

12. Community Facilities Element

12.1 VISION STATEMENT

Because community facilities protect public safety and enhance the quality of life in Riverhead, they should be improved and/or expanded to meet growing needs. At the same time, the Town should seek opportunities for the efficient and multiple use of facilities, in order to limit increases in costs. New facilities should be conveniently sited in or near residential neighborhoods and hamlet centers, where they can easily accessed by residents and contribute to the sense of community.

12.2 SCHOOLS

The Town of Riverhead has three separate school districts, shown on Figure 12-1: (1) Riverhead Central School District (CSD), which occupies most of the Town; (2) the Shoreham-Wading River School District, in the Town's northwestern corner; and (3) the Laurel School District, which includes a narrow strip of land along the Town's eastern border with Southold.

The CSD operates seven schools (five elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school), six of which are located in Riverhead. Only one of the schools in the Shoreham-Wading River School District is located in Riverhead. That school is located on Manorville Road, just north of Route 25A. The Laurel School District has no school sites in Riverhead itself.

As Riverhead continues to grow in population, additional schools may be needed in all of the school districts. In particular, the CSD will be under the greatest pressure for school expansion, as the district includes large areas of open space that may be subdivided for residential development. Each school district monitors its own needs on a continuous basis, and each prepares its own budget and facility plans. The Town, therefore, is not the primary decision-maker with respect to future school facility expansions. However, in the context of the Comprehensive Plan, the Town can express preferences for the location of future school sites and can work with the districts to ensure that residents are being provided with adequate and appropriate facilities.

RIVERHEAD CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Additional classrooms are needed to accommodate population growth in the CSD between 2000 and 2009. In June 2000, Western Suffolk BOCES completed a *Long Range Planning Study* for the CSD. Tables 12-1 and 12-2 compare school capacity with enrollment, both for 1999 and 2009 (projected). Currently, many of the schools in the CSD are operating at or over capacity; that is, they are overcrowded. The CSD relies on the use of portable units for extra space at some of the school sites. Despite a number of expansion plans, many of the schools are still expected to be operating over capacity in 2009.

In the 2001-2002 school year, the CSD reorganized the grades in order to use its space better and therefore relieve some of the overcrowding problem. Fourth graders were moved from the Pulaski Intermediate School to the elementary schools, such that the K-3 schools were converted into K-4, with full-day kindergartens. Sixth graders were moved to Pulaski from the Middle School. This change will help alleviate some of the current overload at the Pulaski and Middle schools, but it will not eliminate the need for additional school expansions by 2009.

Figure 12-1: Community Facilities

Back of Figure

Table 12-1: School Capacity and Enrollment

	<i>Functional Capacity 1999</i>	<i>Enrollment June 2003</i>	<i>Enrollment vs. Capacity</i>
Aquebogue Elementary (K-3)	301	448	149%
Phillips Elementary (K-3)	473	532	112%
Riley Elementary (K-3)	413	593	144%
Roanoke Elementary (K-3)	346	369	107%
Pulaski Intermediate (5-6)	575	776	135%
Riverhead Middle (7-8)	996	715	72%
Riverhead High (9-12)	1288	1387	108%

Sources: Riverhead Central School District, June 2003; Western Suffolk BOCES Office of School Planning & Research for the Riverhead Central School District, Long Range Planning Study, June 2000 - Final Report.

Table 12-2: Projected School Capacity and Enrollment, 2009

	<i>Planned Functional Capacity 2009</i>	<i>Projected Enrollment 2009</i>	<i>Enrollment vs. Capacity</i>
Aquebogue Elementary (K-4)	595	414	70%
Phillips Elementary (K-4)	629	550	87%
Riley Elementary (K-4)	583	609	104%
Roanoke Elementary (K-4)	313	510	163%
Pulaski Intermediate (5-6)	575	797	139%
Riverhead Middle (7-8)	996	836	84%
Riverhead High (9-12)	1288	1755	136%

Source: Western Suffolk BOCES Office of School Planning & Research for the Riverhead Central School District, Long Range Planning Study, June 2000 - Final Report.

Elementary Schools (K-4)

Expansions are being planned for three elementary schools: Aquebogue, Phillips, and Riley. These expansions will be able to accommodate large increases in student enrollment. Riley will still be expected to have a shortage of space in 2009 and will require two additional classrooms by that time. Although Aquebogue and Phillips Schools would have space to absorb some of the Riley overflow, those two schools are located far from the residential areas in the west side of the CSD and would require long bus or car rides for students. In the long run, the preferred option may be to build another addition to the building. Because the

Riley School is located on a 15-acre site, it has plenty of room to accommodate such an addition.

Roanoke School — located in downtown Riverhead — is extremely cramped for space. By 2009, seven additional classrooms will be needed, and expansions will be required for the cafeteria, the library, and the gymnasium as well. The problem at the Roanoke School is that the existing site is too small to accommodate an addition. The Aquebogue School (located three miles to the east) could potentially absorb some of the overflow after current expansion plans are completed. An alternative is to build another elementary school on a new site and to convert the Roanoke School building into Board of Education offices or some other civic or cultural use (such as a library, a museum, a performance space, a community center, or Town Hall offices). This idea is currently being considered by the Board of Education.

Intermediate School (5-6)

Enrollment at the Pulaski School is expected to increase rapidly, mainly because sixth grade classes have been moved there from the more cramped Riverhead Middle School. Although the Pulaski School will be able to absorb the increase fully at first, it will require an expansion before 2009 in order to accommodate the long-term enrollment increases. By 2009, five additional classrooms, an additional support room, and additional space in the cafeteria and library will be needed. The front and side yards of the school site could potentially be used to accommodate an expansion.

Middle School (7-8)

Riverhead Middle School is currently operating at capacity. The plan to move the sixth grade to Pulaski School was intended to reduce the overcrowding. However, now that the sixth grade is gone, Middle School enrollment for the remaining two grades is still expected to increase quickly. Additional space will probably not be needed before 2009, but may be necessary at some time thereafter. If and when additional space is required, the Middle School will need to look off-site, as its 10-acre site is already built out.

High School (9-12)

Riverhead High School will require a significant expansion by 2009, as enrollment is expected to exceed capacity by about 470 students. The Boces report has determined that the high school will require an additional 13 classrooms, as well as an art room, a home/career room, and a music room. The six science rooms may also need to be expanded to handle slightly larger class sizes. Furthermore, additional space may eventually be needed for the gymnasium, the cafeteria, and the library. This represents the single largest expansion need for the CSD in the near future.

As with the Middle School, the high school site is almost entirely built out. The CSD is seriously considering a proposal to build a new high school in Enterprise Park at Calverton,

allowing the existing high school to be used for the middle, intermediary and/or elementary school purposes.

SHOREHAM-WADING RIVER SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Wading River Elementary School is located on Manorville Road on the north side of Route 25A. The school serves the entire northeastern corner of the Shoreham-Wading River School District, one of the fastest growing areas of Suffolk County. A school expansion may be necessary prior to 2010, in which case the site behind the school should be set aside as a potential expansion site.

LAUREL SCHOOL DISTRICT

A very limited area in the eastern part of Riverhead is located in the Laurel School District. This area consists of a narrow strip of land east of Herricks Lane along the Southold border. The predominant land use in this area is agricultural, with a few clusters of residences along Herricks Lane, Route 25, and Peconic Bay Boulevard. No school sites are located in this part of Riverhead.

SCHOOLS: GOALS & POLICIES

Goal 12.1: Provide adequate land for school expansions or new schools, while ensuring that school buildings fit into their surrounding neighborhoods.

Policy 12.1A: Continue working with the school districts to identify appropriate sites for new schools.

The four schools in the downtown area, all of which will face a shortage of classroom space in the near future (i.e., within the next ten years), have difficult land constraints. Although the Pulaski School could potentially accommodate additions in its side yards, the High School, the Middle School, and the Roanoke School have no additional room to expand.

