



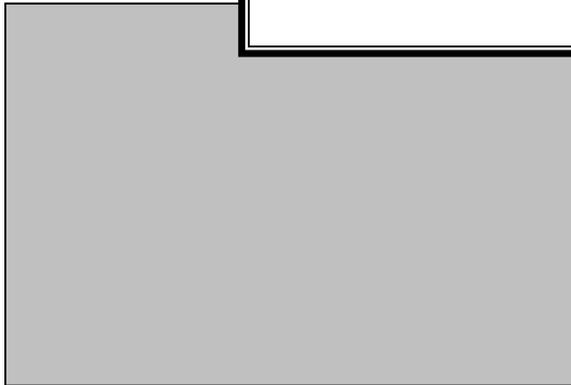
# CHAPTER V: COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENTS







**GREENWAYS AND OPEN  
SPACE**





# THE VISION FOR GREENWAYS AND OPEN SPACE

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ESTABLISH A NETWORK OF INTERCONNECTED GREENWAYS WHICH SAFEGUARD THE VISUAL AND RURAL QUALITIES OF SOUTHAMPTON TOWN, PROVIDE BOTH PASSIVE AND ACTIVE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALTERNATIVE MODES OF TRANSPORTATION WITHIN THE TOWN.

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## GOALS FOR A COMPREHENSIVE GREENWAYS SYSTEM

1. *To maintain and preserve existing open space, natural and cultural resources and scenic views as described in The Resources section of the Plan;*
2. *To provide an interconnected system of greenways, walkways, and bike paths linking destinations and resources throughout the Town;*
3. *To encourage the preservation and expansion of existing trails and open space through the subdivision process;*
4. *To use all the tools of fee simple acquisition, Transfer of Development Rights, Purchase of Development Rights, donation and conservation easements to protect open space and enhance the Town's greenways; and*
5. *To provide increased access to trails and greenways to all residents and visitors of the Town.*

## GOALS FOR PUBLIC ACCESS GREENWAYS

1. *Southampton's network of trails should be integrated with regional and national trail networks.*
2. *In an effort to protect the quality of the trails and the safety of trail users, no motorized vehicles should be permitted on any designated Town trails (presently codified under §292-3 Trail definition).*
3. *Trails are an important resource to the Town in terms of both recreation and non-motorized transportation. When land is set aside under the subdivision process, decision-making boards should refer to the trail map in prioritizing open space designation within the subdivision.*
4. *Multiple, non-motorized uses of trails will be encouraged such as pedestrian, bicycle and equestrian uses. In some cases, however, trail use may be restricted based on the safety or sensitivity of the area.*
5. *The Town should begin a plan for capital outlay to construct trails and trail support facilities including:*
  - *signage and kiosks*
  - *parking*
  - *rest stops*

- maintenance of trail systems
- erosion control

6. *The Town should develop a comprehensive signage plan for trails which details standard signage and phases for the installation of signs.*

7. *The Town should support private-public partnerships in the enforcement of illegal trail activities such as the use of motorized trail bikes and illegal dumping.*

8. *The Town should support the development of a stewardship program to encourage neighbors and volunteer groups to take responsibility for the supervision and maintenance of the trails.*

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## GOALS FOR RESOURCE PROTECTION GREENWAYS

*In addition to the goals listed in the Natural Resources section of the Comprehensive Plan:*

1. *Provide linkages between significant habitat areas which will minimize habitat fragmentation and maximize the size of protected habitat areas.*
  2. *Develop wildlife corridors which will allow freedom of movement for wildlife throughout the community.*
  3. *Ensure a balance between the environmental sensitivity of resource protection areas and the desire of the public to access natural areas.*
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## GOAL FOR SCENIC PROTECTION GREENWAYS

*In addition to the goals listed in the Scenic Resources section of the Comprehensive Plan:*

1. *Provide interconnected greenspaces throughout the community, to link and protect scenic views, vistas and landscapes.*
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# TECHNICAL FINDINGS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

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## 1. WHAT ARE GREENWAYS?

The term greenway can be used to describe a whole range of protected land areas in the Town of Southampton. A greenway can be a linear open space situated along a naturally formed corridor, such as an oceanfront, a stream valley, or ridgeline. It can extend overland along a railroad right-of-way, a canal, a scenic roadway corridor, or a similar type of route. A greenway can be any natural or landscaped course for pedestrian, equestrian, or bicycle movement. A greenway, however, need not be linear, and includes both the parks, nature preserves, cultural features, or historic sites and the open space connectors which link them together.

## 2. A THREE-PART GREENWAYS SYSTEM

The Town of Southampton already has the basic components of a comprehensive greenway system in place. These components include:

- existing community and public facilities;
- existing parks;
- protected open space and farmland;
- significant natural areas;
- well defined hamlet and village centers;
- significant scenic areas;
- significant historic areas;

- ocean frontage and beach access;
- existing public transportation; and
- public support, financing, and regulatory mechanisms.

The greenways system for the Town is intended to link these components in a comprehensive fashion that also makes use of a variety of protection mechanisms. In order to achieve this goal, three distinct categories or types of greenways are suggested:

1. Public Access Greenways, for active and passive recreation and alternative modes of transportation;
2. Resource Protection Greenways, including wetlands, significant fish and wildlife habitat areas, and existing agricultural lands; and
3. Scenic Protection Greenways, including historic structures, historic landscapes and natural landscapes.

The greenways system can be divided into these three types in order to develop strategic implementation plans to meet the specific goals of the greenway type. It is important to note that while a particular greenway may primarily serve one of these functions, the greenway types and goals are not mutually exclusive.

Greenways can effectively link together many important existing resources within the Town, both natural and constructed. These include:

- a. Public Access Greenways:

- to serve alternative modes of transportation such as bicycles and pedestrians;
  - to link residential areas with hamlet centers, schools and public services; and
  - to link existing park and recreational areas and to increase passive and active recreation opportunities.
- b. Resource Protection Greenways
- link significant habitat areas;
  - minimize habitat fragmentation;
  - maximize the size of protected habitat areas;
  - protect agricultural lands for continued agricultural use; and
  - provide wildlife corridors to allow freedom of movement for wildlife throughout the community.
- c. Scenic Protection Greenways
- to provide significant greenspace throughout the community;
  - provide greenbelts around each hamlet to maintain its identity; and
  - to protect significant scenic views and vistas throughout the community.

### **3. WHY A COMPREHENSIVE GREENWAYS SYSTEM IS NECESSARY FOR SOUTHAMPTON**

A Comprehensive Greenways System allows an integration of critical resource and open space protection with requirements

for public access for alternative modes of transportation and active and passive recreation. The results of the various public participation surveys conducted as part of this Comprehensive Plan Update indicated that Town residents have a high desire to protect the natural and scenic environment, and further develop an integrated trail system.

The five highest rated images in the visual preference survey all showed scenic views and scenes of the natural environment. In addition, 69 percent of the written survey respondents indicated that their favorite aspect of Southampton is the natural beauty and rural character. In addition, 69 percent said that destruction of the natural beauty was their least favorite aspect. A coordinated greenway system is one method that the Town can use to protect these scenes, images and qualities that make Southampton special and to retain its rural character.

Southampton Town has many individual characteristics and resources that combine to create a truly unique community character. A comprehensive system of greenways can serve as the unifying link among these components and serve to protect them as well. At the beginning of the Comprehensive Plan process, each of the CAC's was asked to identify the major problems and concerns related to greenway and open space protection in the Town. Many expressed the desire to see the park and recreational facilities linked together by greenways. Residents also expressed concern for the safety of their children who are riding their bicycles to the beach, town parks, and school without a network of clearly established off-road trails or clearly marked bicycle paths.

Public access greenways, whether they are trails or bicycle routes, can also provide much needed alternative modes of transportation, particularly during the severely congested summer season. For example, citizens now drive their automobiles on already congested public roads to travel from a

historic hamlet center through a scenic corridor to go to a public facility such as a beach or a hiking trail accessing the Pine Barrens. As simple a route as this may seem, without a system of greenway linkages, the automobile is currently the only means for making these connections.

The telephone survey which was conducted by the Southampton College Institute for Regional Research found that recreation areas such as bicycle paths, parks, playgrounds and picnic areas are in need of additional funding and attention from Town government. A total of 49 percent of those polled were in support of additional funding being spent on recreational facilities. The most widespread support went to the creation of more bicycle paths (63 percent) and nature trails (43 percent). In addition, respondents to the written survey supported this search for alternative modes of transportation, 58 percent either strongly agreed or agreed that:

“sidewalks and bike lanes are an important part of our transportation system and should be provided even if it takes taxpayer dollars to do so.”

These survey results also indicated a strong and positive reaction to images of bicycle trails, both on and off-road. The images, shown to the right, indicate a bicycle riding along a quiet, residential street, and a striped and signed bicycle lane along a major road. Both of these images received positive scores in the survey.

In Southampton, the development of an integrated greenways system will have a direct effect on the quality of life enjoyed both by year-round and seasonal residents. Public access greenways provide alternative forms of accessibility and recreation activities while protecting scenic resources.



Image 2.43



# IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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As identified in the previous section that discussed Technical Findings and Community Support for greenways, three types of greenways have been identified for the Town. These three types, public access greenways, resource protection greenways, and scenic greenways each have different characteristics and therefore a variety of acquisition and protection methods apply.

## 1. ASSEMBLING THE PUBLIC ACCESS GREENWAY

Public access greenways are those areas of the greenways system which accommodate pedestrian trails, bridle trails, bikeways, and/or recreational parklands. The Town at present has the basic elements of the public access greenway system in place. What is needed in the future is a program to ensure continuous linkages throughout the Town, along with a coordinated access system (see Map 13W and 13E).

### 1.1 Use existing public facilities to augment the Town's active recreation facilities.

The existing facilities at school sites, such as tennis courts, ballfields and running tracks should be made easily available for community programming of group and ad hoc recreational activities during non-school recreational periods. At present, the Town has one school park agreement, whereby the school turned maintenance over to the Town in exchange for public programming of the facilities. This type of partnership can aid in augmenting the lack of facilities for both the schools and the Town.

### ACTION ITEM

- 1 WORK WITH THE SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO DEVELOP A NEW PILOT PROGRAM THAT ALLOWS THE COMMUNITY TO USE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AT SCHOOL SITES.

### 1.2 Utilize existing public open space to achieve important trail linkages.

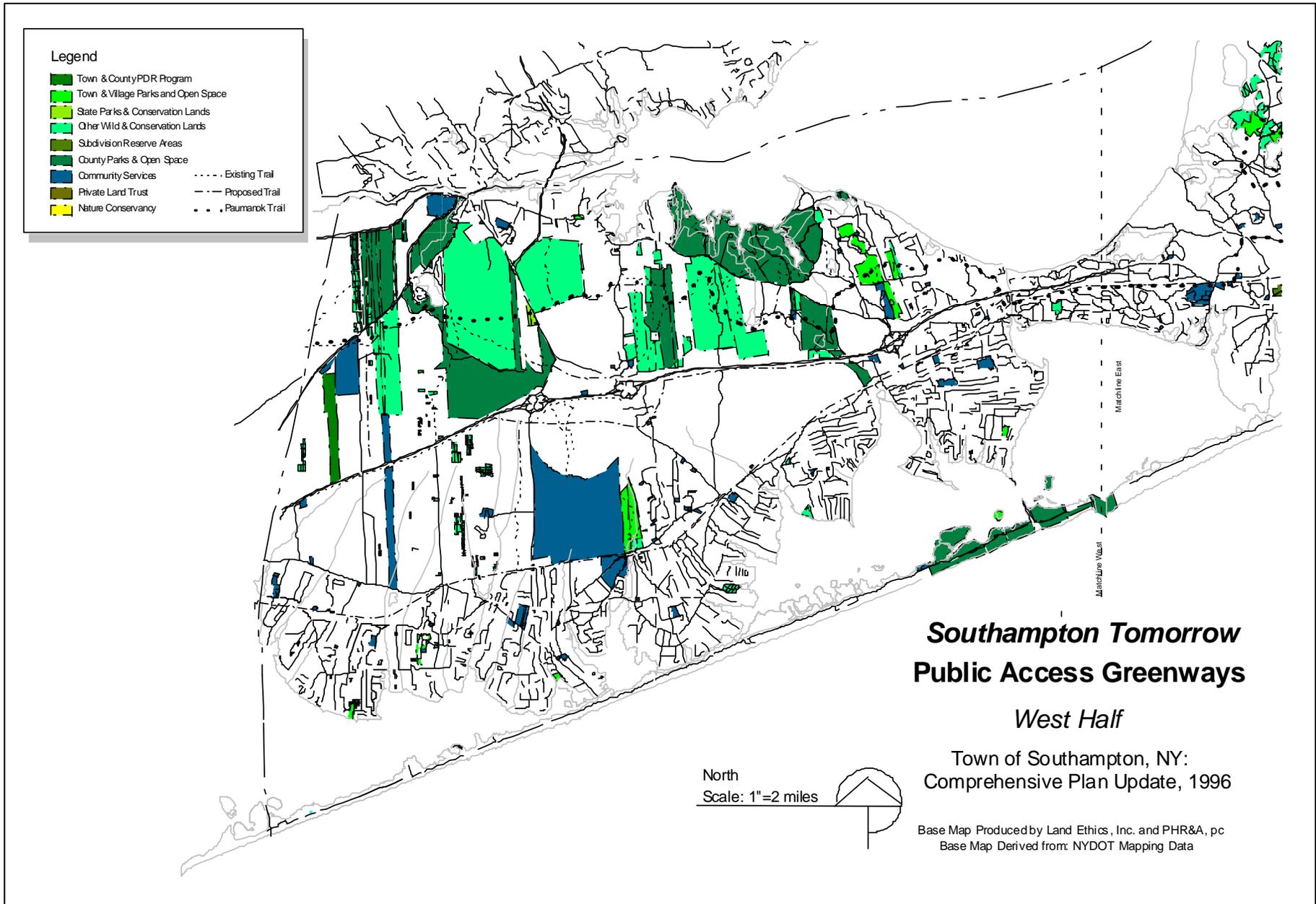
Many areas of existing publicly-owned land such as schools, government centers, parks, athletic fields and recreational areas whether State, County or Town owned, offer opportunities to extend public recreational trail access. As indicated earlier, there are approximately 2,921 acres of parkland in Southampton, of which 2,338 acres are owned by Suffolk County. These parks are in essence the major nodes for an active and passive recreation system throughout the Town, and provide the opportunity to develop trail linkages.

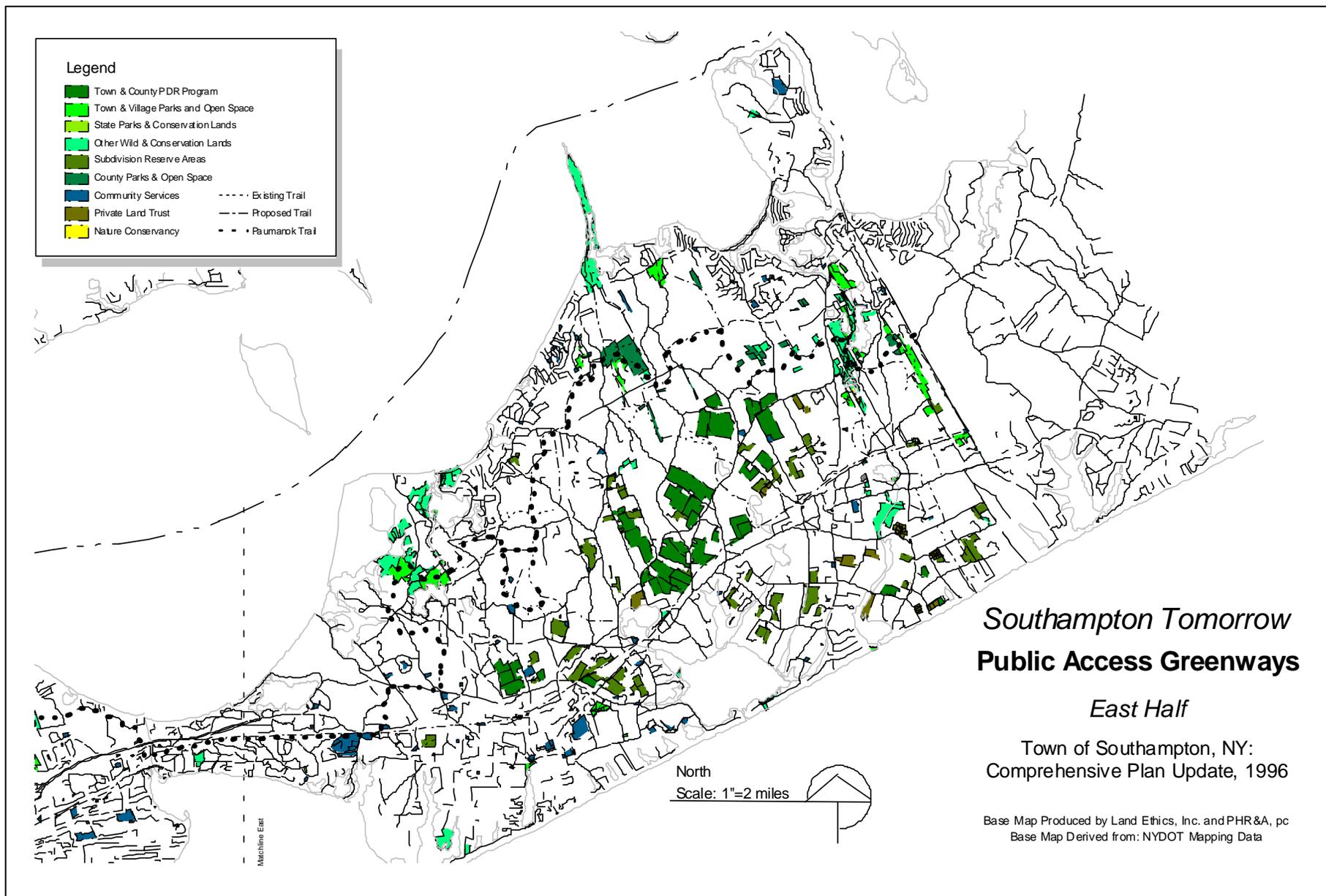
Priority linkages include those to Red Creek Park and other active recreation in Town.

