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Municipality: Nassau County
Year (adopted, written, etc.): 2010
Community Type - applicable to: Urban; Suburban
Title: Replacing Paving with Trees
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Abstract

Nassau County suggests planting medium height plants and trees on paved medians. Nassau goes further by promoting the use of double curbs to improve the aesthetics and allow rain to percolate into the ground, reducing runoff and improving water quality. These low impact development and green infrastructure policies will reduce stormwater runoff and improve water quality.

Resource

Existing medians on arterials are mostly paved; some areas have low plantings. Adding planting beds with medium height plants and trees to paved medians along with a double curb, as shown in Figure 3-9, will greatly improve the aesthetics of commercial corridors. In some locations a landscaped buffer can also be added between the roadway and parking areas by removing a row of parking from the lot. This would allow space for a widened sidewalk along the roadway with plantings on either side. This sidewalk could potentially be used by bicyclists as well as pedestrians. Within parking lots, landscaping can be introduced between rows of parking. Trees in parking areas can provide shade and reduce heat generated by large swaths of asphalt. Planting areas would allow rain to percolate into the ground, reducing stormwater runoff and improving surface and near-shore water quality.

Nassau County, New York's Master Plan can be found here:
<https://www.nassaucountyny.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1193>

**CHAPTER 3 LAND USE:
TARGET SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT TO GROWTH AREAS**

POLICY 3: PROTECT AND MAINTAIN ECONOMICALLY VIABLE COMMERCIAL LAND USES AND RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS BY DIRECTING FUTURE DEVELOPMENT TO TARGETED GROWTH AREAS.

YEAR 2030 GOALS:

DOWNTOWNS AND TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD):

- ACCOMMODATE 26,000 NEW JOBS (10.4 MILLION SF OF NEW COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT)
- ACCOMMODATE UP TO 11,000 NEW RESIDENTIAL UNITS
- GENERATE ADDITIONAL PROPERTY TAX REVENUE WHILE MINIMIZING NEW SERVICE EXPENDITURES (“TAX – POSITIVE” DEVELOPMENT)

NASSAU HUB & THE GRUMMAN PROPERTY, BROWNFIELDS, AND UNDERUTILIZED COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS:

- ACCOMMODATE 16,275 NEW JOBS (6.5 MILLION SF OF NEW COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT)
- ENHANCE AESTHETIC CHARACTER OF COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS
- REVITALIZE APPROPRIATE SITES WITH MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT
- EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG WORKFORCE AND SENIOR HOUSING

SINGLE-FAMILY NEIGHBORHOODS AND OPEN SPACE

- INCREASE THE TOTAL LAND AREA DESIGNATED AS OPEN SPACE, PARKS, NATURAL AREA OR PRESERVE BY 1,000 ACRES (OR 1/5 OF REMAINING UNPROTECTED OPEN SPACE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY VALUABLE LANDS)

A. HISTORIC GROWTH PATTERNS AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

Nassau County’s history is similar to that of first suburbs outside of metropolitan core areas across the country. Its early development was marked by agriculture, which then gave rise to modest suburban expansion. Through the early 20th century the County’s population grew along with its commuter rail and parkway systems. Direct service from Nassau to New York City’s Pennsylvania Station was established in 1911 and between 1900 and 1930 the number of people using the Long Island Rail Road to commute from Nassau to Manhattan grew by nearly 250,000.¹ During this period, communities along Nassau’s rail lines such as Port Washington, Rockville Center and Freeport grew rapidly. Passenger rail service also increased tourism to Nassau, providing access to the County’s waterfront communities where many country estates were built on the North Shore.

In the post World War II period Nassau experienced a second population boom as Levitt & Sons, Inc. transformed approximately 4,000 acres of potato fields into 17,500 single-family homes for returning

¹ Smits, Edward J. *Nassau Suburbia, USA*. Friends of Nassau County Museum, 1974, pgs. 155-56.

soldiers and their families benefiting from low interest mortgages through the GI Bill, and other builders followed suit. At the same time automobiles became increasingly affordable to average Americans and the County's roadway network expanded to accommodate them. During this period of residential growth and roadway expansion the character of modern Nassau was established. The central and southern portions of the County were developed with residential and commercial uses at a variety of densities; while the North Shore was developed with low density residential uses and small-scale commercial and office uses mainly located in villages.

Levittown, Town of Hempstead, 1926



Levittown, Town of Hempstead 1950



Levittown, Town of Hempstead, 2007

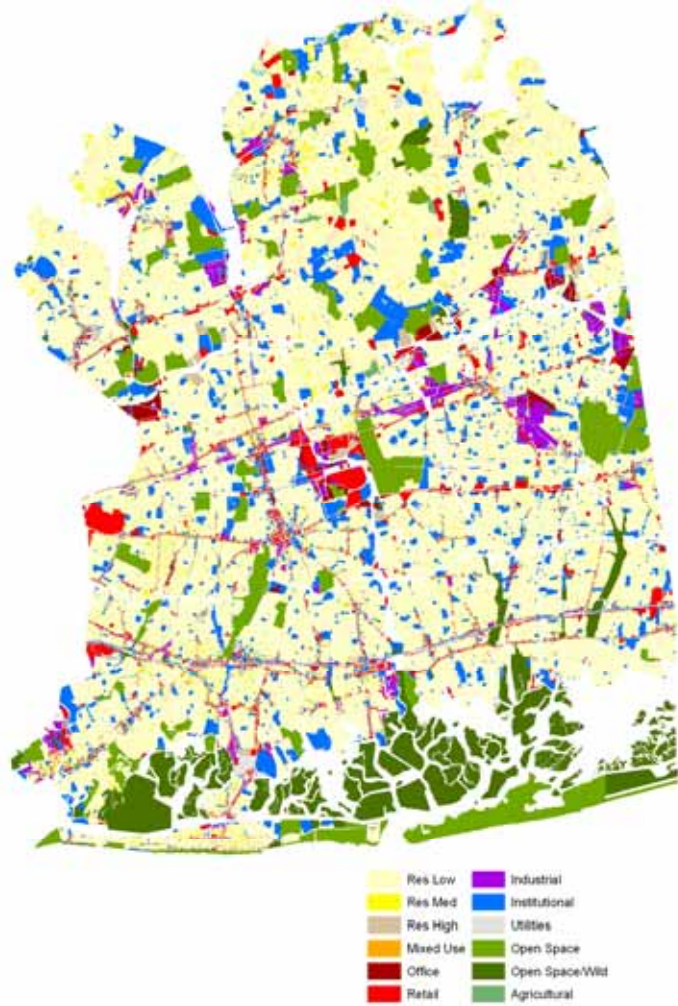


Source: Nassau County Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

Unlike urbanization which evolved around the needs of pedestrians, suburbanization in Nassau and throughout the country was almost entirely auto-reliant. The suburban pattern of development, characterized by single use areas connected to one another by roadways, necessitated use of the automobile for nearly all aspects of everyday life. This pattern of development was the result of consumer demand and a standard zoning model that called for the separation of land uses as a means to protect public health and safety. Municipalities across the country began instituting this standard zoning in the 1920s and 1930s just as America's first suburbs like Nassau were being developed.

As shown on the Table 3-1 and Figure 3-1, residential development is the predominant use in the County and accounts for nearly 60 percent of Nassau's total land area. Retail development, which accounts for approximately 4 percent of land area, is concentrated primarily in established downtown centers and along the County's arterial roadways in community shopping centers. Office uses account for approximately 2 percent of development in the County. Industrial uses, which represent approximately 2 percent of total land area, are generally concentrated in the center and southern portions of the County near rail lines. Institutional uses, which are generally tax exempt, constitute 11 percent of the County's total land area and are scattered throughout the County. Open spaces, including parks and recreation, conservation land and agriculture, represent approximately 17 percent of the County's land area. Vacant land accounts for approximately 4 percent, or 5,700 acres, of the County's land area.

**Figure 3-1
 Existing Land Use Map**



Source: Nassau County GIS, 2009

**Table 3-1
 Nassau County: Existing Land Uses**

Land Use	Percent of Total Land Area
Residential	60%
Retail	4%
Office	2%
Industrial	2%
Institutional	11%
Open Space/Recreation	17%
Vacant	4%
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>

Source: Urbanomics, 2009

While separation of uses was considered a desirable pattern of development during the American automobile age, it has led to a variety of unintended consequences for today's mature suburbs (see Figure 3-2). Nassau's downtown retailers struggle to compete with big box chain stores that line the County's arterial roadways.

Figure 3-2
Vintage Auto Advertisement: A Community Shopping Center



Source: www.flickr.com

Monotonous strip commercial centers with extensive asphalted parking areas are unable to create a sense of place for the local communities that surround them. Mass transit use is limited. While these issues are daunting, tackling them provides an opportunity for Nassau County to take the lead in meeting the challenges that suburbs face in the 21st Century and preserve the quality of life that their residents love.

[Pull Quote: “The global urgency of reducing greenhouse gases provides the most time-sensitive imperative for reshaping sprawl development patterns, for converting areas that now foster the largest per-capita carbon footprints to more sustainable, less automobile-dependent places. “²]

If the current trend of auto-dependent, dispersed development based on uncoordinated land use decision-making throughout the county continues, Nassau's identified problems will continue to worsen, eroding the quality of life that its residents treasure. This Plan calls for a reversal of this trend by re-imagining land use and transportation in certain parts of the county where they make sense: existing downtowns, greyfields (underperforming commercial areas with vacancies or sub-prime tenancies), brownfields, the Nassau Hub, and the Grumman Property

1. LAND USE DECISION MAKING PROCESS

Land use decision-making occurs at the local level through zoning and is often highly politicized. Individual communities often make land use decisions based upon the parochial, yet legitimate interests

² Dunham-Jones, Ellen and June Williamson, *Retrofitting Suburbia*, Urban Land, June 2009, pg. 40.

of their constituencies; this presents a significant obstacle to addressing the challenges that transcend all of Nassau County.

To put Nassau on track towards a sustainable future, land use and transportation decisions must be coordinated and streamlined countywide. This will require local communities to buy into the vision and make land use decisions that support it. While this may be a daunting and politically difficult task, local recognition of a common set of challenges that must be met to protect the County's future will ultimately benefit Nassau's many individual communities. A clear roadmap for future growth and preservation throughout the county is an important first step to overcoming parochial/"Not in My Backyard (NIMBY)" decision-making.

2. CURRENT COUNTY INITIATIVES

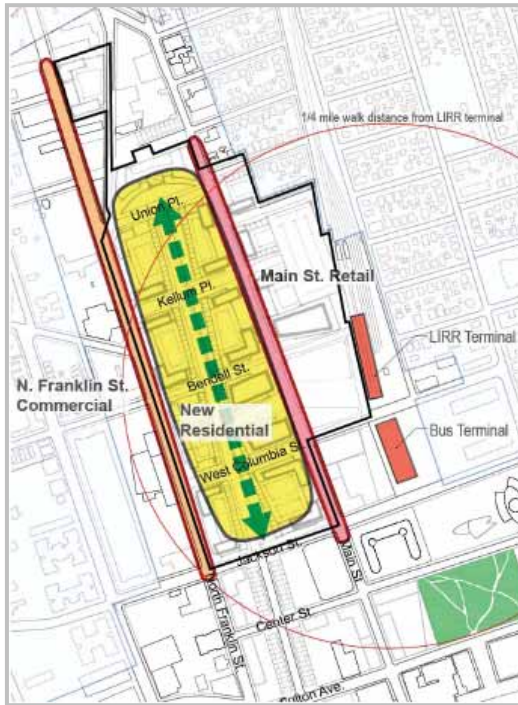
Community Visioning Grants

The County recognizes the local land-use and planning authority of its 69 municipalities. To coordinate and collaborate on local planning initiatives that benefit the County as a whole, the Nassau County Community Visioning Program provides grants to local communities to develop plans to support downtown revitalization and expansion. The funds are used to engage the public to develop a consensus on where and how the community should grow – both in the long- and short-term. Since its inception in 2007, the Village of Hempstead, Elmont, City of Glen Cove (Cedar Swamp Road corridor), the Villages of Freeport and Farmingdale have completed visioning studies. The plans that came out of these visioning processes call for reasonable yet increased density in the downtown area and streetscape improvements – all aimed at increasing safety and the quality of life for local residents. Most importantly, these visioning plans include the priorities of all the stakeholders involved in their respective communities. As of fall 2009, three other communities have visioning programs underway: New Cassel industrial area, Great Neck Peninsula (traffic), and Port Washington.