Beyond 2012, population levels will continue to grow, as will the school-age population. There will be two countervailing demographic trends in coming years. One the one hand, the senior population will grow, as the baby boom generation enters retirement. At the same time, many people reaching retirement age may move away to more affordable parts of the State or the country, because seniors tend to have more limited incomes. As seniors move, families with young children will continue to be attracted to Riverhead, because it has a housing stock popular with families (single-family detached homes) and the good schools and recreational amenities that families want.

For these reasons, it is uncertain exactly how many school children may need to be accommodated in local schools in 2020 or 2040. Nevertheless, additional school sites will be

needed, and the Town should be proactive in identifying potential school sites. The Town may want to consider purchasing and banking sites that could be used for school, recreational, or other public purposes in the future.

Policy 12.1B: Encourage the Riverhead Central School District to consider expanding downtown school sites before developing new schools in outlying locations.

The four downtown schools are located in the geographical center of the Riverhead CSD, which includes a large portion of the northern part of Southampton Town. The downtown location is convenient for students, who can easily walk to Main Street shops, Pulaski Street, Stotzky Park, or the downtown Library after school.

Policy 12.1C: Work with the school districts to explore the feasibility of purchasing vacant parcels or open space/farmland sites adjacent to existing school sites.

The Wading River Elementary School, if an expansion becomes necessary, would not have room to expand on its current site, but the large vacant site next to the school could be set aside for a future expansion project. Vacant sites next to other schools should be identified and considered for potential purchase as well.

Policy 12.1D: If school expansions are undertaken, ensure that the design of the additions is consistent with the design of the original building.

The Pulaski School has an attractive facade from the early 20th century that contributes to the civic character of downtown. It lends a beautiful impression to the street. To the greatest extent possible, the front facade should not be altered or obscured from view.

Policy 12.1E: Work with the school district to ensure that the architectural design of school buildings is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

Policy 12.1F: Ensure that the school districts reduce or mitigate traffic impacts resulting from school expansions or new school development, to the greatest possible extent.

Goal 12.2: Generally, locate school expansions and new schools in downtown or hamlet centers, but also consider alternate locations that provide excellent educational or recreational opportunities for students.

Policy 12.2A: Work with the school districts to identify appropriate sites for new schools in downtown and in hamlet centers.

Because the downtown location is ideal for many reasons, a new school would be well-sited in the downtown area. There are several large vacant sites in the vicinity of Stotzky Park, as well as sites on East Main Street. If downtown sites are not available or feasible, sites near the business districts of Jamesport, Calverton, Aquebogue, or Route 25A should be

considered. In these locations, schools would be well-located relative to student populations and would contribute to the civic character of those centers.

Policy 12.2B: Continue working with the Riverhead Central School District to determine the feasibility of locating a new high school in the vicinity of Enterprise Park at Calverton.

From a land use planning perspective, schools should be ideally located in downtown or the hamlet centers. However, for a several reasons, it makes sense to consider locating a new high school facility in Enterprise Park.

- First, because the land is currently owned by the Town, it could be offered at a reasonable price to CSD, saving the taxpayers who live in the CSD a significant sum.
- Second, the school site could be located next to the Central Pine Barrens Core Preservation Area, Robert Cushman Murphy Peconic River County Park, and the newly proposed Town park (see Chapter 11, Parks and Recreation Element). The location of a new school in this particular place provides great educational and recreational opportunities for students.

Nevertheless, there are two potential constraints that could make the siting of high school in the Calverton area less than ideal. First, the school would be located on the western edge of the CSD district, meaning that some high school students would have travel about 15 miles through Town to reach the site. Some students would be bused, but others would be driven by their parents, guardians, or friends, and still others would drive their own cars. The Town should make certain that the CSD has a workable transportation scheme that prevents undue traffic impacts on Town roads and ensures the safety of students traveling those distances.

Second, there is still ongoing discussion about the potential for an active airfield supporting the commercial and industrial uses to be developed at Enterprise Park at Calverton, even though the airport referendum was defeated in November 2001. The Town should consider the possibility that an airfield could have negative impacts on an adjacent school. The Town should make sure that the high school is so situated that children are not placed at risk. In particular,

1. The high school should not be located within the crash hazard zone for the airport, as determined by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). These zones are typically found at the beginning and end of runways.
2. The high school should not be located within high noise-impact areas, as determined by the FAA and in accordance with the FAA's guidebook *Land Use Compatibility and Airports: A Guide for Effective Land Use Planning* of September 1999. Areas impacted by high noise levels are not just the immediate areas around the airport, but those areas within the runway flight path.

12.3 LIBRARIES

RIVERHEAD FREE LIBRARY

The Riverhead Free Library is a "free association library," which is chartered under the Board of Regents of the State of New York to operate as a public library. A "free association library" is operated by a non-profit association, rather than a municipality or a school district. The Library has an agreement with the Riverhead Central School District (CSD), whereby the library provides services to the schools in exchange for a portion of the tax revenues raised by the district. Because the Library is an independent entity, the Town cannot make decisions regarding Library facilities and programs. However, the Comprehensive Plan can express preferences for future Library locations and can work with the Library to ensure that resident needs are being met.

The Library building, conveniently located in downtown, recently underwent an expansion and upgrade. The total size of the building was expanded from 19,000 to 30,000 square feet. New offices, study rooms, meeting rooms, book stacks, and storage facilities were added. Another expansion will probably not be needed for many years. However, as the population grows, additional Library space may eventually become necessary.

Resources and Programs

Professional librarians and library volunteers are on-hand in the Library to help patrons find the materials they need. In addition to the large on-site book collection, the Free Library participates in the Suffolk County Cooperative Library System, which allows patrons to borrow books from other libraries. Tanger Mall recently made a donation to the Library, for use in compiling a "wellness" collection. These funds are being used to purchase books on cancer, a cancer database, and to staff a "cancer room" in the Library.

Through a Gates Foundation Grant, the Library has been able to buy new hardware and software for the computer lab, which currently has ten computers and offers internet access. The Library offers internet training to seniors and allows school-age children to use the internet for research projects. The Library maintains a web site with searchable electronic databases.

The Riverhead Free Library also sponsors programs, events, and courses, functioning as a quasi-community center. The Library hosts more than 500 programs, events, and courses during the year. Programs have included children's storytelling, defensive driving courses, cooking classes, and training for U.S. Census volunteers. The Library also sponsors games and other events for seniors.

The Library basement has several activity rooms, one of which contains a small performance space, and another of which contains a kitchen for cooking classes. The Library also has a children's room, a crafts room, a quiet study room, and several meeting rooms. Central Suffolk Hospital sponsors seminars in the Library meeting rooms, and community groups use

the activity rooms for their meetings and functions. There are plans to add a café to the Library as well.

In the future, as more and more Library resources become available online, many people will be able to access Library materials from the comfort of their own home. However, the internet will never fully replace the Library, which provides resources that are unavailable online, such as hard-copy materials, original and historical documents, and research assistance from experienced librarians. Also, the Library will continue to play a strong role as a community center.

Parking

The Free Library currently has 115 parking spaces, which are usually adequate. However, during summertime (when school is out) and special events, it is not unusual for the Library to experience a parking shortage. In the future, population expansion will attract more visitors and lead to more frequent parking shortages. The Downtown Revitalization Strategy calls for additional municipal parking to be developed along Court Street. More parking in the area would benefit the Library, because patrons could park there when the Library lot fills up.

OTHER LIBRARIES

In addition to the Riverhead Free Library, there are two other public libraries in Town. The Suffolk County Historical Society, located on West Main Street in downtown, maintains a library of historical documents and books. In addition, the Baiting Hollow Free Library serves as a small neighborhood facility for local residents. It is located on Sound Avenue.

LIBRARIES: GOALS & POLICIES

Goal 12.3: Provide adequate library space.