### ACTION ITEMS

- 1 DEVELOP A DETAILED PLAN TO IMPLEMENT TRAIL LINKAGES BETWEEN EXISTING PASSIVE AND ACTIVE RECREATION FACILITIES AND OTHER DESTINATIONS.

- 2 IDENTIFY PUBLICLY-OWNED LAND WHICH CAN BE USED TO DEVELOP TRAIL LINKAGES.





- ③ DEVELOP A PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN TO IDENTIFY HOW THE TOWN, PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND OTHER PROVIDERS WILL ADDRESS CURRENT AND FUTURE DEMAND THROUGH VARIOUS FORMS OF PARTNERSHIPS.

### 1.3 Trail Preservation Agreement

At present, the Town has a trail preservation agreement ordinance in effect. Defined under *Chapters 247 (Open Space)* and *§298 (Taxation)* of the Code of the Town of Southampton, the law provides

“a procedure by which the owners of property with trails can voluntarily limit the use of their property in exchange for certain property tax adjustments.”

In essence, the trail preservation agreement is a written agreement between the Town of Southampton and the owner of an eligible property who agrees to allow the public to use a portion of their land as a trail. In the agreement, the owner agrees to preserve that portion of the property upon which the trail exists and not to eliminate, build on, or block access to the trail. Efforts should be made to acquire long term easements where possible, since the longer term will ensure that the trails can continue through changes in ownership.

The law also provides a tax benefit for land under a trail preservation agreement. Under *Taxation, §298-26* of the Code, the land under the trail agreement will be assessed according to the “limitation on future use of the land that will be committed to trail use.”

In order to encourage individuals to enter into trail use agreements, the Town should emphasize to prospective trail owners that while each easement is assessed on an individual

basis, lengthening the period of the agreement will increase the tax benefit. A notice of the benefits of the agreement can be sent to property owners, in formats such as notices with their property tax bills.

### ACTION ITEMS

- ❶ DEVELOP AN INFORMATION BROCHURE WHICH EMPHASIZES THE BENEFITS OF LONGER TERM TRAIL EASEMENTS AND USE THE BROCHURE TO ENCOURAGE INDIVIDUALS TO SIGN LONGER-TERM EASEMENTS.
- ❷ THE TRAIL LICENSE AGREEMENT SHOULD BE REVISED TO SPECIFICALLY DENOTE A THREE MONTH PERIOD IN LIEU OF “REASONABLE TIME” FOR THE REMOVAL OF ALL TRAIL MARKERS ONCE THE TRAIL LICENSE AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REVOKED.

### 1.4 Open Space Conservation and Park District

There are currently a total of 7,568 acres of land in Southampton Town designated as Open Space Conservation (OSC) lands. This zoning district is defined in *§330-27* and *§28* of the Zoning Law as:

“Land in public and private ownership used for golf courses, tennis courts, nature preserves, hunting preserves, parks, recreational areas and beach areas. Such land in private ownership shall only be considered for inclusion in the Open Space Conservation and Park District where approval for such designation is requested, in writing, by the fee owner. No buildings are to be allowed except customary structures related to the particular use, such as a

golf club house, tennis club, bath house, park administration and maintenance buildings, etc.”

The existing landfill property should be added to this zone, since in the future, properly capped and rehabilitated, the site may serve as another source of both active and passive recreation east of the canal. The site would benefit from having a master plan developed for its future use.

### ACTION ITEMS

- ❶ DEDICATE APPROPRIATE AREAS OF THE LANDFILL AS TOWN PARKLAND AND CONSIDER ESTABLISHING A PARK DISTRICT TO FINANCE IMPROVEMENTS.
- ❷ DEVELOP A MASTER PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EXISTING LANDFILL PROPERTY INTO AN ACTIVE AND/OR PASSIVE RECREATION PARK.

## 1.5 Criteria for Selecting Priority Public Access Greenway Areas for Acquisition or Development

Public access greenways are most effectively protected by a combination of acquisition and access easements. Generally, acquisition should be limited to those properties which are key to a trail, or which serve a dual purpose as a trail and recreational area. For public access greenways, the most important aspects are recreational opportunity and connectivity. Priority ranking for parcels and areas can be based on the following criteria:

- *Connectivity* - The portion of the trail or area in question links already existing recreation areas or trail systems and makes these more attractive for or effective in use.
- *Size or Length* - the parcel or area in question would either add considerable size or length to existing recreational areas or trail corridors, or would maximize the use of a large area of trails and/or recreational areas.
- *Near or Links Other High Priority Greenway Groups* - the parcel or area is near or connects high priority resource protection or scenic greenways.
- *Threat of Development or Loss* - If the parcel or area is under development pressure and/or a commonly used trail is in danger of being lost.
- *Receptive Property Owner* - The parcel or area is owned by an individual willing to place an easement on the property, or sign a trail agreement.

### ACTION ITEMS

- ❶ CONTINUOUSLY UPDATE A FIVE-YEAR TRAILS ACQUISITION PLAN FROM THE TRAILS MAP WHICH IDENTIFIES A PRIORITY RANKING FOR KEY TRAILS AND TRAIL LINKAGES.
- ❷ CONTINUE TO UPDATE KEY TRAILS AND TRAIL LINKAGES TO THE TOWN'S LIST OF PROPERTIES FOR CONSIDERATION OF OPEN SPACE ACQUISITION.

## 1.6 Parkland set-asides in new residential subdivisions.

Park requirements are defined for new residential subdivisions under §292-35B. Under these requirements, the size of the park is defined as five acres per 100 dwelling units. Wetlands and other unbuildable areas do not count towards meeting the park requirements.

The dedication of parkland, particularly in smaller subdivisions can be met by the dedication to public use of trails and their buffers in accordance with this Comprehensive Plan. These trails should be dedicated through the grant of trail easement as part of the trails network identified by the Comprehensive Plan. These trails should

- connect to other trails or planned trails off-site; and,
- also serve as connections between wildlife corridors when possible.

In order to ensure the legal validity and equability of the parkland requirements, the technical aspects of §292-35B should be clarified to indicate that

- in every case each residential subdivision plat shall have the requirement for a park site consisting of not less than five acres for each one hundred dwelling units (indicated in §292-35B(1));
- this park site can take the form of either a block of parkland and/or a trail corridor;
- if the Planning Board feels it is not appropriate to physically locate a park on-site, the subdivider may pay a fee-in-lieu of the park;
- this fee-in-lieu should be determined by multiplying the number of dwelling units by the 5 percent requirement

(which provides the number of acres of parkland to be set aside), and then multiplied by the fair market value per acre of the land under subdivision; and,

- in §292-35B(5)(c), the fee for five lots or fewer can be set at a value of one thousand dollars per dwelling unit for those developments that meet affordable housing criteria (see Affordable Housing chapter) or for intra-family farm subdivisions of single parcels (see Agricultural chapter).

## ACTION ITEMS

- ❶ REVISE THE EXISTING CODE TO CLARIFY THE ASSESSMENT OF PARKLAND OR PARK FEES.
- ❷ REVISE THE EXISTING PARK STANDARDS TO ALLOW ALL OR PART OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR PARKLAND SET ASIDES TO BE MET BY TRAIL DEDICATION.
- ❸ REVISE §292-42.1 TO INCLUDE CONNECTIVITY REQUIREMENTS IN THE DESIGN REQUIREMENTS FOR TRAILS.

## 1.7 Trails easements in new subdivisions.

New subdivisions of land for any purpose are required under §292-6.1 to maintain existing trails or relocate them to preserve linkages to off-site trails. Although it is presently not required for the land owner to grant public access over the trail, the Planning Board encourages the use of dedications, access easements or covenants to create public access rights (see Trail Preservation Agreement in the Appendix of the Greenways Technical Report chapter, Part 1).

Public access can be required only under a finding by the Town that a reasonable relationship exists between the trail exaction and the development impact. For residential developments, this link is made in the Town Code and the Comprehensive Plan through the need for recreational facilities. A coordinated trail system has been identified as a key recreational strategy by the Town.

For commercial and/or industrial developments, the link is the need for alternative modes of transportation. The Transportation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan clarifies this required link.

**ACTION ITEM**

- ❶ REVISE THE TOWN CODE TO REQUIRE TRAIL DEDICATIONS IN ALL SUBDIVISIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TRAIL LINKAGES INDICATED IN THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.

### **1.8 Open Space Preservation in Planned Residential Developments**

Under *Chapter 247, Open Space*, the Town Code sets guidelines for the preservation of open space in planned residential developments (cluster subdivisions). A minimum of 25 percent of the land shall be reserved “in its natural state for passive recreational, open space, paleontological, archaeological and historical resources.”

This section should include the language that a portion of the open space can be used for trail purposes. In addition, *Chapter 330, Zoning, §330-240E(2)* should also specifically list the

connection of trails as one of the long term goals of the Planned Development District.

**ACTION ITEM**

- ❶ SPECIFICALLY IDENTIFY TRAIL DEVELOPMENT AND CONNECTIVITY AS ONE OF THE GOALS FOR PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS.

### **1.9 Bicycle Routes along existing roadways.**

The existing roadways in Southampton provide the opportunity to develop a system of signed and striped bicycle paths throughout the Town. Intended particularly for those individuals who are using bicycles to commute to work or a particular destination in Town, and particularly for accomplished riders, on-road bicycle routes must be augmented by off-road routes in certain areas.

The Transportation chapter of this report illustrates the routes identified as potential bicycle routes in Town.

**ACTION ITEMS**

- ❶ IDENTIFY BICYCLE ROUTES THROUGHOUT TOWN BY SIGNING AND STRIPING.
- ❷ CREATE LINKAGES BETWEEN ON-ROAD AND OFF-ROAD BICYCLE ROUTES THROUGHOUT TOWN TO DEVELOP AN INTEGRATED SYSTEM OF BICYCLE PATHS.

## **2. CONSIDERATIONS FOR PUBLIC ACCESS**

### **2.1 Automobile Parking and Sanitary Facilities at Access Points**

A comprehensive public access trail system must have adequate parking located at access points. Without adequate parking, users of the greenway are either forced to illegally park their cars on the shoulders of narrow roads, or they may opt to use the edge of a yard of a private residence. All of these options will become a source of conflict for those who live or work adjacent to an access point.

Existing trail access points occur at unsupervised town parks, both waterfront and inland; supervised waterfront parks; and existing trail heads. Access points that have been improved have typically been done to accommodate public boat launching ramps and/or at supervised and some unsupervised waterfront parks.

Parking should be provided at all major trailheads, at unsupervised inland parks, and to a limited extent at supervised and unsupervised waterfront parks as indicated in the Transportation section of the Comprehensive Plan. Additional access can be provided, particularly for beaches, by providing a beach shuttle bus from hamlet center parking areas. All parking locations should be identified on all greenways and trails maps along with signs placed at access points and trailheads identifying the appropriate locations for automobiles. The Town should prepare a parking-needs analysis for each of the public beaches, to determine the demand and feasibility for additional parking and the viability of alternative means of beach access.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

- 1** PROVIDE SAFE PARKING AREAS AT MAJOR TRAIL HEADS, UNSUPERVISED INLAND PARKS AND A LIMITED AMOUNT OF PARKING AT SELECTED UNSUPERVISED AND SUPERVISED BEACH ACCESS POINTS.
- 2** IMPROVE SIGNAGE AT UNSUPERVISED BEACH ACCESS POINTS.
- 3** PREPARE A PARKING-NEEDS ANALYSIS FOR ALL OF THE BEACH ACCESS POINTS IN THE TOWN TO DETERMINE THE NEED FOR ADDITIONAL PARKING AREAS OR ALTERNATIVE MEANS.
- 4** BEACHFRONT ACCESS CAN BE IMPROVED FROM PARKING LOTS IN HAMLET CENTERS TO WATERFRONT BEACHES. WHERE FEASIBLE, CONSIDER ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION MEANS.
- 5** WHERE BEACHFRONT ACCESS IS IMPROVED BY INCREASED PARKING OR A SHUTTLE BUS SYSTEM, IMPROVEMENTS MUST BE MADE TO THE SANITARY FACILITIES TO ACCOMMODATE THE NEW LEVEL OF USE.
- 6** PROVIDE RESTROOM FACILITIES AT REGULAR INTERVALS ALONG HEAVILY USED TRAILS AND AT TRAILHEADS.

### **2.2 Safety Requirements**

- a. Clear Signage and Pavement Striping for Bicycle Routes**

An essential safety component of a greenways bike route for Southampton includes pavement striping and route signage. The pavement striping should delineate the width of the bike route with a bicycle logo in the middle. Although pavement striping is commonly used to reinforce signs, it should not replace signs altogether. Pavement markings containing bicycle logos should be used sparingly, and only where necessary to attract additional attention to a possible problem area, since signs painted on pavement can be slippery when wet and make stopping difficult for bicyclists. Thus, pavement signs should not be used at critical stopping and turning points.

In addition to pavement striping, signs indicating the presence of the bike route must be placed along the roadside at regular intervals to alert motorists. Trail regulatory or warning signs should not be grouped together, but rather placed at intervals of approximately 75 feet.

Informational signs should be grouped together at trailheads, rest areas, and trail facility locations, such as beachfront kiosks and should not be placed where they will detract from natural surroundings or from a scenic vista. It is recommended that the Town adopt a uniform standard for marking bicycle routes with signs and pavement striping.

#### ACTION ITEMS

- ① COORDINATE WITH THE HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT'S ROAD STRIPING MAINTENANCE PROGRAM TO INSTITUTE PAVEMENT STRIPING FOR DESIGNATED BICYCLE ROUTES THROUGHOUT THE TOWN.
- ② DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A SIGNAGE PROGRAM FOR BICYCLE ROUTES THROUGHOUT TOWN.

#### **b. Safe Locations for Bike Racks**

Bicycle racks should be located in village and hamlet centers, at LIRR stations, and at all schools, libraries and other public facilities. Bike racks should be located where visual supervision is likely and where lighting and shelter is available.

#### ACTION ITEMS

- ① LOCATE BICYCLE RACKS AT TOWN HALL, ALL SCHOOLS, LIBRARIES AND OTHER PUBLIC FACILITIES.
- ② WORK WITH LOCAL CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND BUSINESS OWNERS TO PROVIDE BIKE RACKS AT STRATEGIC LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT THE HAMLET AND VILLAGE CENTERS.

#### **c. Trail Security**

As the trail system develops, the Town will need to work closely with private citizens and the police department to ensure trail security. Other communities have used mounted bicycle police patrols as the trails become more heavily used, an approach which may become attractive within the village and hamlet areas during certain key hours. An alternative to police on bicycles is a citizen trail patrol whose primary function is to assist users, warn of trail problems and distribute information.

#### ACTION ITEMS

- ① DEVELOP A VOLUNTEER CITIZENS PATROL TO PROVIDE A MEASURE OF TRAIL SECURITY AND IDENTIFY MAINTENANCE PROBLEMS.

- ② IN THE LONG TERM, ASSIGN POLICE OFFICERS OR RETAIN TRAIL MANAGER(S) WHEN TRAIL SECURITY BECOMES A PROBLEM OR DURING PERIODS AND IN AREAS OF HEAVY USAGE.

### 3. AN ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE FOR PUBLIC ACCESS GREENWAYS

Chapter 295 of the Town Code establishes the Trails Advisory Board, and their duties and responsibilities. In addition to other duties they are to:

- Identify existing and potential trails;
- Conduct advisory reviews of subdivision proposals and make certain planning recommendations regarding trails; and
- Assist the Planning and Natural Resources Director(s) with the inventory and analysis required for the development of a Trails Overlay Map.

At present, there is no Town Committee that specifically takes responsibility for recreation. Since trails are only one aspect of the Public Access Greenways system, there is a need to expand the responsibilities of the Trails Advisory Board. By doing this, the Trails Advisory Board could serve as a Public Access Greenways Board having responsibility for active and passive recreation parks, trails, bicycle routes, and beaches. As such, the Natural Resources Director, the Superintendent of Parks and Recreation and the Highway Superintendent should be ex-officio members of this Board. The Natural Resources Director will have an interest in, and jurisdiction over, assembling recreational trails; work in partnership with the Superintendent of Parks and Recreation over parks and beaches; and help the

Highway Superintendent supervise on-road bicycle trails. It is critical that all aspects of this public access greenways system be coordinated among these departments.

### ACTION ITEMS

- ① EXPAND THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRAILS ADVISORY BOARD TO INCLUDE ALL ASPECTS OF THE PUBLIC ACCESS GREENWAYS SYSTEM
- ② INCLUDE THE NATURAL RESOURCES DIRECTOR, THE PARKS AND RECREATION DIRECTOR AND THE HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT ON THE BOARD TO ENSURE A COORDINATED SYSTEM.

### 4. RESOURCE PROTECTION GREENWAYS

Resource protection greenways are primarily composed of globally, nationally, State and locally significant lands and sensitive resources. The Pine Barrens, significant fish and wildlife habitat areas, and the remaining agricultural land in Town all compose part of this greenways group. Agricultural lands are included in this group since they are an important open space resource for the Town and should be protected as such.

Due to the nature of the sensitive resources involved, this class of greenways warrants the greatest level of protection. Thus, acquisition of critical land areas and/or their development rights is primary among the protection mechanisms recommended for this group. For less sensitive land areas, development restrictions and standards can achieve a level of compromise

between the requirements of development and the need to protect significant resources for the future of the Town.

