

Town of Smithtown

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE



Supplemental Report
New York State Route 25
Corridor Study



Town of Smithtown

Comprehensive Plan

Update

SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY

DRAFT

ROUTE 25 CORRIDOR STUDY

Prepared by:
Planning and Community Development
August 2011

Town of Smithtown
Comprehensive Plan
Supplemental Report

New York State Route 25 Corridor Study

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Comprehensive Plan
Supplemental Report

New York State Route 25 Corridor Study

I. Introduction

A. Purpose and Objectives

This study summarizes the historical background and current conditions of the New York State Route 25 corridor in the Town of Smithtown and proposes a plan, consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan Update, for land use policies and suggested infrastructure improvements to achieve the following objectives:

- **Promote a mix of public, commercial, institutional, and residential uses appropriate for this corridor.**
- **Support the land use objectives, provide a better functioning and safer transportation network, and improve the appearance of the streetscape, while serving the long-term needs of the community.**

B. Overview

The findings and recommendations of this study are derived from the Comprehensive Plan Update that began in 2006 and will be completed in 2012.

New York State Route 25 (NYS Rt. 25) is an important corridor within the Town. While the larger New York State routes, such as NYS Rt. 347 (the Port Jefferson/Nesconset Bypass) and the Northern State and Sunken Meadow Parkways, move more traffic, NYS Rt. 25 is a local arterial that functions as a major road for circulation within the Town. It also serves as a major commercial corridor of the Town in that 85% of its frontage is used for commercial purposes. Its nine-mile length bisects the Town, connects various business centers, and serves a variety of other commercial uses.



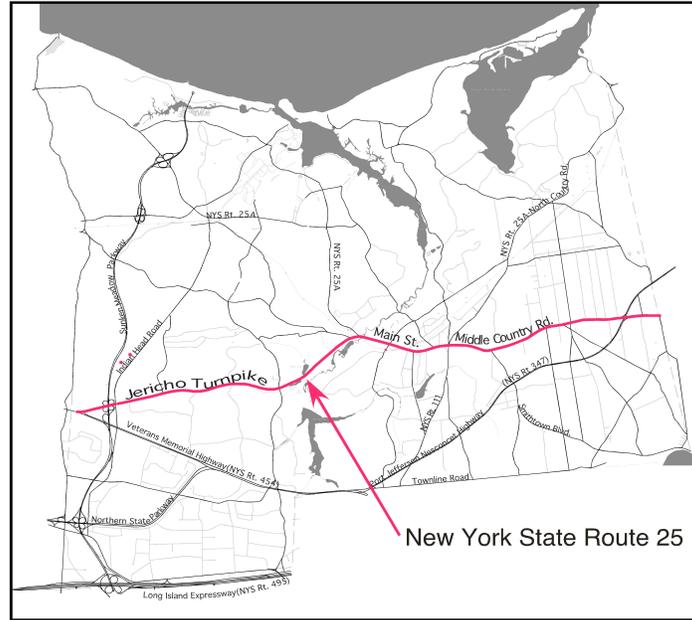


Figure 1. Major Roadways in the Town of Smithtown

The land uses within this corridor evolved over time and they reflect land use policies that were in place at particular points in time. When zoning was originally adopted in 1932, almost the entire length of the corridor was zoned for business on both sides of the street. Over the next 80 years, up to the present, the zoning was modified many times. Some of these changes were attempts to correct impacts of previous land use decisions, others reflected changes in trends and demands, as suburbia witnessed the increased use of automobiles, the emergence of shopping centers, malls, fast food restaurants, “big box” stores and so forth.

Figure 2. Development is uneven along NYS Rt. 25



Left: A successful outcome

Right: An undesirable outcome

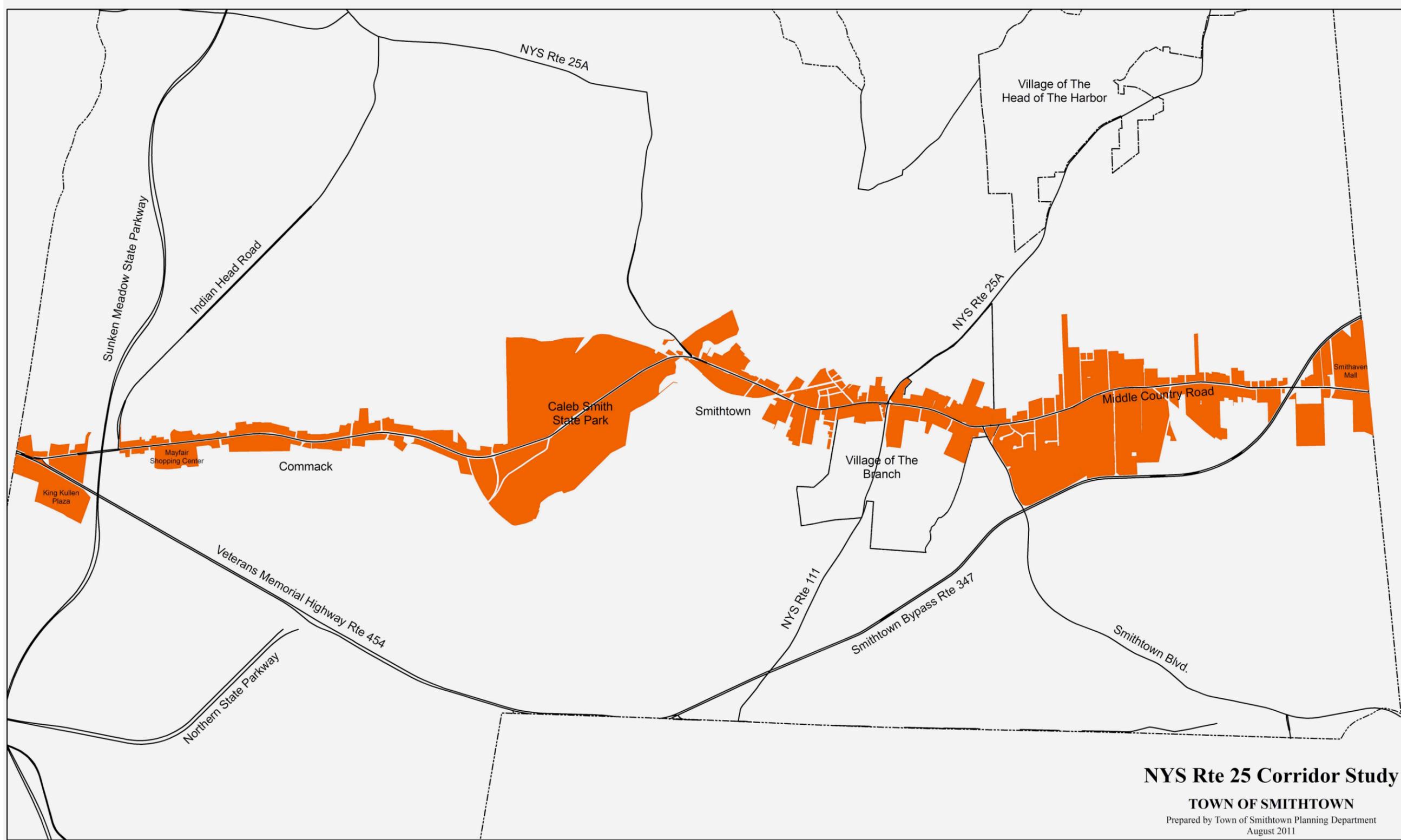


Land use policies, however, are also dependant upon infrastructure. Over the last 50 years, the NYS Rt. 25 corridor has seen many infrastructure improvements, some that encouraged and some that hindered development within this corridor. Some areas have flourished while other locations have stagnated. Without the proper infrastructure, development is restricted to a limited number of uses, especially if a location lacks sewers or water mains. Mass transportation issues are also important in development; the Comprehensive Plan deals with matters such as bus routes along this corridor in the volume on transportation.

The boundaries of this study are illustrated in Figure 3 [foldout, page 4]. While this corridor has an impact on most of the Town, this study concentrates on the roadway and the surrounding land uses that are directly dependant on this route.

Figure 3. Study Boundaries/NYS Rt. 25 [see foldout, page 4]





II. Inventory and Analysis

A. Land use

Findings:

- **The 1932 “strip zoning” of NYS Rt. 25 has been the source of ongoing zoning issues for the Town.**
- **The size and shape of some of the commercially zoned properties have made them difficult to develop.**
- **Regardless of all the past zoning strategies to deal with “strip zoning”, some areas of the NYS Rt. 25 corridor have flourished, while some areas appear stagnated.**
- **Commercial center development appears to be successful for large centers while the demand for neighborhood centers appears to be declining.**
- **The highest vacancy rate within the corridor is within downtown Smithtown.**
- **The demand for light industrial zoning appears limited and that is fueling some of the rezoning along the NYS Rt. 25 corridor.**
- **Since 1959, the Wholesale and Service Industry zoning category has been the most requested zone change.**

When zoning was first adopted by the Town in 1932, nearly all of the road frontage along this corridor was zoned for “A Business” (for a depth of 200’), a category similar to the current “Neighborhood Business” or “Central Business” districts. The “A Business” property totaled about 320 acres, though most of the road frontage was undeveloped.

The figure on page 6 shows the original 1932 zoning map, with an enlargement of the “A Business” section of NYS Rt. 25.