Policy 12.3A: If additional Library space becomes necessary, work with the Riverhead Free Library to consider expanding the downtown site.

While the downtown site has little space left, one of the adjacent properties could potentially be purchased and used to accommodate an expansion. A second floor could also potentially be added. The advantage of expanding the Library building is that all Library resources would be concentrated in one place, promoting efficiency, saving costs, and creating "one-stop" convenience. Also, because of its central location, the existing site is convenient to most Riverhead residents. It also adds to the sense of community and civic role in downtown Riverhead. Parking shortages could worsen as the result of an expansion, so consideration would also have to be given to the availability of parking on-site and in adjacent areas.

Policy 12.3B: As an alternative to expanding the downtown Library site, work with the Riverhead Free Library to consider establishing branch libraries in other parts of Riverhead.

Although branch libraries would be more expensive to operate and maintain, the Library could achieve cost efficiencies by co-locating branch libraries with schools, community centers, fire stations, and other public facilities. Branch libraries have significant advantages. They provide residents with some local Library resources (such as hard-copy books, magazines and newspapers, internet access) and a quieter alternative to the busier central Library. Also, developing branch libraries could eliminate the need to undertake a difficult or costly expansion of the existing downtown Library.

If branch libraries are developed, they should be located in hamlet centers, next to schools, or near senior living facilities. The majority of library users are school children and senior citizens, many of whom do not have access to car. Branch libraries in these locations would be more easily accessible to people who need to reach the Library on foot, by bike, or via transit. Another concept to explore is to give the branch Library its own unique theme, targeted to a user group. For example, a branch library could become the “kids’ branch” that specializes in programs and books for elementary school children.

Goal 12.4: Continue to expand library services and programs.

Policy 12.4A: Encourage the Riverhead Free Library and the Baiting Hollow Free Library to continue expanding library collections and providing special programs in areas of interest to Riverhead residents.

The Riverhead Free Library currently provides an array of programs for seniors and children, and it has unique collections, such as the center for cancer research.

Policy 12.4B: Encourage the Riverhead Free Library to expand the role of the Library as a community center.

The library already functions as a community center, with programs appealing to all age groups. The library's "community center" role should continue to be expanded.

Policy 12.4C: Encourage the Riverhead Free Library to explore the feasibility of leasing Library space and facilities to telecommuters and work-at-home professionals.

With the growth of the second-home population, ever-increasing LIE traffic, and the trend toward telecommuting, more people than ever before are working out of a home office one or more days each week. While many workers have faxes, computers, and internet connections at home, they often lack amenities such as photocopier machines, reference materials, teleconferencing capabilities, and meeting rooms. The Riverhead Free Library should consider using a portion of the downtown facility or any future branches as business

technology centers, where telecommuters or work-at-home professionals can use a portion of the Library as a workspace. The Library could consider charging professionals for the use of specific services, such as the use of meeting rooms, classrooms, computers, internet connections, printers, and photocopiers. In considering this idea, the Library should take into account the demand for such services, the amount of space that could be dedicated to such uses, possible fees, and any potential impact on other services provided by the Library.

12.4 TOWN OFFICES AND FACILITIES

Riverhead has a relatively modern Town Hall, located just east of downtown on Howell Avenue. Town Hall houses all municipal offices except the Recreation Department, which is located in Stotzky Park. The Police Department is located on the same site as Town Hall, but in a separate building to the rear of the property.

Although Town Hall has served Riverhead's needs very well for many years, office space is currently at a premium. Town Hall was built in the early 1970s, when the Town's population was about 18,000 to 19,000 residents. As of the year 2000, the population had increased to nearly 28,000 residents. With more people living in Riverhead, Town services have been expanded, and the Town has had to hire more employees. Additional space will be needed in the future to accommodate additional service and staff needs, as the population grows to those levels forecasted in the Land Use Element of this Comprehensive Plan.

Town maintenance facilities (i.e., garages, storage facilities) are adequately serving Riverhead's needs. However, the Town may need to consider expanding its facilities and/or establishing additional sites as the population grows.

TOWN OFFICES AND FACILITIES: GOALS & POLICIES

Goal 12.5: Consider a variety of options for increasing space for Town Hall offices, while ensuring that Town Hall remains in the downtown area.

Policy 12.5A: Explore the feasibility of relocating the Police Department to another site and use the vacated space to expand Town Hall offices.

As discussed in Section 12.4, office space at the Police Department is also currently at a premium and the department could be better served by a new building in a non-downtown location, where access for patrol vehicles may be easier.

Policy 12.5B: Consider the feasibility of building or renovating a "landmark" building in downtown Riverhead in the vicinity of the County Courthouse, including the Roanoke School, to serve as a new Town Hall or to provide space for "satellite" Town Hall offices.

The Riverhead Central School District is considering closing the Roanoke School due to its small size and relocating those students to another facility. As a landmark building in the center of downtown, the Roanoke School would be an ideal location for a new Town Hall. The Town should work with the Riverhead CSD to explore the feasibility of utilizing the Roanoke School as a new Town Hall, in case that building is no longer needed for school purposes.

Another option is to utilize a portion of the Roanoke School or another building as a satellite office, while keeping the main Town Hall facility in its current location at 200 Howell Avenue. In this scenario, the remainder of the satellite building could be used for other public purposes, such as a community center, a teen center, a senior center, or a Town museum.

Policy 12.5C: If Town Hall is moved to a new facility, develop a plan for the reuse of the existing Town Hall facility.

The facility could be reused for either public or private purposes. There are currently plans to utilize the former senior citizen nutrition center located on Howell Avenue to accommodate Town Hall offices or the Justice Court. Office campuses are found along East Main Street, so one option is to sell the facility to an investor/developer for the purpose of converting it into private-sector office space. Other options include: expansion of the Police Department into the facility, and/or establishment of a second senior center, and/or establishment of a community center. Whatever the use, the Town should not move from the site unless there is a clear plan in place for disposing of or reusing the site, lest the facility were to lie vacant for an unwarranted period of time.

Policy 12.5D: Locate all Town Hall satellite offices in downtown, even if those offices are not in a single building.

Town offices, if not located in Town Hall itself, should still be located in downtown. This ensures greater ease of communication and coordination between various Town offices. It also ensures that people requiring Town services do not have to make circuitous trips to various offices in different parts of the Town. Also, keeping these Town offices in downtown would reinforce the civic role of downtown Riverhead.

Policies 12.5A through 12.5C provide various options for how Town Hall offices could continue to be maintained in the downtown area. If necessary, the Town could also consider leasing privately owned space in downtown, whether in a second-floor space above a Main Street shop, in a freestanding converted home in the Office/Courts District, or in one of the office campuses along East Main Street.

Goal 12.6: Ensure adequate space for Town maintenance facilities.

Policy 12.6A: If any new sites become necessary in the future, consider locations easily accessible to major arterial roads.

This facilitates road maintenance work and snow plowing tasks. It would also make those facilities easier to access by residents (e.g., for the purpose of dropping off brush and leaves).

Policy 12.6B: Ensure that existing and new Town maintenance facilities minimize impacts surrounding areas.

Any new facilities abutting a residential use should be buffered with some combination of berms, vegetation, and fencing, in order to reduce off-site impacts. Ideally, facilities should not be located on local residential streets, but on collector arterial roads in non-residential areas. This would reduce the exposure of residential neighborhoods to truck activity. Also, recycling storage and sale bins are just some of the uses that may be found on a Town maintenance facility, and such uses are inappropriate in a residential area.

12.5 POLICE

The Riverhead Police Department provides patrol and detective services throughout the entire Town. The Police headquarters is located at 210 Howell Avenue, behind Town Hall, and it has a relatively modern, 17,000-square foot facility, which was built in the 1980s. Despite being in a relatively new building, the Police Department is outgrowing its space because of increasing calls, and it needs additional room to accommodate new technological equipment and services. The Police Department has also taken on additional responsibilities, such as emergency management, that requires additional space and manpower.

