

# West Main/Coddington Development Center Master Plan

**PREPARED FOR**

Town of Middletown, RI  
SEPTEMBER 2011

**PREPARED BY**



*Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.*

*in association with*

RKG Associates

## Acknowledgements

The Town of Middletown would like to thank the following individuals who played a significant role in preparing this Plan. They contributed in many ways and attended numerous meetings which helped shape the vision, recommendations, and actions that are included in the study. Thank you!

### PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE

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- ❑ Gladys B. Lavine
- ❑ Joseph P. Marnane
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### RESIDENTS, BUSINESS OWNERS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Thank you for your participation at the numerous public events that were held during the study. We value the input and time you have given towards advancing planning efforts for this important part of our Town.

### FUNDING

Funding assistance for this project was provided by the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission and the Newport County Chamber of Commerce.

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# Executive Summary

### Introduction

The Town of Middletown hired Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB) to work with Town staff, a steering committee, stakeholders and the community to prepare a master plan for the West Main/Coddington Development Center. The Development Center consists of four publicly owned parcels that are targeted for potential redevelopment. They include the former Navy Lodge, the Town’s Recreation Complex, Middletown Public Library, and the former JFK Elementary School—all located on the west side of West Main Road (Route 114). The Development Center or “Core Study Area” is surrounded by a larger study area that includes approximately 245-acres of developed land.

The Development Center Master Plan will serve as a guiding document for the transformation of the area into a vibrant, attractive, mixed use area, capitalizing on its relatively dense development pattern, available land under public ownership, good transportation access, and available utilities. The master plan sets the framework for implementing a series of strategic redevelopment initiatives that will guide private investment and development in a way that benefits the entire community. The Master Plan will be used by the Town to seek funding to implement the recommended improvements, particularly for the Core Study Area.

The 245-acre Study Area is located northeast of the town line dividing Middletown from Newport. It is generally bounded by West Main Road (Route 114) to the east, Coddington Highway to the south, U.S. Navy property and Coddington Cove to the west, and Gate 17 Access Road to the north. The Study Area encompasses a mix of commercial and residential uses, including: retail, restaurants, single- and multi-family residential, public park and library as well as vacant land (a recently closed elementary school and land owned by the U.S. Navy) within the vicinity of the intersections of Coddington Highway/East Main Road (Route 138)/West Main Road (Route 114).

Although the mixed use nature of the Study Area would seem to make it an ideal walkable destination, this is not currently the case. Disjointed residential and commercial uses, unattractive streetscapes, inadequate pedestrian facilities, and congested intersections make for an uninviting pedestrian environment

### Project Goals

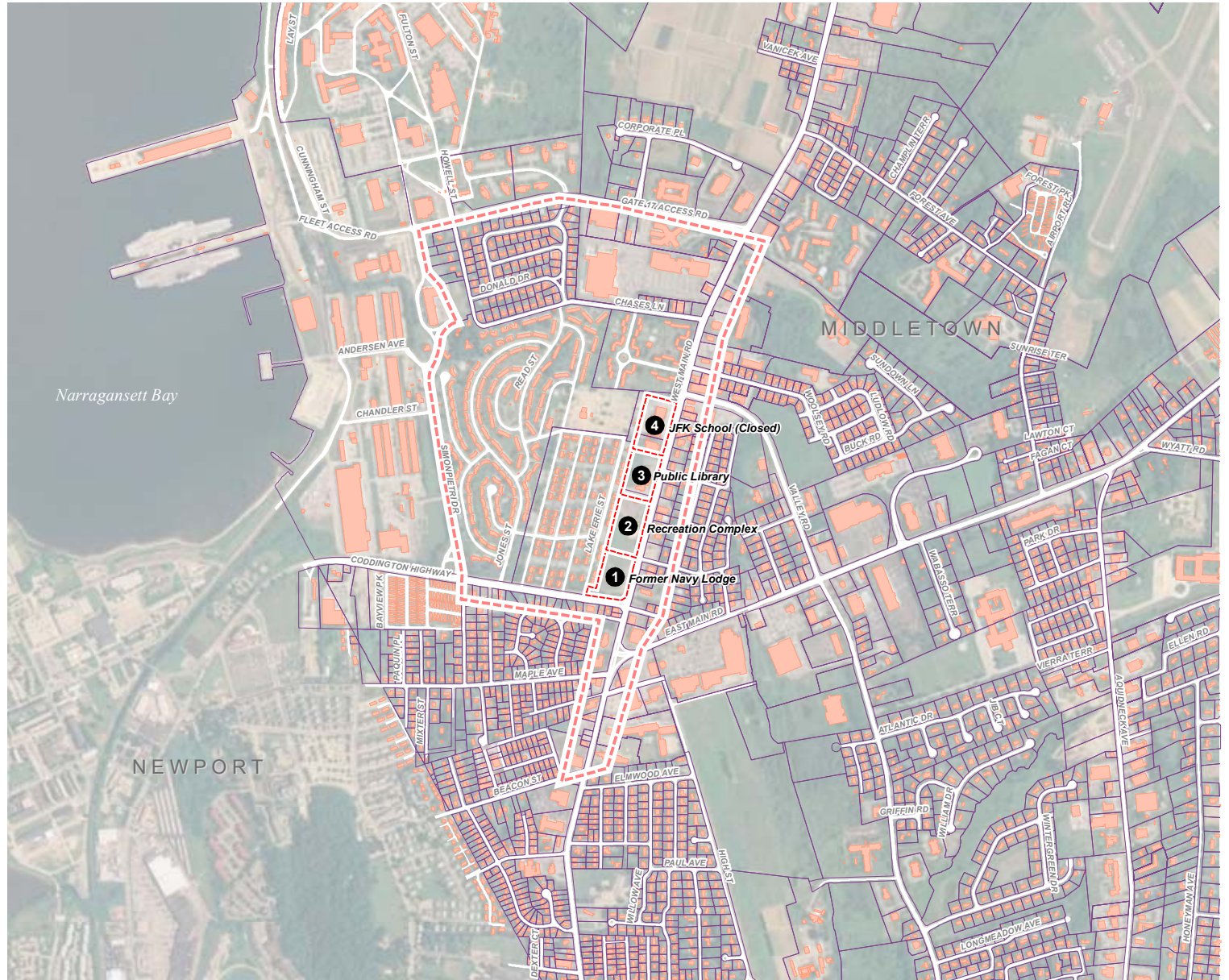
The Town identified the following goals that set the stage for various aspects of the planning study:

- ❑ The West Main/Coddington Development Master Plan will serve to guide development and redevelopment within the project boundaries.
- ❑ The Plan will focus efforts on the Core Study Area, consisting of the former Navy Lodge, Recreation Complex, Middletown Public Library, and former JFK Elementary School)
- ❑ The Plan will identify recommendations and strategies for:
  - ❑ *Redevelopment options for the Core Study Area*
  - ❑ *Integrating surrounding areas into the redevelopment Core Study Area, including pedestrian and vehicle connections*
  - ❑ *Become a mixed use center and unique destination in Town*
  - ❑ *Enhancing future redevelopment of private property to compliment the core area*
  - ❑ *Identifying opportunities for streetscape improvements*
  - ❑ *Identifying potential transportation improvements*

Figure ES.1 — Study Area

**Legend**

-  Study Area
-  Core Study Area



Source: Town of Middletown GIS

### Community Outreach

The community outreach process for included numerous events and meetings that helped guide the development of the overall Master Plan. The process lasted for approximately ten months and included Steering Committee meetings, stakeholder interviews, community meetings/workshops, and Town Council meetings. The stakeholder interviews provided insight early in the process regarding issues and opportunities. Two public meetings were held to gain an understanding of the community's goals for the study area, and to facilitate discussion regarding the three alternatives that were developed.

### Existing Conditions

#### Zoning

The Core Study Area is situated within the Public Zoning District (P), but is designated as PA, indicating that it is within a traffic sensitive area. The Public District was established for land which is owned by the federal, state or municipal government, or related public agencies. The only uses permitted in the Public District are for governmental functions and certain agricultural uses. The traffic sensitive designation identifies districts where special regulations regarding lot width and frontage apply. They are intended to provide for adequate and safe access onto major thoroughfares, in this case the Core Study Area is located on West Main Road.

Immediately to the south at the intersection with Coddington Highway, is the Navy Lodge parcel, which is also in the Public District. Behind the Core Study Area to the west is a residentially developed area that is zoned Residential Multifamily (RM). To the north on the west side of West Main Road is an area designated as RM, residential multifamily in a traffic sensitive area, which is the location of the Harbor Village Apartments. Across West Main Road, the area is designated as General Business (GB) in a traffic sensitive area where commercial uses are located.

### Historic Resources

One historic property, the Thomas-Chase-Smythe House at the west end of Chase Lane, lies in the northwest section of the Study Area. The late 18th century structure was extensively modified in the 19th century by members of the Chase family, who owned the house from the late 18th century until 1913. The house derives its significance from its association with this family. The house, also known as Quarters NB-1 in the U.S. Naval Education and Training Center, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1989.

### Landscape

The existing landscape is characterized by a range of tree types and landscape treatments. These include open lawn areas and athletic fields along the southern portion, street trees in a lawn strip along the central portion, shrub beds and flowering cherry trees at the library and low-canopied trees along the John F. Kennedy Elementary School. This presents opportunities to develop a comprehensive program of new street and shade tree plantings which may incorporate attractive features of the existing landscape. The existing landscape along the west side of the Core Study Area varies from shrub beds and scattered trees along its southern extents to areas of open pavement devoid of landscaping further north. This area presents opportunity for planting infill as sites are redeveloped.

### Open Space Plan

A Recreation, Conservation and Open Space Master Plan (RCOS) was completed by the Town in September 2010. The findings the RCOS Master Plan outline potential options to relocate the existing Recreational Complex on West Main Road. Some of the pertinent findings from that plan include:

The West Main Recreation Complex is in a location that is poorly situated for recreational uses due to high traffic volumes and the




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Looking northeast along  
West Main Road

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Left to right: J.F.K. Elementary School, Middletown Public Library, West Main Road Recreation Complex, Former Navy Lodge Property

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proximity of a major roadway. This area is potentially better suited for a mix of housing, commercial, and institutional uses that are typical of a village center.

The RCOS Plan Identified parcels in Middletown that have potential for the building of new fields and playground areas.

## Infrastructure

VHB conducted an assessment of utility infrastructure needs and upgrades that would be required to support the build out of the Core Study Area based on the Development Center Master Plan. The following highlights the key findings from this assessment:

- ❑ Sewer is available but will require upgrades to the municipal system for full build out of the proposed development. Existing sewer service could be reused until the development exceeds the existing sewer loads, however, any future development within the Core Study

Area that exceeds existing sewer flow would need to be conveyed to the Coddington Cove Pump Station. The Town of Middletown estimates that approximately \$750,000 to \$1,000,000 are required to upgrade the Coddington Cove Pump Station to accommodate any increase in sanitary flow. It is also likely that the development parcels will require a pump station and force main to tie into the Coddington Highway gravity sewer, based on the existing grades of the parcels and the elevation of the gravity sewer.

- ❑ Water, Gas, Electric, and Telecommunications services are available. Adequate service would be confirmed once the loads and requirements for future development have been established.
- ❑ The public utility infrastructure costs (including a twenty percent contingency) for a utility corridor within the Core Study Area are estimated to cost approximately \$1,000,000.
- ❑ Additional impervious area is anticipated for redevelopment of the parcels. Stormwater Management BMPs must include Low Impact Development (LID) Systems, and will likely require underground stormwater detention to mitigate any increases in impervious area.
- ❑ Infiltration capacity is anticipated to be limited within the Core Study Area.

### Transportation

An evaluation was performed of the physical conditions of the roadway network that is influenced by the potential developments within the Core Study Area. Adjacent parcels included as part of the Study Area, such as The Landings housing development, the Coddington Cove Navy housing development, and the US Navy property are also included as part of this transportation assessment. Also included in the assessment is the existing transit and alternative transportation options, including bus and bicycle and pedestrian mobility within the Core Study Area and

larger Study Area, as well as existing access to these developments. The information used for this evaluation was collected as part of the Aquidneck Island Transportation Study (AITS), and was supplemented by additional field visits. Also included in the evaluation are proposed roadway improvement projects and related studies that occur within the Study Area. The findings from the existing conditions were factored into the development of the alternative concept plans.

The transportation findings are as follows:

- ❑ There are existing sidewalks along a majority of the study area roadways; however, they are generally in fair to poor condition and are typically not ADA compliant
- ❑ There is a gap in bicycle facilities between Chase Lane and the proposed West Main/Coddington Development Center and to the bike route along Coddington Highway
- ❑ There are no bus shelters or benches at any RIPTA scheduled stops
- ❑ There are numerous closely spaced driveways along the study roadways that create conflict points for vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists which cause congestion and can lead to crashes
- ❑ The study area experiences significant fluctuations in traffic throughout the year, mostly due to tourists; therefore, the 30th highest hour (Thursday in August) were used for analysis purposes to be conservative
- ❑ There are significant pedestrian volumes (100 to 200 pedestrian crossings over a 12 hour period) crossing at the signalized intersections along West Main Road
- ❑ The Aquidneck Island Transportation Study (AITS) noted the following three intersections as having the highest frequency of crashes and/or severity on the entire Island: West Main Road at East

Main Road, West Main Road at Coddington Highway, and West Main Road at Valley Road

- There are several ongoing projects at various stages of development that could have a direct effect on the operation of the study area roadways and intersections including but not limited to the Reconstruction of Two-Mile Corner, the RI\*STARS Road Safety Assessment, Shoreline Drive (Burma Road) Southern Extension, and Pell Bridge Interchange Project

## Urban Design Opportunities

The Core Study Area and surrounding context are located at the crossroads of West Main Road, East Main Road, and Coddington Highway, that affords the opportunity to make this area a unique district or “gateway” to Middletown. Figure ES.2 identifies urban design opportunities that were considered in developing the alternatives and subsequent preferred scenario. The urban design opportunities include:

- “Gateways” – Explore the potential to create gateway features at key entry points to the study area that celebrate arrival to this area. These include the intersections at:
  - West Main at East Main*
  - West Main at Coddington Highway*
  - West Main at Valley Road*
- Edges and Streetscape – Understand the potential to enhance the streetscape and building frontage along West Main Road to create a unique sense of place and streetscape environment. The existing streetscape and built edges along West Main Road vary in scale, setbacks, and streetscape treatments and would benefit from a more unified approach.

- Connections – Seek opportunities to make pedestrian and bicycle connections to and from the Core Study Area to better integrate the area into the surrounding neighborhoods. This could be accomplished by improving connections along West Main Road and through improved connections to nearby residential areas.

## Market Overview

An assessment of housing, retail and other commercial (office/ industrial) supply and demand indicators was performed to provide a range of market-based development opportunities for the site, as well as a possible continuation or expansion of community and/or municipal uses.

### Residential

The near-term demand for residential development, at the site, appears limited, and may be contrary to the “highest and best use” locational factors for retail and other non-residential development. This is not to indicate however, that over time the residential opportunities may not improve, but they would be better served as development parcels not fronting to West Main. Towards the rear of the site, it may be possible to accommodate some housing, realizing that it would most likely be renter-occupied and priced as “workforce housing”. It would also be reasonable for senior housing, given its proximity to services and transit, if demand for such housing was evident at the time of development.

### Retail

There is approximately 1.3 million sf of retail uses in Middletown, including 891,300 sf of direct (shoppers) retail; 124,700 sf of restaurant; 107,700 sf of mixed use retail; and around of 200,000 sf of miscellaneous retail uses. According to a local real estate professional the current vacancy rate for retail is around 3% in Middletown. Despite this there

are several retail categories where there exist unmet demand and an opportunity for an additional 70,000± sf of development in selected retail categories. The traffic counts and other location factors serve as favorable criteria to capture some of this development.

**Office**

Middletown has approximately 1.1 million sf of office space according to assessment records. While there is some market demand for office space, in the context of the study area this would suggest mixed-use development, with retail on the lower floor and selected office space on the upper floors. Such office demand may include high-tech incubator office space, realizing there would likely be a high turnover rate and limited lease terms. Other potential office users could include smaller and more independent users such as finance, information services or other professional/technical business services, essentially a second story office park for users amenable to upper story space but requiring high consumer/traffic access and visibility.

**Scenario Development**

Three concept plans were developed for the Core Study Area and its surroundings. Each scenario applied land uses and programmatic components that range in intensity and use to showcase how the area could potentially redevelop in the future. The alternatives respond to findings from the market study and goals that were identified during the outreach process—namely to become a mixed use center and unique destination in the town. The scenarios also explore the potential to accommodate a range of municipal uses should the Town seek to rebuild the existing library on site and add other municipal uses to the area, such as a Town Hall or Town Common. The scenarios were the subject of the second public meeting where participants were asked to critique each plan, including each option’s urban design and transportation goals.

All three scenarios contemplate potential redevelopment on the west side of West Main Road, and include redevelopment concepts for the four parcels in the core study area (Navy Lodge parcel, recreation complex, library and J.F.K. school). In addition, each illustrative concept plan includes a vision for the long-term redevelopment of the east side of West Main Road. Table ES.1 is a summary of the potential development program that was included in each of the three scenarios.

**Table ES.1 – Scenario Summary**

Scenario	Program			
	Civic (sf)	Retail (sf)	Office (sf)	Residential
<b>One</b>	28,000	94,000	82,000	none
<b>Two</b>	75,000	80,000	68,000	none
<b>Three</b>	75,000	106,000	56,000	175 Units

Note: Does not include “Long Term” uses for the east side of West Main Road






**Preferred Scenario**

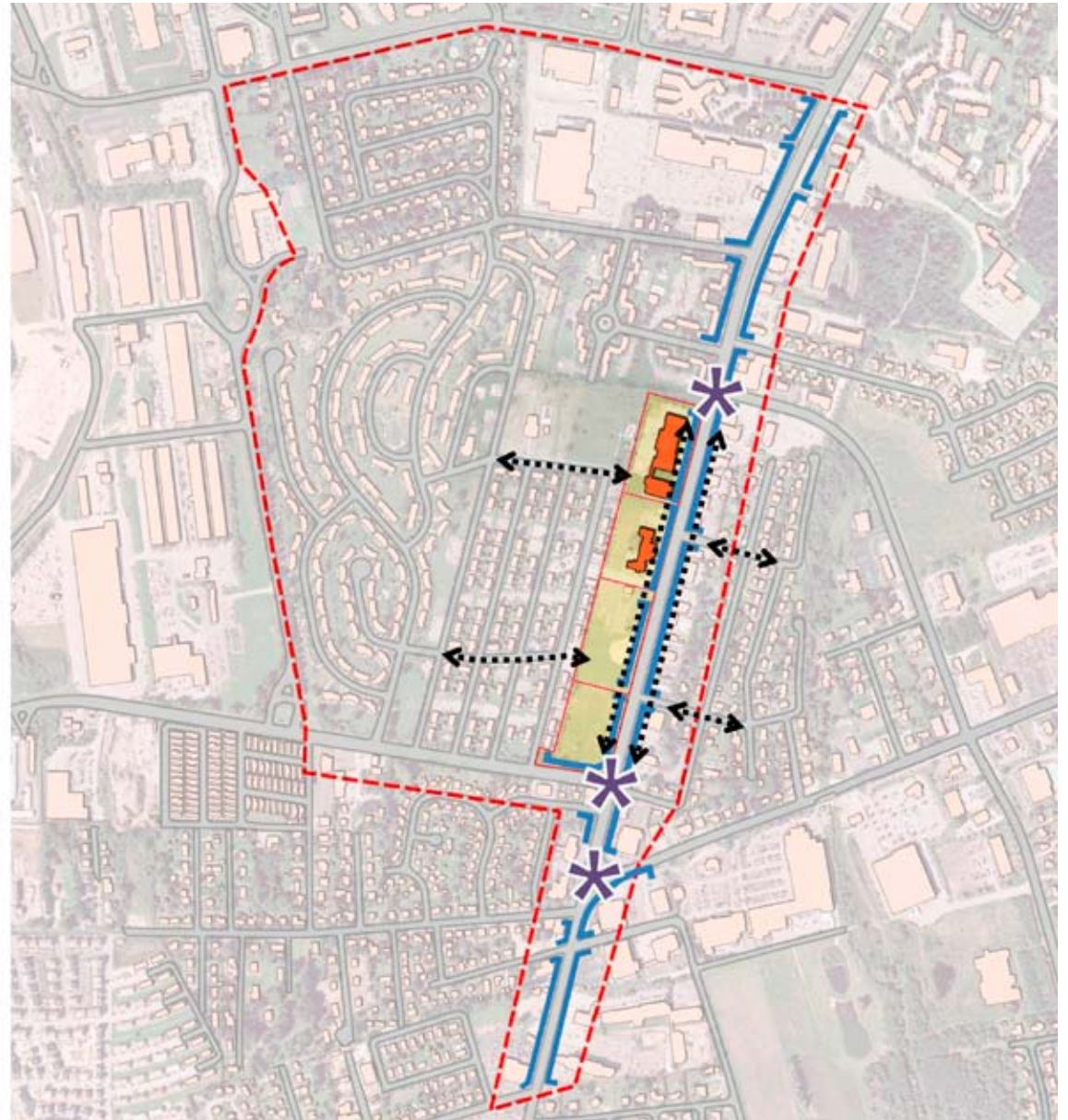
Based on comments received at the second public meeting and direction received from the Steering Committee, a “Preferred Scenario” was created.

The Core Study Area and its immediate context has the potential to be transformed into a thriving mixed use center, accommodating a wide range of uses that could include retail, office, housing, and civic uses. In addition, there is potential to create new civic places, such as a Town Common, where planned community events could take place adjacent to new municipal uses. It is important to acknowledge that the Preferred Scenario is meant for illustrative purposes; it is expected that refinements to the plan will be required as further information is developed relative to site control and as actual plans are put forth for redevelopment.

Figure ES.2 — Urban Design Opportunities

**Legend**

-  Study Area
-  Core Study Area
-  Gateway
-  Enhanced Streetscape/Edges
-  Connections



Source: Town of Middletown GIS

### Urban Design

The Preferred Scenario is illustrated in Figure ES.3 and in the massing diagrams and character sketches that are included on the following pages. As shown, the scenario explores the concept of creating a mixed use center along the west side of West Main Road. The illustrated uses include civic, office and retail. Buildings on the west side of West Main Road are placed close the street, in order to “line the street” with new development. Parking is located at the sides and/or rear of the proposed development. The streetscape along West Main Road is enhanced with the inclusion of small plazas and green space located in front of buildings by varying the setbacks along the street. Municipal uses include two new buildings located on the northern section of the Core Study Area. The long-term goals for the east side of West Main Road include redevelopment that places buildings closer to the street, enhancing the streetscape, consolidating driveway entrances and providing shared parking at the rear of the lots.

The Preferred Scenario includes the concept of expanding the redevelopment potential further to the west side of West Main Road, and illustrates the potential for that area to include an expanded Town Common and parking (to the north), residential uses (centrally located on the west side), and additional retail uses (adjacent to Coddington Highway). The preferred scenario also provides for a new internal “parking street” located between the development that fronts West Main Road and the expanded redevelopment area to the west. The goals for this internal parking street are to link the development internally (north-south), provide opportunities for additional building frontage, and create an opportunity to provide a “village-like” streetscape with on-street parallel parking.

Building massing is generally a mix of one, two, and three story tall buildings. The buildings are placed to reinforce the street edge and provide opportunities to create small urban plazas and pocket parks. A

series of character sketches illustrate the potential for the area to contain active ground floor uses with upper-story office or residential uses. The images also illustrate the goal to enhance the streetscape in the area, with wider sidewalks, enhanced landscaping, signage and lighting.

