

6. Business Districts Element

6.1 VISION STATEMENT

Commercial retail development should be well planned on a site basis instead of sprawled along Riverhead's roads. Downtown and hamlet centers should be promoted as centers for specialty shopping and civic life, building on their historic and pedestrian character. Route 58 should absorb most of the demand for regional and destination retail uses and thus should continue to be a mainstay for generating jobs and tax revenue.

Riverhead's business districts provide essential shopping opportunities, employment, tax revenue, and entertainment venues. At the same time, in a focus group conducted in fall 1999, community members identified several problems: increasing traffic; poor aesthetic quality of "strip" development, particularly along Route 58; and insufficient retail vitality in downtown and the hamlet centers. The results of the focus group were consistent with the results of the residents surveys conducted the preceding summer. Sixteen (16) percent of the survey respondents said that "shopping" was one of the three best things about living in Riverhead (only "rural atmosphere," the "waterfront," and "open space" got higher percentages). However, 93 percent said that traffic on Route 58 was "poor" or "could be better," and 87 percent said that the appearance of Route 58 was "poor" or "could be better."

In coming years, the combination of population growth and tourism in both Riverhead and the North Fork will increase retail demand. It is in the best interest of the Town's tax and jobs base to stay responsive to demand and accommodate new retail development. At the same time, unplanned and unattractive commercial development would only worsen Riverhead's current problems, putting at risk the Town's rural character. *The challenge is therefore how to accommodate new retail development, while still enhancing Riverhead's character and minimizing traffic congestion.*

6.2 SUMMARY OF BACKGROUND RESEARCH

Riverhead's population is expected to increase dramatically over the next 10 to 20 years, fueled by ongoing employment growth and housing shortages elsewhere in Suffolk County. As the population grows, the pressure for retail development will grow in kind.

Riverhead's retail sector also draws a regional and tourist/visitor clientele to achieve a net inflow of retail dollars. In 1998, Riverhead residents spent about \$138 million in non-gasoline products, but in the same year, Riverhead stores had retail sales in excess of \$310 million. Wealthy seasonal residents, tourists, and day-trippers account for part of the higher-than-expected sales figures. Riverhead also taps into the population of other towns, especially for comparison retail spending, such as clothing, appliances, and furniture. The population of five East End towns in the year 2000 was more than four times the population of Riverhead alone. For some residents in Southampton, Southold, and Brookhaven, Route 58 is their closest and largest shopping district. Tanger Mall taps into an even larger market, drawing people on excursion shopping trips from Nassau County and New York City.

Over the last four decades, Route 58 has had the location and visibility to attract retailers, the land to accommodate commercial development, and the road capacity to absorb the increases in traffic. Route 58 is Riverhead's largest and most important commercial center, providing essential convenience shopping (grocery stores, drug stores, hardware stores), comparison shopping (Tanger Mall), auto sales, gas stations and auto repair centers, restaurants, personal and professional services, and agricultural products and supplies. In the resident survey conducted in summer 1999, 68 percent of the respondents usually go to Route 58 for

groceries, and 52 percent usually go there for quick errand shopping. Also, 46 percent said that Tanger Mall was their primary destination for clothing and furnishings.

Route 58's success had several consequences for Riverhead. On the positive side, Route 58 absorbed all the commercial sprawl that would otherwise have spread to the Town's rural and scenic corridors. On the negative side, the commercial development of Route 58 had adverse impacts upon downtown Riverhead and hamlet centers.

Today, the commercially zoned sites along Route 58 are nearly all developed, although retail demand continues to grow. As a result, nearly all non-commercially zoned parcels along Route 58 will eventually be targeted for commercial development through use variances or rezoning applications. Rather than allowing those parcels to convert in a haphazard fashion, a thoughtful, comprehensive rezoning could provide structure to the inevitable trend. Most retailers are less interested in sites beyond Route 58 because they are less centrally and prominently located and thus have a more limited market potential.

Specialty retailers, however, gravitate to downtown and the hamlet centers. In these locations, space is less expensive, more eclectic, and therefore more suitable for entrepreneur-driven restaurants, boutiques, antique stores, and “mom and pop” businesses. Current zoning patterns are not well-suited to such businesses, and in many cases, downtown and the hamlet centers are over-zoned for commercial development, further encouraging strip-style commercial sprawl. A rethinking of downtown and hamlet zoning can tailor development patterns to the types of businesses interested in locating there.

DOWNTOWN

For several years, the Town has been working to shift the focus of downtown from convenience and comparison shopping to entertainment, tourism, and cultural activities. This market niche is ideally suited to downtown, as it builds off the area's attractive walking environment and historic character, in addition to the attractions and events.

Cultural Attractions

The new Atlantis Aquarium is a tourist anchor that attracts thousands of visitors. Other attractions include Leavitt Music Hall, the East End Arts Council, the Suffolk County Historical Society (museum), the Long Island Railroad Museum, and the Peconic River waterfront. The Country Fair, the Polish Fair, the Blues Festival, the Summer Concert Series, the Halloween Festival, and the Community Mosaic are major annual events. Many of these are sponsored by downtown's Business Improvement District (BID). There have been various initiatives to provide even more cultural attractions in downtown Riverhead, from the restoration of the Suffolk Theater, to the creation of a Long Island Science Center and children's museum.

Historic Character

Downtown Riverhead has distinctive historic buildings from the late 19th and early to mid-20th centuries. There are examples of various architectural styles, including Victorian, Neo-Classical, Georgian, Arts & Crafts, and Modern. Many of the buildings have fine masonry, woodwork, stained glass, and ironwork. The neighborhood north of Main Street also has a traditional layout, with gridded streets, small yards, front porches, and garages in the rear. Ironically, Riverhead offers the historic architecture and layout that are being replicated in "neo-traditional" neighborhoods (at great expense) in places like *Celebration, Florida* and *Kentlands, Maryland*. While such new subdivisions can attempt to re-create a traditional atmosphere, downtown Riverhead provides an authentic older neighborhood with a truly historic scale and character. In focus groups, participants identified the historic quality of downtown as one of Riverhead's key strengths.

Waterfront

In those same focus groups, residents and business leaders concurred that the Peconic River waterfront is one of downtown's greatest assets. Downtown is particularly unique, because it is stretched out along the length of the waterfront. Most Main Streets dead-end there, as in Port Jefferson. Thus, there are frequent views of the river all along Main Street, and *all* of downtown has a close physical relationship with the water.

The waterfront is a major recreational destination. The recently built boardwalk provides an attractive place to stroll, from Peconic Avenue to the new Aquarium. The boardwalk and the waterfront provide an attractive backdrop for the summertime concert series, the Community Mosaic, the Blues Festival, and other events. Also, the Riverhead boardwalk has the only sewer-docked on the East End of Long Island, providing a great opportunity for commercial, residential, and recreational boats to dock in downtown Riverhead. Outside of downtown, people use the river for kayaking, canoeing, and fishing.

Mixed Use

Downtown is not just a commercial retail center, but a complete neighborhood with a mix of housing, shops, offices, and civic and cultural institutions. The largest concentration of housing in the downtown area is the residential neighborhood located east of Roanoke Avenue and north of Main Street. Offices are clustered primarily in the area around the County Courthouse, with another cluster located on East Main Street, between the Aquarium and Town Hall. Many older residences in downtown Riverhead have been converted into small offices and beautifully restored. Many of the shops along Main Street have second or third floors with office space or apartments.

Walking Environment

Downtown already has many of the elements of a successful walking environment: historic buildings with unique facades; an attractive waterfront and boardwalk; brick pavers; antique lighting; street trees; and decorative directional signs. Nevertheless, some aspects of downtown impede pedestrian activity and should be fixed. Currently, streetscape treatments do not extend into the Office/Courts District, and they do not reach as far as the new Aquarium. Pedestrians often avoid places that are vacant or nondescript, including vacant storefronts and ground-floor offices. They may also be reluctant to walk past vacant lots or large parking lots, particularly at night, and they may stop walking along a commercial street with gaps between buildings or shops.

Traffic and Streets

The downtown street pattern has a unique blend of a grid pattern and cross-cutting through streets, like Main Street and Roanoke Avenue. While the through streets funnel more traffic and experience the worst congestion, the street grid diffuses traffic onto side streets and puts traffic pressure on the residential uses there. Downtown has experienced more traffic as a result of the Aquarium opening. The area in front of the Aquarium and along Main Street has the worst congestion. Without directional signage that diverts motorists, most Aquarium visitors probably drive up to the front of the building, realize there is no parking, and then drive back to a parking lot. This double-back movement pushes some of the congestion onto the local side streets.

Parking

Downtown Riverhead has a virtually ideal configuration of parking lots. Small lots are interspersed throughout the downtown area, providing most business and cultural facilities with convenient parking and helping to disperse traffic. The existing parking configuration is also valuable from an urban design perspective. Having the parking to the rear of Main Street buildings allows buildings to be located up to the sidewalk and street, creating an attractive walking environment along Main Street.

Downtown is expected to experience ever-greater demands on its parking supply, with buildout of currently planned projects and retail space. However, according to the Downtown Revitalization Strategy, neither weekday nor weekend parking demand is expected to exceed the total number of parking spaces in the downtown area, including on-street and off-street spaces. If it is determined that additional parking will be required in the downtown area, small parking lots should be added in the Office/Courts District. In that location, they can serve several uses — from the Courthouse, to the Library, to the transportation center, to downtown attractions. A shuttle could link these parking lots to the Aquarium, but ideally, some people will walk, patronizing local shops and restaurants along the way.

The downtown Parking District was created in order to establish and operate public parking lots in the downtown area. Property owners in the district are not required to provide on-site

parking, but are entitled to use the Parking District lots for all their parking needs. Downtown property owners pay taxes into the District for maintenance and operation. There is a combination of two-hour and unlimited time parking spaces in the Parking District lots. A parking attendant circulates throughout downtown and issues summonses if cars exceed their time limit. The parking attendant oversees the two-hour limited spaces, as well as on-street parking spaces. This system functions similar to parking meters and encourages some turnover in the on-street spaces, which allows more customers to park right in front of the stores.

ROUTE 58

In focus groups, community members made clear that they would prefer to concentrate future commercial strip development along Route 58, since it has already been transformed into a commercial corridor, and to limit development in other locations, which are still small in size and quaint in character. Yet as successful as Route 58 has been from a *commercial* perspective, it suffers from traffic congestion and poor aesthetics, and these issues need to be addressed before additional development is allowed there.

Drivers on Route 58 experience significant delays, particularly during the summer months, because tourists bound for the North Fork take the last exit off the LIE and use Route 58 to reach the North Fork. As traffic conditions have worsened on Route 58, more and more people have been using Middle Road and Sound Avenue as bypass routes. As evidence of the increasing traffic, speeding and car accidents increased on Middle Road over the course of the 1990s, according to the Town Engineer.¹ The Town should discourage use of Middle Road and Sound Avenue as bypass routes, in order to preserve the rural and residential character of those corridors and should continue to funnel most heavy traffic along Route 58. This issue is discussed further in Chapter 9, the Transportation Element.

During focus groups, community members expressed their dislike for the "strip" aesthetics of Route 58. The multi-lane roadway is flanked by single-story shopping centers, fast-food restaurants, gas stations and auto repair shops, and familiar "prototype" buildings (like the Pizza Hut and the Waldbaum's). Many parking lots are vast in size and inadequately landscaped. Large, sometimes garish, freestanding signs dominate the streetscape. The roadway is extremely unfriendly and potentially dangerous for pedestrians and bicyclists. Design improvements to Route 58 make sense not only from an aesthetic point of view, but also from an economic standpoint; they can help increase consumer interest and bolster property values.

¹ Interviewed by APPS, Inc., November 13, 2000.

ROUTE 25A

Route 25A in the Wading River area has some of the characteristics of a commercial shopping strip: national chain stores (King Kullen; CVS), large parking lots, and free-standing signs. However, Route 25A does not have the appearance of being overly built up, like Route 58. In addition to the large chain stores, there are several small and medium-size retailers, eateries, country stores, and offices along both Route 25A and Wading River-Manorville Road. The business district is relatively small in size and surrounded by open space, farmland, and low-density residential neighborhoods.

In the 1990s, with increasing population, tourism, and through-traffic, Wading River started to experience more pressure for commercial development. In 2002, a McDonald's fast-food restaurant was built on the site at the southwest corner of the Wading River-Manorville Road intersection, and the King Kullen shopping center underwent a major expansion. Because the newly expanded center will absorb most of the local demand for grocery store and drug store shopping, the other smaller parcels along Route 25A will tend to be developed as small stand-alone businesses, such as banks, fast-food restaurants, convenience stores, gas stations, and auto repair shops. As these sites are developed, Route 25A will look more and more like Route 58, unless development standards and design guidelines are established to encourage a more neighborhood-sensitive look.

WADING RIVER

The Wading River hamlet is a charming country crossroads with a few small shops and offices. It is tucked away in a rolling, forested landscape beside a series of small ponds in the midst of a quiet residential neighborhood, halfway between Route 25A and Wading River beach. Although the district is nearly built out to its maximum commercial zoning, an expansion of the commercial zoning is *not* desirable, because it would only undermine the historic and natural setting.

Wading River has been fortunate in that the design of most new buildings has been consistent with the older, historic structures. However, a few buildings have been built with wide front setbacks and contemporary styles that contrast the hamlet's traditional character. Design guidelines should be established to encourage traditional building dimensions, cornice lines, windows, entrances, and facade materials and details. Due to the hamlet's small size, traffic and parking have not become major issues. However, some sidewalk and landscaping improvements can be implemented to make the center even more pedestrian-friendly.

CALVERTON

The Calverton business district — on Route 25, near the intersection of Fresh Pond Road — is currently little more than a commercially zoned area. One successful commercial project has been built in the area — Calverton Commons — which is attractively designed around a central parking court and has lush landscaping along its street frontage. There are some other small businesses, eateries, and farmstands along the northern side of Route 25 that are well-

known by locals. In the future, residential development in the surrounding area and development of the Enterprise Park at Calverton will increase the demand for some convenience shopping, specialty shopping, personal services, and restaurants. Because a great deal of land in this hamlet center still remains vacant, it can provide an outlet for commercial retail development, as growth continues to occur.

JAMESPORT

The Jamesport hamlet center is clustered around the intersection of Route 25 and South Jamesport Avenue. The historic buildings, the antique shops and restaurants, the green and the gazebo, the historic church on the corner of Manor Lane, and the Community Center create a warm village ambiance. Jamesport is fortunate to be located at the eastern end of Riverhead, near the wine country and the recreational attractions of the North Fork. The combination of the countryside atmosphere and the unique location give Jamesport the potential to become the gateway to the North Fork wine country, capturing tourists traveling westward along Route 25.

Because the Jamesport area is overzoned for commercial development, it runs the risk of attracting commercial sprawl. A smaller land area, combined with "village" design standards, would promote a more compact pattern of development in keeping with the historic hamlet center, while still providing enough room for growth. West of the hamlet center, the farm stands, country stores, and other limited retail permitted by the Town's old zoning complement the rural character of the area and should continue to be allowed.

Residential development and tourism are adding more and more traffic to Route 25. Jamesport needs to remain auto-accessible, because tourists and shoppers will primarily arrive by car, and traffic jams could scare potential customers away. Nevertheless, a pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly environment is critical to the success of the hamlet center as a retail and restaurant destination. A multi-faceted strategy of partial traffic diversion, traffic calming, road and signal improvements, and limited roadway improvements outside the hamlet center would make traffic more manageable while not compromising the pedestrian environment.

