

# Existing and Emerging Conditions Report Village of Farmingdale Downtown Master Plan



**Submitted to:**  
Village of Farmingdale Board of Trustees  
Village Hall  
361 Main Street  
Farmingdale, NY 11735

**Submitted by:**  
Saccardi & Schiff, Inc.  
445 Hamilton Avenue, Suite 404  
White Plains, NY 10601

July 2009

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

---

	Page
<b>I. Farmingdale Today .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>II. Economic Conditions and Market Trends .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>III. Transportation and Parking Conditions.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>IV. Infrastructure .....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>V. Urban Design .....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>VI. Zoning .....</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>VII. Other Observations .....</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>VIII. Summary of Key Challenges and Opportunities .....</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>IX. Appendices</b>	
Appendix A – Sanitary Sewer System	
Appendix B – Water Supply	
Appendix C – Stormwater	
Appendix D – Electric	
Appendix E – Gas	

## **I. Farmingdale Today**

---

## ***I. FARMINGDALE TODAY***

---

### **A. Introduction and Purpose**

Farmingdale's downtown area has undergone a transformation due to changes in retail and professional services, residential development patterns, high vacancy rates, and inadequate property maintenance. As a result, in early spring of 2009 the Village, including the Board of Trustees and other departments, downtown interest groups, and community residents embarked on a planning process to combat these issues and provide direction for the future development of the downtown area.

Overall, the Village downtown area has the fundamental characteristics of an attractive and pedestrian-friendly business area. The goal of this study is to not only highlight the distinct characteristics of the downtown area and enhance them, but to preserve the residential character of the Village's neighborhoods.

The study will result in a Downtown Master Plan, which will establish the potential build-out of the downtown area and short- and long-term goals and recommendations for the Village to ensure that its objectives are met. As such, the Downtown Master Plan will be one of the main policy tools of the Village Board of Trustees, Planning Board, Village administration, as well as other Village boards and departments.

In order to lay the groundwork for the Downtown Master Plan and where the downtown area is headed in the future, two initial questions needed to be asked:

- 1) What are the existing conditions within the downtown area, especially with regard to population, housing, land use, zoning, transportation, urban design, and infrastructure?
- 2) What are some of the emerging conditions that might result in the near future with regard to population growth, housing changes, economic changes, etc.?

In order to answer these questions, the Project Team, working with the Village and the Downtown Revitalization Committee, reviewed and analyzed existing conditions within the downtown area. In some cases information has been collected through first-hand observations and other primary research (including field surveys, traffic and parking observations, land use, GIS, and public opinion data). In other cases, we have relied on statistics from various sources including the United States Bureau of the Census.

These observations and subsequent conclusions and initial suggestions are summarized in this Existing and Emerging Conditions Report.

## B. Components of This Report

The Existing and Emerging Conditions Report is organized to cover the primary areas of concern in terms of development within the downtown area:

- Economic Conditions and Market Trends
- Transportation and Parking Conditions
- Infrastructure
- Urban Design
- Zoning
- Other Observations

## C. Definition of the Study Area

While the process towards developing the Downtown Master Plan focuses on the downtown area along Main Street, a larger area was reviewed to provide context and to allow for analysis of primary impacts. As depicted in **Figure 1, Study Area**, the study area generally extends from the Village boundary in the south north to the Melville Road/Secatogue Avenue intersection, bounded by Columbia Street/Waverly Place/Weiden Street on the west and the Village boundary/Maple Street/Secatogue Avenue/Cherry Street/Staples Street to the east.

These boundaries were chosen because they represent essentially one-block off of Main Street, with the exception of the area that surrounds the LIRR Farmingdale station and along Fulton Street. In addition, as depicted in **Figure 2, Existing Land Use**, the properties are more typical of the commercial core of a community, with a mix of retail, office, personal service, restaurants, and multi-family uses and only limited single-family residential.

One of the issues that will be discussed further on in this document in the economic conditions, as well as urban design chapters, are the retail vacancies within the downtown area. Special consideration was made to try to include to the extent feasible these vacancies, as well as other vacant and underutilized land within the vicinity of the downtown area. **Figure 3, Vacant and Underutilized Properties**, depicts the vacant and underutilized parcels in the vicinity of the downtown area. These parcels will be important in looking to forecast what the future of the downtown area may consist of, which will be the thrust of the second half of the downtown study.

Again, the existing and emerging conditions were evaluated focusing on the downtown area, but considering the larger Study Area and Village as a whole as well.

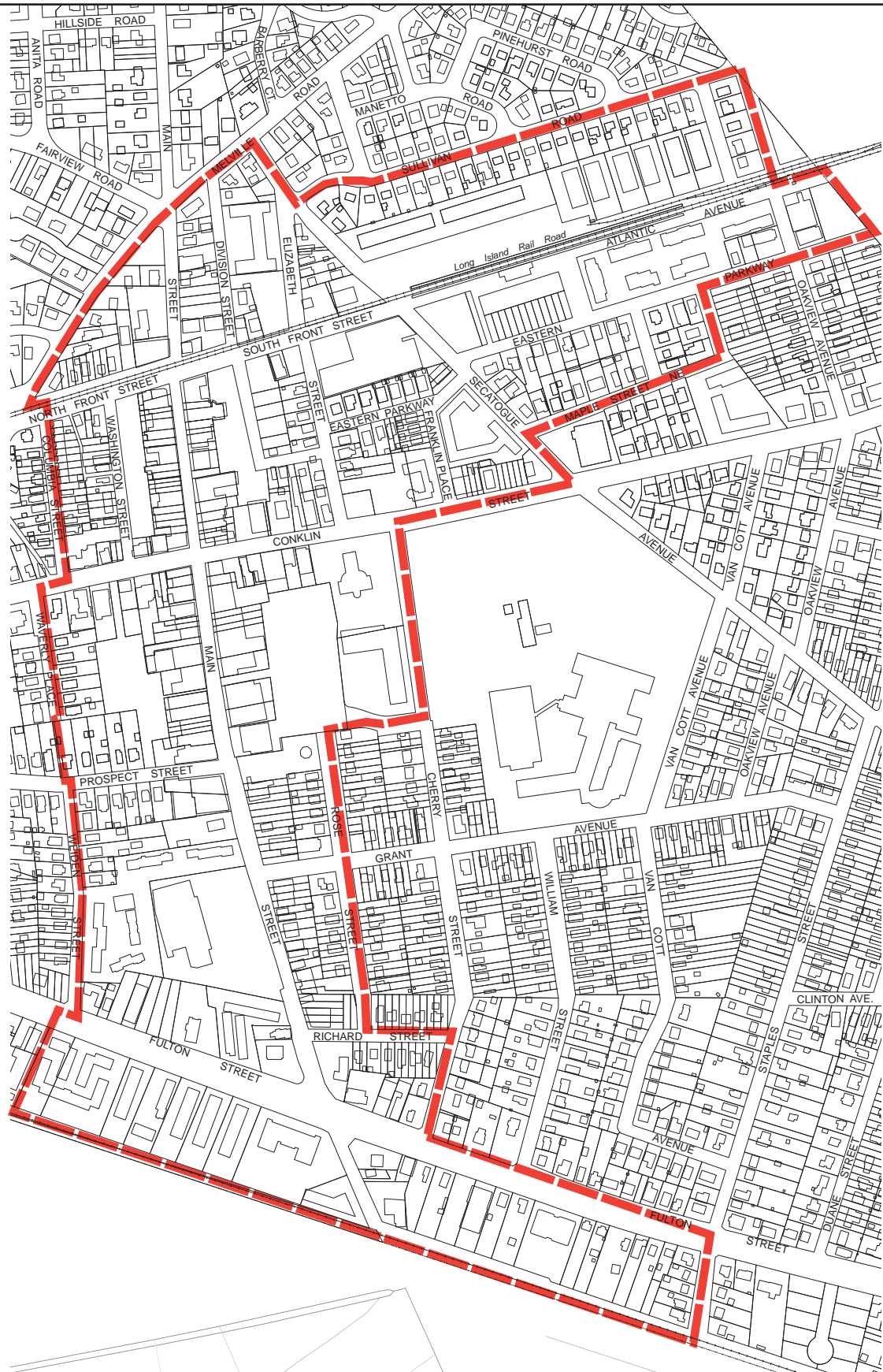
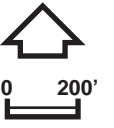


Figure 1  
**STUDY AREA**

 Study Area Boundary

**FARMINGDALE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN**  
Existing and Emerging Conditions Report  
Village of Farmingdale, New York

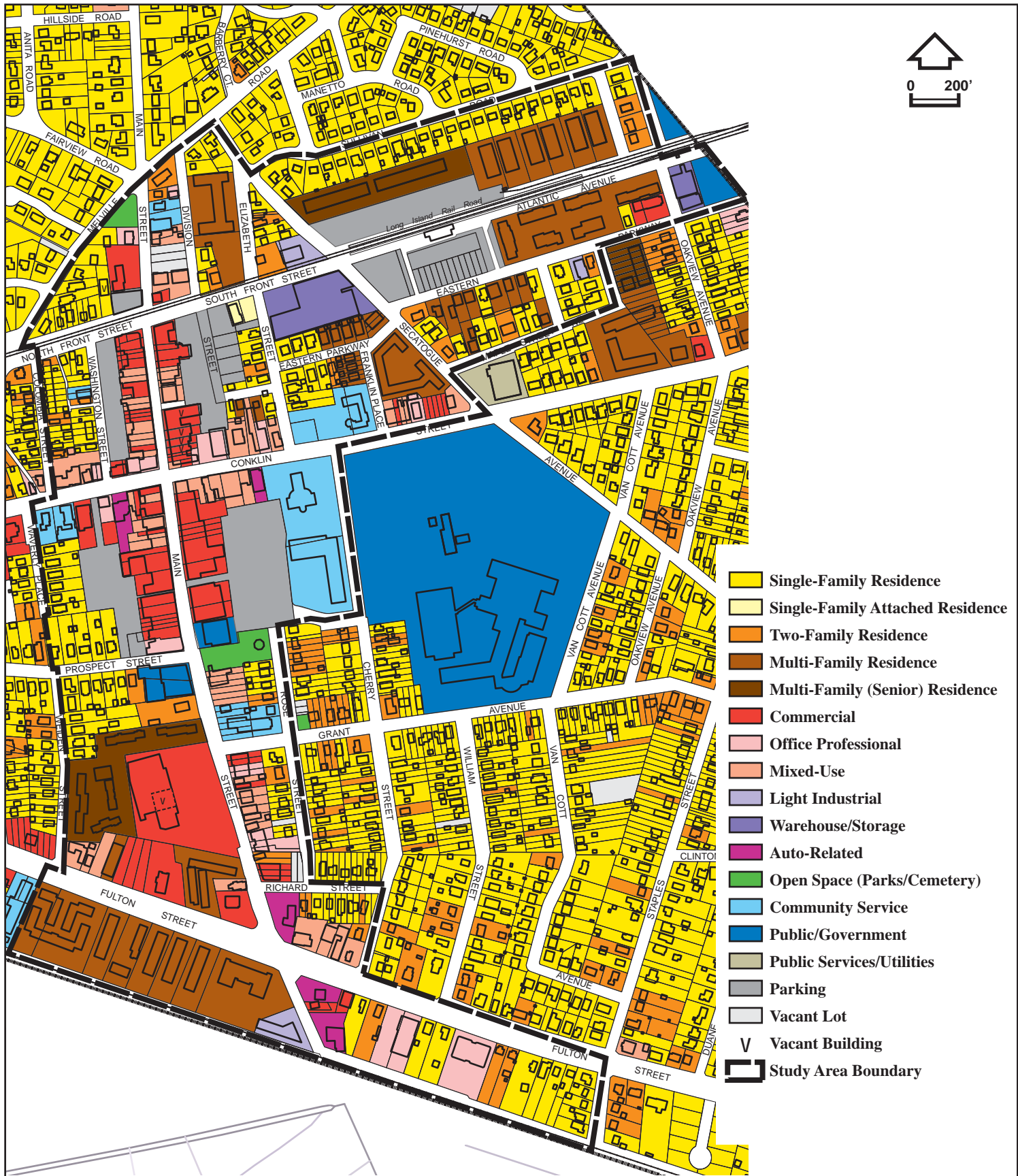
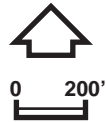


Figure 2  
**EXISTING LAND USE**

FARMINGDALE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN  
 Existing and Emerging Conditions Report  
 Village of Farmingdale, New York



- Underutilized Properties
- Vacant Properties
- Major Parking Lots

Figure 3

## VACANT AND UNDERUTILIZED PROPERTIES

FARMINGDALE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN  
Existing and Emerging Conditions Report  
Village of Farmingdale, New York

Saccardi & Schiff, Inc. - Planning and Development Consultants



## **II. Economic Conditions and Market Trends**

## II. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND MARKET TRENDS

### A. Introduction

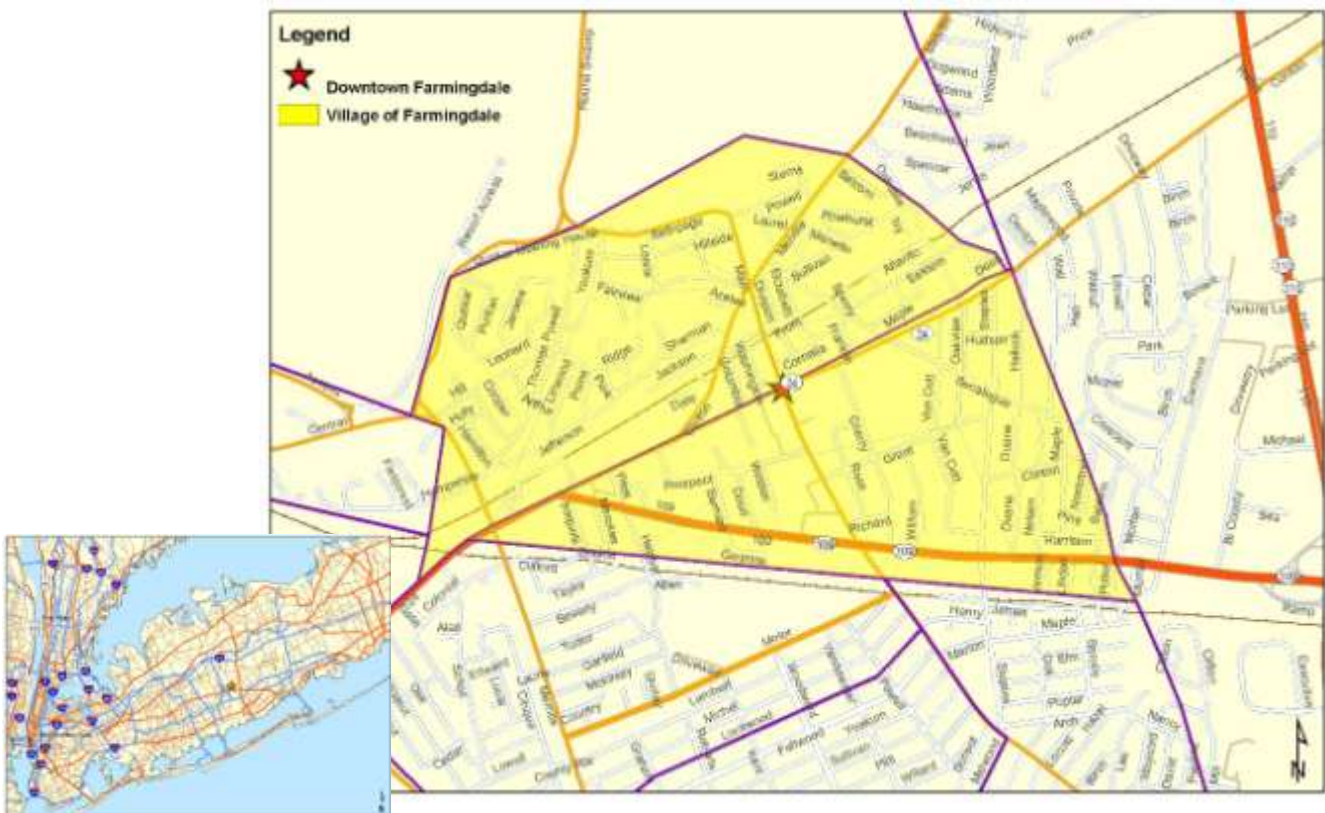
Economics Research Associates, an AECOM company, as part of a planning team led by Saccardi & Schiff, was asked to review the market potential for the revitalization of Downtown Farmingdale. Like several other villages in Nassau County, Farmingdale has been cited by County Executive Tom Suozzi as having the potential to become a “cool” downtown, where shopping, dining, living and working combine within a walkable, active setting that is attractive to young professionals, families and senior citizens alike (see <http://www.nassaucountyny.gov/agencies/planning>).

As part of its study, ERA staff spent time in the Village, spoke with existing retailers and retail brokers, and visited comparable villages and towns in the area. The following is a summary of findings.

### B. Overview of Farmingdale

The Village of Farmingdale is located in Eastern Nassau County on the border of Suffolk County (see **Figure 4, Village of Farmingdale Study Location**). The Village houses a station on the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) Ronkonkoma Branch, offering a 50 minute to one hour trip to Manhattan’s Penn Station.

Figure 4  
Village of Farmingdale Study Location



## a. Population, Households, and Household Income

In 2008, approximately 8,500 residents in 3,250 households lived in the Village of Farmingdale. As shown in **Table 1, Demographic Summary**, the Village of Farmingdale experienced minimal population growth from 1990 through 2008 and will experience a very slight population decline through 2013, according to national data provider ESRI.

Household income of residents in the Village was approximately \$94,500 per year on average in 2008. While the income levels were lower than the County, Farmingdale incomes are still relatively healthy.

**Table 1  
Demographic Summary**

	1990	2000	2008	2013	Annualized Growth	
					1990-2008	2008-2013
<b>Village of Farmingdale</b>						
Population	8,022	8,401	8,471	8,433	0.3%	-0.1%
Households	3,117	3,217	3,250	3,239	0.2%	-0.1%
Average Household Income	\$51,686	\$70,029	\$94,477	\$119,236	3.4%	4.8%
<b>Nassau County</b>						
Population	1,321,768	1,419,369	1,498,410	1,543,329	0.7%	0.6%
Households	424,689	469,299	493,870	509,613	0.8%	0.6%
Average Household Income	\$56,987	\$79,409	\$106,500	\$141,361	3.5%	5.8%

SOURCE: ESRI; US Census Bureau; Economics Research Associates

Additionally, the latest Census Zip Code Business Patterns database (2006) indicated that Zip Code 11735, which consists of the Village of Farmingdale, South Farmingdale, and East Farmingdale, shows that close to 33,000 people work in this area, quadrupling the population of the Village for much of the day.

## b. Age Distribution

**Table 2, Age Distribution in Farmingdale**, compares the age distribution trends in Farmingdale from 1990 through 2008. During this time period, the Village experienced a growth in family-age population (i.e. parents and children). At the same time, population in their 20s declined dramatically, a trend that is reflected throughout Long Island and is associated with the high cost of housing in the area. While not as dramatic, it is expected that the population of people over 65 years of age will also decline, which may reflect relocation from the area due to the cost of housing, taxes, and lack of opportunity to “downsize” housing.

**Table 2**  
**Age Distribution in Farmingdale**

Age Group	1990	2000	2008
0 - 19	22%	23%	24%
20 - 34	32%	22%	18%
35 - 54	24%	33%	35%
55 - 64	9%	8%	10%
65+	14%	15%	13%
<b>Study Area</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

SOURCE: ESRI; US Census Bureau; Economics Research Associates

c. Race and Ethnicity

As shown in **Table 3, Race in Farmingdale** and **Table 4, Ethnicity in Farmingdale**, the Village has increased its share of population of minorities and persons of Hispanic descent over the last 20 years. This has been reflected in some of the retail options – particularly food – offered in Village.

**Table 3**  
**Race in Farmingdale**

	1990	2000	2008
White	96%	87%	86%
Black or African American	0%	1%	2%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0%	0%	0%
Asian	3%	3%	4%
Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%
Other Race(s)	0%	8%	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

SOURCE: US Census; ESRI; Economics Research Associates

**Table 4**  
**Ethnicity in Farmingdale**

	1990	2000	2008
Not Hispanic or Latino	93%	87%	87%
Hispanic or Latino	7%	13%	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

SOURCE: US Census; ESRI; Economics Research Associates

2. Farmingdale State College – SUNY

Farmingdale is home to Farmingdale State College, part of the State University of New York (SUNY) system. The school, which employs 500 faculty and staff, had a total enrollment in the 2008-09 academic year of 6,850 students, of which 4,878 were matriculated full-time and 1,972 were part-time students. The school has grown considerably in the last 10 years, with full-time enrollment increasing 62 percent since 2000 and total enrollment rising 36 percent in the same period.

According to the Acting Dean of Students, SUNY Farmingdale students are primarily commuters from other parts of Long Island but there are approximately 500 resident students living on-campus approximately 1.8 miles from Downtown Farmingdale.

### **C. Market Overview-Existing Conditions**

#### **1. Retail**

ERA assessed the retail in the Village of Farmingdale, focusing primarily on the blocks surrounding the intersection of Main Street and Conklin Street (Rt. 24). The village center is approximately one-half mile (four or five blocks or five-minute walk) from the Farmingdale train station. The area contains elements of a traditional Village/Main Street including contiguous first-floor retail with street parking (additional parking is also available in parking fields behind Main Street). The street has varying types of architecture and a mix of primarily one- and two-story building heights. It also contains a range of older and recently renovated storefronts, around 13 of which are vacant.

Tenants can be characterized as primarily convenience retailers with numerous restaurants and bars and some specialty retailers. The village contains a mix of full-service restaurants such as Croxley Ales, Library Café, and Ubaldo's Italian Restaurant, limited-service/take-out establishments such as Stuff-A-Bagel, Subway, and Blimpie, and ethnic restaurants including Mexican and Dominican food. Other retail uses include a florist, jewelry stores, thrift store, and stores selling gifts, cigars, candy, sporting goods, and other items. With the exception of the aforementioned national sandwich shops, CVS and 7-Eleven, the majority of retail is independently-owned and operated. The retail area also includes office uses and personal services including hair and nail salons, cleaners and tanning businesses.

ERA staff interviewed a representative sampling of tenants on Main Street including: The Chocolate Duck, Infinite Yarns, Gino's Pizza, Tallulah's, Bollingers, Jim's Stogies, and Moby Drugs.

Interviews with retailers indicate that unique offerings such as The Chocolate Duck, Runner's Edge, and Infinite Yarns are regional destinations, attracting customers from a wide trade area. Sit-down restaurants along Main Street draw local residents as well as people from outside the area, while the remaining retail caters primarily to the population in Farmingdale.

According to the Acting Dean of Students at SUNY Farmingdale, resident students prefer to shop at Target and Walmart along Route

110 where they obtain practical, inexpensive goods, including snack foods, health and beauty items and other sundries, rather than in Village. They also take buses to the larger shopping centers and malls in the area. Given limited finances, many students bring in food or order from Village businesses that deliver to the dorms rather than eat out. On the other hand, faculty and staff regularly frequent businesses in the Village of Farmingdale, particularly restaurants and services during lunch hours. They also patronize the family restaurants on Rt. 110 due in part to coupons and promotions.

a. Competitive Retail in Farmingdale

In terms of local competition, Route 110 contains numerous large-scale retailers including “big box” stores. There are a number of furniture stores on Route 110, north of Conklin Street/Route 24, including Raymour & Flanigan, Bob's Discount Furniture, Roma 2000 Furniture, and others. Target is also along Route 110 north of Conklin, close to SUNY Farmingdale. Immediately south of Conklin on Route 110 are Home Depot, Borders, Staples, Dave & Buster's, and Walmart. Additionally, the Route 110 strip offers family dining options Ruby Tuesday's, Houlihan's and Panera Bread. While there is currently a large Waldbaum's further south on Main Street, a new Super Stop & Shop is also scheduled to open nearby.

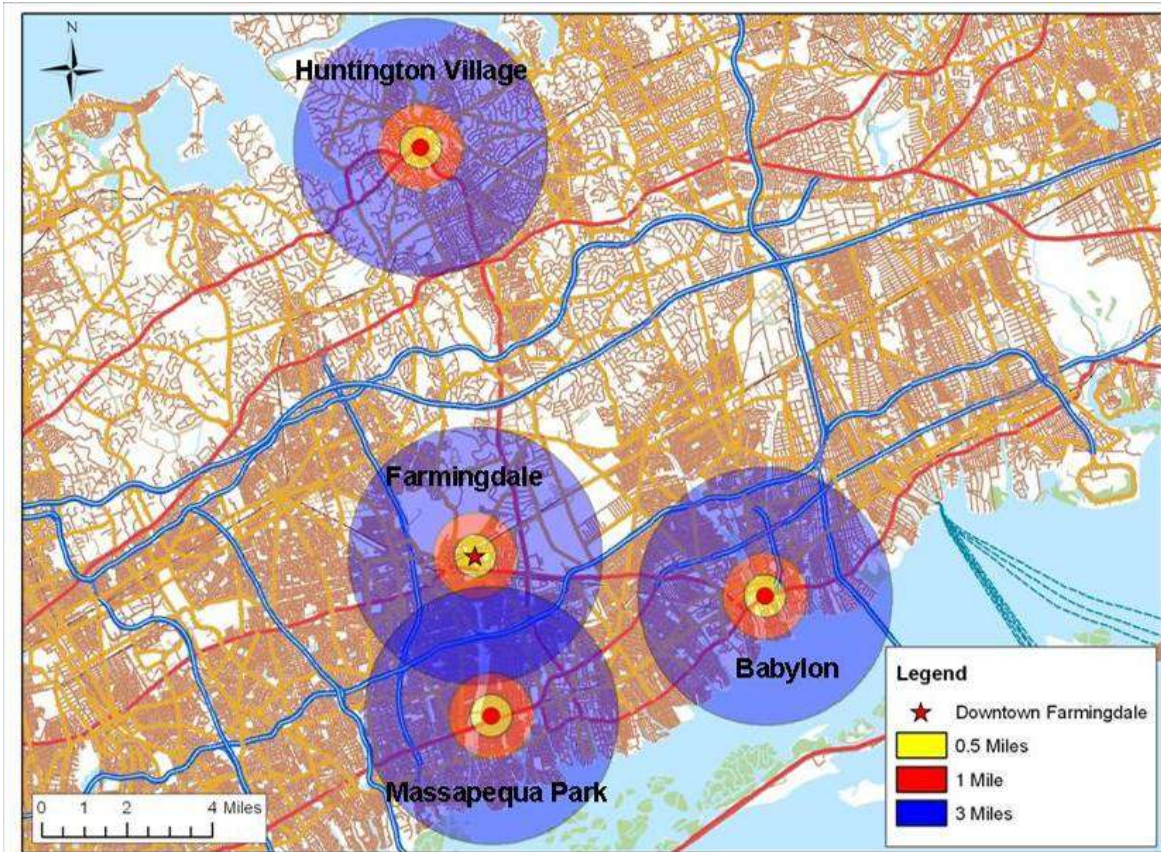
b. Comparable Retail Villages Analysis

In order to better understand potential opportunities for the Village of Farmingdale, ERA, along with representatives of the Village of Farmingdale, identified retail corridors that could be considered competitive or illustrative in terms of attracting retailers and consumers (see **Figure 5, Comparable Villages – Location and Rings**). They include similar convenience retail-oriented villages (Massapequa Park), as well as villages containing destination retail (Babylon and Huntington).