Below is a summary of the land use recommendations from the visioning studies that have been completed to date:

Village of Hempstead - Downtown Visioning Report, February 2008

Village of Hempstead, Downtown Vision



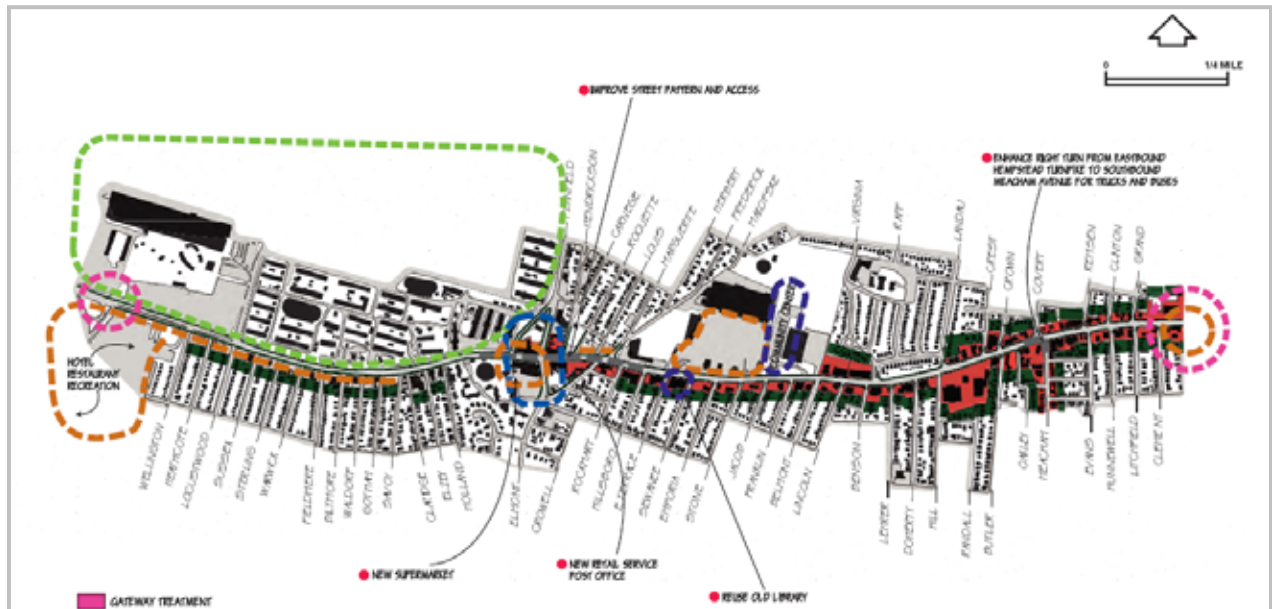
Source: Ferrandino & Associates, Inc./FXFowle Architects, PC

- Mixed use downtown:
 - * Entertainment- restaurants/movie theaters
 - * Cultural attractions- museums, performing arts
 - * Residential- townhouses and apartments
 - * Commercial- retail stores, offices and hotels
 - * Open space- parks and active recreation
- Buildings should be low to mid rise
- Integrate parking with a mix of uses
- Enhance walkability and pedestrian safety
- Redevelop underutilized surface parking- infill development
- Intermodal center should have active transit plaza

Town of Hempstead, Hamlet of Elmont - Community Vision Plan, June 2008

- Redevelop vacant parcels along Hempstead Turnpike in Jamaica Square west of Holland Avenue and at Lucille Avenue (the old Lefferts Auto parcel)
- Redevelop underutilized parcels along Hempstead Turnpike, such as the former Argo Theater site and possibly the Home Depot parking area
- Attract new commercial uses
- Attract a supermarket to the intersection of Hempstead Turnpike and Elmont Road (“Community Corners”)
- Integrate the NYRA development plans with the surrounding community.
- Redevelop Hempstead Turnpike frontage opposite Belmont Park with a mix of uses including hotel, restaurants and quality retail.

Elmont Community Vision Plan



Source: Saccardi and Schiff

City of Glen Cove - Cedar Swamp Road Corridor Study, October 2008

- Create public plaza at the Glen Street Train Station
- Transit-oriented development overlay district for Glen Street Train Station area
- Enhance the streetscape
- Improve walkability/pedestrian safety
- Attract more retail to corridor
- Should have first floor retail with workforce housing above
- Coles School site could be put to better use as a library or community center
- Reconfigure roadway to include a planted median, a narrower roadway, diagonal on-street parking and bike lanes
- Multi-modal transportation network should be centered around the Glen Street Station, making connections to downtown and the waterfront

Glen Cove- Cedar Swamp Road Corridor

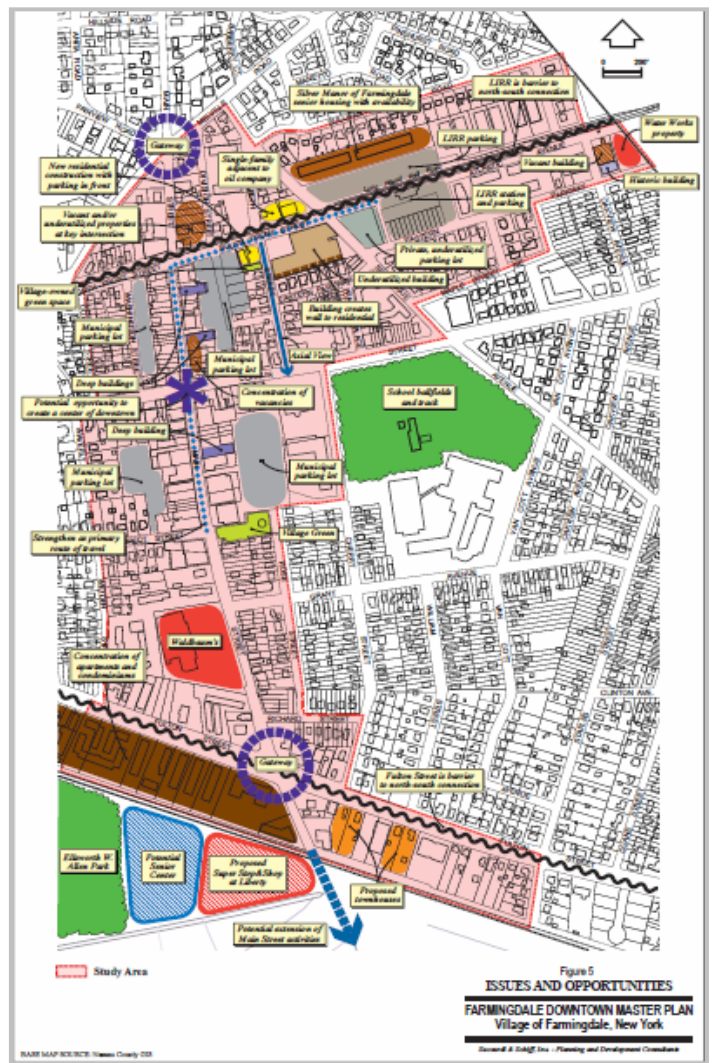
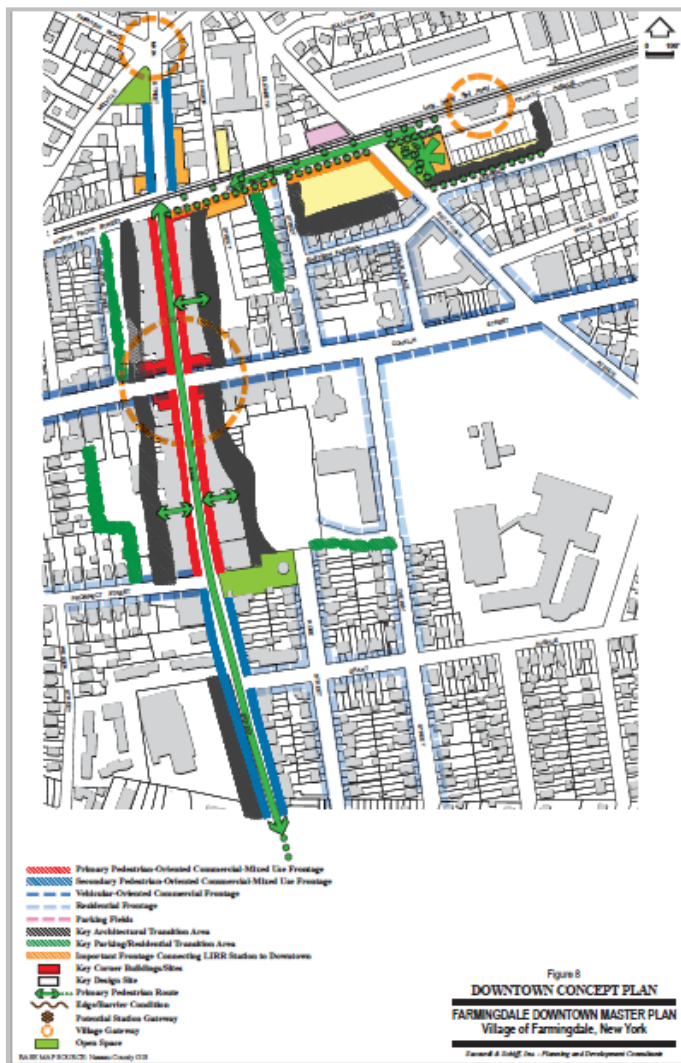


Source: Urbitran

Village of Farmingdale - Downtown Master Plan, December 2009

- Focus on Beautification, Redevelopment, Connection
- Large increases in housing, restaurants, and open space in downtown
- Manage “Transitions and Gateways” into and within Main Street Corridor
- Design standards to create consistent Main Street
- Improve connection and integration with LIRR station
- Mixed Use zoning

Farmingdale Visioning Report

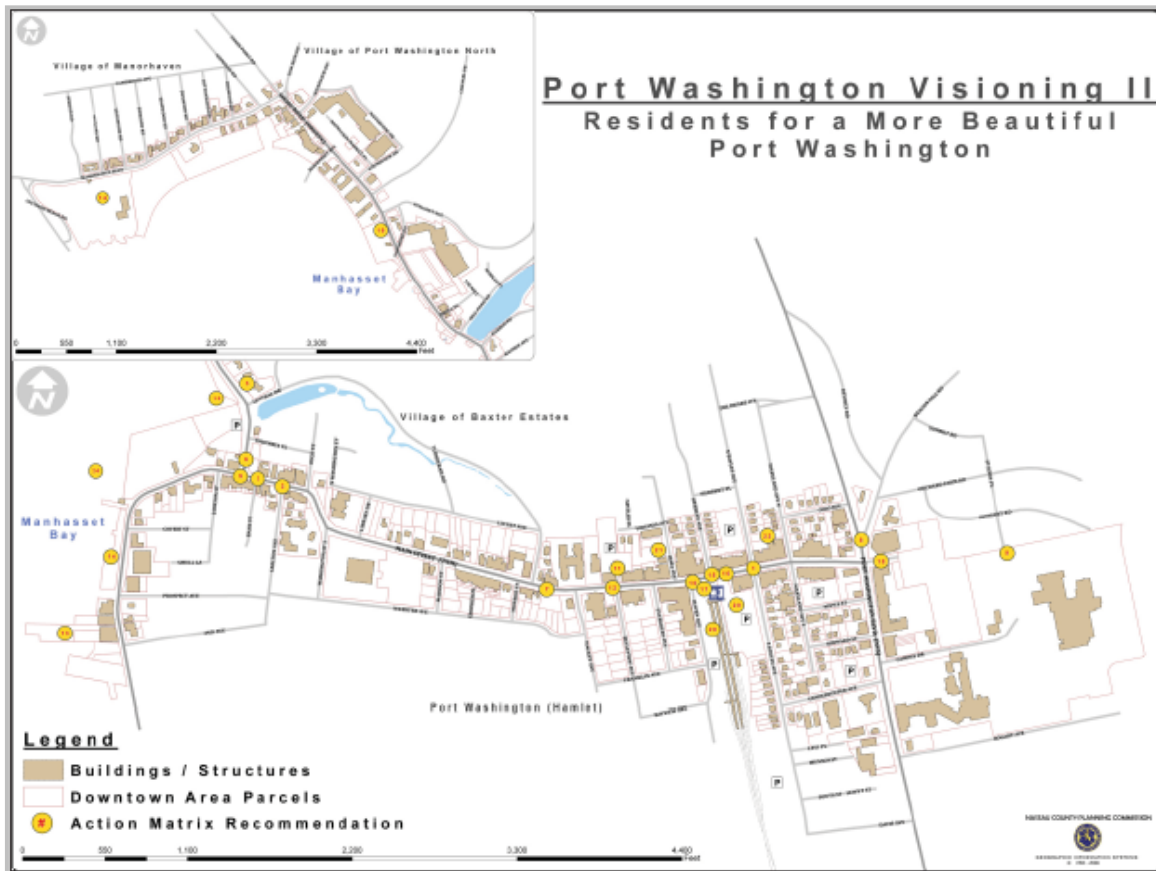


Source: Saccardi & Schiff

Residents for a More Beautiful Port Washington, Downtown Port Washington, February 2010

- Mixed use zoning near train station
- Architectural design guidelines to strengthen downtown's image
- Façade and streetscape improvements; including walkability
- Improved parking management

Downtown Port Washington – Action Matrix / Recommendations



Source: Nassau County Planning Department

Village of Freeport – North Main Street and Station Area Master Plan, July 2010

Freeport Master Plan Study Area

North Main Street

- LIRR station area
- Building preservation and restoration
- N. Main St.
- Traffic Calming
- Sidewalks and street planning
- Mixed-use and housing

LIRR Station TOD

- Mixed-use buildings
- Pedestrian Connectivity
- Landscape and Open Space Improvements
- Park-once parking management

South Main St. District

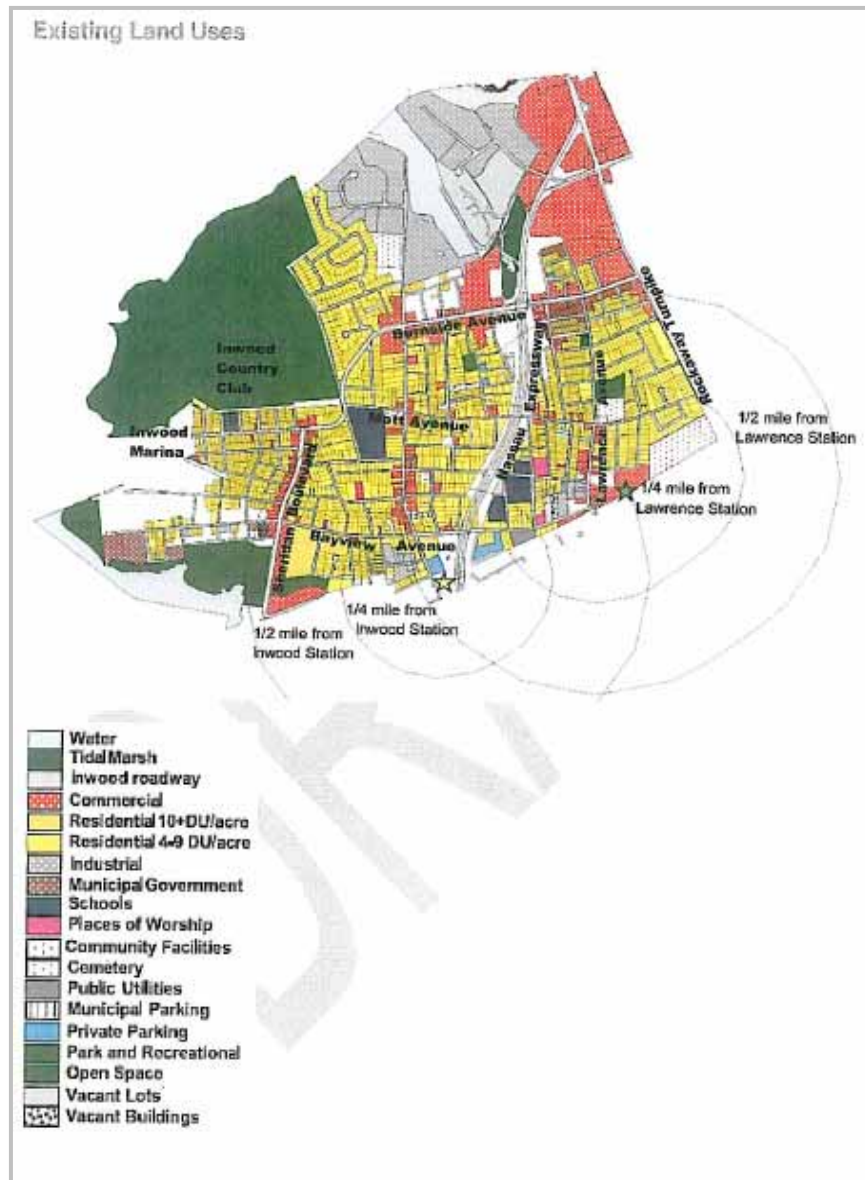
- Historic building preservation and restoration
- Taming Sunrise Hwy and Merrick Rd
- Infill development
- Village Gateway



Town of Hempstead, Hamlet of Inwood – Visioning Plan, Draft submitted July, 2010

- TOD within 1/8th mile of Inwood and Lawrence train station
- Mixed use along Sheridan and Doughty Boulevards
- Medium to High Density Residential (TOD) near Inwood station
- Inwood Marina from industrial to commercial/recreation
- Expansion of Urban Renewal Area in Southeast Inwood
- Façade Improvements on Burnside Ave

Inwood Study Area – Existing Land Uses



Source: Ferrandino & Associates, Inc.

