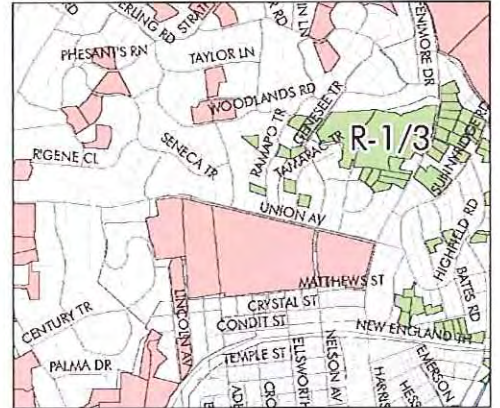


## Town/Village of Harrison Comprehensive Plan Update



BFJ Planning

September 2012

**DRAFT**



**Town/Village of Harrison  
Comprehensive Plan**

Public Hearing Draft  
September 20, 2012

Town/Village of Harrison  
Harrison Municipal Building  
1 Heineman Place  
Harrison, New York 10528





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# Chapter 1: Comprehensive Plan Summary

## 1.1 Introduction

This Comprehensive Plan for the Town/Village of Harrison has been prepared to update the existing 1988 Plan, to better reflect the current planning framework for Harrison. Many of the 1988 recommendations have been enacted, and some are in progress. This update process, which began in late 2004, focuses on three key topics:

- Resolving remaining planning issues since the 1988 Update;
- Identifying and resolving critical new issues; and
- Incorporating any new town projects into the plan.

This plan is a guide to Harrison's decision makers on major planning issues and their solutions (or options). Data and analyses are updated where necessary. Following the format as laid down by the 1988 update, this plan provides specific geographically based planning action guides for the downtown Central Business District, downtown Harrison, West Harrison (Silver Lake and Park Lane), southern Harrison, Purchase and the Platinum Mile. The bulk of this plan concerns these areas.

The work of the Plan was divided into three phases. Phase 1 was the update of the initial chapters of the 1988 plan, with a focus on the planning framework. Phase 2 was the writing and review of the study area chapters, and the compilation of all chapters into a unified draft comprehensive plan document. This phase included three public consultations, which were held in late 2005, with community representatives from downtown and southern Harrison, West Harrison, and Purchase and the Platinum Mile. Much of this work was completed in 2006 and 2007, culminating in three additional public forums in the same Harrison neighborhoods, to gather input on the Plan's findings and recommendations.

Phase 2 was newly initiated in 2012, with a particular focus on addressing key issues in the downtown Central Business District and Platinum Mile areas. Phase 3 involved the final plan preparation, SEQR process, and public hearing process.

## 1.2 Plan Concepts

### 1.2.1 Townwide Concepts

#### Residential Development

Harrison's residential zoning controls preserve qualities important to residents and promote sufficient housing choice to meet market demand for the most part. Certain modifications are needed to improve housing choice in a targeted way and to improve the end result of development controls.

#### Environment and Open Space

Harrison respects environmentally sensitive areas, reducing hazards to property and preserving the scenic qualities of the community. Going forward, the town will upgrade and expand open space and recreational facilities to enhance their function and appearance. The town will seek to preserve open space when large-scale residential development is proposed through the required open space set-aside, and through the use of cluster (open space) subdivision, where appropriate. Further, Harrison recognizes the significance of private recreation here, such as the golf courses. The town will ensure that the open landscape qualities so key to its beauty and serenity are preserved.

#### Transportation and Parking

Harrison will continue to promote, and, when found to be feasible and appropriate, to provide transportation improvements, and parking facilities to serve its population, and which are compatible with the town's character.

### 1.2.2 Downtown Central Business District Concepts

- Harrison will continue to promote development of an attractive and appealing downtown CBD which has a distinctive character and which achieves a high standard of pedestrian and urban amenities.
- Harrison will encourage economic development and vitality in the downtown CBD.
- Harrison will create a comprehensive, orderly parking management system that balances the demand for long- and short-term parking in the downtown CBD.
- Harrison will provide community and recreational facilities and services which contribute to the overall improvement of the community, such as the renovation of the historic train station as a new court and town meeting facility.

### 1.2.3 Downtown Harrison Concepts

- Harrison recognizes the need to preserve and enhance the existing neighborhoods in downtown Harrison as the foundation of a strong community.

- Harrison will preserve the quiet, safe nature of neighborhood streets in downtown.

#### **1.2.4 West Harrison Concepts**

- Harrison will enhance the identity, appearance and vitality of West Harrison's commercial core for the benefit of residents and business owners alike.
- Harrison will encourage an accessible and pedestrian-friendly commercial core.
- Harrison will endeavor to maintain natural resources in a sustainable manner to provide maximum benefit to the environment and to residents.
- Harrison will improve the quality and range of community and recreational facilities in West Harrison.

#### **1.2.5 Purchase Concepts**

- Harrison will preserve the existing low-density, open and rural character of Purchase and ensure any future development respects this character.
- Harrison will endeavor to facilitate the correction of existing traffic conflicts and congested intersections, and minimize conflicts potentially generated by future developments.
- Harrison will encourage any development of former estates or on any undeveloped land to respect existing neighborhoods and add to the quality of life in the area.
- Harrison will continue to seek cooperation between the colleges and the Town/Village of Harrison, to protect the interests of residents.

#### **1.2.6 Platinum Mile Concept**

- Harrison is committed to sustaining the important tax base created by corporate office development while promoting flexibility for other land uses, as appropriate, which may further enhance the tax base while generating few adverse impacts to surrounding areas.



### 1.3 Summary of Plan Recommendations

The following is a summary of all recommendations made in this plan; Section 1.4 discusses those recommendations that should be the Town's first-priority actions.

#### Townwide Recommendations

##### *Residential Controls*

- Consider bulk reduction techniques such as, but not limited to, the creation of residential floor area ratio (FAR) provisions to limit oversized dwellings.
- Introduce a Landscaping Ordinance to the town's code which lays down minimum requirements for landscaping in any new development.
- Determine if the community wants the creation of different types of housing in selected areas such as:
  - Senior housing (age-restricted housing)
  - Townhouses
- Revise the regulations of the B-district (Two-family zone) to better control the size of newly constructed two-family residences. Alternatives include keeping new construction of traditional "up-down" two-family homes as a permitted use, but requiring a special exception permit to build a "side-by-side" residence. Approval of the permit could require additional analysis on issues of parking, visual impacts and open space/density.
- Investigate the possibility of sunsetting the unbuilt portions of existing approvals/subdivision plats so that they must be re-approved in conformance with any code updates.

##### *Environment and Open Space*

- Review the code's residential cluster subdivision regulations.
- Set up a Recreation Committee, to make recommendations for recreation.
- Work with NYCDEP to improve the recreational opportunities in watershed lands adjacent to Kensico Reservoir.
- Consider the use of a conservation overlay district on the golf courses and examine various options such as the right of first refusal, or the acquisition of conservation easements.
- Study possible methods for improving water quality in all waterbodies in the town.
- Seek ways to use energy-efficient products and incorporate green building practices in new municipal projects, and consider updating the Town ordinance to encourage sustainable design practices.
- Examine methods of controlling the town's geese and deer populations.

### *Transportation and Parking*

- Study the Anderson Hill Road intersection with Purchase Street with a view to implementing intersection improvements.
- Study methods for access management (curb cut consolidation and limits) on arterials and collectors.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the 10-space waiver in the town's parking regulations.
- Consider reducing the requirement for retail store or service establishments to 1 space per 200 square feet of gross floor area, except in the downtown CBD and in Silver Lake.
- Consider reducing the requirement for offices to 1 space per 300 square feet of gross floor area, except that a proprietary executive headquarters office building shall have a requirement of 1 space per 350 square feet of gross floor area.

### **Downtown Central Business District**

- Public-Private Projects: Pursue the Metro-North development project and development of its 3.3 acre site to create a second street wall of stores, a new park and new community facilities, using good downtown urban design principles.
- Undertake a phased paving and streetscaping initiative along Halstead and Harrison Avenues.
- Address the two problem intersections of Heineman Place/Bruce Avenue/Sunnyside Place and Halstead Avenue/Macy Road to improve safety and connectivity.
- Consider rezoning the industrial area on Oakland Avenue to a General Commercial (GC) zone, to allow and support existing businesses in this area.
- Undertake a comprehensive study of the "civic center" area around Ma Riis Park, exploring strategies to develop the park as a unifying element for the surrounding uses to create a true civic center in downtown Harrison, and to provide safe and convenient pedestrian access among uses, to and through the park.
- Promote a diverse base of retail establishments, while allowing offices, services and housing.
- Promote Halstead Avenue as the "main street" of the downtown CBD, and support and enhance unique features such as the historic train station and parks as part of the various redevelopment projects.
- Promote a comfortable, safe, interesting and visually attractive pedestrian environment.
- Encourage good design for new commercial development, and major renovations through adopting design guidelines or form-based coding. Such guidelines would address streetscaping and sidewalk design, building facades, signage and awnings, landscaping and lighting.
- Encourage, promote and improve accessibility for persons with disabilities.
- Clean up and repair all existing municipal parking lots and improve their signage.
- Secure additional parking to improve access along Halstead Avenue, including the Metro-North TOD project, potentially leasing spaces at the Dunkin Donuts lot and other opportunities as they arise.
- Undertake a downtown CBD traffic study to address flow and signal timing issues.

- Ensure that, in future development or redevelopment in the CBD, any parking spaces lost as part of development will be replaced at no less than a 1-to-1 ratio.
- Allow off-site parking and shared parking subject to approval by the Planning Board. Shared parking calculations need to be provided as per Institute Transportation Engineers (ITE) or Urban Land Institute (ULI) guidelines.
- Evaluate a possible merchant permitting parking scheme for the CBD.
- Consider in-lieu parking fees subject to approval by the Planning Board. Any such fees should be allocated to the Parking Authority, to be used for transportation and parking improvements in the downtown area.
- Consider reducing the parking requirements for retail store or retail service establishment to 1 space per 400 square feet of gross floor area in the downtown CBD.
- Consider reducing the parking requirements for office uses in the downtown CBD to 1 per 330 square feet of floor area.
- Enforce parking bylaws to ensure that short-term parking stalls are utilized efficiently and effectively.
- Evaluate the Sollazzo Center and provide a quality recreational facility in the downtown.
- Support and participate in the library's plans for a renovation to its main branch, recognizing that funds will come from private sources.
- Facilitate the reuse of the former train station building for municipal court and board functions, as previously studied.

#### Downtown Harrison

- Continue to provide code enforcement of all residential properties and enhance if and when feasible.
- Consider the promotion of neighborhood enhancement programs and strategies such as preservation of mature trees, street tree plantings, neighborhood gardens, and sidewalk improvements.
- Examine the potential for traffic calming measures to discourage through traffic.

#### West Harrison

- Maintain a bright line on the extent of commercial uses so that there is no creep into residential areas.
- Encourage the redevelopment of Lake Street quarry to a compatible and viable use.
- Examine the creation of two gateways (arriving north from airport on Lake Street; arriving on Westchester Avenue) to demarcate and consolidate the identity of the core.
- Study the possibility of applying Downtown Design District guidelines/mandates to West Harrison.
- Ensure the enforcement system for parking in West Harrison is effective.
- Examine a parking permitting system for local residents and restrict non-resident use of parking spaces.
- Consider a reduction in the parking requirements for retail store or retail service establishment to 1 space per 400 square feet of gross floor area for any conforming retail use.
- Explore the use of traffic calming tools to discourage through traffic on local streets.
- Examine the possibility of working with the City of White Plains and the county to

- improve water quality and aesthetics of Silver Lake.
- Maintain measures to reduce eutrophication in Silver Lake.
- Study methods of increasing public awareness and education in relation to the Critical Environmental Areas and the preservation of all remaining environmental features, particularly in regard to watershed protection.

### Purchase

- Retain low densities of development and consider promoting cluster subdivision development in line with any revised subdivision text, where appropriate.
- Retain mature trees, stone walls, and other natural and built features which contribute to the character of the area.
- Study key intersections to devise appropriate solutions.
- Retain existing roadway classification; correct bottlenecks where possible.
- Limit curb cuts along Anderson Hill Road, Lincoln Avenue, and Purchase Street.
- Require that driveways should be combined for adjacent commercial parcels.
- Study methods of identifying desirable land or habitat on properties for eventual dedication as permanent open space if subdivided.
- Require a landscape buffer around all large tracts of undeveloped/underdeveloped land being subdivided.
- Consider appointing town employees as liaison officers for Manhattanville College and SUNY.

### Platinum Mile

- Create a new SB-MX (Mixed Use) zone for the area bounded by I-287, I-684 and the Hutchinson River Parkway, to allow for potential development of assisted-care and senior housing, as well as complementary retail uses and improved vehicular and pedestrian connections.
- Allow for an emergency-access linkage between Manhattanville Road and Westchester Avenue.
- Require that access to new commercial development should be from existing office parks.
- Allow commercial campuses to have accessory uses, such as health clubs, child care food-related uses, and other ancillary uses.
- Study the effectiveness of existing off-street parking requirements in the SB districts.
  - a. Consider reducing the parking requirements for offices to 1 space per 300 square feet of floor area.
  - b. For proprietary executive headquarters office buildings, maintain the requirement at 1 per 350 square feet of floor area but consider removing the alternative requirement of 0.9 spaces per each employee on site at any one time.
  - c. Enable the Planning Board to waive a percentage of required parking spaces for specific uses with low parking demand.
  - d. Distinguish between long-term and short-term parking spaces in large parking areas, differentiated by stall size and location (proximity to building).
  - e. Consider requiring long-term and short-term parking spaces in large parking areas, differentiated by stall size and location (proximity to building).

- Study methods for reducing the negative effects of impervious surfaces on stormwater management in the SB district.

#### 1.4 First-Priority Items

- Start the process of redeveloping the Metro-North property in the downtown into a mixed use development.
- Create a new SB-MX (Mixed Use) zone for the Platinum Mile's "teardrop" area to broaden the potential uses in this area.
- Revise the regulations of the B zones to more carefully control the bulk of new two-family residences.
- Undertake a comprehensive study of the "civic center" area around Ma Riis Park, exploring strategies to develop the park as a unifying element for the surrounding uses to create a true civic center in downtown Harrison, and to provide safe and convenient pedestrian access among uses, to and through the park. This study should be undertaken in cooperation with the library and with consideration given to the planned adaptive reuse of the former train station building and potential renovations to the Sollazzo Center.
- Initiate a phased paving and streetscaping initiative along Halstead Avenue, beginning with gaining municipal ownership of the road.
- Complete short-term parking recommendations (enhancements to existing municipal lots, improved signage), and explore options to secure more parking.
- Undertake a traffic study to address flow and signal timing issues in the CBD.
- Evaluate applying Downtown Design District guidelines for the downtown Central Business District and for Silver Lake.
- Rezone the non-conforming industrial area along Oakland Avenue in the downtown Central Business District to the General Commercial (GC) zone.
- Decide on an approach to preserving open space. Such approaches include:
  - Reviewing the town's cluster subdivision text
  - Considering the use of an Overlay/Special Purpose/Recreation District
- Consider residential development bulk reduction tools to limit oversized dwellings.
- Set up a Recreation Committee, to make recommendations on recreation programs and facilities.
- Evaluate the zoning for the Special Business Districts to make parking standards more flexible and allow for accessory uses.



## Chapter 2: Townwide Analyses

This chapter sets the context for understanding geographically-specific issues and actions and also includes discussion on issues that have no specific geographic boundary (wetlands preservation, zoning changes, potable water and stormwater management concerns).

### 2.1 Changes since the 1988 Update

Harrison today is a mature suburban community with a pattern of development which has become well defined and firmly established. The following is a summary of the major factors which shaped the growth of Harrison since the 1988 Master Plan.

#### Land Use

Land use patterns in Harrison were well established by 1988 and defined as follows: two densely developed hamlet centers in Downtown Harrison and at Silver Lake; a large area of suburban residences south of the Cross Westchester Expressway; a belt of corporate office development north of the Cross Westchester Expressway from Rye Brook to White Plains; an area of former estates which was being subdivided, centering around Purchase; and a rural area of rough terrain and smaller house sites in the northwest corner of Harrison. This general land use pattern has been consolidated since 1988 with further subdivisions and the creation of suburban residences in Purchase and Park Lane. A new country club, the Country Club at Purchase, was established in 1996 on a large estate straddling Purchase Street, adding to the open space character of the area.

#### Recent Development Areas

By 1988, the predominant area of undeveloped land in Harrison was located in Purchase, and this is where development has been concentrated since. The largest area of recent development was the Park Lane subdivision in Purchase, in a development of 306 single family homes. In addition, 73 single family homes were developed off Purchase Street in the Hickory Pine (Purchase Estates) subdivision. Recently, development applications have focused on land that was previously bypassed for development due to environmental constraints and other physical limitations. A proposed subdivision of a 14.62-acre vacant parcel on Sherman Avenue in Silver Lake was the subject of a recent application. In February 2012, the Town adopted SEQRA Findings denying the project, which was subsequently challenged by the applicant. The Article 78 proceeding is currently making its way through the court system.

#### Natural Features

Wetlands, flood-prone areas, steep slopes and other environmentally sensitive areas are local features which define the community. They are also characteristics which strongly influenced development, constraining development in areas as diverse as Purchase, adjacent to the Westchester Country Club, and even in the Downtown and Silver Lake. A number of additional State wetlands were designated in Harrison since 1988. The most recent designations were in July 2004. Locally designated wetlands are continually evolving, requiring careful individual review and assessment in conjunction with development applications.

### Critical Environmental Areas

A Critical Environmental Area (CEA) is a specific geographic area designated by a state or local agency as having exceptional or unique environmental characteristics. In establishing a CEA, the fragile or threatened environmental conditions in the area are identified, under the State Environmental Quality Review Act. Four CEAs were designated by Westchester County in Harrison in 1990: Westchester County Airport 60+ Ldn<sup>1</sup> noise contour, Silver Lake Park, and Maplemoor Golf Course and Saxon Woods County Park (parts of which are in Harrison). Development proposed in a designated CEA is subject to a more in-depth review than other areas. Specifically, proposed development wholly or partially within or substantially contiguous to a CEA under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) requires that the proposed development's potential impairment of the environmental characteristics of the CEA be evaluated, either in the Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) or a DEIS (Draft Environmental Impact Statement). The airport CEA is the largest in Harrison, constituting approximately one-third of the area north of Westchester Avenue.

### Town/Village-Owned Property

Since the 1988 Plan, the Beaver Brook Swamp project (Project Home Run) commenced which initially contemplated 18 acres of active recreation areas. Today, the site provides for a passive recreation area with public access to the Beaver Swamp Brook and surrounding wetland system. The former Nike base near Rye Lake (36 acres) has been and continued to be developed for various municipal uses including the fire training center, a firing range for the Harrison Police Department, and a DPW garage. A recreational component is also being considered.

### Regional Development

Because several of the major Northeast Corridor transportation routes run through Harrison, the development pattern in the Town was strongly influenced by development elsewhere in central Westchester County and southwestern Connecticut. The growth in commercial offices and residential development raised the value of land and strained the arterial highway systems in Harrison. However, the national economic recession that began in 2008 has significantly impacted office growth throughout the region, with the impact on Harrison being felt most strongly along the I-287 corridor, through high vacancy rates.

### Public Utilities and Roadways

Significant portions of Purchase were un-sewered and without adequate roadway capacities for intensive development at the time of the last plan. Since then sewers have been installed in some areas, accommodating new subdivisions.

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<sup>1</sup> Day Night Sound Level. Day Night Sound level, symbolized as Ldn, is the 24-hour average sound level, in decibels (dB), obtained from the accumulation of all events with the addition of 10 decibels to sound levels in the night from 10 PM to 7 AM.

## 2.2 Previous Plans

Harrison has been the subject of planning studies since its first Master Plan in 1946. In 1950, the Purchase area was the subject of its own Master Plan which predicted that many of the large estates would be subdivided, a development pattern that is apparent today.

The 1972 Master Plan was approved after two years of study and analysis. That Plan suggested improvements to the downtown shopping area, locations for new public facilities, and a land use pattern in the Purchase area that provided for commercial growth at the County Airport and at the State University. The Plan included a land use element that proposed commercial office development at locations along the Cross Westchester Expressway, Mamaroneck Avenue and south of the County Airport. Specific land use plans were also included for downtown Harrison and Silver Lake.

The 1972 Master Plan was updated in 1988, following nearly a year of study and analysis, discussions with community leaders and officials, public participation meetings and public hearings. This Plan formulated goals and objectives for the community as a whole, but also for the sectors of downtown Harrison, Silver Lake and Purchase.

## 2.3 The Planning Process

In recent years, the Planning Board recognized that although much of the 1988 Plan remains relevant, many aspects are outdated. Harrison continues its premier position in the county as the location of corporate offices and fine residences, but this role has intensified pressures to develop the remaining vacant land.

The Comprehensive Plan process was begun in late 2004 under the direction of a volunteer committee designated by the Mayor's office. The product of this effort, this Comprehensive Plan, represents Planning Board concurrence on policies and programs that will guide the physical development of Harrison well into the 21st Century.

The work of the Plan was divided into three phases. Phase 1 was the update of the initial chapters of the 1988 plan, with a focus on the planning framework. Phase 2 is the writing and review of the study area chapters, and the compilation of all chapters into a unified draft comprehensive plan document. Phase 2 included three public consultations, which were held in late 2005, with community representatives from downtown and southern Harrison, West Harrison, and Purchase and the Platinum Mile. This phase was newly initiated in 2012, with a particular focus on addressing key issues in the downtown Central Business District and Platinum Mile areas. Phase 3 was the final plan preparation, SEQR process, and public hearing process.

## 2.4 Development History

In 1662, the land which was to become Harrison was purchased from Native Americans, but was not settled. Harrison is named after John Harrison who with four partners purchased the land again in 1695. A patent was issued to John Harrison and the land was known as "The Purchase." The area began to be settled in the early 1700's as a precinct of the Town of Rye. Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries Harrison was a remote farming community populated primarily by Quakers from Long Island. The Quaker meeting house in Purchase, originally constructed in 1727, is a remnant of this early history. In 1778, Harrison incorporated as a town separate from Rye.

Change came rapidly to Harrison after 1870, when the railroad brought the town within commuting distance of New York City. Many wealthy New Yorkers arrived and bought large landholdings. Downtown Harrison developed rapidly around the railroad station in the early 20th century. Silver Lake developed somewhat later as a suburb of White Plains.

Throughout the early and mid-20th century, Harrison continued to develop as a suburban community and the location of large estates. In the late 1960's and 1970's, corporate offices sought room to expand out of New York City. They were attracted to Harrison due to the large landholdings in single ownership and the well-developed system of limited access highways which had become established by that time. The 1972 Master Plan encouraged this form of development along the Cross Westchester Expressway, in the area that was to become known as the "Platinum Mile".

In 1975, Harrison was reorganized as a coterminous Town and Village under New York State Municipal Law. This action means the governing body has the power of a Town Board and a Village Board of Trustees in taxation, state and federal aid requests, and land use regulation. The Planning Board functions for both the Town and Village.

A significant element in Harrison's development history is Westchester County Airport which had been established in Harrison during World War II as an air base. From its transformation to a commercial airport in the 1970s, activity increased gradually until by 1986 the total number of passengers per year had passed the 500,000 mark, by 1992 had passed the 750,000 mark and presently accommodates more than 800,000 passengers annually.

In the 1980s and 1990s corporate development was consolidated and expanded in Harrison, as the attraction of suburban locations with cheap, available land and good automobile transportation links began to surpass the attractions of city center locations. A large belt of commercial office buildings, many housing corporate headquarters, developed along the Cross-Westchester Expressway, as encouraged by the 1972 Plan. The corporations included Hitachi, Texaco, IBM and New York Telephone. While some of these headquarters remain, the 2008 economic downturn generated a number of corporate departures, which has resulted in several areas of high vacancies.

This heritage forms the basis of a discussion of existing conditions.

## 2.5 Context: The Region and Town

The Town/Village of Harrison is a suburban community, located in east-central Westchester County, about 23 miles north of New York City. Harrison is spread over an area of more than 11,000 acres in a key location with regard to regional transportation routes (Figure 2-1). The combination of three interstate highways, the Hutchinson River Parkway, the Metro-North Railroad and the Westchester County Airport makes the community among the most accessible in Westchester County and contributes to the high value of its real estate.

Harrison is only a 35-40 minute commuter railroad ride to New York City's Grand Central Terminal, which makes it an attractive location for city workers. It also comprises part of the now well-established corporate office expanse in Westchester County, in addition to adjoining the high-end office sector of Fairfield County, Connecticut. (According to CB Richard Ellis<sup>2</sup>, by the first quarter of 2012 Westchester was host to approximately 30.9 million square feet of office space in 243 buildings, although this total was somewhat lower than pre-recession levels.) These regional growth factors are much more dispersed and automobile-oriented than those involving an older suburban community linked to the central city by a commuter rail line.

### 2.5.1 The Region – A Region at Risk

Since 1922, the Regional Plan Association (RPA) has issued three plans that provide a regional perspective on land use issues in the 31-county New York/New Jersey/Connecticut metropolitan area. The Third Regional Plan, *A Region at Risk* (1996), presents a broad vision for improving regional quality of life and competitiveness within a global economy. The plan's specific recommendations, expressed as Campaigns, include policies on green areas, the economic development of centers, improved transportation systems, the work force and governance. Some of these recommendations are incorporated in this plan.

### 2.5.2 Westchester County Planning Strategies

Westchester County produced a countywide plan in 1996 titled *Patterns for Westchester: The Land and the People*, the goals of which were to strengthen centers, improve the function of corridors and protect the county's open space character.

The basic premise of *Patterns* is that existing centers, if nurtured by necessary infrastructure, can support commercial and residential growth; that existing strip development along corridors can be reshaped to capture some benefits of centers; and that not all land uses are appropriate to all locations. From this perspective, hamlets and small towns function as service centers and remain the optimum locale for development investment. Harrison and Silver Lake are both identified as local centers in *Patterns*. Local centers typically have a well defined downtown business district and include, in addition to the uses found in hamlets, small scale offices, more extensive retail stores, supermarkets, libraries, other public buildings and residential uses "over the store" and in low-rise multifamily structures. Some parts of the identified corridors also run through Harrison.

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<sup>2</sup> CB Richard Ellis, *MarketView*, Westchester County, Midyear 2005

(See Figure 2-2.) The county plan encourages development along corridors to be consistent with county policy on transportation, housing, waste disposal and watershed protection. Existing corridor development can be enhanced and new corridor development can be designed to encompass mixed uses that improve their function and their economic vitality and make maximum use of the public investment in infrastructure.

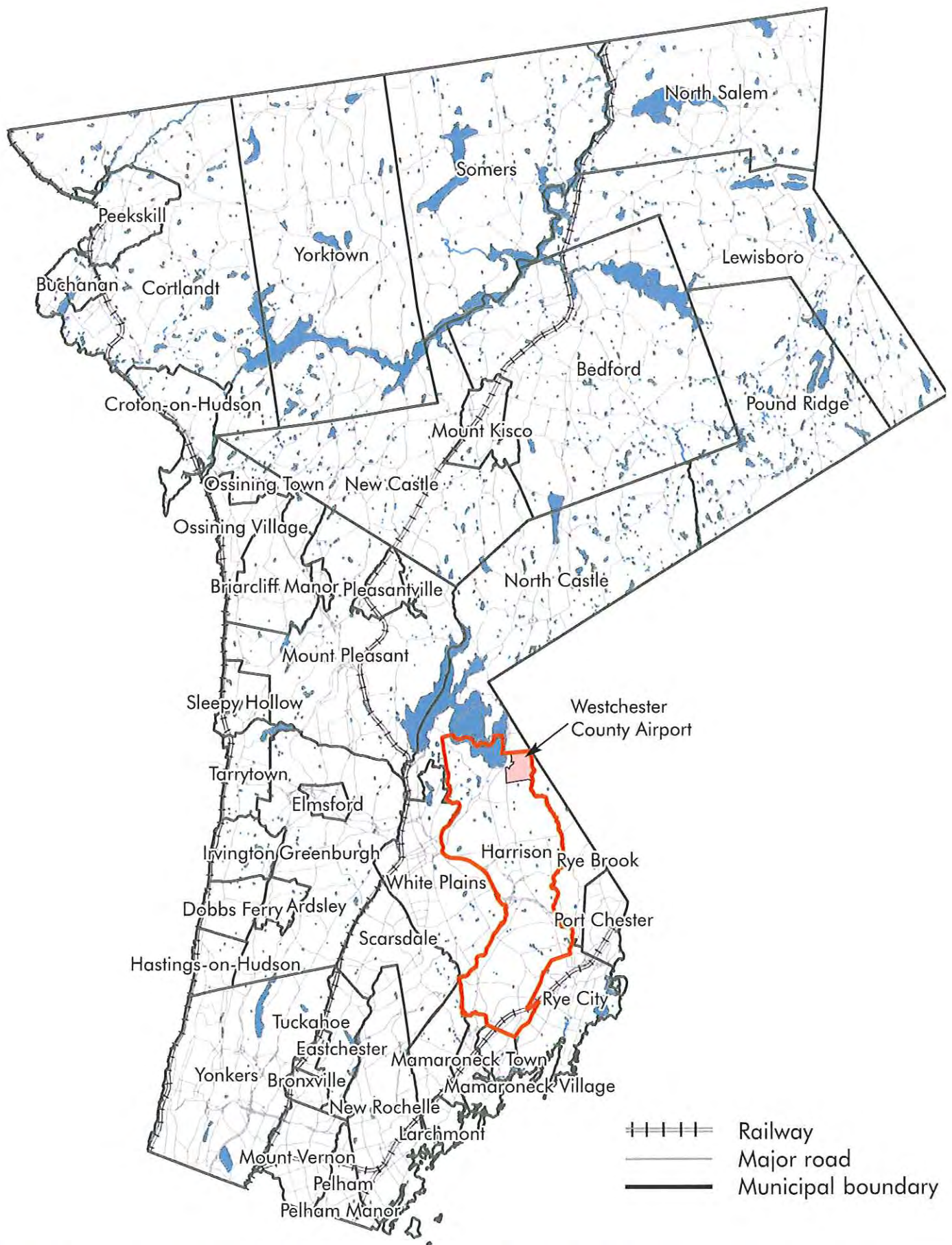
In 2006, the Westchester County Planning Board began a review of the county's planning policies in the context of the challenges currently facing the region. While the board found that *Patterns* continues to provide a solid foundation for the county's development, new critical issues require specific acknowledgement and action. Thus, the County created *Westchester 2025*, an Internet-based, interactive framework for a planning partnership between Westchester and its 45 municipalities. *Westchester 2025* is intended to help create a single regional vision, and to assist the County's Planning Board carry out its primary duties of long-range planning, advising on capital spending and responding to planning and zoning referrals from municipal governments.

*Westchester 2025* supports sustainable development to balance economic and environmental concerns and serve the needs of the county's changing population. To respond to major recent events such as flooding, terrorism and infrastructure failure, the plan modifies the policies originally developed for *Patterns*, as follows:

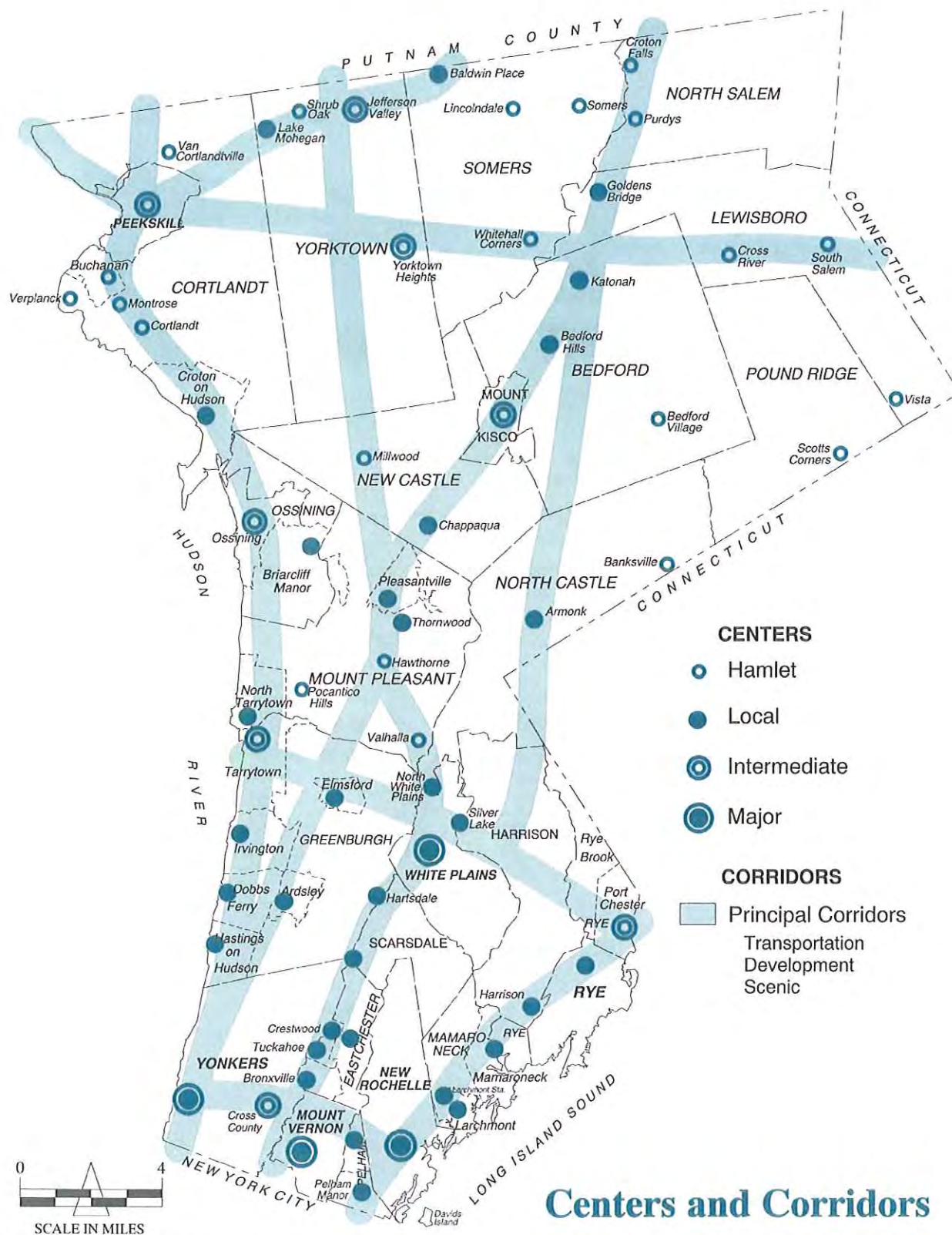
1. Channel development to centers.
2. Enhance transportation corridors.
3. Assure interconnected open space.
4. Nurture economic climate.
5. Preserve natural resources.
6. Support development and preservation of permanently affordable housing.
7. Support transportation alternatives.
8. Provide recreational opportunities to serve residents.
9. Protect historical and cultural resources.
10. Maintain utility infrastructure.
11. Support vital facilities.
12. Engage in regional initiatives.
13. Define and protect community character.
14. Promote sustainable technology.
15. Track and respond to trends.

While *Westchester 2025* has not developed specific recommendations for Harrison, the County's policies are generally in line with its overall land use and development goals.











Westchester County plays a role in Harrison's site specific land use decisions in two ways. When considering distributing grants or funding assistance for local planning efforts, the County can look at whether these local efforts conform to the vision set forth in *Patterns and Westchester 2025*. Second, through Article 239-m of the state's General Municipal Law, the County's planning department has mandatory review over certain proposed planning and zoning actions that occur within 500 feet of a municipal boundary and state and county facilities. These actions include the adoption of Harrison's comprehensive plan, and the issuance of site plan approval, special permits or variances for property within 500 feet of a municipal boundary, county or state park or recreation area, county or state roadway, county owned stream or drainage channel, or county or state-owned land on which a public building or institution is situated. If the County does not approve the proposed action, it can require that the referring local board approve the action by a majority plus one vote of all board members.

## 2.6 Demographics

### 2.6.1 Population

The US Census Bureau has released Harrison's 2010 population at 27,472 which represents a community-wide population increase of 13.7% since the 2000 Census. According to this estimate, population has increased more than 19% from 1980.

Table 2-1: Population in Harrison 1980-2003

Year	Total	Percentage increase
1980	23,046	
1990	23,308	1.1
2000	24,154	3.6
2010	27,472	13.7

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010

Detailed demographic characteristics are available from the 2010 U.S. Census. A select profile of characteristics for Harrison and Westchester County is shown in Table 2-2.

Table 2-2: Select Demographic Characteristics from 2010 Census

<i>Data</i>	<i>Harrison</i>	<i>Westchester County</i>
Population	27,472	949,113
Percent change 2000 - 2010	13.7	2.8
Percent under age 5	4.8	6
Percent age 5-19	25.4	20.5
Percent age 15-24	24	12.5
Percent age 18 and over	77.3	76
Percent age 65 and over	12.8	14.7
Median age total population	34.6	40
Median Family income (2006-2010)*	\$131,712	\$79,619
Percent of Families below Poverty level (2006-2010)*	2.9	5.8
Average household size	2.8	2.7
Percent high school graduates or higher (2006-2010)*	91.3	87.4

\*The U.S. Census Bureau no longer collects detailed social, economic, housing or demographic data in the decennial census, but provides estimates for key data based on a sample of households over a 5-year period.

This profile indicates, on the whole, that Harrison contains a slightly younger, more affluent and better educated population than the averages for Westchester County.

The population profile by census tract (Table 2-3) shows that the various sections of the community have considerably different characteristics. (Note that some data provided in the table are for the five-year period from 2006-2010; data available from the 2010 Census are limited for census tracts.) The location of these census tracts is shown on Figure 2-3. The older, established areas of downtown Harrison and Silver Lake tend to be somewhat younger, more racially and ethnically diverse and much less affluent than the portions of Harrison south of the Hutchinson River Parkway, and these older areas also have a higher percentage of single-person households. Meanwhile, the Purchase and Park Lane areas – which represented most of Harrison's population growth from 2000 to 2010 – are significantly younger than the rest of the town and are generally diverse relative to the rest of Harrison, but are also affluent.