For the purposes of this evaluation, the comparable retail villages studied include:

- Village of Massapequa Park – Park Boulevard and Front Street
- Village of Babylon – Main Street and Deer Park Avenue
- Village of Huntington – Main Street and New York Avenue

**Figure 5**  
**Comparable Villages – Location and Rings**



Demographics

**Table 5, Comparable Villages – Demographics**, details the demographic characteristics of the comparable villages, focusing specifically on population within a few miles of each village area. ERA considers trade areas of one-half mile, one mile, and three miles appropriate for village retail.

Relative to the other villages, Farmingdale has a high population density proximate to its village center. Additionally, while the Farmingdale trade area has lower household incomes than the other villages, the income level is still considered healthy.

**Table 5**  
**Comparable Villages – Demographics**

	0.5-Mile Ring	1-Mile Ring	3-Mile Ring
<b>Population</b>			
Farmingdale	6,206	17,646	113,915
Massapequa Park	4,710	18,617	155,172
Babylon	3,809	14,338	110,009
Huntington Village	3,344	11,377	64,116
<b>Households</b>			
Farmingdale	2,449	6,291	38,193
Massapequa Park	1,592	6,155	51,025
Babylon	1,571	5,071	36,819
Huntington Village	1,588	4,628	22,089
<b>Median Household Income</b>			
Farmingdale	\$71,016	\$81,976	\$92,144
Massapequa Park	\$103,001	\$103,128	\$98,728
Babylon	\$82,577	\$95,122	\$87,460
Huntington Village	\$91,000	\$98,913	\$103,551

SOURCE: ESRI; Economics Research Associates

### Retail Mix

In mid-April 2009, ERA conducted a detailed field survey of retail uses in Farmingdale and the comparable villages. ERA counted and categorized retail establishments using nine retail categories based on North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes including:

- *Food Services and Drinking Places* sell prepared foods and drinks for consumption on the premises or take out;
- *Food/Liquor Stores* sell food and alcohol for home preparation and consumption (examples include grocery stores, specialized food stores including health food stores, and beer, wine and liquor stores);
- *Home Furniture, Furnishings, and Equipment Stores* sell goods used for furnishing the home, such as furniture, floor coverings, glass and chinaware, stoves, refrigerators, and other household electrical and gas appliances;
- *General Merchandise Stores* sell a variety of merchandise, such as dry goods, apparel, and accessories; furniture and home furnishings; small wares, hardware, and food (examples include department stores, variety stores, general merchandise stores, and general stores);
- *Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores* sell new clothing, shoes, hats, underwear, and related articles for personal wear;
- *Recreation Services* provide amusement and entertainment, such as movie theaters, performing arts centers, dance studios and fitness centers;



- *Personal Services* provide a variety of services to individuals (examples include laundries, dry cleaning businesses, nail or tanning salons, beauty and barber shops);
- *Miscellaneous Retail Stores* includes retailers such as pharmacies; sporting goods stores; book stores; hobby, toy, and game shops; jewelry stores; florists; gift novelty, and souvenirs shops;
- *Institutional/ Art* includes schools and art galleries;
- *Non-Retail* includes financial services (banks); tax preparers; insurance brokers; law offices; CPAs; medical/dental offices; and other non-retail related activities.

**Table 6, Comparable Villages – Retail Mix**, compares the retail mixes in Farmingdale and the comparable villages. While restaurants are well-represented in downtown Farmingdale, there are comparatively few high-quality options. Additionally, for an active retail district, the Village of

Farmingdale is over-represented by ground-level office space and under-represented by traditional retailers.

Farmingdale has a significantly higher retail vacancy than other villages, the result of closed businesses or movement from one location to another on Main Street. The vacated businesses include iCruise.com cruise travel agents, Mario's Delancy Street Café, Diabetes Resource Center, and Vivid Landscaping. The vacant storefronts range in size from approximately 2,000 square feet to larger spaces of nearly 10,000 square feet (see photograph below).

According to local retailers and real estate brokers, vacancy among retail stores on Main Street is high due, in part, to its inflated rents relative to the moderate amount of pedestrian traffic and income generation. Correspondingly, large store sizes inhibit the economics of retail businesses on the corridor and disinterested building owners affect the cohesion and vision for the Village. In addition, non-retail uses and varied merchandising standards and quality negatively impact shopping experience. The Village is also in direct competition from malls and Route 110 retailers, making it difficult to attract retailers. Additionally, the link between Main Street and the LIRR Farmingdale station area is not well-defined.

Nonetheless, ERA recognizes several opportunities for the area and potential for growth. Existing restaurants and retailers such as The Chocolate Duck, Runner's Edge, and Infinite Yarns are destinations that attract non-Farmingdale residents. The proximity to SUNY Farmingdale provides additional retail potential, if this

relationship is cultivated. The location of Main Street within walking distance of the train station provides the opportunity for transit-oriented development that could bring new higher-income residents and shoppers to the area. In addition, developers have expressed interested in building new products and renovating existing buildings in the Village area.

**Table 6**  
**Comparable Villages – Retail Mix**

Retail Category	Farmingdale	Massapequa Park	Babylon	Huntington
Food Services and Drinking Places	26%	29%	20%	22%
Non-Retail	25%	23%	25%	14%
Miscellaneous Retail	17%	21%	23%	22%
Personal Services	13%	20%	12%	7%
Vacant	12%	1%	3%	9%
Recreation Services	3%	1%	3%	2%
Food/Liquor Stores	2%	4%	3%	1%
Institutional/Art	2%	0%	0%	2%
Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores	1%	0%	10%	20%
Home Furniture and Furnishings Stores	0%	0%	0%	2%
General Merchandise Stores	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

SOURCE: Economics Research Associates



Example of retail vacancy along Main Street

Other Factors

According to local real estate brokers in Farmingdale as well as the other villages, Farmingdale differs from the other retail villages in terms of demographics, proximity to the train station, and retail traffic. Compared to Massapequa Park, Babylon, and Huntington, Farmingdale households are lower-middle income and more price-conscious particularly in the present difficult economic climate. In addition, the other three villages draw more business from affluent areas nearby. As a result, the Village of Farmingdale experiences higher vacancies especially when the economy falters.

Additionally, the retail core of Massapequa Park is directly adjacent to the train station and caters to commuter needs, while Farmingdale’s train station is not as proximate to Main Street and is not connected by a retail corridor.

Babylon and Huntington have a variety of architectural styles, landscaping, and public spaces which create an attractive pedestrian shopping district that attracts affluent consumers and subsequently more retailers. In contrast, because of the lack of foot traffic, one Farmingdale property owner along Main Street indicated that he is less likely to rent to retailers that rely heavily on street traffic to generate business; he prefers to rent to professional uses such as medical, law and insurance.

Retail Rents

**Table 7, Comparable Villages – Retail Rates**, lists the retail rents in Farmingdale and the comparable villages. Despite its lower retail traffic, rents in Farmingdale are relatively high compared to the other village centers. This factor, combined with the large size of retail spaces, makes retail economics in Farmingdale difficult.

**Table 7  
Comparable Villages – Retail Rents**

Village	Rent	Notes
Farmingdale	\$18 to \$25 per square foot	5-year lease terms
Massapequa Park	\$27 to \$30 per square foot	3- to 5-year lease terms
Babylon	\$30 per square foot	
Huntington	\$25 to \$40 per square foot	5- to 15-year lease terms

SOURCE: Economics Research Associates

2. Residential

In order to understand the opportunity for multi-family residential development as part of a mixed-use program in the Village of

Farmingdale, ERA reviewed residential trends in the area, including tenure (home-ownership), housing types, and recent development.

a. Tenure and Housing Types

Data from the US Census suggests that there is an established market for a variety of housing types in the Village of Farmingdale. As shown in **Table 8, Residential Tenure, 2008**, Farmingdale contains both owner-occupied and renter-occupied units, with its share of rental housing units being higher than Nassau County as a whole. Single-family units and multi-unit buildings are equally represented, with over 28 percent in structures containing five or more units (**Table 9, Housing Types in Farmingdale**).

**Table 8  
Residential Tenure, 2008**

Location	Housing Units	Owner-Occupied Units	Rental Units	Vacant Units <sup>1</sup>
Village of Farmingdale	3,403	61.0%	24.5%	4.5%
Nassau County	464,706	79.1%	17.0%	3.9%

SOURCE: US Census Bureau; ESRI; Economics Research Associates

NOTE: <sup>1</sup>Vacant units include second homes.

**Table 9  
Housing Types in Farmingdale**

	1990		2000	
	Count	Distribution	Count	Distribution
Single-Family Detached	1,458	44.0%	1,593	48.4%
Single-Family Attached	176	5.3%	125	3.8%
2-Unit	423	12.8%	378	11.5%
3- to 4-Unit	247	7.5%	257	7.8%
5- to 9-Unit	85	2.6%	194	5.9%
10- to 19-Unit	436	13.2%	295	9.0%
20- to 49-Unit	238	7.2%	172	5.2%
50+ Unit	176	5.3%	269	8.2%
Mobile	0	0.0%	7	0.2%
Other	75	2.3%	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,314</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>3,290</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

SOURCE: US Census Bureau; Economics Research Associates

b. Recent Residential Development

The Katter Development Company recently completed the redevelopment of an abandoned warehouse one block from the LIRR station in Farmingdale. The building offers 4 one-bedroom rental units for \$1,850 and 4 two-bedroom rental units for \$2,150. Silver Manor, at 81 Secatogue Avenue adjacent to the LIRR

parking lot, contains 49 attached rental units restricted to 55 and older householders.

Information provided for Fairfield Courtyard at Farmingdale, a 56-unit residential development located around the train station at 150 Secatogue Avenue, listed the following rental rates: Studio-\$1,325-\$1,375, One Bedroom-\$1,495-\$1,870, and Two Bedroom-\$2,145-\$2,195.

A survey of applicants for apartments at Fairfield Courtyard showed that those interested in living in these units are single, either living alone or with a roommate, and average 36.5 years old. Approximately 27% had incomes ranging from \$50-75,000 per year, with 14% ranging from \$25-\$50,000 and the remainder above \$75,000. Approximately one-third of the applicants work in Nassau County with the remainder divided between Manhattan, Queens, Suffolk County, and other areas. However, the number of people who take the train to work each day was unclear.

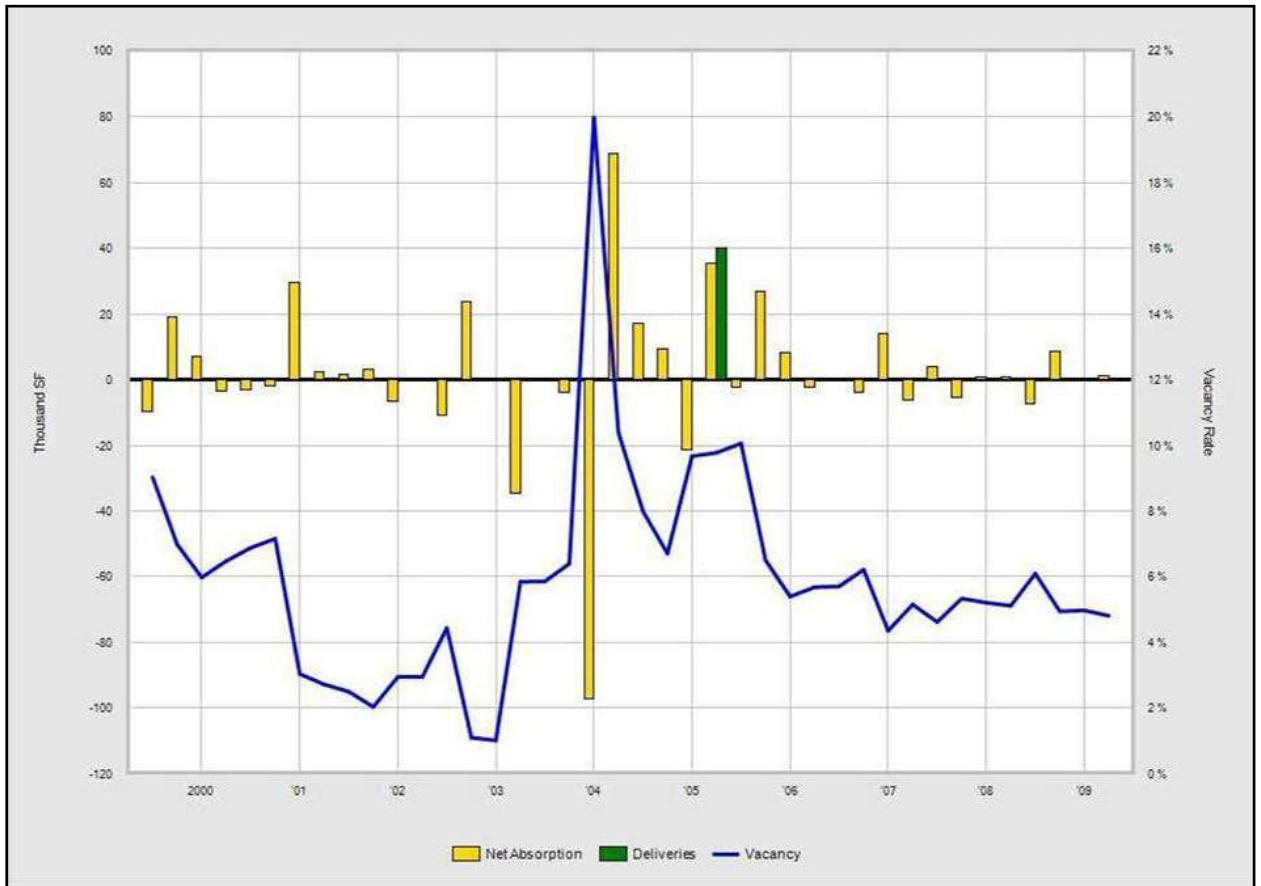
Additionally, we understand that two mixed-use developments have recently been proposed for downtown Farmingdale. Bartone Properties have plans to develop a transit-oriented development near the train station at 148 Secatogue Avenue. It will be comprised of 148 residential condominiums, representing a mix of one and two-bedrooms and two-bedrooms with lofts, along with approximately 17,400 square feet of ground floor retail and an 84-key hotel. At 231-235 Main Street, the Stoller Group proposes to replace six vacant storefronts with a 3 ½ story building consisting of apartments above retail stores.

### 3. Office

The Farmingdale office market currently consists of 766,311 square feet of space in 52 properties according to CoStar, a national real estate data provider, with 72 percent of space classified as Class B and the remaining 28 percent Classified Class C. (There is no Class A space in this market).

There has been minimal new office development in Farmingdale over the last ten years, as illustrated in **Figure 6, Farmingdale Office Trends**. Since 1999, only one office building has been developed in Farmingdale – a 40,000 square foot Class B building at the Airport. Nevertheless, the office vacancy rate is currently about five percent, which indicates a relatively healthy market.

**Figure 6**  
**Farmingdale Office Trends**



Using CoStar data, ERA estimates that there is 173,818 square feet of office space (38 percent Class B and 62 percent Class C) in 24 properties within Downtown Farmingdale.

Tenants in the Village include financial services (banks, mortgage companies, etc.), insurance companies, lawyers' and doctors' offices, and social services organizations including AHRC Nassau County and ACLD (Adults and Children with Learning and Developmental Disabilities). According to local office brokers, Main Street office users are attracted to the transit proximity offered by the Village.

However, in order to cultivate and maintain a vibrant retail environment by creating a critical mass of retail and restaurants that entices shoppers, the Village should consider relocating ground-floor office uses to second-floor spaces.

**D. Key Challenges and Opportunities – Conclusions and Initial Suggestions**

1. Mandate Ground Floor Retail Uses

ERA believes that in order to improve retail activity in the area, new development or major alternations along Main Street must include ground floor space that is leased for retail uses only, not office. Additionally, any residential development near the train station must include ground floor retail in order to provide a continuous retail link to Main Street. If the Waldbaum's property were to become a candidate for redevelopment, ERA would recommend that the site be reconfigured so that retail storefronts would be placed at the property line along Main Street, with parking located to the rear of the parcel.

2. Pursue Mixed-Use Development Around The LIRR Train Station

Options for mixed-use transit-oriented development (TOD) around the train station, including residential, retail and small office uses, should be actively pursued. This type of development has recently been of interest to developers in the New York metropolitan area, including Long Island. Most importantly, there has been strong market acceptance of this type of product. TOD development generally provides benefits that include increased housing opportunities accommodating transit-focused lifestyles, particularly young commuters and empty-nesters/seniors; increased sales potential for businesses located within walking distance of new TOD housing; less dependence on automobiles; and, mitigation of traffic congestion.

3. Encourage Diversity of Storefronts and Uses of Sidewalks to Enhance Shopper Experience

Another method of adding vitality to the street would be to permit sidewalk cafes for sit-down, table service restaurants. Also important, retail within new developments should not be more 1,500 square feet, with varying square footage and storefronts. This will help create a healthy economic environment for a range of businesses.

Examples of types of specialty retailers that should be targeted include destination stores such as a needlepoint shop, liquor/wine shop, bike shop, high-end optometrist, gourmet foods, and existing tablecloth restaurants seeking additional locations. The possibility of a small, three-screen cinema could also be explored for either the Waldbaum's site (if available) as well as other locations in Village.

4. Provide Public Incentives and Activities

Village may also consider pursuing County and State funding for small business training and storefront improvements. Public festivities such as festivals, parades and other special events can also be used to promote Village retail.

5. Proactively Market Downtown Farmingdale Shops and Services

A marketing plan should be developed for the area to target a mix of destination stores and local serving convenience offerings. A tailored marketing package highlighting Farmingdale – similar to those offered by malls – should be provided to real estate brokers and retailers. To this end, landlords could be asked to provide the Village with a list of vacant space (address, size, rent etc) that could be compiled and sent to retail brokers every quarter, along with updates of what is happening within the Main Street/Train Station corridor.

In order to encourage the participation of all landlords, the Village should consider hosting a breakfast where landlords could hear about future plans and discuss ways in which joint marketing efforts could succeed.

6. Reach Out To Farmingdale State College

ERA also recommends that the Village develop a working relationship with Farmingdale State College and partner very closely to increase their usage of Village retail and possibly residential. In the short-term, the school could help to develop temporary uses for vacant storefronts, such as exhibits from the Visual Communications department and seasonal displays from the Ornamental Horticulture department. Additionally, the Acting Dean of Students suggested that students might utilize more Village businesses if their operating hours were extended to 9 or 10 PM. To complement this effort, the Village could attract more business from the college by offering special promotions or discount coupon books for both students and faculty/staff and inviting college participation for any sponsored special events.

In a longer time frame, the Village should conduct a survey of students, faculty, and staff about retail and residential offerings in Village as well as investigate the potential for a trolley connecting the campus with downtown Farmingdale.



### **III. Transportation and Parking Conditions**

### ***III. TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING CONDITIONS***

---

This section of the report provides an overview of traffic and parking activity within the Village of Farmingdale. A preliminary visual evaluation of the study area was conducted, followed by a detailed parking occupancy analysis. The study area described in this report encompasses: Main Street between Front and Fulton Streets; four Municipal parking lots behind the land uses on Main Street; the Waldbaum's supermarket parking lot near the intersection of Main Street and Grant Avenue; and the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) Farmingdale station parking facilities.

This initial existing conditions report is not a detailed assessment of traffic volumes or congestion characteristics but, rather, an overview of the conditions observed at representative times throughout a typical day. The intention here is to provide a picture of the operation and physical characteristics of the study area. A sampling of volumes along Main Street was collected during weekday and weekend conditions, and a detailed survey of parking occupancy was conducted on Main Street and eight parking facilities. A more detailed assessment of potential future impacts will be conducted later in the study.

#### **A. Traffic**

Main Street is the north-south roadway which runs through the commercial and retail corridor of the Village. The section covered in this preliminary study is bounded to the north by Front Street, and the south by Fulton Street. It is a two-way undivided roadway in this area. The curb-to-curb width is approximately 32 feet, and it has a speed limit of 30 mph. A typical section consists of one travel lane about 10 feet wide in each direction with particularly narrow six foot wide curb parking areas available on both sides. With such narrow travel and parking lanes it is common to see parked vehicles encroaching on the travel lanes, and trucks or buses using extreme caution when traveling along Main Street. At times, Main Street is used as a "cut-through" for traffic between Fulton Street and Conklin Avenue, as mentioned by the Village.

Main Street between Front Street and Fulton Street is occupied by a variety of commercial spaces and restaurants with an appealing streetscape to promote a vibrant pedestrian friendly downtown area. Both sides of Main Street have sidewalks with brick pavers equipped with planters, benches, and decorative street lighting. Pedestrian crossings are painted across Main Street and emphasized with yield-to-pedestrian signs placed in the middle of the roadway.

Midblock crossings are located between Front Street and Conklin Avenue, and also between Conklin Avenue and Prospect Street. They are positioned leading to the one-way entrances to Municipal Parking Fields 3 and 4, on the east side of Main Street. The crosswalk on the north leg of Main Street at Prospect Street has warning lights embedded in the pavement which can be activated with a pedestrian-activated push button

mounted on a pedestal. This feature aids in alerting drivers when pedestrians are attempting to cross Main Street.



*Typical section of Main Street in the downtown area, which is a two lane undivided roadway with parallel parking available on both sides.*

Sample volumes along Main Street were collected at representative times of the day to get a preliminary sense of traffic volumes. Weekday and Saturday conditions were observed at 12-1 PM, 3-4 PM, 5-6 PM, and 7-8 PM (Friday and Saturday night conditions were requested by the Village). We collected 20-minute sample counts and extrapolated those counts to get an estimate of hourly volumes. In general, traffic volumes in both directions are fairly consistent both on weekday and Saturday afternoons. On weekdays, northbound and southbound volumes are generally in the 300 to 350 vehicles per hour (vph) range at 12-1 PM, 3-4 PM, and 7-8 PM, and are only slightly higher at 350 to 450 vph per direction at 5-6 PM. Saturday volumes are generally in the 300 to 350 vph range per direction at 12-1 PM, in the 200 to 300 vph range per direction at 3-4 PM, and in the 150 to 250 vph range per direction at 7-8 PM. These volumes can be characterized as moderate.

We also conducted sample counts of left turns from northbound Main Street onto Prospect Street since those left turns need to wait for suitable gaps in oncoming southbound Main Street traffic in order to complete their turns. Our counts indicated that 50 vehicles per hour typically make that

left turn, with volumes up to 100 vph during the weekday between 12-1 PM. This will be taken into consideration as the project continues, as well as potential left turn issues at other intersections.

The most heavily trafficked intersections in the project's study area are Main Street/Conklin Avenue, followed by Main Street/Fulton Street and Main Street/Front Street adjacent to the LIRR grade crossing. Potential effects of the Downtown Plan will be considered at these locations as the project progresses.



*Narrow lanes along Main Street experience queuing when parallel parking maneuvers are executed; buses and trucks encroach on the centerline.*



*Sidewalk cross sections along Main Street equipped with brick pavers, young trees, and street lighting promote a pedestrian friendly downtown environment.*



*Intersection of Main Street and Prospect Street: typical pedestrian crossing sign and vehicle making northbound left turn onto Prospect Street.*

## **B. Parking**

### **1. Main Street**

Parallel parking is available on both sides along Main Street for the majority of its length between Front Street and Fulton Street, with approximately 166 available spaces. The majority of spaces occupied are generally between Front Street and Prospect Street, with fewer spaces typically used between Prospect Street and Fulton Street starting south of the Farmingdale Post Office. Parking occupancy was observed to be the highest during the midday between 12 PM and 1 PM with 61% and 58% for the weekday and Saturday, respectively. During all other time periods, an average of 51% parking occupancy was recorded along Main Street (see **Table 10, Parking Utilization: Main Street**).

**Table 10**  
**Parking Utilization: Main Street**

Time Period	Percent Occupied
Weekday 12-1 PM	61%
Weekday 3-4 PM	45%
Weekday 5-6 PM	48%
Friday 8-9 PM	59%
Saturday 12-1 PM	58%
Saturday 3-4 PM	50%
Saturday 8-9 PM	55%

Posted parking regulations generally allow 2-hour parking with street cleaning regulations effective on Mondays and Fridays from 4 AM to 5 AM. Parking is also limited to 10 minutes, between the hours of 8 AM and 6 PM, for spaces near the Post Office located at the southwest corner of Main Street and Prospect Street. Directly across from the post office on the east side of Main Street is the Village Green, which has a few 10 minute parking spaces and two designated Police Vehicle Only parking spaces.

2. Municipal Parking Field 1

Municipal Parking Field 1 is located west of Main Street north of Conklin Avenue, with access via entrances on the south side of Front Street and the north side of Conklin Avenue. It has approximately 89 parking spaces including six handicapped spaces, with an additional 17 parallel parking spaces available on Washington Street which borders the west side of the parking lot. Also, 14 spaces are marked on the north side of Front Street and were unoccupied, with the exception of two or three vehicles, throughout the day. Parking within Field 1 is limited to 3-hour parking intended for retail and commercial patrons. Spaces located on Washington and Front Streets have regulations posted as 12-hour parking Monday through Friday, from 6 AM to 6 PM, with a Village Permit.