Nassau County Environmental Program Bond Acts

In a show of strong bi-partisan support, the Nassau County Legislature in August 2004 and September 2006 unanimously approved the \$150 million Environmental Program. An overwhelming 77% of Nassau County voters agreed, approving the 2004 and 2006 referenda to authorize the issuance of \$150 million in bonds to fund the program. The \$150 million Environmental Bond Act Program calls for the preservation of 400 acres of open space, improvement of 57 parks, implementation of 42 storm water treatment projects, including installation of nearly 2000 catch basin inserts, and remediation of seven brownfield properties.

As of August, 2010, the County has spent approximately \$100 million preserving (through outright acquisition or purchase of development rights) nearly 300 acres of open space and farmland (see Table 3-2). Of the 300 acres, more than 85 percent is located in Special Groundwater Protection Areas. Of particular note, the purchase of the Cutting Property, Pulling Estate, and Schwab Property in the Village of Oyster Bay Cove, represents over 30 acres of contiguous property that will make up the new Red Cote Preserve. On the South Shore, the purchase of private lots, consisting of tidal marshland and upland woodlands adjacent to Parkway Drive in Baldwin Harbor, prevented the disturbance of this sensitive ecosystem. To date, approximately 86 percent of Environmental Program funding allocated for open space preservation has been committed.

**Table 3-2
 2004 & 2006 Nassau County Environmental Program Bond Acts
 Open Space Preservation**

	Location	Acres
2004 EBA		
Boegner Estate	Old Westbury	35
Boegner Farm	Old Westbury	12.2
Meyer's Farm	Woodbury	8.5
Parkway Drive	Baldwin	3.5
Pulling Estate	Oyster Bay Cove	16
Red Spring Woods	Glen Cove	11
Northwood Estate		34
2004 Total		120.2
2006 EBA		
Cutting Property	Oyster Bay Cove	7.2
Gold Property	Seaford	1
Fruggies Farm	East Meadow	2.5
Hall Property	Muttontown	30
Held Property	Oyster Bay Cove	8
Humes Estate	Mill Neck	15
Old Mill Horse Farm	Brookville	42
Schwab Property	Oyster Bay Cove	7
Smithers Estate	Mill Neck	25
Trout Lake	West Hempstead	3.1
490 N Central Ave	Valley Stream	0.7

Grossman Farm	Malverne	5
Banfi Vintners	Old Brookville	30
2006 Total		176.5
Total		296.7

Park Improvements

The Environmental Program has committed approximately \$16.5 million for improvements and enhancements to County and non-County public parks. Projects range from the installation of playing fields and nature interpretive trails to solar panels and environmental education facilities in parks such as

- Tackapausha Preserve (Massapequa) – Stormwater management upgrades, repair of pedestrian bridges
- Halls Pond Park (Malverne) – Restoration of forested areas, construction of trails, native plantings
- Bay Walk Pier (Port Washington North) – Installation of shoreline walkway and rehabilitation of existing pier
- Nassau Aquatics Center (East Meadow) – Installation of a 10KW Solar Photovoltaic System
- Herricks Pond Park Education Center (Searingtown) – Installation of a walkway, pier and plantings
- Water Trail Master Plan (Freeport) – Create a water trail for marine recreation on Nassau’s South Shore

Stormwater Projects

The Environmental Program has committed approximately \$15 million for more than sixty stormwater quality improvement projects throughout the County. Projects range from installing sediment and erosion barriers in and around ponds and wetlands, to catch basin inserts which prevent pollutants from entering the County’s South Shore bays and estuaries.

Brownfields

The Environmental Program has committed approximately \$3.7 million for brownfield projects throughout the county. Both the Long Beach and Glen Cove incinerators are receiving funding for demolition and associated contaminated material containment. The Program has also allocated funding for Phase I and Phase II environmental site assessments for public and private properties perceived to be contaminated.

Municipal Environmental Programs

Two of Nassau County's three Townships have also passed environmental bond acts: the \$30m Save Environmental Assets Bond Act (SEA) in Oyster Bay and the \$15m Environmental Legacy Fund in North Hempstead. In addition, two significant land trusts, North Shore Land Alliance and the Nassau Land Trust, have assisted with conservation easements, enabled public access to open space and received charitable donations of land.

Municipal Energy Efficiency Codes

The Towns of Hempstead, North Hempstead and Oyster Bay have all incorporated Long Island Power Authority (LIPA) Energy Star rating compliance into their building codes. The purpose of these regulations is to increase energy efficiency throughout the county by reducing the amount of energy that is consumed by both single and multifamily residences. These codes require building permit applications to conform to the New York ENERGY STAR Labeled Homes Program administered by LIPA. This program requires that newly constructed dwelling units meet stated energy efficiency standards.

B. PROJECTIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

POLICY 3: PROTECT AND MAINTAIN ECONOMICALLY VIABLE COMMERCIAL LAND USES AND RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS BY DIRECTING FUTURE DEVELOPMENT TO TARGETED GROWTH AREAS

The 2010 Nassau County Master Plan is a centers-oriented plan. The key to the plan is that changes are recommended only in certain areas where they make sense: where a shift in course from the status quo will help Nassau become a stronger suburban community. The central idea of the plan is that Nassau should spur economic development by strengthening downtowns, revitalizing underutilized commercial properties, and redeveloping brownfields, while preserving the qualities of suburban life that residents love by protecting Nassau's environmental, scenic and historic resources.

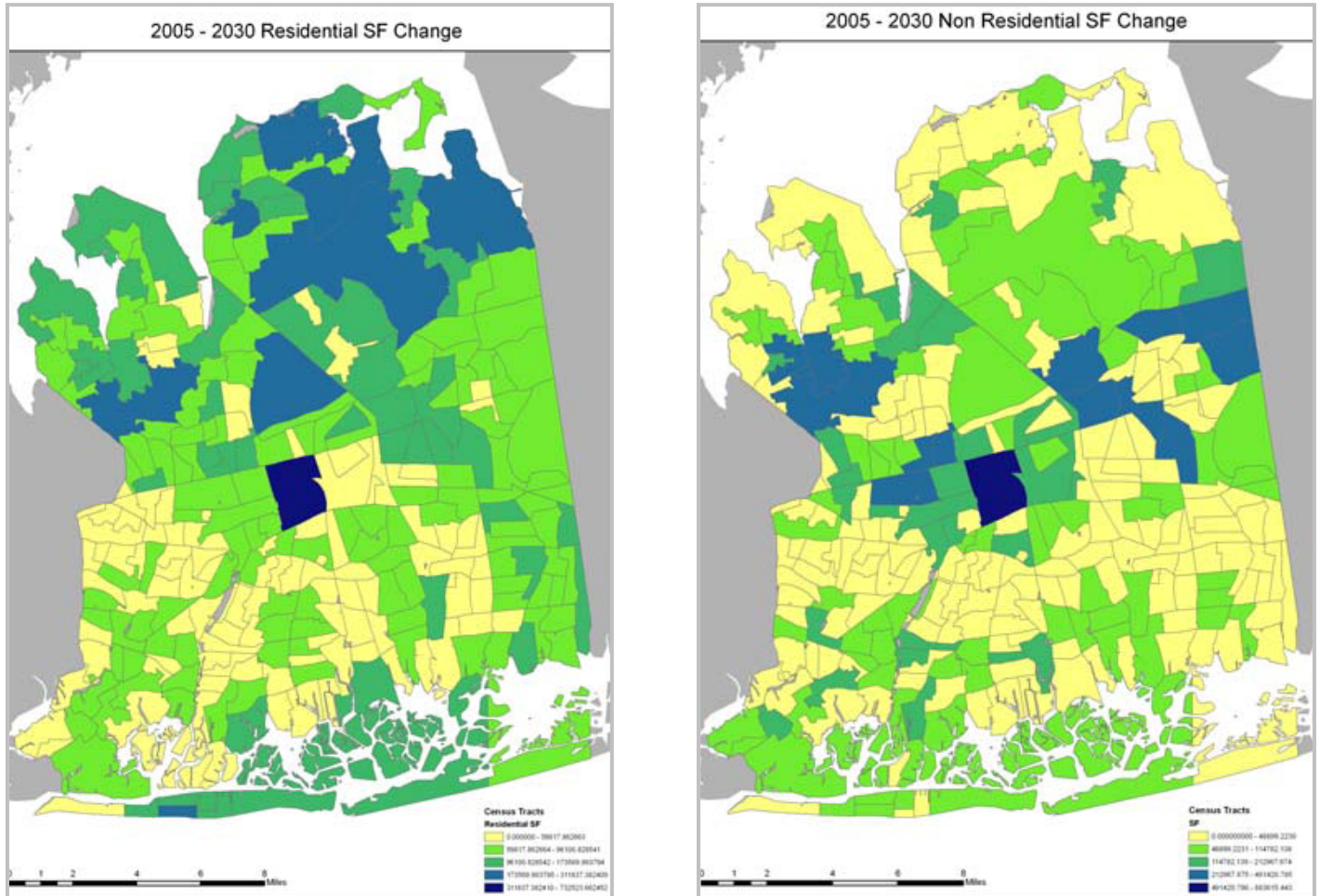
As shown in Figure 3-1 "Existing Land Uses", land uses in Nassau are generally separated into single-use districts. Residential development is the predominant use in the County and accounts for nearly sixty percent of Nassau's total land area. Commercial development, which accounts for approximately five percent of land area, is concentrated primarily along the County's arterial roadways in malls and strip malls. Industrial uses, which represent approximately two percent of total land area, are generally concentrated in the center and southern portions of the County near rail lines. Institutional uses, which are generally tax exempt, constitute over ten percent of the County's total land area and are scattered throughout the County. Open spaces, including parks and recreation, conservation land and agriculture, represent approximately 17 percent of the County's land area.

If the current trend of dispersed development based on uncoordinated land use decision making throughout the county continues, Nassau's potential for a sustainable future may be in serious jeopardy. Unprotected open space areas, which account for approximately 6,000 acres across the County, down from 15,000 acres in 1997³, will remain vulnerable to development and the potential of underutilized land in downtowns, along strip malls, and on brownfield sites may not be realized.

According to NYMTC forecasts, Nassau County is expected to gain 19.2 million square feet of non residential development and 21.4 million square feet of residential development over the next twenty years. If this growth is dispersed throughout the county consistent with current land use trends, it is expected that traffic congestion, energy consumption and carbon emissions will continue to grow at current rates corresponding to population growth. Dispersed development will not support investments in transit, will require investments in infrastructure and services, and will continue to consume natural resources and capital. Projected future development to 2030 under a dispersed growth scenario (continuation of historic and current land use trends) is shown on the maps below (Figure 3-3). This growth scenario is based on distribution of total projected future growth in the County to census tracts based on NYMTC's projections for household and employment growth.

³ 1998 Nassau County Comprehensive Plan

Figure 3-3
2005-2030 Increase in Residential and Non-Residential Development



Source: NYMTC

Reversing the trends of suburban sprawl by concentrating growth in downtowns/centers, underutilized commercial areas, and within planned redevelopment areas will reduce the impacts associated with growth, such as traffic congestion, energy consumption, and carbon emissions. At the same time, the rational concentration of growth will help to foster neighborhood revitalization, healthy and walkable communities, as well as establish the new paradigm for an economically and environmentally sustainable future.

DOWNTOWNS AND TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD)

Concentrating future growth in existing downtowns is central to this Plan. Targeting future residential and commercial development to existing downtowns will strategically expand the tax base in appropriate locations. Downtown revitalization will also create an environment favorable for the sharing of new ideas, culture, and education. This environment would attract talented young people and empty nesters to designated centers. Targeting future development to existing downtowns will also create and reaffirm a sense of place in Nassau. It is envisioned that downtowns include vibrant and interesting public spaces, providing unique character that enhances the quality of life in the County. This is particularly important for young people and empty nesters who are looking for alternatives to single-family neighborhood living.

Single-family homes are too large and too expensive for many single young people; and alternative housing options such as rental apartments and townhouses are few. The lack of identifiable “places” in Nassau limits opportunities for young adults to socialize and be entertained, which are important factors in attracting young populations to live and work in the County. For older residents, alternative housing options are essential to ensuring that people stay in Nassau as they age. As was recently noted in the *Wall Street Journal*, suburban communities designed for families “...are proving tough places to grow old. Maintaining yards and homes requires more effort [as people age]; driving everywhere, and for everything, becomes expensive and, eventually, impossible.”⁴ Creating “lifelong communities” that allow Nassau residents to stay in the communities they love as they age will become increasingly important over the next twenty years as baby-boomers enter retirement and beyond.