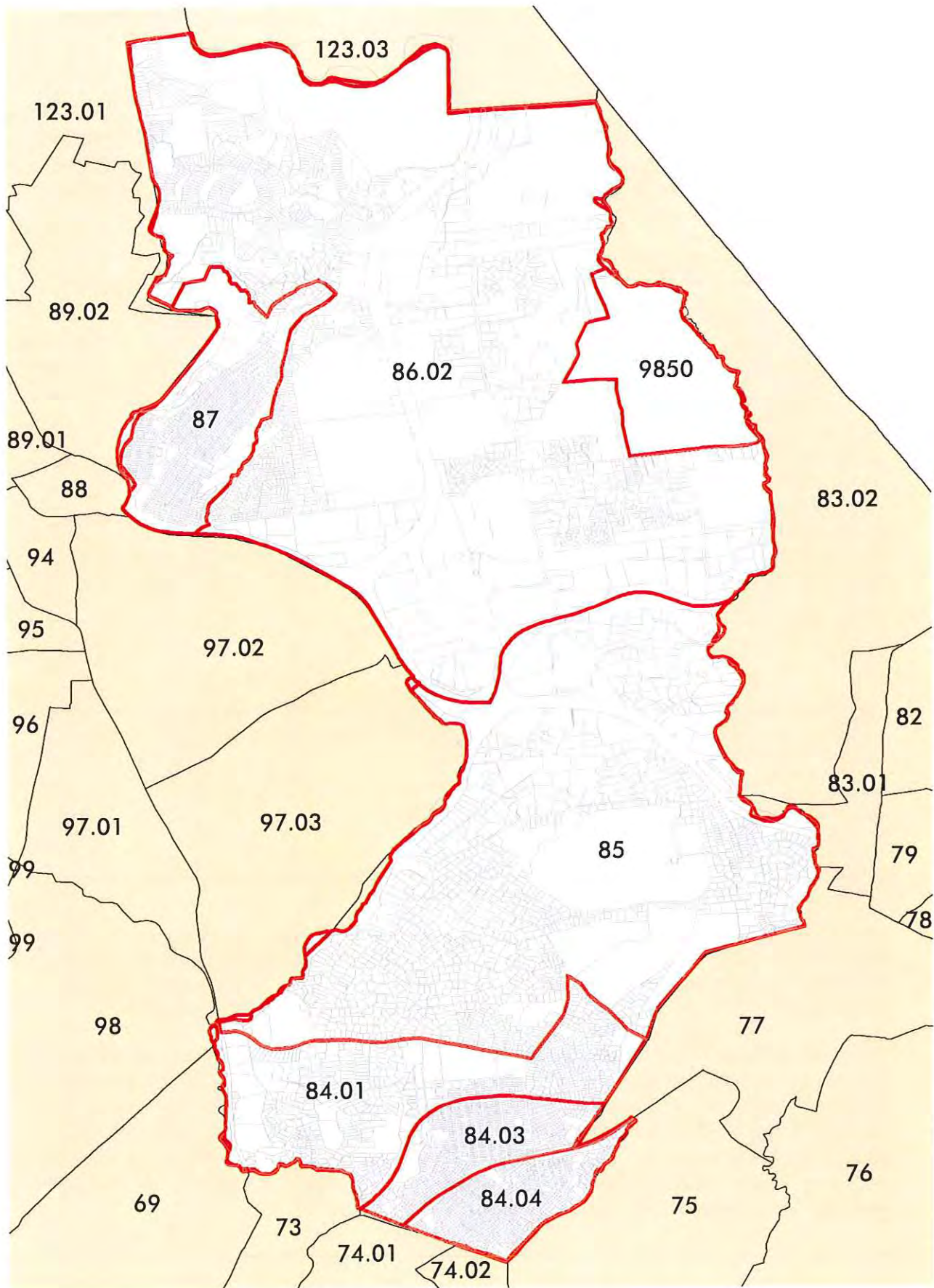
Table 2-3: Selected Census Tract Characteristics, 2010\*

Area within Harrison	Downtown Harrison		South of Hutchinson River Parkway		Purchase & Park Lane	Silver Lake/West Harrison	Harrison Overall
Census Tract	84.03	84.04	84.01	85.00	86.02	87.00	
Total Population	3,641	4,790	2,142	3,391	5,657	5,326	27,272
% Population change 2000-2010	-3.2	2.1	-1.4	-2.7	21.4	-1	13.7
% White alone	82	78.8	93.1	93.9	80.3	87.6	86.2
% Black/African American alone	0.9	1.2	0.8	1.2	3.7	1.1	3.2
% Asian alone	10.8	12.9	3.5	3.6	11.1	2.9	8.5
Hispanic (any race)	11.7	13.6	3.6	2.6	8.5	21.2	11.7
% under Age 5	5.3	6.4	7	4.5	4.1	5.1	4.8
% Age 15-24	12.3	10	9.9	11.9	34.8	12.4	24
% Age 65+	15.5	13.5	14.5	17.3	9.1	16.9	12.8
Median Age	40.7	39	41.4	45.6	22.2	40.2	34.6
Median Family Income**	\$124,145	\$72,150	\$250,000+	\$250,000+	\$216,765	\$77,212	\$131,712
Average household size	2.7	2.4	3.2	3.1	3.2	2.6	2.8
% 1 person households	23.2	31.9	12	10.6	10.2	24.8	21.2

\* The 2010 Census data do not reveal any figures for Census Tract 86.01, which equates to SUNY.

\*\*This information is not available for the 2010 Census, but the American Community Survey provides estimates based on a sample of households over a 5-year period from 2006-2010.

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census and 2006-2010 American Community Survey



## 2.6.2 Housing stock

In 2010, there were approximately 8,956 housing units in Harrison, according to the U.S. Census. This had risen from the 2000 figure of 8,657, an increase of 299, or 3.5%. Approximately 33% of the total housing stock dates from 1949 or earlier (Table 2-4). Out of the total number of occupied housing units of 8,375, 66% were owner-occupied.

Table 2-4: Age of Housing Units, 2006-2010\*

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Total Housing Units	8,933	100
Built 2005 or later	131	1.5
Built 2000 to 2004	542	6.1
Built 1990 to 1999	484	5.4
Built 1980 to 1989	577	6.5
Built 1970 to 1979	858	9.6
Built 1960 to 1969	1,547	17.3
Built 1950 to 1959	1,851	20.7
Built 1949 or earlier	2,943	32.9

Source: US Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey

\*This information is not available for the 2010 Census, but the American Community Survey provides estimates based on a sample of households over a 5-year period from 2006-2010.

Table 2-5: Housing Units in Structure

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Total Housing Units	8,933	100
Single family	4,876	58.6
2 to 9 units	2,728	31.1
10 to 19 units	213	2.6
20 or more units	732	7.8
Mobile homes/other	7	0.1

Source: US Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey

According to the Westchester County Department of Planning, there were 795 condominiums and cooperative units in Harrison in 2000, primarily located in downtown Harrison, along Halstead Avenue, and in West Harrison, or 9.1% of all housing units. In Westchester County, 19.4% of all housing units were condominiums or cooperatives.

House prices have, for the most part, risen sharply in Harrison in recent years, which has created an affordability gap for those on lower incomes. According to the Westchester County Department of Planning, the median sale price for single-family homes in Harrison from 1997 to 2007 more than doubled, from \$662,500 to \$1.55 million. It should be noted, however, that the 2007 number pre-dates the nationwide economic recession which began in 2008 and resulted in a significant weakening of housing markets, with corresponding lower sale prices.



Harrison's household types remain fairly limited. Alternate forms of housing are recommended to help meet the demand for smaller, low-maintenance units, sought by empty-nesters, single parents, and young couples, of all incomes. Harrison should evaluate the possibility of allowing more varied housing types to increase variety and affordability of housing opportunities. The town should also encourage the provision of housing suited for senior citizens to ensure a housing type choice at every stage of its residents' life cycle.

Table 2-6: Key Trends in Housing Need

Harrison	1980	1990	2000	2010
Percent age 65+	11.2%	13.9%	14.6%	12.8%
Average household size	2.9	2.7	2.7	2.77
Total number of households	7,208	7,639	8,394	8,375
Percent 1 person households	17.9%	20.6%	22.1%	21.2%
Median value for single owner-occupied family homes*	\$125,800	\$474,400	\$578,700	\$871,500

Source: US Census Bureau

\*This information is not available for the 2010 Census, but the American Community Survey provides estimates based on a sample of households over a 5-year period from 2006-2010.

As documented by the 2010 Census and the American Community Survey, Harrison's population has continued to become more diverse. The size of households has decreased since 1980 while senior citizens have grown as a component of the town's population. The 2010 household number has stayed relatively unchanged since 1990, whereas the population increase was nearly 14%. These trends, coupled with ever-increasing real estate costs show a need for alternate forms of housing. Consideration of multi-family housing in various forms may represent an opportunity to meet the needs of these groups.

## 2.7 Planning Concerns: Development Controls

### 2.7.1 Land Use

An analysis of land and its use is one of the major research elements necessary in preparing a town development plan. For any planning purpose, it is important to know where and how much land is presently developed for residences, businesses, recreation and other uses, and how much land is undeveloped. The land use analysis is based on GIS data from Westchester County Planning Department, last updated in 2009. The results are shown on the Land Use Map, Figure 2-4. Harrison's existing land use helps residents visualize future desirable and undesirable land use patterns and provides a foundation for the planning objectives and policies guiding future development.

Land use in Harrison can be defined as follows: two densely developed hamlet centers in downtown Harrison and at Silver Lake, a large area of suburban residences south of the Cross Westchester Expressway, a belt of corporate office development north of the Cross Westchester Expressway from Rye Brook to White Plains, an area of subdivisions and country clubs, centering around Purchase, and an area of subdivisions in rough terrain in

the northwest corner of Harrison. Large acreage is devoted to such institutional uses as the State University of New York at Purchase, Manhattanville College, St. Vincent's Hospital and Keio High School and to seven country clubs, totaling more than 1,200 acres. The remaining 976 acres of vacant land in Harrison is mainly located in the West Harrison and Purchase sectors.

The existing land use pattern in Harrison can be defined within seven general categories. The generalized locations of these land uses are shown on Figure 2-4:

- **Residential:** Residential land uses are predominantly low-density, with two or fewer dwelling units per acre comprising about 95% of the residential area. In recent years, Purchase has become a very prestigious location with the development of large houses on large lots. Moderate and higher-density residential development is located primarily in downtown Harrison and Silver Lake.
- **Retail:** The principal retail centers are located in downtown Harrison and Silver Lake. Some isolated retail establishments have located on Anderson Hill Road, and retail uses extend along the Halstead Avenue corridor toward Mamaroneck.
- **Commercial Offices:** In addition to the belt of commercial offices and office parks north of the Cross Westchester Expressway, areas of office development are located on Mamaroneck Avenue. PepsiCo has its headquarters off Anderson Hill Road. There are also some smaller office buildings in the CBD and residence conversions around the CBD's perimeters (such as doctors' offices).
- **Institutional:** Schools, hospitals, community facilities and religious institutions comprise a significant component of Harrison's land use pattern.
- **Airport:** The Westchester County Airport comprises about 311 acres in the northeast corner of Harrison.
- **Recreation/Open Space:** Public parks and large country clubs constitute significant open space and recreation amenities in Harrison.
- **Vacant Land:** The vacant land in northern Harrison represents the remnants of large estates in the Purchase area, and areas with severe natural constraints in West Harrison.



West Harrison:  
Silver Lake and  
Park Lane

Purchase

Southern  
Harrison

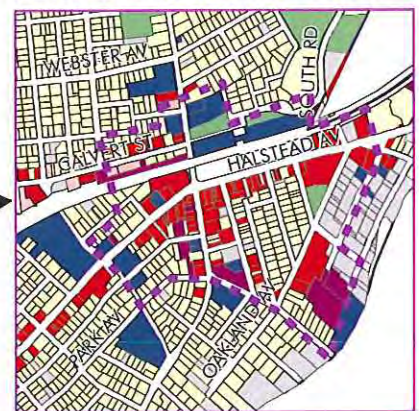
Harrison  
Central Business District

Downtown  
Harrison

#### Legend

##### Land Use

- Residential
- Commercial/Mixed
- Office
- Institutional/Community
- Manufacturing/Utility
- Airport
- Agricultural
- Private Recreation
- Public Recreation
- Vacant/Under-developed
- Waterbodies
- Water Supply Lands



A breakdown of the approximate acreage of the major land use categories in 2009 is shown in Table 2-7. These figures are based on survey and Westchester County GIS data. (According to the U.S. Census Bureau 2010, Harrison contains a total of 11,136 acres.)

**Table 2-7: Generalized Land Use, 2009**

Use	Approximate Acres,*	Percent
Residential	4,440	40%
Commercial, Retail & Office/Mixed Use	727	6.6%
Institutional/Recreation/Open Space	2,903	26.1%
Airport	311	2.8%
Vacant	976	8.8%
Circulation/Utilities	1,227	11%
Cemetery	22	0.2%
Waterbodies/Water supply land	501	4.5%
	11,107	

\*The total Harrison acreage given by Westchester County GIS data is approximately 29 acres less than the official total acreage.

Sources: Westchester County GIS, 2009

### 2.7.2 Town Development Trends

Within the local context, Harrison is influenced by, and influences, patterns of development in neighboring communities. Office growth in White Plains, Greenwich and Rye Brook strains movement on limited access highways running through Harrison, and spills traffic onto the local arterial and collector roadway system.

Other land use patterns are also influenced by the local context. The character of the retail area in downtown Harrison is determined to some extent by the more competitive centers of Mamaroneck; White Plains; Rye; Port Chester and Greenwich, Connecticut. Of the 47 major retail facilities over 100,000 square feet listed in Westchester County in 2010, none were located in Harrison.

#### Residential

Residential properties are generally very highly valued in Harrison, with only limited diversity in housing stock. About 67% of Harrison's housing stock is in single-family dwellings, but within this category there are numerous subcategories. The following categories of housing types and prices ranges are found in the community:





**Luxury large-lot residences:** A recent trend in Purchase has been the construction of very large residences on two acre (or larger) lots, with some floor areas exceeding 10,000 square feet. These homes typically sell in the \$4 to \$9 million range.



**Large-lot suburban residences:** These are located throughout Harrison in the R-1, R-2 and R-2.5 districts on lots ranging from one acre or more. These residences generally date from the 1950s, except for Purchase where they are more recent. These homes are individually designed in a wide range of styles. In several areas around the Westchester Country Club, this type of residence exists on lot sizes ranging from one-third to one-half acre, reflecting prior zoning criteria. The typical price range is from \$1 to \$2 million.



**Small-lot suburban residences:** Scattered throughout the community and concentrated to some extent adjacent to and within the centers of downtown Harrison and Silver Lake are suburban residences on smaller lots, constructed primarily in the 1960s and 1970s. These houses are generally constructed as single-family homes in a variety of styles popular in suburban tract subdivisions. The typical price range here is in the \$500,000 to \$1 million range.



**Two-family residences:** Within downtown Harrison and West Harrison are two-family residences on small lots. In some cases, this type of housing results from the conversion of a single-family house to serve a second family, although a large number of two-family residences have been constructed in the last two decades. This form of housing continues to be popular for its greater affordability. In some cases, however, abuses have led to the creation of three or four apartments in these buildings. Knocking down older, more modest buildings and replacing them with two-family homes that reflect the maximum permitted size reflects a trend that has adversely affected the character of older established neighborhoods. In West Harrison, prices ranging from \$575,000 to \$920,000 were noted.



**Residences above retail:** In downtown Harrison and West Harrison there are some mixed-residential and retail buildings. This housing type is also an important component of Harrison's housing stock, for its generally greater affordability.





Garden apartments: These are low-scale, multi-family dwellings which were developed in the 1960s in some areas of West Harrison and downtown.



Multi-family apartments: These are higher-scale, frequently four- to six-story, apartment buildings which appear in areas of downtown Harrison.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau estimates for the years 2006-2010, the median value for owner-occupied homes in Harrison was \$871,500, which was an increase of more than 50% from its 2000 level of \$578,700. (The median value represents the middle value (if the number is odd) or the average of the two middle values (if the number is even) in an ordered list of data values.)

### Commercial

CB Richard Ellis conduct quarterly reviews of the office market in Westchester County, and subdivides the County into five sub-regions, with Harrison being located in the Eastern sub-region<sup>3</sup>. For the first quarter of 2012, rents in this sub-region, at approximately \$26 per square foot (SF), were essentially flat but slightly down from the first quarter of 2011. This rent level is among the highest in the county, but somewhat lags the White Plains Central Business District sub-region's rent of approximately \$28 per SF. It should be noted that, from 2004 to 2005, before the economic recession, the Eastern sub-region saw rents of about \$27 per SF, which was lower than the White Plains sub-region's rents at the time of \$26.32 per SF. The average rents in Harrison's sub-region are lower than both Greenwich and downtown Stamford, Connecticut, with average first-quarter 2012 rents at about \$62 and \$43 per square foot, respectively, both higher than their year-earlier levels<sup>4</sup>.

The commercial property market is continuously changing. The update to the 1988 Plan mentioned four major corporate headquarters: Texaco, Hitachi, IBM and New York Telephone. Texaco, following its merger with Chevron Corporation, has since relocated to the San Francisco area, and its 725,000-square-foot property was purchased by Morgan Stanley in 2002, at a price of approximately \$58 a square foot. Hitachi downsized from

<sup>3</sup> CB Richard Ellis, *MarketView*, Westchester County, First Quarter 2012

<sup>4</sup> CB Richard Ellis, *MarketView*, Fairfield County, First Quarter 2012

its 26,000-square-foot building on a 58-acre site at 2400 Westchester Avenue to a 20,000 square foot unit on the third floor of 2 Manhattanville Road. Its former 58-acre site was rezoned and developed for residential use. New York Telephone changed its name to Verizon after a series of mergers, and its location on Westchester Avenue is now being redeveloped to accommodate the Memorial-Sloan Kettering cancer center. IBM is no longer headquartered in Harrison, but retains a significant presence in the area.

Harrison remains a desirable location for office development. Table 2-8 lists the businesses that employ 500 or more employees in Harrison at present. Office property sales are expected to increase into the future, fueled by the continuing pattern of low interest rates, low return-on-equity or capitalization rates and a shift by investors of capital from the stock market. In May 2005, 2 and 4 Gannett Drive sold for approximately \$42 million, equating to nearly \$200 per square foot. That is significantly higher than the prices other office buildings have attracted in the past few years. More recently, the vacant 120,000-square-foot Nokia building at 102 Corporate Park Drive was purchased by biotechnology company HistoGenetics, for \$12 million, or about \$100 per square foot. Each of these buildings is located just off Westchester Avenue, adjacent to Interstate 287 along the desirable Platinum Mile, home of multiple corporate headquarters, which remains a significant asset to the Town.

**Table 2-8: Private Employment Sites in Harrison, with 500 or More Employees**

Company	Number of Employees	Type of Industry
Morgan Stanley	1,800	Security brokers, dealers and flotation companies
PepsiCo Inc	1,500	Bottled and canned soft drinks
Mastercard Inc	800	Short-term business credit institutions
Citigroup	500	Short-term business credit institutions
Dansk International Designers	600	Miscellaneous non durable goods
Diversified Investment Advisor	555	Pension, health and welfare funds

Source: Westchester County Department of Planning, 2010

However, the HistoGenetics move also underscores a recent shift in the office market that has affected municipalities throughout the region, including Harrison. According to CBRE, since 2008, more than 1 million square feet of office space has either been repurposed or repositioned in Westchester County. In Harrison, the former Verizon building at 500 Westchester Avenue was converted to medical use (Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center), 101 Corporate Park Drive to hospitality (Hyatt House), 400 Westchester Avenue to educational use (Fordham University), and the former Journal-News headquarters at 1 Gannett Drive to recreational use (Lifetime Fitness).

This repositioning of properties along the Platinum Mile is helping somewhat to stem the tide of large companies either downsizing significantly or vacating the area entirely, leaving behind vacant and often outdated office spaces. The reuses are also helping to offset the loss of tax revenue from a combination of corporate departures and property tax appeals from remaining companies. The Platinum Mile is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.



### 2.7.3 Neighborhoods

The various neighborhoods in Harrison are illustrated on the land use map, Figure 2-4.

#### Harrison Central Business District (CBD)

This area is the heart of downtown Harrison and encompasses the area between the intersection of Broadway and Halstead Avenue to the west, Orchard Street and Harrison Avenue to the north, Grant and Halstead Avenues to the east and Park Avenue and Harrison Avenue to the south. Several Town-initiated projects are potentially in the pipeline here – the creation of a transit-oriented development (TOD) on MTA property adjacent to the Metro-North rail lines; the potential renovation and adaptive reuse of the Town-owned old train station; and Project Home Run, which is an 18-acre plan to create parkland, sports fields and a nature preserve in an area previously occupied by heavy industry and a junkyard.

The CBD also includes the light industrial/manufacturing area along Oakland Avenue; as well as a shopping center at the intersection of Halstead and Oakland Avenues and a collection of civic uses including Town/Village Hall, the library and the Sollazzo Center recreational facility.

#### Downtown Harrison

For the purposes of this plan, the downtown is defined as the mainly residential area surrounding the CBD, south of the New England Thruway. This area has the highest residential density in Harrison and is an important housing resource offering a range of house types.



Harrison Avenue



Former Train Station prior to adaptive reuse

#### Southern Harrison

Between downtown Harrison to the south and Purchase and West Harrison to the north lie many neighborhoods. This area, stretching from I-95 (New England Thruway) to I-287 (Cross Westchester Expressway) holds the neighborhoods of Sunnyridge, Sterling Ridge, Westchester Country Club, Winfield and Polly Park Road.

### West Harrison – Silver Lake and Park Lane

This area is located north of Anderson Hill Road and west of Purchase and includes the settlement of Silver Lake in addition to the residential area of Park Lane. West Harrison contains significant environmental features and constraints. Part of the Kensico Basin is located here, which is an important component of New York City's Catskill/Delaware water supply system. New York City has bought an area of approximately 132 acres to the south of the basin, in the interests of protecting water quality. West Harrison is an area with many steep slopes and state and locally designated wetlands. A significant amount of development has taken place since the 1988 Plan along Park Lane and it is now almost entirely suburban in character.

Silver Lake is a special resource to Harrison due to its unique lakefront setting, the quality and diversity of its housing and the character of its commercial area. The Town implemented a Master Plan for Passidomo Park and the West Harrison business district, which involves improving the park and the streetscape. The 30-acre park's ballfields were resurfaced with artificial turf and a new state-of-the art pool was constructed, as well as new tennis courts an improved park entrance, and 92 additional parking spots. In addition to providing better visual and pedestrian access to the park, the streetscape improvements on Lake Street in West Harrison addressed engineering issues such as drainage, utilities and overall layout.

### Purchase

Purchase is the area located east of West Harrison and north of the Cross-Westchester Expressway. It is separated from West Harrison by the Mamaroneck River. The area is centered along Purchase Street; and the view from that roadway, along with Barnes Lane, Lincoln Avenue and Cottage Avenue determines the public character of the area. Formerly the area of large, rural residential estates, the area is now almost entirely comprised of large lot single-family homes and country clubs. SUNY Purchase, Manhattanville College, the Westchester County Airport and the PepsiCo headquarters are also located here.



Westchester Country Club



House in Stoneleigh development



### Platinum Mile

Westchester's 'Platinum Mile' of corporate office complexes runs through Harrison along I-287, and connects it with the growing office presence along Connecticut's "Gold Coast" in Greenwich and Stamford to the east, and also to those in White Plains and Tarrytown to the west. A number of large companies are located within the Harrison portion of the Platinum Mile, including Morgan Stanley, Mastercard and U.S. Postal Service general mail facility.

#### 2.7.4 Zoning

Harrison adopted its first zoning ordinance in 1923. The present ordinance was adopted in 1974, reflecting recommendations of the 1972 Plan. The significant amendments to date include adding business districts to accommodate expanding office growth, and conservation development provisions added in 1981 to accommodate greater density in cluster subdivisions in rural areas served by water and sewers. Since the 1988 update, this conservation development subdivision provision was repealed and replaced with a residential cluster development provision. A general commercial zone, which formerly existed northeast of Oakland Avenue, was re-established in 1995 to allow for retail and some other business uses fronting onto Osborn Road. In 1990 the remaining tract of the R2.5/1 District was changed to R2. An area of land, formerly the Hitachi offices, was changed from office district to residential in 2003. The most recent major amendment was passed in January 2004; this created a new R-50 district to accommodate two areas of historically non-conforming parcels. The present zoning is shown on Figure 2-5. A summary of zoning districts, their intent, and maximum density is shown on Table 2-9.

Some significant areas of Harrison have patterns of land use inconsistent with current zoning. Many lots surrounding the Westchester Country Club have lot sizes under one acre and are non-conforming as a result. Along Harrison Avenue, north of Calvert Street, some residential buildings are partially used as professional offices in the R-75 District. Also, in the B District, many one- and two-family dwellings have been converted to three- or even four-family dwellings, in contradiction to the zoning regulations and New York State Multiple Dwelling Law. The introduction of the R-50 District in 2004 was designed to solve some of the non-conformance issues along Anderson Hill Road and Orchard Street.

The SB-Special Business Districts have been mapped in the belt north of the Cross-Westchester Expressway, at the site of the Pepsico headquarters off Anderson Hill Road, and along Mamaroneck Avenue. The SB Districts have a maximum lot coverage of 20% (SB-O and SB-I) and 10% (SB-35 and SB-100) and a height limit of four stories (SB-O, SB-35 and SB-100) and five stories (SB-I). Only the SB-35 District has a floor area ratio (FAR), which is 0.3 times the lot area.

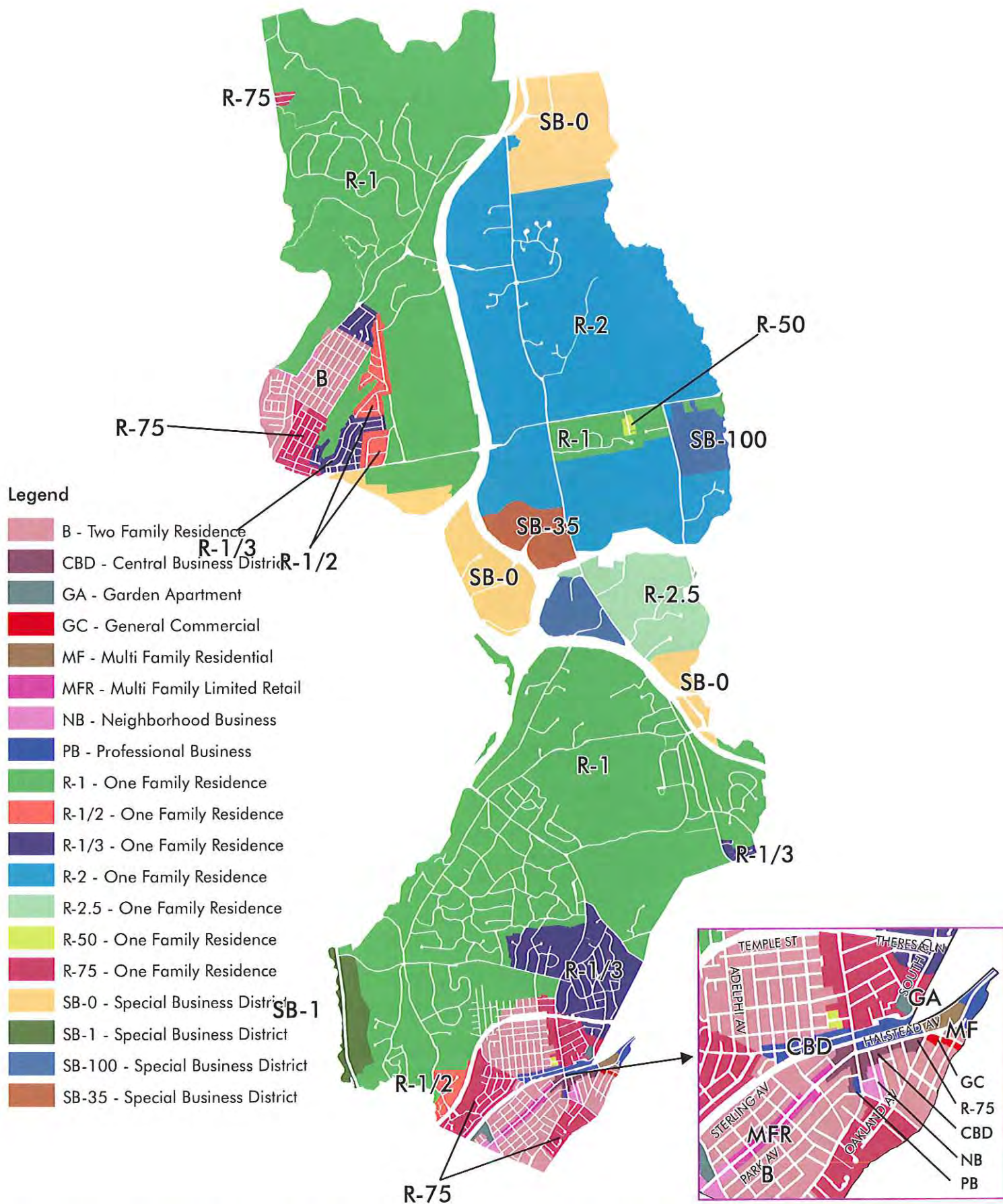


Table 2-9: Summary of Existing Zoning Districts

District	Intent	Minimum Lot Size/Density
R-2.5 One Family Residence District	Provide for single family estates on large lots	2.5 acres
R-2 One Family Residence District	Provide for single family housing on large lots	2 acres
R-1 One Family Residence District	Provide for single family housing on large lots	1 acre
R-1/2 One Family Residence District	Provide for single family housing on moderate size lots	½ acre
R-1/3 One Family Residence District	Provide for single family detached housing on smaller lots	1/3 acre
R-75 One Family Residence District	Provide for single family detached housing on smaller lots	7,500 sq ft
R-50 One Family Residence District	Provide for single family detached housing on smaller lots	5,000 sq ft
B Two Family Residence District	Provide for two family housing in high density areas	5,000 sq ft 2,500 sq ft DU
GA Garden Apartment District	Provide for multiple dwellings with relatively low lot coverage on large lot near high density areas	80,000 sq ft 2,500 sq ft/D.U.
MF Multi family Residence District	Provide for relatively high density multiple dwellings with greater lot coverage	4,000 sq ft 750 sq ft/ D.U.
MFR Multi-Family limited retail	Provide for a range of residential uses in conjunction with office and retail business and services	4,000 sq ft 750 sq ft/D.U.
NB Neighborhood Business District	Provide for retail businesses and services serving local needs	None
GC General Commercial	Provide for general retail businesses and services	None
PB Professional Business District	Provide for professional offices and office support services with limited retail activities	None
CBD Central Business District	Provide for a variety of retail goods and services in downtown area	None
SB-0 Special Business District	Provide for commercial office, research and development facilities at higher densities	5 acres
SB-1 Special Business District	Provide for commercial office, research and development facilities at higher densities	5 acres
SB-35 Special Business District	Provide for corporate office, research, development and training facilities on large lots	35 acres/ 0.30 FAR
SB-100 Special Business District	Provide for large corporate parks with large areas of open space	100 acres



### 2.7.5 Development Controls

#### Signage

A new sign law has been proposed in Harrison. An in-house committee has studied the issue and is committed to creating a street graphics system that promotes the use of signs that are aesthetically pleasing, of appropriate scale, and integrated with surrounding buildings and landscape.

#### Floor Area Ratio

Harrison is experiencing the teardown of older houses and their replacement by dwellings which are built out to the setbacks, maximum lot coverage, and height allowed given the zoning code. One option would be to re-examine the dimensional requirements for each district, but any change in these dimensional requirements would make numerous lots and their houses non-conforming. A second, and better option, is for the town to adopt a residential floor area ratio (FAR). This would limit the aggregate floor area of all structures on a parcel to a percentage of the lot size. The FAR would be calculated based on a thorough analysis of what is built in each district. The FAR is then set at a slightly higher level, so that no existing buildings are made non-conforming. Other municipalities in Westchester County have adopted residential FARs to combat similar problems of bulky houses in small-lot districts where the out-of-scale development is unwanted and visually intrusive.

#### Landscaping Ordinance

Most of Harrison's streets are pleasant, quiet, and leafy, lined with attractive, well-kept houses. But the lack of tree planting, perimeter landscaping or the use of appropriate species in some new developments is contributing to a loss of this green appearance, shade and privacy. The town does not have a landscaping ordinance, and provides limited guidance for landscaping in new developments. A landscaping ordinance should be adopted which outlines minimum requirements and gives guidance on the type of trees and shrubs required.



Older house with landscaping



Newer houses with minimum side yard and little room for a screen of plants

### **B - Two-Family District**

The B-district, located in Silver Lake, West Harrison and Downtown, was created after World War II to offer affordable accommodation for returning soldiers and their families. At that stage, the two units were typically comprised of one owner-occupier unit and one rental unit. In the present day, it is more common that an absentee landlord rents out both apartments. In addition, many of the traditional "up-down" two-family homes – which featured separate apartments on the first and second floors – are being replaced by "side-by-side" two-family homes, which tend to be significantly larger and can dominate the typically small lots (5,000 square feet) of the B zones. Finally, many dwellings have been illegally converted to three- or even four-family dwellings, in contradiction to the zoning regulations and New York State Multiple Dwelling Law. Preserving the integrity of the district requires the continued steadfast enforcement of the existing laws and periodic reevaluation. Largely as a result of these trends, the B district is experiencing some infrastructure issues, such as a lack of off-street parking, as most post-WWII developments did not anticipate today's private automobile ownership trends, which has in turn created serious on-street parking problems as well.

This Comprehensive Plan proposes to address these density issues, while maintaining two-family residences as a viable housing option, by revising the regulations for the B zones throughout Harrison with targeted measures implemented either alone or in combination. One option could be to continue allowing new construction of the traditional "up-down" two-family homes as permitted uses in the B zones, but to require a special exception permit to build a "side-by-side" residence. The permit approval could require additional analysis on issues of parking, visual impacts and open space/density. For example, the permit could consider the sufficiency of side yard setbacks to allow for a driveway that connects to parking in the rear yard. These measures could serve to control the density and bulk of new development in Harrison's two-family zones, maintaining their special character and preserving a range of housing options.

### **Subdivisions**

The town code contains a section on residential cluster development (Chapter 235-10.1), the purpose of which is to enable subdivision development with more flexible dimensional requirements (e.g. minimum lot sizes) than conventional subdivision controls in order to preserve open space and protect sensitive environmental features. Using cluster development, developers can design subdivisions that maximize open space protection without reducing the number of homes to be built. This is achieved by clustering - locating the structures on the most usable and unconstrained portion of the property with the remainder permanently protected through conservation easements or some other mechanism. It is important to note that there is no change in the total number of dwelling units based on the underlying zoning – they are simply carefully situated to protect land and water resources, in direct contrast to a conventional subdivision that could have an adverse impact on a greater area of a site, often fragmenting wooded areas and habitats.

This section of the code should be reviewed. One possibility is to use the term 'Open Space Subdivision' and to alter the text to reflect this different approach. An open space subdivision differs from traditional clustering in three important ways. First, it sets higher standards for the quantity, quality and configuration of the resulting open space and developable area. Second, communities can exercise greater influence on the design of new subdivisions because the regulations are designed to be flexible so that more land is

retained for the community for active or passive recreation, wildlife habitat, and stormwater management. Thirdly, the protected land is configured so that it will, wherever practicable, contribute to an interconnected network of open space throughout the community, linking resource areas in adjoining subdivisions and/or providing buffers between new development and preexisting parklands or forest.

Open space subdivisions could be used for parcels over a certain size, say 15 acres, or for when the Planning Board finds that a conventional layout would alter environmentally sensitive land or the surrounding context, utilizing open space subdivision to a case-by-case basis.

Harrison's ordinance allows the yield for the cluster subdivision to be calculated based on what would be permitted under a conventional subdivision, conforming to all requirements of the law. A way to strengthen this language is to ensure that environmentally constrained land, including wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes, and special habitats, is not used in the calculation of yield. Conventional subdivision yield can be determined from either a "yield plan" or a full-blown preliminary conventional plan submittal, as determined by the Planning Board.

In regard to the open space, if the zoning text does not specify that it should be at least a certain size, it can end up being a long narrow fringe abutting rear lot lines and the parcel's outer perimeter. This can be easily avoided by clarifying, in the ordinance, that lots and roads shall not cover a specified percentage of the parcel, and that a portion of the remaining open space must be otherwise buildable or usable for active recreation. Common open areas could be managed by a Home Owner's Association (HOA) or other suitable entity.

The requirement for the provision of open space however does not replace the obligation for the developer to also provide a public park site or in the alternative pay a recreation fee to the town. Section 204-32B establishes the provisions for the park site requirement and the payment in lieu of the park site set-aside in an amount to be annually reviewed by the Town Board and Village Board. Harrison holds these funds in a special Park and Recreation Site Acquisition and Improvement Fund, and uses the fund for the acquisition of sites that are properly located for neighborhood parks, playgrounds or recreational purposes or for the physical improvement of such sites. (See discussion under 2.11 Open Space and Recreation.)

Controls can be built into any revised text to ensure that existing residences that abut the proposed development are not adversely affected. This can include a requirement for a minimum depth perimeter buffer, which would protect existing residences from any impact on their privacy and amenities. This buffer would be counted toward satisfying the open space requirement.



## 2.8 Transportation and Parking

### 2.8.1 Hierarchy of Roadways

The purpose of the roadway functional classification is to define the function of each roadway so that roads can be properly designed and maintained, and access to roads properly managed to avoid traffic conflicts. Figure 2-6 shows the existing roadway hierarchy as it functions today.

#### Limited-Access Highways

These roads provide regional access for vehicles traveling through Harrison. They primarily carry high-speed, long distance, through traffic. All access and egress occurs via grade-separated interchanges, and access to individual properties along the rights-of-way is prohibited. There are four limited-access highways running through Harrison: Interstate 684, the New England Thruway (I-95), the Cross-Westchester Expressway (I-287) and the Hutchinson River Parkway.

#### Arterials

Arterials are designed to carry traffic between Harrison and the surrounding towns and villages. There are two major arterials: Mamaroneck Avenue and Westchester Avenue.

There are a number of minor arterials including Anderson Hill Road and Purchase Street. The Planning Board should discourage direct access to arterial roads from adjoining land wherever possible. Separate local roads should be required in those cases where access cannot be obtained from intersecting side roads. The width of the pavement of the arterial should be sufficient to permit the movement of traffic in both directions. On-street parking should be discouraged along arterials.

#### Collector Roads

Collector Roads carry and circulate traffic within neighborhoods and connect local roads to arterial roads, balancing access and mobility. Collector roads in Harrison include West Street and Polly Park Road.