AQUEBOGUE

Aquebogue does not have the strong hamlet identity that Jamesport has. Instead, it has two very small commercial clusters: an older center at the intersection of Route 25 and West Lane around the historic church, and the more contemporary commercial development near the intersection of Route 25 and Edgar Avenue, in the vicinity of the Aquebogue Elementary School. Other small businesses — as well as residences, farms, wetlands, and open space — fill in the rest of the business district. Because of its dispersed commercial development and its lack of a strong center, Aquebogue does not have the feel of a single, cohesive business district.

Although the adjacent residential subdivisions provide a potential customer base, Aquebogue will continue to have a hard time competing with Route 58 (about one mile west) and Jamesport (about one mile east) for commercial development. Competition from Route 58 suggests that the area zoned for commercial development around the Aquebogue Elementary School is larger than necessary to serve as a convenience center. At the same time, competition from Jamesport suggests that there will be little demand for specialty shopping near the intersection of West Lane, the older hamlet center of Aquebogue. The commercial zoning in the hamlet center should generally be scaled back to reduce the risk of sprawl.

UPPER EAST MAIN STREET

Upper East Main Street, which connects downtown to the Route 58 corridor, is lined with a mix of commercial and industrial uses. Yet Upper East Main Street is unlike either Route 58 or downtown. Whereas Route 58 is a commercial strip and downtown is a traditional center, Upper East Main Street is a hodgepodge of land uses: houses, office campuses, converted offices, automotive uses, industrial sites, institutions (like Town Hall), and apartment complexes. The appearance of the streetscape is as random as the land uses. Lot sizes vary from large office and industrial sites to very narrow sites with auto repair garages. Some front setbacks are given over to parking and storage, and many parts of the sidewalk are in disrepair. Office and apartment campuses are set back from the street behind trees and lawns.

While commercial and residential development is viable along Upper East Main Street, industrial zoning is questionable, since most future industrial development is expected to gravitate toward large lots in Enterprise Park and the vicinity. Commercial development on Upper East Main Street should be focused in a few concentrated nodes rather than in a long linear fashion, in order to avoid the sprawling strip style of Route 58. Such development patterns would be more compatible with the residential surroundings and provide a smoother transition between downtown and Route 58.

POLISH TOWN

The shops and restaurants along Pulaski Street that make up Polish Town are unique and charming. Walking along the street, a visitor can browse through wonderful food stores with imported goods and freshly baked breads. There are several well-known restaurants. Food and craft shops sell traditional Polish products, and Polish-speaking offices provide services to the community. Like downtown, Pulaski Street has small stores that are clustered along the sidewalk. Historic lamps, flower pots, and display windows create an attractive place to walk on a summer evening.

Polish Town has an active and enthusiastic group of property owners and merchants, bound by their common heritage, who work together to improve the neighborhood. For example, they installed the "Polish Town" signs that can be seen on either end of the Pulaski Street commercial area. In 2000, they also installed trees along the street as part of a grass-roots beautification project. The Pulaski Street area works very well, although the existing zoning

could be fine-tuned to ensure that new development is consistent with the traditional pattern of buildings. Also, the zoning could prohibit auto-oriented development — like service stations, auto repair and sales, and boat repair and sales — that, if built, would start to undo the traditional “Main Street” ambiance.

OTHER BUSINESS-ZONED AREAS

Most of Riverhead's other business-zoned areas — Wading River East, Roanoke, Laurel, and Route 25 in Calverton — are composed mostly of vacant sites, agricultural land, or open space. The few freestanding commercial establishments that have been built are few and far between. These areas do not have enough businesses or demand potential to function or grow into whole districts. While existing businesses should be allowed to stay, these districts would preferably be eliminated in order to prevent commercial sprawl. In the area north of downtown, commercial zoning covers areas that are mostly residential in use, and thus, rezoning to residential would be more appropriate.

6.3 GOALS & POLICIES

In the future, if retail development is concentrated in downtown, the hamlet centers, and on Route 58, and reduced elsewhere, it will generate higher value, greater satisfaction, and a larger consumer draw. In downtown, the challenge is to retool Main Street for tourism, while protecting and enhancing the historic building fabric and managing traffic and parking demands. On Route 58, the challenge is to ensure that new development does not replicate the problems associated with older strip development, and instead “gives back to the community” by protecting open space and trees, improving the design of commercial buildings, signs, and parking lots, and maintaining lush greenery along the roadway. Elsewhere, the challenge is to develop hamlet centers that are more concentrated in size and have the complementary cultural amenities and tourist attractions needed to succeed as specialty shopping centers.

OVERALL GOALS

A new hierarchy of retail zones, as well as area-specific planning, land use and design strategies, are needed to address these challenges. The new retail zones are presented and explained in Chapter 2, the Land Use Element, which includes a Proposed Land Use Plan for the entire Town. Each new zone has its own permitted land uses and design concepts. The new zones are loosely based on existing commercial zones, but they go much farther, requiring hamlet centers to have village-style development, linking commercial development along Route 58 to open space conservation, improving the aesthetics of commercial development, and better limiting commercial sprawl along rural corridors. Zoning, however, as a uniform tool, cannot address some of the unique traffic and aesthetic issues in each business district. Design strategies, parking and traffic management tools, economic development approaches, and public investments are needed as well.

Overarching goals for the Town's business districts are listed and explained below. Additional goals and policies specific to each business district are then presented. A map accompanies the discussion of each business district and demonstrates how the new zoning framework would be applied, as well as the how other planning strategies might be implemented. These maps are consistent with the Proposed Land Use Plan and the new zoning framework presented in Chapter 2, the Land Use Element.

Goal 6.1: Emphasize downtown as the civic, cultural, specialty shopping and historic center of Riverhead.

Downtown should be bolstered as a regional tourism center. A mix of cultural, retail, civic, park, tourism, office, entertainment, and residential uses should be promoted, in order to create a dynamic, 7-day a week, 4-seasons destination. Design standards in downtown should promote an historic, compact, pedestrian-oriented, high-amenity environment.

Goal 6.2: Emphasize destination retail in the Route 58/Tanger Mall area, as a way to absorb future retail demand, to provide needed services, and bolster the Town's tax base.

The Route 58/Tanger Mall area should (like downtown) continue to serve local residents as well as a regional clientele. Achieving high-quality and high-value development would bolster the Town's tax base. It can also support efforts to employ Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) to preserve agricultural land and open space. Design standards in the Route 58/Tanger Mall area should be respectful of the Town's rural character, by creating commercial development buffered and defined by landscaping and open space.

Goal 6.3: Protect and enhance hamlet centers in Calverton, Jamesport, Aquebogue, Wading River, and along Route 25A.

Smaller business districts should be enhanced through infill and adjoining development. They should portray a mix of commercial and civic uses, a traditional town layout, village greens, and other features that create hamlet centers, not just retail centers. Design standards in these areas should promote a "Main Street" environment (Jamesport and Aquebogue), a county crossroads environment (Calverton and Wading River), or a community shopping environment (Route 25A). Except in Wading River, adjacent land should be targeted for "traditional neighborhood design" housing development, featuring street arrangements and higher densities than allowed elsewhere. Hamlet centers should be designated TDR receiving areas, to further preserve agricultural land and open space.

Goal 6.4: Protect and enhance the neighborhood center along Pulaski Street in Polish Town, and transform Upper East Main Street into a green, mixed-use corridor that provides a transition between downtown and Route 58.

Both Polish Town and Upper East Main Street are closely related to the downtown area, both physically and economically, yet each has its own unique identity and commercial mix. The new zoning provisions, combined with various other improvements, should help strengthen and commercially improve their link to downtown. At the same time, those elements that lend a unique character to each place should be built up. In Polish Town, these elements are the Polish ethnic heritage and pride, as well as the "village" ambiance. Along Upper East Main Street, these elements include the greenery, the campus-style setting of existing industrial, office, and apartment sites, and the pockets of small-scale residential and commercial buildings.

Goal 6.5: Maintain the rural image of the Town by carefully controlling development along the Route 25 corridor in the Calverton, Aquebogue, and Jamesport areas.

Commercial development should be very strictly limited outside the business districts. Along portions of Route 25, commercial development should generally be prohibited, except for a handful of uses that would be compatible with the agricultural setting. Design standards should be adopted for such uses in order to better reflect the rural image of the Town. Elsewhere, the temptation to accommodate retail and commercial development along the Town's arterials and at its crossroads should be resisted. Exceptions are accessory farm uses, home occupations, and accessory retail establishments in Enterprise Park, and small-scale, agriculture-compatible uses like craft stores and farm stands.

GOALS & POLICIES FOR DOWNTOWN

Vision: Building on its historic character and its waterfront location, downtown Riverhead should have major civic and cultural attractions and specialty- and entertainment- oriented shopping along Main Street.

Table 6-1: Summary of Policies for Downtown

<i>Proposed Zoning</i>	<i>Improvements and Investments</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown Center (DC) should be the zoning throughout the downtown area, but DC has subzones that distinguish between different parts of downtown • DC-1: Main Street • DC-2: Waterfront • DC-3: Office (primarily in the vicinity of the County Courthouse) • DC-4: Office/Residential Transition (between the Courthouse area and the residential neighborhood east of Roanoke Avenue) • DC-5: Residential (residential neighborhood) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop retail market niches that will make downtown more appealing to tourists, including specialty food markets, restaurants, antique and furniture stores, music stores, and eclectic specialty stores • Promote the development or expansion of cultural and entertainment attractions and events • Promote the arts and artist housing • Establish an indoor, year-round regional farmers' market • Require developers to meet high design and landscaping standards for all new and rehabilitated buildings and signs • Improve landscaping, sidewalks, crosswalks, lighting and facades along Main Street • Expand and improve the waterfront park • Create public plazas in front of the train station and Courthouse • Improve sidewalk connections between the train station, the Courthouse area, and Main Street. • Preserve historic buildings and encourage adaptive reuse • Continue to provide parking in small, dispersed lots throughout the downtown area • Additional surface and deck parking in the center of blocks in the area near the Courthouse • No parking garage • No one-way streets • No intersection reconfigurations

Goal 6.6: Develop tourist and specialty shopping niches and a variety of tourist attractions.

Market niches are groups of stores or products that attract a certain type of customer. Currently, downtown Riverhead provides a mix of convenience and specialty shopping that caters to local residents, downtown employees, and shoppers seeking specialty items (e.g., antique furniture). As part of a shift toward to tourism and entertainment, the Town should work to further develop market niches and attractions that appeal to tourists, while still maintaining shops that serve local residents and workers.

Policy 6.6A: Promote specialty food markets and restaurants.

- ***Specifically, pursue an indoor public market or specialty supermarket on the north side of Main Street.***
- ***Pursue specialty or ethnic food markets.***
- ***Encourage outdoor dining.***

Specialty food markets and restaurants can provide lunch and dinner opportunities for downtown visitors. While Route 58 has fast-food restaurants, downtown can provide a more attractive dining atmosphere for tourists throughout the entire summer and particularly on weekends; they would also serve local employees during the week. A range of markets and restaurants should be provided. Some visitors would like to buy sandwiches and snacks and eat outdoors, perhaps by the waterfront. Others would prefer to eat at a sit-down restaurant. Outdoor dining would give restaurant patrons the option of eating inside or outside. Outdoor dining creates activity along the street and takes advantage of the warm summer weather. While Main Street sidewalks may be too narrow in many spots to accommodate sidewalk seating, outdoor tables and chairs could be set up to the rear of buildings in or on alleyways.

An indoor public market can provide not only a variety of unique foods, but also an exciting activity center. Currently, downtown has an outdoor farmer's market during summer, which has achieved moderate success. The indoor public market would also feature local growers, but would be different for several reasons: (1) it could be open all year, since it would be indoors; and (2) it could be designed not to compete directly with farm stands. Part of the reason why the outdoor farmer's market has not been as successful as others is that it provides many of the same products as popular farm stands along rural roads. The indoor public market should provide fewer vegetables and fruits and more "high-end" products like wine, duck, fish, cheese, and grapes. It could also feature products from other parts of New York (i.e., the Hudson Valley) and New England, not just from the local area. If retained, the outdoor farmers market could be staged next to the indoor public market.

A location on the north side of Main Street is preferable for the indoor market, because it can have front and back entrances, one on Main Street and a second one on the rear parking lot. In the summer months, an expanded public market could spill out into the parking lot. An indoor public market would need a sponsor to sign the lease and manage the space. The

Figure 6-1: Downtown

Back of Figure

sponsor would function like the manager of a shopping mall, who operates the space and leases stalls to individual vendors. A private-sector sponsor would be best, because they would have a profit incentive and the management expertise to make the public market work.

A specialty supermarket could provide an alternative to the public market and would eliminate the need for a sponsor or manager. While a conventional grocery store in downtown could probably not compete with supermarkets on Route 58, downtown could have specialty or ethnic food markets that require less space than a supermarket and provide unique items difficult to find elsewhere. Similar stores — bakeries, wine shops, organic food markets, other ethnic markets — could be very successful.

Policy 6.6B: Promote stores and restaurants oriented to children and families.

The Aquarium, the Historical Society, and the Science Center are major child and family destinations. Toy stores, child-friendly music stores, family restaurants, and children's programs at the Arts Council or the Library would build off of this emerging "children" theme and encourage families to spend the entire day in downtown Riverhead. The Aquarium visit lasts one to two hours, and these ancillary activities could help lengthen their stay and encourage families to patronize stores and restaurants.

Policy 6.6C: Promote antique stores and other specialty retail shops.

Policy 6.6D: Promote music stores and develop music programs for both adults and children.

With the annual Summer Concert Series and the Blues Festival, and the potential for using the Suffolk Theater and the Vail-Levitt Music Hall as performance spaces, downtown is becoming known as a center for music. Music stores and programs in conjunction with local elementary schools (i.e., music and dance lessons) could help develop music as a specialty niche.

Policy 6.6E: Preserve eclectic specialty stores and convenience shopping.

While attracting new tourist-oriented uses, existing eclectic stores in the downtown area ought to be retained to the extent practical. Stores like the camera shop, the uniform store, and Ben Franklin do not belong to any particular specialty niche, but they do provide a variety of interesting products that draw customers from a large trade area. This variety of products is an asset to the downtown. New shops and restaurants should be steered toward vacant storefronts and infill sites, so that existing shops remain in place.

Convenience shopping serves some local residents and downtown employees. While convenience shopping cannot be the focus of the downtown retail mix due to competition from Route 58, there can and should be shops and services that meet the everyday needs of the people who are in or pass by downtown every day. These include dry cleaners, delis, stationery stores, and other similar enterprises.

Policy 6.6F: Support the development and growth of downtown attractions and foster development of the arts.

Downtown attractions like the Aquarium, the East End Arts Council, and the Historical Society attract potential customers to Main Street shops and restaurants. Downtown is better off having a wide variety of attractions rather than a single major destination. The more downtown has to offer, the more likely visitors are to spend the entire day, and the more likely they are to make return trips. Having a variety of small attractions also encourages people to walk throughout downtown between destinations and to patronize shops along the way. The Town should support the efforts of existing attractions to offer new exhibits, programs, and events, and it should work to develop additional attractions, as discussed in Chapter 7, the Economic Development Element.

