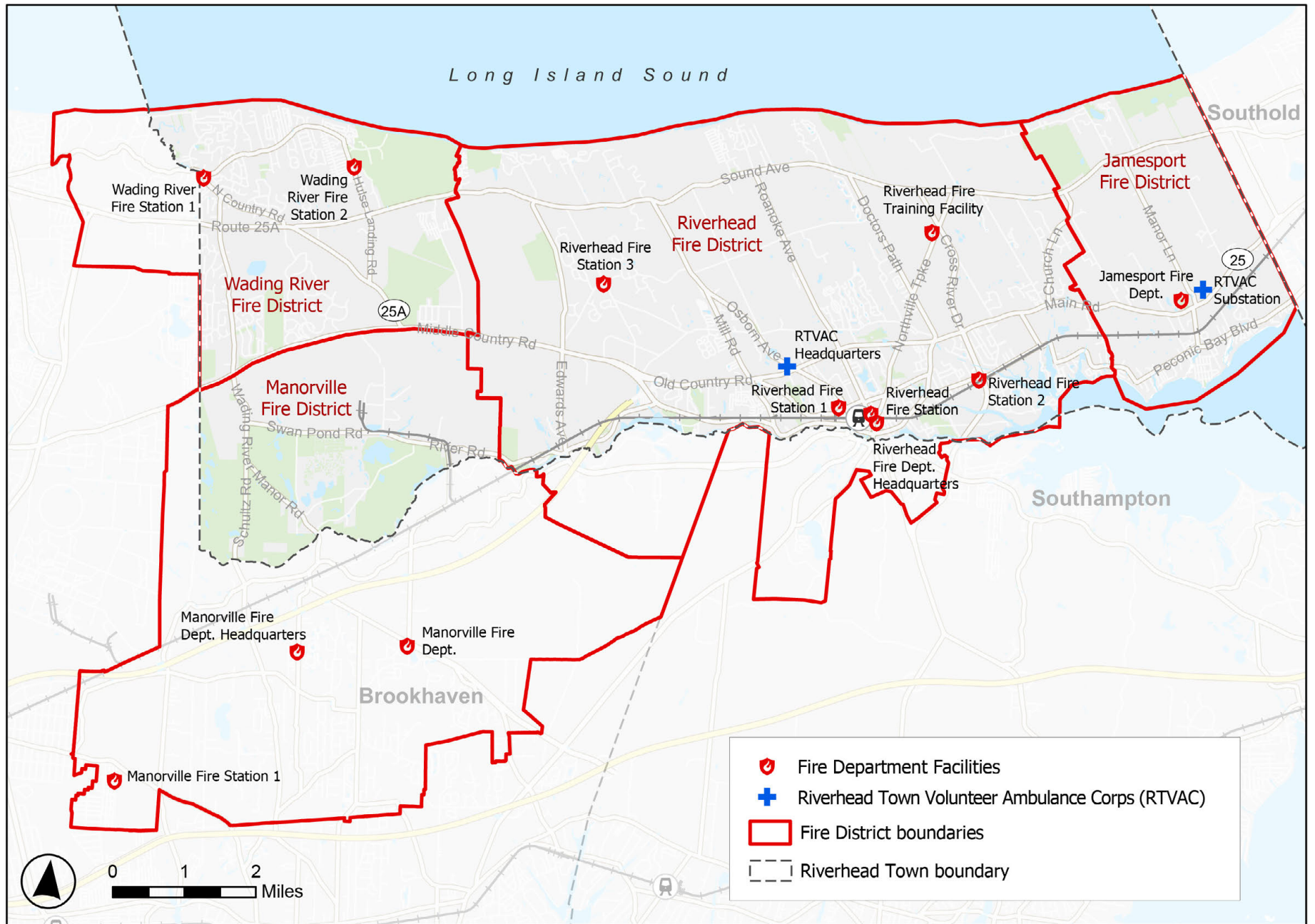
Fire Protection

Four fire districts serve Riverhead: Jamesport, Riverhead, Wading River, and Manorville (See Figure 3.5-2). Each fire district may have multiple stations to ensure adequate response time and service, and each has a budget funded through tax collection in the corresponding district, donations, and grants on occasion.

All fire districts are volunteer and do not have career firefighters. Because of dwindling human resources, especially daytime volunteers, fire districts have formed mutual agreements to share resources during staff shortages. Fire districts have been actively recruiting volunteers and working on recruitment and retention programs.

Ambulance

Wading River Fire District provides ambulance service within its district. In other areas of Riverhead, the Riverhead Town Volunteer Ambulance Corps (RTVAC) operates as a volunteer ambulance department and responds to around 5,500 emergency medical assistance calls annually. RTVAC maintains its headquarters on Osborn Avenue and operates a substation in Jamesport (see Figure 3.5-2). The organization relies heavily on donations to sustain its operations.



Community Centers

George Young Community Center

The George Young Community Center, once the Jamesport School, now serves as a venue for various events and activities. Rooms are available for rent for public and private events. The Town invested \$10,000 in CDBG funds to improve the center's Honor Garden, incorporating walkways and a gazebo, to honor Riverhead's veterans. The Recreation Department also introduced new playgrounds at the center and recently replaced its aging historic cupola.

Shade Tree Senior Center and Senior Services

Riverhead's Senior Citizen Department offers a comprehensive range of programs and services for older residents at 60 Shade Tree Lane in Aquebogue. The center provides various amenities, including a dining room, kitchen, auditorium, and activity rooms. Other Senior Citizen Department services include:

- **Dial-A-Ride:** Transportation within Riverhead for grocery shopping, banking, and medical appointments. Reservations must be made in advance. The service is funded by the Town and Suffolk County Office of the Aging.
- **Home Aide:** Light housekeeping, shopping, laundry, and errands for eligible seniors. Funded by the Town, eligibility is determined through an assessment by the County Department for Aging, and fees are based on a sliding scale.
- **Meals on Wheels:** Hot noontime meals delivered to homebound seniors or those unable to cook for themselves. Eligibility for meal delivery requires an in-home assessment by Senior Citizen Department staff.
- **Residential Repair:** Minor home repairs for Riverhead homeowners at no labor cost, with payment only for materials.

Riverhead Armory

The Armory Building next to Stotzky Park on Route 58 previously housed Parks and Recreation Department programs such as indoor basketball and tennis. Currently, the Police Department is using it for storage. The feasibility of repurposing the property for the YMCA is under study; however, for the facility needs extensive and costly renovations (and possible asbestos remediation). There is also an impediment related to the State's deed, which requires that the property be used by the Police Department, Justice Court, or Town-operated recreational programs, thereby limiting use by a private entity.

Libraries

Riverhead Free Library

Riverhead Free Library offers traditional material borrowing, digital media access, classes and activities, and technology literacy programs. It also hosts community services such as health screenings and counseling.

The library underwent a renovation following the last comprehensive plan and secured a grant for an exterior walkway. Additionally, the library secured a \$25,000 grant to restore the historic Perkins Carriage House, known as the Yellow Barn, a Town-designated landmark, and received \$215,000 from the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) for a new entrance and welcome center at the library building. The Yellow Barn operates seasonally as a bookstore managed by Friends of the Library, with proceeds supporting the library's operations.

Since the last comprehensive plan in 2003, the library's patronage has grown from approximately 33,000 to 41,000 patrons. Additional expansions and facilities to accommodate the growth are considered in this plan.

Baiting Hollow Free Library

The Baiting Hollow Free Library, established in 1903, joined the Suffolk Cooperative Library System in 1972. The library operates on Thursdays and Saturdays for limited hours, providing book lending and a public computer.

County Facilities

Riverhead is the County Seat of Suffolk County, with the County's government offices, courts, and other offices located downtown. Suffolk County Department of Social Services also has an office on Route 58.

Social Services

Suffolk County Social Services and private institutions mainly provide social services for Riverhead. Some notable social-service organizations include the Riverhead Family Center, Maureen's Haven, Long Island Cares, The Retreat, and East End Hospice. These organizations provide crucial support in housing, food assistance, healthcare, and mental health services.

Health Care

Peconic Bay Medical Center

Peconic Bay Medical Center (PBMC) is the largest hospital in eastern Suffolk County and the eastern hub of Northwell Health, the largest healthcare organization in New York State. With a focus on orthopedics, women's health, and heart care, PBMC is a critical contributor to the regional healthcare infrastructure. It is also one of the largest employers on Long Island.

To address the growing demand for critical care due to population growth, PBMC is expanding its emergency department by 6,600 square feet. Renamed the Poole Family Trauma & Emergency Center after a \$5 million donation, the expansion includes a 75% increase in capacity, a new trauma unit, advanced cardiac technology, and enhanced radiology. The hospital also acquired the former Mercy High School property and is envisioning future development there.

Acadia Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation

The Acadia Center, previously known as Riverhead Care Center, has provided skilled nursing services to Long Island's East End for over four decades and is committed to providing person-centered care in a home-like environment.

Higher Education

The Eastern Campus of Suffolk County Community College and Cornell Cooperative Suffolk County Extension are in Riverhead. These institutions offer associate degrees, vocational training, workforce development initiatives, and continuing education opportunities. Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County also provides various community-based educational programs and resources in agriculture, horticulture, health education, youth development, environmental initiatives, and community outreach.

Schools

Riverhead has three school districts (See Figure 3.5-3). Riverhead Central School District (Riverhead CSD) encompasses most of the Town and portions of Southampton and Brookhaven. Geographically, it is the largest school district in Suffolk County. Some areas of the western side of Town are in the Shoreham-Wading River

Central School District (Shoreham-Wading River CSD), while some areas on the eastern side of Town are in the Mattituck-Cutchogue Union Free School District (Mattituck-Cutchogue UFSD). New York State Education Department (NYSED) provides annual data on enrollment, student demographics, academic achievement, and financial reports, and is the source of all data in this section.³⁹ Riverhead CSD is much larger than either of the other school districts (See Figure 3.5-4 and Table 3.5-1). Enrollment has notably grown (14% from 2005-2023) in the Riverhead CSD, while in the other two school districts, it has fallen substantially (Shoreham-Wading River CSD by -26% and Mattituck-Cutchogue UFSD by -37%) during the same period.

Enrollment in the Riverhead CSD declined by 6% from its peak in 2020 (5,829 students) to 2022 (5,480 students).

In Mattituck-Cutchogue UFSD, Enrollment peaked in 2008 (1,590 students) and has declined by 37% (1,000 students in 2022).

With 1,993 students enrolled in 2022, the Shoreham-Wading River CSD has seen a 29% decrease in enrollment from its peak in 2008 (2,816 students).

³⁹ New York State Education Department, 2023 <https://data.nysed.gov/>

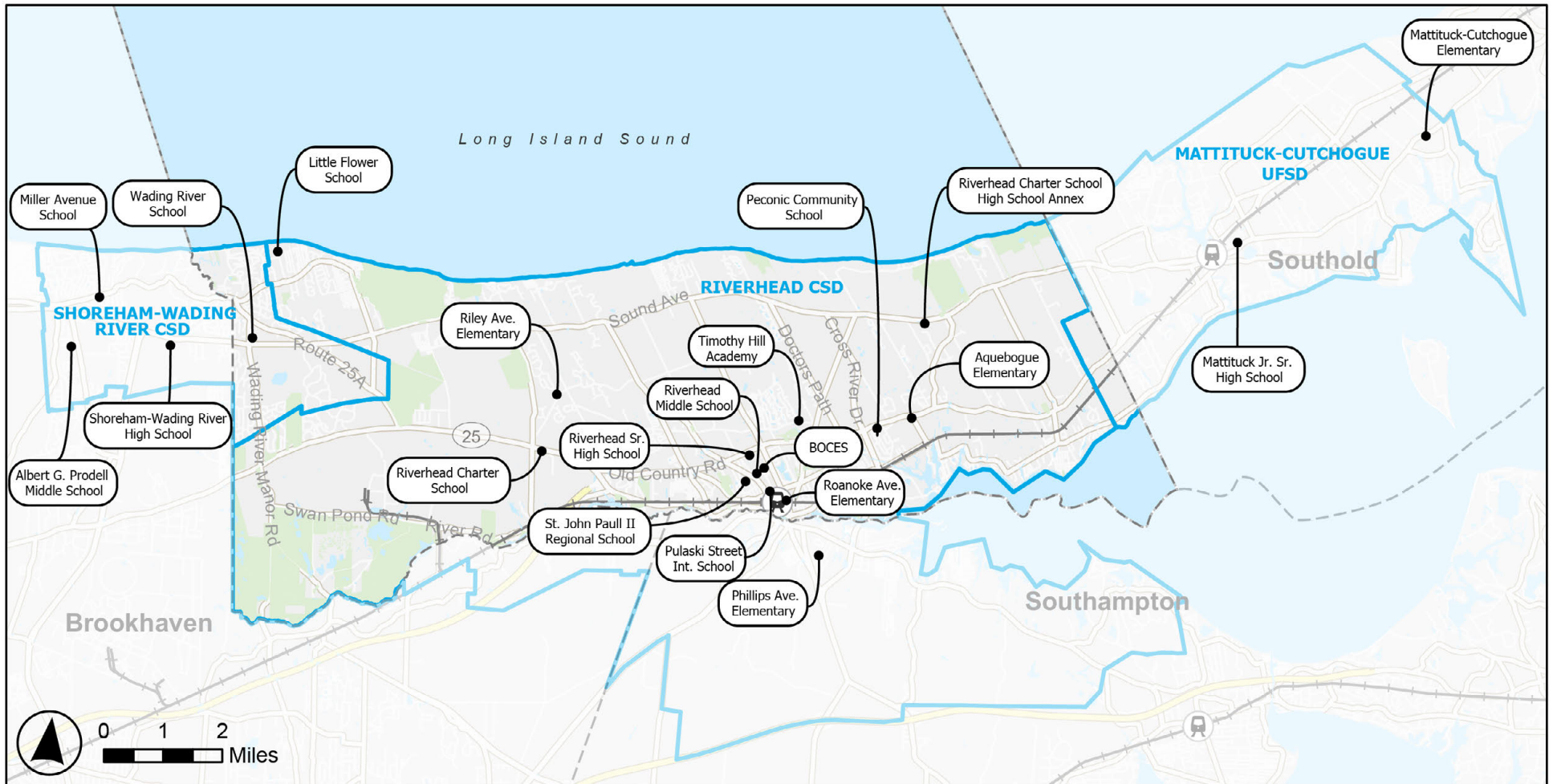


Figure 3.5-4. K-12 Enrollment (2002-2022)

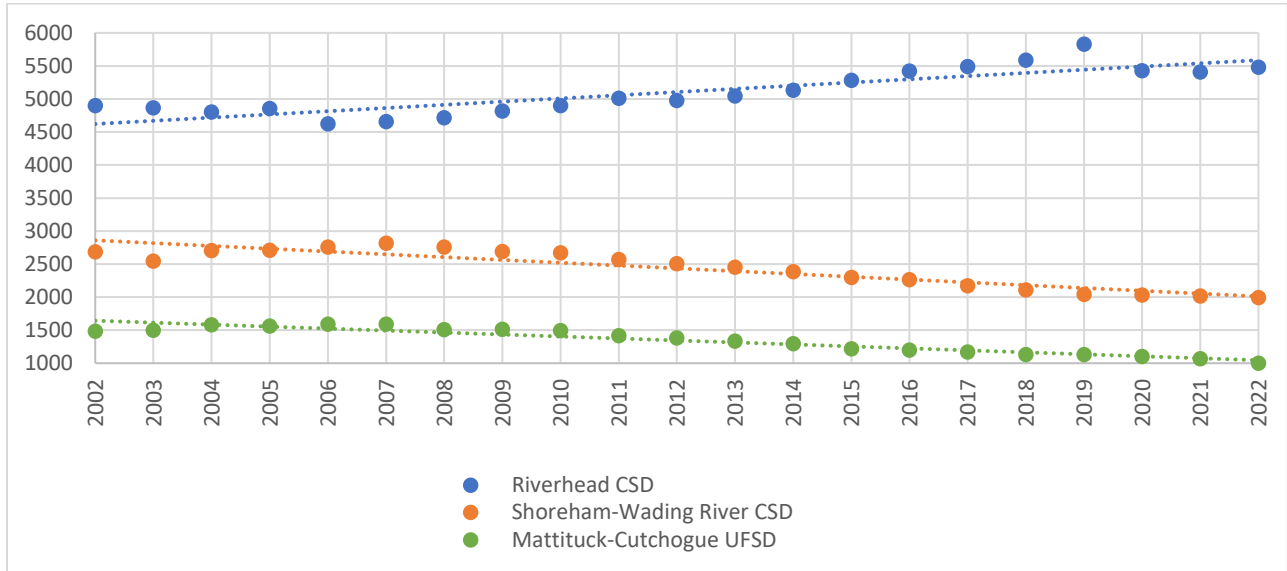
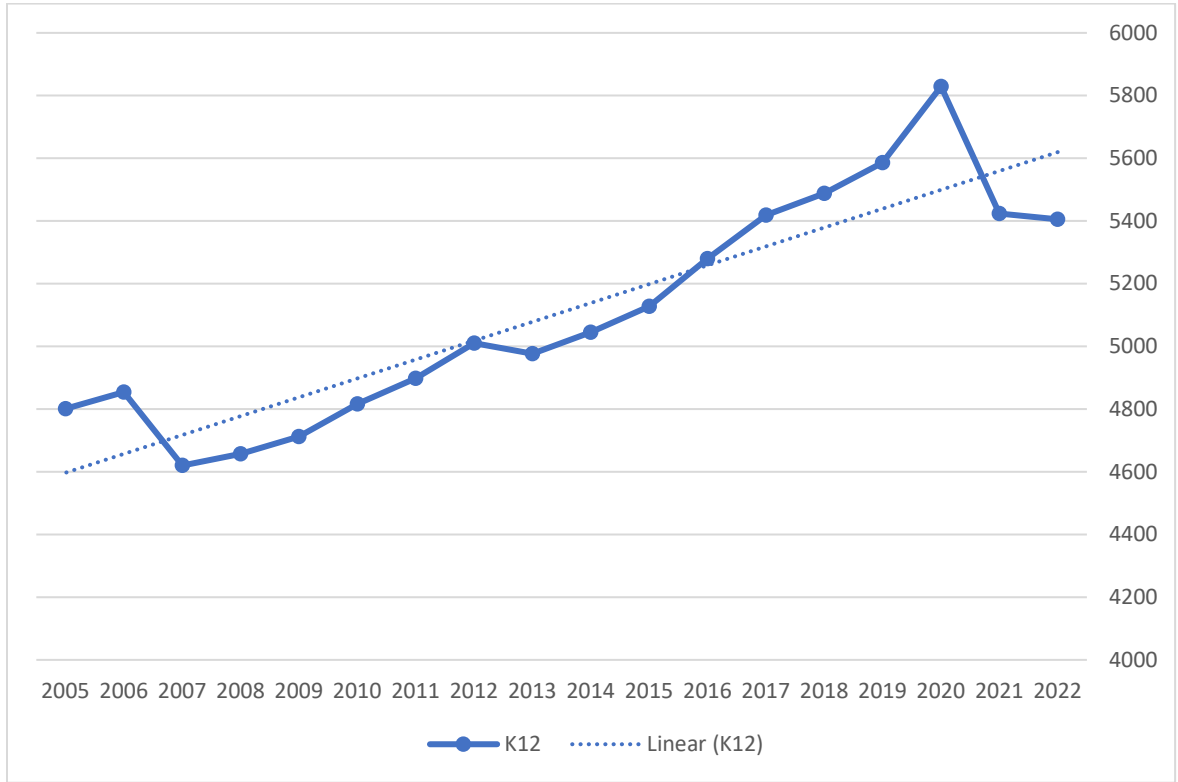


Table 3.5-1. K-12 Enrollment (2002-2022)

| YEAR | Riverhead CSD | Shoreham-Wading River CSD | Mattituck-Cutchoque UFSD |
|------|---------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2022 | 5,480 | 1,993 | 1,000 |
| 2021 | 5,405 | 2,016 | 1,066 |
| 2020 | 5,424 | 2,030 | 1,101 |
| 2019 | 5,829 | 2,039 | 1,128 |
| 2018 | 5,586 | 2,106 | 1,128 |
| 2017 | 5,488 | 2,170 | 1,167 |
| 2016 | 5,419 | 2,264 | 1,197 |
| 2015 | 5,280 | 2,296 | 1,216 |
| 2014 | 5,128 | 2,386 | 1,293 |
| 2013 | 5,045 | 2,452 | 1,334 |
| 2012 | 4,977 | 2,505 | 1,380 |
| 2011 | 5,010 | 2,570 | 1,413 |
| 2010 | 4,898 | 2,668 | 1,492 |
| 2009 | 4,816 | 2,687 | 1,514 |
| 2008 | 4,712 | 2,758 | 1,505 |
| 2007 | 4,657 | 2,816 | 1,590 |
| 2006 | 4,620 | 2,757 | 1,588 |
| 2005 | 4,854 | 2,708 | 1,561 |
| 2004 | 4,801 | 2,702 | 1,581 |
| 2003 | 4,862 | 2,542 | 1,495 |
| 2002 | 4,897 | 2,686 | 1,485 |

Source: New York State Education Department, 2024. <https://data.nysed.gov/>

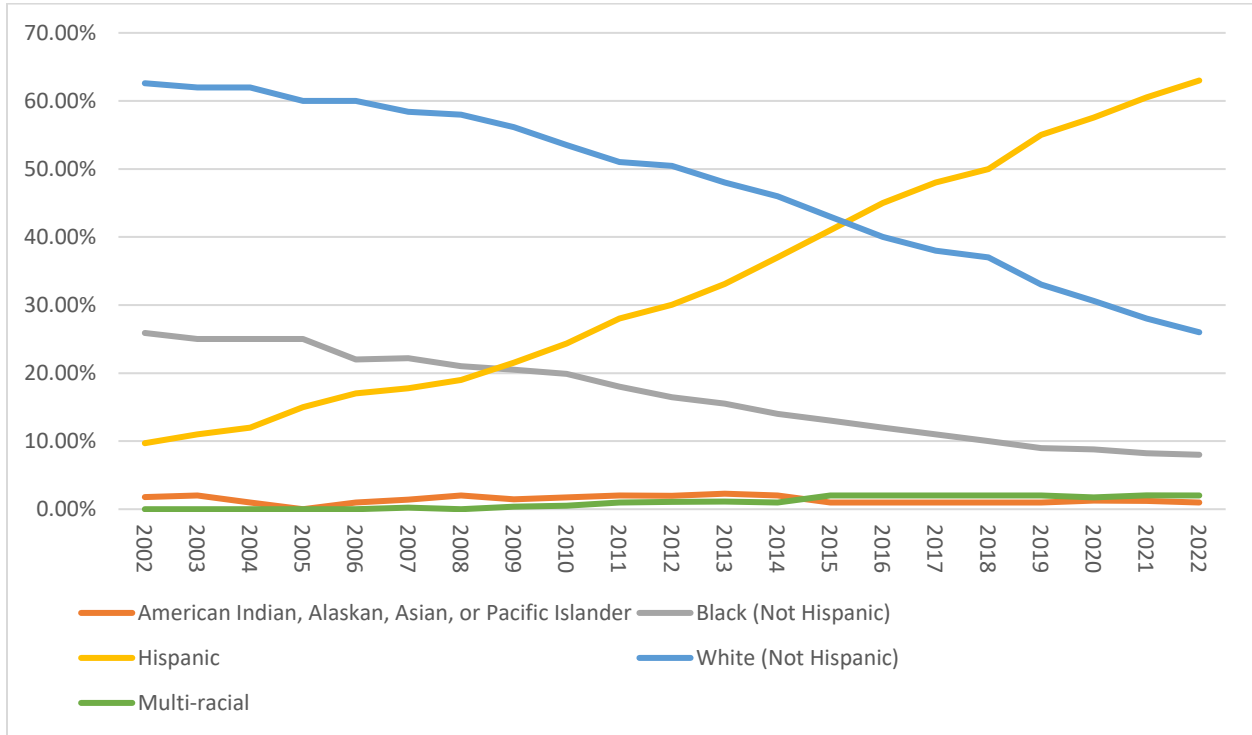
Figure 3.5-5. K-12 Enrollment Riverhead CSD



Source: New York State Education Department, 2024. <https://data.nysed.gov/>

Riverhead has a significantly higher percentage (63%) of Hispanic students enrolled than the County (38%), the State (29%) and neighboring school districts (Shoreham Wading River 11%, and Mattituck-Cutchogue 24%). The demographics of the Riverhead CSD have changed significantly over the past 20 years. Enrollment data between 2002 and 2022, shown in Figure 3.5-5, shows that the Hispanic student population increased from 10% of enrollment (475 students) to 63% of enrollment (3,433 students). At the same time, the Black or African American (non-Hispanic) student population has declined from about 26% of enrollment (1,267 students) to 8% of enrollment (450 students). In the same period, the white (non-Hispanic) student population also declined from 63% of enrollment (3,067 students) to 26% of enrollment (1,432 students).

Figure 3.5-6. K-12 Enrollment Percentage of Race and Ethnicity (2002 – 2022)



Source: New York State Education Department, 2024. <https://data.nysed.gov/>

Several indicators show that Riverhead CSD has more student needs than the other two school districts, the and compared with the County and the State. As of the 2022-23 school year, 37% of Riverhead CSD students qualify as English language learners, 62% are economically disadvantaged, and 4% are homeless. In the 2021-2022 school year, 50% of students were eligible for free lunch. Riverhead CSD’s average class sizes are also generally larger than their counterparts in Shoreham-Wading River CSD and Mattituck-Cutchogue UFSD. Riverhead CSD has significantly higher percentages in many of the categories in Table 3.5-2.

Table 3.5-2. Student Enrollment Statistics (2022-2023 School Year)

| | Enrollment | English Language Learners | Students with Disabilities | Economically Disadvantaged | Migrants | Homeless | Free School Lunch* |
|----------------------------------|------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------|----------|--------------------|
| Riverhead CSD | 5,480 | 37% | 17% | 62% | 2% | 4% | 50% |
| Shoreham-Wading River CSD | 1,993 | 1% | 17% | 6% | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| Mattituck-Cutchogue UFSD | 1,000 | 11% | 18% | 31% | 3% | 2% | 30% |
| Suffolk County | 2,188,77 | 13% | 17% | 44% | 0% | 1% | NA |
| New York State | 2,422,494 | 10% | 19% | 58% | NA | NA | NA |

*2021-2022 School Year, 2022-2023 School Year data not available

Source: New York State Education Department, 2024. <https://data.nysed.gov/>

According to the adopted budget for the Riverhead CSD, the total adopted budget for the 2022-2023 school year is \$115,220,267 (including Administrative, Program and Capital Components; excluding \$54,530,029 in New York State aid). According to the School District, with a current enrollment of 5,480 students, total budgeted expenditures per pupil are therefore approximately \$21,026. The cost per pupil in the Mattituck-Cutchoque UFSD is approximately \$39,879 and approximately \$34,144 per pupil in the Shoreham-Wading River CSD as shown in Table 3.5-3. This is a very conservative estimate of the cost to educate a school child as it does not discount for fixed costs relating to overall administration, capital costs, debt service, etc.; these costs do not relate to actual costs that would be incurred to educate additional school children.

Table 3.5-3. Cost to Educate Per Pupil

| School District | 2022-2023 Budget | State Aid | Enrollment (# of students) | Cost Per Pupil |
|---------------------------|------------------|---------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| Riverhead CSD | \$ 169,750,296 | \$ 54,530,029 | 5,480 | \$ 21,026 |
| Mattituck-Cutchoque UFSD | \$ 42,829,297 | \$ 2,950,000 | 1,000 | \$ 39,879 |
| Shoreham-Wading River CSD | \$ 83,002,107 | \$ 14,952,657 | 1,993 | \$ 34,144 |

School Facilities

Riverhead CSD, Shoreham-Wading River CSD, and Mattituck-Cutchoque UFSD have five-year strategic, or facilities plans that include goals for capital improvements.⁴⁰ However, these plans do not indicate anticipated expansions of new facilities within the Town of Riverhead.

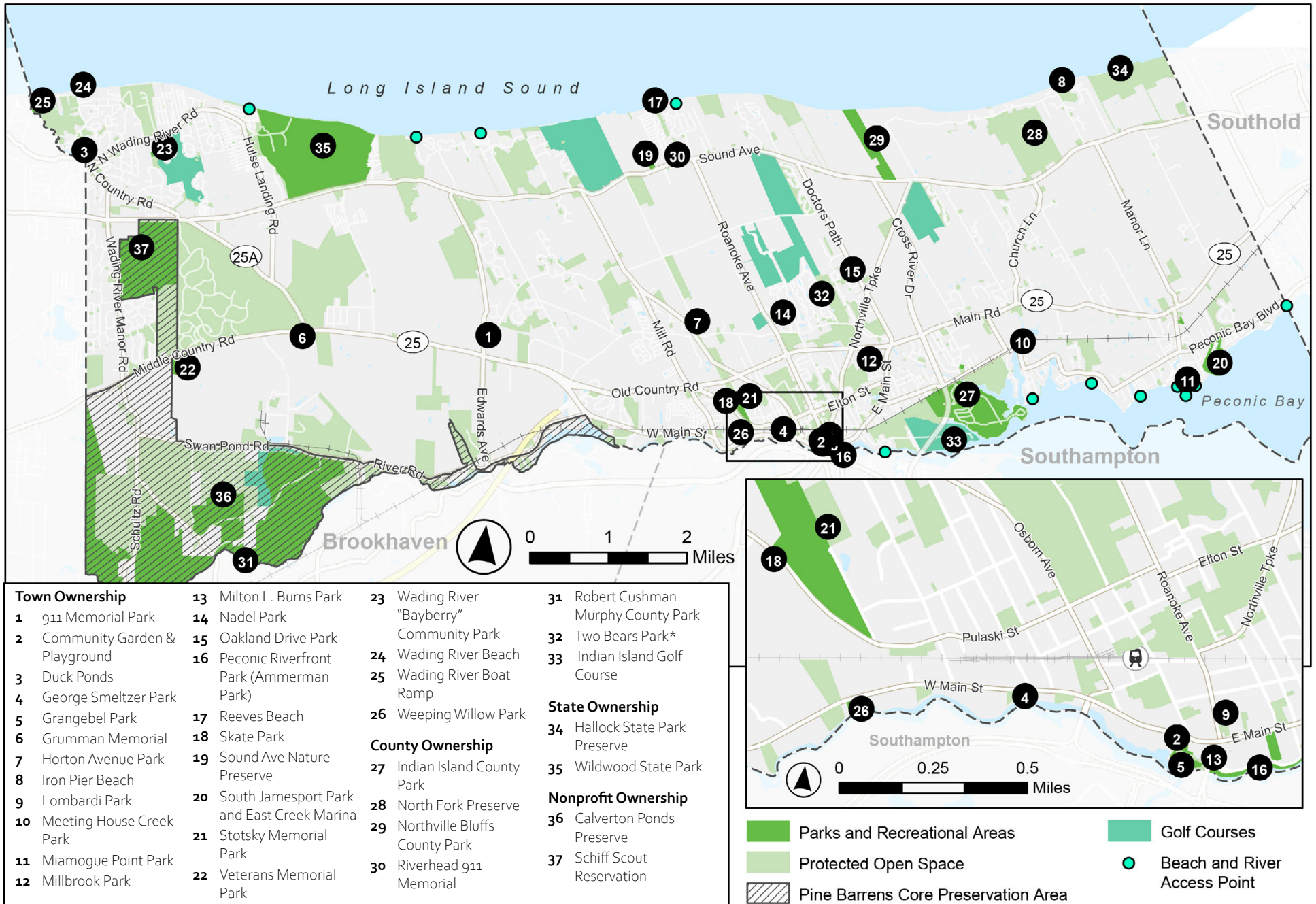
3.5.1.2. Parks and Open Space

Riverhead has 26 parks, over 150 acres of Town-owned parkland, and a dozen public waterfront access points (see Figure 3.5-7). These resources include neighborhood parks, sports amenities, memorials, and beaches. Neighborhood parks, such as Horton Avenue Park, Unity Drive Park, Millbrook Gables Park, and Two Bears Park, offer basketball courts, grill and picnic areas, and playgrounds. Grangebelle Park, also known as Milton Burns Park, is a picturesque riverside destination in historic downtown Riverhead. Grumman Memorial Park and World Trade Center Memorial offer places of quiet reflection. The Town has three public beaches on Long Island Sound, Wading River Beach, Reeves Beach, and Iron Pier Beach.

⁴⁰ RSCD Strategic Plan, July 2022, <https://www.riverhead.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/RCSD-Strategic-Plan-July-2022-final.pdf>

http://www.swrschools.org/Assets/District/062719-621_Strategic_Plan.pdf

https://files.smartsites.parentsquare.com/3594/5_year_facilities_plan_december_2021.pdf



Parks and Recreation Department

Riverhead Parks and Recreation Department conducts annual inspections of all its parks and recreational facilities to assess their needs, and annually reviews and revises the Town's Parks and Recreation Department five-year capital plan. Proactively staying ahead of trends, the department engages in meetings with other towns, conducts research, and seeks feedback from Riverhead residents.

In an effort to enhance accessibility and streamline processes for Town residents, the Department actively explores new technologies. This includes facilitating easier access to permits, schedules, and activity sign-ups. The integration of social media has become indispensable for the Department, serving as a vital tool for connecting with Town residents.

Adopt-a-Park Program

This program serves as a platform to actively engage the community in preserving the cleanliness and appeal of Riverhead's parks and beaches. Residents, resident groups, and organizations are encouraged to "adopt" specific sections within these recreational areas. Adopters commit to conducting litter and debris cleanup, promptly reporting any safety concerns or maintenance needs, and engaging in manual labor activities. While routine inspections and maintenance are carried out by the Parks and Buildings & Grounds Departments, adopting groups and individuals provide additional care and attention to these locations.

Suffolk County Parks

Riverhead has six parks and one golf course owned by the County. Indian Island County Park is a 275-acre estuarine park at the mouth of the Peconic River that offers campgrounds, beaches, and hiking trails. The Robert Cushman Murphy County Park provides hiking trails in the unique ecosystem of the Central Pine Barrens. The Peconic Riverfront Park provides scenic river views and recreational areas. Other County parks include Northville Bluffs County Park, the North Fork Preserve and the public golf course at Indian Island.

New York State Parks

There are two State parks: Wildwood State Park and Hallock State Park. Wildwood State Park, located in Wading River, spans over 600 acres and offers campsites, hiking and biking trails, and beachfront access to Long Island Sound. The Hallock State Park Preserve land was acquired by the State from KeySpan Energy in 2002 and opened to the public in 2017 after over 15 years of conservation and planning work. It comprises approximately 220 acres in Northville and primarily serves as a nature preserve while offering public trails and a beach.

Golf Courses

Riverhead has eight privately-owned golf and country clubs that provide outdoor recreational space. Both 18-hole and 9-hole courses are available. These include Cherry Creek Links / The Woods at Cherry Creek, Long Island National Golf Club, Swan Lake Golf Club, Baiting Hollow Golf Club, The Rock Golf Club, Friar's Head, Sandy Pond Links, and the Vineyards Golf and Country Club.

A ninth private golf course, Calverton Links, closed in 2013 and has been redeveloped as a solar farm. Golf continues to be a popular sport that attracts visitors to Riverhead, and it seems unlikely that additional courses would close in the near term. Most golf courses in the Town are in residentially zoned areas that would require cluster subdivisions with open space set-asides if they were to be redeveloped.

Open Space Preservation

Because of Riverhead's precious natural features and rich agricultural lands, many programs and regulations have been implemented to preserve open space permanently. These are meant to protect significant natural areas, farmland, and community character while providing open space and recreational opportunities, protecting water and wildlife, and ensuring long-term agricultural production. Zones in Riverhead, including the Open Space Conservation District (OSC), Natural Resources Protection (NRP), and Riverfront Corridor District (RFC), have been designated to further these goals. The primary means of open space preservation in Riverhead include public and nonprofit ownership of properties, conservation easements, and cluster development set-asides. Land preserved as open spaces or parks in Riverhead is shown in Figure 3.5-7.

Community Preservation Fund

Riverhead set up a \$72 million bond against future revenues to enable the preservation of key properties. However, the Town's opportunity to purchase development rights, acquire land, or invest in other eligible properties with CPF funds is limited by the repayment of the bond indebtedness. As of January 1, 2023, the remaining debt payments, including interest, are approximately \$20 million. The bond is expected to be paid off by 2030.

As of 2021, the Town has invested \$22,000,000 in purchasing open space parcels using CPF funds and has successfully preserved about 300 acres of open space.⁴¹ A list of properties protected with CPF funds is included in the CPF Plan.

The 2021 CPF Plan prioritized open space to be protected and recommended the best method to do so. Various data, including NYS DEC Open Space Plan priority status, Regional Aquifer Protection Land Acquisition Program criteria, Suffolk County priority list, wetlands status, Pine Barrens preservation boundaries, and other fragile environmental statuses, are used to prioritize land for preservation.