Development standards and restrictions for natural resource areas of the Resource Protection Greenways are covered in the Natural Resources chapter of the Comprehensive Plan, and agricultural resource areas in the Agriculture chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. Development standards and restrictions include such techniques as

- the transfer of development rights, such as those used in the Pine Barrens, from sending zones in critical resource areas to receiving zones in less sensitive areas of the Town;
- the clustering of allowable zoning density on a site, with minimum amounts of open space specified for preservation;
- specific criteria for locating new development on a site, whether clustering is used or not;
- grading and clearing standards for a site, which reinforce the need to protect existing native vegetation; and
- limits for total impervious surfaces in new developments.

#### **4.1 Acquisition of Resource Protection Greenways**

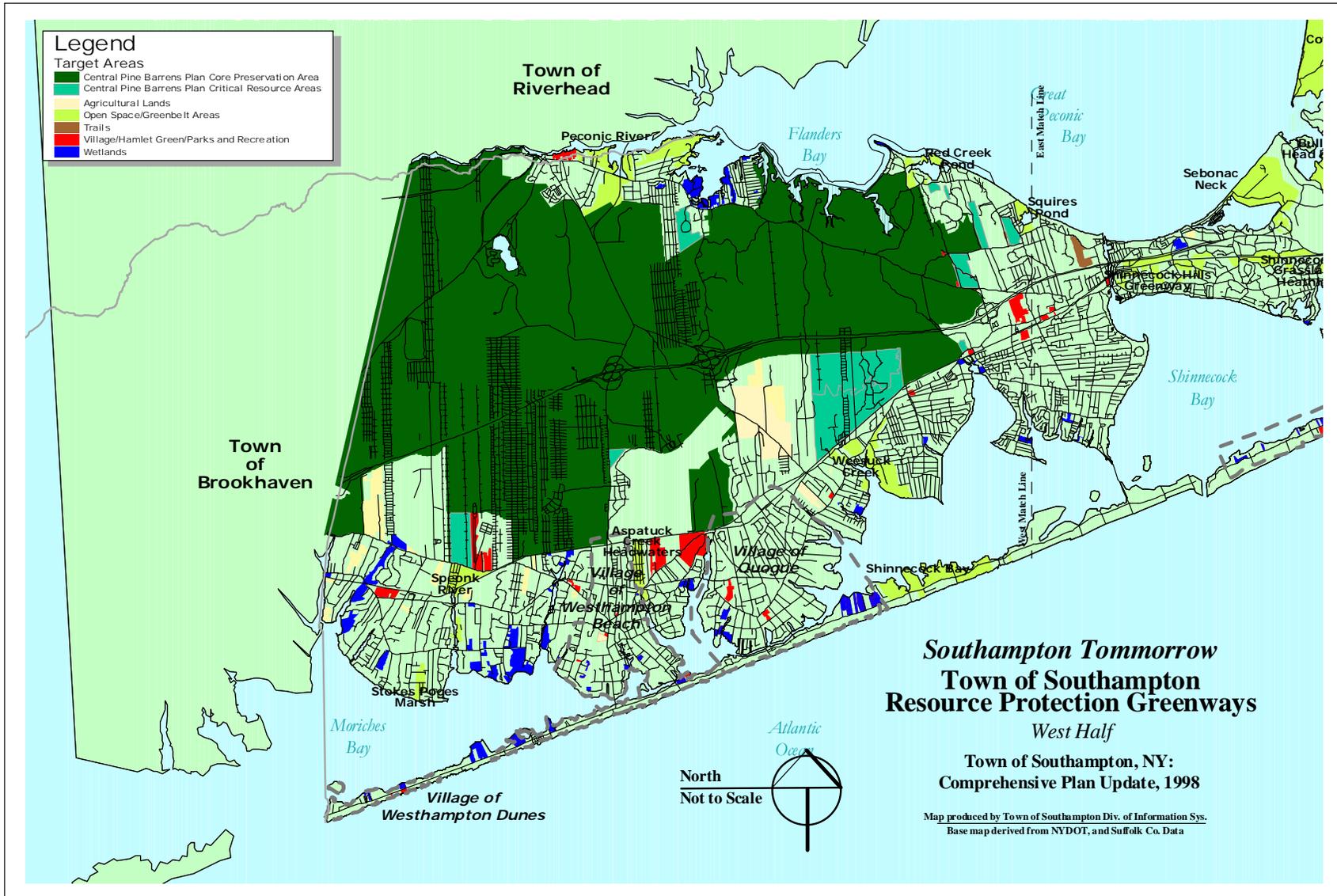
At present, acquisition efforts are occurring in the Central Pine Barrens and Town-wide as a result of the “Open Space and Greenbelt Acquisition Program Report,” which was drafted in 1986-87 and updated in 1995-96, and the Community Preservation Project Plan adopted by the Town Board in 1998.

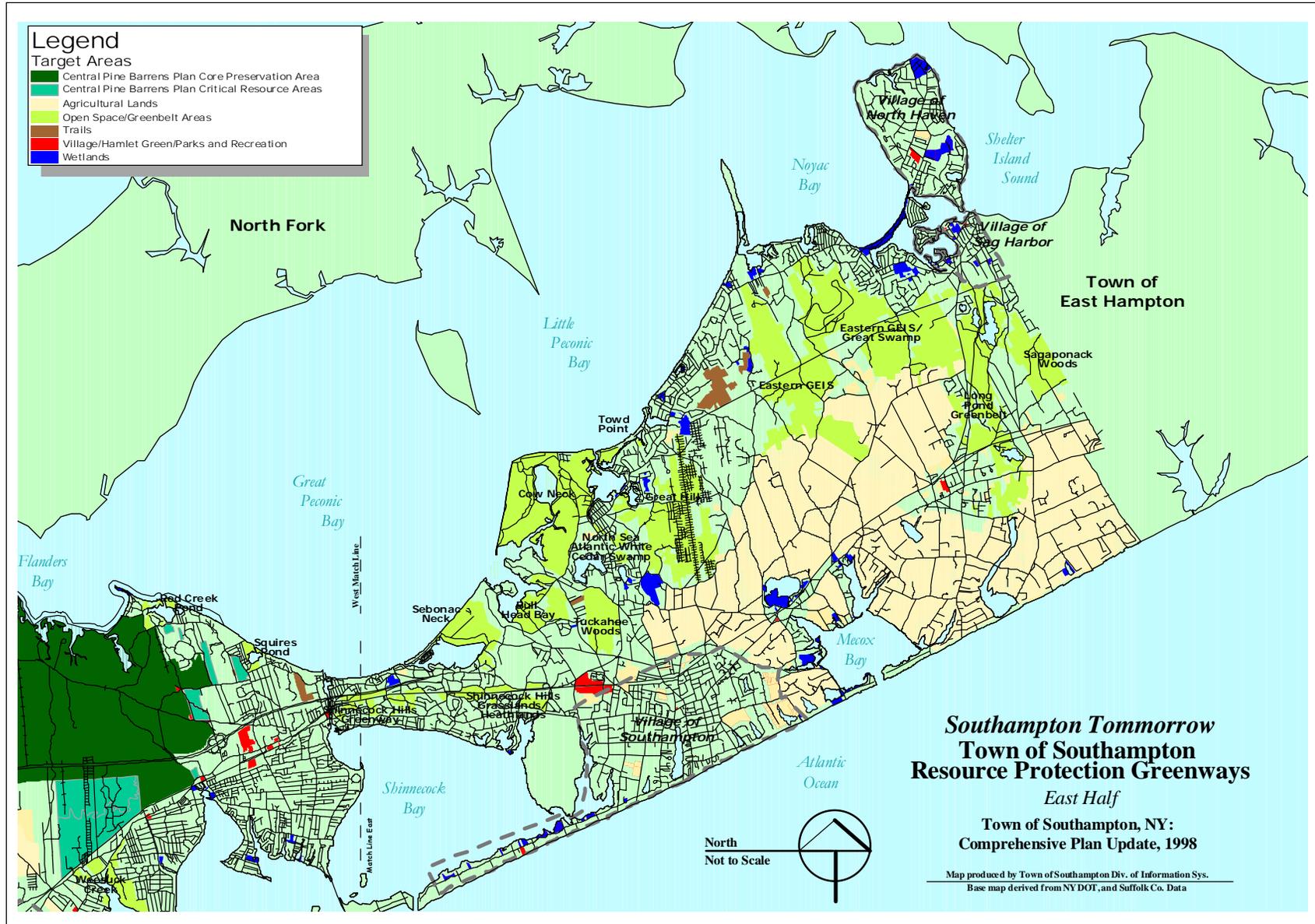
Both the 1998 Community Preservation Project Plan and the 1995-1996 Open Space and Greenbelt Acquisition Program were designed to address the Town’s most urgent conservation needs and to build upon ongoing open space preservation efforts throughout the area. The plans call for a town-wide effort to establish at least one new protected area within ten biologically distinct regions and watersheds in Southampton during the next two years. An additional planning document, the Community Preservation Project Plan adopted by the Town in August of 1998, lists 21 environmentally significant open space and greenbelt target areas in the Town.

The Town should continue to work within this framework to identify priority acquisition areas, and to use this listing to develop sufficient bond issues to meet the acquisition goals. The acquisition plan should be updated on a five-year basis. In addition, coordinated management plans for the 21 significant areas should be developed, using the Long Pond Greenbelt Management Plan as a guide.

## ACTION ITEMS

- ① USE THE OPEN SPACE AND GREENBELT ACQUISITION PROGRAM TO IDENTIFY PRIORITY ACQUISITION AREAS.
- ② ESTABLISH A MULTI-YEAR OPEN SPACE BOND ISSUE WHICH LEVERAGES STATE AND COUNTY FUNDS TO ACQUIRE OPEN SPACE.
- ③ DEVELOP BOND ISSUES BASED ON THE PRIORITY ACQUISITION AREAS REPORT TO ENSURE SUFFICIENT FUNDING TO MEET PROGRAM GOALS.
- ④ UPDATE THE PRIORITY ACQUISITION AREAS REPORT EVERY FIVE YEARS.
- ⑤ DEVELOP COORDINATED MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR ALL OF THE TOWN IDENTIFIED SIGNIFICANT OPEN SPACE AND GREENBELT AREAS.
- ⑥ DEVELOP A REAL ESTATE TRANSFER TAX PROGRAM AND USE THE PROCEEDS TO PURCHASE OPEN SPACE AND DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS IN DESIGNATED SENSITIVE AREAS.





## 4.2 Criteria for Selecting Priority Resource Protection Greenways for Acquisition

Many of the criteria established by the Southampton Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) directly apply to the task of establishing the criteria for the selection of priority areas for resource protection greenways.

- *Size:* The size of a property is important in its evaluation. Although large parcels are generally rated higher than small parcels, some properties may be too large to be a realistic target for a local preservation program.
- *Part of Assemblage:* A parcel of land which is part of an assemblage - or collection of preservation-worthy properties - is a higher priority than an isolated parcel. (Examples of assemblages are Long Pond Greenbelt and Tuckahoe Woods).
- *Near Existing Open Space:* A property is rated higher if it is adjacent or near existing open space.
- *Threat of Development:* The urgency to preserve a particular parcel can escalate if it is in danger of being developed.
- *Willing Seller:* If the property has a willing seller, the property's rating is elevated.
- *Wetland:* Properties that contain wetlands are considered high priorities for preservation.
- *Groundwater Recharge Values:* Properties that possess high groundwater recharge capabilities (i.e., located on the moraine, wooded and contain well-drained soils) are strong candidates for preservation.

- *Rare Plants, Animals, or Plant Communities:* Properties which contain any of these elements are ranked highly.
- *Wildlife Habitat:* Properties which provide valuable wildlife habitat (e.g., large forest block, salt marsh, wooded freshwater swamp) are given a high rating.
- *Passive Recreation:* Properties which may provide passive recreational opportunities (e.g., trails) are considered important.
- *Aesthetic Value:* Properties with obvious scenic value (e.g., barrier island marshes) are considered important.

### ACTION ITEMS

- 1 THE ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE SHOULD USE THE CRITERIA DETAILED ABOVE TO SELECT PRIORITY PARCELS FOR ACQUISITION IN THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.
- 2 THE EAC SHOULD CONTINUE TO ADVISE THE TOWN BOARD ON ACQUISITION PRIORITIES FOR OPEN SPACE.
- 3 CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

*Article III of the Open Space code* of Southampton details Conservation Easements, an existing tool that can be used to protect scenic and resource protection greenways in the Town. To obtain an easement, an owner can submit a proposal of easement which is reviewed by the Conservation Board and accepted by the Town Board. Similar to the trail easement, the conservation easement carries with it a tax benefit under §298-11.

## ☑ ACTION ITEM

- ① ENCOURAGE PROPERTY OWNERS TO ENTER INTO CONSERVATION EASEMENTS PARTICULARLY IN AGRICULTURAL AREAS, OPEN SPACE TARGET AREAS OR IN THE PINE BARRENS.

## 5. SCENIC GREENWAYS

Scenic greenways are composed of those areas which are important to the visual character and quality of the Town. Included in this greenways group are those areas identified as scenic road corridors and specific scenic views identified by the hamlet Citizen Advisory Committees.

Since the resource to be protected is primarily visual in these greenways, the protection strategies employed for this group can also be the most flexible. In addition to acquisition, which should only be used in the case of the most significant and sensitive views, scenic easements and design and siting standards for new development are appropriate protection mechanisms.

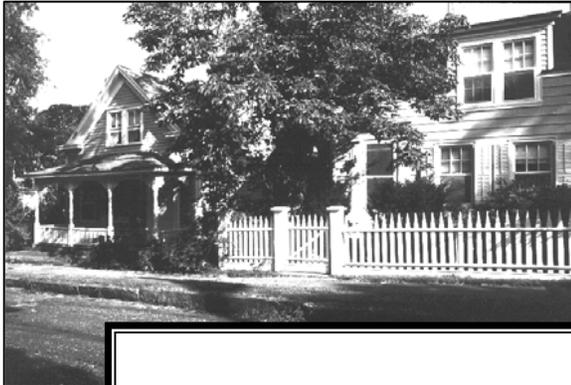
The criteria for selecting priority scenic greenways for acquisition are outlined below. A full discussion of design and siting standards are included in the Scenic Resources chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.

### 5.1 Criteria for Selecting Priority Scenic greenways for Acquisition.

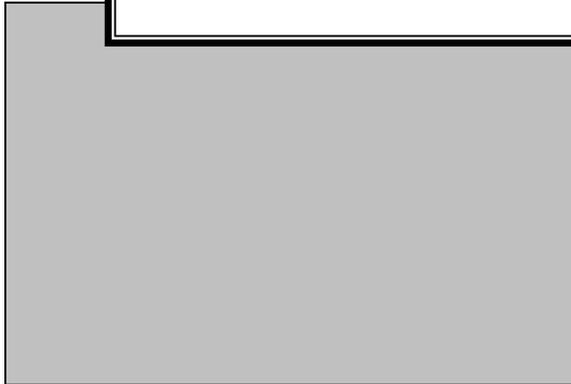
For scenic greenways, the most important aspects of a parcel or area are its effect on the overall scenic quality of the Town, the hamlet or the area. Priority parcels can be based on the following:

- *Size:* The size of the viewshed affected.
- *Connectivity:* When the scenic area connects other priority greenway groups.
- *Near Existing Preserved Open Space:* When the scenic area is adjacent to already preserved areas, and the effect of protection would be enhanced.
- *Proposed Development:* When the area is under an imminent development proposal.
- *Serves More than One Greenway Group:* The affected area also includes wildlife habitat, rare plants, animals, or plant communities, serves a groundwater recharge function, includes wetlands, or is suitable for trail use or passive recreation.
- *Buffers hamlets:* The area provides key greenspace buffer for existing hamlets.





**AFFORDABLE HOUSING**





# THE VISION FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

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SOUTHAMPTON SHOULD PURSUE REGULATORY AND FINANCIAL INCENTIVES THAT PROMOTE AFFORDABLE HOUSING. ALTHOUGH SOUTHAMPTON OFFERS A HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ITS RESIDENTS, IT LACKS HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES THAT ARE AFFORDABLE FOR MANY FIRST-TIME BUYERS; YOUNG AND SEASONAL WORKERS; AND MANY SENIORS AND OTHERS WHO ARE HARD-PRESSED TO MAINTAIN THEIR HOMES.

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## VISION GOALS

- 1. Increase the amount of homeowner and rental affordable housing in the Town, not only for low-moderate income households, but also for working middle-income households that are priced out of the market.*
- 2. Provide and equitably disperse affordable housing in all parts of the town, focusing on hamlet centers where various uses and densities are to be encouraged.*

- 3. Create affordable housing that is in keeping with the historic, architectural and natural qualities of Southampton, and does not stigmatize affordable housing tenants.*
- 4. Leverage private sector financing resources to create affordable housing opportunities.*



# TECHNICAL FINDINGS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

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The Town of Southampton offers a high quality of life to both its year-round and seasonal occupants. Unfortunately, the town's desirability has had the effect of driving up the value of housing. In 1990, Southampton's median household income (which does not include seasonal residents) was 33 percent less than Suffolk County, but its median contract rent was only 18 percent less, and its median housing value was 18 percent greater.<sup>1</sup>

By interpolating 1990 Census data, it was determined that approximately 1,500 homeowners and another 1,000 renter households earned less than 50 percent of the area (in this case, Suffolk County) median income and spent more than 30 percent of their gross income on shelter costs. Another 500 homeowners and 400 renter households earned between 50 to 80 percent of median income and spent more than 30 percent. These 2,500 "moderate income households" (defined as earning less than 50 percent of area median income) and 900 "middle income households" (defined as earning 50 to 80 percent of median income) together represent 19 percent of all households in the town.<sup>2</sup> Matters may be worse now: 1990 was part of a real estate recession. The real estate market has tightened markedly in the past few years causing a sharp increase in housing costs.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: U.S. Census

<sup>2</sup> This figure does not include households in the incorporated villages within Southampton that may be similarly situated. Nor does this count seasonal and migrant workers, who do not live in the town year-round.