### Transportation

When developing the conceptual developments alternatives, the following transportation-related goals were defined:

- ❑ Improve traffic flow and safety;
- ❑ Plan for improvements to key intersections; and
- ❑ Provide pedestrian connections to existing residential areas; and
- ❑ Reduce curb cuts, consolidate entry/exit points, and restrict turning movements.

These goals are in line with recommendations from the Aquidneck Island Transportation Study (AITS), which is a guide for the Island’s transportation future.

*Improve Traffic Flow and Safety* – The Plan provides internal roadways to limit vehicle conflicts on the internal roadways (looking for parking, etc) and not on the West Main Road and Coddington Highway arterials. With the increase in traffic from the proposed development, the roadway network is projected to operate efficiently and at acceptable levels of service with the implementation of the proposed improvements.

*Plan for Improvements to Key Intersections* – The Plan takes into consideration the planned improvements (roundabouts or signalized intersections) at the West Main Road intersections with Coddington Highway and East Main Road as well as the recently reconstructed West Main Road/Valley Road intersection. There is also a proposed signalized

**Figure ES.3 — Vision Plan**

- A** Create a municipal zone with a town common
- B** Expanded “town common” with additional landscaping and parking
- C** Orient buildings towards West Main Road
- D** Lining the “internal street” with buildings
- E** Place parking at the rear of buildings
- F** Multi-story buildings with retail at ground floor
- G** Enhanced landscaping along Coddington
- H** Future roundabout (alternatives)
- I** Multifamily residential

Potential Program*		
Civic	50,000 S.F.	
Retail	80,000 S.F.	
Office	45,000 S.F.	
Residential	175 Units	

Note: Uses shown are approximate

\*Does not include “Long Term” uses shown on the East Side of West Main Road



Source: Town of Middletown GIS



Figure ES.4 — Massing



Massing view looking southwest

## Figure ES.5 — Character Sketches



Character Sketch—Looking south along West Main Road towards the Core Study Area (Inset: existing conditions)



Character Sketch—Looking south along the new internal "parking street" (Inset: existing conditions)

intersection for the development along West Main Road, which involves the widening of West Main Road to include left-turn lanes into the proposed development.

*Provide Pedestrian Connections to Existing Residential Areas* – The Plan provides pedestrian connections to “The Landing” residential development and the residential area on the east side of West Main Road to the proposed development through proposed pedestrian paths and at the controlled crossing at the proposed signalized intersection for the development along West Main Road. The development also provides a connection to the proposed Island-wide Bicycle Network.

*Reduce Curb Cuts, Consolidate Entry/Exit Points, and Restrict Turning Movements* – The Plan provides one full access point along West Main Road. Other limited access points include a right-in only access point adjacent to Valley Road along West Main Road and three right-in/right-outs access points, two along West Main Road and one along Coddington Highway. It also includes full access points along Lawrence Street, connecting to “The Landings” residential development, US Navy housing, and the Chases Lane neighborhood.

### Infrastructure

The initial phases of development can take advantage of the limited existing sewer capacity in West Main Road prior to any improvements to the Coddington Cove Pump Station and the construction of a sanitary pumping station for the Core Study Area.

Further infrastructure planning should include selection of a preferred location for the utility corridor and placement of the sanitary pumping station in a central location to facilitate gravity sewer services throughout the entire Core Study Area that will minimize the depth of the gravity sewer system.

Further investigation is required to confirm the cost of the upgrades to the municipal infrastructure and for the utility corridor for the Core Study Area. Fire flow tests should be included as part of that analysis to evaluate water service capacity for the design of fire protection systems. Soil evaluations and geotechnical analysis will also be required for the design of stormwater management systems and building foundations.

## Implementation Strategies

Implementation strategies have been prepared to guide the Town of Middletown (and potentially private developers) as they prepare for redevelopment. While the preferred scenario outlines a development vision with potential building footprints and square footages, the concept plans and supporting illustrations are meant to be conceptual and were created to convey broad ideas and a general vision for study area. More detailed analysis of any proposed site plan and program would need to occur to accurately describe project details for which implementation and action steps would need to occur.

### Recognize and Adopt the West Main/Coddington Development Center Master Plan

- ❖ The Town Council should determine how it will use the West Main/Coddington Development Center Master Plan and formally adopt and recommend the Master Plan as the acceptable “blueprint” for future redevelopment efforts.

### Site Control

Within the planning context of this study, it is assumed that the Town of Middletown will acquire site control of the former Navy Lodge site and assemble it as a development package with the adjoining Recreation Complex, Library, and former JFK School. Although the method of acquisition may not be known as this time, it is considered to be important to have site control for the assembled and entire site to

“market” the desired development, meaning that the plan considers the development of the assembled site, albeit in phases, rather than as a piecemeal effort.

- ❑ The Town should determine whether their desire is to own, manage, oversee or “flip” the sites within the Core Study Area.
- ❑ If the desire is for the Town to own and manage the sites then some sort of redevelopment authority may be warranted, with a clear mandate that has a “sunset” clause.

## Predevelopment efforts

- ❑ Navy Lodge – The Town should complete the Navy Base Realignment And Closure (BRAC) process, which will identify a preferred land use for the Navy Lodge site.
- ❑ Recreation Complex – Discussions with the National Park Service should continue to further efforts that define the steps needed to remove the deed restrictions for the parcel. The Town should continue investigating the requirements and timing necessary to remove those site restrictions to facilitate future redevelopment.
- ❑ Library – The Library should complete an assessment of their existing facilities to understand their future needs. The assessment could be incorporated into a broader Municipal Needs Assessment that is identified below. Based on the findings of this assessment, the library should work with the Town to update the preferred scenario.
- ❑ JFK School – The Town should work with the school department to clarify the near term goals for the former JFK School. Assuming the school is declared a surplus property, the Town should coordinate the redevelopment of this site with the Municipal Needs Assessment identified below. A cost estimate should be prepared that identifies the costs to “prep” the site for future redevelopment

- ❑ Municipal Needs Assessment – The Town should undertake a Municipal Needs Assessment to confirm the Towns potential need for municipal uses in the Core Study Area. Based on the findings of this assessment, the Town should update the preferred scenario.
- ❑ Leasing Navy Land – The Preferred scenario identifies an expanded Town Common on the adjacent Navy Land. The Town should revisit discussions help previously with the Navy regarding the potential to lease land behind the former JFK School.

## Zoning

In order to implement the preferred scenario, zoning changes will need to be addressed. Draft zoning language for a new overlay distinct was prepared during the course of this study and is included in Appendix D. The Town should identify a timeline and steps needed to refine and adopt the draft zoning overlay.

## Transportation

During the planning process for this study, there were several parallel transportation initiatives that were underway. As plans move forward for the redevelopment of the Core Study Area and abutting areas, there will continue to be the need to coordinate with those transportation efforts. Design for the intersections at Two-Mile Corner are currently underway with the RIDOT and will affect the roadway network in the Core Study Area. The Town should continue to coordinate with the RIDOT as these plans are advanced to consider how the more detailed design will impact the preferred scenario. As specific plans for redeveloped sites in and around the Core Study Area become more defined, it is anticipated that additional traffic analysis will be required along West Main Road, Valley Road, Coddington Highway, and other key streets in and around the study area. These future traffic analyses will provide updates to the transportation improvements that are identified in the preferred scenario.

### Infrastructure

The following items could be undertaken as early action items to facilitate the redevelopment within the Core Study Area.

- ❑ Confirm costs for sewer improvement upgrades to the Coddington Highway system and the Coddington Cove Pump Station.
- ❑ Develop implementation strategy for public infrastructure.
- ❑ Prepare existing conditions and property line survey for the development parcels.
- ❑ Conduct soil testing to determine groundwater elevations, and geotechnical information required for design.

### Marketing

The Town should develop a marketing plan and strategy for the Core Study Area and the preferred redevelopment. Specifically, will the site be marketed locally or to a broader regional audience of developers? Will print media, such as brochures, be employed? Will the internet be a media marketing source, utilizing the Town website or will a new website be required? To the extent that the marketing is more involved, this may be considered as a function of the earlier mentioned redevelopment authority. Other potential marketing activities could include preparing and issuing a formal Request for Developer Interest.

### Project Phasing

The location attributes of the former Navy Lodge site—including traffic counts, access and visibility—are all favorable to development in the short-term, most likely as a retail use. However, development build-out, or density, on the specific Navy Lodge site may be somewhat limited. This takes into account such elements as parking requirements, potential roadway improvements at West Main and Coddington and considerations for a “gateway” element at this intersection. As such,

developing this parcel in conjunction with the adjacent ball field—allowing for a bigger site with more potential—would prove beneficial in attracting private sector involvement. This could also assist in assuring developer participation of future public use development of the northern parcels.

The development time frame for the northern parcels is considered to be more speculative and longer term, perhaps three to five years at a minimum. On one hand this allows for additional studies and issues to be addressed, such as the library relocation (if that is the decision) and the school acquisition for redevelopment. This also takes into account the preferred development scenario, whereby a continued public use is desired.







# 1 Project Overview

## Introduction

The Town of Middletown hired Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB) to work with Town staff, a steering committee, stakeholders and the community to prepare a master plan for the West Main/Coddington Development Center. The Development Center consists of four key parcels located on the west side of West Main Road (Route 114) which are targeted for potential redevelopment, and are the primary focus of this master planning study. The Development Center or “Core Study Area” is surrounded by a larger study area that includes approximately 245-acres of developed land. Refer to Figure 1.1 for the Study Area location and its surrounding context.

The Development Center Master Plan will serve as a guiding document for the transformation of the area into a vibrant, attractive, mixed use area, capitalizing on its relatively dense development pattern, available land under public ownership, good transportation access, and available utilities. The master plan sets the framework for implementing a series of strategic redevelopment initiatives for the Study Area that will guide private investment and development in a way that benefits the entire community. This Master Plan will be used by the Town to seek funding to implement the recommended improvements, particularly for the Core Study Area.

## Study Area Description

The 245-acre Study Area is located northeast of the town line dividing Middletown from Newport. It is generally bounded by West Main Road (Route 114) to the east, Coddington Highway to the south, U.S. Navy property and Coddington Cove to the west, and Gate 17 Access Road to the north. The Study Area encompasses a mix of commercial and residential uses, including: retail, restaurants, single- and multi-family residential, public park and library as well as vacant land (a recently closed elementary school and land owned by the U.S. Navy) within the

## Why create a Master Plan for the West Main/Coddington Area?

The West Main/Coddington area is uniquely located at the “crossroads” of two of the most significant transportation routes on Aquidneck Island. West Main Road and East Main Road have historically provided critical links between the Aquidneck Island communities of Newport, Middletown, and Portsmouth. These communities have a rich heritage in tourism, recreation, agriculture, and have forged a long-lasting partnership with the US Navy.

In addition to being located at a crossroads, the West Main/Coddington area is adjacent to several sites which were formerly used for Navy-related purposes. The Navy Lodge Site (located in the Core Study Area) was once used for lodging purposes and is currently being considered as part of the Navy’s Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process, which seeks to potentially transfer land out of Navy ownership.

The Town of Middletown has long seen the potential for this area to become a focal point in its community, capitalizing on its centralized location and the existing connections to its surrounding communities. Prior planning studies have identified the potential for this area to become a “growth hub”. Regional corridors (like West Main Road) have historically evolved over time to meet the needs of their communities and provided the much needed services to residents, business owners, and visitors. With the creation of a Master Plan for the West Main Coddington Area comes the opportunity to think ahead about the next generation of users of this corridor, and plan for how it will achieve its promise as a growth center and focal point for the Town, its residents, business owners, and the patrons who will travel this corridor for the years to come.

Figure 1.1 — Study Area

**Legend**

-  Study Area
-  Core Study Area



Source: Town of Middletown GIS

vicinity of the intersections of Coddington Highway/East Main Road (Route 138)/West Main Road (Route 114). Although the mixed use nature of the Study Area would seem to make it an ideal walkable destination, this is not currently the case. Disjointed residential and commercial uses, unattractive streetscapes, inadequate pedestrian facilities, and congested intersections make for an uninviting pedestrian environment (See study area photos on pages 24 and 25).

The study includes four publicly-owned parcels located on the west side of West Main Road (Route 114) totaling approximately 14 acres which constitute the “Core Study Area”. VHB reviewed the existing conditions of the key parcels to determine potential constraints for future development. The Core Study Area parcels are previously developed with the former J.F.K. Elementary School, the Middletown Public Library, athletic field and associated parking. The parcels include Assessor’s Map 102 Lots 3,4,5, 6 and 7.

## **J.F.K. Elementary School**

The J.F.K. Elementary School parcel is the northernmost parcel and is approximately 3.7 acres. The school was used for Kindergarten through 4th Grade before closing in 2009. The parcel consists of the former school building and its associated facilities (parking and a playground—which are currently leased for private use on a short-term basis).

## **Middletown Public Library**

The Town Library parcel is approximately 3.2 acres in size and is located between the J.F.K. Elementary School and Recreation Complex parcel. This parcel is currently used as a public library. The building is approximately 9,000 square feet in size and has numerous programs that serve the community.

## **West Main Road Recreation Complex**

The West Main Road Recreation Complex is approximately 3.8 acres in size and includes active recreation uses. The complex was the subject of a Recreation, Conservation and Open Space Master Plan that was completed by the Town in early 2011. As part of that plan, recommendations were identified that outline the potential for this site to be redeveloped.

## **Former Navy Lodge Property**

The former Navy Lodge Property parcel is approximately 3.2 acres in size and previously consisted of the former Navy Lodge, which has been demolished. The Navy Lodge property is currently the subject of a Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) process. The results of this planning study will inform the BRAC process by: outlining a preferred land use for the Navy Lodge, and by understanding the potential timeline and opportunities for redevelopment.

J.F.K. Elementary School



Town Library



West Main Road Recreation Complex



Former Navy Lodge Property



# 1 Project Overview

## West Main/Coddington Today

Navy Lodge Site



Recreation Complex



Town Library



J.F.K. Elementary School



Study Area Context



Study Area



East Main Road



West Main Road



- ROUNDABOUT US,
- TRAFFIC SIGNAL
- STOP TRAFF
- CONCERN CAL
- "THE" TO
- BIRTHHO



# 2

## Community Outreach

The community outreach process for the West Main/Coddington Development Center Master Plan included numerous events and meetings that helped guide the development of the overall Master Plan. The process included Steering Committee meetings, stakeholder interviews, community meetings/workshops, and Town Council meetings, over a period of approximately 10 months. The stakeholder interviews provided insight early in the process regarding issues and opportunities. The two public meetings were targeted to gain an understanding of the community's goals for the study area, and to facilitate discussion regarding the three alternatives that were developed. This section provides an overview of the steps and outcomes involved in the community outreach process

### Steering Committee

The Middletown Planning Board served as the Steering Committee for this project. Steering Committee members included: Jan Eckhart, Chairman, Richard P. Adams, Vice-Chairman, Gladys B. Lavine, Joseph P. Marnane, Betty Jane Northup-Owen, Charlene A. Rose-Cirillo, and Audrey E. Rearick, Secretary. Four Steering Committee meetings were held during the planning process where the Committee reviewed content, established key project milestones, and set the timeframe for upcoming events. In addition, the Steering Committee evaluated stakeholder and public input, provided input into the creation of the alternatives; and ultimately, the preferred plan that is outlined in this report.

#### MEETING #1 (JULY 2010)

At the outset of the project, the Steering Committee informed the overall project timeline and provided various perspectives on the goals and objectives for the study.

#### MEETING #2 (FEBRUARY 2011)

Prior to the first Public Meeting, the Steering Committee met to review the existing conditions findings.

#### MEETING #3 (MARCH 2011)

Following the second public workshop on March 10, a Steering Committee meeting was held to discuss the preferred alternative, comments which arose at the public workshop, and the framework for the final Master Plan.

#### MEETING#4 (JUNE 2011)

The fourth Steering Committee meeting was held in June to review a Draft of the Master Plan report and redevelopment strategies for the Core Study Area.

### Stakeholder Interviews

Stakeholder interviewees included Town staff, business and property owners, representatives of the school department, library and Navy, each of whom were chosen due to their ability to provide specific insight into issues pertaining to the Study Area. The following stakeholders were interviewed.

- ❑ Department of Public Works, Town Engineer
- ❑ Members of the Middletown Open Space and Fields Committee
- ❑ Representatives of the Middletown Public Library Board of Trustees and administration
- ❑ Representatives from the Middletown School Committee and administration
- ❑ Newport Navy DPW
- ❑ Landings Real Estate Group of Newport (The former Anorage)

- ❑ Picerne Properties (Harbor Village)
- ❑ Abutting business property owners

Key issues and opportunities identified during the stakeholder interviews included the following.

### General

- ❑ Likely that future development will need to separate sewer or provide improvements to facilitate future development
- ❑ Concerns about traffic in the area—particularly left turns
- ❑ Concern that future development complement existing development

### JFK School

- ❑ Potential short term need to continue to use the building for school uses
- ❑ Middletown School’s long-term plan calls for consolidation of facilities to a campus

### Public Library

- ❑ Library is ±9,000 SF and maxing out on space
- ❑ Need for more parking
- ❑ Facility has undergone recent and ongoing repairs
- ❑ Library was converted from a prior use and is in poor condition

### Recreation Complex

- ❑ Can potentially be moved to another location in Town, if agreed upon
- ❑ Not an ideal location for a ballfield

- ❑ Potential deed restrictions for public uses

### Navy Lodge Site

- ❑ Navy needs to maintain their access to utilities
- ❑ Portion of Navy Lodge site being used for turning lane easement

## Public Meetings

In addition to the stakeholder interviews, two public meetings were held during the planning process. The first public meeting was held on January 20, 2011, at the Middletown Town Hall, with approximately 40 people in attendance. The primary purpose of this meeting was to present existing conditions, issues and opportunities. The agenda included an overview of the project (project goals, process, study area, prior studies and parallel studies, photographs of the study area and results of stakeholder interviews), and a presentation of existing conditions (zoning, historic resources, urban design, utilities, transportation and an overview of the real estate market). This was followed by a discussion session and concluded with a summary of next steps. The following is a general list of comments and questions raised at the first public meeting:

- ❑ Where will the JFK School, Library, and Recreation Complex go?
- ❑ What are costs / benefits of recapturing “sales leakage”?
- ❑ Will people walk to this development?
- ❑ Requests were made to keep sites as recreational.
- ❑ Concerns were raised about filling vacant retail vs building new retail.
- ❑ What will be the effects on the tax base?

- ❑ Middletown doesn't currently have a "town center". This property could be used to create a town center or civic center.
- ❑ This area could be developed similar to downtown Barrington.
- ❑ What will the impacts be on the adjacent local roadways?
- ❑ Concern was raised that about constructed things like roads and ball fields over and over again.
- ❑ The timeline of the alternatives is an important consideration.
- ❑ What will happen to the businesses on the east side of West Main Road with the development of the west side?
- ❑ There is an active spring in the vicinity of the recreational complex.
- ❑ Questions were raised about roundabouts: their operation, land requirements, and pedestrian movements? Could examples be shown at the next public meeting?
- ❑ West Main Road will always be an arterial roadway. Preference for creating a walkable community should be developed along Coddington Highway or at the former Navy Hospital, not on West Main Road.
- ❑ Participants noted that during the summer, this area already experiences slow traffic speeds.
- ❑ Future development should include quality architecture, open space, and connections to the Landings development.

A second public meeting was held on March 10, 2011, at the Middletown Town Hall, with approximately 45 people in attendance. This meeting was in the form of a public workshop, with a presentation by the consultants, followed by facilitated breakout sessions to allow for small group discussions. The presentation included a project overview, recap

of existing conditions, issues and opportunities, and a summary of comments from the January 20 public meeting. Urban design, transportation, and real estate market conditions were also the focus of the second public meeting presentation.

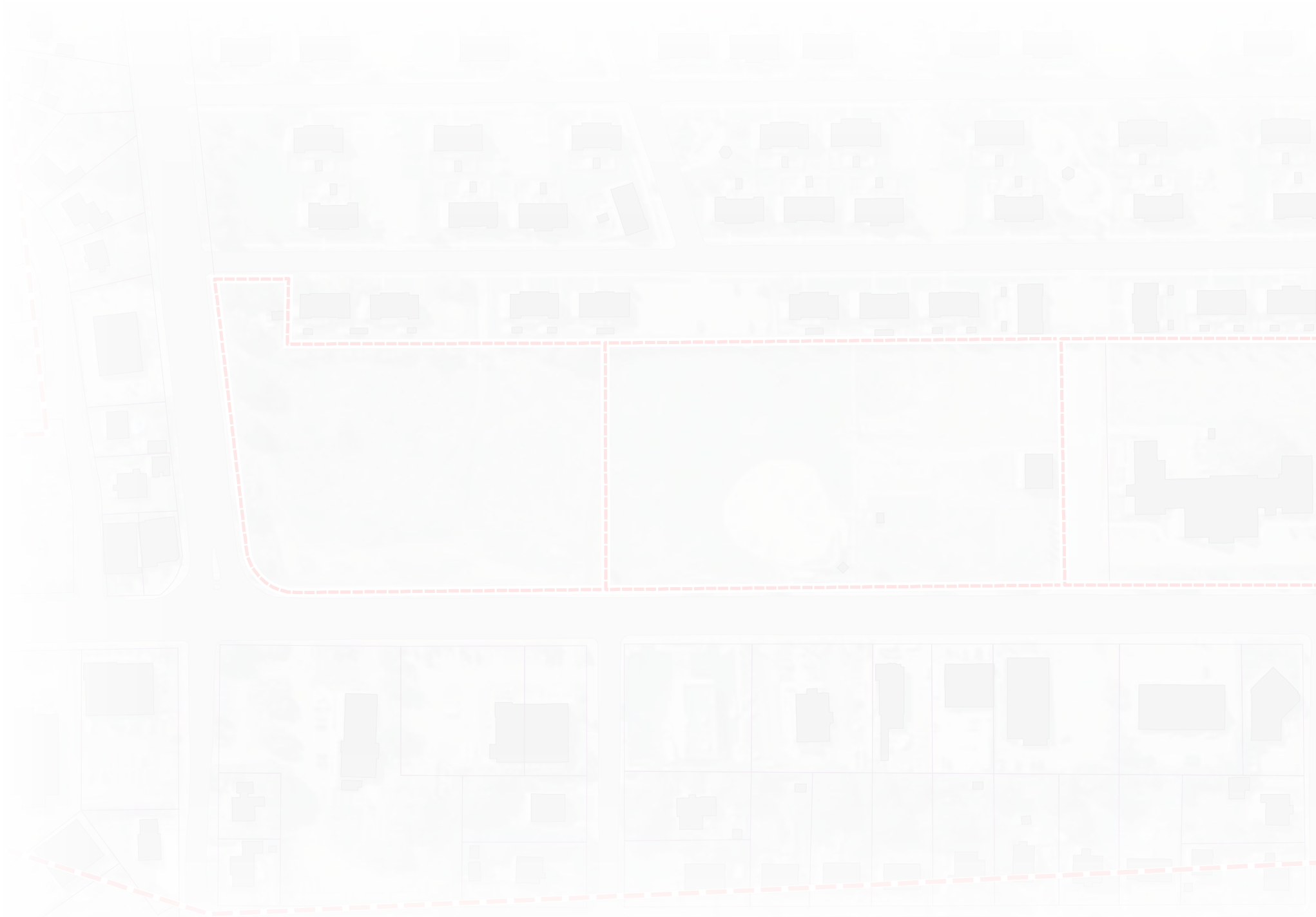
The breakout sessions focused on gathering feedback on the three Preliminary Scenarios for the Core Study Area and its abutting area. The group discussions provided participants with an opportunity to discuss issues, ask questions, and voice preferences of the three Preliminary Scenarios. Scenario 3 was generally found to be most preferred because it achieved the most goals for the district. Following the breakout sessions was a general question & answer period. The following is a list of general comments, questions, and/or concerns from this Q&A discussion:

- ❑ Consider the size/type of retail signage
- ❑ Questions were raised about the differences between a roundabout vs a rotary
- ❑ Support was expressed for a new traffic signal, which would stop traffic.
- ❑ Develop an appropriate name/branding of the district (concerned with calling this "the town center")
- ❑ Consider the need for an access road to connect to Gate 17 Access Road
- ❑ Create tax incentives to promote economic development on the east side of West Main Road to compliment the west side of West Main Road
- ❑ Developing the area may slow traffic
- ❑ Consider utility conflicts (i.e., with planned trees)

## **Town Council**

The draft Master Plan was presented to the Middletown Town Council on June 20th 2011. The presentation included an overview of the planning process, alternative scenarios that were explored during the process, and a summary of the preferred scenario and implementation strategies.