The department has 74 officers, plus 33 additional civilian staff members. According to Riverhead's Police Captain, the department is understaffed. Each police officer is responsible for handling an excessive number of calls, creating a drag on response times and follow-up on reported crimes. Outdated technology (i.e., manual system of records management) also makes the department less efficient.

In the past, as new development has occurred, police services have been impacted. When Tanger Mall was built, for example, the Town was left with a shortage of police officers to handle the shoplifting problems there. Also, increasing tourism in Riverhead has attracted larger numbers of seasonal residents and vacationers, which also result in more police calls. As the Town population and employment base continue to grow, additional police services will be needed.

POLICE: GOALS & POLICIES

Goal 12.7 Continue to ensure the safety of Riverhead residents and employees by maintaining adequate response times and service levels.

Policy 12.7A: If necessary, consider the feasibility of expanding the police headquarters, or moving the headquarters to an alternate location in a larger building.

Moving the police station could potentially solve several problems. First, it could provide more space for the department because a larger building could be built. Second, the existing building could provide spillover space for Town Hall offices.

Policy 12.7B: As an alternative to expanding or moving the police headquarters, consider establishing substations in hamlet centers and business districts.

Substations provide additional places for Townspeople to go in case of emergencies, and could provide a base from which officers can do walking or biking patrols. Substations are most useful in major activity centers such as a shopping center or a hamlet center, where there is a great deal of foot traffic. Building substations can help avoid the difficulty of expanding the Howell Street site, which would be difficult or costly to expand.

The Town should identify parcels that could be purchased for use as police substations, particularly in hamlet centers (i.e., Route 25A in Wading River, Jamesport), and major business centers (i.e., downtown, Tanger Mall, Enterprise Park).

Goal 12.8: Ensure the safety of Riverhead residents and employees in case of a terrorist attack or other form of violent attack.

Policy 12.8A: Develop an emergency response plan that coordinates the efforts of the Police Department, the fire districts, the Volunteer Ambulance Corps, and Town departments in the event of a terrorist attack.

As part of this plan, the Town should consider two scenarios: one where Riverhead or a nearby town is attacked; and another where New York City is attacked. In the unlikely event of an attack in or near Riverhead, the Town should consider establishing emergency shelters that provide temporary housing for displaced families. In case of an attack on New York City or another employment center where some Riverhead residents may be working, the plan should include strategies for helping Riverhead families contact their loved ones or emergency relief/assistance agencies. The plan should also consider ways to help evacuate Riverhead residents from those employment centers or to provide police, fire, or ambulance assistance to those places.

Policy 12.8B: Coordinate the town's emergency response plan with federal, State, and County plans.

The federal government is currently developing strategies to improve and coordinate emergency response. The Town should work with all other public agencies to ensure a coordinated response.

12.6 FIRE

Riverhead is divided into four fire districts: Jamesport, Riverhead (downtown area), Wading River, and Manorville. District boundaries are shown on Figure 12-1. Each district levies a fee on all properties within its boundaries and provides fire-fighting services to those properties. The Manorville District is based in the Town of Brookhaven, but includes the southwestern portion of Riverhead, including Enterprise Park.

New development will likely require additional fire-fighting staffing, equipment, technology and facilities. The Comprehensive Plan does not enumerate the specific needs of fire districts, because these needs are best determined by fire-fighting professionals on an ongoing basis. However, the Comprehensive Plan can plan ahead for any new fire stations that may be needed by identifying potential sites.

JAMESPORT

Currently, the Jamesport Fire District has a single station on Manor Lane, near the Jamesport hamlet center. The station was recently enlarged and has adequate equipment to serve the existing development in the district. The equipment inventory includes 3 pumpers, 1 tanker, 1 rescue truck, 2 police vans, 1 brush truck, and 1 boat. The district has one employee who oversees the operation of the facility, and 85 volunteers serve as fire fighters.

The district also owns land for a future substation at the corner of Pier and Sound Avenues. Although there are no ready plans to build a substation, the substation is expected to be necessary in order to serve new residential development in the future. The substation would serve the northern half of the Fire District.¹ The substation would also help avoid the traffic that interferes with response times from the headquarters, which is located near the busy intersection of Route 25 and Manor Lane.

RIVERHEAD

The Riverhead Fire District serves the central part of Town, roughly from the east side of Enterprise Park to Jamesport. It includes downtown, Route 58, and Aquebogue, and it extends from the Southampton border to Long Island Sound. The headquarters is located in downtown, on Second Street, and three substations are located throughout the district.

¹ Discussion with Jamesport Fire District, Chairman of the Board, June 1, 1999.

The district is currently building a new training facility near the intersection of Cross River Drive and Northville Turnpike. The district currently has a shortage of training space for its 180 volunteers. The new facility would also potentially serve as the district's new headquarters. The existing headquarters in downtown is cramped for space, and engine access into and out of downtown is limited by heavy traffic and narrow street widths. Some participants in the CAC meetings expressed concern about the location of a training facility in an agricultural and residential area. Fire training facilities have simulation drills with live (albeit controlled) fires, which could have visual, noise, air quality, and other impacts on adjacent areas.

The district's fire-fighting equipment is relatively new, as most vehicles were purchased within the last 8 years. Equipment levels are generally adequate to serve existing development. The district has 4 pumpers, 1 tanker, 1 rescue truck, 2 police vans, 3 brush trucks, 1 hook-and-ladder, and 1 combined pumper/hook-and-ladder. The district has 7 paid employees.²

WADING RIVER

The Wading River Fire District has its headquarters on North Country Road, near the Wading River hamlet center. A substation is located on Hulse Landing Road, next to Wildwood State Park. The district has 5 employees and an all-volunteer fire-fighting force.³ The district expanded the headquarters in 1987 to cope with past and anticipated development in the Wading River area, as well as growing district needs.⁴

MANORVILLE

The Manorville Fire District is based in the Manorville section of Brookhaven, near the southwestern corner of Riverhead. The district headquarters is located on Silas Carter Road, and another substation is located on Cranford Boulevard in Mastic. The part of the district that lies within Riverhead is primarily served from the headquarters.

The district in recent years has experienced little development overall, since much of its land area lies in the Pine Barrens Core Preservation Area. Current equipment levels are generally adequate to serve existing land uses. The district has 5 pumpers, 1 tanker, 2 police vans, 3 brush trucks, and 1 combined pumper/hook-and-ladder. However, future development at Enterprise Park may require additional facilities and equipment.

Enterprise Park lies within the district and is served by the Manorville headquarters. Prior to the closing of the runways, the site was entirely served by its own government-run fire-

² Discussion with Riverhead Fire District, Supervisor, June 1, 1999.

³ Discussion with Wading River Fire District, District Manager, June 14, 1999.

⁴ Letter from the Wading River Fire District to the Riverhead Town Master Plan Committee c/c Fire Marshall Bruce Johnson, January 5, 2002.

fighting squad, as required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Currently, the Manorville district would have a 15-minute response time to the south entrance of the site and potentially 20 to 25 minutes to an individual building within the site. The Wading River Fire District covers the portion of Enterprise Park that fronts on Route 25.

Although having a fire substation at Enterprise Park could — in theory — provide better fire coverage, this is not necessarily true. With volunteer districts (Manorville and Wading River both rely on volunteer firefighters, primarily), it is actually more practical to locate the fire station closer to the locations from which volunteers will be coming. Currently, there is no large pool of residents and/or employees in the Enterprise Park area who can serve as volunteers. A substation would actually require volunteers to travel a longer distances to the station in their individual cars, potentially resulting in no better a response time to the buildings in Enterprise Park.

ISSUES AFFECTING ALL FIRE DISTRICTS

Roadway Connections

Roadway design and traffic can potentially reduce the response time of fire vehicles. Currently, Riverhead roadways are designed with a minimum right-of-way width of 50 feet and a pavement width of 30 to 35 feet, which is adequate to allow fire truck access. However, even though new streets may be wide enough, residential subdivisions often lack connecting through streets to other subdivisions. Also, street segments tend to be short and looping, and many streets dead-end into cul-de-sacs. These street patterns can impede fire truck access and reduce response times.