The Open Space Committee established a parcel ranking system to evaluate open space for preservation, considering State and federally designated rare, endangered, threatened, and special concern species habitats, rivers, water bodies, floodplains, critical environment areas, Peconic Estuary Partnership (PEP)-identified areas to protect and restore the Peconic estuary and watershed, and at-risk properties identified in PEP's Climate Vulnerability Assessment.⁴²

Ownership

About a third of Riverhead's CPF funds have been used to purchase open space parcels through fee-simple acquisition. These parcels are owned by the Town and can be used for recreation or conservation. The Town may also acquire land through a land donation or grants. For example, New York Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) funding was used to preserve the Miamogue Park and Weeping Willow Motel properties.

Properties in Riverhead are also preserved through ownership by public and nonprofit entities. For example, the Nature Conservancy and the County worked together to preserve River Club and Riverhead Meadows. The Town and the Peconic Land Trust preserved the former Pratt property on Long Island Sound. The County's quarter-

⁴¹ Town of Riverhead, Community Preservation Fund Project Plan, Adopted 2021

⁴² Peconic Estuary Program, Peconic Estuary Program Climate Vulnerability Assessment and Action Plan, 2019, <https://www.peconicestuary.org/peconic-estuary-program-climate-vulnerability-assessment-and-action-plan-final-report/>

percent sales tax for open space and hamlet park preservation program – partnered with Town to protect large open space parcels, including North Fork Preserve.

Conservation Easements

Conservation easements are voluntary legal agreements between the property owner and a public, non-profit, or other entity restricting the land's use. The owner may continue to use their property and transfer it. However, the easement stipulates the allowable uses, conservation values, and permanent protection of the property. There are several types of easements in Riverhead. For example, the Town's cluster zoning regulations, detailed below, require developers of residential subdivisions to record conservation easements restricting a portion of the property to open space or farmland. Suffolk County and NYS OPRHP have conservation easement programs, while the U.S. Department of Agriculture provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands and wetlands through conservation easements. Non-governmental organizations may also hold easements and have agreements for land stewardship. For example, Peconic Land Trust accepts conservation easements and helps property owners conserve natural resources. The Pine Barrens transfer of development rights program involves the record of an easement in the Pine Barrens Core Area in exchange for Pine Barrens credits that can be sold and used for development elsewhere. This program is discussed in further detail in this plan's Natural Features and Environmental Resources chapter.

Open Space Set-Asides in Subdivisions

Cluster development requirements in the APZ, RA-80, and RB-80 zones aim to preserve 70% of the land for agriculture or open space while concentrating development on the remainder of the property. Cluster development regulations are discussed in further detail in the Agriculture chapter. In industrial subdivisions, open space or recreational reserved land should have an area of at least 1 acre per 50 acres of the plat, and no reserved area should be less than 1 acre.

Payment in Lieu of Parkland

In the Town code, there are provisions to require that developers, when proposing a subdivision, must establish recreational facilities. If insufficient or unsuitable land is available, the Planning Board may require a developer to make a payment in lieu of parkland. The Park Fund is only usable for capital improvements to parks.

3.5.2. Potential Impacts

This section provides an analysis of the potential impacts that could occur as a result of the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan Update.

3.5.2.1. Community Facilities

Discussion of Comprehensive Plan Policies and Impacts

Chapter 10 of the Comprehensive Plan presents goals and recommendations related to community facilities. The following presents a summary of the chapter recommendations under each proposed goal, followed by a discussion of potential impacts

Goal 1. Enhance responsiveness and service quality of emergency services.

The recommendations within this goal aim to enhance emergency response capabilities in Riverhead by addressing various challenges and needs within firefighting and emergency services. This includes planning for specialized training and equipment to tackle modern firefighting challenges such as Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) fires and ensuring sufficient water supply and pressure throughout the town for firefighting

purposes. The recommendations include expanding and renovating the Police Station to meet the needs of a modern and growing police force, identifying a long-term strategy for RTVAC facilities, ensuring adequate services at EPCAL, and supporting the expansion of firehouses. These measures aim to address specific needs, such as accessibility, security, and operational efficiency, while aligning with the demands of the Riverhead community. While each recommendation requires further study and planning before implementation, the Plan ensures that public services remain responsive to the community's needs. Additionally, measures are proposed to improve the accessibility of emergency vehicles to all parts of Riverhead, implement preemptive signal programs to prioritize emergency response vehicles, and ensure adequate human resources within fire departments and RTVAC.

Adoption of the Comprehensive Plan itself would not have any negative impacts on the identified community services. The identified recommendations would have positive impacts on the community by bolstering emergency preparedness and response, enhancing public safety, service delivery, and overall well-being. Expanding and upgrading facilities for emergency services, such as the Police Station, RTVAC, and firehouses, would improve response capabilities and ensure efficient handling of emergencies, contributing to a safer and more resilient community. Additionally, addressing the needs of growing areas like EPCAL demonstrates proactive planning to accommodate development while maintaining adequate public services, fostering sustainable growth and prosperity for residents and businesses in Riverhead. Planning for specialized training and equipment ensures that firefighters are adequately prepared to handle modern firefighting challenges, contributing to more effective emergency response and mitigation of potential hazards. Furthermore, initiatives to improve water supply, enhance accessibility, and implement preemptive signal programs facilitate faster and more efficient emergency response, reducing response times and minimizing the impact of emergencies on residents and businesses in Riverhead Town.

Fiscal impacts associated with implementing these recommendations could be mitigated through strategic planning, collaboration with stakeholders, and seeking external funding sources. By working together with developers, the Water District, and emergency responders, the town can address infrastructure needs and ensure adequate resources for firefighting and emergency services. Moreover, seeking grants and exploring partnerships can help offset the costs associated with implementing preemptive signal programs and acquiring specialized equipment, ensuring that the enhancements to emergency response capabilities are achieved in a financially sustainable manner. Fiscal impacts resulting from the expansion of services due to new developments, such as those at EPCAL, would be evaluated during site specific review under SEQRA and appropriate mitigation measures would be developed to address any identified site-specific fiscal impacts related to the provision of public facilities and services.

Goal 2. Strengthen community well-being through enhanced programming and facilities for all ages.

The recommendations within this goal aim to elevate programming and facilities catering to senior citizens, youth, and the broader Riverhead community, recognizing demographic challenges and evolving needs. They include expanding social activities and support services for seniors, establishing a second senior center on the west side of Town, assisting the Peconic YMCA in identifying a suitable site and advocating for needed amenities, and exploring the feasibility of establishing a youth center. Additionally, working with the Riverhead Free Library and Baiting Hollow Free Library to expand and establish branches or outposts is proposed to provide more accessible spaces, technologies, and programs for the growing patron base.

Adoption of the Comprehensive Plan itself would not have any negative impacts on the identified community services. Implementing these recommendations would have positive impacts on the community by fostering inclusivity, engagement, and improved well-being for residents of all ages. Expanding services and facilities for seniors addresses the needs of a rapidly aging population and enhances social connections and support systems, contributing to overall quality of life. Similarly, establishing a youth center and collaborating with libraries to

expand their footprint ensures that youth and residents of all ages have access to recreational, educational, and cultural opportunities, promoting community cohesion and vitality.

Fiscal impacts associated with implementing these recommendations could be mitigated through various strategies. For instance, leveraging partnerships with organizations like the YMCA and seeking grants or funding opportunities can help offset the costs of establishing new facilities and expanding services. Additionally, exploring innovative approaches such as outposts or mobile libraries can maximize resources and reach underserved populations more efficiently, enhancing the overall effectiveness and sustainability of the community programming and facilities. Overall, strategic planning and collaboration can help ensure that the recommendations are implemented in a financially responsible manner while meeting the diverse needs of the Riverhead community.

Goal 3. Support expansion of school district facilities to accommodate growing demand.

The recommendations focus on addressing the increasing enrollment and facility needs within the Riverhead Central School District (CSD). Despite consistent growth in enrollment over the past two decades (although enrollment in the Riverhead CSD declined by 349 students between 2019 and 2022), critical aspects such as classroom space have not been expanded to meet rising demands, partly due to the closure of Mercy High School in 2018 and migration patterns. With anticipated population growth and new developments, proactive identification of new facilities is essential to accommodate the evolving needs of the community and provide an optimal learning environment for students.

It is recognized that the school districts are separate entities to the Town of Riverhead, with their own capital budget processes. However, the Town can work with the school districts on joint planning efforts and can coordinate infrastructure investments and other land use plans to optimize resources and ensure that educational needs are met in a financially responsible manner.

Implementing these recommendations would have positive impacts by ensuring that the school district can effectively respond to increased enrollment and provide equitable access to quality education for all students.

Goal 4. Increase childcare options and promote affordable childcare.

Efforts to address the issue of affordable childcare in Riverhead include streamlining the opening of childcare facilities and ensuring their safe operation. Recommendations include clarifying Town code language to be consistent with New York State social service law, which allows for small daycare centers in single-family and two-family homes. Daycare centers should be an accessory use in places of worship. The Town should consider incentivizing or requiring large employers to provide onsite daycare to employees.

Implementing these recommendations would have positive impacts by increasing the availability of childcare services in Riverhead, thereby addressing the shortage of facilities and meeting the needs of working families. Allowing small daycare centers in residential homes and places of worship expands options for childcare providers, potentially increasing access to affordable care for parents. Onsite daycare facilities provided by large employers would benefit their employees by offering convenient childcare solutions and contribute to workforce productivity and retention.

Introducing new childcare facilities into residential neighborhoods has the potential to result in traffic and circulation impacts. Potential environmental impacts would be addressed during site-specific approvals and review under SEQR at the time any future in home facilities are proposed.

Goal 4. Strengthen the Town's capacity to address diverse community health and human service needs.

The recommendations in this goal aim to develop targeted strategies to address healthcare challenges faced by vulnerable groups in Riverhead, including seasonal farm workers, individuals recovering from addiction, and

those encountering language barriers. Collaborative efforts with Suffolk County and Peconic Bay Medical Center are proposed to enhance access to essential health and human services. Additionally, the plan emphasizes the importance of expanding outreach to vulnerable populations and ensuring information about available services is accessible in multiple languages.

The plan addresses the long-term need to support the Peconic Bay Medical Center's growth. This planning effort must be done collaboratively to identify potential impacts to the community such as to the transportation network and to address visual impacts that this use would have on the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Implementing these recommendations would have positive impacts by improving access to critical healthcare and human services for vulnerable populations in Riverhead. Collaborating with Suffolk County and Peconic Bay Medical Center allows for coordinated programming efforts that complement existing resources and address specific community needs effectively.

Discussion of Impacts from Recommended Rezoning Areas

The following presents a discussion of potential impacts related to the recommended rezoning area changes and the associated Build-out Analysis presented in Chapter 2.

Police, Fire, and EMS

Industrial Areas

The recommendations seek to balance industrial growth with preserving economic opportunities and minimizing negative impacts on surrounding residential areas through zoning adjustments, such as reducing allowable density and implementing non-disturbance buffers and outdoor storage regulations. Potential impacts on community facilities may arise from increased demand for services such as police, fire, and emergency services due to future industrial development, despite a proposed reduction of approximately 166,968 square feet of industrial development compared to the Without Action scenario. These impacts would be mitigated by tax revenue generated from any new industrial development that could be used to fund any increased service needs. Further, new industrial development would most likely have low call volumes since they would likely have on-site security and sprinklered fire suppression systems. Additionally, impacts on the provision of police, fire and emergency services would be evaluated on a site-specific basis as part of any future development within the industrial areas as part of site plan approval by the Planning Board and site-specific review under SEQOR. This review should include coordination with the police department and the Fire Marshal's Office. Specific impacts related to equipment and staffing needs and any associated fiscal impacts would be addressed during this site-specific review. For these reasons, the Proposed Action as it relates to recommended changes related to the industrial zoning districts are not anticipated to result in any significant adverse community facilities impacts.

Assisted Living

The Comprehensive Plan recommends allowing assisted living facilities and continuing care retirement communities (CCRCs) near Peconic Bay Medical Center (PBMC) to support Riverhead's aging population. This district would also encourage the use of TDR credits. Overall, the recommendation aims to address seniors' needs, improve healthcare access, and offer specialized housing solutions while preserving community character and infrastructure. These facilities are not expected to contribute students to the school district, alleviating potential burdens on educational facilities and resources. However, assisted living facilities could potentially impact community facilities such as healthcare services, police, fire, and emergency services, necessitating careful planning to ensure sufficient resources for the aging population.

As shown in the Build-out Analysis, the zoning changes have the potential to result in approximately 267 new assisted living units (267 residents), through the purchase of 123 TDR credits, in the Town. The purchase of 123

TDR credits equates to a reduction in potential future development of approximately 62 single-family units, while an assisted living facility would replace an additional 9 single-family units (approximately 203 residents). Additional calls to police, fire, and EMS from an additional 64 residents (267 assisted living residents – 203 residents in single-family units) in assisted living units would be anticipated to be minimal since these units would be equipped with some on site services and they would be more centrally located in proximity to PBMC and not spread out in more remote areas of the Town on large 2-acre lots. However, any minor increase in service calls would be mitigated by property taxes generated by the new assisted living units.

Further, impacts on the provision of police, fire and emergency services would be evaluated on a site-specific basis as part of any future development of assisted living units as part of site plan approval by the Planning Board and site-specific review under SEQR. Specific impacts related to equipment and staffing needs and any associated fiscal impacts would be addressed during this site-specific review. For these reasons, the Proposed Action as it relates to recommended changes related to assisted living units are not anticipated to result in any significant adverse community facilities impacts.

New TDR Sending Areas: RA-80 and RB-80

The proposed recommendations would incentivize the purchase of TDR credits within the new TDR Sending Areas. This would result in an overall reduction of new single-family development in these areas in the future with the Proposed Action. Therefore, demand for police, fire, EMS and other community services (see discussion of school district impacts below) would be reduced. Therefore, these zoning changes would have a beneficial impact on the provision of community services within the Town of Riverhead.

CRC and PRC Districts

The recommendations for CRC and PRC districts aim to enhance housing options in transitional areas while providing a new market for the purchase of TDR credits to preserve sensitive areas of the Town. Potential impacts on community facilities could arise from the additional 67 townhomes (191 additional residents⁴³) that could be developed within the CRC and PRC districts. The development of the 67 townhomes (191 residents) would replace the construction of 6 single-family homes and requires the purchase of 10 TDR credits, which would equate to a reduction of five additional single-family homes for a total of 11 homes (32 residents). Additional calls to police, fire and EMS from an additional 159 residents in townhomes would be anticipated to be minimal since these units would be of new construction and would be more centrally located and not spread out in more remote areas of the Town on large 2-acre lots. However, any minor increase in service calls would be mitigated by property taxes generated by the new townhome units. As presented in Chapter 3.2 Demographics, Housing and Economic Conditions the projected zoning changes are anticipated to result in an incremental increase of approximately \$551,672 additional tax dollars to the Town, including for the police department and fire districts, to support any increase in services.

Further, impacts on the provision of police, fire and emergency services would be evaluated on a site-specific basis as part of any future development of townhome units in the CRC and PRC districts as part of site plan approval by the Planning Board and site-specific review under SEQR. Specific impacts related to equipment and staffing needs and any associated fiscal impacts would be addressed during this site-specific review. For these reasons, the Proposed Action as it relates to recommended changes related to the CRC and PRC districts are not anticipated to result in any significant adverse community facilities impacts.

TDR Map Change: Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area Overlay District (RRA-OD)

As discussed in the Build-out under the Future with Action scenario, the proposed changes to the TDR map would allow for a development increase provided TDR credits are used. The analysis identified a maximum of 30

⁴³ Who Moves into New York Housing – 2015 Residential Demographic Multipliers. By Econsult Solutions. 2.847 persons per household for single-family and townhomes.

new multi-family units (68 residents⁴⁴), requiring the application of 10 TDR credits (5 single-family homes; 15 residents). Additional calls to police, fire, and EMS from an additional 53 residents in multi-family units would be anticipated to be minimal since these units would be more centrally located and not spread out in more remote areas of the Town on large 2-acre lots. However, any minor increase in service calls would be mitigated by property taxes generated by the new multifamily units. As presented in Chapter 3.2 Demographics, Housing and Economic Conditions the projected zoning changes are anticipated to result in an incremental increase of approximately \$551,672 additional tax dollars to the Town, including for the police department and fire districts, to support any increase in services.

Further, impacts on the provision of police, fire and emergency services would be evaluated on a site-specific basis as part of any future development of townhome units in the RRA-OD district as part of project approvals by the Town and site-specific review under SEQR. Specific impacts related to equipment and staffing needs and any associated fiscal impacts would be addressed during this site-specific review. For these reasons, the Proposed Action as it relates to recommended changes related to the RRA-OD are not anticipated to result in any significant adverse community facilities impacts.

Lodging Facilities

The recommendations propose accommodating new types of lodging facilities within the community through responsible development and the utilization of Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) to manage development density. Potential impacts on community facilities could arise from increased tourism-related activities, including demands on police, fire, and emergency services. Mitigation strategies include site-specific evaluations to address individual project impacts, adherence to design, development, and environmental standards, and leveraging tax revenue from these uses to fund increased needs for community services.

Conclusion

Based on the above analysis, the proposed recommended rezoning area changes would result in a reduction of industrial/office and commercial uses, as well as single-family residential development within more remote areas of Town. These reductions would off-set any potential increase in service from the addition of 267 units of assisted living, 67 townhomes, and 31 multifamily units. These units would also be more concentrated within developed portions of town in closer proximity to existing services. The proposed new development would generate approximately \$551,672 in additional tax dollars to the Town as compared to the Future without Action condition, including for the police department and fire districts, to support any increase in services. Any future development would be evaluated during future project approvals and site-specific review under SEQR. For these reasons, the Proposed Action would not result in significant adverse impacts to police, fire and EMS services.

School District

Industrial Areas

The recommended amendments to the industrial areas would not result in the generation of additional school children and would therefore not result in any impacts to the Riverhead CSD, Shoreham-Wading River CSD, or Mattituck-Cutchoque UFSD.

Residential Areas – Assisted Living, CRC, PRC and RRA-OD

The recommended rezoning area changes for the above identified zoning districts would result in an incremental reduction of 24 school children entering the Riverhead CSD as compared to development under existing zoning (Without Action Scenario) if all future development were to utilize TDR to achieve increased

⁴⁴ Who Moves into New York Housing – 2015 Residential Demographic Multipliers. By Econsult Solutions. 2.238 persons per household for multifamily housing.

density. See Table 3.5-4 below. Without the use of TDR, which is unlikely given the lower densities permitted without the use of TDR, development in the recommended rezoning areas has the potential to result in an incremental increase of an additional 25 school children entering the Riverhead CSD over the next ten years. These projections include all school age children, and although most are expected to attend Riverhead CSD, some may attend private school, and therefore this represents a conservative projection.

As presented in Chapter 3.2 Demographics, Housing and Economic Conditions the projected zoning changes are anticipated to result in an incremental increase of approximately \$697,548 additional tax dollars to the Riverhead CSD and an overall reduction in the generation of school children entering the Riverhead CSD if TDR credits are utilized. If no TDR credits are used and only the 47 townhomes are constructed, resulting in an incremental increase of 25 school children, the cost to educate could potentially be more than the property taxes generated by the development. However, this scenario is unlikely as some or all of the future development sites would be expected to utilize TDR. The more TDR used, the less school children generated and the more tax dollars generated.

Table 3.5-4. Incremental Change in School Children – Future without Action vs. Future with Action

| District | Increment | | School Children Multiplier ¹ | School Children | |
|----------------------------|--------------|---------------|---|-----------------|------------|
| | Without TDR | With TDR | | Without TDR | With TDR |
| Single-Family (SF) Units | -6 SF Units | - 87 SF Units | 0.79 | -5 | -69 |
| Assisted Living (AL) Units | 0 AL Units | +267 AL Units | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Multi-Family (MF) Units | 0 MF Units | +30 MF Units | 0.09 | 0 | +3 |
| Townhomes (TH) Units | +47 TH Units | +67 TH Units | 0.618 | +30 | +42 |
| Total | | | | +25 | -24 |

Assumptions:

1. A. School children generation rate for Single-family: 0.79 students/unit – assumes 50/50 split of 3- and 4-bedroom single-family units. Source: *Who Moves into New York Housing, 2015 Residential Demographic Multipliers, Econsult Solutions.*
- B. School children generation rate for Townhomes: 0.618 school-aged children/unit, assumes townhomes with three-bedrooms. Source: *Rutgers Center for Real Estate’s School-Age Children in Rental Units in New Jersey.*
- C. School children generation rate for Multi-family: 0.09 school-aged children/unit Source: *REI at Stony Brook University College of Business: Impact of Market Rate Apartments on School District Enrollment (2019)*

New TDR Sending Areas: RA-80 and RB-80

The calculation of the total number of potential TDR credits that could be achieved considered several key factors. First, as per Town Code, the minimum lot size requirement to be a candidate site for TDR credits is 7 acres. The intent of this requirement is to ensure that only sufficiently large parcels are considered. Town Code requires 43,560 square feet of developable land for each TDR credit. Applicants for TDR would have to demonstrate developable parcels on a site plan. For the purposes of this analysis, a conservative deduction of 15% was applied to account for limitations on actual buildable area within the site such as roads, steep slopes, and other natural features.

The Future with Action scenario was looked at to determine how many potential credits could be sent from the various school districts. There are areas proposed to be designated as sending districts in both the Shoreham-Wading River CSD and the Mattituck-Cutchoque UFSD. Since there are no designated or proposed receiving

districts in either of those school districts, it is anticipated that density from the sale of TDR would be transferred to the Riverhead CSD (see Table 3.5-5).

Table 3.5-5. Anticipated TDR Sold with Proposed Action

| | Total Acres | Potential Residential Units | Potential TDR Credits | Number of Parcels | Percentage of Total TDR Credits | Anticipated TDR Sold in RA-80 and RB-80 (2024-2035) |
|---------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| Shoreham-Wading River CSD | 174 | 76 | 144 | 8 | 8.2% | 7 |
| Mattituck-Cutchogue UFSD | 443 | 196 | 372 | 15 | 21.1% | 19 |
| Subtotal | 617 | 272 | 516 | 23 | 29.3% | 26 |
| Riverhead CSD | 1,380 | 607 | 1,243 | 29 | 70.7% | 64 |
| Total | 1,997 | 879 | 1,759 | 52 | 100% | 90 |

As can be seen in Table 3.5-5 above, within the proposed sending areas, in the Shoreham-Wading River CSD, there are 144 potential TDR credits that could be sold on 8 parcels. In the Mattituck-Cutchogue UFSD, there are 372 potential TDR credits on 15 parcels.

As discussed in the Build-out Analysis under the Future with Action Scenario, it is anticipated that 90 units total would be redeemed in the new RA-80 and RB-80 sending areas combined. This corresponds to an anticipated 7 TDR credits sold within the Shoreham-Wading River CSD and 19 credits sold within Mattituck-Cutchogue UFSD.

Estimating impacts on community facilities necessitates projecting the potential utilization of TDR credits, considering their allocation toward residential development, which could affect the Riverhead Central School District, alongside commercial, industrial, and assisted living uses, none of which would impact the Riverhead CSD. As discussed in Chapter 2, in the last 10 years, less than 9% of TDR credits have been redeemed for residential use. Forty-six percent have been redeemed for aged-restricted residential, and 43% has been redeemed for commercial. If conservatively estimated, in the next 10 years, 25% of credits would be redeemed for residential, it is anticipated two TDR credits sent from Shoreham-Wading River CSD and five TDR credits from Mattituck-Cutchogue UFSD – for residential uses located within Riverhead CSD.

Table 3.5-6 below presents the estimated projected increase in school aged children that would increase within the Riverhead CSD associated with the Future without Action condition as compared to the Future with Action condition related to the recommended new sending areas. Since it is difficult to speculate what type of housing TDR credits would be used for, this analysis uses a range – based on different unit types, multifamily and townhomes. The schoolchildren generation rates for each were based on studies of comparable property types. As shown in the table, TDR credits sold in Shoreham Wading River CSD are anticipated to result in an increase of 1-2 schoolchildren in Riverhead CSD. TDR credits sold in Mattituck-Cutchogue UFSD are anticipated to result in an increase of between 1 and 6 schoolchildren, depending on unit type. Together, these two areas are expected to increase enrollment in Riverhead CSD by 2-8 children. These projections include all school age children, and although we expect most of them would attend Riverhead CSD, some may attend private school, and therefore this represents a conservative projection. It is also important to recognize that this scenario would also result in a reduction in school children in both Mattituck-Cutchogue UFSD and Shoreham Wading River CSD – thereby helping to alleviate strain on existing educational resources and facilities in those districts.

Table 3.5-6. Schoolchildren Generated in Riverhead CSD by Proposed Action

| | Anticipated TDR Sold (2024-2035) | Anticipated TDR Sold for Residential | School Children generated in Multi-family units (1TDR = 2 Units) | School Children for Townhome units (1TDR = 2 Units) | Range of School Children Generated |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|------------------------------------|
| Shoreham-Wading River CSD | 7 | 2 | <1 Child in 4 units ¹ | 1-2 Children | 1-2 children |
| Mattituck-Cutchogue UFSD | 19 | 5 | 1 Child in 10 units ¹ | 6 Child in 10 units ¹ | 1-6 children |
| Subtotal | 26 | 7 | | | 2-8 school children |

1. School children generation rate for Multi-family: 0.09 students/unit for multifamily including mid-rise and garden apartment. Source: REI at Stony Brook University College of Business: Impact of Market Rate Apartments on School District Enrollment (2019)
2. School children generation rate for Townhomes: 0.618 school-aged children/unit, assumes townhomes with three-bedrooms. Source: Rutgers Center for Real Estate’s School-Age Children in Rental Units in New Jersey

It is also important to note that these 2-8 children are accounted for within the other recommended rezoning areas discussed herein – see discussion of CRC, PRC and RRA-OD districts below. This analysis was included to show the impact on the recommended new TDR sending areas on the three Riverhead school districts.

Conclusion

As presented in Table 3.5-4, the recommended rezoning area changes (Future with Action Scenario) when considered would result in a net reduction of 24 school children entering the Riverhead CSD when compared to development under existing zoning (Future without Action Scenario) if all future development were to utilize TDR to achieve increased density. Without the use of TDR, development in the recommended rezoning areas has the potential to result in approximately 25 additional school children entering the Riverhead CSD over the next ten years. The estimate of 25 school children is unlikely to be realized given that it is anticipated that the development community would utilize TDR to achieve increased development densities within the Assisted Living overlay District, RRA-OD, CRC and PRC districts. Therefore, it is more likely that the Proposed Action would generate less than 25 school children and potentially result in a net reduction of school children of up to 24 students. These projections include all school age children, and although most would attend Riverhead CSD, some may attend private school, and therefore this represents a conservative projection.

While it is possible that these proposed changes could have a slight increase in enrollment if no TDR credits were used, the build-out would occur in a phased manner over ten years and be spread across the seven Riverhead CSD schools and would not create a one-time or abrupt increase in the number of school aged children. This slow pace of increase allows the Riverhead CSD time to absorb the minimal number of additional school aged children that could be generated. Importantly, it is anticipated that the new development would also contribute up to approximately \$697,548 in tax revenues to the Riverhead CSD and any future development would be evaluated during future project approvals and site-specific review under SEQOR, including an analysis of school district impacts as applicable. Considering the relatively small number of school children generated, the phased nature in which they would be expected to join the school system and the increased revenues accrued to the Riverhead CSD, no significant adverse impacts to schools are anticipated.

3.5.2.2. Open Space, Parks, and Recreation.

Discussion of Comprehensive Plan Policies and Impacts

Chapter 8 of the Comprehensive Plan presents goals and recommendations related to open space, parks, and recreation. The following presents a summary of the chapter recommendations under each proposed goal, followed by a discussion of potential impacts.

Goal 1. Expand recreational opportunities to address additional community interests and needs.

The Comprehensive Plan advocates for the creation of new parks and open spaces, prioritizing environmentally sensitive and underserved areas, while also emphasizing the development of recreational facilities and enhancement of public spaces in downtown Riverhead. Collaborative efforts with various committees and non-profit partners are proposed to ensure transparency and cooperation in identifying priority lands for conservation. Additionally, the plan recommends implementing the vision for the Town Square and pursuing opportunities to repurpose the armory for community use, along with expanding recreational programming to cater to diverse interests and demographics, including the Hispanic community. These initiatives aim to enhance community well-being, promote social engagement, and revitalize public spaces, ultimately contributing to a higher quality of life for Riverhead residents.

The proposed recommendations would have positive impacts by providing residents with increased access to recreational amenities, fostering community engagement, and revitalizing downtown areas, thereby enhancing the overall quality of life. Additionally, the prioritization of environmentally sensitive areas for park development and collaboration with non-profit partners demonstrates a commitment to conservation and sustainable land use practices. Moreover, expanding recreational programming and facilities, particularly in underserved areas, would cater to diverse interests and promote inclusivity within the community.

To mitigate fiscal impacts, the plan suggests collaborating with State and County officials to explore opportunities for expanding existing parks or establishing new parks, which can provide greater recreational opportunities for residents at a relatively low cost to the Town. Additionally, partnerships with organizations like the YMCA and the Riverhead CSD can help share the cost of developing and maintaining recreational facilities. Furthermore, considering the feasibility of building a Town gym and a dedicated Youth Center, possibly co-located with other public facilities, would optimize resources, and ensure efficient use of space. Overall, these measures aim to maximize community benefits while minimizing financial strain on the Town.

Goal 2. Activate the Peconic Riverfront and other navigable waterways with recreation opportunities and good stewardship.

The recommendations aim to enhance public access and recreational opportunities along the Peconic Riverfront in Riverhead, proposing measures such as providing safe access to the riverfront, improving signage to make attractions more visible, and developing a plan for moorings. These efforts seek to diversify programming along the riverfront by introducing passive activities like hiking and birding, alongside existing active uses such as boating. Additionally, addressing issues related to boat access, such as parking shortages and water depth, is essential to promote boating activities effectively and sustainably while preserving the natural habitat.

Implementing these recommendations would have positive impacts by enhancing the overall experience for visitors and residents along the Peconic Riverfront, promoting outdoor recreation, and fostering environmental stewardship. By providing safe public access, improving signage, and developing mooring plans, the riverfront becomes more attractive and accessible to a wider range of users, contributing to increased tourism, economic activity, and community engagement. Moreover, integrating educational programs on river conservation and collaborating with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to address invasive species further enhances environmental awareness and habitat preservation.

Revenue generated from moorings could be used to offset operational costs associated with managing the riverfront, while grant funding could support capital projects such as trail development and habitat restoration. By strategically allocating resources and seeking external funding sources, the Town can ensure the long-term sustainability and success of initiatives aimed at enhancing the Peconic Riverfront.

Goal 3. Encourage open space preservation and public access opportunities in new development.

The recommendations aim to strengthen Town code to enhance open space provision, such as conducting a comprehensive review of subdivision regulations, encouraging cluster development on waterfront sites, and requiring public easements for connectivity between open spaces. These measures seek to preserve natural features, promote interconnected open spaces, and ensure public access to waterfront areas and greenways. By implementing these recommendations, the Town can better leverage new development to provide open space, safeguard environmental resources, and enhance recreational opportunities for residents.

Implementing these recommendations would have positive impacts by promoting environmental conservation, improving recreational amenities, and fostering community connectivity. Strengthening open space requirements in subdivision regulations ensures that new development contributes to preserving natural areas and enhancing community green spaces. Encouraging cluster development on waterfront sites and requiring public easements facilitate public access to waterfront areas, promoting recreational activities such as boating, fishing, and swimming. Furthermore, ensuring safe public access to the Peconic Riverfront and enhancing greenway connectivity contribute to the overall well-being of residents by providing opportunities for outdoor recreation and leisure activities.

Revenue generated from in-lieu payments into a parks fund or through mooring regulations could offset operational costs associated with managing open spaces and water resources. Furthermore, any future amendments to subdivision regulations resulting from a thorough review would undergo site-specific review under the SEQR, ensuring that potential environmental impacts are adequately addressed.

Discussion of Impacts from Recommended Rezoning Areas

The following presents a discussion of potential impacts related to the recommended rezoning area changes and the associated Build-out Analysis presented in Chapter 2.

Modification to PRC Districts

The recommendations for PRC Districts aim to facilitate a mix of residential, commercial, and recreational uses, permitting residential development with TDRs to support diverse housing options while adhering to urban planning principles. Potential impacts on open space include the need to balance development with the preservation of riparian areas and compliance with NYSDEC regulations. These impacts would be mitigated through the development of design guidelines that ensure responsible growth and environmental integrity, ensuring that all developments conform to regulatory standards while positively impacting community livability and development sustainability.

Cluster Development Requirement in RA-40, and RB-40 zones

The recommendations propose cluster development requirements in RA-40 and RB-40 zones to preserve 70% of land for agriculture or open space while concentrating development on the remaining portion. This approach aims to protect unique natural features and open space by allowing the Planning Board to request cluster development alternatives for candidate parcels of sufficient size, promoting responsible land use. Potential impacts to open space include the conversion of agricultural lands for development, but this would be mitigated by preserving 38 acres of land through the implementation of cluster development requirements, ensuring the preservation of open space and natural features in the affected zones.

Other Proposed Recommended Rezoning Area Changes

The Build-out Analysis presented in Chapter 2, under the Future with Action Scenario, has the potential to result in a reduction of approximately 87 units of single-family residential units, a reduction of approximately 8,471 square feet of general commercial use, a reduction of approximately 166,968 square feet of industrial office use, and an increase of approximately 67 townhomes, 30 multi-family units, and approximately 267 units of assisted living as compared to the Without Action Condition. This equates to an increase in population of approximately 145 new residents by 2035 if all new development were to utilize TDR (worst case assumption). The NYMTC⁴⁵ 2035 population projection for Riverhead is 40,009. The increase of 278 new residents by 2035 equates to a 0.69% increase in the Town's population. This minor increase would not result in a significant adverse impact on the Town's ability to provide adequate open space, parks, and recreational services to Town residents. Further, recommendations in the Plan would also increase the supply of open space and recreational resources over the next ten years. Finally, certain district regulations also contain open space requirements for various uses that would serve to off-set any local increase in demand for open space. Potential impacts to open space, parks and recreation would also be assessed during site specific project approvals and review under SEQR.

Conclusion

The minor increase in Town population (0.36%) that could occur by 2035 under the Future with Action condition is not anticipated to result in any significant adverse impacts to open space, parks or recreational facilities in the Town for the reasons outlined above.

3.5.3. Mitigation Measures

Overall, the Comprehensive Plan's recommendations related to community facilities, open space, parks, and recreation are anticipated to benefit the community without significant adverse environmental impacts, pending thorough SEQR review for future development proposals.

Regarding impacts to community facilities due to population increases resulting from the recommended rezonings, these impacts are not anticipated to be significant due to the phased nature in which population increases would occur. Additionally, any potential impacts would be minimized due to the increased revenues accruing to community services providers townwide, and coordination with the emergency service providers during the site plan process for site-specific proposals within the recommended rezoning areas. In consideration of the foregoing, potential significant adverse impacts to community facilities and open space resources are not anticipated.

⁴⁵ Urbanomics, 2023. NYMTC Socioeconomic and Demographic (SED) Forecasts.

3.6. Natural Features, Environmental Resources and Agricultural Lands

The following sets forth an examination of existing natural features, environmental resources, and agricultural lands within Riverhead. The potential impacts that could occur as a result of the adoption of the Riverhead Comprehensive Plan Update are explored, and any necessary mitigation measures needed to mitigate potential impacts are identified.