Thus, there are a total of approximately 126 spaces within and around the vicinity of Municipal Parking Field 1, and it has the highest occupancy rate of the four public lots adjacent to Main Street. The Friday and Saturday evening occupancy was 94% and 79% respectively, between the hours of 8 PM and 9 PM (as noted by the Village, primarily due to patrons of nearby restaurants); Municipal Parking Field 1 was the only one of the four parking fields substantially occupied on Friday and Saturday nights. The average occupancy rate was 74% for all time periods surveyed (see **Table 11, Parking Utilization: Municipal Parking Fields** for occupancy of all four Municipal Parking Lots).

3. Municipal Parking Field 2

Municipal Parking Field 2 is located to the south of Field 1, west of Main Street south of Conklin Avenue with entrances on the south side of Conklin Avenue and the north side of Prospect Street. Approximately 140 parking spaces are available, five of which are designated as handicapped spaces. The majority of spaces are currently regulated as 3-hour parking; however two rows on the west side of this lot are designated as 12-hour parking Monday through Friday, from 6 AM to 6 PM, with a Village Permit. An occupancy rate of 75% occurred during the weekday between 12 PM and 1 PM, and was the highest observed for all time periods including Saturday. The average occupancy rate was 45% for all time periods surveyed.

4. Municipal Parking Field 3

Municipal Parking Field 3 is located east of Main Street north of Conklin Avenue with multiple points of entry. Access to this lot is available on the south side of Front Street, a one-way entrance on the east side of Main Street, and through a private parking lot on the north side of Conklin Avenue. There are approximately 235 parking spaces available, seven of which are designated as handicapped spaces, and ten reserved taxi spaces. An additional 15 spaces are located on the north side of Front Street, but only a couple of vehicles were observed occupying them throughout the day. Most of the spaces are regulated as 12-hour parking Monday through Friday, from 6 AM to 6 PM, with a Village Permit. The row of spaces on the west side of the parking lot allows 3-hour parking for commercial and retail patrons. During the weekday and Saturday time periods, on average, 40% and 28% of the spaces were occupied, respectively.

5. Municipal Parking Field 4

Municipal Parking Field 4 is situated east of Main Street south of Conklin Avenue with four access points. A one-way entrance provides access from Main Street between Conklin Avenue and Prospect Street. The south end of the parking lot is accessible from both Rose Street and Wesche Drive. Additional access is also available on the south side of Conklin Avenue through a private parking lot. There are approximately 330 spaces available in this lot, including eight designated as handicapped spaces. About 60 of these total spaces are reserved for employees and patrons of commercial and retail stores with rear entrances. The combined weekday and Saturday average occupancy throughout the day was 41%. Saturday evening between 8 PM and 9 PM experienced the highest occupancy rate at

60%, and could be attributed to religious activities occurring at the church located on Conklin Avenue west of Cherry Street.

**Table 11  
Parking Utilization: Municipal Parking Fields**

Location	Available Spaces	Weekday 12 - 1 PM Percent Occupied	Weekday 3 - 4 PM Percent Occupied	Weekday 5 - 6 PM Percent Occupied	Friday 8 - 9 PM Percent Occupied	Saturday 12 - 1 PM Percent Occupied	Saturday 3 - 4 PM Percent Occupied	Saturday 8 - 9 PM Percent Occupied
Field 1	126	77%	71%	57%	94%	76%	63%	79%
Field 2	140	75%	56%	46%	35%	38%	37%	27%
Field 3	250	34%	36%	38%	50%	29%	27%	27%
Field 4	330	47%	39%	44%	34%	34%	28%	60%

6. Waldbaum’s Parking Lot

The Waldbaum’s supermarket parking lot is located on the west side of Main Street near Grant Avenue and has approximately 192 parking spaces. The main entrance to this lot is at the traffic signal at Main Street and Grant Avenue; on the north side of Fulton Street west of Main Street, an auxiliary truck entrance provides access to the rear of the facility. Throughout the day, occupancy rates for weekday and Saturday varied slightly but remained between 49% and 58% for the periods observed (see **Table 12, Parking Utilization: Waldbaum’s**). Parking in this lot is limited to employees and patrons of Waldbaum’s and its attached retail tenants.

**Table 12  
Parking Utilization: Waldbaum’s**

Time Period	Percent Occupied
Weekday 12-1 PM	54%
Weekday 3-4 PM	58%
Weekday 5-6 PM	49%
Friday 8-9 PM	39%
Saturday 12-1 PM	52%
Saturday 3-4 PM	49%
Saturday 8-9 PM	39%

7. Long Island Rail Road Parking Lots

The Farmingdale station is located at the intersection of Secatogue Avenue and Front Street and is about a seven minute walk to “the heart” of Main Street. It has two parking facilities, one on each side of the tracks, which provide commuter parking throughout the day. The LIRR does not regulate or enforce parking regulations; permits must be obtained through the Village of Farmingdale to use these facilities.



The LIRR north parking lot is located on the north side of the tracks where westbound trains typically board. Its only access is on Secatogue Avenue north of Front Street and has approximately 254 parking spaces, which also includes 12 designated handicapped spaces. The posted regulations throughout the lot allow 12-hour commuter parking with a Village Railroad Permit. As expected, the north parking lot was nearly full during the weekday morning and midday hours, then drops approaching the early evening hours. During normal weekday commuting hours the occupancy rate averaged 91% (see **Table 13, Parking Utilization: LIRR Parking Lots**). This includes a significant vacancy rate in handicapped spaces; otherwise occupancy would likely be about 95% or more. Saturday occupancy rates are significantly lower than those during the weekday.

The LIRR south parking lot, which is Village-owned, is located on the south side of the tracks where eastbound trains typically board or alight. The entrance to the lot is on Eastern Parkway. Within the parking lot, there is a taxi parking and waiting area on the north end closest to the ticket office, which leads to a one-way exit on to Front Street. There are approximately 268 spaces available in the facility which include 51 metered spaces inside the lot, and an additional 11 metered spaces along the north side of Eastern Parkway. Parking regulations are similar to that of the north parking lot requiring a Village Railroad Permit, and metered spaces allow up to a maximum of 12 hours to be deposited. As expected, similar trends to the north parking lot were observed with a slightly higher occupancy rate. During the normal commuting hours the average occupancy rate is 98% between 9 AM and 4 PM.

Adjacent to the west of the LIRR south parking lot is a private parcel that appears to be underutilized. Access to the lot is on Secatogue Avenue, and posted signs indicate that it is private parking. There are approximately 54 unmarked parking spaces along the perimeter of the lot. The average occupancy is 25% during the weekday, and only 15% on Saturday.

**Table 13  
Parking Utilization: LIRR Parking Lots**

Location	Available Spaces	Weekday 9 - 10 AM Percent Occupied	Weekday 12 - 1 PM Percent Occupied	Weekday 3 - 4 PM Percent Occupied	Weekday 5 - 6 PM Percent Occupied	Friday 8 - 9 PM Percent Occupied	Saturday 12 - 1 PM Percent Occupied	Saturday 3 - 4 PM Percent Occupied	Saturday 8 - 9 PM Percent Occupied
LIRR North Lot	254 <sup>1</sup>	91%	89%	93%	73%	69%	12%	15%	9%
LIRR South Lot	268	97%	99%	97%	67%	62%	18%	22%	18%
Private Lot	54	28%	26%	26%	19%	30%	17%	13%	15%

<sup>1</sup> Includes a significant number of handicapped spaces, which are underutilized

## C. Public Transportation

### 1. Long Island Rail Road

The Farmingdale LIRR Station has service to and from Penn Station on the Ronkonkoma Branch. The scheduled travel time for weekday morning commuters is approximately 54 minutes for trains departing to Penn Station between approximately 7AM and 8AM, and according to the official timetables there are six trains within that time frame. Weekday afternoon/early evening commuters experience an average scheduled travel time of 59 minutes from Penn Station, with five trains available that arrive at Farmingdale between approximately 5:30 PM and 7 PM. Weekend service to and from Penn Station is limited, with trains every hour, and a scheduled travel time of 53 minutes.

### 2. Long Island Bus

The MTA Long Island Bus System serves the immediate study area with four routes: the N95, N70, N71, and N72.

The N95 Bus route operates between the Farmingdale LIRR Station and SUNY Farmingdale, with service only on weekdays. There are approximately three to four buses stopping near downtown each hour from 9-10 AM, 12-1 PM, 3-4 PM, and 5-6 PM (generally one to two buses per direction).

The N70 Bus route operates between the Hempstead Transit Center and Melville, with a stop located at the intersection of Conklin Avenue and Main Street. This route operates along Hempstead Turnpike, Conklin Avenue, and then north on Route 110. Service on this route is available only on weekdays with a combined frequency in both directions of five to six buses stopping near downtown between 9-10 AM and 5-6 PM, two stopping from 12-1 PM, and four stopping from 3-4 PM (generally two to three buses per direction in the AM and PM peaks).

The N71 Bus route operates between the Hempstead Transit Center and Massapequa Park, with a stop located at the intersection of Main Street and Fulton Street. This route runs along Hempstead Turnpike, Fulton Street, and then south on Main Street. Service on this route is available seven days a week. Frequency on weekdays is about three stops (one eastbound and two westbound) for each hour from 9-10 AM, 12-1 PM, 3-4 PM, and 5-6 PM, and Saturdays between two to four stops for the same hours (generally one to two buses per direction).

The N72 Bus route operates between Hempstead Transit Center and the Babylon LIRR Station, with a stop located at the intersection of Main Street and Conklin Avenue. This bus operates along a similar route to the N70 Bus, but heads south on Route 110. The weekday frequency is six to seven buses stopping near downtown between 9-10 AM and 12-1 PM (generally three to four buses per direction), and eight stops between 3-4 PM and 5-6 PM (generally four buses per direction). The Saturday frequency is two to four combined stops between 9-10 AM, 12-1 PM, 3-4 PM, and 5-6 PM (generally one to two buses per direction).

**D. Key Challenges and Opportunities – Conclusions and Initial Suggestions**

**1. Conclusions**

Based on the existing conditions assessment and meetings with the Village, the following conclusions can be made about the existing transportation and parking conditions in the downtown area of the Village of Farmingdale:

- Traffic volumes on Main Street are moderate, generally in the 300 to 450 vph range per direction during weekday peak periods and 200 to 300 vph per direction on Saturdays.
- The most heavily trafficked intersections, which may be of concern, are Main Street/Conklin Avenue, Main Street/Fulton Street, and Main Street/Front Street.
- Improvements can be made to traffic flow, but the narrow curb-to-curb width along Main Street with parking allowed on both sides is a significant impediment. Improving the pedestrian environment will also be considered.
- Currently, there is ample public parking available, including parallel parking along Main Street and parking within the four parking fields. The highest occupancy rate of the four parking fields is Parking Field 1, notably on Friday night.
- The Waldbaum's parking lot is only approximately half occupied throughout the week and weekend.
- The Farmingdale LIRR Station is well-used; parking for the LIRR is basically full throughout the work week.

## 2. Initial Suggestions and Next Steps

Based on the existing conditions assessment and meetings with the Village, key issues and opportunities to be explored will include:

- Will development of available parcels in the downtown area generate vehicular traffic that could significantly affect flow conditions along Main Street? Existing traffic volumes are moderate, not excessive, so there could be capacity to accommodate additional traffic, although there could also be potential issues at Main Street's key intersections with Conklin Avenue, with Front Street, and with Fulton Street that may need to be examined.
- Will new development generate a need for parking that cannot be accommodated within available parking facilities or on-street along Main Street, thus requiring the addition of more parking? Existing parking surveys indicate that there are approximately 1,200 parking spaces available within the four municipal lots, the Waldbaum's parking lot, and along Main Street between Front and Fulton Streets (excluding additional parking available along Front and Fulton Streets, along Conklin Avenue, within private parking areas, or at the LIRR station). These 1,200 spaces are approximately 54 percent occupied weekdays at midday and 44 percent occupied Saturdays at midday (the peak parking demand hours), thus leaving over 550 parking spaces available on weekdays and well over 650 spaces available on Saturdays, to help accommodate future parking demands.

The LIRR parking lots, on the other hand, are nearly fully utilized at peak times on weekdays (even under current adverse economic conditions), so more residential development with at least some workforce orientation to Manhattan and Downtown Brooklyn will create demand more parking at the station unless new residential development is focused within a convenient walking distance of the station. There are parking capacity opportunities that may be available at a private parking lot near the station's south parking lot along Secatogue Avenue, or as part of potential joint development projects near the station.

- There may be opportunities to improve pedestrian conditions along Main Street, i.e., to improve the safety of pedestrian crossings of Main Street and overall pedestrian conditions at the intersection of Main Street and Front Street at this unsignalized intersection next to the LIRR grade crossing. Opportunities to improve traffic flows along Main Street may be more challenging due to the constrained,

narrow 32 foot width of Main Street. This narrow curb-to-curb width creates narrow 10-foot wide travel lanes next to extremely narrow 6-foot wide curb parking lanes. Parked cars often encroach on the travel lanes, and larger vehicles such as trucks and buses traveling on Main Street often encroach over the centerline. There is no real opportunity to widen Main Street. There could be opportunities to reconfigure Main Street with improved travel lane widths and curb parking lane widths, but only if curb parking were removed on one side of the street – a trade-off that can be discussed with Village officials and the community. This will be examined as part of the “next steps” within the study along with other potential traffic safety and capacity considerations.

- As described in the Zoning Section of this document, the parking requirements per the Village zoning code should be re-examined, along with other Village policies (e.g., 12-hour spaces, permits).

## **IV. Infrastructure**

---

## **IV. INFRASTRUCTURE**

---

Existing infrastructure conditions in the Village were evaluated, including the capacity not only for existing uses, but also for those improvements and uses that are currently planned. This infrastructure includes sanitary sewer, water, stormwater, electricity, and gas. What follows is a discussion of those conditions, with a focus on the downtown area.

### **A. Sanitary Sewer System and Capacity**

The Village of Farmingdale is currently being serviced by Nassau County Sewer District No. 3. The discharge from the Village of Farmingdale is collected at the Cedar Creek Water Pollution Control Plant, which has ample capacity for the existing land uses and already planned improvements within the Village. Based on our conversation with Peter Pyne of the Nassau County Department of Public Works (NCDPW), the Cedar Creek Water Pollution Control Plant has an existing capacity of 56 million gallons per day (MGD) and a maximum capacity of 74 MGD which includes the discharge from the Village of Farmingdale. Connection to the treatment system already exists, therefore, there will be no cost required for connection. Based on the sanitary sewer maps obtained from NCDPW, there is an existing eight-inch sanitary sewer main running along Main Street. There are existing sanitary sewer mains with eight-inch and thirty-inch diameters running along South Front Street. There are existing sanitary sewer mains with eight-inch, ten-inch, and twelve-inch diameters running along Fulton Street. Copies of the sewer plans and profiles obtained from NCDPW have been included in the **Appendix A** of this report.

### **B. Water Supply System and Capacity**

The water supply system for the entire Village of Farmingdale is currently being serviced by the Village of Farmingdale Water District. The three existing water wells are capable of pumping 5.4 million gallons per day (MGD). Based on the 2008 Annual Water System Pumpage Report prepared for the Village of Farmingdale, the domestic peak day rate in 2008 was 2.67 million gallons per day (MGD), which occurred on July 18, 2008. There is minimal capacity to supply the existing domestic water demand at this time. This is due to the fact that if one of the three wells shutdown, the pumpage rate will be reduced by at least 1.44 MGD. If the Village happens to have a very heavy usage during, a shortage of water supply may result. The continued increase in building and population in the coming years will require the Village to construct a fourth well.

Based on several meetings with Village Department of Public Works (DPW) personnel and H2M, the Village's engineer, there appears to be minimal water capacity to handle fire emergency. In the case of a severe

fire event within the downtown area, mutual aid companies would be called in to support the local fire department and interconnections between the Village of Farmingdale and other water districts would be activated to provide an adequate water supply for the emergency. The addition of a fourth well will also provide additional capacity for fire emergency within the Village.

Based on the water distribution maps obtained from H2M, there is an existing six-inch water main running along Main Street. There are also existing water mains with six-inch and eight-inch diameters running along South Front Street. There are existing water mains with four-inch and eight-inch diameters running along Fulton Street. A copy of the 2008 *Annual Water System Pumpage Report* prepared for the Village of Farmingdale, water distribution map, and pumping capacities of the three existing wells obtained from H2M have been included in the **Appendix B** of this report.

The pumping facilities are in need of an electronic upgrade. Most of the electronic equipment was installed in the 1950s. The original electronic equipment for the pumping facilities has been breaking down more frequently in the past few years. One of the first pieces of equipment that needs to be replaced is the telemetering equipment which is currently using “pulse” signals will need to be converted to “tone” signals.

Based on the letter received from Nassau County Department of Health, volatile organic contaminants could possibly impact Well 1-3 by 2027, but potentially as early as 2022. It is important that all regulatory agencies continue to have a regular monitoring, assessment of the plume and come up with alternative solutions to resolve this problem as early as possible.

### **C. Storm Drainage**

The Village of Farmingdale utilizes infiltration basins for the stormwater runoff within the Village DPW right-of-way. The Village requires two-inches of on-site stormwater storage for all properties fronting the Village right-of-way, except for properties fronting Lenox Court, which requires eight-inches of on-site stormwater storage. Based on the information obtained during the meeting with Village DPW and H2M, the existing drainage system within the Village DPW’s jurisdiction has ample capacity. However, the intersection of Secatogue Avenue and South Front Street as has flooding issues. The Village DPW and H2M are looking to solve the flooding problems. Note that regardless of any alternative solutions, it is important that proper maintenance of the existing drainage structures is done on a regular basis to avoid any flooding issue. A copy of the *Comprehensive Drainage Plan* obtained from H2M has been included in the **Appendix C** of this report.



Based on the storm drainage maps obtained from NCDPW, there is an existing 15-inch, 18-inch, and 24-inch storm sewer main running along Main Street. The NCDPW requires eight-inches of on-site stormwater storage for the properties fronting NCDPW right-of-way. Based on the information obtained during the meeting with Village DPW and H2M, the existing drainage system within the NCDPW's jurisdiction has ample capacity. However, flooding occurs at the intersection of Grant Avenue and Main Street in which the Village DPW, H2M and NCDPW is looking to solve. Again, note that it is important that proper maintenance of the existing drainage structures is done on a regular basis to avoid any flooding issue. A copy of the storm drainage plans and profiles obtained from NCDPW has been included in the **Appendix C** of this report.

Based on maps the obtained from New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), there are existing 15-inch, 18-inch and 24-inch storm sewer mains running along South Front Street within the NYSDOT maintained roads. Based on the sewer plans and profiles obtained from NCDPW, there are existing 15-inch, 18-inch and 24-inch storm sewer mains along Fulton Street. The NYSDOT requires two-inches of on-site stormwater storage for the properties fronting the NYSDOT right-of-way. Based on the information obtained during the meeting with NYSDOT, the existing drainage system within the NYSDOT's jurisdiction has existing capacity. Again, note that it is important that proper maintenance of the existing drainage structures is done on a regular basis to avoid any flooding issue. A copy of the plans and profiles obtained from NYSDOT has been included in the **Appendix C** of this report.

**D. Electric**

The Village of Farmingdale is currently being serviced by Long Island Power Authority (LIPA) for electricity. There is ample capacity to supply the existing electric demand at this time. A copy of the electric distribution maps obtained from LIPA has been included in the **Appendix D** of this report.

**E. Gas**

The Village of Farmingdale is currently being serviced by National Grid for gas. There is ample capacity to supply the existing gas demand at this time. A copy of the gas distribution maps obtained from National Grid has been included in the **Appendix E** of this report.

## **F. Key Challenges and Opportunities – Conclusions and Initial Suggestions**

On the infrastructure standpoint, the water supply system for the Village appears to be the area of most concern due to the following:

- The continued increase in building and population in the coming years will require for the Village to need a fourth well. This is due to the fact that if one of the three wells shutdown, the pumpage rate will be reduced by at least 1.44 MGD. If the Village happens to have a very heavy usage during a major fire event, a shortage of water supply may result.
- The original electronic equipment for the pumping facilities has been breaking down more frequently in the past few years. One of the first pieces of equipment that needs to be replaced is the telemetering equipment.
- There appears to be minimal water capacity to handle fire emergency. In the case of a severe fire event within the downtown area, mutual aid companies would be called in to support the local fire department and interconnections between the Village of Farmingdale and other water districts would be activated to provide an adequate water supply for the emergency. The addition of a fourth well will also provide additional capacity for fire emergency within the Village.
- The possible impact of volatile organic contaminants to Well 1-3 by as early as 2022 is an issue for concern. It is important that all regulatory agencies continue to have a regular monitoring, assessment of the plume, and come up with alternative solutions to resolve this problem as early as possible.

Concerning stormwater management, there is sufficient capacity within the Village; however, there are a number of locations that experience flooding. Village DPW, H2M, and NCDPW are examining ways to reduce or eliminate these flooding issues. Regardless of any alternative solutions, it is important that proper maintenance of the existing drainage structures is done on a regular basis to avoid any flooding issue.

The other infrastructure areas – Sewer, electric, and gas – present no concerns, as sufficient capacity exists to serve the Village.

## **V. Urban Design**

---

## V. URBAN DESIGN

---

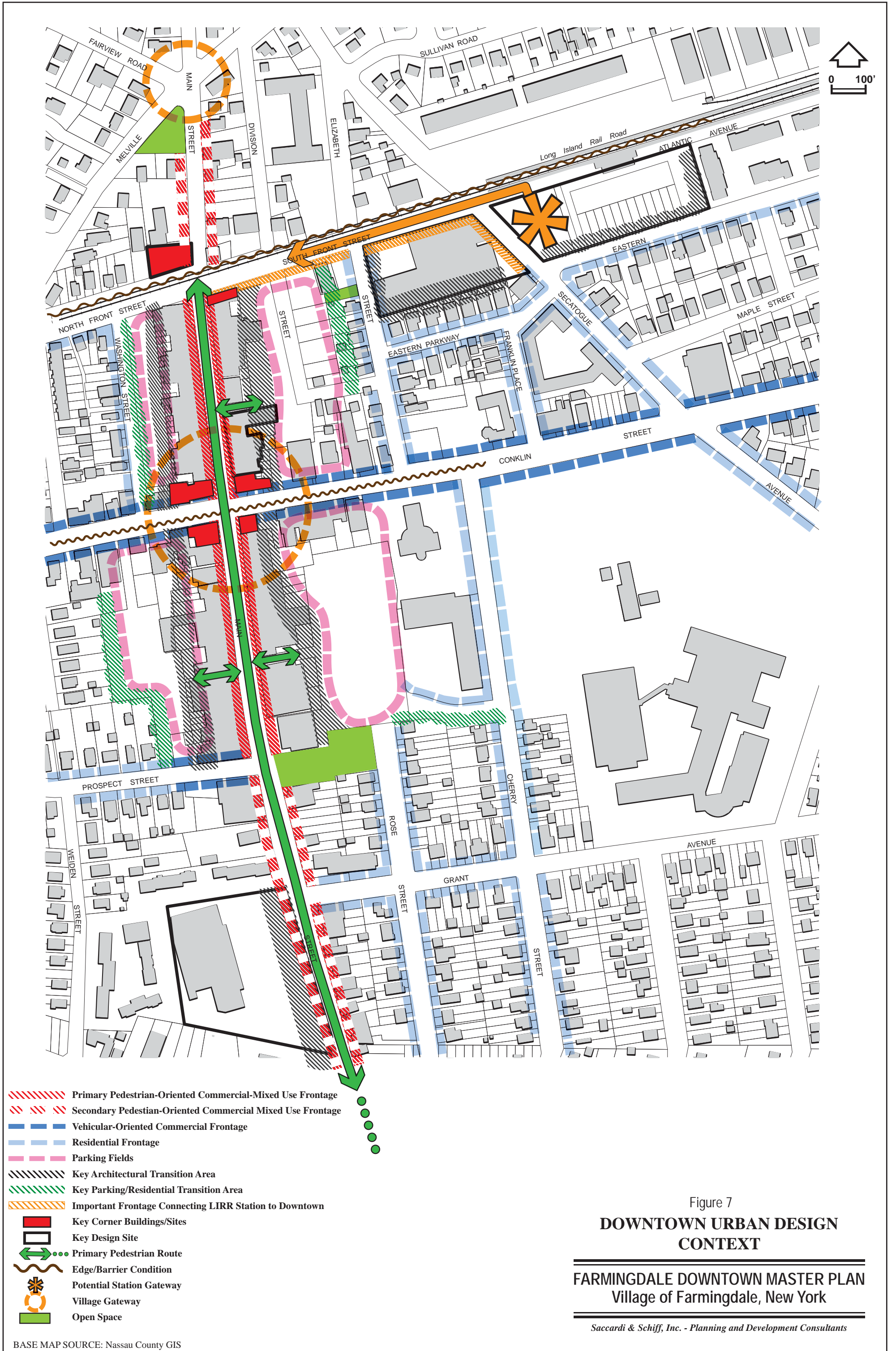
### A. Introduction

Four field visits were conducted to observe and record downtown urban design conditions in the Village of Farmingdale. These occurred at various times of day and night, including one full day field visit. The study focused on the buildings and lots that front Main Street and South Front Street, and adjoining lots, including Parking Fields 1-4, although conditions throughout the downtown study area were observed. The downtown study area generally extends from the Village boundary in the south north to the Melville Road/Secatogue Avenue intersection, bounded by Columbia Street/Waverly Place/Weiden Street on the west and the Village boundary/Maple Street/Secatogue Avenue/Cherry Street/Staples Street to the east.

Data was collected in the form of notes, mapping, and photography (over 500 photographs were taken) to record building, street, parking, open space and sidewalk conditions, and the locations of street furniture, signage, lighting, fencing, vegetation and utility lines.

From a design perspective, while downtown Farmingdale has many desirable physical elements, it somehow seems to not have a truly identifiable character. For example, in walking downtown, it is evident that there have been several intelligent and thoughtful efforts made to improve the quality of the downtown built environment, especially along Main Street (see photographs below and **Figure 7, Downtown Urban Design Context**). These improvements include:

- Hanging carved wood signs on most buildings;
- Inlaid brick along street edges of sidewalks to define pedestrian pathways;
- Decorative street lamps with banners, flags and hanging flower pots;
- Decorative street furniture including planters, benches and trash receptacles;
- Street trees and other vegetation;
- Small hardscaped pocket park area to the entrance to Parking Field 3 with a clock (with inscribed memorial bricks at its base), trees and benches;
- Widening of portions of the sidewalk along Main Street;
- Improvements to the Village Green.


