Further, strategic allocation of future growth to existing downtowns will reinforce the single-family suburban landscape that exists throughout the County by directing growth to defined centers. Concentrating commercial growth and medium density housing within existing downtowns will protect against out-of-scale development in other parts of Nassau, particularly in established single-family neighborhoods, and increases in vehicular traffic from additional scattered development.

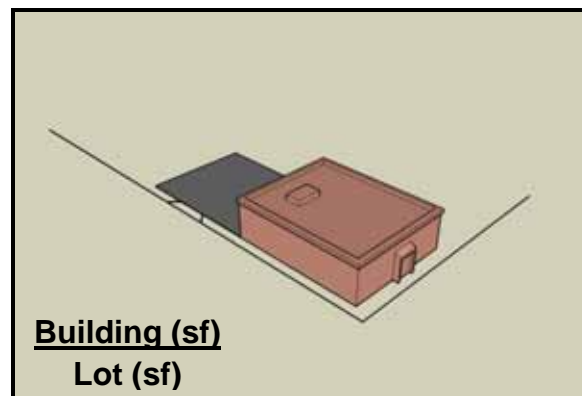
Downtown Growth Analysis

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) is the outcome of coordinated and strategic transportation, economic, land use, infrastructure, and environmental policy. The organized and rational allocation of public and private resources is necessary to create an environment conducive for TOD. The benefits of TOD compared to a continued pattern of sprawl include: creating vibrant and walkable places, providing public transportation alternatives to a larger share of Nassau’s population, creating new and revitalized employment centers, and relieving development pressure on open space, sensitive tidal and freshwater areas, and along congested arterial roadways.

⁴ Ruffenach, Glenn, “Making Suburbia More Livable,” *The Wall Street Journal*, September 19-20, 2009

To more thoroughly analyze the potential of Nassau’s downtowns to accommodate and accept TOD as a future development strategy, eighteen existing downtowns in Nassau County (see Figure 3-6) were subjected to a Downtown Growth Analysis (See *Appendix A* for complete analysis) which took into account forecasted commercial and residential growth over the next twenty years . With the exception of Elmont, each analyzed downtown includes a centrally located Long Island Rail Road station. Comparable to the Long Island Index, 2010 Report: *Places to Grow*, the extent of each downtown study area was determined by creating a ½ mile radius around the railroad station, then, reconciling that boundary with the transition to single-family residential properties. Downtown Elmont was defined by using the study area found in the “*Elmont Community Vision Plan, June 2008*”. For each downtown, the existing intensity of commercial development was calculated by dividing the total commercial floor area by the total commercial land area. This method of conveying commercial intensity is commonly known as floor-area-ratio, or “FAR”. In general, the higher FAR, the greater the commercial development intensity (see Figure 3-4).

Figure 3-4
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)



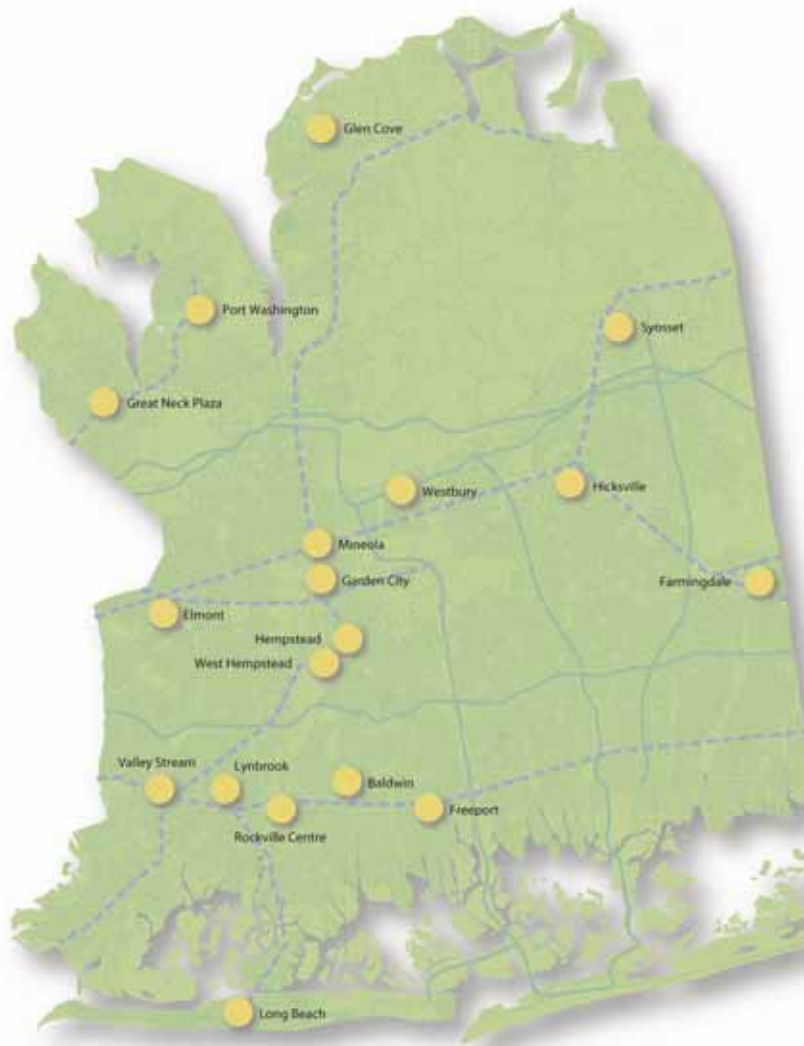
Determining the existing intensity of commercial development within analyzed downtowns serves as an indicator of future development infill potential. Several municipalities throughout Nassau County have conducted downtown planning studies to stimulate and attract reinvestment and redevelopment of their downtown centers. Downtowns with comparatively low FAR (< 0.6), such as Elmont, Hicksville, Village of Farmingdale, and the Village of Freeport, have all undertaken downtown revitalization studies. The findings and recommendations resulting from each local planning effort have been factored into the analysis.

The downtown analysis utilized 20 year population and employment forecasts found in the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council’s (NYMTC) “2010-2035 Regional Transportation Plan”. Based on the NYMTC forecasts, Nassau County could see an increase of 19.2 million sf of commercial development and 21,000 new residential units by the year 2030. Consistent with smart growth planning principles, over 50% of forecasted growth could be allocated to downtowns in Nassau, with the remainder being distributed to the Nassau Hub, brownfields, and underutilized commercial corridors throughout the county. The goal of concentrating future development in targeted areas is to ensure the preservation of

remaining open spaces, as well as realizing the fiscal and social benefits that are associated with compact growth.

This hypothetical allocation of future development to analyzed downtowns could yield a total of 10 million square feet of new commercial development, 26,000 new jobs, and 11,000 new residential units over the next twenty years. Upon full build-out, it is estimated that this development could generate approximately \$100 million in annual property tax revenue⁵.

Figure 3-4
Downtown Growth Analysis – Selected Downtowns



Source: Russell Graphic Design

⁵ Assessed value assumed to be \$350psf for commercial development and \$300psf for residential development. Tax rates generated from NYS Comptroller's Overall Full Value Tax Roll 2008, using lowest rate for each place. See Appendix B "Downtown Revitalization Comparative Fiscal Impact Analysis (FIA)" for full details.

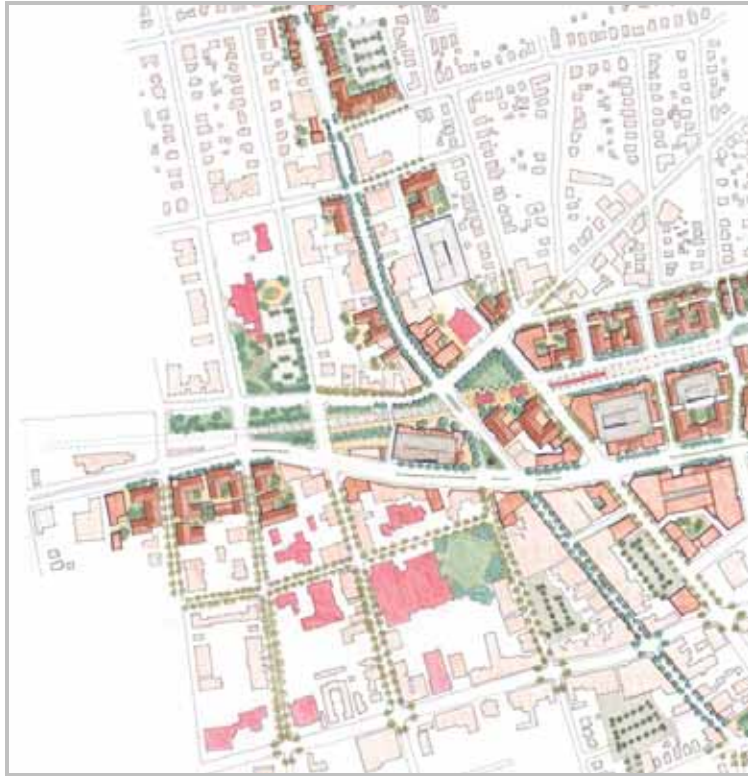
- BALDWIN
- ELMONT
- FARMINGDALE
- FREEPORT
- GARDEN CITY
- GLEN COVE
- GREAT NECK PLAZA
- VILLAGE OF HEMPSTEAD
- HICKSVILLE
- LONG BEACH
- LYNBROOK
- MINEOLA
- PORT WASHINGTON
- ROCKVILLE CENTRE
- SYOSSET
- VALLEY STREAM
- WEST HEMPSTEAD
- WESTBURY

START SIDEBAR

The Long Island Index 2010 Report “Places to Grow”

The Long Island Index 2010 Report “Places to Grow” analyzed the future growth potential for Long Island. The report focused on the Island’s ability to accommodate forecasted residential and commercial growth in transit-rich downtowns through an analysis of infrastructure capacity, land use, and demographic data. The report found that nearly 8,300 acres of vacant land and parking lots lie within a ½ mile radius of downtown centers (or LIRR stations). Given the distribution of vacant and underutilized land, **X** downtowns were analyzed for their growth potential based on size, existing levels of development, average daily LIRR ridership, and growth area status. The goal of the report is to further the conversation about targeting future growth to downtowns given the host of environmental, social, and economic advantages. In addition, the report cites the downtown revitalization efforts of the Village of Mineola. The Village, after preparing a Comprehensive Master Plan, adopted a new overlay zoning district to attract and incentivize transit-oriented development in and around its transit-rich downtown. Since its adoption, the zoning overlay district has allowed for the approval of a 285 unit rental housing development, *The Winston*, proposed by Polimeni International, Inc.

Downtown Redevelopment: Freeport Master Plan



Source: Moule & Polyzoides, RPA, and Sustainable Long Island

Following the release of “Places to Grow” in January, 2010, the Long Island Index and the Rauch Foundation announced its “Build a Better Burb” competition. The design challenge sought ambitious submissions to re-imagine the 8,300 “acres of opportunity” comprised of vacant land and parking lots in the downtowns of Nassau and Suffolk Counties. The competition sought to answer “How might Long Island’s existing downtowns be creatively retrofitted – redeveloped, re-inhabited and/or re-greened – in ways that are economically productive, environmentally sensitive, socially sustainable, and aesthetically appealing?” The competition resulted in 21 finalists from over 200 entrants; winners were chosen in the fall of 2010. For details please see <http://buildabetterburb.org/>

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Downtown Revitalization Comparative Fiscal Impact Analysis

Redirecting future commercial and residential growth to downtowns can result in positive fiscal impacts, particularly in terms of property taxes. To evaluate this potential, a downtown development fiscal impact analysis was prepared (See *Appendix B* for complete analysis). The analysis examined the property tax implications of downtown-targeted commercial and residential growth. The scope of the analysis was limited to three representative municipalities, including:

1. City of Glen Cove,
2. Village of Hempstead
3. Hamlet of Hicksville (Town of Oyster Bay).

These municipalities were chosen due to their well-defined downtown centers and accessibility to transportation and utility infrastructure.

For each downtown, the analysis compares the potential tax revenues and government and school district expenditures resulting from build-out using prevailing zoning, and the share of NYMTC-forecasted commercial and residential growth to Nassau’s downtowns (as per the *Downtown Growth Analysis* – described above). This hypothetical scenario calls for appropriately-scaled mixed-use development, consistent with the principles of transit-oriented development and downtown revitalization.

The analysis concludes that future development in the downtowns of Glen Cove, Hempstead, and Hicksville could collectively generate between **\$29 million** and **\$33 million** per year in property tax benefits to the County, as well as the respective Town, and School District. A summary of property tax surplus by development scenario (see Table 3-3) demonstrates that the downtowns of Glen Cove and Hempstead are currently zoned to accommodate the hypothetical allocation of forecasted commercial and residential development⁶, while downtown Hicksville may require modifications to the local zoning ordinance to fully realize its growth potential. Compact development clearly has the potential to yield positive fiscal impacts which could lead to a relief in respective residential and commercial property tax rates.

Table 3-3
Summary of Annual Revenues and Expenditures (\$000)

Scenario	Net Benefit / Disbenefit			
	County	School District	Other Municipal	Total
Downtown Glen Cove				
Existing Conditions	\$566.20	\$879.30	\$139.20	\$1,584.70
Maximum FAR	\$989.30	\$5,780.60	\$1,965.50	\$8,735.30
Concentrated Growth Allocation	(\$2,376.90)	\$7,217.70	\$1,306.50	\$6,147.30
Downtown Hempstead (Village)				
Existing Conditions	\$1,656.30	\$346.00	\$38.80	\$2,041.10
Maximum FAR	(\$4,087.50)	\$11,034.30	\$378.6	\$7,325.30
Concentrated Growth Allocation	(\$1,875.10)	\$2,783.20	\$470.70	\$1,378.80
Downtown Hicksville				
Existing Conditions	\$302.90	\$520.80	\$667.9	\$1,491.60
Maximum FAR	(\$755.40)	\$7,771.70	\$9,966.70	\$16,983.00
Concentrated Growth Allocation	\$73.40	\$9,473.40	\$11,724.80	\$21,271.60

⁶ Total fiscal benefits of “Maximum FAR” scenario exceed “Concentrated Growth Allocation” scenario.