#### Local Roads

Local roads are all other streets. They provide direct access to the properties located along them, and should not be designed to carry through traffic. They have very limited mobility, with low average speeds, and a high degree of accessibility. Local roads serve residential neighborhoods as connectors to collector roads.

The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) provides traffic counts for State and County roads in Harrison.

#### Interstate 287 (Cross Westchester Expressway)

This major limited-access east-west oriented six-lane highway links Interstate 95 to the east with the New York Thruway (Interstate 87) to the west. I-287 is flanked by one-way service arterial roads known as Westchester Avenue Eastbound and Westbound between White Plains and Harrison. The Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) for both directions

for I-287 between the western town boundary and the junction with I-684 was approximately 127,800 in 2010. This figure indicates heavy traffic use on this roadway.

NYSDOT is undertaking a phased reconstruction of I-287 at present. This project involves the reconstruction of 10 miles of highway beginning at the toll plaza of the Tappan Zee Bridge and extending eastward past the Hutchinson River Parkway to Route 120 (Purchase Street). The improvements include rehabilitating the existing six-lane roadway, eliminating choke points and making safety improvements along the corridor, including the rehabilitation or replacement of more than 30 bridges.

In addition to the work along I-287, NYSDOT, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority/Metro-North Railroad and the New York State Thruway Authority began a joint effort in 2001 to reduce traffic congestion on I-87/287 by studying transit alternatives including bus and rail, as part of a proposed replacement of the Tappan Zee Bridge. As summarized in the Transit Mode Selection Report (2009)<sup>5</sup>, a set of alternatives were intended to address transportation needs of the I-287 Corridor for the next century. The strategies explored – including bus rapid transit (BRT), commuter rail transit (CRT), and roadway improvements – are intended to ameliorate future traffic congestion levels along the I-87/287 corridor. Current plans call for the new bridge to be built with the potential to add mass transit at a later date, although space would be designated for bus lanes.

#### **Hutchinson River Parkway (907-W)**

This four-lane north-south oriented divided parkway links the Merritt Parkway to the north with the Cross Bronx Expressway (I-95) to the south. The Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) for both directions in 2010 between North Street and I-287 was approximately 91,100. This figure indicates very heavy traffic use on this roadway.

#### **Interstate 684**

This major limited access four to six lane north-south oriented highway connects I-84 to the north with I-287 and the Hutchinson River Parkway to the south. The Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) for both directions in 2010 for I-684 between the junction with I-287 and Purchase Street was approximately 74,700. This figure indicates moderate to heavy traffic use on this roadway.

#### **New England Thruway I-95**

The New England Thruway is a 15-mile thruway that connects the Bruckner Expressway (I-278) in the Bronx to the Connecticut Turnpike on the New York/Connecticut border. This is a major limited-access six-lane highway. The Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) for both directions in 2010 for Harrison was approximately 109,800. This figure indicates heavy traffic use on this roadway.

#### **NYS Route 120 (Purchase Street)**

This northwest-southeast oriented two-lane minor arterial road extends from NYS Route 100 in the Town of New Castle to Boston Post Road (U.S. Route 1) in the City of Rye. The Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) for both directions in 2010 between Westchester Avenue and the junction with Hutchinson River Parkway was approximately 5,800. This figure indicates low traffic use on this roadway.

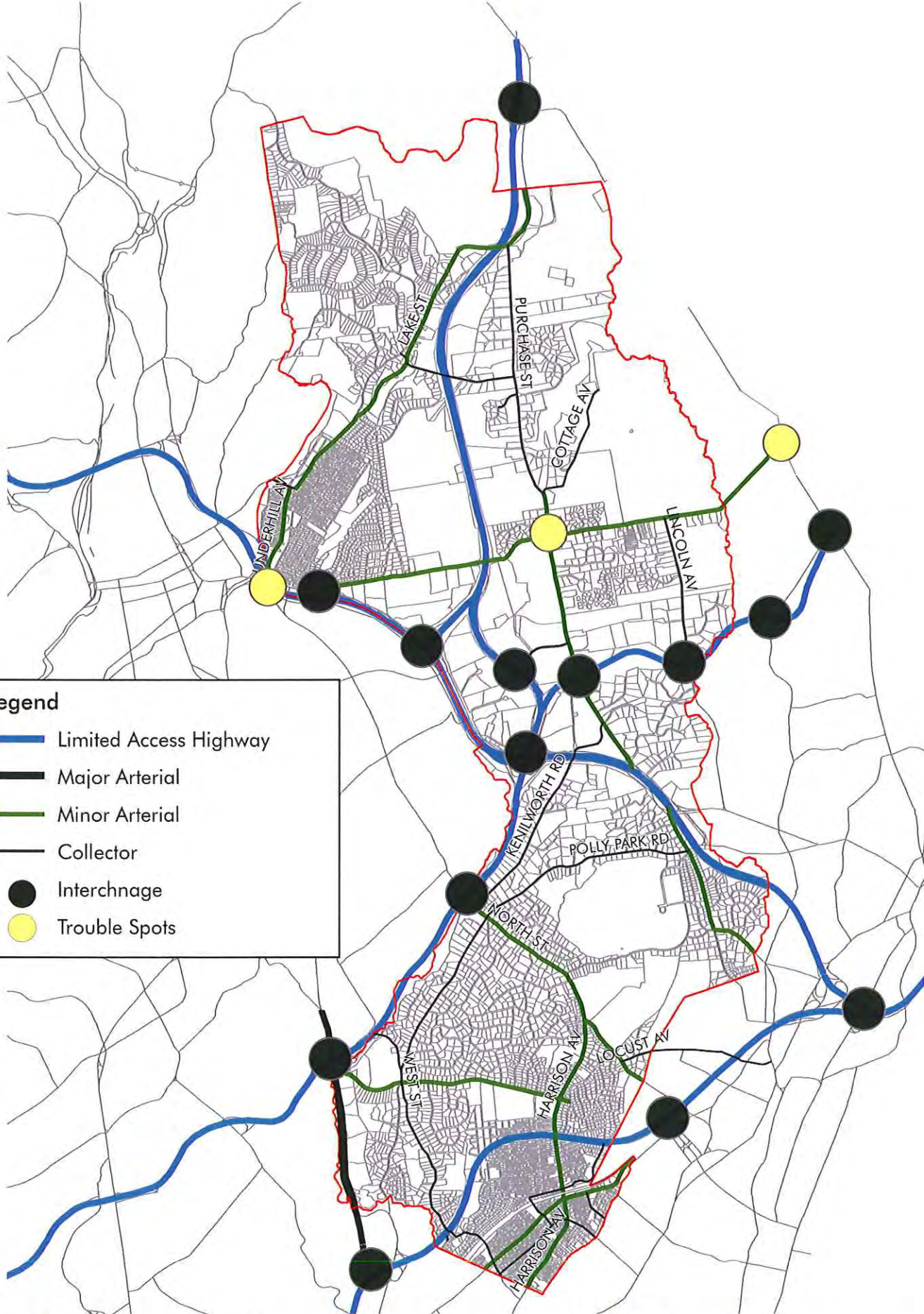
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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.tzbsite.com>



**Legend**

- Limited Access Highway
- Major Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Collector
- Interchnage
- Trouble Spots



**County Route #73 (North Street)**

This northwest-southeast oriented two lane minor arterial road extends from a signalized intersection with Westchester Avenue in White Plains to Boston Post Road. The Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) for both directions in 2010 for North Street between Locust Avenue and Harrison Avenue was approximately 4,800. This figure indicates low traffic use on this roadway.

**NYS Route 127 (Harrison Avenue)**

This north-south oriented two lane road runs through Downtown and connects the Boston Post Road in the south to North Street. The Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) for both directions in 2010 between Halstead Avenue and Union Avenue was approximately 11,300. This figure indicates moderate traffic use on this roadway.

**Polly Park Road (County Route #104)**

This north-south oriented two-lane road connects Purchase Street to North Street. It has traffic signals at both ends. The Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) for both directions in 2010 for Polly Park Road between Purchase Street and North Street was approximately 4,050. This figure indicates moderate traffic use on this roadway.

**Anderson Hill Road (County Route #18)**

This east-west oriented two-lane road connects Westchester Avenue to King Street in Rye. The Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) for both directions in 2010 between Westchester Avenue and Blind Brook was approximately 7,900. This figure indicates low to moderate traffic use on this roadway.

Conflicts occur between this road hierarchy and the adjacent land uses. Some streets are primarily residential, but they are used by through traffic as a result of their layout and because they lead to limited-access highways. Anderson Hill Road and Lincoln Avenue suffer from this conflict. They support single-family homes and carry significant volumes of through traffic. Because of the numerous driveways, these roads do not function very effectively as through roads, and moreover, the through traffic affects the residential quality of the neighborhood in a negative manner. These functional conflicts exist along many roadways in Harrison (and in numerous suburban or small-town communities), such as along Anderson Hill Road.

**2.8.2 Other Transportation****Commuter Railroad**

Downtown Harrison is served by the Metro-North commuter railroad, with frequent service to Grand Central Station. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), for the years 2006-2010, more than 15% of the work force residing in Harrison commutes by train. This is an increase from the 1990 figure of 13%. Average daily peak period ridership from Harrison (Table 2-10) has remained fairly stable since 1990, with two small dips during the period which likely reflect economic downturns in the early part of the 2000 decade and in 2008, as well as the 2001 attack on the World Trade Center, which significantly disrupted transportation systems in the region. The Harrison station is popular for non-resident commuters because it is near the



beginning of a fare zone and is less crowded than many stations closer to New York City. Commuter parking is available adjacent to the station. On the northbound side of the tracks, the parking lots are owned by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), and have meters. On the southbound side of the tracks, the parking lot is owned by the Town of Harrison and is regulated by annual permits which are issued upon application with proof of residency and a fee. Daily parking permits are issued for the occasional trip to New York if there is space in the parking lot. Weekend and holiday parking is free.



Harrison Train Station



Bicycle Parking at Train Station

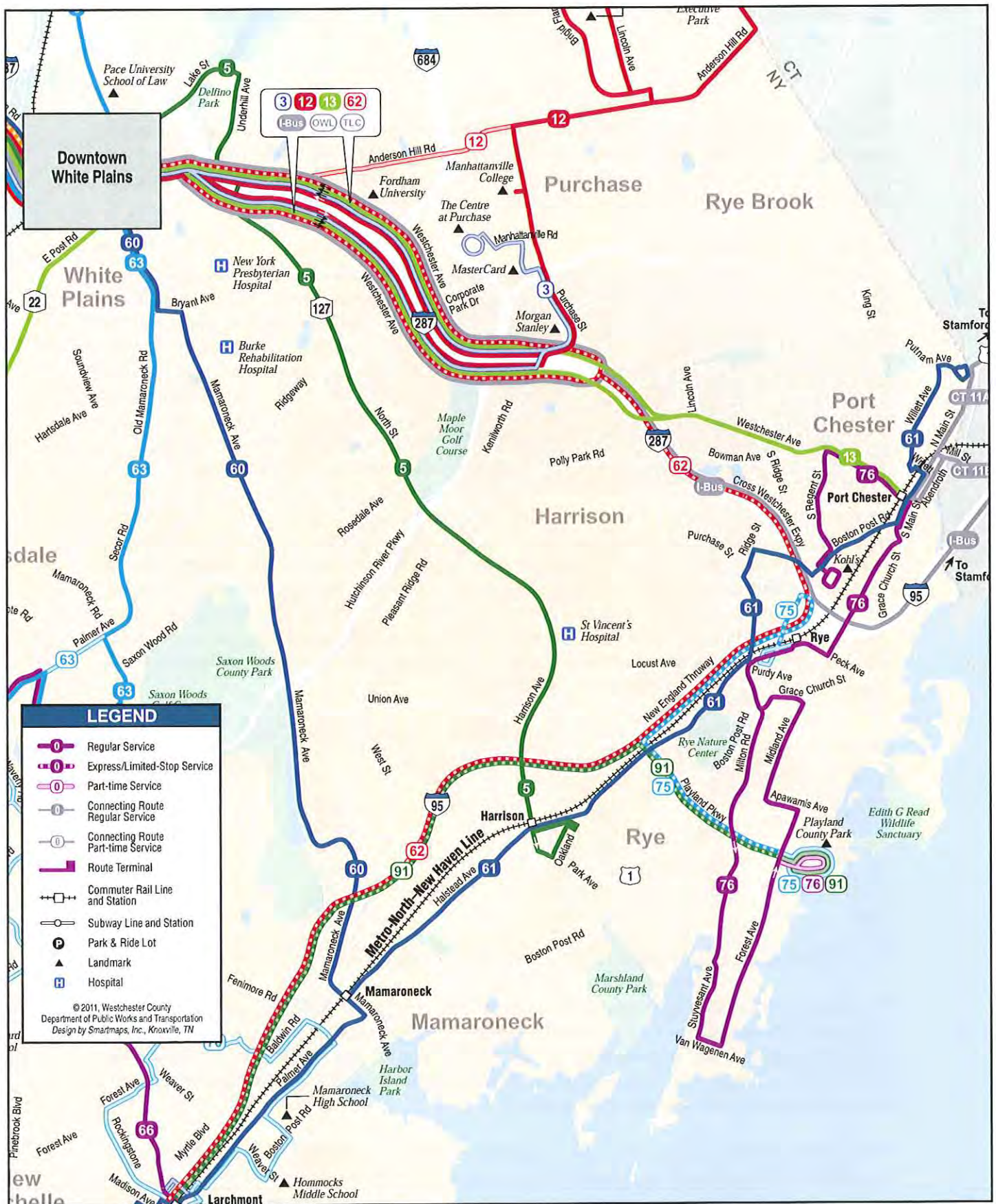
Table 2-10: Average Daily (Weekday) Peak Period Ridership from Harrison

Year	Number
1990	1,447
1991	1,430
1992	1,348
1993	1,357
1994	1,409
1995	1,410
1996	1,459
1997	1,477
1998	1,497
1999	1,530
2000	1,571
2001	1,511
2002	1,529
2003	1,432
2004	1,399
2005	1,403
2006	1,420
2007	1,469
2008	1,498
2009	1,442
2010	1,429
2011	1,437

Source: Metro-North Railroad, 2012

\*Data calculated based on actual counts for a limited number of years when counts were taken, combined with estimates obtained by factoring the count totals based on ticket sales data.







## Bus

Harrison is served by Westchester County bus lines. Most lines through Harrison emanate from the White Plains hub (Figure 2-7). Consequently, service within the community from points north to south and vice versa is not particularly effective. According to the BTS, for 2006-2010, only 1.3% of the work force commutes to work by bus.

## Westchester County Airport



Westchester County Airport was constructed during World War II as an air defense satellite base, and is county-owned. It currently serves commercial, corporate and private aircraft. By 1978, the airport was operating near capacity. In 1980, Westchester County developed a Master Plan for the airport which included plans for expansion. Local

residents strongly opposed any form of airport expansion. Since 1985, commercial traffic at the airport has been restrained by operation of a Terminal Capacity Agreement. These restrictions were further extended and signed into Westchester County law in September 2004, into what is known as the Terminal Use Regulation. This limits the number of passengers and the number of flights to four flights per half-hour (either arriving or departing). A Voluntary Restraint from Flight (VRFF) agreement is also in place, which applies to the hours between midnight and 6.30 a.m. The level of flights at the airport has never approached the maximum limit.

**Table 2-11: Total Passenger Enplanements, 2000-2007**

Year	Passenger Enplanements	Change (%)
2000	507,145	
2001	456,296	-10%
2002	461,448	1.1%
2003	426,864	-7.5%
2004	462,981	8.5%
2005	462,256	-0.2%
2006	511,559	10.7%
2007	822,750	60.8%

Source: Westchester County DataBook (2010), Federal Aviation Administration

The airport operates light general aviation and corporate aviation, with over 400 corporate jets based there. There are no plans for expansion at present, but there are continuing plans for improvements to safety, efficiency and environmental performance. Some minor alterations are proposed, such as an area for overnight parking of aircraft, security improvements and de-icing facilities.

The airport creates many impacts in Harrison. As a significant economic driver, it facilitates the attraction and viability of businesses, but it also creates noise. Although the airport itself is located in Harrison, much of the spin-off commercial development is located in the Town of North Castle. The land in the vicinity of the airport, along Purchase

Street, is mainly in residential use. Residential use in the vicinity of the airport often leads to opposition to airport activity, based on the noise.

The airport 60 + Ldn (Day Night Sound Level)<sup>6</sup> noise contour has been designated as a County Critical Environmental Area. Development proposed in a designated CEA is subject to a more in-depth review than other areas. Specifically, proposed development wholly or partially within or substantially contiguous to a CEA under the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), requires the lead agency to consider potential impacts on the characteristics of a CEA.

The airport CEA is the largest in Harrison, constituting approximately one-third of the area north of Westchester Avenue, see Figure 2-10. Development within the CEA, in Harrison, will be primarily residential, given the R-2 and R-1 zoning.

### **Bicycle**

Walking and bicycling are a means of transportation that is energy efficient, generates no air pollution, provides the health benefits of exercise and is consistent with compact traditional communities. For these reasons the New York State Department of Transportation, the metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), local governments and other agencies and organizations are creating an extensive network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the Hudson Valley. These range from sidewalks in cities and villages to shoulders for walking and cycling in rural areas to regional trailways on their own rights-of-way. One of these proposed trailways runs through Harrison, along the Hutchinson River Parkway. This trailway also forms part of the East Coast Greenway which is an ambitious plan of the East Coast Greenway Alliance to connect all the major cities of the East Coast along a continuous, off-road path, spanning 2,600 miles from Calais, Maine to Key West, Florida.

## **2.8.3 Planning Concerns: Circulation and Parking Controls**

### **Access Management**

One way of improving the traffic flow and safety in the town and to resolve the functional conflict created by excessive driveways along arterials and collectors, is through the implementation of an access management plan. Among the many benefits of a managed roadway are increased public safety, reduction of congestion, extended life of the roadway and improved appearance of the built environment. Access management also serves to both preserve the transportation functions of roadways as well as the long-term property values and the economic viability of abutting development. A further benefit is the ability to concentrate commercial activity in a smaller area, which is less damaging to landscapes and the environment.

Access management strategies aim to alleviate the inherent conflicts between the function of through traffic of an arterial and the local function of access to abutting properties. As

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<sup>6</sup> Day Night Sound Level. Day Night Sound level, symbolized as Ldn, is the 24-hour average sound level, in decibels (dB), obtained from the accumulation of all events with the addition of 10 decibels to sound levels in the night from 10 PM to 7 AM.

traffic volumes increase along the arterials, conflicts become more and more problematic in terms of congestion and accidents, and will eventually hamper the economic well being, as well as the quality of life in the town. Eventually it will become difficult to make left turns onto and off arterials, which may lead to an increase in accidents.

Access management attempts to group the turning movements in and out of properties, or shift them to side streets or service roads or to minimize the more problematic turns, i.e. the left turns. The basic goal is to improve traffic flow and safety along the arterial without reducing access. Accident rates along arterials are related to the density of driveways. The elimination or discouragement of certain turns in and out driveways is often seen as a reduction in accessibility. However, this potential reduction is generally offset by increased accessibility to the property from side streets or from adjacent properties. By facilitating traffic flow along the arterials, these actions will make it easier for the volume of vehicles to grow, which will be beneficial in the long term and will increase property values.

Studies have shown that an effective access management program can reduce crashes by as much as 50%, increase roadway capacity by 25% to 45%, and reduce travel time and delay as much as 40% to 60%. Though property owners need a driveway permit from NYSDOT, the state has limited authority to control and manage access along the state roads. The land use authority of the town offers the best regulatory means to manage access along an arterial. By developing an access management program, the town can work to minimize and possibly eliminate the most hazardous movements (left turns in and out) in the town.

Access management strategies also have beneficial impacts on pedestrian circulation in the sense that the actions encourage more walking between adjacent properties (by providing connections) and by making walking more pleasant along any sidewalk that may exist in the area, due to reduced numbers of driveways and vehicular turns. Aesthetics are generally also improved by access management plans.

### **Parking**

Downtown Harrison, the Central Business District and Silver Lake all experience parking conflicts. The effectiveness of the town's parking regulations is in need of review.

The off-street parking requirements should be reviewed with a view to more accurately address the requirements for some of the uses, such as office and retail. At present, for office uses one space is required per 200 square feet of floor area, except that a proprietary executive headquarters office building in an SB-35 or SB-100 district shall have whichever is the greater requirement as determined by the Planning Board, one per 350 square feet or 0.9 per each employee on site at any one time. Consideration should be given to reducing the requirement for offices to one space per 300 square feet of gross floor area. In 2010, the Planning Board recommended that the Town Board consider such a modification. For a proprietary executive headquarters office building, consideration should be given to removing the provision for 0.9 spaces per employee, i.e. requiring one space per 350 square feet. Such a modification will more accurately reflect actual usage patterns and reduce the amount of unnecessary impervious surface created.

The off-street parking regulations include a 10-space waiver for all non-residential uses in the Downtown Revitalization Target Area, the Halstead Avenue Commercial Corridor, and the Silver Lake Commercial Area. These waivers were intended to allow flexibility to businesses locating in the area, but when the waiver was adopted in the 1990s the complementary provision of additional public parking was not followed through with. This has contributed to some of the present-day parking shortages. The effectiveness of the waivers needs to be examined in the context of today's parking problems. In tandem with this, consideration should be given to reducing the off-street parking requirements for non-residential uses. In-lieu fees and other innovative solutions should also be studied by the Planning Board. Any such fees should be allocated to the Town's Parking Authority, which was created several years ago, to be used for transportation and parking improvements in the area.

### Traffic Calming

Some streets in the town, particularly in Silver Lake and the downtown, are used as shortcuts by commuters to access the state highways. The speed and volume of this traffic can detract from the quality of life in a neighborhood. In addition, the most important factor in the severity of a crash is the speed of the vehicles. By employing traffic calming measures, the town can both decrease the number and severity of crashes and improve the quality of life in its neighborhoods. Traffic calming methods are especially useful in high crash locations and residential streets or collectors suffering from high travel speeds.

Traffic calming measures include measures such as:

- Four-way stops applied to residential intersections. Typically four-way stops are only recommended at locations where there are sight-distance restrictions. However, they are an inexpensive control device, slowing down traffic and increasing intersection safety.
- Speed humps (an improved version of speed bumps that are bicycle friendly and can be plowed). Generally speed humps are only recommended on local and collector roads at locations that are not steep and have good sight distances as needed. They are effective in reducing speeds (especially the high-speeds drivers) and in improving safety. Their location needs to be coordinated with emergency services and they need to be designed so that drainage continues to function.
- Pinch points. At locations with good sight distances (possibly where there are overpasses or culverts), the town can narrow each lane width or narrow two lanes to one lane with adequate signing. This strategy needs to be coordinated with the emergency services and school bus services.

Some of these measures could be implemented on a test basis. Speeds and volumes should be measured before and after the construction of the speed device. Additionally, NYSDOT has traffic calming grants for which the town may apply.



## 2.9 Community Facilities, Services, and Infrastructure

### 2.9.1 Emergency Services

#### Police

The Harrison Police Department is located at the corner of North Street and Pleasant Ridge Road and has a total force of 61. The Patrol Division consists of 50 uniformed police officers, four sergeants, six lieutenants and one chief. Police service is provided 24 hours a day, 365 days a year by uniformed police officers, and supervised by uniformed patrol sergeants and lieutenants. Officers assigned to the patrol division are responsible for patrolling approximately 24 square miles and answering all calls for police service, which includes first responder medical service. The Police Auxiliary Force assists with traffic and crowd control at special events.

#### Fire



Harrison Avenue Fire Station

Harrison is served by five fire districts, manned mostly by volunteers and supplemented by career firefighters in the downtown district only. Each department elects its chiefs and officers. All firefighters attend drills and training sessions, to maintain and improve their firefighting and rescue skills, so that they can function at maximum efficiency when needed.

Fire Protection District #1, the West Harrison area, covers 11 square miles and is entirely manned by volunteer firefighters. This district has 83 members.

Fire Protection District #2, the Downtown area, has 14 career firefighters and 70 volunteer firefighters.

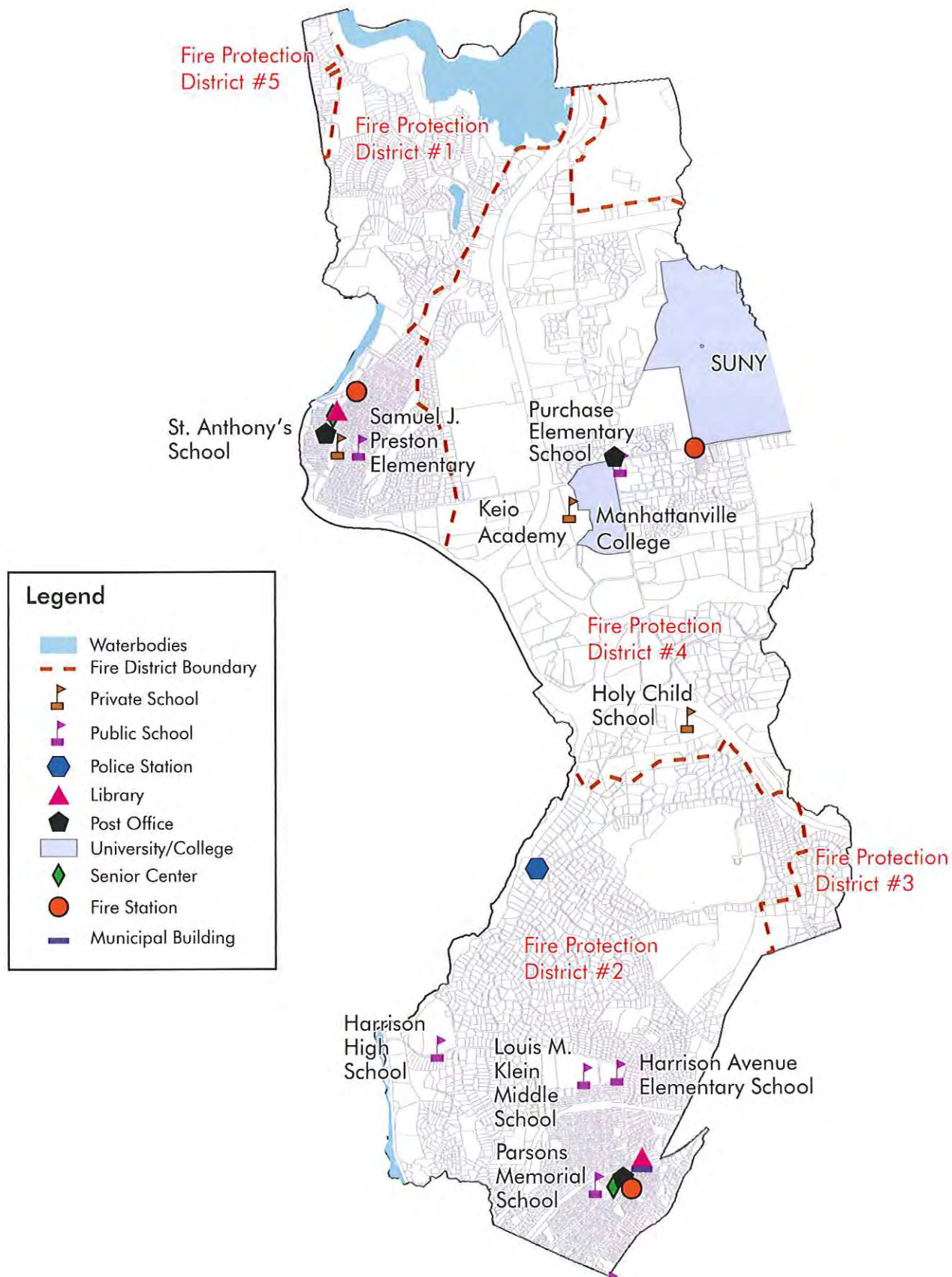
Fire Protection District #4, Purchase area is served by 50 volunteer firefighters.

Fire Protection District #3 is served by the Rye City Fire Department, under a contract with Harrison. It is a small district close to the Rye border.

Fire Protection District #5, North Castle Border is served by the West Harrison Fire District #1.

#### Harrison Emergency Medical Services

Harrison has a Volunteer Ambulance Corps (HVAC), located adjacent to the Police Station, on the corner of North Street and Pleasant Ridge Road. The HVAC has a staff of more than 56 EMTs and paramedics and operates two Advanced Life Supports (ALS) ambulances on eight-hour rotations.





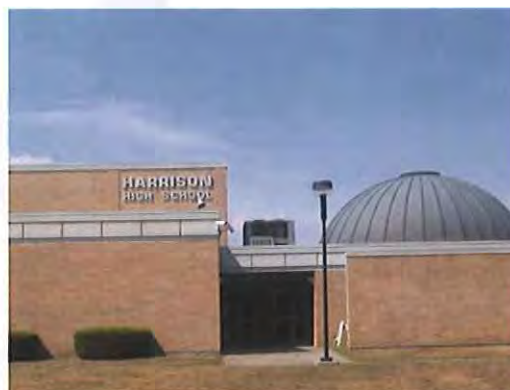
## 2.9.2 Education

### Schools

Harrison is served by both public and parochial schools. Harrison Central School District is coterminous with the Town/Village of Harrison. Most elementary students attend neighborhood schools from kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grades. West Harrison is served by the Samuel J. Preston elementary school, and Purchase is served by Purchase Elementary. Downtown Harrison is served by two elementary schools: the Harrison Avenue School and the Parsons Memorial School. The Louis M. Klein Middle School serves students in grades 6-8. High school students, grades 9-12, attend the Harrison High School.



Purchase Elementary School



Harrison High School

One parochial school serves Harrison. The School of the Holy Child, located on Westchester Avenue, serves grades 5-12. In addition, the Keio Academy of New York is a Japanese-language private school serving approximately 330 students in grades 9-12 on a 27-acre campus in Purchase.

Total enrollment in the Harrison Central School District in 2010 was 3,494 students (Table 2-12). A comprehensive plan for Harrison's schools has been completed to address some infrastructural and capacity issues at each of the six schools.



Table 2-12: Harrison Central School District

School	Grades	2004-05 Enrollment	2005-06 Enrollment	2006-07 Enrollment	2007-08 Enrollment	2008-09 Enrollment	2009-10 Enrollment
Harrison High School	9-12	878	957	975	968	963	1,003
Louis M. Klein Middle School	6-8	802	808	812	779	787	808
Parsons Memorial School	K-5	448	439	433	460	467	464
Harrison Avenue Elementary School	K-5	542	522	524	500	480	480
Samuel J. Preston School	K-5	304	312	322	326	342	328
Purchase School	K-5	474	456	468	447	443	437
<b>Total</b>		<b>3,448</b>	<b>3,494</b>	<b>3,534</b>	<b>3,480</b>	<b>3,482</b>	<b>3,520</b>

Source: New York State District Report Cards, New York State Education Department, 2004-2010

### Libraries

Three library facilities serve the residents of Harrison. The main public library is located on Bruce Avenue; a branch facility and history center is in Silver Lake. The library offers a range of other cultural services to adults and children; special services are also available for the disabled and homebound. The Purchase Free Library, located in the Purchase Community House, has an independent charter and is available to Purchase residents.

The Harrison Public Library Foundation, formed in 2011, is presently raising funds to complete a \$3 million renovation to the main branch, the Richard E. Halperin Memorial Library Building. The renovation would address outdated electrical systems and computers, expand the children's and teen areas and improve the overall layout.

### Higher Education

There are two major institutions of higher education in Harrison, which also make a valued contribution to the cultural life of the community.



Reid Hall, Manhattanville College  
Source: Manhattanville College

Manhattanville College is a private undergraduate institution with approximately 1,700 full-time students and 1,000 part-time graduate students. This college is also an important historic asset to the town. The land on which it is built originally formed part of Whitelaw Reid's estate, which was designed by noted landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted and architect Stanford White. Reid Hall is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

The State University of New York (SUNY) at Purchase was opened in 1972. Enrollment has increased from the 1988 level of 3,700 undergraduate students at the college to 4,148 in Fall 2011. The college also contains the Neuberger Museum of Art and the Performing Arts Center which are valuable cultural institutions in the town.

### 2.9.3 Water, Sewer and Stormwater Management

#### Water

Since 2005, Harrison has been served by one water district, Westchester Joint Water Works, which is operated by the town in conjunction with the Town and the Village of Mamaroneck. The water district serves Silver Lake, Purchase and downtown Harrison. The Westchester Joint Water Works serves approximately 6,000 customers in the town. Harrison's water is purchased from the New York City Water system and is pumped from Kensico Reservoir.

#### Sewers

Harrison is served by four sewer districts. The Mamaroneck and Blind Brook Districts include county trunk lines along the eastern and western borders of the community and serve most of Harrison. Portions of the northern part of the community are served by the Bronx River and Upper Bronx systems.

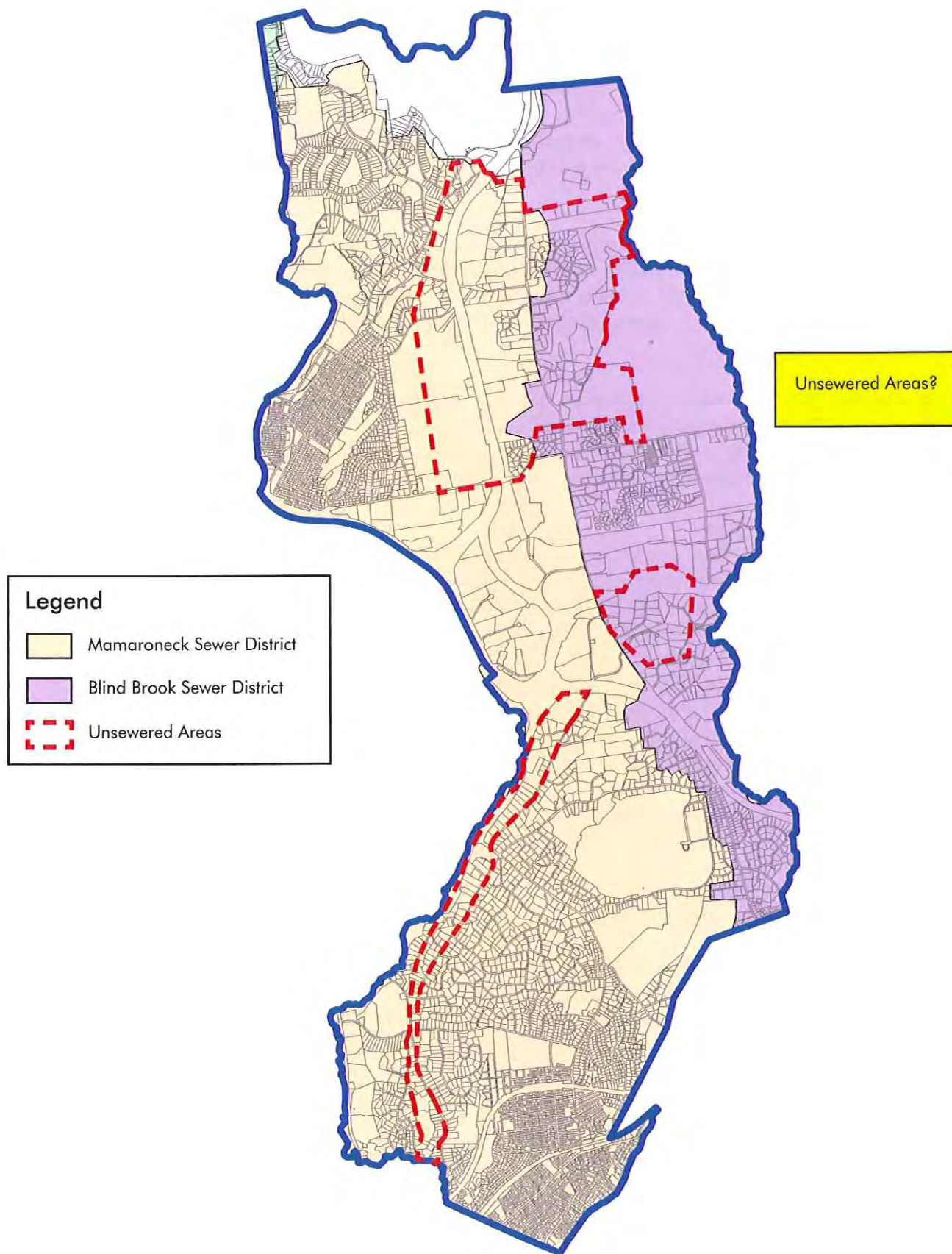
Figure 2-9 indicates a large portion of Harrison, north of Anderson Hill Road, is not sewered. However, as new subdivisions are developed in the area, the town is committed to providing the necessary extensions.

#### Stormwater Management

Stormwater discharges are generated by precipitation and runoff from land, pavement, building rooftops, and other surfaces. Stormwater runoff accumulates pollutants such as oil and grease, chemicals, nutrients, metals, and bacteria as it travels across land. Heavy precipitation or snowmelt can also cause sewer overflows which, in turn, may lead to contamination of water sources with untreated human and industrial waste, toxic materials, and other debris. Harrison is now subject to federal EPA regulations on the management of stormwater flows. These are known as Phase II requirements of the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program. These require that the Town address the problem of non-agricultural source stormwater runoff.

New York State, New York City and the Town all regulate stormwater management in Harrison. The State has set down requirements for each town to comply with the federal Phase II stormwater law. To comply with Phase II, New York State issued two non-industrial Stormwater Management General Permits under the State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES); GP-02-01 for construction activity, and GP-02-02 for MS4s (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems). Under GP-02-02, regulated MS4s must establish stormwater management programs that reduce the discharge of pollutants to the maximum extent practicable. Stormwater management programs must include six minimum control measures, two of which are relevant to the plan.





*Minimum Control Measure 4 – Construction Site Runoff Control*

To comply with GP-02-02, operators of MS4s are required to adopt a new local law, amend existing local laws and ordinances or establish an equivalent regulatory mechanism to reduce pollutants in stormwater runoff from construction activities that disturb one or more acres of land.

*Minimum Control Measure 5- Post-Construction Stormwater Management*

Either separately or in combination with Minimum Measure 4, MS4 municipalities must adopt new local laws, amend existing local laws and ordinances or establish equivalent regulatory mechanisms to reduce discharge of pollutants in stormwater runoff after completion of construction.

To comply with the above minimum control measures, Harrison adopted a new Stormwater Management and Erosion and Sediment Control law in 2007. The law was amended in 2011 to add a provision encouraging the use of green infrastructure practices to control stormwater runoff.