Development of the arts ought to be a focus of Town efforts, because of the widespread interest and patronage of the arts on the East End. With the presence of the East End Arts Council, the success of the Blues Festival and the summertime concert series, and the contemplated reopening of the Suffolk Theater, downtown already has the elements of an artistic center. In addition, the Town has authorized the commitment of resources to the Riverhead Incubator for the Arts (RIFTA), a performing arts and fine arts center that has helped to sustain the redevelopment of Downtown Riverhead as an arts district. To build on this strong basis, the Town could undertake the following tasks:

- Provide technical and financial assistance for artists who are seeking housing, studios, and gallery space;
- Pursue shops that cater to artists (such as music stores, art supply shops, film stores, etc.);
- Commission public art installations, providing work for local artists and making Riverhead identifiable as an artistic center to the occasional visitor;
- In conjunction with the BID, the East End Arts Council, RIFTA, the Suffolk Theater, and the Vail-Levitt Music Hall, sponsor additional art festivals, music performances, and craft shows to showcase local artists and draw tourists;
- Encourage local restaurants, shops, and cafes to display the art of local artists; and
- Encourage the East End Arts Council to remain open on summer weekends and sponsor weekend programs, particularly for young children.

Policy 6.6G: Encourage coordinated marketing and programming for downtown destinations, in order to promote longer visits.

Coordinated marketing could include ticket packaging, such as unified one-day passes to the Aquarium, the Historical Museum, the Arts Center, and the Railroad Museum. Similarly, programming could be coordinated between different venues. For instance, picking up on the Aquarium's aquatic theme, the Historical Society could offer a whaling exhibit and the Library could offer related readings. Local shops and restaurants could build off the Blues

Festival by providing "piano bar" performances and dinner and lunch specials. This would help extend the Blues Festival into the late evening hours.

By providing a set of activities that last an entire day, downtown Riverhead can draw families from a much larger trade area. People are generally willing to endure two-way travel times that are about half as long as the length of the visit. If a family can plan on a six-hour visit, they would be willing to travel from as far away as an hour and a half in one direction. People who stay the whole day will spend more money in local shops and restaurants, as they filter between attractions.

Policy 6.6H: Provide retailers and other businesses with incentives to locate in downtown Riverhead.

Tax abatement is already in place in the downtown area to encourage renovation and improvement of the building stock. Abatement applies to the increase in taxes that would result from an investment in real property within the Business Improvement District. This program has been extensively marketed to current and prospective owners to encourage investment. This program is called the Commercial and Industrial Tax Incentive Program and is a 10-year program, with the abatement beginning at 100% and reducing to 0% at year 10. Additionally, the Town of Riverhead in June 2003, with the support of the County of Suffolk and the State of New York Empire Development Corporation, approved the expansion of the Empire Development Zone (EDZ) at Calverton to include 61 acres of Downtown Riverhead. The EDZ designation provides economic incentives and assistance to retailers and other businesses with the aim of promoting private investment, business development, and job creation in economically struggling areas. These programs should be continued, and the Town should explore and develop other incentives that can help attract businesses to the downtown area.

Goal 6.7: Expand and improve the waterfront park.

The existing boardwalk and park along the Peconic River serve as major recreational attractions, where people can stroll, relax, and picnic. It also provides space for circulation between parking lots and downtown destinations.

Policy 6.7A: Expand the waterfront park west to the Court Street bridge and establish a continuous waterfront trail.

Pedestrian and bicycle trails should be extended through the waterfront park, so that there is a continuous riverfront trail. The waterfront park should eventually connect to a trail that runs westward along the Peconic River as part of the Town's greenway system (see Chapter 11, the Parks and Recreation Element). The waterfront trail can be designed as an interpretive walk, with signs that describe the natural habitat, the fish and bird species, and the history of the waterfront. An expanded waterfront park with better Main Street connections would also provide a physical linkage between most of downtown's destinations.

Expansion of the park would require the Town to purchase properties (or portions thereof) located along the waterfront. A portion of the Community Preservation Fund (CPF) has already been set aside for purchasing land for parks and open space. The Town should make a commitment to use this fund for buying waterfront property along the Peconic River.

Policy 6.7B: Work with the Town of Southampton to expand park uses and protect open space on the south side of the Peconic River.

The south side of the Peconic River is located within the Town of Southampton but exerts a strong influence on the functioning and image of downtown Riverhead. The south of side the river, like the north side, could contain pedestrian and bicycle trails, as well as recreational concessions, consistent with the Southampton Comprehensive Plan.

Policy 6.7C: Establish areas for recreational concessions and consider installing public restroom facilities in the park.

Recreational concessions and uses could be situated in the park, and at the gateways into downtown, on Peconic Avenue, East Main Street, and West Main Street. These include canoe and paddleboat rentals, bed-and-breakfasts, fishing supply stores, etc. Also, a theme children's playground could be added to the park, building off the Aquarium as a children's attraction. Public restrooms should be installed only if there is a plan for maintenance, operation, and security, and only if funding sources are provided.

Policy 6.7D: Preserve and enhance pedestrian and view corridors between Main Street and the Peconic River.

Some parts of the waterfront are difficult to see from West Main Street, because trees, undergrowth, and buildings block the views. As properties are procured for park expansion, the Town should redesign the enlarged park to create and preserve view corridors and pedestrian connections from Main Street. In the center of downtown, alleyways and streets provide views of the water and access to the parking lots behind Main Street, but some do not lead all the way down to the waterfront. Landscaping, walkways, and lighting should be redesigned so that there are safe, direct, and visible connections between the waterfront and Main Street. River "identifiers" or beacons (i.e., banners, public artwork) could be placed along the waterfront to call attention to the water's edge.

Policy 6.7E: Limit polluted runoff from draining into the Peconic River.

Parking lot surfaces collect particulate matter, oil, salt, and dirt from automobiles, and during heavy rains, the pollutants bubble to the surface and contaminate the surface water runoff. There is a natural grade from Main Street to the waterfront, so contaminated surface water would tend to flow into the river. Trees, shrubs, and grass can help trap water and limit runoff. Adding additional landscaped areas to the parking lots can therefore prevent contaminants from flowing into the river. This may mean that surface pollutants will collect

in soils, but as with the water, the low levels of pollutant would not be expected to create significant contamination.

Goal 6.8: Establish a land use framework, while preserving and promoting a fine-grain mix of uses.

Keeping a mix of uses will help maintain the variety and vitality of downtown Riverhead. At the same time, establishing a more ordered land use framework can group together compatible uses and minimize conflicts between adjacent land uses. Figure 6-1 shows the proposed zoning framework.

Policy 6.8A: Encourage ground-floor retail along Main Street, with apartments and offices on the upper floors.

Mixed-use buildings encourage local walking trips, because office and residential uses are integrated into the downtown shopping area.

Policy 6.8B: Encourage cultural attractions to expand into adjacent buildings or lots.

Cultural attractions are arranged in a linear fashion along Main Street and the waterfront. In the future, there may be interest or pressure to expand the activities and programs offered. In order to keep these uses in downtown, the Town should work with cultural attractions to provide opportunities to expand into adjacent sites.

Policy 6.8C: Maintain the pattern of small, dispersed parking lots, and ensure that any new parking lots are built according to the same pattern.

Small, scattered parking lots provide convenient access to buildings throughout the downtown area and help disperse traffic.

Policy 6.8D: Encourage the development of mixed-use buildings on infill sites throughout the downtown area.

Along Main Street and side streets, there are vacant lots that should be targeted for infill development. Infill development will help create a continuous street frontage. As part of the zoning ordinance update, the Town should adopt mixed-use requirements or incentives for new buildings along Main Street.

Policy 6.8E: Concentrate office uses in the Office/Court District.

Offices are already and should continue to be concentrated in the vicinity of the County Court building. Offices typically have higher real estate value than retail and residential buildings, and could potentially create pressure for site assemblage, conversion of storefront space, and

demolition or conversion of houses. While conversion of some houses and above-store space is desirable, conversion of ground-floor storefronts to office uses are not, and not all residential areas ought to be opened up to office conversion. The area for single-purpose conventional office buildings ought to be limited in order to prevent pressure for demolition and/or speculation on Main Street or in the adjoining residential area.

Policy 6.8F: In the Office/Court District, create large parking lots in the center of the blocks, and line the edges of the blocks with office, retail and institutional buildings.

This strategy provides adequate space for desperately needed parking, while still maintaining a consistent street wall. This approach mimics the existing pattern of parking lots and buildings along Main Street and thus creates a consistent character throughout the downtown area. Specifically, Court Street is targeted for infill office development along the street, with parking behind the buildings on both sides. The area between Court Street and the LIRR station could be cleared for additional parking lots, providing convenient parking for not only the station, but also the Library, the Historical Society, and the Courts.

Policy 6.8G: Create a mixed office and residential district on either side of the residential neighborhood located north of Main Street, where residential-to-office conversions would be allowed.

This would provide a transition between the more intensively used Office/Court district and the relatively quiet residential neighborhood east of Roanoke Avenue. Residential uses located on Third Street are marginal and negatively impacted from railroad noise; they ought to be reconfigured and redeveloped. Closing Third Street and consolidating several lots would create a larger, more buildable development parcel. Office uses are preferred for the site, because of the adjacent noise impacts, but residential uses could be permitted with the appropriate setbacks and buffers.

Policy 6.8H: In the residential area north of Main Street, establish a residential zone that prohibits stand-alone commercial uses, while allowing home occupations and artist studios and galleries.

The neighborhood is under pressure for conversion to office uses and parking lots, and this policy would help protect the historic housing stock. A limited area around the edges of the residential area would allow office conversions. Within the neighborhood itself, home occupations would be permitted, subject to performance standards, and artists would be allowed to set up studios and galleries, either in spare rooms or in detached ancillary buildings. These commercial uses would be permitted only as an ancillary use to a residence.

Policy 6.8I: As part of the zoning ordinance update, establish setback, buffer, landscaping, and other standards that minimize land use impacts while maintaining mixed uses.

In any location where two different land uses are located next to one another, there may be off-site negative impacts. For example, morning deliveries to businesses could generate noise that disturbs adjacent or upper-floor residences. In less dense suburban locations, these impacts can be avoided through setbacks and buffers, but in downtown Riverhead, there are other strategies more appropriate to the compact, mixed-use setting. One option is to restrict the hours of operation of businesses (e.g., opening and closing times, truck delivery hours, etc.).

Goal 6.9: Promote housing revitalization and artist housing.

Policy 6.9A: Work with the Business Improvement District to make housing available to visual and performance artists in the downtown area, and provide incentives for landlords to lease space to artists.

Consistent with efforts to promote the arts in downtown, the Town should work with the BID to develop a marketing scheme that aims to attract artists to downtown Riverhead. The strategy should take into account the needs of artists and their families and should provide technical assistance to artists who are looking for housing. Because artists may have minimal or inconsistent sources of income, they may require assistance in renting and buying homes.

Similarly, the Town should provide incentives for landlords to lease space to artists. For landlords with artist tenants, real estate taxes could be frozen for the first five years and then undergo a five-year graduated return to the proper level, thereby adding immunity to the affects of inflation. Another option is encourage landlords and artists to develop renovation agreements, where artists would pay a lower rent in exchange for renovations on their living space. Many artists seek flexible space that they can improve and upgrade to suit their own needs and artistic expression.

Policy 6.9B: Expand the boundaries of the downtown Arts District, to include the entire downtown area and allow greater flexibility in artist housing, studios, and galleries.

In 1997, the Town passed the "Riverhead Arts District Law," which permitted studios, galleries, and ancillary artist housing in a portion of the downtown area. Based on experience in other cities, artists generally choose their place of residence first, and the presence of a studio space is a secondary factor. Therefore, in addition to permitting studios, galleries, and ancillary artist housing, the regulations should be amended to allow ancillary studios or galleries and retail sales of art in appropriately sized housing units. Performance standards could limit the hours of heavy studio work (i.e., welding), require buffering or screening, or impose other regulations to minimize impacts on adjacent uses.

Policy 6.9C: Expand the definition of an "artist" to include persons practicing any of the applied arts, and eliminate Town Board approval of artist certification.

Currently, the "Riverhead Arts District Law" defines an artist as "a person who is regularly engaged in the fine arts... or in the performing or creative arts... or in the composition of music on a professional basis." This definition excludes any person involved in the applied arts, such as pottery-making, jewelry-making, or graphic design. The applied arts would be equally appropriate in the Arts District and should be added to the definition.

Town Board approval of artist certification creates an unnecessary level of bureaucracy to the artist certification process and potentially discourages artists from coming into Town. Town staff can more quickly and easily certify artists. The zoning ordinance should be revised to provide a more workable definition of "artist" to be applied by staff.

Policy 6.9D: Allow home occupations in the downtown area, on condition of meeting stringent performance standards, sign regulations, and locational requirements.

Chapter 7, the Economic Development Element, provides a detailed discussion of ways to provide, promote, and regulate home occupations.

Policy 6.9E: Provide property tax incentives for housing rehabilitation.

Residential development currently does not have the opportunity to take advantage of tax incentives offered to commercial development in the downtown area. Commercial development can abate taxes for ten years for investments in excess of \$50,000.

Goal 6.10: Preserve and enhance downtown's historic character.

Policy 6.10A: Identify historically significant sites and buildings, and implement historic preservation regulations as part of the zoning code update.

Consistent with Chapter 5, the Scenic and Historic Resources Preservation Element, the Town should complete a survey to identify sites and buildings in the downtown area that have local historical value. These buildings shall be subject to special regulations, in order to protect the buildings from demolition, and to ensure that alterations are consistent with the character of the original building. The Main Street area should be strongly considered for designation as an historic district.

Policy 6.10B: Provide opportunities for relocating historic houses in downtown Riverhead.

The Town should establish a program for relocating historic homes from other locations to infill sites in downtown. Specifically, houses abutting the railroad or along the river could be relocated to infill sites to create a more suitable setback from the tracks or implement the proposed riverside park.

Policy 6.10C: Seek and provide financial incentives for historic preservation.

Such incentives are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5, the Scenic and Historic Resources Preservation Element. Further, the Town should pursue those intergovernmental arrangements necessary to provide for relaxed building construction standards for the renovation and use of older buildings within the downtown.

Goal 6.11: Preserve and promote traditional building layouts and development patterns, while allowing variety in building design.

New buildings built in the downtown area should have a design that is consistent with older downtown buildings. This is not to say that all buildings should have a specific style, such as Victorian or Arts & Crafts. On the contrary, downtowns should have buildings that represent a variety of architectural styles, because that mix gives downtown an eclectic and refreshing character. Promoting "traditional" building layouts means that buildings should be compact and oriented to pedestrians, but modern-looking buildings can achieve that layout just as well as older-looking buildings.

Policy 6.11A: Establish maximum setbacks and requirements for pedestrian-oriented design.

Excessive setbacks create gaps in the street wall and reduce the walkability of streets. Traditional residential setbacks in the downtown area are about five to fifteen feet, and along Main Street, buildings are built right up to the property line. In the zoning ordinance, buildings should be required to build up to the line that is comparable to the setbacks of other downtown buildings. In addition, the main entrance of each building should be encouraged to be oriented to the street, rather than the parking lot. Similarly, the zoning ordinance should encourage buildings along the Peconic River to provide for dual entrances, such that entrances are oriented to both the street and the waterfront. This would promote activity along the Peconic River while maintaining the traditional store fronts on Main Street. In residential areas, garages can be required to be setback behind the rest of the house, so that auto access is secondary to pedestrian access.