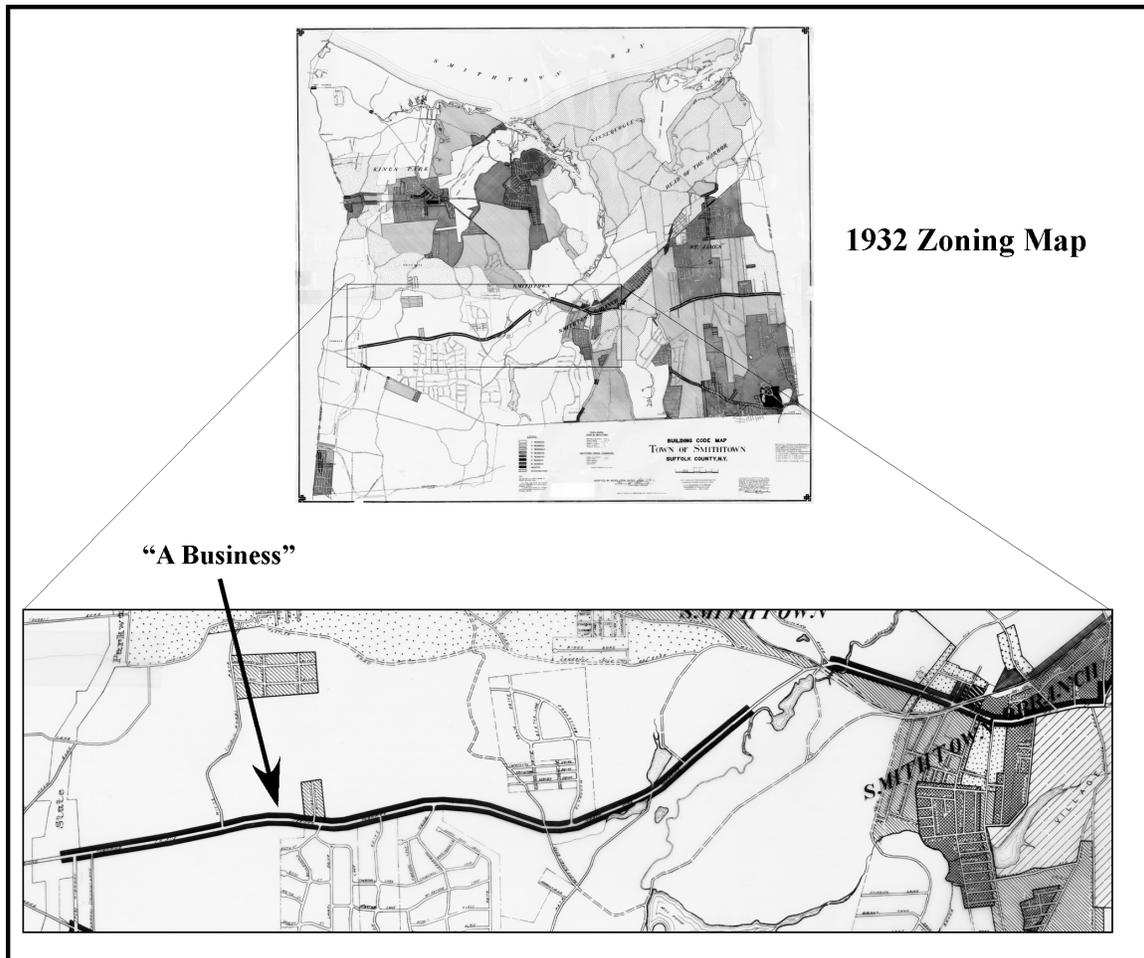


Figure 4. "A Business" zoning along NYS Rt. 25 as designated in 1932

By the 1940s it became apparent that the practice of establishing commercial zoning along an entire corridor, i.e. “strip zoning”, was harmful when the corridor became fully developed. Because of the shallow depth of the commercial properties, “the strip” was not suitable for many commercial centers. The strip zoning reduced traffic capacity, provided more commercial property than could be absorbed by the community, and had a tendency to produce unsightly development. In many cases, especially on Long Island, strip zoning contributed to the decline of many older downtown centers. However, reversing this land use policy has proved difficult and there are still effects of this decision that we are experiencing today.

Between 1945 and 2000, the Town attempted to resolve some of these corridor issues, as well as land use issues in other parts of the Town, with several rezoning efforts. Within this corridor, three different strategies emerged. The first began with the development of commercial centers along this corridor. The second trend began with the elimination of most of the “A Business” zoning along the corridor and replacing that zoning with “Wholesale and Service Industry” (WSI) and “Light Industry” (LI) zoning. The third

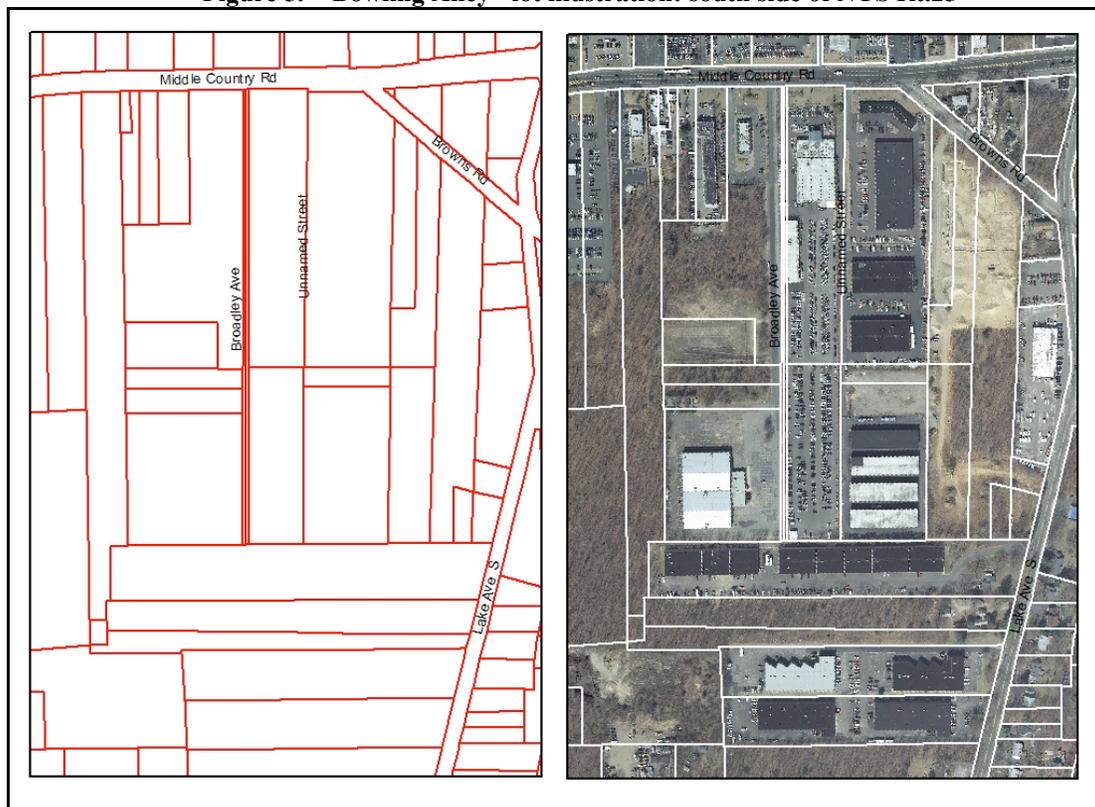


trend included the rezoning of mostly light industrial property to WSI on the eastern portion of NYS Rt. 25.

Center Development

After World War II, commercial centers began to evolve beginning with the traditional downtown business center, and then the shopping centers, malls, and recently the “big box” stores. Along NYS Rt. 25, the existing 1932 strip zoning pattern was not appropriate for these types of land uses. The narrow depth of the “A-Business” zoning (i.e., 200’) at various locations and the “bowling alley”-shaped properties in the eastern section of the corridor tended not to be suitable for the development of commercial centers, such as shopping centers and large stores.

Figure 5. "Bowling Alley" lot illustration: south side of NYS Rt.25



Tax map parcels: deep, narrow lots (left)

Same parcels overlaid on aerial photograph (right)

In response to these changes in commercial development, and after assessing community needs, the Town rezoned selected parts of the NYS Rt. 25 corridor for various types of commercial centers, classified according to size and distributed according to neighborhood and community requirements. These included “regional centers” (Smithhaven Mall), “sub-regional centers” (e.g., Commack Plaza), “community centers” (e.g., Mayfair Shopping Center) and “neighborhood centers” (e.g., Northgate shopping center). The Smithtown downtown was part of these center locations and functioned as a regional center. Between 1945 and 1995, about 420 acres of land was rezoned for these centers.



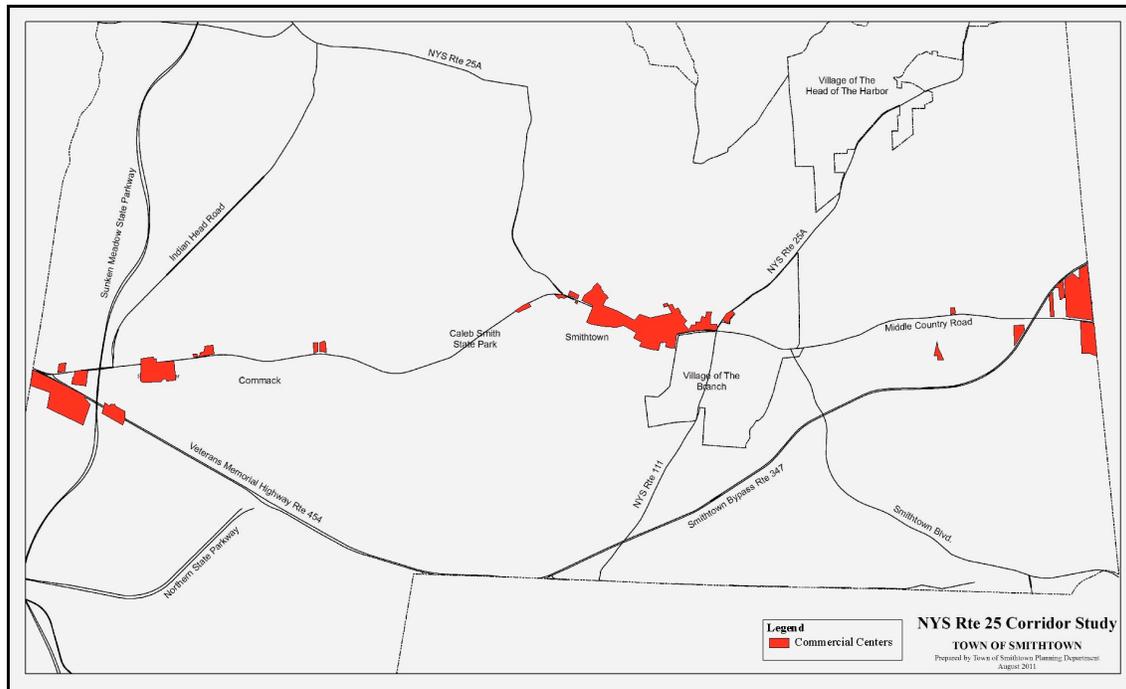


Figure 6. Commercial centers along NYS Rt. 25

Over the long run, the major centers have appeared to remain economically healthy. Studies such as “Shopping Centers and Downtowns” (2006), prepared by Suffolk County, have indicated that these areas in Smithtown have lower than average vacancy rates in comparison to other areas of Long Island. However, the number of stores has decreased while individual store sizes have increased. As a result, new commercial development tends to require more land and many of the older lots and buildings do not meet current standards. This trend appears to continue. For example, whereas the typical supermarket of the 1970s was about 35,000 sq. ft., new supermarkets are now more than 80,000 sq. ft. in size.

