

**LEAD AGENCY FINDINGS STATEMENT  
STATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW ACT**

This Findings Statement has been prepared in accordance with Article 8 of the Environmental Conservation Law, the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), and its implementing regulations set forth at 6 NYCRR Part 617.

Lead Agency: Town of Riverhead Community Development Agency  
Address: 200 Howell Avenue  
Riverhead, NY 11901  
Name of Action: Adoption of the *East Main Street Urban Renewal Plan Update 2008*  
Description of Action: The Town of Riverhead Community Development Agency (CDA) proposes to adopt the *East Main Street Urban Renewal Plan Update 2008* (URP Update) which serves as an update to the 1993 *East Main Street Urban Renewal Plan*. The URP Update addresses the existing issues that may hinder the ongoing redevelopment efforts by the Town and property owners, and seeks to foster redevelopment and eliminate the blight and substandard conditions that continue to exist. The proposed URP Update sets forth 60 recommendations that focus on a variety of topics including land use, traffic, infrastructure, and solid waste management; and provides a suggested timeline for the implementation of the recommendations in the report. The URP Update has been studied in a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS); Draft and Final GEIS documents have been prepared and issued for review by the public.  
Location: The focus of the URP Update is the East Main Street Urban Renewal Area (EMSURA) which is located in the Town of Riverhead in eastern Suffolk County along the Peconic River. Specifically, the EMSURA is bounded by East Second Street to the north, the Peconic River to the south, just east of the Peconic River Yacht Basin, and Peconic and Roanoke Avenues to the west.  
Date Final GEIS filed: August 21, 2008

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

This Findings Statement is issued by the Town of Riverhead CDA, which has served as the lead agency pursuant to SEQRA, Article 8 of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law, and the regulations promulgated there under (6 NYCRR Part 617), in connection with the proposed implementation of the URP Update.

The “findings” stated below provide a summary of the CDA’s rationale for its decision to adopt the *East Main Street Urban Renewal Plan Update 2008*.

Part A of this Findings Statement sets forth a summary of the URP Update, its purpose and need, and its location. Part B provides the procedural background of the URP Update. Part C provides the procedural background of the SEQRA process. The Conclusion of this Statement is provided in Part D.

### **NAME OF ACTION**

Adoption of the *East Main Street Urban Renewal Plan Update 2008*

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The URP Update includes recommendations for the elimination of blight; encouragement of development pursuant to the *Town of Riverhead Comprehensive Plan 2003*; improvement of substandard properties, marginal land uses, and public facilities; promotion of tourist- and river-related development; enhancement of cultural resources; and encouragement of private and public funding. The URP Update also summarizes the growth and overall evolution of the EMSURA as a focus of public policy. In addition, the URP Update provides numerous land use recommendations that consider the current and future needs and trends of the EMSURA and the Town, and methods to implement those recommendations.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The URP Update presents a “Statement of Proposed Land Uses,” which includes recommendations intended to eliminate the conditions of blight and deterioration in the EMSURA.

The following are the recommendations as stated in the URP Update:

1. Fill and redevelop existing vacancies with uses permitted under current zoning regulations. As applications for site plans, building permits, or certificates of occupancy for structure or uses are submitted, the CDA, consistent with Section 503(H) of the General Municipal Law, should ensure that the reuses are appropriate (e.g., uses near the waterfront should incorporate the scenic value and public space of the Peconic River and associated waterfront park as part of their overall design and use). Additionally, interaction between uses should encourage pedestrian walkability and promote shared public spaces. Buildings identified as vacant in this report should be given priority for all redevelopment projects.
2. Deteriorated and vacant structures that pose a risk to public safety and welfare, and impede economic viability should be considered for public and/or private acquisition and redevelopment. Redevelopment of these properties should be in conformance with zoning

regulations and be considered for the highest and best use. Buildings identified as deteriorated in this report should be given priority for redevelopment projects.

3. Redevelop and rehabilitate dilapidated buildings using contemporary and environmentally-friendly design in conformance with Chapter 73, "Landmarks Preservation," of the *Code of the Town of Riverhead*, which gives the Town's Landmark Preservation Commission the authority to oversee and provide input on alterations, demolition, construction, repairs, or relocation of structures within the historic district.
4. Preserve and maintain buildings, sites, and structures of historical, cultural, or architectural interest. New development and uses should be cognizant of historic structures and other significant cultural buildings.
5. The CDA and Town should review those structures that currently do not have a landmark designation but possess historic significance for potential inclusion into the Town's list of official designated landmarks.
6. Strengthen the tax base while promoting the integration of commercial and residential uses through development of multi-family residential units with ground floor commercial uses; providing a mix of uses that tie the residential and cultural components of the EMSURA, and encouraging meeting and gathering places to accommodate tourists and residents.
7. Provide multi-family residential developments that accommodate a mix of incomes. This could be accomplished through an incentive zoning program for affordable housing within multi-family developments.
8. Encourage personal service uses related to tourists and residents.
9. Support applications for commercial and recreation uses that are more directly related to the waterfront and incorporate site layout requirements, including minimum setback requirements from the waterfront so that public access is not inhibited.
10. Promote additional open space and community facilities for tourists and local residents. Public spaces should be strategically placed throughout the EMSURA to encourage pedestrian access, tourism, and improved scenic vistas. Additionally, within the western portion of the EMSURA, south of East Main Street across from Benjamin Street, the Town should encourage land or access easements that accommodate open areas allowing pedestrian access to the waterfront ensuring connectivity between East Main Street and the Peconic River.
11. Maintenance and enlargement of public space along the river corridor, south of East Main Street by reducing land dedicated to parking, should be considered a high priority; and the Town should seek public/private partnerships to make improvements and maintain view sheds. Further, development other than public open space should be discouraged within this area to eliminate a conflict of use.
12. Encourage more scenic vistas along the Peconic River corridor within the DC-2 zoning district. Development in this area should be limited to and reserved for public uses, including pedestrian oriented parks, courtyards, and strategic parking areas. All uses in this area should have streetlights, signs, and demonstrate a positive aesthetic quality.
13. Although current zoning permits a building height of no more than 60 feet or five stories, future development should consider the character of existing structures in conformance with existing heights on a block by block basis. Specifically, the buildings located on the east side of McDermott Avenue do not exceed two stories while buildings west of McDermott Avenue reach three stories in height. Future development should consider these existing building heights. Waterfront vistas or views from buildings on the north side of East Main Street

should also be maintained and, where possible, enhanced by ensuring that building heights on the south side are restricted and do not block access or prohibit these views.