START SIDEBAR

BEST PRACTICES: SUBURBAN DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION



Blue Back Square, West Hartford, Connecticut

Blue Back Square is a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood in West Hartford. Developed on the former sites of a parking lot and two vacant car dealerships on the edge of

downtown West Hartford, this 26-acre area has been transformed into a new neighborhood with street-level retail, entertainment venues, and restaurants with condominiums, loft apartments and offices above. The area also includes professional office space and a wellness center. The project, which was completed in 2007, was built in 28 months at a cost of \$28 million. The design of this new development is consistent with the architectural style and character of adjacent downtown West Hartford.

Blue Back Square includes public space, sidewalks and public parking, which help make it a pedestrian friendly place. It is a lively area with a substantial number of stores that attracts people during both the daytime and evening. Securing national retailers such as Whole Foods Market and Barnes and Noble as well as White House Black Market and Ann Taylor has been key to the success of this redevelopment project.

This project is an example of infill development that revitalized a downtown and provided a high quality addition to an existing center. It is an approach that could be applied in Nassau County in places like Mineola and Glen Cove.



Bethesda Row, Bethesda, Maryland



Bethesda Row is a neighborhood in Bethesda, MD located northwest of downtown Washington, D.C. This area has been revitalized as a mixed-use, walkable neighborhood with approximately 600,000 square feet of retail, restaurant, office and residential space. The project site is approximately 80 acres. Prior to implementation of this project, the area was a suburban commercial district at the edge of downtown Bethesda. It was not pedestrian friendly and had inadequate parking.

Bethesda Row was a multi-phase redevelopment project for a new center/district based on a set of design guidelines for architecture, place-making and streetscape design. The project included a mix of retail uses, including a supermarket, and emphasized walkability and public gathering places. Creating a walkable neighborhood was key to the redevelopment process and was achieved by both good sidewalk design and workable parking solutions. Sidewalk café seating was placed next to the street and was bordered on the other side by sidewalks in front of restaurants/retail. This design arrangement created a feeling of walking through the restaurants and makes the area a place “to see and be seen.” Most of the parking is located in a 1,000 space, County-owned public parking garage located in the middle of the block. This hides cars behind the stores and restaurants, while providing parking that is easily accessible. Developers who build within the designated district are required to pay a parking assessment to the County in lieu of providing parking on the site. These assessment revenues are used by the County to build public parking throughout the district.

Bethesda Row is an example of a new suburban downtown area in close proximity to public transportation. It has a pedestrian-friendly streetscape with brick sidewalks, trees, fountains, plazas, and outdoor seating. Public parking structures built throughout the district help create a walkable streetscape uninterrupted by parking lots. This approach could be applied in Nassau to redevelopment of the Hub area, or at a smaller scale to downtowns such as Mineola or Hicksville.



Old Town, Alexandria, Virginia



Old Town is a four block mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented neighborhood in suburban downtown Alexandria, VA. It is in the quaint, historic part of Alexandria, which dates back to 1749. It has shops, restaurants, housing, and public parks in close proximity to a metro rail station. It was revitalized with the addition of new two-story

infill buildings consistent with the character of the historic commercial district. Old Town is a good example of infill development in a historic suburban downtown area. The opening of a new train station nearby has led to new office and hotel development as well as the revitalization of existing townhouses in the vicinity of the downtown. An infill development approach sensitive to the architectural character of an existing downtown area in Nassau could be applied in a place like Garden City.

Mixed-use, infill buildings with street-level retail and office, and residential units on upper floors create a strong street wall from the river to the metro station. Old Town has become a meeting place for people from all around with many social activities including a weekly farmers market.



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TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT: DOWNTOWN FARMINGDALE

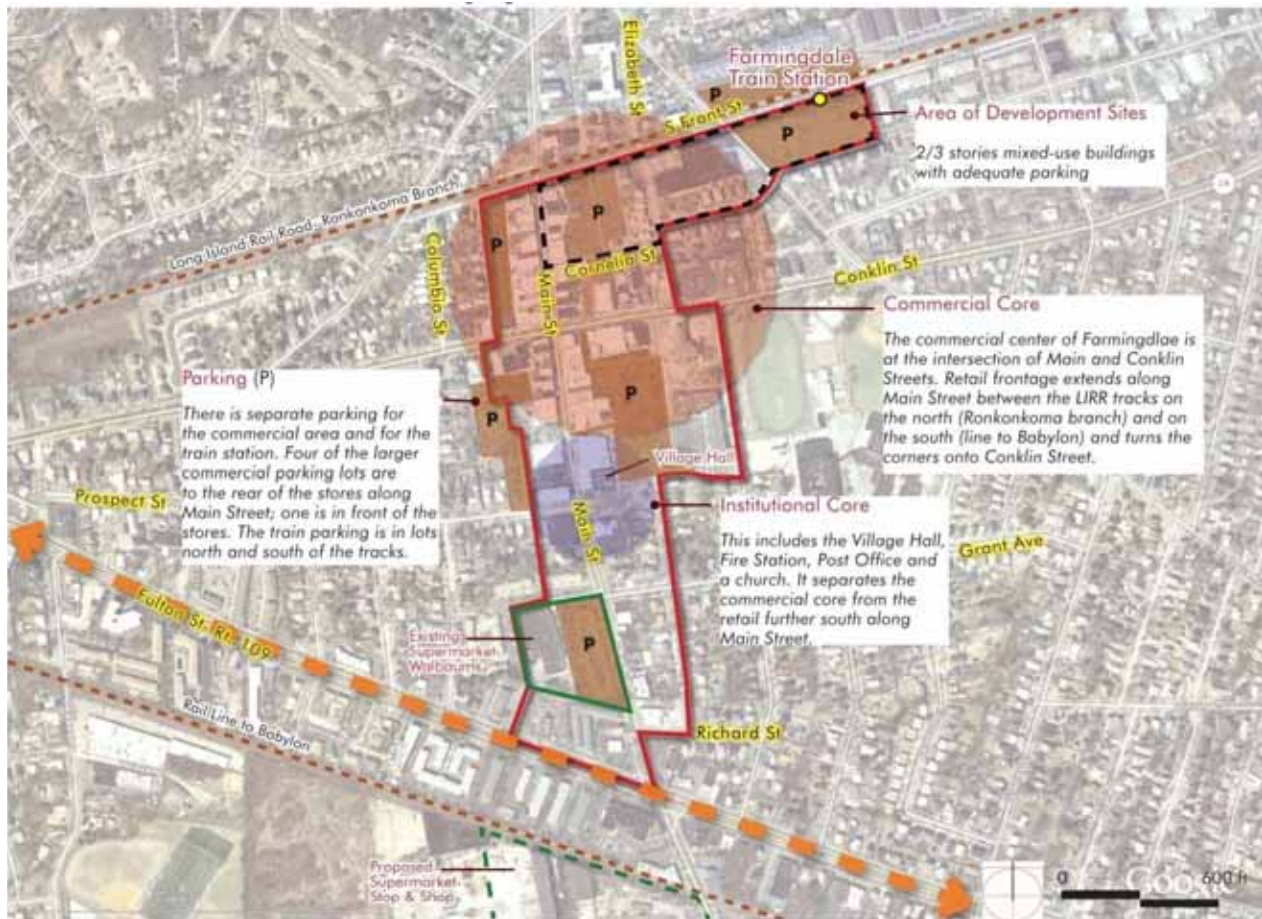
An important dimension of downtown revitalization is Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). TOD generally refers to higher density mixed use development within a ¼ to ½ mile radius of a train station. TOD can reduce automobile dependency by creating an environment where people can easily walk or bike from home to work, shopping and entertainment, thus reducing automobile dependency. In Nassau County, TOD can be achieved in downtown areas near Long Island Rail Road stations where there are opportunities for infill development.

The Village of Farmingdale, which completed an “Existing and Emerging Conditions Report” in July 2009, is a community that is working to strengthen its downtown and enhance walkability with transit-oriented development. The Farmingdale train station is 1-½ blocks east of Main Street. It is within walking distance of the downtown shopping area, but connecting streets between the two areas are currently not very inviting. There are several soft sites in the area including surface parking lots and one-story commercial buildings.

With TOD, Farmingdale has the potential to enhance linkages between the train station and the downtown area, thereby encouraging pedestrian-oriented residential and commercial growth. There are four key development sites along South Front Street between Depot Avenue and Main Street that could strengthen connections between Main Street and the train station. These include a municipal parking lot serving commercial uses on Main Street; one-story commercial buildings in private ownership; and train station parking co-owned by the Village and the Long Island Rail Road (see “Existing Conditions”).

As shown on the site plan illustrating potential transit-oriented development, new TOD along South Front Street would create continuous street frontage that clearly links Main Street and the train station. Potential uses could include two to three-story mixed use buildings, a parking garage and public green space. A key consideration for development will be to provide adequate parking for both new development and commuters. Implementation of TOD in Farmingdale and other downtowns throughout the County will amendments to local zoning codes to encourage pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use development.

Farmingdale: Existing Conditions



Source: BFJ Planning, 2009

Farmingdale: Potential Transit-Oriented Development



Source: BFJ Planning, 2009

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BEST PRACTICE: TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT: TARRYTOWN, NEW YORK



Hudson Harbor, Tarrytown, New York

Hudson Harbor is a new transit-oriented development (TOD) on the Hudson River. It is located within a five minute walk from the Tarrytown train station on a 27-acre former industrial/brownfield site.



Hudson Harbor includes townhouses, apartments, retail uses, a public park, and community recreation center. It is a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Platinum certified project. This project is an example of how TOD can transform a brownfield into a mixed-use community with direct access to transit. It is a model that can be applied to soft sites and/or brownfields near transit stations in Nassau County.



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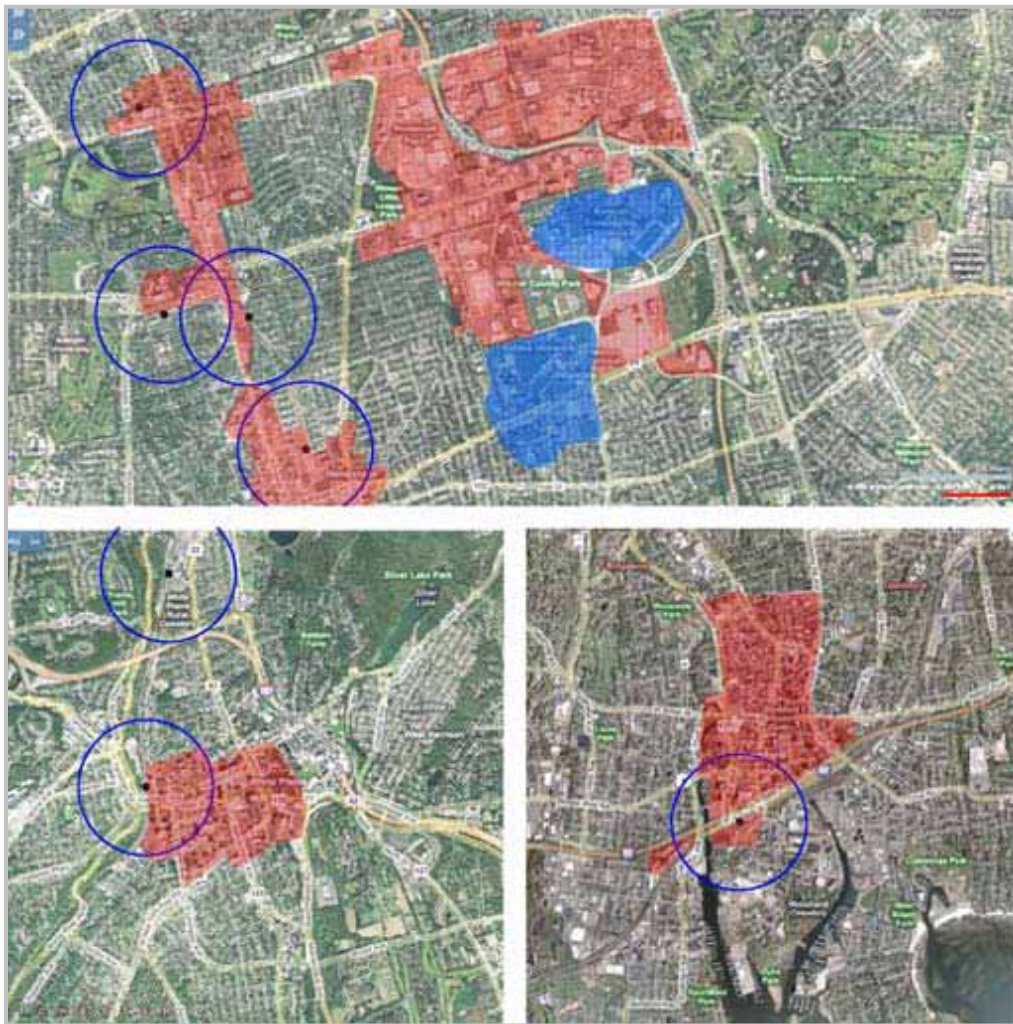
NASSAU HUB AND THE GRUMMAN PROPERTY

THE NASSAU HUB

Why is the Hub not the downtown of Nassau County like White Plains is the downtown of Westchester and Stamford is the downtown of southern Connecticut (see Figure 3-4)? All three are centrally located, are served by highways and railways, contain destination shopping, and include offices and apartments. The Hub even includes two colleges and a sports arena.

White Plains and Stamford, in contrast to the Hub, are much more compact and walkable. Their office buildings are within a few blocks of a train station, they have a fine grained grid of blocks, and their commercial centers are edged with apartment buildings; they look and feel like downtowns.

Figure 3-4
Nassau HUB



White Plains, NY

Stamford, CT

Source: BFJ Planning

In 1969 Regional Plan Association (RPA) published two reports, one on Westchester and one Nassau, discussing how they might grow in the context of The Second Regional Plan. A central question that was posed for Nassau was whether its commercial uses would be concentrated in one center or spread among several locations. The result is a bit of both -- commercial growth is encouraged to concentrate in the Hub but the Hub is so large that it is really several centers that happen to be near each other.