Policy 6.11B: Encourage ground-floor retail along Main Street.

Retail should be the preferred use on the ground-floor along Main Street. Retail stores create a visually stimulating, active storefront, whereas offices and residential uses draw less activity. Maintaining a solid strip of retail on the ground floor encourages pedestrians to keep walking along the street.

Policy 6.11C: Establish detailed downtown design standards.

Design standards can ensure that new buildings have the bare minimum elements of well-designed buildings, such as minimum window area and appropriate exterior materials. Standards can also be established to ensure that building additions or alterations are consistent with the original design.

Policy 6.11D: Prohibit auto-oriented land uses in the downtown area.

Auto-oriented uses like drive-throughs, gas stations, car dealerships, car rental agencies, and auto repair shops should be prohibited in downtown. This ensures that any future infill development is consistent with the pedestrian orientation of older downtown buildings.

Policy 6.11E: Ensure that sign regulations are pedestrian-oriented and compatible with the downtown character, but continue to allow variety in signage design.

Sign regulations ought to establish appropriate limits on the size and type of signs allowed in the downtown area. Billboards, roof signs, or other large signs ought to be prohibited. Similarly, specific types of illuminated signs (i.e., internally illuminated signs, flashing signs) ought to be prohibited or strictly limited. However, a wide variety of signs should still be permitted, in order to give downtown a vibrant and eclectic character. Awning signs, wall signs, signs hanging over the sidewalk, some neon signs, and banners can all be permitted. Limitations on size, materials, height, and location should be imposed.

Policy 6.11F: Establish minimum and maximum residential lot sizes that resemble existing lots in the downtown area.

The smallest residential lot size allowed under the current zoning is 20,000 square feet, about a half-acre. Most existing residential lots in the downtown area, however, are 6,000 to 10,000 square feet, about one-eighth to one-quarter acre. Residential zoning regulations should allow single-family residential lots that are compatible in size with existing development. This would help maintain the compact scale and traditional ambiance of the neighborhood. Zero lot line development should be permitted.

Policy 6.11G: Establish parking standards that take into account the traditional buildings and space constraints.

Property owners outside the Parking District are required to provide their own parking spaces. In some cases, parking requirements may be excessive or overly restrictive, particularly for those sites where on-street parking or public parking lots are available. For instance, housing being converted to offices has sometimes been required to install more parking spaces that they have room for in the front and rear yards. The zoning ordinance update should include shared parking provisions, updated parking standards that are tailored to the downtown context, and provisions regarding the design of small parking lots.

Goal 6.12: Promote pedestrian and bicycle access and circulation.

Policy 6.12A: Implement continuous streetscape and façade improvements.

Along most of Main Street, the Town has already implemented a series of streetscape improvements that included brick pavers and antique street lamps; but this streetscape treatment does not yet extend as far as the new Aquarium or into the Office/Court district. Continuous, consistent streetscape improvements can help weave together the different downtown zones and expand the perceived walkable area of downtown.

Façade improvements could also help bolster the image of downtown and encourage pedestrian activity. The Town should establish a façade improvement program that provides a mixture of grants and tax incentives to encourage façade cleaning, door and window replacement and repair, enlarged windows, compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and installation of awnings and planters. Wherever there are vacant lots or parking lots along downtown streets, decorative fencing, landscaping, trees, low walls, or benches should be added in order to mask the empty space and preserve the continuity of the frontage.

Policy 6.12B: Build pedestrian walkways between Main Street and the waterfront.

Sidewalks leading down from Main Street do not all reach the waterfront. The Town should work with the Parking District to build continuous landscaped walkways, with the consultation of a landscape architect.

Policy 6.12C: Establish crosswalks and sidewalk bulbs at certain key intersections, and improve pedestrian safety at the Peconic-Roanoke-Main Street intersection.

Crosswalks are critical for pedestrian circulation and are necessary at certain major intersections in downtown. Also, sidewalk "bulbs" (a.k.a. "neckdowns") at certain crosswalks can reduce the length of the walk across the street, increasing safety. Crosswalks that are decorated with pavers or cement can enhance the special quality of the place. Pedestrian improvements are particularly necessary at the Peconic-Roanoke-Main Street intersection, which experiences heavy traffic congestion. The offset intersection has poor visibility, with cars often speeding around blind corners, and pedestrian crosswalks have been obscured. An "all stop" crosswalk can be installed there to allow all pedestrians to cross through the intersection at once.

Policy 6.12D: Work with the Business Improvement District and downtown property owners to consider collecting fees for the purpose of undertaking streetscape improvements.

Sidewalk, crosswalk, curb, and drainage improvements could be funded in this way. The same concept is currently employed by the Parking District.

Policy 6.12E: Keep all existing connections across the LIRR tracks.

Street connections allow for pedestrian circulation. In places like downtown Riverhead, where there is a variegated grid pattern of streets, pedestrian circulation is particularly convenient. Closing any of the streets across the LIRR tracks would impede pedestrian circulation, and cut off residents immediately north of the tracks from the downtown area. The Town should work with the LIRR to ensure that all existing street crossings are retained.

Policy 6.12F: Work with the Parking District to install bicycle racks in Parking District lots. Require property owners outside the Parking District to provide bicycle racks on-site.

The absence of bicycle parking can be a deterrent to bike riding. If bike racks are present, people who might otherwise drive their cars could ride their bikes instead and be assured a safe place to lock their bicycle.

Goal 6.13: Manage traffic circulation while maintaining auto access.

Maintaining auto access to downtown is critical to its success. Most tourists and visitors will arrive by car and will need to enter and exit downtown quickly and easily. Traffic difficulties in the downtown area could keep visitors from making a return trip. At the same time, traffic circulation needs to be properly managed, so that pedestrian and bicycle circulation is not compromised.

Policy 6.13A: Maintain two-way streets and prohibit street closures.

Proposals for one-way streets or street closures would detract from the vitality of Main Street. One-way streets would impede access into downtown and would create high-speed traffic thoroughfares unfriendly to pedestrians. Two-way streets would maintain auto access and still accommodate pedestrian activity. Street closures tend to sap life from traditional commercial districts.

Policy 6.13B: Relieve congestion on Main Street and at the Peconic-Roanoke- Main Street intersection by installing directional signs that divert cars into parking lots before they reach the core Main Street area.

Motorists have a tendency to drive up to a building to look for the closest parking, and then double back when they don't find an available space. Diversion signs can reduce this tendency and help keep traffic off of Main Street. If traffic conditions worsen on Main Street and at the Peconic-Roanoke-Main Street intersection, the driveway leading east from Peconic Avenue into the parking lots along the riverfront should be converted into a regular roadway. The road already functions as a bypass route for Main Street. Converting the driveway into a roadway would provide an easier and more apparent way to reach the Aquarium. It would also improve access to the parking lots.

Policy 6.13C: Increase opportunities for reaching downtown Riverhead by train.

As discussed in Chapter 9, the Transportation Element, the Town should work with the LIRR to increase train service to downtown Riverhead. Excursion trips can provide coordinated ticketing and access to a variety of downtown (and other Riverhead) attractions and events. Also, the Town should work with the LIRR to provide additional weekend service to Riverhead during the summer months.

Goal 6.14: Expand the facilities of the Riverhead Parking District.

Adequate parking is critical to the success of downtown Riverhead as a tourist destination. Some destinations in downtown have different peak parking periods, so parking used for one attraction can be used for another attraction at another time. Nevertheless, a parking shortage may occur during peak summer weekends until a shared parking arrangement or other actions are established. Further, parking district facilities should be expanded to ensure adequate parking for patrons, visitors, and residents. Possible sites include:

- Parking lot on the south side of 129-1-21 on Mc Dermott Avenue;
- The decked parking located north of the old Woolworth building.

Policy 6.14A: Assess the parking impacts created by Phase I of the Aquarium.

To understand the parking needs that can be expected under full buildout of the Aquarium, the Town should study the parking impacts created by Phase I of the Aquarium. The study should focus on demand during summer months, when demand is greatest, and it should examine the changes in parking needs over the course of a typical summer weekday and weekend day. The study should also examine the needs for bus parking, where Aquarium visitors are parking, and how far they are willing to walk.

Policy 6.14B: Consider expanding the Parking District boundaries to include all downtown shops, offices, and attractions.

Currently, there are major downtown destinations — including the County Courthouse, the train station, the Railroad Museum, the Library, and the office complex on East Main Street — that lie outside the District. Some of these destinations, like the Courts, already have parking demand that spills over into Parking District lots, meaning that they make use of the parking lots without contributing to the tax revenue. Incorporating these major destinations into the Parking District would ensure that all downtown parking users are contributing equitably to parking maintenance and monitoring. Expansion of the Parking District would allow visitors to use all downtown parking lots, while ensuring that all the lots are monitored and maintained. This strategy could be used to implement the parking deck proposed for the Court parking lot, as discussed later in this section.

Policy 6.14C: Work with the Parking District to pursue shared parking agreements.

As an alternative to expanding the Parking District, there are several large parking lots outside the Parking District that can be used for shared parking. In particular, the parking lot behind the County Courthouse building and the lot for the East Main Street office center are not used during weekends and evenings, when courts and offices are closed. The Aquarium and other cultural attractions experience the greatest parking demand during weekends, and the Suffolk Theater and the Vail-Levitt Music Hall would experience the greatest demand during evenings. There are enough parking spaces in these and other private parking lots to accommodate much of the parking demand for the entire downtown area.

Policy 6.14D: Redesign the configuration of on-street parking on all downtown streets, in order to maximize the supply of on-street parking.

Downtown already has several hundred on-street parking spaces. Additional spaces could be added to the street by making simple adjustments. For example, bus stops could be co-located with fire hydrants, so fewer spaces are lost to such uses. The Town should work with a landscape architect to undertake a comprehensive, detailed redesign of on-street parking and parking lot configuration and design.

Policy 6.14E: If new parking lots are necessary, build them in the Office/Court district and near the train station.

There is currently a large vacant lot at the corner of Roanoke and Railroad Avenues that could easily be converted to surface parking. Also, there are marginal buildings and uses adjacent to the LIRR station that could also be converted to parking lots. Parking lots in this area would serve multiple functions. It would provide daytime parking for Court employees. It would provide spillover parking for the Library and downtown events. It would provide parking for the Historical Society, which currently lacks parking. Finally, it would serve as an interceptor for motorists on their way to the Aquarium, most of whom are expected to come from areas to the west.

Policy 6.14F: Explore the establishment of a privately operated shuttle that runs back and forth along Main Street between the Office/Court district parking lots and the Atlantis Aquarium on weekends.

A summer weekend shuttle service could link the Office/Court district lots with the Aquarium. A weekday shuttle could run on an expanded route, connecting the train station, the Library, Town Hall, and points along Main Street. Studies have shown that people are generally willing to wait no more than nine minutes for a shuttle. The proposed shuttle could run every five to eight minutes for truly convenient service. Assuming that a single loop takes 15 minutes, accounting for pick-up, travel time, and drop-off, the shuttle service would require two or three continually circulating buses in order to maintain five- to eight-minute headways (or wait time).

The proposed privately operated shuttles would be similar to those that were employed by Tanger Mall. During the week, the same shuttle could be used to meet rail travelers whose destinations are either the County offices in Southampton or Tanger Mall.

Policy 6.14G: If a parking garage is necessary, build a recessed parking deck behind the County Court buildings.

While most shoppers and tourists shy away from using a parking garage, employees are usually more willing to park there. The County Courts currently generate a large employee-based parking demand. The Court parking is always full during a work day, and Court-related parking spills over into the adjacent Parking District lots. Building a parking deck behind the County Courts would help alleviate this highly concentrated demand. On weekends, the lots could serve double-duty as parking for the Aquarium and other downtown destinations.

A parking garage, if built, should also be limited in size and visually hidden from downtown streetscapes. An elevated parking deck built behind the County Court building would be hidden behind the large Court building itself. The design of the deck could alternatively take advantage of the slope, so that the lower portion is level with West Main Street and partially submerged, and the upper portion appears like a surface parking lot from Court Street.

Policy 6.14H: Require downtown attractions to provide adequate bus drop-off areas and facilities, and ensure that Parking District lots have space for bus parking.

Downtown attractions such as the Aquarium, the proposed Science Center, and the Historical Society attract school field trips. Bus drop-off areas are required to ensure child safety and keep pulled-over buses out of traffic lanes along Main Street. The Aquarium is already outfitted with a bus drop-off area in front, and other attractions can be required to build similar facilities.

Parking District lots ought to be designed so as to accommodate buses. The Town should designate a remote central bus parking area for buses that are idle during field trips. In addition, buses ought to be able to negotiate curves in the circulation lanes, and they should be able to park across two face-to-face parking spaces, as buses are roughly twice as long as normal-sized cars. Thus, some head-to-head spaces should not be obstructed by landscaping or wheel stops.

Policy 6.14I: Allow the Parking District to review and submit comments on proposed projects in the downtown area.

New development in downtown would potentially increase parking demand in Parking District lots and reduce parking availability for existing shops, offices, and attractions. As new projects are proposed, the Town should request that the Parking District review the project proposals and submit written comments. The comments would then be taken into account in the normal decision-making procedures for the project.

Policy 6.14J: Ensure that adequate handicapped parking is provided.

Such spaces should be located in prime spots, near building entrances and walkways.

Goal 6.15: Design parking lots that are walkable, attractive, and integrated with downtown buildings.

Policy 6.15A: Preserve the pattern of small, dispersed parking lots.

The existing small lots are integrated with downtown buildings, which are arranged in a traditional, compact form. They are also largely hidden from view, behind buildings, so that they do not interrupt the charming downtown streetscapes. Moreover, small lots provide convenient access to downtown shops. If any new parking lots are developed, therefore, they should be built according to the same pattern as the existing parking lots.

Policy 6.15B: Design parking lots with identifiable pedestrian walkways, lighting, trees, planting beds, marked entrances, and clear edges, as well as architectural flourishes like archways, decorative pavers, and monuments.

Policy 6.15C: Expand the use of the parking lots along the Peconic River for special events.

The parking lots along the Peconic River are currently used for outdoor performances during the annual Blues Festival and other summertime events. The parking lots can be redesigned, so that they can be more easily converted into performance spaces. Lighting fixtures can be outfitted with durable outdoor electrical outlets, useful for powering stage lights and sound systems. The actual layout of the landscape features and parking aisles should create a natural stage area and audience space. Trees are necessary for shade and comfort, but they should be high-branching and arranged so as not to interrupt sight lines.

Policy 6.15D: Keep sight lines open between Roanoke Avenue and the County Court building by establishing a public plaza and/or landscaped parking lots in the area.

This proposal would enhance the Court building as an architectural landmark in the downtown area. A public plaza could serve as a place for workers to eat lunch outdoors, and it would also function as a celebratory civic space, which downtown currently lacks. The plaza and parking lots could be used for outdoor fairs or events. With the neo-classical façade of the Court building as a backdrop, the plaza and parking lots would become a special destination in downtown Riverhead. Street improvements along Griffing Avenue would help connect this center to Main Street and the waterfront.

Goal 6.16: Enhance gateways and arrival points.

Gateways and arrival points convey the character of downtown and leave indelible impressions with visitors.