14. Provide outside courtyards at the rear entrance of buildings along East Main Street and allow outside merchandise displays within these courtyards. This dual-entrance design would connect commercial and retail uses to the waterfront and parking areas, encouraging better designs.
15. Ensure new development provides connectivity between the eastern and western portions of the EMSURA by way of walkways, building layouts, and greenways.
16. Encourage maritime uses, including retail, restaurants, boat and canoe rentals, and commercial use of the Peconic River, in the portion of the EMSURA that is west of Atlantis Marine World Aquarium. This block could also include workforce housing for employees of maritime trade and a museum dedicated to the history of the waterfront.
17. Minimize the occurrence of alleyways and hidden spaces that pose a risk to public safety (e.g., alleyways could be reused as pedestrian access points to the waterfront). The Town should ensure that design standards address line of sight issues and encourage building clarity that identifies pedestrian access points by incorporating the use of lighting and signage that better identifies these spaces.
18. Improve the overall safety of the area by enhancing the design, layout, and lighting of alleys, streets, and parking areas as well as provide safe road crossings.
19. Implement beautification projects that address façade, landscape, and streetscape improvements as well as encourage an aesthetically pleasing and functional transition between public spaces and parking areas.
20. Establish additional parking areas within the eastern end of the EMSURA where a tourist information center, public amenities, and police substation could be developed.
21. All uses and development in the EMSURA should incorporate designs that consider pedestrian use and safety. Give priority to uses that create minimum conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles by creating a pedestrian-oriented street design, including roadway markings and signage, and provide pedestrian spaces, including benches and safe walkways.
22. Adopt and incorporate building design guidelines that reflect unity and coherence within the EMSURA and maintain the intended integrity of the downtown atmosphere. Standards would include signage, streetscape, and landscape regulations and should provide increased corner lot setbacks to increase vehicular visibility and eliminate and/or reduce gaps in building facades to reduce commercial inactivity.
23. Due to the important nature of encouraging redevelopment activities within the EMSURA, the Town should ensure that applications are responded to in a timely fashion and handled in such a way that avoids unnecessary delays. Specifically, applications that require more than one agency or commission involvement should be coordinated in advance. Advisory commissions and agencies (e.g., the Landmarks Commission) should accommodate and encourage pre-submission meetings prior to, or simultaneously with, building department application submissions.
24. Promote sustainable development in the downtown area to redevelop existing structures while conserving resources. Buildings should be constructed to provide a long life span and a flexible design to accommodate future uses. Multi-family residential developments of four units or less must be consistent with federal Energy Star standards. Further, green building designs should be promoted in conformance with the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.

### *Infrastructure*

25. Continue test well program and construct production wells to meet additional demand.
26. Increase connection fees to mitigate costs associated with supplying additional capacity.
27. Encourage or mandate water conservation throughout the water district.
28. In the event of development on the East First Street right-of-way, the existing 6-inch water main and existing 8-inch sewer line must be relocated.
29. Investigate existing flows and capacities of the sanitary sewer piping within the EMSURA and of the DeFriest Pump Station to determine whether any upgrades are necessary to handle anticipated additional flows for the interim and long-term development scenarios. This effort should consist of the preparation of a “Map and Plan” similar to that which has been recently developed for the Howell Avenue Pump Station.
30. Encourage Suffolk County to implement measures to reduce sanitary flow from the County Center facilities through the installation of water saving devices, conservation measures, etc.
31. Conduct a thorough inventory to determine where/whether roof drains are connected to the sewer system, and require property owners to provide alternative means for handling flows from roof drains.
32. Explore the possibility of creating a storm drainage district to provide common storm drainage facilities located on public property.
33. Collect impact/mitigation fees to be utilized to handle excess runoff from on-site drainage facilities.
34. Encourage or mandate green stormwater management techniques such as roof gardens and the installation of cisterns.
35. Incorporate drainage improvements into any new parkland/green space provided by elimination of parking along the riverfront, maximizing pervious surfaces that allow percolation.
36. Investigate and inventory those existing facilities that direct stormwater flows to the drainage system, either directly piped or flowing across sidewalks, streets, and parking areas.
37. Initiate a program to encourage retrofitting properties with such conditions to contain some or all of their stormwater on-site.
38. Investigate the opportunity to upgrade or eliminate direct stormwater outfalls to the Peconic River during future development, similar to the ongoing Suffolk County project at Peconic Avenue.

### *Traffic, Transportation, and Pedestrian Access*

39. The Suffolk County Department of Public Works (SCDPW) has indicated its intention to reconstruct the traffic circle and the intersection of CR94 at County Center Drive into modern two-lane roundabouts. The analyses conducted by SCDPW to evaluate the effectiveness of these improvements did not consider impacts due to redevelopment of the EMSURA. It is therefore recommended that the CDA work with the New York State Department of Transportation, the SCDPW, and the Town of Southampton to develop an improvement plan that will provide a roadway system capable of accommodating the traffic anticipated to be generated by the development envisioned in the EMSURA as well as any plans that the Town of Southampton has for the hamlet of Riverside, as envisioned in the newly released DEIS for the Riverside Planned Development District. To accommodate the traffic anticipated due the short-term phase 1 development in the EMSURA, the following

low-cost, readily implementable measures should be considered for implementation, subject to Suffolk County and/or NYSDOT concurrence:

- Change operation of Roanoke Avenue between Second Street and Main Street to provide one-way southbound operation and restripe to provide two southbound lanes;
- Revise lane use at the intersection of Roanoke Avenue at Main Street to reflect the one-way operation. Two southbound lanes should be carried through the intersection and onto southbound Peconic Avenue. The rightmost lane should transition to a separate right turn lane at the traffic circle;
- Provide one-way northbound operation on East Avenue between Second Street and Main Street. This will provide the northbound compliment to the southbound operation of Roanoke Avenue;
- Prohibit parking on both sides of East Avenue, due to the narrow right-of-way, so that two travel lanes can be provided;
- Revise the operation of the traffic signal at Roanoke Avenue at Main Street;
- Provide a separate eastbound left turn lane on Main Street at East Avenue to accommodate the additional demand due to the one-way operation of Roanoke Avenue. Signalization of the intersection of East Avenue at Main Street should be considered, in consultation with NYSDOT; and
- Install a traffic signal at the intersection of CR 94 at County Center Spur.

40. Revise the *Code of the Town of Riverhead* and/or to the Parking District guidelines to require that any development with a residential component of more than four units provide parking for those units on-site at a rate of at least one parking space per unit. Commercial components of mixed-use developments could be accommodated in the Town-owned parking provided by the Parking District.

41. Upgrade all mid-block pedestrian crossing locations to provide signing requiring motorists to yield to pedestrians.

42. Upgrade the pedestrian crossing at East Avenue and at Atlantis Marine World Aquarium to provide overhead signing requiring motorists to yield to pedestrians, contrasting pedestrian crosswalk material, and pavement markings, and pedestrian bumpouts to enhance pedestrian safety.

43. Install full pedestrian signals at all existing and proposed signalized intersection locations. Pedestrian signals should be equipped with countdown timers for crossing arterials.

44. Provide a mid-block pedestrian crossing between Grangebel Park on the west side of Peconic Avenue and Riverfront Park on the east side of Peconic Avenue with overhead signing requiring motorists to yield to pedestrians, contrasting pedestrian crosswalk material, and pavement markings.

45. Encourage installation/maintenance of sidewalks with a comfortable, uniform, accessible cross-section with a minimum of street furniture on private development plans, and adopt such a policy when sidewalks are installed by the Town.