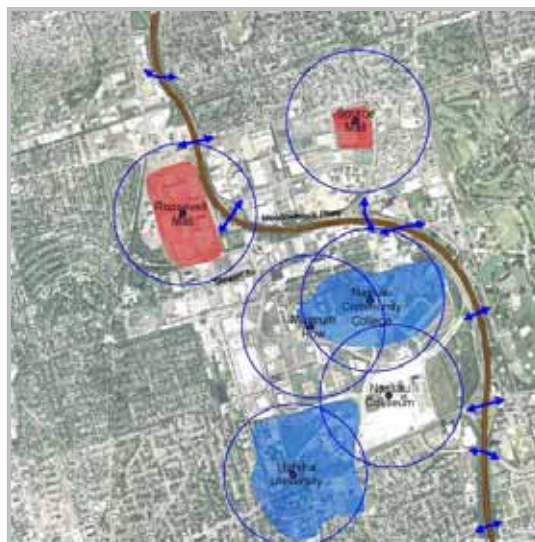
Access to the Hub

The Hub, which encompasses approximately 10 square miles in central Nassau, is readily accessible by car from the Meadowbrook Parkway as well as the local road system. The Meadowbrook links to the Northern and Southern State Parkways and the Long Island Expressway and has five interchanges within the Hub. The Hub is framed by Old Country Road, Hempstead Turnpike, Merrick Avenue, and Clinton Road and Stewart Avenue goes through its center. However, the roads, and the parking to which they connect, also isolate destinations from one another (see Figure 3-5).

- The Meadowbrook Parkway divides the northeastern portion of the Hub, including Mall at The Source, from the south and west, including Roosevelt Field Mall, Stewart Avenue, Nassau Community College, and Hofstra University.
- The destinations in the Hub are also separated by the size of the place. Any one activity and its parking are within a five to ten minute walking radius; however, few uses are within a ten minute walk of their neighbors.
- The Hub is bisected by Stewart Avenue.

The Hub is not readily accessible by transit. Mineola, Garden City, Hempstead, Carle Place, and Westbury each have a LIRR station but each of these places is at the edge of the Hub. None of them provide convenient, centralized access for the Hub. Similarly, the bus system focuses on three destinations – Hempstead train station, Mineola train station, and Roosevelt Field Mall.

Figure 3-5



Source: BFJ Planning

Land-Uses

Today, the area defined as the Hub includes a number of large-scale disparate uses with few connections to one another including Nassau Veterans Coliseum, Nassau Community College, Museum Row, Roosevelt Field Mall and RXR Plaza, Hofstra University and the Omni Building (see Figure 3-7). This concentration of uses within relatively close proximity to one another in a central location within the County, combined with a significant piece of underutilized land adjacent to the Nassau Coliseum, presents an opportunity to create a central destination for Nassau and stimulate the County's economy. The Hub could be enhanced by several important factors:

- Creation of a multimodal transit hub with regional access
- The adoption of a new mixed-use zoning district to allow for the development of transit-supporting densities for commercial and residential uses
- Creation of a sense of place through good design
- The ability to increase the County's tax base by expanding commercial uses

Development Projections

As referenced in the 2006 Nassau County HUB MIS, the Nassau Hub has the potential to generate approximately 4,328,000 square feet of new commercial development and 10,820 jobs over the next twenty years (see Figure 3-6). New transit alternatives, both to and within the Hub, which are discussed in Chapter 4, will be critical to the Hub's ability to capture this growth potential.

Figure 3-6
Nassau Hub



Source: Google Maps, BFJ Planning

A centerpiece of the Nassau Hub is the redevelopment of 91 acres surrounding the Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum. Conceptual redevelopment ideas include the creation of an entertainment destination to complement a renovated Coliseum, home of the New York Islanders professional hockey franchise. A mix of uses surrounding the entertainment core are being contemplated to enhance the County's regional economic center. In addition to the Coliseum redevelopment, the 2006 Nassau County Hub Major Investment Study (MIS) identifies other opportunities for development in the Hub, including Nassau Community College, Roosevelt Field South, Mitchel Field, and Museum Row, as well as additional development on soft sites.

On the periphery of the HUB area, Hofstra University and the Nassau Health Care Corporation's (NuHealth) Nassau University Medical Center will see major investment over the next 20 years. The North Shore Long Island Jewish Health System has partnered with Hofstra University in the establishment of the School of Medicine, scheduled for opening in July, 2011. Over \$12 million in New York State funding has been awarded to upgrade an existing 50,000sf facility on the Hofstra University campus to make way for a state-of-the-art medical school complex of lecture halls, laboratory rooms, and meeting space. The 50 acre Nassau University Medical Center campus on Hempstead Turnpike in East Meadow is poised to implement its "*Health Care Village Master Plan*". While several conceptual site plans are being explored and analyzed, the Master Plan calls for a new 64,000sf ambulatory surgery center (ASC), approximately 500 units of medical resident housing, a 10,000sf veterans' administration clinic, a 35,000sf fitness and wellness center, and 50,000sf of medical office / R&D space.

THE GRUMMAN PROPERTY

In April, 2008, the US NAVY formally transferred to Nassau County the remediated portion (approx. 96 acres) of the former Northrop-Grumman industrial complex (see Figure 3-7). The former 105-acre Northrop Grumman manufacturing facility at Bethpage presents a significant opportunity for the development of a high technology, high skilled lifestyle campus, as well as provide studio space for movie and television production. It is expected that redevelopment of 105 acres at Bethpage could generate approximately 1.4 million square feet of new high tech/high skilled development. This growth translates into approximately 3,000 new jobs.

Given the national trends in green energy and high-technology employment growth, as well as the existing County competitiveness in the healthcare and higher education job sectors, the redevelopment of 105 acres at Bethpage should explicitly target these industries. The site's access to public utility and transportation infrastructure, and its history as an employment hub, makes it well suited to accommodate the next generation of high-quality jobs in Nassau County.

The County should consider conditioning the redevelopment of the site on the installation of certain renewable energy generators and green building design components. Such components may include:

The Grumman Property



Source: Nassau County Planning Department

- Installation of solar panels (photovoltaics): Solar arrays may be appropriate given the large expanse of flat roof area and unobstructed southern sky exposure. In the event that Building #3 is retrofitted and reused, the building’s roof area (649,657sf) could be draped with solar panels that would potentially yield between 4,000,000 and 7,000,000 kWh per year⁷.
- Water recycling: Rainwater reuse and greywater technologies may be feasible alternatives to drawing from the public water (i.e. groundwater) supply to meet onsite non-potable/industrial water demand. Large, flat, building roofs may provide a sufficient catchment area for the collection of rainwater.

The County is proactively seeking public grant funding in an effort to incentivize the inclusion of the aforementioned renewable energy/infrastructure components.

Figure 3-7
105 acres at Bethpage



Source: Nassau County Planning Department

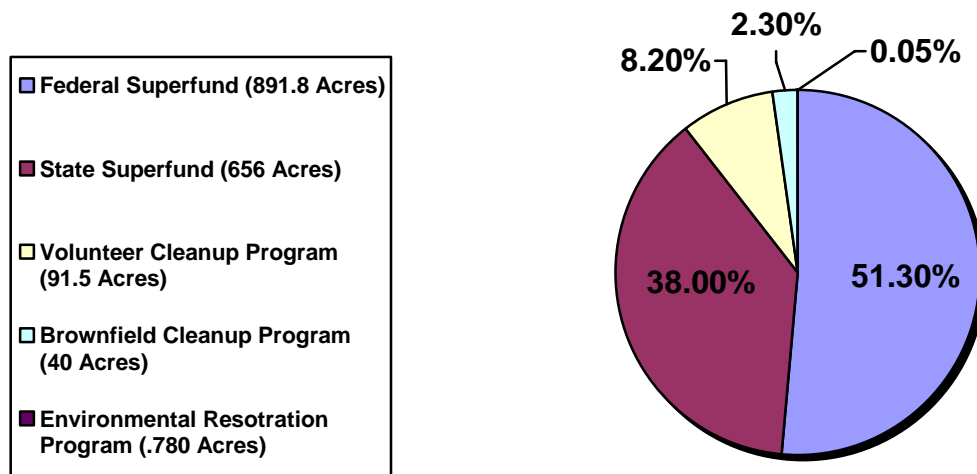
⁷ Total kwh based on calculations found in the “Environmental Assessment – enXco Eastern Long Island Solar Project”, dated December, 2009 (<http://www.lipower.org/pdfs/company/projects/solar/enxco/enXco-ea.pdf>); and the “Environmental Assessment for BP Solar Array Project, Brookhaven National Laboratory; Upton, New York”, dated December, 2009 (<http://www.lipower.org/pdfs/company/projects/solar/BPsolar-EA.pdf>).

BROWNFIELDS

Brownfield's are properties whose reuse or redevelopment may be complicated from the presence of contamination. There are over 3,600 known and at least 6,800 potential brownfield sites in Nassau County. Transforming blighted brownfields in downtowns and commercial centers could generate enough momentum and investment to revitalize entire neighborhoods. Most importantly the redevelopment of brownfields removes contaminants, making the property safer and preventing the spread of harmful pollutants to adjoining properties, groundwater, and surface water.

The County seeks to facilitate the remediation and redevelopment of brownfield properties, in an effort to reduce development pressure on open space, create jobs, and increase the tax base. For every acre of brownfield that is redeveloped, three acres of open space are preserved. The resulting development of Long Island's brownfields creates 60,000 full-time jobs, \$6.8 billion in business revenue, and \$340 million in tax revenue⁸. Both the federal and State governments offer programs to leverage local municipal and private investment in the cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields. Currently, over 1,723.6 acres in Nassau County are being remediated and redeveloped with funding assistance from the federal and State government (see Figure 3-8).

Figure 3-8
Site Specific Brownfield Cleanup Assistance in Nassau County



Revolving Loan Fund Grants

Revolving Loan Fund Grants, administered by the US Environmental Protection Agency, are available to municipalities and sub-grantees to carry out brownfield remediation efforts. In 2003, the County received funding in the amount of \$700,000 for hazardous substances cleanup and \$300,000 for petroleum cleanup for two properties on Garvies Point Road in the City of Glen Cove (Doxey and Gladsky Properties).

⁸ Sustainable Long Island

Federal Municipality Assessment and Cleanup Grants

Federal Municipality Assessment and Cleanup Grants, administered by the US Environmental Protection Agency, supply funding for brownfields inventories, planning, environmental review, and community outreach. Several communities noted below have participated in the Assessment and Cleanup Grant program.

- (2004 and 2006) City of Glen Cove: Awarded \$400,000 and \$200,000 to further the cleanup efforts at the Doxey and Gladsky Properties.
- (2003) Village of Hempstead: Awarded funds to investigate hazardous substances
- (2003) Hamlet of Roosevelt: Awarded funds to investigate hazardous substances (2003)
- (2003) City of Glen Cove: Awarded \$200,000 for Phase I and Phase II site assessments for various locations in the community.
- (2000) Town of North Hempstead: Awarded an assessment grant to investigate up to 8 brownfields in the Hamlet of New Castle.

The Inactive Hazardous Waste Disposal Site Program (Superfund)

Sites in a Superfund program contain substantial amounts of hazardous waste, and are abandoned by the polluters. Superfund provides the financial assistance needed to begin remediation immediately, while liability issues are settled. In Nassau County, approximately 1,500 acres have been subject to either Federal or State Superfund cleanup assistance.

The Volunteer Cleanup Program (VCP) and Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP)

The Volunteer Cleanup Program and Brownfield Cleanup Program, administered by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, enhance private sector cleanup of brownfields by enabling parties to investigate and remediate sites using private funds. Under State supervision, a subject property owner carries out the environmental remediation, to a level which conforms to the intended use of the property. The property owner is ultimately responsible for all cleanup costs, including those associated with State oversight. There are 28 active VCP sites in Nassau County, totaling 91.5 acres. To date, 10 sites in Nassau County have been successfully remediated, totaling 50.5 acres. There are 9 active BCP sites in Nassau County, totaling 40.16 acres.

The New York State Environmental Restoration Program

The New York State Environmental Restoration Program, administered by the Department of Environmental Conservation, provides grants to municipalities to leverage the cost of brownfield exploration and cleanup activities. Currently, the Program is funding the cleanup and restoration of the Gladsky Property in the City of Glen Cove.

New York State Brownfield Opportunity Area Program (BOA)

The NYS Brownfield Opportunity Area Program operates on a regional basis, and enables communities to investigate potential brownfields within a designated study area. While a study area may be extensive, the entire land area may not be composed of brownfield sites. This program provides financial and technical assistance to municipalities and community-based organizations to carry out environmental site

assessments, identify strategic redevelopment areas, and compose revitalization plans. Currently, BOA study areas in Nassau County encompass approximately 3,000 acres in 6 municipalities (see Table 3-9). The BOA program consists of three steps:

1. *Pre – Nomination* is a basic site assessment including a description of the study area, the current land use and zoning of the area, a description of the existing brownfields in the area, and the areas potential for redevelopment.
2. *Nomination Study* is a more in-depth look at the area then the pre–nomination study. It includes economic and market trend analysis. It concludes with a description of the key finding and recommendations to advance redevelopment of strategic sites and to revitalize the area.
3. *Implementation Strategy* provides an in depth description of the actions that need to be taken and a timeline for the various projects in the included in the plan.