On September 19th 2011, the final Master Plan was presented to the Middletown Town Council. The presentation included a summary of the planning process, the preferred scenario, and implementation plan.





# 3

## Existing Conditions

## Existing Conditions

This section provides an overview of the existing zoning, historic resources, landscape amenities, open space plan recommendations, infrastructure, and transportation network that may affect redevelopment of the Study Area, with a focus on the Core Study Area.

### Zoning

Figure 3.1 shows the zoning districts that fall within or directly adjacent to the Core Study Area. Districts include:

- ❑ Public Zoning District (P);
- ❑ Residential Multifamily (RM);
- ❑ General Business (GB)

The Core Study Area is situated within the Public Zoning District (P), but is designated as PA, indicating that it is within a traffic sensitive area. The Public District was established for land which is owned by the federal, state or municipal government, or related public agencies. The only uses permitted in the Public District are for governmental functions and certain agricultural uses.<sup>1</sup> The traffic sensitive designation identifies districts where special regulations regarding lot width and frontage apply. They are intended to provide for adequate and safe access onto major thoroughfares, in this case the Core Study Area is located on West Main Road.

Immediately to the south at the intersection with Coddington Highway, is the Navy Lodge parcel, which is also in the Public District. Behind the Core Study Area to the west is a residentially developed area that is

<sup>1</sup> According to Section 2601 of the Middletown Zoning Ordinance: "Should the title or any interest in any land located in a Public District be transferred to a person other than a federal, state or municipal government or agency thereof, no use other than that permitted by this subchapter shall be permitted until such land is re-zoned by the Town Council in accordance with the Comprehensive Community Plan to an appropriate zoning district compatible with surrounding uses, and according to the procedure for amendment specified in Article 28."

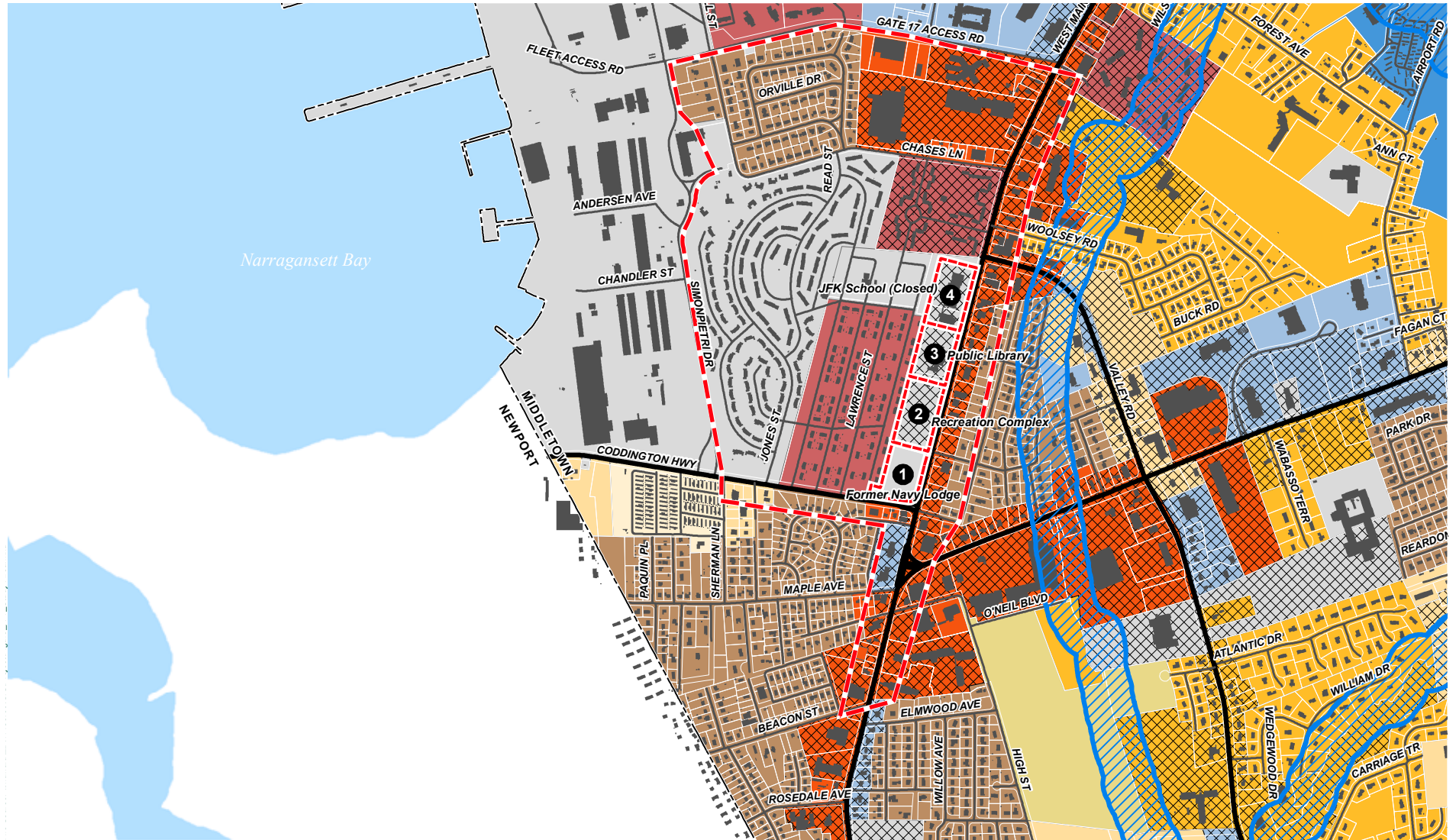
zoned Residential Multifamily (RM). To the north on the west side of West Main Road is an area designated as RM, residential multifamily in a traffic sensitive area, which is the location of the Harbor Village Apartments.

Across West Main Road, the area is designated as General Business (GB) in a traffic sensitive area where commercial uses are located. This district allows most of the retail, wholesale and service businesses such as food sales and processing related businesses; apparel finishing; a variety of retail uses including restaurants (shopping centers require a special use permit); personal, business, and professional services (including offices); and some institutional uses. In the GB District, the minimum lot size is 12,000 square feet, the maximum lot coverage is 25%, and the maximum height is 40 feet. Since this frontage is on a traffic sensitive area, the minimum lot width/frontage is 300 feet, which may be reduced under certain circumstances. Although this district runs along much of the length of West Main Road, the stretch across from the Core Study Area is only the depth of one lot. Immediately behind it is residential (R-10).

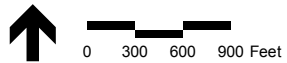
### Historic Resources

One historic property, the Thomas-Chase-Smythe House at the west end of Chase Lane, lies in the northwest section of the Study Area—on US Navy Property. The late 18th century structure was extensively modified in the 19th century by members of the Chase family, who owned the house from the late 18th century until 1913. The house derives its significance from its association with this family. The house, also known as Quarters NB-1 in the U.S. Naval Education and Training Center, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1989. Refer to Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.1 — Zoning



Source:  
Town of Middletown GIS



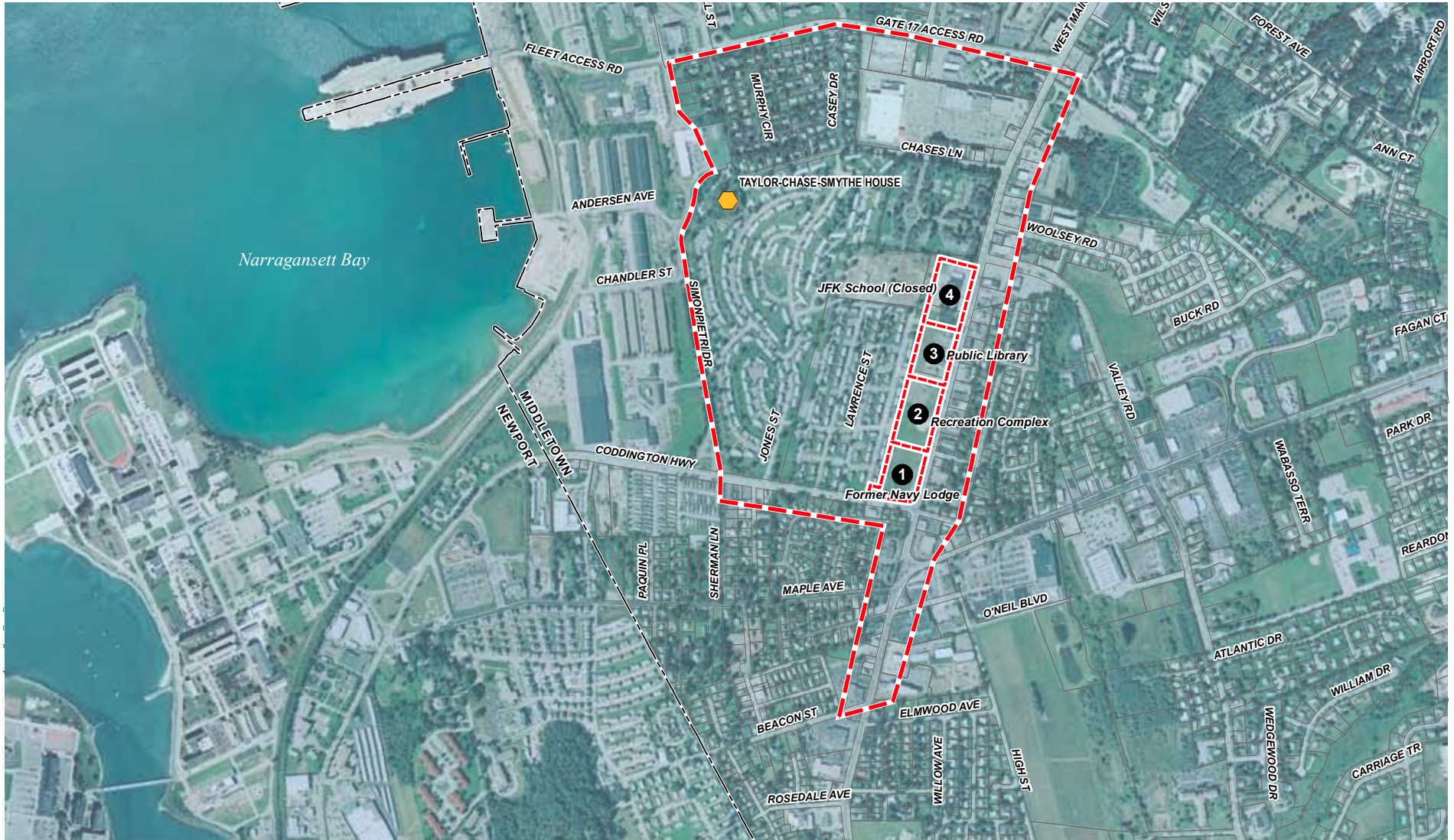
**Legend**

**Study Areas**

- Study Area
- Development Core Study Area

Watershed Protection District	LBA	OBA	PA	R-20	R-40	RMA
GB	LI	OS	OP	R-20A	R-60	MT
GBA	LIA	OSA	R-10	R-30	R-60A	Historic Districts
LB	OB	P	R-10A	R-30A	RM	National Register-eligible Historic District




Figure 3.2 — Historic Resources

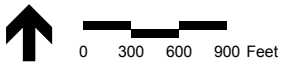


Source:  
Town of Middletown GIS

**Legend**

**Study Areas**

-  Study Area
-  Development Core Study Area
-  NHRP Historic Site



## Landscape

The existing Core Study Area landscape ranges from open grassed areas to developed sites. Views to the Core Study Area from the intersection of West Main Road and Coddington Highway are dominated by a large open field (the former Navy Lodge Site) devoid of street tree plantings or other features along West Main Road. This location would be an ideal visual gateway to the Core Study Area as approached from the south, but at the present time it is featureless.

Immediately north of the open field is a recreational complex comprised of a softball field and associated basketball court and parking. The roadway frontage is dominated by the softball field's chain link fence and backstop, the only relief being randomly spaced older street trees planted in a narrow four-foot wide lawn panel alongside the sidewalk.

Both of these open areas stand in sharp contrast to the small retail developments that line the opposite side of West Main Road. The development area is characterized by numerous curb cuts, lending a visually busy appearance, with parking lots separated from the roadway by approximately 10 foot wide planted strips. Overhead power lines along West Main Road further detract from the quality of appearance by dominating views inward to the stores.

As one proceeds north on West Main Road, the retail area opposite the Core Study Area quickly degrades in appearance due to a lack of any planted separation between roadway and parking lots. It is often difficult to see where entrances to the many parking lots are located. Given that numerous driveway entrances are quite wide, the result is confusion to motorists trying to enter or exit and unsafe conditions for pedestrians trying to cross the road.

Proceeding further north on West Main Road, a small entrance road lined with parking lies between the Recreation Complex and the Middletown Public Library, and then continues onto Lake Erie Street.



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Existing landscape in front of the Public Library

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Existing landscape in front of J.F.K. Elementary School

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The property line behind the athletic fields and the library is planted with a tall hedge of evergreen arborvitae trees, providing a visual buffer to existing residences on Lake Erie Street.

The frontage of the town library is planted with Zelkova shade trees and small shrub beds. Shrub beds at the library building are in good condition as are the lawn areas in the immediate vicinity.

Low canopied older trees line the approximately 20-foot wide lawn panel separating the John F. Kennedy Elementary School's front parking lot from West Main Road. The trees appear overgrown; however, they do

serve to visually define the roadway edge. The lawn in the island is in poor condition, likely due to salt-laden snow storage, and largely devoid of shrub plantings. There are several additional larger trees planted between the school and its major wing, lending an established appearance.

In terms of park spaces, a small naval memorial comprised of an anchor and plaque mounted on a raised concrete plaza is located immediately south of the school, this area being attractively lined with a double row of healthy Zelkova trees. A second park space is provided by a small children's play area located immediately behind the school and proximate to the nearby residential area.

To summarize, the Core Study Area frontage is characterized by open lawn areas edged with occasional trees along its southern portion, street trees in a lawn strip along the central portion, the Middletown Public Library's attractive flowering cherry trees and shrub beds further to the north, and the older low canopied trees fronting the John F. Kennedy Elementary School's front parking lot. Future redevelopment opportunities should explore a comprehensive landscape design approach to the Core Study Area, identifying opportunities for gateways and a more integrated streetscape and landscape environment. Future redevelopment should also consider incorporation of more attractive features of the existing landscape, such as the cherry trees at the public library and nearby zelkova shade trees.

The retail properties opposite the Core Study Area should be studied separately to develop creative ways to reduce curb cuts, introduce landscaped buffers between parking and roadways, and, in general, bring it to a visual level appropriate to the quality redevelopment envisioned as part of the master plan.

### Open Space Master Plan Recommendations

A Recreation, Conservation and Open Space Master Plan (RCOS) was completed by the Town in September 2010 and will be incorporated into the revised Middletown Comprehensive Plan. This section highlights those portions of the RCOS pertinent to the West Main Recreation Complex and possible locations for new recreational facilities.

The West Main Recreation Complex is in a location that is poorly situated for recreational uses due to high traffic volumes and the proximity of a major roadway. This area is potentially better suited for a mix of housing, commercial, and institutional uses that are typical of a village center.

The RCOS Plan identified several options, including Town owned parcels in Middletown that have potential for the building of new fields and playground areas. The Town, within its current land inventory, has options for relocation—possibly in conjunction with efforts to meet the needs identified in the RCOS Plan.

## Infrastructure

VHB conducted a review of soils and floodplain information, and public and private utility availability through site visits, discussions with local officials, and research of available information. VHB's findings identified the following issues:

- ❑ Water system connections are available from West Main Road and will require the approval of the Newport Water Department.
- ❑ Additional impervious area is anticipated with redevelopment of the parcels. Stormwater Management BMPs must include Low Impact Development (LID) Systems, and will likely require stormwater detention to mitigate any increases in impervious area.
- ❑ Sewer is available but may require upgrades to the municipal system if the proposed development results in an increased sewer flow.
- ❑ Gas, electric, and telecommunications services are available. Adequate service will be confirmed once the loads and requirements for future development have been established.

## Floodplain

The majority of the Study Area is located in Zone X, Area of Minimal Flooding, as shown on the Flood Insurance Map for the Town of Middletown (Community Panel Number 44005Coo93H dated April 5, 2010) provided in Appendix A.

## Soil Conditions

According to the Web Soil Survey of Newport County Rhode Island (USDA NRCS National Cooperative Soil Survey), the soil units mapped on the Study Area include "NP" Newport Urban Land Complex, and "Ur" Urban Land. Refer to Appendix B for the soils map. The surrounding soils include "Pm" Pittstown Silt Loam" which is a moderately drained

soil formed in glacial till. The permeability of this soil is moderate at the surface layer and subsoil, and slow in the substratum. The Urban Land and Newport Urban Land Complex soils found on the Study Area are anticipated to have a parent material substratum similar to the Pittstown Silt Loam and are therefore likely to exhibit the same slow permeability characteristics. Infiltration capacity is anticipated to be limited, and construction may require careful consideration to minimize subsoil exposure to wet weather.

## Utilities

VHB conducted a preliminary review of the existing utility systems in the area of the Study Area. Figure 3.3 shows the utility infrastructure within the Study Area. Based on discussions with each utility company, the Town of Middletown, and VHB's recent experience with other projects in this area, the existing services are available for future redevelopment; however, upgrades to the sanitary sewer system may be required if total future development peak sewer flow exceeds the total existing and/or former development peak sewer flow.

## WATER SUPPLY

The water supply for the Study Area is provided by the Newport Water Department. Water service is provided to the Study Area by a 24-inch municipal water main located on the west side of West Main Road. An 18-inch line is also located on the east side of West Main Road.

The former Navy Lodge parcel has a 12-inch water service from Coddington Highway that supplies the Newport Naval Station. This service must remain in place and includes a concrete meter/chlorination pit located on the southern end of the parcel. The Navy Lodge parcel also has a 10-inch service that must remain in place and a concrete meter pit within a 15-foot wide easement on the northern end of the parcel that feeds the Landings Apartment Community.

The J.F.K. Elementary School parcel has an abandoned 10-inch water service within a 20-foot wide water line easement for the Newport Naval Station. This service was disconnected in 2007. The meter pit for this service was located adjacent to West Main Road. The top of the meter pit was removed and the vault was backfilled.

### **SANITARY SEWER**

Sanitary sewer facilities for the School and the Library connect into the municipal sewer system in West Main Road and are conveyed to the Wave Avenue Pump Station. There is also a 12-inch gravity sewer in Coddington Highway that connects to the Coddington Cove Pump Station. The former Navy Lodge was connected to the Newport Naval Station sanitary system via a 10-inch vitrified clay pipe that has been abandoned.

The Town of Middletown upgraded the Wave Avenue Pump Station in the spring of 2011 to enhance efficiency and increase capacity at the pump station. Based on meetings with the Town of Middletown, this section of the sanitary sewer system is not anticipated to have capacity to accommodate any increase in sanitary flow from the five parcels. Any future development on these parcels that would increase flow would need to be conveyed to the Coddington Cove Pump Station. This station will require upgrades to accommodate additional flow. The Town of Middletown estimates that these upgrades could cost between \$750,000 and \$1,000,000.

It is also likely that the development parcels may require a pump station and force main to tie into the Coddington Highway gravity sewer, based on the existing grades of the parcels and the elevation of the gravity sewer. A dedicated pump station and force main for the five parcels could cost between \$150,000 and \$200,000.

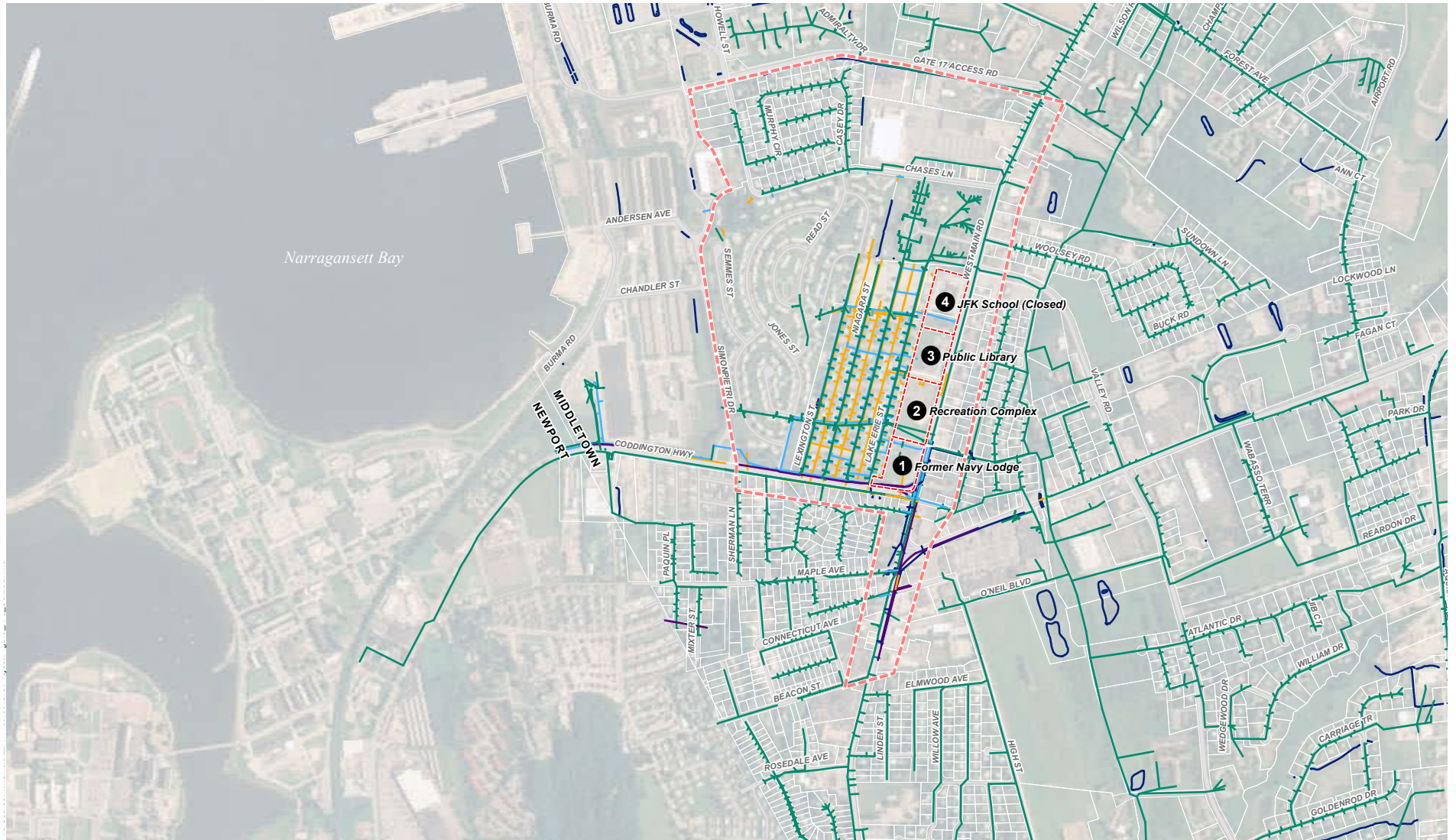
### **DRAINAGE**

The developed portions of the Core Study Area include the athletic fields and the impervious areas for the Town of Middletown Library, the former J.F.K. Elementary School, and associated parking for these buildings. There is a system of catch basins connected by drainage pipes, which discharge to the drainage system in West Main Road. Topography varies in elevation by approximately 10 feet across the five parcels, generally sloping toward their midpoint on a north-south axis. The western portions of the School, the Library and the athletic fields drain to the adjacent properties to the west. A series of catch basins on the adjacent Landings Apartment Community collect surface runoff from this area.