46. Investigate funding sources for additional traffic calming measures within the EMSURA. In recent years, New York State Department of Transportation administered the Local Safe Streets and Traffic Calming Program, which provided funding to local governments to

investigate and implement pedestrian safety improvements. This program was not funded for the current fiscal year, but is expected to be funded in the future.

47. Monitor parking demand in the EMSURA as development proceeds, and provide additional off-street parking to accommodate demand. In order to make certain that sufficient parking is in place to accommodate demand, applicants should be required to provide parking demand analyses as part of their site plan packages, or the Town should perform parking demand analyses for each approved site plan, so as to anticipate the need for new parking sufficiently in advance.
48. Work with Suffolk Transit to ensure they are kept abreast of increasing demand due to development in the EMSURA to make appropriate adjustments to routes and schedules as needed.
49. Provide bus shelters at all bus stops within the EMSURA. Bus shelters should be provided with copies of schedules, at a minimum. Investigate funding sources and the availability of real time information technology to provide information on route conditions and delays.
50. Encourage private developers to provide incentives for patrons and employees to use public transportation to travel to and from the EMSURA. Movie and hotel discounts, free or discounted merchandise, shuttle service between the EMSURA and the LIRR station should be considered.
51. Engage the LIRR in discussion on the possibility of shuttle service between the LIRR station and the EMSURA, similar to the program on the South Fork. Funding opportunities should be examined also.

#### *Solid Waste Management*

52. Develop a comprehensive solid waste collection strategy that uses either the local Business Improvement District (BID), in which the EMSURA is located, or a similar approach for solid waste collection and disposal. To develop the most efficient and effective strategy, the Town or BID should work with landowners and/or tenants to assess the different comprehensive collection strategies and select the best plan or approach considering cost, traffic, visual quality, equity, needs, resources, as well as the potential for future growth.
53. All containers should be kept in good repair (e.g., painted to prevent rust and deterioration), be structurally sound, leak proof, easily accessed, and vermin proof.
54. Garbage and other waste materials should be completely contained within the container. No accumulation of garbage or waste materials should be permitted outside the confines of the container, and garbage should not accumulate so that the container cover cannot be firmly closed as to prevent animals from gaining access to the container.
55. Containers should be strategically located, angled, and screened, yet still allow for removal. Containers should be screened from public view with a solid enclosure or enclosure of dense vegetation on at least three sides to a height of the container. No container should be located in or on a public right-of-way.
56. Efforts should be taken to consolidate all containers within the area, with the assistance of the BID and/or a creation of a garbage district. Such consolidation may include requirements such as the installation one litter receptacle or receptacle area for several uses placed in an inconspicuous and safe location.
57. Garbage should be removed frequently to avoid unpleasant odors.
58. Deliveries, collection of refuse, and other activities should be confined to such hours and such type as will not create any unreasonable disturbance to neighboring residential areas.
59. Heighten code enforcement of mandatory recycling.

60. Require tonnage reports describing the quantity and types of refuse generated.

#### ***TIMELINE***

The URP Update also provides an approximate timeframe for the implementation of the recommendations.

Table 1 below is the recommended time schedule as included in the URP Update. The implementation of the report would commence upon the completion of the SEQRA process and adoption of this plan by the CDA. As indicated in the URP Update, the start and completion dates for all actions, including land acquisition, clearance, disposition of property, redevelopment and rehabilitation, are subject to change as a result of funding, State loans, periodic subsidies, and capital grants.

**Table 1**  
**Recommended Time Schedule**

Action	Start Date	Date of Completion
Submission of Update to the Town Planning Board	May 2008	July 2008
Planning Board Determination Public Hearing		July 2008
New York State Environmental Quality Review Process	Late 2006	August 2008
Adoption of the East Main Street Urban Renewal Plan Update 2008	Late 2006	September 2008
CDA's Advisory Role to the Building Department as per Section 503(h) of New York State Article 15 (Urban Renewal Law)	Late 2008	36 months
Reuse of Vacant Structures	September 2008	2012
Rehabilitation of Identified Deteriorated Structures	September 2008	2012
Disposition of Land	September 2008	2017
Acquisition of Land	2008	2017
Infrastructure and Public Space Improvements	September 2008	2022
Approval of Development Applications	Late 2008	2022
Private Development of Underdeveloped or Undeveloped Properties	Late 2008	2022

**Source:** *East Main Street Urban Renewal Plan Update 2008.*

#### **PURPOSE AND NEED**

The EMSURA has and continues to suffer from a loss of patronage, the decline of economic activity, the presence of blight, and an increasing number of dilapidated and/or vacant structures. Although improvements to the area have occurred in the last several years, as indicated in the URP Update, the area continues to be in need of significant revitalization. In addition to these issues, there has also been in the last few years, an increase in the number of applications for development projects proposed in the area.

The URP Update provides the Town with guiding principles that are intended to address the obstacles facing the EMSURA with consideration to the overall effects of the numerous development applications. Table 2 summarizes the development applications, which had been included in the Final Scope. The URP Update, in addition to evaluating existing issues, provides recommendations that address development in the EMSURA as a whole with the intent to improve the area as well as an approximate timeline that the recommendations should follow. The recommendations of the URP Update have been included as part of this report below. As a

result, it is expected that the area's economic viability, patronage, pedestrian activity, and use of the waterfront would be improved.

The Town believes that the URP Update would transform the EMSURA from a struggling and under-populated and patronized area plagued with blight and high rates of vacancy to a more active and thriving downtown.

**Table 2**  
**Proposed Applications**

<b>Proposed Project Name</b>	<b>Suffolk County Tax Lot(s)*</b>	<b>Building Description</b>	<b>Use Description</b>
Zenith Building	0600-129-4-5.2	14,900 square foot, 5-story building	9 units (3rd-5th floor) 5,960 square feet retail
Elizabeth Strelbel	0600-128-6-78	1,835 square foot, 2-story building	1 residential unit 918 square feet retail
Viva L'Arte Center	0600-128-6-58.1	3,698 square foot, 2-story building	2 artists lofts 1,984 square feet commercial
209 East Avenue Building	0600-129-1-4	9,590 square foot, 5-story building	3 residential units 1,448 square feet office 1,448 square feet retail
54 East Main Retail and Apartment Building	0600-128-6-64	37,500 square foot, 5-story building	40 residential units 7,500 square feet commercial
Suffolk Performing Arts Theatre	0600-129-1-8.4	19,866 square foot, 4-story building	22 residential units 4,697 square feet theater
Atlantis Marine World Aquarium	0600-129-4-20, 21.1, and 21.2	290,250 square foot, 5-story building	120-room hotel with amenities
Riverhead Enterprises	0600-129-1-12, 13, and 14	140,565 square foot, 5-story, mixed-use building	116 units 28,113 square feet of commercial use on ground floor
Riverhead Enterprises	0600-129-1-17, 17, 19, and 20	202,505 square foot, multifamily residential building	165 condominium units
Apollo	0600-129-1-8.2, and 1.9 0600-128-6-66.4 (part of)	174,800 square foot, 4-story building	Commercial
<b>Note:</b> * Tax lot numbers are written in District-Section-Block-Lot format. <b>Source:</b> Town of Riverhead.			