**Table 3-9
 Brownfield Opportunity Area Program – Participating Municipalities in Nassau County**

MUNICIPALITY	Study Area (acres)	Potential Brownfield Sites	Funding Awarded
Town of Oyster Bay: Southeast Hicksville	1,100	24	\$307,170.00
Town of Oyster Bay: Northwest Hicksville	1,100	21	\$76,050.00
Town of North Hempstead: New Cassel	430	48	\$180,000.00
The Village of Hempstead	50	40	\$67,500.00
The City of Glen Cove	55	10	\$150,000
The City of Long Beach	140	24	\$65,000.00
The Village of Farmingdale	60	14	\$289,710.00
Total:	2,935	181	\$1,135,430.00

Specific BOA projects in Nassau County include:

- The Town of Oyster Bay received \$20,800 to complete a pre nomination study along Route 107 in southeast Hicksville that could have as many as 10 brownfield sites. The study identified 24 potential brownfields, and the Town was awarded \$307,170 to complete a nomination for approximately 1,100 acres. The Town was also granted \$76,050 to perform a pre-nomination study on about 1,100 acres in Northwest Hicksville containing approximately 21 potential brownfields.
- The Town of North Hempstead was awarded \$180,000 for nomination studies in New Cassel. The study area is about 430 acres and contains 48 possible brownfields.

- The Village of Hempstead received \$67,500 to perform a pre – nomination study on a 2 mile corridor along Franklin Street which may contain up to 40 brownfields.
- The City of Glen Cove received \$150,000 to study the Orchard neighborhood; the area is approximately 55 acres containing 10 potential and 4 actual brownfields. They have completed the pre nomination study and are now doing a nomination study.
- The City of Long Beach was awarded \$65,000 to complete a pre nomination study of 140 acres with 13 to 24 potential brownfield sites along Reynolds Channel.
- The Village of Farmingdale received \$289,710 for a nomination study of a 60 acre area with possibly 14 brownfields near Main Street in the downtown.

The New York Metro Brownfields Redevelopment Fund

This program, which has yet to be initiated⁹, will assist distressed communities in the greater metropolitan area by providing resources for the clean-up and adaptive reuse of brownfields. This is the first regional program in the country to use federal grants to leverage private loan capital for brownfield projects. The partners in this project are the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, The City of New York, The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Nassau County, Sustainable Long Island, and others. In order to be eligible for this program the site must be in either Nassau County or New York City, and the borrower can not be responsible for the contamination. The eligible end uses of the site must meet at least one of the following four types of community development objectives: affordable housing, community services or facilities, economic development/small business/job generation, and neighborhood stabilization.

US EPA Brownfields Showcase Community

Showcase Communities are selected by the Brownfields National Partnership to demonstrate that through cooperation, federal, state, local, and private efforts can be concentrated around brownfields to restore these sites, stimulate economic development, and revitalize communities. Through its designation of a Showcase Community, the City of Glen Cove received additional funding to revitalize a 214 acre area of environmentally challenged and underutilized properties along the north side of Glen Cove Creek into a regional tourist destination, complete with waterfront restaurants, boutiques, new maritime attractions, a hotel/conference center, and pedestrian esplanade.

⁹ As per 9.13.10 phone interview with Jody Kass, New Partners for Community Revitalization, potential administrators are currently negotiating specific program details with federal officials.

START SIDEBAR

Glen Cove Waterfront – City of Glen Cove

The area of former heavy industrial use along the north side of Glen Cove Creek in the City of Glen Cove has been the subject of over \$100 million in environmental remediation efforts. Redevelopment of the site is being pursued by RXR Glen Isle Partners, LLC. RXR proposes to develop approximately 56 acres with a mix of uses to transform a currently underutilized area and spur economic development (see Figure 3-12). The project includes a hotel and conference center, residences, and retail and restaurants uses, as well as boat slips and publicly accessible open space. This project is expected to create approximately 260,000 square feet of commercial development, 860 housing units and approximately 655 new permanent jobs.

Glen Cove Waterfront Revitalization Plan



Source: RXR Glen Isle Partners, LLC

END SIDEBAR

UNDERUTILIZED COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

While the Plan focuses on the concept of centers, revitalization of existing commercial corridors is also an important piece of the vision for a sustainable suburban future. Commercial corridors provide an opportunity to transform the visual landscape and functionality of Nassau's arterial roadways such as Hempstead Turnpike, Old Country Road, and Sunrise Highway. With thoughtful design and appropriate zoning amendments these roadways can be transformed into attractive mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented districts with a variety of uses including retail, office, restaurants, workforce and senior housing, and public/civic space, with connections to public transportation and adjacent downtown areas.

As the New York Times reported in May 2009, the recession has had a significant impact on Nassau's retail industry. Large retailers such as Fortunoff and Circuit City have closed their doors, leaving empty big boxes behind. While these empty stores and their vast parking lots are a blight on the landscape, they provide an opportunity for Nassau to re-imagine its strip commercial corridors. A range of improvements from simple changes to more complex redevelopment have the power to transform the image and function of community shopping centers. Simple landscaping solutions such as landscaped medians along arterial roadways, landscaped buffers along the edge of parking lots, and landscaping within parking areas can greatly improve the physical appearance of these roadways and make them more environmentally friendly.

Existing medians on arterials are mostly paved; some areas have low plantings. Adding planting beds with medium height plants and trees to paved medians along with a double curb, as shown in Figure 3-9, will greatly improve the aesthetics of commercial corridors. In some locations a landscaped buffer can also be added between the roadway and parking areas by removing a row of parking from the lot. This would allow space for a widened sidewalk along the roadway with plantings on either side. This sidewalk could potentially be used by bicyclists as well as pedestrians. Within parking lots, landscaping can be introduced between rows of parking. Trees in parking areas can provide shade and reduce heat generated by large swaths of asphalt. Planting areas would allow rain to percolate into the ground, reducing stormwater runoff and improving surface and near-shore water quality.

**Figure 3-9
Landscaped Buffer**



Existing Community Shopping Center Buffer



**Example of Landscaped Buffer Separating Community
Shopping Center from Roadway**

Source: RGR Landscape

In addition to landscaping, more dramatic changes to the layout and mix of uses in community shopping centers have the potential to significantly improve the aesthetics and functionality of Nassau's commercial corridors. The following case study provides an example of one approach that could be taken to re-imagine a parcel along one of the County's arterial roadways.

Case Study: Reimagining the Suburban Arterial - Sprawling Community Shopping Center

One of the County's east-west commercial corridors contains a community shopping center with multiple buildings of a variety of uses and ownerships, including municipal ownership of parking areas. One of the buildings on the site is vacant and the others contain marginal retail and service uses. There is parking both in front of and behind the buildings and there is very little landscaping on the site. The site is adjacent to a school and associated playing fields (see Figure 3-10).

Figure 3-10
Community Shopping Center: Aerial Photograph



Source: www.googlemaps.com

As shown on the aerial photograph, the site appears to have an excessive amount of parking. This presents an opportunity to convert the northern parking area adjacent to the school playing fields into an appropriately-scaled, new use, such as workforce and/or senior housing. Housing would be a good addition to the site because new residents would provide clientele for the retail/commercial space that already exists on the site. Further, housing and retail are compatible uses in terms of shared parking. Stores need parking during the day when residents are at work and residents need parking at night when stores are closed. Shared parking would reduce the total number of spaces that would be required to accommodate this mix of uses on the site. While developments for retired seniors may not have the advantage of freeing up daytime parking for commercial uses, senior housing generally requires fewer parking spaces per unit than single-family housing and therefore presents an opportunity for shared parking as well.

New streets could be built around the northern parking area and townhouse units and/or apartments could be built along these new streets. Parking for residential units could be contained within a parking court behind the buildings, hidden from the street. At the same time, the landscaping techniques previously discussed in this section could also be applied to the site. A sidewalk for pedestrians and bicycles flanked

on both sides by landscaping could be added in front of the site. The parking area could be substantially enhanced with plantings between aisles and bioswales that would reduce stormwater runoff.

A second phase of development on this site could include additional housing units along the edge of the parking lot behind the existing buildings. These additional units would necessitate construction of a parking garage, which could include ground floor retail (see Figure 3-11). This additional development would make the new through street on the site both more active and more attractive (See Figure 3-12).

Figure 3-11
Community Shopping Center Redevelopment: Phase 2 - Plan View



Source: BFJ Planning

Figure 3-12
Community Shopping Center Redevelopment: Phase 2 - Street Level View



Source: BFJ Planning

This is just one alternative for re-imagining the site. Another alternative for redevelopment on the rear portion of the site could be to extend the school's playing fields or to create a neighborhood park and/or playground. Still another alternative that could potentially be explored would be total redevelopment of the site with apartments and townhouses ground floor retail uses along the side street that separates the site from the adjacent single family neighborhood.

No matter what uses are imagined for redeveloped community shopping centers, these sites provide a real opportunity for Nassau to become more sustainable and implement green building and green site design standards. Both public and private developers should be encouraged to consider planted roofs, on-site retention of stormwater, and the use of photovoltaics which produce energy by converting the sun's rays into electricity. Site design should be pedestrian-friendly and should emphasize thoughtful design.

START SIDEBAR

BEST PRACTICE: GREYFIELDS - REIMAGINING A COMMUNITY SHOPPING CENTER



Cape Cod, MA.

Mashpee Commons, Mashpee, Massachusetts

Mashpee Commons is a retrofit of a strip shopping center into a mixed-use, mixed-income, pedestrian-friendly town center. It has grown to become a lively center for the surrounding community of Mashpee in



It has a range of national retail and local “mom and pop” stores including a drug store and supermarket. Some shops are housed in liner buildings that conceal parking lots. The area includes diverse housing options including apartments over shops, lofts, live-work units and affordable units. There are also many civic buildings in the community including a church, hotel, children’s museum, library, medical office building and a proposed performing arts theater. This project is an example of a community shopping center retrofit, which could be applied to vacant or underperforming community shopping centers along Hempstead Turnpike and Sunrise Highway.



END SIDEBAR

PRESERVE AND MAINTAIN RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS AND OPEN SPACE

While the central focus of this Master Plan is on targeting development to growth areas, preserving and protecting areas which encompass the things that people love most about Nassau including its single family neighborhoods, waterfronts, open spaces, and scenic and historic resources, is equally important. Directing growth to existing downtowns other major redevelopment sites, directs development away from single family neighborhoods and alleviates development pressure on greenfields, protecting open space. The County is also undertaking a variety of initiatives that will not only protect, but also enhance those things that residents love about Nassau.

Nassau is actively working to ensure a sustainable future for this and future generations from its open space acquisition program through which the County has spent approximately \$100 million protecting over 300 acres of land since 2004, to its *Fit Nassau* initiative which seeks to preserve air, land and water quality; improve energy efficiency; reduce dependence on nonrenewable energy resources that contribute to elevated carbon emissions; and promote active and healthy lifestyles.. Key to these efforts is protecting and enhancing Nassau s environmental resources from open space and recreation to waterfronts and historic, scenic and cultural resources. This includes addressing Nassau s network of open space as well as improving air and water quality.

RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

Single family homes make up over 50% of Nassau s total land area and are what many residents most treasure about the county. The suburb s promise of a home and a yard for the thousands of people who left crowded city apartments for Levittown in the post World War II period remains an iconic image in many residents minds today.

Preserving the quality of Nassau s neighborhoods is directly related to the county s ability to address the high-property tax challenge that it now faces. High property taxes are eroding quality-of-life as they strain families financial resources. As discussed in Chapter 1, 40% of homeowners who have mortgages now spend over 35% of their monthly income on housing costs. This has a negative impact on their ability to keep up their homes and maintain the quality of Nassau s residential neighborhoods. Further, the current economic crisis has increased the number of foreclosures in the County, which can threaten neighborhood character and stability.

OPEN SPACE, NATURAL RESOURCES, AND RECREATION

There are a variety of recreational and natural resources that serve residents of Nassau County, all of Long Island and the entire New York City metropolitan region. They range from full service tourist destinations to daytime passive recreation sites and open space preserves. They include dozens of public beaches, which are located along the Atlantic Ocean and the Long Island Sound shoreline, an extensive public park system, recreational bikeways, and hiking trails. Nassau County's public parkland is maintained by various villages, cities, towns, the County, the state and federal government. County parks

provide golf, tennis, ice rinks, swimming pools, and athletic fields. The County also has 56 public school districts which control a large variety of recreational fields available for organized as well as passive recreation. Nassau County is home to the 930-acre Eisenhower Park in the Hamlet of East Meadow, Bethpage State Park in Farmingdale and numerous small local parks and campgrounds which offer a broad spectrum of recreational opportunities. Nassau's park system is complimented by two major bikeway and hiking trails: Nassau-Suffolk Greenbelt trail (19.2 miles) between Harbor Road in Cold Spring Harbor and Merritt Road in Massapequa and the Jones Beach multi-use trail (4.5 miles) along the Wantagh Parkway between Jones Beach and Cedar Creek County Park in Seaford.