**Watershed Management**

Harrison lies in the Long Island Sound watershed which is designated an Estuary of National Significance. Westchester County instigated a non-point source pollution control program in 1991 to dovetail with the federal and bi-state Long Island Sound Study. This program has focused its efforts on intermunicipal watershed planning, natural resources restoration and public outreach and education since 1995. The Long Island Sound watershed was separated into seven study areas made up of one to three sub-watersheds. A Watershed Advisory Committee (WAC) is assigned to each study area, and two WACs are responsible for Harrison, WAC 3 and 4. Both these WACs published reports which assessed and made recommendations for improving the following:

- municipal ordinances and comprehensive plans of development
- streams
- wetlands
- stormwater management
- public education and outreach

Regulated MS4s that discharge stormwater to 303(d) (List of Impaired Waters) listed streams or TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) watersheds are required to meet the standard of “no increase in pollutants of concern.” Some watercourses, such as Blind Brook, are listed. A regulated MS4 discharging to a TMDL watershed is required to ensure improvement in water quality. Stormwater management programs must ensure no increase in the listed pollutants of concern to the listed water. New York State DEC provides direct guidance to affected MS4s.

**New York City’s Watershed Regulations**

The city also regulates stormwater management in the northern portion of Harrison, within the city’s watershed boundary, due to the critical role of Kensico Reservoir in New York City’s water supply. NYCDEP has set down regulations for development in the form of the *Rules and Regulations for the Protection from Contamination, Degradation, and Pollution of the New York City Water Supply and its Sources* (Watershed Regulations) 1997.

## 2.10 Natural Environment

Figure 2-10 demonstrates various natural and environmental features which contribute to the character of Harrison.

### Ridge Lines and Steep Slopes

A major ridge line runs from Rye Lake through downtown Harrison separating the Blind Brook and Mamaroneck River drainage areas. There are also many areas of steep slopes (defined as slopes of 15% or more) located throughout Harrison. Faced with diminishing amounts of level land, developers are increasingly looking to lots that are situated on steep slopes and grades. A Steep Slopes Law was adopted in 2006 which requires a slope permit. This law ensures any application for development on steep slopes is thoroughly evaluated.

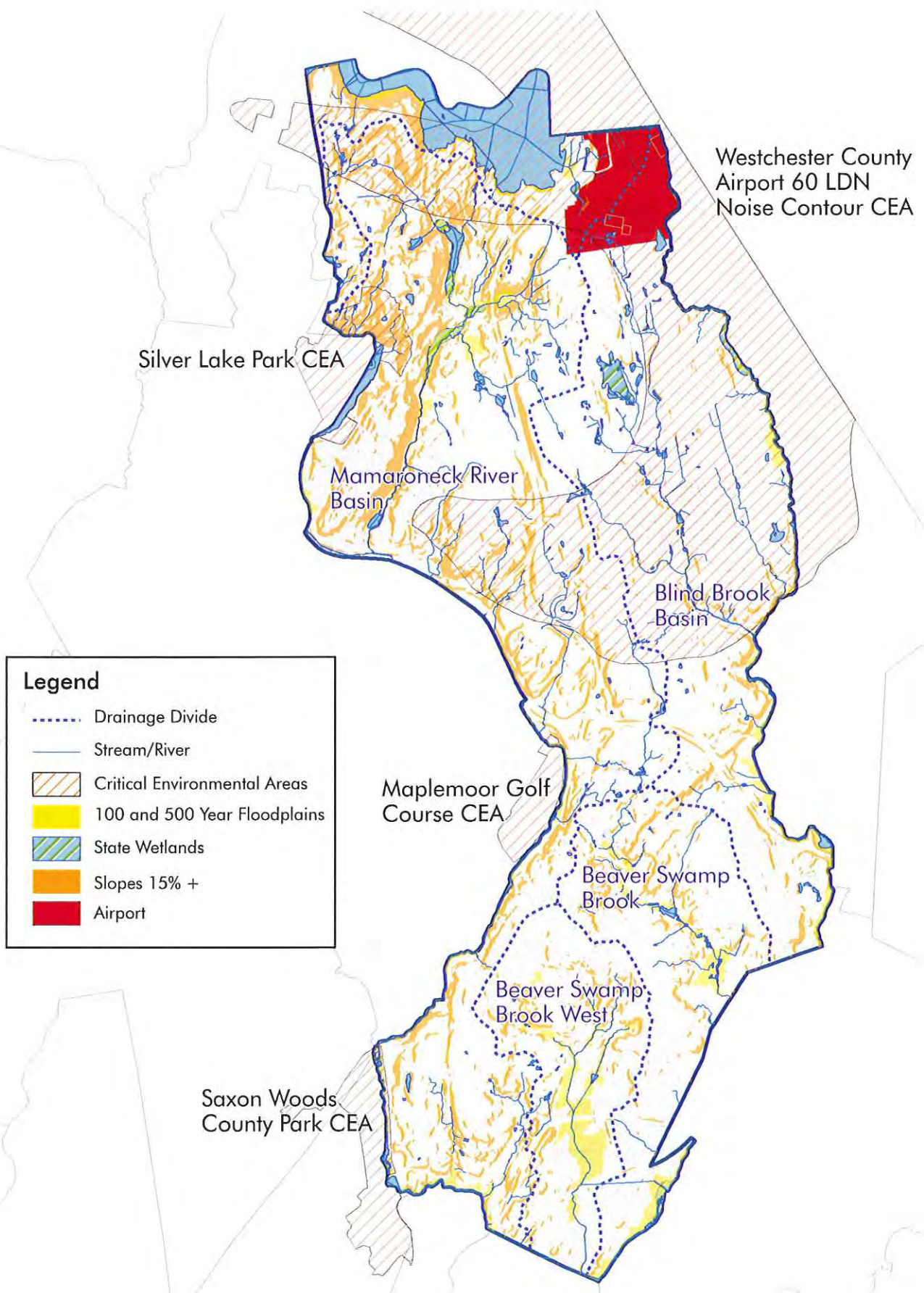
### Water Bodies and Flood Hazard Areas

Three major areas are defined within the 100-year floodplain - those areas adjacent to Blind Brook, Brentwood Brook and branches of the Mamaroneck River. Floodplains offer benefits in the form of improved water quality, opportunities for recreation and enhanced habitat for river wildlife. Floodplains should be protected from intensive development of new residences and commercial buildings. Flooding occurs along these watercourses in Harrison, and causes damage to homes in the vicinity.

Water quality has been an issue for some ponds and lakes in the town, where eutrophication has taken place. Eutrophication is the gradual increase and enrichment of an ecosystem by nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus. The increase in available nutrients promotes plant growth, favoring certain species over others and forcing a change in species composition. In aquatic environments, enhanced growth of choking vegetation or phytoplankton (that is, an algal bloom) disrupts normal functioning of the ecosystem, causing a variety of problems. Human society feels the impact as well: eutrophic conditions decrease the resource value of rivers, lakes and estuaries such that recreation and aesthetic enjoyment are hindered. Health-related problems can occur where eutrophic conditions interfere with drinking water treatment. There are numerous methods of addressing the problem of eutrophication, including tackling the source of excess nutrients, such as the presence of geese. The seasonal draw-down of water would also help to eliminate excess algal growth. The Town has taken steps to address eutrophication by introducing sterile grass carp in some water bodies. Further measures to improve water quality in all waterbodies in Harrison should be examined. Possible measures include:

- Geese and duck control: the fowl population must be controlled
- Construction of sediment ponds
- Growth of a hedge buffer around the waterbody's edge
- Winter water draw-down measures to fatally expose the weeds to the atmosphere





### Wetlands

The Town of Harrison regulates wetlands through its wetlands ordinance (Chapter 149). This states that wetlands are invaluable resources for flood protection, wildlife habitat, open space and water resources. It establishes a 100' wetlands buffer and requires a permit from the Town Planning Board for the listed regulated activities.

There are three levels of designation for wetlands: federal (through the Army Corps of Engineers), state and local. Wetlands over 12.4 acres in size are mapped and protected by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC). Any construction activity that might have an impact on these wetlands (excavation, filling, building, obstructions, potential pollution sources etc.) is regulated, whether or not the activity occurs in the wetland itself or on land adjacent to the wetland.

For wetlands smaller than 12.4 acres in size, the town is responsible for their identification and protection. Wetlands are subject to constant change, in terms of their hydrology, plant life and drainage. Therefore it would be difficult to produce a definitive town wetlands map, as it would require constant modification. At the site-specific level, delineation of wetlands will require the services of a soil scientist or wetland consultant to determine exact boundaries.

### Beaver Swamp Brook – Project Home Run

Beaver Brook is subject to periodic flooding and is particularly significant because it runs through downtown Harrison. One of the town's projects, carried out in conjunction with the county and state, is the Beaver Swamp Brook project. Initially, a two-acre site between Park and Bradford Avenues was converted from a severely degraded marsh into a haven for wildlife and a natural water filter. First, dense invasive common reeds (*Phragmites australis*) as well as junk (an abandoned shed and car, steel drums and automobile parts) were removed. Then thousands of native plants representing more than two dozen species were installed, as were shrubs and trees that included dogwood, ash, maple, oak and sycamore. Roosts for herons and swales for breeding turtles were installed, as was a subsurface structure in the stream channel to reduce stream bank erosion. The plants provide habitat for fish and wildlife and help filter out pollutants and excess nutrients before they enter adjacent Beaver Swamp Brook and downstream Long Island Sound.

This project has since grown into a larger recreational vision, covering 18 acres, and providing parkland, youth baseball and soccer fields, walking trails and a nature preserve, in addition to infrastructure improvements to Oakland Avenue. The larger project is currently on hold pending resolution of implementation issues.

### Kensico Reservoir

The Kensico Reservoir is the final stop for 90% of New York City's drinking water supply before it enters the water tunnels that carry it to consumers' taps. Normally, all of the water from the City's Catskill and Delaware watersheds – located in parts of Ulster, Delaware, Greene, Schoharie and Sullivan Counties west of the Hudson River – flows into the Kensico Reservoir. As Harrison obtains its water from this water supply system, the protection of the quality of Kensico is vital for both New York City and Harrison.

The Kensico Environmental Enhancement Program (KEEP) is a committee formed to protect the Kensico Reservoir. Its mission is to educate the communities in the Kensico



watershed about the importance of protecting water quality. By educating the people who live and work in the 13-square-mile watershed about how their daily activities affect water quality, KEEP works to protect the watershed and reservoir from pollution.

Funded by New York City, KEEP is a joint effort of DEP, county and local governmental organizations, and residents from the towns surrounding the Reservoir to enhance the Kensico's water quality and protect the watershed from pollution. The group has an Executive Board composed of community leaders and designated representatives of local governments in the Kensico watershed. KEEP develops public outreach and educational programs on watershed protection in Harrison and the four other towns in the watershed: New Castle, North Castle, Mount Pleasant and Greenwich, Connecticut.

#### Climate Change and Green Building Practices

According to the NYSDEC's policy for assessing energy use and greenhouse gas emissions in environmental impact statements (EISs), global climate change is a significant environmental challenge, and one that will continue to affect the environmental and natural resources of New York State. There is scientific consensus that human activity is increasing the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, and that this, in turn, is leading to climate change. Emissions of carbon dioxide represent an estimated 89% of the total greenhouse gas emissions in the state, and the vast majority of these emissions result from fuel combustions. Other sources of greenhouse gases include electricity distribution; refrigerant substitutes; management of municipal waste, municipal wastewater and agriculture; and natural gas leakage.

While climate change is often perceived as a federal, state or regional issue, local communities can take actions to mitigate its impacts. In 2008, Westchester County released the Westchester Global Warming Action Plan, created to identify workable strategies and potential actions the County can implement to reduce greenhouse gases and promote sustainable development. The task force charged with completing the plan considered the 2005 countywide greenhouse gas footprint of approximately 13.1 million tons of carbon dioxide, and relying on the most recent climate science, set a goal to reduce greenhouse gases by 20% below the 2005 base year by 2015. For 2050, the task force set a goal of an 80% reduction below the base year.

As one element of greenhouse gas emissions reduction, many communities are pursuing measures to encourage and in some cases mandate green or sustainable building practices. Green building practices are resource-efficient models of construction, renovation, operation, maintenance and demolition. Elements of green building include:

- Energy efficiency and renewable energy
- Water stewardship
- Environmentally preferable building materials and specifications
- Waste reduction
- Elimination of toxics
- Indoor environment
- Smart growth and sustainable development

The U.S. Green Building Council has devised a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED™) Green Building Rating System to measure the energy and environmental

performance of buildings. The system allots points in seven categories for environmentally beneficial building materials and design, such as site location, water efficiency, energy and the atmosphere, materials and resources and indoor environmental quality.

In addition to LEED accreditation, New York State offers a tax incentive program for developers known as the Green Building Tax Credit (GBTC) program. The GBTC is a \$25 million income tax credit for owners and tenants of buildings that meet energy, indoor air quality, materials, commissioning, water conservation, appliance and size criteria. Also, the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) provides technical and financial assistance to those interested in building green.

As an overall goal, Harrison should seek ways to use energy-efficient products and incorporate green building practices in new municipal projects. Where feasible, equipment and products should be upgraded to meet higher environmental standards. This might include smaller items, such as office equipment, or big-ticket items such as the acquisition of hybrid electric cars for the municipal departmental fleets.

There is currently no provision or incentive for green buildings in the Harrison Code. The Town should update its ordinance to encourage sustainable design practices; one option might be a rebate on building permit fees based on the level of LEED-type compliance.

#### **Deer**

The virtually unchecked growth in Westchester's herd of white-tailed deer has led to high fences to keep yards and gardens intact, the loss of plants and trees due to deer browsing, Lyme disease and the fear of it that keeps residents indoors, and collisions between deer and vehicles. This is a particular concern in areas where extensive manicured landscaping is present, such as the office parks, corporate headquarters and residential estates. Harrison should try to avoid the proliferation of deer fencing, but as a long-term solution needs a plan that reduces the deer population. As it is not alone in this, Harrison should discuss the various strategies that other municipalities are using in order to develop its own policy.

#### **Geese**

An estimated 20,000-25,000 'resident' Canada geese breeding pairs live in New York State in addition to unknown numbers of non-breeding and juvenile geese. These 'resident' geese are distinct from the migrating geese that pass through New York, as they tend to remain year-round in one location. This 'resident' population has created problems in Harrison, particularly where there are expanses of grass located near unobstructed water bodies.

Some options for the control of geese include:

- Reducing grassy expanses by planting trees and shrubs and allowing some areas to turn into meadows.
- Establishing shrubbery, trees and ground cover around ponds.
- Restricting public picnicking to pavilions.
- Enforcing non-feeding legislation.
- Utilization of noise-makers.
- Use of trained dogs, such as border collies.

## 2.11 Open Space and Recreation

### Parks



Town Park, downtown Harrison

Public parks in Harrison are operated by the Department of Public Works and the Recreation Department, and by the County. There are 81.8 acres of municipally owned public parks, the major ones being the John A. Passidomo Park in Silver Lake (48 acres), Veterans Memorial Park (23 acres) and Bernie Guagnini Brentwood Park (3.4 acres). Smaller park areas are improved with playground equipment.

About 132 acres of county parks are located in Harrison. Silver Lake Park, a natural reserve, is the largest of these with 95 acres. Saxon Woods Park, largely in Mamaroneck, has 17 acres in Harrison.

The town/village has approximately 145 acres of reserved parkland that is undeveloped. The major parcels include the former Nike missile base in the northern portion of the Town, and the Klingenstein property on Kenilworth Road which was donated to the community. Eleven acres of the former Nike base is used by the Department of Public Works. Table 2-13 lists the approximately 1,600 acres of parks and open space in the community.

### Public Recreation facilities

Recreation facilities other than parks are under the jurisdiction of Superintendent of Recreation. A comprehensive and diversified program of activities and facilities are offered, including programs at three community centers.



Sollazzo Recreation Center

The Sollazzo Recreation Center, in downtown Harrison, is equipped with a regulation gym, fitness center, game rooms, snack machines and TV. There is a meeting room that will accommodate 50 persons. A multi-purpose outdoor recreation area adjacent to the center is used for street hockey, basketball and volleyball. Given the increasing demand for the services that the Sollazzo Center provides and the age of the building, the town may need to consider repairing or rehabilitating the building or developing a new purpose-built building.

The Veteran's Memorial Building on Halstead Avenue has a large meeting hall. The facility is used primarily as a Senior Citizen drop-in center. The building is available for various community organizations including the Police Department youth division.

The Leo Mintzer Community Center in Silver Lake has a game room with pool tables, ping pong tables, air hockey and pinball machines, a fitness room, and a lounge used by the West Harrison Senior Citizens. It also includes a children's day-care center.

There is an abundance of adult softball teams, Babe Ruth baseball teams and Little League programs in Harrison. Due to the proliferation of these teams and in particular the growth in youth baseball and soccer, it has been reported that there is inadequate ball field capacity.

### 2.11.1 Open Space and Recreation Plan

The assessment of the adequacy of open space and recreation in any municipality should rely on detailed surveys and analysis of municipal needs. While the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) does have standards for various facilities, the most recent version of their guidelines, *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines* (1996), calls for an individualized community planning approach. Each community should plan and program facilities based upon identified local need. Harrison should consider an open space initiative, using a volunteer committee. The committee's charge would be to identify areas that have potential as dedicated open space, to identify funding options for acquiring such land, and to recommend priority actions to the Town Board.

In general, NRPA suggests that a park system, at a minimum be composed of a "core" system of parklands, with a total of 6.25 to 10.5 acres of developed open space per 1,000 population. Applying this to Harrison's 2010 population of 27,472 results in a range from 171.7 acres to 288.5 acres for developed open space requirements. At present, the sum of existing county parks and town parks (see Table 2-13, below) is 200.32 acres. Although Harrison also has approximately 174 acres of Town-owned property reserved for parks, as these parks are created and come on stream, the town's population is also expected to continue growing. Harrison's policy is to accommodate both existing and future requirements for parks and recreation.

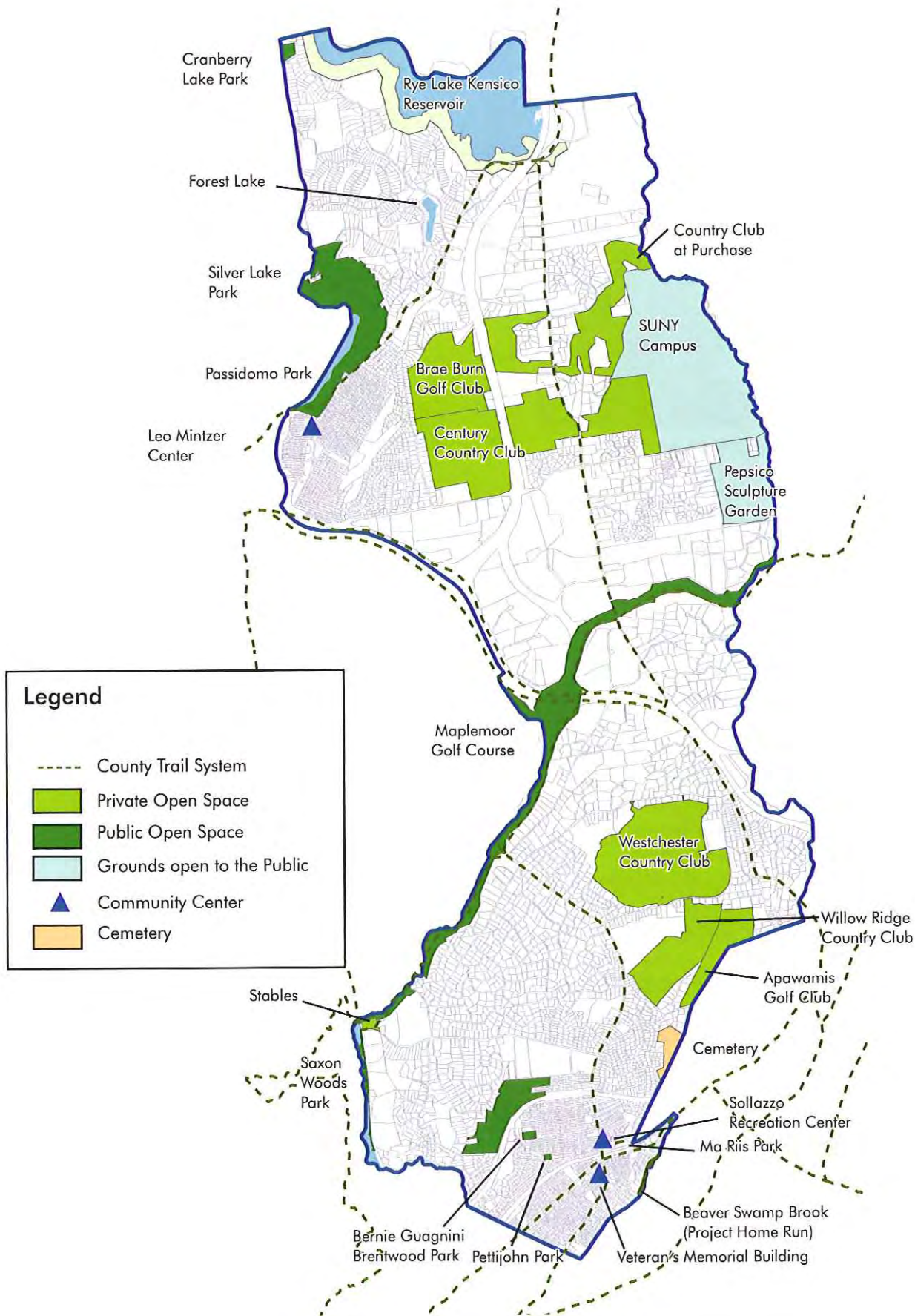
#### New York City Acquired Land

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection has acquired a 132-acre area just south of the Kensico reservoir. All NYCDEP-acquired properties are purchased under conditions established by the 1997 Watershed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). NYCDEP decisions on recreational use of land in its ownership are made primarily on a case-by-case basis. For example, if a property is small or can only be accessed over private property (right of way), it is not usually opened for public access. Large parcels with safe access are usually opened. The 1997 MOA also outlined some considerations for recreational use on acquired property, and states that historical recreational uses, including fishing, hiking and hunting, will be allowed to continue on newly acquired fee property, subject to rules and regulations adopted, or permits issued, by NYCDEP, provided that they neither threaten public safety nor threaten to have an adverse impact on water quality. The town should examine possible public access to this land, in conjunction with NYCDEP.

Table 2-13: Parks and Open Space

Type of Park	Name of Park	Acreage in Harrison	Subtotal
County Park Lands	Maple Moor Golf Course	15.3	
	Saxon Woods Park	17	
	Silver Lake Park	84	
Municipal Parks	Veteran's Memorial Park	23	
	Passidomo Park	48	
Smaller Town-Operated Recreational facilities	Wilding Park	1	
	Ma Riis Park	2	
	Pettijohn Park	1	
	Bernie Guagnini Brentwood Park	3.4	
	Emilio Scatenato Congress Park Playground	2	
	West Harrison Community Center	1.4	
	Rose Avenue Tot Lot	0.22	
	Jilly Flowers Park	1	
	Amelia Earhart Park	1	
			200.32
<b>Other Open Space</b>			
Watershed Properties		132	
Municipally owned property reserved for Parks	Nike Site (Total of 33 – of which 22 for rec.)	22	
	West Street Site (East side)	23	
	Klingenstein Property	17.5	
	Land that adjoins Brentwood Youth Memorial Park	16	
	Land adjoining Passidomo Park	43	
	Site at Emerson Avenue and South road	4.3	
	Land adjoining Veterans Memorial Park	16	
	West side of West Street	13.8	
	Beaver Swamp Brook – Project Home Run	18	
			173.6
Private Recreation Sites	Apawanis Country Club	67	
	Brae Burn Country Club	152	
	Century Country Club	181	
	Old Oaks Country Club	186	
	Westchester Country Club	328	
	Willow Ridge Golf Club	122	
	Country Club at Purchase	196	
			1,232
<b>Total</b>			<b>1605.92</b>







### 2.11.2 Private Recreation



Sculpture Garden at PepsiCo

One of the unique characteristics of Harrison is the large amount of open space devoted to country clubs and golf courses. These are not open space in the sense of undeveloped land, but nonetheless are critical to the town as large green vistas and visual breathing room. These are all located in residential zoning districts.

Additionally, there are private grounds in the town that are open to the public, namely the SUNY campus and the Donald M. Kendall Sculpture Garden at PepsiCo.

The country clubs in Harrison comprise an important resource for the town in the form of large green vistas and visual breathing room. There is no guarantee, however, that they will remain forever as private recreation. The development potential of the properties is significant. Strategies need to be devised to deal with the possibility of redevelopment, with a focus on mechanisms that provide for their retention, fully or partially, as open space resources in perpetuity, either with their full acreage or part of the land.

#### Conservation Easement

An easement is a voluntary agreement made between the property owner and an appropriate third party, such as a land trust or public agency. The easement is a legal device for conveying the right to enforce restrictions on the use of the land. This allows the purchaser to acquire partial rights to a parcel of land instead of acquiring all of the rights in fee simple (where the owner holds the full bundle of rights). Conservation easements impose restrictions on the land and can be used to conserve open space or to protect valuable environmental areas. They have become an increasingly popular tool in land conservation because of the benefits available to landowners, such as income or property tax benefits (if the easement is donated) or a payment (if the easement is sold). However, easements can be extinguished and so are not perfectly useful.

#### Overlay and Special Purpose Districts

An overlay district is a set of controls for a defined area which are required in addition to the base district's (or districts') regulations. Overlay zoning is used to protect the character of an area of special concern especially if the character needing protection extends past defined zoning districts. Overlays are commonly used for historic districts, floodplains, waterfronts, and aquifers. It may be possible for Harrison to apply an overlay district to its country clubs, especially where clubs abut one another, or the resource extends beyond the boundary of the club parcel.

A second option is a special purpose district such as a recreation district. Locally, the Town of Mamaroneck has mapped a recreation district on the Bonnie Briar Country Club. Mamaroneck preceded the rezoning with 10 years of very careful data collection and comprehensive planning on which the rezoning was based. This study documented that the lands to be rezoned were subject to serious environmental constraints, not the least of



which was flooding. The land was already dedicated to an apparently economic recreational use. Finally, the rezoned properties were located in a heavily populated, affluent area with a demonstrable demand for private recreational services and facilities.

Another type of special purpose district is a variation on a historic district, known as a Special Character District. Harrison can look to three examples in other Westchester municipalities for zoning districts that provide detailed design guidelines for areas with special character. While the guidelines are not mandatory, they clearly inform property owners about the town or village's preferences regarding how new construction and alterations are expected to mesh with existing buildings and enhance the overall appearance.

In Scarsdale, the commercial village center is designated a special design district. The Planning Board refers all applications in the village center to the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) for its recommendations. The BAR is directed by the zoning code's design guidelines to review architectural character, landscaping, streetscaping, and lighting.

In Pleasantville's zoning code, a Special Character Overlay District exists to "encourage the protection, enhancement, perpetuation and reasonable use of land and buildings in the village which have a special historical, architectural, cultural, aesthetic or similar interest or value, as well as to conserve existing neighborhoods which impart a sense of the village's cultural and historic heritage (.)" The overlay district uses supplementary design guidelines that apply to new construction and alterations of all uses within the district; the design guidelines are enumerated in the zoning text and administered by Pleasantville's Board of Architectural Review.

In the Town of Lewisboro, five special character districts – Old Goldens Bridge, Cross River, Mead Street, South Salem and West Lane/Elmwood Road – have been identified in the zoning code. These "encompass relatively large land areas that contain a substantial number of contiguous buildings and common landscape elements reflective of a period of Lewisboro history. Each area presents a unique setting which can be protected while allowing for new development if detailed attention is given to the enhancement of the special characteristics." While the separate areas have their respective design guidelines for building construction, the general language of the special character overlay district enables the town to also control grade alterations, removal of stone walls, erection of walls or fences and the removal of live trees. The district controls and the review process are administered by the Architecture and Community Review Council.

The town could study the possibility of overlay and special purpose districts, and the necessary local laws, and powers and duties of the Planning Board (or other board) that would regulate development in these districts. These would serve to protect areas of town that retain a special character worth preserving.

### **Open Space in Subdivisions**

State statutes authorize planning boards to insure that the recreational needs of the occupants of residential subdivisions are met by requiring land in the project to be set aside where a municipal study shows that there is now or will be an unmet demand for recreational facilities in the municipality. The planning board may require a financial contribution in lieu of a land reservation but only where it specifically determines that, in a

particular case, the subdivision is not of a sufficient size or adequate character to create a suitable recreational area for the subdivision's occupants.

The controlling case on this issue, *Bayswater Realty v the Planning Board of the Town of Lewisboro* (1990) held that a planning board must make two findings before it may exercise its authority to require a payment in lieu of setting aside park or recreation lands. First, the planning board must determine whether a "proper case" exists for imposing the requirement by evaluating the present and future needs for park and recreational facilities in the town. Second, the planning board must determine whether the proposed plat contains adequate and suitable space for recreational facilities. Only if it determines that a "proper case" exists and that the plat does not contain such space may the planning board require the subdivider to pay money as a substitute.

In relation to open space subdivisions, in the Bayswater case the court held that in a "proper case" where it has made the necessary findings, the planning board is not precluded from exercising both its powers under the town law authorizing cluster subdivision ordinance and the town law requiring that a developer set aside land for recreation purposes or pay fees for recreation.

## Chapter 3: Platinum Mile

Westchester's "Platinum Mile" of corporate office complexes runs through Harrison along I-287, and connects Harrison to the growing office presence along Connecticut's "Gold Coast" in Greenwich and Stamford to the east, and also to those in White Plains and Tarrytown to the west (see Figure 3-1). The 1988 Master Plan Update noted that the most significant change in land use since the 1972 Master Plan was the development of approximately 256 acres of land in Purchase for office use, contributing to the completion of some 4.5 million square feet of commercial office construction from 1972 to 1988. This concentration of office uses has been instrumental in contributing to Harrison's well-being, not just in terms of tax revenue and jobs, but also in terms of the contribution to the town in other ways, such as corporate sponsorship and the provision of semi-public open space.

At its height in 1984, the Platinum Mile area generated some 60% of Harrison's entire tax revenue<sup>1</sup>. However, since the peak in the 1980s, and particularly since the beginning of the current economic recession in 2008, the area has been beset by a wave of corporate departures that have resulted in vacant properties and empty buildings. Although this trend has been noted throughout Westchester County, the central I-287 corridor has been hit especially hard. Some existing buildings – which were largely built during the 1970s – have fallen into disrepair, and property managers have had difficulty replacing exiting tenants. With this changing landscape in the Platinum Mile, a number of companies have challenged their assessment values through tax certiorari cases, creating a significantly eroded tax base. At present, corporations contribute just 18% to Harrison's tax revenue<sup>2</sup>.

Amid this substantial shift, Harrison and other Westchester communities have been forced to entertain the possibility of repositioning formerly corporate areas with new uses that are compatible with surrounding land uses and beneficial to the tax base. As noted in Chapter 2, CB Richard Ellis has estimated that, since 2008, more than 1 million square feet of office space has either been repurposed or repositioned in the county<sup>3</sup>. In Harrison, much of the recent development in the Platinum Mile has been dictated by the special exception use permitting provisions of the SB (Special Business) districts, reflecting market forces and demand. To better ensure that future development and redevelopment is in keeping with the Town's overall goals, Harrison should carefully evaluate whether any specific changes to the SB provisions – particularly regarding permitted and special exception uses – should be considered.

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<sup>1</sup> "Our Platinum Mile Has a Little Bit of Rust." *Journal-News*, February 27, 2011.

<sup>2</sup> Harrison Tax Assessor Mark Heinbockel, at Platinum Mile Summit, May 23, 2012.

<sup>3</sup> CB Richard Ellis, *MarketView*, Westchester County, First Quarter 2012





COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

FIGURE 3-1: AERIAL PLATINUM MILE



### 3.1 Land Uses

The Platinum Mile contains several subareas with distinct issues and opportunities, reflecting the larger area's significant transformation in recent years. As shown in Figure 3-2, the central portion of the Platinum Mile is bounded by I-287 to the south, the Hutchinson River Parkway to the east and I-684 to the north and west. This teardrop-shaped subarea has seen some of the most significant vacancy issues, and represents the portion of the overall area that is most subject to change. The teardrop area, which is zoned SB-0, is bisected by four east-west access roadways: Bryant Avenue, Gannett Drive, Corporate Park Drive and Red Oak Lane. The northern and southern extremes of the subarea are the most stable. The northernmost parcel is occupied by the U.S. Postal Service as a regional distribution center, and the parcels along Red Oak Lane are built out and have transitioned to non-residential uses (including hotel, office, recreational and educational uses). However, the interior portion of the teardrop has recently experienced major changes and still faces challenges. The building located at 101 Corporate Park Drive was repurposed to the Hyatt House extended-stay hotel, while the former Nokia building at 102 Corporate Park Drive has been approved for the headquarters for biotechnology company HistoGenetics; the former Journal-News headquarters at 1 Gannett Drive was recently approved for redevelopment as a Lifetime Fitness location; and the EastRidge Enrichment Center day-care facility was built at 109 Corporate Park Drive. Meanwhile, the law firm Wilson, Elser, Moskowitz, Edelman Dicker LLP announced in 2011 that it would relocate its Westchester offices from 3 Gannett Drive – where it now occupies the majority of the building – to White Plains, and at least two floors of the building across the street at 4 Gannett Drive are vacant.<sup>4</sup> The two buildings located at 103 and 105 Corporate Park Drive have been vacant for some time and are lapsing into disrepair, while other scattered vacancies persist throughout the remainder of the buildings in the teardrop.

Most of the office properties within the teardrop subarea are managed by two companies: Normandy Real Estate Partners, which owns more than a dozen buildings collectively marketed as The Exchange on Corporate Park Drive and Westchester Avenue, and Heritage Realty Services, LLC, which owns 2, 3 and 4 Gannett Drive.

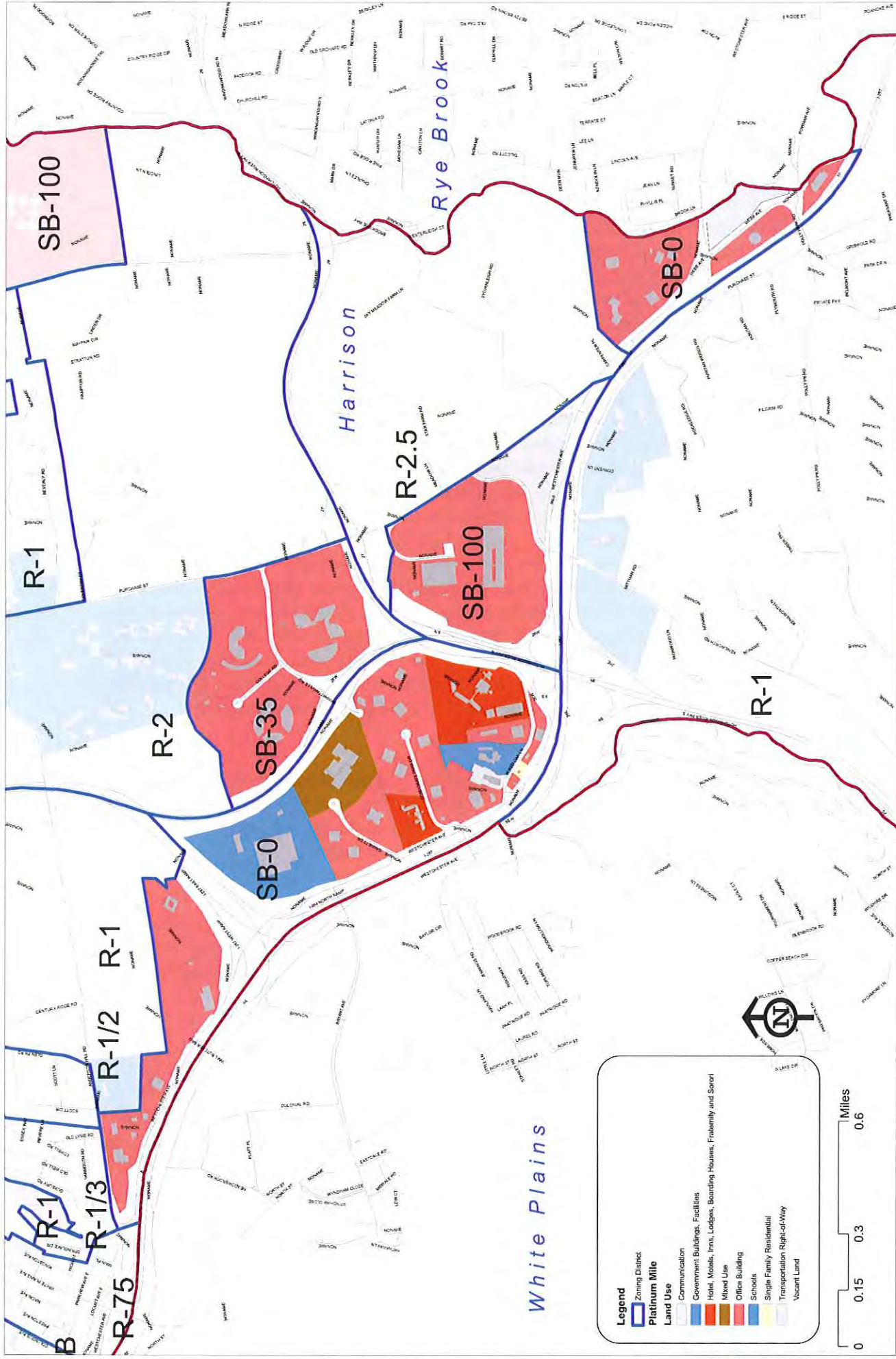
Outside of the teardrop, the land use and development picture is more stable. The SB-0-zoned area located north of I-287 and west of I-684, like much of the Platinum Mile, is now dominated by medical and institutional uses, including the recently approved Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in the former Verizon building at 500 Westchester Avenue, and Fordham University, which opened a campus at 400 Westchester Avenue.

In the SB-35-zoned subarea northeast of the teardrop, south of Manhattanville College and northwest of the Hutchinson River Parkway, the uses are dominated by the global headquarters of MasterCard, but other office uses are also located here, primarily in the financial and insurance industries. The major change in this subarea is the recent announcement by distilled-beverage company Pernod Ricard to relocate most of its employees located at 100 Manhattanville Road to a new U.S. headquarters in Manhattan. However, the company will retain about 150 employees at the Purchase location.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> "Developers Applaud "Platinum Center Proposal." *Westfair Communications*, June 1, 2012.