Of the major commercial centers within the Town, the Smithtown Central Business District has the highest vacancy rate (approximately 9.7% in 2005) and it has not redeveloped like other downtowns in Suffolk County. As will be discussed in the Town’s Comprehensive Plan Update, there are multiple elements that impact redevelopment. However, infrastructure issues such as the need for sewers and municipal parking significantly restrain redevelopment in the downtown.

Along the corridor, there are several smaller centers that serve the adjacent neighborhoods, usually zoned for “Neighborhood Business” (NB). Each of these is located at signalized intersections to permit easy access. Neighborhood centers are designed to serve a small area (as opposed to a “Community” or “Regional” shopping center). Because of several factors, the demand for neighborhood centers is declining. In order to fill this commercial space, these centers have leased space to businesses – such as fence sales, dance studios, fitness centers, and the like –that are also permitted in the



adjacent WSI District. This has skewed the distinction between WSI and retail districts and suggests, inaccurately, that additional retail zoning is needed along this corridor.



Figure 7. NB zoning with WSI-permitted use (gymnastics center in neighborhood shopping center)

As discussed in the Town's Comprehensive Plan Update, the Town's population has remained stable since 1970, but the Town has continued to expand its community and regional commercial centers. Today, the Town has the largest per capita amount of commercial floor space in the County. While there will always be a need to locate new retail users within the Town, the demand for these commercial centers has appeared to plateau. With four of the Town's eight community or regional centers located within the NYS Rt. 25 corridor, there does not appear to be any demand for new community or regional centers in the corridor; additions or changes can be expected to occur within or adjacent to the existing centers.

The WSI and LI Zoning Districts

As the Town rezoned properties to create several separate commercial centers, it also eliminated the strip NB zoning along the length of the corridor and replaced it with less intensive zoning. About half of the frontage along the eastern section (the Middle Country Road portion of the corridor) was rezoned to LI. The remaining land along the Middle Country Road portion, and the land in between the commercial centers along the western portion (the Jericho Turnpike section of the corridor) was rezoned to the new "Wholesale and Service Industry" zoning category that was created in 1958.



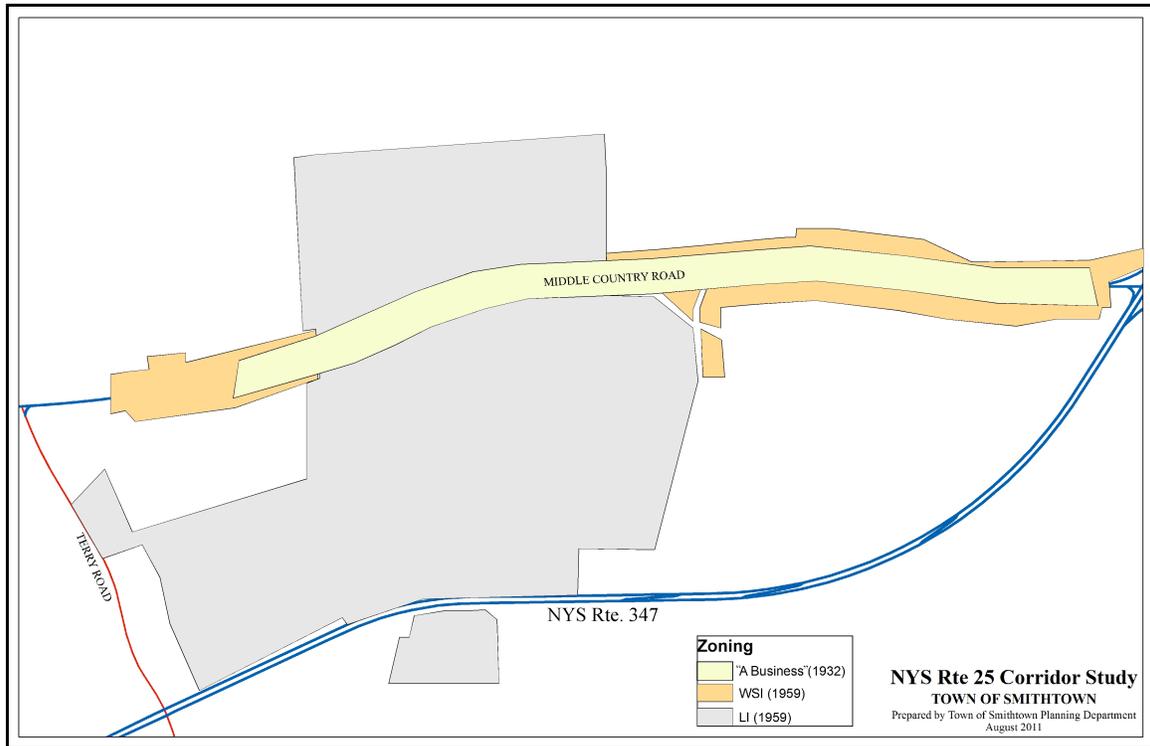


Figure 8. Zoning changes (1959) to WSI & LI along the Middle Country Road section of NYS Rt. 25

The LI zoning locations reflected the objective of having industrial centers in each hamlet. At that time, it was thought that each of the Town’s hamlets should have an industrial center and land was set aside for this purpose in nearly all of them. Unlike the original neighborhood business concept, the LI zoning was intended to foster development of industrial centers. These uses require large sites, well beyond the 200 foot depth of the neighborhood business zoning. As a result, about 70 acres of “A Business” was replaced with about 360 acres of LI zoning, with the additional land coming from the surrounding residentially zoned properties.

The remaining commercial frontage that was not zoned for LI or commercial centers was zoned for WSI. This new zoning category was intended to be a transitional or hybrid zone that would combine the features of industrial development with service types of industry, while providing space for business uses that were best suited to highway locations (e.g. filling stations, car dealers, fast food restaurants, etc). In rezoning the former “A Business” areas, the Town appeared to recognize that the 200’ depth of zoning was insufficient for many uses; in about 40% of the frontage locations, the depth of zoning for WSI was extended to 300’. This effectively replaced about 270 acres of “A Business” zoning with 350 acres of WSI zoning.



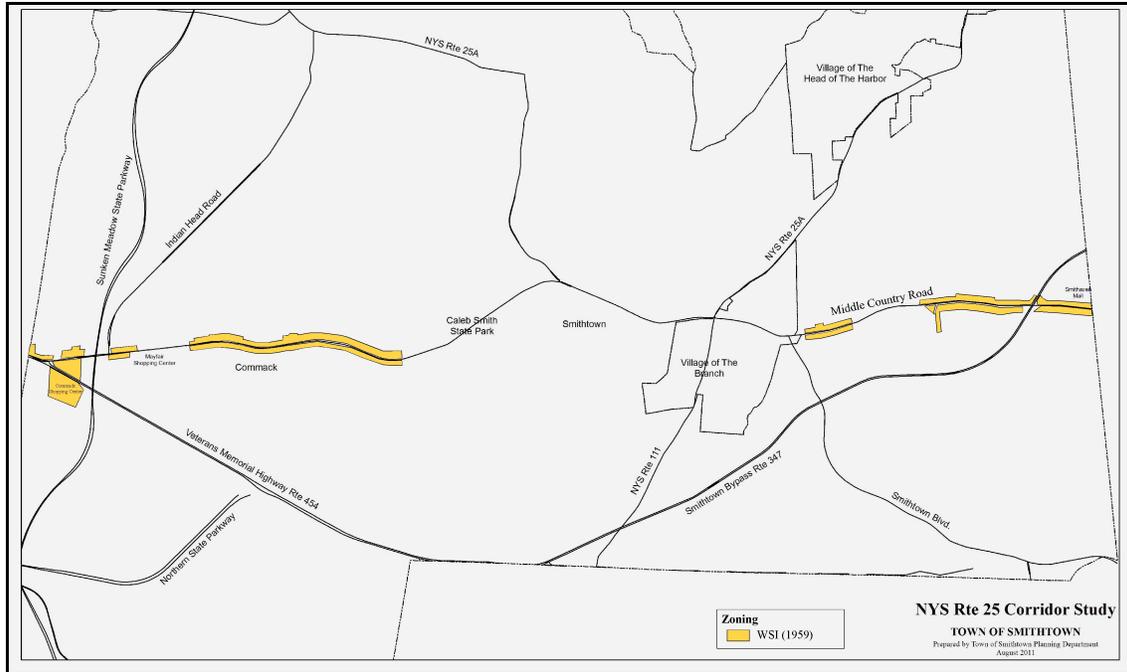


Figure 9. WSI Zoning along NYS Rt. 25 (1959)

Zone Changes from 1959-2010

However, the original WSI and LI zoning districts did not remain as first planned. Starting in 1959, about 150 acres of the original 350 acres of WSI were rezoned to other zoning categories while 200 additional acres were rezoned from other zoning categories to WSI, a net increase in acreage zoned WSI. Large portions of the original WSI zoning were rezoned for large shopping centers, such as the Smithhaven Mall and Commack Plaza. This reflected the strategy of developing commercial centers for retail uses. A smaller number of parcels were rezoned to multifamily or other less intensive zoning categories.