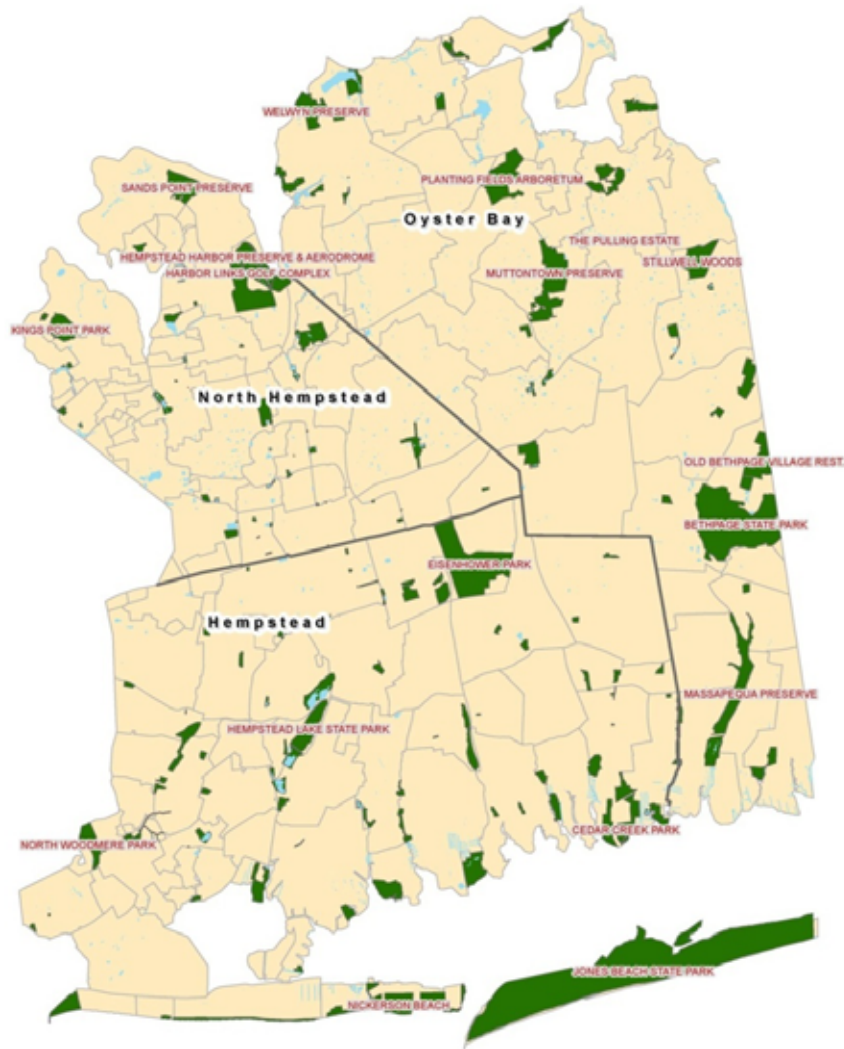
Open Space

A land use study of Nassau and Suffolk Counties undertaken by the Regional Plan Association (RPA) in 2004 documents the current development pressures on open space and the need for its preservation as a growth (sprawl) management tool. The study noted that over 80% of Nassau County's land area is suburbanized and that residential properties represent approximately 75% of this land. Institutional uses—schools, hospitals, etc.—are the second largest use. For both Nassau and Suffolk Counties “another 168,000 acres (22% of all land on Long Island) have been protected from development by federal, state, county and municipal governments.” About half of this area represents public parks. The remainder consists of protected agricultural districts, cemeteries and other uses that preclude them from being changed to residential, commercial or institutional uses and subsequently developed. More than 80% of this protected open space is in Suffolk County with 20% or 33,600 protected acres in Nassau County (see Figure 3-13). For both Counties, “this leaves approximately 113,000 acres of unprotected farms, wetlands, forests, meadows and beaches” according to the RPA study. However, more than 1/3 of this land is unlikely to ever be developed since its topography or other physical characteristics present significant challenges. That leaves approximately 67,000 acres¹⁰ in Nassau and Suffolk that could still be developed, less than 9% of the Island's total land area. Over 90% of this is in Suffolk County”; hence, 6,700 vulnerable acres in Nassau County.

[Pull Quote: There are 6,700 vulnerable acres in Nassau County]

¹⁰ 2009 Nassau County land and tax records reflect approximately 5,700 acres of vulnerable undeveloped land.

Figure 3-13
Designated Open Space in Nassau County



Source: Nassau County GIS

As shown in Table 3-10, over the course of the next forty years Nassau’s undeveloped land will come under increasing development pressure. The number of undeveloped acres in Nassau County is expected to dramatically decline from approximately 1,200 acres in 2010 to 250 acres by 2050. Given the scarcity of open space and resulting development pressures, the policies and recommendations presented herein encourage adaptive re-use of previously developed property; the return of formerly developed and underutilized property to the tax roles; achieving critical density to support transit oriented development and public transit; and protection of open space. These recommendations aim to counter residential sprawl and contribute to the reduction in cost of public services via preservation of open space and increased focus on appropriately scaled and higher-density development in welcoming communities with existing and emerging downtowns.

Table 3-10
Projections of Land Available for Development, 2000-2050 (in acres)

	Total Land	Land Developed by 2000	Protected or Unsuitable for Development	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
Glen Cove	4,379	86%	12%	75	23	0	0	0	0
Hempstead	78,213	78%	22%	11	3	1	1	0	0
Long Beach	1,449	91%	9%	0	0	0	0	0	0
North Hempstead	34,643	89%	9%	929	496	348	272	231	210
Oyster Bay	66,778	78%	18%	2,240	707	279	113	55	42
Nassau County	185,461	80%	18%	3,254	1,229	628	386	284	251

Source: Nassau County Department of Parks and Recreation

As the number of acres suitable for development becomes more limited, there is great risk that environmentally sensitive areas such as deep aquifer recharge zones, agricultural lands, barrier beaches, wetlands and marshes will become more endangered. The RPA study cites that the character of rural communities and coastal areas could also change as these areas become more developed. The success and popularity of ongoing open space acquisition and farm protection initiatives demonstrate that Long Islanders understand this risk and support measures to avert it.

Open Space Preservation Strategy

The County ' s 1998 Comprehensive Plan highlighted the need for an open space preservation strategy which resulted in the County s first Open Space Plan completed in 2001. This Plan set up the Nassau County Open Space and Parks Advisory Committee (OSPAC) for reviewing, evaluating and recommending to the County land purchases which will protect the natural, scenic and historic resources of the County.

Through the collaborative effort of the Nassau County Legislature, various County agencies, OSPAC, and public/private stakeholders, the 2004 and 2006 Nassau County Environmental Program Bond Acts achieved the preservation of nearly 300 acres of open space and farmland throughout the county. This level of commitment, compromise, and effectiveness should carry through the next 20 years with the preservation of approximately one-fifth, or 1,000 acres, of remaining unprotected open space, farmland, and other lands of significant environmental value.



Caption: Youngs Farm in Old Brookville- One of the few remaining farms in Nassau County.

START SIDEBAR: Nassau’s Private Golf Courses – Preservation Strategy

The vulnerability of Nassau’s golf courses to future development, due to the current economy and the limited availability of vacant land, may provide an opportunity for County and local officials to implement environmental conservation and smart growth principles, while still allowing for a golf course’s full private development potential to be realized. The American Planning Association defines Smart Growth as using comprehensive planning to build communities that preserve and enhance valuable natural and cultural resources, and the incorporation of provisions for compact, transit accessible, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use development patterns¹¹. More specifically, local government officials have been looking at ways to revitalize their downtowns and preserve remaining tracts of open space. In pursuing these objectives, local officials should look to transferring the development potential of golf courses to existing downtown centers.

The creation of a *Transfer-of-Development Rights* (TDR) program should be explored by municipalities that have identified golf courses within their boundaries, as well as a well defined growth/downtown center. A market-funded preservation of open space and downtown investment can be made possible by the transfer (“sale”) of a golf course’s unused development credits (“seller”) to a downtown or growth area receiving district (“purchaser”). Golf courses in municipalities with designated growth areas

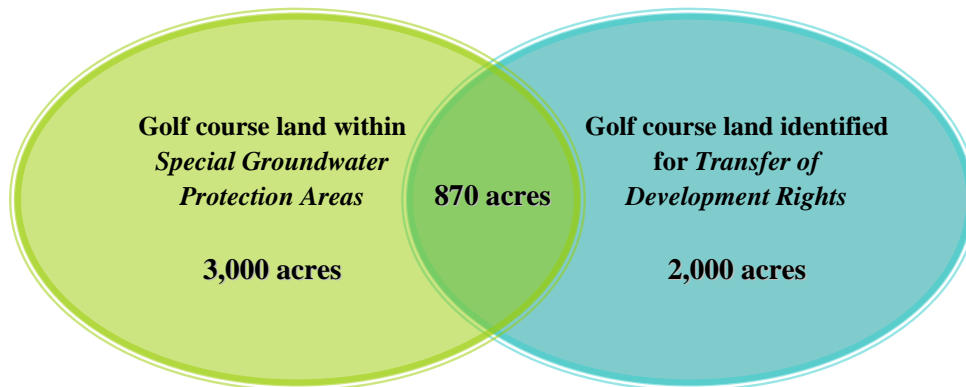
¹¹ American Planning Association “Policy Guide on Smart Growth”. April 14, 2002. Accessible online at: <http://www.planning.org/policy/guides/pdf/smartgrowth.pdf>

represent approximately **2,000** acres with a residential development potential of between **2,800** and **36,000** units¹² (see table below).

The key fiscal advantage of land preservation via TDR is that the assessed value of the preservation parcel is transferred to a receiving site along with the purchased development credit. This prevents the reduction of the local property tax base when property is preserved through other measures (i.e. government / not-for-profit acquisition). This regional planning approach to may lead to future municipal cost savings due to the incremental increase in service and infrastructure demand resulting from new development in areas that are already provided with adequate infrastructure.

Golf course land in municipalities with designated growth areas (acres)	Total Residential Build-out Potential (units)
2,000	2,800 – 36,000

Priority TDR implementation should be given to golf courses that are also located within an SGPA. Approximately **870** acres, or **45%**, of golf course land identified for TDR implementation, are also located within an SGPA (see Fig. below). This acreage represents between **730** and **21,000** units of residential development in SGPA's. Preserving open space in areas of deep groundwater recharge protects the value of our most valuable resource.



<u>HIGHEST PRIORITY</u> for TDR Program¹³ (acres)	Total Residential Build-out (units)
870	730 – 21,000

END SIDEBAR

¹² Based on existing residential zoning districts

¹³ Golf course land that is located in both an SGPA and a municipality with an identified growth area.

Public Facilities

Nassau County parks provide golf, tennis, ice rinks, swimming pools, and athletic fields. The County also has 56 public school districts which contain a large variety of recreational fields and activities available for organized as well as passive recreational activities. Nassau County is home to Eisenhower Park, inclusive of its 930-acres, in the Hamlet of East Meadow; Bethpage State Park in Farmingdale; the Nassau Greenbelt Trail in the eastern part of the County, and numerous small local parks and campgrounds which offer a broad spectrum of recreational opportunities. Historic sites such as Old Bethpage Village and Sagamore Hill; historical, art and natural history museums; theaters; symphony orchestras; and nature trails and preserves all add to the recreational, cultural and educational value of the County.



Caption: Summer Concert at Eisenhower Park

One of the most popular destinations among the County's parks and beaches is the 2,413-acre Jones Beach State Park in Wantagh. With approximately six to seven million visitors annually, Jones Beach State Park features a six-mile ocean beachfront, a two-mile boardwalk and an 11,200-seat performing arts center (Tommy Hilfiger at Jones Beach Theater) which attracts world-class musical acts. Jones Beach currently lacks hospitality facilities and overnight accommodations often deemed a lost tourism and economic development opportunity.

Enhanced public connections to and between waterfront communities and destinations are also possibilities that public officials have begun to consider. Means may include land and water borne trails and multi-modal corridors. Glen Cove, Sea Cliff, Freeport's Nautical Mile, Long Beach and Sands Point are potential destinations just to name a few.

The County and each municipality should seek opportunities to include bikeways in local roadway and infrastructure improvements. Efforts should be coordinated with neighboring towns and villages to provide safer and more convenient networks of on-road and dedicated facilities.

Private facilities

Private facilities contribute greatly to Nassau County's recreation inventory. The North Shore contains a series of unique private recreation facilities with large tracts of protected open space and waterfront parcels providing opportunities for potential land swaps, trail connections and passage, and conservation easements. The County's Hempstead, Long Beach and Oyster Bay/South Shore is characterized by broad barrier beaches and protected salt water bays, channels and marshes suitable for boating with multiple outlets to the Atlantic Ocean. The South Shore also contains a series of bay and channel front private boating and golf club facilities. Smaller land holdings in comparison to the North Shore, however, they do provide open space and potential public waterfront access land swap opportunities.

Park Management Policy

Nassau County maintains approximately 6,000 acres of parkland, open space, historic sites and building sites. It is the obligation of the Department to enable the public to enjoy quality visits to these areas, while protecting park resources. Park uses may be subject to certain legal restrictions or covenants but they are also protected in perpetuity including provisions set by the Nassau County Perpetual Preservation Law (Local LAW 5-1988), which insures that the valuable acres of Nassau County land, either currently owned or hereafter acquired will be protected and preserved forever.

[Pull Quote: The Nassau County Department of Parks, Recreation and Museums maintains approximately 6,000 acres of parkland, open space, historic sites and building sites.]

Waterfronts

Nassau County is bordered to the north by Long Island Sound and to the south by the Atlantic Ocean. Together, the northern and southern boundaries of the County comprise nearly 188 miles of scenic coastline. The majority of this coastline, however, is privately owned and not accessible to the public. Coastal parks tend to be smaller facilities with beaches, docks, wetlands and marshes. In North Hempstead, there are plans to connect waterfront pathways and link facilities. Where private parcels intervene, kayak and small boat blue ways are being proposed, for example, there is an Environmental Bond Act project ongoing in the Village of Freeport for a blueway trail along the County's south shore. The coastline is one of Nassau County's greatest assets, and increasing opportunities for public enjoyment is encouraged.

Coastal zones and salt marshes are the most ecologically diverse and essential natural systems. They sustain the coastal food chain, cleanse our natural water bodies and dissipate the impact of storm events. Impacts of climate change such as sea level rise and inundation as well as over development must be closely monitored.

Historic Districts and Sites

In addition to its environmental resources, Nassau County is home to a variety of historic, cultural and scenic resources. Nassau boasts exceptional south shore ocean beaches, north shore waterfronts, parks, playing fields, golf courses and open spaces (see Appendix C for complete list). It also hosts the New York Islanders, a professional hockey team, an array of historic sites, and cultural resources ranging from museums to theaters.

Nassau County has a total of twelve historic districts, comprising both local districts and those listed on the National Register of Historic Places. National Register historic districts and local historic districts differ in structure and the reviews required. A National Register historic district is established through the State Historic Preservation Office and National Park Service as formal recognition of an area with historical, architectural or cultural significance. Alterations to a property listed in a National Register historic district require review only if there is a state or federal involvement. Local historic districts are controlled by local communities and offer greater protection to historic properties with regard to alterations to the exterior of designated structures.

Nassau County is rich in entertainment, cultural and historic resources. One key to harnessing the economic development potential of these resources is to market and promote them both within the region and within the County. Another approach that should also be explored is the potential to link these resources to targeted growth areas throughout the county. The County's numerous theaters and museums, in particular, should be part of a strategy to attract all segments of Nassau's population to downtown areas for arts and entertainment. The link between downtown areas and County cultural attractions should also be strengthened to encourage tourists to take advantage of Nassau's downtown restaurants and retail shops. Examples of potential linkages include: expanding public bus routes and service between downtown nodes and County tourism attractions, and forming County and municipal joint marketing campaign.