-  Primary Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial-Mixed Use Frontage
-  Secondary Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Mixed Use Frontage
-  Vehicular-Oriented Commercial Frontage
-  Residential Frontage
-  Parking Fields
-  Key Architectural Transition Area
-  Key Parking/Residential Transition Area
-  Important Frontage Connecting LIRR Station to Downtown
-  Key Corner Buildings/Sites
-  Key Design Site
-  Primary Pedestrian Route
-  Edge/Barrier Condition
-  Potential Station Gateway
-  Village Gateway
-  Open Space

Figure 7  
**DOWNTOWN URBAN DESIGN  
 CONTEXT**

---

**FARMINGDALE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN**  
 Village of Farmingdale, New York

---

*Saccardi & Schiff, Inc. - Planning and Development Consultants*



*Downtown Farmingdale exhibits evidence of properly designed improvements. Many stores have hanging carved wood signs (photo left); sidewalks have trees, planters, brick paving along the street edge and decorative street lamps with banners and other decorative items (photo middle); and the corner of Main Street and Conklin Street has an example of a very attractive*

As the above photographs suggest, to a large degree, Farmingdale has made sound, intelligent investments towards improving its downtown environment. The question then becomes, why, after all this effort, does downtown Farmingdale not have the genuine character and sense of place that all these improvements were supposed to impart? A second question then arises, what can be done to correct the situation? This report seeks to answer the first question and make initial suggestions that begin to answer the second. This section of the report is primarily an existing conditions and an evaluation of the design aspects of Farmingdale's downtown; more specific proposals and recommendations will be presented as part of the Downtown Master Plan.

## **B. General Observations**

### **1. Urban Form**

Downtown Farmingdale has a prototypical small village downtown form with streets and blocks built off a north-south "main street" spine (see **Figure 7, Downtown Urban Design Context**). Main Street is predominantly commercial in nature and is surrounded by blocks of mainly residential uses. The primary pedestrian-oriented and mixed use frontages occur on both sides of Main Street between Prospect Street and South Front Street. These are adjoined by secondary frontages that continue south on Main Street from Prospect Street to Fulton Street. These have uses that are slightly more automobile-oriented and are less pedestrian friendly. The frontages along Conklin Street, east and west of Main Street, are predominantly automobile-oriented, with a variety of uses, including larger stores and offices, religious and residential uses.

Farmingdale's "main street" urban form creates strong blocks along Main Street. These blocks remain well intact, although many of the original (2-3 stories) buildings that once occupied Main Street have been replaced by single-story shops. This urban form places greater importance on corner buildings, especially at the intersection of Conklin Street and Main Street, but also at the intersection of Main Street and South Front Street. Presently, these corners are not architecturally well defined.

Parking in the downtown is provided on-street and in four parking fields behind the stores on Main Street. These fields serve as buffers between the commercial uses on Main Street and the residential uses that adjoin to the east and west. Field observations suggest that these fields have two potential zones of transition—one that occurs between the commercial buildings and the parking lots and a second between the parking areas and the adjoining residential uses. Presently, neither of these transition zones is functioning to its potential. The transition between the buildings and parking areas is undefined and poorly maintained. The transition between the parking area and adjoining residential uses is also undefined and nonfunctional.

The train station serves a primary point of entry to the village for many, however, at present it does not provide a formal gateway. Also, there is no active frontage on South Front Street from Main Street to the LIRR station to connect the station to the downtown.

## 2. Architectural Character and Form

Downtown Farmingdale does not have an identifiable architectural character. Rather, the downtown is comprised of many diverse building types and architectural styles. While similar building types and architectural styling is not a prerequisite for place identity, it is a feature that can contribute strongly to sense of place. The primary issues concerning architectural form in Farmingdale seem to relate to two observable conditions. First is the obscuring of extant architectural character in many of the higher quality buildings in the downtown. Second is the loss of a traditional architectural vocabulary in newer buildings in the downtown and/or in older buildings that have been retrofitted or renovated. These issues are discussed below.

The architectural character of many of the higher quality buildings along Main Street is obscured due to poor signage placement and/or poor façade retrofits. For example, 300 Main Street is one of the last remaining original multi-story buildings on Main Street, however half of its brick façade has been painted and its uncoordinated signage program including an unattractive stretched awning, clutters its facade and hides the building's architectural character (see **Figure 8, 300 Main Street Façade Analysis**). There are other buildings in the downtown



Figure 8  
**300 MAIN STREET  
 FACADE ANALYSIS**

**FARMINGDALE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN**  
 Village of Farmingdale, New York



that suffer similar conditions. If improved, these buildings could make a stronger contribution to a collective sense of place in the downtown.

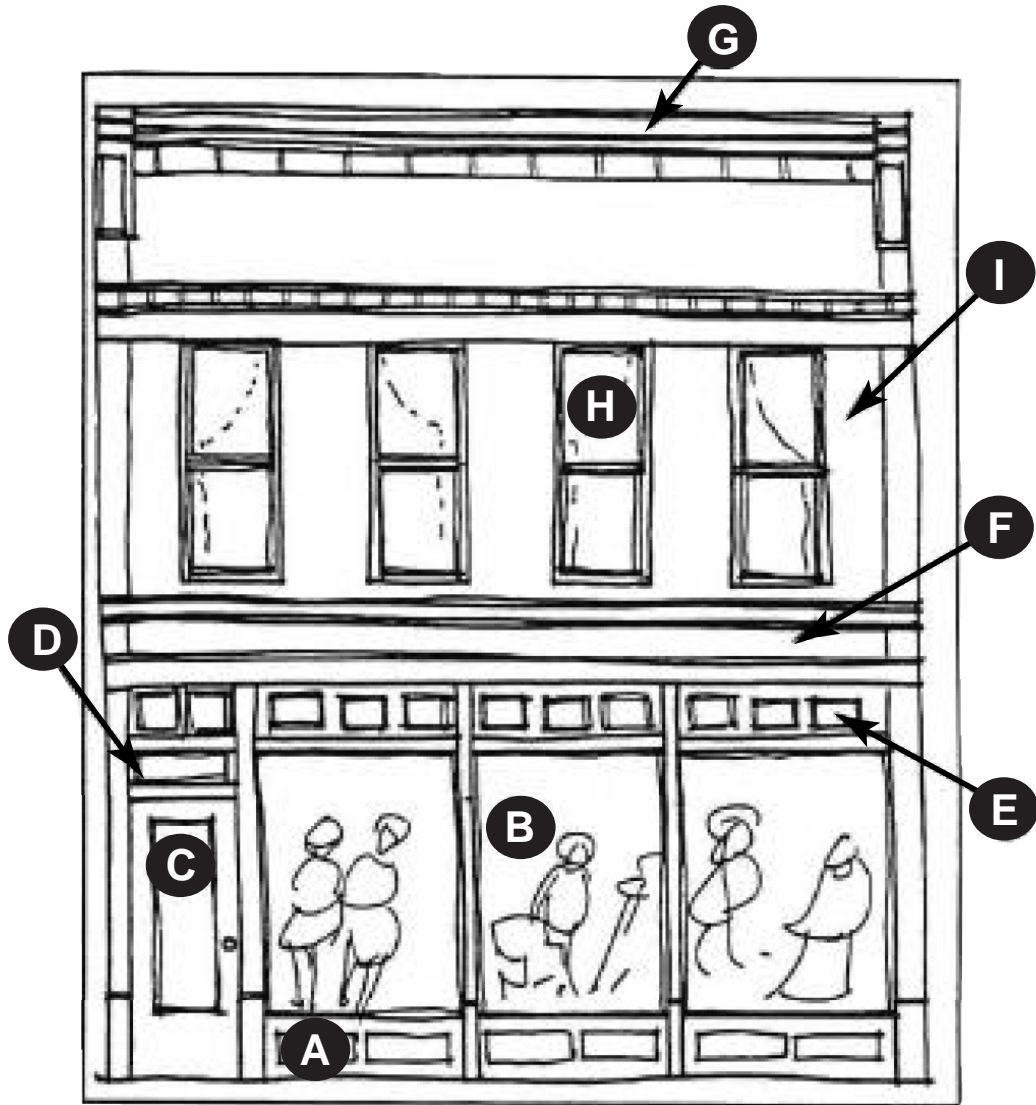
The traditional “main street” architectural vocabulary appears to have been lost in Farmingdale as evidenced by numerous façade retrofits and modifications. Traditional downtown buildings have a certain architectural vocabulary that includes, for example, kick plates along the bottom of storefronts, transoms above doorways, clerestory portions within the display windows, and dedicated sign bands above display windows to clearly differentiate between the first and second stories of a building (see **Figure 9, Traditional Façade Elements**). Generally, these elements align horizontally along a block, from building to building, to provide a sense of visual unity along the street. Contributing further to this visual unity is a rhythm created by buildings and storefronts of (or provide a sense of) approximately similar widths. Traditionally, even large buildings employed this architectural technique to provide scale and a sense rhythm to their facades. It appears that the intention behind many of the façade retrofits in the downtown was to modernize existing storefronts through the installation of new fenestration systems and other elements (such as false eaves) with the intention to unify the finer pattern of smaller storefronts. Ironically, these efforts have resulted in less unity amongst the buildings in downtown and less of a stable rhythm along Main Street (see **Figure 10, Main Street Façade & Signage Placement Analysis**).



*This building exhibits several problematic design conditions that are indicative of several buildings along Main Street. 1) The building appears as one uniform frontage, which breaks the rhythm of the traditional, smaller storefronts along Main Street. 2) The storefronts are occupied by offices with closed blinds, which create no visual interest for pedestrians. 3) While the signs on the building are aligned, the sign band has no visual relationship to neighboring buildings on the block. 4) The light box signs are inappropriate for downtown and the lettering is too large. 5) The windows are too tall without a clerestory partition for pedestrian scale. Overall, the design of this building is typical of a strip-mall, and contributes little to the character of Main Street.*



*While attractive and constructed of quality materials, this façade retrofit presents a monolithic appearance, which does not contribute positively to the finer-grained appearance of a traditional Main Street. The building, one of the tallest on Main Street, could also be improved with a cornice or cap.*



- A. Kick plates as base to building fronts
- B. First floor display windows
- C. Recessed central entrance areas or angled entrances on corners
- D. Transoms above entrance doors
- E. Clerestory portions of display windows
- F. Sign bands
- G. Parapet walls with caps or cornices
- H. Vertical window patterns, shapes, window sills on 2nd floor
- I. Pilasters and decorative brick or stone

Figure 9

**TRADITIONAL FACADE ELEMENTS**

---

**FARMINGDALE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN**

**Village of Farmingdale, New York**

---



Closed shutters on offices disrupt pedestrian environment

Poor signage and window style disrupts pedestrian shopping interest

Cut-out letters signage

Punch-through windows detract from "Main Street" character

Monolithic building façade inappropriate for "Main Street" environment: better suited for strip mall setting. Closed shutters on office windows disrupt pedestrian shopping interest

Mixed signage and awning styles hide the architectural character of one of the few remaining traditional buildings on Main Street

Unique sign contributes positively to building's architecture, however sign needs repair. Awning in poor condition

Monolithic façade detracts from "Main Street" character

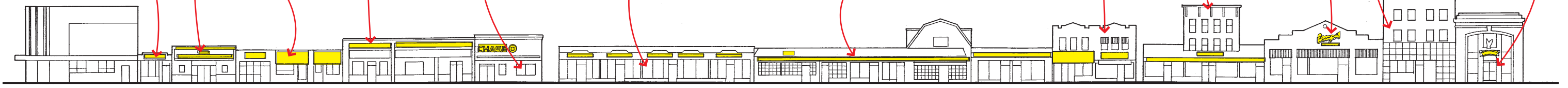
Library Café should serve as model for all downtown store fronts and buildings

Missing building cap (cornice)

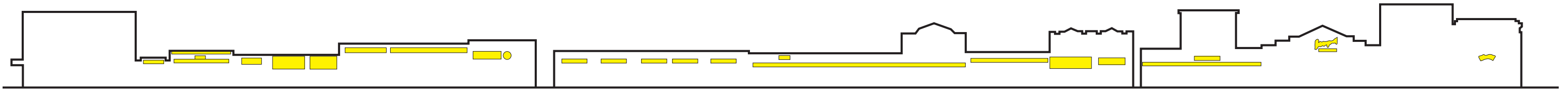
Lightbox signage

Awning signage hinders architectural character of building and provides minimal shade for outdoor dining

Unified roof line and single light box sign banner disrupts architectural rhythm of the Main Street and obscures original Main Street building



**Existing Building/Façade Rhythm (irregular)**



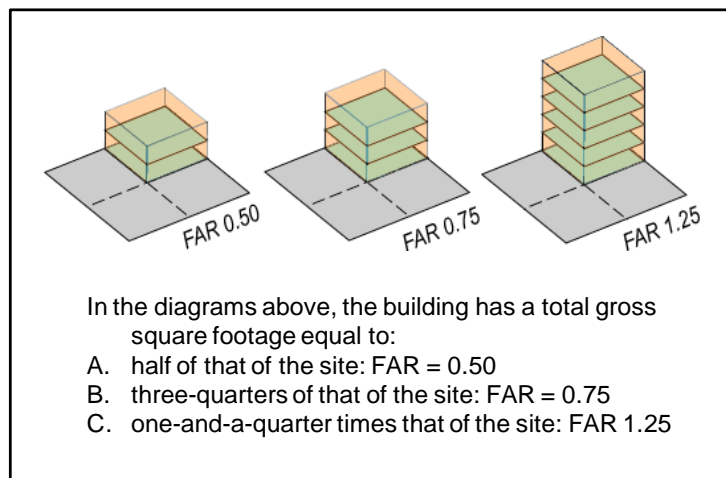
**Existing Signage Placement and Alignment (unaligned)**

Figure 10  
**MAIN STREET FAÇADE AND SIGN PLACEMENT ANALYSIS**  
 FARMINGDALE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN  
 Village of Farmingdale, New York

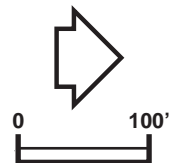
### 3. Building Height and Density

Building height and density are important generators of urban form. Building height is an important factor because taller buildings, even those as tall as two-stories, help create an urban wall, which defines the space of a main street environment. Density is related to height in that parcels with higher allowable density generally allow for taller buildings. Density is also an important economic factor for developers. Generally, the higher the land costs, the higher the density is required to make a development proposal economically viable. Density is usually expressed in terms of "Floor Area Ratio" (FAR), which is the ratio of the total (gross) square footage of a building, generally excluding mechanical space, basements and sometimes circulations elements such as elevators or stair bulkheads, compared to the total square footage its building lot. **Figure 11, Floor Area Ratio Explained** provides a graphic explanation of how FAR is measured.

**Figure 11**  
**Floor Area Ratio Explained**



As depicted in **Figure 12, Approximate Building Heights and FAR on Main Street**, the approximate height of buildings and facades along Main Street is predominantly one-and-a-half stories, with some smaller buildings (1.5 story) and taller buildings (up to 3.5 stories, notably at the corner of Prospect Street and Conklin Street and on the northern portion of Main Street). Analysis of existing FARs along Main Street shows three distinct areas of density. The highest density exists between Conklin Street and Front Street. The second highest density occurs between Prospect Street and Conklin Street, and the lowest density occurs south of Prospect Street south to Fulton Street (see **Figure 13, Existing Floor Area Ratios in Downtown Study Area** and **Table 14, Existing FAR for Parcels Fronting Main Street**). The FARs presented in **Table 14** are relatively low for a downtown area.



- 1 Story Building
- 1.5 Story Building
- 2.0 Story Building
- 2.5 Story Building
- 3.0 Story Building
- 3.5 Story Building

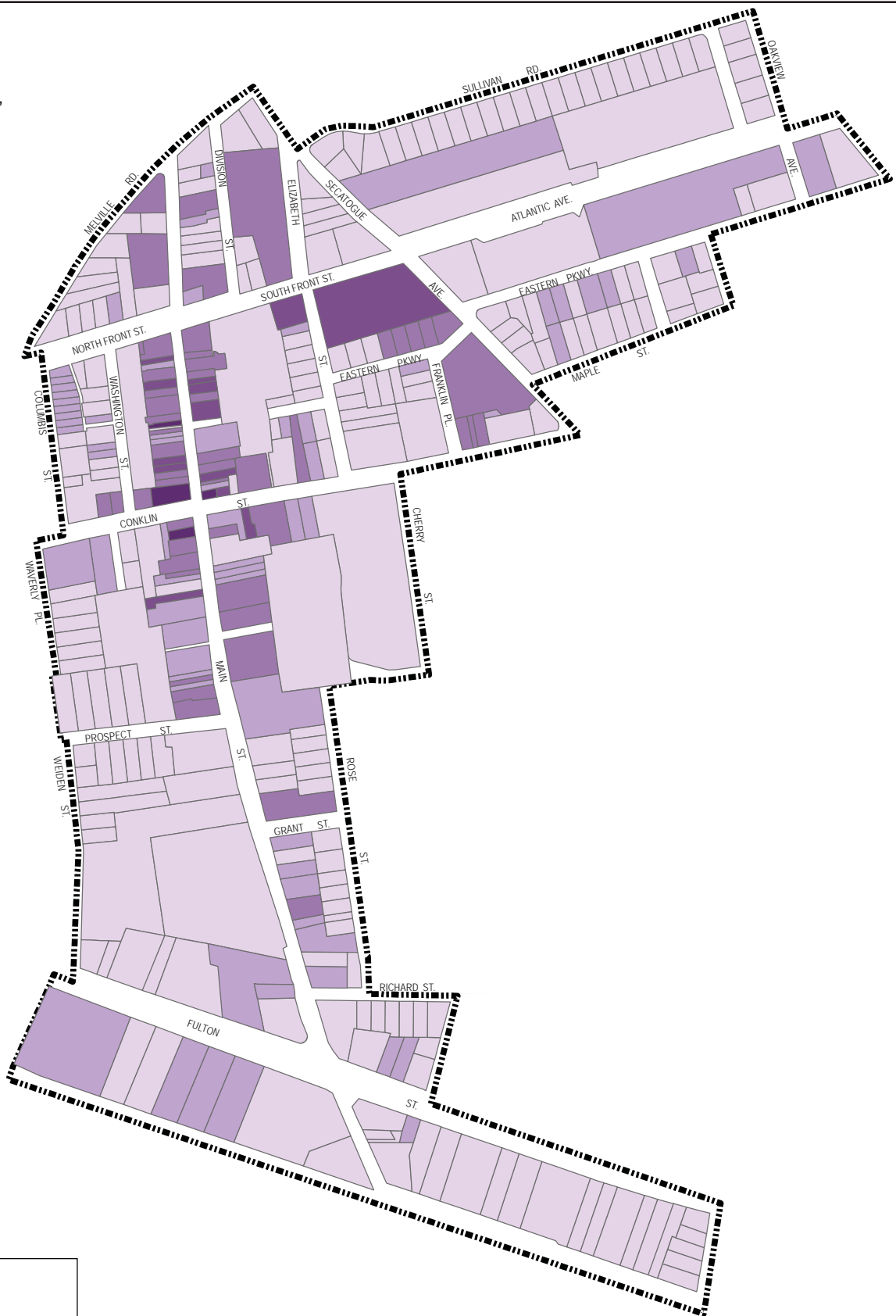
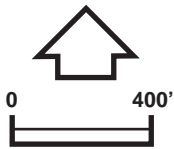
**Average FAR**

A. Fulton Street to Prospect Street = 0.54

B. Prospect Street to Conklin Street = 1.09

C. Conklin Street to South Front Street = 1.38

Figure 12  
**APPROXIMATE BUILDING HEIGHTS  
 AND FAR ON MAIN STREET**  
 FARMINGDALE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN  
 Village of Farmingdale, New York



LEGEND	
	0.00 - 0.50
	0.51 - 1.00
	1.01 - 1.75
	1.76 - 2.25
	2.26 - 2.85

Figure 13  
**EXISTING FLOOR AREA RATIO (FAR)  
 IN DOWNTOWN STUDY AREA**  
**FARMINGDALE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN**  
 Village of Farmingdale, New York

**Table 14**  
**Existing FAR for Parcels Fronting Main Street (3 Identifiable Areas of Density)**

Portion of Main Street	Approximate Boundaries	Number of Parcels	Average Parcel Size (S.F.)	Average FAR
Southern	Fulton Street to Prospect Street	22	28,820	0.54
Center	Prospect Street to Conklin Street	25	8,113	1.09
Northern	Conklin Street to South Front Street	34	4,061	1.38
All Parcels	Fulton Street to South Front Street	81	12,037	1.09

*SOURCE: Nassau County GIS, 2007*

Accordingly, there are more multistory buildings on the northern portion of Main Street, north of Conklin Street, but these occur sporadically, and do not create a cohesive urban wall. If additional density were to be allowed along Main Street, it should reinforce this pattern of tiered density with the highest density being permitted north of Conklin Street and the lowest being permitted south of Prospect Street. This strategy would serve several purposes. First it would reinforce the existing density pattern along Main Street. Second, it would provide greater density of uses, including residential uses, closer to the Farmingdale LIRR station. Further, the building lots along both sides of the northern portion of Main Street are reared by parking lots, with a street (Washington Street) separating parking from residential uses on the west side, and a very wide parking lot behind the buildings on the east side of Main Street. Both of these conditions would allow for ample buffering between any potential increase in density in this area and adjacent residential uses and would provide a zone for orderly architectural transition in order to protect quality of life of residents whose homes adjoin the downtown area. Finally, a tiered density approach would provide an identifiable urban form to the downtown and place greater emphasis on the northern portion of Main Street, which has been identified as being the most economically challenged portion of Main Street. This portion of Main Street has the most vacancies, and is therefore where redevelopment is most likely to occur and do so with least amounts of disruption and displacement.

This tiered density strategy is very different than simply allowing a small and uniform increment of growth along the whole length of Main Street. It is more purposeful and contextual, and would move the Village towards creating a more identifiable built urban form and character in its downtown. A uniform development strategy, such as allowing an additional story above any building along Main Street, could produce a sporadic pattern of development as a result of variation in buildings' structural capacities to support an additional story, and in the willingness of property owners to redevelop. This would produce an urban form not unlike that which currently exists along Main Street today, where 3.5 story buildings sit astride one-story buildings, failing to create a cohesive urban wall.

A tiered approach to density, as suggested, does not, however, preclude second story residential development occurring along Main Street south of Conklin Street. In fact, from an urban design perspective, it would be desirable if some parcels south of Conklin, such as those near the corner of Conklin Street and Main Street, received some additional FAR and height in order to provide greater visual importance to the downtown's primary intersection. But, generally, under a tiered strategy, if new development were to occur on Main Street, density and height should be encouraged from south to north, from Fulton Street to South Front Street.

Of note with respect to building height is that it appears that Main Street traditionally had taller buildings, especially near the intersection of Main Street and Conklin Street. Two of the finest buildings in the downtown are located at this intersection: the former Farmingdale library, which is now the Library Café, and a former classical revival bank building, now occupied by Carman, Callahan, and Ingham law offices, on the southwest and northwest corners respectively. These buildings should be viewed as anchors for the intersection. On the opposite corners from these buildings are two less attractive buildings that should be refurbished, or preferably replaced. This intersection plays an important role by forming the primary corners in the downtown, and should therefore be designed to convey its importance.

#### 4. Pedestrian Environment, Street Design and Walkability

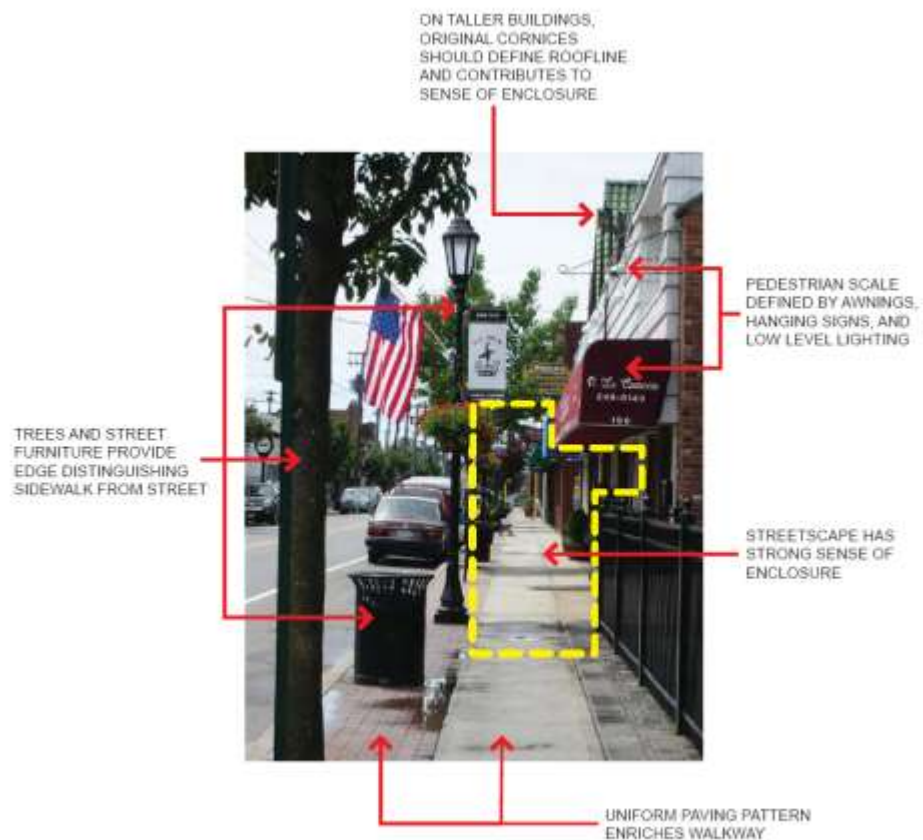
##### a. Pedestrian Enclosure

A strong sense of pedestrian enclosure along the sidewalk is an important sensory condition that is created through the use of physical elements such as street trees, street furniture, and building details such as cornices and awnings by providing a separation between the street and the sidewalk, and a sense of human scale provided by an overhead canopy. Observation suggests that Main Street provides an acceptable level enclosure along its sidewalks through the use of these elements, and this contributes positively to Farmingdale's small downtown character (see **Figure 14, Pedestrian Enclosure in Farmingdale**). There are stretches of Main Street where conditions could be improved, including areas where there are non-functioning or damaged awnings and where stretched fabric awning signs exist (e.g. 300 and 282 Main Street). Damaged, non-functioning awning should be repaired and awning signs should be replaced with traditional functional awnings that have minimal signage lettering. With few exceptions, taller buildings on Main Street are missing ornamental cornices, which help define the roofline and building form where it meets the



skyline. These important elements reinforce a pedestrian’s sense of enclosure and add character to the urban street wall. Missing cornices or building caps should be reinstated as part of a downtown façade improvement program, and new development should include a cornice element. While almost every building along Main Street has a hanger for a carved wood sign, some signs are missing and should be reinstated. The presence of bare hangers gives a blighted appearance to the downtown streetscape. The pedestrian environment could also be improved with installation of low-level sconce lighting on buildings’ vertical façade elements. Various façade elements, as present in Farmingdale, are depicted in **Figure 10, Main Street Façade and Signage Placement Analysis** and **Figure 8, 300 Main Street Façade Analysis**.