#### **AGENCY OF JURISDICTION<sup>1</sup>**

- Town of Riverhead CDA (Lead Agency)

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<sup>1</sup> The Suffolk County Planning Commission indicated to the Town that the URP Update would require the Commission's review prior to adoption. However, as indicated in the 9/25/2008 letter, which has been included at the end of this Findings Statement, the URP Update is a policy document which does not require the Commission's review.

## **DATE FINAL GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FILED**

These findings consider all the relevant environmental impacts, facts, and conclusions identified in the Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement (FGEIS) adopted August 21, 2008. These findings also weighed and balanced relevant environmental impacts with social, economic, and other considerations and provided the rationale for the CDA's decision.

## **B. PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND**

Since the *1993 East Main Street Urban Renewal Plan*, the Town had been working on projects in and around the EMSURA to address issues that were identified at that time. In 2001, the area was rezoned to a newly adopted zoning district, namely Downtown Center (DC) and new issues became prevalent. This report was deemed necessary address anticipated growth and development.

Development applications presented an opportunity to improve the EMSURA and it was clear to the Town that the EMSURA would worsen or stay stagnant if redevelopment was not encouraged or facilitated.

Pursuant to SEQRA and its implementing procedures in 6 NYCRR 617, in 2006, a public scoping process was initiated by the issuance of a Draft Scope of issues for inclusion in the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS). A public meeting was held with respect to the Draft Scope in October of 2006, and written comments on the Draft Scope were accepted until October 25, 2006.

The DGEIS for the URP Update, which was prepared by the Town with the assistance of its consultants, was accepted by the Town as adequate for the purpose of public review and issued on June 4, 2008.

A SEQRA public hearing on the DGEIS was conducted by the CDA on June 19, 2008. Simultaneously with that hearing, the Town of Riverhead Planning Board conducted a hearing on the Proposed URP Update pursuant to the New York State Urban Renewal Law. The public comment period on the DGEIS remained open until July 7, 2008 for the submission of written comments. The CDA held a second public hearing on the URP Update on July 15, 2008. Although there were no public comments presented at the June 19, 2008 SEQRA hearing, a total of 4 different speakers commented on the DGEIS URP Update. The URP Update public comment period remained open until July 25, 2008 for the receipt of written comments. Written comments were accepted on both documents till July 25, 2008.

The FGEIS, which was prepared by the Town with the assistance of its independent consultants, was accepted as adequate in scope and content by the Town and issued on August 21, 2008. The FGEIS contains responses to comments made at the public hearing and sent in written form.

## **C. NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

As required by SEQRA, the FGEIS assessed No Action as an alternative to the URP Update. This alternative assumed that no actions would be taken by the CDA or Town and assumed that development of pending projects, reuse, and development of existing lots would occur consistent with current zoning.

In the No-Action Alternative, development would not occur in conformance with existing local and regional public policy. Development would occur in a manner that would be inconsistent with the goals and objectives of the Town and regional plans due to the fact the development

would be limited by the constraints that currently exist and would continue to exist in the future. These constraints are a high number of vacancies, underutilized waterfront, low density development, lack of adequate infrastructure to accommodate future growth, and transportation related issues.

## **D. BUILD-OUT STUDY**

The analysis presented in the DGEIS was based on a build-out study that calculated the type and amount of development that may occur by the year 2022. The build-out calculations followed current zoning requirements. The build-out study concluded that a certain level of development with specific uses would exist by 2012, 2017, and 2022. The heights, square feet, and use of the forecasted development served as the basis of the analysis which was then superimposed with the recommendations of the URP Update.

The projected growth was analyzed for three development scenarios: short term, which encompasses a level of development that may occur within the next 5 years (2007-2012); interim, which includes development that may occur between 5 and 10 years into the future (2012-2017); and long term, which includes development that may occur between 10 and 15 years into the future (2017-2022).

The short-term development scenario includes a level of development that was expected to occur approximately within the next five years (2007-2012). That level of development was determined for the purpose of potential impact evaluation based on the following assumptions that were made with respect to each Superblock during the short-term scenario:

- All currently vacant buildings and structures will be occupied. Their uses will be identical to prior uses, as recorded by the Town's Assessor and property records. The use of this assumption to calculate a level of short-term development does not mean that only "reuse" development is addressed by the GEIS analysis of the short-term scenario. As long as the cumulative impacts of a proposed project do not exceed the maximum short-term phase impacts evaluated in the GEIS, the analysis would constitute the necessary SEQRA review of that project even if it is not a renewed use of an existing vacancy; and
- All specifically identified, pending, and approved projects as they are described in this chapter would be implemented.
- Calculations indicated that approximately 366 residential units will be developed as a result of the projects. This is 73 percent of the total number of housing units permitted in the DC-1 zone within the EMSURA (500 units).

Analysis presented in Chapter 6, "Infrastructure," and Chapter 11, "Transportation and Parking," divided the short-term scenario in two consecutive phases. Phase I measured all pending or proposed projects (see Table 2). Phase 2 measured the cumulative effects of Phase I and all in-fill of vacant existing buildings. The Phase 2 analysis will therefore reflect the cumulative impacts of pending and proposed projects and the in-fill of vacant existing buildings, which is estimated to occur by the end of the short-term scenario.

The level of development that was calculated to occur in the short-term scenario would encompass 164 percent more development than the existing condition (see Table 3). This considerable level of development is significant and as indicated by the Town, would most likely not be completed by the end of 2012. Of the three scenarios this scenario assumes the largest increase in development and consists predominantly of the development of proposed projects

(see Table 2). However, the analysis presented in the DGEIS evaluates the effects of these projects should they be constructed in such a small frame of time (2012).

### **INTERIM DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO**

The interim scenario encompassed a level of development that assumed all underdeveloped parcels would begin to redevelop according to the current zoning district. The level of development expected to occur during this scenario would most likely not occur by 2017. It was assumed that the EMSURA would have approximately 2,092,238 square feet of development or 68 percent over the short-term 2012 scenario.

### **LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO**

The long-term development scenario, including development that may occur between 10 and 15 years into the future (2017-2022), permits 80 percent lot coverage. It is assumed that 100 more residential units would be developed in the entire EMSURA during this phase. The methodology of assigning new square footage to land uses mimics the methodology used in the interim development scenario.

The build-out study assumed an extreme scenario of development. The EMSURA is a downtown area located within a suburban setting in eastern Long Island. The level of development calculated to occur would most likely not occur within the development scenarios time frame. Table 3 below provides the forecasted development calculated to occur by each scenario.