Policy 6.16A: Implement streetscape and landscape improvements in key locations.

While all downtown streets should be friendly to pedestrians (with crosswalks, decorative paving, street lamps, trees, shrubs and flowers, decorative signs), gateways and arrival points should have special additional treatment. For example, the Main Street-Court Street intersection is a gateway into downtown in that it provides the first glimpse of the waterfront and has three great civic buildings — the Suffolk County Historical Society, the Henry Perkins Hotel, and the Riverhead Free Library. The design of this gateway should open up pedestrian connections and views of the water. Banners, flags, and landscaping can be used to create a celebratory space that calls attention to the civic buildings. Also, the Historical Society lawn is an attractive, shady space and one of the largest green spaces in downtown and could serve as the setting for summer events, like an arts and crafts market or antique show.

Policy 6.16B: Install edifice lighting on the façades of major downtown landmarks, and install holiday lights and decorations along Main Street from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day.

Edifice lighting can create a dramatic and festive atmosphere in the downtown area, particularly during the winter months, when daylight is limited. It can also call attention to the unique architecture found in downtown. Buildings that could be lit include the Bank of New York building, the Aquarium, the two churches, the Woolworth building, the County Court building, and the Henry Perkins hotel. Holiday lighting can be installed on Main Street buildings, on lampposts, or on trees.

Policy 6.16C: Work with the Business Improvement District to establish maintenance plans for gateways and arrival points.

Attention to detail and high maintenance is an important part of making gateways and arrival points into special places. The maintenance plan should establish standards and develop a funding and implementation strategy.

Policy 6.16D: Create a public plaza/greenway that links the train station to Court Street.

Establish a pedestrian-oriented plaza in the block between Railroad Avenue and Court Street. The space should be bounded by two one-way streets (i.e., the existing Cedar Street and a new road) and should have sidewalks, trees, landscaping, and benches. It will create a physical and visual link between the train station and Court Street, giving the impression that the station is located on Court Street, one of the major entering roadways into downtown.

GOALS & POLICIES FOR ROUTE 58

Vision: Route 58 should remain Riverhead's principal destination for convenience and comparison shopping, but with improved design, traffic circulation, and landscaping requirements.

Table 6-2: Summary of Policies for Route 58

<i>Proposed Zoning</i>	<i>Improvements and Investments</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destination Retail Center (DRC) in west • Shopping Center (SC) on larger sites in center • Business Center (BC) on smaller sites • High-density residential development on appropriate parcels contiguous with commercial development with transferred development rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require developers to meet high design and landscaping standards for new commercial sites, buildings, and signs • Plant trees and flowering shrubs alongside the arterial • Work with property owners to align site entrances at traffic lights • Encourage the County to implement roadway and signal improvements that ameliorate the flow of through-traffic • Encourage the County to include a planted median and left-turn pockets in any future road-widening projects along Route 58

Goal 6.17: Promote a mix of comparison shopping and convenience shopping along Route 58 that continues to serve both local residents and a regional clientele.

Policy 6.17A: Open up the western portion of Route 58 for Destination Retail Center development.

The ongoing success of Tanger Mall and the growing tourism industry in Riverhead and the North Fork are creating pressure to open up more land for commercial development along the western half of Route 58. For example, in 2001, an Applebee's Restaurant was developed across the street to take advantage of the Tanger Mall clientele. Currently, the area around Tanger Mall, from the Long Island Expressway (LIE) to Harrison Avenue, is mostly zoned for industrial development. Rezoning the area for a wider range of business uses would stimulate assemblage and revitalization of sites in that area, some of which are small-scale and under-utilized. The proximity to the LIE provides a unique opportunity for allow for destination-style retail operations.

In 1996, the Riverhead Planning Board recommended that the industrially zoned land at the western terminus of Route 58 be rezoned in order to discourage inappropriate industrial development and encourage regional commercial development within the vicinity.

During CAC meetings, some participants questioned whether additional retail development along the Route 58 corridor was really necessary, in light of anticipated future population growth. The proposed DRC zoning, however, is intended to draw not only from the local population, but also from a regional market. By building up such destination retail establishments, the Town would experience a positive cash flow of retail expenditures, resulting in higher commercial property values, commercial tax ratables, and increased sales tax revenue sharing. This helps pay for Town services and schools, and reduces pressure for future tax increases, which benefits all Riverhead residents.

Policy 6.17B: Allow a mix of Shopping Center and Business Center development along the rest of Route 58.

Currently, the commercial core of Route 58 is zoned Business B and Business C. These zones allow the full range of retail stores, and they limit office development to business-related, professional, and fraternal offices. With no minimum lot sizes, Business B and Business C allow for a variety of large and small convenience retail establishments. The zoning has successfully attracted auto-oriented convenience retail that provides essential products and services to the community and creates a substantial tax base.

The zoning should continue to allow this mix of uses, while fine-tuning the regulations, so that larger Shopping Center (SC) lots and smaller Business Center (BC) lots are treated in slightly different ways. Lots in the BC zone would be smaller, oriented to quick in-and-out convenience shopping, whereas lots in the SC zone would be larger and can accommodate large-footprint grocery stores. Buildings in the BC zone would be closer to the street, and the sites have frequent curb cuts. SC sites would have large setbacks and parking lots with consolidated curb cuts. While the two zones would have many of the same permitted uses, the BC zone would be the only place along the corridor where new auto dealerships and car washes (by special use permit of the Town Board) would be permitted.

Goal 6.18: Promote improved architectural and site design, traffic circulation, and open space conservation along the Route 58 corridor.

Chapter 9, the Transportation Element, includes detailed provisions for improving traffic flow along the Route 58 corridor, both for local and through traffic. The following policies address the other two issues of design and open space.

Policy 6.18A: Implement more strict design and landscaping standards for new development along Route 58.

Route 58 works well as a commercial corridor and its design should continue to provide safe automobile access and convenient parking. At the same time, superior design concepts can be adapted to fit into its auto-oriented environment. These design changes, while they do not amount to a "Main Street" or "neo-traditional" environment, can still improve the appearance and image of the corridor, erasing some of the adverse impacts of commercial sprawl. The following design concepts can be applied to Route 58:

- *Building Scale, Mass, Materials, and Entrances.* To prevent overly bulky buildings, the height and width of a building should be proportional to the lot size and setbacks, and large expanses of blank walls should be avoided by requiring variations in façade treatment. Exterior building materials should be limited to non-reflective surfaces. Building entrances should be visible from and oriented to the street. These measures would make shopping centers more pedestrian-friendly and storefronts more visible and attractive.
- *Parking Lot Size and Site Location.* Parking lots should be broken up between and behind buildings or landscaped areas, rather than concentrated into a single expanse of asphalt. This reduces the visual dominance of the parking lot and allows the buildings and landscaping to become more visually prominent.
- *Landscaping.* Current landscaping requirements in the existing Business B and C zones are limited to evergreen screening adjacent to residential uses. Trees, shrubs, lawns, hedges, and decorative fencing can soften the visual effect of commercial development and parking fields. The Town should require a minimum amount of landscaping in and around the site, especially along street frontage to screen parking areas as visible from the roadway. The Town should also require existing vegetation preservation where appropriate. A landscaped area should be provided along the street frontage, and this area should be well-maintained and unobstructed (i.e. by parking outdoor storage, permanent displays, etc.).
- *Signage Scale and Materials.* Signs should clearly advertise the name of the business and should be visible from the street. However, they should not generate excessive glare, should avoid creating visual or physical obstructions for motorists, and should be consistent with the design of the building. There should be limits on the number of signs to reduce visual clutter.
- *Banners, Flags, Streamers.* The Town should also give consideration to the use of banners, flags, streamers and other decorations, which also influence the visual character of the corridor. Some communities prohibit all such decorations, while others permit them only on a temporary basis, while still others regulate their location (i.e. permitting them only if attached to a wall or a ground-mounted pole, but not strung between structures, for safety purposes). The Town should continue to allow such uses, but consider establishing appropriate restrictions as to their use.

Policy 6.18B: Maximize landscaped areas along the Route 58 corridor by reducing the maximum floor area ratios, increasing the extent of landscaped areas, and reducing off-street parking requirements through shared parking.

Policy 6.18C: Provide incentives for parcels in the DRC district to receive transferred development rights, and require these parcels to provide generous open space and landscaped areas.

Low base densities are established for the DRC zone, with sizeable bonus densities for the purchase of development rights. Major shopping destinations occupy large areas of land and attract large volumes of traffic. This growth impact should be offset by asking the destination center to "give back" open space that maintains the rural character and the viability of agricultural activity in Riverhead. A small center, built at the permitted base density, would maintain large portions of the site as open space.

Policy 6.18D: Through the site plan review process, improve pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access to DRC, SC, and CRC sites.

Bike racks, continuous sidewalks, and off-street transit stops should be provided.

Figure 6-21: Route 58

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GOALS & POLICIES FOR ROUTE 25A

Vision: Small- to moderate-scale infill development should be combined with open space and civic investments to create a community center in this business district.

Table 6-3: Summary of Policies for Route 25A

<i>Proposed Zoning</i>	<i>Improvements and Investments</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shopping Center (SC) and Business CR (Rural Neighborhood Business) in western half • Business CR and Residence E (Multifamily Residential Professional Office Zone) on north side of Route 25A between Wading River-Manorville Road and North Country Road • Business PB (Professional Service Building) on 600-75-3-4 • Business CR on eastern parcels between Route 25A and Sound Avenue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announce gateways and arrival points in commercial zones with trees, signs, and seasonal displays • Target sites for parks and community facilities near the intersection of Route 25A and Wading River-Manorville Road and near existing open space preserves • Require development to meet additional design and landscaping standards for new commercial sites and buildings • Focus roadway improvements along the major traffic thoroughfares: Route 25A, Parker Road, and Sound Avenue • Require principal driveway and pedestrian entrances to all commercial sites to be oriented to Route 25A, Parker Road, and Sound Avenue • Implement sidewalk and crosswalk improvements that allow convenient and easy pedestrian circulation • Use traffic-calming techniques to reduce traffic speeds at the tourist-oriented commercial node near the intersection of Parker Road and Sound Avenue • Require variegated street grids and frequent street connections between adjacent subdivisions • Encourage the NYSDOT to improve the level of service at the intersection of State Route 25A and Wading River-Manorville Road.

Goal 6.19: Promote neighborhood-oriented retail, office, and service development along Route 25A.

Policy 6.19A: Concentrate retail development at the intersection of Wading River-Manorville Road.

The sizeable commercially-zoned area along Route 25A in the Wading River area is larger than necessary for the local population. As is, the business district would attract free-standing businesses on scattered sites in a sprawling fashion. To avoid this result, the district should be reduced in size and concentrated around the Wading River-Manorville Road intersection. This would result in a more clustered development pattern at the most visible and accessible place in the business district.

Wading River's grocery store, drug store, and other shops help meet the essential daily shopping needs of nearby neighborhoods. Currently zoned Business CR, the area around the Wading River-Manorville Road intersection allows a wide range of retail stores and commercial uses. The zoning should continue to allow a mix of retail sales and small freestanding shops, offices, and restaurants. A combination of Shopping Center (SC) and Business PB (Professional Service Building), along with the current zoning of Business CR and Residence E (Multifamily Residential Professional Office), would help achieve this goal.

Policy 6.19B: Allow Business CR (Rural Neighborhood Business) uses along the rest of Route 25A.

The existing Highway Service/Commercial zoning near the Parker Road/Sound Avenue intersection is not needed. Stores are already clustered around the Wading River-Manorville intersection, and the area's small population would not be able to support additional retail at Parker Avenue. Business CR should be expanded eastward to take in the triangle of land between Parker Road and Sound Avenue, where office development has already occurred. A variety of moderate-size offices would be permitted, providing space for local lawyers, doctors, dentists, and other professionals. Campus-style multi-family housing would also be permitted as an alternative to offices.

Policy 6.19C: Create a service road for commercial properties located along the south side of Route 25A, west of Wading River-Manorville Road, and design the site as an attractive, auto-oriented shopping cluster, with moderate-size buildings, small, interspersed parking lots, and generous landscaping.

The recommendation for a service road was originally included in the 1988 Wading River Hamlet Study, and it is reaffirmed here. The service road would provide access to properties, limiting curb cuts along the street and improving traffic flow. However, in considering the character of the service road, the CAC decided that it should not take on the character of a

Figure 6-3: Route 25-A

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traditional Main Street. Although a Main Street environment is generally attractive, the site was deemed to be badly sized and located to create a full Main Street ambiance.

Instead, following the model of Amagansett Square in East Hampton, the preferred approach is to have moderate-size buildings with small, interspersed parking lots with generous landscaping, gardens, and lawns. Access to the individual buildings would be from both Route 25A and the service road. Sidewalks, trees, and flowerbeds should be provided both along the service road and the Route 25A frontage. The moderate-size buildings would attract a mix of restaurants, professional offices, small retailers, and personal services.

Goal 6.20: Create a pedestrian-friendly environment, and enhance the identity of the business district as a neighborhood center.

Policy 6.20A: Carry out sidewalk and crosswalk improvements that allow convenient and easy pedestrian circulation.

Crosswalks — combined with either a traffic signal, stop sign, or yield to pedestrians sign — are necessary at the two major intersections in the business district, in order to protect pedestrian safety and encourage walking. These include the Route 25A – Wading River-Manorville Road intersection and the Sound Avenue – Parker Road intersection. Additional crosswalks should extend across Route 25A at the King Kullen shopping center, allowing people to walk from across the street without making a circuitous route.

In addition, sidewalks should link commercial storefronts with surrounding residential areas, so that local residents and workers have the option of walking to the store. Residential sidewalks should lead continuously into sidewalks along Route 25A, and pedestrian walkways should run from the sidewalk, through the parking lot, and right up to the store entrance, creating an unimpeded connection.

Policy 6.20B: Avoid strip-style commercial development, and enhance the countryside image of the Wading River area by adopting design standards for new construction.

Design standards can be used to balance neighborhood with business interests, so that the district is both visually attractive *and* commercially viable. From a business perspective, buildings and signs should be visible from the street; parking should be abundant and convenient; and signs should be easy to read for both motorists and pedestrians. From a design perspective, overly large, garish, or brightly lit signs should be avoided; the area should be walkable, with safe and continuous sidewalks and crosswalks; and parking lots should be punctuated with trees and shrubbery.

Current landscaping requirements in the Business CR zone on Route 25A require preservation of existing vegetation in the front setback. In addition, 10 percent or more of

parking areas need to be landscaped, and the landscaping needs to be reasonably dispersed throughout the parking lot. In order to accommodate setbacks, however, many sites end up concentrating landscaping around the edges of very large parking lots. In all of the new commercial zones, the Town should implement a more stringent requirement. In addition to the 10+ percent landscaping regulation, the provisions should require that no more than 10 to 15 parking spaces (approximately 100 to 150 feet of asphalt) be located side by side without being broken up by a landscaped planter.

Likewise, the Multifamily Residential Professional Office Zone (Residence E) should require minimum 50-foot buffers with trees along the north portion of Route 25A between between Wading River-Manorville Road and North Country Road. This would frame the core business district and would maintain the double-sided, tree-lined character of Route 25A (adjacent to the campground and cemetery). Parking would not be permitted in the buffer, and the property owner would have to maintain a minimum number of trees within 20 feet of the street edge.