<sup>5</sup> "Pernod Ricard's U.S. Headquarters Moving." *Connecticut Beverage Journal*, June 1, 2012.



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

FIGURE 3-2: PLATINUM MILE LAND USE AND ZONING



The subarea zoned SB-100 and bounded by the Hutchinson River Parkway to the west and north, I-287 to the south and Purchase Street to the east contains a large regional office of Morgan Stanley, while the SB-0-zoned subarea between I-287 and the Village of Rye Brook border contains predominantly medical and traditional corporate uses, including the offices of WestMed Medical Group and the Friedlander Group. WestMed is presently completing renovations to its office on Westchester Avenue; there are no other indications of other planned expansions or departures in these two subareas.



Harrison Executive Park



Morgan Stanley

### 3.2 Zoning

As shown on Figure 3-2, the Platinum Mile area contains three zoning districts: SB-0, SB-35 and ZB-100. These districts are characterized by minimum lot size: 5 acres for SB-0, 35 acres for SB-35 and 100 acres for ZB-100. In general, the SB-0 zone is the most permissive of the three, being the only one that allows by special exception permit educational uses, hotels, fitness centers and day-care centers. However, none of the SB zones allow any type of residential (including nursing home), retail or restaurant use. Nonprofit clubs are also not permitted in any of the SB zones.

Given the recent office development trends discussed above and their resultant impacts on Harrison's tax base, the Town should examine expanding the allowable uses in appropriate areas within the Platinum Mile, with targeted controls, with the purpose of both retaining office complexes and promoting suitable, complementary non-office development. Clearly, any such development and redevelopment will need to be carefully evaluated for potential negative impacts on area traffic and the school system.

To achieve these goals, this Comprehensive Plan suggests creation of a new SB-MX (Mixed Use) zone for the teardrop subarea bounded by I-287, I-684 and the Hutchinson River Parkway. The regulations for this zone would be the same as the currently mapped SB-0 zone, except that assisted-care housing and senior housing (age 55 and older) would now be allowable by special permit. In addition, retail service, retail business or restaurant uses would also be allowable by special permit, with a maximum gross floor area of 15,000 square feet and a provision that, where these uses are proposed within a building containing other uses, the retail/restaurant use must be on the ground floor. Retail service or retail business that is accessory to a permitted use would also be

allowable as a permitted use. Finally, the SB-MX zone would contain a general special permit provision that any new development or substantial redevelopment must include street and sidewalk connections to adjacent properties, as determined by the Town Board.

The remainder of the currently mapped SB-0 zone, as well as the SB-35 and SB-100 zones, would remain unchanged, as these areas appear to be relatively stable. However, in the future, if the SB-MX zone is successfully implemented and market forces appear to indicate demand for mixed uses elsewhere in the overall Platinum Mile area, consideration may be given to expanding the SB-MX zone as appropriate.

In terms of parking, the requirements for offices in the Platinum Mile are one per 200 square feet of floor area, except that a proprietary executive headquarters office building in an SB-35 or SB-100 District shall have whichever is the greater requirement; one per 350 square feet or 0.9 per each employee on site at any one time. As discussed in Chapter 2, consideration should be given to reducing these requirements and removing the method of calculating requirements per employee for headquarters buildings.

### 3.3 Stormwater

Office campuses can contain huge amounts of impervious surfaces and can contribute enormously to stormwater flows. As discussed in Chapter 2, Harrison adopted a new Stormwater Management and Erosion and Sediment Control law in 2007, to comply with the Phase II requirements of the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program.

One of the major contributors to stormwater is impervious surfaces, such as the large parking lots necessary for office complexes. An impervious surface is one that is resistant to penetration by moisture, and includes but is not limited to, paving, concrete, asphalt and roofs. Impervious surfaces affect water quantity by diverting subsurface flow to surface runoff, often resulting in increased flooding and stream bank erosion. Impervious surfaces also affect water quality by accumulating and conveying polluted runoff to surface waters. Runoff from residential rooftops usually drains to lawns that promote infiltration, reduce runoff rates and filter pollutants. In contrast runoff from roads, parking lots and commercial/industrial rooftops often drains directly to stormwater sewers and is not naturally filtered by soil and vegetation. The general goal is to limit the amount of this type of impervious surface area, and to retain and treat stormwater on site.

The regulations for the SB zoning districts should be examined to study various means of placing greater emphasis on stormwater management. This could include requirements that parking area drainage should be designed such that all surface runoff (both piped and overland flow) is conveyed through a vegetated swale, vegetated filter strip, created wetlands, rain gardens, detention basins with bio-filtration prior or other similar facility to discharge into existing wetlands, streams, ponds, or other waterbodies. In addition, landscaping requirements, which also benefit stormwater management, could be strengthened. Reference should be made in the zoning text to Best Management Practices as illustrated in the 2010 *New York State Stormwater Management Design Manual*. As parking constitutes such a large proportion of impervious surfaces, consideration should also be given to adjusting the off-street parking requirements in light of new ideas such as landbanking or landscaping; the setting aside of landscape reserves that can be



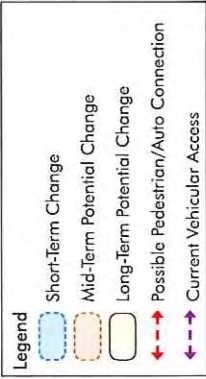
converted to parking if shortages arise. The use of porous surfaces should also be considered as an alternative to impervious ones.

The zoning changes discussed above would also serve to reduce the amount of parking needed in the new SB-MX zone by promoting a wider variety of land uses, which have different parking requirements at different times of day, thus allowing for the potential for shared parking arrangements.

### 3.4 Traffic

In general, vehicular circulation in the Platinum Mile area is good; in fact, easy access to regional highways and local arterials is one of the factors that led to the significant growth in office growth in the 1970s and 1980s. However, the teardrop subarea has some constraints to efficient circulation. The primary limitation is that the interior of the teardrop is highly segmented, reflecting its development as separately owned parcels. None of the four east-west roadways connects through the subarea, nor do they connect to each other. As indicated in Figure 3-3, a number of internal connections could be made within the teardrop to improve overall circulation. For example, Corporate Park Drive could be extended to connect with the Renaissance Hotel property on Red Oak Lane, while Gannett Drive could be connected to Bryant Avenue. Although the topography in the teardrop can make such roadway connections somewhat difficult, the actual distances between many of the roads are quite small. Providing for an improved internal roadway network – complete with sidewalk connections to accommodate pedestrians – would create a greater set of amenities and enhance the overall developability of the subarea.

It should be noted that the Town has long recognized by Purchase Street has a unique rural character that can be severely impaired by heavy traffic volumes. However, with the potential allowance by special permit of assisted-care and senior housing, emergency access throughout the teardrop subarea is critical. Therefore, this Plan recommends maintaining the separation between Corporate Park Drive and Manhattanville Road for through traffic, but creating an emergency-access-only connection between these two streets. This would ensure that future development of the teardrop would not result in significant traffic impacts onto Purchase Street, but would provide for good emergency access if needed. In addition, in the interest of promoting efficient overall circulation, this Plan recommends that Manhattanville Road retain its connection with Purchase Street. This connection is crucial for the office uses located on Manhattanville Road between I-684 and Purchase Street; without it, these users would have very limited vehicular access to points eastward – in particular the Hutchinson River Parkway – and would often be forced to travel through Manhattanville College to access Purchase Street to the north. This would create potential negative impacts for the college and would thus be unlikely to see much support for that significant land user. It is worth noting that the offices uses on Manhattanville Road are unlikely to expand substantially in the near future, and are in fact below their peak employment due to the economic trends discussed earlier in this chapter (including the relocation of much of Pernod Ricard's staff from its Manhattanville Road site to New York City).





## Chapter 4: Downtown Central Business District

The Harrison Central Business District (CBD) is delineated as shown on Figure 4-1. This encompasses the area between the intersection of Broadway and Halstead Avenue to the west, Orchard Street and Harrison Avenue to the north, Grant and Halstead Avenues to the east and Park Avenue and Harrison Avenue to the south. As outlined in the 1988 Plan, this area serves four important functions: as the center for municipal government and the location of many community facilities and services; as a commuter transportation center; as an important housing resource offering a range of housing types; and as the largest retail area in the town.

It should be noted that, as Halstead Avenue continues westward past Broadway to the border with the Village of Mamaroneck, it remains an important commercial corridor; however, the nature of the businesses is somewhat different from that of the downtown core. Most of these businesses are single-story, often more neighborhood-focused, and are also more interspersed with residential uses. Because of these differences in character and density, the western portion of Halstead Avenue (to West Street) is not considered part of the CBD; nonetheless, it can be seen as a support to the downtown core and as a key gateway into Harrison. Therefore, some of the discussion and recommendations for the CBD area may also pertain to this western portion of Halstead Avenue.

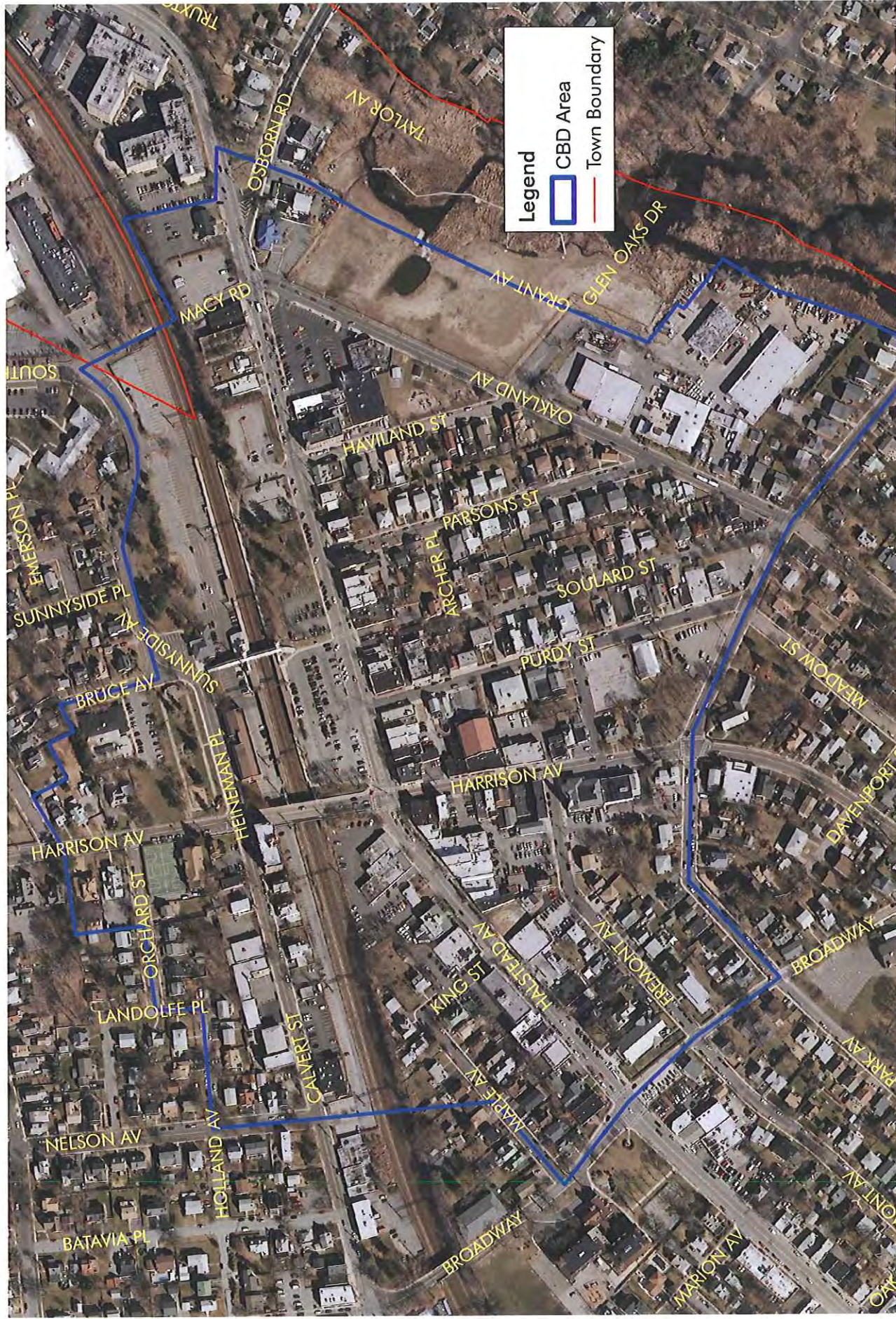
### 4.1 Land Uses

Harrison's CBD is characterized by a range of residential, retail, restaurants, mixed commercial, parking lots, institutional, industrial uses and parks (see Figure 4-2A). The layout created by Harrison and Halstead Avenues forms the basic structure of the CBD, and both avenues are characterized by a broad range of uses, as discussed more fully below. The downtown contains three distinctive areas based on use; 1) the area north of Halstead, containing the town hall, the library, the Sollazzo Center, significant parking lots and Ma Riis Park; 2) the area east of Oakland Avenue which is characterized by industrial, mixed commercial, preserved open space, and the Project Home Run site, which will be redeveloped as a park and recreation facility; and 3) the central spine of the downtown, running east-west along Halstead Avenue, which serves as Harrison's mixed use "Main Street." The Metro-North Railroad bisects the area, constituting a significant barrier to north-south connections, with Harrison Avenue being the only street and the Metro-North overpass as the only pedestrian-only connection that traverses it in the CBD. The commuter parking lot serving the station is also a major land use in the area.



Retail Uses in the CBD







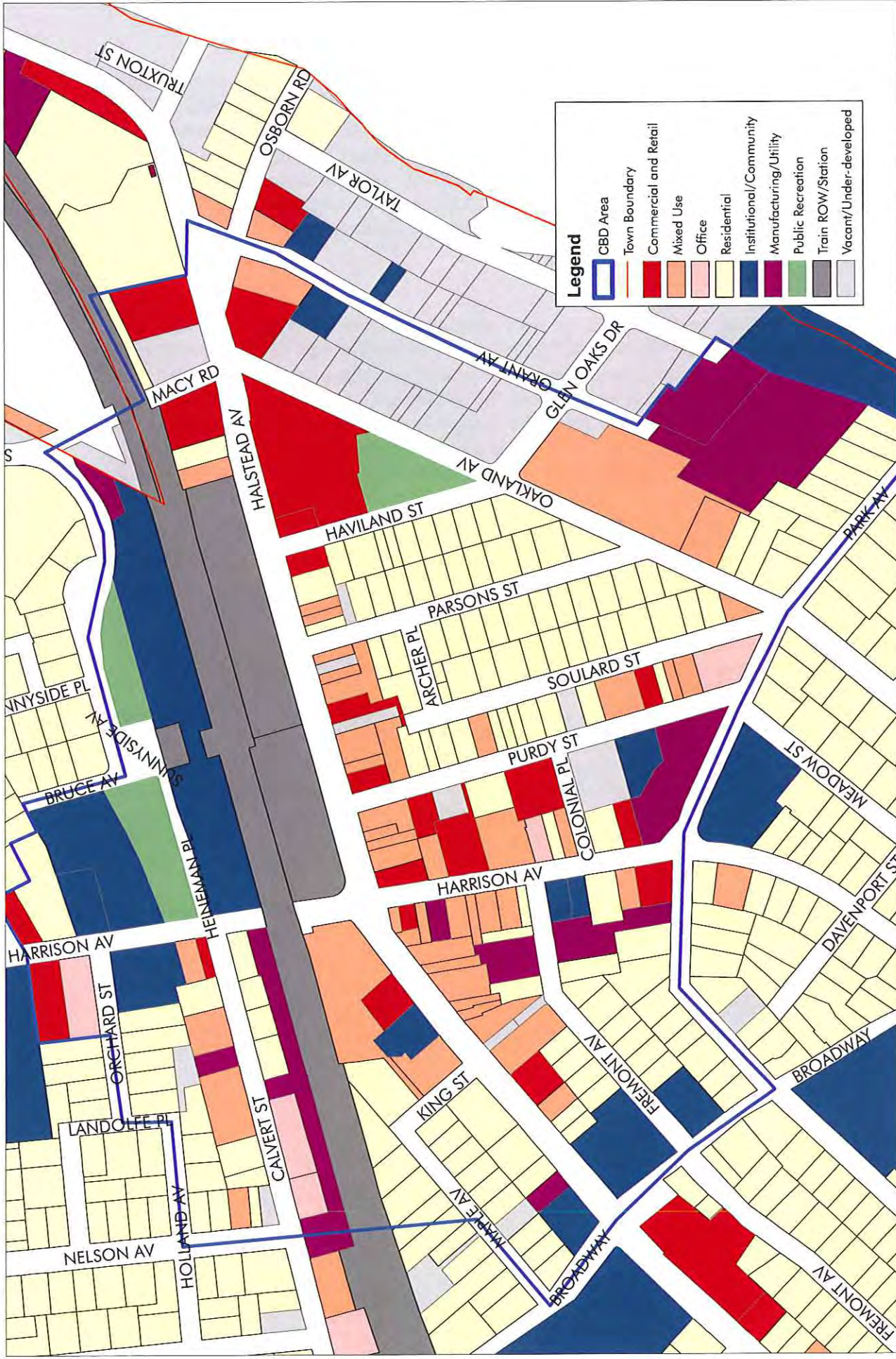


Figure 4-2B illustrates that Harrison has a very walkable CBD. In this figure, restaurants and retail uses have been separated out from the rest of the land uses, and building footprints are shown, rather than the entire lot. This demonstrates that restaurants are very well represented, with the largest concentration along Halstead Avenue. The orange color in Figure 4-2B denotes lots that are solely in restaurant use, but in some cases the pink also contains a restaurant, as one of a number of businesses operating on one lot. Vacant buildings are also noted on the figure, indicating that vacancies are relatively few, and primarily located along Harrison Avenue.

#### *Halstead Avenue*

This corridor serves as Harrison's primary commercial thoroughfare, and has some elements of a traditional "Main Street" character, particularly east of Harrison Avenue, with a relatively consistent row of early 20<sup>th</sup>-century buildings on the southern side. However, on the northern side of Halstead, the streetscape is interrupted by two parcels totaling about 3.5 acres, which contain the Metro-North train station commuter surface parking lots and a small area of public open space, known as Jilly Flowers Park. At this area, the Town and Metro-North Railroad are jointly advancing the development of the two parcels for a potential transit-oriented development (TOD) project that could potentially include residential, retail and municipal uses, pedestrian plazas, a new parking structure and associated streetscape improvements.

In addition, the Harrison Shopping Center at Halstead and Oakland Avenues, which is anchored by an A&P, is more auto-focused than most of the rest of the corridor. This site could be considered for some improvements to building façade and parking circulation, but still acts as an appropriate gateway into Harrison and transition out of the CBD.

West of Harrison Avenue, the Halstead corridor shows more variation in building heights and types and land uses, which results in a less clearly defined character. For example, the new CVS drug store and Dunkin' Donuts outlet, while attractively designed to complement the existing surrounding character, are somewhat geared toward vehicular traffic. This contrasts with the character of the corridor on the opposite, southern, side, as well as to the immediate east. Residential and community facilities at the western end of Halstead (at Broadway) do provide some foot traffic and street activity.

The majority of Halstead Avenue contains commercial and mixed uses. For the most part, the single commercial-use buildings are one-story, with older buildings containing off-street parking in the rear and newer buildings having larger, landscaped parking areas. The mixed-use buildings, typically containing retail on the ground floor and residential apartment units above, range in height from two to four stories. Ground-floor commercial uses include bars, restaurants, dry cleaners, flower shops, law offices and similar uses.



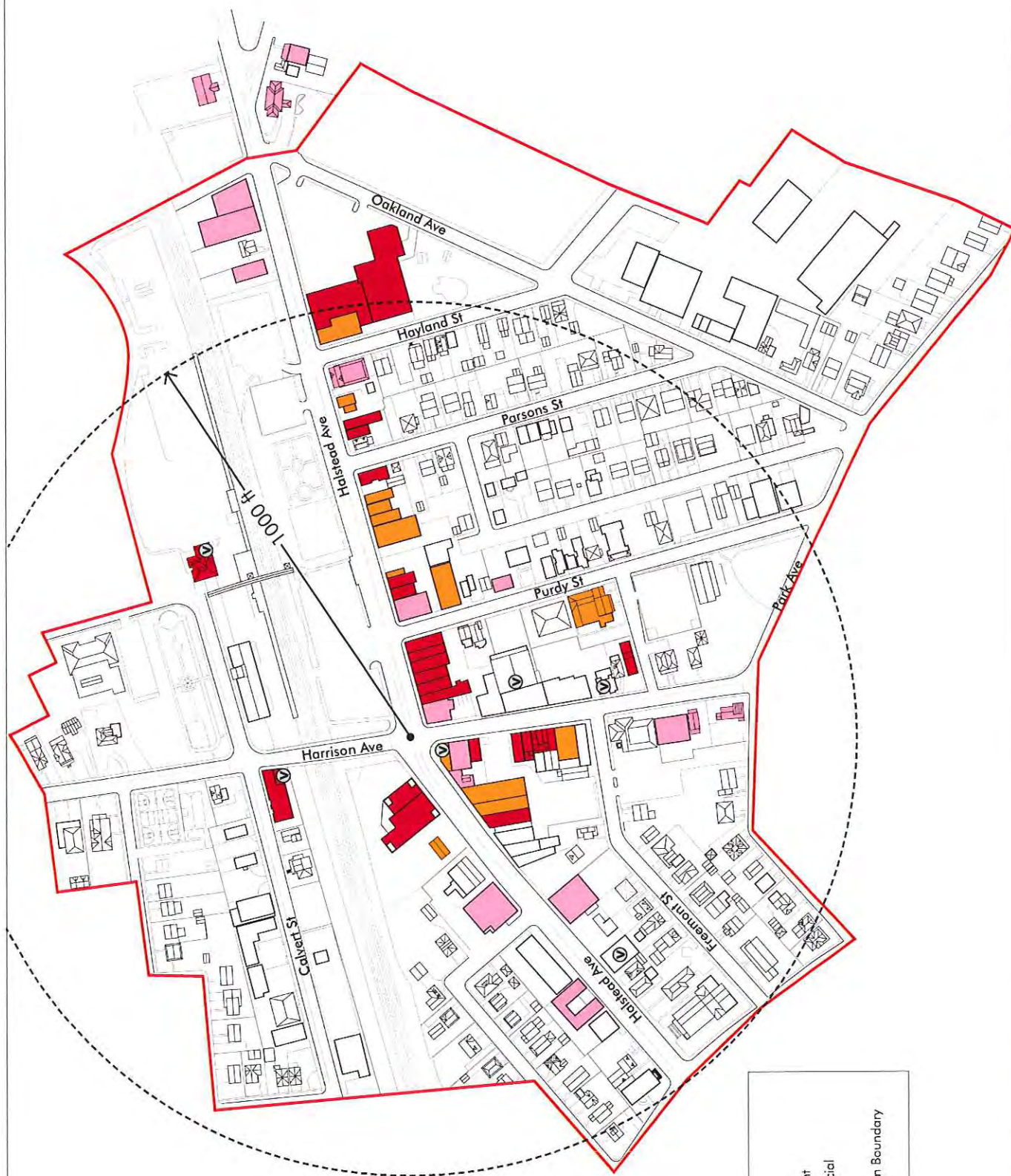


FIGURE 4-2B: COMMERCIAL USES



### *Harrison Avenue*

This corridor shows greater variation in character than Halstead Avenue, reflecting its use as a regional route connecting the Hutchinson River Parkway to Route 1, and its importance as a local link between downtown and southern Harrison. The south side of the intersection of Harrison and Halstead Avenues has a strong “Main Street” quality, with several architecturally significant buildings and a mix of two- and three-story buildings with commercial and mixed uses. The largest lot on Harrison Avenue contains a 1920s, two-story building with ground-floor retail uses, second-floor office space and a vacant single-screen movie theater. Another major use on Harrison Avenue south of Halstead is the fire station serving all of Downtown and southern Harrison.

North of Halstead, Harrison Avenue contains an eclectic mix of a high-rise multi-family building, residences converted into offices and municipal uses including Town Hall, the main branch of the library, the Sollazzo Recreation Center and Ma Riis Park. As it exits the CBD, Harrison Avenue transitions to primarily single-family residential uses.

Harrison Avenue, although situated in the heart of the downtown, is not capitalizing on its strengths at present. This is a narrow corridor, with parking on only one side of the street. Very few of the businesses have their own parking available, and this is a significant constraint. The old theater offers a significant reuse and redevelopment opportunity, and the “boutique” character of this street needs to be retained, but the corridor requires improvements in its appearance and retail vitality.

Harrison Avenue is presently located in the CBD zone – Central Business District, which only allows for residential uses, via a special exception permit, if they are above first-floor non-residential uses. Between Halstead and Park Avenues, Harrison Avenue could be a very pleasant, mixed-use street with boutique-sized stores with the appropriate zoning solution with design guidelines. One such approach is called form-based coding, where the zoning controls uses, bulk, exterior design of the building, and the building and lots relation to the rest of the street.

Retail uses are scattered within the CBD, mainly along Halstead Avenue, with the largest concentration present in the Harrison Shopping Center on the corner of Halstead and Oakland Avenues. However, there is less of a retail presence than one would normally expect in a downtown. In general, the retail stores are small-scale, and cumulatively comprise a relatively small proportion of overall square footage for a downtown.



Harrison Avenue



Harrison Avenue



Halstead Avenue parking lot



Successful downtowns typically include a variety of shops, services and restaurants and other uses, with sufficient on-street and off-street parking that is sited in order to encourage shoppers to park their cars and travel the downtown on foot. This helps to increase foot traffic and therefore support local businesses. The ideal downtown mix includes residential uses to help ensure a 24-hour presence in the area that complements traffic and parking needs for the commercial uses.

A key goal expressed during the comprehensive planning process is for the CBD to accommodate a wide mix of business types as well as residential uses. The consensus is that, at present, the range of stores lacks variety. This opinion is strengthened by long-standing vacancies in the core business area. Although vacant buildings do not represent a significant portion of the CBD, there are several highly visible sites that have remained vacant for some time, which affects the perception of the health of the entire area. These include the old movie theater on Harrison Avenue and the former Harrison Sports Shop on Halstead Avenue. In addition, there are several vacant lots along Halstead Avenue – as well as the Metro-North parking lot – which act to break up the urban fabric and disrupt pedestrian continuity. The potential exists for a vibrant commercial core, as the town is home to a large population of high earners, and host to a large volume of commuters and reverse commuters that travel through the downtown to the train station on a daily basis; however this is not being capitalized upon. A reasonable diversity is necessary to properly serve local residents and employees, and to sustain the vitality of the surrounding residential community. The Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals should continue to be aware of this need, as applications come before them.

Furthermore, good urban design is required to create a strong sense of place. A review of the zoning districts and the area and bulk schedule (Table of Dimensional Regulations) could be undertaken to ensure that the requirements lead to buildings and stores of the correct size for the downtown with perhaps some differentiation between Halstead and Harrison Avenues and the side streets that support these two main thoroughfares. Recent successful developments such as the Pizza 2000 building on Halstead and the (now closed) Quizno's building on Harrison are examples of good placemaking.

In 2012, to begin addressing some of these issues, the Town established a Downtown Revitalization Committee, composed of approximately 10-12 business owners, property owners, interested individuals and residents. The committee has narrowed its focus to three main areas to address aesthetics, infrastructure (including lighting, sidewalks, pavement, flooding, sewer, water and the library) and parking. Progress achieved to date by the committee includes work to create a model block on the north side of Halstead Avenue, from the clock to the corner of Harrison Avenue, selection of a set of general colors and materials for downtown Harrison façades and private/voluntary fundraising for downtown beautification and façade improvements. The Downtown Revitalization Committee was involved in the development of this Comprehensive Plan, and provided a number of recommendations which are discussed below.

### Community and Public Services

Harrison CBD contains the largest concentration of community services in the town, including the Veteran's Memorial Building, the Sollazzo Recreation Center, the town hall, post office, and the library, in addition to religious and educational facilities and the Metro-North train station. Some of these community facilities require upgrades and improvements, if not replacements.



Harrison Library



Sollazzo Center



St. Gregory the Great school

The connection between the Town Hall and the library and the retail core of Halstead Avenue has been improved since the 1988 plan, with the MTA's construction of a covered pedestrian bridge linking the parking lot on the Halstead Avenue side across the railway tracks to the parking lot at the old train station on Heineman Place. This has enhanced the pedestrian connection between these two separated components of the downtown. However, the full potential of Harrison's civic assets in the CBD is not being realized. The concentration of the Town Hall, library, former train station and Sollazzo Recreation Center in a small area north of Halstead Avenue and the Metro-North railroad tracks creates a clear opportunity to create a true civic center that better links these municipal uses to each other and to the surrounding community.

The centerpiece of the civic center would be Ma Riis Park, which, though well-used for a variety of community events, lacks good connections to the adjacent library and convenient parking. Ideas raised during the comprehensive planning process include transforming the park into a formal "Town Green," reminiscent of well-known greens throughout New England. Thus, the park would have vehicular access on all four sides, with the provision of parking and strong pedestrian connections to the library, Town Hall and the rest of downtown. Another concept suggests expanding the existing playground into the open space between the library and Harrison Avenue. Given that both of these concepts seek to reconfigure this open space from a well-used area for active recreation in the downtown to some other use, and that any reconfiguration would need to take into account connections with surrounding municipal uses (the library, the municipal building, the Sollazzo Center and the former train station building), this Plan recommends that the Town undertake a comprehensive study of the civic center area. Of primary concern should be effectively developing Ma Riis Park as a unifying element for the surrounding uses to create a true civic center in downtown Harrison, and the provision of safe and convenient pedestrian access among uses, to and through the park. This should be accomplished with the creation of a clearly marked network of pedestrian paths and crosswalks. It may also be possible to rework the central area of the park to provide more useable open space, thus making ideas suggested above more feasible. Further study would be needed to address potential issues of traffic, circulation and pedestrian safety.

In addition, the Harrison Public Library is raising funds to complete a \$3 million renovation to its main branch, to address outdated technology, expand the children's and teen areas and improve the overall layout. While recognizing that funds for this effort will come from private sources, the Town should be closely involved in the library's renovation, to ensure that the goals for the library and the Town as a whole for this portion of downtown are aligned.

Given the increasing demand for the Sollazzo Center's services and the age of the building, the Town may need to consider either repairing or rehabilitating the building, or constructing a new purpose-built building. In addition, the Town-owned former train station building to the east of Town Hall has previously been proposed for adaptive reuse as a municipal court facility, which could also host the regular meetings of Town boards. While the current fiscal environment and the substantial cost of a renovation to this historic building have thus far made reuse cost-prohibitive, historic preservation grants and other funds may be available to undertake the project in the future. Any major repair or replacement of either the Sollazzo Center or the old train station building should be done as part of a unified planning effort that considers the adjacent Town Hall and library uses, as well as the local street network, parking needs and surrounding neighborhoods.

#### Parks

The CBD is well served by parks, and will be better served with the completion of Project Home Run. However, the CBD lacks an inviting, accessible public space in its center. The two main public spaces in the downtown core: Ma Riis Park and Amelia Earhart Park north of Halstead Avenue are separated from the rest of downtown by the railroad and not well linked to adjacent civic uses, while Jilly Flowers Park is isolated, surrounded by the railroad to the rear, parking lots to either side and Halstead Avenue to the front.

A proposed "Town Green" concept for Ma Riis Park is discussed above and indicated on Figure 4-3, while Jilly Flowers Park should be improved as part of the Metro-North TOD project to offer an inviting, accessible and well-supervised open space to the public, in the interest of enhancing the entire downtown experience.

#### Housing

Housing in the CBD is mainly comprised of two-family residences. There are a few multi-family residential units along Halstead Avenue, one being Marion Court Condominiums in the west and Newport Towers in the east. There are also dwelling units over first-floor non-residential uses along Halstead and Harrison Avenues.

## 4.2 Zoning

Zoning in the downtown reflects a mix of business and residential zoning; Figure 4-3A illustrates the zoning districts and Figure 4-3B outlines the use regulations. There are a total of four business districts, within which the only residential development permitted is dwelling units over first-floor non-residential uses. The PB - Professional Business district is centered on the Town Hall and the train station, and allows for professional offices and office support services with limited retail activities and no restaurants. The CBD - Central Business District is located to the south of the rail line, along both Halstead and Harrison Avenues. This allows a variety of retail goods and services in the downtown. The NB -



Neighborhood Business district is located on the east side of Harrison Avenue, south of Colonial Street stretching eastward as far as Soulard Street. This provides for retail businesses and services serving local needs. The fourth business district is the GC – General Commercial district, which provides for general retail businesses and services but excludes restaurants, and this is located in the far east of the CBD, along the south side of Osborn Street. Further analysis is required to determine if four separate districts are necessary to serve the commercial core.

The largest residential district in the CBD is B – Two Family Residence District, but there are also R-75 and R-50 which are One Family Residence Districts. One block containing Newport Towers is located in the MF – Multi Family Residence District. Finally, two blocks are located in a mixed-use district, the MFR – Multi Family limited retail district which provides for residential uses in conjunction with offices and retail businesses and services. Marion Court Condominiums, with retail on the ground floor, is located in this district.

#### 4.3 Non-conforming Uses and Vacant/Underutilized Sites

The B-district contains several non-conforming uses. The first is the industrial/commercial site east of Oakland Avenue containing Superior Heating and Cooling, the Berlanti building, Daltille on Oakland and Harrison Auto Sales and Stone and Landscape Supply on Grant Avenue. The second is Prestige Auto Salon on the corner of Oakland and Soulard. The third area of non-conforming uses in the CBD contains the offices on Harrison Avenue north of Orchard Street.

The industrial/commercial area east of Oakland Avenue should be considered for rezoning to the General Commercial (GC) district. That zone appears to permit the current industrial uses, which have existed as nonconformities for at least 20 years. Clearly, their nonconforming status has not induced them to relocate, but instead may be inhibiting their ability to maintain and upgrade their facilities. A rezoning to GC would support a contributor to taxes and jobs in Harrison. The exact boundaries of the new zone, and possibly new landscape requirements for buffering, would need to be carefully evaluated to ensure minimal impacts on the adjacent residential neighborhood and avoid creating an inappropriate number of non-conforming uses.



Industrial/ commercial buildings on Grant Avenue



Daltille building on Oakland Avenue



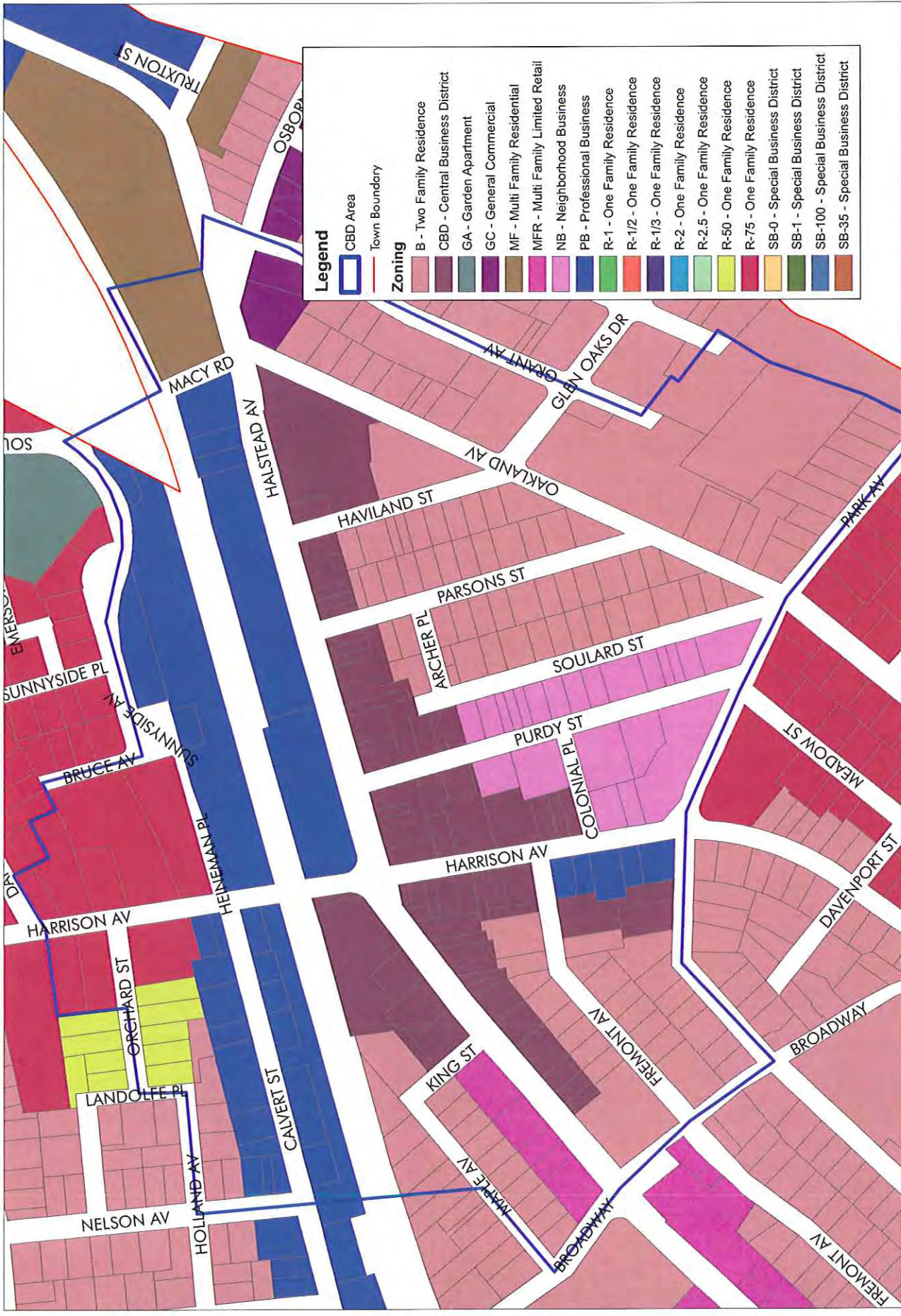


FIGURE 4-3A: ZONING DISTRICTS IN CBD



Use Classifications	PB	NB <sup>1</sup>	CBD	SB-0	SB-1	SB-35	SB-100	MFR	GC
<b>Residential uses</b>									
1-family detached dwelling	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	P	X
2-family detached dwelling	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	P	X
Multiple dwelling	X	SE	X	X	X	X	X	P	X
Dwelling units over first-floor nonresidential uses [Amended 9-17-1980]	SE	SE	SE	X	X	X	X	P	SE
<b>Residential community facilities</b>									
Church, synagogue or similar place of worship, parish house or rectory	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE
Public library, police station, fire station, Town Hall or municipal service building	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
<b>General community facilities</b>									
Bus passenger shelter	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE
Nonprofit clubs, fraternal, social, educational or philanthropic organizations	P	P	X	X	X	X	X	X	P
Public passenger transportation station or terminal	X	X	SE	X	X	X	X	X	SE
Public utility structure or right-of-way, including offices	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE
SB-0 educational school	X	X	X	SE	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Business uses</b>									
Automobile or boat salesroom, outdoor sales area or repair garage	X	X	SE	X	X	X	X	X	P
Automobile service stations	X	SE	X	X	X	X	X	X	SE
Bowling alley, billiard parlor and similar indoor recreation uses	X	SE	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cabaret	X	X	P	X	X	X	X	X	X
Cleaning establishments	X	SE	SE	X	X	X	X	X	X
Personal wireless services facilities <sup>2</sup>									
Structurally mounted	X	X	X	SE	SE	SE	SE	X	X
Monopole	X	X	X	SE	SE	SE	SE	X	X
Tower	X	X	X	SE	SE	SE	SE	X	X
Eating establishment: drive-in, open front or curb service	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Equipment storage building <sup>2</sup>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	P
Executive learning center, corporate management training facility	X	X	X	X	X	SE	SE	X	X
Food-processing shop	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Guest facilities (See § 235-17K)	X	X	X	X	X	X	SE	X	X
Health maintenance, rehabilitation and fitness	X	SE	X	SE	SE	SE	SE	X	X
Scientific research, excluding manufacturing of products for sale	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	X	X
Secretarial, business, trade or similar schools	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	X	SE
Telephone exchange	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	SE	X	X
Undertaker's establishment	X	X	SE	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Accessory uses</b>									
Customary accessory uses incidental to a permitted use on the same premises	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Private off-street parking pursuant to Article VII	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
Retail service or wholesale trade only as an incidental activity to a permitted use	P	P	P	SE	SE	SE	SE	P	P
SB-0 Day-care center	X	X	X	SE	X	X	X	X	X
Signs pursuant to Article VIII	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P

P = Permitted use

SE = Special exception use

X = Prohibited use

All unlisted uses are prohibited in all districts

In addition to the Metro-North TOD project site on Halstead Avenue discussed above, there are several other sites that have the potential for redevelopment (see Figure 4-4). Whether considered short- or long-term development opportunities, the main shared characteristic of each of the sites is underutilization within the context of a downtown area that is ripe for additional development. "Underutilized" refers to vacant land; properties containing buildings that are substantially lower in height than permitted by zoning; sites that contain obsolete structures; or key locations within the CBD where a more intensive development of the site would likely occur.