**Table 3**  
**EMSURA Build-Out Summary**

Land Use Category	Existing (2007) (sf)	Short-term (2012) (sf)	Interim (2017) (sf)	Long-term (2017) (sf)	2007-2012 Percent Change	2012-2017 Percent Change	2017-2022 Percent Change
Commercial	127,459	650,775	1,150,065	1,317,485	411	77	15
Mixed use	20,384	251,873	251,873	251,873	1,111	--	--
Single family	9,526	8,382	4,224	4,224	(12)	(50)	--
Vacant buildings	178,982	--	--	--	(100)	--	--
Cultural and institutional	49,339	49,339	182,483	227,128	--	270	24
Recreation	84,528	79,272	278,989	345,956	(6)	252	24
Multifamily residential	--	202,505	224,605	289,739	100	11	22
<b>Totals</b>	<b>470,218</b>	<b>1,242,146</b>	<b>2,092,238</b>	<b>2,436,405</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>16</b>

**Sources:** AKRF, Inc., 2007, Town of Riverhead Assessor's Office.

## **E. FINDINGS**

### **LAND USE, ZONING AND PUBLIC POLICY**

#### *LAND USE*

The URP Update puts forth recommendations that, if adopted, would promote new development and thus new land uses in the EMSURA, which would include a mix of commercial, residential, cultural, and tourism type uses. As demonstrated in the DGEIS, development as it is permitted under current zoning would potentially result in a more densely developed area. However, as indicated in the FGEIS, the DGEIS analysis assumed a worst case scenario that would require significant robust improvements in the area within a short period of time.

Overall the URP Update would decrease vacancy rates. In addition, new development would include the highest and best land use as well as environmentally sensitive building design for all new buildings. If implemented the URP Update would facilitate development of more mixed-uses (commercial and residential) and multifamily residential units. The increase in these uses would help to re-establish the area as a vibrant downtown, which is characteristic of the area's historical development.

The URP Update would result in the preservation of additional buildings that contribute to the historical significance of the area. An increase in the number of designated historical uses would have a positive impact on preserving the historical integrity of the EMSURA, promoting cultural and tourist uses.

The URP Update seeks to implement recommendations that would phase out nonconforming uses; redevelop and reuse vacant and/or deteriorated buildings; promote development of additional cultural and recreation uses such as open space, public spaces, and historic sites; encourage mixed-use, multifamily structures; and expand new commercial development such as maritime uses.

With regard to land uses immediately adjacent to the EMSURA (predominantly single-family residential and commercial uses), it is expected that the increase in height and density of buildings as well as the improvement of their overall condition would benefit the surrounding area by improving property values and increasing diversity of uses consistent with a vibrant downtown community. Further, the improved mix and variety of uses would allow residents to shop and work downtown, versus driving to various destinations outside of the EMSURA.

#### *ZONING*

The recommendations proposed in the URP Update would encourage a review of the existing zoning and potentially result in need to modify the extent and building heights of the existing DC-1 zoning district. The URP Update is expected to improve the health, safety, and general welfare of the Town of Riverhead and increase property values. In fact, consistent with the goals of DC-1 and DC-2, the URP Update would improve the overall economic viability, character, and vibrancy of the area. Further, the URP Update would not alter the zoning designation of the area surrounding the EMSURA, including the Residence A-40 Zoning District to the north and Industrial C zoning district to the west.

#### *PUBLIC POLICY*

The URP Update if adopted would promote development that enhances public use of the waterfront by, attract visitors and tourists to the area, incorporates the Peconic River waterfront,

supports the environmental and development goals of the region, and promotes connectivity between buildings and/or uses. By resulting in such improvements, the URP Update would be in compliance with the policies set forth in the various regional and local planning reports.

## **POPULATION AND HOUSING**

The URP Update would encourage the development of residential structures as permitted by the DC-1 zoning district, causing an increase in the number of residents in the area. The development of residential units would cause an increase in the overall population within the EMSURA.

The URP Update would increase the small housing stock by promoting the development of 500 multifamily units. The URP Update recommends the phasing out of non-conforming uses in the EMSURA, including single-family homes. It is expected that this housing would be replaced with multifamily units, including town homes, condominiums, and apartments, as permitted by the DC-1 zoning district. It is expected that the URP Update would improve the EMSURA's economic viability and likely increase home value within and surrounding the EMSURA. It is also expected that the EMSURA would offer existing and future residents with increased housing options, which would attract a demographically diverse population.

## **EMERGENCY SERVICES AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

An analysis of local emergency services includes the local police, fire, and ambulance providers and their ability to service the growth anticipated to occur. It is expected that these services may need to modify in order to accommodate the growth.

If housing in the EMSURA according to current zoning limits, the area would see an increase in the number of students by 125 over a 15-year period. Compared to Riverhead Central School District's projected growth rate, the URP Update would increase the number of students by 7 percent over the 1,779 district projection. However, the URP Update would provide an increase in revenue that may be generated according to current assessment standards. It is estimated that by the long-term scenario the projected tax revenue increase would be 362 percent more than the 2006 tax generated. In 2006, Riverhead Central School District collected approximately \$486,757. In 2022, the EMSURA would generate approximately \$2,251,884 in revenue for the school district.

The URP Update would not have a significant adverse impact on library services, as the increase in demand for library services would be offset by the increase in the tax revenue generated from the EMSURA.

The URP Update recommends that the Town encourage the development of parks and recreation types of uses within the EMSURA. If implemented, the URP Update would increase the amount of space dedicated to parks and open space. The URP Update also recommends the acquisition of a parcel for the expansion of the existing waterfront park.

The URP Update, if approved, would increase the overall population of the EMSURA, which would potentially increase the demand for recreational uses and open space. However, the parks are not currently heavily utilized and have capacity to accommodate an increase in visitors.

Commercial recreation and cultural uses should also increase as a result of the URP Update. By adding to the inventory of existing commercial recreation uses, the URP Update would enhance the recreation component of the EMSURA.

## **ECONOMIC AND FISCAL CONDITIONS**

The URP Update would result in a decrease in vacancy rates, new development, an increase in full-time employment, an increase the overall household median income. It is anticipated that the redevelopment of the EMSURA would result in a gain in patronage and tourists that would also have an impact on revenue generated in the retail sectors.

While it is impossible to realistically project future property tax revenues, it is anticipated that the property taxes generated by the URP Update would increase substantially over those currently collected.

Overall, the URP Update, if implemented, could dramatically improve the economic conditions of the EMSURA and surrounding area. An increased number of jobs would be made possible as a result of new and better development, as well as on- and off-site spending by new residents. New residents, employees, and tourists in the area would also contribute to the increase in sales tax, which would serve as a significant economic benefit.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

### ***WATER SUPPLY***

There would be sufficient water pressure to support the proposed development within the EMSURA. In addition, although it was found that there would be ample flow available for fire-fighting needs, it is likely that the applicable building and fire codes for these projects would require the installation of fire sprinkler systems for the protection of lives and property. Such systems would need to be designed based upon current hydrant flow test data as well as various other parameters in accordance with the codes and other applicable standards. The Riverhead Water District presently charges a water hook up fee pursuant to Section 105 of the Riverhead Town Code in order to finance improvements to the district made necessary by increased demand for potable water.