Because many properties in the business district have already been developed, these improvements will take place gradually over time, as those sites undergo expansions or renovations. This is entirely appropriate and preferable in fact, as it allows private investors to explore and pursue different variations on the "countryside" theme, allowing for a more rich and less uniform character to evolve over time.

Policy 6.20C: Announce gateways and arrival points in the business district with trees, signs, and seasonal displays.

The district's major arrival point is the Route 25A – Wading River-Manorville Road intersection. One of the corners on the intersection should be decorated with trees, directional signs, a welcome sign, flowers, seasonal displays, and perhaps a decorative element like a stone wall or fence. These design features are strong enough to convey a sense of the neighborhood, but are still rustic in character, reflecting the rural ambiance of the Town. Likewise, the gateways into the Route 25A commercial node (e.g., the Brookhaven border) should be celebrated with similar features: trees, flowering shrubs, and welcome signs.

Policy 6.20D: Avoid road widening for the section of Route 25A between the Brookhaven Town line and the Wading River-Manorville Road intersection.

Although the business district is auto-oriented, it is also intended to be pedestrian-friendly. Road-widening would reduce the ability of shoppers to cross the street, dampening the potential for cross-fertilization between stores. Also, a wider road would encourage higher speeds, making the area less appealing to pedestrians. Finally, because the business district does not have very deep lots, a widened road would eliminate parking spaces and landscaping that could not be easily replaced elsewhere. As a result, the commercial viability and attractiveness of the district as a whole could be compromised.

Policy 6.20E: Reserve sites for parks and community facilities near the intersection of Route 25A and Wading River-Manorville Road and near existing open space preserves.

As the population of the area continues to grow, additional sites may be required for parks and community facilities. These should be clustered close together, so that they can share buildings and parking. Although the Route 25A – Wading River-Manorville Road intersection is the 100 percent corner for the convenience retail center, it is also the center-point between two important community facilities: the Wading River Elementary School and the post office. That same general area is the perfect location for future parks, playing fields, a community center, a branch library, etc. All together, these facilities would create a true center of community life and activity.

While the properties on the intersection itself are turned over to commercial uses, a few parcels around and behind the commercial node are still available. The elementary school may need room for expansion and it could potentially make use of the adjacent open space areas, which front on Route 25A, for that purpose. A portion of the site could be used for civic facilities, like a branch library, a community center, parks, or playing fields. In this case, the Town could work jointly with Shoreham-Wading River School District to purchase the site, as a partnership, which could also open up the possibility for the Town and School District to share recreational facilities. Since the site is currently commercially zoned, it could be an expensive purchase for the Town and/or the School District, but the community benefit would be significant, due to the site's ideal location relative to the business core and the elementary school.

Goal 6.21: Surround the business district with moderate-density residential neighborhoods and ensure that commercial development is compatible with surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Policy 6.21A: Rezone certain portions of the business district for residential use.

Areas in the vicinity of the business district are already zoned for and developed with residential uses. This zoning should be expanded into the areas where there is commercial zoning, but no commercial uses. In particular, parcels currently zoned for Business E (Highway/Commerical Service) on the north side of Sound Avenue should be rezoned as residential.

Policy 6.21B: Minimize glare impacts from lighting in commercial areas and along streets by establishing appropriate standards.

Glare impacts can be reduced by establishing a cap on the luminous intensity of outdoor lamps and/or capping the number and height of outdoor lamps. Also, lamp heads should be designed such that the light is directed only onto those particular areas or spots that require lighting. To the greatest extent possible, light should not be allowed to travel in a horizontal direction over the property lines on which the lamps are located. This policy should be applied to all business districts and other places where outdoor lighting is being used.

GOALS & POLICIES FOR WADING RIVER

Vision: Wading River should remain an intimate rural crossroads featuring woodland and pond views.

Table 6-4: Summary of Policies for Wading River

<i>Proposed Zoning</i>	<i>Improvements and Investments</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hamlet Center (HC) • Allow home offices in surrounding residential areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish hamlet design standards • Improve sidewalks and curbs along storefronts, plant street trees, add historic lampposts, and provide on-street parking in front of shops, restaurants, and offices • Add crosswalks with stop signs at all the intersections in the hamlet center • Add picnic tables and shade trees alongside the pond, with a pond-side pedestrian trail • Add trees, shrubbery, and walkways to the municipal parking lot • Establish parks and playgrounds to frame the hamlet center • Establish bike paths and walking trails that link into the Town’s greenway network

Goal 22: Keep Wading River a small, quaint hamlet center catering to local residents.

Policy 6.22A: Limit the size of the hamlet center, and maintain low-density single-family houses around the hamlet center.

In order to protect the hamlet's quaint character, the area zoned for retail and office development should be limited in size. The boundary of the proposed Hamlet Center (HC) zone was drawn to include the entire area of shops, restaurants, and offices beside the duck ponds on North Country Road. Although professional offices would not be out-of-character with the hamlet center, it would be preferable to concentrate most such land uses along Route 25A, where they would be much more visible and accessible. The traffic and parking impacts from small professional offices would be incompatible with the small-scale character of the hamlet.

Figure 6-4: Wading River

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Policy 6.22B: Establish hamlet design standards that preserve the traditional character of the neighborhood.

Buildings in the hamlet center need not have a colonial or country style, but they should follow some basic design standards to ensure that they fit into the traditional format of the neighborhood:

- Pedestrian entrances should face the street, rather than a garage or parking lot;
- Building design, landscaping, and decorative fences should announce the pedestrian entrances;
- Parking lots and garages should be located behind or beside buildings;
- Facades should be punctuated with windows, and blank walls should be avoided;
- Natural cladding materials like wood, brick, and stone should be used; synthetic and reflective materials should be avoided; and
- Buildings should have architectural accents such as porches, porticoes, shutters, decorative door and window frames, balconies, cornices, dormers, chimneys, turrets, and spires.

Policy 6.22C: Allow on-street parking along parcels zoned Hamlet Center (HC) on North Country Road.

On-street parking makes sense for several reasons. First, it would provide an added convenience for local residents who are running quick errands. Second, it would be consistent with the goal of improving the pedestrian-friendly quality of the hamlet center, because parked cars provide a barrier between pedestrians and moving cars. Third, allowing on-street parking would be consistent with the informal character of the hamlet. Since traffic volumes are low, on-street parking would not be expected to cause access or congestion problems. On-street parking should not be permitted alongside the pond, because in that location, they would block views of the water. In response to concerns raised during the CAC meeting, the Town should undertake a study to determine how on-street parking can be added while ensuring safety for motorists and pedestrians.

Policy 6.22D: Establish parks and playgrounds on the outskirts of the hamlet center.

According to the resident survey conducted in summer 1999, 51 percent of the respondents said that the Town should spend more money on parks and picnic areas, and 43 percent said the Town should spend more money on playgrounds. The Town should explore the feasibility of establishing at least one small park/playground on either side of the hamlet center, framing the retail core with open space. There is a vacant site on Sound Road, north of Seaman Court, that could serve this purpose. On the other side of the hamlet center, there are no vacant sites, but the Town could consider partnering with one of the local churches to establish a small park or playground on its property.

Whereas the pond provides natural scenery and habitat, a park with a playground would provide "active" recreational space. Neighborhood children would be the main beneficiaries of a small neighborhood park and playgrounds, because they could walk there without being chauffeured by parents. The hamlet, as a focal point of the community, provides an ideal spot for new parks. While the hamlet center would benefit from the additional of small parks, participants in the CAC meetings stressed the importance of also improving maintenance at the Wading River Community Park located east of the hamlet center. Park investments in the hamlet center should be done in addition to — not instead of — improvements to that existing facility.

Policy 6.22E: Limit the type and scale of home offices in and around the hamlet center.

Home offices should be allowed in the residential areas abutting the HC zone. Other than home offices, no deviation in the surrounding residential character is recommended. Home offices should be of a type and scale that are compatible with the low-density, low-impact, small-scale character of the area. No employees living off-premises and no ancillary retail uses should be permitted. Signage should be limited in size and should only identify the name of the business enterprise (i.e., no advertising signs). This is consistent with the goals and policies regarding home occupations in Chapter 7, the Economic Development Element.

Goal 6.23: Make the hamlet centers more pedestrian friendly, and increase opportunities for enjoying the pond setting.

Policy 6.23A: Improve sidewalks and curbs along storefronts, plant street trees, and add historic lampposts; and add trees, shrubbery, and walkways to the municipal parking lot.

Although the overall lack of sidewalks adds to the rural charm of the area and the low traffic levels allow good pedestrian circulation, some sidewalk improvements could help improve the safety, comfort, and attractiveness of the hamlet. Brick or cobblestone sidewalks could be installed along storefronts, enhancing the historic atmosphere; they are affordable here since such a small area is involved. Landscaping, walkways, and decorative picket fencing would help improve the visual quality of the municipal parking lot and make it more inviting.

Street trees could create a more enticing walking environment and complement the pond environment. Street lamps are necessary to provide a safe walking environment at night, and historic lampposts would fit into the traditional hamlet ambiance. Alongside the pond, a simple gravel path inside the wooden barrier would allow pedestrians to stroll beside the water and enjoy the serene setting; this would require cooperation with the Town of Brookhaven, in which the duck ponds are located.

Policy 6.23B: Add picnic tables and shade trees alongside the ponds.

In addition to the existing landscaping and benches, picnic tables and shade trees could help increase enjoyment of the quiet pond setting. The design of picnic tables should be consistent

with the informal, countryside character of Wading River. If new trees are planted around either Mill Pond or the Duck Ponds, they should be high-branching, deciduous shade trees that create a comfortable place to sit during the hot summer months. This too would require cooperation with the Town of Brookhaven.

Policy 6.23C: Improve the crosswalk at the intersection of North Wading River Road and North Country Road.

The existing crosswalk connects the municipal parking lot with the stores across the street, but broken pavement and faded lines make the crosswalk a potential safety hazard. Decorative pavers should replace the existing crosswalk. Stop signs should be installed at the crosswalk from all directions, because the bend in the road at that spot creates poor visibility for drivers.

Policy 6.23D: Link sidewalks in the hamlet center to existing sidewalks in adjacent residential areas, and where they don't already exist, add sidewalks to those adjacent residential areas.

This policy is intended to promote greater connectivity and walkability between the hamlet businesses and the surrounding residences, strengthening the function and image of the hamlet as a real community center.

Policy 6.23E: Create a pond-side pedestrian trail, and establish bike paths and walking trails to nearby recreational sites.

Nearly 49 percent of the residents who responded to the Townwide survey said that the Town should spend more money on nature trails. The pond setting of the Wading River hamlet provides an ideal setting for a nature trail. A pedestrian trail connecting the ponds would allow residents to enjoy the pond-side setting and scenery even more, providing a local place to walk the dog, stroll, or jog without the interruptions of traffic. It would also provide a shortcut to the hamlet center for some residents. Crosswalks should connect the trail to the shops and parks on the north side of North Wading River Road.

The Town should use park acquisition funds to purchase easements along the ponds for the purpose of establishing a public trail. The Town should actively reach out to private property owners whose land is being considered for purchase, understand their needs, and if the owner agrees to sell an easement, the Town should work to address any concerns they may have about the trail. In particular, the Town should ensure that the trails are adequately wooded, buffered, and/or fenced so as to preserve the privacy of those properties. At the same time, the Town should ensure that property owners will have adequate visual and physical access to the water's edge. Maintenance and liability issues should also be worked out ahead of time. Part of the proposed trail would be located across the Town line in Brookhaven, so the Town will have to have to coordinate with Brookhaven to get that portion of the trail built.

Wading River is fortunate to be located near several major parks and outdoor recreational sites. Bike paths and walking trails would provide residents with greater opportunities for enjoying the outdoors and would offer an alternative to driving to nearby parks. Paths and trails should be established to Wading River Beach, Wildwood State Park, Camp Wauwepex, and the State/County Preserve on Parker Road near the cemetery. Chapter 11, the Parks and Recreation Element, elaborates upon the concept of greenways and bikeways.

GOALS & POLICIES FOR CALVERTON

Vision: Building off Calverton Commons, and the market created by Enterprise Park, encourage a small hamlet center to evolve, with a “country crossroads” character.

Table 6-5: Summary of Policies for Calverton

<i>Proposed Zoning</i>	<i>Improvements and Investments</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hamlet Center (HC) in core commercial area. • Rural Corridor (RLC) in a limited area east of Fresh Pond Avenue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streetscape and sidewalk improvements along the north side of Route 25 and the west side of Fresh Pond Road • Crosswalk improvements at Fresh Pond Road • Pedestrian connections to Enterprise Park at Calverton • Heavy buffering along the northern edge of Enterprise Park • Pedestrian and bike connections to the residential areas northwest of the business center

Goal 6.24: Promote a mix of convenience and comparison retail, as well as office space at the Calverton commercial areas near Fresh Pond Road.

Policy 6.24A: Reduce the existing commercial zoning along Route 25 between the LIE and the Brookhaven Town line.

There are three small commercially zoned areas along Route 25 in the Calverton area: (1) at Wading River-Manorville Road; (2) at Fresh Pond Road; and (3) on the north side of Route 25, at Edwards Avenue east to Manor Road. Since these areas were zoned for commercial development, the Pine Barrens preserve was established, reducing future expectations of development and market potential for retail and service uses along the corridor. In addition, these business districts suffer from competition from Route 58 and Route 25A, each located less than three miles away. These combined factors suggest that these commercial areas should be reduced in scope. The Calverton business districts will continue to attract small, auto-oriented, sprawled development if the current zoning is retained. The area at Fresh Pond Road, however, has some potential for future growth, due to its proximity to Enterprise Park and should be retained on both sides of Fresh Pond Road.

Policy 6.24B: Rezone the hamlet area near Fresh Pond Road for small- to moderate-scale retail and office development.

The proposed HC zoning would allow a mix of small shops, restaurants, and offices, consistent with the anticipated market trends. The area would not be expected to support a grocery store or shopping center, due to competition from Route 58 and Route 25A. Small-scale shops, offices, and restaurants would complement the larger-scale uses in Enterprise Park, building off the clientele that is attracted to that area. It would also provide some conveniences for local residents.

Goal 6.25: Design the hamlet center as a campus, with an internal off-street system of driveways, parking lots, and sidewalks, with pedestrian linkages to Enterprise Park and the adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Policy 6.25A: Concentrate compact residential development around the hamlet center at Fresh Pond Road.

Like Jamesport, Aquebogue, Wading River, and Route 25A, compact residential development would help create a mixed-use environment, where local residents can walk to and enjoy the hamlet center.

Policy 6.25B: Create a pedestrian-friendly environment along the Route 25 and Fresh Pond Road frontages through streetscape, sidewalk, and crosswalk improvements.

Policy 6.25C: Establish direct pedestrian linkages between the hamlet center and Enterprise Park.

This would allow patrons of the adjacent family entertainment complex to walk over to the Calverton business center.

Policy 6.25D: Establish a system of off-street driveway and pedestrian linkages between commercial uses in the HC zone.

This policy would help foster a campus-like environment for the hamlet center.

Figure 6-5: Calverton

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GOALS AND POLICIES FOR JAMESPORT

Vision: A concentrated "Main Street" framed by a rural corridor and surrounded by a traditional residential neighborhood should be provided at this historic center.