At the same time, between 1958, when WSI was created, and 2010, the most requested rezoning was for WSI uses. This was due to several factors including the limited demand for LI properties, the increased demand for automobile dealerships, and the large number of split-zoned properties within this corridor.



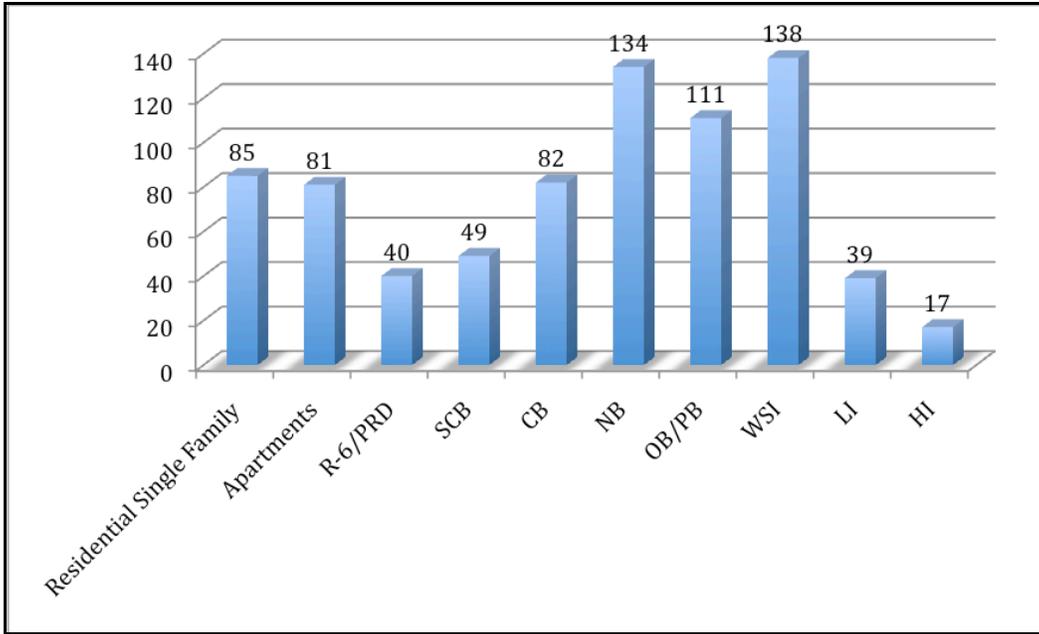


Figure 10. Number of zone changes by zoning category requested, 1959 - 2010

While the Town hoped to develop an industrial center along NYS Rt. 25, the pattern of industrial development in Suffolk County was to locate along major transportation corridors, such as the Long Island Expressway, or major arterials that connected to the Expressway, such as NYS Rt. 110 or Veterans Memorial Highway. There was little demand for developing the industrially-zoned properties that were far from the main arterial corridors, particularly the industrially-zoned areas of Kings Park, St. James, and Smithtown. An additional difficulty in the Middle Country Road portion of the corridor was the unusual “bowling alley” shape of the properties, which was not suitable for industrial uses (or for most other uses). Even though these properties were of a size appropriate for industrial use, the narrow frontage combined with the unusual depth of the lots tended to discourage development.

Many of the unusually shaped LI properties, however, were suitable for automobile dealerships. Since this use was not permitted in light industrial zoning, the Town received a large number of requests to rezone properties from the LI category to WSI. This resulted in the development of one of Long Island’s largest concentrations of automobile dealerships, establishing a major feature of the Middle Country Road corridor.



Figure 11. Automobile dealership, Middle Country Road



Finally, the original 1932 zoning district lines along NYS Rt. 25 did not follow property lines. When the WSI zoning was created in 1958, even though the Town Board extended the depth along a large section of the corridor, there remained many properties that were zoned WSI in the front and residential in the rear. When property owners later sought to develop their properties with WSI uses, they frequently requested WSI zoning for the entire property, further increasing the total WSI acreage.

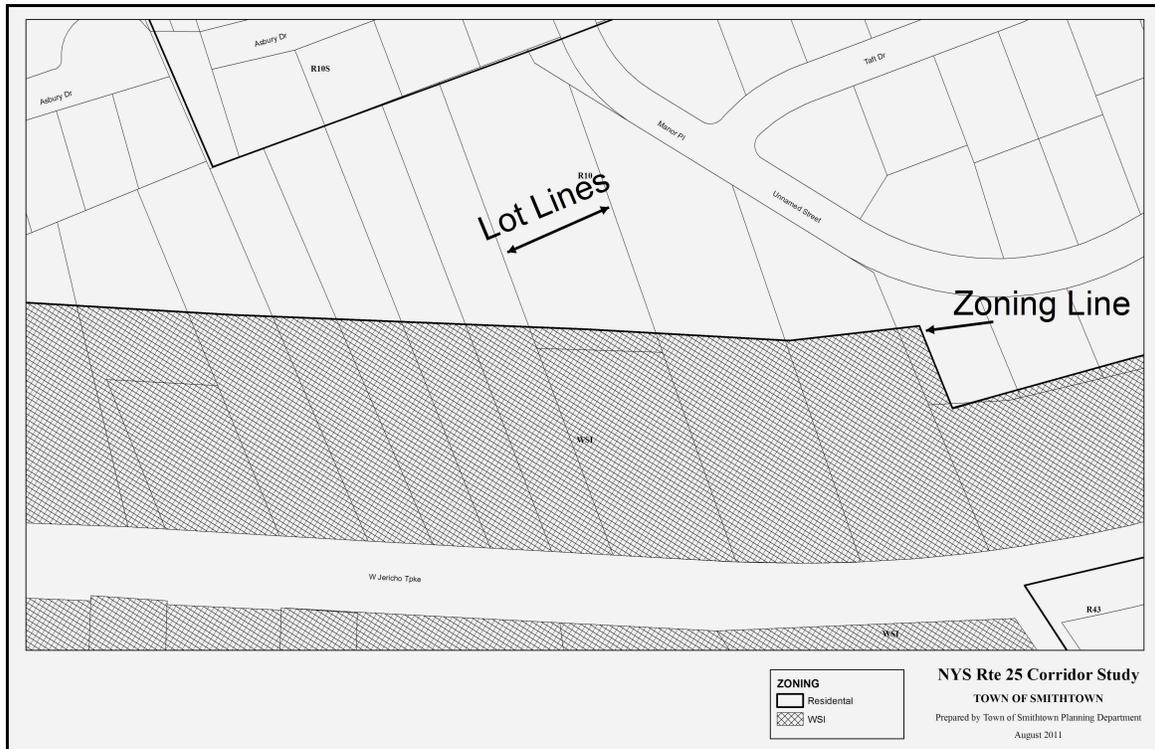


Figure 12. Split-zoned properties along NYS Rt. 25

B. Highway System

Findings:

- **NYS Rt. 25 serves both as a major arterial and as a major circulation route within the Town.**
- **Traffic congestion is a result of multiple factors related to land use, traffic volumes, and highway design.**
- **High traffic volumes increase circulation problems and inhibit pedestrian movements.**
- **There are many traffic issues within the Smithtown downtown.**
- **NYS Rt. 25 has more accidents than other major corridors in Town.**

An effective transportation system is key to a successful community. The transportation assessment of the NYS Rt. 25 corridor must consider a number of elements. This includes assessing current and future volumes, present and future land use, high accident



locations, and the relationship to the region’s highway system. While this topic will be discussed in more detail in the Comprehensive Plan Update, the following is a summary of the findings.

Highway Description

New York State Route 25 begins in New York City and terminates on the north fork of Long Island, at Orient Point, for a length of about 105 miles. Before the construction of the Northern State Parkway and the Long Island Expressway, NYS Rt. 25 was a primary highway to New York City.

In the middle of this route, a nine-mile segment goes through the Town of Smithtown. Between the “Bull” and NYS Rt. 111, for about a mile in length, NYS Rt. 25A merges with NYS Rt. 25. In the Town of Smithtown, NYS Rt. 25 has three different street names. West of the “Bull” the road is known as Jericho Turnpike. In downtown Smithtown, it is known as Main Street and east of NYS Rt. 111 it is known as Middle Country Road.



Figure 13. Main Street, Downtown Smithtown

Throughout the Town, NYS Rt. 25 varies in width and number of lanes. From Veterans Memorial Highway (NYS Rt. 454) to NYS Rt. 111, it is predominately a four-lane roadway. West of Veterans Memorial Highway, it widens to six lanes; it narrows to three lanes through Caleb Smith State Park. Through the Village of the Branch, it again becomes a three-lane highway narrowing to two lanes after Terry Road. At NYS Rt. 347, it again widens to four lanes as it enters the Town of Brookhaven. With the exception of the Smithtown downtown and a small segment just east of Terry Road, on-street parking is discouraged throughout most of its length.

NYS Rt. 25 functions as a major east-west arterial road in the Town, being the most direct cross-Town route. It also is a commercial corridor that serves an extensive and complex land use system. Traffic volumes range from about 24 to 32 thousand cars per day, depending upon the location. The segment of the corridor between the “Bull” and NYS Rt. 111, where NYS Rt. 25 merges with NYS Rt. 25A, has one of the largest traffic volumes of this corridor.