Future development will need to be designed to comply with the latest edition of the Rhode Island Stormwater Design and Installation Standards Manual. The latest edition was adopted in December 2010 and includes new requirements for rainfall intensities, groundwater recharge, and use of Low Impact Development (LID) stormwater BMPs. LID systems include, but are not limited to, rain gardens (bioinfiltration), pervious pavement, green roofs, and grass infiltration swales to manage and treat stormwater runoff. Many of these systems encourage infiltration, which may require secondary methods of collection using perforated underdrains, given the anticipated poor infiltration capacity of the existing soils on these parcels.

In addition to LID systems, above or below grade detention systems are anticipated to mitigate any increases in impervious area from any proposed future development. The Navy Lodge parcel and the athletic fields would require significantly larger detention systems, assuming the large expanses of existing grass cover would be replaced with impervious surfaces.

**Figure 3.3 — Infrastructure**



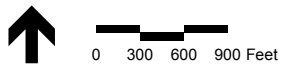
Source:  
Town of Middletown GIS,  
National Grid

**Legend**

- Existing Stormwater
- Existing Gas
- Existing Sewer
- Existing Telecomm
- Existing Water

**Study Areas**

- Study Area
- Development Core Study Area



### ELECTRIC SERVICE

Electric service is provided by National Grid. Three-phase electric service is available from overhead wires located on the east side of West Main Road and from the south side of Coddington Highway. Several overhead connections exist across West Main Road to supply the school, the library, and the athletic fields. Adequate service will be confirmed when site plans and load information are supplied.

### GAS SERVICE

Gas service is supplied by National Grid Gas via a 6-inch wrapped steel main located along the east side of West Main Road and a 4-inch wrapped steel main in Coddington Highway. Gas service is currently provided to the former school and the library. A 4-inch gas service is located in Commodore Perry Boulevard between the library and the athletic fields and connects to the gas service mains for the Landings Apartment Community. Adequate service for any proposed future development will be confirmed when load information is supplied.

### TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND CABLE SERVICE

Telecommunications services are provided by Verizon and Cox Communications. Telecommunications service is available from overhead wires located on the east side of West Main Road and is expected to be adequate for future development of the project parcels. Fiber optic service is also available.

Underground conduits and a generator for Verizon are located on the southern side of the former Navy Lodge parcel. These services are located immediately north of the Newport Naval Station 12-inch water service and must remain. These telecommunications services will need to be considered for future development of this parcel.

The local cable television service is provided by Cox Communications and is expected to be adequate for a reuse project.

## Transportation

A comprehensive evaluation of the physical conditions of the existing roadway network within the Core Study Area was undertaken. Adjacent parcels included as part of the Study Area, such as The Landings housing development, the Coddington Cove Navy housing development, and the US Navy property were also included as part of this transportation assessment. This section also documents existing transit and alternative transportation options, including bus and bicycle and pedestrian mobility within the Core and larger Study Areas, as shown in Figures 3.4 through 3.7.

The information used for this evaluation was collected as part of the Aquidneck Island Transportation Study (AITS), and was supplemented by additional field visits. Also included are proposed roadway improvement projects and related studies that occur within the Study Area.

### Core Study Area Roadways/Intersections

The roadways/intersections that could be influenced by the development of the West Main/Coddington Development Center include:

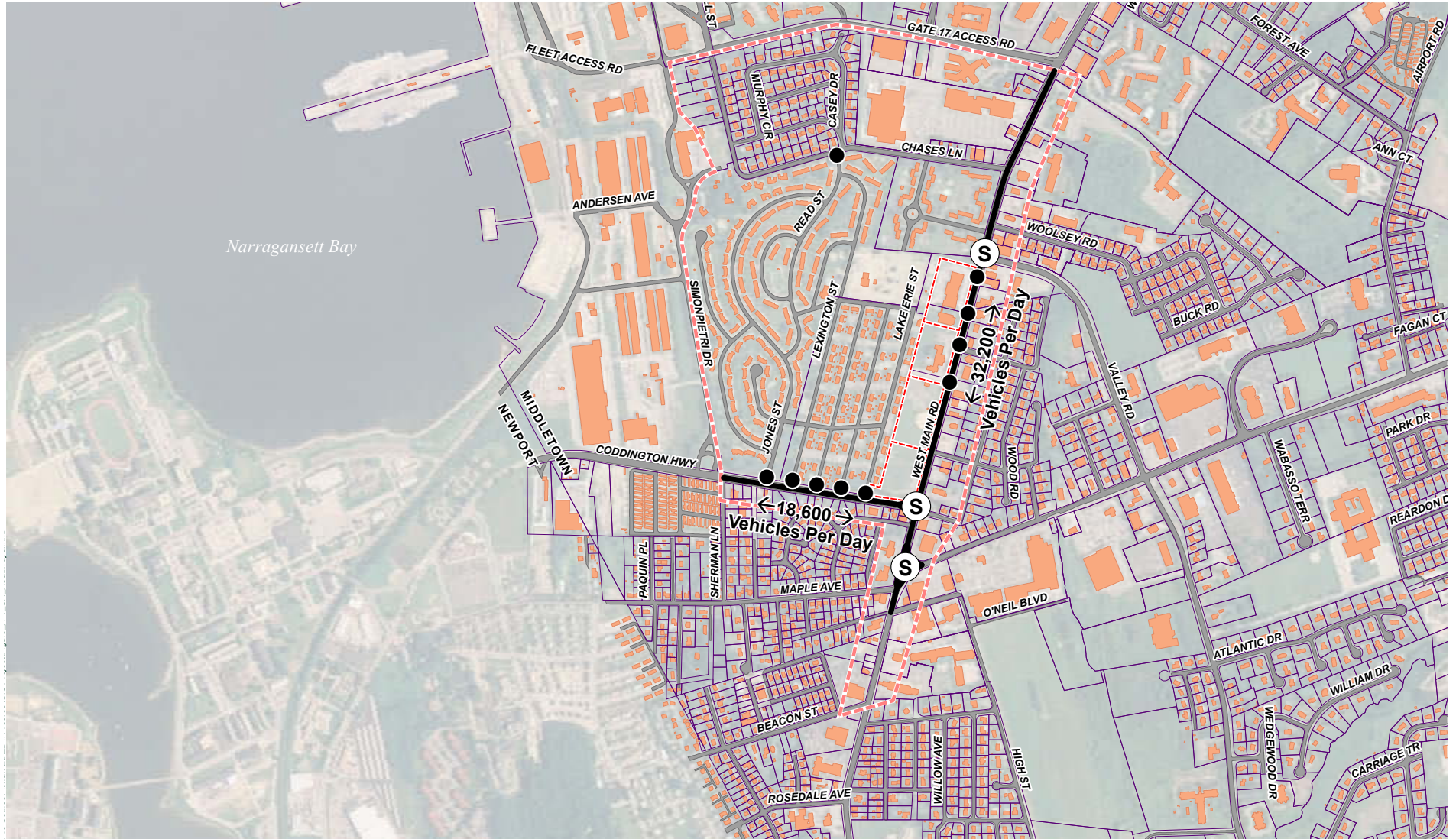
Major Roadways:

- ❑ West Main Road
- ❑ Coddington Highway

Major Intersections:

- ❑ West Main Road at Valley Road
- ❑ West Main Road at Coddington Highway/Rockwood Road
- ❑ West Main Road at East Main Road

Figure 3.4 — Transportation



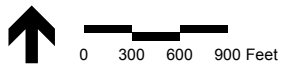
Source:  
Town of Middletown GIS

**Legend**

- Key Access Points
- Study Area Roadway
- Ⓢ Study Area Intersection

**Study Areas**

- Study Area
- ... Development Core Study Area



For the Core Study Area roadways, inventories of the functional classification, key connection points, cross-section, and jurisdiction are described hereafter.

*West Main Road (Route 114)* is a four-lane principal arterial under the jurisdiction of the RIDOT. West Main Road runs in a north/south direction along the west side of Aquidneck Island, linking Bristol Ferry Road to the north with Broadway (Newport) to the south. West Main Road serves as a major access point between Mount Hope Bridge/Sakonnet River Bridge (Route 24) and Middletown/Newport. In each travel direction, West Main Road is a two lane roadway with narrow 1-foot shoulders for the majority of its length. Land use within the Development Core Study Area is made up of primarily commercial uses.

The posted speed limit along West Main Road between Valley Road and East Main Road is posted at 30 mph in both directions. There are 3 existing signalized intersections along West Main Road within the Development Core Study Area.

*Coddington Highway* is a principal arterial roadway under the jurisdiction of the RIDOT. Coddington Highway runs primarily in an east/west direction linking West Main Road with JT Connell Highway. Coddington Highway serves as a major access point between West Main Road and the US Navy, Pell Bridge, and Newport. Within the Development Core Study Area, Coddington Highway has two travel lanes and a shoulder in each direction from West Main Road to where it bends in a north/south direction. Land use is a mix of residential and commercial, with access to Navy Gates 4 and 10 (currently closed). The posted speed limit is 25 mph.

The exclusive right-turn lane on the West Main Road southbound approach onto Coddington Highway was constructed in the past few years to help alleviate congestion at the intersection. This construction required the RIDOT to obtain an easement from the US Navy.

The Core Study Area signalized intersections are described hereafter and shown on Figure 3.4.

*West Main Road (Route 114) at Valley Road (Route 214)*. Valley Road (Route 214), which is under RIDOT jurisdiction, intersects West Main Road from the east to form a three-legged signalized intersection approximately 2,100 feet north of Coddington Highway.

The intersection is controlled by a recently installed traffic signal that is coordinated with the West Main Road traffic signals between Valley Road and Greene Lane.

*West Main Road (Route 114) at Coddington Highway/Rockwood Road*. Coddington Highway intersects West Main Road from the west to form a four-legged signalized intersection across from Rockwood Road. This intersection as well as the West Main Road/East Main Road intersection (known as Two-Mile Corner) form one of the highest bottleneck locations on the Island.

The intersection is controlled by a traffic signal that is coordinated with the West Main Road traffic signals at East Main Road and Commercial Boulevard/Smythe Street.

*West Main Road (Route 114) at East Main Road (Route 138)*. East Main Road (Route 138), which is under RIDOT jurisdiction, intersects West Main Road from the east to form a four-legged signalized intersection, with Bank Newport driveway serving as the west leg. This intersection is known as Two-Mile Corner, which is the one of the highest bottleneck locations on the Island.

The intersection is controlled by a traffic signal that is coordinated with the West Main Road traffic signals at Coddington Highway and Commercial Street.

## **Pedestrian Transportation System**

An inventory of sidewalks and crosswalks has been compiled within the Core Study Area, as shown in Figure 3.5. New concrete sidewalks exist along both sides of West Main Road between Valley Road and Maplewood Road, where they were recently reconstructed as part of Rhode Island Departments of Transportation's (RIDOT) West Main Road 1R project. Along both sides of West Main Road south of Maplewood Road and along the north side of Coddington Highway, sidewalks exist, but they are generally in fair to poor condition and do not appear to be compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. For a small stretch of Chases Lane, a sidewalk exists along the south side.

There are pedestrian accommodations at all three signalized intersection within the Core Study Area. Marked crosswalks exist on all legs of the intersections, except the northern legs. The West Main Road/Valley Road intersection traffic signal equipment has recently been upgraded and includes pedestrian countdown timers and an exclusive pedestrian phase—in which pedestrians can cross all legs of the intersection without vehicle conflict. The West Main Road intersections with Coddington Highway and East Main Road have older pedestrian signal equipment.

## **Bicycle Transportation System**

Within the Study Area, Chases Lane is the only roadway that is designated as a “suitable” bicycle route based on RIDOT’s publication, A Guide to Cycling in the Ocean State 2009-2010, and shown in Figure 3.5. Volumes along West Main Road and Coddington Highway are higher than recommended for on-road bicycle facilities with the existing cross sections. Therefore, there is a gap in bicycle facilities between Chases Lane (connects to the bike route along Burma Road) and the proposed West Main/Coddington Development Center and to the proposed bike route along Coddington Highway. (see Planned Projects section)

## **Public Transportation System**

Bus service on Aquidneck Island is provided by the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA), and the routes that serve the Development Core Study Area roadway are Routes 60, 63, and 64, as shown in Figure 3.6. Within the Core Study Area, there are no bus shelters or benches at any scheduled stops along the three bus routes.

The RIPTA bus Route 60 is the busiest fixed-route on the Island, running north/south through Aquidneck Island and extending from the Newport Gateway Center to downtown Providence crossing the Mount Hope Bridge. The West Main Road and East Main Road corridors are served by Route 60. This route runs between 4:40 AM and 2:25 AM weekdays with 20 – 55 minute headways, depending on the time of day. On weekends and holidays, the route offers slightly shorter service with 30 – 55 minute headways.

Route 63 runs along West Main Road and Coddington Highway in the Core Study Area, connecting to Stop & Shop in Middletown and the Newport Gateway Center, running through Broadway in Newport. This route runs between 6:30 AM and 7:20 PM weekdays with 30 – 50 minute headways, depending on the time of day. On weekends and holidays, the route offers slightly shorter service with 30 – 50 minute headways.

Route 64 runs mainly along Coddington Highway in the Core Study Area, servicing the Navel Underwater Warfare College (NUWC) via West Main Road during peak times only. Route 64 connects the Community College of Rhode Island with the Newport Gateway Center. This route also travels over the Pell Bridge, connecting to the University of Rhode Island and the Kingstown Train Station. This route runs between 7:00 AM and 5:30 PM weekdays with 60 – 90 minute headways, depending on the time of day. On Saturdays, the route runs between 10:30 AM and 4:20 PM with 2 hour headways and is not in service on Sundays and holidays.

### Existing Parcel Access

The presence of closely spaced driveways along an arterial such as West Main Road and Coddington Highway and the ensuing entering and exiting vehicle movements create conflict points for vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists. These conflicts cause additional congestion along the already busy arterial and can lead to numerous access related crashes. There are over 30 curb cuts along West Main Road between Valley Road and East Main Road (approximately one mile), including many wide driveway openings.

To help identify the existing access points to properties within the Core Study Area, an inventory of key access points was completed adjacent to the Core Study Area—along the northern edge of Coddington Highway and at the southern edge of Chases Lane. This inventory is summarized below and illustrated in Figure 3.4.

- ❑ The *former Navy Lodge parcel*, located on the northwest corner of the West Main Road/Coddington Highway intersection, is currently vacant and has no access points to the property. There is an easement on the parcel's southwest corner, abutting The Landings parcel.
- ❑ The *Recreation Complex*, located on West Main Road north of the former Navy Lodge, has a single access point along West Main Road at Commodore Perry Boulevard.
- ❑ The *Middletown Library*, located on West Main Road across from Oakwood Road, has two access points along West Main Road, an entrance only slightly offset from Oakwood Road and an exit only that is shared with the Recreation Complex access point at Commodore Perry Boulevard.
- ❑ The *J.F.K. Elementary School*, located on the southwest corner of the West Main Road/Valley Road intersection, has two access points along West Main, an entrance only drive immediately south of Valley Road and an exit only drive 300 feet south of the entrance only drive.

- ❑ The *Landings housing development* is bounded by Coddington Highway to the south, Constitution Avenue to the north, Lexington Street to the west, and the Coddington Development Center area to the east. It can be directly accessed from the south through four access points along Coddington Highway. From the north and the west, The Landings can be accessed from Chases Lane through the Coddington Cove Navy Housing property. There are also a few cross connections between the Navy Housing and The Landings properties.
- ❑ The *U.S. Navy property* located on the northeast corner of the Constitution Avenue/Lexington Street intersection, can be accessed directly through a single access point off of Lexington Street, which connects to Chases Lane and Coddington Highway.

### Existing Transportation System Demands

This section quantifies the existing traffic volumes on the Core Study Area roadways. The information used for this evaluation was derived from the Aquidneck Island Transportation Study (AITS).

#### OBSERVED TRAFFIC VOLUMES

To identify current traffic flow characteristics, daily and hourly traffic volume data were collected and reviewed, which included previously published reports, RIDOT permanent count station data, and new traffic counts performed in 2009.

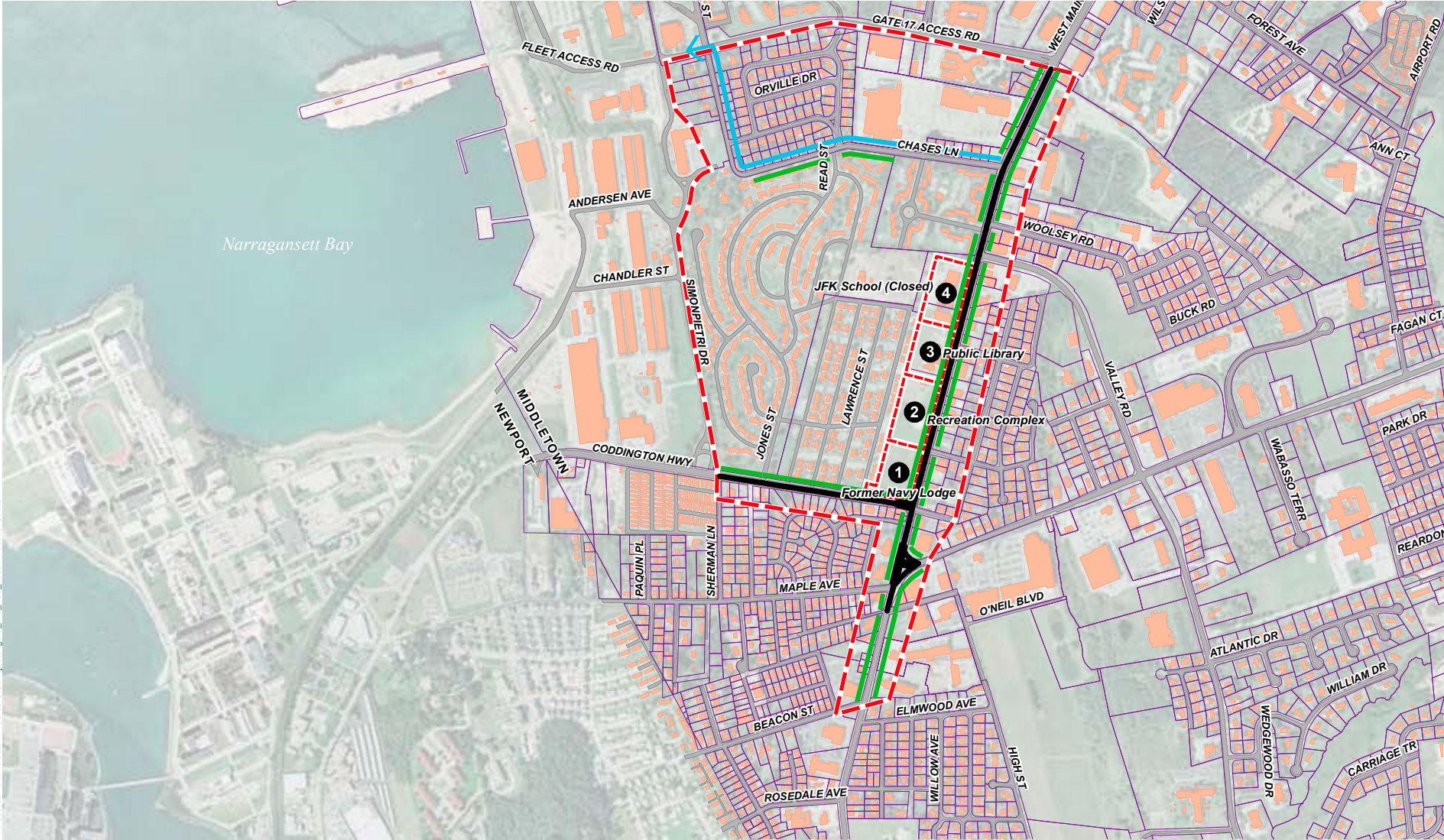
#### DAILY TRAFFIC VOLUMES

Weekday daily traffic volumes along Core Study Area roadways are shown on Figure 3.4.

#### PEAK HOUR TRAFFIC VOLUMES




It should be noted that Aquidneck Island experiences significant fluctuations in traffic throughout the year, mostly due to tourist destinations including Newport. Therefore, in order to provide a

Figure 3.5 — Pedestrian Accommodations





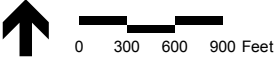
Source:  
Town of Middletown GIS

**Legend**

-  Study Area Roadway
-  Suitable Bike Route
-  Sidewalk

**Study Areas**

-  Study Area
-  Development Core Study Area



conservative analysis of traffic operations, the capacity analysis used to calculate operations uses the 30th highest hour (Thursday in August), as defined in the AITS.

Peak hour traffic volumes were derived and compiled from existing turning movement count (TMCs) data collected as part of the AITS. The weekday morning peak hour occurred between 8:00 AM and 9:00 AM and the weekday afternoon peak hour occurred between 4:30 PM and 5:30 PM.

### PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE TRAFFIC VOLUMES

Pedestrian volumes were collected as part of the AITS and other published reports. The volumes were collected in 2006-2009 in July and August, which is during the peak season. At the intersection of West Main Road and Valley Road, there were 100± pedestrian crossings between 6:00 AM – 6:00 PM; at the intersection of West Main Road and Coddington Highway, there were 200± pedestrian crossings between 9:00 AM – 9:00 PM; and at the intersection of West Main Road and East Main Road, there were 120± pedestrian crossings between 7:00 AM – 7:00 PM.

As part of the AITS, bicycle volumes were counted at the West Main Road/ Coddington Highway intersection. There were 5 bicycles observed during the 2-hour morning peak period counted and 13 bicycles observed during the 2-hour afternoon peak period counted.

### Planned Projects

There are several projects at various stages of development that could have a direct effect on the operations of the Core Study Area roadways and intersections.

*Reconstruction of Two-Mile Corner* is a RIDOT project currently at the 75% design stage. The proposed improvements currently consist of geometric improvements including the addition of exclusive left turn

lanes and reduction/elimination of channelized right-turns. Other improvements include new sidewalks and traffic signal equipment.

As part of the Aquidneck Island Transportation Study (AITS), an alternative concept has been developed, replacing the 4-way signalized intersections with two lane roundabouts. The two roundabouts alternative would improve access management, as left-turns would be restricted on the side streets/driveways between the two intersections.