### ***SANITARY***

The URP Update in the short-term scenario would result in additional wastewater flow of approximately 145,000 gpd. Based on the stated maximum flow of the AWTF under the existing State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permit of 1,200,000 gpd (1.2 mgd), the short-term development scenario would utilize roughly 38 percent of the plant's remaining available permitted capacity, assuming no additional growth takes place in the balance of the district.

Under the existing SDPES permit, the AWTF has sufficient capacity to accommodate the additional flows estimated under the short-term development scenario. An underlying assumption is that there is no limit placed on how much of the plant's permitted excess capacity is available for development within the EMSURA.

Independent of the capacity of the DeFriest Sewage Pumping Station, a review of the plant's condition by H2M Group in May 2008 determined that the pumping station "has not been upgraded for some time but currently is functioning reliably". Should that condition change in the future and the station require major upgrades or rebuilding existing Riverhead Sewer District procedures and regulations would need to be followed. The Riverhead Sewer District presently charges a densification fee as set forth by resolution of the Riverhead Town Board from time to time in order to finance improvements to the district made necessary by increased sewage flow.

The AWTF would theoretically accommodate the short-term flows under the existing SDPES permit. Under the interim scenario and full development of the EMSURA combined with full development of the rest of the sewer district would result in increased flow to just below the rated capacity of the AWTF, and it is within the margin of error for the methodology. However, the total flow at assumed full build-out would be approximately 17 percent above the flow permitted under the existing SDPES permit.

In the event that the Town was unable to obtain a SPDES permit modification, flow at a future point in time to the AWTF would need to be reduced to accommodate proposed development within the EMSURA and the Town in general, or the amount of development-producing flows would need to be limited.

The recommendations in the URP Update set forth several methods that would accomplish reducing current flow. The effluent diversion program currently being explored by the Town is a key component in meeting the total maximum daily load (TMDL) levels for nitrogen at both the current and permitted flows. During the critical warmer months, for any flow greater than the current flow, the corresponding improvement in effluent quality in conjunction with effluent diversion would be necessary. It should be noted that if a SPDES permit modification was obtained to increase the flow from the currently permitted flow, a nitrogen concentration less than the practical load reduction would need to be achieved in order to meet the TMDL during the warmer months.

The plant is presently operating at its organic capacity. In other words, given the characteristics of the influent entering the plant, the nitrogen concentration of the effluent is as low as possible given the equipment and technology utilized at the plant. Therefore, the current average daily nitrogen concentration of 10.7 mg/L and corresponding nitrogen load could not be reduced without additional measures being taken.

#### ***DRAINAGE***

Much of the existing drainage facilities throughout the EMSURA pre-date the requirements for storage of a 2-inch rainfall, however, new development projects would be required to meet the current standards. The 2-inch rainfall requirement conflicts with the DC-1 zoning, which at present permits 100 percent lot coverage, leaving essentially no opportunity to install any conventional drainage structures to handle the runoff from the site. Anticipated redevelopment of properties within the EMSURA presents the opportunity to increase the ability to reduce runoff below present levels, and to handle more of the runoff by replacing existing inefficient structures, installing additional structures, and utilizing the latest stormwater management practices to more closely meet current requirements.

#### ***NATURAL RESOURCES***

The URP Update would not have an adverse impact on the flora, fauna, and marine life within the EMSURA since these natural resources occur only in a very limited extent. As a result of the URP Update, open space could increase overall, potentially increasing the quantity and diversity of these resources.

The URP Update would prevent development of other areas in the Town, or possibly allow for preservation of green areas while enabling appropriate development. Additionally, the URP Update recommends that buildings follow Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards and green building design. Buildings constructed according to LEED standards promote a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in

five key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality. The URP Update is expected to increase the amount of pedestrian activity in the EMSURA, potentially reducing vehicle miles traveled.

## **SOILS, GEOLOGY, AND WATER RESOURCES**

The study area is already developed, so it is highly unlikely that implementation of the URP Update would result in a significant adverse impact to soils.

The established system of recharge of stormwater and treatment of wastewater within the EMSURA will not be significantly altered, and therefore protection of the underground aquifer system will be maintained. Due to the developed nature of the EMSURA, steep slopes do not occur in this area.

Overall any changes to existing grades, soil, and stormwater that would occur as a result of development would be evaluated on a site by site basis through the site plan review process.

With regards to groundwater, the URP Update encourages the development of public spaces such as courtyards and parks, also decreasing total impervious coverage in the area. The natural filtration process would be enhanced by increasing the total area of pervious surface and implementing resource management techniques previously identified. This would have an overall beneficial impact on the groundwater.

Due to the fact the region's groundwater serves as the water supply, water usage increases created by the URP Update, or development resulting from the URP Update, was evaluated. Overall, the development resulting from the URP Update would by 2022 require an additional 292,600 gpd. This amount would not have a significant adverse impact on the groundwater since it would not create a significant burden on the groundwater supply.

## **VISUAL RESOURCES**

If adopted, the URP Update would improve the overall visual quality of the EMSURA and therefore would have a significant positive impact on the visual resources. The URP Update sets forth recommendations that improve the street views, waterfront access and view, and building layout in the EMSURA.

## **CULTURAL RESOURCES**

The EMSURA, in addition to being located in a historic district, contains several designated as well as unofficial places of historical significance. The URP Update recommends that the Town protect and enhance these resources by restricting development close to historic sites and furthering the goals of the Town's Landmarks Commission by continuing the current advisory role of the Landmarks Commission in reviewing development applications.

With regards to archeological resources, the build-out of the EMSURA would increase the developed footprint on some lots and the few vacant lots that do exist. Significant disturbance of previously virgin property is highly unlikely. In those instances, a Phase I Survey would be required, which would identify any potentially significant archaeological resources.

Applicants for projects that involve permits, approvals, or funding by federal or State agencies must consult with the State regarding potential impacts to cultural resources and mitigation measures.

## TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

### *TRANSPORTATION*

The recommendations discussed above and set forth in the URP Update are expected to provide adequate parking to accommodate demand commensurate with construction of the known projects (short-term phase 1), and the pedestrian and public transportation improvements will foster increased use of public transportation and encourage more pedestrian activity. However, the roadway improvements recommended above would not be sufficient to accommodate the traffic demand beyond that generated by the known projects (short-term phase 1), nor would the existing parking supply be adequate to meet the estimated demand. In addition, the roadway improvements do little to address the traffic circle south of the Peconic River, where congested conditions would continue to prevail.

Development that generates additional traffic demand beyond that envisioned in the short-term phase 1 scenario will require improvements to the roadway system of a considerably more robust nature. The intersection of Main Street at Roanoke Avenue / Peconic Avenue processes all of the traffic destined to the EMSURA that arrives via the traffic circle, essentially that traffic originating south and east of the traffic circle on the south side of the Peconic River, as well as the traffic that arrives and departs to and from the west via Main Street, and to and from the north via Roanoke Avenue. The offset configuration of the intersection limits the effectiveness of traditional intersection improvement strategies, such as the addition of turning lanes and revisions to traffic signal operations. The improvements discussed above provide some relief at this location, and the added capacity should allow for significant development in the near future. However, because of its important role, and the unorthodox configuration, included among the more robust strategies investigated in the GEIS are the realignment of the northbound and southbound approaches to the intersection of Roanoke Avenue / Peconic Avenue at Main Street. Such realignment, intended to eliminate the offset between the approaches and the resultant inefficiencies in the operation of the traffic signal at this location, would require the acquisition of private property either in the northwest or southeast quadrants of the intersection, depending on the ultimate alignment.