**Figure 14**  
**Pedestrian Enclosure in Farmingdale**



b. Sidewalks

A uniform paving pattern enriches the sidewalk for pedestrians and helps define walking and resting zones along the walkway. This paving pattern also reinforces the separation between the sidewalk

and the street. While almost all sidewalks along Main Street have some paving pattern, including brick pavers along the street edge, there are places where the pavers and/or curb edges are in need of repair. These damaged areas give the downtown a “run-down” appearance and could be improved.

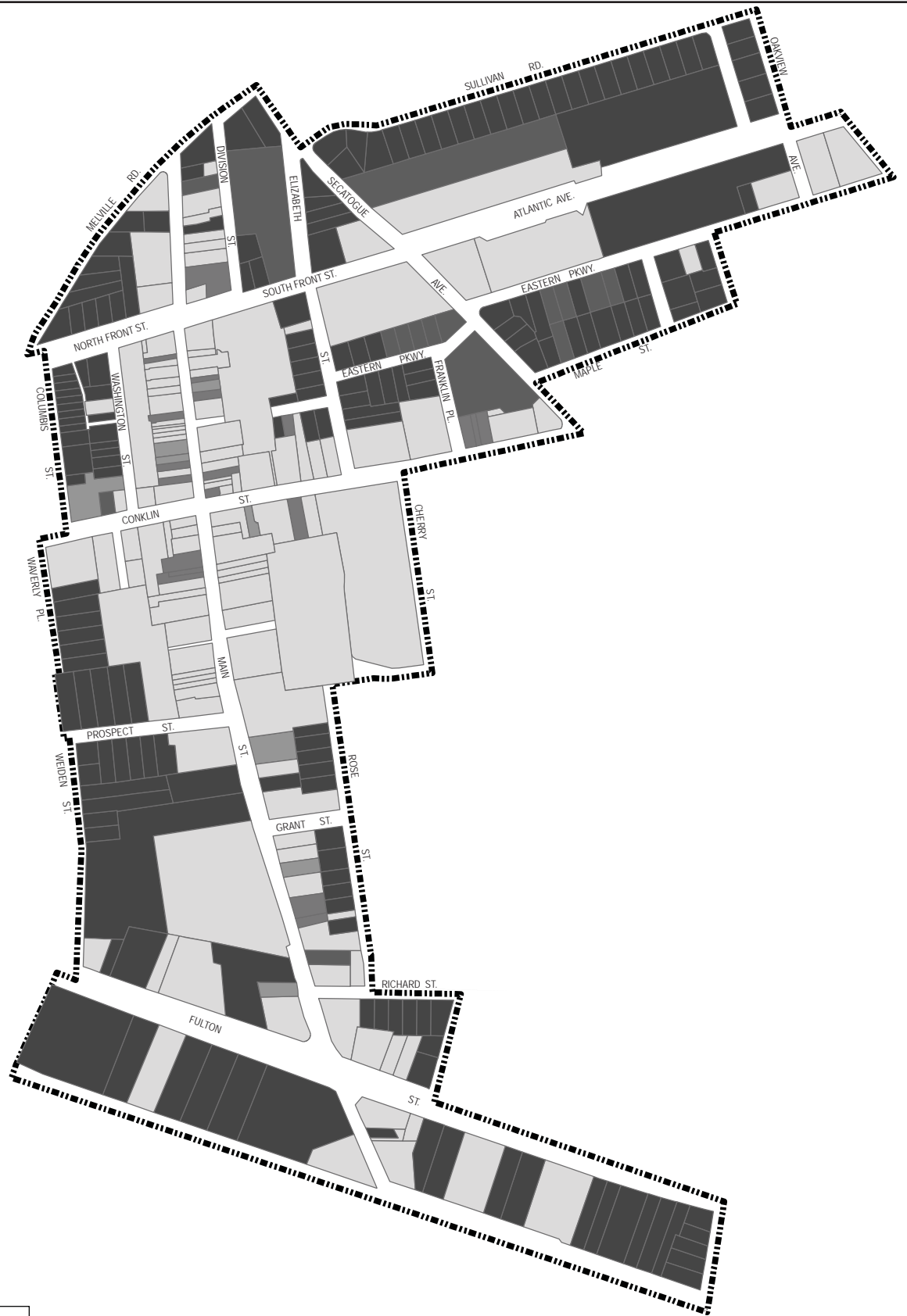
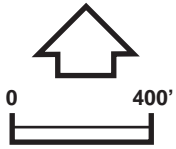
c. Program

Street level office uses distract from the pedestrian experience by disrupting the visual interest along the street. According to the market study conducted by ERA, Main Street office users are attracted to the transit proximity offered by the Village. In order to preserve viable office uses as part of a mixed-use program for Main Street and promote an active pedestrian shopping environment, it is suggested that future development on Main Street allocate office uses to spaces above retail store fronts.

While Farmingdale has a high number of residential uses in close proximity to its downtown, these mainly occur in single-family residential units found on the surrounding street network. Very little residential development exists along Main Street (above retail or otherwise). According to Nassau County Assessment Data, of the 81 parcels that front Main Street, 57 have no residential use, 7 have between 1%-25% of their total square footage area dedicated to residential use, 12 have between 26%-50% of their total square footage area dedicated to residential use, 1 has 51%-75% of its total square footage area dedicated to residential use, and 4 have between 76% and 100% of their total square footage area dedicated to residential use. **Figure 15, Percentage of Building in Residential Use in Downtown Study Area** shows the distribution of residential use in the downtown study area. More residential uses, preferably above retail uses, should be developed along Main Street in order to create a more mixed use environment.

d. Street Trees

Street trees along Main Street are young, healthy and are generally well cared for. However, the tree wells could benefit from more maintenance with respect to litter clean-up and their appearance could be improved with decorative grates or by planting vegetative ground cover. Almost every tree was observed to have litter in its tree well, and the open soil presented an unattractive appearance (which might explain why people throw refuse there).



LEGEND	
	0%
	1%-25%
	26%-50%
	51%-75%
	76%-100%

Figure 15  
**PERCENTAGE OF BUILDING IN  
 RESIDENTIAL USE  
 IN DOWNTOWN STUDY AREA**  


---

---

**FARMINGDALE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN**  
 Village of Farmingdale, New York

e. Street Furniture

Some street furniture is poorly placed and is non-conducive to practical use. For example, several benches were observed to be in disrepair and all benches along Main Street were backless, which does not encourage prolonged sitting. Benches in the hardscaped clock tower park at the entrance to Parking Field X and those in the Village Green have backs and people were observed sitting and enjoying these areas.

f. Fencing

The use of chain link fencing along pedestrian walkways along Main Street. Chain link fencing, while affordable, does not contribute to the character of downtown and could be replaced by other fencing material, including painted wood, low stone or brick walls. The base of fencing could be softened with vegetative ground cover.

g. Utility Lines

Utility lines that run on the east side of Main Street contribute negatively to the aesthetic character of downtown. Not only do they contribute to the visual clutter of Main Street, their numerous poles detract from the pedestrian environment along the sidewalk. While submerging these lines underground would be ideal, the associated cost would likely be prohibitive. Alternatively, these lines could be placed to the rear of stores, as has been done on the west side of Main Street. **Figure 16, Visual Clutter of Utility Lines on Main Street** shows a before and after image with and without utility lines for a portion of Main Street. Also, see **Figure 17, Existing Placement of Street Furniture on Main Street**.

## C. Signage

### 1. Store Signage

Downtown Farmingdale has a wide variety of sign styles from attractive carved wood hanging signs to large interior illuminated light-box wall signs. Other sign styles include awning signs, cutout-applied letter signage, hanging window signs, illuminated letters and corporate logo signage, painted sheet metal signs, and plastic banner signs. Many stores have more than one style of sign (e.g. a light-box sign and a carved wood hanging sign). There are a variety sign shapes and sizes along Main Street and the area within each sign panel dedicated to typeface and graphics varies widely. In an environment with so many



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**

Figure 16  
**VISUAL CLUTTER OF UTILITY LINES  
ON MAIN STREET**

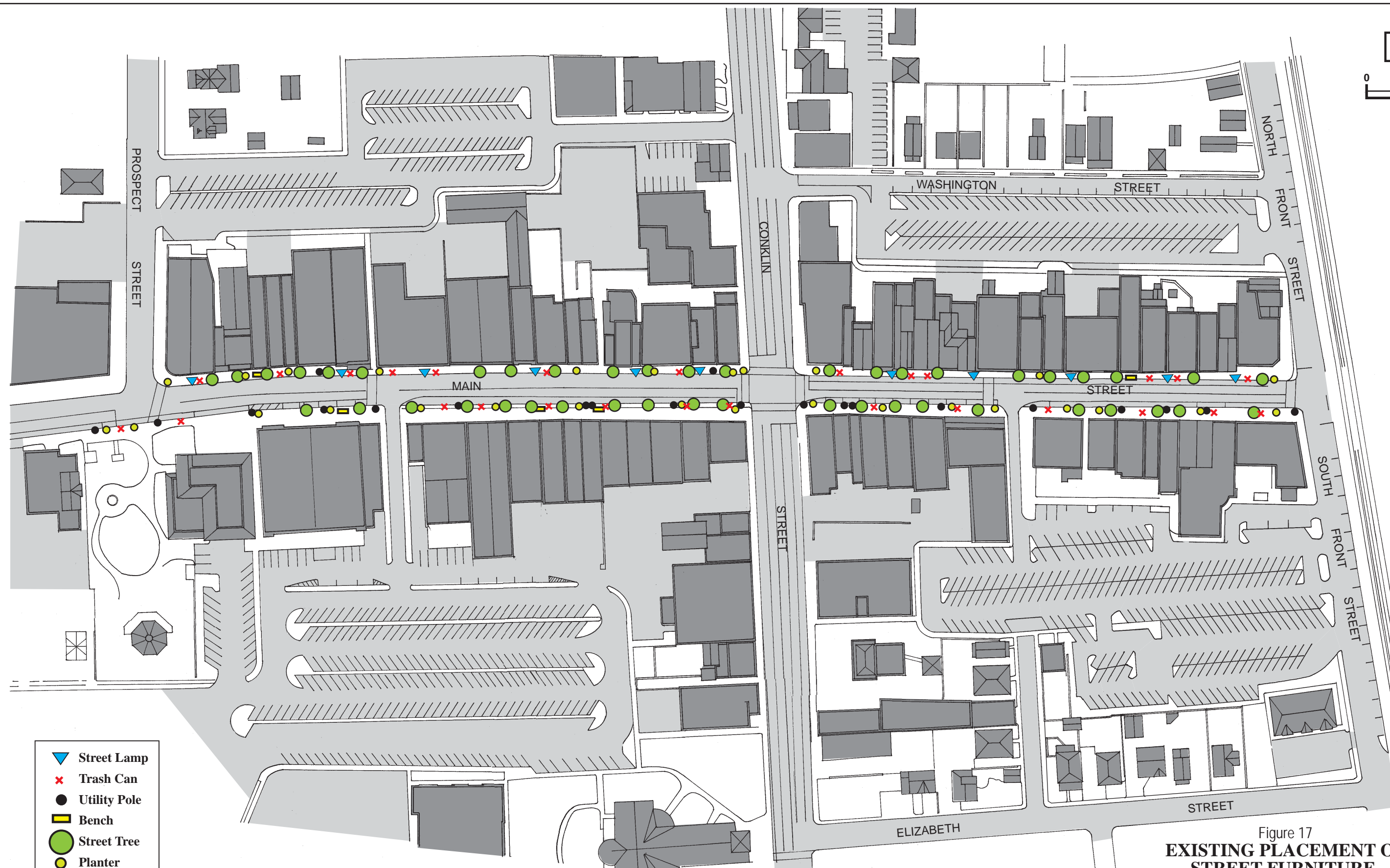
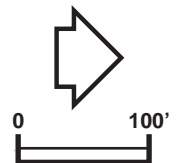
---

---

**FARMINGDALE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN**  
Village of Farmingdale, New York

---

---









-  Street Lamp
-  Trash Can
-  Utility Pole
-  Bench
-  Street Tree
-  Planter

Figure 17  
**EXISTING PLACEMENT OF  
STREET FURNITURE  
ON MAIN STREET**  
FARMINGDALE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN  
Village of Farmingdale, New York

signs, each competes for attention (and also with the architecture), instead of conveying a message simply and effectively. This detracts from creating a unified Main Street appearance, which would help create a more positive downtown character. For example, although most buildings have attractive hanging signs, which appear to have been part of an earlier downtown improvement effort, these beautiful signs are hardly noticeable. The overall condition of signage along Main Street is generally fair to poor. For example, several signs are missing letters or lenses, thus exposing light bulbs or neon, and many awning signs are torn or have peeling letters. Many awnings are heavily sun-damaged and are in need of replacement.

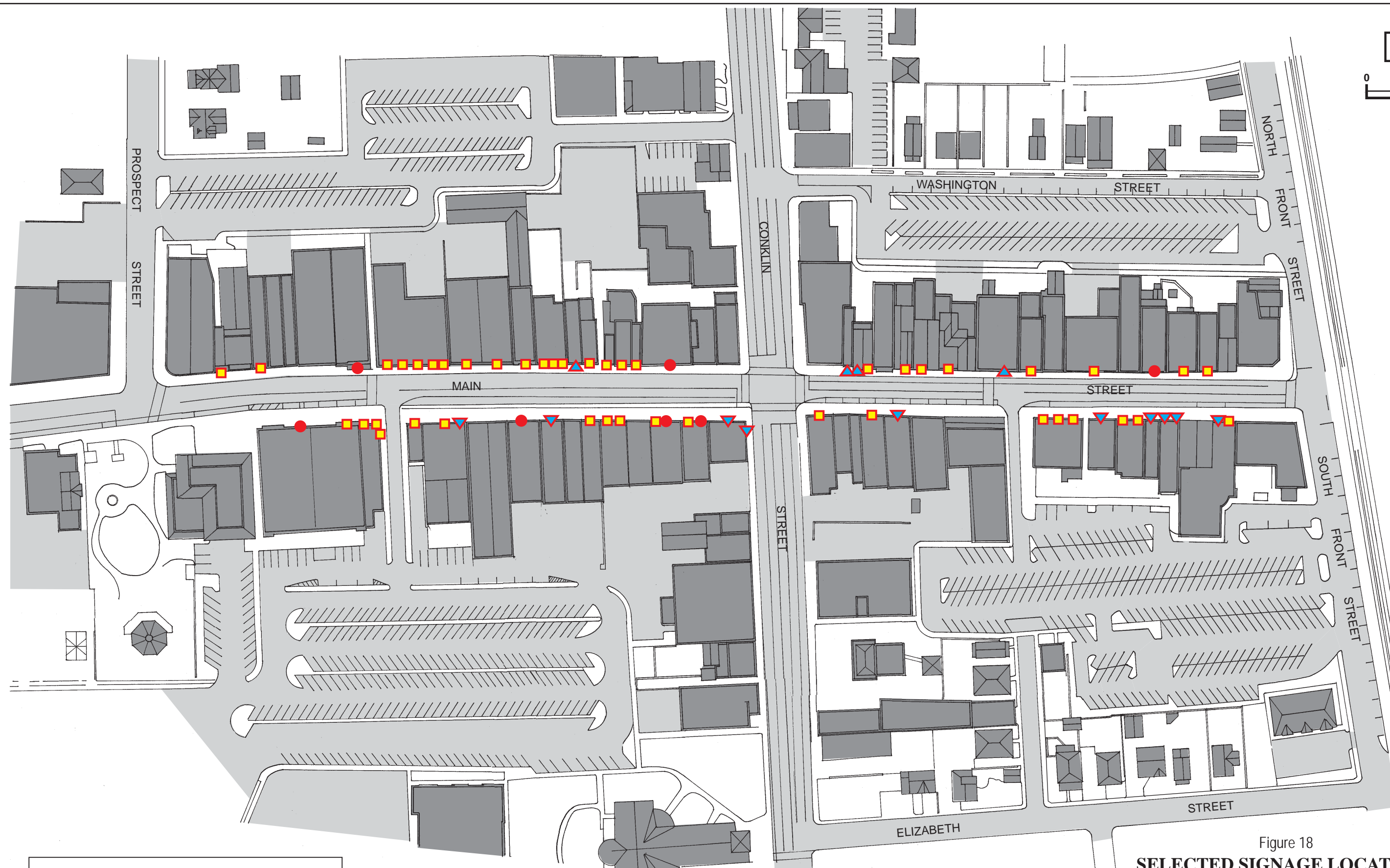
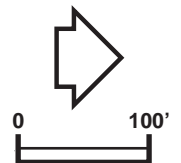
There is a general lack of consistency with respect to placement of signs on buildings, and this, along with the prevalence of light-box signs, may be one of the most significant detractors to the downtown environment. Also, signs are not aligned with one another, from building to building along each block (see **Figure 10, Main Street Façade and Signage Placement Analysis**), and signage is often poorly placed so as to obscure important architectural details or disrupt the architectural balance of a building's facade. For example, some awning-style signs reach to the building's parapet while others allow for additional signage to be placed above the awning. The sheer number, variety, inconsistency in placement and condition of signage along Main Street gives a cluttered and unkempt impression to downtown. **Figure 18, Selected Signage Location on Main Street** shows the locations of selected signs observed along Main Street.



*Stretched fabric (internally illuminated) awning signs such as this are incompatible with creating an attractive small downtown environment. This sign detracts from an otherwise attractive brick building. Also, this sign provides unnecessary information by repeating the store name and is visually unappealing. These types of awning signs should be discouraged along Main Street.*



*While fabric awning signs such as this present an attractive image, they can hide important architectural elements and provide little effective shade. Shallow awnings like this contribute little to the pedestrians' sense of enclosure along the street. Traditional awnings should be preferred.*






-  Light Box Sign (Internally Illuminated) (44)
-  Stretched-Fabric Awning Sign (Illuminated) (14)
-  Cut Out Letters (Illuminated) or Neon (7)

Figure 18  
**SELECTED SIGNAGE LOCATIONS  
ON MAIN STREET**  
FARMINGDALE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN  
Village of Farmingdale, New York





*There are several examples of good signage along Main Street. One of the best can be found on the Library Café, which could serve as a model for the rest of Main Street. Here, the signs are high-quality wood carved signs that are well placed to enhance the architecture. The signs communicate their message simply and effectively, and the colors are understated yet visually pleasing. The hanging sign is visible from the street and does not compete for attention with other signs on the façade. While signage like this costs more than other types of signs, the result is a visually pleasing environment where people will want to spend their time.*



*The condition of signage along Main Street varies. This unique sign actually compliments the building, but it is missing lenses in front of letters and the awning is tattered and sun-faded. The large green window posters are unnecessary and contribute to a cluttered appearance along the street and detract from the pedestrian experience.*



*Signage should be durable and easy to maintain. While an otherwise attractive awning sign, the lettering on this awning needs replacement. Generally, cost influences buyers of signage towards less expensive formats that tend to deteriorate quickly.*

## 2. Street and Informational Signage

There is an over abundance of informational signage in downtown, much of it being standard NYSDOT signage mounted on perforated metal channel. Many of the sign posts are bent or askew, and some signs partially obstruct the pedestrian pathway at or near eye level. Placement is disorganized and inefficient: for example, there are parking signs on posts just feet away from another type of sign. These could be combined to minimize the number of posts along Main Street. Informational signage, while necessary and helpful, does not have to be unattractive. There are a few examples of attractive informational signage in the downtown, including the street signs at the corner of Main Street and Conklin Street and the public parking sign on East Front Street. These attractive signs function as well as the standard NYSDOT signs, but add more character to the downtown environment. Generally, like store signage in the downtown, the sheer number, variety, inconsistency in placement and condition of the informational signage along Main Street also contributes to a cluttered and unkempt impression to downtown.



*Examples of good and bad informational signage—the two photos on the left show examples of good informational signage. The public parking sign on East Front Street directs visitors to Parking Field 3 and lends a sense of character appropriate for a small downtown. The street signage on the corner of Main Street and Conklin Street is another example of a very attractive information street signage is another example of appropriate informational signage. Contrast these to the standard NYSDOT parking sign on Conklin Street. There are many opportunities to improve the informational signage in the downtown and create a stronger sense of place.*

### 3. Review of Signage Regulations in Village Code

Sections 83-2 through 83-18 of the Farmingdale Village Code regulate signage. An examination of these regulations suggests that, while they provide broad regulatory controls, including size, placement, colors of temporary and permanent signs, awning signs, freestanding sign and others types, the reality observed in the downtown suggests they may be insufficient in their detail to create an attractive downtown environment. For example, Section 83-14 provides design guidelines for signage in the village. While these guidelines appear sufficient in their scope to guide signage generally in the village, the language may be too broad to effectively regulate signage in the downtown area—the code allows awning signage everywhere in the village, including the downtown, which per the discussion above, awning signs, especially the stretched fabric, internally illuminated versions, may be counterproductive to creating an aesthetically pleasing the downtown environment. Therefore, these guidelines should be reviewed and appropriately amended. Some recommendations include creating a separate section in the code to regulate signage in the downtown. This section might include a listing or visual examples of appropriate and inappropriate signage for the downtown, and more specific language with respect to materials, lighting, and signage typeface. This approach, supplemented by design guidelines (discussed below), has been used by other communities to effectively regulate signage in service of creating attractive downtown environments with a strong sense of place.

#### D. Parking Fields

There are four primary parking fields located behind the storefronts on Main Street (see **Figure 7, Urban Design Context**), and several other Village- and privately-owned parking lots in the downtown study area. Use and capacity of these lots are discussed in detail in the traffic section of this report. From a design standpoint, conditions observed at the parking areas suggest a range of opportunities from improving their appearance to allowing for limited infill development. These are discussed below.

Initial observations suggest that Parking Fields 1-4 function fairly efficiently, although it may be possible to increase capacity and vehicular circulation through restriping. The physical appearance of these areas, however, indicates that they are not well maintained. For example, there are places where the curb edges of traffic islands are in need of repair, and areas where surface repairs are needed. Traffic islands used to direct traffic have very little vegetative planting, and trees are planted in islands in Parking Fields 1 and 4 only. Only one tree was observed in Parking

Fields 2 and 3, which have large areas of diagonal hatch striping rather than curbed traffic islands. In addition, very few trees or other plantings were observed along the perimeters in all four parking fields to help visually screen and audibly buffer the parking areas from adjacent residential uses. Entrances to Parking Fields 2 and 3 are formally defined with curbing and islands, some of which are half-split with a sidewalk and planting strip, but none of which are planted, and none use low walls or other means to screen the parking area from the public right-of-way. This was especially evident along the Parking Field 3, where it abuts South Front Street and at the entrance to Parking Field 1 on Prospect Street which is undefined along the sidewalk—the sidewalk and parking area are not physically differentiated. Pedestrian circulation within the fields was not clearly defined in any of the parking fields.



*The entrances to Parking Field 3 along South Front Street could be improved with low walls and vegetative screening to reduce the visual impact of the parking areas and to better define the pedestrian right-of-way.*



*This parking entrance to McCourt-Truden Funeral Home abuts Main Street is attractive and functional. The low wall also serves as a sign marquee and the low cover vegetation helps distinguish the sidewalk from the parking and maintains lines of sight.*

Collectively, these conditions give the Parking Fields an unattractive appearance, which reflects negatively on the downtown as a whole. Given the fact that many people arrive downtown by car, it is important to recognize the important role that the Parking Fields play as functional gateways to the downtown. They are where many people will begin their downtown experience, and therefore their design and appearance should be considered important elements in building and improving downtown character.



*Traffic islands in parking areas, such as these in Parking Field 4, could be landscaped to improve the appearance of the parking lot.*



*The private residences behind the McCourt-Trudden Funeral Home parking lot are barely visible through the use of effective screening. This strategy could be applied elsewhere in the downtown to buffer commercial and residential areas.*

Several strategies could be employed to improve the appearance and use of the parking fields. These include general maintenance tasks such as weeding and repairing broken curbs, which give the parking lots a “run-down” appearance and could be improved. Beyond general maintenance, the visual impact of all parking lots in the downtown could be reduced through the following strategies:

- Subdivide parking lots into smaller areas through the use of landscaping and/or other visual elements including planting strips/islands, ground cover or shrubs to separate double rows of parking. It was observed that some areas of the Village’s parking fields employ planting strips to separate double rows, but these elements need replanting with ground cover and/or trees.
- Connect parking areas to one another and to Main Street through the use of clearly defined pedestrian pathways within the parking areas. These pathways can be formed through the use of islands and/or alternate paving treatments.
- Where parking areas abut public sidewalks, formally separate the parking area from the pedestrian public right-of-way. This can be accomplished through the use of landscaped buffers. These should be at least 6 feet wide or equal to the setback of adjacent buildings. Several parking areas provide planting strips between the parking areas and sidewalk, but these areas should be planted with vegetation that provides visual screening to reduce the visual impact of the parking areas.
- At vehicular entrances to parking lots, vegetative screens or low walls of a material similar to adjacent buildings should be provided to minimize the visual impact of the parking areas. These areas can also

be planted with small trees and shrubbery, but care will be needed to be given to protecting sight lines for pedestrians and vehicles.

- Where parking areas abut private residences provide vegetative buffer including trees. None of the parking areas observed to provide adequate screening for adjacent residential uses.
- Provide ample lighting within the parking area. Lighting design should be given the same attention as other design elements, including consideration for providing lighting that not only provides adequate security but is also attractive and contributes to sense of place.
- Service facilities such as refuse dumpsters, recycling areas and utility equipment should be sufficiently attractively screened with fencing and vegetation. It was observed that some dumpsters in the parking fields were screened with chain link fencing and aluminum slats. These could be improved with alternate fencing material, including painted wood or brick walls with vegetation used to soften the base.