Beyond these gross numbers, there are four population groups particularly affected by the lack of affordable housing. As revealed in meetings with community and real estate representatives:

1. Young couples, with or without children, who are attempting to buy their first house in a town where the median value of a single-family home in 1990 was \$196,000.<sup>3</sup> Young adults often find it very difficult, if not impossible, to raise a family in the community in which they grew up. Also, more seasonal workers are putting down roots in Southampton.
2. Town residents as well as seasonal workers, who find renting adequate housing in the town prohibitively expensive or difficult to obtain. The peak summer season for visitors coincides with the peak period for the demand for seasonal workers such as hotel and restaurant employees. Also, more seasonal visitors are staying more months, thus reducing the availability of affordable year-round rental units.
3. Town residents who own their homes, but are confronted with substandard conditions in their units and do not have sufficient income to afford repairs.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Source: U.S. Census

<sup>4</sup> Common measures of substandard units are households lacking either complete plumbing facilities (41 households in Southampton) or a central heating system (249 households). Obviously, some units share both indicators. After deducting these, there are at most 2900 housing units with one or both deficiencies. (Source: U.S. Census, 1990)

4. As a subset of the prior group, seniors who own their homes but are confronted with an affordable housing problem in the sense that their home is too large for them, and that the cost of maintenance, taxes and insurance may demand much of their social security and pension income.

There are two related reasons why housing affordability will remain an issue: (1) the Town is likely to remain attractive to the wealthy seasonal and year-round occupants who will continue to bid up values; and (2) preservation of the Town's rural character will make even more of the area appealing to affluent home buyers and renters.

Residents recognize the affordable housing need all too well. Six out of ten respondents to a Telephone Survey for the Southampton Plan favor an increase in affordable housing: "Affordable housing is the only development that receives a clear mandate from the public for increased activity. Full-time residents and long-time residents are particularly strong in their support."<sup>5</sup>

While ownership housing is preferred to promote neighborhood stability, not everyone wants the responsibility that comes with home ownership. Both homeowner and rental housing needs should be addressed.

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<sup>5</sup> Southampton College, Institute for Regional Research, "Attitudes of the Southampton Town Population Towards Various Issues to be Addressed by Southampton Tomorrow - Comprehensive Plan Update" for the Town of Southampton, December, 1995.

## EXISTING REGULATIONS AND PROGRAMS

Southampton's commitment to providing affordable housing dates back to the 1970s, putting the Town in the vanguard in an area of social concern that did not emerge nationally until the economic boom years of the 1980s. Two subsequent reports expanded the Town's policy on affordable housing: the 1985 "Master Plan Update" (Report #2), and the 1989 "Affordable Housing Program Proposed Improvements" report. Nearly all of the recommendations of these reports have been incorporated into the Town Zoning Ordinance and work of the Town Department of Housing and Community Development.

The Town Zoning Ordinance has four zones in which affordable housing was mandated in exchange for the ability to develop housing at higher densities than otherwise permitted:

1. *Senior Citizen Zone (SC44)* permits 8 units per acre, and 12 units per building. At least 25 percent of the units must be set aside for families below the moderate-income level. (Refer to Article III of the Town Zoning Code.)
2. *Multi-Family Planned Residential District (MFPRD)* is a floating zone that permits 6 units per acre for multi-family dwellings (and 8 units per building), and 1 unit per 15,000 square feet for single-family dwellings. The development must be within 1/2-mile of the boundary of an existing village business district or shopping center business district. At least 25 percent of the units must be set aside for families below the moderate-income level. (Refer to Article IV of the Town Zoning Code.)
3. *Affordable Housing Overlay District (AHOD)* is a floating zone that permits 1 unit per 20,000-sq. ft. (i.e., 2 units

per acre). At least 25 percent of the units must be set aside for families below the moderate-income level. (Refer to Article VA of the Town Zoning Code.)

4. Density Incentive: this floating density bonus may be used in the following residential districts: R-80, R-60, R-40, R-20, CR-80, CR-60, and CR-40. The number of units may be increased by 50 percent, but at least 50 percent of the additional units must be set aside for persons below the moderate-income level, yielding, at maximum densities, a 25 percent set aside. (Refer to §330-9 of the Zoning Code)

As evidenced by the 1970 Master Plan, the master plan updates, and the current zoning ordinance, the Town has attempted to make it easier for developers to build affordable housing. Yet to date, only a handful of affordable housing units have been developed.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to zoning directly intended to promote affordable housing, the Town's Accessory Apartment regulations (*Article IIA*) deal with units that are not affordable by mandate, but tend to be so because of their size and circumstances. Southampton's Accessory Apartment ordinance was approved in 1992 after a reassessment of housing stock uncovered a large supply of illegal units. The Town passed its Accessory Apartment ordinance in large measure to better regulate the conversion of these apartments. Since the ordinance was enacted, only a limited number of accessory applications have

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<sup>6</sup> Source: Surveys prepared by the Southampton Deputy Supervisor and Director of Housing, June and July 1995. These surveys identified nine affordable housing developments, most of which have not been built, and from which any eight units of affordable housing were "based solely on Town Board and Town Planning Board approvals pertaining to zoning, subdivision, and site plan applications. (emphasis added)

been submitted, of which approximately half have been approved.

Besides regulating private development, the Town has directly intervened to promote affordable housing, as follows:

1. The Section 8 rental voucher and certificate program administered by the Department of Community Development. As of the fall of 1994, almost 300 vouchers and certificates were distributed to low-income town residents, allowing them to keep costs at less than 30 percent of their income for rent and utilities. Federal funds for the Section 8 program are, however, uncertain.
2. The Town's moderate rehabilitation program, whereby the Town subsidizes the repairs needed to bring apartments with maintenance problems up to Building Code in exchange for the landlord renting the apartment at affordable rates for a period of 10 to 15 years. In the Fall of 1995 the Town had 43 landlords enrolled in this program.
3. Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) whereby the Town provides low-interest loans for home improvements to permanent residents earning less than 68 percent of the Nassau-Suffolk median income (the cutoff mark is established by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development). The home improvement program has assisted between 15 and 20 homes per year, lending between \$70,000 and \$100,000 per year.

Combining the number of households assisted through Section 8, the Pines project, and the Town's several senior citizen developments produces a total of 550 household units that are

currently receiving some form of subsidized housing. The Town is close to meeting its 1970 Master Plan goal of providing affordable housing units equal to 5 percent of year-round units, and should consider increasing its goal of low- and moderate-income housing to 10 percent of year-round units.

Combining the number of Southampton households assisted annually by the home improvement loan program and real estate tax abatement program produces a total of 930 units, or 27 percent of the 3,400 moderate and middle income households spending more than 30 percent of their income on shelter costs. (Note: by definition, the 550 households/units receiving subsidies do not pay more than 30 percent of their incomes for shelter costs, and therefore are not included in the

3,400 count.) The Town should consider as a goal increasing the number of households so assisted to 1,100 units, or 33 percent of the households burdened by shelter costs.

It should be emphasized that the affordability problem varies in each hamlet. In some hamlets, such as Hampton Bays and Riverside/Flanders, many houses can be bought or rented at a reasonable price, and concerns shift to questions of housing quality and maintenance. Furthermore, some areas have a higher tax base, and are more able to absorb the albeit incremental addition of school children associated with some forms of affordable housing. The Town should therefore be sensitive to local concerns as it pursues its affordable housing policies.

# IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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As noted, four population groups are especially affected by the high cost of housing: first-time home buyers, tenants confronted with increasing rents, owners that occupy substandard units, and senior citizens. Their need for affordable housing must be accommodated in different ways.

## 1. AFFORDABLE HOME OWNERSHIP

### 1.1 Density Incentives

Many towns have incorporated density incentives into their zoning ordinances, but, as the Southampton experience attests, voluntary incentives have a mixed record in the production of affordable housing. There are ways, however, in which to strengthen the Town's affordable housing program. The SC44, MFPRD and AHOD zones have a minimum 25 percent set-aside for affordable units (§330-14, §330-25, §330-29.9, respectively); and the Density Incentive provisions yield a 25 percent set-aside as well (§330-9). A set-aside of 20 percent is more likely to encourage developers to take advantage of the incentives offered, since the financial burden of building affordable units is smaller, allowing a better profit.

Likewise, the Senior Citizen housing (SC44) zone mandates that only 25 percent of the units can have more than one bedroom, with dens, etc., counting as bedrooms (§330-15). A limit of one bedroom plus a den/guest bedroom would improve the marketability of senior citizen projects in Southampton.

The zoning revisions should go a long way to spur production of housing affordable to moderate and middle income families now priced out of the Southampton housing market. The

Town should, however, review the effect of these ordinance changes every five years, concurrent with Town Board reviews of the comprehensive plan. If they do not prove sufficient, the Town may want to consider a more profitable 15 percent set-aside requirement. Conversely, if affordable housing appears less than an issue, especially in comparison to environmental concerns regarding higher density development, it may prove warranted to return to the less profitable 20 percent.

Because the Nassau-Suffolk median income is unusually high, programs intended to assist moderate-income families in Southampton actually reach into what would be considered middle-income elsewhere.

### ACTION ITEMS

- ❶ REVISE THE AFFORDABLE UNITS SET-ASIDE REQUIREMENTS OF SC44, MFPRD AND AHOD ZONES TO 20 PERCENT.
- ❷ REVISE §330-15 SENIOR CITIZEN HOUSING IN THE SC44 ZONE TO ALLOW ONE BEDROOM PLUS A DEN/GUEST BEDROOM.

### 1.2 Subsidies and Alternative Financing

While the zoning revisions will not work as well for families with lower incomes, the density bonus combined with public subsidies can prove sufficient. The proof is in the existing Pines and Brookside Estates projects, where the land is set aside

for affordable housing at no or below-market cost, and a non-profit builder has secured a \$25,000 per unit subsidy from the NYS Affordable Housing Office. The Town should continue to promote such projects, coupling land donations with limited State and federal subsidies, particularly targeting residents earning under 50 percent of the Nassau-Suffolk median income. The Town should specifically explore the following two initiatives to make more land and capital available for affordable housing.<sup>7</sup>

1. Donations of publicly and privately owned land for affordable housing development (under §72-H of the NYS General Municipal Law). As precedent, the Town recently donated property to *Habitat for Humanity* in both Flanders and Bridgehampton. Potential sites include County and Town land acquired under “in rem” (real estate tax delinquency) proceedings, as well as the developable portions of parcels otherwise acquired for open space or natural resource preservation. A key advantage of this strategy is that it provides the Town with some opportunity to spread out affordable housing development throughout Southampton.
2. Joining with other South Fork communities to explore additional and alternative ways to finance affordable housing. There is the general expectation that State (and federal) subsidies for housing will become even more limited in the coming decade than in the past.

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<sup>7</sup> It should be noted that in its overseeing of such projects, the Town should be careful to calibrate household size and unit size; median income by household size; and unit price by unit size. Finally, the Town should seek weighted lotteries and other methods of promoting sales of affordable units to people who already live and/or work in the town.

One alternative to consider is a consortium of banks and lenders, to provide funding for affordable housing builders and/or low-interest loans for qualifying residents. These loans could include: reduced down-payment financing, financing for mutual housing, and revolving loan pools all aimed at addressing the problem that starter families and others have in raising equity.

### ACTION ITEMS

- ① CONTINUE TO COUPLE LAND DONATIONS WITH LIMITED STATE AND FEDERAL SUBSIDIES TO ACHIEVE AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR RESIDENTS EARNING BELOW 50 PERCENT OF THE NASSAU-SUFFOLK MEDIAN INCOME.
- ② JOIN WITH OTHER SOUTH FORK COMMUNITIES TO EXPLORE ADDITIONAL WAYS TO FINANCE AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUCH AS A CONSORTIUM OF BANKS AND LENDERS TO PROVIDE FUNDING FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING BUILDERS AND/OR LOW-INTEREST LOANS FOR QUALIFYING RESIDENTS.

### 1.3 Zoning Revisions

Other minor changes that should be made in the Town zoning ordinance in order to make the code more coherent and productive in regard to affordable housing are as follows:

1. The definition of moderate- and low-income families (§330-5) should simply be 80 percent and 50 percent,

respectively, of the regional median family income as determined by HUD.

2. The Town code should require deed restrictions providing for resale of houses to families within the prescribed income ranges, with review by the Town at the time of closing, instead of (as now set forth in §216.5) requiring the Director of Community Development to annually reexamine the income of occupants of both owner-occupied as well as rental affordable housing.
3. The definition of a “Unit for a Moderate-Income Family” (in §330-5) should be brought in line with most State and federal programs by requiring that a gross rent (i.e., including utilities) not surpass 30 percent of the gross annual income of the occupying family, and that a sale price not exceed 250 percent of an applicant’s annual income.
4. The ordinance should make clear that the price of lots (defined in subsection C of Unit for Moderate-Income Family, §330-5) has already been included in the sale price of a new home, adhering to the affordability standard suggested above.
5. The Town should explore changing the ordinance to allow a smaller square footage for a home. The current minimum is 800 square feet; a 600 square foot minimum may be preferable.
6. The ordinance should have a coherent policy with regard to siting of all multi-family housing, requiring that all affordable senior citizen and/or multi-family developments involving multi-family housing prototypes (townhouses, apartment buildings, etc.) or

involving senior citizen or affordable housing units must be within one-half mile of hamlet centers (i.e., Village Business Districts). Waivers can be provided to very small (e.g., 10-unit) developments, as well as to developments that provide free shuttle services to hamlet centers, or that are within a short walking distance (such as ¼ mile) of a major corridor with public transit serving a hamlet center, or that are a safe ½ to ¾ of a mile walking distance on sidewalks or paths to a hamlet center.

7. The Town should strive to identify opportunities to utilize Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) and Pine Barrens Credits (PBC) as a means to both preserve open space and create affordable housing opportunities.

#### ACTION ITEMS

- ❶ REVISE §330-5 TO DEFINE MODERATE- AND LOW-INCOME FAMILIES AS 80 PERCENT AND 50 PERCENT RESPECTIVELY OF THE REGIONAL MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME AS DETERMINED BY HUD.
- ❷ REVISE §216 TO REQUIRE DEED RESTRICTIONS PROVIDING FOR RESALE OF HOUSES TO FAMILIES WITHIN THE PRESCRIBED INCOME RANGES.
- ❸ REVISE THE DEFINITION OF A “UNIT FOR A MODERATE INCOME FAMILY” TO REQUIRE THAT GROSS RENT NOT SURPASS 30 PERCENT OF THE GROSS ANNUAL INCOME AND SALE PRICE NOT EXCEED 250 PERCENT OF AN APPLICANT’S ANNUAL INCOME.

- ④ REVISE §330-5 TO CLARIFY THAT THE PRICE OF LOTS IS INCLUDED IN THE SALE PRICE OF A NEW HOME.
- ⑤ EXPLORE REDUCING THE MINIMUM SIZE HOME FROM 800 SQUARE FEET TO 600 SQUARE FEET.
- ⑥ REVISE §330-25 TO PRESENT A COHERENT POLICY FOR THE LOCATION OF ALL AFFORDABLE SENIOR CITIZEN AND/OR MULTI-FAMILY DEVELOPMENTS.
- ⑦ UTILIZE TDR AND PBCS TO CREATE AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES.

## 2. RENTAL APARTMENTS

Southampton's Section 8 rental voucher and certificate program, and the Town's moderate rehabilitation program, directed toward landlords, act to provide quality affordable rental units for low-income families and individuals, and should be continued, to the extent that federal funds remain forthcoming.

In addition, the Town should seek to add to the inventory of rental units. A strategy emphasizing apartment buildings is eschewed for one favoring accessory apartments in order to preserve the rural image of the community. Additionally, the lack of public sewer systems coupled with the need to protect the integrity of the groundwater, will not support substantial construction of multi-family apartment buildings.

In the few years since Southampton's Accessory Apartment ordinance was approved in 1992, only 40 or so accessory applications have been submitted, of which approximately half had been approved. Meanwhile, there is the potential threat to

neighborhood character from undetected illegal conversions, especially where there is an absentee landlord, in further contradiction of the current zoning's home owner requirements (as per §330-11.2). The Town should therefore consider the following actions.

1. Tax reassessments could be phased in over a five-year period, and altogether waived for rentals to low- and moderate-income residents.
2. A waiver could be provided to the dimensional requirements for houses located in pre-designated areas, such as potential historic districts, near hamlet centers, or along major corridors (-e.g., parts of Montauk Highway) where a mix of uses is to be promoted in lieu of commercial strip development.
3. Building inspectors could rigorously attack non-compliance (illegal conversions), on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis, and perhaps include IRS notification of the additional income source represented by the illegal apartments. The accessory unit rules and enforcement practices could also be more widely advertised.
4. Accessory units could be allowed in accessory structures on a lot, such as a garage, pool house or guest house. A maximum square footage should be set, and covenants should be imposed to prevent the conversion of accessory unit(s) in accessory structure(s) to principal structures. In order to help preserve neighborhood character, there should be a limit of one accessory unit per lot except in the Agricultural Overlay Districts, to better enable farmers to provide housing for migrant workers and/or family members. The Town should tie accessory units in accessory structures to the purchase

of Pine Barrens and agriculture land transfer of Development Rights (TDR) credits; and there should be a minimum of one and a half times the required lot area.