The addition of the short-term phase 2 traffic will require coordination of multiple agencies to implement long term measures of a significantly more robust nature. These mitigation measures would be needed to provide improved operating conditions. A series of potential improvements intended to provide the capacity necessary to accommodate longer-term growth in and around the EMSURA was examined in the GEIS. With these mitigation measures in place, the otherwise significant deterioration in operating conditions on the network, particularly during the Saturday midday peak hour, could be better accommodated.

However, it is recognized that there are other strategies that would alleviate congestion at this location that have not been examined in detail by this study. Among those strategies would be the diversion of some of the traffic utilizing this intersection to enter the downtown area to alternate routes. Diversion of traffic is complicated by the presence of the Peconic River, and the availability of only two bridges in reasonable proximity to the downtown area, the Peconic Avenue Bridge and the Court Street/County Center Spur Bridge. A good deal of the traffic destined to and from the County Center, and the court houses north and west of the EMSURA already utilizes the Court Street bridge, limiting its availability as an alternate route to the EMSURA.

Therefore, a strategy that envisioned significant diversion of traffic away from the Peconic Avenue bridge would need to consider construction of another bridge over the Peconic River

into the downtown area. Construction of such a bridge is likely to have significant beneficial impact on accessibility and mobility within the EMSURA, and would also provide relief to the operation of the traffic circle by diverting traffic away from Peconic Avenue. However, it would also have major economic, environmental and design considerations, which would likely dwarf those impacts of the improvement strategies that have been considered.

Further note that, even if the bridge congestion were to be alleviated, Main Street could not accommodate the addition of the large amounts of traffic projected under these longer term scenarios under its current configuration, and would have to be widened to provide at least two lanes in each direction with turning lanes at major intersections. While this configuration could be achieved through some combination of the elimination of on street parking and pavement widening, the elimination of parking is not conducive to attracting commerce to Main Street, and the four-lane configuration is not in keeping with a walkable, pedestrian-friendly downtown business district, especially one in which a mix of commercial and a significant number of residential properties is envisioned. In addition, many of the buildings along Main Street are built down to the property line, and any widening could require acquisition and demolition of the buildings, or a narrowing of the existing sidewalks.

Since the hypothetical additional roadway improvements of the nature discussed above would result in a roadway network not appropriate to a thriving downtown business district, and the impediments to their implementation make it extremely unlikely that they would ever come about; no additional traffic simulations have been performed to evaluate their effect on the network.

#### ***PARKING***

As indicated in the FGEIS, the parking demand analysis conducted to estimate the potential increase in parking demand in the EMSURA as a result of the development scenarios examined in the DGEIS has been revised. The revisions reflect the significant reduction in the scope of the Apollo project proposed on the north side of Main Street between Roanoke Avenue and East Avenue, the changes to the site plan for the proposed hotel/conference venue associated with Atlantis Marine World, and the impact of the recommendation that larger residential developments within the EMSURA be required to provide dedicated parking for residents. Note also that the Atlantis Marine World project includes an approximately 100-room hotel, and will be providing a separate off-street parking facility for exclusive use by Atlantis Marine World as a valet parking lot to accommodate the hotel parking demand. The revised analysis examines the impact on parking conditions in the absence of the large 1,100+ space parking structure included in the original analysis performed for the DGEIS. The results of these analyses indicate that short-term Phase 1 additional parking demand has been reduced from 1,827 spaces to 1,142 spaces during weekday peak demand, and from 1,725 to 1,055 spaces during projected weekend peak demand. Corresponding projected parking deficits have been reduced from 898 to 213 on a weekday, and from 796 to 126 on a weekend. Similarly, the revised estimated parking deficit for the short-term phase 2 scenario, which envisions full occupancy of all existing vacant properties in the EMSURA, is reduced to 527 spaces on a peak weekday and 390 spaces on a peak weekend.

In light of the results of this analysis, it is concluded that there is sufficient available off-street parking within and in the immediate vicinity of the EMSURA to accommodate a significant amount of new development in the immediate future. Should applications for development within the EMSURA be submitted, or should increased activity in the EMSURA result in a significant decrease in the amount of vacant or underutilized properties such that parking

demand at the level projected for the short-term phase 1 scenario seems likely to emerge, an additional 100 to 200 spaces will be required to accommodate demand. Similarly, should such new development rise to the levels projected for full build-out of phase 2 of the short-term scenario, then 400 to 500 additional parking spaces will be needed to accommodate demand.

The largest parking lot maintained by the Town is located along the Peconic River waterfront, between the rear of existing properties facing Main Street, and the riverfront park recently rehabilitated by the Town. While providing sufficient convenient parking is important to the viability of the businesses in the EMSURA, of equal importance is the enhanced use of the major asset presented by the Peconic Riverfront. It is the stated desire of the Town to reduce the use of waterfront property as off-street parking, to increase the amount of public space and enhance the aesthetics of the waterfront by eliminating some of the parking located there. Any reduction in the number of spaces provided in the waterfront parking facilities would increase the projected parking deficit accordingly.

If needed, new off-street parking spaces can be provided in a number of ways: additional at-grade parking facilities could be provided, on-site parking could be required by the Town as a condition of site plan approval, or a smaller parking structure could be constructed. Further, the Riverhead Parking District should develop a parking impact fee schedule which would provide funds to provide additional surface and/or structured parking. In addition, there is a significant existing parking supply outside the EMSURA that could be utilized to offset increased demand in the EMSURA, through the provision of a shuttle service that circulates among the various parking lots and the EMSURA. Several parking facilities serve the courts north of the EMSURA. It should be noted, however, that although a significant amount of parking is available at these facilities on weekends, few vacant spaces are available in many of these parking facilities outside the EMSURA on weekdays, due to the nature of existing parking demand. In addition, construction of eight new courtrooms in the court complex northwest of the EMSURA is underway. Upon completion, these new courtrooms will generate additional parking demand. Based on the results of the parking demand survey conducted for this study, approximately 70 parking spaces were available in the existing off-street parking facilities located in the immediate vicinity of the court complex. In the event that parking demand at the court facilities increase to the point that it exceeds this existing spare capacity, additional parking might need to be provided in order to prevent court related parking demand from impacting on the parking available to the EMSURA. It is recommended that parking demand at the court complex be monitored to determine the potential impact on the parking scenario in the EMSURA.

The revised results of the parking demand analysis for the interim scenario indicate that, although projected deficits are reduced, the parking demand generated by the large amount of new commercial space envisioned in the interim scenario still results in deficits of 2813 spaces during the weekday and 3060 spaces on Saturday. Note that the previously discussed reduction of parking along the waterfront would further increase the parking deficit.