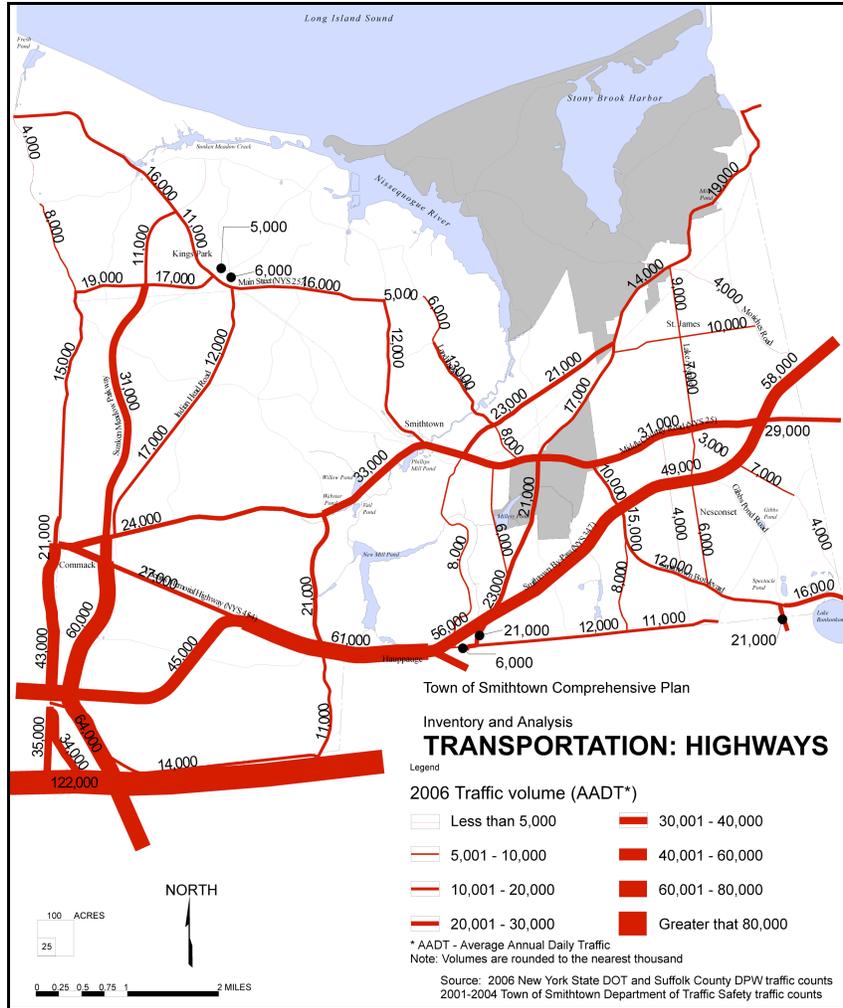


Figure 14. Town highways by volume

Highway Functions



Figure 15. Westbound traffic, Middle Country Road

While there have been issues with the land use along the NYS Rt. 25 corridor, there are also issues with how the corridor transportation system functions. Traffic volumes, congestion, accident levels, and other conflicts are evident throughout its length. Like the land use, some areas function well and other areas have significant problems.

Although the NYS Rt. 25 corridor has historically served as an east-west arterial, much of this primary function was supplanted for a time with the construction of the “bypass” that included Veterans



Memorial Highway (NYS Rt. 454) and the Port Jefferson/Nesconset Highway (NYS Rt. 347). This bypass was intended to direct through-traffic away from the commercial areas along NYS Rt. 25 to permit faster east-west travel. However, the bypass was never completed as a limited access roadway, as it had been conceived originally, and as it became congested, the overflow reverted to the NYS Rt. 25 corridor. Combined with the transportation requirements of the commercial uses along this roadway, this has had several impacts.

The most visible impact is traffic congestion. At key points during the day, particularly during the morning and evening rush hours, traffic is backed up at several locations. Part of this problem is the dual function of the corridor itself. It serves both as an arterial road moving traffic through the community and as a major circulation route permitting traffic to circulate within the community. In this latter capacity, it serves the surrounding commercial development and provides access to the neighborhoods north and south of this corridor. This is evident from the number of traffic signals placed throughout its length. Part of the traffic congestion within this corridor is caused by these signals, which, though necessary for safety, impede the arterial flow.



Figure 16. Left turn difficulty

Traffic volumes contribute to congestion when volume exceeds capacity. Even before this happens, however, high traffic volumes can also impede circulation. When a road has a high volume of traffic, it is difficult for traffic to enter the road system or to make left turns, and it impedes pedestrian movement. During the weekday it is extremely difficult to make a left turn to or from Middle Country Road. At several intersections pedestrians find it difficult to cross the street safely.



Figure 17. Pedestrian/vehicular conflict

There are examples of each of these problems throughout the corridor. The Smithtown Central Business District has a concentration of these issues due to high traffic volumes, a large number of circulation movements, high land use densities, and a high level of pedestrian activity. However, the State has recently made pedestrian improvements at several intersections within the downtown that should significantly increase pedestrian safety.



Many factors contribute to traffic accidents, but land use, traffic volumes, circulation, and congestion all have an impact. In comparison with the other major State arterials in the vicinity, NYS Rt. 25 has a high accident count, especially when considering that the other arterials, such as NYS Rt. 347, are carrying much higher volumes of traffic.

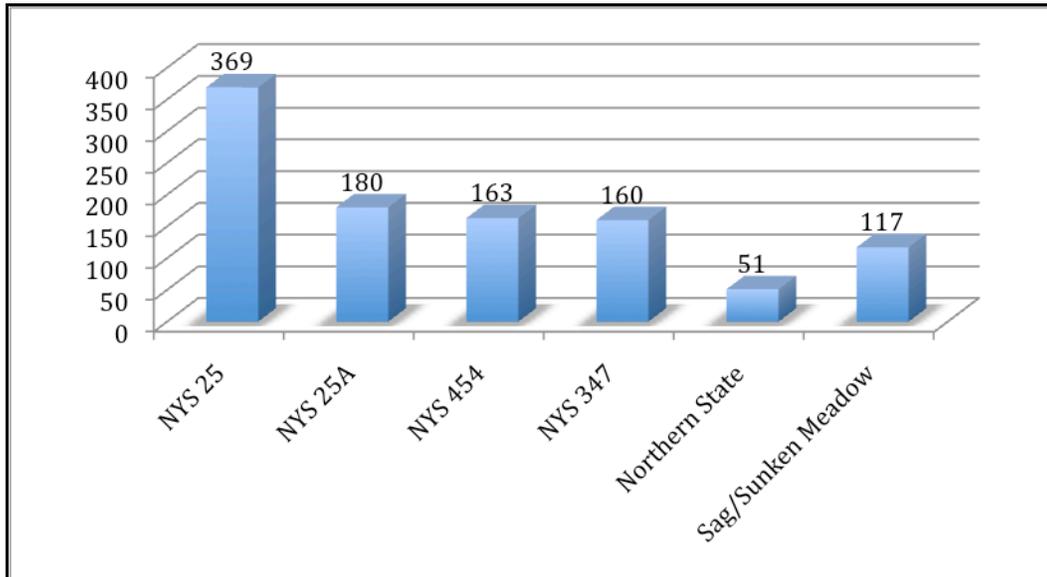


Figure 18. Highway accidents by NYS arterial roadway in Smithtown, 2005 (NYSDOT)

C. Water Mains and Sewer Systems

Findings:

- **There is no sewer system along the NYS Rt. 25 corridor.**
- **Without sewer systems, development options are limited.**
- **There are portions of the NYS Rt. 25 corridor that have no water mains or only a limited water main system.**
- **Without water mains, development options are limited.**

As discussed in the previous section, the intensity and type of development within this corridor is mixed. While there is no single cause for this, the lack of water mains and the lack of sewers are infrastructure issues that contribute to development problems.

Sewer Systems

In Suffolk County, all development, residential and commercial, must either connect to a sewer system or meet stringent restrictions on the intensity of development. For example, even if land is zoned for 10,000 sq. ft. single-family development, the Suffolk County Health Department requires 20,000 sq. ft. per lot if the home uses a septic system and not sewers. This same requirement restrains development along the NYS Rt. 25 corridor; without a sewer system in place, the choices for land uses become limited.



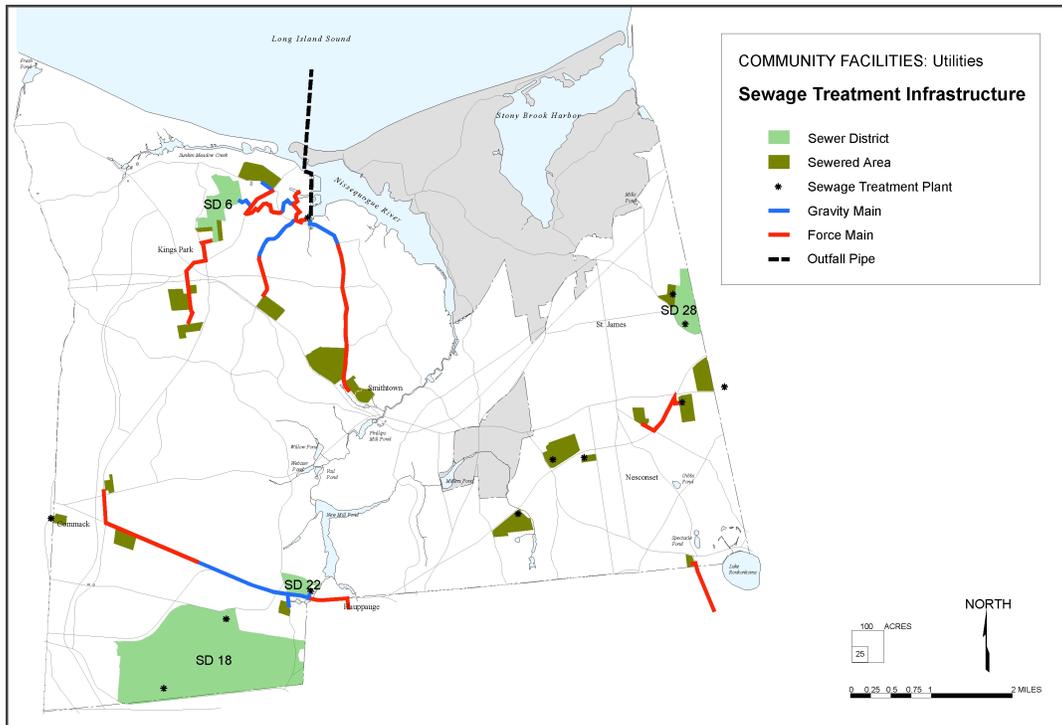


Figure 19. Sewage treatment infrastructure, Town-wide

This has had a marked impact on downtown development. The typical downtown has evolved from a retail center to more of a multipurpose center having a mix of land uses that ideally includes retail, office, residential, entertainment and restaurant uses. This is considered a healthy model for downtown development. In downtown Smithtown, however, it is almost impossible to open a new restaurant or to create offices or apartments over stores because of the lack of sewers. Without the density permitted by a sewer system, downtown development is stifled.