Often, developers create circuitous and short streets intentionally, in order to keep through-traffic out of the neighborhood. However, there are a variety of other traffic-calming strategies that can be used to limit through-traffic and reduce traffic speeds without compromising emergency access. These are discussed in more detail in Chapter 9, the Transportation Element.

Coordination

The various fire districts in Riverhead coordinate with one another through two organizations: the Town Fire Chief's Council and the Town Fire District's Council. The Town Code requires detailed building plans and plans for major subdivisions be provided to the Fire Districts. The plans need to show the location of doors, windows, and walls, and they need to indicate the presence of utilities and flammable materials. The Town should continue working, through the Fire Marshall, to ensure that fire districts have all the information they require.

Staffing

Adequate fire district staffing is expected to become an issue in Riverhead over the next 20 years. Currently, fire fighters in all districts are volunteers. As the population grows, volunteers may be more difficult to find for several reasons:

- Many current volunteers no longer work in Town — whether on farms, at home, or in local offices — but in employment centers outside Riverhead. Thus, many volunteers are not able to respond to emergency calls.
- Many current volunteers are older, long-time residents of Riverhead and have plans to retire in the next 10 to 20 years.
- Fewer volunteers offer their time, because of competing personal and professional commitments. Also, training requirements have increased, making it more difficult for volunteers to commit the minimum required time for both training and service.

FIRE: GOALS & POLICIES

Goal 12.9: Ensure that Enterprise Park has adequate fire fighting services.

Policy 12.9A: Continue working with the Manorville Fire District to ensure that adequate fire-fighting services, with adequate response times, are provided at the Enterprise Park at Calverton.

Establishment of a new fire substation in or adjacent to Enterprise Park has been proposed. However, as noted, establishment of a new station may not make sense, if volunteers are not available in the immediate area.

Policy 12.9B: Explore methods available to require developers to finance the construction of a substation at EPCAL.

The need for a fire substation in Enterprise Park would be generated primarily by new commercial development on the site. Thus, since the future developers of the site will be the primary beneficiaries of the new substation, consideration should be given to developers to assist in the provision of a new fire station.

Goal 12.10: Maintain adequate response times and service levels.

Policy 12.10A: Continue to work with the Riverhead Fire Marshall and fire districts to ensure that subdivision and site plans provide adequate street connections and access points for emergency fire vehicles.

Subdivisions should have adequate street connections in order to facilitate access for emergency fire vehicles. In particular, the number and length of cul-de-sac streets ought to be

limited; at least two access points should be provided to a subdivision; and at least one through-street should be provided (i.e., a street that links two major streets, or which connect a major street with an adjacent subdivision). Typically, a street grid is easier to navigate than a curvilinear street pattern, but a grid need not be required, as long as adequate access points and connecting streets are provided. These standards should be made part of the new highway specifications currently being prepared by the Planning Board.

Policy 12.10B: Continue to ensure that Fire Districts receive detailed site plans, building plans for new buildings within their districts, as well as plans for major and minor subdivisions.

The Town's fire districts use site plans to plot fire-fighting and rescue strategies. Detailed site plans should show the location of all exterior and interior walls, doors, and windows and should indicate the presence of utilities and flammable materials. Copies of plans should be forwarded to the appropriate fire district upon issuance of a Building Permit. Fire districts should also be notified of changes in land use, where there is no addition or reconstruction.

Goal 12.11: Ensure that fire fighting facilities fit into the surrounding areas.

12.7 AMBULANCE

The Riverhead Volunteer Ambulance Corps, Inc. (RVAC) is under contract with the Riverhead Ambulance District (RAD) to provide ambulance services to all areas in Town except Wading River, including most of Enterprise Park. The RAD is a special assessment district that collects a separate line-item tax from all properties in the district and does not obtain funding from the Town's general fund. In the Wading River area, the Wading River Fire Department provides emergency response services.

Suffolk County encourages ambulance districts to maintain response times of four to five minutes. A variety of factors influence response time. The factors that can be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan are (1) the location and size of facilities and (2) traffic and property access. The RVAC has response times of four to nine minutes, suggesting that there is room for improvement. Wading River — with ambulances at two different locations and a smaller district — has been able to maintain very short response times.

RIVERHEAD AMBULANCE DISTRICT

Emergency calls have increased every year since the RAD was founded in 1978, and much of this increase has resulted from the Town's ongoing population growth. Although young families moving into Riverhead place little demand on ambulance services, retirees and seniors place a large demand on these services. To keep up with needs, the Town built a small

ambulance facility on Manor Road across from the Jamesport Firehouse in 1987 and then built the main ambulance facility on Osborn Avenue in 1989.

The main facility has three ambulance bays, staff rooms, and offices, but is already too small to meet the current level of calls, which reached nearly 2000 in 1999. The facility needs at least one more bay, additional storage and office space, training classrooms, parking, and space for equipment and uniform cleaning, which are required under OSHA standards. However, building an expansion on the site may be difficult, because the property is oddly shaped and largely built out. As of December 2000, the RAD was considering purchasing sites for a new facility on Route 58, between Osborn Avenue and Mill Road, which would replace the Osborn Avenue facility.

The Jamesport facility has only one bay and may require expansion to meet the needs of new development. The land area of the Jamesport facility is sizeable and could accommodate an expansion of at least another bay and staff area. It is conceivable that a new facility could be necessary in the western part of town to better serve Enterprise Park, particularly if the current headquarters is not expanded or moved to a larger building. However, as noted in the discussion of fire districts (Section 12.6), the lack of volunteers living in Calverton would make a station location there inconvenient; response times would not necessarily improve.

WADING RIVER EMS

Over the course of the 1990s, Wading River had increased in size from roughly 5,000 to 7,000 households, sharply increasing the need for emergency response services. The district's existing main facility and substation — each equipped with an ambulance — have been adequate to meet the growing needs of the area. In the future, however, additional facilities and equipment may be required.

ISSUES AFFECTING BOTH AMBULANCE DISTRICTS

Traffic and Property Access

For both the RAD and the Wading River EMS, traffic impedes response times. Ambulances struggle to pass through congested corridors and intersections, where cars have little or no room to pull over. Also, State law prohibits the use of lights and sirens in situations that are non-life-threatening, meaning that ambulances have to sit in traffic with other cars.

Three roads — Sound Avenue, Route 58, and Route 25 — create the most traffic problems for the RAD. In particular, congestion at the traffic circle on Route 58 makes access to Central Suffolk Hospital difficult. The Wading River ambulance team experiences delays on Route 25A as well. Also, circuitous streets, driveways, and parking lot entrances can be difficult or confusing to navigate in an emergency. Within buildings, narrow hallways and doors make the use of stretchers more difficult. These factors can all increase the amount of time that an ambulance takes to respond to an emergency.

Senior Housing

The Town's large senior population is expected to grow even bigger in the future, as the baby boom generation enters retirement. Senior housing — while it is a critical need — increases the demand for ambulance service, as seniors are more prone to illness and injury. Also, seniors tend to increase the demand for non-emergency calls or “false alarms.” To cope with increasing calls (emergency and non-emergency) many ambulance corps have been charging for services rendered.

Staffing

Both the RAD and the Wading River EMS are all-volunteer organizations. However, the trend Countywide has been toward the use of non-for-profit paid paramedics for emergency services. Due to work, childcare, and travel demands, volunteers are difficult to find and may not be able to respond to emergencies during weekdays. Also, some volunteers are teenagers who eventually leave for college, and some others are older adults or retirees whose age may eventually prevent them from serving. Paid positions may help create more stability and reliability in the emergency response services.

AMBULANCE: GOALS & POLICIES

Goal 12.12: Maintain adequate response times and service levels.