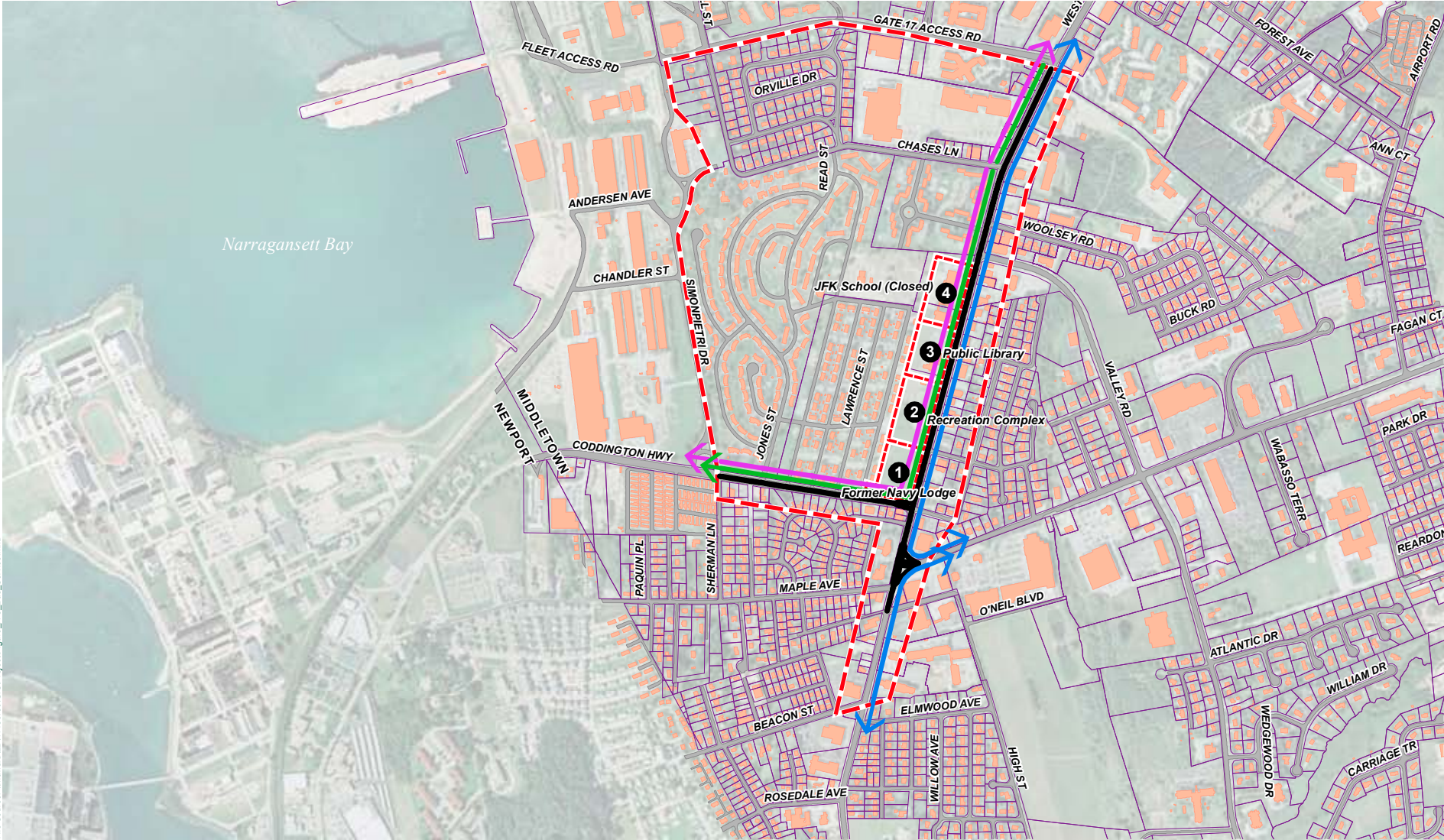
The geometric improvement concept and the roundabout concept are presented in Figure 3.7. RIDOT and the Town will present both concepts to the public before choosing a preferred alternative.

A *RI\*STARS Road Safety Assessment* has recently been performed along West Main Road, between Coddington Highway and Smythe Street. From this assessment, safety and congestion issues were identified and several near-term, intermediate, and long-term improvements have been recommended.

*Shoreline Drive (Burma Road) Southern Extension* is currently being investigated as part of the AITS to determine the feasibility of providing a key connection from Gate 17 Access Road to Coddington Highway.





Shoreline Drive (Burma Road) Southern Extension Road Safety Assessment has recently been performed for the potential new intersection with the Shoreline Drive (Burma Road) Southern Extension and Coddington Highway. From this assessment, potential safety and congestion issues were identified and several near-term, intermediate, and long-term improvements have been recommended. One of the recommendations that were independent from the construction of the Burma Road extension was to implement a “Road Diet” along Coddington Highway. This “Road Diet” would provide a two-way left-turn lane and wide shoulders along Coddington Highway within the Core Study Area. This would provide refuge for left-turning vehicles as along with on-road bicycle facilities. The feasibility and implementation

Figure 3.6 — Bus Service





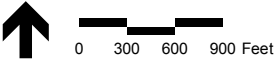
Source:  
Town of Middletown GIS

**Legend**

-  Study Area Roadway
-  Bus Route 60
-  Bus Route 63
-  Bus Route 64

**Study Areas**

-  Study Area
-  Development Core Study Area



timeframe of these improvements has not yet been determined.

*Pell Bridge Interchange Project.* This project involves the configuration of bridge ramps and provides a direct connection from JT Connell Highway to downtown Newport. This new, direct, connection results in some traffic shifts that may increase traffic on Coddington Highway.

### Transportation System Safety Assessment

A general review of existing crash data over the three-year period between 2006 and 2008 was completed as part of the Aquidneck Island Transportation Study (AITS). The following Core Study Area intersections were noted as having some of the highest frequency of crashes and/or severity on the entire Island, including:

- ❑ West Main Road at East Main Road (57 crashes)
- ❑ West Main Road at Coddington Highway (45 crashes)
- ❑ West Main Road at Valley Road (24 crashes)

## Urban Design Opportunities

The Core Study Area and surrounding context are located at the crossroads of West Main Road, East Main Road, and Coddington Highway, that affords the opportunity to make this area a unique district or “gateway” to Middletown. Figure 3.8 identifies urban design opportunities that were considered in developing the alternatives and subsequent preferred scenario. The urban design opportunities include:

- ❑ “Gateways” – Explore the potential to create gateway features at key entry points to the study area that celebrate arrival to this area. These include the intersections at:
  - ❑ *West Main at East Main*
  - ❑ *West Main at Coddington Highway*
  - ❑ *West Main at Valley Road*
- ❑ Edges and Streetscape – Understand the potential to enhance the streetscape and building frontage along West Main Road to create a unique sense of place and streetscape environment. The existing streetscape and built edges along West Main Road vary in scale, setbacks, and streetscape treatments and would benefit from a more unified approach.
- ❑ Connections – Seek opportunities to make pedestrian and bicycle connections to and from the Core Study Area to better integrate the area into the surrounding neighborhoods. This could be accomplished by improving connections along West Main Road and through improved connections to nearby residential areas.

Figure 3.7 — Intersection Concepts



Geometric Improvement Concept








Roundabout Concept

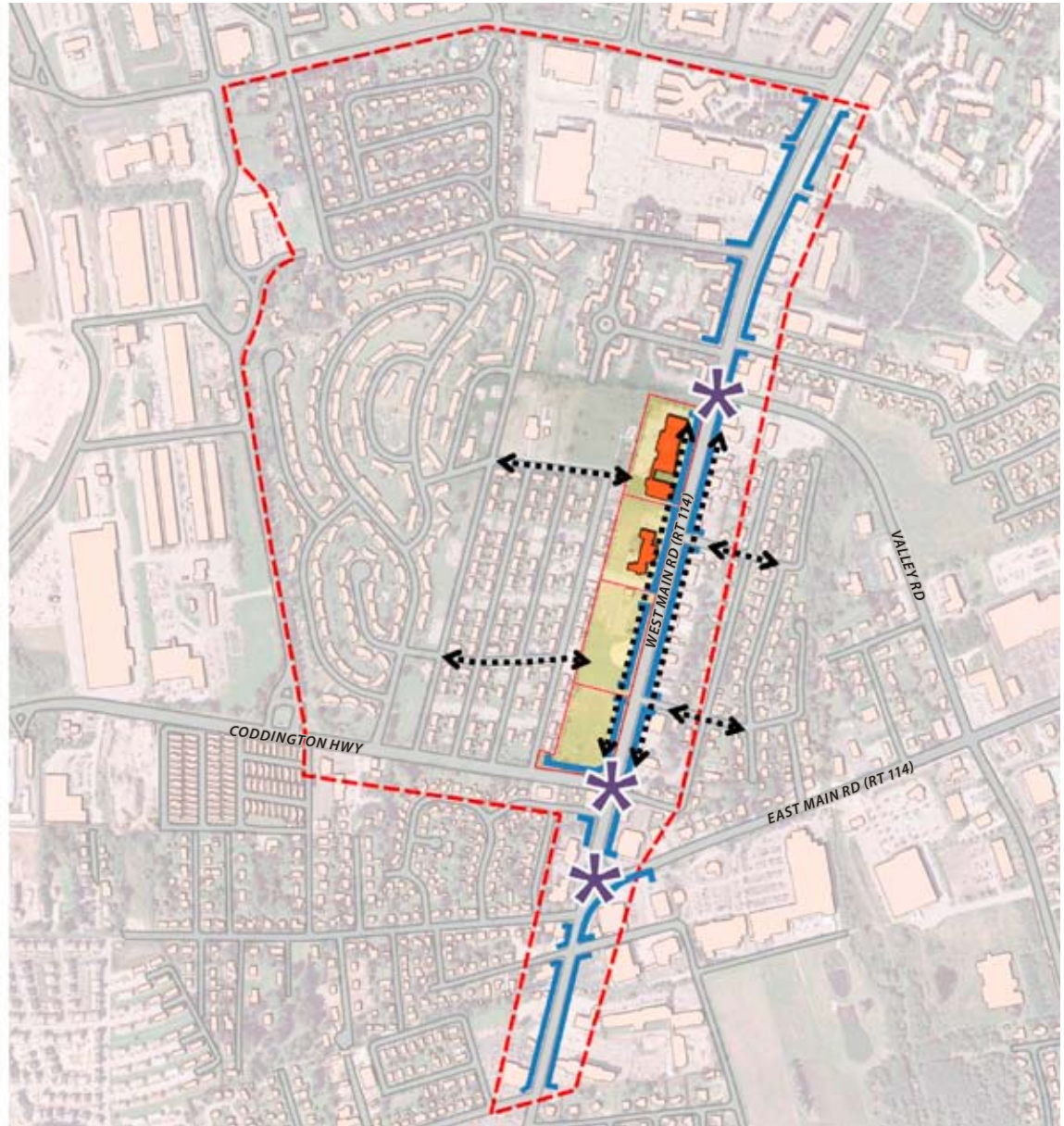


Not to Scale

Figure 3.8 — Urban Design Opportunities

Legend

-  Study Area
-  Core Study Area
-  Gateway
-  Enhanced Streetscape/Edges
-  Connections



Source: Town of Middletown GIS







# 4 Market Overview

### Overview

RKG Associates, Inc. (RKG) was retained as a sub-consultant to VHB, to assist in completing the market study component of the West Main/Coddington Development Center Master Plan. A full and detailed market analysis has been issued and is included in Appendix C. This section provides a summary of the market supply and demand characteristics.

### Zoning and Site Characteristics

The Site within the Core Study Area is currently situated in the Public (P) zoning district, where the by-right and allowed uses (by special permit) are somewhat limited and restrictive in their breadth. As such, once the site is assembled for alternative use(s), it is reasonable to estimate that it would be re-zoned to similar regulations to the GB, General Business district, or that the Town would adopt an overlay zoning district, which is consistent with the Town's comprehensive plan.

Traffic volumes reported by RIDOT, indicate approximately 32,200 ADT (vehicles per day) on West Main Road, north of Coddington Highway in 2008; and, approximately 18,600 ADT on Coddington Highway, west of West Main Road in 2009. These traffic counts coupled with the site's overall visibility and access render it as a desirable location for many commercial, notably including retail, uses.

### Real Estate Indicators

A summary of housing, retail and other commercial (office/industrial) supply and demand indicators are summarized in order to provide a range of market-based development opportunities for the site, as well as a possible continuation or expansion of community and/or municipal uses.

### Residential

As of 2010, the Town had 4,060 single family units (excluding mobile homes); 300 condominium units; approximately 850 duplex units; as well as 150 triplex units. According to building permit data provided by the Town less than 300 single-family homes were added to the inventory since 2000, and about 30 condominium units. Over the same period, home sales averaged about 125 annually (at \$307,000 average) and condominium sales (at \$310,000 average) about 20 annually. The near-term demand for residential development, at the site, appears limited, and may be contrary to the "highest and best use" locational factors for retail and other non-residential development. This is not to indicate however, that over time the residential opportunities may not improve, but they would be better served as development parcels not fronting to West Main. Towards the rear of the site, it may be possible to accommodate some housing, realizing that it would most likely be renter-occupied and priced as "workforce housing". It would also be reasonable for senior housing, given its proximity to services and transit, if demand for such housing was evident at the time of development.

### Retail

Over the past decade, the Island has absorbed approximately 172,000 SF of new construction in the retail sector, representing an annual average absorption of 17,200 SF. Nearly 148,500 SF of the new retail development has occurred in Middletown, representing 86% of all retail absorption and indicating an annual absorption of 14,850 SF in Middletown, specifically.

There is approximately 1.3 million SF of retail uses in Middletown, including 891,300 SF of direct (shoppers) retail; 124,700 SF of restaurant; 107,700 SF of mixed use retail; and around of 200,000 SF of miscellaneous retail uses. According to a local real estate professional the current vacancy rate for retail is around 3% in Middletown.

Retail sales across Newport County exceed local demand (of the resident households) by more than \$53 million in total, most notably in the food, beverage and eating/drinking sectors reflecting the tourism and seasonal influences in the market. Despite this there are several retail categories where there exist unmet demand and an opportunity for an additional 70,000± SF of development in selected retail categories. The traffic counts and other location factors serve as favorable criteria to capture some of this development.

### **Office**

Middletown has approximately 1.1 million SF of office space according to assessment records. The majority of office properties (55%) have less than 10,000 SF and there has been little new construction in the last decade with no new construction since 2005, based on assessment data. While the estimated office vacancy rate in Middletown is less than 10%, this is attributed in large part to the many defense related contractors tenanting space in the market. However, considering the potential short-term nature of defense related contracts, most leases are for three to five-year periods. As a result, developers are hesitant to build speculative office space without 10-year lease commitments. As a result, new office development likely to occur would be for owner-occupants or build-to-suit tenants. According to a local real estate professional, the overall lease and sale values of commercial properties in Middletown is well below that of comparable areas, suggesting that companies could locate or expand in Middletown at relatively affordable prices, but conversely, the low rents (at less than \$15/SF) also hinder new commercial investment activity, for uses other than owner-occupants.

While there is some market demand for office space, in the context of the site this would suggest mixed-use development, with retail on the lower floor and selected office space on the upper floors. Such office demand may include high-tech incubator office space, realizing there would likely be a high turnover rate and limited lease terms. Other

potential office users could include smaller and more independent users such as finance, information services or other professional/technical business services, essentially a second story office park for users amenable to upper story space but requiring high consumer/traffic access and visibility.

### **Community and/or Municipal Uses**

From the public input and stakeholder interviews, maintaining some civic and/or municipal activities are considered appropriate and desirable. Such a use could include a new public library at the former JFK school site. A new library could also serve as a gateway entrance to Middletown and could incorporate recreation and green space as a public amenity and as a buffer to the more densely, private sector development, on the southern tier of the Site.





# 5 Scenario Development

## Scenario Development

Three concept plans were developed for the Core Study Area and its surroundings. Each scenario applied land uses and programmatic components that range in intensity and use to showcase how the area could potentially redevelop in the future. The alternatives respond to findings from the market study and goals that were identified during the outreach process—namely to become a mixed use center and unique destination in the town. The scenarios also explore the potential to accommodate a range of municipal uses should the Town seek to rebuild the existing library on site and add other municipal uses to the area, such as a Town Hall or Town Common. The scenarios were the subject of the second public meeting where participants were asked to critique each plan, including each option’s urban design and transportation goals.

Each of the three scenarios is summarized in this chapter, which includes an illustrative concept plan and cross section, urban design goals, and transportation goals, along with a summary of the proposed program (See Table 5.1 below). All three scenarios contemplate potential redevelopment on the west side of West Main Road, and include redevelopment concepts for the four parcels in the core study area (Navy Lodge parcel, recreation complex, library and J.F.K. school). In addition, each illustrative concept plan includes a vision for the long-term redevelopment of the east side of West Main Road. Following the description of each alternative is a section on transportation that outlines the traffic and transportation goals for each of the scenarios.

**Table 5.1 – Scenario Summary**

Scenario	Program			
	Civic (sf)	Retail (sf)	Office (sf)	Residential
<b>One</b>	28,000	94,000	82,000	none
<b>Two</b>	75,000	80,000	68,000	none
<b>Three</b>	75,000	106,000	56,000	175 Units

Note: Does not include “Long Term” uses for the East Side

### Scenario 1

Scenario 1 includes proposed civic space at the north end of the core study area in the form of a new public library on the JFK School parcel, mixed use on the recreation complex and library parcels, and “gateway” retail at the southern end of the core study area on the Navy Lodge parcel. In this Scenario, the civic space totals 28,000 sf; retail totals 94,000 sf and the office space totals 82,000 sf. Of the three scenarios provided, this one includes the most office space and the least civic space. Urban design goals for Scenario 1 include orientation of buildings toward West Main Road, with retail on the ground floor, parking behind the buildings, and enhanced pedestrian connections and amenities.

### Scenario 2

Scenario 2 also includes proposed civic space at the north end of the core study area, but in this scenario, civic space would total 75,000 sf, and there would be several buildings in a municipal zone, along with a Town Common. Mixed use would be located in the center of the core study area, with gateway retail at the southern end on the Navy Lodge parcel. In this Scenario, retail totals 80,000 sf and the office space totals 68,000 sf (both less than in Scenario 1). Urban design goals include creating a municipal zone with a Town Common, orientation of buildings toward West Main Road and varied setbacks, providing retail on the ground floor, parking behind the buildings, and enhanced pedestrian connections and amenities, including connections to existing residential areas and planned improvements to existing intersections.

### Scenario 3

Scenario 3 includes an expanded area for redevelopment (including lands to the west of West Main Road), allowing for an expanded municipal complex and Town Common, a residential development area as well as additional area for mixed use and gateway retail. Approximately 75,000 sf of civic space is provided, with expanded Town

Common areas at the north end of the core study area. In addition to mixed use in the center of the core area, some new multi-family residential development is shown (175 units). A total of 106,000 sf of retail and 56,000 sf of office are included. This has the most retail space of all three scenarios, but the least amount of office space. Urban design goals for Scenario 3 include creating a large municipal zone with a Town Common at the north end of the core study area. A residential component is included as well, providing “internal” streets lined with buildings along with orientation of mixed use buildings toward West Main Road and providing retail on the ground floor, parking behind the buildings, enhanced landscape treatment along Coddington Highway and enhanced pedestrian connections and amenities—including connections to existing residential areas and implementation of planned improvements to existing intersections.

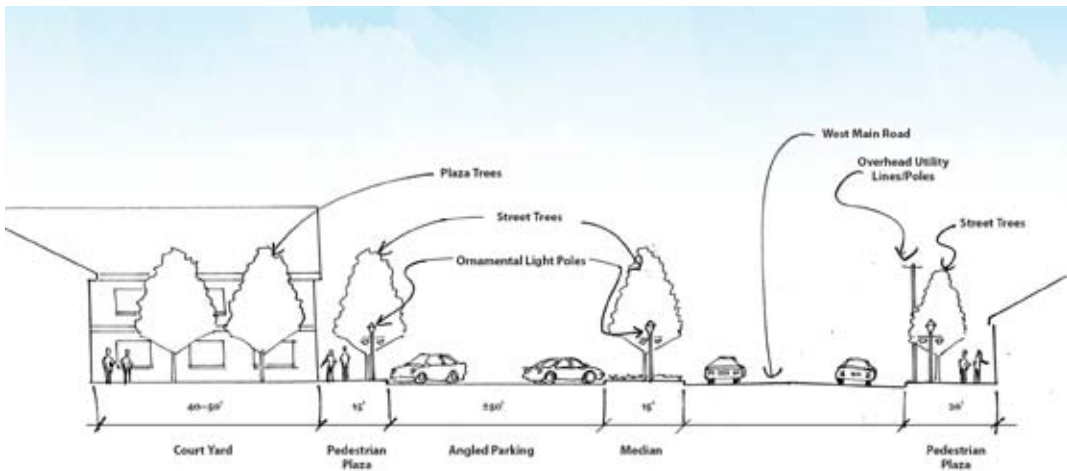
### Scenario 1

The first scenario explores the idea of creating a mixed use center along the west side of West Main Road. The illustrated uses include civic, office and retail. (See adjacent illustrative concept plan). Unique to this scenario is the frontage “parking road” that parallels the west side of West Main Road. The frontage parking area would provide parallel or angled parking in front of the new development that is oriented to “line the street”. Additional parking would occur behind the proposed development. Civic uses are limited to the northern section of the Core Study Area, which is targeted for a potential new library. On the east side of West Main Road, this scenario explores the potential for long-term redevelopment with the goal of placing buildings closer to the street, enhancing the streetscape, and enabling shared parking at the rear of the lots.

Potential Program*	Civic	28,000 S.F.
	Retail	94,000 S.F.
	Office	82,000 S.F.