Recently, Suffolk County recognized this issue for several locations in Smithtown and has begun the design work to expand three existing sewer systems. However, funding is limited; except for a feasibility study by Suffolk County for the eastern portion of the corridor and into the Town of Brookhaven, there are no plans currently to go beyond downtown Smithtown within the NYS Rt. 25 corridor.

Water Mains

Some sections of NYS Rt. 25 have no water mains and some sections have limited service. In these areas, development must either rely on well water systems or attempt to tap into the water mains of the nearby residential areas.



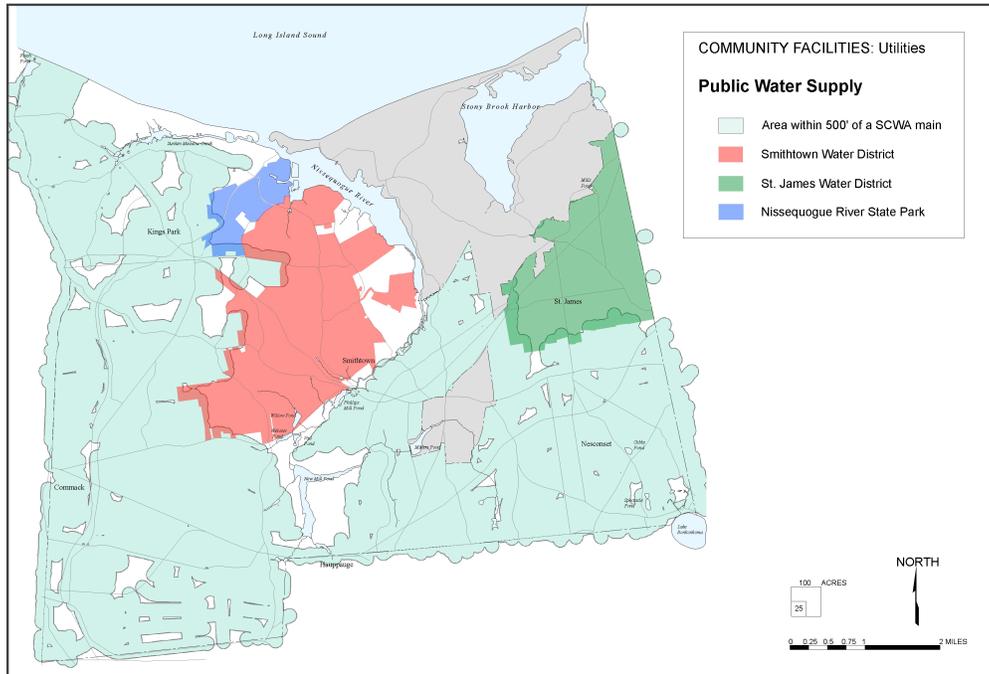


Figure 20. Public water mains, Town-wide

The segment of the corridor between Old Willets Path and Morewood Road, as an example, has experienced limited development due in part to the lack of water mains. In contrast, the Town’s recent reconstruction of Southern Boulevard between NYS Rt. 25 and NYS Rt. 347 included installation of water mains as part of the work. Within a short time after completion of the project, several new commercial properties were developed.



Figure 21. Medical offices, developed after water mains were installed on Southern Boulevard



III. Plan Recommendations

A. Overview

There is no single solution to resolve the issues within this corridor. The problems are complex and have developed over decades. Resolving them will take time. In planning for the future of this corridor, a combination of short- and long-term strategies is recommended. Short-term strategies include those elements that could be undertaken within the next 2 to 3 years and can most likely be achieved within on-going Town budgets. Long-term strategies are intended to be implemented over the next 10 to 20 years and may involve significant cost.

B. Short-term Recommendations

- **Enhance successful land use areas within the NYS Rt. 25 corridor through overlay districts.**
- **Limit commercial expansion in the remaining areas.**
- **Adopt zoning amendments that add flexibility and modernize some of the zoning categories.**
- **Use the Transfer of Development Rights program as an interim development strategy.**
- **Identify traffic congestion and high accident areas and apply traffic management efforts to help mitigate problems.**

Overlay Districts

As noted in Section II, the large commercial centers and the Middle Country Road automotive dealer cluster are two areas where development in the corridor is considered to be successful. Each of these areas, however, has unique concerns to be addressed.



Figure 22. Automobile dealership

signage that may be more applicable to smaller centers or sites.

When the zoning ordinance is amended, the change applies to all properties in the affected zoning categories, on a town-wide basis. However, using zoning overlay techniques, a municipality can focus on the

Automobile dealers, for example, are tied to storage restrictions that were primarily developed for other types of wholesale business. Large shopping centers, on the other hand, have limitations on parking or



Figure 23. Smithhaven Mall



specific needs of a specific area, and adopt regulations that apply to that area only. For the NYS Rt. 25 corridor, a recommended strategy is to develop overlay districts for the downtown area, the major retail centers, and the automobile dealerships along Middle Country Road to permit more flexible and targeted land use policies. These policies should address: parking and storage requirements; signage; mixed-use provisions; alternate setback and height requirements; and additional permitted uses.

With overlay districts, the Town can assist specific areas to develop more effectively, while maintaining appropriate requirements in other locations.

Limit Zoning Expansion

As noted above, the 320 acres of “A Business” that was created in the first Town zoning was replaced with about 1100 acres of commercial and industrial zoning by the mid-1960s. Some of that additional commercial and industrial acreage along this corridor has not been absorbed to date and it appears it cannot be absorbed by current or anticipated demand. There is limited demand for light industrial zoning throughout most of Long Island, and, depending upon location, size, or shape of the property, there appears to be a lessening demand for WSI and NB properties. To modernize the zoning within this corridor, it is necessary to anticipate future needs and to account for the other variables, such as property size or infrastructure requirements, that affect demand for property and for specific land uses.

Although some of the LI property along Middle Country Road could easily be changed to WSI for automotive uses, it is not clear how much additional property is needed for those uses. In much of the corridor, where properties are faced with limitations such as lack of sewers, odd size or shape of property, or poor access to the property, rezoning should not be handled on a lot-by-lot basis, but as part of an overall plan. Such plans should be linked with infrastructure improvements that would make it possible to permit a variety of appropriate uses.

Revamp the Zoning Ordinance

The zoning ordinance should be reexamined to consider what changes could be made that might improve each of the districts. This includes both changes in permitted uses and in other standards.

The WSI areas that are not in the proposed overlay district discussed earlier should be reviewed in light of any proposed update of the table of use categories, considering those uses that might be consistent with the purposes of this district and that would not negatively impact the existing commercial centers.

At the same time, because of the high traffic volumes within this corridor, Town site plan requirements should take into consideration elements that would reduce congestion and increase safety. For example, the Town might consider new site plan requirements or ordinance amendments that make it more attractive to interconnect parking lots and limit the number of driveways within the corridor. In this way, business uses could be



expanded near existing traffic signals when parking lots are interconnected, providing safe ingress and egress, or parking requirements could be reduced when parking lots are merged. This approach was implemented successfully on the northeast corner of NYS Rt. 347 and Terry Road.



Figure 24. Successful development at the corner of Terry Road and NYS Rt. 347

Transfer of Development Rights

The Town recently adopted a Transfer of Development Rights Ordinance that permits sewage rights to be transferred from one parcel to another. This permits uses that are consistent with existing zoning, such as restaurants and medical office buildings, to be built even if there are limitations on wastewater discharge on the specific site. This is only an interim strategy but it can be used until sewer systems are constructed; limitations on the development rights that can be transferred prevent over-use. It is a partial answer to providing flexibility in land use decisions.

Traffic Management Systems



While there are limited non-structural options for dealing with high traffic volumes, there are strategies known as “traffic management systems” whereby traffic flow can be improved, accident rates lowered, or pedestrian safety increased by redesigning elements of the road system. The recent restriping of NYS Rt. 25 at Caleb Smith State Park is an example of a traffic management system.