Policy 12.12A: Consider establishing a new ambulance facility in Enterprise Park.

In conjunction with new development, a new ambulance facility may be needed there. If determined to be necessary, the site should be located in an area such that it can also serve the western portion of the RAD area. As noted in Section 12.6, volunteers generally do not live in the Calverton area, and thus, a substation there would not necessarily help improve response times. The Town should continue working with the RAD to evaluate future needs.

Policy 12.12B: Identify a long-term strategy for expansion or replacement of the Osborn Avenue ambulance facility.

The RAD and the Town should work together to develop a long-term strategy for expansion or replacement of the facility. Although the site, as currently configured, may not be able to accommodate an expansion, there are adjacent underutilized sites that could potentially be purchased to create room for an expansion.

Goal 12.13: Improve emergency access and ambulance circulation.

Policy 12.13A: As part of subdivision and site plan review, discourage circuitous streets, driveways, and parking lot designs.

Elimination of circuitous streets and driveways will allow easier emergency access. This does not mean that a street grid must be built in new residential subdivisions. However, excessively looping or confusing streets should be discouraged. Also, the length and number of cul-de-sacs in a subdivision should be limited, and at least one through-connecting street should be required. All these provisions will help reduce response times in the case of an emergency.

Policy 12.13B: Concentrate senior housing and nursing homes in central locations.

Senior housing generates a greater need for emergency response services than non-age-restricted housing. Thus, it makes sense to locate senior housing in places where emergency response services and medical facilities are more concentrated, particularly in the downtown area. Ideal locations for senior housing are in downtown and hamlet centers.

Policy 12.13C: Explore the need for expanding emergency roadway shoulders Townwide.

Emergency shoulders allow vehicles to more easily pull over in case of an oncoming emergency vehicle. This issue is further discussed in Chapter 9, the Transportation Element.

Goal 12.14: Improve funding mechanisms for ambulance services and work to reduce the need to respond to non-emergency calls.

Policy 12.14A: Consider charging patients for ambulance services.

These fees would supplement the money contributed to the RAD and the Wading River Fire District.

Policy 12.14B: Consider requiring senior housing and residential health care facilities (i.e., nursing homes, assisted living senior housing) to provide their own non-emergency ambulance services.

Such facilities are typically the greatest generators of non-emergency calls.

12.8 HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

HEALTH SERVICES

Central Suffolk Hospital serves the Riverhead area and is centrally located near the intersection of Route 58 and Roanoke Avenue. The Hospital runs an emergency room and provides specialized medical services, such as surgery, radiation therapy, geriatric care, and

child birth. The Hospital helps staff the Suffolk County Clinic, which provides primary care and prenatal care to people who lack health insurance. Many people without insurance also use the Hospital emergency room as a de facto primary care center. By law, the Hospital cannot turn away anyone who goes to the emergency room seeking treatment.⁵

Because of increasing health care costs and the shift to managed care, administrators at Central Suffolk Hospital — like all hospitals throughout the country — have had to become more strategic with regard to financial planning. Central Suffolk Hospital has worked to protect its "customer" base by establishing local affiliated doctor's offices throughout the Riverhead area. Affiliated doctors refer their patients to the Hospital for blood work, x-rays, surgery, and other procedures. This strategy has helped keep the Hospital financially solvent, while other hospitals throughout the country have closed or merged.

In the mid-1990s, the Hospital formed a joint parent company with Eastern Long Island Hospital in Greenport and Southampton Hospital in Southampton. This new parent company appoints the boards of the three hospitals, approves capital budgets and master plans, and negotiates with health care providers. This coordinated venture helps the three hospitals achieve economies of scale and save costs, because they now share a single laboratory and warehouse, as well as some administrative responsibilities.⁶

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mental health is a growing concern for many Americans, and growing numbers of people are seeking out mental health services and/or taking medication to address problems like depression or anxiety. As discussed in Section 12.12, people with developmental disabilities receive treatment from institutions, hospitals, group homes, and outpatient services. People who are not mentally disabled but who nonetheless suffer from chronic mental illness usually obtain mental health services from private practicing psychiatrists or psychologists on an outpatient basis. In addition, some public and non-profit organizations provide affordable outpatient services.

The Riverhead Mental Health Center provides mental health services with sliding scales which are available for people without health insurance. In addition, the Veterans' Affairs office provides a mental health clinic in Riverhead, and the Family Service League of Suffolk County provides a variety of mental health services for families and children.

⁵ Interview with Joseph Turner, Central Suffolk Hospital, September 11, 2000.

⁶ When the parent company was formed, the U.S. Justice Department found that the new company would not result in "restraint of trade" for hospital services on the East End.

HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES: GOALS & POLICIES

Goal 12.15: Improve access of low-income households to free or affordable health and mental health services.

Policy 12.15A: Work with the Suffolk County Clinic and local service providers to expand outreach to immigrant farm workers and their families with regard to health and mental health services.

Seasonal farm workers and their families often have no health insurance, and as a result, they receive minimal health care and typically no mental health services. Some take advantage of free health care services at the Suffolk County Clinic, and others use the hospital emergency room as a de facto primary care unit. Because many farm workers are immigrants who speak little English, they are often unaware of the services that are available to them at the Clinic. The Town should work with Clinic staff and local service providers to inform immigrant farm workers about their opportunities for obtaining health care and mental health services.

Policy 12.15B: Explore the feasibility of sponsoring a health services shuttle that links transit-dependent patients with Suffolk County Clinic, Central Suffolk Hospital, the Riverhead Mental Health Center, and doctor's offices.

Another limitation on obtaining adequate health care is transportation. People without cars are often unable to get to the doctor, the clinic, or the hospital, unless they take the bus, whose routes or schedules may not be convenient. County paratransit services require advance reservations and will only take people to destinations within a 3/4-mile distance of Suffolk County Transit bus routes. The only alternative to the bus or paratransit currently is a taxi, which often requires a long wait and a steep fare. An on-call shuttle service would provide a low-cost, relatively efficient alternative to a bus or taxi. The Town should conduct a feasibility study in order to determine the demand for such a service, the appropriate user fee, and the overall cost of operation.

Goal 12.16: Improve the Town's ability to address health and human services needs throughout the community.

In 2001, the Town Board established a Human Services Advisory Board to assess the services provided by the Town and other agencies. The Advisory Board surveyed local service providers working in health care, senior services, youth services, mental wellness, and other human service fields.

Policy 12.16A: Consider establishing a Department of Health and Human Services with credentialed staff in the areas of health services, as well as senior and youth services.

Programs that could be handled or coordinated by such a department could include at-risk youth intervention and adult day care, among others. The department would serve as a liaison between the Town and local service providers, and it could help coordinate the independent functions of those agencies. On an ongoing basis, the department would play a critical role in identifying human service needs and securing grant funding.

12.9 CHILD CARE

Similar to most other communities, Riverhead parents have a difficult time finding adequate, affordable child care. Although there are several child care facilities in Riverhead, most are filled to capacity, and openings are rare. In the future, population increases will only increase the need for child care services, resulting in a lack of options for parents and increasing costs.

There is a particular shortage of infant care services. Only one facility offers infant care for children six weeks old, and that facility is full. There are more opportunities for older children. Most of the child care facilities in Riverhead accept children who are over 18 months old. The Town's two Head Start programs provide education and care for children between three and five years old. An after-school program takes in school-age kids at the end of the school day, but this program is also full.

Parents who work in agro-business (particularly migrant workers) have seasonal child care needs that are going unmet. The Agri-Business Child Development Center is working to develop a free child care program for these seasonal workers. In 2001, the Center came forward with a proposal to build an eight-classroom, 7,000-square foot facility for 76 children from 6 months to 6 years of age. The facility would be located on Doctor's Path near Northville Turnpike. In addition, some parents who work evenings and weekends (i.e., waitresses, shopkeepers, nurses) have difficulty finding odd-hour child care.