From a design standpoint, the parking fields offer several other more creative design opportunities aimed at not only improving the parking areas, but also downtown on the whole. These include allowing for alternate uses and limited infill development as discussed below.

While not formally part of Main Street, the transitional space between the backs of the buildings and the parking fields warrant greater attention. Currently, the space is unattractive and could be improved, beyond that this space should be viewed as an important zone of architectural transition. If new development were to occur on Main Street (e.g. residential above retail) this space should be rendered so as to provide a functional buffer between the parking and residential units. This would increase the market viability of residential uses along Main Street, and increase the comfort level of the residents. This area should also function to provide a buffer between Main Street business environment and residential uses in the surrounding neighborhoods.

More specifically, in Parking Fields 3 and 4 for example, the 30' to 50' wide zone between the backs of buildings and the parking areas could serve as a new linear multi-functional green space. This area could be planted with trees to buffer and screen the parking area, and designed with hardscape and landscaped areas to allow restaurants and bars to hold patio dining in the park. It was observed that at least one business currently provides patio service in the rear of its establishment in this area, but has to screen this within an 8' wood fence. If improved, this space could also serve as a location for a linear "Farmers' Market in Farmingdale" or an annual crafts fair and other programmatic functions that would enhance and promote downtown business. Service functions such as trash, deliveries, fire access, and other required functions that presently occur along this edge would also be accommodated in the

design. This design concept will be further explored in the downtown plan document.

Infill development may be appropriate in Parking Field 3 along its northern frontage along South Front Street. New infill development at this location would help create a cohesive pedestrian connection between the LIRR station and the northern portion of Main Street. The purpose for making this connection would be to integrate the train station better into the downtown by providing a more attractive route for residents living in the station area, including those of any future transit oriented development that might occur, as well as for Farmingdale visitors who arrive by train. It appears from observation that this connection has received previous attention: the sidewalks along the south side of South Front Street have brick pavers and street trees are present. Strengthening the LIRR station/Main Street connection would not likely encourage significantly more daily commuters to patronize the northern portion of Main Street, but combined with a formal green space near the station (as discussed below), it would create a formal and attractive gateway into the Village for those arriving by train, as well as adding significantly to the downtown's character. With that said, infill development along the northern frontage of Parking Field 3 alone would not be enough; other design strategies such as improving the streetway with tree plantings (on bump-outs) on the north side of the South Front Street to reduce the visual impact of the exposed train tracks would also be important. Currently, the tracks are exposed and separated from the street by chain link fencing. Replacing that fencing with a more attractive barrier and blending it with trees and on-street parking would make the pedestrian environment more appealing. New lighting and signage along the route would also be appropriate improvements. These issues will be further explored in the downtown plan document.

## **E. Open Space**

Open space plays an important role in downtown by providing areas where people can rest, play, enjoy the outdoors and participate in social activities. Downtown parks and public spaces can and should be great assets for the whole village, and should play an especially important role in the Village's efforts to enhance downtown's livability and its distinctive quality of life. Open spaces have the potential to play other important roles, including to:

- Enhance/amplify a “live, work, and play” character of Farmingdale's downtown;
- Provide a clear identity to the downtown through the consistent use of elements in the public realm;
- Support daily activities and special events;
- Enhance connectivity in the downtown;

- Provide clear entry points (gateways); and
- Enhance the value of adjacent buildings and development sites.

However, open space and parkland account for less than 2% of land area in the Village of Farmingdale. In the downtown study area, there four open space areas (see **Figure 7, Urban Design Context**):

- 1) The Village Green
- 2) The small hardscaped pocket park at the entrance to Parking Field 3;
- 3) A small Village-owned vacant lot on Elizabeth Street; and
- 4) While, observation found these areas to be acceptable, both elements could be improved so as to contribute to creating a stronger sense of place in the downtown.

The Village Green could be redesigned so that it has a stronger presence on Main Street and is more pedestrian friendly. Also, its rear area could be improved with a formal entrance from Parking Field 4 and/or connection to the proposed multi-functional linear green space running along the 30' to 50' wide zone between the backs of buildings and the parking areas as discussed above. Currently, the Village Green operates as a landmark: People recognize it as only as a destination or place to go. Given its location, the park could be improved to operate also as a node – a place that people pass through – and function as another formal pedestrian entrance or gateway to Main Street from Parking Field 4. This proposal will be further explored in the downtown plan document.

In the downtown study area, there four open space areas:

- 1) Village Green on Main Street;
- 2) A small hardscaped pocket park at the entrance to Parking Field 3;
- 3) A small Village-owned lot at 122-126 South Front Street, which fronts on Elizabeth Street; and,
- 4) A small park at the intersection of Melville Road and Main Street.

The small park at the intersection of Melville Road and Main Street has a gazebo, many trees and is well maintained. The small Village-owned lot at 122-126 South Front Street, that fronts on Elizabeth Streets is part of Parking Field 3. Opportunities to use this area for functional green space are minimal due to its size and location. The Village Green and small hardscaped pocket park at the entrance to Parking Field 3 were found to be acceptable, but both elements could be improved so as to create a stronger sense of place in the downtown.

The Village Green could be redesigned so that it has a stronger presence on Main Street and is more pedestrian friendly. Also, its rear area could be improved with a formal entrance from Parking Field 4 and/or connection to the proposed multi-functional linear green space running along the 30' to 50' wide zone between the backs of buildings and the



parking areas as discussed above. Currently, the Village Green operates as a landmark: People recognize it as only as a destination or place to go. Given its location, the park could be improved to operate also as a node—a place that people pass through—and function as another formal pedestrian entrance or gateway to Main Street from Parking Field 4. This proposal will be further explored as the Downtown Master Plan Moves forward.

The pocket park at the entrance to Parking Field 3 shows how the Village can take advantage of seemingly small opportunities to create more open space in the downtown. This park is appropriately equipped with benches, trees and a clock. During our day-long site visit, more people were observed sitting and enjoying this area than in the Village Green. This area, however, could be improved with new plantings, tree grates, or decorative tree guards at the base of trees. The space could be further improved if windows were placed to open up on to the park from adjoining buildings. This would change the appearance and use of the park dramatically, creating a more active setting for possibly outdoor dining if a restaurant was to occupy the adjoining building space to the north. On the south side, potential new development on the adjacent row of vacant buildings (e.g. the Staller properties) could be designed to provide a small green space that mirrors the existing pocket park on the north side of the parking entrance, and restaurant uses could also front the mirrored open space at this location. This would not only provide additional open space in the downtown, but would also allow the existing pocket park to play a much stronger open space function in the downtown. Under this twin park scenario, the parking entrance itself could be improved with a brick paving and be traffic calmed with bump out with trees and/or planters. Both open spaces could formally connect to the proposed multi-functional linear green space that would run between the backs of buildings and parking areas as discussed above. This proposal will be further explored in the Downtown Master Plan.

The station area offers the greatest opportunity to create additional open space in downtown Farmingdale. A park to welcome visitors to Farmingdale and to serve as a formal gateway into the downtown (in combination with improvements to South Front Street) is, from a design standpoint, probably the most obvious missing element in downtown Farmingdale. Currently, people arriving by train are greeted by two large parking lots, and mostly empty warehouse and other vacant buildings. Under these conditions, the train station plays a markedly diminished role in downtown—one of secondary importance, as a functional infrastructure utility rather than one of primacy in creating a sense of place. To some degree, this may be a function of how the train station is used and viewed by many, simply as a point of arrival and departure, separated from Main Street proper. However, despite this perception, many communities in the

region and around the country have employed their train stations to effectively help create or reinforce a stronger sense of place by making it an attractive element in their downtowns. This is an important step for the Village to consider because it is likely that a majority of people determine their impression of what Farmingdale is by passing through the LIRR train station on a daily basis. Given LIRR ridership from Farmingdale, it is probably the primary point of exposure for many people, and this leaves a lasting impression. By developing an open space in this area, that impression will be changed, and people will start to think (and remember) differently about Farmingdale. This may encourage them to return to enjoy the downtown in the future. A formal green in this area with benches, trees, paths and possibly even a fountain would not only present a more lasting positive impression, but would also serve surrounding residents and support any future retail development in the station area. It would likely also have the added effect of improving property values in the area.

By seeking the opportunities mentioned above, including creating a linear hardscape/landscape open space behind the stores on the east side of Main Street, the Village can create substantially more open space in the downtown.

## **F. Key Challenges and Opportunities – Conclusions and Initial Suggestions**

The first section of this report began with two questions:

1. Why have all the improvements—from a pocket park at the entry to Parking Field 3 to matching hanging carved wood signs—not produced an evident sense of place in the downtown?
2. What can be done to correct the situation?

The analysis presented above suggests several answers to the first question.

First, many of the improvements were relatively small aesthetic improvements such as planters, decorative lighting, and hanging carved signs. In order for such improvements to have proper impact, they must be placed in an environment that is aesthetically ordered to begin with. This is not the case in downtown Farmingdale, which has over time developed a wide variety of buildings and façades that seem to have forgotten to include the aesthetic details and rhythms of a traditional small downtown. In this environment, beautiful hanging carved wood signs, for example, will have less impact because they must compete with a program of poorly placed program of internally illuminated light box and

awning signs. Hanging signs like many elements found in a traditional downtown have a defined aesthetic role beyond their utilitarian role: they contribute to the overall character of a building, a street, and a downtown area. Because much (but not all) of the traditional character has been lost in downtown Farmingdale, hanging signs and other smaller improvements can no longer play their aesthetic role effectively.

A second and related answer to the first question is that the improvements made were done in absence of a comprehensive vision for the downtown area. Certainly, the Downtown Master Plan will provide this missing element, but, depending upon its scope, this may not be enough. If for example, the Downtown Master Plan focuses only on design elements such as façade improvements and improving Main Street, Farmingdale will have difficulty making (and funding) the substantial improvements required to turn its downtown into a truly attractive and vibrant mixed use area. New development should play a role in the revitalization program for downtown and some new development should occur on Main Street to replace buildings that detract from the downtown environment and provide new residential spaces above retail. New development should also play a role in connecting the LIRR station to the downtown area and providing new residents who will patronize the businesses on Main Street. Any new development in Farmingdale should conform to the vision that will be set forth in the Downtown Master Plan, and guidelines that focus on the issues of quality of life, social amenities and design.

Initial suggestions to improve the character of downtown Farmingdale have been made explicitly and implicitly throughout this report, and these begin to answer the second question (above). They range from seeking new opportunities to create open space in the downtown to making improvement to the existing built environment. In summary, the recommendations include:

- Improve urban form through a tiered approach to density, allowing more FAR in the downtown generally and encouraging on Main Street new development in key areas and on key sites in the downtown.
- Improve urban form by creating a strong and intentional pedestrian connection between the LIRR station and downtown. This could be supported by new infill development along Parking Field 3's frontage along South Front Street.
- Improve architectural character in the downtown through façade improvements and by improving and better regulating signage in the downtown area.
- Improve the pedestrian environment in downtown by relocating office uses to the second floor along Main Street, relocating the utility lines along the east side of Main Street to the rear of the existing commercial development, and encouraging more residential development in the downtown.

- Improve the existing parking fields with new plantings and trees, islands, internal pedestrian walkways and new formal entry features. Parking fields should also be effectively screened from adjacent residential uses.
- Improve existing open space in the downtown by redesigning the Village Green to have a stronger presence on Main Street and improve the pocket park at the entry to Parking Field 3.
- Create new open space in the downtown through a new multi-functional linear green space (with hardscape) between the backs of buildings along the east side of Main Street. This could extend from the Village Green to South Front Street and provide space for restaurants and bars to provide outdoor dining and for regular Village events such as craft fairs and a farmers' market.
- Create a new station green at the LIRR station to welcome visitors and improve the connection between the station area and downtown. This could be included as part of any proposed transit oriented development in the station area. This connection to downtown could be supported by new landscape improvements to South Front Street.

The most important step that the Village can take to encourage a more attractive built environment in the downtown would be to develop and adopt comprehensive set of formal design guidelines to supplement zoning in the downtown. Additionally, within the zoning code, the Village could designate an Architectural Review Control District for the downtown, where these guidelines could apply. These guidelines should also cover signage design.

Design guidelines are concepts related to the compatible scope of architectural styles, street layout and building form, access and parking configurations, landscape design standards, lighting and signage standards, and other design concepts that the Village prefers in new development or building renovation. Recommendations can range from façade treatments and suggested building materials to preferred site configurations.

Specifically for Farmingdale, design guidelines could include alignment architectural features on buildings facades to establish a pattern (or rhythm) with adjacent buildings along the block. The alignment of architectural features, including the proportion and width of buildings (or storefronts) and their features helps unify the street visually. Aligning features from one building to the next creates visual continuity, which in turn improves the pedestrian experience and helps create a sense of place. Currently, the buildings along Main Street are poorly aligned and thus do not create a cohesive environment. Requiring new buildings or retrofitting existing buildings to have aligning sign bands, kick plates, and awnings, for example, would establish a recognizable and pleasing visual

rhythm along Main Street. The idea here is not to discourage individual retail expression, but rather to align and standardize certain façade elements while allowing purposeful differentiation to occur within certain parameters (e.g. signage typeface and colors, storefront displays, etc.).

Some façade elements that traditionally align include (see **Figure 9, Traditional Façade Elements**):

- Building kick plates
- Top and bottom of first floor window displays
- Transoms over doorways and clerestory portion of display windows
- Horizontal width of storefronts (in Farmingdale, the standard width is approximately 25 feet)
- Vertical height of first, second and third stories
- Sign band above the street sidewalk
- Parapet and cornice lines
- Storefront and restaurant windows

Generally, design guidelines are presented in a handbook that serves to guide residents, developers, and design professionals wishing to build new development in the Village. The handbook assists in the implementation of the community-vision that would be set forth in the Village's Downtown Master Plan, and provides a clearer visual expression of that vision as it relates to the Village's built environment. The handbook would serve as the basis for the planning, design and evaluation of new residential and non-residential development in the downtown area. By doing so, design guidelines attempt to provide those wishing to build with a clearer picture of what to expect when appearing before the Village's Architectural Review and Planning Boards, thus simplifying and expediting the review, permit and development process. Applicants are more likely to "get it right" the first time by reviewing the guidelines presented, and therefore avoid expensive delays, public controversy, and project redesign.

Benefits of design guidelines:

- They send a clear message to developers, property owners and their designers of the aesthetics and site design expected in new development
- They establish a consistent set of guidelines that the Architectural Review and Planning Boards use in reviewing and approving projects. This avoids arbitrary decision making and inconsistent approvals, reduces legal challenges, and produces a more harmonious development pattern.
- They promote a vision for a future built environment that is proactive (reflecting Village's choices) rather than reactive (reflecting applicant choice).

Implementation of design guidelines can happen in three ways:

- **Reference Document (non-adopted)** – The guidelines document can be used solely as a reference document at the pleasure of the Planning and Architectural Review Boards. Under this scenario, the document is not formally adopted by the Village;
- **Advisory Document (adopted)** – The guidelines document can be adopted by the Village as an advisory document for use by the Planning and Architectural Review Boards. Under this scenario, the document serves a guide to the Boards. It would be non-binding (thus allowing flexibility), but would carry more weight legally than a reference document. This ensures greater compliance and consideration by developers;
- **Regulatory Document (adopted)** – The guidelines document can be adopted as a regulatory document, meaning that the guidelines become compulsory as part of the Zoning Ordinance.

Recommendations on how the Village could develop and adopt design guidelines will be provided as part of the Downtown Master Plan.

## **VI. Zoning**

---

## VI. ZONING

---

### A. Introduction and Purpose

The predominant and, perhaps, oldest development tool in the United States is zoning. Introduced in Germany at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as a way to manage density and bulk, zoning was a reaction to the squalid conditions of the working class. Zoning was first adopted for use in the United States in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century when New York City enacted the first comprehensive city zoning ordinance, dividing New York City into three zones: residential, commercial, and uncontrolled use. Since that time, zoning has been applied to various conditions across the United States: urban and rural, new and old, northern and southern. Today, zoning has become more creative, not just indicating what can and cannot be done on a specific parcel, but providing design guidelines and incentives consistent with community objectives.

To that end, in order to understand the issues related to development within downtown area, any impediments to development, and the potential opportunities, the Village's zoning code was reviewed, both generally and specifically to Main Street. This chapter presents a summary of that evaluation, as well as our observations and initial recommendations.

### B. General Overview of Zoning in Farmingdale

Chapter 105 of the Village of Farmingdale Village Code, the "Zoning Ordinance of the Incorporated Village of Farmingdale," was first adopted in 1942 and most recently published in December of 2008. The zoning code lists thirteen zoning districts within the Village, five of which are commercial and eight of which are residential, and details the various permitted uses and lot and bulk controls for each district. As part of this evaluation, a use, lot, and bulk table was created, since one does not currently exist in the zoning code (see **Table 15, Use, Lot, and Bulk Table**). This table should be included as an attachment to the zoning code. Note that a discussion of parking and loading requirements for these districts follows later in this document.

The districts were last updated in 1991 and the district boundaries are presented on the "Zoning Map of the Incorporated Village of Farmingdale," last updated in February of 2003.

As indicated in the Zoning Map, the boundaries of the zoning districts within the Village do not follow a clear pattern, as districts are disjointed.



District	Permitted Uses	Special Exception/Special Permit Uses	Maximum Building Area	Minimum				Max Building Height
				Front Yard (feet)	Side Yards (feet)	Rear Yard (feet)	Lot Area (sqft)	
Residence AA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single-family detached house including the office, studio or occupational room of a professional person</li> <li>• Churches, libraries and public and private schools</li> <li>• Playgrounds, parks and accessory buildings</li> <li>• Agriculture, gardens, nurseries and greenhouses</li> <li>• Public and Town uses</li> <li>• Accessory uses incidental to Permitted Uses</li> <li>• Real Estate signs for real estate which said sign is placed</li> </ul>	None	25%	30	10	30	7,500	35 feet or 2.5 stories
Residence AAA	• Any use permitted in Residence AA District, excluding the office, studio or occupational room of a professional person	None	20%	35	15	35	12,500	35 feet or 2.5 stories
Residence A	• Any use permitted in the Residence AA district	None	30%	30	8	25	6,000	35 feet or 2.5 stories
Senior Citizen Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multifamily residences housing: families of 2 or more persons, the head of which is 62 years or older; the surviving member or members of any family described in subsection A(1) living with the deceased member at the time of his or her death; A single person who is 62 years or older or a nonelderly handicapped person between the ages of 18 and 62 years; or two or more elderly or handicapped persons living together or one or more such persons living with another person who is essential to his or her care of well-being</li> <li>• A handicapped person within the meaning of Subsection A shall be any adult having an impairment which is expected to be of long-continued and indefinite duration and is a substantial impairment to his or her ability to live independently</li> </ul>	None	35%	35	70	35	80,000	35 feet or 3 stories
Residence B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any use permitted in a Residence AA District</li> <li>• Private garage for the storage of not more than three motor vehicles, one of which may be a commercial vehicle</li> <li>• Office/residential uses for properties fronting on Conklin Street, Fulton Street and West Street</li> </ul>	None	35%	25	6	25	6,000	35 feet or 2.5 stories
Residence C	• Any use permitted in a Residence B District	None	30%	20	6	25	4,000	35 feet or 2.5 stories
Residence BB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any uses permitted in a Residence B District</li> <li>• Nursing home or convalescent home</li> </ul>	• Multiple-family dwellings <sup>3</sup>	35%	25 or 35 <sup>1</sup>	6 or 30 <sup>1</sup>	35	5,000 or 40,000 <sup>1</sup>	35 feet or 2.5 stories
Office-Residence District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One-family detached dwellings</li> <li>• Mixed office and residential use</li> <li>• Churches and temples</li> </ul>	• Professional, medical and veterinarian offices, fraternal meeting rooms, financial institutions and office buildings	35%	25	25 total one not less than 15 and either not less than 8	25	6,000	35 feet or 2.5 stories
Business D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offices; financial institutions; studio; hotel; telephone exchange</li> <li>• Retail stores not including a planned shopping center</li> <li>• Theater; bowling alley; bar and grill; skating rink; public tennis court; community center; fraternal meeting rooms</li> <li>• Shoe repair shop; bootblack, hat-cleaning shop; lawn mower repair shop; hand laundry; tailor; dressmaker; jeweler; beauty parlor; barbershop; job printer; millinery shop; and butcher shop provided no slaughtering is done on the premises.</li> <li>• Cabinetmaking, furniture or upholstery business; electrician or plumbing shop, optician and optical shop; automobile showroom</li> <li>• Used car lots</li> <li>• Post office; firehouse; police station</li> <li>• Undertaking and embalming establishment</li> <li>• Any use of the same general character as the uses hereinbefore specifically permitted in this article</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential</li> <li>• Planned shopping center</li> <li>• Gasoline service station or public garage</li> <li>• Restaurants and luncheonettes in which seats and tables are provided for all customers</li> <li>• Municipal parking field; public parking spaces privately owned</li> </ul>	None <sup>2</sup>	None <sup>2</sup>	None <sup>2</sup>	15	None	36 feet or 3 stories
Business DD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial or professional office building; medical center</li> <li>• Financial institution; telephone or telegraph office; library</li> <li>• Club, fraternity house, lodge or community center</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theater</li> <li>• Hotel</li> <li>• Automatic car wash</li> </ul>	35%	25	20 total at least 8 on one side	30	None	2 stories except garden apts can be 2.5 stories
Business H	• Any use permitted in a Business G District	None	35%	25	Total 36 feet	35	24,000	2 stories
Industrial I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A use permitted in a Business D District, Business DD District, Business E District, Business F District or Business G District, other than a one-family residence, a two-family residence or a multiple-family residence.</li> <li>• Laboratories for scientific and industrial research, testing and development</li> <li>• Cold storage plant, pasteurizing plant or creamery</li> <li>• Warehousing and distribution plant, not including outdoor storage or storage or sale of lumber, ice, coal, petroleum or petroleum products as principle use</li> <li>• Light industrial uses including manufacture, intermediate production or assembly of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Food products</li> <li>o Textiles, leather goods and clothing</li> <li>o Publishing, printing or bookbinding</li> <li>o Furniture and cabinets</li> <li>o Toys, games, musical instruments, watches, or clocks</li> <li>o Mechanical, optical, photographic, scientific, electrical or electronic instruments</li> <li>o Compounding of cosmetics and pharmaceuticals</li> <li>o Light manufacturing of the same general character as those specifically permitted above</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	• Adult uses	40%	10	25 total and neither less than 10	30	None	36 feet or 3 stories

<sup>1</sup>In cases of Multi-family

<sup>2</sup>In cases of townhouses, the requirements are as follows: Minimum front yard is 20 feet, minimum rear yard is 25 feet, minimum building height is 35 feet and 2.5 stories, plot width shall be at least 20 feet, minimum side yard shall be 20 feet.

<sup>3</sup>According to Article IV §105-14C(1) and (2) the minimum lot area for multiple residences is 40,000 square feet with the minimum area for each dwelling unit being 2,500 square feet, thus allowing a maximum of 16 dwelling units/acre.

According to Article XXA §105-147.1.B., the minimum lot area is one acre and must provide more than 20,000 square feet of floor area.

In most zoning codes the zoning districts are introduced with a statement of intent and objectives that describes the intended purpose of each district. The Village of Farmingdale's zoning code does not include such statements (outside of the Office-Residence District). It is therefore recommended that such statements be added to the zoning code for each district, clearly stating the purpose of the district and any other intent. An additional overall recommendation then would be to re-visit and re-evaluate the zoning district boundaries and their appropriateness for specific areas and parcels within the Village.

## C. Districts

What follows is a discussion of the various zoning districts within the Village. Refer to **Figure 19, Zoning Map of the Incorporated Village of Farmingdale** for the exact locations of each of these districts.

### 1. Commercial Districts

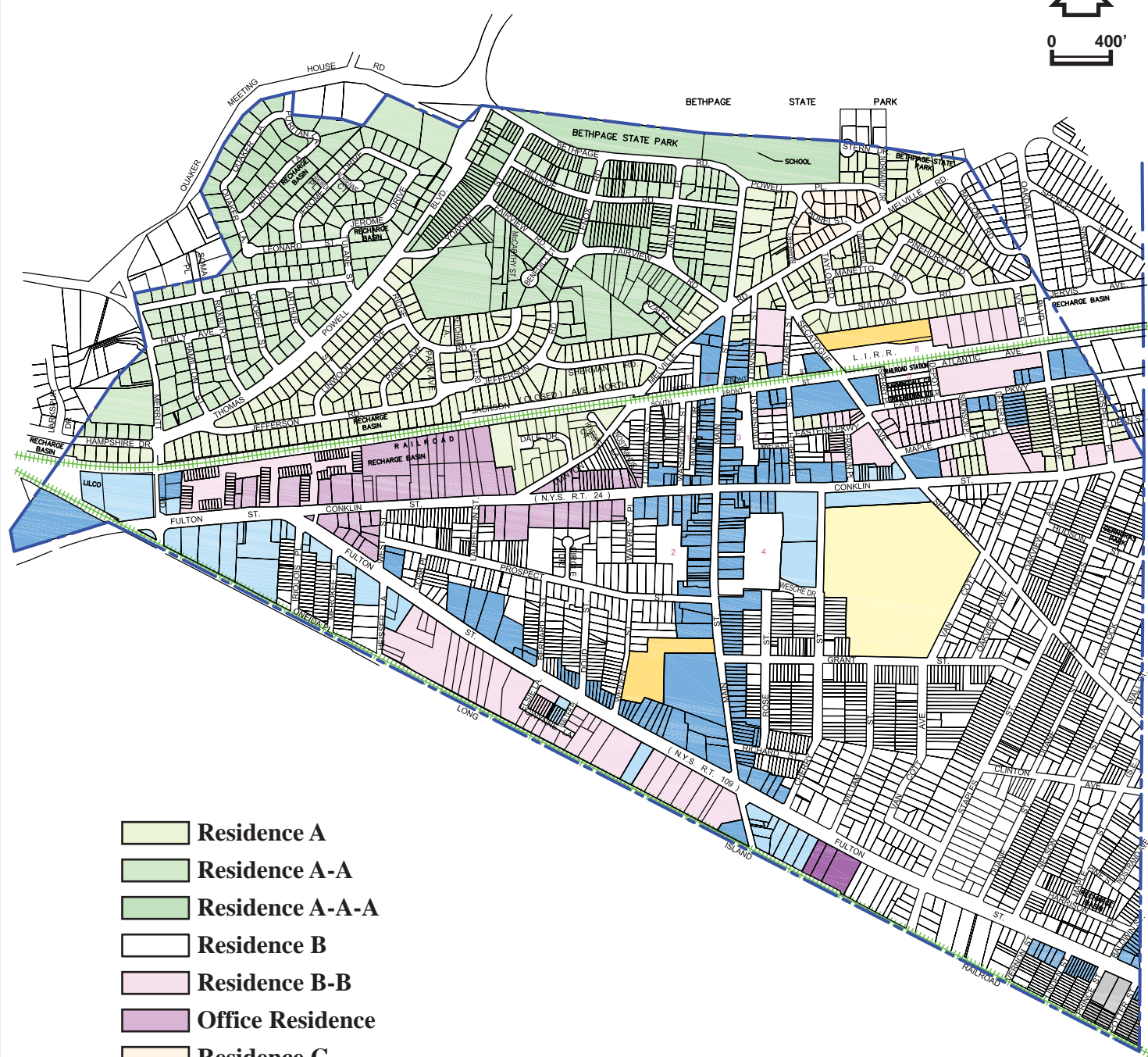
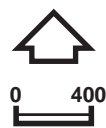
Of primary concern, as it relates to the downtown, are the Village's commercial districts. As noted earlier, there are five (5) commercial districts in the Village:

- Business D
- Business DD
- Business H
- Industrial I
- Office-Residence

Each of these districts differs not only the uses that are permitted, but also in the lot and bulk regulations that control development. What follows is a brief discussion of each of the extant commercial districts.