Figure 25. Traffic Management System, NYS Rt. 25 at Caleb Smith Park



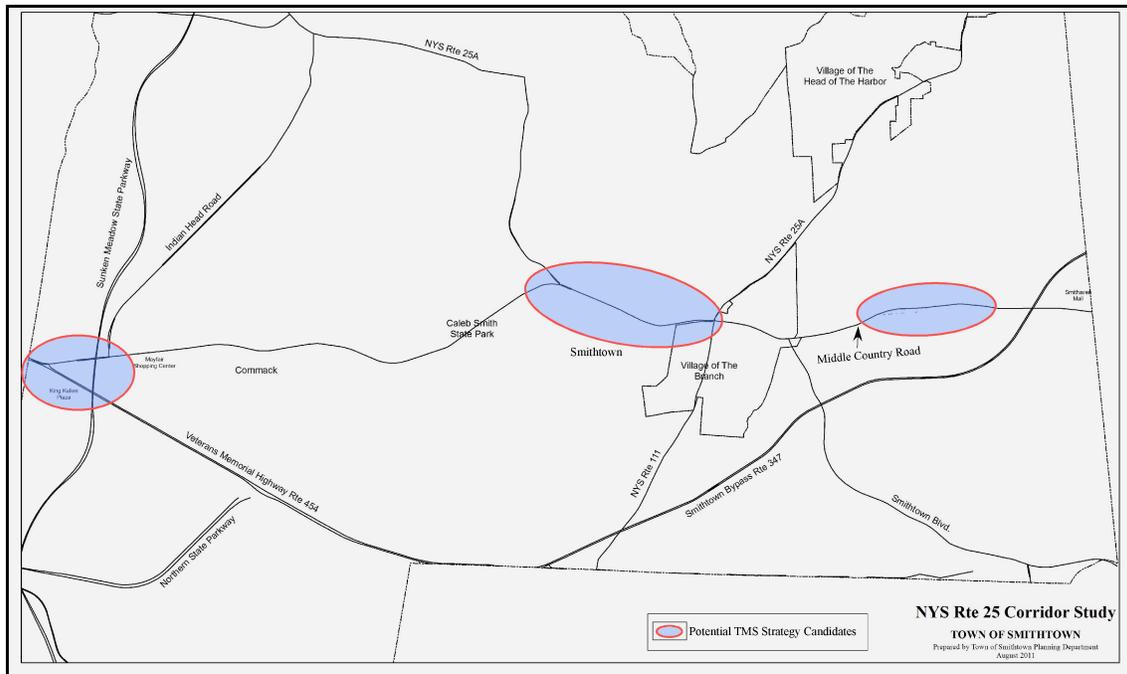


Figure 26. Potential Traffic Management System strategy areas along NYS Rt. 25

C. Long-term Recommendations

- **Reduce the amount of LI, WSI, and NB zoning within the corridor by encouraging alternate uses, such as institutional and multifamily or planned unit developments.**
- **Complete the Southern Boulevard road network.**
- **Reconstruct the corridor as a boulevard throughout its entire length.**
- **Provide sewage and water main infrastructure that can support a wide variety of development.**

Reduce the Amount of LI, WSI, and NB Zoning

As discussed in Section II, within the NYS Rt. 25 corridor, there appears to be limited demand for LI properties, NB usage appears to be on decline, and outside of the automobile dealer usage, the need for more WSI appears limited. At the same time, there are other major retail and industrial centers that are not in this corridor that are also important to the Town. The potential impacts to these other centers should be considered when reconfiguring the potential uses within this corridor.

The long-term solution is to find the types of land uses that would make these changes economically viable and then encourage those uses. Simply rezoning these properties to another category or changing the use table within each of these districts does not solve the issues. With the exception of Heavy Industrial uses, sufficient land is available for



virtually all commercial activities throughout the corridor. Further, the property owners within this corridor would be concerned and resist any potential change if they felt that the change would harm the value of their property.

One alternative might include rezoning selected areas for institutional and small multifamily uses. While assisted living facilities, day care centers, and other types of institutional uses must meet stringent Town guidelines, revising standards to permit them to locate along this corridor, while still retaining requirements to promote health and safety and protect the community character, might encourage these uses to locate in these areas. Additionally, other communities are now experimenting with constructing small multifamily projects along similar roadways. Some of the land along the NYS Rt. 25 corridor (especially the property that is 200' in depth) is well-suited for this type of development. However, many of these uses would require a sewer system, which will be discussed later.



Figure 17. Infill housing

Another example of this strategy might include the creation of “planned unit development”. The “Galleria” located in the NYS Rt. 25 corridor is an example of this approach. After a developer assembled a number of LI-zoned parcels in the 1980s, the Town rezoned an 85-acre segment of these “bowling alley” properties and created a planned community consisting of condominiums, apartments, single-family homes, and commercial development. There are sections within the NYS Rt. 25 corridor that could replicate that process if the properties were assembled. Ideally, 15 to 20 acres or more would be assembled for such development.

Figure 28. Aerial views of Galleria site, before and after development



Galleria site 1980

Galleria site 2007



Complete the Southern Boulevard Road Network

As discussed above, many of the properties along Middle Country Road are “bowling alley”-shaped lots that are difficult to develop, except for automobile dealerships or other unique uses. In 1986, the Planning Department proposed a road network that would bisect these properties east of Southern Boulevard and result in more conventionally shaped properties. A portion of this road network has been constructed. If this road system is completed as it should be, the vacant land in this area could be more easily developed.

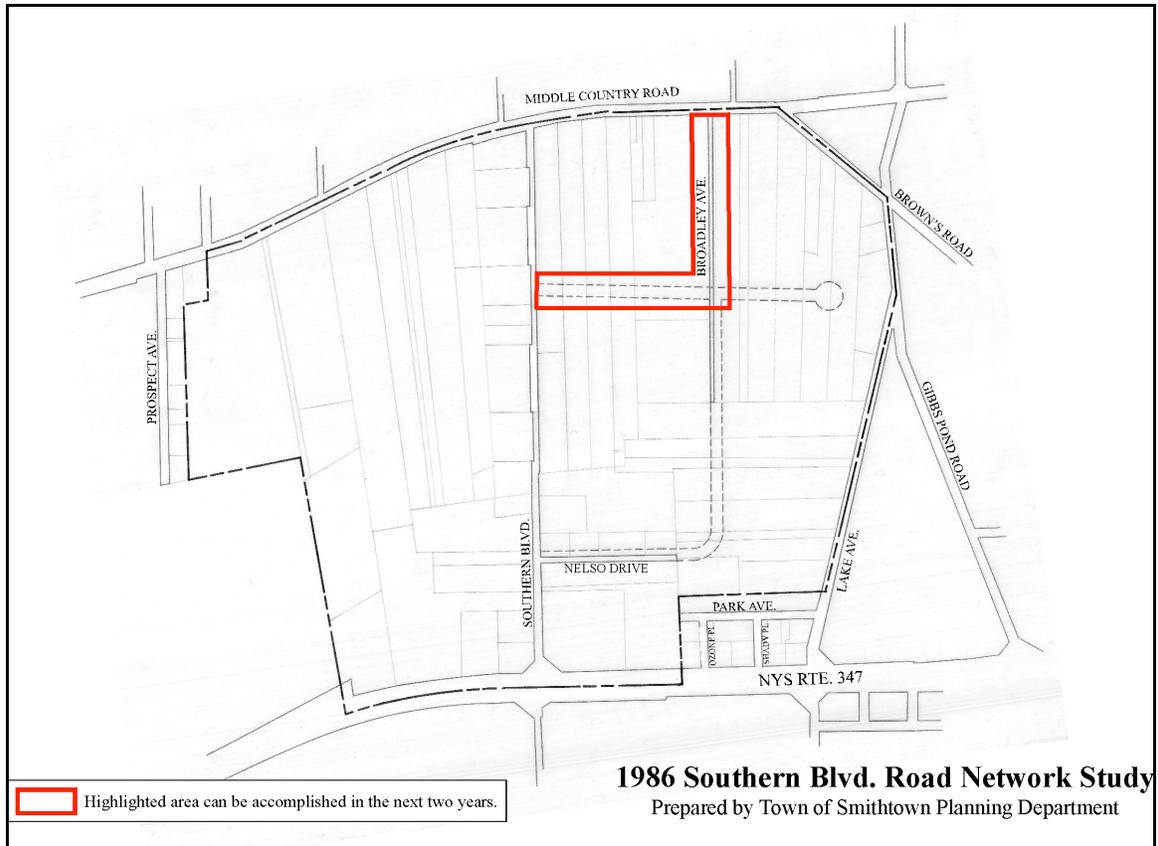


Figure 29. Proposed Southern Boulevard roadway network

Reconstruct NYS Rt. 25 as a Boulevard

As noted previously, NYS Rt. 25 has a high accident count in comparison to other major arterial roadways, due to the complexity of its functions as a commercial corridor. In order to make the road safer and to add some aesthetic features, we recommend that the corridor be reconstructed in the form of a boulevard.

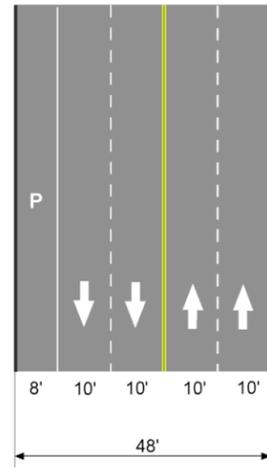
Figures 30, 31, 32. Conceptual plans for boulevard design:
1 lane each direction (p. 26), 2 lanes each direction (p. 27) for Main Street, Downtown Smithtown
2 lanes each direction (p. 28) for portion of Jericho Turnpike section in Commack
 [see foldout pages 26 - 28]



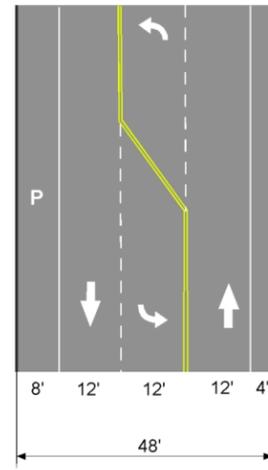


DRAFT

Scale: 1"= 40'