5. Accessory apartments could be allowed in connection with commercial development (as already allowed under §330-158). Specifically, the one unit per store restriction should be deleted, particularly as it works against concentrating more development in hamlet centers, as recommended elsewhere in this Comprehensive Plan. Provision of more than one unit per store could also be tied to TDR credit purchases, +/- "sterilization" of lots elsewhere, in order to address the County Department Health's concerns regarding water degradation.

In sum, the Town could induce greater compliance with the ordinance by at once making the process less difficult, and its avoidance more risky and costly.<sup>8</sup>

### ACTION ITEMS

1. TAX ASSESSMENTS SHOULD BE PHASED IN OVER A FIVE-YEAR PERIOD AND WAIVED FOR RENTALS TO LOW- AND MODERATE-INCOME RESIDENTS.

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<sup>8</sup> The Town should also review the accessory unit ordinance every five years, concurrent with Town Board review of the comprehensive plan. If an issue arises as to neighborhood character, the Town should consider making accessory units in residential zones contingent on (1) purchase of transfer of development rights (TDR) - e.g., in connection with Pine Barrens preservation, and/or (2) a requirement that the parcel in question have 1.5 times the minimal lot size required by the underlying zoning.

2. PROVIDE DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENT WAIVERS FOR RENTAL APARTMENTS IN DESIGNATED AREAS WHERE A MIX OF USES IS PROMOTED.
3. ENFORCE COMPLIANCE OF ILLEGAL ACCESSORY UNITS IN THE TOWN.
4. ALLOW ACCESSORY UNITS IN ACCESSORY STRUCTURES IN THE AGRICULTURAL OVERLAY DISTRICT AND ELSEWHERE IN CONNECTION WITH TDR-GENERATED LAND PRESERVATION.
5. ALLOW ACCESSORY APARTMENTS IN CONNECTION WITH COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENTS.

### 3. HOUSING REHABILITATION AND IMPROVEMENTS

While many people must leave Southampton to find affordable housing, others stay by choice or necessity, living in substandard units. To address the problem of homeowners who live in physically deteriorated units but do not have the financial resources to make the necessary repairs, the Town could seek means to bolster programs for moderate rehabilitation program and home ownership units. As noted, the Town now uses federal CDBG grants to provide low-interest loans for home improvements to qualifying residents. Three strategies have been defined for strengthening this program, as follows:

1. Since federal funds may become more scarce, the Town should enter into a dialogue with local financial institutions, local not-for-profit housing developers, other South Fork communities, and others, to discuss

alternative funding sources; the appropriate mechanism might be a revolving loan fund or loan pool.

2. Small, low-interest home-improvement loans are also preferred over more substantial new construction grants, because a far greater number of low-income households can thus be assisted out of the same budget.
3. The program should be targeted on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis, in concert with other capital investments and code enforcement, so as to have the maximum impact possible.

#### ACTION ITEM

- 1 DEVELOP ALTERNATE FUNDING SOURCES FOR THE TOWN'S MODERATE REHABILITATION PROGRAM, SUCH AS A REVOLVING LOAN FUND OR LOAN POOL.

## 4. SENIOR CITIZEN HOUSING

Southampton's percentage of elderly is higher than that in Suffolk County. Its 75 to 84 year cohort is 7 percent of the population, versus 3 percent for Suffolk County; Southampton's 65 and older cohort is 11 percent of the population, versus 6 percent for Suffolk County. Both senior age cohorts are far larger in Southampton than in the nation. The hamlets and villages with the greatest proportion of elderly residents (65+) were Riverside (with 40 percent), and North Haven, Noyack, Southampton Village, Westhampton Beach, East Quogue and Hampton Bays (all with over 20 percent).

To some extent, many of the programs and actions described earlier will help to create new units for seniors. The

recommendations to encourage a wider variety of accessory apartments will create more rental housing from which to choose. The liberalizing of the SC44 zoning (with regard to the proportion of affordable housing units, size of units, and location §330-14, §330-15, and §330-13) will create more senior citizen developments. In particular the liberalization of unit size and location requirements is essential to ensuring marketability of developments and availability of sites.

Many of the programs and actions described earlier will help provide seniors, who are often living on fixed incomes, with greater financial resources to continue to live in their current homes. The low-interest home improvement loans can provide seniors with ready cash to make repairs to their homes.

Accessory units can provide seniors with additional sources of income, which can be quite substantial in summer. And the Town offers real estate tax abatements for seniors now earning under \$25,000.

On the other side of the ledger, there should be assurance that housing designated for seniors remain as such. Restrictive covenants and other legal safeguards should be a condition of Town approval of senior housing developments.

## 5. CAPACITY AND CONFIDENCE BUILDING

The strategies above emphasize private sector initiatives promoted through zoning and financial incentives. These incentives should be made better known. A brochure describing rules, regulations, and incentive for affordable housing may be in order.

Town government should consider the following items priorities: setting aside scattered sites for affordable housing;

creating a consortium to explore housing finance; zoning reform; and, staff dedicated to affordable housing.

Finally, a number of strategies involve new affordable housing development. Local residents will naturally be concerned with the siting, design and quality of such development. Therefore, affordable housing development in Southampton should be built with consideration to the special character of Southampton as a rural and resort community.

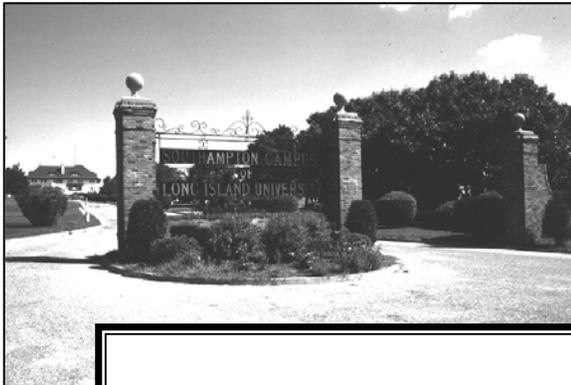
1. Architecturally, building prototypes should reflect indigenous architecture. This is especially true for townhouses or smaller detached units. But even in developments with large houses, it is possible to combine two to four units within one building which has the appearance of a single-family unit. This design, referred to as a “manor house,” is allowed in the Town through §247-5 of the Town Code. Furthermore, the Planning Board should, in its reviews, seek the opinion of the Design Review Board and others, as appropriate.
2. As a policy, the Town should be sensitive to the number and proportion of multi-family and affordable housing units in each hamlet when considering rezoning or applications for such development. Hampton Bays, for instance, has a higher than average percentage of such development.
3. Furthermore, while affordable housing may be scarce in most areas of the town, it can be found in some areas,

such as Hampton Bays and Riverside/Flanders. A formula should be adopted to confine density incentives for new mixed-income housing to those areas where affordable housing is relatively scarce. A logical standard would be that density bonuses only apply in census tracts (which are similar in boundary to hamlets) where the median housing values exceed those of the town in total. This would exempt Hampton Bays and Riverside/Flanders from the density bonus. (Refer to §330-9 of the Zoning Code)

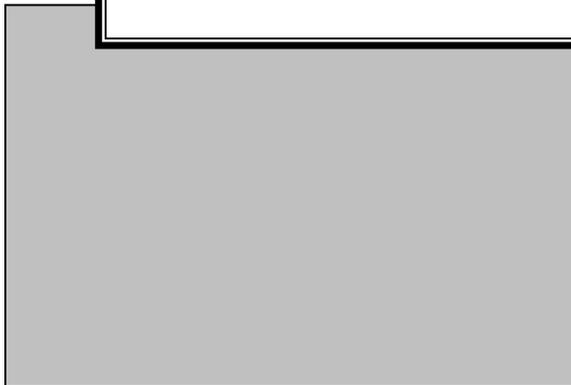
#### ACTION ITEMS

- ① DISTRIBUTE INFORMATION TO ENCOURAGE AFFORDABLE HOUSING.
- ② CREATE OR ASSIGN STAFF POSITIONS DEDICATED TO PROMOTING AFFORDABLE HOUSING.
- ③ PROMOTE NEW CONSTRUCTION COMPATIBLE WITH LOCAL AND TOWN DESIGN.
- ④ SPREAD MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING THROUGHOUT THE TOWN.
- ⑤ REVISE §330-9 TO USE DENSITY BONUSES WHERE AFFORDABLE HOUSING IS MOST SCARCE.





**COMMUNITY FACILITIES**





# THE VISION FOR COMMUNITY FACILITIES

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COMMUNITY FACILITIES SHOULD BE EXPANDED TO MEET EVOLVING NEEDS, YET SHOULD SEEK OUT COLLABORATIVE AND MULTIPLE USES SO AS TO ACHIEVE ECONOMIC AND SERVICE DELIVERY EFFICIENCIES. FACILITIES SHOULD IDEALLY BE SITED IN OR NEAR HAMLET CENTERS, BOTH TO BE CONVENIENT AND TO CONTRIBUTE TO EACH HAMLET'S SENSE OF COMMUNITY.

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## VISION GOALS

1. *Seek multiple and specialized uses for facilities such as libraries, nutrition centers, schools, etc.*
2. *Provide community facilities in all parts of the Town, mindful of the large size and rural character of Southampton.*
3. *Concentrate community (and recreation) facilities in village and hamlet centers.*
4. *Adopt programs, facility designs, and land use patterns that ensure maximum feasible accessibility by the disabled to town facilities, and to encourage private entities within the town to act in a compatible pattern.*

*These additional goals have been set, by type of community facility:*

1. *Fire Protection: To provide improved response times for fire districts.*
2. *Public Schools: To provide improved efficiency without losing local control or lessening the generally high standards of Southampton's schools.*
3. *Special Needs Treatment Centers and Group Homes: To provide needed facilities without disproportionate impact on a particular hamlet or neighborhood.*



# TECHNICAL FINDINGS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT

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The community facilities discussed below—Town facilities, police, fire protection, libraries, schools, health and human services—are marked by many differences in mission, operation, and service area/taxing jurisdiction. However, they all possess the significant similarity of being more or less decentralized to best serve a town in which local identity is quite important. Because these facilities are so decentralized, collaboration assumes a prominent role in permitting these facilities to function as efficiently as possible.

Nearly all of the recommendations presented in this chapter relate to these two themes—decentralization and collaboration.

## **TOWN FACILITIES**

Southampton began a reorganization of the Town facilities in 1994, with both short-range and long-range strategic elements.

The Town Hall was converted from what had been a public school, and the Town is now refurbishing the structure to address disability access issues, and to maximize use of the building. The Town is also planning to move both the animal control center, now located in East Quogue, and the Parks Department to the satellite Jackson Avenue Town Complex/Red Creek Park in Hampton Bays. Other Town facilities include the North Sea Landfill, maintenance garages for Town vehicles, and several community and senior citizen nutrition centers.

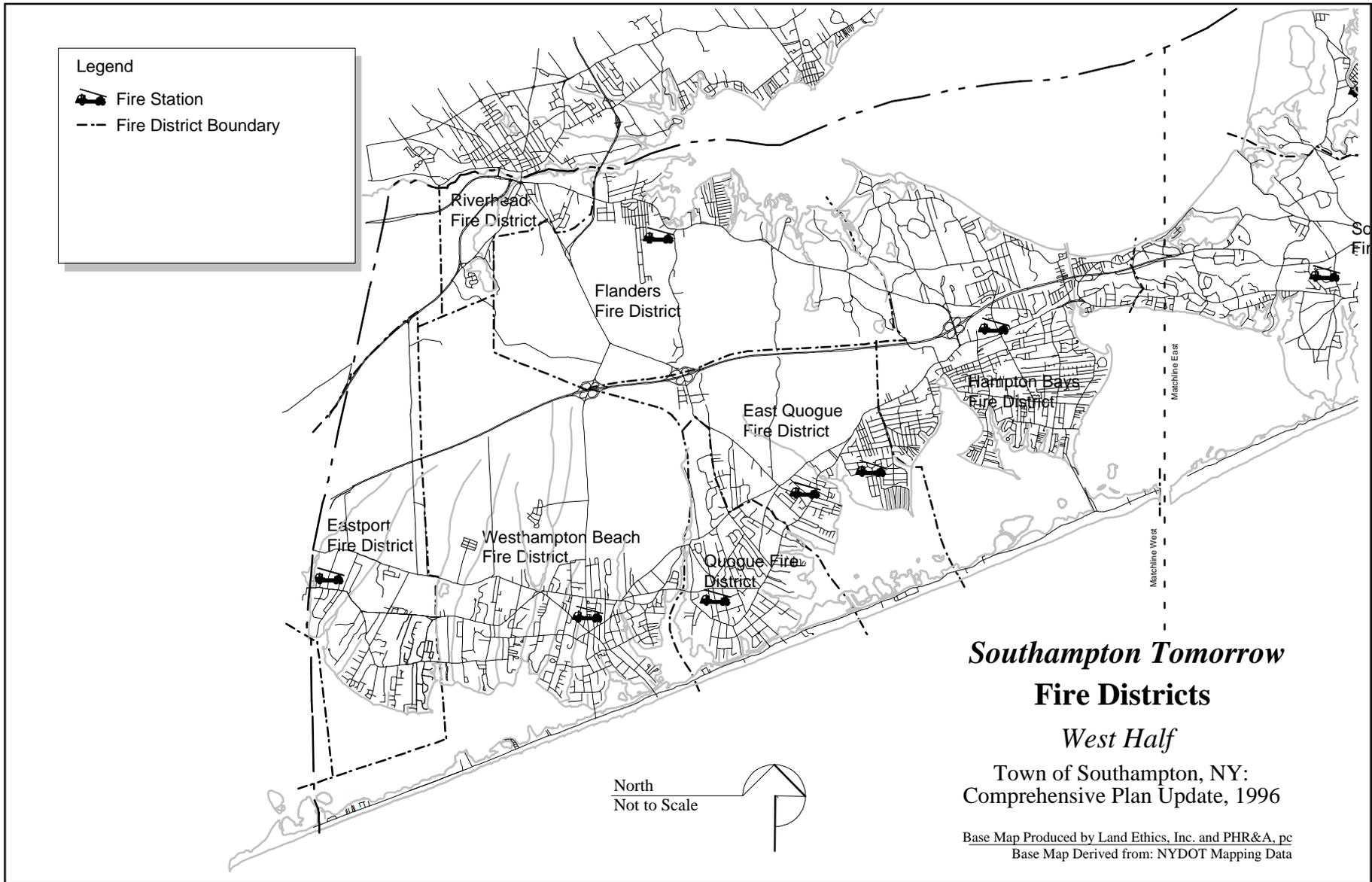
## **POLICE**

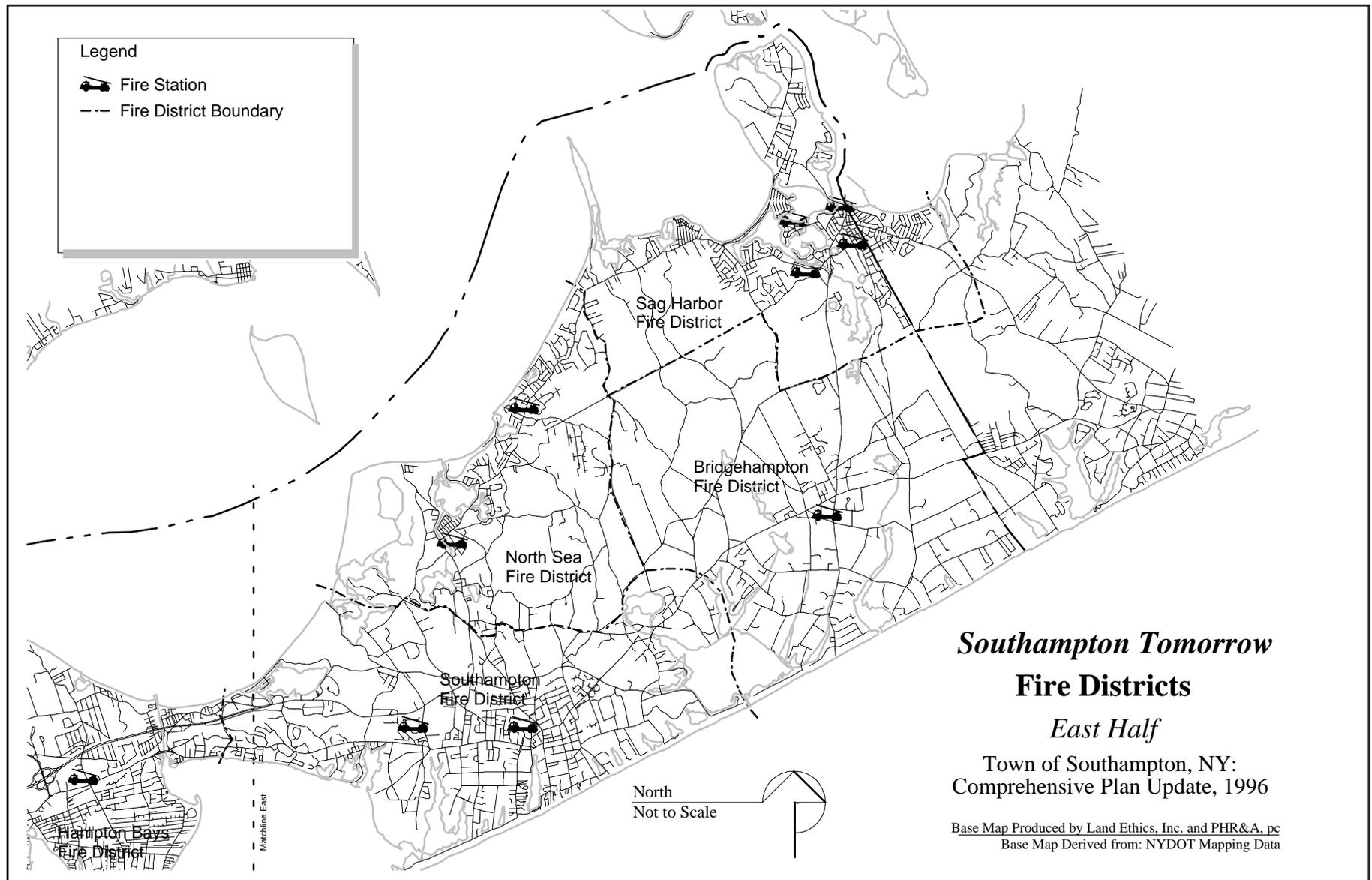
The Police Department is already located at the Jackson Avenue Town Complex. The Department now has 87 police officers and a Chief of Police. To handle the seasonal spike in crimes and traffic accidents, the police force hires 30-40 part-time workers during the summer; most of these perform office work, and the remainder engage in traffic control. The Department has requested a small addition to the current structure. The Police Department also has a new police substation at the Bridgehampton Commons, which serves as a relief point and establishes a police presence in the East End.