Obviously, absent significant addition parking construction, the parking demand generated by the long-term scenario would also be beyond the capacity of the supply in the EMSURA.

Utilizing the methodology in the Urban Land Institute (ULI) "Shared Parking" report, over 740,000 square feet of at-grade parking or more than 17 acres would be required to provide enough parking to meet the interim demand, and an additional 6 acres would be needed to meet the long-term parking demand. Note that the entire EMSURA is only 41 acres in size. Therefore, meeting the parking demand through the addition of at-grade parking is not logical.

As previously discussed, there is a significant amount of public parking located outside the EMSURA that is underutilized on weekends, evenings and other times when courts are not in session. This parking supply could be utilized to offset demand generated by redevelopment of the EMSURA during those time periods. Due to the proximity to the courts, train station, and waterfront, these locations are also considered more desirable locations for a potential future parking structure. However, since this parking supply is outside the maximum acceptable walking distance recommended by ULI, a shuttle service would be needed to encourage maximum usage of this available and potential future parking supply.

#### *PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION*

Development of the EMSURA as envisioned in this study is expected to increase travel demand in general considerably, and it is desirable that as much of this demand as possible be accommodated on public transportation. However, the nature of the trip type generated would continue to be ill-served by the existing LIRR service. The Long Island Rail Road has long been reluctant to increase service, citing lack of demand, and indeed Metropolitan Transit Authority points to the ample capacity available on the existing trains. Prior studies conducted in the area as well as other communities on the eastern end of Long Island have recommended that shuttle-type service be offered by the LIRR, making numerous shorter distance round trips between destinations within the region. However, until recently, LIRR has been reluctant to provide this service, even on trial basis, citing scarce funds and the need to focus on the New York City commute, which provides an overwhelming majority of income through train fares.

Ridership on all the Suffolk Transit bus routes serving the EMSURA and its vicinity has increased significantly in recent years. Much of the increase is thought to originate in the growth in the immigrant population attracted to the east end of Long Island by the availability of employment in the service industries, such as landscaping, nurseries, wineries, vineyards, hotels and restaurants. The trip-types associated with this sector of the economy tend to be well served by buses, insofar as the trips are usually short, have varying start and end points, and occur at varying times on the day. One of the desired results of development in the EMSURA is an increase in employment opportunities within the EMSURA, a proportion of which is likely to be in those economic sectors that have been found to generate demand for public transportation. While it is desirable and likely that some of these new employees will live in the residential development being encouraged in the EMSURA, and would thus be able to walk to work, it is also likely that many will not, and will contribute to the rising demand for bus service on those routes serving the EMSURA.

#### *PEDESTRIANS*

The recommendations in the URP Update foster an enhanced pedestrian environment within the EMSURA that facilitates a safe movement of pedestrians among the parks, stores, residences, and remote parking facilities, and to encourage patrons, employees, residents and visitors to the many attractions envisioned in the plan to walk rather than drive to or among such attractions. The Town of Riverhead has applied to the Suffolk County Department of Public Works to allow the installation of a mid-block pedestrian crossing between Grangebel Park on the west side of Peconic Avenue and Riverfront Park on the east side of Peconic Avenue. This mid-block crossing is recommended with a crosswalk made of contrasting materials, and mast arm mounted overhead signs instructing motorists to yield for pedestrians.

In recent years, NYSDOT administered the Local Safe Streets and Traffic Calming Program, which provides funding to local governments to investigate and implement pedestrian safety

improvements. The Town of Riverhead has used this program to finance pedestrian safety and traffic calming improvements at the intersection of Middle Road at Osborne Avenue. While this program was not funded for the current fiscal year, it is expected that funds would be available in the future.

## **SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT**

It is expected that the increase in development would not have an impact on the existing solid waste system due to the fact that regulations intended to manage solid waste in the EMSURA and Town-wide are in place and all new development must be in conformance to the established ordinances. Further, the commercial and multifamily uses would utilize and pay for private carters.

The URP Update makes certain recommendations intended to improve the existing system by creating additional requirements pertaining to container location and maintenance, litter, reporting, code enforcement, and screening. The URP Update also recommends that existing uses develop a system where dumpsters may be consolidated and pickup times would be better coordinated to meet demand in an efficient manner.

Based on the recommendations, solid waste management within the EMSURA should improve overall. The growth would be mitigated with the implementation of such recommendations. For example, although the growth would create more solid waste in the EMSURA, the improvements to management and enforcement of recycling would offset the impacts caused by the increase.

## **F. CONCLUSION**

Based on information, evaluation and conclusions in the GEIS and this Findings Statement, site-specific application for site plan approval within the EMSURA will not require supplemental SEQRA analysis for the impacts evaluated in this report, including for so long as the cumulative level of prospective EMSURA development and redevelopment does not exceed the short-term phase 1 development scenario parameters, including projected traffic generation, parking demand, water usage and sanitary waste generation. The development of the EMSURA analyzed in the SEQRA process was based on the existing zoning and the EMSURA was assumed to be built to the maximum extent permitted by 2022. This long-term scenario assumes an extreme case and will most likely not occur due to the robust nature of mitigation and improvements that would be needed to support the significant increase in development. It is more likely that the level of development assumed in the short-term scenario will occur, and that such development can take place with no significant impacts on the environment. The EMSURA will be able to support and accommodate the development assumed in the short-term scenario, and in particular, the pending and proposed projects and in-fill analyzed in phase I of the short-term scenario, without significant impacts or the need for major changes in infrastructure or mitigation measures.

## **G. CERTIFICATION OF FINDINGS TO APPROVE**

The CDA has considered the relevant environmental impacts, facts, and conclusions disclosed in the GEIS and has weighed and balanced relevant environmental impacts with social, economic, and other considerations. Having considered the DGEIS and FGEIS and the above written facts and conclusions relied upon to meet the requirements of 6 NYCRR Section 617, the Town of Riverhead CDA certifies that all applicable requirements have been met. Specifically, the CDA

finds that, consistent with the social, economic, and other essential considerations from among the reasonable alternatives available, the action is one that avoids or minimizes adverse environmental impacts to the maximum extent practicable, including the effects disclosed in the GEIS, and that adverse environmental impacts will be avoided to the maximum extent practicable. \*



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September 25, 2008

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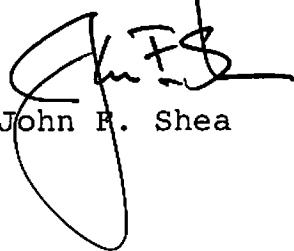
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Re: Town of Riverhead East Main Street Urban  
Renewal Plan Update – County Planning  
Commission

Dear Mr. Freleng:

I am writing in response to your letter of September 11, 2008, regarding the above-referenced matter. The Town of Riverhead respectfully disagrees with your assessment that the proposed Update to the East Main Street Urban Renewal Plan ("URP Update") is an action requiring a referral to the Suffolk County Planning Commission. The Town believes that the URP Update is merely a policy document, not something that requires referral to the Commission.

Very truly yours,



John P. Shea

JFS:js

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