\*Does not include “Long Term” uses shown on the East Side of West Main Road

Conceptual Section



### ILLUSTRATIVE CONCEPT PLAN



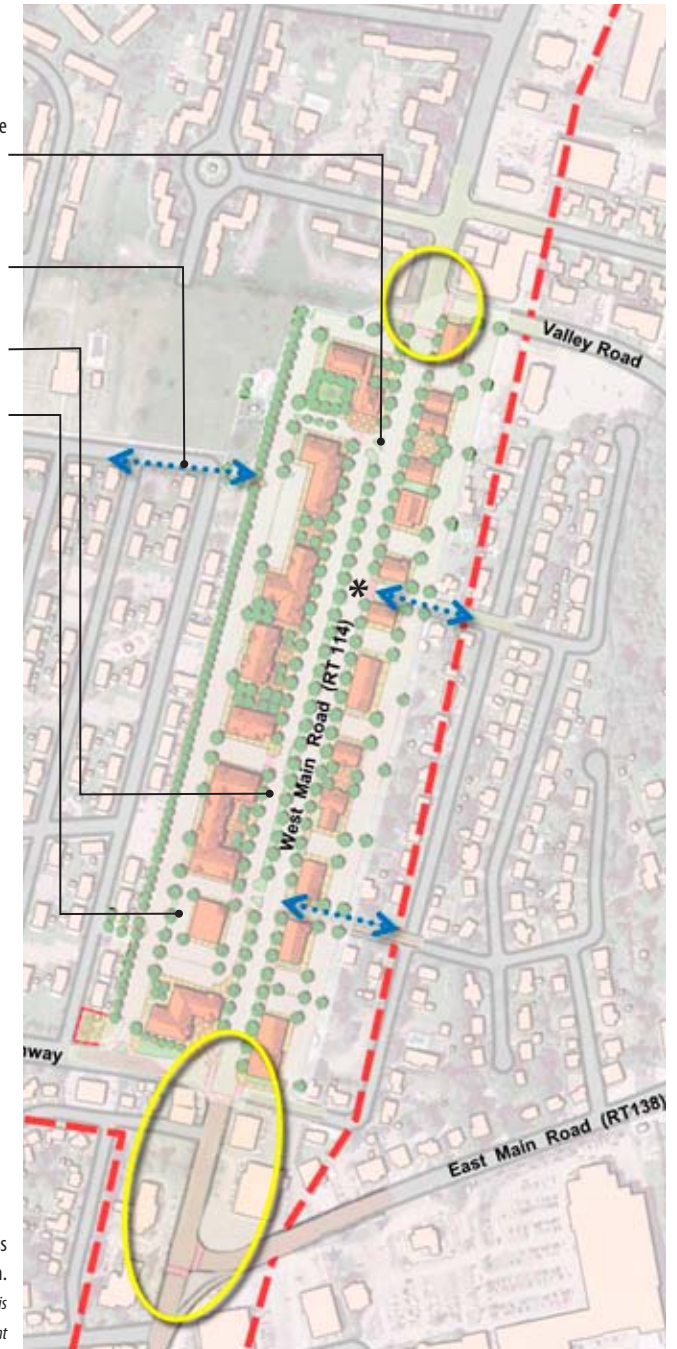
## URBAN DESIGN GOALS

## TRANSPORTATION GOALS

- Orient buildings towards West Main Road
- Enhance the pedestrian zone with off street angled parking
- Multi-story buildings with retail at ground floor
- Varied setback and building form to create pedestrian amenities



- Reduce curb cuts, consolidate entry/exit points, and restrict turning movements
- Provide pedestrian connections to existing residential areas
- Improve traffic flow and safety
- Parking at rear of buildings
- Plan for improvements to key intersections:  
West Main at Coddington  
West Main at Valley



\* Potential location of full access signalized intersection.  
See page 68 for description of this improvement

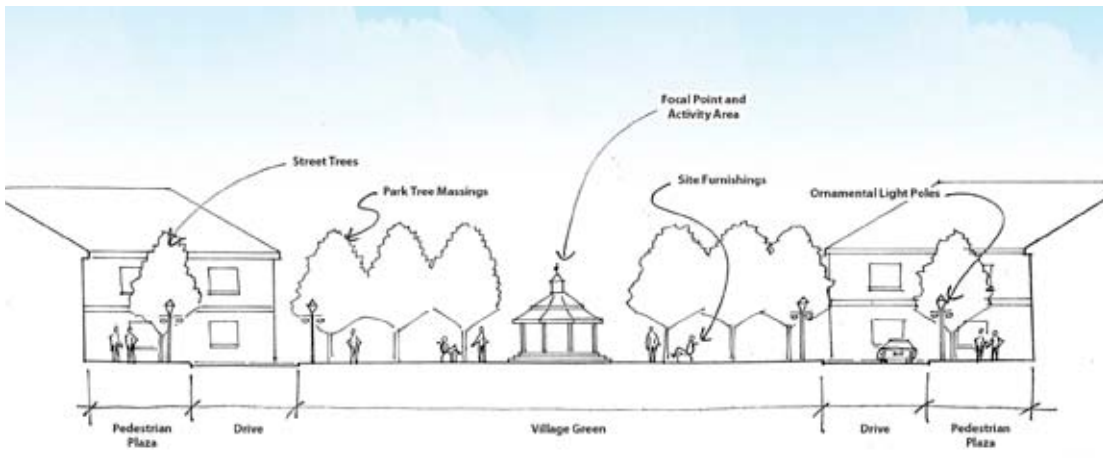
## Scenario 2

Similar to Scenario 1, this option also explores the idea of creating a mixed use center along the west side of West Main Road. Illustrated uses include civic, office and retail. (See adjacent illustrative concept plan). In contrast to the first scenario, buildings on the west side of West Main Road are placed closer to the street, essentially “lining the street” with new development. Parking is located at the side or rear of the proposed development. The streetscape along West Main Road is enhanced with the inclusion of small plazas and green space located in front of buildings by varying the setbacks along the street. An expanded municipal use program is provided in this scenario, again located on the northern section of the Core Study Area. A small Town Common (or “green”) is introduced in this scenario. The long-term goals for the east side of West Main road are the same as the first scenario.

Potential Program*	Program	Area
	Civic	75,000 S.F.
	Retail	80,000 S.F.
	Office	68,000 S.F.

\*Does not include “Long Term” uses shown on the East Side of West Main Road

Conceptual Section



## ILLUSTRATIVE CONCEPT PLAN



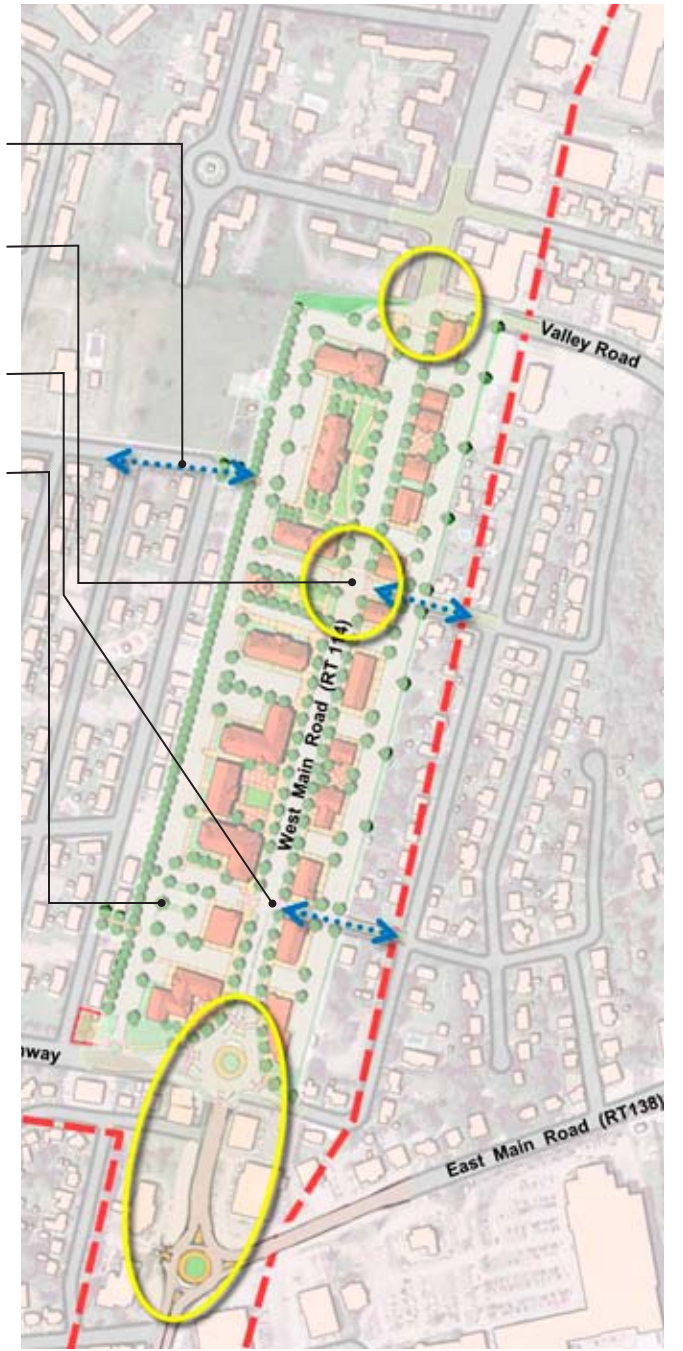
## URBAN DESIGN GOALS

- Create a Municipal zone with a town common
- Orient buildings towards West Main Road
- Varied setback and building form to create pedestrian amenities
- Place parking at the rear of buildings
- Multi-story buildings with retail at ground floor



## TRANSPORTATION GOALS

- Provide pedestrian connections to existing residential areas
- Improve traffic flow and safety with a new full access drive with pedestrian crossings
- Reduce curb cuts, consolidate entry/exit points, and restrict turning movements
- Parking at rear of buildings
- Plan for improvements to key intersections:  
*West Main at Coddington*  
*West Main at Valley (Entrance Only)*



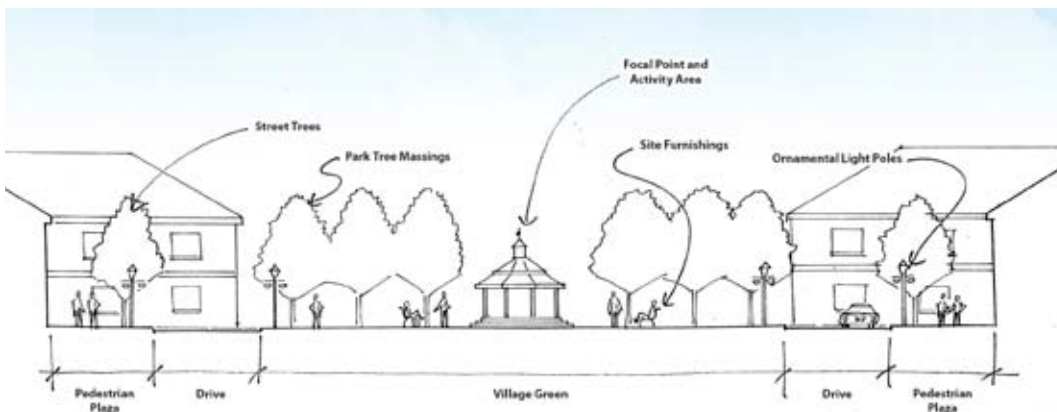
### Scenario 3

Scenario 3 includes the same approach to the Core Study Area and east side of West Main Road as depicted in Scenario 2. With those areas remaining the same as Scenario 2, this scenario explores the idea of expanding the redevelopment potential further to the west side of West Main Road, and illustrates the potential for that area to include an expanded Town Common (to the north), residential uses (centrally located on the west side), and additional retail uses (adjacent to Coddington Highway). This scenario also explores the idea of creating a new internal “parking street” located between the development that fronts West Main Road and the expanded redevelopment area to the west. The goals for this internal parking street are to link the development internally (north-south), provide opportunities for additional building frontage, and create an opportunity to create a “village like” streetscape with on-street parallel parking.

Potential Program*	Civic	75,000 S.F.
	Retail	106,000 S.F.
	Office	56,000 S.F.
	Residential	175 Units

\*Does not include “Long Term” uses shown on the East Side of West Main Road

Conceptual Section



### ILLUSTRATIVE CONCEPT PLAN



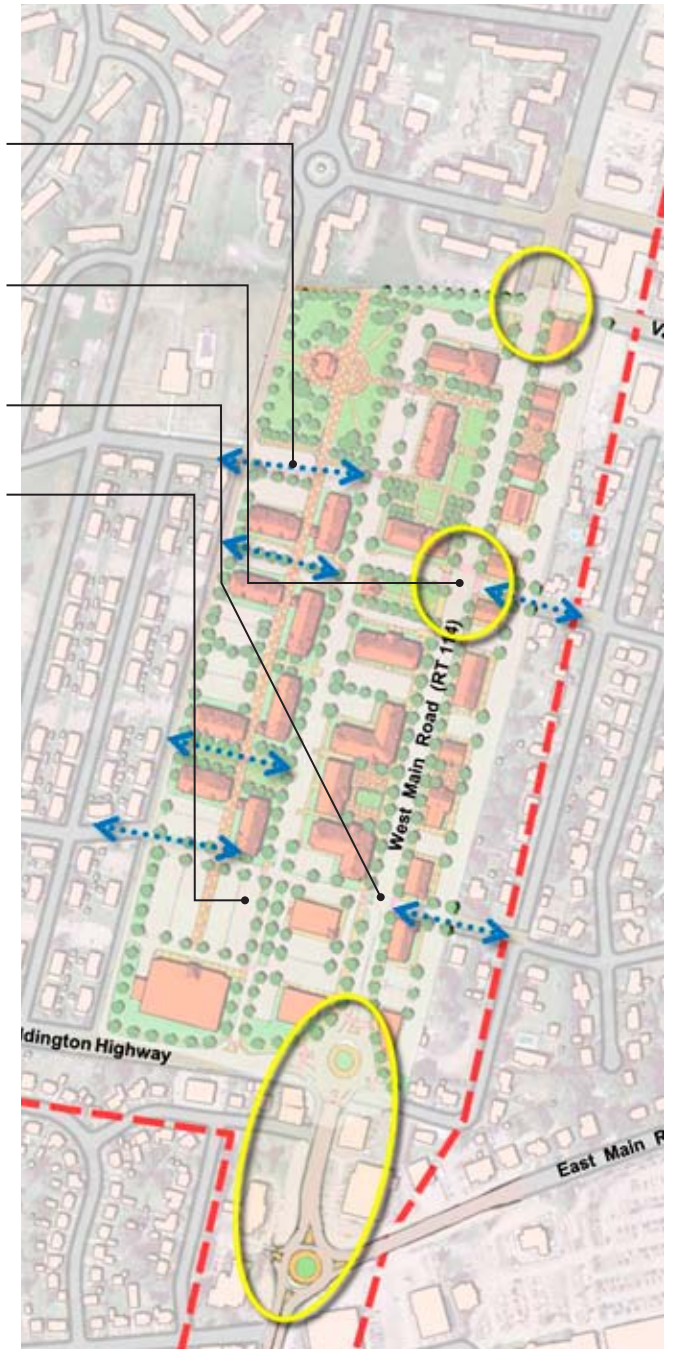
## URBAN DESIGN GOALS

- Create a municipal zone with a town common
- Expanded "town common" with additional landscaping and parking
- Orient buildings towards West Main Road
- Lining the "internal street" with buildings
- Varied setback and building form to create pedestrian amenities
- Place parking at the rear of buildings
- Multi-story buildings with retail at ground floor
- Enhanced landscaping along Coddington



## TRANSPORTATION GOALS

- Integrate pedestrian connections to existing residential areas
- Improve traffic flow and safety with a new full access drive with pedestrian crossings
- Reduce curb cuts, consolidate entry/exit points, and restrict turning movements
- Parking at rear of buildings
- Plan for improvements to key intersections:  
*West Main at Coddington*  
*West Main at Valley (Entrance Only)*



## Transportation

When developing the conceptual development alternatives, the following transportation related goals were defined:

- ❑ Improve traffic flow and safety,
- ❑ Plan for improvements to key intersections,
- ❑ Provide pedestrian connections to existing residential and surrounding areas,
- ❑ Enhance pedestrian safety and amenities, and
- ❑ Reduce curb cuts, consolidate entry/exit points, and restrict turning movements.

These goals are in line with recommendations from the Aquidneck Island Transportation Study (AITS), which is a guide for the Island's transportation future.

As shown in the Transportation Goals illustrations, each of the three scenarios were designed to meet these transportation related goals. In addition to meeting these goals, all three scenarios were designed in conjunction with RIDOT's proposed Two-Mile Corner Reconstruction project. This project includes reconstruction of the West Main Road intersections with Coddington Highway and East Main Road. As for the submission of the West Main/Coddington Development Center Master Plan, two design concepts were being considered by RIDOT and the Town of Middletown; a signalized concept and a roundabout concept. All three scenarios have been developed to work with either design concept RIDOT and the Town move forward with.

The following is a brief summary of the transportation infrastructure required for each scenario to meet the defined goals.

## Scenario 1

### Improve Traffic Flow and Safety

Scenario 1 includes two internal roadways (one in the front of the buildings and one in the rear of the buildings) that would provide internal circulation and access. This would allow vehicle conflicts (patrons/residents looking for parking, etc) to occur on the internal roadways and not along the West Main Road and Coddington Highway arterials.

### Plan for Improvements to Key Intersections

Scenario 1 takes into consideration the planned improvements at the West Main Road intersections with, Coddington Highway, and East Main Road as well as the recently reconstructed West Main Road/Valley Road intersection. Through further transportation analysis, it was confirmed that Scenario 1 would require a full access signalized intersection located at West Main Road and Oakwood, which would involve widening West Main Road to include a left-turn lane into the proposed development. Although a full access signalized intersection is warranted for the building program under Scenario 1, it was felt that the combination of the signalized intersection with the frontage road on site would create traffic-related issues such as turning movement conflicts and lack of vehicle queue storage, which poses traffic challenges for this Scenario. Note the Illustrative Concept Plan on page 62 does not show the full access signalized intersection, however the potential location of the full access intersection is footnoted in the Transportation Goals Diagram on page 63.

### Provide Pedestrian Connections to Existing Residential and Surrounding Areas

Scenario 1 provides pedestrian connections to "The Landing" residential development through proposed pedestrian paths along the west side of

the development. There is also a pedestrian connection provided from the residential and commercial properties on the east side of West Main Road to the proposed development. This is accomplished by providing a controlled crossing at the proposed signalized intersection for the development along West Main Road at Oakwood Road.

### **Enhance Pedestrian Safety and Amenities**

Scenario 1 enhances pedestrian safety by providing a controlled pedestrian crossing—where one does not currently exist—along West Main Road, between Valley Road and Coddington Highway. In addition to aiding the crossing of pedestrians generated from the proposed development, it will aid the numerous pedestrian that cross this section today, without a controlled crossing. Pedestrian amenities, such as benches, enhanced lighting and bump-outs at crosswalks, and wide sidewalks, will be provided within the development. Also, bus shelters are proposed along West Main Road, adjacent to and within the proposed development.

### **Reduce Curb Cuts, Consolidate Entry/Exit Points, and Restrict Turning Movements**

Scenario 1 provides one full access point along West Main Road. Other limited access points include a right-in only access point adjacent to Valley Road along West Main Road and three right-in/right-outs access points, two along West Main Road and one on Coddington Highway.

## **Scenario 2**

### **Improve Traffic Flow and Safety**

Scenario 2 includes one internal roadway in the rear of the buildings that would provide internal access. This would allow vehicle conflicts (looking for parking, etc) to occur on the internal roadways and not along the West Main Road and Coddington Highway arterials.

### **Plan for Improvements to Key Intersections**

Scenario 2 takes into consideration the planned improvements at the West Main Road intersections with, Coddington Highway, and East Main Road as well as the recently reconstructed West Main Road/Valley Road intersection. There is also a proposed signalized intersection for the development along West Main Road, which involves widening West Main Road to include a left-turn lane into the proposed development.

### **Provide Pedestrian Connections to Existing Residential and Surrounding Areas**

Scenario 2 provides pedestrian connections to “The Landing” residential development through proposed pedestrian paths along the west side of the development. There is also a pedestrian connection provided from the residential and commercial properties on the east side of West Main Road to the proposed development. This is accomplished by providing a controlled crossing at the proposed signalized intersection for the development along West Main Road at Oakwood Road.

### **Enhance Pedestrian Safety and Amenities**

Scenario 2 enhances pedestrian safety by providing a controlled pedestrian crossing—where one does not currently exist—along West Main Road, between Valley Road and Coddington Highway. In addition to aiding the crossing of pedestrians generated from the proposed development, it will aid the numerous pedestrian that cross this section today, without a controlled crossing. Pedestrian amenities, such as benches, enhanced lighting and bump-outs at crosswalks, and wide sidewalks, will be provided within the development. Also, bus shelters are proposed along West Main Road, adjacent to and within the proposed development.

## **Reduce Curb Cuts, Consolidate Entry/Exit Points, and Restrict Turning Movements**

Scenario 2 provides one full access point along West Main Road. Other limited access points include a right-in only access point adjacent to Valley Road along West Main Road and three right-in/right-out access points, two along West Main Road and one on Coddington Highway.

### **Scenario 3**

#### **Improve Traffic Flow and Safety**

Scenario 3 includes one internal roadway in the rear of the buildings that would provide internal access. This would allow vehicle conflicts (looking for parking, etc) to occur on the internal roadways and not along the West Main Road and Coddington Highway arterials.

#### **Plan for Improvements to Key Intersections**

Scenario 3 takes into consideration the planned improvements at the West Main Road intersections with, Coddington Highway, and East Main Road as well as the recently reconstructed West Main Road/Valley Road intersection. There is also a proposed signalized intersection for the development along West Main Road, which involves widening West Main Road to include a left-turn lane into the proposed development.

#### **Provide Pedestrian Connections to Existing Residential and Surrounding Areas**

Scenario 3 provides pedestrian connections to “The Landing” residential development through proposed pedestrian paths along the west side of the development. The development itself includes residential units as well that would be directly connected to the other proposed uses in the development. There is also a pedestrian connection provided to the residential and commercial properties on the east side of West Main Road from the proposed development. This is accomplished by providing

a controlled crossing at the proposed signalized intersection for the development on West Main Road at Oakwood Road.

#### **Enhance Pedestrian Safety and Amenities**

Scenario 3 enhances pedestrian safety by providing a controlled pedestrian crossing—where one does not currently exist—along West Main Road, between Valley Road and Coddington Highway. In addition to aiding the crossing of pedestrians generated from the proposed development, it will aid the numerous pedestrian that cross this section today, without a controlled crossing. Pedestrian amenities, such as benches, enhanced lighting and bump-outs at crosswalks, and wide sidewalks, will be provided within the development. Also, bus shelters are proposed along West Main Road, adjacent to and within the proposed development.

#### **Reduce Curb Cuts, Consolidate Entry/Exit Points, and Restrict Turning Movements**

Scenario 3 provides one full access point along West Main Road. Other limited access points include a right-in only access point adjacent to Valley Road along West Main Road and three right-in/right-out access points, two along West Main Road and one along Coddington Highway.

Scenario 3 also includes full access points along Lawrence Street, connecting to “The Landings” residential development, US Navy housing, and the Chases Lane neighborhood. This additional connection would provide an alternative for people from these neighborhoods to access the proposed development without traveling on West Main Road or Coddington Highway.







# 6 Preferred Scenario

## Preferred Scenario

Based on comments received at the second public meeting and direction received from the Steering Committee, a “Preferred Scenario” was created. There was general consensus that Scenario 3 was the most successful in achieving the overarching goal of creating a more integrated “district” that is connected to the surrounding area. Many of the elements depicted in Scenario 3 were included and/or refined in the Preferred Scenario. This chapter provides an overview of the key elements that define the Preferred Scenario. In addition, this section identifies both site specific strategies and broad goals that will guide the Town and community as more specific plans and implementation steps are advanced.

As identified during the creation of the three scenarios, the Core Study Area and its immediate context has the potential to be transformed into a thriving mixed use center, accommodating a wide range of uses that could include retail, office, housing, and civic uses. In addition, there is potential to create new civic places, such as a Town Common, where planned community events could take place adjacent to new municipal uses. These opportunities are captured in the Preferred Scenario. It is important to acknowledge that the Preferred Scenario is meant for illustrative purposes; it is expected that further refinements to the plan will be required as further information is developed relative to site control and as actual plans are put forth for redevelopment. The elements of the Preferred Scenario are described in this chapter and organized into the following sections:

- ❏ Urban Design and Vision
  - ❏ *Potential development program*
  - ❏ *General massing for the area*
  - ❏ *Character sketches*

- ❏ Landscape and Streetscape
  - ❏ *Gateway areas*
  - ❏ *Public spaces*
  - ❏ *Sidewalks and pedestrian zones*
  - ❏ *Street furnishing*
  - ❏ *Lighting*
  - ❏ *Landscape treatments*
- ❏ Transportation
  - ❏ *Transportation infrastructure*
  - ❏ *Transportation system demands*
  - ❏ *Transportation system performance*
  - ❏ *Timing and phasing*
- ❏ Infrastructure
  - ❏ *Utilities*
  - ❏ *Phasing*
  - ❏ *Potential costs*
- ❏ Zoning
  - ❏ *Overlay District*

## Urban Design and Vision

The Preferred Scenario is illustrated in the adjacent figure and in the massing diagrams and character sketches that are included on the following pages. As shown, the scenario explores the concept of creating a mixed use center along the west side of West Main Road.