## **FIRE PROTECTION**

The Town of Southampton has 10 fire companies; this number, relatively high for a town of its population, can be explained by the town's many hamlets and villages as well as its considerable geographic area (refer to Maps 15W and 15E). The fire departments provide a high level of service, as attested to by their spectacular success in quelling the Pine Barrens forest fires of the summer of 1995, as well as other objective measures.

Based on interviews with their representatives, the fire departments are generally satisfied that their stations have a fairly central location from which to respond to fires. If any firehouses should be supplemented or moved, one factor to consider is distance (hence response time) from the firehouse to the areas to be protected. The Insurance Services Organization (ISO), which rates the districts and sets premiums accordingly, recommends that pumpers be no further than 2½ miles from





***Southampton Tomorrow***  
**Fire Districts**  
*East Half*

Town of Southampton, NY:  
Comprehensive Plan Update, 1996

Base Map Produced by Land Ethics, Inc. and PHR&A, pc  
Base Map Derived from: NYDOT Mapping Data

low-density residential areas. A few portions of Southampton now fall outside this radius, as follows: the section of Noyack within the Sag Harbor fire district; Dune Road in East Quogue; a section of North Haven north of Salt Meadow Lane; the northwest corner of Bridgehampton; and a small slice of Tuckahoe by the Canal (which includes a cluster of motels and restaurants).

While the fire departments are all volunteer, only a few have had difficulty in recruiting personnel. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) recommends that no fewer than 13 firefighters/officers be used to perform an attack on the scattered dwellings and isolated small businesses typically found in rural areas<sup>9</sup>; more firefighters are needed for larger or attached structures. Given that the number of volunteers in each department ranged from 40 to 165 as of January 1993, the necessary number of firefighters turning out would range from 33 percent to 8 percent by department. Flanders, with 40 volunteers, Quogue, 44, and East Quogue, 60, had the fewest number of volunteers; Southampton, with 145, and Sag Harbor, with 165, were the largest.

### **AMBULANCE SERVICES**

The town has eight volunteer ambulance services, serving areas that roughly match the town's fire districts. Two companies, East Quogue and Bridgehampton, are affiliated with the local fire departments; the other six operate independently.

All the ambulance service companies are volunteer and, while several have experienced some trouble maintaining as large a

pool of volunteers as they would like, the ambulance service throughout the town tends to be prompt and reliable.

The ambulance companies are all generally satisfied with the location of their headquarters as well as with their physical plants. However, the Southampton Volunteer Ambulance Service is outgrowing its current facility. Only one ambulance company, Flanders-Northampton, has expansion plans. Plans to begin work on several projects in 1998 include an update of the OSHA room, an office addition, and alterations necessary to make the restroom handicapped accessible.

### **LIBRARIES**

Southampton's libraries are not just important places to find books and resources, but also social centers in which to make and renew acquaintances. In a telephone survey of Southampton residents conducted for the Comprehensive Plan, "all subgroups (i.e., full-time and part-time residents) indicated that efforts to improve the libraries had the highest priority of all community facilities measured."<sup>10</sup>

The most frequent users of libraries are retired persons and schoolchildren. As discussed in the Demographics section, the proportion of persons aged 55 or older in Southampton is considerably higher than in most Suffolk communities; and the number and proportion of youngsters is increasing.

Southampton's libraries offer a wide range of services, including video collections, book clubs, language studies, and special programs. Further, all libraries are members of the Suffolk County Cooperative Library system, thereby giving borrowers

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<sup>9</sup> International Association of Fire Fighters, *Safe Fire Fighter Staffing*, 1993.

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<sup>10</sup> Southampton College, Institute for Regional Research, *Attitudes of the Southampton Town Population Toward Various Issues to be Addressed by Southampton Tomorrow - Comprehensive Plan Update*, for the Town of Southampton, December 1995.

access to a collection considerably larger than all of the Town libraries combined.

The boundaries of the library districts in the Town of Southampton are the same as the school districts; however, only six of the eleven library districts actually possess libraries, and the remaining districts contract out for library services with adjoining districts. Four of the six libraries are found in the incorporated villages: Quogue, Sag Harbor, Southampton, and Westhampton Beach. The other two libraries are in Bridgehampton and Hampton Bays.

As population increases, the Town's libraries are confronting space issues with various degrees of intensity, and are mixed in their perceptions of what physical improvements may be needed.

1. The Rogers Memorial Library in Southampton Village is proceeding with plans to build quarters in a far larger library, housing expanded computer facilities, a 150-person meeting room, a senior citizens' room, a story-telling room, and a used book store, in addition to reading rooms and library storage.
2. The Hampton Bays Library was expanded in 1989, and there are no plans for further expansion of the building.
3. Space is at such a premium in the Sag Harbor Library that book club lectures must be held in the rotunda.
4. The Westhampton Free Library completed two expansions in 1986 and 1989, and has no plans to further increase its size.
5. The Bridgehampton Library, which has a sizable collection in proportion to its small number of users, has no expansion plans.

6. The Quogue Library, like the Bridgehampton Library, has a large collection compared to its number of users. Its space is largely adequate.

## **PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Southampton is served by 12 school districts (refer to Table 1 and Maps 16W and 16E), some of which straddle the border with adjoining towns.

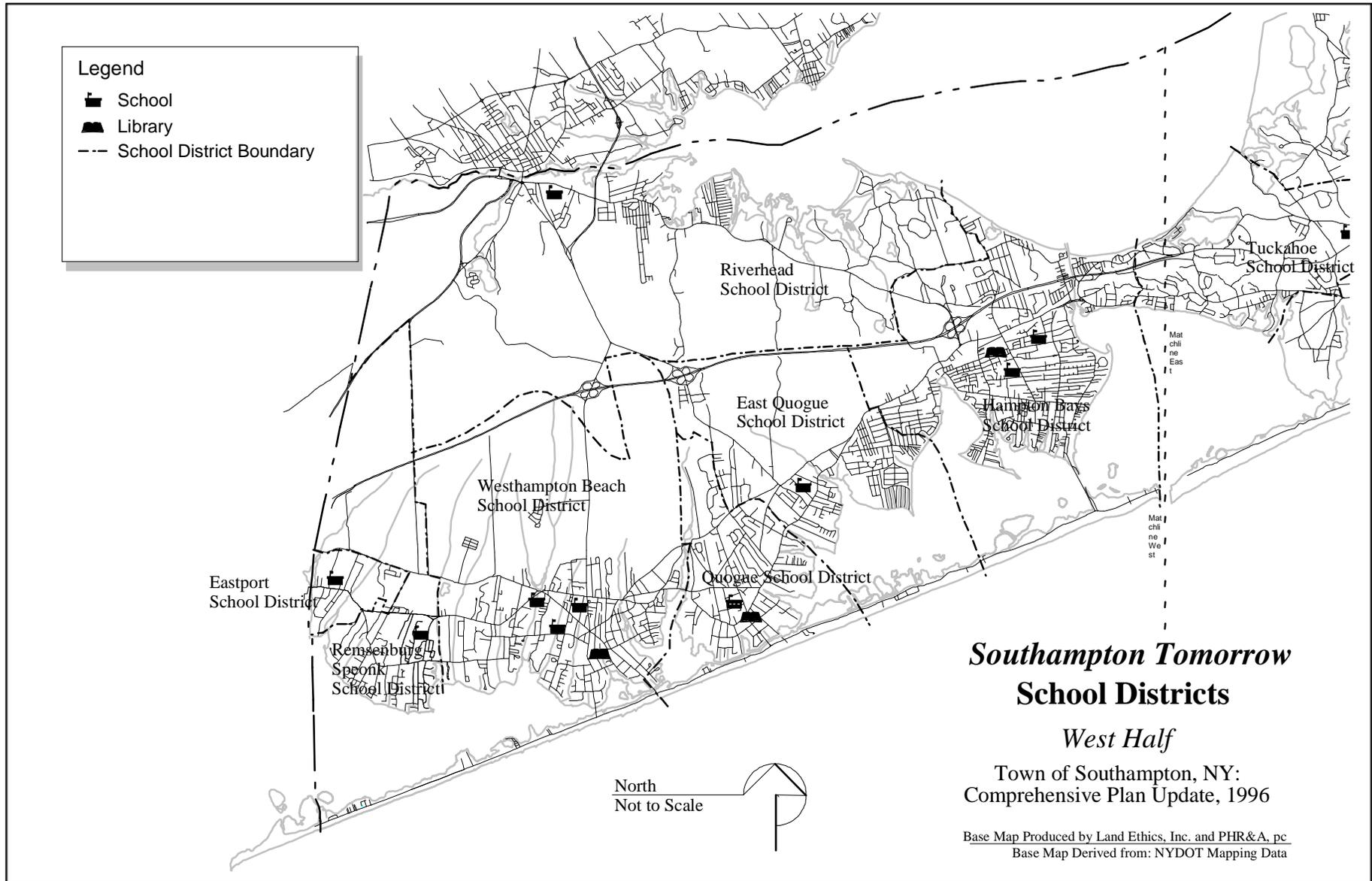
The school-age population in the town has been, and continues to be, marked by dramatic swings. Persistent growth in the 1960s and 1970s (corresponding with the post-World War II "Baby Boom") was followed by decline in the 1980s (corresponding to a national trend toward smaller families). From 1980 to 1990, the number of persons aged 5 to 19 declined from 9,100 to 7,600, a 17 percent loss. However, because of strong growth in the under 5 population in the same period (as many of the "Baby Boomers" settled down to raise families), school-age population has begun to pick up in the 1990s.

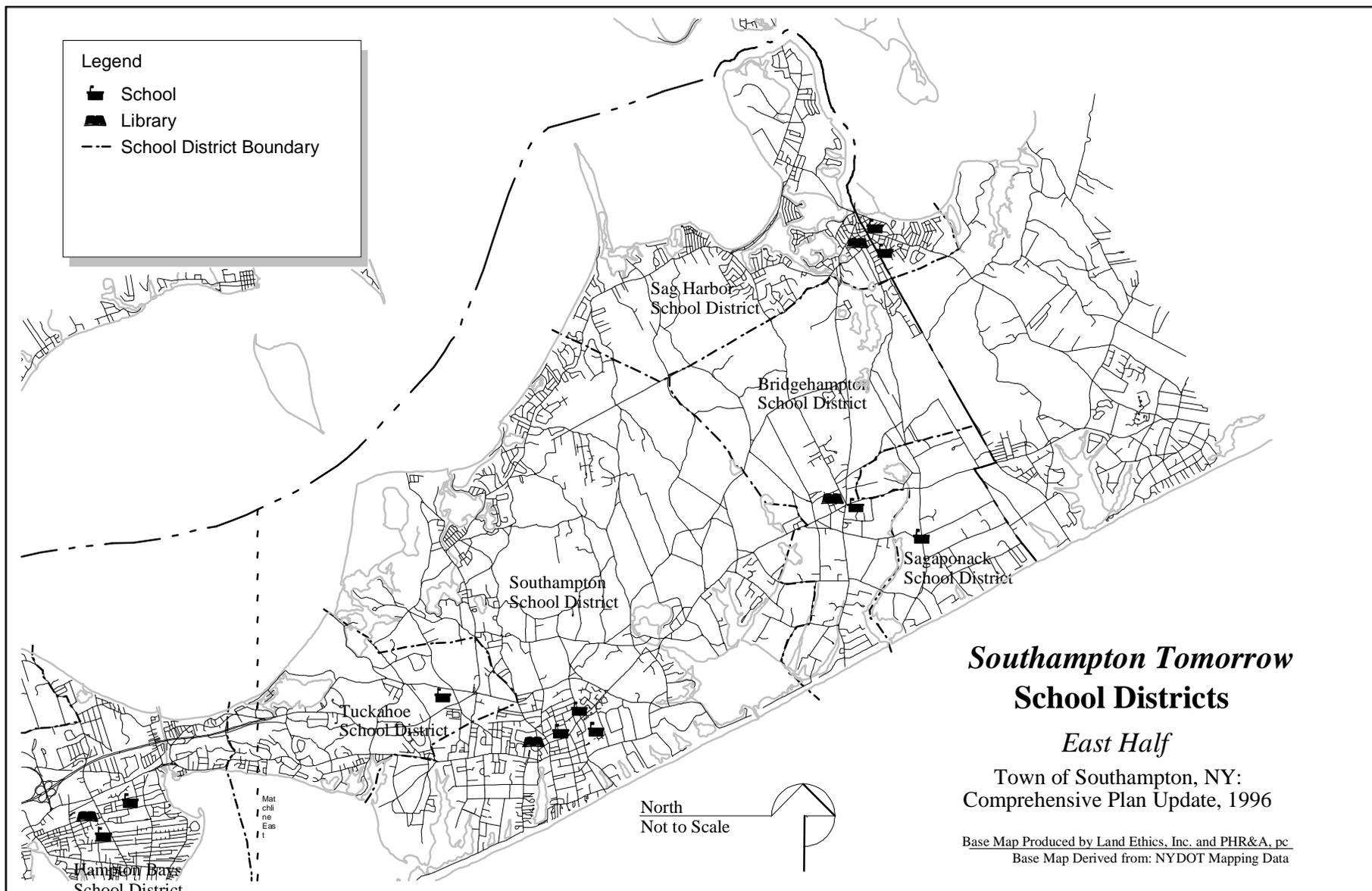
From the fall of 1990 to the fall of 1995, the enrollment of Southampton's school districts increased from 9,600 to 10,100, for a modest 5 percent increase.<sup>11</sup> But the growth was all in the younger grades, and the kindergarten through 6th grades (K-6) enrollment jumped from 5,100 to 6,100, for a spectacular 18 percent increase in only five years. School districts exhibiting the greatest growth were Eastport, with a huge 80 percent increase; Remsenburg-Speonk, up by 35 percent; and Sag Harbor, up by 27 percent.

The dramatic increases of the recent past are expected to continue, but will vary widely by school district. The greatest

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<sup>11</sup> Source: BOCES.





**TABLE 1: PUBLIC SCHOOLS, TOWN OF SOUTHAMPTON**

| <b>District</b>   | <b>School</b>   | <b>Grades</b> | <b>District</b>   | <b>School</b>                                       | <b>Grades</b> |
|-------------------|---|---------------|-------------------|---|---------------|
| Bridgehampton     | Bridgehampton UFSD<br>Montauk Hwy & Sag Harbor Tpke.    | K-12☐         | Sag Harbor        | Sag Harbor Elementary School<br>Hampton Road        | K-6           |
| East Quogue       | East Quogue UFSD<br>6 Central Avenue                    | K-6☐          |                   | Pierson Middle School & High<br>Division Street     | 7-12          |
| Eastport          | Eastport UFSD<br>398 Montauk Hwy                        | K-12☐         | Sagaponack        | Sagaponack School<br>Main Road                      | 1-4           |
| Hampton Bays      | Hampton Bay Elementary School<br>Ponquogue Avenue       | K-6           | Southampton       | Southampton Elementary School<br>30 Pine Street     | K-4           |
|                   | Hampton Bay Secondary School<br>Argonne Road            | 7-12          |                   | Southampton Intermediate School<br>70 Leland Lane   | 5-8           |
| Quogue            | Quogue UFSD<br>Edgewood Road                            | K-6☐          |                   | Southampton High School<br>141 Narrow Lane          | 9-12          |
| Remsenburg-Speonk | Remsenburg-Speonk Elementary<br>Mill Road, Remsenburg   | K-6☐          | Tuckahoe          | Tuckahoe Common School District<br>468 Magee Street | K-8           |
| Riverhead         | Phillips Avenue Elementary<br>Phillips Avenue, Flanders | K-3☐          | Westhampton Beach | Westhampton Beach Elementary<br>Mill Road           | K-5           |
|                   |   |               |                   | Westhampton Beach Middle School<br>Mill Road        | 6-9           |
|                   |   |               |                   | Westhampton Beach High School<br>Lilac Road         | 10-12         |

increases will be in the school districts within commuting distance of employment centers and most susceptible to conversion of second homes to year-round residences; these especially include Eastport, East Quogue, Remsenburg-Speonk and Westhampton Beach. Additional increases will be registered in the school districts with affordable housing attractive to the town's service sector employees; these especially include Hampton Bays, Riverhead, Sag Harbor, and Tuckahoe.

These population trends have a direct corollary in the demand placed on the school districts' physical plants. East Quogue, East Hampton and Hampton Bays are essentially at capacity already (at over 90 percent of rated capacity as of 1994). Other school districts in the Town of Southampton were at less than 75 percent of rated capacity. It should be noted, however, that these estimates do not account for the space required for computers, special education classes, or other educational trends bearing on space utilization.

Each of the school districts proceed with their physical plans independent of one another. As of the fall of 1994, half of the school districts were planning to expand by adding classrooms and other facilities to existing schools. All but one of the schools have sufficient land at current sites to accommodate the needed physical expansions. The exception is Eastport, which will be seeking space for an additional school, most likely to be located in the Town of Brookhaven.