3.6.1. Existing Conditions

A summary of the existing natural features, environmental resources, and agricultural conditions in Riverhead is given below. For a more detailed overview of existing conditions, refer to Chapters 6 and 7 of the 2024 Draft Comprehensive Plan Update.⁴⁶

3.6.1.1. Natural Features and Environmental Resources

Surface Waters

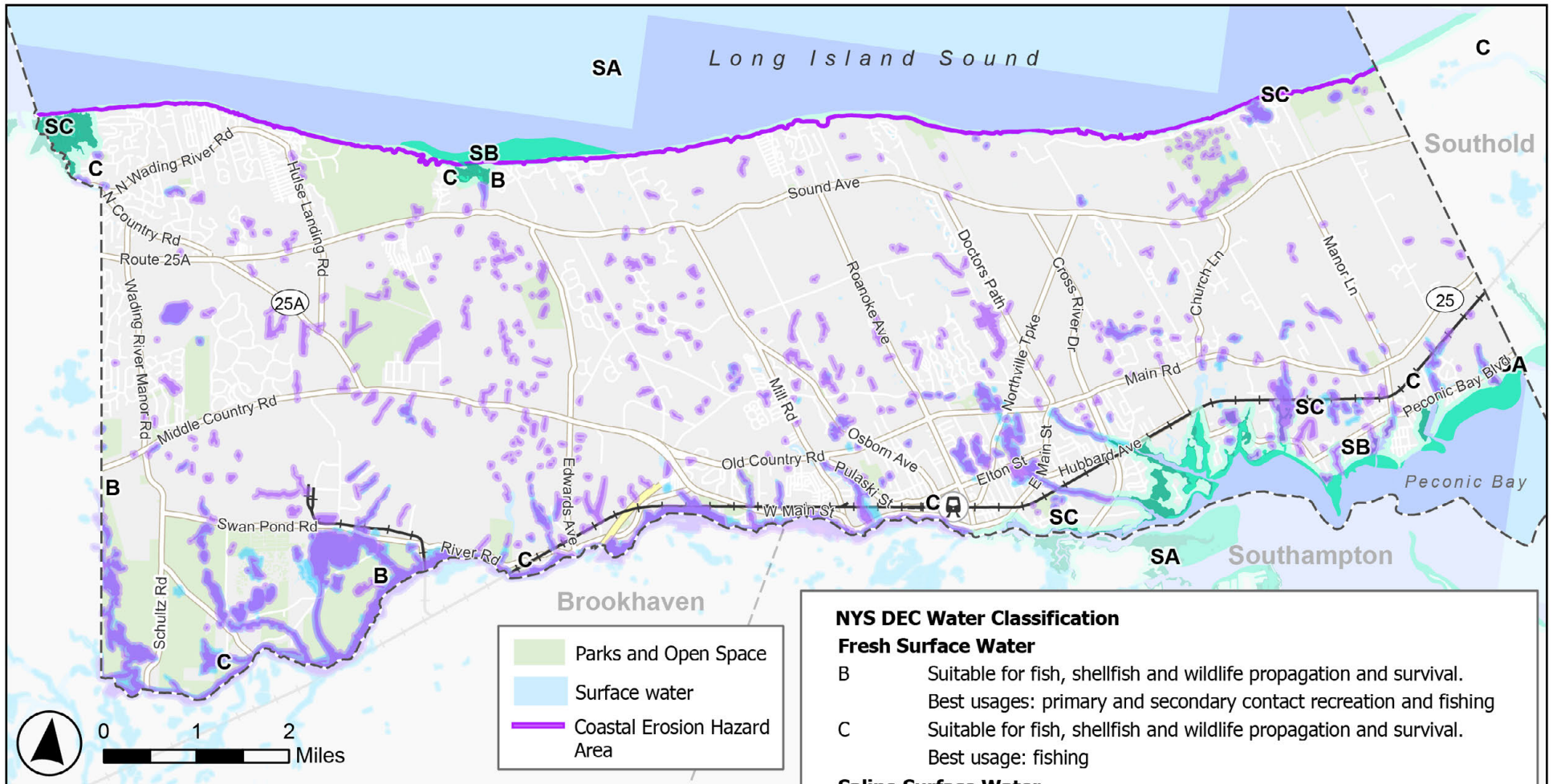
Riverhead's water resources, including Long Island Sound and Peconic Estuary, are used for fishing and diverse recreational activities such as canoeing, kayaking, sailing, and swimming.

These water resources play a pivotal role in Riverhead's economy, supporting local fishermen and attracting tourists to the scenic waterfront areas for water sports, hiking, biking, and other leisure activities. The tourism industry relies on the Town's water bodies, influencing residential property values, particularly in coastal areas. However, the delicate ecological balance of these areas is vulnerable to human activities, emphasizing the need for sensitive planning to prevent adverse impacts on water quality. Additionally, the rich biodiversity of Riverhead's water bodies, including freshwater and tidal wetlands, provides essential habitat for distinct plant and animal populations, underscoring the interconnectedness of environmental preservation and community well-being.

New York Protection of Waters Program

Under the State's Environmental Conservation Law, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) regulates activities within water resources, including rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds. These resources provide essential ecological functions, recreation, aesthetic, and economic value while also contributing to the quality and supply of drinking water. Waters are classified based on their best use (see Figure 3.6-1). Regulations vary depending on the classification of the water, surface area, segment length, type (e.g., protected streams), buffer areas and banks, and the proposed project or action.

⁴⁶ The Draft 2024 Comprehensive Plan can be found here:
<https://townofriverheadcomprehensiveplanupdate.com/>



NYS DEC Freshwater Wetlands

- Freshwater Wetlands
- Freshwater Wetlands Buffer

Town of Riverhead Wetlands

- Wetlands
- Wetlands Buffer

NYS DEC Tidal Wetlands

- Intertidal, Fresh, and High Marsh or Formerly connected
- Coastal Shoals, Bars and Mudflats
- Littoral Zone
- Tidal Wetlands Buffer

NYS DEC Water Classification

Fresh Surface Water

- B** Suitable for fish, shellfish and wildlife propagation and survival.
Best usages: primary and secondary contact recreation and fishing
- C** Suitable for fish, shellfish and wildlife propagation and survival.
Best usage: fishing

Saline Surface Water

- SA** Suitable for fish, shellfish and wildlife propagation and survival.
Best usages: shellfishing for market purposes, primary and secondary contact recreation and fishing.
- SB** Suitable for fish, shellfish and wildlife propagation and survival.
Best usages: primary and secondary contact recreation and fishing.
- SC** Suitable for limited primary and secondary contact recreation.
Best usage: fishing.

Long Island Sound

Long Island Sound, spanning approximately 1,320 square miles with 600 miles of coastline, is a vital economic and ecological hub. The Sound's impact on the regional economy, generating over \$15 billion annually, underscores its significance in supporting diverse activities, contingent upon the quality of its waters, living resources, and habitats.⁴⁷ The Sound's health and visual character are intrinsically linked to the well-being of the north shore communities, including Riverhead. The estuarine nature of the Sound, blending fresh and saltwater, fosters a rich ecosystem for fish, shellfish, waterfowl, and various plant species, supporting commercial and recreational fisheries and shellfisheries, educational opportunities, migratory bird habitats, habitats for endangered species, and coastal wetland functions.

Long Island Sound Study (LISS)

Designated as an "Estuary of National Significance" in 1987 under the National Estuary Program (NEP), Long Island Sound garnered formal recognition in 1985 with the establishment of the Long Island Sound Study (LISS). LISS is a partnership between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Connecticut, and New York, and includes representatives from government agencies, nonprofits, commercial entities, educational institutions, and community organizations. This cooperative effort has been pivotal in addressing the Sound's most pressing environmental challenges.

In 1994, LISS published the Long Island Sound Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan, which outlined actions to improve the quality and health of the Sound's waters and habitats. LISS revised the plan in 2015, with targets through 2035, and measurable implementation actions in five-year periods.⁴⁸ The update places emphasis on actionable targets to achieve four thematic primary goals:

1. **Clean Waters and Healthy Watersheds:** Improve water quality by reducing contaminant and nutrient loads from the land and the waters impacting Long Island Sound.
2. **Thriving Habitats and Abundant Wildlife:** Restore and protect the Sound's ecological balance in a healthy, productive, and resilient state to benefit both people and the natural environment.
3. **Sustainable and Resilient Communities:** Support vibrant, informed, and engaged communities that use, appreciate, and help protect Long Island Sound.
4. **Sound Science and Inclusive Management:** Manage Long Island Sound using sound science and cross-jurisdictional governance that is inclusive, adaptive, innovative, and accountable.

The Peconic Estuary

The Peconic Estuary system, stretching from the Peconic River mouth to the Atlantic Ocean, encompasses over 100 distinct bays, harbors, embayments, creeks, and tributaries within its defined study area. Covering more than 158,000 surface water acres and 125,000 land acres, this vital ecosystem supports a year-round population of over 100,000 people, surging significantly during the summer months. Riverhead, situated at the estuary's western end, is intricately linked to this system, which includes Flanders Bay and the Peconic River mouth. The Peconic River, teeming with diverse plant and animal life both in its waters and along its banks, contains an 800-acre undisturbed salt marsh complex serving as a critical nursery for marine life.

⁴⁷ Long Island Sound Study, <https://longislandsoundstudy.net/>

⁴⁸ Long Island Sound Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan 2015, [2015 Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan - Long Island Sound Study](#)

Despite generally high-water quality, the Peconic Estuary faces challenges from increased development pressure and land use changes, leading to water quality degradation and habitat loss, particularly in the system's western end near Riverhead. This vulnerability is attributed to inadequate water flushing compared with eastern waters. Recognized as an "Estuary of National Significance" in the National Estuary Program (NEP) since 1992, administered by the EPA, the Peconic Estuary is actively managed through the Peconic Estuary Program and the Peconic Estuary Partnership.

Peconic Estuary Partnership (PEP)

The PEP was established in 1992 and has brought over \$13 million of federal grant money to the Peconic Estuary Watershed. It provides monitoring, research, education, and collaboration to protect and restore the Peconic Estuary and Watershed.

Peconic Estuary Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan

PEP's 2020 *Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan* (CCMP) is a strategic framework for protecting and restoring the Peconic Estuary of eastern Long Island.⁴⁹ The 250-square mile estuary comprises Great Peconic Bay, Little Peconic Bay, Gardiners Bay, and a hundred other bays, harbors, and tributaries. Altogether, the estuary's shoreline totals more than 450 miles, and its watershed includes Brookhaven, East Hampton, Southampton, Riverhead, Southold, and Shelter Island.

The CCMP includes several recommendations relevant to this comprehensive planning effort:

- Enhance PEP's organizational structure, operational practices, and financial positions to support successful implementation the Plan. Empower local communities to support estuary health, including underrepresented groups.
- Help local communities take meaningful, well-informed action to prepare for and adapt to climate change impacts; identify and prioritize sustainable projects; conserve and protect habitats; acquire tools and databases related to goals; protect and restore coastal ecosystems; and collaborate on coastal and ocean acidification monitoring and research.
- Protect areas from degradation by identifying water quality in ground and surface waters. Communicate with local governments to increase understanding of negative impacts from legacy, current, and future nutrient inputs.
- Expand scientific understanding of the Peconic Estuary ecosystem and deliver information that supports management decision-making.
- Restore and protect key habitats and watershed biodiversity.

Peconic Riverfront Zoning

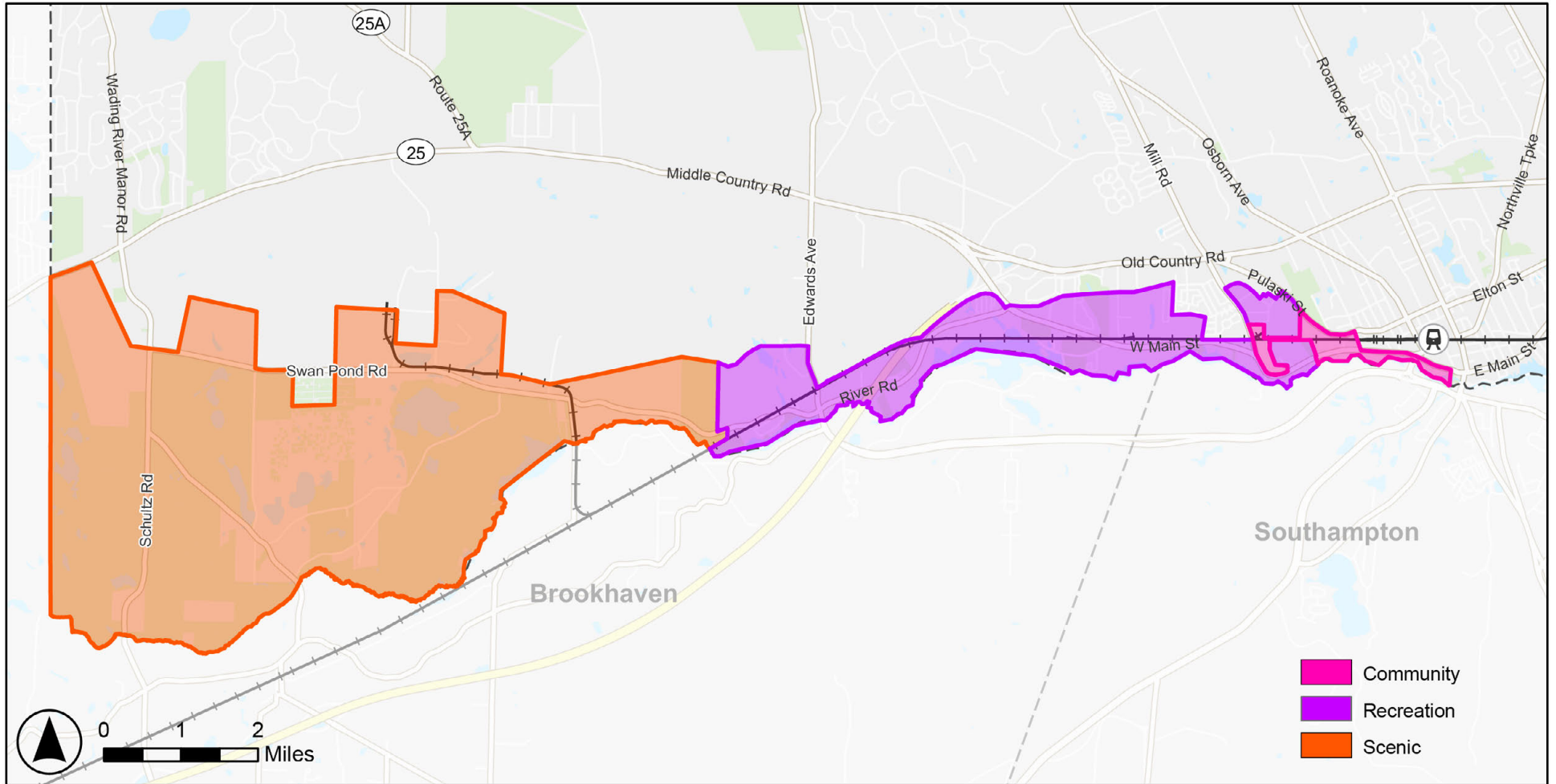
Riverhead has integrated the protection of the Peconic waterfront into several zoning districts. Both the Riverfront Corridor (RFC) and the Peconic River Community (PRC) districts aim to provide a mix of residential, commercial, and recreational uses that harmonize with the Peconic River's natural habitat and ecologically sensitive areas. The PRC district is slightly different and was amended to be compatible with the regulations of the Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers (WSRR) designation for that area, which is discussed further below. The Downtown Center 2 Waterfront (DC-2) district seeks to create a downtown waterfront area that provides continuous pathways and public waterfront access, generous open space and landscaping, and watershed protection through limits on impervious surfaces. The Natural Resources Protection (NRP) district restricts development to compatible agricultural, single-family, or recreational uses in the Pine Barrens area.

⁴⁹ CCMP Implementation Actions 2020-2024 Update, [CCMP Implementation Actions 2020-2024 Update - Long Island Sound Study](#)

New York Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers Program

The State's Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers Act protects rivers with outstanding scenic, ecological, recreational, historic, and scientific values derived from fish, wildlife, and botanical resources; aesthetic quality; archaeological significance; and other features. Rivers should be preserved in free-flowing conditions and protected from overdevelopment and improper use to ensure future generations enjoy the rivers' benefits.

NYSDEC has designated portions of the Peconic River in Riverhead as "scenic," "recreational," and "community" rivers (see Figure 3.6-2). Specific activities within these areas (e.g. construction of new structures, subdividing land, cutting vegetation) trigger the need for a Wild, Scenic, and Recreational River Permit from NYSDEC.



Wetlands

Freshwater Wetlands

Freshwater wetlands are found throughout Riverhead, especially along the Peconic River and in the Pine Barrens Preserve (See Figure 3.6-1). They provide essential benefits to the ecosystem, including plant and animal habitats, flood protection and mitigation, educational and research opportunities, and aesthetic beauty.

NYSDEC regulates freshwater wetlands through the Freshwater Wetlands Act of the Environmental Conservation Law, which establishes regulations protecting wetlands larger than 12.4 acres and 100-foot buffer areas. In some cases, significantly smaller wetlands are also protected by the State. NYSDEC regulates the use of wetlands, particularly filling and draining, and requires wetlands permits for projects within or near wetlands and provisions to avoid or mitigate the consequences of development. Local governments are authorized to add additional protections to wetland areas. Chapter 295 of Riverhead's Town Code outlines regulations and permitting requirements.

The State has adopted changes to its freshwater wetlands law that would take effect in 2025. The current wetlands maps would no longer be used for regulatory purposes, and maps would only be provided for informational use. NYSDEC is working closely with Cornell University to map wetlands more accurately and classify wetlands based on several factors, including whether they are in urban areas, in floodways, contain rare plants, provide habitats for the essential behavior of endangered/threatened/special concern species, and other criteria. As of 2028, the State would regulate wetlands of 7.4 acres or greater in addition to wetlands of special significance. Until 2028, the 12.4-acre threshold remains in place.

Tidal Wetlands

Tidal wetlands line the shore, bays inlets, and estuaries of Long Island Sound and Peconic Bay in Riverhead (see Figure 3.6-1). Some significant areas include the Wading River Marsh Preserve next to the Wading River Beach and Indian Island County Park on Flanders Bay. Tidal wetlands are irreplaceable resources that provide wildlife habitat, fish and shellfish production, flood and storm protection, and cleansing of ecosystems, among other benefits.

New York's Tidal Wetlands Act aims to preserve and protect habitats and enhance their ecological and other values by regulating activities within tidal wetlands and a buffer area around them. The regulations categorize wetlands based on the presence of tides and types of vegetation. NYSDEC tidal wetlands regulations apply anywhere tidal inundation occurs regularly, including within the salt wedge, and also regulated a 300-foot landward buffer around tidal wetlands.⁵⁰

Coastal Erosion Hazard Areas

New York State's Coastal Zone Management Act and Program mandates regulations on activities in coastal areas. Chapter 219 of Riverhead's Town Code outlines these regulations, including restrictions for nearshore areas, beaches, dunes, bluffs, and erosion protection measures. The Coastal Area Boundary established by the State is depicted in Figure 3.6-1.

⁵⁰ A salt wedge is the area in an estuary where freshwater and saltwater meet. Because of the difference in densities, freshwater would float above the denser saltwater which would form a wedge-like mass beneath it. As tides ebb and flow in the estuary and weather conditions change, the location of the wedge would move.

Groundwater Resources

The Groundwater Management Zone (GMZ) system in Riverhead is defined by Article 7 of the Suffolk County Sanitary Code. GMZs, or hydrogeological zones, correspond with the type of aquifer that lies beneath the surface and the characteristics and groundwater quality in each zone. Three GMZs cover Riverhead (see Figure 3.6-3). Zone III is a deep recharge area that extends to Sound Avenue on the north and Roanoke Avenue on the west. It includes the Core Preservation and Compatible Growth Areas of the Pine Barrens. A good portion of Zone III is undeveloped. It contains high-quality groundwater in the upper glacial, Magothy, and Lloyd aquifers. Zone IV extends east of Roanoke Avenue to the Southold town line and has characteristically shallow flow systems that discharge to streams and marine waters. Zone VIII is located west of Roanoke Avenue and extends north to Long Island Sound from Sound Avenue. Groundwater in Zone VIII flows toward Long Island Sound. In addition, with the Meetinghouse Creek restoration project, non-point source nitrogen pollution has been measured entering into the waterways of the estuary at this location. The suggested remediation is the installation of bioswales using phytoremediation (plants-as-filters) along the roadway on Church Lane.

Suffolk County Special Groundwater Protection Area

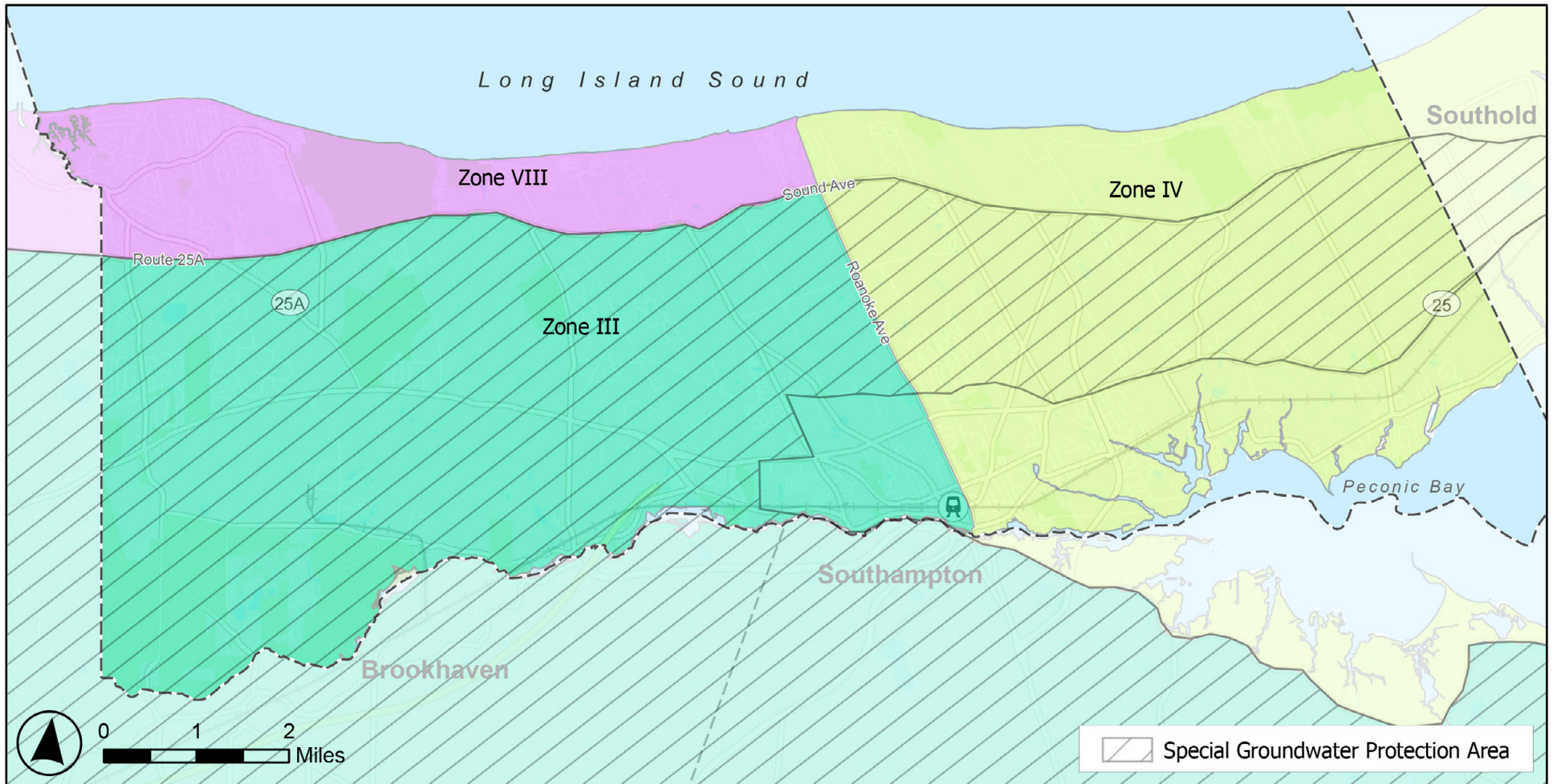
Figure 3.6-3 shows the Central Suffolk Special Groundwater Protection Area (SGPA) boundaries in Riverhead. Article 55, Sole Source Aquifer Protection, of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law seeks to protect designated sole source aquifers and prevent contamination of high-quality groundwater. It sets forth an ambitious program of groundwater protection requirements, including preparing a comprehensive management plan. The requirements generally seek to identify all known existing and potential point and non-point sources of groundwater degradation and to develop specific watershed rules and regulations.

Watershed and Water Resources Management

Riverhead Stormwater Management

In compliance with federal statute, Riverhead's Stormwater Management Office maintains a Stormwater Management Plan that informs the NYSDEC what measures the Town takes on an annual basis to mitigate the impact of stormwater runoff into the surrounding surface waters. Compliance reports are filed annually.

Chapter 275 of Riverhead's Town Code contains regulations for stormwater management that aim to mitigate the flow of non-point stormwater runoff into environmentally sensitive surface waters. Land development and redevelopment activities are subject to standards established by the New York State's Stormwater Design Manual. Best Management Practices (BMPs) are a set of available methods to reduce the volume and nutrient content in stormwater runoff. Certain BMPs are more appropriate for different soil types or contexts, particularly when considering BMPs developed for farms.



Agriculture Stewardship Program

Riverhead's Agricultural community is working closely with the Cornell Cooperative Extension to reduce nutrient runoff from farms. Best Management Practices have been proposed by Cornell and the Nature Conservancy to minimize the use of fertilizers and pesticides through Best Management Practices. Costs are driving the reduction in volume of application of these artificial inputs, but combined with newer technologies (e.g., precision planting, robotics in direct application of chemicals, artificial intelligence, and Big Data for management) the agricultural community would continue to minimize the collateral damage of toxins overall. In addition, improving soil health through cover cropping, crop rotation, organic composting and other methods would increase the absorption of rain- and stormwater and help to alleviate runoff. Approaches that farmers are already taking in Riverhead, include:

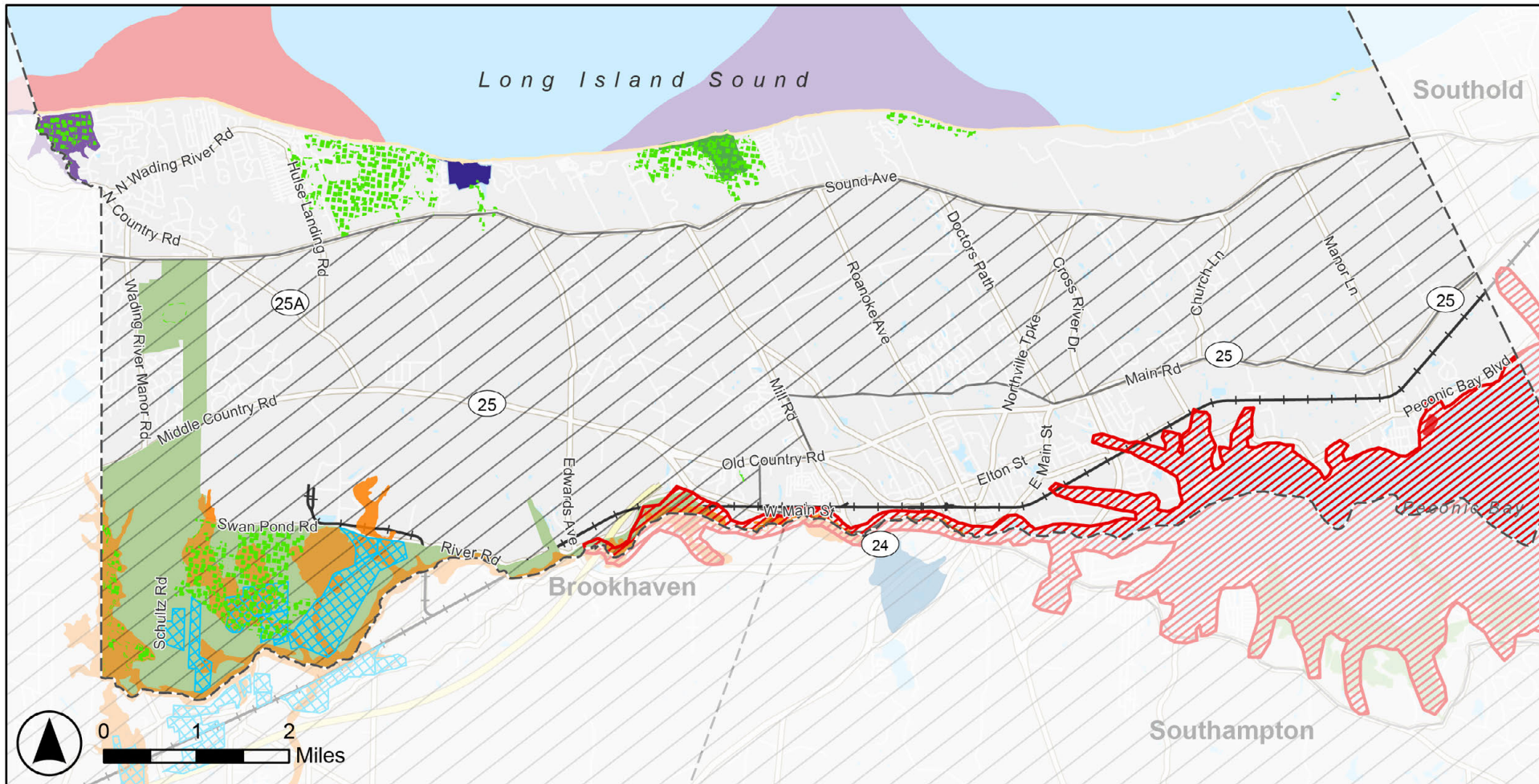
- **Nutrient Management Techniques:** Farmers improve nutrient management practices by applying nutrients (fertilizer and manure) in the right amount, at the right time of year, with the right method and with the right placement. This can significantly reduce how much fertilizer reaches water bodies.
- **Conservation Tillage.** Farmers on Long Island utilize "no till" practices in addition to adding compost and organic matter back into the soil to help preserve nutrients and better drainage of soils. However, not all crops allow for no till agriculture and there are many regulations that make composting inefficient.
- **Ensuring Year-Round Ground Cover:** Farmers plant cover crops or perennial species to prevent periods of bare ground on farm fields when the soil (and the soil and nutrients it contains) are most susceptible to erosion and loss into waterways. The Soil and Water District has done numerous programs and aids farmers to help find better and more advanced systems of cover cropping to recapture and reuse any nitrogen that may be in the fields.
- **Planting Field Buffers:** Farmers plant trees, shrubs, and grasses along the edges of fields; this is especially important for a field that borders water bodies. Planted buffers can help prevent nutrient loss from fields by absorbing or filtering out nutrients before they reach a water body.

Significant Habitats

Riverhead's natural environment includes unique and highly productive ecosystems, some aquatic and some terrestrial. These ecosystems support diverse living species, including microscopic plants and animals, seaweed, fish and shellfish, crustaceans, birds, sea turtles, marine mammals, trees, flowering plants, insects, amphibians (such as the endangered tiger salamander), and mammals (including the endangered northern long-eared bat). Riverhead encompasses the Peconic Estuary watershed, contributing to one of the State's highest concentrations of rare plants and animals, including federally endangered shorebirds like the Piping Plover and the Roseate Tern found on regional beaches.

New York Significant Coastal Habitats

The New York State Department of State (NYSDOS) designates Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitat sites (see Figure 3.6-4). Coastal habitats range from marshes, wetlands, mud and sandflats, beaches, rocky shores, riverine wetlands and riparian corridors, stream, bay, and harbor bottoms, creeks submerged aquatic vegetation beds, dunes, old fields, grasslands, and woodlands and forests.



Significant Environments

- Central Pine Barrens Core Protection Area
- NY DEC Natural Heritage Areas
- Maritime Beach

NY DOS Significant Coastal Habitats

- Baiting Hollow Wetlands and Beach
- Grandifolia Sandhills
- Herod Point Shoals
- Jamesport Town Beach
- Peconic River
- Roanoke Shoals
- Wading River Marsh and Beach

NY DEC Critical Environmental Areas

- Central Suffolk Pine Barrens and Special Groundwater Protection Area
- Peconic Bay and Environs
- Peconic River addition

New York Natural Heritage Areas

Under the Environmental Conservation Law, the New York Natural Heritage Areas Program defines Significant Natural Communities as locations with “rare or high-quality wetlands, forests, grasslands, ponds, streams, and other types of habitats, ecosystems, and ecological areas.” Figure 3.6-4 shows the communities identified and tracked by the New York Natural Heritage Program.

NYSDEC has an Endangered Species Program to track the State’s endangered and threatened species. Natural Heritage Areas and their vicinity are habitats of endangered and threatened species. Some of Riverhead’s significant natural communities are described below.

Calverton Ponds Preserve

The Calverton Ponds Preserve, a 350-acre assemblage of pine barrens and coastal plain ponds, is an irreplaceable natural resource and is one of the rarest wetland ecosystems in the State. The Nature Conservancy and Suffolk County Parks cooperatively own and manage the preserve.

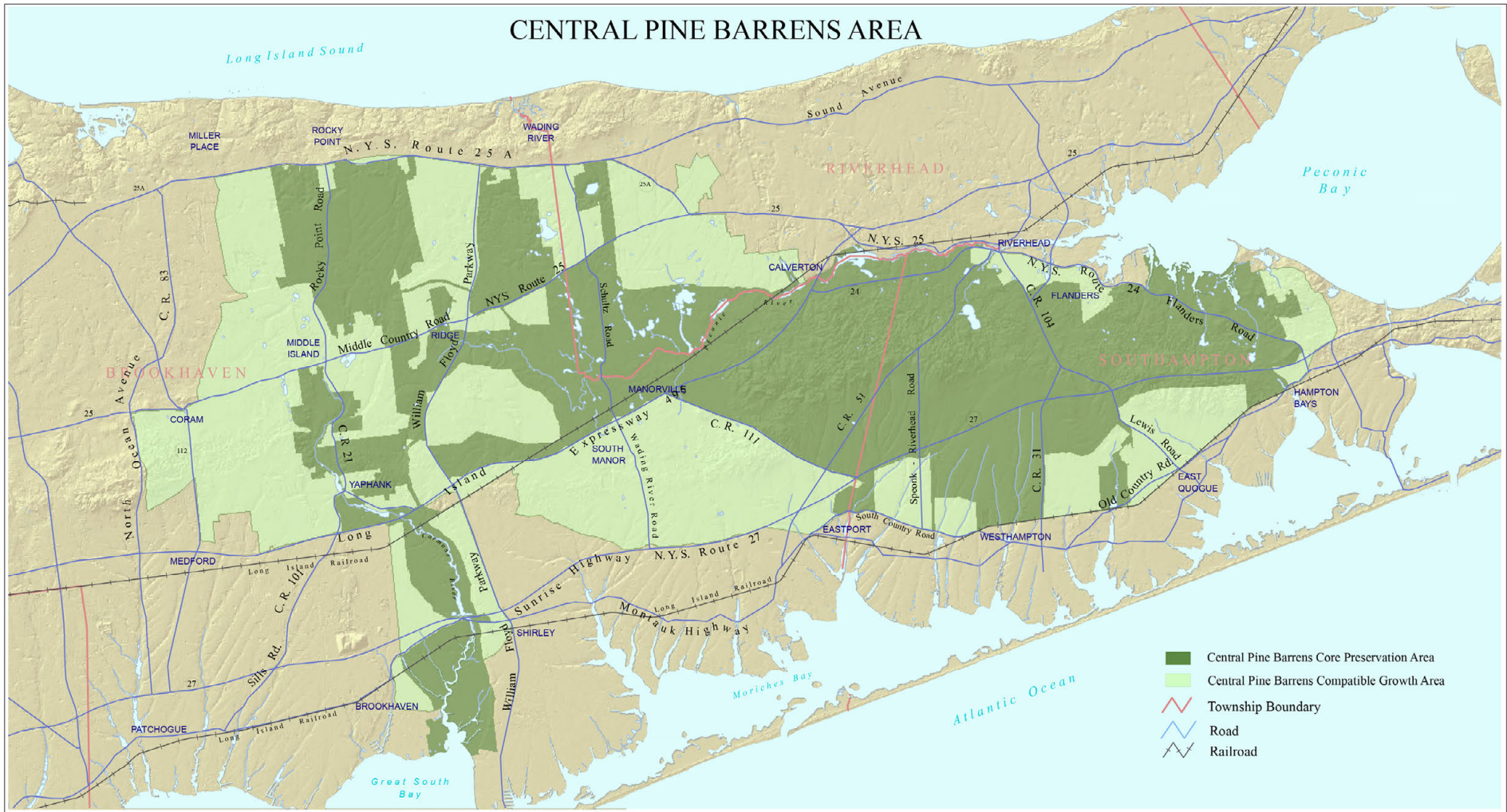
Coastal Oak Beech Woodlands

The old-growth Coastal Oak Beech woodland is along the moraine that forms the Long Island shoreline. Rare Dwarf Beech woodlands are found in certain areas along the escarpment, such as Friar’s Head and Wildwood State Park. The New York Natural Heritage Program has noted that this is the largest maritime beech forest in the State and one of three located along the East Coast. Beech Leaf Disease is a prevalent threat to these rare woodlands.

Central Pine Barrens

Encompassing over 105,000 acres across Riverhead, Brookhaven, and Southampton, the Central Pine Barrens region (see Figure 3.6-5) is hailed as Long Island’s paramount wilderness. Its significance extends to the watershed and headwaters of the Peconic River, overlapping with the Peconic Estuary and the proximity to Long Island Sound and the Atlantic Ocean and fostering a unique climate and biodiversity. Recognized for its globally rare dwarf pine plains, the region hosts diverse flora and fauna, including the pitch pine tree species, oak varieties, and wetland plants found exclusively on Long Island. Regular wildfires, intrinsic to the Pine Barrens, release nutrients that trigger new growth and maintain the balance of the ecosystem, providing habitats for animal communities and serving as breeding grounds for migratory birds.