Finding affordable day care is difficult for many families. Infant care, in particular, is offered at a premium. Several churches in Riverhead are developing child care programs for low-income households.⁷ The proposed Peconic YMCA would also potentially provide affordable child care and babysitting services, as well as a pre-school.⁸

⁷ Phone interview with Carol Slippen, Counselor at the Child Care Council of Suffolk County, June 22, 2000.

⁸ Joe van de Wetering, Proposed Peconic YMCA Information Packet.

CHILD CARE: GOALS & POLICIES

Goal 12.17: Increase child care options.

Policy 12.17A: Allow small day care centers (six children or less) to be established in single-family detached homes as an accessory use.

The Town's zoning ordinance already allows day care facilities (seven children or more) by special permit in most residential and commercial zones. Allowing such large day care centers through special permit is appropriate since there are particular recreational and safety needs associated with these facilities. For example, automobile traffic and circulation ought to be regulated in detail, in order to prevent danger to youngsters.

At the same time, the zoning ordinance should allow the resident of a single-family home to establish a small day care center of six children or less in his or her household. This would allow a stay-at-home parent to care for other children, in addition to his or her own, and to receive payment for the service. Such a facility would still have to be licensed by the State and should still be subject to approval of a special permit, so that the Town can ensure safety and adequate parking. Allowing in-home day care could potentially increase the available day care services in Riverhead and help relieve the Town's current shortage of facilities.

Policy 12.17B: Allow day care centers to be established in places of worship as an accessory use.

Religious facilities often have community rooms and adequate parking to support a child care facility. Also, many parents would like to have the option to leave their children in a faith-based facility. The facility would still need to be licensed.

Policy 12.17C: Organize a forum of major employers to discuss job/parenting conflicts and potential solutions.

The purpose of the forum would be to generate ideas and initiatives for reducing job/parenting conflicts. Ideally, all employers would be willing to provide or subsidize child care, but as an alternative, employers could allow employees to have flex-time schedules, to work at home, or to have other flexible working arrangements. The forum should also identify actions that the Town could undertake in order to improve child care opportunities, especially infant care (children less than 1 year old).

Goal 12.18: Promote affordable child care.

Policy 12.18A: Actively solicit child care facilities that serve low-income families, or provide evening or weekend child care, or offer infant care.

Infant care and evening and weekend child care are costly services, because of the special care needs of infants and the odd hours. Low-income families have particular difficulty paying for such services, even though they are the more likely to require them. Many low-income occupations (i.e., waitresses, shopkeepers, cashiers, nurses) require people to work irregular hours; these people often need evening and weekend child care. Low-income women are also less likely to have maternity-leave benefits and therefore are more likely to require infant care. The Town should actively seek out organizations that offer specialty services like weekend care, evening care, and infant care and help them set up facilities in Riverhead.

12.10 YOUTH

Riverhead does not have a youth center, but the proposed Peconic YMCA would provide a forum for youth programs and activities in Riverhead. In addition to recreational activities, the YCMA would provide opportunities to participate in team sports and offer education on issues like alcohol and drugs. It would also offer a day camp in the summer and a teen center.

Riverhead schools work with social service agencies to offer youth-oriented educational and awareness programs. The Suffolk Network on Adolescent Pregnancy runs after-school programs, and the Community Awareness Program runs school education programs on alcohol and drug addiction. The Cornell Cooperative Extensive runs the 4-H program, which educates school-age children on issues of teen pregnancy, substance abuse, environmental concerns, and consumer and nutrition issues.⁹

In response to the national epidemic of school shootings, Family Service League started the Anti-Violence Program in 2000 to teach young children (first graders) how to manage anger and solve problems without resorting to violent behavior. This trial program may be expanded to older children, depending on the initial results.¹⁰

Even the best early intervention programs are not foolproof. If a youngster becomes pregnant, develops an alcohol or drug addiction, or exhibits particularly hostile behavior, the child at that point needs individual assistance. The Family Service League and other organizations provide assessment, crisis intervention, counseling, and advocacy services.

⁹ Peconic Community Council web site, www.pccouncil.org/directory.html.

¹⁰ Interview with Bernadette Gilday and Larry Weiss, Family Service League, June 28, 2000.

YOUTH: GOALS & POLICIES

Goal 12.19: Provide additional after-school activities for school-age children.

Policy 12.19A: Help the Peconic YMCA to identify a suitable site in Riverhead.

A portion of a site on Riverside Drive was initially set aside for the Peconic YMCA, as part of a proposed condominium project. As of summer 2001, it was uncertain whether the condo/YMCA project would meet with Town approval. In spring and summer 2002, another site in the Indian Island County Park was being considered, although it was uncertain whether the County would allow the use on parkland. Town should work with the Peconic YMCA to identify a feasible site, preferably in the downtown area or a hamlet center, so that the site is centrally located and easily accessible from most parts of Town. The YMCA should be in a location that is or can be well-served by transit and accessible by bicyclists and pedestrians.

If no downtown site is deemed suitable, other locations to be considered include sites adjacent to existing schools or Enterprise Park. While not as centrally located as other potential sites, a site at Enterprise Park would be located near the Town's new 60-acre, community-wide park (see Chapter 11, the Parks and Recreation Element), creating the possibility for shared use of the two recreation facilities. It would also be located near the potential new high school site (see Section 12.2), Peconic River County Park, and the Core Preservation Area of the Central Pine Barrens. Also, the Calverton location would offer the financial incentive of the "Empire Zone", which provides tax credits and incentives for new businesses. The Town could consider offering land to the YMCA at no cost or a reduced cost.

Policy 12.19B: Explore the feasibility of establishing a Riverhead youth center.

The need for a youth center will only increase as the population continues to grow. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of teenagers in Riverhead is expected to increase significantly, as the children of baby boomers grow up. Although the Peconic YMCA would have some youth-oriented programs, a Town youth center could serve as a clearinghouse for the full range of youth services and programs. In particular, the youth center could provide a location for 4-H programs, information on youth services, mentoring or big-brother/big-sister programs, counseling sessions, summer classes and activities, sports outings, and social events.

Goal 12.20: Promote youth educational and intervention programs.

Policy 12.20A: Encourage the Riverhead Central School District and other school districts to continue working with social service agencies to provide intervention and education programs.

The cooperative effort between Riverhead schools and local social service agencies has been extremely effective. The Town should encourage the school district to continue, monitor, and continually improve programs for youth.

12.11 SENIOR CITIZENS

Senior citizens make up a large portion of the Town population and have special needs, due to their frail health. Many seniors choose Riverhead as a retirement home, because of the proximity to East End attractions and the relatively affordable housing, compared to other East End towns. In 1999, about 30 percent of the population was over the age of 55, compared to 22 percent countywide. In 2000 to 2020, the senior population is expected to increase, as retirees continue to move in, and as life expectancy increases.

Seniors require access to a range of housing types and health services, from independent living (for those in good health) to community living, to assisted living, to nursing homes (for those in the poorest health). Senior housing is discussed in Chapter 8, the Housing Element. Seniors also require outpatient medical services, convenient access to shopping, opportunities for socializing, and transportation. The Town already has several facilities and programs that serve the elder population. As the senior population grows, additional services and facilities will be needed.

Riverhead has no congregate care or assisted living facilities. This is a significant gap in services, as seniors who require intermediate-level care (between independent living and a nursing home) would have to leave Riverhead. There are only two nursing homes in Riverhead: the skilled nursing facility at Central Suffolk Hospital (60 beds) and the Riverhead Nursing Home (181 beds).¹¹ These facilities typically operate near capacity, so additional nursing home facilities may be required in the future as well. Also, Riverhead lacks a hospice, and there is a need for such a facility in order to provide care to people in the last stages of life. The nearest facility is the East End Hospice in Westhampton Beach.