In the face of such pressures, the school districts face the question of whether to maintain numerous distinct school districts for its students, or to consolidate into larger school districts.

Arguing against consolidation is the high quality of the education currently being provided by Southampton school

districts, especially for younger children. The numerous school districts which roughly follow hamlet and village boundaries, bolster community identity. Additionally, the trend in education is toward smaller schools with more local control, certainly something that Southampton now offers.

On the other hand, the multiplicity of school districts has inefficiencies with respect to duplication of service. It means that growth of school facilities must take place in a somewhat incremental fashion. The universal resistance of the voters to budget hikes is another obstacle in the way of building new schools or major school additions. Building a new school would seem feasible only if the school districts cooperated to a greater degree than at present.

These inefficiencies do not have only physical and fiscal dimensions, but an educational one as well. The districts, especially the smaller ones, are less able to afford specialized equipment, resources and teachers that increasingly characterize education today. This is particularly an issue for upper grade (high school) students.

Finally, the small size of the school districts results in severe differences in property tax rates among school districts. Tax rates vary from a low of \$5.32 per \$100 in Sagaponack, to \$41.95 per \$100 in Eastport. In general, higher tax rates correspond to districts with lower median house values and lower student evaluations. Hampton Bays and Riverhead are particularly hard pressed, with the highest number of students per teacher, lowest proportion of students above the State Reference Point, the lowest overall housing values, and, after Eastport, the highest tax rates.

## PRIVATE EDUCATION

The Hampton Day School and the Hayground School are but two examples of private educational facilities in Southampton. As the Town's population rises, there may well be demand for more.

At present, public and private schools are allowed in most residential and all business districts (§330-10 and §330-13 of the Town Zoning Code, respectively), with, however, schools for the mentally retarded allowed by special exception (§330-159).

## HIGHER EDUCATION

Southampton is fortunate to have two institutions of higher education in the town:

1. *Southampton College* near Southampton Village is a four-year school, serving, as of 1994, a student body of 1,200 undergraduate and 100 graduate students. Southampton College shares its theater and gymnasium with the community; and the College is proceeding with a long-range plan for expanded facilities; initial construction has already been completed.
2. *Suffolk Community College* in Riverside is a two-year school and, by its very nature, focuses more on attracting local students than Southampton College. The Suffolk Community College, in cooperation with Cornell Cooperative Extension and BOCES, is investigating a regional education center focusing on tourism, the environment, and child care, among other topics. The Town is on record as lending its support to this concept.

## CHILD CARE

The "echo baby boom," or the children born to the baby boom generation, has passed the high-water mark in Southampton. It is expected that the *proportion* of children below the age of 5 will moderate during the rest of the decade. However, although the proportion of persons under the age of 5 will decrease as a percentage of the population, in absolute terms it will continue to increase since the total population will also continue to increase. It is however, difficult to gauge the extent of future demand for child care facilities in Southampton since a considerable proportion of child care facilities are now and will continue to exist "underground."

Southampton now has ten child care facilities listed in the Town's *Human Services Resources Guide*. The Child Care Council of Suffolk is attempting to increase the number of licensed facilities by attracting potential family home providers to its training program. After training, the family home provider may then be registered with the State.

## YOUTH CENTERS

Teenagers represent another special needs population in the town. Many of the participants in community meetings on social services expressed the desire for more recreational youth centers in the town. The Citizens Action Network in Westhampton Beach has prepared plans for a youth activity center, next to the elementary school in Westhampton Beach.

## SENIOR CITIZEN CENTERS

On the other end of the age spectrum, the Town has various facilities (and programs) to serve the elder population. Southampton has an unusually high proportion of senior citizens; in 1970, 19 percent of its population was aged 65 or

more, compared to 11 percent for Suffolk County.<sup>12</sup> We project that senior citizens will continue to form a disproportionate share of the local population.

A popular gathering place for seniors in Southampton is the Town's three nutrition centers—in Bridgehampton, Flanders, and Hampton Bays—all of which provide lunch on-site, some welcome socialization, and a setting for providing services to seniors. An innovation in senior care just introduced by the Town is a social model adult day care center, targeted to the functionally impaired elderly.

### SENIOR CITIZEN RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES

In addition to independent living facilities as now permitted under the Town's SC44 zoning, the Town has two nursing homes, and another is proposed. Southampton Nursing Home is relatively small, with 62 beds. Westhampton Nursing Home, which opened in January 1995, has 180 beds. The proposed Payton Lane Nursing Home would have 280 beds, located on an 8.8 acre site straddling the border between the Village of Southampton and the Town of Southampton. The proposed nursing home would probably attract clients from the entire region.<sup>13</sup>

Oddly, there are no "life care" residential facilities designated for the independent elderly, with the exception of facilities associated with two affordable housing complexes. Lifecare facilities provide a "continuum of care" by combining independent living, assisted living, and skilled nursing facilities

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<sup>12</sup> Source: U.S. Census.

<sup>13</sup> The low number of Southampton residents on the waiting list for the existing and proposed nursing home, and that the Nassau-Suffolk Health Systems Agency (the regional certifying agency for nursing home beds) is in contrast to an unmet need of 1,300 beds in Suffolk County.

in one complex, and thus permit seniors to age in place. The median size of lifecare facilities constructed since 1970 is about 300 units. A typical ratio is 180 independent living units, 60 assisted living beds, and 60 nursing beds. The concept of lifecare facilities is relatively new, and some of the early developments have encountered financial difficulties when entrance fees proved to be inadequate to cover expenses for the total remaining life spans of the residents. Careful market studies, assurance of the financial health and stability of the sponsor, and extensive marketing are critical to the success of these communities.

### HEALTH SERVICES

To a large extent, Southampton cannot determine how the health industry will provide services to town residents; this is primarily decided upon by the private market and State and federal regulations. However, the Town does have a vital role in determining where medical facilities can be built or expanded, and under what circumstances.

There are four significant medical facilities located in or immediately proximate to the town:

1. *Southampton Hospital*. Southampton Hospital, located within the Village of Southampton, captures a 62 percent share of all hospital visits made by Southampton residents; most of the remaining non-emergency hospital visitation goes to Western Suffolk and New York City hospitals. The Southampton Hospital is already de-centralized to some extent, with sole practitioners throughout the community; an x-ray laboratory facility and gerontology facility in Hampton Bays; laboratory pick-up stations in Westhampton and

East Hampton; and medical and technical support for a clinic on the Indian Reservation.

2. *Central Suffolk Hospital.* This hospital, located in Riverhead, also serves Southampton residents, especially through its satellite offices in the Southampton Village, and by the Route 24 traffic circle in Flanders.
3. *East End AIDS Wellness Project/Center.* The AIDS Wellness Project—in collaboration with Southampton Hospital—is based in office space donated by the Village of Sag Harbor. The East End HIV/AIDS Center provides outpatient medical care, psychiatric services, and medical services for HIV-positive people.
4. *The Suffolk County Health Clinic's Satellite.* This clinic, located in Southampton, provides health care for all regardless of their ability to pay. Demand is expected to increase when the County Health Department becomes a Managed Care provider. The County Health Department is now seeking a site for a larger facility.

In addition, the Dominican Sisters Family Health Service is a community-based Certified Home Health Agency, providing intermittent nursing care, home health aides, speech and occupational therapy, etc. The Dominican Sisters Family Health Care is based near Westhampton Beach.

Southampton Hospital, Central Suffolk Hospital and nearby Eastern Long Island Hospital in Greenport have formed a consolidated health care network, the Peconic Health Corporation. Though not a merger, the consortium promises to help each hospital to at once cope with declining payment for services, and improve service delivery.

## **SPECIAL NEEDS TREATMENT CENTERS**

Care for the mentally ill and developmentally disabled has moved from large institutions to smaller treatment centers and residential group homes. Consequently, treatment facilities for mentally ill, developmentally disabled, and substance abusers are spread throughout the community. These facilities may be further divided into outpatient facilities, inpatient facilities and group homes.

1. *Mentally Ill: Outpatient Facilities.* Stepping Stones East, a continuing day treatment center in Hampton Bays for chronically mentally ill adults, is operated by the Family Service League of Suffolk County, with an approved “catchment” area extending from Westhampton Beach to Montauk. The Family Service League also operates an outpatient mental health clinic in Southampton Village, with slots for 125 persons, and a long waiting list. Finally, Independent Group Home Living (IGHL), a local not-for-profit, has 140 to 150 mentally retarded adults in its program.
2. *Mentally Ill and Developmentally Disabled: Group Homes.* In addition to the day treatment offices noted above, IGHL maintains three group homes—in Tuckahoe, East Quogue, and Flanders. Aid to the Developmentally Disabled, another not-for-profit, operates two group homes—in Flanders and in Hampton Bays.

The IGHL homes are intermediate care facilities (ICFs), in which the residents receive comprehensive services ranging from speech therapy to nursing. Since ICFs are expensive and targeted to a population with severe disabilities, they are currently being de-emphasized. Any group homes established in Southampton in the

future will be independent residential alternatives (IRAs). Residents in an IRA perform basic household tasks, such as cooking and shopping, with little supervision.

The construction of more group homes in Southampton is subject to the New York State Site Selection Law of 1978 (the “Padavan Law”), which states that residential facilities for the disabled cannot be concentrated as to “substantially alter” the nature and character of the area. On the other hand, the Padavan Law and court decisions emanating therefrom state that community residences for people with mental disabilities must be treated as single-family dwelling units for zoning purposes. These group homes may have from 4 to 14 residents. The Office of Mental Health also requires that such facilities be within one-half mile of convenience or grocery stores.

3. *Substance Abusers:* In 1994, the Town of Southampton Planning Board, following QPSUD rezonings, approved an in-patient drug treatment center in Hampton Bays; the center is operated by the Long Island Center for Recovery, Inc. Seaford Center in Westhampton Beach is an inpatient facility for persons who are engaged in alcohol and drug abuse recovery.

Inpatient treatment centers have been hit especially hard by the growing predominance of managed care, and the State is seeking to move Medicaid patients into managed care programs as well. The reduced emphasis on inpatient treatment means that Southampton will not likely perceive a need for additional alcohol and drug treatment centers. Conversely, expansion in outpatient facilities is likely.

4. *Hospice:* There is one AIDS hospice in Southampton currently the East End Hospice, based in Westhampton. But the Town should recognize the possibility that additional health provider groups may wish to develop such a facility in the future, consistent with trends evident in communities to the west. It may be possible that such a need could also be filled by any future excess of beds in Southampton Hospital.

Some residents expressed concern about perceived “facility saturation” at community meetings on the Comprehensive Plan. Many health and human services professionals consulted recognized that certain areas of Town with lower property values (such as Flanders and Hampton Bays) are more likely than other areas to be recipients of health and human services facilities, and suggested that these facilities be distributed in a more equitable fashion throughout Town.



# IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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## 1. TOWN FACILITIES

The Town should continue its modernization of Town Hall, which was formerly a public high school.

Given the Town's interest in moving additional offices to the Jackson Avenue Town Complex/Red Creak Park, it is important that a master plan be prepared for the Complex and Park. Also, little attention has been given to its landscaping, and there is no sense of coherent design. The Complex and Park should convey a positive design image, in keeping with Southampton's image as a superior place to live and visit.

The Town should also prepare long-term plans for other Town facilities that may be retired from their current use in the foreseeable future, such as the Town's landfill and highway barns. Some of these facilities should also be consolidated at the Jackson Avenue Town Complex/Red Creak Park.

Decentralized community facilities should be winterized and placed in the hamlet business centers, where they will be more convenient for those users—especially youngsters and seniors—who would like to walk, bike or take public transportation. Specifically, the Town Justice Court should be moved, ideally to the Hampton Bays hamlet center, or to the Jackson Avenue Complex. Both options would free up space at Town Hall and provide a much-needed boost to the business district. The Community Center currently in the Jackson Avenue Town Complex should be shifted to the Hampton Bays hamlet center. (The community center building might be used for police department functions and/or other Town offices.) Further, decentralized community facilities open to the public

(such as nutrition centers) should have multi-purpose capabilities, to the extent practicable.

### ACTION ITEMS

- ❶ CONTINUE WITH THE MODERNIZATION OF TOWN HALL.
- ❷ PREPARE A MASTER PLAN FOR THE JACKSON AVENUE COMPLEX/RED CREEK COMPLEX AND OTHER TOWN FACILITIES SUCH AS THE LANDFILL AND HIGHWAY BARNES.
- ❸ PLACE DECENTRALIZED FACILITIES IN HAMLET CENTERS, AS PRACTICAL, AND WITH APPROPRIATE CAC CONSULTATION.
- ❹ COMMUNITY FACILITIES SHOULD HAVE MULTI-PURPOSE CAPABILITIES, AND SHOULD BE WINTERIZED.

## 2. POLICE

The Town public safety offices—police, fire marshal, and dispatch—should be consolidated at the Jackson Avenue Town Complex. The close proximity of these facilities to each other will encourage greater cooperation. Police substations or “community policing” strategies that increase police presence should be explored in the Riverside/Flanders and Hampton Bays hamlets.

The Juvenile Aid Bureau, is currently in a small frame structure, that also houses the Town arts and crafts facility in the Jackson Avenue Town complex. An alternative location should be considered. One possibility would be to convert part of the current community center building into the Juvenile Aid Bureau. (As discussed in the Town facilities section, the community center would fare better in a hamlet center.) The Juvenile Aid Bureau should remain distinct from certain Police Department functions so that juveniles will not have to mix with adult prisoners.

The efficiency of the Police Department will be improved if Southampton follows through with the earlier recommendation to move the Town Justice Court from the Town Hall in Southampton. The police station at Hampton Bays is the holding facility for prisoners, and having the courts in closer proximity will save on travel time. In addition, any unused portion of the community center building in the Jackson Avenue Town Complex should be considered for a Police Department training center.

### ACTION ITEMS

- ❶ CONSOLIDATE THE TOWN PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICES AT THE JACKSON AVENUE TOWN COMPLEX.
- ❷ MOVE THE TOWN JUSTICE COURT TO HAMPTON BAYS.

### 3. FIRE PROTECTION

As noted, the Town has 10 volunteer fire companies, providing a favorable environment in which to recruit volunteers. It

should continue, but with minor adjustments to better deal with latent problems:

1. One key area far removed from a fire station is the section of Noyack which contracts with the Sag Harbor Fire Department. Noyack should make a condition of awarding its bid for a fire protection contract on the willingness of the fire district (presumably Sag Harbor, Bridgehampton, or North Sea) to build a fire sub-station within the hamlet. As compensation, the contract should extend longer than one year, with reimbursement for a share of the costs of the firehouse if the contract is terminated before the bonding obligation is fulfilled. The Town could help by mandating a set-aside of land for a fire station as a condition for a suitably-sited residential subdivision in the Noyack hamlet.
2. Dune Road in East Quogue is well beyond the 2½-mile radius from the East Quogue fire station, and firefighters attending a fire there must pass through Quogue or Hampton Bays to reach it. It is recommended that East Quogue engage in an “assessed value neutral” swap, whereby Quogue or Hampton Bays pick up this portion of Dune Road in exchange for property of the same value being shifted into the East Quogue district.
3. Quogue reportedly has the greatest difficulty in recruiting volunteers; a merger of Quogue with adjoining East Quogue or Westhampton Beach should be considered, with retention of the Quogue facility as a substation. A merger with East Quogue may make particular sense, due to the ability to simultaneously resolve the previously mentioned service area problems. Such a potential merger should, however, fully account

for feelings of pride and hamlet/village identity; fire departments promote many civic activities that contribute to cohesiveness. It should be subject to further consideration by the appropriate fire commissioners.

Finally, the Town should consider moving the Fire Marshal's office from Gabreski Airport to the Jackson Avenue Town Complex. The public safety offices—fire marshal, police, and dispatch—could be in one location, allowing for greater inter-office cooperation.

#### ACTION ITEMS

- ❶ CONDITION THE AWARD OF THE FIRE PROTECTION BID FOR NOYACK ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF A FIRE-SUBSTATION WITHIN THE HAMLET.
- ❷ EAST QUOGUE SHOULD SWAP THE PORTION OF DUNE ROAD COVERED IN THAT DISTRICT WITH HAMPTON BAYS OR QUOGUE.
- ❸ QUOGUE FIRE DISTRICT SHOULD CONSIDER MERGING WITH AN ADJOINING COMPANY.
- ❹ THE FIRE MARSHALL'S OFFICE SHOULD BE MOVED FROM GABRESKI AIRPORT TO THE JACKSON AVENUE TOWN COMPLEX.

#### 4. AMBULANCE SERVICE

As noted, the eight ambulance corps do not have an overall organizational structure. To the extent that a central ambulance

office and/or dispatch is ever needed, it should be located in close proximity to the other public safety offices at the Jackson Avenue Town Complex to allow for greater inter-office cooperation.

#### ACTION ITEM

- ❶ LOCATE ANY EMS CENTRAL OFFICE OR FACILITY THAT MIGHT BE NEEDED PROXIMATE TO EXISTING FIRE AND POLICE FACILITIES.

#### 5. LIBRARIES

Locally, the challenge is how to enhance library services and still keep Southampton's "small town" libraries intact.

As noted, the Rogers Memorial Library is proceeding with a major expansion on a new site. The future site will be within easy walking distance of the village center, and be convenient for the heaviest users, elderly persons and schoolchildren who do not have as ready access to an automobile as do other age segments.

It is anticipated that the other existing public libraries will continue to operate at their current locations. Given the geographic size of Southampton, such dispersion has significant advantages, especially for children and seniors. Should any libraries seek new locations, it is recommended that sites be found within the hamlet centers. This will provide another "anchor" for the business centers, and greater visibility and clientele for the libraries. Further, given the libraries' importance as local social centers, the provision of meeting space for community groups should always be a priority.