Situated above Long Island’s federally designated sole-source drinking water aquifer system, the Pine Barrens’ porous soils facilitate groundwater recharge through deep flow recharge. This aquifer, crucial for Long Island residents’ clean drinking water, is susceptible to contamination due to the soils’ high permeability, which hampers the ability to filter contaminants effectively. Recognizing the Central Pine Barrens’ importance, laws and policies at the County, State, and federal levels have been enacted to shield it from the adverse impacts of development. Much of the land within the region has been preserved through acquisitions by governmental entities and nonprofit organizations, reflecting a collective commitment to its enduring protection.



Note: This map is intended for general reference only and is not to be used for surveying, legal interpretation of jurisdictional boundaries, or other precise purposes. Information shown on this map may contain defects, errors, and/or omissions. Refer to NY's E.C.L. Article 57-0107 (10), (11) and (12) for the official description of the Central Pine Barrens boundaries. Prepared by Commission Staff (ac), January 25, 2016.

CENTRAL PINE BARRENS JOINT PLANNING AND POLICY COMMISSION

Carrie Meek Gallagher, Chairwoman
 Steven Bellone, Member
 Edward P. Romaine, Member
 Jay H. Schneiderman, Member
 Sean M. Walter, Member

Topography and Soils

The characteristics of landforms determine those areas best suited for agricultural use and areas unsuitable for development, such as steep slopes and eroding bluffs.

Topography

Riverhead's elevation ranges from 230 feet above sea level to sea level, and its topography is characterized by a rolling landscape, flat lands, and coastal bluffs. Figure 3.6-6 shows a map of steep slopes in Riverhead. Topography is largely created by the following: the advance and retreat of glaciers formed these natural features thousands of years ago; the weathering action of rain that erodes the landscape over time; the movement of soil particles through the landscape by rivers and streams; and the shifting of landforms created by the movement of large water bodies, particularly those with tides.

Riverhead's north shore has a hilly ridge known as the Harbor Hill moraine, which runs along the northern edge of Long Island Sound. Along the southern edge of the Town, just south of the Peconic River, is a second ridge known as the Ronkonkoma moraine. Between these two ridges is a broad, flat outwash plain that characterizes most of Riverhead's land and provides prime agricultural soils in its core.

Soils

Figure 3.6-7 shows a pattern of prime agricultural soils and soils that are suitable for farming in Riverhead based on the USDA Soil Survey Geographic Database (SSURGO).⁵¹ Categories used to describe the farmland suitability of different soil types and descriptions of soil types in this section are adapted from Soil Survey of Suffolk County, New York, and the USDA-NRCS Official Soil Series Descriptions.⁵²

Prime farmland

Prime farmland areas comprise approximately 29% of Riverhead's total land area. These areas are characterized by deep, well-drained, moderately coarse-textured soils with moderate to high available moisture capacity. These features make them well-suited for agriculture, and their ease of excavation makes them viable for housing and other development. In Riverhead, prime farmland soils are found in the outwash plain between the two moraines corresponding to the Town's existing agricultural regions.

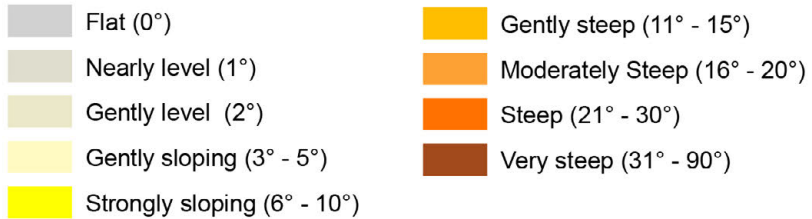
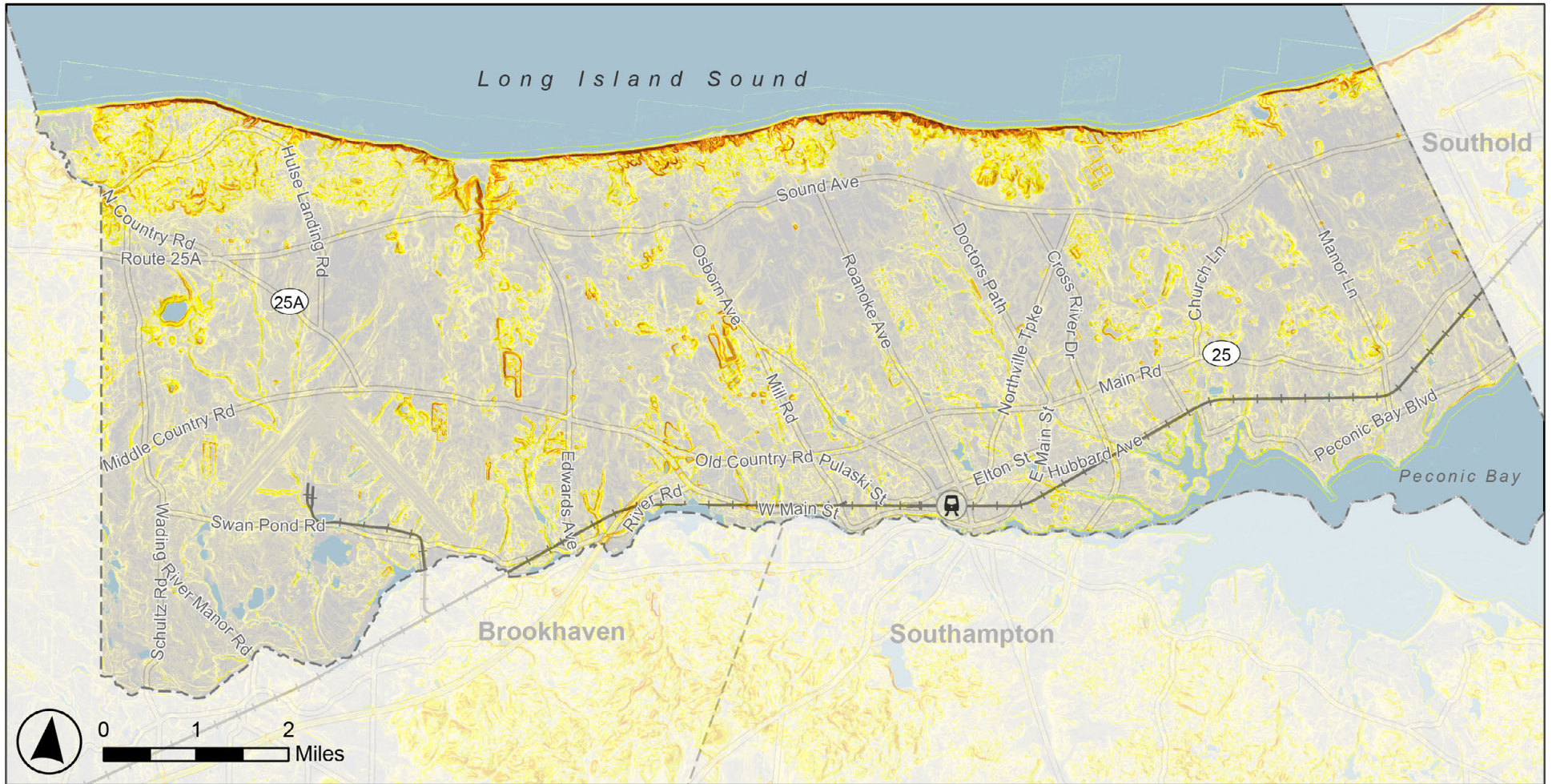
Farmland of statewide importance

Farmlands of statewide importance comprise 15% of Riverhead's total land area. These areas consists of deep, excessively drained, coarse-textured soils with low available moisture capacity. Farmland of statewide importance is often found on the outwash plain and steeper sloping areas along the moraines.

⁵¹ United States Natural Resource Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Survey Geographic Database (SSURGO), <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/resources/data-and-reports/soil-survey-geographic-database-ssurgo>

⁵² United States Conservation Service, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975. Available on Google Books. <https://play.google.com/store/books/details?id=Qd9JAAAYAAJ&rdid=book-Qd9JAAAYAAJ&rdot=1&pli=1>

United States Natural Resource Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Official Soil Series Descriptions (OSD), <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/resources/data-and-reports/official-soil-series-descriptions-osd>





- | | |
|--|---|
| Farmland of statewide importance | Beaches |
| All areas are prime farmland | Escarpments |
| Prime farmland if drained | Tidal Marshes |
| Not prime farmland | Other |

Prime farmland if drained

The only area in this category found in Riverhead is mainly within the boundary of the North Fork Preserve (between Sound Avenue and Long Island Sound, north of Church Lane), a conservation area owned by the County. Soils in this category are only well suited to crops if they are artificially drained but are better conserved as woodland areas.

Not prime farmland

About a third of Riverhead's land area is not prime farmland. Two general areas of this category run east-west along the moraines to the north and south of the prime agricultural regions.

The area of Riverhead on the north shore, along the Harbor Hill moraine, is comprised of excessively well-drained coarse-textured soils. Steep slopes and the sandy texture of the soil make it unsuitable for farming, prone to erosion, and limited in development potential. Grading, logging, or clearing of woodlands can exacerbate erosion.

The rolling, hilly area in the south of Riverhead, bordering the Peconic River and Flanders Bay, has coarse-textured soil that drains rapidly, making it unsuitable for agriculture. In addition, steep slopes and high-water tables in areas also limit development. The rapid permeability of the soils can contribute to groundwater contamination.

Three incredibly fragile soil types are found in small quantities in pockets or along Riverhead's coast.

1. Beaches: Riverhead's beaches on the North Shore are gravelly and cobbly, while beaches on the bays are sandier. Measures should be taken to keep the beach wide enough to protect nearby dunes and uplands.
2. Escarpments: Escarpment soils include bluffs with slopes greater than 35% that occur along the north shore of Riverhead. With such steep slopes, they are highly subject to erosion. Riverhead's escarpments generally lack vegetation and have large boulders embedded in them. Escarpments are habitats for some species of songbirds.
3. Tidal Marsh: Tidal marshes are shoreline areas not inundated by daily tide flow but subject to flooding during abnormally high moon or storm tides. Tidal marshes have layers of organic matter and pale gray or white sand. Tidal marshes are best suited to wildlife habitat.

Town Regulations and Programs

Conservation Advisory Council (CAC)

Riverhead's Conservation Advisory Council (CAC) reviews applications for development activities within 150 feet of Town-designated Freshwater Wetlands and 300 feet of NYSDEC Tidal Wetlands, as regulated in Riverhead Town Code Sections 293 and 295.

While most of the applications relate to single-family residential development and the construction of related structures, there have been several significant applications that the CAC has reviewed that have a broader Town impact. For example, applications for development on the Peconic Bay require 10-foot buffers along bulkheads to prevent the introduction of nitrogen-based fertilizers into the Peconic Estuary.

Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC)

In 2018, the Town Board established the Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) to advise on the preservation, development, and use of natural and man-made features with consideration for beauty, quality, biological integrity, and other environmental factors. The EAC identifies threats posed to environmental quality and works to ensure long-term sustainability. Its mission is to serve as a resource for facilitating conservation

and environmental stewardship by the Town and its residents through education, government policies, and incentives. The EAC has been instrumental in leading the Town's NYSDEC Climate Smart Communities (CSC) program, discussed further in the Sustainability and Resilience chapter.

Regional Partners and Programs

The Town regularly collaborates with many regional partners to assist with environmental stewardship and sustainable resource management, including the following:

Peconic Land Trust

Since its founding in 1983, the trust has been dedicated to conserving and protecting the scenic beauty, farmlands, and natural resources of the Peconic Bay region. Through strategic land acquisitions, conservation easements, and community engagement initiatives, the Peconic Land Trust actively works to sustain the delicate balance between development and preservation.

The Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy's work combats climate change, protects the oceans, land, and freshwater, and provides for food and water sustainability through research, partnerships, and actions. It has worked with Riverhead to acquire lands for protection and stewardship, including the Central Pine Barrens Preserve, Calverton Ponds Preserve, and Wading River Marsh Preserve.

Cornell Cooperative Extension

Cornell Cooperative Extension is a collaboration among Cornell University's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and College of Human Ecology and local communities. The Suffolk County chapter is in Riverhead. Researchers, Educators, and volunteers are dedicated to preserving the heritage, protecting the ecosystems, and supporting the economy through research, training, and educational initiatives.

New York Sea Grant

Sea Grant is a program of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). New York's Sea Grant partners with Stony Brook University to advance research in a variety of marine, aquatic and coastal topics. Sea Grant has been instrumental in examining the health of Long Island Sound and the Peconic Estuary, leading projects on fisheries and aquaculture, coastal ecosystems, coastal resiliency, and environmental justice.

3.6.1.2. Agriculture

Agricultural Industry

Agriculture remains an important economic industry in Riverhead. As discussed in the Economic Development chapter on the plan, Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting has declined by job share in the Town from 5.9% in 2002 to 4.4% in 2021, a decrease representing about 67 jobs.⁵³ Agribusiness has become a growth industry on the North Fork, as farmers have increasingly diversified their crops and business activities on their parcels in response to economic challenges.

⁵³ U.S. Census OnTheMap LEHD, 2002 - 2022

Agricultural Lands and Preservation Programs

Agricultural lands in Riverhead have rich prime agricultural soil compositions, as discussed above. Approximately 15,145 acres of land in Riverhead, 36.5% of the Town’s total land area, is used for agricultural purposes. About 8,900 of those acres are in the Agriculture Protection Zone (APZ), which was created in 2003 following the Comprehensive Plan. The APZ extends from Sound Avenue to Route 25.

One of the first farmland preservation programs in the Country was started in Suffolk County in 1974, with farmland in Riverhead being some of the earliest examples of preservation in the United States. Approximately 8,800 acres of land used for agriculture in Riverhead has been protected through various voluntary means, primarily Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) by the Town and County, the Town’s Transfer of Development Rights Program, and cluster development. A smaller portion of agricultural lands have been protected by public or non-profit ownership, easements, or other means. Figure 3.6-8 shows lands used for agricultural purposes in Riverhead categorized by protection type. Agricultural lands that have not been protected are shown in dark green. The acreage of such lands is provided in Table 3.6-1.

Table 3.6-1. Protected and Unprotected Land Used for Agriculture

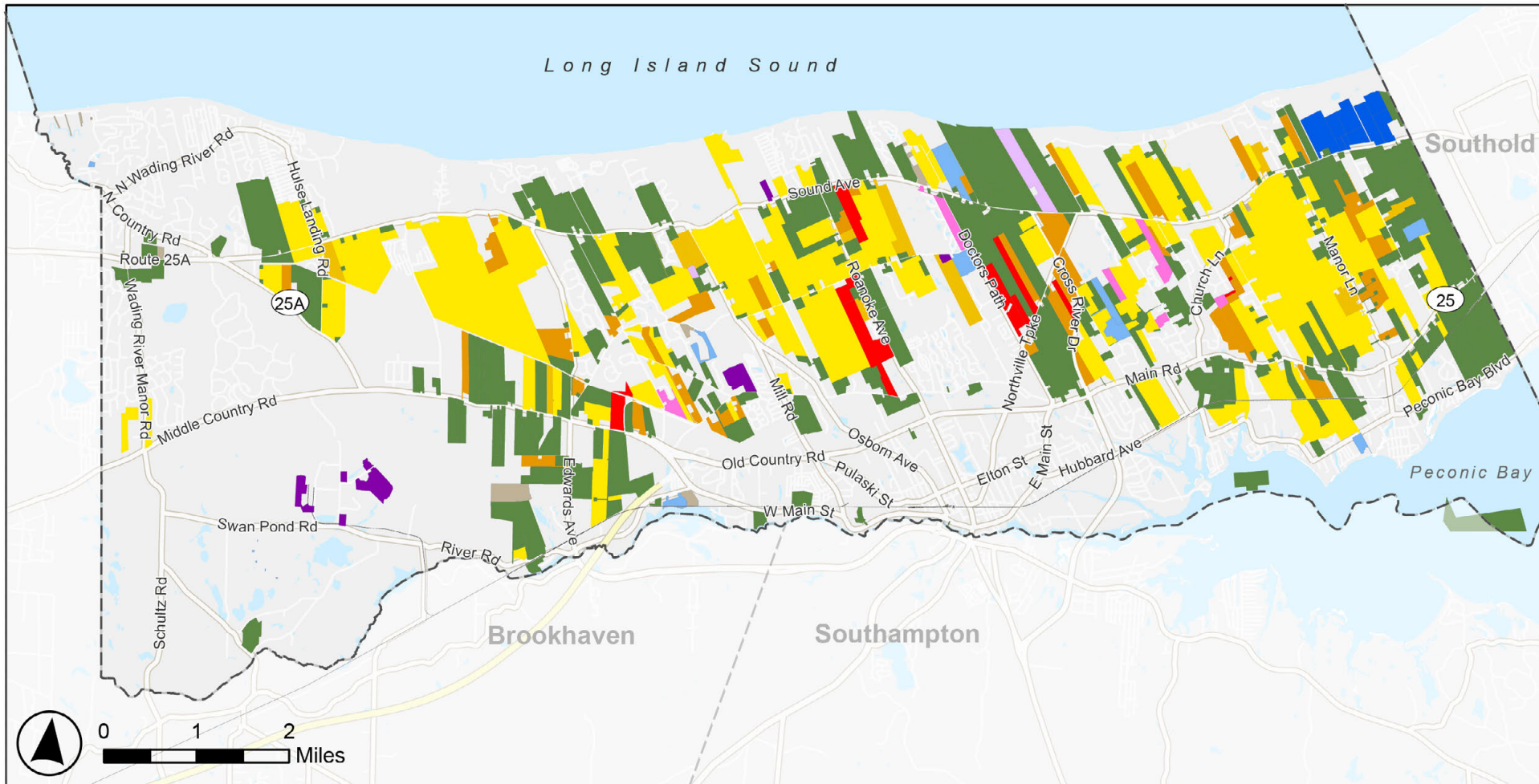
| Primary Protection Type | Acres | Percentage of Total Land Used for Agriculture |
|--|---------------|---|
| County PDR | 5,980 | 39.5% |
| Town PDR | 1,126 | 7.4% |
| County/Town PDR | 374 | 2.5% |
| TDR | 338 | 2.2% |
| State Easement | 259 | 1.7% |
| Town Ownership | 148 | 1.0% |
| Cluster Open Space | 147 | 1.0% |
| Trust Easement | 107 | 0.7% |
| Other | 101 | 0.7% |
| County Ownership | 100 | 0.7% |
| Nonprofit Easement (Unknown) | 76 | 0.5% |
| Trust Ownership | 27 | 0.2% |
| Homeowner Associations | 20 | 0.1% |
| Pine Barrens Easement | 2 | 0.0% |
| Total Protected Land Used for Agriculture | 8,804 | 58.1% |
| Unprotected Land Used for Agriculture | 6,342 | 41.9% |
| Total Land Used for Agriculture | 15,145 | 100.0% |

The data used to calculate the acreage of agricultural land preserved by protection type is derived primarily from the Peconic Land Trust Interactive map⁵⁴ and supplemented by the Town of Riverhead and Suffolk County. The Peconic Land Trust gathered data on land protection, including farmland and open space protection, in cooperation with the Town of Riverhead, the Farmland Advisory Committee, and the Open Space Advisory Committee when preparing the Community Preservation Fund Comprehensive Plan in 2021. This data is supplemented with information provided by the Town on parcels that have issued TDR credits and data from Suffolk County’s Farmland PDR Parcel Viewer.⁵⁵ The Town of Riverhead provided Land Use data.

⁵⁴ <https://peconiclandtrust.org/our-work/map>

⁵⁵

<https://gis.suffolkcountyny.gov/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=e12cd834147643288f870f3c781a831d>



- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| ■ TDR | ■ Town PDR | ■ NGO Ownership or Easement |
| ■ Town Ownership | ■ County PDR | ■ Other Protected or Restricted Areas |
| ■ County Ownership | ■ County/Town PDR | ■ Unprotected Agricultural Land Use |
| ■ State Easement | ■ Cluster Development | |

TOWN OF RIVERHEAD DGEIS Comprehensive Plan Update Figure 3.6-8. Protected and Unprotected Lands Used for Agriculture
Sources: Peconic Land Trust, Town of Riverhead, Suffolk County, NYS GIS, USGS, BfJ Planning

Community Preservation Fund and Project Plan

The Peconic Bay Region Community Preservation Fund (CPF) is a public program established by a referendum in 1998 for the protection of farmland, open space and community character. Each of the five East End towns manages its own funds. The CPF revenues come from a 2% real estate transfer tax, other Town sources, and gifts. Funds can be used for preservation of agricultural lands, open space, wetlands, aquifer recharge areas, undeveloped beaches and shorelands, streams and riverine areas; and water quality improvement projects, including wastewater treatment, aquatic habitat restoration, and pollution prevention; and the establishment of parks, nature preserves, wildlife refuges, recreational areas, greenbelts, and waterway access. The Town maintains a Community Preservation Plan identifying priority properties that should be protected.

Through legislative actions in 2015, the initial 2010 expiration date on the transfer tax was extended through 2050. Riverhead set up a \$72 million bond against future revenues to enable the Town to preserve key properties; the bond is expected to be paid off by 2030. The Town's opportunity to purchase development rights, acquire land, or invest in other eligible projects is limited by the repayment of the bond indebtedness.

As of 2021, the Town has invested \$52 million in the purchase of development rights for properties in active agricultural production, preserving over 1,500 acres of farmland. The Community Preservation Plan identifies priority farmland for protection and recommends the use of the Town's TDR program, PDR programs, and cluster development provisions as the primary methods for preserving farmland in Riverhead.

Community Preservation Project Plan (2021)

The Town, and the Farmland Committee, and the Open Space Committee worked closely with the Peconic Land Trust to update the Community Preservation Fund Project Plan, originally created in 1998-2001.⁵⁶ The update was supported by a New York State Land Trust Alliance Conservation Partnership Program grant and adopted in 2021.

As part of the plan development, Peconic Land Trust mapped eligible parcels and identified priorities for preservation in 2001. Updated information was used in the 2021 plan to evaluate remaining farmland and open space to be protected and recommend the best methods.

The Farmland Committee identified priority farmland for preservation by ranking parcels based on soil suitability for agriculture, presence of or potential for agricultural production, proximity or contiguity to existing farmland, and development pressures.

The Open Space Committee also established a parcel ranking system to evaluate open space for preservation, as discussed in more detail in the Parks and Open Space chapter.

In total, the unprotected farmland and open space recommended for preservation totaled 8,259 acres.⁵⁷ The primary preservation tools recommended by the Plan, in order of most to least acreage, are PDR, TDR, cluster development, and fee acquisition.

Town of Riverhead Purchase of Development Rights (PDR)

Over 1,100 acres have been preserved by the Town's PDR program (see Table 3.6-1). Public funds are used to purchase the development rights of a property, extinguishing development potential beyond the intended agricultural use. The property owner voluntarily enters into the agreement. For example, farmland in a residentially zoned area of town could be developed into residential uses as-of-right. By purchasing

⁵⁶ Town of Riverhead, Community Preservation Project Plan, Adopted 2021

⁵⁷ Town of Riverhead, Community Preservation Project Plan, Adopted 2021

development rights, the Town eliminates the potential of residential development. The owner of the property remains the owner, the property can remain in agricultural production, and structures required for the primary agricultural use may be permitted. In the Town's PDR Program, development rights are not transferred elsewhere, as they are in the TDR program. The majority of the Town's CPF funds have been used to purchase development rights.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

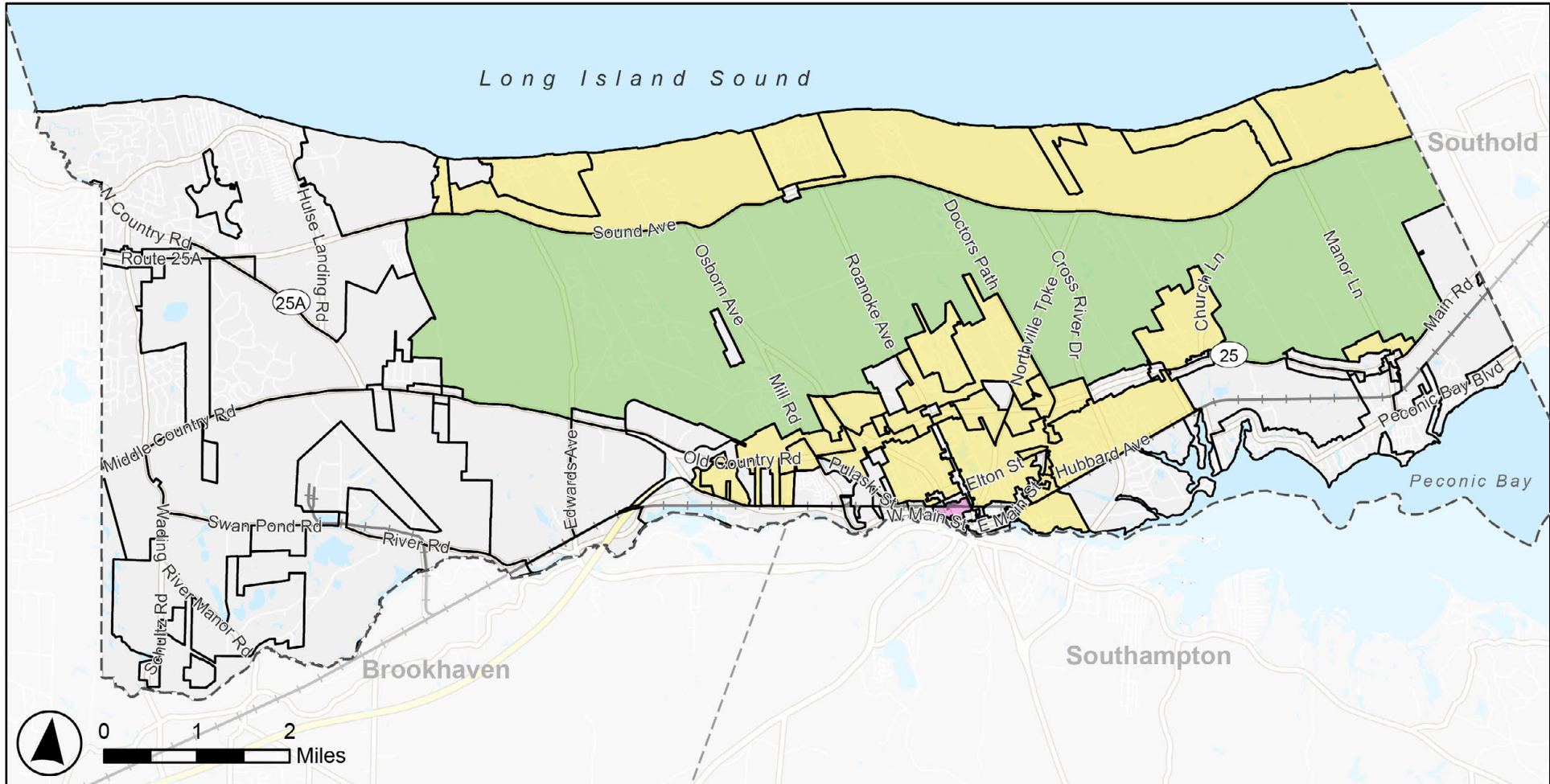
TDR refers to the practice of severing development rights from a property in a sending area, allowing preservation of the land in perpetuity, and selling those development rights to the owner of a property in a receiving area, allowing them to develop additional units or square footage. When a property owner sells their development rights, an easement is recorded restricting the use of the property to agricultural use or open space and strictly limiting development on a property, generally to renovations of pre-existing farm structures and structures necessary for the agricultural use. Most agricultural lands in Riverhead fall within residential zoning use districts, meaning the property can develop a former farm with homes as-of-right. By severing the development rights, no property owner would ever be able to develop the agricultural land for other uses. The land can still be developed for agricultural purposes (i.e. barns, greenhouses, etc.) and be kept in agricultural production, or left fallow to return to its natural state.

The Riverhead TDR Program has been in effect since 2003. Over 300 acres have been preserved through the program, and about 265 TDR credits have been redeemed, including 171 credits for residential development and 94 credits for commercial development. About 43 credits have not yet been redeemed.⁵⁸

Figure 3.6-9 shows existing sending and receiving areas in Riverhead. Properties that have sold development rights are marked with green dots, and properties that have redeemed TDR credits are marked with orange dots.

Sending areas are within the Town's Agricultural Protection Zone (APZ). Receiving areas are within Residence A-80 (RA-80), Residence A-40 (RA-40), Hamlet Residential (HR), Retirement Community (RC), Business Center (BC), Shopping Center (SC), Destination Retail Center (DRC), Commercial Residential Campus (CRC), Business F, and Planned Recreational Park (PRP) zoning districts.

⁵⁸ Riverhead Planning Department, Town of Riverhead, 2023



- Current TDR Sending Districts
- Current TDR Receiving Districts
- RRA-OD District*

*The adopted RRA-OD district provides for the use of TDR, however, the TDR Map was never formally updated.

Cluster Development

Cluster development has preserved approximately 365 acres of land, of which about 150 acres are used for agriculture (see Table 3.6-1). The purpose of cluster development is to allow for maximum flexibility in achieving a compatible arrangement of agricultural and residential land uses and to protect prime agricultural soils, scenic vistas, and significant natural features.

In a cluster development, or cluster subdivision, an applicant concentrates residential lots in a portion of the plat while preserving the remainder of the land. In Riverhead, cluster development is mandated in the APZ, RA-80, and RB-80 zoning districts. The cluster development requires 70% of prime agricultural soils to be preserved through the creation of farm lots or the preservation of 70% of the land as farmland or open space. The Planning Board may approve a cluster subdivision with a lower percentage, no less than 50%, and provide reasoning for its decision in the resolution approving the preliminary plat.

The Town's current cluster development policies could also be called "conservation subdivisions" because they aim to preserve over 50% of the land. A conservation subdivision is a cluster subdivision in which the conservation of the natural environment or cultural resources is prioritized. More than half of the plat is set aside for open space.⁵⁹ In New York statutes, conservation subdivision is not specifically mentioned and is achieved through the State's enabling legislation for cluster subdivision, which Riverhead has codified.

Easements on the preserved agricultural and open space lands are recorded to ensure protection from development in perpetuity. If the open space is not dedicated to the Town or similar authority, the developer must create a property owners' association or provide a maintenance plan approved by the Planning Board to ensure the ongoing upkeep of the land.

The same number of residential lots calculated for a conventional subdivision is allowed in the cluster subdivision, which therefore reduces some of the dimensional restrictions of the zoning district. The result is the same net density on the plat as in a conventional subdivision, with the added benefits of preserved farmland, open space, scenic vistas, and more compact neighborhoods.

Suffolk County Farmland Preservation

Suffolk County Purchase of Development Rights Program

About 6,000 acres of farmland in Riverhead have been preserved by the Suffolk County PDR Program (see Table 3.6-1). This represents 57% of the County's total PDR program, which is the oldest of its kind in the nation.⁶⁰ Sometimes the County holds the development rights to extinguish them when needed to support the increased sewage flow capacity of a particular workforce housing project (elsewhere).

The first such program in the United States, the Suffolk County Farmland PDR program was created in the early 1970s for the purpose of acquiring development rights to working farms. The program evaluates parcels based on soil quality, farmland contiguity, potential to preserve scenic vistas, property values, and development pressure in the community. Farmers agree to sell their development rights to Suffolk County and retain ownership of the land. The land is restricted to agricultural uses only.

⁵⁹ New York Department of State, *Subdivision Review in New York State, 2021*, <https://dos.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/12/subdivisionreviewinnys.pdf>

⁶⁰ Suffolk County Purchase of Development Rights Program, Distribution of County of Suffolk Purchased Development Rights by Town, Updated 6/10/2021, https://www.suffolkcountyny.gov/Portals/0/formsdocs/planning/Farmland_Comm/2021/Distribution%20of%20SCPDR%20by%20Town%206-10-2021.pdf

Suffolk County Agricultural Protection Plan (2015)

An important cornerstone of the regional effort to preserve farmland is the Suffolk County Agricultural Protection Plan. The plan documents the state of farming in the county and identifies challenges faced by the agricultural community and courses of action to address them. Some of these challenges include high production costs, excessive regulations, farm labor availability, and protection of ground and surface waters.

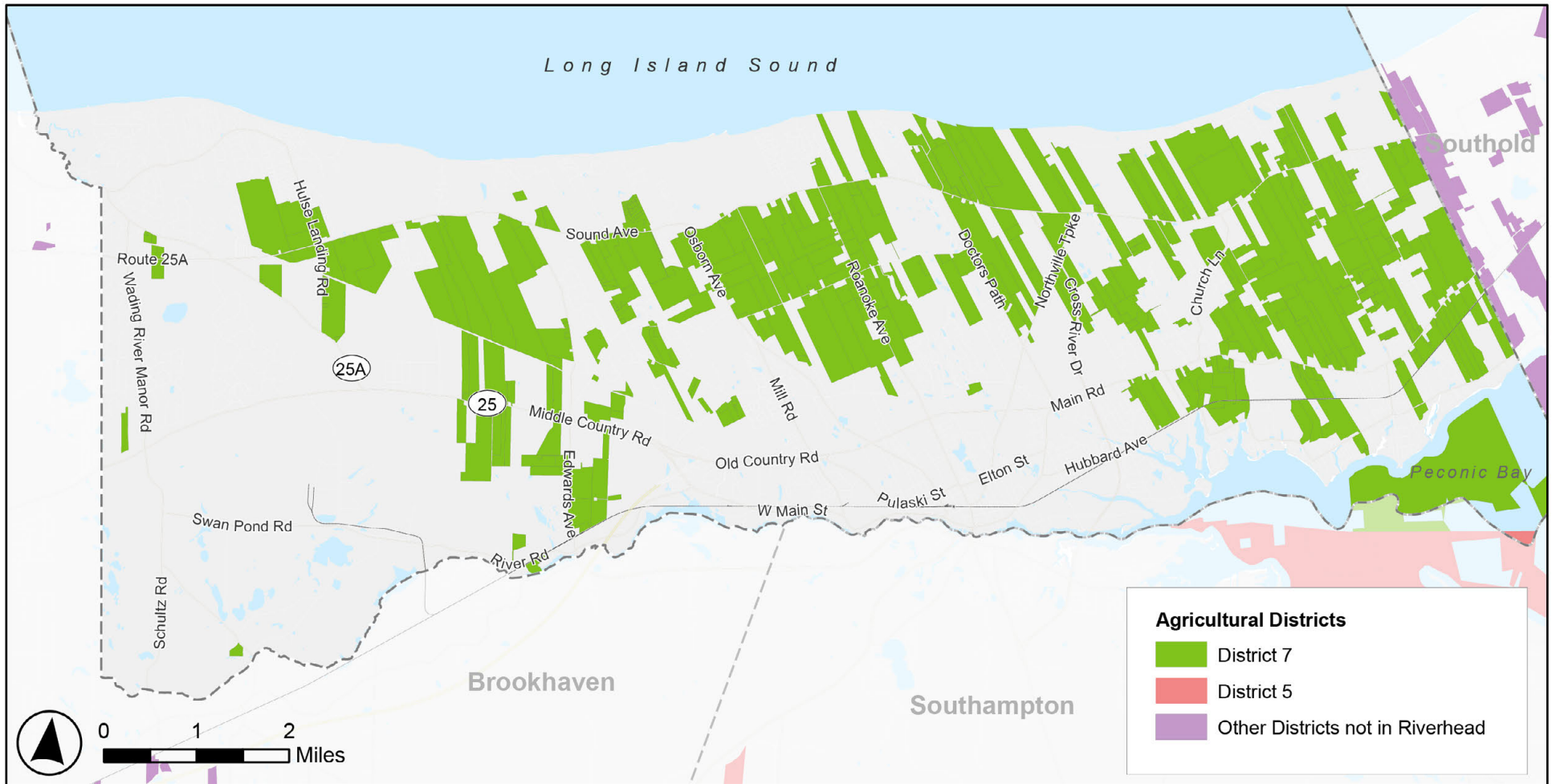
Suffolk County Agricultural District Program

Article 25-AA of the Agriculture and Markets Law of New York established the Agricultural District Program and gives counties authority to create districts and administer enrollment of farmlands in the program, to protect and promote the availability of farmland for agricultural uses. Suffolk County has four Agricultural Districts.

Approximately 14,420 acres of Riverhead's land, and 258 acres of water, are included in the 7th Agricultural District (see Figure 3.6-10). A very small portion of Riverhead's waters are included in District 5. Inclusion in an Agricultural District provides farmers with the right-to-farm law and protects farm properties from nuisance complaints related to standard agricultural practices and protection from over-restrictive local regulations. Land within the Agricultural District includes active agricultural lands and lands that have potential for agricultural use but may not be in current production.