**Figure 6.1 — Preferred Scenario**

- A** Create a municipal zone with a town common
- B** Expanded “town common” with additional landscaping and parking
- C** Orient buildings towards West Main Road
- D** Lining the “internal street” with buildings
- E** Place parking at the rear of buildings
- F** Multi-story buildings with retail at ground floor
- G** Enhanced landscaping along Coddington
- H** Future roundabout (alternatives)
- I** Multifamily residential

Potential Program*		
Civic	50,000 S.F.	
Retail	80,000 S.F.	
Office	45,000 S.F.	
Residential	175 Units	

Note: Uses shown are approximate

\*Does not include “Long Term” uses shown on the East Side of West Main Road



Source: Town of Middletown GIS



## 6 Preferred Scenario

### Existing Conditions

- 1 Former Navy Lodge
- 2 Recreation Complex
- 3 Public Library
- 4 JFK School (Closed)

### Preferred Scenario (Opposite page)

- A Create a municipal zone with a town common
- B Expanded “town common” with additional landscaping and parking
- C Orient buildings towards West Main Road
- D Lining the “internal street” with buildings
- E Place parking at the rear of buildings
- F Multi-story buildings with retail at ground floor
- G Enhanced landscaping along Coddington
- H Future roundabout (alternatives)
- I Multifamily residential



Existing massing looking southwest



Massing view looking southwest



Massing view looking southeast



Massing view looking northwest



Massing view looking northeast

The illustrated uses include civic, office and retail. Buildings on the west side of West Main Road are placed close the street, in order to “line the street” with new development. Parking is located at the sides and/or rear of the proposed development. The streetscape along West Main Road is enhanced with the inclusion of small plazas and green space located in front of buildings by varying the setbacks along the street. Municipal uses include two new buildings located on the northern section of the Core Study Area. The long-term goals for the east side of West Main Road include redevelopment that places buildings closer to the street, enhancing the streetscape, consolidating driveway entrances and providing shared parking at the rear of the lots.

The Preferred Scenario includes the concept of expanding the redevelopment potential further to the west side of West Main Road, and illustrates the potential for that area to include an expanded Town Common and parking (to the north), residential uses (centrally located on the west side), and additional retail uses (adjacent to Coddington Highway). The preferred scenario also provides for a new internal “parking street” located between the development that fronts West Main Road and the expanded redevelopment area to the west. The goals for this internal parking street are to link the development internally (north-south), provide opportunities for additional building frontage, and create an opportunity to provide a “village-like” streetscape with on-street parallel parking.

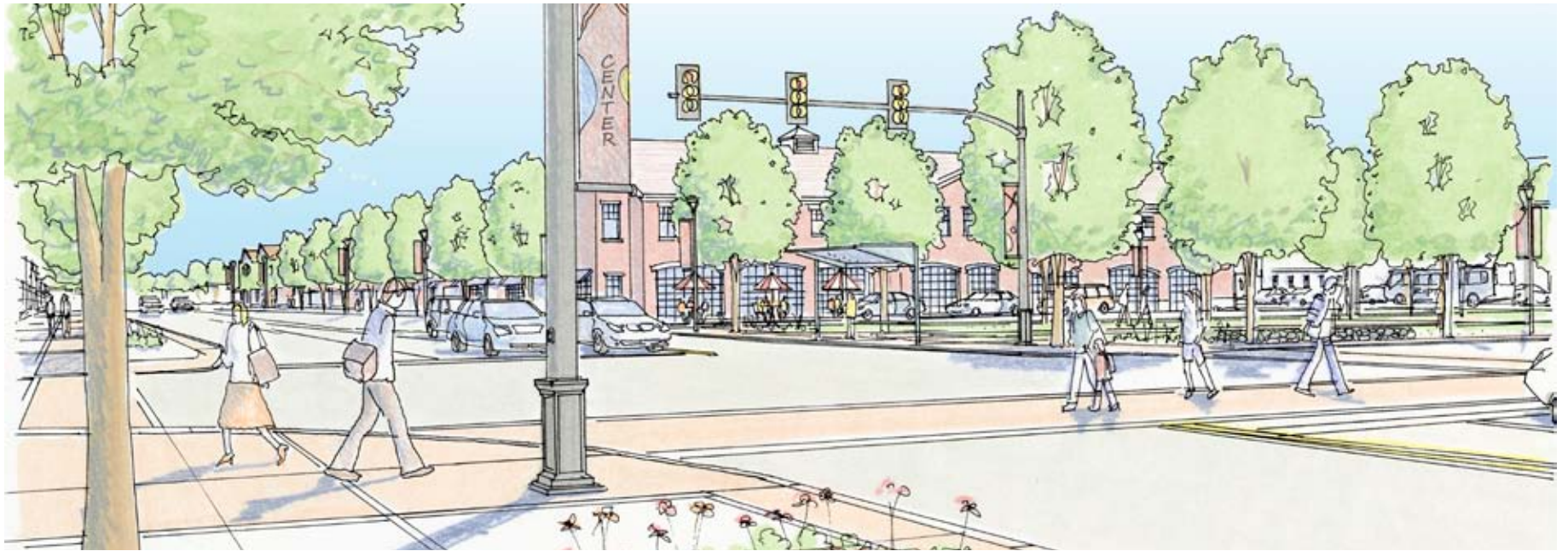
Building massing consists of a mix of one, two, and three story tall buildings. The buildings are placed to reinforce the street edge and provide opportunities to create small urban plazas and pocket parks. A series of character sketches illustrate the potential for the area to contain active ground floor uses with upper-story office or residential uses. The images also illustrate the goal to enhance the streetscape in the area, with wider sidewalks, enhanced landscaping, signage and lighting.



Existing Conditions



Existing Conditions



Character Sketch—Looking south along West Main Road towards the Core Study Area



Character Sketch—Looking south along the new internal "parking street"

### Landscape/Streetscape

The preferred scenario identifies opportunities to enhance the streetscape and landscape amenities in the West Main/Coddington Development area that sets this location apart from the more “conventional” landscape and streetscape that exists along West Main Road and Coddington Highway. These opportunities include:

- ❑ *Gateways* that celebrate the West Main/Coddington area as a distinct development
- ❑ *Public spaces* that invite the public to become engaged with the development
- ❑ *Sidewalks and pedestrian zones* that provide safe and attractive access
- ❑ *Street furnishings* that present a cohesive appearance
- ❑ *Lighting* that meets pedestrian and vehicular needs
- ❑ *Landscape treatments* that provide year-round interest

This section outlines goals and objectives for the landscape and streetscape elements identified above, and is supplemented with analog photos that illustrate various applications for these elements.

#### Gateways

- ❑ Provide a signature gateway to the project site as approached from the south. Currently an open field, this key “window” to the development site can be developed as a gateway through introduction of attractive signage, colorful foreground plantings and tree-lined road edges that frame views. The roundabout shown in the preferred plan can be designed to include additional gateway plantings in its center circle.
- ❑ Provide a second gateway to the development site from the north at

Valley Road. Gateway signage might be placed along the westerly edge of West Main Road, presenting an introduction to the development area as a special district. This can be achieved by including foreground plantings and integration with new street tree plantings.

#### Public Spaces

- ❑ Provide a series of new public spaces within the development area. These might be varied in size and character to create visually distinctive settings which will draw people into the development, assuring the success of possible retail, office areas, and municipal buildings.
- ❑ Present a “frontage” design to the development area which takes advantage of potentially varied setbacks for buildings and parking lots. The benefits of such an approach include opportunities for a rich landscape foreground as viewed from West Main Road, presenting high-quality settings for the architecture and reducing the visual scale of parking areas.

#### Sidewalks and pedestrian zones

- ❑ Streetscape design for the development area frontage should provide a cohesive palette of street trees, furnishings and lighting. Sidewalk treatments can allow for a “meandering” walkway along West Main Road with varied depths for landscape and seating areas, supported by the selection of plants, lighting and furnishings.
- ❑ Streetscape design of the existing retail frontage along the east side of West Main Road should provide a consistent landscaped edge and sidewalk. Features may include low ornamental trees which avoid interference with overhead power lines, plant beds that screen parked cars and an ADA compliant walkway set back from the roadway edge.

- ❑ Driveways within the development area should be functional but also “low-key” to place emphasis on the pedestrian environment. Drive widths should be minimized to emphasize pedestrians and landscaping while also slowing vehicle speeds.
- ❑ A varied palette of pavement materials for sidewalks, plazas and public spaces should be developed. This may include a design hierarchy of concrete sidewalks, feature areas of concrete pavement with paver trim, and public spaces defined by patterned colored concrete pavement or ornamental pavers.
- ❑ Crosswalks should be highlighted to emphasize pedestrian movements over vehicular movements. This may be accomplished by introducing special pavement treatments such as precast concrete pavers or creating a paver simulated appearance using color impregnated stamped surfaces in place of the traditional painted striping.

## Street furnishings

- ❑ Provide for a distinct “family” of site furnishings to present a cohesive appearance. The street furnishing design should be of similar color and materials and the selections should have proven urban durability. A carefully thought out “program” of furnishings sets the stage for a vibrant pedestrian friendly environment.

## Lighting

- ❑ Selection of light poles and fixtures should be based upon low energy requirements, durability and compatible appearance with the site furnishings. The design of light poles and luminaires is a key element defining the appearance of the roadway and landscape beyond. Period lighting of historic character can also imbue the project area with a sense of permanence as well as provide visual interest.

## Landscape treatments

- ❑ Provide a rich palette of plant materials for both streetscape and public spaces on the project site interior. Plantings should be a primary element setting the tone for the development aesthetic and may include urban tolerant street trees, urban tolerant ornamental and shade trees on the project interior and beds of ornamental grasses, perennials and shrubs to visually buffer parking areas and roadway edges. Plant selection should consider varied color and texture through the seasons as well as use of durable native plants which will not require irrigation.
- ❑ Trees can be used to set the tone of the landscape through a variety of approaches. Evenly spaced street trees can serve to frame and define West Main Street, presenting a cohesive statement joining old and new development flanking the corridor. Urban tolerant trees introduced along drives and parking areas on the interior of the development can lend form and provide visual buffers. Larger shade trees help to anchor newly developed areas, lending a sense of permanence, while clusters of ornamental trees can serve to highlight gateways and internal park spaces, providing seasonal interest.

### Landscape/Streetscape “Kit of Parts”

Gateways



Public Spaces



Walkways



Site Furnishings



Lighting



Trees



## Transportation

For the preferred scenario, the transportation-related goals previously mentioned in Chapter 5 were further analyzed and assessed with the following categories:

- ❑ Future transportation infrastructure, including proposed access points, proposed pedestrian and bicycle accommodations and access, and transit accommodations and access;
- ❑ Future transportation system demands; and
- ❑ Future transportation system performance.

As previously mentioned, the preferred scenario was designed in conjunction with RIDOT's proposed Two-Mile Corner Reconstruction project. This project includes the reconstruction of West Main Road intersections with Coddington Highway and East Main Road. As of the submission of the West Main/Coddington Development Center Master Plan, two design concepts were being considered by RIDOT and the Town of Middletown; a signalized concept and a roundabout concept. The preferred scenario has been developed to work with either design concept RIDOT and the Town move forward with.

## Future Transportation Infrastructure

### Proposed Access Points

In order to provide good access management principles by limiting the number of access points that cause conflicting movements, the preferred alternative was designed with one full access point and three limited access points along the West Main Road and Coddington Highway arterials. The proposed access points include:

- ❑ Full-access Site Drive on West Main Rd, adjacent to Oakwood Dr,
- ❑ Right-in only on West Main Rd, across from Valley Rd,

- ❑ Right-in/Right-out on West Main Rd, north of Coddington Hwy, and
- ❑ Right-in/Right-out on Coddington Hwy, west of West Main Rd.

The preferred development alternative also includes multiple access points along Lawrence Street, which is part of "The Landings" housing development. The proposed access points are illustrated on Figure 6.2.

### Pedestrian/Bicycle Accommodations and Access

The preferred alternative is designed to provide accommodations and access to the development for pedestrians and bicyclists, including:

- ❑ *Connection to the proposed "Island-Wide Bicycle Network"* – As part of the AITS, a proposed Island-Wide Bicycle Network was recommended, including a combination of off-road and shared roadway bike routes. Lawrence Street is part of the proposed network and offers a direct connection to the development alternatives. Valley Road is also a part of the proposed network (already listed as a "suitable road" based on RIDOT) and will connect to the proposed development by offering a controlled crossing at the signalized intersection of Valley Road and West Main Road.
- ❑ *Pedestrian connection across West Main Road* – As shown in the Future Transportation System Demand section, the full access point for the development along West Main Road is warranted for the installation of a traffic signal. This traffic signal will create a controlled pedestrian crossing along West Main Road.
- ❑ *Include bicycle facilities (such as numerous bike racks) throughout the development* – The development's internal roadway network will also include bicycle signage and pavement markings to make vehicles aware of bicycle activity within the development.
- ❑ *Provide a Pedestrian Connection to Residential Communities* – The preferred alternative provides a pedestrian connection to "The

## Figure 6.2 — Transportation

- A** Provide right-in only and connection to island-wide bicycle network
- B** Provide connection to island-wide bicycle network
- C** Provide connection to residential neighborhood
- D** Provide bus shelter
- E** Provide right-in/right-out along West Main Road
- F** Provide right-in/right-out along Coddington Highway
- G** Reconstruction of 2-Mile Corner
- H** Roundabout or signalized intersection (Shown as roundabout)
- I** Upgrade sidewalks and pedestrian crossings
- J** Provide bicycle racks, signing and striping along internal roadway network
- K** Provide full access signalized site drive with left-turn lanes along West Main Rd.
- L** Provide controlled pedestrian connection across West Main Road to development from neighborhood on east side



Source: Town of Middletown GIS



Landings” residential development, the US Navy housing development, Harbor Village, and the Chase’s Lane residential area through proposed pedestrian paths connecting as shown in Figure 6.2. These pedestrian connections will connect to existing sidewalks in “The Landings” roadway network.

- ❑ *Provide controlled pedestrian crossing on West Main Road* at the development’s full access point in order to provide a pedestrian connection to the neighborhoods on the east side of West Main Road, including Oakwood, Ridgewood, Rego Roads.
- ❑ *Provide multiple marked crosswalks* within the development’s internal roadway network to provide pedestrians with dedicated crossing areas to help corral pedestrians and deter them from crossing at random locations within the development.
- ❑ *Update sidewalks* – As part of the reconstruction of Two-Mile Corner project, the sidewalks adjacent to the development along West Main Road and Coddington Highway are proposed to be replaced and conform to ADA standards.

### Transit Accommodations and Access

To encourage the use of transit as an alternate mode of transportation to the proposed development, the following enhancements to the existing transit system are recommended:

- ❑ Increase the frequency of bus service on weekends adjacent to the development.
- ❑ The bus stop(s) should be located along the development’s internal roadway network. The bus stop(s) within the development should consist of a bus shelter with bus arrival times noted, either with a printed schedule or real-time via a message board.

### Future Transportation System Demands

This section quantifies the projected traffic volumes from the preferred alternative on the Core Study Area roadways. The information used for this evaluation was derived from the Aquidneck Island Transportation Study (AITS) as well as the potential development programs from the three conceptual alternatives.

### Future Traffic Volumes

As part of the AITS, projected traffic volumes based on known developments across the Island were identified in discussions with the Towns of Middletown and Portsmouth and the City of Newport. The projected traffic generated from these developments was applied to the Development Core Study Area roadways to project the operation of the roadway network if the developments were to be constructed. Included in this projection were traffic volumes generated from assumed land uses (consisting of office, retail, and multi-family housing) for the West Main/Coddington Development Center. These projected traffic volumes were adjusted to reflect the preferred alternative and were applied to the existing traffic volumes to generate the future traffic volumes along the Development Core Study Area roadways.

As previously mentioned under “Planned Projects”, the Burma Road southern extension (aka Shoreline Drive) consists of an alignment that has been conceptualized, running through the Coddington Cove Navy Housing development, between the US Navy and The Landings property lines. Depending on the final cross section and alignment for the Shoreline Drive project, significant traffic shifts from West Main Road and the Two-Mile Corner area are possible. Since the concept and resulting shift in traffic percentages have not been finalized as of this submission, the traffic volumes used for this analysis do not include any expected traffic shifts.

## Traffic Signal Warrant Analysis

To determine if the preferred alternative would generate enough traffic volumes to warrant the installation of a traffic signal, a traffic signal warrant analysis was conducted in accordance with the 2009 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (2009 MUTCD) standards for unsignalized intersections. There are 8 warrants described in the 2009 MUTCD. The installation of a traffic signal should only be considered if one or more of the signal warrants are met. For this study, three of the warrants were examined to determine the need for traffic signal control:

- ❑ Warrant 1 – Eight-hour vehicular volume
- ❑ Warrant 2 – Four-hour vehicular volume
- ❑ Warrant 3 – Peak hour

The MUTCD states that “Engineering judgment should be used to determine what, if any, portion of the right turning traffic is subtracted from the minor-street traffic count when evaluating the count” against the above signal warrants. To provide a conservative analysis to prevent installation of a traffic signal where it’s not warranted, all of the right-turning traffic exiting from the development was removed from the minor street traffic volumes to complete the signal warrants analysis.

The analysis indicates that based on the projected weekday traffic volumes for the preferred alternative at the proposed intersection of West Main Road at the development “full access site drive”, two of the three threshold levels for the traffic signal warrants analyzed are met (Warrants 2 & 3). Therefore, the full access site drive is assumed under the preferred alternative.

## Future Transportation System Performance

This section summarizes the traffic operation assessment for the Core Study Area roadway network including the projected traffic generated from the preferred alternative. This is a supply and demand analysis for the identified intersections.

### Method of Analysis

Understanding the relationship between the supply and demand on a roadway is a fundamental consideration in evaluating how well a transportation facility safely and efficiently accommodates the traveling public. Methods from the 2000 Highway Capacity Manual were used to evaluate how the intersections accommodate the traffic demands under existing conditions. Field measurements were taken and peak hour traffic volume data were obtained at the key intersections.

Using the traffic counts and field measurements, a traffic operations model was used to evaluate how well the transportation infrastructure handles the peak hour demands. The term “Level of Service” (LOS) is used to denote the different operating conditions that occur under peak traffic volume loads. It is a qualitative measure that considers a number of factors including traffic demands, roadway geometry, speed, travel delay, and freedom to maneuver. The level of service designation is an index that is based on vehicle delays, ranging from A to F, with LOS A representing the best operating conditions and LOS F representing the worst operating conditions. Typically, LOS D (as defined in the 2000 Highway Capacity Manual) is considered to be the acceptable limit. LOS E or F conditions are typically considered unacceptable. LOS E or F conditions are typically accepted for low volume movements where progression on the main street takes priority over low volume side street movements.

The measures used to evaluate supply and capacity are presented for the critical movement and include:

- ❑ Delay – The total average delay to drivers on the critical intersection approach, including deceleration, queue maneuvering, and acceleration delays.
- ❑ V/C – The volume-to-capacity ratio is a measure that compares the observed volume of traffic to the theoretical processing capacity of the intersection. When the V/C ratio exceeds 1.0, the volume of traffic exceeds the theoretical capacity.
- ❑ LOS – Level of service is a rating based on the delay. LOS E and F are typically considered unacceptable and warrant further review.
- ❑ Queue – The average and maximum observed queue lengths.

### Capacity Analysis Results

Levels-of-service analyses were conducted using both the existing traffic volumes as well as the 2030 future projected volumes. The SYNCHRO 7.0 traffic model was used for the LOS evaluation for signalized intersections and SIDRA 3.2 was used for the LOS evaluation for the proposed roundabouts. These models are widely used by traffic engineering professionals and are consistent with procedures in the 2000 Highway Capacity Manual. The signal timings used for the signalized intersection analyses were derived from a combination of compiled existing signal plans and extracted timings from the AITS.

The capacity analyses results for the 4 signalized intersections in the Core Study Area (3 existing and 1 proposed) are presented in Table 6.1. For each of the signalized intersections, the table summarizes the delay and level-of-service for the intersection as a whole. In Table 6.2, it is assumed that the RIDOT Two-Mile Corner Geometric Improvements design project is constructed as currently proposed. The realignment concept has not been included in the analysis, as it is not being carried forward at this time.

As stated previously, it is assumed that the full access site drive for the development will be a signalized intersection. The projected traffic volumes generated for the preferred alternative were used to calculate the capacity analysis of the West Main Road/Full Access Site Drive intersection. Not included, however, is the potential increase in traffic volumes at the Full Access Site Drive under the preferred alternative, in which vehicles from “The Landings” residential development and US Navy housing development may use the Full Access Site Drive traffic signal to enter West Main Road. A full traffic impact and analysis study should be performed when this connection is made.

As shown in Table 6.1, all of the Core Study Area signalized intersections operate at overall acceptable calculated levels of service under both existing and future conditions. However, as described below, there are individual movements at the intersections that operate over capacity, have queues that either extend beyond or block provided storage bays, and/or are effected by upstream/downstream signalized intersections.

For the proposed development’s Full Access Site Drive intersection with West Main Road, it is assumed that left-turn lanes are provided on the West Main Road northbound approach, as shown in Figure 6.2.

The Two-Mile Corner roundabout alternative has been analyzed using SIDRA (software version 3.2). Table 6.2 summarizes the projected overall operations of the proposed roundabouts. As shown, both proposed roundabouts are projected to operate at overall acceptable calculated levels of service under future conditions. The delays and queues are projected to be less than the projected delays and queues from the geometric improvements alternative.

The analysis results for each of the Core Study Area intersections are summarized below:

- ❑ West Main Road at Valley Road – Under existing and future conditions, the intersection is projected to operate under capacity;

### Table 6.1 – Signalized Intersection Capacity Analysis Summary

Intersection	Time Period	2010 Existing Conditions		2030 Future Conditions	
		Overall Delay <sup>a</sup>	Overall LOS <sup>b</sup>	Overall Delay <sup>a</sup>	Overall LOS <sup>b</sup>
<b>West Main Road at Valley Road</b>	Weekday Morning	29	C*	16	B*
	Weekday Afternoon	32	C*	17	B*
<b>West Main Road at Full Access Site Dr</b>	Weekday Morning	N/A	N/A	13	B
	Weekday Afternoon	N/A	N/A	15	B
<b>West Main Road at Coddington Hwy<sup>c</sup></b>	Weekday Morning	16	B	29	C*
	Weekday Afternoon	22	C*	34	C*
<b>West Main Road at East Main Road<sup>c</sup></b>	Weekday Morning	23	C	23	C*
	Weekday Afternoon	27	C*	30	C*

Source: Compiled by VHB as part of the Aquidneck Island Transportation Study using SYNCHRO 7 software.

Note: existing signal timings obtained by VHB in August 2009.

a Average delay in seconds per vehicle

b Level of service

c 2030 future conditions assumes the RIDOT Two-Mile Corner Geometric Improvements concept is constructed

\* Individual movements at the intersection are projected to operate over capacity, have queues that either extend beyond or block provided storage bays, or are affected by upstream/downstream signalized intersections.

N/A Not Applicable. The intersection does not exist under 2010 Existing Conditions.

### Table 6.2 – Roundabout Capacity Analysis Summary

Intersection	Time Period	2030 Future Conditions	
		Overall Delay <sup>a</sup>	Overall LOS <sup>b</sup>
<b>West Main Road at Coddington Hwy</b>	Weekday Morning	7.4	A
	Weekday Afternoon	10.9	B
<b>West Main Road at East Main Road</b>	Weekday Morning	10.6	B
	Weekday Afternoon	17.9	B

Source: Compiled by VHB as part of the Aquidneck Island Transportation Study using SIDRA 3.2 software.

a Average delay in seconds per vehicle

b Level of service

however, left-turning vehicle queues often extend beyond the available storage bay, blocking southbound thru vehicles on West Main Road. There are also long queues on the West Main Road northbound approach during the afternoon peak period.

- ❑ West Main Road at Full Access Site Drive – Under future conditions, the intersection is projected to operate under capacity with acceptable levels of service. It is assumed that the intersection will have left-turn lanes on the West Main Road approaches to serve vehicles entering the development and Oakwood Drive. This intersection has been analyzed assuming that it would be coordinated with the West Main Road traffic signal system.
- ❑ West Main Road at Coddington Highway/Rockwood Road – During the afternoon peak hour periods; vehicle queues along West Main Road often extend into the East Main Road intersection and impact operations at that location. Under projected future conditions, if the RIDOT Two-Mile Corner Geometric Improvements are in place, the intersection is projected to operate more efficiently. However, because of the limited space between this intersection and East Main Road, vehicle queues will often extend beyond the storage bays during the afternoon peak hour period, blocking the West Main Road northbound thru traffic.