1. Short-Term Opportunity: 249 Halstead Avenue

In 2010, the Harrison Planning Board approved a site plan for a mixed-use development on the south side of Halstead Avenue to the west of Harrison Avenue. The project will include a three-story building, with two floors of residential use above retail. Parking will be located in the rear of the building off Fremont Street. The upper-floor residential areas will contain 10 apartment units.

2. Short-Term Opportunity: Emilio's Restaurant and Parking Lot

In 2011, the owners of the Emilio's Restaurant building and associated surface parking lot across Colonial Place to the south (0.35 and 0.42 acres, respectively) developed several alternative site plans for the property, indicating that the site could be developed for approximately 32 to 40 units of transit-oriented multifamily housing. The owners sought, and were granted, modifications to the existing NB district pertaining to maximum building height, open space and removal or the requirement for ground-floor commercial use. Although these modifications primarily affect the Emilio's property in the near-term, they would also be applicable to other sites along Purdy Street that may have the potential for redevelopment.

3. Long-Term Opportunities

In addition to the above short-term opportunities, there are several long-range development prospects in downtown Harrison. For example, one parcel on the west side of the intersection of Purdy Street and Halstead Avenue contains two one-story commercial uses. One, used as a Carvel Ice Cream store, is active; the other, formerly a retail bank, occupies the corner. Across Purdy Street, to the east, a series of one-story buildings extend more than half the length of the block of Halstead Avenue which ends at Parsons Street. Each of these buildings is one or two stories in height. Portions of these parcels are used for surface parking for adjoining restaurants. These properties are potential candidates for redevelopment because they are directly across the street from the Metro-North TOD project site.





FIGURE 4-4: VACANT/UNDERUTILIZED SITES AND POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES



With the exception of a three-story masonry mixed-used building near the western end of the block and the easternmost parcel at the corner of Haviland Street and Halstead Avenue, which contains a one-story funeral home, all of the parcels on the portion of Halstead between Parsons and Haviland Streets could be considered to be underutilized. The building on the corner of Parsons Street is a wood-frame two-family structure, while the block also contains a one-story building with a tavern, and a 2 ½-story wood-frame structure and garage occupying a large parcel. As with the parcels to the west along Halstead, the underutilization of these properties is driven in part by their proximity to the TOD project directly across the street.

A fourth area, at the intersection of Purdy Street and Park Avenue, is adjacent to the Emilio's parking lot. It extends south on Purdy Street and west to three properties fronting on Harrison Avenue. The underutilized municipal parking lot at the intersection of Park Avenue and Purdy Street, the social club adjacent to the surface parking lot and the three properties occupied by three buildings fronting on Harrison Avenue, are also involved. This area also has long-term redevelopment potential, and could be redevelopment at similar densities as those proposed for the Emilio's site.

In addition to the above opportunities, several other areas in downtown Harrison are also underutilized and could be candidates for redevelopment given the catalyst of revitalization elsewhere in the CBD. These include the movie theater property on Harrison Avenue; the parcels on the north side of Halstead Avenue, between the Metro-North TOD site and Macy Road; one-story buildings on the south side of Halstead including the former Harrison Sport Shop; and underused properties along Harrison Avenue north of the train tracks. While each of these sites – and potentially others – represents potential opportunities, none has been the subject of any concrete proposal to date.

Potential gateways to the CBD, or key entrances and intersections that provide a first impression of the downtown, could also be established and enhanced (see Figure 4-6).

#### 4.4 Downtown Street Hierarchy and Urban Fabric

Some of the most important elements necessary for creating a successful small downtown are the street network and hierarchy among streets. To a large part, success is dependent upon ensuring that the street network – the streets and blocks that comprise the urban fabric of the downtown – remains intact, while creating a clear difference in character among various key streets. It is important to understand each street's role in establishing the built environment of downtown, and how secondary streets can play a supporting role to Halstead Avenue, the "Main Street" of downtown.

Harrison has a relatively strong urban fabric, with its street blocks creating a strong frontage along Halstead and a portion of Harrison Avenues. However, there is little difference in terms of form and scale between Halstead and the other streets, including Purdy Street and the southern portion of Harrison Avenue. The Town should promote higher densities along Halstead Avenue, while carefully controlling building form so as to complement and enhance the pedestrian scale and walkability of the street. Currently,

much of Halstead is significantly underutilized, with a number of one- and two-story buildings where four stories are permitted, and strategic corners that should contain signature buildings to create a sense of place containing minor structures instead. Any increase in density along Halstead Avenue should be accompanied by building design guidelines or form-based regulations to strengthen the pedestrian experience and control for architectural quality.

Complementing any actions to solidify and improve Halstead Avenue's role as downtown's "Main Street" should be new regulations for the blocks on secondary streets in the downtown street network, such as Purdy Street. This street is currently a mix of residential, retail and professional office. The current zoning on Purdy Street allows for CBD development closer to Halstead, and for neighborhood business uses approaching Park Avenue. The present zoning along Harrison Avenue is similar, except that there is a small portion of professional business zoning along its western side south of Fremont Street. In order to strengthen downtown Harrison both economically and architecturally, the zoning and allowable densities along these streets should be re-examined as to how these streets can further support Halstead Avenue, while also relating to their proximity to the railroad station and to the proposed TOD project. Allowable densities and building heights should be higher along Halstead and slightly lower along secondary streets such as Purdy Street and Harrison Avenue to the south.

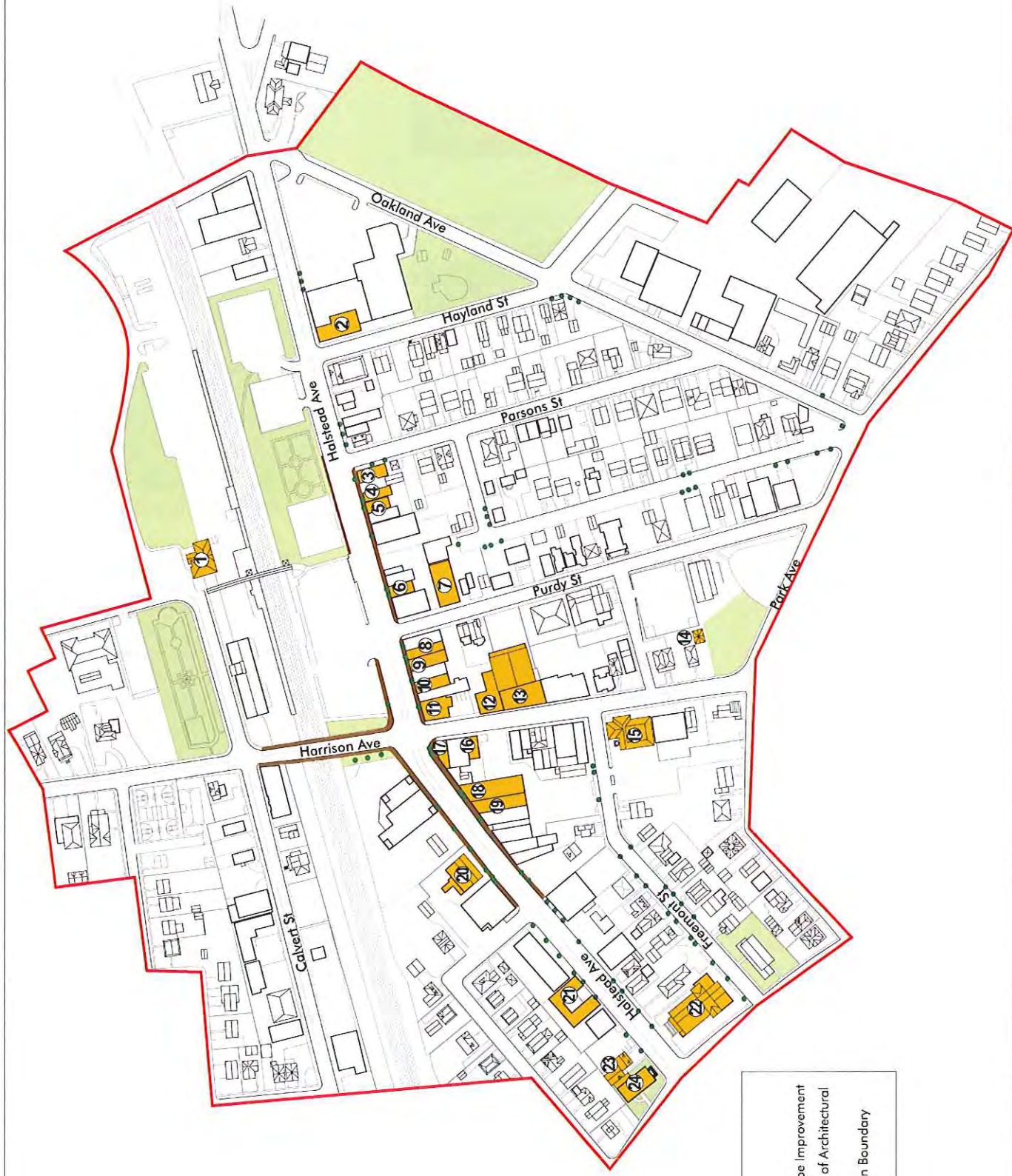
Further promotion of Halstead Avenue as the downtown "Main Street" should include new regulations and incentives to provide greater control over the appropriate types of uses, including restaurants, shops, outdoor dining and apartments over stores. In addition, attention should be given to uses and densities along secondary streets. For example, the CBD mixed-use zoning on Purdy Street near Halstead allows for commercial uses there instead of on Halstead. Further south on Purdy Street, the neighborhood business zoning allows for reasonable residential density as long as it includes some element of retail or professional offices/services on the ground floor. These are the kinds of uses that would best be placed on Halstead Avenue to bolster its role as downtown's primary street. Zoning along Purdy Street and other secondary streets could allow them to play a stronger supporting role by providing residential densities equal to or slightly greater than what is presently allowed, but without the retail or professional office requirement. This would allow property owners to use their land efficiently and also provide a transit-oriented residential population necessary for successful downtown revitalization.

It is important to note that other secondary streets in downtown Harrison will require a tailored approach that reflects their individual land-use patterns, especially those streets – such as Parsons and Haviland Streets – where the predominant land use is single- and two-family detached housing.

#### **4.5 Physical Assets**

A pleasant streetscape is essential in creating a good impression of the downtown. In recent years the town has undertaken some streetscape improvements, centered on Halstead Avenue, which included installing uniform historically styled light fixtures, consistent street furniture, curb extensions with canopy street trees, and striped crosswalks. The extent of these improvements is delineated on Figure 4-5A.









1. Old Train Station



2. Pizza 2000



3. Art Nails, Halstead Ave



4. Magic Carpets



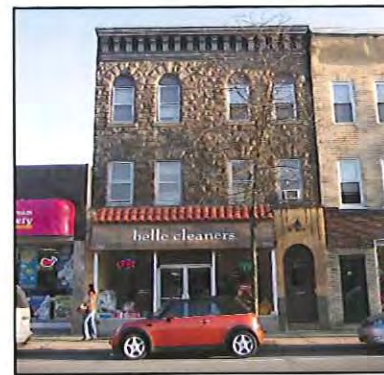
5. Uncle Henry's



6. Butler Brothers



7. Trinity Grill



8. Belle Cleaners



9. Oishinbo Grocery



10. Flower Market & Cleaners



11. Chase Bank



12. 241 A Harrison Avenue





13. Old Theater



14. Traditional Building on Harrison Ave



15. Fire House



16. Harrison Ave



17. Former Quiznos



18. Halstead Avenue



19. Vacant on Halstead Ave



20. Post Office



21. Marion Court Condos



22. St. Gregory's Church



23. Community House



24. Veteran's Memorial







## 4.6

## Downtown Aesthetics

Harrison's downtown CBD, in addition to serving as the primary commercial node for the town, also has the potential to capture interest throughout the surrounding area. However, in this more regional mode, downtown Harrison is in competition with other downtown districts in east-central Westchester County, such as the City of Rye and the villages of Mamaroneck and Port Chester. Because many of the goods and services offered in Harrison also available elsewhere, it is critical that the Town set its CBD apart from others by establishing a strong sense of place. According to downtown specialist Kent Robertson, eight key elements are essential to a main street's sense of place:<sup>1</sup>

1. *Downtown is distinct from other commercial settings:* A downtown should build on its unique historic, economic, natural and cultural amenities to support the following elements.
2. *The downtown, and its sense of place, has evolved over time:* The downtown community has changed to represent multiple generations and varying economic, social and cultural conditions.
3. *Downtown represents the unique heritage of the community:* The downtown, more than any other place within the municipality, reflects much of the heritage and experiences of a broad spectrum of people.
4. *Downtown is multifunctional:* A downtown may serve as a node for employment, shopping, worship, tourism, housing government services, dining, entertainment, lodging and cultural attractions. This range of functions can create a continuous, "24-7" environment, and increase the number and breadth of stakeholders.
5. *Downtown is pedestrian-friendly:* Because a sense of place is best experienced on-foot, a successful downtown has acted to "tame" the automobile and make pedestrian needs a high priority.
6. *Human activity is vital to a sense of place:* The presence of people creates a desirable, appealing place; people make a business area look more vibrant, and in turn attract more activity.
7. *Downtown encourages people to linger:* People are induced to linger if a place is comfortable, safe, attractive and interesting. The longer people choose to stay downtown, the more businesses they are likely to visit.
8. *Downtown engenders a high level of community ownership:* The higher the number of downtown stakeholders, the greater the level of ownership, interest and potential for downtown to become "everybody's neighborhood."

To gain an aesthetic cohesiveness which could create a sense of place, attract higher-end, brand-name merchants and lead to greater use of the CBD, the Downtown Revitalization Committee has suggested crafting a set of comprehensive design guidelines.

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<sup>1</sup> Robertson, Kent. "Enhancing Downtown's Sense of Place." *Main Street News*, September 1999.

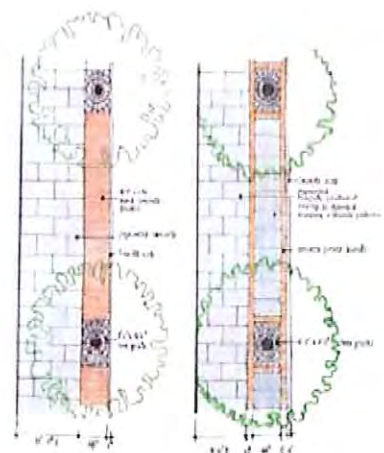
It is understood that creating design guidelines for downtown Harrison would require careful consideration and study through a separate planning effort. However, in general, such guidelines give a framework for residents and developers to work toward achieving a better built environment through adherence to fundamental design principles. The three primary objectives of any design guidelines should be to encourage site planning and architectural design that will enhance the town's character and ensure that new development sensitively fits into the downtown; to provide flexibility in the application of development standards; and to improve communication and participation among developers, neighbors and the town early in the design and siting of new development.

The overall goals of downtown design guidelines generally fall into four categories:

- **Site Planning for a Pedestrian Environment:** The pedestrian environment (sidewalks, pathways, entries, crossings) should be safe, accessible, link to places people want to go, and provide areas used for many things. Strategies include<sup>2</sup>:
  - Brick pavers to make sidewalks look more distinctive
  - Street trees to soften the environment and provide visual interest and shade
  - Human-scale street lights for improved aesthetics and illumination
  - Banners and flags to make the district look more festive and colorful
  - Benches to give pedestrians a place to sit, rest and "people watch"

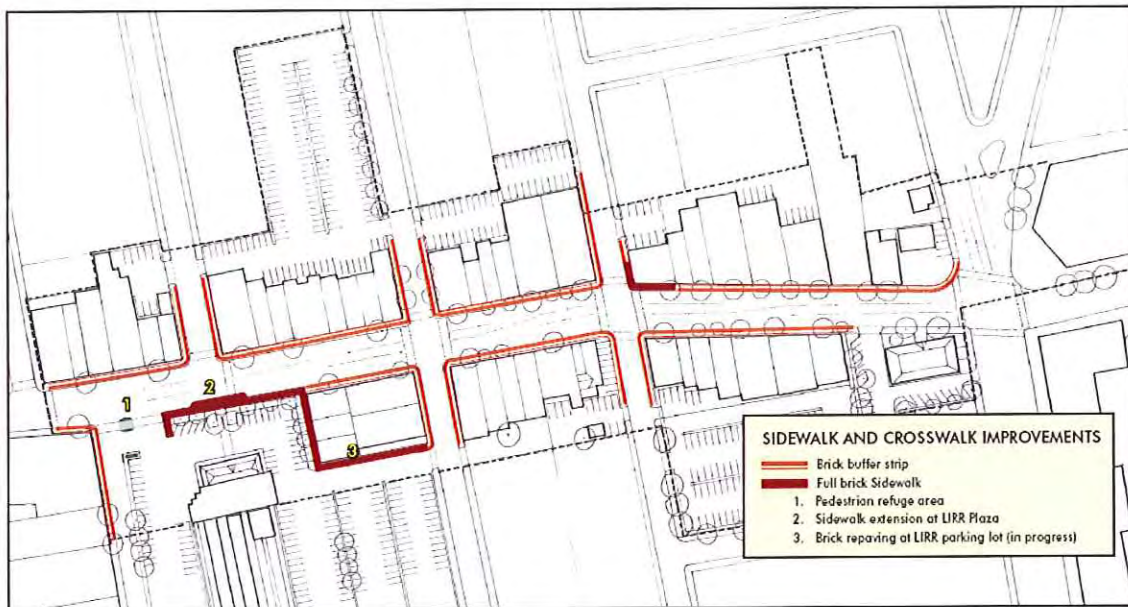


*Example of planted bulb-out and mid-block bulb-out with crosswalk in Huntington, NY*



*Streetscape design guidelines, Village of Mamaroneck, NY*





*Proposed guidelines for sidewalk design and crosswalks in Port Washington, NY*

- **Height, Bulk and Scale Compatibility:** One way to preserve a "small town" or "village" quality in development or redevelopment is in the siting, massing and design of new buildings. New or redeveloped buildings must be consistent with the height, bulk and scale of other structures in the CBD.



*Existing conditions vs. potential redevelopment using appropriate Village-scale massing, Pleasantville Road, Briarcliff Manor, NY*



- **Architectural Character:** New development or redevelopment should respond to the downtown's context by providing enough visual linkages between the existing stock of good buildings and the proposed structure so as to create a cohesive overall effect. Appropriate visual linkages are simple, basic features such as window proportions, entryway placements, decorative elements and materials.



*Potential building and storefront upgrading in Port Washington, NY that includes façade restoration, additional floor with 15' setback, new signage, awnings and improved display window appearance.*

The design guidelines envisioned by the Downtown Revitalization Committee would be highly specific and detailed, addressing streetscaping and sidewalk design, building façades, signage and awnings, landscaping and lighting. The guidelines would primarily build upon the established design aesthetic in downtown Harrison, and their adoption would also include implementation measures such as short-term merchant compliance incentives and mid-term enforcement provisions.

In the future development of downtown design guidelines, careful consideration will need to be given to the appropriate level of detail. In general, design guidelines work best when they provide overall guidance to businesses rather than acting as a book of strict requirements. When given the flexibility to operate within a broad set of design criteria, merchants can develop creative solutions that generate better results than a stringent set of rules. The design guidelines will also need to determine such factors as the appropriate boundaries for the downtown CBD (so as to delineate gateway signage); the optimal treatment for the varying street hierarchies (Halstead and Harrison Avenues versus the other downtown streets); what is the best entity for implementing the guidelines (e.g. Chamber of Commerce, Architectural Review Board, new Business Improvement District); and whether other tools, such as form-based zoning, may also be appropriate to achieve downtown revitalization goals.

## 4.7 Traffic and Parking

The main problems in the CBD are general traffic flow, traffic speeds in residential areas and pedestrian safety in the commercial area. Numerous parking conflicts are created in the CBD as a result of its multiple roles. As a commuter center, commuters require long-term parking near the train station; as a retail center, short-term parking is required for shoppers; and as a residential center, long-term off-street parking is required for residents.

Reflecting this parking concern, the Town commissioned in 2007 a parking supply, demand and feasibility study for the CBD by Desman Associates. A key finding of the study determined a need for 80 off-street parking spaces to support the downtown retail business community. Follow-up work done by the Downtown Revitalization Committee in 2012 indicated that this demand was met by the following available off-street parking spaces:

- Harrison Train Station South lot: 27 spaces
- Harrison Avenue lot: 14 spaces
- Fremont Avenue lot: 22 spaces
- Sollazzo Community Center lot: 17 spaces

In addition to these 80 available spaces, the committee also found that more off-street parking is available – though not widely known – at the Fremont Avenue lot (11-12 unmarked spaces) and the Dunkin Donuts lot (22 unmarked spaces, some of which are leased by the Post Office but not designated as such). Additional on-street parking is also available, primarily along Halstead Avenue 34-35 unmarked angled spaces).

While the above analysis appears to demonstrate that there is adequate parking to meet demand in downtown Harrison, opportunities exist to improve the current parking situation so that the available parking is used more efficiently. The Downtown Revitalization Committee identified a number of such steps, organized by priority:

### *Near-Term (0-12 months)*

The committee identified the following fairly simple, low-cost measures to address parking issues in the short-term:

- Clean up and repaint all existing municipal lots (currently underway)
- Improve signage in existing municipal lots
  - Emphasize available two-hour free shopper parking
  - Link parking signage to any downtown themed signage or wayfinding elements
  - Eliminate inconsistencies in signage (e.g. Harrison Avenue lot has signage indicating both one-hour and two-hour parking, availability of Dunkin Donuts lot is unclear)
  - Consider increasing the angled parking on Halstead Avenue to two-hour free shopper parking (currently it is one-hour free)

*Mid-Term (12-24 months)*

The first stage of this phase involves securing additional municipal parking to improve accessibility along Halstead Avenue, particularly on the northern side. A critical site is the large MTA-owned parking lot located at the train station with access from Halstead Avenue. This centrally located property, which provides necessary parking for shoppers and commuters, could also be utilized to strengthen the connection between the town hall and library and the rest of the downtown, and to consolidate the retail base along Halstead Avenue.

The request for proposals issued by the MTA for this property includes a provision, originally suggested in the 1988 plan, that a parking structure be built in the existing parking lot, taking advantage of the natural topographic slope into the station. Commercial space would be constructed underneath this structure, at street level on Halstead Avenue.

In addition to the MTA site, the Dunkin Donuts property provides an opportunity to secure more municipal parking, through the potential leasing of additional spaces. Other sites in the CBD that are subject to future redevelopment should be considered for additional parking opportunities.

The proposed parking structure at the MTA site offers an opportunity for the town to implement a parking management strategy. Some aspects of the strategy might include:

- A priority system that will encourage shoppers to park-and-walk. First priority should always go to shopper parking. The most attractive spaces for shoppers must be reserved for short-term parking; regulation of short parking times must be enforced. If shoppers cannot park in a convenient location, they will drive elsewhere.
- Tools to create parking turnover: establish a short-term core, enforcement of parking duration limits (such as two hours) and graduated fines (where the first three parking fines in a 12-month period are at the same level as today, and the next fines become double or triple to discourage repeat offenders).
- Beyond the short-term core, relax parking regulations to allow more long-term parking.
- Review the effectiveness of the waiver of parking requirements in the Downtown Revitalization Target Area and the Halstead Avenue Commercial Corridor, where the parking requirements do not apply for the first 10 spaces.
- Merchant permit parking: evaluate a possible merchant permitting parking program whereby merchants and their employees are granted a permit for a Town-owned lot designated for them. This has the advantage of removing these users from on-street parking.

In addition to seeking out additional municipal parking, the Downtown Revitalization Committee has identified a need for a traffic study to address overall flow and signal timing issues which may be affecting the parking and traffic situation. With the exception



of Halstead and Harrison Avenues, most of the streets in Harrison's CBD are one-way. This can make it difficult – particularly for visitors who may be unfamiliar with the downtown street network – to navigate and search for additional parking. For example, if one is traveling eastbound on Halstead, the slanted on-street parking spaces adjacent to the MTA lots are not accessible without changing direction. This is problematic if the driver is trying to use side streets; one must use Purdy or Haviland Streets to access Oakland Avenue to get to Halstead going westbound. Either of these choices requires traveling out of the way, and an easier option is to turn around in one of the MTA lots. Not only does this situation create extra traffic on Halstead Avenue, but if the Metro-North TOD project proceeds as expected, the commuter parking lots will no longer be available for turnarounds. The overall downtown traffic flow should be studied to determine whether some streets may be made two-way or their directions may be changed as appropriate.

Two intersections have been noted in downtown Harrison as challenging and potentially unsafe for both vehicles and pedestrians. The first is the intersection of Heineman Place, Bruce Avenue and Sunnyside Place. This three-legged intersection is complicated by the fact that it occurs on a curve, as well as the inherent conflicts among various users: visitors to the municipal building (many of whom park at the small lot tucked into the curve of Sunnyside Place), users of the library and neighborhood residents. In conjunction with the potential creation of a Town Green (see discussion above), the adaptive reuse of the former train station building and renovations to Ma Riis Park, this intersection should be improved for safety and efficiency. Sunnyside Place could be squared off to create a T intersection with Bruce Avenue at the edge of the park. This new intersection could have a stop sign allowing drivers to either turn left toward Heineman Place or right toward the library and residences on Bruce Avenue. These improvements would greatly contribute to the grid nature inherent in a Town Green, and could also create additional off-street parking in the lot adjacent to the former train station building, which could enhance the building's potential for adaptive reuse.

The second problem intersection is at Halstead Avenue and Macy Road. This four-way intersection marks the easternmost entrance into Harrison's CBD, but it is not well suited for pedestrians. Macy Road is a very narrow two-way street with no sidewalks, and limited potential for sidewalks given the restricted space as the street tunnels under the Metro-North railroad tracks. The Town should work with the MTA to widen Macy Road to a sufficient two-lane width, with sidewalks on either side of the roadway. This would create a valuable pedestrian link between the commercial uses along Halstead Avenue and the commuter parking lots along Sunnyside Drive, as well as residential and municipal uses across the railroad tracks. This connection will become even more important upon implementation of the Metro-North TOD project, when the northern side of Halstead between Harrison Avenue and Macy Road will be primarily developed with a robust mix of commercial and residential uses.

#### *Long-Term (24 months and beyond)*

The primary long-term recommendation on parking from the Downtown Revitalization Committee is that, as future development and redevelopment occurs in downtown Harrison, any parking spaces lost as a consequence of development must be replaced at no less than a one-to-one ratio.

## 4.8

### B Zoning Districts

As discussed in Chapter 2, the two-family B-district has recently experienced a shift in development focus from traditional “up-down” two-family homes – which feature separate apartments on the first and second floors and are often indistinguishable in general appearance from single-family houses – to new “side-by-side” two-family residences. These newer structures tend to be much larger and can overwhelm the typically small (5,000-square-foot) lots of the B zones, with potential negative impacts on parking, visual character, open space and neighborhood density.

To address these concerns while maintaining two-family residences as an option in Harrison, the Town should consider several targeted changes to the zoning regulations for the B zones. One alternative could be to continue allowing new construction of the traditional “up-down” two-family homes as permitted uses in the B zones, but to require a special exception permit to build a “side-by-side” residence. Approval of the permit would require additional analysis on issues of parking, visual impacts and open space/density. For example, the permit could consider the sufficiency of side yard setbacks to allow for a driveway that connects to parking in the rear yard. These measures could serve to control the density and bulk of new development in Harrison’s two-family zones, maintaining their special character and preserving a range of housing options.

## 4.9

### Summary

Harrison is fortunate to have a compact, walkable downtown central business district that benefits from a number of important assets: a broad mix of commercial, residential, institutional and recreational uses; a train station providing access to key points throughout the region; a true “Main Street” to serve as a focal point; and many buildings of significant architectural quality. To fully capitalize on these assets, this Plan makes a number of recommendations that could help downtown Harrison achieve its full potential and become a vital draw for visitors throughout the region. These recommendations are summarized in Figure 4-7.



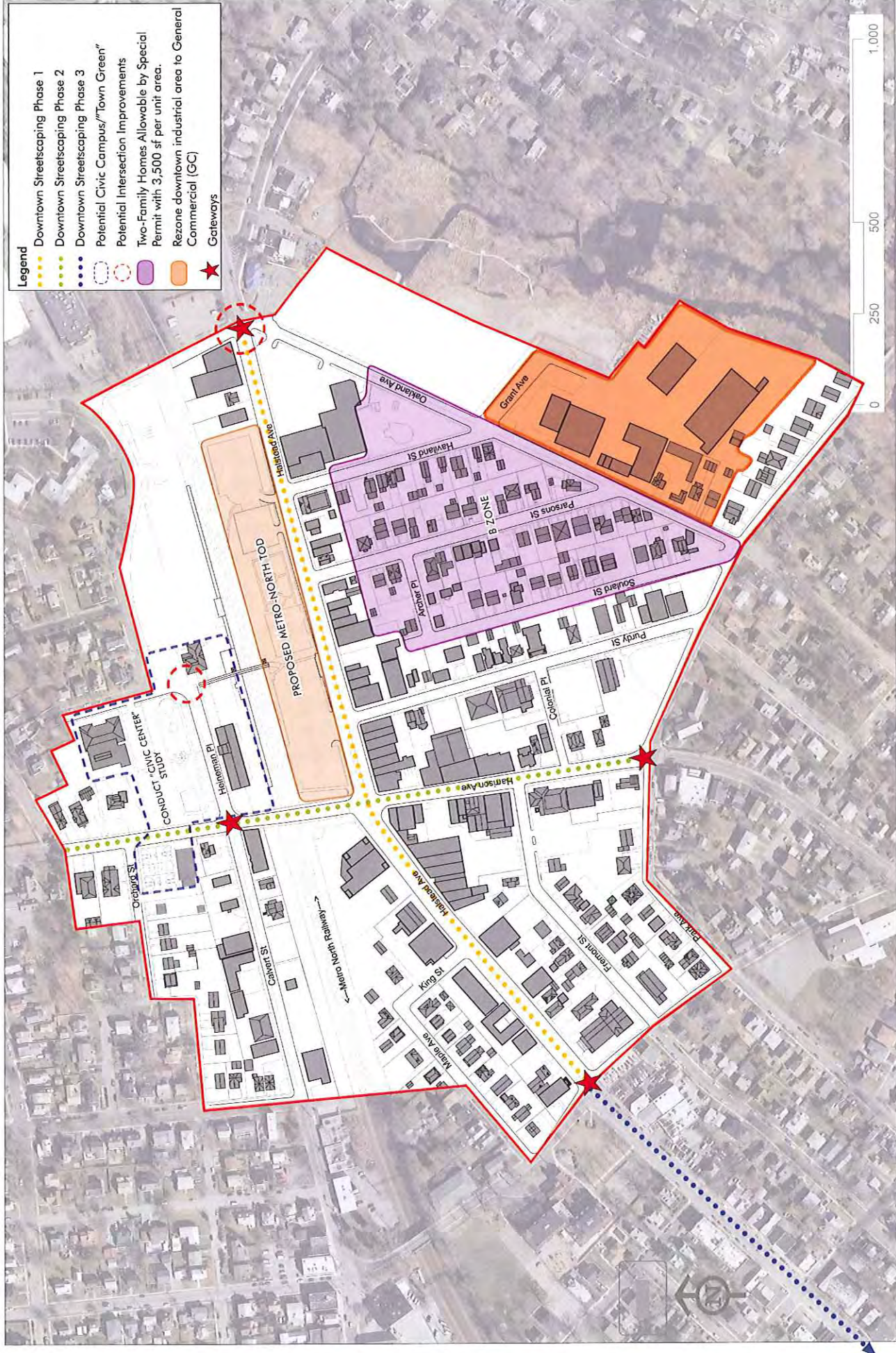


FIGURE 4-7: SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS IN CBD



## Chapter 5: Neighborhood Analyses

### 5.1 Downtown Harrison and Southern Harrison

#### 5.1.1 Downtown Harrison

For this plan, downtown Harrison is defined as the mainly residential area south of I-95, surrounding the CBD. Although this area is centered on the CBD and has a strong relationship to it, the larger area has a distinct set of characteristics and issues.

##### Land Uses

This area is mainly residential, with commercial uses limited to Halstead Avenue and a smaller component at the intersection of Calvert Street and Broadway. The area contains a number of parks, which provide recreational opportunities for residents. These include the Bernie Guagnini Park, at Webster and Adelphi, and the Pettijohn Park at the corner of Glenwood and Crotona Streets. The future Project Home Run Park, at the eastern edge of the downtown, will provide additional sports fields for the community.

The 1988 plan addressed the issue of the non-conforming offices located along Harrison Avenue, north of Calvert Street. These originated as "home professional offices" but can no longer be classified as such, as in some cases the entire building has been converted to professional offices. An overlay district was introduced following up on the 1988 plan, and then rescinded, as the dimensional requirements were found to be too inflexible. These businesses should remain as non-conforming uses, but should not be allowed to expand.

##### Zoning

The residential zoning districts in the area are mainly B – Two Family Residence District and also one family residence districts (R-75, R-1/3, R-50). There are also some limited areas of GA- Garden Apartments, at the southern edge of the town, north of Halstead. The commercial uses along Halstead are located in both the MFR- Multi-Family Limited Retail and NB-Neighborhood Business Districts, and the PB- Professional Business District stretches along Calvert Street from the town hall to the intersection at Crotona Street.

##### Physical Character

The downtown is an attractive residential area, offering a pleasant place to live. Its close proximity to the services of the CBD is an advantage. The house types range from large one-family residences to two- or more family dwellings, offering a choice to potential Harrison residents not available elsewhere in town except for West Harrison. In addition, although the area has a broadly uniform character, the diversity in architectural styles of the houses is interesting and adds to the quality of the area. However, the traditional modest scale of downtown Harrison is being chipped away.