#### Business D District

The Business D District is the largest business district in the Village and makes up the majority of the zoning along Main Street. Although the Business D District is primarily along Main Street, it also exists along Fulton Street to both the east and west boundaries of the Village, as well as along Conklin Street from Waverly Place to the west to the intersection of Conklin and Secatogue Avenue to the east. There are other instances of Business D-zoned properties along Front Street from the intersection of Merritt Street and Front Street to the west to the intersection of Secatogue Avenue to the east. Finally, there is a small pocket of parcels zoned Business D along Eastern Parkway and the intersections of Dexter Street and Oakview Street. See **Figure 19, Zoning Map of the Incorporated Village of Farmingdale**.



- Residence A**
- Residence A-A**
- Residence A-A-A**
- Residence B**
- Residence B-B**
- Office Residence**
- Residence C**
- Residence C-C**
- Residence D**
- Residence D-D**
- Residence H**
- Industrial I**
- Senior Citizen Housing SCH**

Figure 19  
**ZONING MAP OF THE  
 INCORPORATED  
 VILLAGE OF FARMINGDALE**

**FARMINGDALE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN**  
 Existing and Emerging Conditions Report  
 Village of Farmingdale, New York

Permitted uses in this district are:

- Offices; financial institutions; studio; hotel; telephone exchange;
  - Retail stores, not including a planned shopping center;
  - Theater; bowling alley; bar and grill; skating rink; public tennis court; community center; fraternal meeting rooms; Shoe repair shop; bootblack, hat-cleaning shop; lawn mower repair shop; hand laundry; tailor; dressmaker; jeweler; beauty parlor; barbershop; job printer; millinery shop; butcher shop, provided no slaughtering is done on premises;
  - Cabinetmaking, furniture or upholstery business; electrician or plumbing shop; optician and optical shop; automobile showroom;
  - Used car lots;
  - Post office; firehouse; police station;
  - Undertaking and embalming establishment; and,
  - Any use of the same general character.
- Special permit uses include:
- Restaurants and luncheonettes, in which seats and tables are provided for all customers;
  - Planned shopping center (a development that primarily houses retail commercial uses on a site of more than one acre and provides for more than 20,000 square feet of floor area or has more than five tenants or occupants);
  - Gasoline service station or public garage;
  - Municipal parking field; and,
  - Residential townhouses.

Some of the uses listed above are inappropriate for the Main Street setting given their skew towards being automobile-oriented and/or the nature of existing downtown Farmingdale, including:

- Skating rink
- Public tennis courts
- Lawn mower repair shop
- Automobile show room
- Used car lot
- Planned shopping center
- Gasoline service station
- Public garage

Finally, two uses are typically not found in a downtown setting, but already exist along Main Street:

- Cabinetmaking, furniture, or upholstery business
- Undertaking and embalming establishment

While some of these uses may be appropriate in other areas of the Village (even other areas zoned Business D, i.e., used car lots), they are not appropriate for the downtown environment of Main Street. An important general observation regarding the Business D District is that

Fulton Street is a completely different environment from Main Street, yet they are both within the Business D District. Fulton Street is a relatively wide arterial with automobile-oriented uses; Main Street is a narrow, more traditional downtown street, with smaller, pedestrian-oriented uses. It is, therefore, recommended to establish two different business zoning districts, with one focusing on the Main Street corridor, maintaining the pedestrian friendly and typical “Main Street” aesthetic, and a second for Fulton Street and other more auto-oriented areas within the Village.

Other uses are simply outdated and could be removed from the text entirely. These include:

- Hat-cleaning shop
- Millinery shop
- Telephone exchange
- Bootblack

Finally, it should be noted that minimum rear yards and maximum building heights are given for the Business D District, but no maximum building area, minimum front and side yards (except for residential townhouses), and minimum lot area. These regulations will be developed further on in the Downtown Master Plan.

#### Business DD District

The Business DD District is distributed around the southern half of the Village on a parcel-by-parcel basis along Fulton Street with clusters around the Fulton/Merritt Street intersection, Fulton/Conklin Street intersection, and Fulton/Main Street intersection. There is also a cluster of parcels zoned Business DD around the Conklin/Cherry Street and Conklin/Franklin Place/Secatogue Avenue intersection. See **Figure 19, Zoning Map of the Incorporated Village of Farmingdale.**

Permitted uses in this district are:

- Commercial or professional office building; medical center;
- Financial institution; telephone or telegraph office; library; and,
- Club, fraternity house, lodge, or community center.

Special permit uses include:

- Theater;
- Hotel; and,
- Automatic car wash.

One use, telephone or telegraph office, contains the outdated “telegraph” use, which could be removed from the text entirely.

Again, this district is distributed on a parcel-by-parcel basis, with very little connection between the parcels at the intersection of Fulton and Conklin Streets to the parcels that compose St. Kilian's Church off of Cherry and Conklin Streets (which, as a church, is currently not listed permitted uses in the Business DD District). Further, there is a strip of high school property that fronts Conklin Street that is currently zoned Business DD, while the remainder of the school property is zoned Residence CC. This current designation does not appear to be appropriate, both because it differs the strip from the rest of the school property and because a school is not an appropriate use in the Business DD District. It should be noted that other parcels currently zoned Business DD appear to be either non-conforming or not appropriately zoned. As with the other districts, it is recommended that the location and applicability of the Business DD District be re-evaluated in order to create more cohesive district boundaries.

The regulations state that the maximum building height within the Business DD District is two stories, except for garden apartments (which can be 2 ½ stories tall). However, since garden apartments are not listed as a permitted use within the district and Village, it is recommended that this reference be removed from the zoning code. Note that as opposed to the other districts, the maximum building heights for the Business DD District are only provided as the number of stories, not in feet. It is recommended that a maximum building height in feet be added for the Business DD District in order to 1) be consistent with the rest of the heights in the zoning code and 2) to specifically state the height in feet (a two story building can contain stories that range in feet).

Finally, it should be noted that maximum building area, minimum yards, and maximum building heights are given for the Business DD District, but no minimum lot area. It is recommended that this regulation be provided.

#### Business H District

The Business H District is a very small zoning district that is comprised of only three parcels within the Village. These parcels are located along the south side of Fulton Avenue to the east of Main Street. See **Figure 19, Zoning Map of the Incorporated Village of Farmingdale.**

There is a major issue with this district as the uses permitted in the Business H District are listed as "Any use permitted in a Business G District<sup>1</sup>." However, there currently is no Business G District listed in the Village's zoning code. As a result, there currently are not permitted uses within the Business H District. Therefore, the three parcels

---

<sup>1</sup> Village of Farmingdale Zoning Code §105-104.14A.

currently zoned Business H could be considered non-conforming. It is recommended that this issue be remedied in one of three ways: 1) Remove reference to the Business G District and create permitted uses; 2) Refer to a different commercial district; or, 3) Rezone such properties to a different district.

It should be noted that this is the only commercial district that details all of the lot and bulk controls.

#### Industrial I District

The Industrial I District is limited to a few parcels in the southeasternmost corner of the Village along Fulton, Prince, and Potter Streets. See **Figure 19, Zoning Map of the Incorporated Village of Farmingdale**.

Permitted uses in this district are:

- Laboratories for scientific and industrial research, testing, and development;
- Cold storage plant, pasteurizing plant, or creamery;
- Warehousing and distribution plant, not including outdoor storage or storage or sale of lumber, ice, coal, petroleum or petroleum products as principal use;
- Light industrial uses including manufacture, intermediate production or assembly of: food products, textiles, leather goods, clothing, publishing, printing, bookbinding, furniture and cabinets, toys, games, musical instruments, watches, clocks, mechanical, optical, photographic, scientific, electrical, electrical instruments, compounding of cosmetics or pharmaceuticals, and, light manufacturing of the same general character; and,
- Uses permitted in the Business D, Business DD, Business E, Business F, or Business G Districts, other than one-family, two-family, or multiple-family residences.

There is one special permit use allowed in the Industrial I District, adult uses. This is the only district in the Village where such uses are permitted, which makes sense, especially since residential is not permitted in this district.

As with the Business H District, there is a major issue with this district, as there is a reference to “Uses allowed in the business E, F and G districts<sup>2</sup>,” districts that currently are not listed in the Village’s zoning code. Although there are other permitted uses in this district, it is recommended that this issue be remedied in a similar manner to those listed for the Business H District: 1) Remove reference to the Business E, F, and G Districts or 2) Refer to a different commercial district.

---

<sup>2</sup> Village of Farmingdale Zoning Code §105-105A.

In addition, many of the permitted uses listed for this district may or may not still be considered appropriate or feasible uses for the Village, especially due to the limited amount of Industrial I-zoned properties. For example, a cold storage plant, pasteurizing plant, or creamery may no longer be a use that exists or will exist in the future in the Village. It is therefore recommended that the types of permitted uses in the Industrial I District be redefined further on in the Downtown Master Plan with more general categories.

Finally, it should be noted that maximum building area, minimum yards, and maximum building heights are given for the Industrial I District, but no minimum lot area. It is recommended that a regulation for minimum lot area be considered further on as part of the Downtown Master Plan.

#### Office-Residence District

The Office-Residence District was created to provide a transition between the commercial uses along Main and Conklin Streets and the residential uses that characterize the rest of the community. This transitional area represents the gateway and entrance to the downtown area. The Office-Residence District is located along Conklin Street west from Merritt Street and east to Columbia Street. The district is also located at the triangle east of the intersection of Fulton Street and Conklin Street. See **Figure 19, Zoning Map of the Incorporated Village of Farmingdale**.

Permitted uses in this district are:

- One-family detached dwellings;
  - Mixed office and residential use; and,
  - Churches and temples.
- Special permit uses include:
- Professional, medical and veterinarian offices;
  - Fraternal meeting rooms;
  - Financial institutions; and,
  - Office buildings.

These uses and the location of the parcels that are zoned Office-Residence appear to be appropriate for the Village.

## 2. Residential Districts

Although there are limited residential uses in the downtown area, protection of the character of the Village's residential neighborhoods is an important element of the Downtown Master Plan. Therefore, this analysis briefly looks at the Village's residential districts. As indicated above, there are eight residential districts in the Village:



- Residence A
- Residence AA
- Residence AAA
- Residence B
- Residence BB
- Residence C
- Residence CC
- Senior Citizen Housing SCH

The permitted uses, outside of the Senior Citizen Housing SCH District, are similar between these districts. The bulk and lot controls for each district, however, vary. Further, floor area ratio (FAR) requirements were developed that apply to all residential districts.

The Residence B District is the predominant residential district in the Village and covers most of the properties to the east of Main Street and South of Conklin Street, as well as those residential properties off of Prospect Street. The north and northwestern portions of the Village consist of the Residence A, Residence AA, and Residence AAA Districts. The various residential developments along Fulton Street consist of properties zoned either Residence BB or Residence C. Two parcels, Silver Manor and Hardscrabble Apartments, are zoned Senior Citizen Housing SCH.

These districts are predominantly single-family; multiple-family dwellings are only permitted as a special use permit in the Residence BB District; senior residences are only allowed in the Senior Citizen Housing SCH District; townhouses are a special permit use in the Business D District; there is indication of “garden apartments” in the Business DD District. The discussion will now focus on these non-single-family uses and district.

#### Multiple-Family Dwellings

One of the more important observations regarding to the zoning code, especially as it affects Main Street, is the lack of clarity concerning multiple-family dwellings – both what it is and where it is permitted.

A multiple-family dwelling is defined in §105-7 of the zoning code as “...a building of any kind which is used or designated to be used or occupied as a residence by three or more families living independently of each other.” However, elsewhere in the zoning code (notably Article IV, §§105-13 through 105-33) such uses are referred to as “Multiple Residences”. Note that under the parking requirements (Article XVII, §105-109.A(3)), such uses are referred to as simply “apartments,” further confusing the matter.

Further, as stated earlier, multiple-family dwellings are only permitted in the Residence BB District. However, Article IV is not specific to the Residence BB District, but rather refers to a generic use district.

These inconsistencies create confusion as to multiple-family development within the Village and should be clarified.

The lot and bulk controls for multiple-family dwellings are presented in §105-14.C. These controls encourage larger-scale developments with large setbacks. Consideration should be given to re-examining these controls to allow for different typologies of multiple-family dwellings, such as townhouses and apartments. In addition, consideration should be given to permitting multiple-family uses in other districts (i.e., Business D).

#### Residential Townhouses

Residential townhouses are a special use permit in the Business D District. Townhouses have lot and bulk controls that are different and separate from the rest of the Business D District, as well as multiple-family dwellings. The density of “one dwelling for each 4,000 square feet of total plot area devoted to such use” is not tied to other density standards within the zoning code (which are stated as dwelling units per acre). In addition, the regulations §105-79.N.(2) contains a set of development incentive bonuses designed to encourage community facilities or amenities from development in exchange for varying the required density, coverage or floor area ratio, parking requirements, building heights, required setbacks, and open space. To what extent the Board of Trustees has discretion to vary any or all of these requirements in exchange for amenities should be more fully detailed and explained in the zoning code. Further, consideration should be given to extending the incentive bonuses to other types of development, at least multiple-family and/or commercial development. Note that under the parking requirements (Article XVII, §105-109.A) there is no mention of “townhouses,” and it is assumed that the “apartment” standard applies. This should be clarified and, if so, a new standard for townhouses should be developed.

Finally, although mixed-use (apartments above retail or office) is not stated as a permitted use in the Business D District, many upper-story apartments can be found along Main Street. The multiple-family use that is permitted in the Business D District, “Townhouse,” denotes a free-standing structure and not an upper-story apartment. Our recommendation would be to promote such type of development by clarifying the applicability of mixed-use along Main Street.

### Garden Apartments

The regulations for the Business DD District state that the maximum building height within the Business DD District is two stories, except for garden apartments. However, 1) garden apartments are not listed as a permitted use within the district and 2) garden apartments are not defined anywhere in the zoning code. It is recommended that this reference to garden apartments be removed from the zoning code.

### Two-Family Dwellings

Note that although there is reference to two-family dwellings in the zoning code, notably in the definitions (as “two-family detached house”), parking requirements (as “two-family residential lot), and General Provisions (Article XXII, §105-162, Minimum lot requirements for two-family detached dwellings), two-family dwellings are not indicated as a permitted use in any district. In fact, it appears as if the section of the zoning code that allowed two family detached houses (§105-58.B) was repealed in 1991. It is recommended that reference to two-family dwellings be removed from the zoning code in order to fully be consistent with that repeal.

### Senior Citizen Housing SCH District

The Senior Citizen Housing SCH District, which is limited to two locations within the Village (Silver Manor and Hardscrabble Apartments), allows “multifamily residences housing” for households with at least one person over the age of 62 (or a surviving member). In addition, up to 10 percent of the dwelling units in a development can be occupied by at least one person who is handicapped, but less than 62 years of age. Lot and bulk controls are provided for this district, including maximum density, minimum habitable floor area, and distance between buildings. Additionally, the parking requirements of one space per 2 dwelling units is provided within the description of the district. However, this information is not included under Article XVII of the village code (Off Street Parking and Loading Areas) and should be added.

## **D. Parking and Loading Issues**

In addition to the zoning districts and controls in the Village, the general parking and loading requirements were examined (Article XVII, §§105-109 through 105-114.1, of the zoning code). The following observations are noted:

- a. For the most part, the off-street parking requirements for residential buildings are appropriate for the Village. The exception is the requirement of one space for each 400 square feet of gross floor area for apartment houses. This number is high for a downtown area and, therefore, will be examined further on in the Downtown Master Plan.

As noted earlier in this document, additional categories of multi-family residential uses should be added that correspond to the categories listed in the village code (e.g., multiple-family dwelling, townhouses, senior citizen housing).

- b. The parking requirements for commercial and business uses have a few instances where the parking requirements are too high, especially for a downtown area, and will be re-evaluated further on as part of the Downtown Master Plan.
  - **Restaurants:** The village code currently requires one space for each 50 square feet of floor space.
  - **Retail stores:** The village code currently requires one space for each 160 square feet (which is greater than that required for planned shopping centers – one space per 200 square feet) or “parking space in square feet equal to two times the gross floor area<sup>3</sup>.” The regulations also stipulate that properties within 500 feet of a municipal parking field may have their requirements reduced to as much as 90 percent. This is important in utilizing and encouraging the shared parking in the public parking lots.
  - **Office buildings:** The village code currently requires one space for each 200 square feet of gross floor area.
- c. The loading requirements appear to be appropriate for the Village, however the language in §105-110A is confusing when it states “off-street loading space requirements for office buildings, apartment or apartment hotel over three stories in height shall be ½ of the foregoing requirement.” This is confusing as it does not mention in detail what the “half” refers to, either half the amount of spaces or a space for half of the listed square footage, thus actually doubling the requirement. Further, the loading requirement does not distinguish between uses in the downtown area and those that are not. These requirements will be re-evaluated and/or clarified further on as part of the Downtown Master Plan.

## **E. Proposed Local Law #2 of 2008**

Local Law #2 of 2008 was proposed to create a “Development Incentive Bonus Overlay District (DIBOD)” in the Village’s downtown area, but was not finished based on concerns from the public regarding its impacts. It is briefly discussed here in this evaluation noting that it is currently in draft form and is likely to change, but is also an integral piece of consideration within the Downtown Master Plan.

The DIBOD is proposed to be an overlay district that would essentially extend 1,000 feet off of Main Street to the east and west, bounded to the north 1,000 feet north of the LIRR and bounded to the south to the Village boundary. The purpose is stated as a “system of incentive bonuses...to

---

<sup>3</sup>Village Zoning Code §105-109B(9) and (10).

advance the Village's specific physical, cultural and social policies in accordance with the Village's comprehensive plan and in coordination with other community planning mechanism or land use techniques." A list of various smart-growth mechanisms is then listed.

The local law describes the types of amenities and facilities that could lead to the granting of incentive bonuses:

- Open space, parks, and recreation facilities
- Streetscape amenities
- Landscaping
- Road improvements
- Water and sewer system improvements
- Other specific physical, social, or cultural amenities
- Cash in lieu of amenity or facility

The local law then describes the types of incentive bonuses:

- Increased density
- Increased coverage
- Increased floor area ratios
- Decreased parking requirements
- Increased building heights
- Decreased required setbacks
- Varied topographical changes, open space, and permissible uses

The local law then lists some of the criteria for approval, other procedures, and the limitations that would apply to a subject development. These limitations include:

- The maximum building height within 25 feet off of Main Street would be the lesser of 3.5 stories or 50 feet
- The maximum building height greater than 25 feet off of Main Street would be the lesser of 4.5 stories or 50 feet
- The maximum density for multiple-family dwellings would be up to 75 units per acre
- The minimum parking for retail or office would be one space per 350 square feet of retail or office use
- The minimum parking for residential would be one space per residential unit

The local law then goes on to list the special permit uses that would be allowed (which would be in addition to the uses permitted in the underlying district):

- Single-family homes
- Commercial surface parking lots
- Laboratories
- Fast food establishments
- Research facilities

- Stadiums and sports facilities with over 10,000 seats
- Grocery stores over 10,0000 (note the extra zero) square feet
- Multiple dwelling units and mixed use buildings

While this proposed local law is based on the rationale of focusing development in the downtown area, there are a number of potential issues with the proposed draft.

- It appears that it takes portions of text from other parts of the zoning code, which may be duplicative
- The extent of the area upwards of 1,000 off of Main Street and the LIRR may be too broad, as it reaches into the Village's residential neighborhoods
- The allowance of all underlying uses and some of the listed special permit uses do not appear to be appropriate uses for Main Street
- The limitations, which focus on height, density, and parking, are confusing, especially maximum heights, which allow greater heights the further off of Main Street. In addition, the heights and densities are large and may not be appropriate for the Village.
- The ability for a developer to pay cash in lieu of actual amenities or facilities may not serve as the best incentive to create a "Cool Downtown."
- The incentives could be expanded to include green elements.

In the end, it is suggested that the proposed DIBOD be re-evaluated, especially in light of some of the other recommendations listed in this report.

#### **F. Key Challenges and Opportunities – Conclusions and Initial Suggestions**

- Re-consider zoning district boundaries and applicability to particular parcels.
- Differentiate between the Business D District along Fulton Street and Main Street by creating a new district along Main Street, possibly by altering the proposed DIBOD.
- Permit mixed-use apartments above retail/office along Main Street, perhaps as a special permit use, by clarifying the residential language in the Business D District.
- The zoning code is not accessible on the Internet (in fact only portions of the village code are accessible on the Village's website). Many codes are available, whether on local websites or clearinghouses such as GeneralCode.com, making it easier for developers, citizens, and government to access the regulations of a municipality and better understand what type of development is permitted in the municipality. Therefore, the zoning code should be posted online at GeneralCode.com. The full village code could be posted as well.
- Review residential FARs; Develop commercial FARs, especially for

## Main Street.

- Allowable densities, FARs, and heights along Main Street should be re-examined in congruence with the other findings and recommendations for downtown.
- As will be noted in the Urban Design section of this report, there is a variety of façade and sign treatments in the Village, especially along Main Street. This variety, while providing some distinction and visual interest, also prevents a cohesive aesthetic for the downtown area. Many municipalities have design guidelines, whether in their zoning codes or as a separate document, to help provide their commercial areas with a more coherent aesthetic. Therefore, design guidelines should be established for commercial areas. Especially on Main Street, the facades, signage, and design of structures is a mixture of styles that create a disjointed and unattractive aesthetic. By establishing guidelines that will provide for a coherent aesthetic, the Main Street corridor will become a more inviting destination.
- Many municipalities are “going green” by adding green elements or incentives to their codes. The Village’s codes currently do not have many green elements or incentives. The Town of Babylon has received national exposure from its Green Building Certification and other “green” elements. For example, the Town pays the upfront cost of upgrades performed by Town-licensed contractors to improve the efficiency and sustainability of the energy use of homes and then allows the homeowners to repay the town over a specified time. Many times, the cost of the improvements save the homeowners money on energy to the extent that while they are paying back the Town for the upgrades, they are still experiencing a positive net cash flow. County Executive Tom Suozzi has stressed sustainability and green with such programs as “Cool Downtowns” and “Green Levittown.” Therefore, incorporate green elements and incentives into the village and zoning codes. By “going green” the Village could not only emulate Babylon, but become the model for a “Cool Downtown.”
- Since a use, lot, and bulk table does not currently exist within the zoning code, the use, lot, and bulk table developed as part of this analysis should be integrated as an attachment to the zoning code.
- There are no provisions for affordable/inclusionary zoning within the Village, outside of its mention alongside other amenities in the Business D District residential townhouses special permit use (§105-79.N.(2)(e), as “socially responsible and preferred housing such as senior, work-force or next-generation housing”). Therefore, include affordable/workforce/next-generation housing or inclusionary zoning in the zoning code to cover all non-single-family residential development.
- Better define and outline the development bonuses provided for in the zoning code.
- The parking regulations for all districts could be evaluated as to their applicability to the respective district and the proximity to potentially

shared parking within the Village. Main Street should be a main focus as there are several large parking lots that can be used to provide shared parking for the uses fronting on Main Street.

- Finally, during the visioning process the idea of a Neighborhood Conservation District was discussed. The likely purpose of such a district would be to protect the residential character of Farmingdale's neighborhoods. It appears as if the Village changed its focus in 2008 from to influencing development along Main Street through Local Law #2 of 2008. It can be argued that the focus on Main Street is intended to produce the same result – protection of the quality of life and character of Farmingdale's residential neighborhoods.