SENIOR CENTER

The Riverhead Senior Center, which is funded through the Town, provides a variety of programs and services for senior citizens, including:

- *Adult day care.* Three days per week; for frail elderly and seniors diagnosed with early Alzheimer's Disease or related dementia.
- *Computer lab.* Free computer training and access to high speed internet service.

¹¹ Intercounty Health Facilities Association, Inc., *Consumer Resource Directory* pamphlet.

- *Dial a Ride*. Free transportation within the Riverhead Town limits for seniors without transportation.
- *Home Chore*. Minor home repairs for Riverhead homeowners.
- *Home Aid*. Housekeeping, shopping, laundry, errands for a fee.
- *Meals on Wheels*. Hot noontime meals delivered weekdays to homebound seniors unable to cook for themselves.¹²
- *Recreational Activities*. Group-oriented events and games.

According to staff members at the Senior Center, inadequate transportation is a major concern of senior citizens. Many seniors lose the ability to drive and must rely on either family members with cars, transit, or free services like dial-a-ride. Some senior living communities, including Riverhead Landing, provide free shuttle service throughout the Town, but demand for the shuttle service has reportedly outstripped the availability. The proposed Peconic YMCA would be oriented to seniors, as well as other groups.

SENIOR CITIZENS: GOALS & POLICIES

Goal 12.21: Continue to provide adequate household, meal, and transportation services for senior citizens.

Policy 12.21A: Expand Adult Day Care, Dial a Ride, Home Chore, Home Aid, and Meals on Wheels services through the Riverhead Senior Center.

As senior citizens live longer and long-term care becomes more expensive, more seniors will choose to live independently, whether or not they are able to perform daily functions on their own. Some senior citizens will choose to live with family members, who can provide some care, but many adult family members also have work and child care responsibilities and cannot provide senior citizens with the full attention they require. This means that seniors will require more in-home services, particularly for meals, household chores, and errands. The services currently offered at the Center may need to be expanded to meet the increases in demand.

Policy 12.21B: Continue to offer a variety of social activities, programs and meals, along with support services at the new Town Senior Center on Shade Tree Lane in Aquebogue.

On October 28, 2002, the Town opened a new and improved Senior Citizens Center on Shade Tree Lane in Aquebogue. The new center offers additional recreational space and more accommodations than the old senior nutrition center located on Howell Avenue. Meals are prepared on site and served daily, and the new center can seat up to 180 persons in the dining

¹² Town of Riverhead, *Senior Citizens' Programs and Services* brochure.

room. While there has been discussion of establishing a satellite senior center, no plans have been considered.

12.12 SPECIAL NEEDS POPULATIONS

PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Developmentally disabled patients who live outside group homes (discussed in Chapter 8, the Housing Element) require outpatient services, including medical, therapeutic, educational, and counseling services. Social service agencies like East End Disability Associates, Inc. already provide a range of services, including case management.¹³ Case managers work with outpatient developmentally disabled persons to find and coordinate services for them. The County Center also sponsors mental health clinics, and agencies like Synergy Center provide vocational training and drop-in counseling for people with development disabilities.¹⁴ The trend of deinstitutionalization suggests that the need for outpatient services will continue to grow.

PEOPLE WITH HIV OR AIDS

With the advent of protease inhibitors, people with HIV and AIDS have much longer life expectancies. As a result, while HIV/AIDS is still life-threatening, it is also a chronic condition that people live with for many years. Riverhead does not have an organization that specializes in providing services or counseling to people living with HIV or AIDS, although the Riverhead Health Clinic and Central Suffolk Hospital do treat people with HIV and AIDS. Other Towns on the East End have a variety of AIDS service organizations, advocacy groups, and referral agencies. Major service organizations include:

- *The East End AIDS Wellness Project (EEAWP)*. Started in 1993, the EEAWP is located in Sag Harbor. In collaboration with Southampton Hospital, it provides support, advocacy, and case management for HIV-positive people. The program is based in office space donated by the Village of Sag Harbor.
- *The East End HIV/AIDS Center*. Located in East Hampton, the Center provides outpatient medical care, psychiatric services, and medical service for people with HIV or AIDS.
- *Long Island Association for AIDS Care (LIAAC)*. Located in Huntington Station, LIAAC is a multi-service agency offering case management, crisis intervention, support groups, meal delivery, respite care, legal clinic/advocacy, and prevention education.

¹³ Peconic Community Council web site, www.pccouncil.org/directory.html.

¹⁴ Mental Health Association of Suffolk County, *Directory of Mental Health Services*, p. 24-25.

The Suffolk County Clinic provides testing for HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Treatment for STDs is also available there. Unlike HIV, most other STDs have a cure and are not life-threatening. Housing is a critical need for people with HIV or AIDS. Many people live with the disease for years, but are nonetheless unable to work — making it very difficult to pay basic living expenses. HIV/AIDS housing is discussed in Chapter 8, the Housing Element.

SUBSTANCE ABUSERS

Riverhead does not have any in-patient facilities for substance abusers, and many of the in-patient facilities in other East End towns have closed. Managed care has reduced the funding for in-patient centers, and the State's reduction in Medicaid recipients has limited those who are eligible for in-patient care. Seafield Center in Westhampton Beach is one of the last remaining for-profit, in-patient treatment centers on the East End. Southampton still funds a recovery center in Hampton Bays.

As in-patient centers have closed, the trend has been toward outpatient services. The Suffolk County Department of Health Services is the primary provider of outpatient rehabilitation and detoxification services in the Riverhead area. It is located just south of downtown Riverhead in Southampton. It is one of the only facilities of its kind on eastern Long Island.

VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The victims of domestic violence require a variety of services: from psychological support, to emergency housing, to legal assistance, to childcare. The Suffolk County Coalition Against Domestic Violence provides confidential support groups and counseling for the victims of domestic violence. The organization also runs a 24-hour hotline. Nassau/Suffolk Law Services for Low Income Legal Assistance has a Riverhead office located on West Main Street in downtown. The agency runs a Domestic Violence Project that provides legal aid to victims. The County also offers domestic violence referrals.

SPECIAL NEEDS POPULATIONS: GOALS & POLICIES

Goal 12.22: Continue to support community living in Riverhead.

Riverhead is required by federal law to allow group homes to be built in residential neighborhoods, as discussed in Chapter 8, the Housing Element. Transportation and accessibility are issues that all group homes struggle with.

Policy 12.22A: Ensure that group homes make transportation services available to residents.

Many special needs patients may not be able to drive or take public transportation to their service providers. As a condition of approval, the Town should require group home operators to make transportation service available to residents, who may need to travel beyond the group home for outpatient services, doctor appointments, shopping, or other needs. Moreover, some residents may require physical assistance in traveling or specialized vehicles, and a group home-sponsored service should be able provide such assistance, as appropriate to the group home population.

Goal 12.23: Provide additional out-patient services or walk-in services for special needs populations.

Policy 12.23A: Consider working with Suffolk County and Central Suffolk Hospital to explore the feasibility of establishing an HIV/AIDS clinic and/or service organization in Riverhead.

HIV cases are still on the rise nationwide. Moreover, because of recent advances in HIV/AIDS treatment, HIV is no longer a "death sentence." It is a manageable, chronic disease, meaning that people may live with HIV a long time, requiring household help, meal services, and constant health care. A clinic and/or service agency would help provide needed services to people with HIV or AIDS.

Policy 12.23B: Work with Suffolk County to explore the feasibility of establishing a detoxification clinic and/or addiction recovery agency in Riverhead.

Because in-patient facilities are few and far-between, out-patient services are necessary to assist people in their recoveries from alcohol or drug addiction. A clinic would supplement the services provided by the County.

Policy 12.23C: Work with Suffolk County and local non-profit service providers to expand outreach efforts for the victims of domestic violence.

Victims often feel ashamed to come forward, or they are prevented from doing so by their abusers. Improved outreach efforts can encourage victims to seek out help. Spanish-language counselors and information should also be made available.