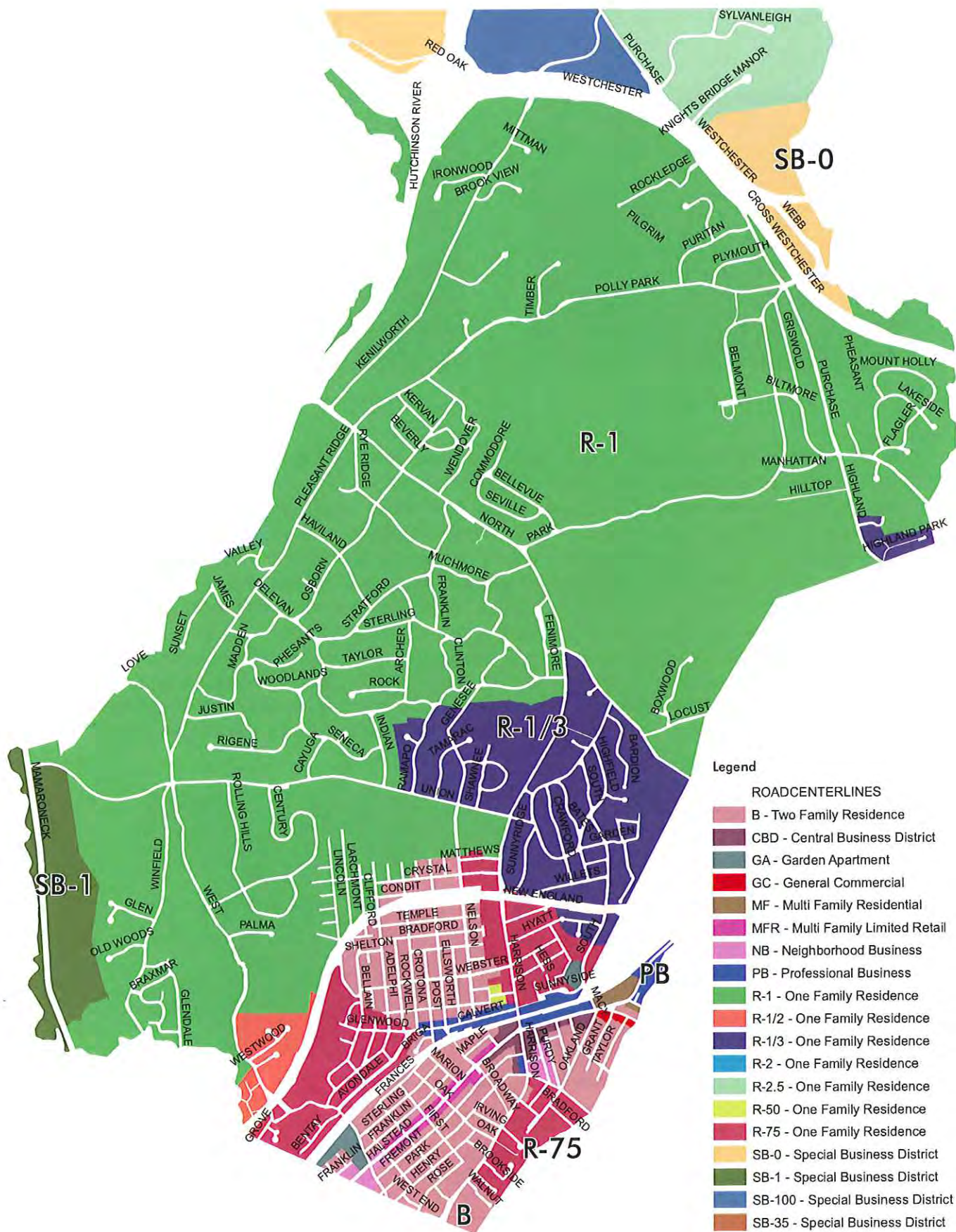


FIGURE 5-1:





Dutch barn-style house



Traditional two-family house

Most streets remain pleasant, quiet, and leafy and are lined by attractive, well-kept houses. But out-of-scale development on some lots (where the new houses result from teardowns, and are substantially larger than their older neighbors), the lack of tree planting or perimeter landscaping in any new development, and the increase in traffic, and associated parking conflicts were issues of concern identified during the planning process. When older, small houses are replaced by larger houses, which are out of proportion to the existing context, there is often little room for landscaping. Although most of these are where the development is simply maximizing the lot coverage, there are also instances where the development is not in compliance with the code. There is at present no landscaping ordinance in the town, and therefore no minimum requirements for landscaping any new development. In some areas the streets of Harrison are losing their green appearance. This results in a negative impact aesthetically on the neighborhood residential character, specifically the loss of shade and privacy.



Examples of newer development in downtown

As discussed in Chapter 2, and detailed in Chapter 6, some additional controls could be added to the existing regulations to better regulate development.



### Traffic

As outlined in Chapter 2, Harrison has excellent road transportation links, in particular I-684, I-287 and the Hutchinson River Parkway. However, congestion on these roads leads to traffic using the streets in the downtown as a short-cut. The traffic calming measures as suggested in Chapter 2 should be considered for some streets in the downtown.

#### 5.1.2 Southern Harrison

Between downtown Harrison to the south and Purchase and West Harrison to the north lie many neighborhoods. This area, stretching from I-95 (New England Thruway) to I-287 (Cross Westchester Expressway) holds the neighborhoods of Sunnyside, Sterling Ridge, Westchester Country Club, Winfield and Polly Park Road, among others that have no place name.

Three zoning districts cover this large area: R-1, R-1/2 and R-1/3.

#### R-1 District Neighborhood Character

This is by far the largest zoning district in Harrison and contains a diversity of lots and uses. R-1 is a One Family Residence District, which is intended to provide for single family housing on large lots. The minimum lot size is one acre; the area is largely built according to this density, with some exceptions discussed below.

The R-1 zoning has traditionally resulted in quiet, pleasant, low-density residential neighborhoods. The houses are generally proportionate to the lot size. The R-1 zone has a maximum lot coverage of 15% and a height restriction of two and a half stories.



House on Palma Court



House off Union Avenue

There are numerous examples of non-conforming lots in the R-1 district. Three areas where these are concentrated are 1) around the Westchester Country Club, 2) along North Street on Fenimore Street and 3) in the southwest, in the area bounded by Glendale Lane and Winfield Avenue.

### Traffic

The streets in these neighborhoods were not intended for large volumes of through traffic. Some streets are quite narrow, and if cars park on the street, this can cause problems for cars trying to pass each other. Park Drive, Indian Trail and Brentwood were cited by residents for speeding and lack of traffic enforcement.

### R-1/2 District Neighborhood Character

R-1/2 is a One Family Residence District, which is intended to provide for single-family housing on small lots. This is a small zoning district, located along River Terrace, Sayford Street, Saddletree Lane and Westwood Drive. Though small, this area is also distinctive for its traditional character. It is as quiet and pleasant as the R-1 areas, but at a compact scale.

The houses are generally proportionate to the one-half acre lot size. The R-1/2 zone has a maximum lot coverage of 20% and a height restriction of two and a half stories (30 feet).



House on Saddletree Lane



Newer house on West Street

### R-1/3 District Neighborhood Character

The R-1/3 District is a One Family Residence District, with the minimum lot size one-third of an acre, or 14,520 square feet. This district is located in two areas: just north of I-87, either side of Harrison Avenue as far north as Cooper Street, and also a pocket area east of Highland Street, along Highland Park and Highland Ridge. These areas are also quiet and pleasant.

The houses are generally proportionate to the lot size. The R-1/3 zone has a maximum lot coverage of 20% and a height restriction of two and a half stories (26 feet).





House on Crawford Street



House on Bates Street

### Development Potential

Within each of the three districts, there are lots which contain development potential. In the R-1 district, there are a number of lots in excess of two acres. Some of these are facilities such as the schools, the synagogue, St. Vincent's Hospital and other non-residential uses. Other lots containing more than two acres are in residential use. They could in theory be subdivided to allow one or more dwellings to be constructed under the current zoning dimensional requirements.

Within the other two districts, there are lots which have development potential, by virtue of their acreage being more than twice the minimum required lot size. These are all indicated on Figure 5.2.

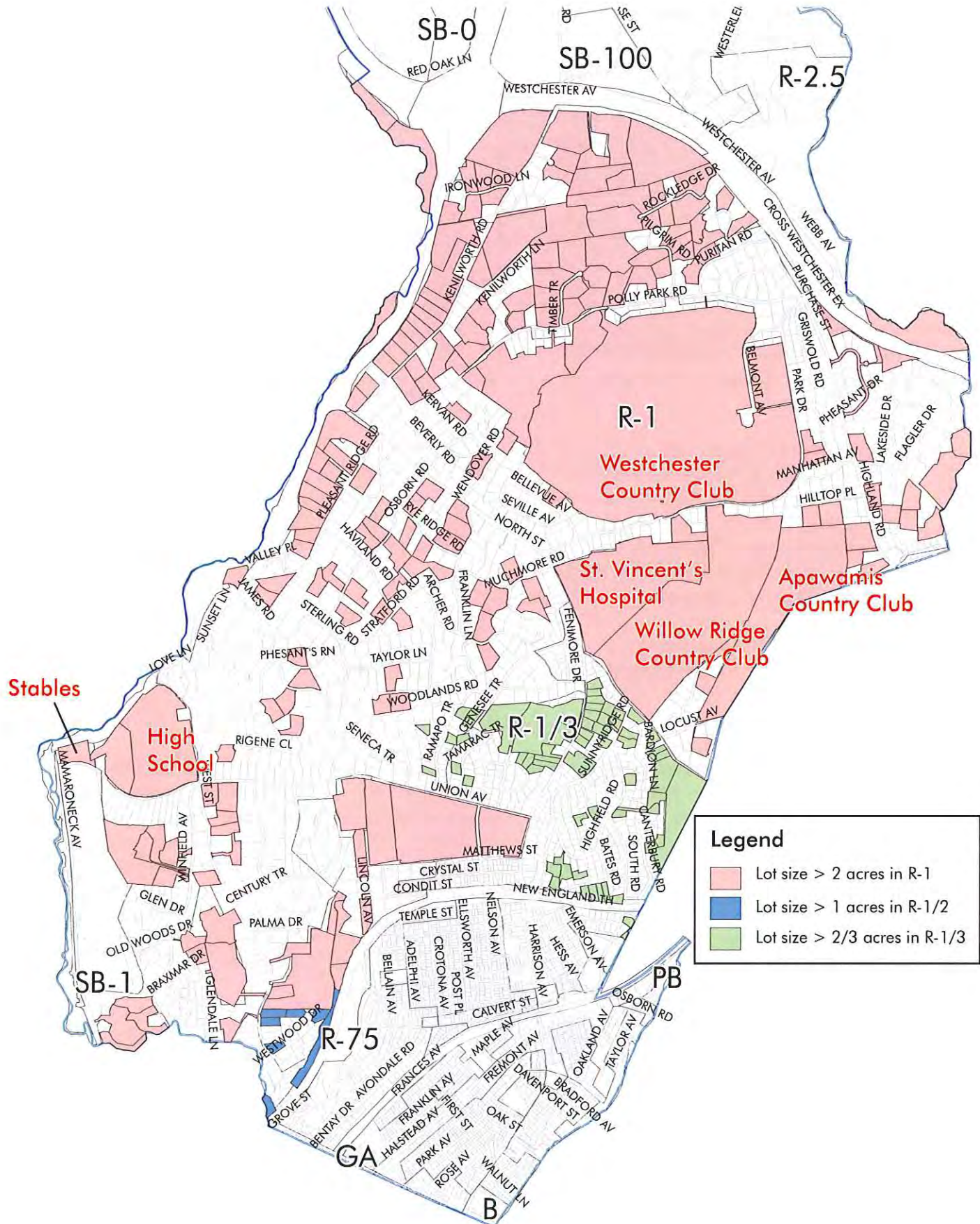
### Recommendations

Similarly to what is occurring elsewhere in Harrison, these districts are experiencing the tear-down of older housing and their replacement by newer dwellings which are frequently built out to the setbacks, maximum building coverage, and height allowed given the zoning code. Bulky houses are a concern for two reasons: 1) they are out of scale with traditional housing patterns, and 2) residents feel that overdevelopment of lots disrupts privacy, open space and solitude.

The town must ensure any infill development in these neighborhoods is compatible with its context and with the existing neighborhood character. Two methods for preserving the established scale and character of the neighborhood are:

- Introducing minimum landscaping requirements, as discussed under the downtown section and in Chapter 2.
- Modifying zoning controls to limit to some degree the development of these bulky houses; this issue is discussed earlier, as a townwide issue.







## 5.2 West Harrison: Silver Lake and Park Lane

The neighborhood of Silver Lake is located along the eastern shore of Silver Lake (also known as St. Mary's Lake). It is bounded to the south by the Cross-Westchester Expressway and Westchester Avenue, to the west by the City of White Plains, and to the east by an area of steep slopes. To the north, the boundary is less clearly defined, but High Ridge Road marks a change from higher density development, close to Silver Lake's commercial core, to a less dense, suburban area. Figure 5-3 shows an aerial view of the area. The area has been known as Silver Lake, when it was developed in the early 1900s as a resort, and even East White Plains, a name which still appears on old Hagstrom maps. The comprehensive plan refers to this community as Silver Lake.

The community is contained within these strong road and natural boundaries, with few roads connecting it to other parts of Harrison or White Plains. The entries are the Lake Street-Boulevard connection (from the north), Underhill Avenue and Silver Lake Road (off Westchester Avenue, from the south), and Lake Street coming in from White Plains to the west.



View south along Lake Street



Lake Street Quarry

The neighborhood of Park Lane stretches from the built-up area of downtown Silver Lake (High Ridge Road) as far north as the town boundary with North Castle. The area is centered on the long spine of Park Lane, and other main streets include Buckout Road and Forest Lake Road. Since 1988, this area has been witness to large scale development in accordance with mid-1980s subdivision approvals.

Park Lane has significant environmental features in the form of steep slopes, wetlands, Rye Lake/Kensico Reservoir, Silver Lake Park and Forest Lake. Cannon Merritt Hill, a Harrison landmark, is included in Silver Lake Park. Two County-designated Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs) are located here: Kensico Basin CEA and Silver Lake Park CEA. The Department of Public Works (DPW) operates a facility at the former Nike base off Lake Street.





FIGURE 5-3: SILVER LAKE AERIAL



## Land Uses

For the plan, a land use survey was carried out in March 2006. As can be seen from Figure 5-4, the commercial area of West Harrison is very limited, centered on Passidomo Park and Silver Lake Park, along Lake Street. This area contains a mix of uses, including restaurants, retail, services, and the West Harrison firehouse. At the time of the land use survey, there was one vacant storefront on this main commercial street; a few others businesses appeared in decline. More recent land use data (2009) indicate that this vacancy is now occupied. Scattered retail and commercial uses exist outside Lake Street: a commercial property is noted on the corner of Columbus and Madison, while a small cluster of businesses exist on Underhill Avenue around Harrison Street: a restaurant, automotive businesses, a deli, and a dentist.

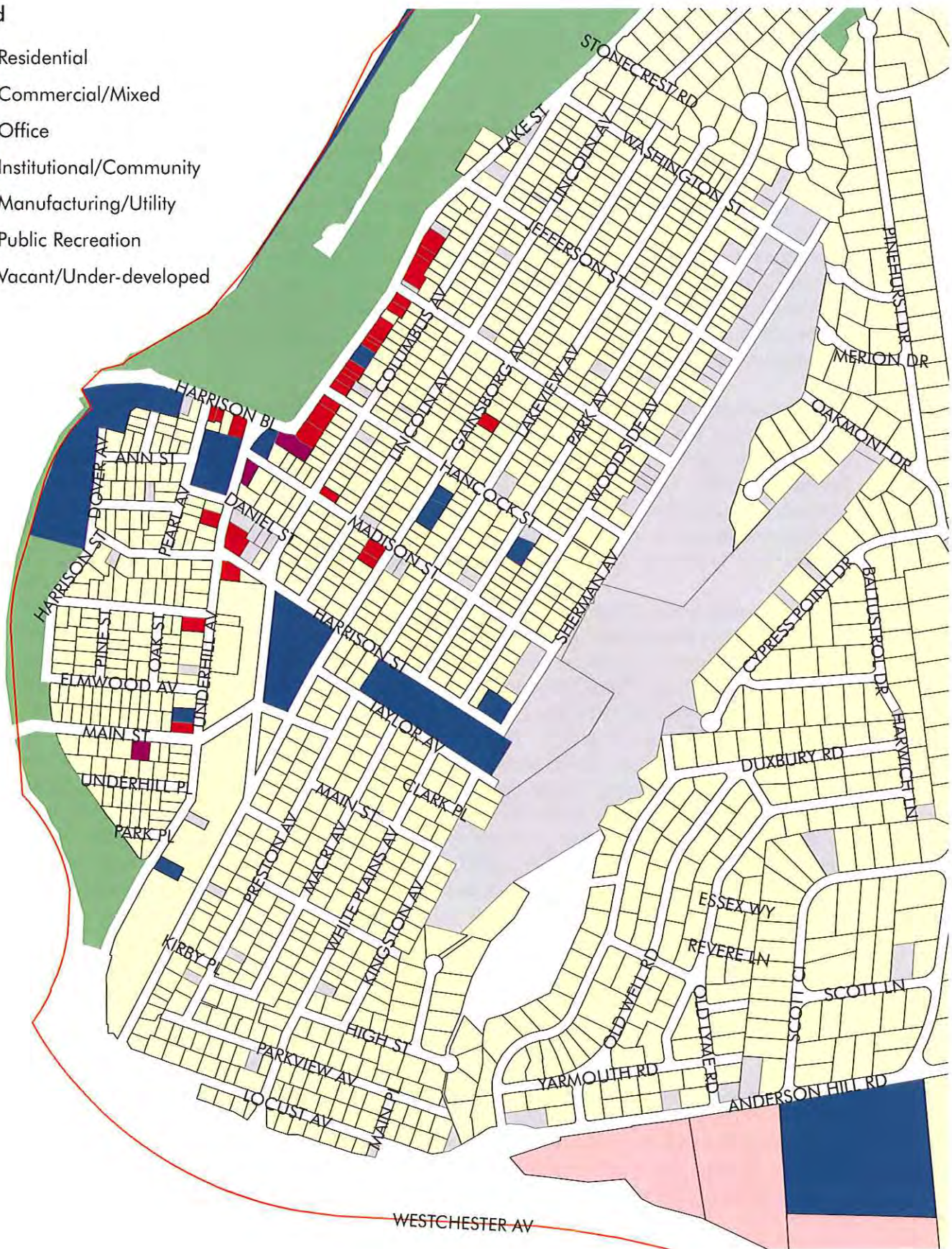
Park Lane is mainly residential, but there is one commercial nursery (Hillside Farm). The town operates the DPW facility here to the north of Park Lane, south of Rye Lake, containing two water tanks and a pumping house for the Water District and a fire training center. The future use of the former 33-acre Nike base should provide for both the best interests of Harrison's DPW and the recreational needs of the surrounding community. An examination of the current recreational needs should be undertaken in an effort to find the best use for the site. DPW needs a total of 11 acres which leaves 22 for recreation.

There is a quarry/stoneyard located on Lake Street just south of Barnes Lane. The Lake Street Quarry is located in the R-1 zoning district, but has been operating since before zoning was adopted, sometime around the early 1920s. During the planning process for the 2006 draft Master Plan, the quarry owner indicated that he had considered such new commercial uses as a plant nursery and a high-end food market with ancillary restaurant. The planning process found a strong community desire for the current suburban residential character of Lake Street to be maintained, requiring that all future development on the quarry site be undertaken according to the existing zoning. The site, however, is not naturally an attractive one for single-family houses, such as the ones built in recent years in the larger area. More discussion of realistic options is required. Since this planning process, in October 2009, the Town issued a stop-work order to the business until a permit was acquired in accordance with Chapter 133 of the Town Code. The matter remains in litigation.

The four main community uses in West Harrison are the library, fire station, Leo Mintzer Center, and the parks, all of which are very centrally located. West Harrison is served by the Samuel J. Preston Elementary School, which is located well-within the residential part of the community, and appears to be well-situated to allow walking to school. Community uses vary in their condition. The West Harrison Fire Company No. 1 firehouse is a handsome building, appearing well-maintained. In contrast, the Leo Mintzer Center, a former school, is in bad repair and requires renovations. It houses the local community center, and provides a meeting place for the West Harrison Senior Citizen Club and Town Board meetings. The 2004 Master Plan for John A. Passidomo Park noted that the center serves "a multitude of users who are competing for space." Since completion of that Master Plan, the Town completed construction of an annex building to the center, improving its functionality for the community.

## Legend

- Residential
- Commercial/Mixed
- Office
- Institutional/Community
- Manufacturing/Utility
- Public Recreation
- Vacant/Under-developed







Harrison Fire House



Leo Mintzer Center

West Harrison contains an interesting mix of residences. In Silver Lake, most are one- and two-family residences, but there are some multi-family units near the downtown - for example on the corner of Pearl and Harrison. Garden apartments, stretching along Columbus and Underhill Avenues, provide multi-family housing without being out-of-scale with the nearby houses or blocking views of the lake and park. Park Lane has a suburban character with a semi-rural setting bestowed upon it by the presence of Silver Lake Park, Forest Lake and Rye Lake. Forest Lake is owned by the Park Lane Homeowner's Association. Rye Lake is owned by New York City.



Multi-Family residence



Garden Apartments

### Parks

Of the two parks, Silver Lake Park encircles the northern end of the lake, and lies within both Harrison and White Plains. Passidomo Park is Harrison's own, and lies along the lake's narrow southern edge. Passidomo Park is 48 acres, with about 14 in active use now, or planned for active use. The park's prospect overlooking the lake is shaded by trees and an important group of civic memorials. The memorials demonstrate a long commitment to remembering events and persons: the World War II Memorial has been joined in more recent years by a September 11 Memorial and an Arbor Day Memorial. The park also provides the community with sitting and viewing places and a renovated sports field. The field has synthetic turf and is suitable for baseball, football, lacrosse, and soccer. Other planned capital improvements, resulting from the 2004 Passidomo Park Master Plan, included an expanded recreation center, new basketball and tennis courts, a lakefront walk, gazebo, and streetscaping (new sidewalks, benches, street lights). The



project also entailed a walkway from the Leo Mintzer Center directly to the Lake Street shops and Veterans Memorial Plaza. However, this portion of the plan – together with the expanded recreation center – has been put on hold indefinitely due to the current economic climate. The Town has also not determined what will replace the former pool at the park, although construction of additional parking has been mentioned as a possibility. Since the bulk of the Master Plan recommendations have been carried out, most of the park remains undisturbed open space, with some trails, while the land closest to houses, stores, and community buildings now serving the community's recreation needs better.



World War II Memorial



View of Passidomo Park

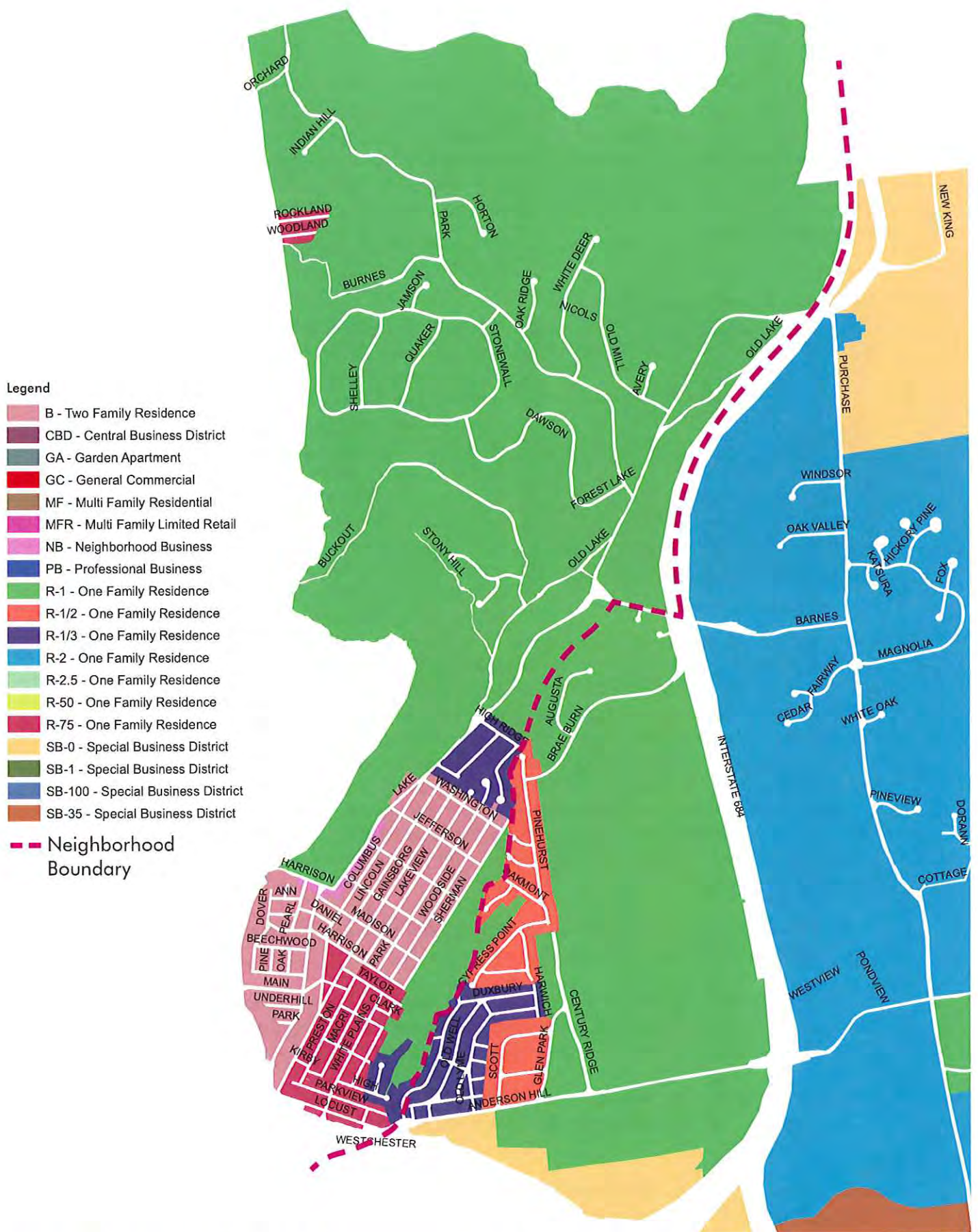
The plan noted that despite the capital improvements to Passidomo Park, the lake itself required attention. In recent years, the lake has eutrophied – where an overgrowth of algae overcomes water quality. The appearance of Silver Lake is intrinsic to the identity and pleasant character of West Harrison. Measures to combat water quality problems need to be devised and implemented, in concert with the City of White Plains and the county, through the institution of the Watershed Advisory Committee 3. Possible measures, as discussed in Chapter 2, include:

- Geese and duck control: the fowl population must be controlled.
- Construction of sediment ponds
- Growth of a hedge buffer around the lake's edge
- Winter water draw-down to fatally expose the weeds to the atmosphere

### Zoning

The zoning in Silver Lake is mainly a mix of B – Two Family Residence District and R-75 – One Family Residence District. The R-75 District is bounded by Harrison Street to the north and Columbus Avenue to the west. The commercial zoning in West Harrison is NB – Neighborhood Business District. The commercial area is L-shaped, occupying the south and east sides of Lake Street, fronting the park, covering approximately 19 acres. There was one significant area of non-conforming uses along Underhill Avenue, including the block between Daniel and Harrison streets, which contained Sal's Automotive and Clark's Towing. This was the subject of a successful subdivision application that replaced the towing use with conforming two-family, side-by-side residences.







The zoning in Park Lane is almost entirely R-1 (minimum lot size one acre), with one small area of R-75 (minimum lot size 7,500 sq feet) located along Rockland and Woodland Streets adjoining White Plains. As discussed earlier, the Park Lane subdivision is now nearly built out. Applications from homeowners can now be anticipated for decks, swimming pools, fences and other accessory structures. Given the topography in this area, it may not be easy to site such structures; variances may be required. The town should monitor this.

#### Silver Lake Business Area Character



Good example of a storefront

Design is strongly linked to identity: Lake Street has the potential to become an even more pleasant commercial core, offering retail and service opportunities to residents and visitors alike, but at present is not living up to this potential. The appearance of the business district is crucial to the creation of an identity and can contribute to commercial success. Lake Street has a very 'green' feel due to its picturesque location. The parks provide an attractive setting for Lake Street's businesses and pedestrian traffic. This is further enhanced by the street trees lining the sidewalks. There

are a number of noteworthy buildings in West Harrison, including the Fire House, the Chase Bank and Donohue's store. These buildings date from an earlier architectural era and have not been modernized or had their design character stripped away. These buildings could serve as good examples for any new development. Two good examples of appropriately designed store fronts are Monica Chimes Florists, and also the uniform awnings and appearance of the building housing Scoops, the laundry, and the dry cleaners. This latter building is not by itself noteworthy, but has been tenanted with a good eye toward creating a clean and attractive appearance. In an effort to improve this area, the Town placed all overhead utility wires for cable, electricity, and telephone services underground. Other possible actions that would enhance Silver Lake's business area's appearance are:

- Developing Design Guidelines, specific to West Harrison, to promote development that enhances and reinforces its character.
- Encouraging merchants and landlords to assume greater responsibility for the maintenance, cleanliness, and overall ambiance of their establishments. The town can provide an incentive by levying fines for non-compliance.
- Creating a new sign law to promote the use of signs that are aesthetically pleasing, of appropriate scale, and integrated with surrounding buildings and landscape.

Beyond appearance, the local community reports that there is insufficient variety in the retail and services. The community wants a diversity of businesses, to sustain the vitality of



the center and to properly serve the surrounding community. Specifically, there is a desire for a grocery and a bakery.

Finally, there is the risk that West Harrison's commercial core on Lake Street will blur into the separate cluster further west on Underhill Avenue. The plan recommends that the core retain a distinct and intact identity, in the interest of sustaining a center which attracts West Harrison residents. Likewise, the Underhill commercial area should not expand, particularly with business creep into former residences. The Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals should continue to be aware of this, as applications come before them.

### **Parking and Traffic**

Parking difficulties in Silver Lake restrict the full use and potential of its downtown core. The capacity of the main parking lot is seasonally inadequate. There is the problem of the use of short-term parking spaces by long-term users; and on-street parking spaces in residential areas are used by non-Harrison residents. Parking enforcement is critical if these issues are to be resolved. The enforcement of the short-term rule against long-term users is essential if this is to be resolved. The Parking Authority should examine this issue. Where on-street parking spaces in residential areas are being used by non-Harrison residents, the town should restrict parking in municipal lots to residents only. A solution to this would be a permitting system, whereby residents would be provided with one or two permits per house. Furthermore a permit should be required for parking at both the park and the Mintzer Center.

The 1988 Master Plan Update identified the parking issue as being critical and recommendations were made regarding the design and layout of the parking lot. The main parking lot in West Harrison is located adjacent to Passidomo Park, along Lake Street. The parking lot has been expanded and improved since the 1988 Plan, with a new, lower level addition. Although the capacity of the expanded lot is large (approximately 90 spaces) it is inadequate to serve the peak hours of restaurant use each evening, and some restaurants are forced to use valet parking. In addition, there is a seasonal element to the problem, as in summer the park is more heavily utilized, and so is the parking lot. The Master Plan for Passidomo Park and the business district involved improving the park and the streetscape, which includes providing for an improved parking lot, but these recommendations have not fully been carried out. Additional parking is possible at the location of the former pool.

The parking regulations at present require one space per 175 square feet of floor area in a commercial or service use. The regulations also include a 10-space waiver for the first required ten spaces for all commercial uses in the Silver Lake Commercial Area. This waiver was intended to allow flexibility to potential businesses, but it may contribute to the present-day parking shortage. As discussed in Chapter 2, the effectiveness of the waiver needs to be examined and consideration given to reducing the parking requirements to one per 400 square feet of gross floor area. In-lieu fees should also be considered subject to approval by the Planning Board. Any such fees should be allocated to the Parking Authority to be used for transportation and parking improvements in Silver Lake.

West Harrison experiences traffic as commuters use Lake Street as a shortcut to get to White Plains from I-684. The speed and the volume of this traffic detract from the

pleasant character of West Harrison. The neighborhood is located east of the City of White Plains, which is a large city, (population 56,853 in 2010) containing a large commuting work force. Harrison has excellent road transportation links, in particular I-684, I-287 and the Hutchinson River Parkway. Possible traffic calming measures were identified in Chapter 2.



Cannon Merritt Hill

Former Nike Base

Forest Lake

### 5.3 Purchase

The neighborhood of Purchase is located north of the Cross-Westchester Expressway and is separated from West Harrison by the Mamaroneck River as far north as Barnes Lane where the boundary is formed by I-684, see Figure 5-6. The central spine of the area is formed by Purchase Street, which is lined with large plot single-family homes and country clubs.

#### Land Uses

This area is mainly residential, but it also contains some significant large land users, including Westchester County Airport, SUNY, Manhattanville College, country clubs and large office campuses such as MasterCard and PepsiCo. There are also limited business uses along Anderson Hill Road, including Purchase Deli and Trattoria 632 restaurant. With the exception of PepsiCo, the office campuses are located along the Hutchinson River Parkway and Westchester Avenue. These comprise part of the "Platinum Mile" and are discussed in a separate chapter.

There is a concentration of community services in the area around the Anderson Hill Road and Purchase Street intersection. The library, fire station, post office, Purchase Community House and Elementary School are located in the vicinity. These buildings are all attractive, appearing well maintained. This area provides a good community focus for Purchase.

Purchase does not contain a variety of housing types: the majority consists of single-family homes. Anderson Hill Road contains the smaller, more traditionally styled older housing, but in the rest of the area, most houses are large-lot single-family homes, with varying architectural styles.





HARRISON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, 2012

FIGURE 5-6: AERIAL OF PURCHASE

HARRISON, NY

Source: Westchester County GIS





There are a number of large, undeveloped or underutilized properties in Purchase, including the Lehman-Loeb estate, the Sisters of John the Baptist convent, the Kempner Property and the Gache property.



Anderson Hill Road



Purchase Library



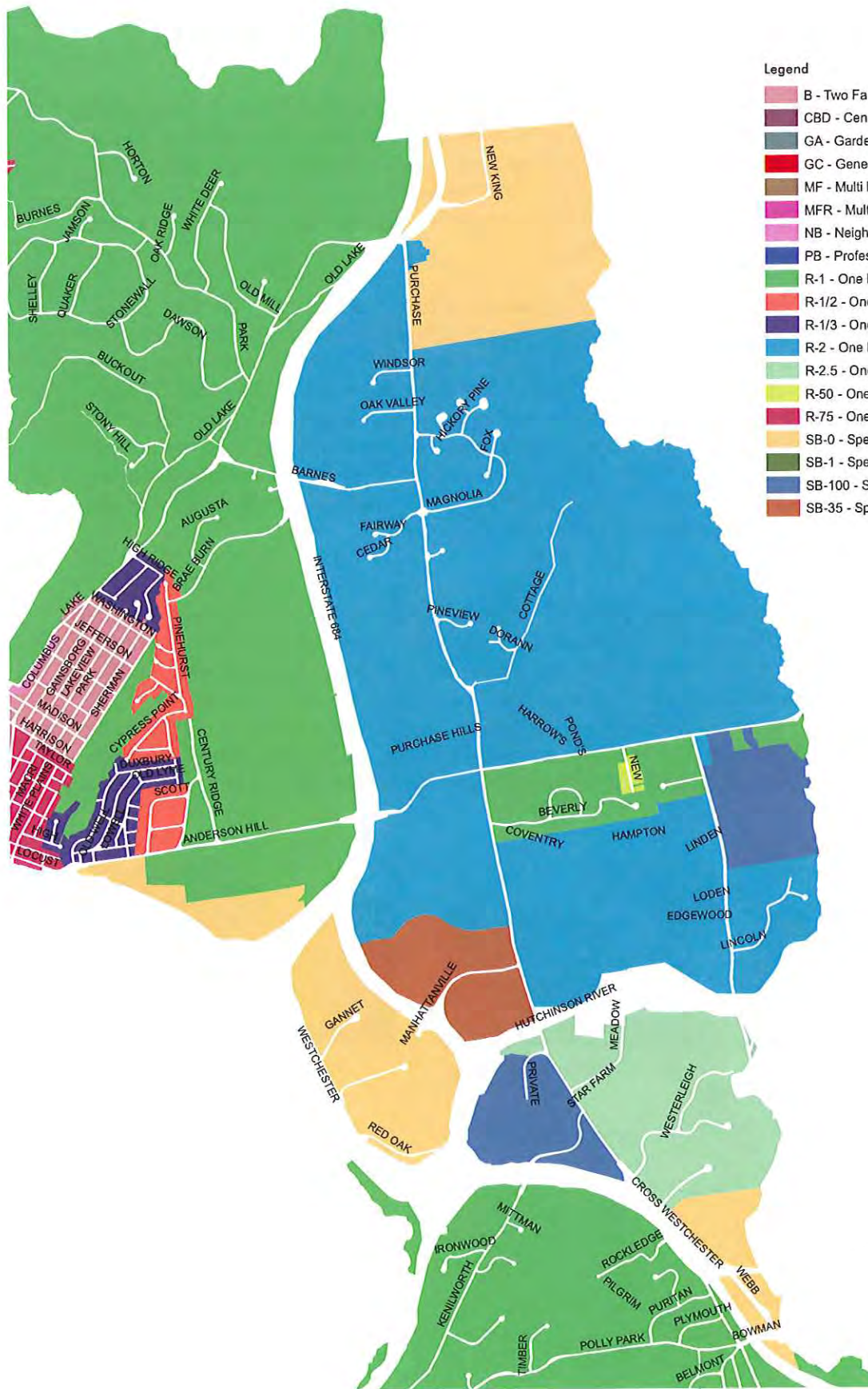
Purchase Elementary School

### Zoning

The zoning in Purchase is mainly One Family Residence Districts with six levels of density; see Figure 5-7. The lowest-density zoning is R-2.5 (minimum lot size of 2.5 acres). This district is located between the Hutchinson River Parkway and I-287. The next lowest is R-2 (2 acre minimum); this comprises the bulk of zoned land in Purchase, and is located east of I-684. The R-1 district (1 acre minimum) is located both south of Anderson Hill Road, and west of I-684. Nearer to Silver Lake there are two higher-density districts – R-1/2 (1/2 acre minimum) and R-1/3 (1/3 acre minimum). The highest-density zoning district, R-50 (minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet) is located off Anderson Hill Road, along New Street. In general, rural, low-density development is considered most suitable for this area of Harrison.

The large lots in Purchase, containing the office campuses and the airport, are zoned Special Business, SB, ranging from SB-0 and SB-1 which require a minimum lot area of 5 acres, to SB-100 which requires a minimum lot size of 100 acres.

The main area of non-conforming uses is along Anderson Hill Road, where a small amount of neighborhood business uses such as a deli and some restaurants has accumulated.



- Legend
- B - Two Fa
  - CBD - Cen
  - GA - Garde
  - GC - Gene
  - MF - Multi I
  - MFR - Mult
  - NB - Neigh
  - PB - Profes
  - R-1 - One I
  - R-1/2 - On
  - R-1/3 - On
  - R-2 - One I
  - R-2.5 - On
  - R-50 - One
  - R-75 - One
  - SB-0 - Spe
  - SB-1 - Spe
  - SB-100 - S
  - SB-35 - Sp



### Neighborhood Character

Purchase is a very attractive, affluent residential area, which has a general impression of open landscape, containing low-density, semi-rural development. Although the house types are broadly similar, the diversity of architectural styles is interesting and adds to the experience of traveling through the area. The character of this area should be maintained, and policies need to be devised to carefully regulate new development and ensure compatibility with existing character.

Harrison's zoning code provides for a minimum buffer setback of 100 feet to be established along each of the following roadways: Purchase Street, Barnes Lane, Lincoln Avenue, Cottage Avenue and Anderson Hill Road. This means that the front of any new house or structure must be set back at least 100 feet from the edge of the road right-of-way and a permanent open space preservation easement is required by the Planning Board prior to the granting of any building permit for any development abutting any of those streets. In addition to this buffer setback, the zoning code should contain direction on the preservation of mature trees, stone walls and other natural and built features on private property which contribute to the character of the area.