## **VII. Other Observations**

---

## **VII. OTHER OBSERVATIONS**

---

### **A. CDBG-Eligibility and Housing Affordability**

#### CDBG-Eligibility

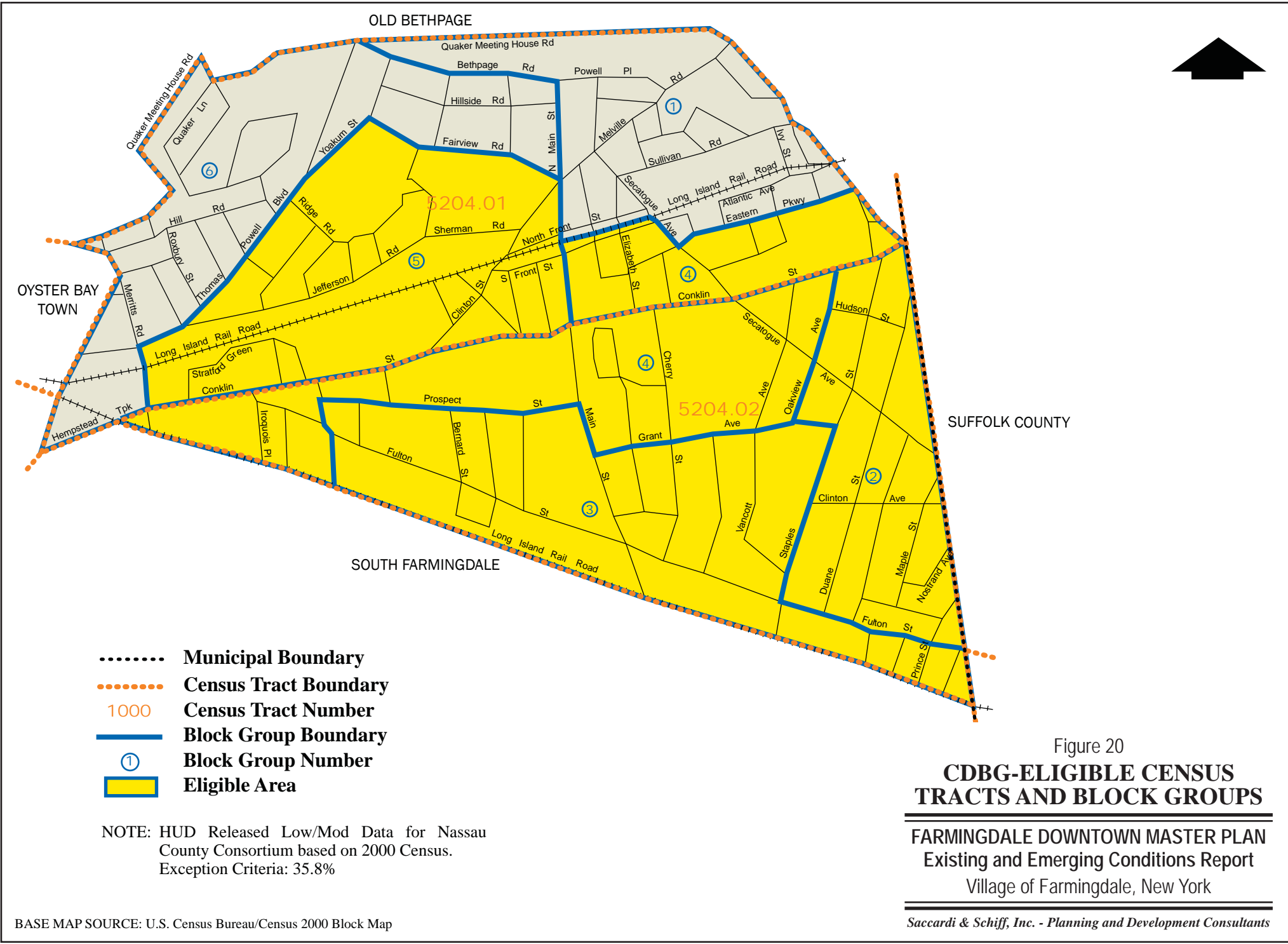
Due to particular census tracts and block groups containing a percentage (equal to or greater than 35.8 percent) of low and moderate-income families (defined as those families with incomes less than 80 percent of the median family income for the Nassau-Suffolk PSMA), certain areas within the Village are eligible for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) assistance. CDBG-eligible census tracts and block groups are depicted in **Figure 20, CDBG-Eligible Census Tracts and Block Groups**.

The CDBG program is run by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The primary objective of the CDBG program is the development of viable communities, by providing decent housing and a suitable living environment, and expanding economic opportunities, principally for persons of low-and moderate income. Funds must be used so as to give maximum feasible priority to activities which will carry out one of the three broad national objectives of:

- Benefit to low-and moderate income families;
- Aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight; or,
- Activities designed to meet other community development needs having a particular urgency because existing conditions pose a serious and immediate threat to the health or welfare of the community where other financial resources are not available to meet such needs.

The following activities may be funded by the CDBG program, so long as they meet one or more of the national objectives stated above.

- Acquisition of real property by purchase, long-term lease (15+ years), donation or otherwise, of real property for any public purpose, subject to limitations.
- Disposition of real property acquired with CDBG funds through a lease or donation, or otherwise; or its retention for public purposes.
- Acquisition, construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, or installation of public facilities and improvements, except buildings for general conduct of government (e.g., roadway improvements, improvements to infrastructure).
- Clearance, demolition, and removal of buildings and improvements, including movement of structures to other sites.
- Provision of public services (including labor, supplies and materials) such as those concerned with child care, health care, education, job training, public safety, fair housing counseling, recreation, senior citizens, homeless persons, drug abuse counseling and treatment, and energy conservation counseling and testing.



OLD BETHPAGE

OYSTER BAY TOWN

SOUTH FARMINGDALE

SUFFOLK COUNTY

- ..... Municipal Boundary
- ..... Census Tract Boundary
- 1000 Census Tract Number
- Block Group Boundary
- ① Block Group Number
- Eligible Area

NOTE: HUD Released Low/Mod Data for Nassau County Consortium based on 2000 Census. Exception Criteria: 35.8%

Figure 20  
**CDBG-ELIGIBLE CENSUS TRACTS AND BLOCK GROUPS**  
**FARMINGDALE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN**  
 Existing and Emerging Conditions Report  
 Village of Farmingdale, New York  
 Saccardi & Schiff, Inc. - Planning and Development Consultants

- Removal of material and architectural barriers which restrict the mobility and accessibility of elderly or handicapped persons to publicly owned and privately owned buildings, facilities, and improvements.
- Rehabilitation of privately and publicly owned buildings and improvements for residential purposes.
- Rehabilitation of publicly or privately owned commercial or industrial buildings, except that the rehabilitation of such buildings owned by a private for profit business is limited to improvements to the exterior of the building and the correction of code violations.
- Improvements to buildings to increase energy efficiency.
- Rehabilitation, preservation, or restoration of historic properties.
- Provision of credit, technical assistance, and general support (including peer support programs, counseling, child care, transportation, etc.) for the establishment, stabilization, and expansion of micro enterprises. A micro enterprise is a business with five or fewer employees, one or more of whom owns the business.
- Provision of assistance to private for profit business where appropriate to carry out an economic development project. Any project funded must be able to document the creation or retention of a certain number of jobs, depending on the type of project proposed.

There are a number of activities listed above that appear to be appropriate, based upon the existing and potential opportunities in the Village of Farmingdale, especially noting the observations and recommendations put forth in other sections of this report. For example, one of the recommendations of the zoning section of the report is to incorporate “green” building regulations into the zoning code. The implementation of such a recommendation in new construction and rehabilitation could be covered as a CDBG-eligible activity. In addition, it has been stated that the Village could house smaller start-up businesses – equivalent to “micro enterprise” listed above. Again, support and assistance to such enterprises could be covered under the CDBG program. The Village currently is utilizing CDBG funds for improvements to public parking lots and walkways in the Village, including design work, installation of energy efficient street lighting, and trees in the downtown area.

As is typical of other smaller villages on Long Island, the Village of Farmingdale is part of the Nassau County Urban County Consortium and relies on Nassau County to administer program activities. Currently the Village Administrator, Mayor, and Deputy Clerk/Treasurer coordinate with the County on the CDBG program. It is recommended that the Village assign a full-time planning or community development individual to be the point-person to coordinate with the County on CDBG activities. In this way there would not only be a greater understanding and exchange of information, but it could allow the Village to advocate for additional funding

and community development opportunities, including some of the recommended activities mentioned above.

### Housing Affordability

Although many activities are eligible for funding under the CDBG program, one of the most important is the creation of additional affordable housing opportunities. As with communities throughout the United States, including Long Island, housing in Farmingdale has become more expensive and housing affordability is a major concern, especially for young professionals, seniors, public service employees. The result is that many citizens, including younger adults, cannot afford to remain in the community. Another result is the proliferation of illegal apartments. Besides being illegal, such apartments tend to be in poor condition and result in an overabundance of calls to local police and code enforcement officials. The Village has tried to address this, partially through the provision of density bonuses for the inclusion of a percentage of affordable townhouses within any townhouse development in the Business D District. This same method is proposed to be used in the proposed “Development Incentive Bonus Overlay District (DIBOD)”. There are currently 174 affordable housing units in the Village, which represents 5.1 percent of all units in the Village:

- Hardscrabble Apartments – 80 senior units
- Woodbridge at Farmingdale – 28 senior units
- Woodbridge II – 62 senior units
- Ferrante (Fulton Street) – 4 planned next-generation units

As with most of the affordable housing on Long Island, these affordable housing units are predominately senior.

In addition to the creation of physical units, issues of housing affordability can also be addressed through rental assistance. The Nassau County Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) is one of the major funding sources used by the County to assist those extremely low and low-income families that cannot find decent, safe housing or that are currently paying in excess of 30 percent of income for housing. This program gives the family the opportunity to choose affordable housing of their choice anywhere in the County. The Nassau County Office of Housing and Homeless Services administers the County’s Housing Choice Voucher Program, as well as the programs for the smaller Villages of Farmingdale, Island Park, and Sea Cliff. In the Village there are 20 Authorized Housing Choice Vouchers.

Despite these incentives and programs, affordable housing options remain limited within the Village, and there is further concern that new development and improvements to the downtown area will further exacerbate the lack of options. Therefore, it is important that housing

affordability be considered for all new development within Farmingdale. Further, the replacement of illegal apartments that currently serve as affordable housing options with new affordable housing should be promoted and coordinated. Finally, the Village should coordinate with Nassau County to tap into CDBG and other funds that can help promote housing affordability and affordable housing policies. As part of the Nassau County Urban County Consortium eligible to receive CDBG funds, the Village may also be eligible to receive substantial funds for the development of affordable housing through the HOME program.

## **B. Cultural and Historic Properties**

The Village of Farmingdale contains one structure that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places – the LIRR Station. The station is located along the Main Line (Ronkonkoma Branch) of the LIRR. Farmingdale Station was originally built on October 15, 1841, when the LIRR first went through the Village. It was rebuilt in July 1875 and again in 1890. On November 13, 1991 it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. As such it is afforded special protection and benefits.

The Village also contains a number of structures that have local significance and help to characterize the Village, including (but not limited to):

- Village Hall/Fire Department
- St. Kilian’s Roman Catholic Church
- Thomas Powell House
- Quaker Meeting House
- 360 Main Street – formerly the “Farmingdale” (movie theater) and now law offices for Grey and Grey
- 31 Rose Street – Christopher and Carolyn Beierling residence, built in 1917

Four properties, the LIRR Station, Village Hall/Fire Department, St. Kilian’s, and 360 Main Street are within the downtown area.



LIRR Station



Village Hall/Fire Department



St. Kilian's



360 Main Street

Any redevelopment of the downtown area should ensure, to the extent possible, the preservation of these properties. In addition, the Village should continue to work with the Bethpage-Farmingdale Historical Society to identify and preserve historic properties.

### C. Open Space and Recreation

As was described in the *Urban Design* section of this report, open space and recreational areas play an important role for communities, especially in downtown areas.

The Village of Farmingdale is a built-up community with a limited number of passive and active recreation resources, parks, and playgrounds. Further, these open spaces are smaller in size.

- The primary civic space for the Village is the Village Green, located adjacent to Village Hall/Fire Department.
- There is a small park at the intersection of Melville Road and Main Street that acts as a gateway entrance to the Village.
- The Village owns a small parcel along Elizabeth Street, just south of South Front Street. Due to its size, location, and lack of amenities or markings, this Village-owned greenspace is not utilized by the public.
- There is also small hardscaped pocket park at the entrance to Parking Field 3;

Due to the limited amount of open and recreational space within the downtown area, the creation of new open space and improvement to existing open space should be encouraged. The *Urban Design* section of this report discusses many initial suggestions.

It should be noted that the largest open space/recreational area in the vicinity of the downtown area is the ballfields and track of the Weldon E.



Howitt Middle School. Currently, however, this resource is underutilized due to concern from the School District about general public use. It is recommended that the Village coordinate with the School District to remove such concern and allow public use of the ballfields and track outside of school hours.

Three other parks are located nearby to the downtown area: 1) Ellsworth W. Allen Town Park south of the study area on Heisser Lane and Motor Avenue, 2) Bethpage State Park north of the study area off of Merritts Road/Quaker Meeting House Road/Bethpage Road, and 3) Michel Park east of the study area off of Michel Drive.

**D. Key Challenges and Opportunities – Conclusions and Initial Suggestions**

In sum of these other observations regarding CDBG funding and housing affordability, cultural and historic properties, and open space and recreation, the following conclusions and initial suggestions can be made:

- In order to tap into CDBG and other funding, the Village should assign a full-time planning or community development individual to be the point-person to coordinate with the County. This could help in promoting housing affordability in the Village.
- Amenities, such as open space and housing affordability should be considered for all new development within Farmingdale.
- The creation of open and recreational spaces should be encouraged in the downtown area, whether as amenities provided by a private developer, through public/private partnerships, or through public investment. The Village should coordinate with the School District to allow public use of the Weldon E. Howitt Middle School ballfields and track outside of school hours.
- The Village should continue to work with the Bethpage-Farmingdale Historical Society to identify and preserve historic properties. Any redevelopment of the downtown area should ensure, to the extent possible, the preservation of these properties.



## **VIII. Summary of Key Challenges and Opportunities**

## **VIII. SUMMARY OF KEY CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

---

As described throughout this report, downtown Farmingdale contains many of the elements that are necessary to be a “cool downtown.” It also faces a number of challenges to fulfilling that objective. These challenges, however, also present tremendous opportunities for the community for redevelopment and re-growth. The challenges and the opportunities, as well as initial suggestions as to how to respond to the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities, were developed based on our assessment of the existing and emerging conditions within downtown Farmingdale, as well as the various meetings with the Village, and were presented in this report. The Downtown Master Plan, to follow, will vet these challenges, opportunities, and further expand upon the suggestions and will, ultimately, provide specific recommendations for an improved downtown Farmingdale. What follows is a summary discussion of the key challenges and opportunities, as well as some of the key initial suggestions.

### **A. Economic Conditions and Market Trends**

#### Key Challenges and Opportunities

- **High Rental Rates, Large Store Floor Plates, and Landlord Issues** – Rental rates are high relative to the amount of pedestrian traffic and sales revenues. Large store floor plates increase overall monthly rents and discourage small retailers from locating in the Village. A number of building owners are absentee and/or have not taken an interest in their property either in terms of general maintenance or choice of tenant.
- **Inconsistent Display Standards** – Merchandise and display standards are inconsistent, as is the quality of goods being sold.
- **Presence of Non-Retail Uses** – Non-retail uses negatively impact the overall shopping experience.
- **Nearby Competition** – Competition exists from nearby regional malls and Route 110 retailers. However, existing restaurants, The Chocolate Duck, Runner’s Edge, and Infinite Yarns are destination retailers that bring in non-Farmingdale residents.
- **Developer Interest** – Recent proposals from developers indicate that Farmingdale is “on the radar screen” for development.
- **Proximity of Main Street to LIRR Train Station** – Main Street is within walking distance of the train station which provides an expanded customer base for retailers and more retailer stores and merchandise offerings for consumers. However, visual and physical connections between Main Street and the train station are poor.
- **Proximity of Main Street to Farmingdale State College** – The proximity to Farmingdale State College provides additional retail, service, and residential potential.

#### Initial Suggestions

- *Mandate* ground floor retail uses. In order to improve retail activity in the downtown area, new development, or major alternations along

Main Street must include ground floor space that is leased for retail uses only, not office. Additionally, any residential development near the train station must include ground floor retail in order to provide a continuous retail link to Main Street.

- *Pursue* mixed-use development around the LIRR train station. Options for mixed-use TOD around the train station, including residential, retail and small office uses, should be actively pursued.
- *Encourage* diversity of storefronts and uses of sidewalks to enhance shopper experience. Another method of adding vitality to the street would be to permit sidewalk cafes for sit-down, table service restaurants. Also important, retail within new developments should not be more 1,500 square feet, with varying square footage and storefronts. This will help create a healthy economic environment for a range of businesses.
- *Provide* public incentives and activities. The Village may also consider pursuing County and State funding for small business training and storefront improvements. Public festivities such as festivals, parades and other special events can also be used to promote Village retail.
- *Proactively market* downtown Farmingdale shops and services. A marketing plan should be developed for the area to target a mix of destination stores and local serving convenience offerings. A tailored marketing package highlighting Farmingdale should be provided to real estate brokers and retailers.
- *Reach out* to Farmingdale State College. The Village should develop a working relationship with Farmingdale State College and partner very closely to increase their usage of Village retail and possibly residential.

## B. Transportation and Parking Conditions

### Key Challenges and Opportunities

- **Moderate Traffic Volumes** – Existing traffic volumes in the downtown area are moderate, not excessive, so there could be capacity to accommodate additional traffic, although there could also be potential issues at Main Street’s key intersections with Conklin Avenue, with Front Street, and with Fulton Street that may need to be examined.
- **Limitations on Improvements to Traffic Flow** – Improvements can be made to traffic flow, but the narrow curb-to-curb width along Main Street with parking allowed on both sides is a significant impediment. Improving the pedestrian environment should also be considered.
- **Available Municipal Parking** – Existing parking surveys indicate that approximately half of the approximately 1,200 parking spaces available within the four municipal lots, the Waldbaum’s parking lot, and along Main Street between South Front and Fulton Streets are occupied during weekdays and the weekend, thus leaving additional parking available to help accommodate future parking demands.

- **Limited Weekday LIRR Parking** – On the other hand, the LIRR parking lots are nearly fully utilized at peak times on weekdays (even under current adverse economic conditions), so more residential development with at least some workforce orientation to Manhattan and Downtown Brooklyn will create demand for more parking at the station unless new residential development is focused within a convenient walking distance of the station.

#### Initial Suggestions

- *Evaluate* if development of available parcels in the downtown area will generate vehicular traffic that could significantly affect flow conditions along Main Street.
- *Evaluate* if new development will generate a need for parking that cannot be accommodated within available parking facilities or on-street along Main Street, thus requiring the addition of more parking
- *Improve* pedestrian conditions along Main Street, including the Main Street/Fulton Street intersection and consider possible reconfiguration of parking along Main Street.
- *Re-examine* the parking requirements put forth in the zoning code. These should be re-examined along with other Village parking policies.

### **C. Infrastructure**

#### Key Challenges and Opportunities

- **Flooding Issues** – Concerning stormwater management, there is sufficient capacity within the Village; however, there are a number of locations that experience flooding.
- **Need for Fourth Water Supply Well** – The continued increase in building and population in the coming years will require for the Village to need a fourth well. This is due to the fact that, if one of the three wells shutdown or if the Village happens to have a very heavy usage during a major fire event, a shortage of water supply may result. Further, there appears to be minimal water capacity to handle fire emergency. Finally, the possible impact of volatile organic contaminants to Well 1-3 by as early as 2022 is an issue for concern.

#### Initial Suggestions

- *Examine* ways to reduce or eliminate flooding issues. Village DPW, H2M, and NCDPW are currently examining ways to reduce or eliminate these flooding issues and should continue to do so. Regardless of any alternative solutions, it is important that proper maintenance of the existing drainage structures is done on a regular basis to avoid any flooding issue.
- Continue to *examine* the possibility of providing a fourth water supply well to not only deal with some of the current concerns, but also to allow for any additional future increases in development or population

- *Stay informed* as to what the regulatory agencies are proposing to deal with the possible impact of volatile organic contaminants by 2022. It is important that all regulatory agencies continue to have a regular monitoring, assessment of the plume, and come up with alternative solutions to resolve this problem as early as possible.
- *Replace* electronic equipment for the pumping facilities. The original electronic equipment for the pumping facilities has been breaking down more frequently in the past few years. One of the first pieces of equipment that needs to be replaced is the telemetering equipment.

## D. Urban Design

### Key Challenges and Opportunities

- **Urban Form** – Although downtown Farmingdale contains the typical “main street” urban form, some of the key intersections (e.g., Main Street and Conklin Street, Main Street and Front Street) and gateways (i.e., LIRR train station) are not architecturally well defined or utilized.
- **Lack of Identifiable Architectural Character and Form** – Downtown Farmingdale does not have an identifiable architectural character. Rather, the downtown is comprised of many diverse building types and architectural styles. Two elements contribute to this lack of identity: First is the obscuring of extant architectural character in many of the higher quality buildings in the downtown. Second is the loss of a traditional architectural vocabulary in newer buildings in the downtown and/or in older buildings that have been retrofitted or renovated.
- **The Pedestrian Environment Can Be Improved** – The pedestrian experience along Main Street contributes positively to Farmingdale’s small downtown character. However, elements of this experience, including pedestrian enclosures, sidewalks, program of uses, street trees, street furniture, fencing, and utility lines could be altered/enhanced to improve this experience.
- **Signage is Uncoordinated** – Downtown Farmingdale contains a wide variety of signage. In an environment with so many signs, each competes for attention (and also with the architecture), instead of conveying a message simply and effectively. This detracts from creating a unified Main Street appearance, which would help define a more positive downtown character.
- **Conditions in the Parking Fields Can Be Improved** – From a design standpoint, conditions observed at the parking areas suggest a range of opportunities from improving their appearance to allowing for limited infill development. Further, the transition from the parking fields to Main Street, as well as to the adjacent residential areas, is not functioning to its potential from an aesthetic point of view.
- **Limited Open Space** – Open space and parkland account for less than 2% of land area in the Village of Farmingdale. Many of the

existing spaces are currently underutilized and there are opportunities to create new open space.

#### Initial Suggestions

- *Develop* and adopt comprehensive set of formal design guidelines to supplement zoning in the downtown.
- *Improve* urban form through a tiered approach to density, allowing more FAR in the downtown generally and encouraging on Main Street new development in key areas and on key sites in the downtown.
- *Improve* urban form by creating a strong and intentional pedestrian connection between the LIRR station and downtown. This could be supported by new infill development along Parking Field 3's frontage along South Front Street.
- *Improve* architectural character in the downtown through façade improvements and by improving and better regulating signage in the downtown area.
- *Improve* the pedestrian environment in downtown by relocating office uses to the second floor along Main Street, relocating the utility lines along the east side of Main Street to the rear of the existing commercial development, and encouraging more residential development in the downtown.
- *Improve* the existing parking fields with new plantings and trees, islands, internal pedestrian walkways and new formal entry features. Parking fields should also be effectively screened from adjacent residential uses.
- *Improve* existing open space in the downtown by redesigning the Village Green to have a stronger presence on Main Street and improve the pocket park at the entry to Parking Field 3.
- *Create* new open space in the downtown through a new multi-functional linear green space (with hardscape) between the backs of buildings along the east side of Main Street. This could extend from the Village Green to South Front Street and provide space for restaurants and bars to provide outdoor dining and for regular Village events such as craft fairs and a farmers' market.
- *Create* a new station green at the LIRR station to welcome visitors and improve the connection between the station area and downtown. This could be included as part of any proposed transit oriented development in the station area. This connection to downtown could be supported by new landscape improvements to South Front Street.

## E. Zoning

#### Key Challenges and Opportunities

- **Purpose and Intent of the Zoning Districts Are Unclear** – The zoning code does not provide a purpose or intent for most of the

zoning districts. This, in part, has led to a disjointed zoning pattern throughout the Village.

- **Zoning Along Main Street Needs to be Re-Evaluated** – Currently, the Business D District applies the same to both Main Street and Fulton Street, which present very different commercial environments. In addition, some of the uses permitted along Main Street are not appropriate in a pedestrian-oriented, downtown setting.
- **Multiple-Family Residential Needs to be Better Defined** – There is the lack of clarity concerning multiple-family dwellings – both what it is and where it is permitted. Currently, the only type of multiple-family residential use permitted along Main Street is townhouses.
- **Parking and Loading Issues** – The standards currently provided in the zoning code for parking are, for the most part, too high for a downtown environment. Further, the loading requirements do not distinguish between the downtown and non-downtown environment.
- **Proposed Local Law #2 of 2008** – Local Law #2 of 2008 was proposed to create a “Development Incentive Bonus Overlay District (DIBOD)” in the Village’s downtown area, but was not finished based on concerns from the public regarding its impacts. While the rationale behind this law, to focus development in the downtown area, is an important one, the specifics within the proposed text have not been fully worked out yet.

#### Initial Suggestions

A number of initial suggestions were provided in the *Zoning* section, some of the key suggestions related to the zoning code include:

- *Re-consider* zoning district boundaries and applicability to particular parcels.
- *Differentiate* between the Business D District along Fulton Street and Main Street by creating a new district along Main Street, possibly by altering the proposed DIBOD.
- *Permit* mixed-use apartments above retail/office along Main Street.
- *Re-examine* allowable densities, FARs, heights, and incentive bonuses along Main Street in congruence with the other findings and recommendations for downtown.
- *Incorporate* green elements and incentives into the village and zoning codes.
- *Include* affordable/workforce/next-generation housing or inclusionary zoning in the zoning code to cover all non-single-family residential development.
- *Evaluate* the parking regulations for all districts as to their applicability to the respective district and the proximity to potentially shared parking within the Village.

## F. Other Observations

### Key Challenges and Opportunities

- **CDBG-Eligibility** – Certain areas within the Village are eligible for CDBG assistance. Although the Village is currently utilizing CDBG funds for improvements to the public parking lots and walkways in the Village, there are a number of other CDBG-eligible activities that appear to be appropriate for the Village.
- **Limited Affordable Housing Opportunities** – Despite the various incentives and programs utilized and offered by the Village, affordable housing options remain limited within the Village, and there is further concern that new development and improvements to the downtown area will further exacerbate the lack of options.
- **Presence of Historic Properties** – Four historic properties, the LIRR Station, Village Hall/Fire Department, St. Kilian's, and 360 Main Street are within the downtown area.
- **Limited Open Space and Recreational Resources** – The Village of Farmingdale is a built-up community with a limited number of passive and active recreation resources, parks, and playgrounds. Currently, the largest recreational resource in the vicinity of the downtown area, the ballfields and track of the Weldon E. Howitt Middle School, is underutilized due to concern from the School District about general public use.

### Initial Suggestions

- *Assign* a full-time planning or community development individual to be the point-person to coordinate with the County in order to tap into CDBG and other funding. This could help in promoting housing affordability in the Village.
- *Consider* amenities, such as open space and housing affordability for all new development within Farmingdale.
- *Encourage* the creation of open and recreational spaces in the downtown area, whether as amenities provided by a private developer, through public/private partnerships, or through public investment. The Village should coordinate with the School District to allow public use of the Weldon E. Howitt Middle School ballfields and track outside of school hours.
- *Continue* to work with the Bethpage-Farmingdale Historical Society to identify and preserve historic properties. Any redevelopment of the downtown area should ensure, to the extent possible, the preservation of these properties.



## **IX. Appendices**

---

## **Appendix A – Sanitary Sewer System**

## **Appendix B – Water Supply**

---

## **Appendix C – Stormwater**

---

## **Appendix D – Electricity**

---

## **Appendix E – Gas**

---