Table 6-6: Summary of Policies for Jamesport

<i>Proposed Zoning</i>	<i>Improvements and Investments</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village Center (VC) in core near community center and church • Hamlet Center (HC) where small shopping center is located and in core on north side of Main Road • Rural Corridor (RLC) to the west and in core on south side of Main Road • Provide for TDR Receiving areas within a half mile radius of the Jamesport Central Business District (CBD) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a safe, comfortable, and attractive walking environment in the "Main Street" area that entices shoppers and diners to stroll, and tourists to stop • Require developers to meet additional design and landscaping standards for new commercial sites, buildings, and signs • Maintain architectural quality of buildings • Establish a facade improvement program for commercial buildings in Jamesport, and establish a Business Improvement District (BID) to maintain streets, sidewalks, parking lots, and landscaped areas • Provide a North Fork Wine Country information center or kiosk • Organize seasonal events • Provide on-street parallel parking in the "Main Street" area • Instead of road widening, use traffic-calming to control traffic volumes and speeds in the hamlet centers • Provide long-term opportunities for a restored Jamesport railroad station, for use by both residents and tourists • Establish a bus stop along Route 25 in the Main Street" area • Require variegated street grids and frequent street connections between adjacent subdivisions • Reserve sites for future parks and community facilities • Establish a pedestrian and bicycle trail along South Jamesport Avenue from the hamlet center to South Jamesport beach

Goal 6.26: Promote tourism-oriented specialty shopping in the historic hamlet center near the South Jamesport Avenue intersection.

Policy 6.26A: Concentrate Village Center/Hamlet Center (VC/HC) development in the traditional historic center near the Route 25/South Jamesport Avenue intersection.

Jamesport's Business CR zoning, which runs from west of Washington Avenue to east of Manor Lane, allows a full range of retail stores and professional offices. With population and tourism growth, this relatively permissive zone would tend to attract convenience stores, gas stations, and other auto-oriented uses to serve the large volumes of pass-through traffic. Such stores, usually national chains, would occupy land in and around the hamlet center that could otherwise be used for small shops and restaurants.

In order for the hamlet center to realize its full tourist potential, convenience and auto-oriented retail should be limited in the "Main Street" area. Building on the established niche of antique stores, Jamesport should provide space for additional furnishing stores, as well as art galleries, arts and crafts shops, sit-down restaurants, cafes, specialty food stores, wine shops, and other similar businesses. Professional offices can be permitted, on condition that they be located to the rear of a store or on an upper floor and not front on "Main Street," which should have a continuous and vibrant retail frontage.

Policy 6.26B: Create a safe, comfortable, walkable, and attractive "Main Street" area through sidewalk and streetscape improvements.

Convenient and comfortable sidewalks and walkways can encourage tourists to stroll, browse through shops, or eat in the local restaurants. Attractive street furniture (trees, lamps, benches, hanging signs, planters, newspaper boxes, etc.) can also serve as enticement. Although Jamesport's small size would not encourage long visits (two- to three-hour visits are expected), an attractive sidewalk environment can lengthen the stay of some visitors and encourage them to visit two or more establishments.

The Town should work with property owners and tenants to redesign and upgrade the streetscape in the "Main Street" area. Because Route 25 experiences heavy traffic, marked crosswalks, sidewalk bulb-outs, and blinking traffic signals are necessary at the key intersections in the "Main Street" area. Not only would these measures increase pedestrian safety, but they would enhance the perception of Jamesport as an historic center and special destination. Streetscape design improvements should be continuous throughout the "Main Street" area. Also, sidewalks along "Main Street" should connect to the sidewalks of the adjacent residential neighborhoods. Local residents should be able to walk down to the local shops, restaurants, church, or community center.

Figure 6-6: Jamesport Map

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Policy 6.26C: Establish design and landscaping standards that are consistent with the historic development pattern in the Village Center/Hamlet Center area.

The existing Business CR zoning would not allow new buildings to be built in the same traditional pattern as Jamesport's hamlet center, with its small front yards, front porches, and entrances off the sidewalk. The Business CR zone has a minimum lot size of 40,000 square feet, a minimum lot width of 200 feet, a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.17, a minimum front setback of 50 feet, and minimum side setbacks of 25 feet.

The standards should be more compatible with Jamesport's historic fabric, and rezoning the area Village Center (VC) and Hamlet Center (HC), with their smaller minimum lot sizes and narrower setback requirements, would allow a more traditional pattern of development. In addition to the VC and HC standards, design standards would ensure that new development is compatible with the historic building fabric:

- *On-site Parking Behind Buildings.* With the elimination of the front setback, parking should be located to the rear of the building, so as not to interrupt the street wall. Open-air, landscaped walkways should connect the parking lots with the street.
- *Street-oriented Building Entrances and Windows.* Shop entrances should face the sidewalk, allowing pedestrians strolling along the roadway to drop in. Shops should also have display windows that create visual interest along the street.
- *Façade Variety.* Exempt bay windows and unenclosed porches from being counted in building area calculations, in order to provide an incentive for variety in façade design. Also, require building facades to be clad with natural materials (wood, stone, stucco, or brick) rather than metal and glass, better reflecting the countryside setting.
- *Sign Control.* Sign regulations should allow variety and interest along “Main Street,” while prohibiting signs that would be incompatible with a traditional, pedestrian-oriented environment. Painted wall signs, hanging signs, wall signs, moveable A-frame, and etched window signs should be permitted, while freestanding signs, roof signs, and internally illuminated or neon signs should be prohibited altogether in the “Main Street” area. Also, natural materials should be used for the sign structure.

Although the VC and HC zoning are similar in many respects, they are distinct. The VC zone has a compact and fine-grain pattern of development in a traditional village format. Small shops would line a traditional Main Street and would be built up to the street. In the HC zone, buildings would still be small in scale, but they would be set back and surrounded with more landscaping, with more of a residential character.

Policy 6.26D: Establish a façade improvement program for the hamlet center.

Façade improvements can help increase the attractiveness of the Jamesport hamlet center. In downtown Riverhead, the Downtown Strategy calls upon the Town to establish a façade improvement program for Main Street buildings. The program would include a mix of grants and tax incentives to encourage property owners to make repairs, add awnings and windows, improve entryways and porches, comply with handicapped access requirements, clean and

paint exteriors, and improve landscaping and walkways. The Jamesport program could be piggybacked on the program offered downtown.

Policy 6.26E: Establish a North Fork wine country information kiosk.

The Town should also join with local businesses to establish a tourism information center or kiosk. The information center/kiosk would help establish Jamesport as the gateway to wine country. If a center is possible, it could be sited in part of the community center or in a storefront. A kiosk would logically be sited at the southeast corner of Route 25 and Jamesport Avenue.

Policy 6.26F: Maintain on-street parallel parking in the “Main Street” area.

On-street parking provides a convenience to motorists by allowing them to park in front of the shop or restaurant they wish to patronize, assuming a space is available. In addition, on-street parking creates a physical barrier between pedestrians and moving traffic, increasing the sense of safety for pedestrians.

Policy 6.26G: Establish a municipal parking district and parking facility.

Existing on-street parking within the Jamesport Hamlet (Route 25) is inconvenient and ineffective in supporting the commercial viability of existing retail uses. In order to address this issue, the Town should establish the Jamesport Parking District and should expend district revenue to construct a parking facility behind the existing stores with access to both Route 25 and Manor Lane. The improvement would serve to provide more convenient parking and would allow for the expansion of retail development of the hamlet, due to the relaxation of off-street parking regulations.

Policy 6.26H: Avoid road-widening along Route 25 in the historic hamlet center.

Population and tourism growth will inevitably lead to traffic increases along Route 25. While the rural parts of Route 25 can be widened easily, road-widening in the Jamesport hamlet would undermine the area's charm. Instead, traffic-calming strategies should be implemented in the hamlet center, in order to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment. These strategies include crosswalks, sidewalk bulb-outs, traffic lights, stop signs, yield signs, and speed bumps.

Policy 6.26I: Concentrate parks and community facilities in the area around the historic hamlet center.

Parks and community facilities may not be needed for many years to come, but the increase in population will eventually create the need. If centrally located sites are not reserved in advance, they may be developed into residential or commercial uses, and the Town would

have to settle for less ideal sites on the outskirts of the residential village or outside the Jamesport hamlet altogether. A village location would ensure that the parks and facilities would be located in a central location within walking distance of the surrounding residential village.

Policy 6.26J: Establish a pedestrian and bicycle trail along South Jamesport Avenue from the historic center to South Jamesport Beach.

Consistent with resident desires for more nature trails (according to the 1999 resident survey), a pedestrian and bicycle trail should extend from the intersection of Route 25 and South Jamesport Avenue all the way down to the beach. Signs should demarcate the trail and direct people to the beach.

Goal 6.27: Create a moderate-density, neo-traditional residential neighborhood around the historic Jamesport hamlet center.

Policy 6.27A: Establish a residential village to the north and south of the hamlet center, but protect those areas that have wetlands or other sensitive natural resources.

One-family houses, two-family houses, and townhouses could be permitted on lots in and around the hamlet center. Also, single-family homeowners would be permitted to have an accessory rental unit in a spare room or detached structure in the back yard. No lots with more than one unit per acre would be permitted with transferred development rights.

Currently, the areas immediately outside Jamesport are zoned Agriculture and allow residential development at densities of one unit per acre. Under the Proposed Land Use Plan, all areas that fall within the Residence A-80 (RA-80) district at Jamesport would be upzoned to two acre lots, which would match the as-of-right density of the Agricultural Protection Zone (APZ). However, parcels in the RA-80 district would have the option to build at densities of one unit per acre with transferred development rights sent from the APZ and/or certain parcels in the Residence AB-80 district.

Some of the areas north and south of the hamlet centers have wetlands and therefore may not be suitable for development of any kind. Those areas must be carefully protected, and wastewater disposal systems must be carefully designed to limit impacts on those areas.

Policy 6.27B: Establish a TDR receiving area in the residential village, and require purchase of TDRs to achieve higher densities.

The RA-80 district around the Jamesport hamlet center should be designated as a receiving area for TDRs, as shown on the Proposed Land Use Plan in Chapter 2, the Land Use Element.

Policy 6.27C: As part of the Town's subdivision and zoning regulations, establish development standards and design guidelines that help create a traditional development pattern.

Development standards and design guidelines should promote a traditional village-style pattern of development. Shallow front yards should be permitted. Front doors should face the street, and garages should be either setback from the main façade of the house or placed in a detached structure in the back yard. Facades should have varied materials and architectural detailing (decorative door and window frames, balconies, bay windows, varied rooflines, dormers, cornices, porches, stoops), in order to create an interesting and attractive streetscape.

In addition, through the Town's subdivision standards, traditional street patterns should be encouraged. Subdivision regulations should be revised to require a minimum number of connecting streets to existing roads and/or a limitation on the number of cul-de-sacs. In this way, the Town can prevent the inefficient street patterns used in many suburban subdivisions, where no through-streets are provided to collector roadways.

Some of the areas north and south of the hamlet center have already been partially subdivided. In many cases, lots have been carved out along the existing street frontage, with larger vacant parcels to the rear. Those larger parcels are typically linked to the roadway by a single strip of land, forming a large flag lot. The parcels along the street frontage should be functionally and visually integrated into the design of the new neighborhood.

Policy 6.27D: Prevent isolated residential subdivisions by requiring variegated street grids and frequent street connections between adjacent subdivisions.

Within certain communities in the 1980s and 1990s, residential subdivisions were generally built with very few street connections to the adjacent roadways and subdivisions, as well as with many cul-de-sacs or dead-ends. These patterns of development created isolated neighborhoods with confusing and circuitous road networks. The Town should require subdivisions in the Jamesport area to have a variegated grid pattern of streets, continuous street connections to adjacent subdivisions, and a limited number of cul-de-sacs. This traditional street pattern would allow easy car, pedestrian, and bicycle circulation between the residential village and the commercial nodes along Route 25.

Goal 6.28: Outside the historic hamlet center, concentrate convenience shopping at the Washington Avenue intersection, but strictly limit other commercial development along the rest of the Route 25 corridor, and maintain the rural character of the corridor.

Policy 6.28A: Maintain the rural character of areas west of the hamlet center along Route 25 through Rural Corridor zoning.

The Jamesport business district is currently zoned Business G from the area west of Washington Avenue to immediately west of Tuthills Drive. The Business G zone limits retail stores to antiques, arts, crafts, and book stores and allows farm stands, providing farms near the village an outlet for selling their goods. In addition to these uses, the newly proposed Rural Corridor (RLC) zone would also permit agriculture-oriented businesses that provide essential goods and services to farms, orchards, and vineyards. Currently, there is no place in Town where rural-oriented businesses are permitted exclusively, and they are forced to compete for space in high-priced commercially zoned areas. By setting aside space for rural-oriented businesses, Riverhead farms benefit and have one less reason to close their operations.

The RLC zone would allow non-residential uses in existing houses. In case of subdivision, properties within the RLC zone could maintain a significant landscaped buffer from the edge of Route 25. This provision would help maintain the countryside character of Route 25 outside the main commercial area of Jamesport. Buildings would be approved for development only on condition that they are housed within buildings that look like residences or farm structures.

In addition to the normally permitted uses in the RLC zone, areas that are within walking distance of Jamesport commercial zones should also be allowed to have small offices and bed-and-breakfasts. Office workers and B&B guests would generally be willing to walk the 1,200-ft distance to the commercial zones to go shopping, eat at a restaurant, or reach the bus stop. However, no restaurants, eateries, or shops would be permitted in this transitional zone, because it is generally beyond the area that most tourists and shoppers would be willing to walk. The combined use of RLC, HC, and VC zoning ensures that a wide variety of shopping opportunities is available, serving everyone from tourists to residents and local workers.

Policy 6.28C: Outside the historic hamlet center, keep Route 25 a two-lane road (one lane in each direction), but make roadway and intersection improvements if necessary.

Such improvements may include wider shoulders, addition of bike lanes or sidewalks, repaving and re-striping, intersection improvements such as left-turn pockets, and improved signal timing cycles.

GOALS & POLICIES FOR AQUEBOGUE

Vision: A more countrified version of Jamesport should be promoted at this historic center, with design guidelines to promote infill, prevent sprawl, and create a traditional residential neighborhood within walking distance.

Table 6-7: Summary of Policies for Aquebogue

<i>Proposed Zoning</i>	<i>Improvements and Investments</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hamlet Center (HC) in core along Main Road at Church Lane and West Lane • Business Center (BC) where small shopping center is located • Rural Corridor (RLC) elsewhere • Provide for a one-half mile TDR receiving area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a safe, comfortable, and attractive walking environment in the "Main Street" area that entices shoppers and diners to stroll, and tourists to stop • Require developers to meet additional design and landscaping standards for new commercial sites, buildings, and signs • Instead of road widening, use traffic-calming to control traffic volumes and speeds in the "Main Street" area • Establish a bus stop along Route 25 in the "Main Street" area • Require variegated street grids and frequent street connections between adjacent subdivisions • Reserve a major site for a community park on the south side of Route 25 • Establish a pedestrian and bicycle trail from the hamlet center to the waterfront

Goal 6.29: Promote specialty shopping in the historic hamlet center near the Church Lane intersection.

Policy 6.29A: Strengthen the hamlet center at the Route 25/Church Lane intersection.