Specifically, the East Quogue Citizens Advisory Committee is currently seeking sites and support to build a small library with community center in its hamlet. This effort should be supported, as it can contribute to community pride and a revitalization strategy for the hamlet business center.

All of the libraries should also consider the growing complexity of data management and needs of local businesses (including home-bound professionals) as they plan for their physical space needs. Several of the libraries—especially those now or eventually located in the hamlet business centers—should consider upgrading their services and facilities to include access to computers, FAX machines, modems, xeroxing and conference rooms.

The libraries could further a logical trend toward developing certain specialties. For instance, Riverhead is a designated Job Improvement Center; East Hampton's specialty is Long Island history. Southampton's libraries could consider specializing in the arts, architecture, and the environment. Such specialization would serve the needs of an unusually sophisticated reading public in the town, since small libraries, by their very nature, have significant gaps compared to large libraries. Thus, the libraries could better complement each other's strengths, and not be overly duplicative of each other's collections.

It is finally recommended that the Town's libraries consider an even higher degree of local cooperation. All of the libraries are members of the Suffolk County Cooperative Library system, and cooperation between libraries has been high, with, for example, regular monthly meetings of the East End Library Directors as well as the Suffolk County Library Directors. Either a merger of library districts into one district, or the formal formation of the districts into a consortium, might produce economic efficiencies for all libraries in the town,

independent of the effect on tax rates in individual library districts, and might permit smaller libraries to stay open for longer hours.

## ACTION ITEMS

- ❶ SITES FOR NEW LIBRARIES SHOULD BE WITHIN EASY WALKING DISTANCE OF HAMLET AND VILLAGE CENTERS.
- ❷ SUPPORT THE EFFORTS OF THE EAST QUOGUE CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO DEVELOP A SMALL LIBRARY/COMMUNITY CENTER.
- ❸ LIBRARIES SHOULD CONSIDER PROVIDING SERVICES AND FACILITIES THAT SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES AND TELECOMMUTERS.
- ❹ SOUTHAMPTON'S LIBRARIES SHOULD CONSIDER SPECIALIZING IN AREAS SUCH AS THE ARTS, ARCHITECTURE, AND THE ENVIRONMENT.
- ❺ ENCOURAGE A HIGHER LEVEL OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE LIBRARIES INCLUDING THE POTENTIAL OF A MERGER.

## 6. PUBLIC SCHOOLS

As noted, Southampton's school districts face the question of whether to maintain numerous local school districts, and thereby help maintain hamlet identity and control, or to consolidate into larger districts, and thereby achieve greater efficiency and variety of facilities. Short of a consolidation,

however, there are a number of things that can be done to increase efficiency and provide greater balance between Southampton's school districts.

One possibility for cooperation would be for those schools without a cafeteria to organize a joint kitchen, or to contract from other schools or catering businesses. (Western Suffolk BOCES already organizes meals for students in its programs at sites throughout the area, and this could serve as a model for extending meal service.) Other types of cooperation include management mergers for adjoining school districts.

Another possibility would be for the school districts to cooperate in constructing at least one new school only at the middle and/or upper class levels. Five of the school districts already send students to adjoining districts for middle and high school education, so extending this cooperation to a larger geographic area(s) or more grades may prove feasible. An option would be to build a new magnet school in the western half of town, where the schools are most crowded. Two logical locations are in Hampton Bays (where the magnet school would be most conveniently located vis-à-vis the entire Town) or at the Suffolk County Community College (where creative linkages could be fostered). The shared school could absorb much of the anticipated townwide increase in school enrollment, thereby relieving pressure on all of the districts to proceed with inefficient incremental construction. Most importantly, the magnet school could focus on particular specializations such as the arts or trades that the smaller districts could not singly afford to provide.

A further possibility would be for the school districts to share athletic facilities, auditoriums, and other major facilities. This is already done to some extent. All of the school districts could cooperate on building these more extensive facilities, perhaps to

be located at the suggested magnet school, or if freestanding, at one of the centrally-located Hampton Bays schools. (Such a facility should also be made available for use by town residents.)

More radically, the Town may want to consider redressing some of the disparity between revenue available to each school district. This can be directly achieved through revenue sharing; however, such sharing is unprecedented and highly unlikely. Instead, the Town should make a more concerted effort to encourage tax ratable development in the school districts with the greatest fiscal crunch, namely Eastport, Riverhead and Hampton Bays.

No matter how these recommendations may find favor, all of the school districts should engage in joint planning, especially with regard to enrollment projections and long-range facility plans. The Department of Land Management could also assist school districts with facilities planning and siting as well as preparing forecasts for future enrollment. Other creative areas of cooperation will naturally emerge from such joint planning.

Such joint plans should also explore how the schools could better serve as the physical "anchors" of the hamlets in which they are located. For example, the school districts could enter into a dialogue with the Town on how to strengthen their physical ties to hamlet centers—by locating any new schools in hamlet centers (e.g., North Sea, Hampton Bays and Speonk all have ideal sites); or by such measures as extending sidewalks and open spaces to connect with hamlet centers (e.g., Tuckahoe/County Road 39 and Bridgehampton).

These schools can also strengthen their role as the social "anchors" of their communities. Most of the schools share their facilities with the community, and at some schools the demand is quite heavy. Among the most popular activities are recreation leagues in the gymnasium, and adult education or

meetings in the classrooms. The Southampton High School offers its 1,300-seat auditorium to the public, and the Tuckahoe Common School runs an after-school child care center. The Town Department of Parks, Recreation, and Human Services should explore partnerships with school districts to make such facilities available and better utilized by the community.

Finally, other areas to explore include health clinics aimed at student populations, daycare centers, youth centers, more after-school use of classrooms for training, and joint programs with senior citizen groups.

## ACTION ITEMS

- ❶ PUBLIC SCHOOLS SHOULD CONSIDER GREATER COOPERATION SUCH AS ORGANIZING A JOINT KITCHEN, CONTRACTING FROM OTHER SCHOOLS, OR MANAGEMENT MERGERS.
- ❷ SCHOOL DISTRICTS CAN COOPERATE BY CONSTRUCTING JOINT SCHOOLS AT THE MIDDLE AND/OR UPPER CLASS LEVELS E.G. A MAGNET SCHOOL IN THE WESTERN HALF OF TOWN.
- ❸ SCHOOL DISTRICTS SHOULD COOPERATE TO SHARE ATHLETIC FACILITIES, AUDITORIUMS, AND OTHER MAJOR FACILITIES.
- ❹ THE TOWN SHOULD MAKE A CONCERTED EFFORT TO ENCOURAGE TAX RATABLE DEVELOPMENT IN EASTPORT, RIVERHEAD AND HAMPTON BAYS SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

- ❺ STRENGTHEN THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE SCHOOLS TO HAMLET CENTERS BY SITING NEW SCHOOLS IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO HAMLET CENTERS OR BY EXTENDING SIDEWALKS AND BIKE/PEDESTRIAN TRAILS TO CONNECT WITH HAMLET CENTERS.
- ❻ ENCOURAGE THE SHARING OF SCHOOL FACILITIES WITH THE COMMUNITY E.G. ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES, RECREATIONAL FACILITIES, AND AFTER SCHOOL CHILD CARE.
- ❼ EXPLORE TOWN/SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS AND PROVIDE INDOOR AND OUTDOOR FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS.

## 7. PRIVATE EDUCATION

As noted, public and private schools are allowed in most residential and all business districts (§330-10 and §330-13, respectively), with schools for the mentally retarded allowed by special exception (§330-159). The Town should more clearly define the circumstances and procedures under which schools are permitted—revising §330-159 to make all schools subject to special permit, and employing the same or similar disclosures and impact statements and other regulations required in connection with the Quasi-Public Service Use District (§330-203A). Although not mandatory, the Town should, to the maximum extent practicable, require that future private schools (and public as well) locate close to hamlet centers and/or public transportation. The Town should also work cooperatively with private (as with public) schools to locate schools next to, or in, the Town's system of parks and greenways. In addition, the Town should promote the public availability—on a free or fee

basis—of the schools’ outdoor play spaces, indoor recreational space, as well as cultural and meeting room facilities.

### ACTION ITEMS

- ❶ REVISE §330-159 OF THE TOWN CODE TO MAKE ALL SCHOOLS SUBJECT TO SPECIAL EXCEPTION.
- ❷ PROMOTE FUTURE PRIVATE SCHOOLS TO LOCATE CLOSE TO HAMLET CENTERS AND/OR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION.

## 8. HIGHER EDUCATION

As noted, Southampton has two institutions of higher education in town: Southampton College and Suffolk Community College.

The Town and the colleges are encouraged to continue to explore ways in which each could help further the other’s educational mission. For example, Suffolk Community College could sponsor a magnet middle or high school (discussed above) in which its strengths of visual arts, agriculture, and hospitality management could benefit students with particular interest in those fields. The Town should support the master plan effort of Southampton College, and remain alert as to potential opportunities for the construction of facilities that might be shared with the community at-large.

### ACTION ITEMS

- ❶ SUPPORT THE MASTER PLAN EFFORT OF SOUTHAMPTON COLLEGE.

- ❷ COORDINATE THE CONSTRUCTION OF COLLEGE FACILITIES THAT MIGHT BE SHARED WITH THE COMMUNITY-AT-LARGE.

## 9. CHILD CARE

The Town zoning ordinance permits day care facilities serving over 10 children by special exception in most residential and commercial districts (§330-10 and §330-33, respectively); smaller day care centers are allowed as of right. Permitting most day care facilities through special exception is appropriate since there are particular recreational or safety needs associated with these facilities that are not pertinent to most residential or commercial uses. For example, the traffic around a day care center ought to be closely scrutinized.

In addition to being receptive to land-use applications, the Town can encourage organized day care by bringing together major employers in a forum to discuss job-sharing, flex-time, and other means of making it easier for employees to do their parenting.

### ACTION ITEM

- ❶ ENCOURAGE ORGANIZED DAY CARE BY BRINGING TOGETHER MAJOR EMPLOYERS IN A FORUM TO DISCUSS JOB-SHARING, FLEX-TIME, AND OTHER JOB/PARENTING ISSUES.

## 10. YOUTH CENTERS

The “echo baby boom” will also have the effect of noticeably increasing the number of teenagers in Southampton shortly

after the turn of the century. At that time, rather than develop one or even two large youth center(s) for the town, the Town should encourage the placement of smaller centers throughout the different hamlets, ideally using existing facilities, including schools. Since teenagers lack the transportation mobility of adults, centers should be placed, if possible, within bicycling distance of the bulk of the population they are intended to serve. Further, youths are often reluctant to socialize in places not within their normal sphere of activities.

**ACTION ITEM**

- ① **DEVELOP SMALLER YOUTH CENTERS THROUGHOUT THE DIFFERENT HAMLETS, IDEALLY USING EXISTING FACILITIES SUCH AS SCHOOLS.**

## **11. SENIOR CARE**

Building on successful programs already initiated, the Town should continue to be open to the possibility of expanding services at the nutrition centers. One example is a “medical model” of day care for the frail elderly.

Senior citizen centers should in the future be sited in hamlet centers, where there is public transportation, and consistent with current Town policy of directing private senior citizen housing to hamlet centers. Siting senior citizen centers in hamlet centers will also permit seniors to do other activities, such as shopping, in conjunction with senior citizen center programs.

Not all programs need facilities. The Town’s Meals-on-Wheels program, for example, now serves over 260 people with more

than 68,000 home deliveries of food. Such programs, respecting the needs of homebound seniors, should be continued.

**ACTION ITEMS**

- ① **EXPAND SENIOR SERVICES AS NEEDED AT THE NUTRITION CENTERS, E.G. DAY CARE.**
- ② **SITE NEW SENIOR CITIZEN CENTERS IN HAMLET CENTERS.**

## **12. SENIOR RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES**

As noted, the Town has few residential facilities for independent living, and lacks “life care” (a.k.a. “continuum of care”) housing altogether. Other such facilities exist (such as in Greenport) or are under construction elsewhere in Long Island. Part of the issue relates to zoning: The SC-44 senior citizen zone (§330-6B) permits housing at higher densities than those found in other zones, but, with a maximum of only 75 units (§330-11), does not permit the number of dwelling units found in most lifecare facilities. The Town’s new Planned Development District Zoning (*Article 26, §330-242, §330-246*) provides opportunity for larger developments, as well as nursing homes. The Town should encourage use of this zoning to build adequately sized life care housing in conjunction with Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) and Pine Barren Credits (PBC’s).

**ACTION ITEM**

- ❶ THE TOWN SHOULD USE THE NEW PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT ZONING (§330-242, §330-246) TO BUILD ADEQUATELY SIZED LIFE CARE HOUSING.

### 13. HEALTH SERVICES

The Town should lend its support to further physical decentralization of medical care, in keeping with the recommendations made by the Human Services Committee, a group of health and human service providers originally formed to channel citizen input into the Comprehensive Plan. The Committee recommends decentralization as a means of making health services more accessible to the less mobile segment of the population, an important consideration in a rural community with minimal public transportation.

One way to help decentralize would be to ease the circumstances under which medical offices can be built in the town. Medical or dental laboratories, outpatient care facilities and other health services are prohibited in Village Business (VB) and Shopping Center Business (SCB) districts, and allowed by special exception in Highway Business (HB) and Office (OD) districts; they should be allowed by special exception in all of these districts. (Refer to §330-33.)

Planned Development District (PDD) designation can also be used to provide added flexibility with regard to development but require extra consideration of the concerns of local residents and civic groups. The central area of the Riverside/Flanders hamlet bears consideration for such a PDD.

Also, as discussed in the Transportation chapter, the Town should join with other East-End municipalities to promote a

flexible and cost-effective means of transportation to ensure that these people who must rely solely on public transportation can access necessary health and human services.

### ☑ ACTION ITEM

- ❶ TO SUPPORT PHYSICAL DECENTRALIZATION OF MEDICAL CARE, THE TOWN SHOULD REVISE §330-33 TO ALLOW HEALTH SERVICES BY SPECIAL EXCEPTION IN THE VILLAGE BUSINESS (VB) AND SHOPPING CENTER BUSINESS (SCB) DISTRICTS.

### 14. SPECIAL NEEDS TREATMENT CENTERS AND GROUP HOMES

Understandably, areas in Southampton which have developed a distinct residential character are concerned that special needs treatment centers and group homes might be out of place in that area. However, if these facilities are small and properly dispersed, they would have very little impact on any one hamlet. It should also be recognized that different types of facilities will have different levels of impact. Small group homes can be made to be indistinguishable from other homes in residential neighborhoods, while larger residential facilities, or non-residential facilities with a substantial number of clients, work better in commercial areas.

Therefore, the Town should add “Licensed Group Homes” to its list of Special Exception uses, and expand “Medical Arts Buildings” (§330-138) to encompass outpatient care facilities and other health services. Licensed group homes should be allowed by special exception in residential and proposed hamlet

office districts; medical buildings should be allowed by special exception in business and hamlet office districts. Currently, the list of permitted uses in Business Districts (§330-13) does not address the siting of either type of facility. If well-conceived, there is no reason why group homes could not be allowed in most residential zones of the Town, and why outpatient facilities could not be in most commercial zones, subject to a special permit and the following criteria:

1. Criteria for ensuring that no hamlet or neighborhood is disproportionately affected by a proposed facility. The hamlet or neighborhood chosen for the proposed use should ideally:
  - a) be compatible with the proposed use;
  - b) provide necessary support services;
  - c) for group homes: within a one-half mile walking distance of hamlet centers and mass transit services;
  - d) for health care facilities: within a one-quarter mile walking distance of hamlet centers and mass transit services;
  - e) not suffer from cumulative negative impact of the proposed use along with existing uses.
2. Criteria for ensuring that no facility be within specified distances of an incompatible use (e.g., there should not be substance abuse centers within 1,000 feet of a school).
3. For group homes: criteria for ensuring that the overall residential quality of the neighborhood be maintained in the design of the site, building and parking areas.

4. For group homes: an upper limit of 12 residents (consistent with recent court decisions).<sup>14</sup>
5. For outpatient and inpatient facilities: written needs/demand statement and management/operations statement (consistent with the *Quasi-Public Service Use District, §330-203A, regulations*).

To ensure that facilities are fairly well dispersed throughout the town (per requirement 1.e above), the Town should, in its review, analyze the existing ratios of hamlet population to facility beds, slots, or enrollment. Such ratios should be taken into consideration when siting the facility. The Town should also consider a recommendation made by health and human services professionals consulted for a “Site Review Committee,” with both resident and service provider representation, to advise the Town, as well as agencies and organizations selected to site facilities.

It should be noted that group homes for up to five unrelated non-transient individuals are allowed as of right in the town, consistent with caps upheld by the courts.<sup>15</sup> Further, many HHS facilities are State-sponsored, and as such, their siting is governed by the Padavan Law.

## ACTION ITEMS

- 1 ADD LICENSED GROUP HOMES TO THE LIST OF SPECIAL EXCEPTION USES.

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<sup>14</sup> David Laube, “Group Think: A Recent Supreme Court Ruling Should Make Local Governments Reconsider their Community Residence Regulations,” *Planning*, October 1991.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

② EXPAND MEDICAL ARTS BUILDINGS (§330-138) TO ENCOMPASS OUTPATIENT CARE FACILITIES AND OTHER HEALTH SERVICES.

③ ALLOW LICENSED GROUP HOMES BY SPECIAL EXCEPTION IN RESIDENTIAL AND HAMLET OFFICE DISTRICTS.

④ ALLOW MEDICAL BUILDINGS BY SPECIAL EXCEPTION IN BUSINESS AND HAMLET OFFICE DISTRICTS.

⑤ CREATE A SITE REVIEW COMMITTEE FOR TREATMENT CENTERS AND GROUP HOUSES.