New York State Farmland Protection Program

This program directly supports preservation of farmland by providing funds for purchase of development rights. Grants are awarded to town or county farmland boards for 75% of the funds needed to purchase development rights; the municipality provides the remaining 25%. Selection criteria include whether there is significant development pressure on a particular piece of property, whether the farm is economically viable, and whether the farm is close to an ecological resource or an adjacent protected farm. From 2004 to 2008, the NYS Farmland Protection Program provided matching funds for preservation of several active farms in Riverhead.



Suffolk County Shellfish Aquaculture Lease Program (SCALP)

Shellfish cultivation has been conducted in the Peconic Estuary for centuries. Most underwater lands in Suffolk County are owned by the County or State, with few exceptions. The County created and offered private land grants for oyster cultivation between 1885 and 1914.⁶¹ While most of these deeds have reverted to County or State ownership, a few have remained in private ownership.

In 2004, the State transferred 110,000 acres of underwater lands in the Bays to the County to implement an aquaculture lease program. Adopted in 2009, SCALP authorized the County to lease underwater lands for the cultivation of shellfish within the designated Shellfish Cultivation Zone located in the Peconic and Gardiners Bays.

Through SCALP, the County determines the location and extent of shellfish farms through limits on the size and number of leases. The State and Federal agencies (i.e., NYS DEC, USACE, and US Coast Guard) regulate the species and number of shellfish allowed to be farmed and the methods for their cultivation, harvesting, and handling.

During the first 10 years of SCALP, Phase I, a lease acreage cap was set at 600 acres, allowing up to 60 acres to be leased annually through an application cycle. The Shellfish Cultivation Zone included historic, private oyster grants and NYS DEC Temporary Marine Area Use Assignments (TMAUAs) issued before implementation of the lease program began. These established shellfish farms were given priority to lease underwater lands through the program. Oyster grants allow for the cultivation of oysters only and do not count toward the cap. However, if an oyster grant owner wishes to expand their production to other types of shellfish, they are required to apply for a lease.

SCALP was reviewed and amended in 2021, Phase II, which applies through 2030. The allowable Shellfish Cultivation Zone was reduced to about 17,000 acres. Within the zone are 61 private oyster grants and 601 10-acre lease sites. Phase II capped the lease acreage program to 600 acres and continues to allow only 60 acres for “new” leases by application each year. Preexisting oyster grants do not count toward the cap.

Within Riverhead are 14 total and three partial (boundary crosses Town line) 10-acre lease sites (see Figure 3.6-11). Of these, five are leased, and one is pending lease as of 2023.⁶² There is also one private oyster grant property owned by Eastern Bays Company Inc.

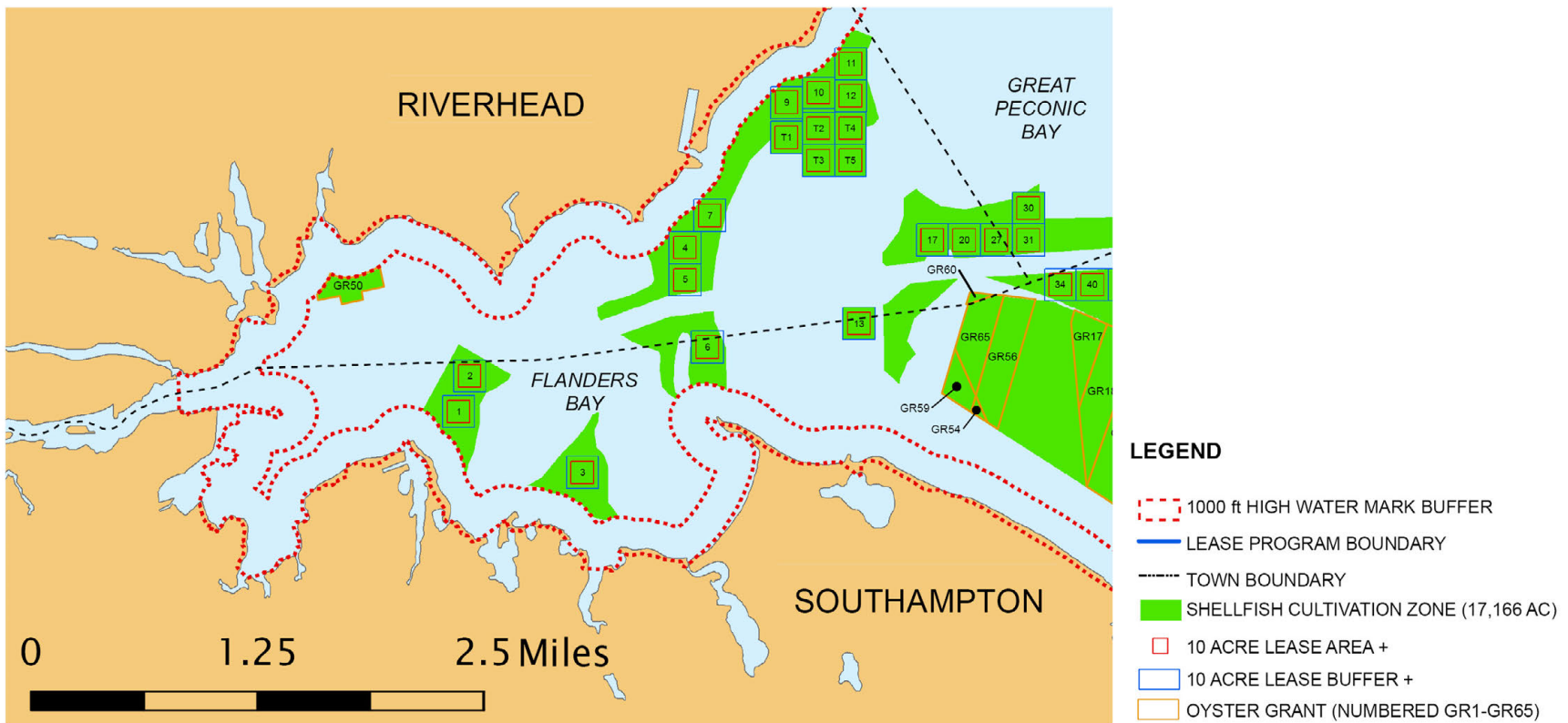
⁶¹ Suffolk County, Lease Program Overview and Program History, 2024, <https://www.suffolkcountyny.gov/Departments/Economic-Development-and-Planning/Planning-and-Environment/Environmental-Planning-and-Aquaculture/Shellfish-Aquaculture-Lease-Program/Program-Overview>

⁶² Suffolk County SCALP Lease Mapper, Accessed 1/26/2024, <https://gis.suffolkcountyny.gov/portal/apps/View/index.html?appid=6ae708a346f340ada850544fe25ceofb>

Floating Upweller Systems (FLUPSY)

Since approximately 2005, the Town of Riverhead has entered into license agreements with various local aquaculturists to locate Floating Upweller Systems (FLUPSY) at the northern terminus of East Creek in Jamesport for the purpose of culturing seed hard clams, Peconic Bay Scallops and Oysters. A FLUPSY is a floating platform, similar in scope to a small floating dock. Per the Long Island Shellfish Restoration Project, “inside the FLUPSY platform is a central trunk line containing a motor to pull water up through 12 connected mesh bottom barrels. Shellfish grow in a layer on the mesh at the bottom of the barrels. As water is pulled up through the bottom of the barrel, algae (food for the shellfish) in the water travels up through the layer of shellfish providing a continuous food supply.”⁶³ There are currently four FLUPSY platforms in East Creek. The operator of the system is required to provide educational tours of the facility and hold a minimum of two informational, educational, or recreational classes, courses, or seminars during their license period regarding the FLUPSY process, oyster cultivation, and other relevant topics, free of charge to Riverhead residents.

⁶³ Long Island Restoration Project, “Floating Upweller System (FLUPSY), [FLUPSY Specs — Long Island Shellfish Restoration Project \(lishellfishrestorationproject.org\)](http://lishellfishrestorationproject.org)



Other Regulations and Resources

Right-to-Farm Provisions

Chapter 201 of the Riverhead Town Code addresses Agricultural Land Preservation. It targets the conservation and preservation of prime agricultural lands used in bona fide agricultural production because of their vital role in both the character of the Town and its economy. The code addresses a farmer's right to partake in activities related to farming practice.

Agricultural Advisory Committee

The Agricultural Advisory Committee is comprised of Riverhead residents from the agricultural community appointed by the Town Board, who meet at least eight times yearly. The Committee serves as a conduit between the agricultural community and the Town Board, Planning Board, and other relevant boards/committees. Their task is to advise the Town Board on agricultural issues and code recommendations and review Planning Board proposals affecting agriculture in Riverhead. Some of the Committee's specific responsibilities, outlined in Article XVII of the Town Code, include:

- Review agriculture-related site plan and subdivision applications related to agricultural activities or contemplating the use of TDR for land located in an agricultural zoning district or land currently used for agriculture.
- Review proposed zoning changes in agricultural zoning districts.
- Review local, county, state, and federal legislation affecting agricultural issues and communicate the effect to the appropriate board and the Town Board.
- Submit to the Town Board an annual summary of the activities of the Agricultural Advisory Committee.

Transfer of Development Rights Committee

The TDR Committee is a subcommittee of the Agricultural Advisory Committee and was originally formed in 2017 and reconstituted in 2023. The Committee meets monthly to review the TDR plan developed and implemented after the 2003 Comprehensive Plan, discuss mechanisms for preserving farmland and creating a TDR certificate, and review sending and receiving areas to ensure there is a good balance.

Farmland Preservation Committee

The Farmland Preservation Committee comprises seven members appointed by the Town Board. Committee members must include four members of the Town's agricultural community who are actively engaged in the ownership and/or operation of a farm located on the agricultural lands within Riverhead, a member of the Planning Board, and two at-large members as appointed by the Town Board.

The Farmland Preservation Committee oversees the assessment and prioritization of agricultural land for preservation or acquisition, recommending lands for the purchase of development rights by the Town or County. Additionally, the committee reviews construction permit applications for structures on agricultural lands after the development rights have been acquired, proposing rules and regulations for its activities, subject to Town Board approval. The committee plays a crucial role in addressing development issues concerning agricultural lands, develops an annual report on development rights acquisition, permit reviews, major decisions, and acts as a clearinghouse advisory board.

Suffolk County Farmland Committee

The Suffolk County Farmland Committee evaluates and approves agricultural development and special event permits on preserved Suffolk County farmland and recommends properties for preservation acquisitions. Out of 20 members of the board, one is appointed by Riverhead's Town Board.

3.6.2. Potential Impacts

This section provides an analysis of the potential impacts that could occur as a result of adoption of the Comprehensive Plan Update.

3.6.2.1. Natural Features and Environmental Resources

Discussion of Comprehensive Plan Policies and Impacts

Chapter 7 of the Comprehensive Plan presents goals and recommendations related to natural features and environmental resources. The following presents a summary of the chapter recommendations under each proposed goal, followed by a discussion of potential impacts

Goal 1. Protect and preserve the ecological integrity of Riverhead's Central Pine Barrens area and the water quality of Long Island's sole source aquifer.

The Comprehensive Plan emphasizes the importance of preserving the Central Pine Barrens area and the aquifer beneath it, which are critical natural resources in Riverhead. The plan recommends continuing to implement the Central Pine Barrens Comprehensive Land Use Plan and meeting its development standards and guidelines. Additionally, it suggests cooperating with local non-profit organizations, the County, and the State to acquire and protect lands in the Central Pine Barrens area, while encouraging private property owners within the Core Preservation Area to use the Pine Barren's Transfer of Development Rights program.

To mitigate potential impacts on the Central Pine Barrens area and aquifer, the plan suggests adhering to the development standards and guidelines outlined in the Central Pine Barrens Comprehensive Land Use Plan. This includes reviewing and potentially amending Riverhead's Community Preservation Project Plan and Town Code in alignment with any updates to the Plan. Furthermore, the Comprehensive Plan Update proposes collaboration with local non-profit organizations, the County, and the State to acquire and protect lands within the Central Pine Barrens area, ensuring that any vacant or available lands are acquired for permanent preservation. Encouraging private property owners to participate in the Pine Barrens Transfer of Development Rights program can also help limit development and preserve critical natural resources. Impacts from implementation of this goal would be beneficial.

Goal 2. Protect the quality of ground water and surface waters throughout the Town.

Watershed management is crucial for safeguarding Riverhead's water resources, encompassing both groundwater and surface water. Major concerns include stormwater runoff, fertilizer and pesticide usage, improper disposal of hazardous waste, and nitrogen pollution, which significantly impacts water quality in the Long Island region. To address these issues, several recommendations are proposed. Firstly, the creation of a Comprehensive Water Management Plan with identified targets is suggested to address water quality improvement and nitrogen reduction goals. Additionally, the encouragement of Innovative and Alternative Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (I/A OWTS), the use of permeable reactive barriers, and improved enforcement of waste discharge regulations from boats and houseboats are also recommended measures.

Implementation of these recommendations would help to address water quality issues and ensure sustainable access to drinking water. Encouraging the use of I/A OWTS and enforcing proper waste discharge regulations can significantly reduce inputs of nitrogen and other contaminants into groundwater and surface water. Additionally, promoting the use of permeable reactive barriers and providing incentives for homeowners to transition to I/A systems would enhance groundwater quality and protect drinking water sources. These measures would ultimately contribute to healthier ecosystems, safer drinking water, and improved quality of life for Riverhead residents. Moreover, developing a best practice manual for vessel discharge and conducting dredging projects where needed can further improve water quality and ecosystem health in Riverhead's water

bodies. By integrating these measures into comprehensive water management strategies, Riverhead can effectively address water quality challenges, protect natural habitats, and ensure the long-term sustainability of its water resources for future generations. Impacts from implementation of this goal would be beneficial.

Goal 3. Limit future increases in impervious surfaces and stormwater runoff to help reduce flood impacts and surface water pollution.

The recommendations outlined aim to enhance stormwater management in Riverhead in response to anticipated climate change impacts, including increased storm frequency and intensity. By updating regulations to incorporate the latest stormwater best management practices (BMPs), revising impervious coverage limits in commercial zones, and maintaining Town-owned drainage systems, Riverhead seeks to mitigate the risks of flooding and overflow while promoting sustainable development practices.

Implementing these recommendations would not have a negative impact on the community, as they are designed to enhance infrastructure resilience and reduce the vulnerability of the Town to stormwater-related risks. By updating regulations and increasing stormwater storage capacities in parking areas, Riverhead can effectively mitigate overflow and flooding, thereby safeguarding properties and public safety. Moreover, reevaluating impervious coverage limits in commercial zones and encouraging pervious surfaces would promote sustainable land use practices and reduce environmental degradation, contributing to long-term community well-being. Impacts from implementation of this goal would be beneficial.

Goal 4. Conserve coastal features, including bluffs, shoreline, and dunes.

The recommendations presented aim to address the ongoing issue of coastal erosion in Riverhead, exacerbated by changing sea levels, increasing storm frequency, and development near the Long Island Sound. To mitigate the erosion of bluffs and the coastline, Riverhead proposes to clarify and strengthen its Coastal Erosion Hazard Code regulations, tracking receding bluffs and shoreline, and encouraging the State to remap coastal erosion hazard areas.

Implementing these recommendations would have no negative impacts on the community, as they are designed to enhance coastal management practices and minimize risks associated with erosion. By clarifying and strengthening Coastal Erosion Hazard Code regulations, Riverhead can provide additional guidance to decision-makers, ensuring that development in coastal erosion hazard areas is conducted in a manner that mitigates risks and protects natural resources. Similarly, tracking receding bluffs and shoreline and updating the map would enable informed decision-making by providing valuable information to the public, planning board, and zoning board of appeals, thereby enhancing coastal resilience and reducing vulnerability to erosion-related hazards. Impacts from implementation of this goal would be beneficial.

Goal 5. Protect and restore environmentally sensitive lands, wetlands, and marine habitats.

The recommendations aim to address critical environmental threats in Riverhead, including tree loss, habitat displacement, invasive species spread, coastal erosion, hydrology alterations, and climate change. Proposed measures include conducting a tree inventory, documenting wildlife corridors, establishing standards around water bodies and wetlands, inventorying wetlands comprehensively, partnering for wetlands restoration, encouraging sustainable fishing, and collaborating with stakeholders to protect coastal habitats and critical environmental areas.

These recommendations would have no negative impacts, promoting environmental conservation and sustainability. Conducting a tree inventory informs decision-making, benefiting the community and environment. Documenting wildlife corridors, setting standards for water bodies, and mapping wetlands enhance habitat preservation and biodiversity, boosting ecological resilience. Impacts from implementation of this goal would be beneficial.

Goal 6. Encourage eco-friendly landscaping and maintenance techniques.

The recommendations focus on promoting eco-friendly landscaping and stormwater management practices in Riverhead to enhance biodiversity, mitigate flooding, filter pollutants, and recharge groundwater. Initiatives include establishing best practices for landscaping on public property, informing private property owners about available grants and programs for eco-friendly interventions, and developing an educational campaign in collaboration with non-profit and academic institutions to promote natural resource conservation.

These recommendations are anticipated to have no negative impacts due to their emphasis on sustainable practices and community engagement. By implementing eco-friendly landscaping on public property, the Town can enhance the local ecosystem while minimizing maintenance costs using native species. Informing private property owners about available grants and programs empowers them to adopt eco-friendly practices, contributing to a collective effort toward environmental stewardship. Additionally, the educational campaign fosters awareness and understanding of conservation principles, encouraging residents, businesses, and developers to embrace sustainable behaviors without imposing regulatory burdens. Impacts from implementation of this goal would be beneficial.

Goal 7. Increase the Town's administrative capacity for working on natural resource conservation efforts.

The major recommendations aim to bolster the Town's capacity for environmental conservation and enforcement of regulations to protect natural resources. This includes the establishment of an Environmental Planner or similar position within the Planning Department to coordinate conservation efforts and improved enforcement of environmental regulations, particularly concerning wetland and water buffer areas, coastal erosion hazard areas, and open space set-asides in cluster subdivisions. Additionally, the Town is expected to assist in enforcing provisions of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and coordinate regional projects related to natural resource conservation.

These recommendations are anticipated to have a beneficial impact due to their focus on enhancing environmental protection and enforcement measures. By providing dedicated human resources and improving enforcement capabilities, the Town can better ensure compliance with environmental regulations and prevent inappropriate development in sensitive areas. The increased monitoring of open space areas and enforcement of regulations are crucial steps toward addressing existing adverse impacts on natural resources, demonstrating the Town's commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainability.

Discussion of Impacts from Recommended Rezoning Areas

The following presents a discussion of potential impacts related to the recommended rezoning area changes and the associated Build-out Analysis presented in Chapter 2.

Modification to PRC Districts

The recommendations for Peconic River Community (PRC) Districts aim to facilitate a mix of residential, commercial, and recreational uses, permitting residential development with Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) to support diverse housing options while adhering to urban planning principles. Potential impacts on natural features include the need to balance development with the preservation of riparian areas and compliance with NYSDEC regulations. These impacts would be addressed through the development of design guidelines that ensure responsible growth and environmental integrity, ensuring that all developments conform to regulatory standards while positively impacting community livability and development sustainability. Further, impacts related to stormwater, wetlands, riparian areas, and other natural and environmental resources would be evaluated on a site-specific basis as part of any future development within the PRC districts as part of site plan approval by the Planning Board and site-specific review under SEQ. This review should include coordination with NYSDEC as applicable.

Cluster Development Requirement in RA-40, and RB-40 zones

The recommendations propose cluster development requirements in RA-40 and RB-40 zones to preserve 70% of land for agriculture or open space while concentrating development on the remaining portion. This approach aims to protect unique natural features and open space by allowing the Planning Board to request cluster development alternatives for candidate parcels of sufficient size, promoting responsible land use. Potential impacts to open space include the conversion of agricultural lands for development, but this would be mitigated by preserving 38 acres of land through the implementation of cluster development requirements, ensuring the preservation of open space and natural features in the affected zones.

Other Proposed Recommended Rezoning Area Changes

The Build-out Analysis presented in Chapter 2, under the Future with Action Scenario, has the potential to result in a reduction of approximately 56 units of single-family residential units, a reduction of approximately 8,471 square feet of general commercial use, a reduction of approximately 166,968 square feet of industrial office use, and an increase of approximately 63 townhomes, 30 multi-family units, and approximately 267 units of assisted living as compared to the Without Action Condition. This has the potential to result in overall decreases in impervious surface coverage in the industrial areas, the preservation of environmentally sensitive lands in the TDR sending areas, and a concentration of development in portions of the Town with better access to sewer and infrastructure. Overall, the recommended rezoning area changes are protective of the environment and seek to balance development rights with the preservation of environmentally sensitive lands. Finally, it is important to note that the Proposed Action is the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan Update and would not result in any construction. As discussed above, any future development within the recommended rezoning areas, following adoption of future zoning text amendments, would be subject to site-specific review as part of discretionary project approvals and site-specific review under SEQR. This review should include coordination with NYSDEC and other regulatory agencies, as applicable.

Conclusion

The recommended zoning changes are generally protective of the Town's natural features, environmental features, and agricultural lands. For these reasons, adoption of the Proposed Action would not result in a significant adverse impact.

3.6.2.2. Agriculture

Discussion of Comprehensive Plan Policies and Impacts

Chapter 5 of the Comprehensive Plan presents goals and recommendations related to the Town's agricultural lands. The following presents a summary of the chapter recommendations under each proposed goal, followed by a discussion of potential impacts

Goal 1. Improve the marketplace for the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program.

The Comprehensive Plan proposes several strategies to enhance the effectiveness of Riverhead's TDR program, aiming to create a more robust marketplace and encourage greater participation. These strategies include designating additional sending and receiving areas to preserve agricultural land and open space and accommodate increased development in more appropriate locations (see Figure 3.6-12). Specific recommendations have been outlined for various districts, such as considering sending areas in single-family districts, making modest adjustments to industrial areas, introducing an overlay zone for assisted living with TDR requirements, and incorporating TDR into the Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Overlay District. These changes to the TDR map are anticipated to open up new opportunities for the sale and purchase of TDR credits,

with an estimated demand for 153 credits in the next 10 years. Potential impacts are further assessed in the discussion of impacts from zoning recommendations later in this section.

By promoting balanced growth, preserving agricultural lands and natural resources, and encouraging responsible development through incentives for TDR participation, these recommendations are expected to have a positive impact. Furthermore, the proposed adjustments aim to ensure that growth occurs in a planned and controlled manner, aligning with the Town's commitment to sustainable and well-managed development practices, while any potential changes to districts like the Planned Industrial Park would require collaboration with state agencies like NYSDEC to modify existing plans.

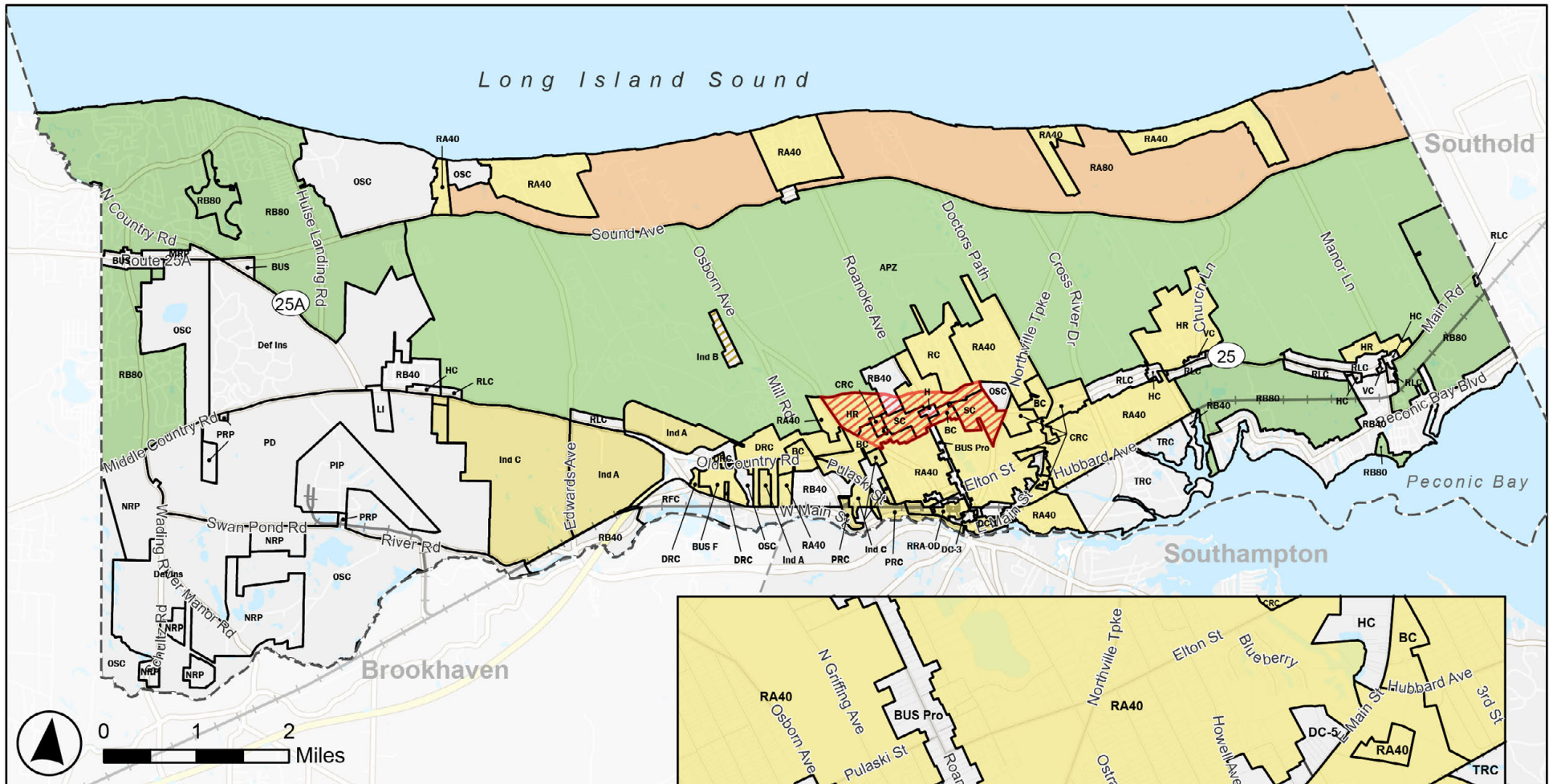
The recommendations outlined in Comprehensive Plan Chapter 13: Future Land Use Plan also discuss the need to revise the transfer formula used in the TDR programs to better align with current market conditions and infrastructure considerations. The existing one-to-one transfer formula is being reconsidered in favor of a more dynamic approach that takes into account factors such as unit size, type, traffic generation rates, and wastewater flow. This adjustment aims to optimize the use of TDR credits and ensure their financial feasibility while adequately compensating property owners in sending districts for selling their development rights.

While these proposed changes may impact the value and utilization of TDR credits, they are not expected to have any negative impacts on the overall density or development potential of the district. Instead, they are intended to calibrate the value of credits more accurately, reflecting the differences in infrastructure costs and market dynamics between various types of development. Additionally, any potential impacts resulting from these adjustments would be addressed through a site-specific review by the Town, ensuring that development projects adhere to established regulations and requirements. Moreover, the recommendation to revisit the transfer formula periodically, every five years or as market conditions change, demonstrates a proactive approach to maintaining the balance between incentivizing development and preserving the unique character and resources of the community.

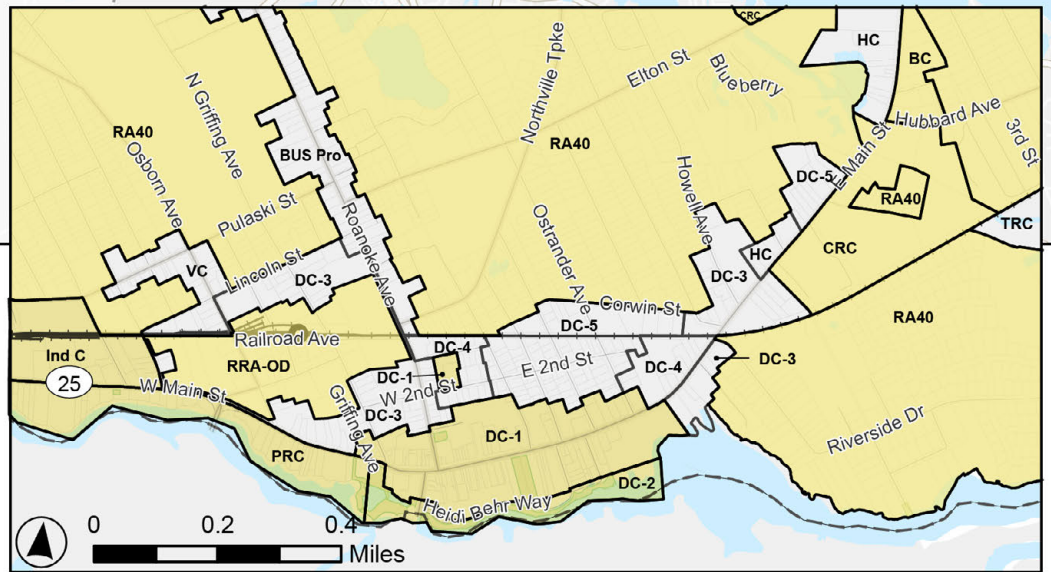
Goal 2. Increase use of TDR through administrative improvements and access to new funding mechanisms.

The major recommendations for improving the effectiveness of the TDR program involve implementing administrative improvements and establishing new mechanisms to facilitate transactions. These recommendations aim to streamline the process for developers and landowners, making it easier to deposit, purchase, and trade development rights while ensuring compliance with local zoning and land use regulations. Additionally, supporting TDR administrative efforts and leveraging community resources to connect buyers and sellers are essential components of enhancing the program's success. Furthermore, continued collaboration with the TDR Committee to revise regulations as needed ensures that the program remains adaptable to changing market conditions and equitable for all stakeholders.

Implementing these recommendations is likely to have a positive impact on the Town's agricultural lands. By establishing a TDR Bank and providing administrative support, the Town can make the TDR program more accessible and efficient, encouraging greater participation from developers and landowners. Facilitating transactions and connecting buyers with sellers can help preserve vital resources such as agricultural lands while promoting balanced growth in the community. Moreover, ongoing collaboration with the TDR Committee to revise regulations ensures that the program remains responsive to market dynamics and continues to meet the needs of both developers and landowners. Overall, these efforts align with the Town's commitment to balanced growth and the preservation of its unique resources and fostering sustainable development.



- Proposed TDR Sending Districts
- Proposed TDR Receiving Districts
- Proposed TDR Sending and Receiving District
- Proposed Assisted Living Overlay Zone



TOWN OF RIVERHEAD DGEIS
 Comprehensive Plan Update

Figure 3.6-12. Proposed TDR Sending and Receiving Areas
 Town of Riverhead, NYS GIS, USGS, BFJ Planning

Goal 3. Safeguard agricultural land through diverse approaches to preservation.

The major recommendations for preserving Riverhead's agricultural heritage involve a comprehensive approach that combines financial collaboration, strategic land-use planning, and dedicated administrative oversight. Firstly, the Town should continue to plan for and coordinate efforts to permanently preserve farmland, prioritizing the purchase of development rights to keep agricultural land in production. Secondly, requiring cluster development subdivisions can effectively preserve agricultural lands while accommodating population growth, concentrating housing and infrastructure in specific areas, and leaving a significant portion of the land for agricultural use. Lastly, establishing a Community Preservation Fund (CPF) Management Division in the Town to administer the program would ensure effective management and long-term stewardship of lands protected through the CPF program.

The promotion of cluster development subdivisions presents a proactive approach to land use that balances growth with conservation efforts. By concentrating housing and infrastructure in designated areas while preserving significant portions of land for agricultural use, the Town can mitigate the fragmentation of agricultural lands and maintain contiguous parcels. As discussed in the Build-out Analysis, Future with Action scenario, there are a total of 24 potential development parcels which are candidates for clustering in both RA-40 and RB-40, totaling approximately 453 acres. Just under 80% of those parcels are agricultural lands. When considering projected growth in the Town for the next 10 years, it is anticipated that 3 of these parcels would be developed using this tool, helping to preserve approximately 38 acres of land.

Implementing these recommendations is likely to have a positive impact on the Town's agricultural lands. By continuing to prioritize farmland preservation and promoting cluster development subdivisions, the Town can safeguard its agricultural heritage while accommodating population growth in a sustainable manner. Moreover, establishing a CPF Management Division would streamline the administration of the program, ensuring that funds are effectively allocated to protect farmland, open space, and water quality. Overall, these efforts align with the Town's commitment to preserving its valuable agricultural lands for future generations, contributing to the economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of the community.

Goal 4. Cultivate agricultural resilience and innovation for a sustainable future.

The goal of preserving and enhancing Riverhead's agricultural legacy while supporting local farmers' economic vitality is addressed through several key recommendations. These recommendations aim to foster collaboration within the community, promote innovation, and streamline the zoning code to provide clarity, reduce obstacles, and facilitate the growth of the local agricultural sector. Flexibility in the zoning code to allow for agricultural innovation is proposed, including conditional use permits for unique agricultural uses and flexibility in renewable energy installations on agricultural properties with development rights intact. Additionally, providing flexibility for the adaptive reuse of agricultural structures and cleaning up the zoning code to support farm operations as an accessory use on farms are recommended to ensure that farming activities are adequately supported and permitted within the town.

Implementing these recommendations is likely to have a positive impact on the Town's agricultural lands. By fostering collaboration and innovation within the agricultural sector, the recommendations can contribute to the economic vitality of local farmers while preserving Riverhead's agricultural heritage. Moreover, providing flexibility in the zoning code and supporting adaptive reuse of agricultural structures can encourage sustainable agricultural practices and the efficient use of land resources. Furthermore, supporting aquaculture in Town waters can help maintain local industries and preserve working waterfronts, contributing to the cultural and economic fabric of the community. Overall, these recommendations align with the Town's goals of promoting balanced growth, preserving agricultural lands, and supporting local farmers, thereby benefiting the community as a whole.

Goal 5. Support Agritourism as a sustainable income source, balancing economic growth and community well-being.

The goal of regulating agritourism activities in Riverhead involves creating clear definitions and implementing regulations to promote responsible and sustainable tourism while preserving the rural landscape. This includes establishing definitions for agritourism activities and regulating events through a permitting process and size restrictions. The Town aims to strike a balance between supporting agritourism ventures and addressing potential impacts on agricultural operations, public safety, and the surrounding community. Collaboration with the farm community and stakeholders, consultation with relevant resources such as the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets and Cornell Cooperative Extension, and engagement with committees and residents are key components of developing transparent regulations that meet the needs of all parties involved.

The regulation of events through a permitting process and size restrictions has no environmental impact. These regulations would not supersede agritourism activities which are already protected by New York State agriculture laws. The recommendations would help to address any potential negative impacts such as traffic and noise. By providing clear definitions and regulations, the Town can ensure that agritourism activities operate in a manner that respects the character of the area and mitigates potential negative impacts on agriculture and the surrounding community. Additionally, supporting agritourism ventures such as bed and breakfasts can provide farmers with additional income opportunities, contributing to the preservation of farmland and rural culture. However, it's important to note that impacts from any future development projects, such as lodging, would need to be evaluated on a site-specific basis as part of future discretionary approvals and review under SEQR to ensure they align with the goals of responsible and sustainable tourism and agricultural preservation.

The Proposed Action also present a comprehensive approach to promoting agritourism and supporting local economies while addressing potential environmental impacts. Starting with the definition of agritourism, establishing clear definitions can aid in regulating activities consistently, but there is a need to ensure that such definitions are flexible enough to accommodate the diverse range of agritourism ventures without compromising environmental integrity.

Discussion of Impacts from Recommended Rezoning Areas

The following presents a discussion of potential impacts related to the recommended rezoning area changes and the associated Build-out Analysis presented in Chapter 2.

Proposed Changes to TDR Map

To enhance the effectiveness of the TDR program in Riverhead, the Comprehensive Plan proposes various strategies aimed at creating a more robust marketplace and encouraging greater participation. One key aspect involves designating additional receiving areas where responsible and sustainable development can occur. These receiving areas would accommodate increased development while preserving the unique character, agricultural heritage, and natural resources of the community. Specific recommendations for sending and receiving areas have been identified to facilitate this objective:

- Single Family Districts: Consideration of sending areas in all RB-80 and RA-80 districts, with proposed adjustments to direct growth away from areas of unique natural value.
- Industrial Areas: Modest adjustments to Floor Area Ratio (FAR) accompanied by TDR utilization for increased building heights and floor areas.
- Assisted Living Overlay Zone: Introduction of an overlay zone requiring TDR credits for all assisted living units, with new bulk regulations specified.
- CRC and Peconic River Community (PRC) Districts: Consideration of slightly higher densities with TDR utilization to accommodate "missing" middle-housing typologies.

- Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Overlay District: Incorporate TDR – which is already provided for in the zoning text for the district.