Currently, the Aquebogue hamlet center is zoned Business G, which allows only a limited range of shops, such as country stores and arts and crafts shops. This limits the retail potential of this traditional center, which already has a day care center, a restaurant, and a few small shops. The zoning should allow a wider range of uses that reflect the historic village pattern of development. Like Jamesport, the Aquebogue hamlet center should allow specialty stores and restaurants on small lots. At the same time, Aquebogue is smaller in scale than Jamesport and would be more appropriately zoned Hamlet Center (HC), rather than Village Center (VC).

Policy 6.29B: Require developers to meet additional design and landscaping standards for new commercial sites, buildings, and signs.

As in Jamesport, parking should be placed behind or to the side of buildings, and pedestrian entrances and display windows should face the sidewalk. Guidelines would also promote architectural detailing on building facades and pedestrian-oriented signage.

Policy 6.29C: Avoid road-widening along Route 25 in the hamlet center.

Road-widening would make the hamlet center less pedestrian-friendly and would disrupt the small-scale character of the village. Instead, traffic-calming strategies should be employed, including frequent crosswalks, stop signs, yield signs, traffic lights, and speed bumps. These would slow down traffic and enhance pedestrian circulation in the Aquebogue hamlet center.

Goal 6.30: Outside the historic hamlet center, concentrate convenience shopping at the Edgar Avenue intersection, but strictly limit other commercial development along the rest of the Route 25A corridor, and maintain the rural character of the corridor.

Policy 6.30A: Direct convenience shopping to the area near the intersection of Edgar Avenue.

Business Center (BC) zoning should be used to concentrate convenience shopping near the existing shopping center and professional office center found at the intersection of Edgar Avenue.

Policy 6.30B: Maintain the rural character of all other areas along Route 25 through Rural Corridor zoning.

As in Jamesport's Rural Corridor (RLC) district, subdivision within the RLC district would be conditioned on provision of a significant landscaped buffer from the edge of Route 25. Adjacent to the BC and HC commercial districts, areas within the RLC districts would allow offices and bed-and-breakfast inns, in addition to the normally allowable uses. These uses should be required to have a larger lot size and to be housed in residential- or farm-style buildings, in order to mitigate their visual impacts on the predominantly rural corridor.

Policy 6.30C: Outside the historic hamlet center, keep Route 25 a two-lane road (one lane in each direction), but make roadway and intersection improvements if necessary.

Goal 6.31: Make the historic hamlet center of Aquebogue into the neighborhood center for a surrounding moderate-density, neo-traditional residential neighborhood.

Policy 6.31A: Establish a residential village around the hamlet center, and concentrate parks and community facilities in the hamlet center or near the elementary school.

As in Jamesport, one-family and two-family housing should be permitted on lots of one unit per acre with the transferred development rights. Under the Proposed Land Use Plan, all areas that fall within the Residence A-80 (RA-80) district at Aquebogue would have an as-of-right density of ½ units per acre or two acre lots, with the option to build at densities of one unit per acre with transferred development rights. The residential village should follow a traditional design format. Design guidelines should require front doors to face the street and garages to be set back from the front façade or located in the back yard. Facades should be clad with natural materials (wood, brick, stone) or non-reflective metal, and architectural details should be added to the façade for variety. Subdivisions in the residential village should also be required to have a variegated street grid pattern and connecting streets to adjacent sites. This will help create a more permeable neighborhood from a pedestrian point of view, and it will also provide the village with a more traditional ambiance.

Policy 6.31B: Explore potential sites for a community park on the south side of Route 25.

Much of Route 25 in the Aquebogue area is still predominantly agricultural in use and character. As Aquebogue experiences development pressure, the open space and rural character of the south side of the road should be maintained as much as possible. A community park would help maintain the open space character, while also providing much-needed recreational space for residents. The park should have facilities for active recreation (playing fields), as well as passive recreation (trails, forests, lawns).

Providing a major community park opposite the “Main Street” area would help fulfill this goal and also link the Aquebogue area to nearby Meetinghouse Creek, which runs into Flanders Bay. As an alternative, the site on the west side of the Aquebogue Elementary School should be considered, so that the park and the school can share parking and facilities. Either site would be centrally located and easily accessible to the residents living in the general area.

Policy 6.31C: Establish a pedestrian and bicycle trail from the hamlet center to the waterfront.

A trail should link the village and the proposed community park to the mouth of Meetinghouse Creek and Indian Island County Park. By providing a continuous park network with a waterfront connection, the trail would further increase recreational opportunities and significantly increase the attractiveness of Aquebogue for homebuyers. This trail should be part of Riverhead’s greenway network (see Chapter 11, the Parks and Recreation Element).

Figure 6-7: Aquebogue Map

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GOALS & POLICIES FOR UPPER EAST MAIN STREET

Vision: As a transitional area between downtown and Route 58, Upper East Main Street should be transformed from an automotive/industrial corridor into a residential/open space corridor with a small commercial node that announces the arrival into downtown.

Table 6-8: Summary of Policies for Upper East Main Street

<i>Proposed Zoning</i>	<i>Improvements and Investments</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hamlet Center (HC) south of Elton Street on the west • Business Center (BC) where automotive businesses are located • Scattered Commercial/Residential Campus (CRC) sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve sidewalks, add historic lighting, and plant trees from Route 58 to downtown • Improve crosswalks at the Elton Street and Hubbard Avenue intersections • Transform streamside wetland area as a community park with trails and interpretive walks • Improve sidewalks where East Main Street crosses the LIRR tracks • Actively pursue redevelopment of the industrial site at the Elton Street intersection, as well as the automotive site at the Hubbard Avenue intersection

Goal 6.32: Establish more concentrated nodes of commercial development along the corridor, reducing the appearance of sprawl.

Policy 6.32A: Concentrate Hamlet Center and Business Corridor development between Elton Avenue and Hubbard Avenue.

Despite the existing industrial/business zoning, many of the properties fronting on East Main Street are actually vacant or residential in use. This suggests that the industrial/business zoning exceeds the localized demand for such uses. If left intact, the zoning would attract low-value commercial development or leave the existing properties underutilized. A paring down of the business zoning would help create a more clustered development pattern with more successful commercial activity.

The largest concentration of existing businesses is found between Elton Street and Hubbard Avenue, and the business zoning should be consolidated in this area. On the east side of the street, there are a variety of auto repair shops, gas stations, and other automotive uses. Business Center zoning, which allows a wide range of retail businesses on

small lots would be appropriate for that stretch of the road. On the west side of the street, a few houses have been converted into offices or shops. The Hamlet Center zoning would allow the trend toward commercial conversions to continue, while preserving the character of those houses.

Policy 6.32B: Pursue the redevelopment of larger, existing industrial and automotive sites into campus-style offices or residences.

With regard to the large industrial site at the corner of East Main and Elton, the Town should promote a use that is more compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. The recommended Commercial/Residential Campus (CRC) zoning would allow development of an office campus or two-family residences, similar to others that have already been built along Upper East Main Street. Likewise, the Town should promote redevelopment of the automotive site at the corner of East Main and Hubbard. Its current use is inconsistent with the predominantly residential use and character of the area. This automotive site has a large outdoor storage area for cars and extends far back into the residential neighborhood.

Policy 6.32C: Use parks to create an attractive approach into downtown.

The area alongside Sawmill Creek, on both sides of East Main Street, is an ideal setting for a neighborhood park. A park in this location could not only provide passive recreational space for the neighborhood, but would create an attractive green gateway into downtown. The park, if established, should incorporate the pond on the west side of East Main Street, providing a visual green counterpoint to the adjacent commercial uses. Located halfway between downtown and Route 58 and next to the neighborhood commercial node, the park would become the new centerpiece of the community. Marginal residential and business parcels should be acquired for open space values.

Goal 6.33: Reduce industrial zoning and promote moderate-density residential development along the corridor and around the business districts.

Policy 6.33A: Eliminate industrial zoning along East Main Street.

East Main Street is ill-suited for industrial development. The lots are small; the area is locked in by residential neighborhoods; and that roadway is relatively difficult to negotiate by truck. Aside from an 11-acre industrial site at the corner of East Main and Elton, there is little existing industrial activity relative to the large land area zoned for industrial development (about 90 acres). Over the next twenty years, most new industrial development in Riverhead is expected to occur in Enterprise Park. For these reasons, it makes sense to eliminate the industrial zoning from East Main Street altogether, replacing it with a mix of residential and commercial zoning that better reflects current uses and anticipated demand for the area.

Figure 6-8: Upper East Main Street

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Policy 6.33B: Extend the existing residential zoning right up to East Main Street, so that it fills in the gaps between the newly proposed commercial zones and protects the adjoining residential neighborhoods.

The existing commercial and industrial zoning have placed pressure on the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Industrial and commercial uses have visual and environmental impacts on their surroundings. Moreover, because so much of the industrial and commercial zoned land is used for residential purposes or lies vacant, the threat of business expansion reduced the attractiveness and investment interest in residential properties. Reduction of the industrial and business zoning and expansion of the residential zoning would help prevent commercial development from encroaching on these compact, traditional residential areas, thereby stabilizing property values. This strategy will help reinforce the residential uses and character along East Main Street.

GOALS & POLICIES FOR POLISH TOWN

Vision: The Pulaski Street retail core should be strengthened and better linked to downtown, and the surrounding residential neighborhood should be protected from commercial and industrial encroachment.

Table 6-9: Summary of Policies for Polish Town

<i>Proposed Zoning</i>	<i>Improvements and Investments</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village Center (VC) in the heart or Polish Town and along Osborne Avenue • Downtown Center (DC) in mixed use and commercial areas abutting downtown • Surrounding residential neighborhoods are rezoned Residential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve crosswalks along Pulaski Street, from Griffing Avenue to Sweezy Avenue • Extend downtown streetscape improvements north along Griffing Avenue and Osborn Avenue north to Pulaski Street • Improve sidewalks across the LIRR tracks, at Roanoke Avenue, Griffing Avenue, and Osborn Avenue

Goal 6.34: Strengthen the commercial node along Pulaski Street and the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Policy 6.34A: Concentrate Village Center development along Pulaski Street and Osborn Avenue.

Pulaski Street has many of the same characteristics as downtown and Jamesport: small, charming shops lining the sidewalk; limited parking; offices and residences above the stores. The small shopping center at the corner of Osborn and Pulaski Street stands out, because it does not fit in with traditional building fabric. On this one site, shops are set back from Osborn Street; there is a large parking field in the front yard with minimal landscaping; and

signage is reminiscent of Route 58. The Village Center (VC) zoning would protect the traditional pattern of development by requiring new buildings to follow the historical pattern.

Policy 6.34B: Protect and enhance the surrounding residential neighborhoods by rezoning them for residential use.

Despite the existing Industrial B and Business C zoning north and east of Polish Town, nearly the entire area is developed with traditional single-family and two-family homes. There are a few scattered offices and corner stores in the area, but no industrial development. The area is ill-suited for either business or industry, because the small lots are not conducive to either, and lot consolidation would be an expensive and disruptive undertaking. Route 58 and downtown are expected to absorb nearly all of the commercial demand in the area, and Enterprise Park is expected to absorb nearly all future industrial and large-scale office development over the next twenty years. It makes sense to zone the area residential, consistent with the prevailing uses, and market prospects.

Goal 6.35: Strengthen the physical connections between Polish Town and downtown.

Policy 6.35A: Create a transitional mixed-use area between the LIRR rail yard, west of Roanoke Avenue, and the residential areas north of the LIRR tracks.

The area immediately north of the LIRR tracks, between the railroad yards and Lincoln Street, has been partially converted from residential into commercial uses. A large parking lot is located in the area, and the Cornell Cooperative Extension is planning to move into an existing building on the north side of the tracks on Griffing Avenue. Because of the mixed commercial and residential uses in the area, and because of its proximity to downtown and the railroad station, a mix of uses should continue to be permitted through an expansion of the Downtown Center (DC) zoning. This mixed-use zone would create a buffer area between the downtown and the exclusively residential areas north of the tracks.

Policy 6.35B: Link Polish Town to downtown, through streetscape, sidewalk, and crosswalk improvements, as well as signs and kiosks.

While Polish Town is distinct from downtown Riverhead, linkages to downtown are important. Downtown provides a potential market for Polish Town shops and restaurants. While most tourists will be drawn to the far end of downtown, where the Aquarium is located, some of them are expected to park their cars in the vicinity of the railroad station and the court building. The physical proximity of that parking lot to Polish Town creates the potential for capturing some of those tourists. Signs and a kiosk would help inform downtown visitors as to the presence of Polish Town and could help draw some people up into the area. The kiosk should provide walking directions to Polish Town and should provide a list of shops, restaurants, and special events along Pulaski Street.

Figure 6-9: Polish Town

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GOALS & POLICIES FOR OTHER BUSINESS-ZONED AREAS

Goal 6.36: Reduce the potential for commercial sprawl outside downtown, Route 58, and the hamlet centers.

Policy 6.26A: Eliminate commercial zoning in Wading River East, Roanoke, Laurel, and north of downtown, and Route 25 in Calverton, and replace it with residential or agricultural zoning, consistent with surrounding land uses and zoning.

The proposed rezoning of each site is demonstrated on the Proposed Land Use Plan in Chapter 2, the Land Use Element.

- ***Wading River East.*** This small commercially zoned area is found at the intersection of Hulse Landing Road and North Wading River Road. The Two by Four, a popular restaurant, is located there, but all other buildings in the district are single-family homes. The relatively low population and the competition from Route 25A and Wading River hamlet have not created a need for convenience shopping in this location. Moreover, although the Two by Four is a popular specialty destination, the remote location of the district is not conducive to supporting additional specialty restaurants or shops. If left intact, the business district would probably attract marginal retailers that could not afford to locate in more visible and accessible locations, such as non-chain gas stations and auto repair shops. This type of development would threaten the quiet residential character of the area. Because the business district serves little real need, the Town should remove the commercial zoning and rezone it for housing. The Two by Four can remain as a pre-existing non-conforming use.
- ***Roanoke.*** A small commercially zoned node is located at the intersection of Sound Avenue and Park Road, just west of the Roanoke Avenue intersection. A restaurant and a country store are found in this location, and all the remaining land is vacant. Farms and open space surround the commercial node, and small residential neighborhoods are found on the north side of Sound Avenue. Competition from nearby Route 58 has curtailed market demand for development there. As this area is the only commercially zoned area along the length of the Sound Avenue corridor, the existing commercial zoning should be retained.
- ***Laurel.*** This small commercial cluster on Route 25 near the Southold border has virtually no commercial development, and no commercial development is found on the Southold side either. Traffic along the road will eventually create pressure for auto-oriented roadside commercial development, which would be inappropriate in the rural setting. The commercial zoning should be eliminated.
- ***North of Downtown.*** Large areas north of the LIRR tracks in the downtown area are zoned for commercial and industrial development, from Polish Town east. This zoning was put into place during the 1970s, when Town leaders envisioned

downtown Riverhead as a major regional office center. Large-scale downtown office development never materialized, and areas north of downtown have remained residential in use and character, except for a few scattered offices, gas stations, and corner stores. This area should largely be rezoned for residential use, to be more consistent with current conditions and the adjacent residential areas, with a transitional mixed-use zone on the north side of the railroad station.

- ***Route 25 in Wading River/Calverton.*** The creation of the Pine Barrens reserve reduced the potential for residential development in the western part of Riverhead, consequently reducing the need for commercial land. The small, evolving hamlet center near the Fresh Pond Road intersection still has some potential for growth due to its proximity to Enterprise Park, so that particular node will remain.