Hartsdale 4 Corners Study Introduction

Purpose of the Study
The purpose of the 4 Corners Study is to plan for an important area in the Hartsdale portion of the Town of Greenburgh which for years has been characterized by a series of challenges, such as traffic congestion, parking inadequacy, unsafe pedestrian conditions, poor aesthetic conditions, commercial vacancies and periodic flooding. This study, and the process leading to its eventual adoption, will include valuable input from residents, property owners within the Study Area, area business owners, potential developers, Civic Associations, Town Officials and land-use Boards (Town Board, Planning Board, Conservation Advisory Council, Town staff, etc.), the Hartsdale Public Parking District, the Greenburgh Central School District, Westchester County, and the New York State Department of Transportation. The study is intended to identify whether the challenges noted above can be transformed into major opportunities through a vision-based area redevelopment initiative.

Local Prior Planning - 2016 Comprehensive Plan Adoption
In September 2016, the Town Board of the Town of Greenburgh adopted, for the first time, a Plan that comprehensively addresses all aspects of municipal governance and includes the following: Community Well Being; Sustainable Development; Art, Culture, and Historic Resources; Environmental Resources; Parks, Trails, Open Spaces and Recreational Facilities; Public Infrastructure and Essential Services; Transportation, Mobility, and Access; Demographics and Housing; Economic Development; and Housing. This is not to suggest that important Planning efforts did not precede the 2016 Comprehensive Plan. Some prior planning studies and plans in the Town include a Central Avenue Corridor Plan (1976), Affordable Housing Study (1996), Open Space/Comprehensive Plan (2000, 2003), and Reconnaissance-Level Historic Resources Survey (2006).

What distinguishes the 2016 Comprehensive Plan as the Town’s “first full feature” Comprehensive Plan, versus the 2000 Comprehensive Plan, is that the 2000 plan and related 2003 update were more heavily focused on four subject areas (environmental regulations, open space/trails, affordable housing, specific land-use concentrations), in contrast to the 2016 Plan, which interconnects all aspects of municipal governance.

The 2016 Comprehensive Plan (“the Plan”) contains 13 Chapters and related appendices which are based on the guiding principles depicted in Table 1.1. This Plan’s 2016 Guiding Principles provide a good framework for the present 4 Corners Study Area.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Guiding Principle</th>
<th>Highlighted in Plan (Chapters)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Life</td>
<td>Foster a distinctive and attractive Town comprised of strong neighborhoods.</td>
<td>3.0, 4.0, 5.0, 7.0, 12.0</td>
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<td>Encourage a Town that is affordable for all.</td>
<td>4.0, 10.0, 11.0, 12.0</td>
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<td>Preserve and enhance the character of the Town including open space, trails,</td>
<td>6.0, 7.0, 12.0</td>
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<td>natural beauty, scenic qualities, critical environmental areas and historic</td>
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<td>properties, landmarks and districts.</td>
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<td>Continue to build a sense of community through cultural and recreational</td>
<td>4.0, 5.0</td>
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<td>opportunities.</td>
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<td>Allow for a variety of housing types that meet the needs of all income levels and</td>
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<td>demographic groups.</td>
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<td>Maintain a high level of public services in a cost effective manner.</td>
<td>8.0, 11.0</td>
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<td>Transportation and</td>
<td>Provide a safe, efficient and accessible transportation system that meets the</td>
<td>3.0, 8.0, 8.0, 9.0, 12.0</td>
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<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>mobility needs of the community.</td>
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<td>Encourage connected neighborhoods that promote walking and bicycling.</td>
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<td>Provide and maintain adequate utilities to meet community needs</td>
<td>8.0, 12.0</td>
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<td>Plan for short and long term infrastructure needs.</td>
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<td>Development</td>
<td>Support and revitalize existing commerce and industry in the Town</td>
<td>9.0, 11.0, 12.0</td>
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<td>Attract new businesses to enhance revenue generation and job creation by</td>
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<td>encouraging economic growth and a creative mix of uses.</td>
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<td>Promote efficient, sustainable, and innovative “green” building and site</td>
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<td>design.</td>
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<td>Support development that complements and preserves the character of</td>
<td>7.0, 10.0, 11.0, 12.0</td>
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<td>existing residential neighborhoods. *</td>
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<td>Process</td>
<td>Encourage a clear, fair and efficient development approval process.</td>
<td>12.0, 13.0</td>
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<td>Continue to encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in planning and</td>
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<td>decision making.</td>
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<td>Continue to work with our planning partners (neighboring communities,</td>
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<td>Westchester County, NYMTC, etc.)</td>
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Each chapter of the 2016 Plan contains narrative, tables, goals, objectives and policies that support the guiding principles. In many respects, the policies of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan take on a general approach to guide subsequent actions such as a future zoning amendment. The Plan also contains policies that have great specificity, particularly when a desired and specific future zoning amendment is deemed necessary to achieve a certain, and oftentimes more immediate, objective and goal. The Town of Greenburgh 2016 Comprehensive Plan contains a broad spectrum of general and specific policies, including several pertaining to 4 Corners.

**4 Corners Study Area (from 2016 Comprehensive Plan)**

With respect to 4 Corners, the Plan contains some specific recommendations and policies from an infrastructure perspective (traffic, stormwater, pedestrian safety); however, from a future land-use perspective, the Plan has general references to the potential for redevelopment. In the Land Use and Zoning section of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan (Chapter 12.8.6) the Hartsdale Four Corners Area is designated as a “study area.” The Plan notes that the leasable spaces there “have experienced high rates and concentrations of vacancies than other areas in the Town’s commercial corridors, likely attributed to a lack of convenient off-street parking.” The Plan cites the need at 4 Corners to alleviate the traffic congestion with new signals and turning lanes, as well as the desire for a pedestrian sidewalk on West Hartsdale Avenue. It also notes that the changes could improve the area’s pedestrian network. The general reference to redevelopment states, “There may be an opportunity for a public-private partnership which could include redevelopment in the area.”