As discussed in the Future with Action Scenario, these changes to the TDR map would open new opportunities for the sale and purchase of TDR credits. It is estimated that the new receiving districts proposed would generate demand for 153 credits in the next 10 years. Creation of new sending areas in RA-80 and RB-80 would be expected to result in the sale of 90 TDR, with 39 in RA-80 and 51 in RB-80.

These recommendations are expected to have a positive impact by promoting balanced growth and preserving the community's unique identity and natural and agricultural resources. By designating additional receiving areas and providing incentives for TDR participation, the plan encourages responsible development while mitigating sprawl and preserving open space. Furthermore, the proposed adjustments aim to ensure that growth occurs in a planned and controlled manner, aligning with the Town's commitment to sustainable and well-managed development practices.

Other Proposed Zoning Changes on Agricultural Lands

These recommended zoning actions for agricultural lands aim to sustain agricultural activities, preserve rural character, and manage environmental impacts through strategic policy interventions, all of which are not anticipated to result in a significant adverse impact on agricultural resources.

- Vertical Farming in Industrial Zones: Allowing vertical farming in industrial zones can diversify land use, promoting mixed-use development and revitalizing underutilized areas. It fosters vibrant and resilient communities without compromising existing infrastructure or community character as it minimizes the footprint needed for agriculture and encourages adaptive reuse of vacant industrial properties.
- Vertical Farming in Other Districts: Permitting vertical farming in any district where agriculture is the primary use on farms with development rights intact can enhance agricultural productivity and support modern farming practices without significantly altering the visual landscape. This policy promotes economic stability and agricultural sustainability while preserving the rural character of the area. Associated regulatory direction would ensure adherence to bulk and design standards, mitigating potential visual impacts and providing flexibility for adaptive reuse of agricultural buildings.
- Renewable Energy: Providing flexibility for renewable energy facilities on agricultural properties with development rights intact supports farmers' financial stability and advances renewable energy integration without detracting from the agricultural landscape. By allowing solar or wind as accessory uses to primary agricultural activities, it enhances energy sustainability and aligns with state agricultural policies while avoiding adverse visual or environmental impacts on the community.
- Farm Operations: Treating farms equally with respect to farm operations regulation ensures consistency and fairness across agricultural districts. This policy promotes uniformity in agricultural regulation and supports farming activities without creating disparities or undue burdens on farmers, thus maintaining agricultural productivity while preserving community integrity.
- Agritourism: Regulating agritourism activities responsibly through permitting processes and size restrictions supports local farmers, manages traffic and safety concerns, and preserves the rural character of agricultural communities. Collaboration with stakeholders and transparent regulations ensure that agritourism benefits are balanced with potential impacts on agricultural operations and community integrity.
- Conditional Use Permits: Introducing conditional use permits offers flexibility to accommodate evolving agricultural demands and technologies while mitigating potential impacts. This policy ensures responsiveness to changing agricultural needs, promotes sustainable agricultural practices, and aligns with community interests and regulations through case-by-case evaluations with conditions imposed for mitigation. Potential impacts would be addressed by the Town Board on a case-by-case basis.

3.6.3. Mitigation Measures

As outlined above, the Comprehensive Plan includes a number of recommendations intended to protect and conserve the Town's natural features, environmental resources, and agricultural lands. The adoption of the Comprehensive Plan would not directly result in land disturbance itself. Future development projects in an area where natural, environmental and/or agricultural resources are present would require separate SEQRA analysis. Such projects should employ mitigation measures if it is identified during project-specific review that adverse impacts may occur. These mitigation measures would be formalized between the applicant and the involved regulatory agencies (Town, State and/or Federal Agencies) and/or provided as conditions of approval issued by the Town. With these measures in place, significant adverse impacts to natural resources and agricultural lands would be avoided or minimized.

3.7. Infrastructure and Utilities

This section of the DGEIS investigates the potential impact on the Town's infrastructure and utilities that could occur as a result of the adoption of the policies recommended in the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is essentially a policy document, which contains a series of recommendations pertaining to an extensive number of issues that are intended to provide guidance to the Town regarding the nature and intensity of growth within the Town over the next ten years. As such, the recommendations in the Plan do not have a direct impact on the Town's infrastructure, insofar as the Plan does not in and of itself propose new development projects, specific changes to infrastructure, or new or modified infrastructure. Rather, by influencing the nature and intensity of potential future development within the Town, the proposed comprehensive plan policies can conceivably have an impact on demand for infrastructure and utilities.

Most significantly, the Plan contains recommendations regarding changes to the zoning code, which, if implemented could modify the way properties might be developed in the future, and in turn would influence the impact that such development would have on the environment in general, including infrastructure and utilities. The DGEIS analyzes how the development related recommendations proposed in the Comprehensive Plan might affect the Town's environment. Toward this end, Chapter 2.0 contains a Build Out Analysis that presents a reasonable worst-case estimate of the potential mix of residential units and commercial/ industrial gross floor area expected to be developed in the Future with the Proposed Action (adoption of Comprehensive Plan Update) within the next 10 years. While this view of the future will be only a projection of what could occur, these estimates will facilitate reasonably conservative and meaningful analyses of how changes in cumulative development could impact the Town's environment and appropriate measures to mitigate any related impacts.

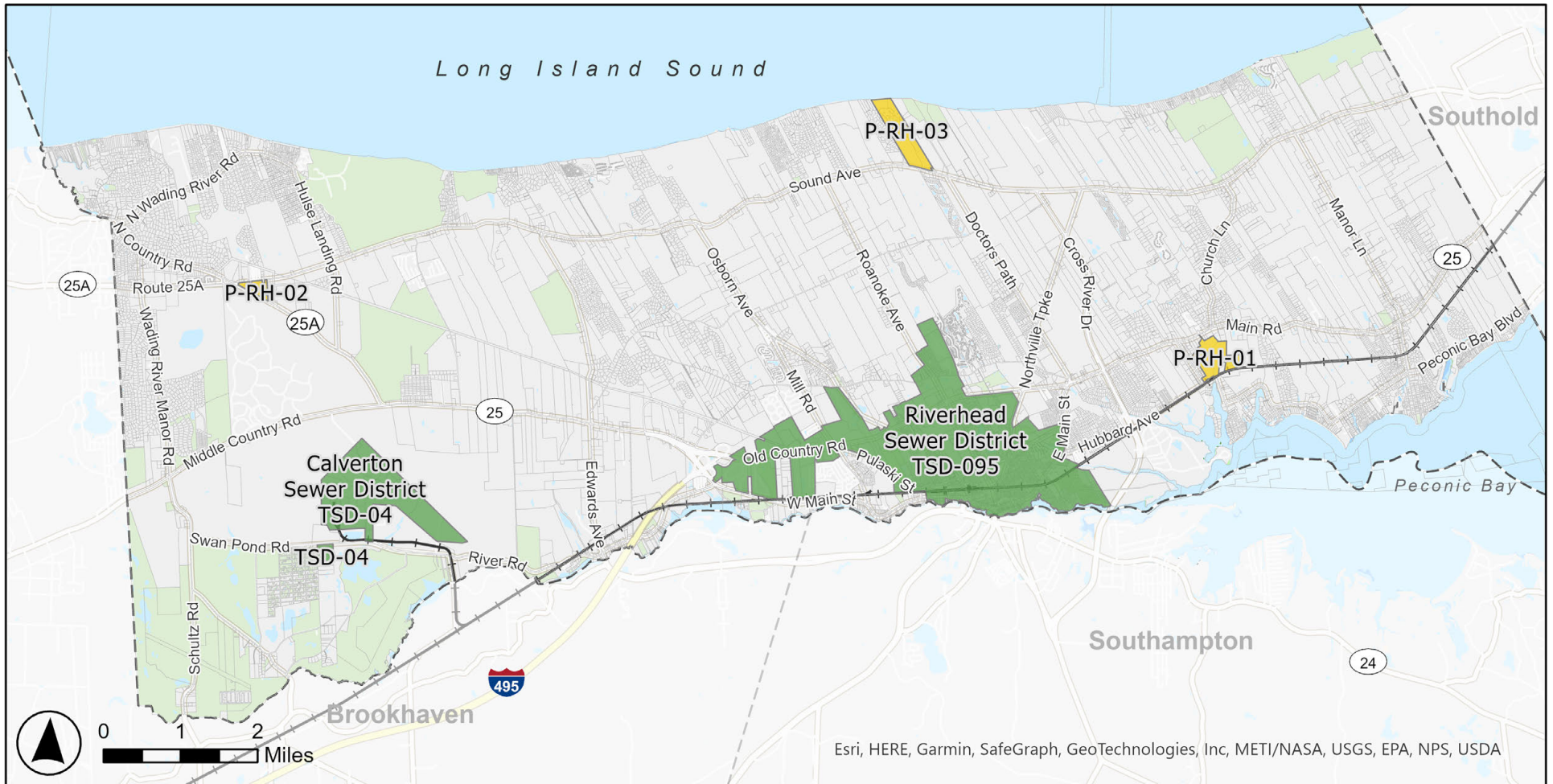
The following sections provide a description of the existing town infrastructure, including general physical and operational characteristics, and a qualitative examination of the potential infrastructure and utility impacts that might occur as a result of the recommended changes in the nature and / or intensity of development in the Town, should the recommendations be adopted and should the affected properties be developed under the existing or recommended future code. The analysis focusses on drinking water, solid and sanitary waste, since supply and demand for electricity, natural gas is beyond the purview of this Plan. For a more detailed overview of existing conditions, refer to Chapter 11 of the Draft 2024 Comprehensive Plan.⁶⁴

3.7.1. No Build Scenario (Existing Conditions)

Sanitary Waste

Riverhead is served by two sewer districts that allow for collection and treatment of wastewater at sewage treatment plants owned and operated by the Town (see Figure 3.7-1). In addition, the Town operates a scavenger waste facility that accepts and treats wastewater from parts of Brookhaven and the five East End towns. There are also two small private sewage treatment plants in Riverhead.

⁶⁴ The Draft 2024 Comprehensive Plan can be found here: <https://townofriverheadcomprehensiveplanupdate.com/>



Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA

Sewer Area District Type

- Private
- Town

Riverhead Sewer District

The Riverhead Sewer District treatment plant is located on River Avenue, off Riverside Drive just east of the downtown core. It was built in 1937, provided primary treatment, and used chlorine for disinfection. The plant was upgraded in 1959 to a secondary treatment plant, and again in 2000, when sequencing batch reactors and ultraviolet light were installed for disinfection. The plant has a capacity of 1.4 million gallons per day (mgd), and sees flows of approximately 1.1 mgd. A total of 12 pumping stations convey wastewater to the treatment plant across 24 miles of pipe. The primary goal of the Riverhead Sewer District (RSD) is treating all wastewater within its boundaries, meeting all Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), and Suffolk County Department of Health Services (SCDHS) regulations and guidelines. The RSD boundaries, shown in Figure 3.7-1, mainly include the downtown core, Route 58 corridor, and residential properties between the two.

Riverhead Sewer District

- *Treatment plant on River Avenue constructed in the early 1937*
- *District serves downtown area and CR58 business district*
- *Twelve pumping stations which transport wastewater to the treatment plant*
- *Flow study underway to meet needs of increased downtown residential development*
- *Scavenger Waste facility on-site*
- *Sludge conditioning project underway*

Source: Riverhead Sewer District

The Town scavenger waste plant is located on the same site, which accepts septic waste from the eastern towns via private cesspool and septic system companies. The district charges a fee for processing this waste, which goes toward the operating budget of the scavenger waste district.

Calverton Sewer District

The Calverton Sewer District (CSD) was formed in 1999 when the EPCAL property was conveyed to the Town. The CSD comprises the 550 acres in the EPCAL industrial core area. The treatment plant was built in the 1950s and three pumping stations convey wastewater to the treatment plant. The CSD plant was upgraded and went online in June of 2021. The district has also completed a map and plan to extend the sewer district boundaries to include the EPCAL property that is for sale (beyond the current PIP District). Thus, sanitary waste from development of the EPCAL property will be treated at a modern facility. The extension of the district boundaries would take place as soon as the property is sold or leased.

Calverton Sewer District

- *Formed in 1999 when the EPCAL property was transferred to the Town*
- *Treatment plant constructed in the early 1950's*
- *District consists of 550 acres which makes up the industrial core area*
- *Three pumping stations which transport wastewater to the treatment plant*
- *Boundaries to be extended when EPCAL property is sold for development*
- *Upgrade completed in 2021 to accommodate increased flow from EPCAL*

Source: Riverhead Sewer District

Solid Waste

Riverhead operated a municipal residential collection system and sanitary landfill until the mid-1990s. In 1993, the Town ceased accepting waste at its Young's Avenue landfill but continued to utilize the transfer station at this 40-acre facility. The landfill was capped in 2011 and the transfer station is now closed. At present, solid waste services within Riverhead is provided by the Town of Riverhead Refuse and Garbage District, which since 2012, is a unit of the Engineering Department. The district is divided into six sub-districts, shown in Figure 3.7-2. The Town's solid waste management program is subsidized by a sanitation tax for curbside solid waste collection and by the Town's General Fund through taxes.

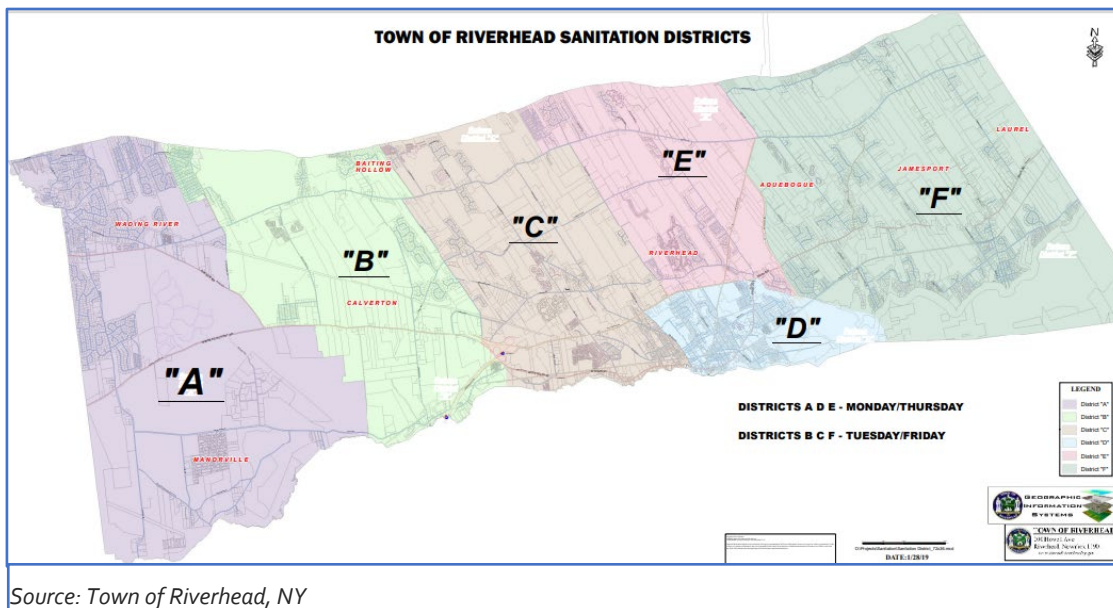
Private carters under contract to the Town provide collection and disposal of residential waste, recyclables, yard waste, and bulk waste. The private carters are responsible for disposition of the waste at facilities outside

Riverhead. The Town also provides for residential yard waste collection and residential yard waste drop-off with compost offered to residents. The yard waste facility is at the Young’s Avenue site. Household hazardous waste collection is conducted twice a year under the Town’s STOP program (Stop Throwing Out Pollutants).

Commercial property owners must contract for private waste collection services. Source separated/curbside recycling is mandatory in Riverhead for both commercial and residential properties. The Town requires cardboard and newsprint and commingled materials (plastics, metals) to be recycled. Riverhead completed and received NYSDEC approval for its 2020-2029 Solid Waste Management Plan.

All residential solid waste is delivered to the Brookhaven transfer station. At the Brookhaven Landfill, waste is consolidated into larger trucks and transported to an incineration facility in Hempstead. The ash by-product is returned to the Brookhaven Landfill. Paper and cardboard are collected for recycling by Riverhead’s contracted carter every other Wednesday and brought to West Babylon. Co-mingled recyclables are collected and delivered to Islip’s Material Recovery Facility (MRF), while non-recyclable Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) is brought to Islip’s Incinerator in Ronkonkoma. The refuse is incinerated, and the energy is transformed into electricity. The ash by-product is returned to the Brookhaven Landfill. Solid waste from all Town owned offices, buildings and park facilities are collected by the Riverhead Sanitation Department and transported to Cutchogue.

Figure 3.7-2. Town of Riverhead Sanitation Districts



Source: Town of Riverhead, NY

Drinking Water

Information regarding the Riverhead Water District was provided by district staff in interviews conducted during the information gathering efforts for the Plan update. The Riverhead Water district is approximately 44.7 square miles (see Figure 3.7-3), with 234 miles of water main and 17 active groundwater wells at 10 separate well

locations. The district services 35,000 customers with over 12,000 residential and commercial services, with many services feeding several customers (i.e., mobile home parks, or apartment buildings). Yearly revenue is dependent on water usage and will fluctuate dependent on wet or dry years, usually ranging from \$8 million to \$9 million dollars per year. Operating funds can vary up to 20% year to year since revenue is based on pumping demand. The district has a \$30 million capital improvement plan.

Riverhead Water District Statistics

- *Created in 1916*
- *District may expand within the boundaries of the entire Town, but not all of Town is on public water*
- *Seventeen (17) Active Wells drilled into Glacial and Magothy Aquifers*
- *Population served (2019) 35,000*
- *Water Drawn for Aquifer (2019) 2.4 billion gallons*
- *Conducts 1000+ tests per year for over 130 contaminants*
- *Quality generally excellent, but some areas of contamination exist*

Utilities

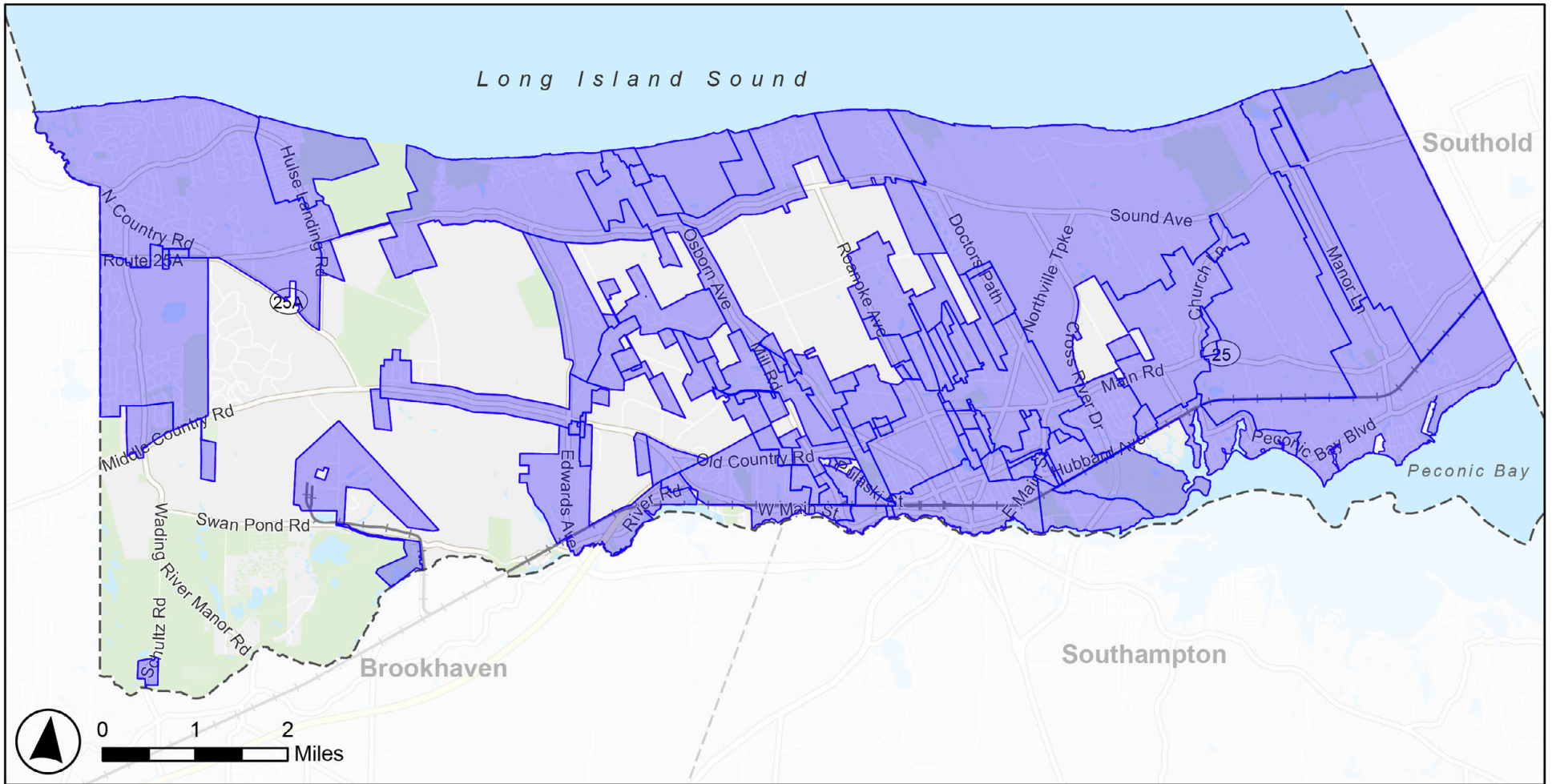
The Town has little control over the administration of electricity and natural gas services beyond the oversight process as to where the utilities might locate new services, such as substations, power lines, battery energy storage, solar arrays, gas mains and other elements that might be controlled through permitting and site plan approval processes.

Long Island Power Authority (LIPA) is a municipal subdivision of New York State that owns the electric transmission and electric distribution system serving all of Long Island and a portion of New York City (Rockaways). Since 2014, LIPA has contracted with New Jersey-based Public Service Enterprise Group (PSEG) to operate LIPA's electric infrastructure on LIPA's behalf. IPSEG Long Island provides electricity to 1.1 million customers in Nassau and Suffolk counties, including Riverhead. KeySpan still operates the natural gas infrastructure on Long Island. LIPA is planning to assume operation of the electric grid by acquiring command of SERVCO, which Public Service Electric & Gas (PSE&G) utilizes to operate the electric grid.

LIPA does not own or operate any generation plants or retail natural gas assets on Long Island, although many generation plants are under contract to LIPA to meet its power supply needs. Most of Long Island's largest power plants are operated by National Grid, which owns three major steam turbine facilities originally constructed by the Long Island Lighting Company (LILCO) in the mid-20th century.

As of 2021, the South Fork Wind Farm and the Sunrise Wind projects are under construction, and the Empire Wind project is in planning, all of which are planned to connect to the Long Island power grid. While these facilities will provide for a more resilient climate-friendly power grid, their specific impact on the Riverhead energy supply is speculative.

Virtually all of the electrical transmission lines in Riverhead are pole mounted overhead lines, which are susceptible to damage during weather events. As storms become more frequent, service interruptions can be expected to increase as well. It behooves the Town to coordinate with the electrical utilities to ensure a modern, resilient grid is available for present and future residents and businesses.



- Water District Boundaries
- Water District Extensions

Flood Risk Management

Riverhead's location between Long Island Sound and Peconic River and Bay makes it prone to coastal flooding. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designates areas with flood hazard risks, as shown in Figure 3.7-3, approximately 3,000 acres, 7% of Riverhead's total land area, fall within a 1% annual chance, also called the 100-year floodplain (A, AE, AO, VE). Almost half of these areas are along the coast and at risk of storm-induced velocity wave action (VE). Nearly 700 additional acres are within the 500-year floodplain and have a 0.2% annual chance of flooding (X-shaded). A moderate estimate puts 600 residential units and 500 jobs within these areas at risk of flooding.⁶⁵ As shown in Figure 3.7-3, the downtown and areas along the Peconic River and Bay are especially at risk of flood events.

The Army Corps of Engineers studied the current and future impacts of flooding on Downtown Riverhead, finding that a 100-year flood could cause floodwaters to reach over 12 feet. The largest storm recorded in the report, a 500-year flood, could result in floodwaters rising to almost 16 feet. Both scenarios could flood the riverfront and sections of Main Street. The preliminary recommendations of the 2021 Army Corps of Engineers Riverhead Flood Plain Management Study have already begun to be implemented.⁶⁶

Flood Damage Prevention

Chapter 233 of the Town Code establishes guidelines for new developments in flood-prone areas to minimize potential flood damage and ensure structural resilience. For subdivision proposals, there are standards to minimize flood damage, position utilities to reduce damage, and provide adequate drainage to lessen exposure to flood damage. The guidelines outline elevation criteria based on different flood zones to ensure structures are built above specified flood levels. They provide detailed construction and structural design requirements for residential and nonresidential structures, manufactured homes, and recreational vehicles in these flood-prone areas.

Sea Level Rise

The U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) maintains coastal stations that continuously monitor daily tides and long-term average sea levels. The Montauk Station, established in 1947, has documented a rise of 9.5 inches since that time, while the New London, CT station has seen a rise of 8.6 inches since 1938.⁶⁷ Of more significant concern, the rate of sea level rise measured from 2005 to 2019 was double the rate during the entire 20th century.

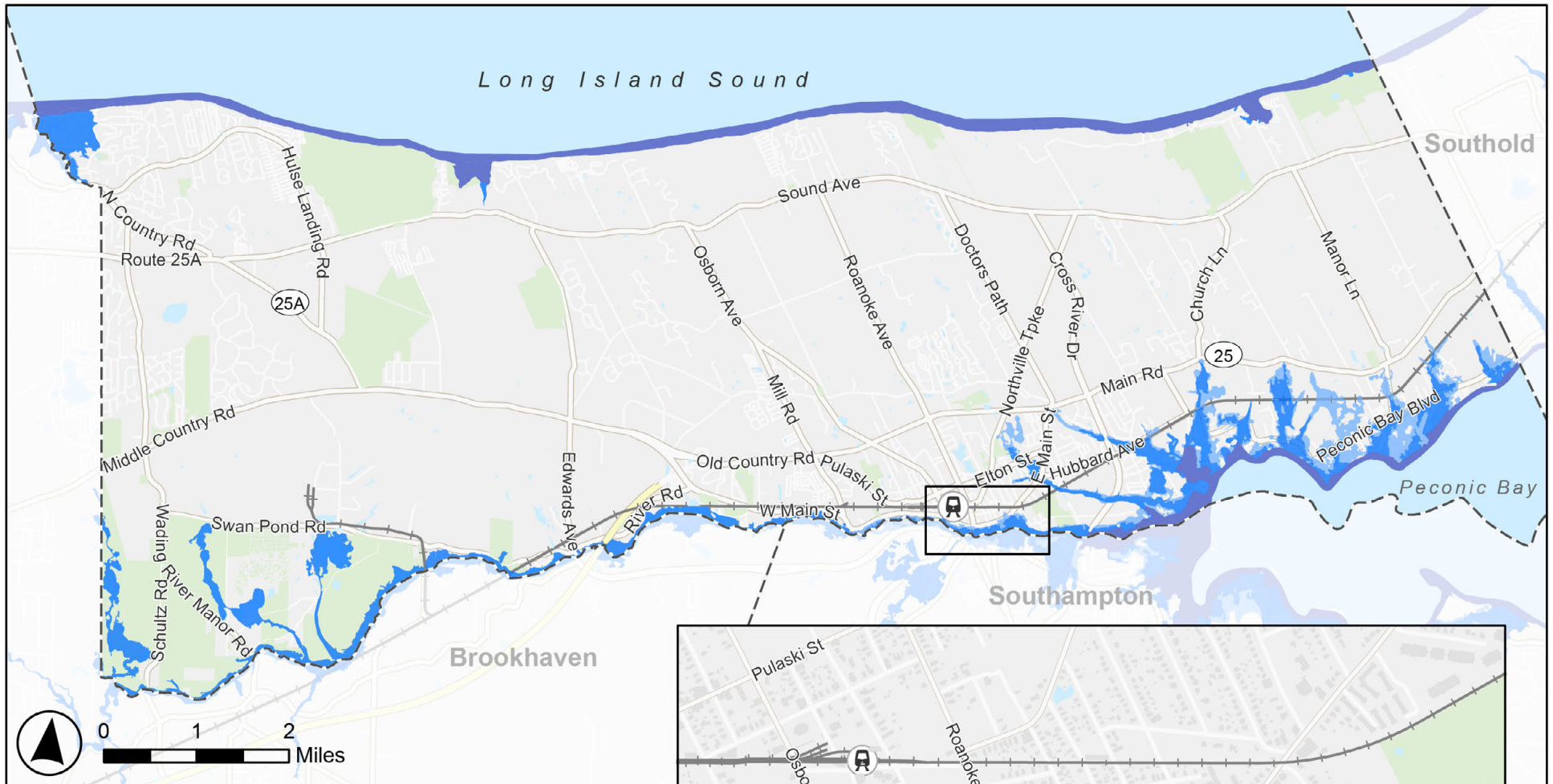
In 2014, Governor Cuomo signed the Community Risk and Resiliency Act into law to provide a shared basis for planning and regulation in New York State. The law intends to ensure that state permits and expenditures consider climate risk, including sea-level rise, and that projections are based on the best available science. The result is 6 NYCRR Part 490, Projected Sea-level Rise, which establishes projections for sea level rise for three geographic regions.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Urban Footprint Risk and Resilience Analysis, <https://help.urbanfootprint.com/methodology-documentation/risk-and-resilience-analysis#output-metrics>

⁶⁶ <https://www.townofriverheadny.gov/files/documents/DowntownStudies-ArmyCorpspreliminaryfindings714211505110253083121AM.pdf>

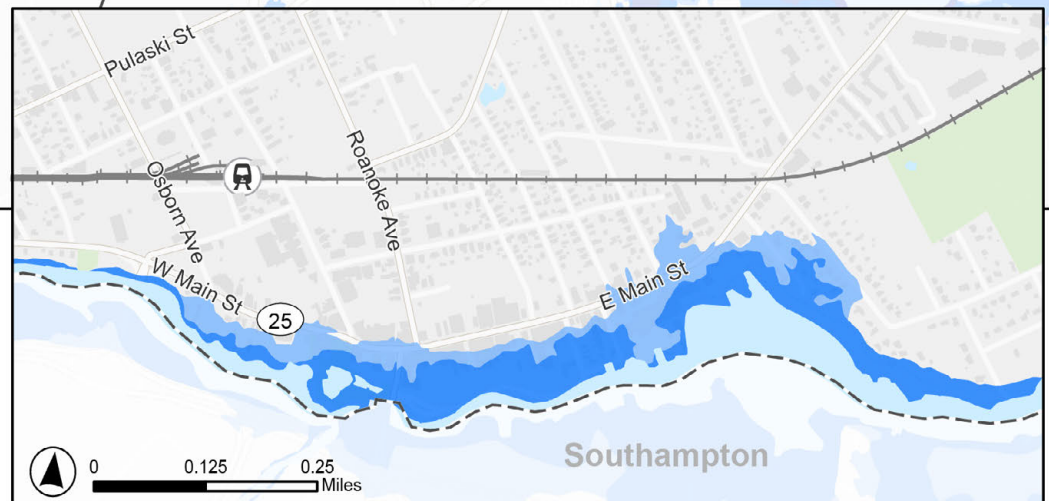
⁶⁷ Coastal Sensitivity to Sea-Level Rise: A Focus on the Mid-Atlantic Region, Environmental Protection Agency. <https://nepis.epa.gov/Exe/ZyPURL.cgi?Dockey=P100483V.TXT>

⁶⁸ New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Regulations and Enforcement. Part 40: Projected Sea Level Rise – Express Terms of the Climate Change Regulatory Revisions. <https://www.dec.ny.gov/regulations/103877.html>



FEMA Flood Hazard Areas

- 100-Year Floodplain (A, AE, AO)
- 100-Year Floodplain with Velocity Wave Action (VE)
- 500-Year Floodplain (X-Shaded)



In the Long Island Region, sea levels are predicted to rise by 1 foot to 2 more feet in the next century. Considering a low-medium projection, which is a likely scenario, the sea level could rise by 11 inches by the 2050s and 21 inches by 2100.⁶⁹ A medium projection scenario estimates a rise of 16 inches by the 2050s and 34 inches by 2100. A high projection scenario, which is “very unlikely,” would see 6 feet of sea level rise by 2100. Figure 3.7-5 shows areas at risk based on these various scenarios.

The rise in sea level will most impact low-lying areas in Riverhead that are already subject to flooding. Figure 3.7-5 shows how rising sea levels could inundate the riverfront downtown and harm docks, marinas, businesses, and residences along the Peconic Bay. As sea levels rise, areas like beaches, marshes, and mud flats are affected because nearby developed areas prevent them from shifting and adjusting to sea levels as they would in natural shorelines. Marshes, for instance, usually move further inland as the sea rises, but if manmade structures or steep land prevent this movement, they flood permanently. This flooding can lead to the loss of plants and animals that rely on coastal habitats.

Summary

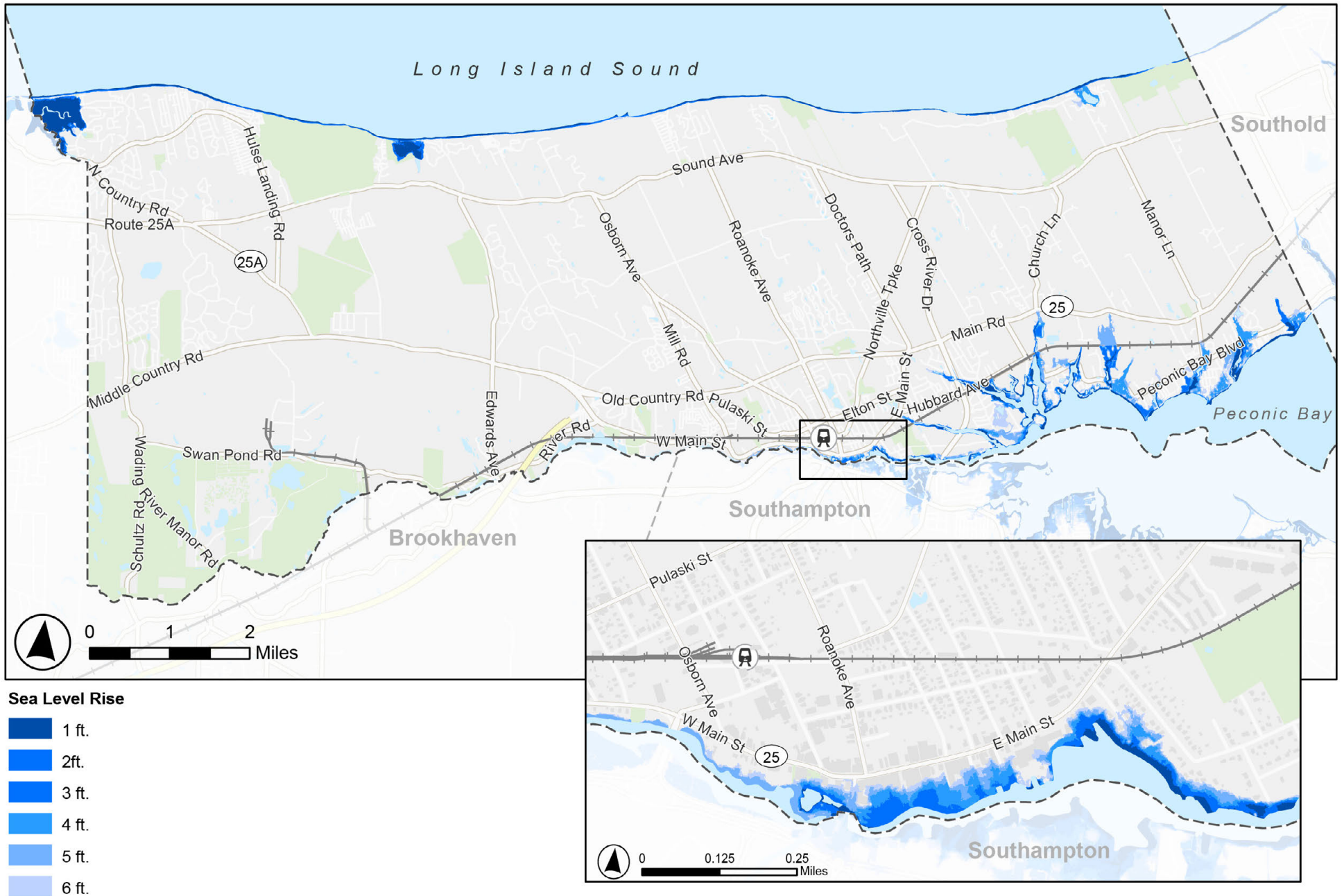
Based on the forgoing, the existing infrastructure within the Town of Riverhead largely has ample capacity to accommodate growth. The Riverhead Sewer District treatment plant has some spare capacity to accommodate more flow but may require improvements to handle additional demand. The Calverton Sewer District treatment plant can handle additional flow, and the sewer district is expected to expand in the future. Changes in rates of growth or the nature of development could have an impact on the production of sanitary waste.