Under projected future conditions with the proposed roundabout alternative, the intersection is project to operate with overall acceptable calculated levels of service under future conditions. The delays and queues are projected to be less than the projected delays and queues from the geometric improvements alternative.

- ❑ West Main Road at East Main Road – During the afternoon peak hour periods, vehicle queues along West Main Road often extend into the Coddington Highway intersection. Under projected future conditions, if the RIDOT Two-Mile Corner Geometric Improvements

are in place, the intersection is projected to operate more efficiently. However, because of the limited space between this intersection and Coddington Highway, vehicle queues will often extend beyond the storage bay during the afternoon peak hour period, blocking West Main Road southbound thru traffic.

Under projected future conditions with the proposed roundabout alternative, the intersection is project to operate with overall acceptable calculated levels of service under future conditions. The delays and queues are projected to be less than the projected delays and queues from the geometric improvements alternative.

### Core Redevelopment Section

The following permits and coordination are necessary in the development of the West Main/Coddington Redevelopment Center:

- ❑ Physical Alteration Permit (PAP) – The Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) requires a PAP to be submitted and approved before any access driveway is installed along a State Highway. Both West Main Road and Coddington Highway are State Highways under RIDOT jurisdiction. The design of any roadways, sidewalks, intersections, driveways, etc within the State Right-of-Way will be required to conform with the following standards and requirements at a minimum:

- ❑ *RIDOT Physical Alternation Permit Manual*
- ❑ *RIDOT Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Design*
- ❑ *RIDOT Standards Details*
- ❑ *RIDOT Highway Design Manual*
- ❑ *RIDOT Traffic Design Manual*

❖ *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)*<sup>1</sup>

As part of the PAP application, the RIDOT may request a formal Traffic Impact and Analysis Study (TIAS) be performed to determine the impact of new trips generated by the proposed developments on the adjacent roadway network.

- ❖ Coordination with the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) – Coordination is necessary with RIPTA to request additional bus service to the development, as well as requesting that the new bus stop(s) are located within the development’s internal roadway network and that the bus stop(s) are equipped with bus shelters. These shelters should be “branded” in concert to the growth center’s theme (as recommended by the AITS).

### **Timings of the Development/Project Phasing:**

- ❖ Each individual development will require a separate TIAS if the development are phased. Each development’s TIAS will include the growth and impact for the individual site as well as the development’s “full-build” scenario. This will help determine the need and type of access points along the State highways.
- ❖ It is unlikely that the entire development will occur simultaneously. Unsignalized full access driveways may be needed to provide access to the first development(s) until the remainder of the site becomes developed. Any access point installed under one development should be converted to a limited access point or entirely removed as the remainder of the site becomes developed. The Town should include conditions during the local approval process to ensure compliance with this requirement.

<sup>1</sup> All traffic control devices installed along the State highways and within the development’s internal roadway network shall conform to MUTCD standards. The MUTCD states that it “shall be recognized as a national standard for all traffic control devices installed on any street, highway, bikeway, or private road open to public travel”

## **Infrastructure**

A preliminary assessment of utility infrastructure needs and upgrades that would be required to support the build out of the Core Study Area based on the Development Center Master Plan was conducted. A central utility corridor through the Core Study Area would simplify connections for new development projects as the site is redeveloped.

- ❖ Future development projects along West Main Road could be connected via existing utility mains, however, if a central utility corridor were constructed prior to the development parcels, these projects could proceed without any significant construction and traffic impacts or cost premiums associated with work in West Main Road.
- ❖ Water system connections are available from West Main Road and will require the approval of the Newport Water Department.
- ❖ Additional impervious area is anticipated for redevelopment of the parcels. Stormwater Management BMPs must include Low Impact Development (LID) Systems, and will likely require underground stormwater detention to mitigate any increases in impervious area. Underground detention systems may require additional weighting to counteract buoyancy conditions from seasonal high groundwater. It is anticipated that each site would be required to address stormwater impacts on a site by site basis.
- ❖ Sewer is available but will require upgrades to the municipal system for full build out of the proposed development. Existing sewer service could be reused until the development exceeds the existing sewer loads from the library, former J.F.K. elementary school, and athletic complex restrooms.
- ❖ Gas, Electric, and Telecommunications services are available. Adequate service would be confirmed once the loads and

requirements for future development have been established. A central utility spine through the Core Study Area would simplify connections for new development projects as the site is developed.

- ❑ Infiltration capacity is anticipated to be limited within the Core Study Area. Construction may require careful consideration to minimize subsoil exposure to wet weather.

### Utilities

VHB evaluated the information collected during the preliminary review of the existing utility systems in the Core Study Area to determine potential infrastructure improvements that would be required to support the Development Center Master Plan. Figure 6.3 shows the potential utility system improvements within the Study Area that may be required.

A central utility spine through the Core Study Area would simplify connections for new development projects as the site is developed. This could be accommodated through one of two options:

- ❑ Option 1: a north/south utility corridor in the center of the Core Study Area that would serve development sites on both the east and west side of the corridor.
- ❑ Option 2: a north/south utility corridor on the western edge of the Core Study Area that would connect back into West Main Road on the northern side of the Core Study Area to serve development sites on the west side. Utility service on the east side of the Core Study Area would be provided by West Main Road.

### Water Supply

Water service is provided to the Core Study Area by a 24-inch municipal water main located on the west side of West Main Road. A central public

water main connected to the West Main Road water main and routed through the Core Study Area would simplify connections for new development projects as the site is developed.

The 12-inch water service from Coddington Highway that supplies the Newport Naval Station located on the southern end of the former Navy Lodge parcel must remain in place. Additionally, the 10-inch service and a concrete meter pit within a 15-foot wide easement on the northern end of the former Navy Lodge parcel must remain in place or be relocated to continue feeding the Anchorage Apartment Community. This service could be shortened to tie into the central utility corridor water main for the Core Study Area.

### Sanitary Sewer

The sanitary sewer capacity from the former J.F.K. Elementary School, the Library, and the athletic field restrooms could accommodate limited redevelopment from the Core Study Area until this existing capacity is exhausted. Any future development within the Core Study Area that exceeds sewer discharge would need to be conveyed to the Coddington Cove Pump Station. This station will require upgrades to accommodate additional flow. The Town of Middletown estimates that these upgrades could cost between \$750,000 and \$1,000,000.

It is likely that the development parcels will require a pump station and force main to tie into the Coddington Highway gravity sewer, based on the existing grades of the parcels and the elevation of the gravity sewer. A dedicated pump station and force main for the five parcels could cost between \$150,000 and \$200,000. The pump station could be located near the center of the Core Study Area to minimize the depth of gravity sewer building service connections. This pump station would not be required until the sewer demand from the Core Study Area exceeded the existing sewer discharge from the library, former JFK elementary school, and athletic complex restrooms.

Figure 6.3 — Infrastructure

Legend

- Option 1: Central Utility Corridor
- Option 2: West Utility Corridor
- Central Sanitary Pump Station



Source: Town of Middletown GIS

### Drainage

Future development will need to be designed to comply with the latest edition of the Rhode Island Stormwater Design and Installation Standards Manual. The latest edition was adopted in December 2010 and includes new requirements for rainfall intensities, groundwater recharge, and use of Low Impact Development (LID) stormwater BMPs. Many of these systems encourage infiltration, which may require secondary methods of collection using perforated underdrains, given the anticipated poor infiltration capacity of the existing soils on these parcels.

In addition to LID systems, below grade detention systems are anticipated to mitigate any increases in impervious area from any proposed future development. The below grade detention systems may require additional weighting to counteract buoyancy conditions from seasonal high groundwater.

It is anticipated that each site would be required to address stormwater impacts on a site by site basis. The Navy Lodge parcel and the athletic fields would require significantly larger detention systems, assuming the large expanses of existing grass cover would be replaced with impervious surfaces.

### Electric Service

Electric service to the Core Study Area is provided by National Grid. Adequate service will be confirmed when site plans and load information are supplied for new development projects.

### Gas Service

Gas service is supplied by National Grid Gas via a 6-inch wrapped steel main located along the east side of West Main Road and a 4-inch wrapped steel main in Coddington Highway. Gas service could be provided from these mains or extended within the utility corridor to provide service for new development projects.

The 4-inch gas service located in Commodore Perry Boulevard between the library and the athletic fields connects to the gas service mains for the Landings Apartment Community. This service will need to be maintained or relocated to accommodate new development projects.

### Telecommunications and Cable Service

Telecommunications service is provided by Verizon and is available from overhead wires located on the east side of West Main Road and is expected to be adequate for future development of the project parcels. Fiber optic service is also available.

Underground conduits and a generator for Verizon are located on the southern side of the former Navy Lodge parcel. These services are located immediately north of the Newport Naval Station 12-inch water service and must remain. These telecommunications services will need to be considered for future development of this parcel.

The local cable service is provided by Cox Communications and is expected to be adequate for a reuse project.

### Infrastructure Phasing

The initial phases of development can take advantage of the limited existing sewer capacity in West Main Road prior to any improvements to the Coddington Cove Pump Station and the construction of a sanitary pumping station for the Core Study Area. It may be beneficial to provide stub connections from these first developments within the

Core Study Area to the future central pumping station. This would relieve the demand on the West Main sewer system, allowing capacity for other developments in the Town once the central pump station is available.

The phasing of the utility infrastructure corridor should begin from either the north or south end and proceed along the length of the corridor until completing a closed loop infrastructure system. This loop is particularly critical for the water system. Under utility corridor Option 2, it may be necessary to construct the utility connections to West Main Road in coordination with any surrounding development parcels within the Core Study Area adjacent to West Main Road.

Initial planning should also include placement of the sanitary pumping station in a central location to facilitate gravity sewer services throughout the entire Core Study Area that will minimize the depth of the gravity sewer system.

### **Estimated Public Infrastructure Costs**

The public utility infrastructure costs (including a twenty percent contingency) for utility corridor Option 1 and 2 are estimated to cost approximately \$1,000,000 within the Core Study Area. This would include approximately \$200,000 for the construction of a sanitary pumping station, underground conduit for electric and telephone service, gas main, 8-inch water, and 8-inch gravity sewer. Public improvements for roads and streetscape are not included in this estimate.

In addition to the infrastructure costs within the Core Study Area, the Town of Middletown has estimated that approximately \$750,000 to \$1,000,000 are required to upgrade the Coddington Cove Pump Station to accommodate an increase in sanitary flow.

## **Zoning**

In order to implement the preferred scenario for the West Main/Coddington Development Center Master Plan, zoning changes will need to be addressed. The zoning districts that fall within or directly adjacent to the Core Study Area include:

- ❑ Public Zoning District (P)
- ❑ Residential Multifamily (RM)
- ❑ General Business (GB)

Although provisions of the existing zoning allow for some of the land uses recommended in the preferred scenario, it does not fully incorporate the type of commercial uses envisioned. Moreover, certain aesthetic and transportation standards are necessary to achieve the overall vision contemplated for the Core Study Area. Such standards will enhance the streetscape, provide buffers between residential and non-residential uses, improve bicycle and pedestrian mobility, regulate parking and site access in a coordinated manner, and encourage sound design principles to new development projects. To that end, the zoning must integrate design and access management standards to achieve the goals of the Master Plan.

It is recommended that a new Coddington Center Overlay District (See Figure 6.4) be established for the Core Study Area. The new district will knit together the three existing zoning districts into one cohesive district designed to implement the Master Plan. The regulations proposed for the area would be mandatory for any proposed new development. Specifically, the proposed zoning changes will include the following:

- ❑ A revised list of uses allowed by right and by special use permit to include multi-family, commercial, office, and municipal government;

## 6 Preferred Scenario

- ❑ New dimensional regulations for the overlay district;
- ❑ Shared parking allowances where adjacent uses have differing hours of business in order to reduce the amount of land devoted to parking;
- ❑ Revised design standards for buildings, parking lots, and streetscapes (including pedestrian and bicycle access); and
- ❑ Access management regulations that will control the placement and design of curb cuts in the district.

For already developed parcels on the east side of the Core Study Area, the new zoning provisions (particularly as they relate to design) would be applied whenever an existing building would be replaced, redeveloped, or substantially altered.

Appendix D includes a draft of the zoning language for the Coddington Center Overlay District.







# 7 Implementation Strategies

This section outlines implementation steps and strategies that focus on the Core Study Area, which includes redevelopment of the Navy Lodge, Recreation Complex, Library and former JFK Elementary School sites. The following implementation strategies have been prepared to guide the Town of Middletown (and potentially private developers) as they prepare for redevelopment. While the preferred scenario outlines a development vision with potential building footprints and square footages, the concept plans and supporting illustrations are meant to be conceptual and were created to convey broad ideas and a general vision for study area. More detailed analysis of any proposed site plan and program would need to occur to accurately describe project details for which implementation and action steps would need to occur. The following implementation and action items identify the key actions needed to advance aspects of the preferred scenario.

### **Recognize and Adopt the West Main/Coddington Development Center Master Plan**

In order to facilitate the desired development of the Core Study Area, and broader study area, it is important to have a set of stated goals, objectives and a development vision. The preferred scenario reflects the culmination of these issues. However, it is also important to present a clear development vision to the private sector development community, as most developers are somewhat risk-averse, avoid uncertainty and prefer to know that they have a “development partner” in the Town or other community/municipal organization. To this end, it is recommended that the Town of Middletown formerly acknowledge and adopt the recommended Master Plan for the West Main / Coddington Development Center as the acceptable “blueprint” for future redevelopment efforts.

### **Site Control**

Within the planning context of this study, it is assumed that the Town of Middletown will acquire site control of the former Navy Lodge site and assemble it as a development package with the adjoining recreation complex, library and former JFK School. Although the method of acquisition may be unknown at this time, it is considered important to have site control for the assembled and entire site in order to “market” the desired development, meaning that the plan considers the development of the assembled site, albeit in phases, rather than as a piecemeal effort.

### **Establish Site Management**

The Town should determine whether their desire is to own, manage, oversee or “flip” the sites within the Core Study area. For example, if the Town desires to “flip” the sites to a private-sector developer, with known zoning and design standards in place, then the question arises as to whether or not to a private-sector master developer or on a piecemeal basis. Alternatively, the Town may desire to own the sites and to remain active as a master developer for the sites. If the desire is to own and manage the sites then some sort of redevelopment authority may be warranted. This authority could include Town officials, area stakeholders and other individuals vested with “steering” the desired redevelopment plan for the Site. If such a redevelopment authority is initiated, it is recommended that their mandate have a “sunset” clause. As an example, the redevelopment authority could have a seven-year mission and action plan, and their renewal as the redevelopment authority would depend on their level of achievements or percent completion within that seven-year period. This is a common tool to narrowly direct the mission and power of a redevelopment authority, as well as to assuage the possible public concern that a new, ongoing level of Town government has been created.

## Predevelopment efforts

In order to facilitate redevelopment, there are several studies and initiatives that will further inform the vision that is conveyed in the preferred alternative. In some cases the results of these additional work efforts will result in changes to the preferred vision plan. The following is a list of planning initiatives and actions items needed to further advance the predevelopment of the four sites within the Core Study Area, which are organized by each of the four sites.

### Navy Lodge

The Navy Lodge site was one of five properties declared as surplus in 2005 by the Navy during the Base Realignment And Closure (BRAC) process with an overall plan to move NAVSTA Newport away from active ship-support functions, to more education and research and development (R&D). The other sites included the former Navy Hospital in Newport, Tank Farms One and Two in Portsmouth and the Defense Highway and Burma Road network which connects the tank farms to the main base enclave. A public plan to redevelop these sites was set in motion in the summer of 2010 under the direction of the Aquidneck Island Reuse and Planning Authority (AIRPA).

The redevelopment planning process has involved many steps including the following:

- ❑ Analysis of environmental conditions and constraints at each property;
- ❑ Infrastructure and utility capacity analysis;
- ❑ Analysis of socioeconomic and real estate market conditions;
- ❑ Development of alternative development concepts for each site;
- ❑ Public meetings and discussions about the baseline site conditions and proposed development alternatives.

The planning process is still currently underway and it is anticipated that a final redevelopment plan will be adopted by AIRPA in the summer of 2011. The plan will include preferred development concepts for each property as well as supporting site condition and market information.

### Timing

The Navy Lodge site and adjacent ball fields represent a short-term development opportunity. As such, it is also important to establish the likely location and timing of the transfer of the existing ball field facility elsewhere in the community.

### Recreation Complex

The Recreation Complex was included in the Town Recreation, Conservation and Open Space Master Plan. As part of that plan it was suggested that the Recreation Complex be moved to another location in Town. As it stands, an existing deed restriction on the Recreation Complex parcel designates the site for public recreation use—thereby limiting its redevelopment potential. The preferred scenario identified the redevelopment of this site as mixed use (office, retail, etc). Preliminary discussion with the National Park Service suggests that the parcel's deed restriction can be removed if the Recreation Complex is provided elsewhere in town. The Town should continue investigating the requirements and timing necessary to remove those site restrictions to facilitate future redevelopment.

### Timing

The near-term market driven reuse opportunities for the Core Study Area, from a potential developer's point of view, would focus on retail development, notably at the corner of West Main and Coddington – the former Navy Lodge site proper. However, considering this site as a stand alone, could limit development options and density. The Navy Lodge site, combined with Pottsey Field could offer 7.3-acres for development.

This in turn would present a more attractive opportunity to the private sector developer and allow them to better capitalize on current market demand opportunities. It is recommended that the Town proceed now with exploring alternative sites, costs and other considerations with relocating the ball fields.

### **Library**

During the stakeholder interviews, a meeting was held with representatives from the Middletown Public Library. As a result, it was understood that the library would need to undertake additional study of their existing facilities to better understand how it may or may not be suitable for continued use, given its size, location and costs relative to ongoing maintenance. The Library should complete an assessment of their existing facilities to understand their future needs. The assessment could be incorporated into a broader Municipal Needs Assessment that is identified below. The preferred plan assumed the rebuilding of the library in the Core Study Area. Based on the findings of this assessment, the library should work with the Town to update the preferred scenario.

### **Timing**

Presumably the library relocation, if that is to be the case, as well as the disposition of the school is a longer-term issue, perhaps three to five years. As such, their eventual development or redevelopment is a longer time frame.

### **JFK School**

The Town should work with the school department to clarify the near term goals for the former JFK School. Assuming the JFK School will be declared as surplus properly, the town should coordinate the redevelopment of this site with the municipal needs assessment identified below. A cost estimate should be prepared that identifies the costs to “prep” the site for future redevelopment.

### **Timing**

A definitive use for the JFK School site has not been determined at this time but would likely include civic uses. The availability of the school for redevelopment, meaning determining whether and when it may officially be designated as surplus property is considered a minimum priority at this time. Eventual redevelopment may be three to five years, but this can be further refined with input from interested private sector developers.

### **Municipal Needs Assessment**

The Town should undertake a municipal needs assessment to identify municipal uses that may be most suitable for location into the Core Study Area. This study should include an analysis of the existing municipal uses that documents the characteristics of the existing facilities, their utilization, operating costs, and other relevant items. The assessment should also examine the future needs of the municipal facilities and the costs for relocating those facilities to the Core Study Area versus expanding in their current location. The Town should develop a specific outline of what they would like to see considered in the Municipal Needs Assessment, to ensure that the Town will be provided with an assessment that will enable the Town to make informed decisions. Based on the findings of this assessment, the Town should update the preferred scenario.

### **Leasing Navy Land**

The preferred concept plan identified an area to the west of the JFK School for a potential Town Common and parking for the municipal uses. It is understood that the Town had initial discussions several years ago with the Navy relative to the potential municipal lease of Navy land, adjacent and to the rear of the JFK School, for public use. It is suggested that the Town and Navy re-establish discussions relative to the possible lease of Navy land for public use (particularly for a Town Common and

public parking or other amenity to both enhance and encourage redevelopment of the Core Study Area.). Based on the outcome of those discussions, the preferred plan should be updated.

## Zoning

In order to implement the preferred scenario, zoning changes will need to be addressed. Draft language for a new overlay district called the “Coddington Center Overlay District” is included in Appendix D. The Town should review the timing of the zoning changes, as they pertain to the predevelopment activities and studies that will need to occur for the four sites within the study area. For example, the results of the municipal needs assessment (identified above) and the results of the potential disposition of the Navy Lodge may impact the timing and revisions needed to the draft zoning.

The Town should develop a plan and timeline for making such refinements to the draft zoning language, including the steps and timeframe needed to navigate the Town’s official adoption process.

## Ongoing Initiatives and Projects

### Transportation

During the planning process for this study, there were several parallel transportation initiatives that were underway (see Transportation section in Chapter 3). As plans move forward for the redevelopment of the Core Study Area and abutting areas, there will continue to be the need to coordinate with those transportation efforts. Design for the intersections at Two-Mile Corner are currently underway with the RIDOT and will affect the roadway network in the Core Study Area. The Town should continue to coordinate with the RIDOT as these plans are advanced to consider how the more detailed design will impact the preferred scenario.

As specific plans for redeveloped sites in and around the Core Study Area become more defined, it is anticipated that additional traffic analysis will be required along West Main Road, Valley Road, Coddington Highway, and other key streets in and around the study area. These future traffic analyses will provide updates to the transportation improvements that are identified in the preferred scenario.

### Infrastructure

Infrastructure strategies are discussed in Chapter 6. The following items could be undertaken as early action items to facilitate the redevelopment within the Core Study Area.

- ❑ Confirm costs for sewer improvement upgrades to the Coddington Highway system and the Coddington Cove Pump Station.
- ❑ Develop implementation strategy for public infrastructure.
- ❑ Prepare existing conditions and property line survey for the development parcels.
- ❑ Conduct soil testing to determine groundwater elevations, and geotechnical information required for design.

### Marketing

The Town should consider developing a marketing plan and strategy for the Core Study Area and the preferred redevelopment. Specifically, will the site be marketed locally or to a broader regional audience of developers? Will print media, such as brochures, be employed? Will the internet be a media marketing source, utilizing the Town website or will a new website be required? To the extent that the marketing is more involved, this may be considered as a function of the earlier mentioned redevelopment authority.

Other potential marketing activities could include issuing an RDI (or Request for Developer Interest). This is a tool commonly used in securing interest in potential development sites or economic development projects from the investors or property developers. The purpose of the RDI is not to secure a development agreement with investors, but rather to gather information and potential interest from the development community relative to a specific site (or sites) which can inform needed public investments or planning efforts. The information collected in the RDI helps set the stage for full-scale marketing efforts or issuance of an RFP (Request for Proposal) or RFD (Request for Development) with the intent of negotiating a development agreement with investors or property developers.

### Project Phasing

The location attributes of the former Navy Lodge site, including traffic counts, access and visibility, are all favorable to development in the short-term, most likely as a retail use. However, development build-out, or density, on the specific Navy Lodge site may be somewhat limited. This takes into account such elements as parking requirements, potential roadway improvements at West Main and Coddington and considerations for a “gateway” element at this intersection, as examples. As such, developing this parcel in conjunction with the adjacent ball field—allowing for a bigger site with more potential—would prove beneficial in attracting private sector involvement. This could also assist in assuring developer participation of future public use development of the northern parcels.

The development time frame for the northern parcels is considered more speculative and longer term, perhaps three to five years at a minimum. On one hand this allows for additional studies and issues to be addressed, such as the library relocation (if that is the decision) and the school acquisition for redevelopment. This also takes into account the preferred development scenario, whereby a continued public use is desired.