### Housing Types

The six different residential zoning districts in Purchase have given rise to a number of different house types. The smallest are located in the highest-density zone - R-50 (5,000 sqft minimum lot), located along New Street. These are traditional single-family homes, similar to house types in downtown Harrison. The next highest densities are the R-1/3, R-1/2 and R-1 zones, which have given rise to similar sized homes as those in the R-50 district, except on larger lots. The two lowest-density districts, comprising the bulk of the residential zoning districts, R-2 and R-2.5, contain much larger houses, on larger lots.



R-50 - New Street



R-1 - Anderson Hill Road



R-2 - Purchase Street



House types in Purchase have traditionally been large, but the local community feels that new houses are being built out of character with the surrounding context. While the general character of houses is colonial, suited to the rural setting on large lots, in recent times, house sizes have grown enormously, with some floor areas exceeding 20,000 square feet. In highly valued real estate markets, which – with the exception of the recent housing market downturn, has been Harrison’s experience – new houses are generally built out to the maximum allowed given the zoning code’s required yards (setbacks), maximum building coverage and height. The use of a Floor Area Ratio or other appropriate similar tools would limit to some degree the bulky houses. This issue is dealt with in this plan as a town-wide planning issue.



Stoneleigh Manor, Lincoln Avenue



Newer house on Purchase Street

### Subdivisions

Chapter 2 discussed the possible amendment of the residential cluster subdivision text to allow open space (conservation) subdivisions. With regard to revising the zoning text on perimeter buffers, Purchase has a required 100-foot buffer setback that applies on certain streets. The Town Board should consider increasing this buffer in any new open space subdivision to a distance of perhaps 150 feet from the street. Where a proposed open space subdivision abuts existing residential development, a similar perimeter buffer could be required to ensure that the privacy of existing residences is protected.

### Stone Walls

The old stone walls of Purchase comprise part of its character and need protection. In the main these are traditional dry-stack stone walls, built without the use of mortar. Some new developments have built mortared stone walls as their front property boundary, but the more traditional dry-stack is preferable, as this method is historically correct for Purchase. Stone walls are not regulated in Harrison’s land development ordinance. Most walls lie on private property and were originally laid to define property boundaries and farm fields. When a wall is beyond the owner’s functional fencing, it can become neglected. Some homeowners may not know the historic and aesthetic value of their walls or how to go about rebuilding or repairing them.





Dry-stack stone wall



Dry-stack in disrepair



Mortared stone wall

Even when a homeowner is familiar with the significance of their walls, rebuilding is expensive. The Town Code should be amended to include old stone walls as items that need to be shown on all site plans and subdivision plats, with the applicant being required to preserve these walls or to rebuild them where they are damaged. Educational materials could also be created for property owners which explain the historical significance, styles, and construction of stone walls, listing reliable local contractors and wall builders, encouraging wall owners to repair their walls as stones fall out, and identifying destructive vegetation (such as vines and bayberry) that should be removed from walls.

### Traffic

Traffic is a critical issue in Purchase, particularly along Anderson Hill Road and Purchase Street, which are both minor arterials. Purchase Street is a New York State road, and Anderson Hill Road is a County road. These streets experience traffic from Greenwich to White Plains and The Westchester Mall, in addition to airport traffic. Minor arterials are designed to carry traffic between Harrison and the surrounding towns and villages. Travel along Anderson Hill Road is also made difficult by parking along the street by patrons of the local, non-conforming businesses. While these businesses are well-patronized and clearly provide a necessary service in this part of town, the lack of sufficient parking creates a safety problem.

The Town Board and Planning Board should discourage direct access to arterial roads from adjoining land wherever possible. Separate local roads should be required in those cases where access cannot be obtained from intersecting side roads. The width of the pavement of the arterial should be sufficient to permit the movement of traffic in both directions. On-street parking should be discouraged along arterials.

As discussed in Chapter 2, NYSDOT is currently undertaking a phased reconstruction of the I-287 corridor. The reconstruction includes rehabilitating the existing six-lane roadway, eliminating choke points and making safety improvements along the corridor, including the rehabilitation or replacement of more than 30 bridges, including the Anderson Hill Road bridge.

The 1988 Master Plan addressed preserving the overall rural character along Purchase Street; this remains relevant. Some of the older roads in Purchase are lined by stone walls, mature trees and other natural and built features, which provide interest and comprise part of the identity of the area. Road improvements and widening are leading to the disappearance of these features, which should be preserved.

Going forward, the traffic problems in Purchase can only be expected to intensify, especially given the development potential of the undeveloped properties off Anderson Hill Road. The 1972 Master Plan showed a connection between Manhattanville Road and Corporate Park Drive, which would connect Purchase Street to Westchester Avenue. This has not happened to date, but an emergency-access linkage should still be considered.

A number of the recommendations of the 1988 Update relating to traffic remain relevant. These are 1) access to new commercial development should be from existing office parks, 2) curb cuts should be avoided along Anderson Hill Road, Lincoln Avenue, and Purchase Street, and 3) driveways for commercial development should be combined for adjacent parcels.

Traffic studies are necessary along Anderson Hill Road and Purchase Street to devise solutions to the issues. Key intersections that have turning delays and congestion are:

- Manhattanville Road and Purchase Street
- Purchase Street and Anderson Hill Road
- Lincoln Avenue and Purchase Street
- Anderson Hill Road and Westchester Avenue
- Barnes Lane and Lake Street

The use of traffic calming could be considered to discourage through traffic, as discussed in Chapter 2. One possible solution for the Anderson Hill Road and Purchase Street intersection could be the construction of a roundabout.

### Open Space

Although there is a high provision of private open space in Purchase, including country clubs, SUNY and the PepsiCo Sculpture Garden, there is insufficient public open space. The only park is located at the Purchase Community House, but this has restricted access. The various educational institutions also have associated open space and recreational facilities. The Donald M. Kendall Sculpture garden located on the grounds of PepsiCo is an excellent cultural resource offering sculpture in 144 landscaped acres, but unfortunately access has been increasingly restricted post 9/11.

Purchase Community House is a nonprofit organization, which provides recreational and enrichment programs for the residents of Purchase and surrounding communities. They offer preschool and after-school programs during the school year, and a seven-week day camp for ages three to 13 and an outdoor family pool program in the summer.

The Town does not own any open space in Purchase, and with increasing development and land values, the purchase of public open space will become more difficult. This issue needs to be addressed to provide both for the existing and future needs of the residents of Purchase, and to sustain the area's rural quality. The options for this are dealt with as a town-wide issue in Chapter 2.



## Manhattanville College and SUNY Purchase

These two colleges make a valued contribution to the cultural life of the community. Continued and enhanced cooperation with them is imperative.

### State University of New York (SUNY)



SUNY was opened in 1972 with the intention of combining conservatory training in the visual and performing arts with liberal arts and sciences programs on one campus. Set over 400 acres, the college had an enrollment of 4,148 for Fall 2011, which reversed a prior trend of declining enrollment. The college also contains the Neuberger Museum of Art and the Performing Arts Center which are valuable cultural institutions in the town.

SUNY has recently pursued an active development program, including the construction of a Student Services Building, and a new 300-bed residence hall centered on a courtyard with space for college retail outlets. Development at SUNY is permitted by the State, not the Town, although it obviously has an impact on Harrison, and is facilitated by the Town in terms of services such as water and sewer. The Town is an "involved agent" pursuant to SEQR and therefore gets informed about any development.

### Manhattanville College

In 2008 the college completed construction of a Center for the Creative Arts, the first new building to be added to the campus since 1965. The college takes a proactive approach to environmental conservation, and was awarded the National Wildlife Federation's Campus Ecology Recognition Award for 2004-2005. Manhattanville also completed in 2006 the Ohnell Environmental Park, featured a restored Lady Chapel, and has constructed an on-site water treatment system (a Living Machine) which purifies water from an on-site stream through natural biological processes. The Town should encourage any conservation and innovative environmental efforts by the college. The appointment of a town employee as a liaison officer would assist in the fostering of cooperation and information exchange. Such an approach could be applied to SUNY as well.



Purchase Community House



PepsiCo Sculpture Garden



Andy Goldsworthy sculpture on SUNY grounds

### Large Private Clubs, Estates, and Undeveloped Tracts



Old Oaks Country Club

As discussed in Chapter 2, the many country clubs in Purchase comprise an important resource for the town in the form of large green vistas and visual breathing room. There is no guarantee, however that these clubs will remain forever as private recreation. The development potential of these properties is significant. Strategies need to be devised to deal with the possibility of their redevelopment. These might include creating a recreation district and open-space subdivision criteria for the provision of open space in the zoning code.

Some estates remain in Harrison, and the development of any or all of these would have significant impacts. The Lehman-Loeb estate, the Sisters of John the Baptist convent, the Kempner property and the Gache property have development potential. The large tracts of undeveloped land in Harrison are identified in Figure 5-8. These properties have significant development potential, comprising almost 189 acres of land, and would result in the development of approximately 161 homes under the current zoning, as can be seen from Table 5-1.

Table 5-1: Development Potential in Purchase

Owner	Portion	Area (acres)	Zoning	Gross Development Potential at existing zoning (d.u.)*
Gache	A	21.2	R-1	21
	B	14.3	R-2	7
	C	20.5	R-2	10
	D	13.6	R-2	6
Gache total		69.6		44
Lehman-Loeb	A	56.4	R-1	56
	B	15.6	R-1	15
	C	11.9	R-1	11
Lehman-Loeb total		83.9		82
Sisters of John the Baptist Convent		11.4	R-1	11
Church of Latter Day Saints		24	R-1	24
<b>Total</b>		<b>188.9</b>		<b>161</b>

\* This gross amount does not take account of any environmentally constrained land on site.



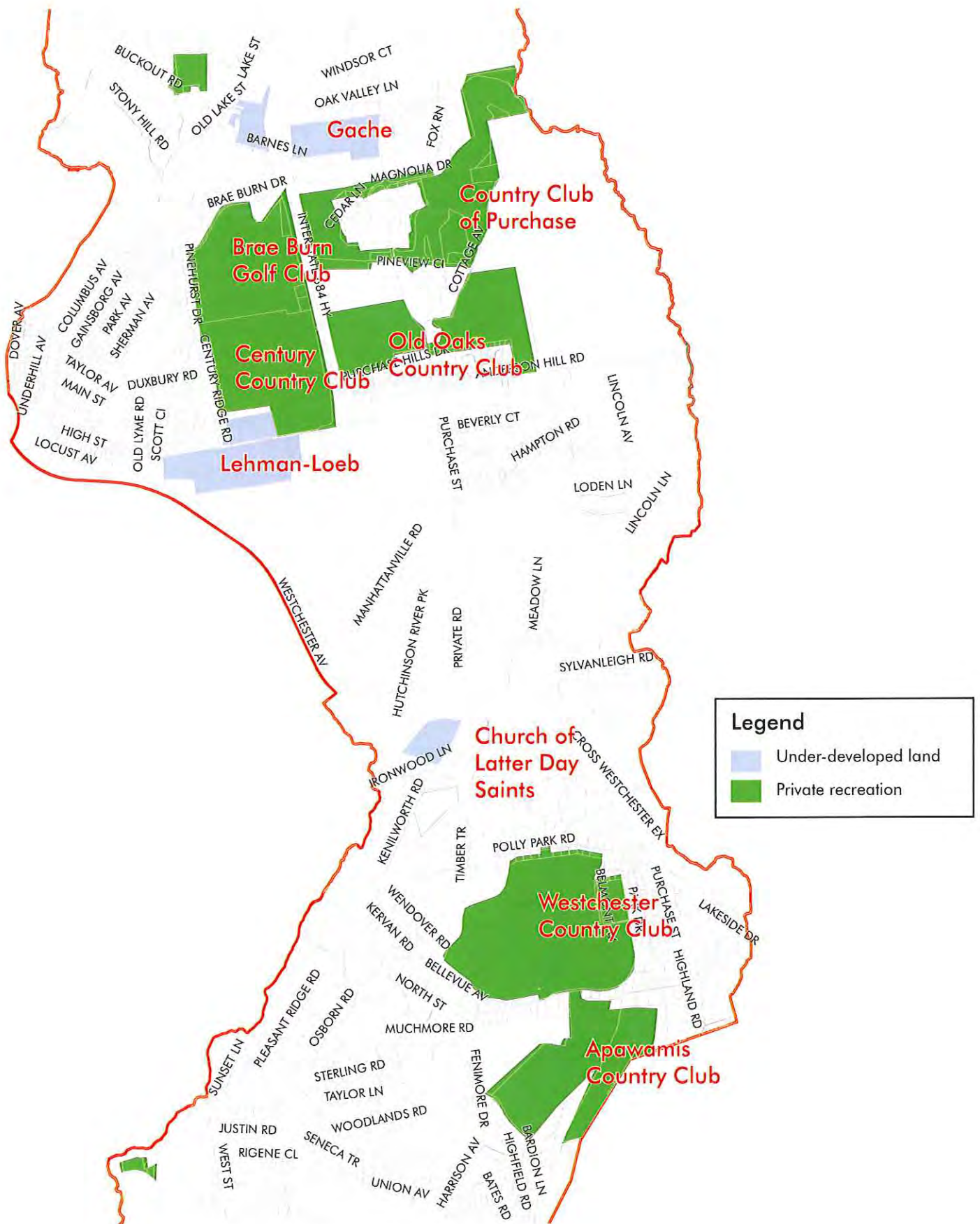


FIGURE 5-8:

SIGNIFICANT PROPERTIES



## Chapter 6: Plan Concepts and Future Land Use Plan

Following both the townwide and neighborhood analyses, this chapter now turns to the future plan for Harrison. The Comprehensive Plan guides Harrison in its accomplishment of shared goals for future development. This plan does not in itself change zoning or assure implementation of plan recommendations. A community is developed over the years by hundreds of individual and group decisions. This plan is designed to educate those who plan to develop their property and the various boards that oversee such development.

This final chapter consists of four elements. First, the planning concepts for Harrison which combine the goal and vision of the community in regard to each topic are presented. The second element is a summary based upon the detailed discussion of existing conditions, issues and recommendations made in the foregoing chapters. This summary takes the form of a future land use plan which will guide future development. Third, there is a summary of all recommendations made in the plan. Finally, implementation measures and first priorities are outlined.

### 6.1 Plan Concepts

This section is the bridge between the description of Harrison's current context and concerns and the future land use plan in the next section. Here, the plan presents the planning concepts for townwide land uses and for specific areas. The planning concepts combine the goal and vision of the community in regard to each topic or area.

#### 6.1.1 Townwide Concepts

##### Residential Development

Harrison's residential zoning controls preserve qualities important to residents and promote sufficient housing choice to meet market demand for the most part. Certain modifications are needed to improve housing choice in a targeted way and to improve the end result of development controls.

##### Environment and Open Space

Harrison respects environmentally sensitive areas, reducing hazards to property and preserving the scenic qualities of the community. Going forward, the town will upgrade and expand open space and recreational facilities to enhance their function and appearance. The town will seek to preserve open space when large-scale residential development is proposed through the required open space set-aside, and through the use of cluster (open space) subdivision, where appropriate. Further, Harrison recognizes the significance of private recreation here, such as the golf courses. The town will ensure that the open landscape qualities so key to its beauty and serenity are preserved.

### Transportation and Parking

Harrison will continue to promote, and, when found to be feasible and appropriate, to provide transportation improvements, and parking facilities to serve its population, and which are compatible with the town's character.

#### **6.1.1.1.1 Downtown Central Business District Concepts**

Harrison will continue to promote development of an attractive and appealing downtown CBD which has a distinctive character and which achieves a high standard of pedestrian and urban amenities.

Harrison will encourage economic development and vitality in the downtown CBD.

Harrison will create a comprehensive, orderly parking management system that balances the demand for long- and short-term parking in the downtown CBD.

Harrison will provide community and recreational facilities and services which contribute to the overall improvement of the community, such as the renovation of the historic train station as a new court and town meeting facility.

#### **6.1.1.1.2 Downtown Harrison Concepts**

Harrison recognizes the need to preserve and enhance the existing neighborhoods in downtown Harrison as the foundation of a strong community.

Harrison will preserve the quiet, safe nature of neighborhood streets in downtown.

#### **6.1.1.1.3 West Harrison Concepts**

Harrison will enhance the identity, appearance and vitality of West Harrison's commercial core for the benefit of residents and business owners alike.

Harrison will encourage an accessible and pedestrian-friendly commercial core.

Harrison will endeavor to maintain natural resources in a sustainable manner to provide maximum benefit to the environment and to residents.

Harrison will improve the quality and range of community and recreational facilities in West Harrison.

#### 6.1.1.1.4 Purchase Concepts

Harrison will preserve the existing low-density, open and rural character of Purchase and ensure any future development respects this character.

Harrison will endeavor to facilitate the correction of existing traffic conflicts and congested intersections, and minimize conflicts potentially generated by future developments.

Harrison will encourage any development of former estates or on any undeveloped land to respect existing neighborhoods and add to the quality of life in the area.

Harrison will continue to seek cooperation between the colleges and the Town/Village of Harrison, to protect the interests of residents.

#### 6.1.1.1.5 Platinum Mile Concept

Harrison is committed to sustaining the important tax base created by corporate office development while promoting flexibility for other land uses, as appropriate, which may further enhance the tax base while generating few adverse impacts to surrounding areas.

### 6.2 Future Land Use Plan

The future land use plan presented in this chapter will guide future development. It is both a map and accompanying text describing the town's general land use categories and areas of specific recommendations. The plan recognizes the established settlement pattern, transportation infrastructure, natural features, and opportunities for new development. Thus, the future land use plan attempts to reconcile community goals for conservation and development, environmental constraints on development, and existing infrastructure.

The major recommendations of this plan are shown on the Future Land Use Map. (See Figure 6.1). The map can be considered a visual representation of an ideal form for Harrison. Figure 6.1 shows Harrison at maturity, with all land committed to development; road networks; dedicated open space; or public land uses such as parks and schools, and built out according to plan recommendations. The map's purpose is to support Harrison's official zoning map, as well as other official town maps, such as wetlands and watercourses and others that may be created, and the maps contained within this plan. These maps – downtown plan, and the environmental constraints map among others – should be referred to in conjunction with the future land use map, in order to understand the potential future development or conservation of a particular lot. Site-specific development plans should use GIS technology where possible in order to show clearly the approving board the proposed subdivision or site plan.

This section is a summary based upon the detailed discussion of existing conditions, issues and recommendations made in the foregoing chapters. The land use planning summary presented here is thus best understood when read alongside, and not as a substitute for, the bulk of the plan.



The following criteria were relied upon in drawing up the future land use plan:

**Land Uses.** The land use plan is generally consistent with existing development. Dramatic changes in existing land uses are not proposed, as the overall settlement pattern is one that Harrison property owners are satisfied with and wish to see continued. Also, there is no public interest served in making large groups of houses and businesses non-conforming under zoning. Thus, areas that are stable or not in need of change are preserved.

**Zoning and Development Pressures.** The plan has sought to consider changes in zoning only in circumstances where a reasonable argument for change, supported by the community planning concepts and planning analysis, can be made. The plan supports most of Harrison's existing zoning as it allows homes where people wish to live and at varying densities, and businesses where these are best located. With respect to zoning, there are a few areas where the plan recommends that rezonings be considered to improve controls on development. The following options should be the subject of further study and evaluation:

- Revise the regulations for B zones throughout Harrison to allow two-family residences only by special permit, requiring 3,000 square feet of gross lot area per unit and mandating that applicants meeting this threshold must address parking and architectural issues.
- Consider rezoning the nonconforming industrial area in downtown east of Oakland Avenue from the B district to a General Commercial (GC) business district.
- Introduce an overlay district or special purpose/recreation district for the country clubs in the town.
- Evaluate the creation of a new townhouse zoning district.

**Environmental Considerations.** There are a number of natural resources requiring protection: steep slopes, wetlands, watercourses, ponds and Kenisco Reservoir. Harrison already controls development that might harm any of these resources, as does the New York City Department of Environmental Protection through its Watershed Regulations. This plan recommends reviewing the town's residential cluster subdivision regulations, in the interests of revising these regulations to more clearly create permanently preserved open space. Such open space may be habitat or environmentally sensitive land. This change would lead to greater protection of environmental resources in future large-scale development.

**Infrastructure.** Access from adequate roads and proximity to existing or potential water and sewer utilities are two factors defining the capacity of land to accommodate different types and densities of development. Some areas of Harrison remain un-sewered, but as new subdivisions are developed, the town is committed to providing the necessary extensions. No changes are proposed to the overall road network, but some improvements at the Anderson Hill Road/Purchase Street intersection and traffic calming measures elsewhere in the town, should be considered.

### 6.3 Future Land Use Plan Elements

The future land use plan is shown in Figure 6.1. There are six basic elements to this. These are:

- Underlying lots and road network
- Residential land uses
- Commercial, retail and office uses
- Industrial uses
- Institutional/community uses
- Parks, recreation (public and private) and open space

The generalized land uses are shown using traditional land use colors. The lighter shade of each color indicates less development density; as the shade darkens, development density increases. This map is not a substitute for and does not supersede Harrison's official zoning map.

Land Use	Color
Residential (three categories)	Yellow
Commercial	Red
Office	Pink
Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (two categories – public and private)	Green
Airport	Deep Pink
Waterbodies	Light Blue
Institutional and Community	Blue

#### a) Residential Land Use

The land use plan shows a range of housing densities, Harrison's primary land use. In general respects, the plan is based on existing zoning and settlement, but groups residential development land into three different levels of density. It should be understood that this category does not exclude uses that are typically found embedded in residential areas, such as schools, places of worship, cemeteries, private foundations and occasional small, stand-alone businesses. These other uses are normally seen as compatible with dwellings in overwhelmingly residential areas, and even as necessary to the proper functioning of such areas.

**Low density:** This corresponds to the R-2.5, R-2, and R-1 zones or a range of density from one housing unit per two and a half acres to one per acre. These land use densities are representative of the predominantly single-family home character of Harrison.

**Moderate density:** This corresponds to the single-family zones of R-1/2, R-1/3, R-75, and R-50. The densities here range from one house per half-acre to 5,000 square feet.

**Medium high density:** This category corresponds to the town's B – Two Family, GA – Garden Apartment and MF – Multi-Family zoning districts. These districts are mapped in the downtown and in Silver Lake. New development in the medium high density areas will mostly be scattered on infill lots, making it imperative that the new houses conform to the immediately surrounding scale and architecture.

The plan contains a number of recommendations in relation to residential area controls including introducing bulk reduction techniques (such as, but not limited to a floor area ratio), a landscaping ordinance, and a review of the cluster subdivision text.

#### **b) Commercial Land Use**

These areas are shown on the map in red and a red hatch line.

**Downtown and Silver Lake:** The Plan recognizes the existing commercial areas and makes recommendations to reinforce these. The primary ones are the downtown and Silver Lake. In both centers there are opportunities for improvements and the Future Land Use Plan identifies such locations.

One location in existing commercial use for which the plan recommends consideration of change is the Lake Street quarry. The replacement of the existing use with a more compatible and appropriate use should be considered here.

#### **c) Office Uses**

The Plan shows office uses in pink. Major office development is grouped along Westchester Avenue, known as the Platinum Mile. Harrison can continue to enhance opportunities for economic development by adopting a more flexible approach to accommodate accessory uses in this district, and reviewing the on-site parking requirements. No change to the extent of the Special Business Districts is envisioned, but a potential new district, the SB-MX (Mixed Use) district, is envisioned for the "teardrop" area.

#### **d) Institutional and Community Uses**

These areas, shown in blue on the Future Land Use Plan, correspond to existing land uses. There is a possibility that a new site for a school will be required in the future, but no potential site is indicated on the plan. Rather, the general consideration must be the appropriate siting of any new school in close proximity to the population it serves. The town should work closely with the school district in the consideration of any site.

#### **e) Parks, Recreation and Open Space**

The Future Land Use Plan shows the largest of the existing parcels in Harrison dedicated to public park use, watershed protection and highway rights-of-way. The watershed reservation lands owned by New York City, which act as a buffer to Kenisco Reservoir, will not be developed. The plan recommends that Harrison work with NYCDEP to increase opportunities for recreation on these lands.



No undeveloped town-owned land earmarked for recreation should be sold or used for any purpose other than a public or institutional use. Both Passidomo Park and Veterans Memorial Park are earmarked for expansion and/or improvements; therefore they are indicated on the map.

The map also shows the possibility of creating an overlay or special purpose/recreation district to cover the country clubs in the town. The recommendation in the plan is to consider the use of such a district.

## 6.4 Summary of Plan Recommendations

The following is a summary of all recommendations made in this plan. Following this, Section 6.5 discusses those recommendations that should be first-priority actions for the town.

### Townwide Recommendations

#### *Residential Controls*

- Consider bulk reduction techniques such as, but not limited to, the creation of residential floor area ratio (FAR) provisions to limit oversized dwellings.
- Introduce a Landscaping Ordinance to the town's code which lays down minimum requirements for landscaping in any new development.
- Determine if the community wants the creation of different types of housing in selected areas such as:
  - Senior housing (age-restricted housing)
  - Townhouses
- Revise the regulations of the B-district (Two-family zone) to better control the size of newly constructed two-family residences. Alternatives include keeping new construction of traditional "up-down" two-family homes as a permitted use, but requiring a special exception permit to build a "side-by-side" residence. Approval of the permit could require additional analysis on issues of parking, visual impacts and open space/density.
- Investigate the possibility of sunsetting the unbuilt portions of existing approvals/subdivision plats so that they must be re-approved in conformance with any code updates.

#### *Environment and Open Space*

- Review the code's residential cluster subdivision regulations.
- Set up a Recreation Committee, to make recommendations for recreation.
- Work with NYCDEP to improve the recreational opportunities in watershed lands adjacent to Kensico Reservoir.
- Consider the use of a conservation overlay district on the golf courses and examine various options such as the right of first refusal, or the acquisition of conservation easements.

- Study possible methods for improving water quality in all waterbodies in the town.
- Seek ways to use energy-efficient products and incorporate green building practices in new municipal projects, and consider updating the Town ordinance to encourage sustainable design practices.
- Examine methods of controlling the town's geese and deer populations.

### *Transportation and Parking*

- Study the Anderson Hill Road intersection with Purchase Street with a view to implementing intersection improvements.
- Study methods for access management (curb cut consolidation and limits) on arterials and collectors.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the 10-space waiver in the town's parking regulations.
- Consider reducing the requirement for retail store or service establishments to 1 space per 200 square feet of gross floor area, except in the downtown CBD and in Silver Lake.
- Consider reducing the requirement for offices to 1 space per 300 square feet of gross floor area, except that a proprietary executive headquarters office building shall have a requirement of 1 space per 350 square feet of gross floor area.

### **Downtown Central Business District**

- **Public-Private Projects:** Pursue the Metro-North development project and development of its 3.3 acre site to create a second street wall of stores, a new park and new community facilities, using good downtown urban design principles.
- Undertake a phased paving and streetscaping initiative along Halstead and Harrison Avenues.
- Address the two problem intersections of Heineman Place/Bruce Avenue/Sunnyside Place and Halstead Avenue/Macy Road to improve safety and connectivity.
- Consider rezoning the industrial area on Oakland Avenue to a General Commercial (GC) zone, to allow and support existing businesses in this area.
- Undertake a comprehensive study of the "civic center" area around Ma Riis Park, exploring strategies to develop the park as a unifying element for the surrounding uses to create a true civic center in downtown Harrison, and to provide safe and convenient pedestrian access among uses, to and through the park.
- Promote a diverse base of retail establishments, while allowing offices, services and housing.
- Promote Halstead Avenue as the "main street" of the downtown CBD, and support and enhance unique features such as the historic train station and parks as part of the various redevelopment projects.
- Promote a comfortable, safe, interesting and visually attractive pedestrian environment.
- Encourage good design for new commercial development, and major renovations through adopting design guidelines or form-based coding. Such guidelines would address streetscaping and sidewalk design, building facades, signage and

awnings, landscaping and lighting.

- Encourage, promote and improve accessibility for persons with disabilities.
- Clean up and repair all existing municipal parking lots, and improve signage for these lots.
- Secure additional parking to improve access along Halstead Avenue, including the Metro-North TOD project, potentially leasing spaces at the Dunkin Donuts lot and other opportunities as they arise.
- Undertake a downtown CBD traffic study to address flow and signal timing issues.
- Ensure that, in future development or redevelopment in the CBD, any parking spaces lost as part of development will be replaced at no less than a 1-to-1 ratio.
- Allow off-site parking and shared parking subject to approval by the Planning Board. Shared parking calculations need to be provided as per Institute Transportation Engineers (ITE) or Urban Land Institute (ULI) guidelines.
- Evaluate a possible merchant permitting parking scheme for the CBD.
- Consider in-lieu parking fees subject to approval by the Planning Board. Any such fees should be allocated to the Parking Authority, to be used for transportation and parking improvements in the downtown area.
- Consider reducing the parking requirements for retail store or retail service establishment to 1 space per 400 square feet of gross floor area in the downtown CBD.
- Consider reducing the parking requirements for office uses in the downtown CBD to 1 per 330 square feet of floor area.
- Enforce parking bylaws to ensure that short-term parking stalls are utilized efficiently and effectively.
- Evaluate the Sollazzo Center and provide a quality recreational facility in the downtown.
- Support and participate in the library's plans for a renovation to its main branch, recognizing that funds will come from private sources.
- Facilitate the reuse of the former train station building for municipal court and board functions, as previously studied.

#### Downtown Harrison

- Continue to provide code enforcement of all residential properties and enhance if and when feasible.
- Consider the promotion of neighborhood enhancement programs and strategies such as preservation of mature trees, street tree plantings, neighborhood gardens, and sidewalk improvements.
- Examine the potential for traffic calming measures to discourage through traffic.

#### West Harrison

- Maintain a bright line on the extent of commercial uses so that there is no creep into residential areas.
- Encourage the redevelopment of Lake Street quarry to a compatible and viable use.
- Examine the creation of two gateways (arriving north from airport on Lake Street; arriving on Westchester Avenue) to demarcate and consolidate the identity of the core.
- Study the possibility of applying Downtown Design District guidelines/mandates to West Harrison.



- Ensure the enforcement system for parking in West Harrison is effective.
- Examine a parking permitting system for local residents and restrict non-resident use of parking spaces.
- Consider a reduction in the parking requirements for retail store or retail service establishment to 1 space per 400 square feet of gross floor area for any conforming retail use.
- Explore the use of traffic calming tools to discourage through traffic on local streets.
- Examine the possibility of working with the City of White Plains and the county to improve water quality and aesthetics of Silver Lake.
- Examine possible measures to reduce eutrophication in Silver Lake.
- Study methods of increasing public awareness and education in relation to the Critical Environmental Areas and the preservation of all remaining environmental features, particularly in regard to watershed protection.

### Purchase

- Retain low densities of development and consider promoting cluster subdivision development in line with any revised subdivision text, where appropriate.
- Retain mature trees, stone walls, and other natural and built features which contribute to the character of the area.
- Study key intersections to devise appropriate solutions.
- Retain existing roadway classification; correct bottlenecks where possible.
- Limit curb cuts along Anderson Hill Road, Lincoln Avenue, and Purchase Street.
- Require that driveways should be combined for adjacent commercial parcels.
- Study methods of identifying desirable land or habitat on properties for eventual dedication as permanent open space if subdivided.
- Require a landscape buffer around all large tracts of undeveloped/underdeveloped land being subdivided.
- Consider appointing town employees as liaison officers for Manhattanville College and SUNY.

### Platinum Mile

- Create a new SB-MX (Mixed Use) zone for the area bounded by I-287, I-684 and the Hutchinson River Parkway, to allow for potential development of assisted-care and senior housing, as well as complementary retail uses and improved vehicular and pedestrian connections.
- Allow for an emergency-access linkage between Manhattanville Road and Westchester Avenue.
- Require that access to new commercial development should be from existing office parks.
- Allow commercial campuses to have accessory uses, such as health clubs, child care food-related uses, and other ancillary uses.
- Study the effectiveness of existing off-street parking requirements in the SB districts.
  - a. Consider reducing the parking requirements for offices to 1 space per 300 square feet of floor area.
  - b. For proprietary executive headquarters office buildings, maintain the requirement at 1 per 350 square feet of floor area but consider removing the

- alternative requirement of 0.9 spaces per each employee on site at any one time.
- c. Enable the Planning Board to waive a percentage of required parking spaces for specific uses with low parking demand.
- d. Distinguish between long-term and short-term parking spaces in large parking areas, differentiated by stall size and location (proximity to building).
- e. Consider requiring long-term and short-term parking spaces in large parking areas, differentiated by stall size and location (proximity to building).
- Study methods for reducing the negative effects of impervious surfaces on stormwater management in the SB district.

## 6.5 Implementation and First Priorities

This section synthesizes the implementation measures recommended throughout the plan. Having an adopted plan is a critical public policy tool, but it is not sufficient to make change or preservation happen – the plan must be realized. There are four critical methods that Harrison will follow to ensure that this plan, through its recommended actions, is implemented:

- **Legislation:** Zoning and subdivision regulations are the two most familiar tools used to implement a plan. The town board/board of trustees may need to amend the zoning chapter and subdivision chapter of the Town/Village Code.
- **Capital Programming:** The second key tool is the capital improvement program (the CIP). The ways that Harrison spends public revenue for public improvements – on water and sewer utilities, road construction, major equipment purchase, a senior center, a library, a new government building, new or renovated parks and recreational facilities – and the standards to which they are built have a major effect on the town's image and function. Once the comprehensive plan is adopted, Harrison should evaluate and choose capital projects based on plan recommendations.

Harrison's CIP is a management and fiscal planning tool. The capital budget systematically assigns priorities to the town's capital needs and schedules their accomplishment through the expenditures of public funds from town revenues and bonding capacity. Projects are scheduled on a multi-year basis, with each succeeding year seeing the completion of a project, or a phase of a long-range project, and a future year is added. New projects come on line as others earlier in the cycle reach completion. The rolling approach enables municipal government to plan for and remain current with necessary infrastructure improvements and other large, non-operational needs. Capital needs remain in balance with available financing; the town achieves aspects of its long-range plan with steady, predictable steps over time.

The process of preparing the capital budget, the resulting document (capital program), and, of course, the improvements themselves are important tools in implementing the comprehensive plan. Such a program is indispensable for a

sustained capital improvement effort. It allows for a continuous update on municipal needs without allowing the revision process to stall the planning and scheduling, and without being sidetracked into unnecessary and poorly planned project. The town knows its capital commitments for at least five years into the future. Thus, it can plan financing in an orderly way and stabilize the tax rate structure by spreading improvement costs systematically over a period of years. In this way, the CIP provides the infrastructure and facilities required by the comprehensive plan's goals. Further, public input into the planning process continues, long past the plan's adoption, as capital budgets are heard publicly. The orderly public expenditures on needed improvements send a positive signal to private businesses and property owners: the CIP enables them to plan their investment knowing that the town is also responsibly planning.

- **Future Studies and Ad-Hoc Committees:** Certain plan recommendations will require more analysis. Detailed implementation measures can only be crafted through this. For example, the plan recommends that Harrison adopt detailed design guidelines for the downtown Central Business District. Development of such guidelines would require a future, separate study, and potentially the formation of a committee to work with consultants on creating the guidelines for the CBD (as well as potentially Silver Lake).. In addition, the plan recommends that the Town establish a Recreation and Committee and Open Space Committee.
- **Continuing Planning:** There are two key aspects to continuing planning. The first is the town/village government's sustained work with regional agencies, authorities, and other municipalities on issues that extend across borders. These include (and are not limited to) County Airport oversight, Metro-North, and NYS DOT. As these entities plan, Harrison makes clear its concerns and preferences. With an adopted comprehensive plan, Harrison's position is in effect on record and must be taken into consideration.

The second aspect concerns development applications before the Planning Board and Town Board/Board of Trustees. In all likelihood, most site plan and subdivision applications conform to existing land development regulations. For these, the Planning Board exercises careful oversight to get the best possible outcome for the town, but is not required to make a policy decision. In other cases, a requested zone change may necessitate just such a policy choice. The boards look to the adopted comprehensive plan for guidance: does the plan anticipate a zoning change, or open space preservation, or the creation of a new community facility? The plan can also aid business recruitment and commercial building renovations, through its discussion of the downtown and the Silver Lake commercial core planning concepts.



## First Priorities

A necessary first step in putting the Comprehensive Plan to work for Harrison is its adoption as official town policy by the Town Board. Certain recommendations are first-priority and should be accomplished within the next year to 18 months. Other mid-term and long-term recommendations require advance planning. Many of the plan's recommendations are preliminary: they require that Harrison study a problem and its solutions in depth before a final recommendation can be pursued. This plan cannot anticipate all new needs for continuing planning; Harrison can expect that new problems or opportunities will arise before the next comprehensive plan is written. The Town Board, the Planning Board, the town's other boards and advisory groups, and its informed and active citizens will ensure that planning for Harrison continues.

Based on this plan's recommendations, the first priority study topics or actions should be:

- Start the process of redeveloping the Metro-North property in the downtown into a mixed use development.
- Create a new SB-MX (Mixed Use) zone for the Platinum Mile's "teardrop" area to broaden the potential uses in this area.
- Revise the regulations of the B zones to more carefully control the bulk of new two-family residences.
- Undertake a comprehensive study of the "civic center" area around Ma Riis Park, exploring strategies to develop the park as a unifying element for the surrounding uses to create a true civic center in downtown Harrison, and to provide safe and convenient pedestrian access among uses, to and through the park. This study should be undertaken in cooperation with the library and with consideration given to the planned adaptive reuse of the former train station building and potential renovations to the Sollazzo Center.
- Initiate a phased paving and streetscaping initiative along Halstead Avenue, beginning with gaining municipal ownership of the road.
- Complete short-term parking recommendations (enhancements to existing municipal lots, improved signage), and explore options to secure more parking.
- Undertake a traffic study to address flow and signal timing issues in the CBD.
- Evaluate applying Downtown Design District guidelines for the downtown Central Business District and for Silver Lake.
- Rezone the non-conforming industrial area along Oakland Avenue in the downtown Central Business District to the General Commercial (GC) zone.
- Decide on an approach to preserving open space. Such approaches include:
  - Reviewing the town's cluster subdivision text
  - Considering the use of an Overlay/Special Purpose/Recreation District

- Consider residential development bulk reduction tools to limit oversized dwellings.
- Set up a Recreation Committee, to make recommendations on recreation programs and facilities.
- Evaluate the zoning for the Special Business Districts to make parking standards more flexible and allow for accessory uses.