With respect to solid waste disposal, the collection and disposal for residential and commercial waste is intertwined with other towns on Long Island. The future closure of the Town of Brookhaven landfill is expected to have an impact on the Town of Riverhead and may increase costs in the future. Insofar as the Town provides for the collection of solid waste from residential uses, any increase in projected residential development would incur an increased need for solid waste disposal by the Town.

The Riverhead Water District, which can be extended within the Town when needed, supplies sufficient quantities of clean drinking water to satisfy demand. However, there are regulatory issues with NYSDEC which have slowed approval of drinking water infrastructure expansion. This approval process is currently holding up the EPCAL redevelopment for the Town of Riverhead. For the purposes of this analysis, demand for water has been considered roughly equivalent to the production of sanitary wastewater. Development under the current zoning would increase water demand in accordance with the analysis above.

Electric power generation and natural gas supply is provided through public utility companies that the Town of Riverhead has little direct control over. The expectation is that all electrical and natural gas will continue to be provided to meet any anticipated increase in demand. Indeed, the ongoing shift away from fossil fuel use to generate electricity associated with the shift to renewable sources is already resulting in the need for significant upgrades to the electrical grid and is expected to result in decreased demand for natural gas in the production of electricity.

⁶⁹ New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Regulations and Enforcement. Part 40: Projected Sea Level Rise – Express Terms of the Climate Change Regulatory Revisions.
<https://www.dec.ny.gov/regulations/103877.html>



3.7.2. Potential Impacts of Proposed Action

Comprehensive Plan Policies

Infrastructure and Utilities

Chapter 11: Infrastructure and Utilities of the Comprehensive Plan provides 4 goals, with recommendations that address emerging challenges in solid waste management, water supply efficiency, groundwater protection through wastewater treatment, and coordination with utility providers. Regarding solid waste management, Riverhead aims to align with NYSDEC goals of reducing solid waste by implementing recycling programs and diverting food waste, potentially reducing disposal costs significantly. In addition, the Town seeks alternative transportation methods to dispose of ash, anticipating the closure of the Brookhaven landfill. The recommendations also emphasize improving the efficiency of the water supply system by expanding public water service, upgrading infrastructure, and discouraging unsustainable water usage practices.

These proposed recommendations are not anticipated to have a negative impact due to their comprehensive approach and alignment with environmental and regulatory goals. By encouraging recycling, composting, and alternative waste disposal methods, Riverhead can reduce its environmental footprint while potentially lowering waste management costs. Similarly, investments in water infrastructure and wastewater treatment aim to ensure the Town's long-term water supply and quality while addressing future demand. Furthermore, efforts to coordinate with utility providers seek to enhance services and address community needs, ultimately contributing to the overall sustainability and resilience of the Town's infrastructure and environment.

Sustainability and Resilience

Chapter 12: Sustainability and Resilience of the Comprehensive Plan intersects with the Infrastructure and Utilities Chapter, particularly when addressing sea level rise and flood issues, due to their interconnected nature and shared goals of long-term viability and adaptability. Infrastructure, such as water management systems, transportation networks, and buildings, must be designed and managed with sustainability principles to withstand and adapt to the impacts of climate change, including rising sea levels and increased flooding. Resilient infrastructure not only mitigates risks but also ensures the continued functioning of essential services and amenities during extreme events. Therefore, integrating considerations of sustainability and resilience into infrastructure planning and development is crucial for enhancing community resilience, reducing vulnerability to environmental hazards, and fostering sustainable growth and development.

The recommendations outlined in Goal 6 of the Sustainability and Resilience Chapter specifically focus on mitigating the effects of flooding, sea level rise, and storm surge in Riverhead. These include infrastructure improvements such as elevating river bulkheads and buildings, improving stormwater interventions, and utilizing nature-based solutions like preserving wetlands and riparian buffers. Additionally, the plan suggests leveraging available grants for resilience projects and developing a comprehensive resilience plan to assess vulnerability and identify context-specific solutions.

These proposed recommendations would not have an adverse impact because they take a proactive approach to address current and future challenges posed by flooding and sea level rise. By implementing infrastructure improvements and nature-based solutions, Riverhead can enhance its resilience to extreme weather events and protect critical infrastructure, properties, and the environment. Overall, these recommendations prioritize long-term sustainability and adaptation, positioning Riverhead to withstand and thrive in the face of climate change impacts.

Zoning Changes which are considered in the Build-out

As previously stated, the impact of the Plan's recommendations on Town infrastructure is largely related to the change in the potential demand that would be generated by development or redevelopment of properties within the Town under either the existing zoning or the recommended zoning, as fully described in the Build Out Analysis in Chapter 2.0: Description of the Proposed Action. It is important to note that this build-out analysis focuses on impacts from specific zoning changes that could be implemented after the completion of the Comprehensive Plan – without further study. Based on the above discussion, the following sections provide an assessment of how the disposal of sanitary waste, the provision of drinking water, and the management of solid waste might be influenced. Given the minor alterations anticipated in the type and scale of development due to the proposed zoning changes in the Plan, there is no substantial expected impact on the demand for electricity or natural gas. Hence, a detailed analysis of such impact is not necessary for the scope of this document.

New Calverton Industrial District (CI)

This area is approximately 317 acres of property that is currently located in the Industrial A (Ind A) Zoning Use District and in the Industrial C (Ind C) Zoning Use District. Under the current regulations 0.40 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) can be developed. Based on the current zoning approximately 5,515,953 Gross Floor Area (GFA) can be constructed if every property is fully developed. It is assumed that only 9% of the potential development will occur in the next ten years. Based on the existing regulations that translates to 496,435.8 (GFA). A discussion of potential impacts follows.

Future without Action

Sanitary Waste

In order to express this zoning change in terms of potential impact on the town infrastructure, the sanitary wastewater demand was analyzed. The sanitary wastewater demand for the existing (Future without Action) conditions is based on Suffolk County Department of Health Services Division of Environmental Quality Standards. General industrial space has an expected demand of 0.04 gallons per day per square foot. Accordingly, a full build out of this area under existing conditions could be expected to demand 220,639 gallons per day, and the assumed build out at 9% is expected to demand 19,858 gallons per day. Note that these calculations are based on potential development in districts where zoning is proposed to change and does not include planned or proposed projects under review. This information is presented in Table 3.7-1 below.

Table 3.7-1. New Calverton Industrial District Existing Conditions Sanitary Wastewater Demand

| Condition | Size (ft ²) | Demand Rate | Water / Sewage Demand (Gal / Day) |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Full Build Out | 5,515,953 | 0.04 Gallons Per Day / Square Foot | 220,639 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 496,435 | 0.04 Gallons Per Day / Square Foot | 19,858 |

Solid Waste

As discussed above, commercial property owners must contract for private waste collection services within the Town of Riverhead, and any new industrial development under the current zoning will be subject to the same requirements. Disposition of solid waste will continue to be the responsibility of the individual commercial entities.

Drinking Water

For the purposes of this analysis, demand for water has been considered roughly equivalent to the production of sanitary wastewater. Development under the current zoning would increase water demand in accordance with the analysis above which would be provided by the Riverhead Water District. The district indicates that ample supply is available to meet the demand. A discussion of additional measures to reduce demand and increase efficiency of the district is provided at the end of this chapter.

Future with Action

Sanitary Waste

As part of the zoning changes recommended by the comprehensive plan the properties currently zoned IND A and IND C in Calverton will be added to a new zoning district, the New Calverton Industrial District (CI). This zoning district would reduce the amount of allowable FAR from 0.40 to 0.25. In addition, developments could achieve a FAR of 0.30 with the use of TDR credits. Sanitary wastewater estimates were performed for both scenarios. As this change represents a reduction in potential development density, this change will result in a reduction in potential sanitary wastewater demand when compared to the existing condition. Table 3.7-2 shown below illustrates the expected reduction in sanitary wastewater demand compared to the existing conditions.

Table 3.7-2. New Calverton Industrial District Proposed/Future Condition Sanitary Wastewater Demand

| Condition | Size (ft ²) | Demand Rate | Water / Sewage Demand (Gal / Day) | Difference From Existing |
|--|-------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| No TDR Credits Utilized (0.25 FAR) | | | | |
| Full Build Out | 3,447,471 | 0.04 Gallons Per Day / Square Foot | 137,899 | -82,740 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 310,272 | 0.04 Gallons Per Day / Square Foot | 12,411 | -7,447 |
| Max TDR Credits Utilized (0.30 FAR) | | | | |
| Full Build Out | 4,136,965 | 0.04 Gallons Per Day / Square Foot | 165,479 | -55,160 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 372,326 | 0.04 Gallons Per Day / Square Foot | 14,893 | -4,965 |

Based on this zoning change proposed by the plan, the expected sanitary wastewater demand will decrease when compared to the existing conditions and therefore will not have a negative impact on the town.

The Future with Action scenario would result in a lower sanitary wastewater demand than the Future without Action scenario; therefore, the Future with Action scenario would have a beneficial impact when compared to the Future without Action scenario, and no mitigation is required. It is noted that the full development of the EPCAL property, regardless of which scenario is considered, will continue to require improvements to accommodate future sanitary wastewater demand.

Solid Waste

The Proposed Action would result in less development than under the current zoning; therefore, less solid waste can be expected to be generated. While the Town does not specifically provide for the disposition of solid waste from commercial properties, reducing the amount of solid waste produced is considered beneficial from the standpoint of environmental impact.

Drinking Water

The Proposed Action would result in less development than under the current zoning; therefore, less water demand would be expected to be generated should the recommended changes be adopted.

Scattered IND A, IND B, & IND C to Light Industrial (LI)

This area is approximately 109 acres of property that is currently located in the Industrial A (Ind A) Zoning Use District, Industrial B (IND B) Zoning Use District, and Industrial C (Ind C) Zoning Use District. These properties are scattered around the Town. Under the current regulations 0.40 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) can be developed. Based on the current zoning approximately 1,904,863 Gross Floor Area (GFA) can be constructed if every property is fully developed. It is assumed that only 9% of the potential development will occur in the next ten years. Based on the existing regulations that translates to 171,437.7 (GFA). A discussion of potential impacts follows.

Future without Action

Sanitary Waste

The sanitary wastewater demand is based on Suffolk County Department of Health Services Division of Environmental Quality Standards. General industrial space has an expected demand of 0.04 gallons per day per square foot. Accordingly, a full build out of this area under existing conditions is expected to demand 76,195 gallons per day. The assumed build out is expected to require 6,858 gallons per day. Note that these calculations are based on potential development in districts where zoning is proposed to change and does not include planned or proposed projects under review. This information is presented in Table 3.7-3 below.

Due to the assortment of areas identified in this selection of properties, some of the areas are located within the Riverhead Sewer District. However, most of the properties are not located within a sewer district.

Table 3.7-3. Scattered IND A, IND B, & IND C to Light Industrial Existing Conditions Sanitary Wastewater Demand

| Condition | Size (ft ²) | Demand Rate | Water / Sewage Demand (Gal / Day) |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Full Build Out | 1,904,863 | 0.04 Gallons Per Day / Square Foot | 76,195 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 171,437 | 0.04 Gallons Per Day / Square Foot | 6,858 |

Solid Waste

As discussed above, commercial property owners must contract for private waste collection services within the Town of Riverhead, and any new industrial development under the current zoning will be subject to the same requirements. Disposition of solid waste will continue to be the responsibility of the individual commercial entities.

Drinking Water

For the purposes of this analysis, demand for water has been considered roughly equivalent to the production of sanitary wastewater. Development under the current zoning would increase water demand in accordance with the analysis above which would be provided by the Riverhead Water District. The district indicates that ample supply is available to meet the demand. A discussion of additional measures to reduce demand and increase efficiency of the district is provided at the end of this chapter.

Future with Action

Sanitary Waste

As part of the zoning changes recommended by the comprehensive plan the scattered properties currently zoned IND A, IND B, and IND C will be rezoned into the Light Industrial (LI) zoning district. This change would reduce the amount of allowable FAR from 0.40 to 0.25. Developments could achieve a FAR of 0.30 with the use of TDR credits. As this change represents a reduction in potential development density, this change will result in a reduction in potential sanitary wastewater demand if the area was fully developed when compared to the existing condition. Table 3.7-4, shown below illustrates the expected reduction in sanitary wastewater demand compared to the existing conditions.

Table 3.7-4. Scattered IND A, IND B, and IND C to LI Proposed/Future Condition Sanitary Wastewater Demand

| Condition | Size (ft ²) | Demand Rate | Water / Sewage Demand (Gal / Day) | Difference From Existing |
|--|-------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| No TDR Credits Utilized (0.25 FAR) | | | | |
| Full Build Out | 1,190,540 | 0.04 Gallons Per Day / Square Foot | 47,622 | -28,573 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 107,148.60 | 0.04 Gallons Per Day / Square Foot | 4,286 | -2,572 |
| Max TDR Credits Utilized (0.30 FAR) | | | | |
| Full Build Out | 1,428,648 | 0.04 Gallons Per Day / Square Foot | 57,146 | -19,049 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 128,578 | 0.04 Gallons Per Day / Square Foot | 5,144 | -1,714 |

The Future with Action Scenario would result in a lower sanitary wastewater demand than the Future without Action scenario; therefore, the Future with Action scenario has a beneficial impact when compared to the Future without Action scenario, and no mitigation is required.

Solid Waste

The Proposed Action would result in less industrial/office development than under the current zoning, less solid waste would therefore be expected to be generated. While the Town does not specifically provide for the disposition of solid waste from commercial properties, reducing the amount of solid waste produced is considered beneficial from the standpoint of environmental impact.

Drinking Water

The Proposed Action would result in less industrial/office development than under the current zoning, less water demand would therefore be expected to be generated should the recommended changes be adopted.

Assisted Living Overlay Zone

The Comprehensive Plan recommends the creation of an overlay zone in areas generally along Route 58 near the Peconic Bay Medical Center. This overlay zone would allow for an increase in density for assisted living or continuing care facilities with the use of TDR credits, if sewer infrastructure is in place. It should be noted that some sections of the Assisted Living Overlay zone are located within the Riverhead Sewer District, and thus sanitary waste in these areas is currently being treated at the Riverhead Sewage Treatment Plant.

The area in question is approximately 134.1 acres in size and contains properties with a variety of zoning districts. These include the Business Center (BC) Zoning Use District, Commercial/Residential Campus (CRC) Zoning Use

District, Hamlet Residential (HR) Zoning Use District, Residence A-40 (RA40) Zoning Use District, Residence B-40 (RB40) Zoning Use District, and Shopping Center (SC) Zoning Use District.

Future without Action

Sanitary Waste

Based on the existing zoning regulations a full build out of the overlay district would include 94,228 SF of additional commercial space and 71 residential units. The sanitary wastewater demand projections for the existing conditions are based on Suffolk County Department of Health Services Division of Environmental Quality Standards. Dry retail space has an expected demand of 0.03 gallons per day per square foot. Assuming an average apartment size of between 600 SF and 1200 SF, residential apartment units have an expected water/sewage demand of approximately 225 gallons per day / Unit. Therefore, based on the existing zoning regulations, a full building out will have a sanitary wastewater demand of 18,802 gallons per day as seen in Table 3.7-5 below. Note that these calculations are based on potential development in districts where zoning is proposed to change and does not include planned or proposed projects under review.

Table 3.7-5. Assisted Living Overlay Zone Existing Conditions Sanitary Wastewater Demand

| Condition | Size | Demand Rate | Water / Sewage Demand (Gal / Day) |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Full Build Out | 71 Units | 225 Gallons Per Day / Unit | 18,802 |
| | 94,228 SF commercial | 0.03 Gallons Per Day / SF | |
| Anticipated Build Out | 9 Units | 225 Gallons Per Day / Unit | 2,280 |
| | 84,811 SF Commercial | 0.03 Gallons Per Day / SF | |

Solid Waste

As discussed above, commercial property owners must contract for private waste collection services within the Town of Riverhead, and any new commercial and residential development under the current zoning will be subject to the same requirements. Disposition of solid waste will continue to be the responsibility of the individual commercial entities.

Drinking Water

For the purposes of this analysis, demand for water has been considered roughly equivalent to the production of sanitary wastewater. Development under the current zoning would slightly increase water demand in accordance with the analysis above (see Table 3.7-5) which would be provided by the Riverhead Water District. The district indicates that ample supply is available to meet the demand. A discussion of additional measures to reduce demand and increase efficiency of the district is provided at the end of this chapter.

Future with Action

Sanitary Waste

The Comprehensive Plan recommends the creation of an overlay zone in areas generally along Route 58 near the Peconic Bay Medical Center. This overlay zone would allow for an increase in density for assisted living or continuing care facilities with the use of TDR credits, if sewer infrastructure is in place. In commercial districts along Route 58 (BC and SC), the proposed overlay zone would allow for an increase in FAR from 0.2 to 0.75, with

residential capped at 30 beds per acre. In other districts, the proposed overlay zone would allow for a maximum FAR of 0.5 with residential density capped at 15 beds acre. TDR credits for the overlay district would only be required to achieve units beyond what is allowed as-of-right. Based on the modifications it is expected that 267 assisted living units/beds will be added in the next 10 years. The full build out of the Assisted Living Overlay Zone, utilizing the maximum possible TDR credits will add 2,228 beds. To establish the water/sewage demand of the assisted living units a rate of 200 gallons per day / unit was selected. This rate is based on Suffolk County Department of Health Services Division of Environmental Quality Standards for planned retirement communities. The sanitary wastewater demand for the 267 units/beds will result in an increase when compared with the development possible under the existing zoning regulations. This information is presented below in Table 3.7-6.

Table 3.7-6. Assisted Living Overlay Zone Proposed/Future Condition Sanitary Wastewater Demand

| Condition | Size | Demand Rate | Water / Sewage Demand (Gal / Day) | Difference From Existing |
|---------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Max TDR Credits Utilized | | | | |
| Full Build Out | 2,228 Units | 200 Gallons Per Day / Unit | 445,600 | 426,798 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 267 Units | 200 Gallons Per Day / Unit | 53,400 | 51,120 |

The Future with Action Scenario would result in increased sanitary wastewater demand as compared to the Future without Action scenario. As noted earlier, parts of the proposed overlay zone are located within the Riverhead Sewer District, which has additional capacity available (approximately 0.9 mgd). Approximately 0.17 mgd of flow is reserved for County facilities in Southampton.

Solid Waste

Under this overlay district, assisted living or congregate care facilities would be permitted to be developed in the zones identified. These facilities are considered commercial entities, and thus would be responsible for the disposition of solid waste in keeping with current Town policies. The Proposed Action has the potential to result in more development than would occur under the current zoning; therefore, more solid waste can be expected to be generated. While the Town does not specifically provide for the disposition of solid waste from commercial properties, increasing the amount of solid waste produced is considered detrimental from the standpoint of environmental impact.

Drinking Water

The Proposed Action has the potential to result in more development than under the current zoning; therefore, more water demand would be expected to be generated should the recommended changes be adopted which would be provided by the Riverhead Water District. The district indicates that ample supply is available to meet the demand. A discussion of additional measures to reduce demand and increase efficiency of the district is provided at the end of this chapter.

Commercial/Residential Campus (CRC)

This area is approximately 40.8 acres of property that is currently located in the Commercial/Residential Campus (CRC) Zoning Use District. Impact of development of the properties would largely be located in the immediate area around these properties as they are not located adjacent to any existing sewer infrastructure. Based on the current zoning approximately 44 residential units can be constructed if every property is fully developed. It is

assumed that only 12% of the potential development will occur in the next ten years. Based on the existing regulations that translates to 6 residential units. A discussion of potential impacts follows.

Future without Action

Sanitary Waste

The sanitary wastewater demand is based on Suffolk County Department of Health Services Division of Environmental Quality Standards. Assuming an average apartment size of between 600 SF and 1,200 SF, residential apartment units have an expected sanitary wastewater demand of approximately 225 gallons per day / Unit. Accordingly, a full build out of this area under existing conditions is expected to demand 9,900 gallons per day. The assumed build out is expected to demand 1,350 gallons per day. Note that these calculations are based on potential development in districts where zoning is proposed to change and does not include planned or proposed projects under review. This information is presented below in Table 3.7-7.

Table 3.7-7. Commercial/Residential Campus Existing Conditions Sanitary Wastewater Demand

| Condition | Size | Demand Rate | Water / Sewage Demand (Gal / Day) |
|-----------------------|----------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Full Build Out | 44 Units | 225 Gallons per Day / Unit | 9,900 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 6 Units | 225 Gallons per Day / Unit | 1,350 |

Solid Waste

As discussed above, residential and commercial solid waste is collected by the Town of Riverhead for disposition outside the Town. The solid waste generated by the small amount of new residential development under buildout of the current zoning would be insignificant.

Drinking Water

For the purposes of this analysis, demand for water has been considered roughly equivalent to the production of sanitary wastewater. Development under the current zoning would increase water demand in accordance with the analysis above which would be provided by the Riverhead Water District. The district indicates that ample supply is available to meet the demand. A discussion of additional measures to reduce demand and increase efficiency of the district is provided at the end of this chapter.

Future with Action

Sanitary Waste

The Comprehensive Plan proposes an increase in density from one dwelling unit per acre to 4 units per acre, bonusable to 12 units per acre with the use of TDR, provided infrastructure is in place. The analysis for CRC presumes an allowance of 8 units with wastewater infrastructure and an additional 4 units through TDR. Acknowledging the limited accessibility to sewer infrastructure for most parcels in this district, it's anticipated that properties would need to implement on-site sewer treatment systems to qualify for the density bonus. Given the costly nature of on-site sewer provisions, it is likely that some properties would be developed at lower densities, at or below 4 units per acre, to standards stipulated by the Suffolk County Department of Health Services for non-sewered areas. These changes will allow for 63 residential units without TDR credits and 489 if all TDR credit are utilized. Table 3.7-8 below, shows the potential increase in sanitary wastewater demand compared to the existing zoning.

Table 3.7-8. Commercial/Residential Campus Proposed/Future Condition Sanitary Wastewater Demand

| Condition | Size | Demand Rate | Water / Sewage Demand (Gal / Day) | Difference From Existing |
|---------------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| No TDR Credits Utilized | | | | |
| Full Build Out | 326 Units | 225 Gallons Per Day / Unit | 73,350 | 63,450 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 43 Units | 225 Gallons Per Day / Unit | 9,675 | 8,482 |
| Max TDR Credits Utilized | | | | |
| Full Build Out | 489 Units | 225 Gallons Per Day / Unit | 110,025 | 100,125 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 63 Units | 225 Gallons Per Day / Unit | 14,175 | 12,982 |

As discussed above, the Future with Action Scenario would result in an increased sanitary wastewater demand than the Future without Action scenario. However, the incremental increase is minor and is therefore not likely to result in the need of significant infrastructure improvements.

Solid Waste

As discussed above, the Future with Action Scenario would result in an increased sanitary wastewater demand than the Future without Action scenario. However, the increase (8,482- 12,982 gallons per day depending on use of TDR) is minor and is therefore not likely to result in the need of significant infrastructure improvements. In the TDR scenario, there would also be a related reduction in the amount of wastewater that would be generated in the more sensitive TDR sending areas.

Drinking Water

Buildout under the proposed zoning would result in the potential for the development of as many as 489 new residential units at full build-out and approximately 63 units in the next ten years. Increased demand for drinking water can be expected to be associated with this new development, which would be provided by the Riverhead Water District. The district indicates that ample supply is available to meet the demand. A discussion of additional measures to reduce demand and increase efficiency of the district is provided at the end of this chapter.

Peconic River Community (PRC)

As discussed in the build-out analysis in Chapter 2, with the current zoning (Future without Action) approximately 1 single-family residential unit would be anticipated to be constructed in the next 10 years. However, under the Future with Action scenario, it is anticipated that 4 townhomes would be developed over the same period.

Future without Action

Sanitary Waste

The water/sewage demand is based on Suffolk County Department of Health Services Division of Environmental Quality Standards. Assuming an average apartment size of between 600 SF and 1200 SF, residential apartment units have an expected sanitary wastewater demand of approximately 225 gallons per day / Unit. Accordingly, a full build out of this area under existing conditions is expected to demand 900 gallons per day. The assumed build out in the next 10 years is expected to demand 225 gallons per day. Note that these calculations are based

on potential development in districts where zoning is proposed to change and does not include planned or proposed projects under review. This information is presented in Table 3.7-9 below.

Table 3.7-9. Peconic River Community Existing Conditions Sanitary Wastewater Demand

| Condition | Size | Demand Rate | Water / Sewage Demand (Gal / Day) |
|-----------------------|---------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Full Build Out | 4 Units | 225 Gallons per Day / Unit | 900 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 1 Units | 225 Gallons per Day / Unit | 225 |

Solid Waste

As discussed above, residential solid waste is collected by the Town of Riverhead for disposition outside the Town, which would apply to this new development. The increase in solid waste generated by the increased residential development allowable under buildout under the proposed zoning is not expected to have a significant impact.

Drinking Water

For the purposes of this analysis, demand for water has been considered roughly equivalent to the production of sanitary wastewater. Development under the current zoning would increase water demand in accordance with the analysis above which would be provided by the Riverhead Water District. The district indicates that ample supply is available to meet the demand. A discussion of additional measures to reduce demand and increase efficiency of the district is provided at the end of this chapter.

Future with Action

Sanitary Waste

The Comprehensive Plan proposes an increase in density from one dwelling unit per 2 acres to 4 units per acre, bonusable to 8 units per acre with the use of TDR, provided infrastructure is in place. This would allow for the development of townhouses or garden apartments. None of the existing PRC zones are currently adjacent to sewer infrastructure, therefore, it is unlikely that any existing districts could achieve densities higher than 4 units per acre given the density standards for non-sewered areas established by Suffolk County Department of Health Services. It is acknowledged that development in this district is further controlled by DEC. The increase in density will allow 30 additional residential units if the area is fully developed. The sanitary wastewater demand for this increase as well as the assumed 10 year build out are provided in Table 3.7-10, below.

Table 3.7-10. Peconic River Community Proposed/Future Condition Sanitary Wastewater Demand

| Condition | Size | Demand Rate | Water / Sewage Demand (Gal / Day) | Difference From Existing |
|---|----------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| No TDR Credits Utilized (Not Likely in this Zoning District) | | | | |
| Full Build Out | 30 Units | 225 Gallons Per Day / Unit | 6,750 | 5,850 |
| Anticipated Build Out | 4 Units | 225 Gallons Per Day / Unit | 900 | 787 |

As discussed above, the Future with Action Scenario would result in slightly more sanitary wastewater flow than the Future without Action scenario. However, the incremental increase is minor and is therefore not likely to result in the need of infrastructure improvements.

Solid Waste

As discussed above, residential solid waste is collected by the Town of Riverhead for disposition outside the Town, which would apply to this new development. The increase in solid waste generated by the increased residential development allowable under buildout under the proposed zoning is not expected to have a significant impact.

Drinking Water

For purposes of this analysis, demand for water has been considered roughly equivalent to the production of sanitary wastewater. The Proposed Action would result slightly more development than under the current zoning, slightly more water demand can be expected to be generated should the recommended changes be adopted which would be provided by the Riverhead Water District. The district indicates that ample supply is available to meet the demand. A discussion of additional measures to reduce demand and increase efficiency of the district is provided at the end of this chapter.

Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area Overlay District (RRA-OD)

This district was adopted in 2021 and includes provisions for the use of TDR for community benefits. However, the TDR Map was never formally updated to be consistent with the adoption of RRA-OD. The FAR under the existing zoning regulations ranges from 2 to 3 dependent on the size of the lot and whether certain community benefits will be provided. Based on the layout of the existing lots it is assumed that multiple lots would be merged into multiple larger developments, which would allow the properties to be developed at the higher density. Based on the existing as of right zoning approximately 210 residential units (assuming 1000 sf per unit) can be developed. A discussion of potential impacts follows.

Future without Action

Sanitary Waste

The sanitary wastewater demand is based on Suffolk County Department of Health Services Division of Environmental Quality Standards. Assuming an average apartment size of between 600 SF and 1200 SF, residential apartment units have an expected water/sewage demand of approximately 225 gallons per day / Unit. The 210 apartments are expected to demand 47,250 gallons per day, as seen in Table 3.7-11. Note that these calculations are based on potential development in districts where zoning is proposed to change and does not include planned or proposed projects under review.

Table 3.7-11. Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area Overlay District Existing Conditions Sanitary Wastewater Demand

| Condition | Size | Demand Rate | Water / Sewage Demand (Gal / Day) |
|----------------|-----------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Full Build Out | 210 Units | 225 Gallons per Day / Unit | 47,250 |

Solid Waste

Residential development in this overlay district would take the form of multi-family residential buildings, which are considered commercial properties. As discussed above, commercial property owners must contract for

private waste collection services within the Town of Riverhead, and any new industrial development under the current zoning will be subject to the same requirements. Disposition of solid waste will continue to be the responsibility of the individual commercial entities.

Drinking Water

For the purposes of this analysis, demand for water has been considered roughly equivalent to the production of sanitary wastewater. Development under the current zoning would increase water demand in accordance with the analysis above.

Future with Action

This district was adopted in 2021 and includes provisions for the use of TDR for community benefits. However, the TDR Map was never formally updated to be consistent with the adoption of RRA-OD. The build-out considers the potential use of TDR credits on remaining soft sites in this area. RRA-OD provides for the use of a variety of different means, or “community benefits” to achieve additional floor area. One such community benefit is the preservation of open space or agriculture through the purchase of TDR credits. The Town Code allows the use of TDR credits in the RRA-OD with the following requirements. For projects on sites that meet the minimum size of 20,000 square feet, the developer can apply up to five TDR credits, each providing a bonus of 3,000 square feet. For projects on sites larger than 60,000 square feet, a developer can apply up to ten TDR credits, each providing a bonus of 3,000 square feet. No sites greater than 60,000 square feet were identified for potential development in the RRA-OD, even when the parcels were combined. The cumulative result would be an additional 30,000 square feet of built area in the RRA-OD and the application of a total of ten TDR credits. If these developments are residential, and assuming a residential unit is approximately 1,000 square feet, the build out in the RRA-OD with TDR credits could result in an additional 30 residential units. A discussion of potential impacts follows.

Sanitary Waste

The additional residential units would generate additional sanitary wastewater flow compared to the existing zoning as seen in Table 3.7-12.

Table 3.7-12. Railroad Avenue Urban Renewal Area Overlay District Proposed/Future Condition Sanitary Wastewater Flow

| Condition | Size | Demand Rate | Water / Sewage Demand (Gal / Day) | Difference From Existing |
|---|-----------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Assuming Merged Lots to Maximize TDR Credits | | | | |
| Full Build Out | 240 Units | 225 Gallons Per Day / Unit | 54,000 | 6,750 |

As discussed above, the Future with Action Scenario would result in slightly more sanitary wastewater flow than the Future without Action scenario. However, the incremental increase is minor and is therefore not likely to result in the need for infrastructure improvements. Insofar as the Overlay District lies within the area served by the Riverhead Wastewater Treatment plant, the additional flow can be readily treated at the plant.

Solid Waste

Residential development in this overlay district would take the form of multi-family residential buildings, which are considered commercial properties. The proposed zoning would allow for increased density in the zone, which would allow more residential units to be developed. Therefore, buildout under the proposed zoning would increase the production of solid waste. As discussed above, commercial property owners must contract for

private waste collection services within the Town of Riverhead, and any new industrial development under the current zoning will be subject to the same requirements. Disposition of solid waste will continue to be the responsibility of the individual commercial entities.

Drinking Water

For purposes of this analysis, demand for water has been considered roughly equivalent to the production of sanitary wastewater. The Proposed Action would result in more development than under the current zoning, slightly more water demand can be expected to be generated should the recommended changes be adopted which would be provided by the Riverhead Water District. The district indicates that ample supply is available to meet the demand. A discussion of additional measures to reduce demand and increase efficiency of the district is provided at the end of this chapter.

Sea Level Rise and Floodplain Management

Future without Action

Existing development patterns are anticipated to continue in the Future without Action scenario. Future development activities would be required to undergo site-specific review to assess the potential for environmental concerns. Projects would be required to document the potential impacts related to climate change during the SEQR process and then look to minimize and mitigate any identified significant impacts resulting from the project.

Future with Action

As discussed in the existing condition section, there is a need for Riverhead to become a more resilient community that is better prepared to manage and adapt to the increasingly frequent and greater intensity storm events and other natural hazards. The policies and recommendations discussed in the Infrastructure and Utilities and the Sustainability and Resilience chapters of the Comprehensive Plan are beneficial in terms of mitigating impacts from sea level rise and flooding. With regard to proposed rezoning areas, only a few are located within areas designated as floodplains. A discussion of each of the rezoning areas is below. As with the Future without Action scenario, any future development activities would be required to undergo site-specific review to assess the potential for environmental concerns. Projects would be required to document the potential impacts related to climate change during the SEQR process and then look to minimize and mitigate any identified significant impacts resulting from the project.

Proposed Changes to TDR Map

As discussed in the Future with Action Scenario, the Proposed Action includes the consideration of sending areas in all RB-80 and RA-80 districts. These districts include some areas within the floodplain, in sensitive areas along Long Island Sound and the Peconic Bay. This Proposed Action would have a beneficial impact by reducing impacts in sensitive areas and directing development to where it can be accommodated in a planned and controlled manner.

Modification to PRC and CRC Districts

The recommendations for Peconic River Community (PRC) and Commercial/Residential Campus (CRC) Districts aim to facilitate a mix of residential, commercial, and recreational uses, permitting residential development with Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) to support diverse housing options while adhering to urban planning principles. It is important to recognize that these districts contain several properties located in the 100-year Floodplain. This is particularly true for PRC properties located along the Peconic River. While the proposed changes would incentivize some new types of residential development, it is anticipated that guidelines in PRC would be implemented to push development away from waterfront areas. Impacts related to stormwater,

wetlands, riparian areas, and other natural and environmental resources would be evaluated on a site-specific basis as part of any future development within the PRC districts as part of site plan approval by the Planning Board and site-specific review under SEQR. This review should include coordination with NYSDEC as applicable.

Cluster Development Requirement in RA-40, and RB-40 zones

The recommendations propose cluster development requirements in RA-40 and RB-40 zones to preserve 70% of land for agriculture or open space while concentrating development on the remaining portion. This approach aims to protect unique natural features and open space by allowing the Planning Board to request cluster development alternatives for candidate parcels of sufficient size, promoting responsible land use. This zoning change is anticipated to have a positive impact on stormwater and flooding issues, however, impacts related to stormwater, wetlands, riparian areas, and other natural and environmental resources would be evaluated on a site-specific basis as part of any future development.

Other Proposed Recommended Rezoning Area Changes

The Build-out Analysis presented in Chapter 2, under the Future with Action Scenario, has the potential to result in a reduction of approximately 87 units of single-family residential units, a reduction of approximately 8,471 square feet of general commercial use, a reduction of approximately 166,968 square feet of industrial office use, and an increase of approximately 63 townhomes, 30 multi-family units, and approximately 267 units of assisted living as compared to the Without Action Condition. This has the potential to result in overall decreases in impervious surface coverage in the industrial areas, the preservation of environmentally sensitive lands in the TDR sending areas, and a concentration of development in portions of the Town with better access to sewer and infrastructure. Overall, the recommended rezoning area changes are protective of the environment and seek to balance development rights with the preservation of environmentally sensitive lands including wetlands and floodplains. Finally, it is important to note that the Proposed Action is the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan Update and will not result in any construction. As discussed above, any future development within the recommended rezoning areas, following adoption of future zoning text amendments, would be subject to site-specific review as part of discretionary project approvals and site-specific review under SEQR. This review should include coordination with NYSDEC and other regulatory agencies, as applicable.

Summary

Near term projections indicate a reduction in potential industrial development of 160,000 square feet, 300 additional housing units, a decrease of 8,471 sq. ft. in commercial development and an increase in 267 assisted living units.

Sanitary Waste

From an overall perspective, considering a full build out of all of the changes to the zoning regulations are expected to increase the expected sanitary wastewater flow (+465,314 gpd) assuming that the maximum number of TDR credits are utilized. A summary table of the differences between the expected wastewater flow from the existing zoning regulations compared to the proposed zoning changes is presented in Table 3.7-13.