EXISTING ROADWAY



PROPOSED ROADWAY



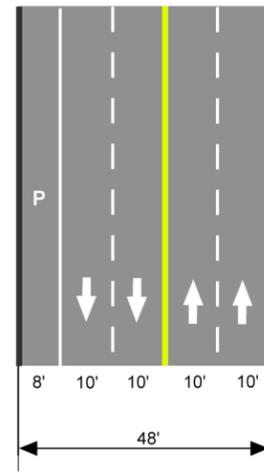
DECORATIVE SIGN POSTS

	<p>TOWN OF SMITHTOWN SUFFOLK COUNTY, NEW YORK</p>		<p>CONCEPTUAL RE-DESIGN FOR: MAIN STREET • SMITHTOWN</p> 		<p>PREPARED BY: TOWN OF SMITHTOWN PLANNING DEPARTMENT</p>				
	<p>Town Supervisor Patrick R. Vecchio</p>	<p>Town Council Robert Creighton, Kevin Malloy Thomas McCarthy, Edward Wehrheim</p>			<p>SCALE: AS NOTED</p>	<p>DRAWN BY: PH</p>	<p>CHECKED BY: DMF</p>	<p>DWG. NO. 2</p>	<p>DATED: MAY 17, 2011</p>

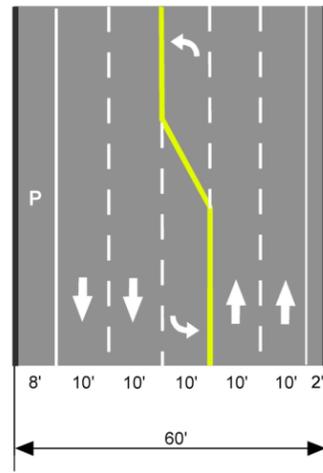




DRAFT



EXISTING ROADWAY



PROPOSED ROADWAY



DECORATIVE SIGN POSTS



TOWN OF SMITHTOWN
SUFFOLK COUNTY, NEW YORK
Town Supervisor: Patrick R. Vecchio
Town Council: Robert Creighton, Kevin Malloy, Thomas McCarthy, Edward Wehrheim

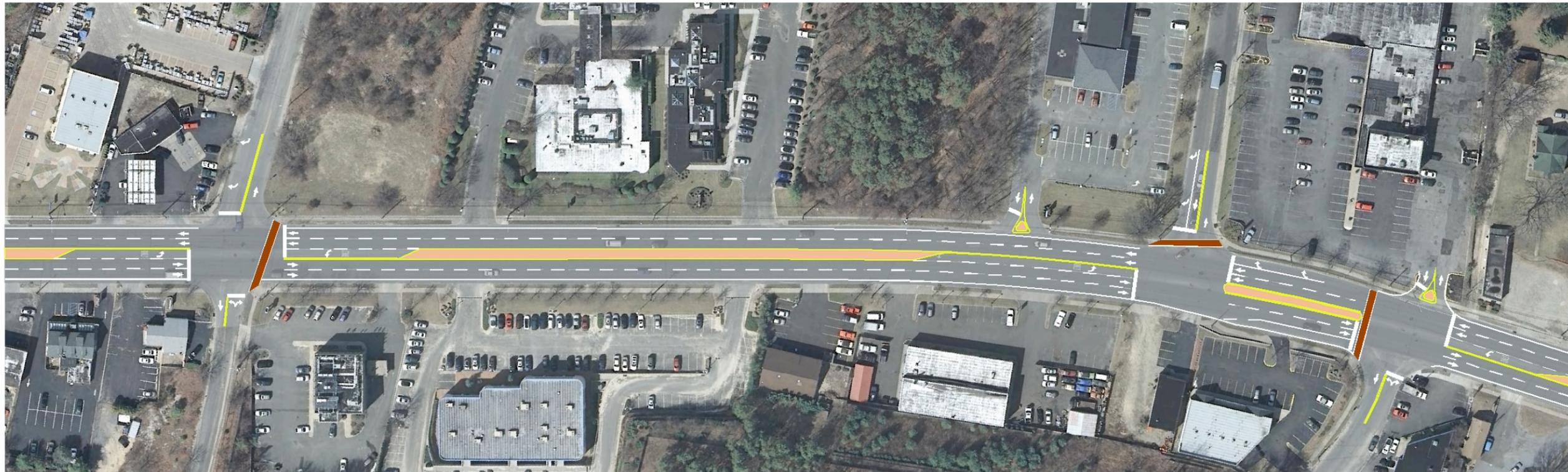
CONCEPTUAL RE-DESIGN FOR:
MAIN STREET • SMITHTOWN



PREPARED BY:
TOWN OF SMITHTOWN
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

SCALE: AS NOTED	DRAWN BY: TO	CHECKED BY: DMF	DWG. NO. 4	DATED: JUNE 6, 2011
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TOWN OF SMITHTOWN
SUFFOLK COUNTY, NEW YORK
 Town Supervisor **Patrick R. Vecchio**
 Town Council: **Robert Creighton, Kevin Malloy**
Thomas McCarthy, Edward Wehrheim

CONCEPTUAL RE-DESIGN FOR:
JERICHO TPKE • COMMACK



PREPARED BY: TOWN OF SMITHTOWN PLANNING DEPARTMENT				
SCALE: AS NOTED	DRAWN BY: TO	CHECKED BY: DMF	DWG. NO. 1	DATED: JUNE 7 2011



There are many advantages to this approach. First, turns will be restricted to specific locations, providing for safer turning movements. In the downtown areas and other locations, they could serve as a protective island for pedestrians and make it easier to cross streets safely. This feature might also function in some areas as a “traffic calming” measure to reduce speed; at other locations, the boulevard might function as a barrier between cars moving at high speeds (e.g. at Caleb Smith State Park).

In the short-term recommendations, a one-lane concept was suggested for the Smithtown downtown, using striping to effect this design. Eventually a median could be constructed within the current right-of-way that supports this approach. However, if land is acquired on the south side of Main Street, a four-lane roadway, that has added capacity, could be constructed. Ideally, the four-lane concept with a median is the best long-term solution for safety and capacity issues.

Along with the boulevard design, where practical or feasible, the utility lines should also be placed underground. In the long run, this will contribute to traffic safety, improve the aesthetics, and make the utilities less vulnerable to inclement weather.

Provide Sewer Systems and Water Mains

In order to provide for the best land use decisions, water mains and a sewer system should be installed through-out the corridor. If this type of infrastructure is not present, then the development of property along this corridor will be restricted and what may be desirable as land use objectives may not be feasible.

Water mains are less expensive to install than are sewer systems. The best time to install these systems is when a road is under major reconstruction. Since the State usually has long lead times for such projects, the Town could coordinate with the State in its next reconstruction cycle to upgrade or install water mains. Another option might be to create a separate district for such purposes and use strategies such as creating Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) to fund such projects.

Sewer systems are more expensive and more complex than water systems, but they are necessary for good land use development. Currently, there are no funds available either from the state or federal governments that could fund a major sewer system. Ideally, such a system would provide the sewer capacity for this corridor and for adjacent properties. If funds become available, we should pursue projects of this scale.

Short of constructing a large new sewer district, there are alternatives that might fill the gap and be affordable. There are currently three plants within this corridor serving residential and commercial uses. These plants are small and operating at or near capacity. Suffolk County has proposed to extend the lines from the Kings Park Sewage Treatment Plant to serve the Smithtown Central Business District. However, most of the corridor will still not have a sewer system.



We recommend that two additional sewer plants be constructed on the east and west side of the corridor to serve other land uses along NYS Rt. 25. While no specific locations have been selected, there are several sites along Middle Country Road that could accommodate a sewer plant. On the Jericho Turnpike portion of the corridor, it would be more difficult to find an available site, but it may be feasible to acquire an underutilized site.

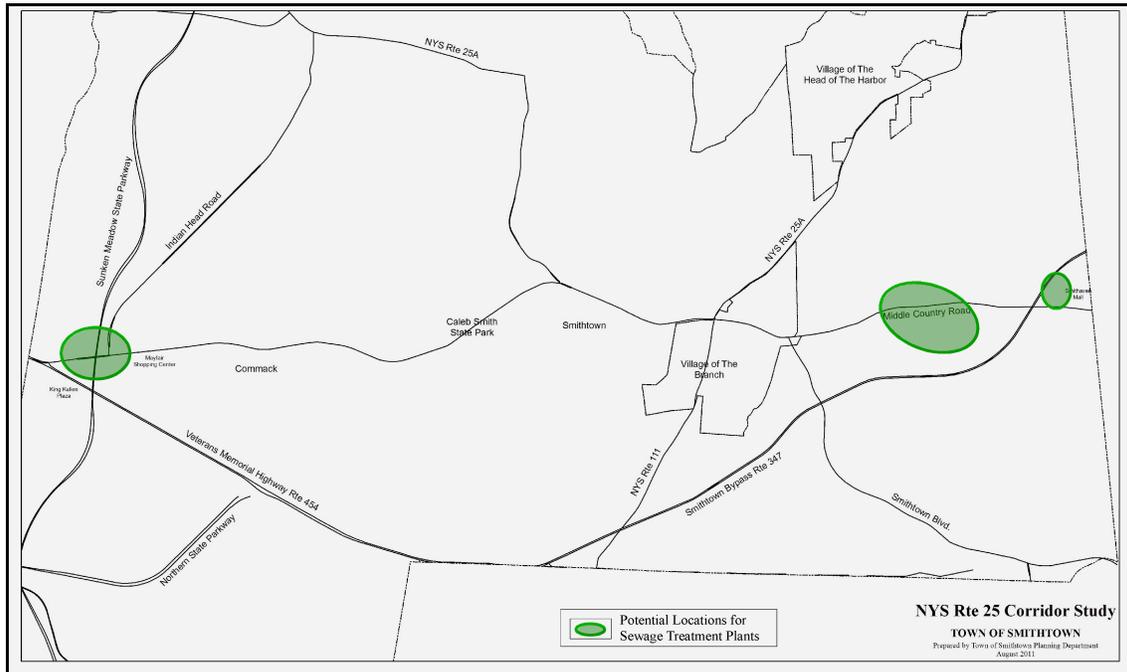


Figure 33. Potential sewage treatment plant locations

Cost is a major factor in any proposed sewer system. While funding the construction of such plants may be difficult for the Town, preparing a feasibility analysis would be a first step that could get the Town ready to seek funding. Additionally, we should examine “private/public” partnerships, grants, or similar strategies to defray construction costs.