Table 3.7-13. Full Build Out Existing Zoning vs Proposed Zoning - Sanitary Wastewater flow

| Condition | CI | LI | AL-OD | CRC | PRC | RRA-OD | Total |
|-------------------------|---------|--------|---------|---------|------|--------|----------------|
| Existing Full Build Out | 220,639 | 76,195 | 18,802 | 9900 | 900 | 47,250 | 373,686 |
| Proposed Full Build Out | 165,479 | 57,146 | 445,600 | 110,025 | 6750 | 54,000 | 839,000 |

| | | | | | | | |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------|-------|---------|
| Change | -55,160 | -19,049 | 426,798 | 100,125 | 5,850 | 6,750 | 465,314 |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------|-------|---------|

Table 3.7-14. Anticipated Build Out Existing Zoning vs Proposed Zoning Sanitary Wastewater flow

| Condition | CI | LI | AL-OD | CRC | PRC | RRA-OD | Total |
|--------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-----|--------|--------|
| Existing Anticipated Build Out | 19,858 | 6,858 | 2,280 | 1,193 | 113 | N/A | 30,302 |
| Proposed Anticipated Build Out | 14,893 | 5,144 | 53,400 | 9,675 | 810 | N/A | 83,922 |
| Change | -4,965 | -1,714 | 51,120 | 8,482 | 697 | 0 | 53,620 |

The anticipated development over the next 10 years is based on growth projections provided by NYMTC (New York Metropolitan Transportation Council) specifically tailored to reflect the unique growth dynamics of the town. As can be seen, buildout under the recommended zoning changes will have a minimal impact of the production of sanitary waste. It is anticipated that the additional sanitary waste flows within or adjacent to the existing sewer districts will be accommodated through a combination of connections to the existing sewage treatment facilities and the planned expansion and modernization of those facilities. For development not within the sewer districts, methodologies including on site wastewater treatment for large developments and/or conventional septic systems are expected to be utilized.

Solid Waste

As discussed in prior sections above, a large majority of the potential additional residential development that could occur should the proposed zoning amendments be adopted would take the form of multi-family residential buildings, which are considered commercial properties. The proposed zoning would allow for increased density in some zones, which would allow more residential units to be developed. Therefore, buildout under the proposed zoning would increase the production of solid waste by residential properties. In industrial zones, reduced development is projected based on the proposed zoning, which would also result in reduced solid waste. Finally, a small number of new residential units is projected, which would slightly increase the amount of solid waste that is handled by the Town of Riverhead Refuse and Garbage District.

As discussed above, commercial property owners must contract for private waste collection services within the Town of Riverhead, and any new industrial development under the current zoning will be subject to the same requirements. Disposition of solid waste will continue to be the responsibility of the individual commercial entities.

Drinking Water

For the purposes of this analysis, demand for water has been considered roughly equivalent to the production of sanitary wastewater. Development under the current zoning would increase water demand in accordance with the analysis above which would be provided by the Riverhead Water District. The district indicates that ample supply is available to meet the demand. A discussion of additional measures to reduce demand and increase efficiency of the district is provided at the end of this chapter.

Sea Level Rise and Floodplain Management

The Future with Action scenario provides strategies for Riverhead to enhance resilience against natural hazards like storms, flooding, and sea level rise. Comprehensive Plan policies aim to mitigate sea level rise and flooding impacts, with proposed rezoning efforts looking to direct development away from sensitive areas. The adoption of measures such as Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) and cluster development requirements seeks to balance development needs with environmental preservation, promoting controlled growth while safeguarding

against flooding and other ecological concerns. For example, in the PRC district, it is recommended that guidelines be put in place to direct development away from riparian areas. In addition, proposed rezoning changes aim to reduce impervious surface coverage, preserve environmentally sensitive lands, and concentrate development in areas with better infrastructure access. It is important to note any future development within the recommended rezoning areas would undergo thorough site-specific review, ensuring compliance with environmental regulations and coordination with relevant agencies to mitigate potential impacts on stormwater, wetlands, and other natural resources.

3.7.3. Mitigation Measures

Sanitary Waste

Innovative Alternative Wastewater Treatment

While the sewer districts serve to treat a significant amount of the sanitary water produced in the Town, apart from smaller private treatment facilities, all of the remaining sanitary waste produced in the town discharges to septic systems or cesspools, where it returns to groundwater and ultimately into the waters surrounding the Town, including the Peconic River. The nitrogen rich effluent feeds algal blooms in the river which have resulted in fish kills and other marine life mortality. Many of these parcels will never connect to a sewer system due to funding constraints. This can be mitigated to an extent by the implementation of modern Innovative Alternative Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems, referred to as I/A OWTS or simply I/A systems. Suffolk County has launched the Reclaim Our Water initiative to regulate the use of I/A OWTS to ensure these advanced wastewater treatment systems continue to reduce nitrogen as they are designed to do. To make the cost of I/A systems more affordable for homeowners, Suffolk County has developed a grant program to make funds available to homeowners to upgrade their systems to I/A.

Wastewater Reuse

In 2016, the Suffolk County-owned Indian Island golf course in Riverhead became the first and only golf course on Long Island to use reclaimed wastewater for irrigation use. The Town of Riverhead partnered with the Suffolk County Parks Department to initiate the project, which can provide up to 450,000 gallons per day of reusable water to irrigate the adjacent golf course, which is adjacent to the treatment plant. The project, which included the installation of 1,000 feet of force main piping between the treatment plant and golf course, was completed in time for the 2016 irrigation season. By diverting nitrogen from the Peconic River to the golf course, nitrogen discharge into the river is reduced. It can also reduce the amount of nitrogen fertilizer required to maintain the turf grass on the golf course.

Solid Waste

As can be seen, the Town's solid waste system is intertwined at many levels with the Town of Brookhaven landfill, which is scheduled to close in 2027-2028. Closure of this facility will result in the need identify new means of disposal of much of the end product of the Town's solid waste, which in turn is likely to have significant impact on the cost of disposal. These cost increases will almost assuredly be passed along to Riverhead residents. The Town already has achieved a substantial reduction in per capita solid waste production between 2009 and 2019, and the 2020-2029 Solid Waste Management Plan projects a continued decrease in per capita waste production, achieved through a variety of measures including educational programs, composting, and incentive programs. However, due to projected population growth, the total amount of solid waste is still projected to increase. It is noted that NYS DEC has set reduction goals of 40% by 2030, and 90% by 2040.

Drinking Water

District representatives identified a need for the district to plan for large scale industrial complexes, EPCAL, and residential development. Representatives stressed the need to find new sources of water supply. In the past, the district has not required the large-scale developments to provide these sources, i.e., Splish Splash Water Park which uses 15 million gallons a month in the peak summer months and did not contribute to the water supply infrastructure needed. These costs were spread out amongst all the customers. The Water District now works closely with the Planning Department to ensure developers provide the funding for increased water supply and fire protection infrastructure if required. The RSD is seeking bids for improvements to the treatment plant to condition sludge into Class A bio-solids, a standard that would allow its use in unrestricted forms such as compost that could be used on sod farms, nurseries, or farms where the material will not come into direct contact with the grown food item. Local reuse of this waste product would save money currently being spent to truck the waste product to sanitary landfills off Long Island. Cost reduction was estimated in 2022 to be on the order of \$260,000 per year.

4.0. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

4.1. Unavoidable Adverse Environmental Impacts

SEQRA requires that the DGEIS identify any unavoidable adverse impacts. An impact is considered unavoidable if there is no practicable way to mitigate or eliminate the impact. The NYSDEC SEQR Handbook provides an example of an unavoidable impact, noting that “there is typically permanent loss of vegetation when building a new facility and any related parking.”⁷⁰ While the preceding chapters did not identify significant adverse impacts that cannot be avoided or mitigated, some unavoidable impacts are possible with all development. Such impacts would be present in both the Future without Action and Future with Action condition; however, the Future with Action condition aims to mitigate these impacts through the implementation of the recommendations presented in the Comprehensive Plan.

The Proposed Action would commit the Town to a cohesive, strategic vision intended to realign zoning designations with the modern needs of the community and incentivize TDR to better protect the Town’s sensitive lands. These recommendations are designed to prevent the potential adverse impacts associated with continued development under the No-Action alternative.

The adoption of the Comprehensive Plan would allow the Town to proceed with the modifications to zoning and subsequent development applications pursuant to the new policy framework. Review pursuant to other regulations, laws and codes that pertain to approvals for individual development applications would remain in place to minimize the potential for adverse impacts associated with implementation of site-specific actions.

Therefore, there are no anticipated significant adverse environmental impacts if the proposed Comprehensive Plan is implemented as drafted. The plan presents a balancing set of Goals/Action Items that encourages responsible sustainable development while addressing community concerns regarding future land use. Comprehensive Plan Update adoption would not invoke direct impacts. The DGEIS/Comprehensive Plan Update establishes a planning policy framework to guide future land use decisions by boards and departments in the Town commensurate with identified community needs, goals, and limiting environmental factors.

Growth would be experienced in some areas of the Town, while other areas are conserved and/or retain their existing community character. New growth is typically accompanied by unavoidable physical adverse impacts, including potential generation of new trip ends, sanitary wastewater, solid waste and effects on land, water and air quality resources. Thresholds inherent in the SEQRA regulations, noted in Section 1, would determine whether additional analysis would be required for implementation of specific projects in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan. Future individual actions, which require review in accordance with SEQRA, would be thoroughly analyzed for potential social, economic, environmental impacts and for compatibility with the Comprehensive Plan Update GEIS. All potential direct project-induced impacts would be mitigated as required to reduce overall environmental effects to the greatest extent practicable.

⁷⁰ New York State Department of Conservation Division of Environmental Permits. The SEQR Handbook Fourth Addition, 2020. P. 120. Available from:
https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/permits_ej_operations_pdf/seqrhandbook.pdf.

4.2. Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

There is no significant commitment of resources anticipated resulting from the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. The primary resources utilized during the preparation and adoption of these updated documents include the effort of those personnel involved in its preparation and paper for printing.

Adoption of the proposed Comprehensive Plan would not cause physical manipulation or commitment of any land resource or direct impact thereto. The action identifies lands and communities that can be best served by rezoning, modifications to the zoning code, or other changes to the Town Code. All development projects to be implemented in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan Update shall be subject to town planning approvals and subsequent SEQR review.

4.3. Growth-Inducing, Cumulative, and Secondary Impacts

This chapter assesses the potential for the Proposed Action to induce growth and have cumulative impacts. Growth related to recommended zone changes are discussed throughout the DGEIS. This section would instead focus on the cumulative impacts that may result from Comprehensive Plan recommendations combined with projects not directly associated with the Comprehensive Plan adoption. It would also address secondary impacts of the Proposed Action that may trigger further development.

4.3.1. Growth Inducement

The NYSDEC SEQR Handbook⁷¹ identifies ways in which a Proposed Action may induce future growth, such as:

- *Attracting significant increases in the local population by creating or relocating employment, with attendant increase in the demands for support services and facilities that may be necessary to serve the working population (housing, stores, public services, etc.); or*
- *Increasing the development potential for a local area by installing or upgrading sewers, water mains, or other utilities.*

The policies of the Comprehensive Plan have been carefully crafted with consideration of growth inducement and cumulative impacts in that the growth proposed in the Comprehensive Plan and recommended rezonings is limited to selectively chosen areas. In this sense, the Comprehensive Plan and recommended rezonings are growth-inducing actions however, these actions have been closely tailored in the existing context of the Town's strong residential character and are designed to induce growth in a targeted manner. Current zoning also allows for additional growth, but in a less targeted and controlled manner. Importantly, the recommendations are designed to protect Riverhead's established low density residential neighborhoods and agricultural lands through the expansion of the TDR program and the proposed adjustments to the TDR formula. These changes prioritize the preservation of the Town's sensitive lands and targets growth to more appropriate areas. Further, the zoning recommendations also decrease FAR in several of the Town's industrial areas, resulting in potential decreases in industrial square footage as compared to existing zoning.

The policies of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update are sensitive to growth with respect to its effect on natural and manmade resources and the provision of public services and infrastructure needs. Any future growth induced by the zoning recommendations would be limited in scale and targeted to areas where the built environment and environmental setting make such growth appropriate. The growth induced in these commercial areas by the Proposed Action is largely consistent with the applicable existing zoning and land use

⁷¹ Ibid 1.

context, and as discussed throughout the DGEIS, is not expected to have the potential for significant adverse impacts.

As outlined in Table 2-4 in Chapter 2.0 Project Description, the DGEIS includes reasonably conservative conceptual build-out projections that estimate the potential residential unit yield and commercial square footage that could be realized with the Comprehensive Plan and recommended rezonings in place. In total the conceptual build out estimates a reduction of 8,471 SF of commercial space, a reduction of 166,968 SF of industrial/office space, a reduction of 59 single-family homes, an increase of 29 townhome units, an increase of 267 assisted living units, and an increase of 30 multi-family units. In order to achieve this modest increase in density, 90 TDR credits would need to be sold and 153 credits used. Overall, development density would decrease for commercial and industrial uses and have a modest increase in residential uses. Residential uses would shift from more traditional single-family homes which have a larger impact on land, particularly sensitive lands in the Town, to denser and less impactful townhome, multi-family and assisted living units. Further, this new development would result in the preservation of sensitive lands through the use of Transfer of Development Rights (TDR). The DGEIS has evaluated the conceptual build out that could occur throughout the Town associated with the recommended rezonings and potential developments in Smithtown.

The zoning framework proposed by the Plan constrains growth by establishing limits to uses and dimensional regulations in a manner designed to foster development that is generally compatible with the existing built environment while prioritizing the preservation of the Town's most sensitive lands. This balanced approach, combined with the overall protective nature of the Plan's recommendations as described throughout this DGEIS, is not expected to result in significant growth-inducing impacts, that have not been mitigated by the recommended policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

4.3.2. Cumulative Impacts

With respect to cumulative impacts, the NYSDEC SEQR Handbook states, "Cumulative impacts occur when multiple actions affect the same resource(s). These impacts can occur when the incremental or increased impacts of an action, or actions, are added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions." And "Cumulative impacts must be assessed when actions are proposed, or can be foreseen as likely, to take place simultaneously or sequentially in a way that the combined impacts may be significant."⁷²

Accordingly, the following discussion considers reasonably related projects that may impact the same environmental resources as the Comprehensive Plan and recommended rezonings. Existing pending development projects in the approval pipeline were considered and projects that could result in similar types of impacts as the Comprehensive Plan were considered. A complete list of all pending projects provided by the Town of Riverhead Planning Department are listed below.

Of the 53 projects included in Table 4-1, there are several larger scale projects, including major subdivisions for 2 properties that would create 23 and 34 individual lots, site plan approvals for the construction of several warehouse buildings in industrially zoned lands, and a site plan for the construction of a moto-cross track in Calverton. All of these potential projects would undergo individual site-specific review by the Town, including review under SEQR.

Mitigation measures are integral components of the Comprehensive Plan's recommendations. The Plan introduces targeted strategies aimed at reducing the overall density of development in specific areas. For instance, prescribed reductions in permitted built area within Industrial districts serve to alleviate potential cumulative impacts originating from ongoing projects in these zones. While there are several warehouse

⁷² Ibid 1.

developments in the pipeline, proposed zoning would help to minimize future impacts compared to the Future without Action scenario discussed in Chapter 2.

Within residential districts, the Plan provides recommendations to increase the use of TDR to safeguard agricultural lands while endorsing the clustering of subdivisions to preserve open spaces and natural landscapes. These initiatives effectively mitigate cumulative impacts in residential districts by fostering sustainable development practices.

Table 4-1. Pending Projects (Application Dates: 1/1/2021 - 3/13/2024)

| |
|---|
| Subdivision-Major: |
| • Sound Shore Rd – 14 new residential lots |
| • 465 Doctors Path – 9 new residential lots |
| • 810 Middle Rd- 25 new residential lots |
| • Midway Dr – 10 new residential lots |
| • 1161 Peconic Bay Blvd – 6 new residential lots |
| • Middle Country Rd - 23-lot subdivision; Includes SCTM# 117-2-11. Industrial subdivision. NOT RESIDENTIAL. |
| • 308-310 Maple Ave - Major Subdivision - 5 residential lots. |
| • Ziemacki Ln - Subdivision of a 19.957-acre parcel into 8 residential lots. |
| • 1945 Main Rd - Subdivision of four contiguous subject parcels totaling 69.97 acres into 34 residential lots. |
| • 5184 Rt 25A Wading River Major Subdivision (48 residential lots) |
| Subdivision-Minor: |
| • 821 Northville Tpke - Three-lot minor subdivision. |
| • 845 Raynor Ave - Four-lot subdivision of an 8.02-acre parcel located within the Industrial C zoning use district. |
| • 196 S Jamesport Ave - Proposed minor subdivision of the property. |
| • 422 Edwards Ave - Three Lot Minor Sub-Division. |
| • 5753 Sound Ave - Minor subdivision of a 41.1708-acre parcel into 3 lots. |
| • 3360 Sound Ave - Proposed 4-lot Minor Subdivision. |
| • 2 Bluffs Dr - 3-lot Minor Subdivision. |
| • 761 E Main - 4 Lot Minor Subdivision. |
| • 1185-87-89 Northville - Proposed 4-lot subdivision for residential use. |
| • 934 Sound Shore Rd - 2-lot minor subdivision. |
| • 3674 Middle Country Rd - Minor 2-lot subdivision Rural Corridor (RLC). |
| Special Permit: |
| • 1521 Roanoke Ave - Special Permit for construction of warehouse/special trade contractor buildings and new clubhouse. |
| • 422 Edwards Ave - Special Permit Ag Worker Housing. |
| • 4592 Middle Country Rd - 2 Family Dwelling. |
| • 5117 Sound Ave - 5 Portable Cassone Units to be connected to sewer and water. |

| Pending Projects (Continued) |
|---|
| Site Plan: |
| • 38 McDermott Ave - Demolish existing metal building; construct 4,031 sf two-story frame restaurant. |
| • 950 W Main St - Construct new commercial building with associated site improvements. |
| • Current Business Owner, Landmark of Riverhead - Demolish existing retail building; proposed residential apartment building with retail & restaurants. |
| • 374 Main Rd - Construction of a one-story 14,999 sf professional office building. |
| • Bay Breeze Inn, 46 Front - Parking plan. |
| • 426-442 W Main St - Demolish single-family dwelling, clear trees, regrade site, excavate, construct new five-story mixed-use building. |
| • 104 Edwards Ave - Existing buildings and structures will be demolished to construct a proposed battery energy storage facility. |
| • 1312 E Main St - Convert vacant building into deli and barbershop. |
| • 505 Lincoln Street – Convert existing building to mixed-use (nine apartments on second floor, first floor lobby art/crafts studio, retail and storage) |
| • 1743 Middle Rd - Construction of a 641,000 sq. ft. Class-A warehouse facility. |
| • 3651 Middle Country Rd - One-Story (42,212 SF) Addition to Existing Storage Warehouse. |
| • 46 Manor Rd - Site plan application to develop SCTM Nos. 600-99-2-21.3, 21.4, 21.5, 21.6 with a self-storage facility. |
| • Mac Lad Corp., 4195 JPD Calverton, 4195 - Demolish existing retail building; maintaining an existing warehouse building and constructing a new multi-tenant warehouse building. |
| • O'Neill's Power Equipment - Install above-ground LP tanks. |
| • 901-932 Scott Ave - Proposed new 60,000 sq ft building with outdoor storage. |
| • Oldcastle (Anchor), 901- 901 Burman Blvd LLC - Construction of a proposed 196,765 Sq Ft Warehouse Building adjacent to an existing multi-story 134,636 Sq Ft building. |
| • JOO I Scott Ave - Proposed one-story, 70,445 SF warehouse building. |
| • Riverhead Ciderhouse, 2711 Sound Ave - Expansion of existing patio area and tasting room. |
| • 397 Laurel Ln - Legalize Existing Farmstand. |
| • 1521 Roanoke Ave - Installation of miniature golf course. |
| • 1800 Old Country Rd - Renovate existing car dealership. |
| • ADI of New York, 1309 Old Country Rd - New motor vehicle dealership, used motor vehicle sales, motor vehicle service. |
| • 2822 River Rd - Construct a motocross race track. |
| • 131 W Main St - Proposed 530 sq ft I-story addition and 177 sq ft roofed over front porch addition. |
| • 254 Railroad St - Regrade site new construction 5-story mixed-use building. |
| • 61 Main Rd - Construction of a 36,250 sq. ft. two-story self-storage building. |
| • 940 W Main St - Construction of 2 new buildings: one is a self-storage 3-story building and the other is a one-story retail building. |
| • 572 Raynor Ave - Proposed accessory food pantry structure. |
| • Terra Vite North Fork Winery, 250 Manor Ln - Convert existing single-family dwelling to commercial tasting room. |
| • Venezia Square, 6435 Route 25A Wading River – shopping center with 30,000 sq. ft. of retail (in three buildings), a 4,000 sq. ft. bank with a drive thru, a 3,000 sq. ft. 84 seat restaurant, and two 1,500 sq. ft. take out spaces |
| • Wading River Square II, 6278 Route 25A Wading River – new construction of four two-story buildings (5,000 sq. dr. each), parking lot, and demolition of an existing building |
| • 46 E Second St - 8-unit townhouse development. |

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 206 Edgar Ave - 2,382 sq ft vegan restaurant. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 743 Union Ave - Development of a single-story medical suite building. |

Moreover, targeted growth areas have been identified, including the proposed assisted living overlay district, CRC district, Railroad Avenue Overlay District, and PRC district. These zones reflect the Town's vision for balanced expansion. Through focused rezoning efforts and incentives for TDR usage, the Plan ensures that growth in these areas aligns with overarching environmental preservation objectives. Growth in these areas is limited by the presence of wastewater infrastructure. Impacts from individual projects would also be addressed during any site-specific review and SEQR evaluation.

Within the context of cumulative impacts, it's important to acknowledge the potential implications of the development of the EPCAL site. This significant project has been a focal point of discussion throughout the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan recommends the need for further study within a collaborative framework with the community. This DGEIS refrains from speculating on the nature of future development at the site. However, should redevelopment of the EPCAL site be pursued, the Town possesses the authority to undertake a project-specific environmental review tailored to minimize potential significant adverse impacts. This proactive approach underscores the Town's commitment to responsible development practices and ensures that any future endeavors at the EPCAL site are conducted with careful consideration of their environmental and socio-economic ramifications.

This balanced approach, along with the protective measures outlined in this DGEIS, is anticipated to mitigate any significant cumulative impacts not addressed by the Comprehensive Plan's recommended policies. With proactive mitigation measures and strategic planning, the Town is prepared to uphold its environmental integrity and socio-economic vitality amid evolving development pressures.

4.4. Effects on the Use and Conservation of Energy

There would be no significant impact on energy use and conservation as a result of adoption of the Proposed Action, however, the eventual construction associated with the proposed zoning recommendations is expected to generate an increase in energy use, due to the increased number of households residing in the area. This increase is anticipated to be balanced by an increase in conservation activities associated with the use of TDR, a reduction in commercial and industrial development as described in the build-out analysis and other sustainability measures proposed in Comprehensive Plan Chapter 12: Sustainability and Resilience.

Chapter 12 of the Plan outlines goals aimed at reducing energy consumption, increasing the use of renewable energy in Town facilities, promoting sustainable business practices, and increasing the prevalence of non-automobile modes of transportation in the Town of Riverhead. Below is a summary of the Plan's Sustainability and Resilience goals and recommendations:

Goal 1. Embrace renewable energy sources to achieve the State's targets of 70% renewable sources by 2030 and 100% zero-emission electricity by 2040.

- Achieve Climate Smart Communities (CSC) certification and continue to act on the CSC pledge elements.
- Create a Greenhouse Gas Inventory.
- Establish a Climate Action Plan and partner with neighboring communities on a regional plan.
- Ensure that renewable energy programs are equitable and promote climate justice.
- Become a regional and state leader by taking more actions in NYSERDA's Clean Energy Communities program.
- Transition Riverhead's utilities to clean energy sources.
- Revise solar regulations and incentives to ensure they are compatible with surroundings.
- Monitor battery storage safety and technology and revise the code as appropriate.

Goal 2. Promote sustainable building practices, landscaping, and design.

- Strengthen the Town's Building Code with green building standards and improved energy requirements.
- Encourage nature-based solutions, eco-friendly landscaping, and green infrastructure.
- Reduce energy and water demand in publicly owned properties and facilities.
- Cooperate with regional institutions and nonprofits on sustainable practices.
- Educate the public about sustainable practices and incentives for sustainability initiatives on private properties such as solar panels, electric vehicles, and green infrastructure.

Goal 3. Promote sustainable transportation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

- Promote alternative transportation.
- Promote infrastructure for Electric Vehicle (EVs).
- Adopt a green fleet plan for Town-owned vehicles and equipment.

Goal 4. Reduce waste and promote circular economy waste management practices.

- Implement recommendations of Riverhead's Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) for more sustainable practices.
- Reduce the use of single use plastics and other wasteful practices.

- Continue to provide and promote a recycling program.
- Implement and expand a Town-wide composting program.
- Explore alternative modes of waste disposal that generate renewable energy and useful byproducts.
- Promote the reuse of rainwater for irrigation and other purposes.
- Explore innovative methods to repurpose graywater.

Goal 5. Promote a green economy and green finance, technology, and jobs.

- Promote EPCAL and industrial sites to green technology and finance companies.

Goal 6. Mitigate the effects of flooding, sea level rise, and storm surge.

- Continue to implement infrastructure improvements to mitigate future flood impacts.
- Mitigate flood impacts and coastal erosion in flood-prone areas on Long Island Sound, Peconic River, and inland, through nature-based solutions.
- Develop a resilience plan to assess vulnerability by location and identify context-specific solutions.

Goal 7. Ensure the safety of Riverhead residents, employees, and visitors in emergencies and strengthen the Town's emergency preparedness.

- Promote the Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- Update the Town of Riverhead Hurricane/Severe Storm Emergency Response Plan.
- Enhance the Town's ability to provide important notifications and increase the public's awareness about emergency preparedness.

The implementation of the Proposed Action is not expected to increase Riverhead's carbon footprint. While the residential build-out under the proposed zoning recommendations is predicted to generate a modest number of vehicular trips in the Town, this increase would be off-set by a fairly significant decrease in trips associated with commercial and industrial uses and the recommendations made in the Comprehensive Plan are expected to mitigate potential future traffic and congestion. Further, the recommendations made in the Comprehensive Plan seek to make Riverhead more accessible by foot, bike and public transport, seek to preserve large swaths of sensitive lands through the expansion and modification of the TDR program, and channel development towards areas more appropriate for development. This combined with the sustainability policies outlined above all aim to reduce the Town's carbon footprint.

5.0. ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES

SEQRA requires the examination of a No-Action alternative; this section provides an analysis of the No-Action Alternative, which assumes that the Comprehensive Plan would not be adopted, and development would continue within the Town under the 2003 Comprehensive Plan and existing Zoning Code. The following sets forth an examination of the No-Action Alternative

5.1. No-Action Alternative: Build-out under Existing Comprehensive Plan and current Zoning Code

Under the No Action Alternative, land use development would continue to be regulated by the existing Zoning, site plan, subdivision, and other land use regulations governing physical development in the Town of Riverhead. The Town would be expected to continue to grow in a manner consistent with current development. The Town would remain reactive to project applications and development would be guided by the 2003 Comprehensive Plan, the existing zoning code, and market forces. Acceptance of this alternative would not further the Town's goals as set forth in the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update and discussed in this DGEIS and would prevent the Town from achieving its vision for the future.

Without the adoption and implementation of the Proposed Action, many of the public benefits identified would not be realized including goals for managed growth and preservation of the natural environment and neighborhood character set forth in the Plan. While existing regulations may provide some level of protection for natural resources, agricultural lands, and the Town's historic character, the Proposed Action offers a structured approach for accommodating growth in appropriate areas while maintaining neighborhood character and preserving valuable resources. The implementation of the Proposed Action is expected to yield positive outcomes, including the retention of Riverhead's distinctive scenic and historic qualities, the protection of sensitive lands and agriculture, the enhancement of community facilities, and the facilitation of managed and targeted growth. Examples of policies and recommendations which would not be completed in the No Action alternative are provided below.

- **Industrial areas:** The Proposed Action provides for a reduction in allowable built area in several industrial areas. It also calls for a reduction in heavy industrial uses and the provision of increased setbacks, landscaping, and screening. These changes would minimize impacts on the surrounding community in several ways such as visual and scenic resource impacts and transportation impacts.
- **Housing needs:** The Proposed Action includes a slight increase in allowable residential density in CRC and PRC districts. The impacts of this increased density on community character are offset by the larger vision in the Plan to provide opportunities for the development of "missing" middle-housing typologies such as townhouses. The zoning also ensures that any density increases would necessitate the provision of infrastructure, which would mitigate environmental and infrastructure impacts. The Plan also provides for other policy recommendations to increase diversity in the housing supply, helping to promote the development of diverse and affordable housing options that align with evolving community needs. One example is eliminating minimum home size requirements, providing homes meet building code standards. Another example are policy recommendations such as easing certain restrictions (i.e. size) for accessory apartments to make them more achievable.
- **Assisted Living:** The recommendations advocate for the development of specialized zones, such as assisted living overlay zones. The impacts of this increased density are offset by the larger vision in the Plan to address housing needs for older residents. Riverhead has an aging population and needs to address the evolving needs of seniors. The designated overlay area possesses the necessary infrastructure and can absorb both traffic and development, making it an ideal candidate for this

purpose.

- **Natural Features, Environmental Resources, and Agricultural Lands:** The proposed adjustments to the TDR program, including revising transfer formulas and designating additional sending and receiving districts, provide mechanisms for preserving farmland, natural resources, and open spaces while allowing controlled growth in designated areas. The recommendation to harmonize regulations for farm operations in the RA-80 and APZ districts by permitting farm activities on parcels with Sound Avenue frontage ensures fairness and consistency for farmers across zoning areas, promoting equitable treatment and operational predictability. Regarding agritourism, transparent regulations and permitting processes can manage traffic, ensure public safety, and preserve community quality of life while supporting farmers economically. Engaging stakeholders in regulation development fosters collaboration and community cohesion, balancing agritourism's benefits with residents' concerns and maintaining the community's overall well-being.
- **Pattern Books:** The Comprehensive Plan recommends that the Town work with several hamlets to develop pattern books – which would establish design standards for development, ensuring that new construction aligns with the community's aesthetic and historical character.
- **Short-term rentals:** It is recommended that the Town reevaluate short-term rental regulations to ensure these rentals are appropriately regulated and are permitted in appropriate locations. The Town would need to balance economic benefits with neighborhood concerns, ensuring sustainable tourism practices while preserving the residential character of communities.
- **Scenic Resources:** The Comprehensive Plan recommends that the Town develop design guidelines for the Route 58 commercial corridor. The guidelines would promote the use of landscaping to soften the built environment, enhance walkability, and contribute to a more inviting atmosphere. They would also address parking lot design to minimize the visual impact of large parking areas. The Comprehensive Plan recommends that the Town work with several local neighborhoods to develop pattern books – which would establish design standards for development, ensuring that new construction aligns with the community's aesthetic and historical character. For the proposed Calverton Industrial district, while the Proposed Action allows for slightly increased heights, any buildings that are taller than what is currently allowed would be set-back further.
- **Zoning code cleanup:** The Comprehensive Plan recommends several enhancements to the zoning code, such as providing a clear and comprehensive use schedule and defining land uses not currently addressed, offer numerous benefits for the Town of Riverhead. By incorporating a use schedule, the Town can ensure clarity and consistency in land use decisions, facilitating understanding among property owners, developers, and the public. Some of the other policy recommendations would help to improve transparency and enhance compliance, consistency, and decision-making for land use boards and Town staff.
- **Other policies:** Other recommended policies address the need to improve design and housing standards which align the Town's evolving needs, fostering inclusivity and enhancing living standards. Enhancements to cluster regulations and consideration of solar facilities promote sustainable development practices and renewable energy initiatives, contributing to environmental preservation and resilience. Strengthening enforcement mechanisms for tree clearing and updating the wetlands inventory further reinforce the Town's commitment to responsible land use management and conservation efforts, ensuring the preservation of natural resources for future generations. These proposed amendments collectively advance the Town's goals of fostering sustainable growth, enhancing quality of life, and promoting environmental stewardship.

As detailed throughout this DGEIS, the Comprehensive Plan sets forth a broad framework that provides flexibility in policy while also providing an array of strategies to address the diverse needs of the Town. The strategies proposed by the Comprehensive Plan are reviewed in the preceding technical chapters of this document and summarized above. Development under the current zoning would continue the status quo without presenting a strategic vision for the future of the Town that addressed modern development needs. The Town's zoning code is grounded in the 2003 Comprehensive Plan and does not respond to the Town's need for

more control over industrial development, a need for varied housing typologies and the need for additional measures to preserve the Town's sensitive lands through improvements to the TDR program. Further, the No Action alternative does not address the vision, goals, and strategies contained in the Comprehensive Plan, which represent public preferences as expressed by residents, land and business owners, and other interested parties who were afforded significant opportunities for input throughout the multi-year planning and outreach process.

6.0. SUBSEQUENT SEQR ACTIONS

This document is the generic assessment of environmental impacts likely to result from the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. The SEQR regulations, part 617.10(c), state that “Generic EISs and their findings should set forth specific conditions or criteria under which future actions would be undertaken or approved, including requirements for any subsequent SEQR compliance. This may include thresholds and criteria for supplemental EISs to reflect specific significant impacts, such as site-specific impacts, that were not adequately addressed or analyzed in the Generic EIS.” Following the adoption of the Proposed Action, all actions or projects coming before the Town of Riverhead Town Board, Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Appeals of the Town of Riverhead for new development projects located within the Town would be required to follow the SEQR process. All future development projects located within the Town would be subject to individual approvals processes, including special permit review, site plan review and site-specific review under SEQR.

Future review and approval processes of all future Type I and Unlisted actions, as defined by SEQR [§617.2(ai) and (ak)], would need to comply with SEQR, including, but not limited to, the preparation of an Environmental Assessment Form (EAF). If, during the site-specific review of any actually proposed future action or project within the Town, there are any potentially significant adverse environmental impacts identified that were not previously or adequately analyzed and reviewed in detail as part of this GEIS, additional review under SEQR, including additional technical studies, and/or a Supplemental EIS, would be required; the EAF for each future action or project would be used by the respective land use board as the basis for this determination. During the site-specific review of future actions or projects all identified significant adverse environmental impacts are required to be mitigated to the maximum extent feasible and practicable.

Based on the generic/area-wide analysis conducted in the DGEIS, the following site-specific studies may be required; many of these studies would also be required as part of site-specific review of future projects under existing zoning:

Hazardous Materials: New in-ground construction of vacant parcels and/or demolition of existing structures may require the preparation of Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment. If remediation is required, such activities shall commence prior to the initiation of construction activities. Remediation activities are required to be completed according to the protocols, procedures, standards, and documentation requirements of the appropriate supervising entity, Town of Riverhead, NYS Department of Labor, County Fire Marshal and/or NYSDEC.

- **Police Protection:** The Police Department would have the opportunity to provide input on site-specific plans, thereby requiring any site-specific mitigation measures necessary.
- **Fire Protection:** The Fire Marshal’s Office would have the opportunity to review future proposed site plans to ensure that firefighting needs, including provisions for emergency access, hydrant locations, sprinkler systems, fire alarms, and smoke and carbon monoxide detection, are properly addressed.
- **Stormwater/Wastewater:** For those individual projects that involve one or more acres of disturbance, a SWPPP must be prepared pursuant to NYSDEC requirements pursuant to the latest version of the NYS Stormwater Management Design Manual.
- **Floodplains:** Development that is located within the 100-year floodplain would be reviewed to ensure that it meets Town regulations regarding minimizing and mitigating potential damage from flood flows.
- **Storm Surge:** As part of any site-specific review, the potential for development which could be inundated by storm surges would specifically need to be evaluated and appropriate measures incorporated to mitigate against damage.

- **Geotechnical Evaluation:** Subsurface soil conditions would be assessed for the purpose of structural and drainage system design as part of the site plan application review. If unsuitable subsoils are found in connection with site-specific development, techniques including deep compaction or over-excavation and replacement of unsuitable fill materials may be utilized. Development areas would be stabilized, as determined by a Geotechnical Engineer, prior to construction of structural elements.
- **Erosion Control:** Erosion Control and Construction Phasing Plans would be prepared for individual site developments during site plan review that would provide protection methods that would be utilized during construction to control transport of sediment and stormwater runoff during construction activities.
- **Traffic:** Future projects located in the Town may result in localized impacts at certain intersections. In addition, traffic and pedestrian safety issues may arise from the location of new vehicle ingress and egress points at new developments. These impacts and other traffic-related impacts may need to be assessed in a traffic impact study as part of future project approvals. A site-specific Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) shall be required of any development at these sites to assess specific localized traffic impacts.
- **Archeology:** Future development projects located in the Town that propose new in-ground construction and are located within a State Historic Preservation Office Archeological Buffer Area may require the preparation of a Phase IA Archeological Survey Report and if necessary, a Phase IB Cultural Resources Inventory.

This is not an exhaustive list and as stated above, all future development projects, any site-specific actions or any other proposed zoning not studied in this DGEIS would be subject to individual approval processes, including site plan review and site specific review under SEQR and information and studies required would be determined through these processes.