The Plan’s 4 Corners objective and policies are as follows:

**OBJECTIVE 12.3.6:** Explore the potential for public improvements in the Hartsdale Four Corners Study Area.

**POLICY 12.3.6.1:** Coordinate with the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) to determine if signalization improvements are feasible at the Four Corners intersection.

**POLICY 12.3.6.2:** Coordinate with NYSDOT regarding pedestrian enhancements in the Four Corners area.

Some positive steps have been taken by the Town in the vicinity of 4 Corners, consistent with the policies above. In 2016, the Town of Greenburgh applied for funding through the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) to design and construct a sidewalk spanning the west side of Central Park Avenue from Marion Avenue to the intersection of West Hartsdale Avenue, a linear distance of over 3,000 ft. The sidewalk grant was awarded in 2017 and is currently in the design phase, with construction completion to occur in 2019. This sidewalk construction will complement NYSDOT intersection improvements at 4 Corners, scheduled for 2019 implementation. These include ADA curb ramps, new crosswalks, and pedestrian signal upgrades. Additionally, sidewalk construction along Columbia Avenue from East Hartsdale Avenue to Jane Street is planned to be constructed in 2018, providing a vital and safe pedestrian link toward the Hartsdale Train station and 4 Corners. While these changes will have positive benefits, they are not anticipated to alleviate many of the significant challenges at 4 Corners, particularly from a traffic, stormwater, aesthetic and economic sustainability perspective.
4 Corners Potential Boundaries

For the purposes of this study, the 4 Corners Study Area is defined as having a center point of the intersection of East Hartsdale Avenue and West Hartsdale Avenue (NYS Rt. 100A) with Central Park Avenue (NYS Rt. 100), and includes properties with frontage at this intersection, and an undetermined additional number of properties beyond those fronting at the corners. The rationale for the undetermined exact extent of additional properties is explained in detail at various points throughout the remainder of the study, and is further elaborated upon in connection with the environmental review associated with the study (the SEQRA process); however, the figure below provides a general sense of the anticipated future area of redevelopment.

It should be noted that the outer extent of any future redevelopment area may very well consist of open space or related buffer areas, and should not be assumed as predetermined development of a specific variety.

Prior to further discussion regarding the potential for redevelopment, a full analysis of existing conditions is warranted, to provide context for visioning associated with 4 Corners.
Existing Conditions - Land-Use

Several different land-uses exist within the 4 Corners Study Area, which is comprised primarily of properties fronting on Central Park Avenue and East and West Hartsdale Avenues. These include retail/commercial, restaurant, automotive, office, residential, and governmental/public uses (Hartsdale Public Parking District - parking district, firehouse – Hartsdale Fire District). Each of the 4 Corners-fronting properties are occupied with low-rise or single-story commercial use buildings. Development on the northeast corner of Central Park Avenue is built to the front and side property lines with the buildings adjacent to the sidewalks, in a somewhat traditional downtown neighborhood development pattern.

The building on the northwest-fronting corner (former Duane Reade) is also built to the front and side property line, and has an irregularly wide sidewalk at Central Park Avenue.
The southeast corner (upper-left photo) contains an automobile-oriented strip commercial use with limited parking. The southwest corner contains an uninviting and outdated series of buildings (lower-right photo), alongside a cluttered and congested sidewalk space fronting Central Park Avenue.

Development patterns beyond the immediate corner-fronting parcels consists of free-standing single use buildings and self-contained (and often) inadequate parking, fronting on East and West Hartsdale Avenue and Central Park Avenue. Non-conforming uses within the 4 Corners Study Area include an automobile repair shop (in the M-174 Multi-Family Residence District) and a multi-use building (residential over retail in the CA Mixed-Use Impact District).

Zoning Districts within the Study Area include the M-174 Multi-Family Residence District, CA Mixed-Use Impact District, and R-7.5 and R-10 One-Family Residence Districts.

View of 4 Corner's southwest intersection

View of a non-conforming auto use alongside an existing multi-family building on East Hartsdale Avenue
Existing Conditions - Mobility (Traffic)

The intersection of 4 Corners is a main traffic thoroughfare in the Hartsdale hamlet of the Town of Greenburgh at Central Park Avenue (Route 100), a NYS State highway, West Hartsdale Avenue (Route 100A), a minor arterial and a NYS State highway, and East Hartsdale Avenue, another minor arterial and Town road.

Traffic volume at 4 Corners is high, with congestion a common occurrence. At times this traffic can extend well beyond the 4 Corners intersection up East and West Hartsdale Avenues. West Hartsdale Avenue and East Hartsdale Avenue are heavily used to access Central Park Avenue and as an east-west vehicular corridor. Westchester County Department of Transportation data in 2010 shows 14,350 vehicle trips per day on East Hartsdale Avenue to the Bronx River Parkway. New York State Department of Transportation calculates that at Central Avenue at the intersection of West Hartsdale Avenue, 24,144 cars are the average annual vehicle volume per day. East and West local traffic is heavy because many travel en route to the Hartsdale Metro-North train station, the Bronx River Parkway or points east. North and South congestion is especially heavy on weekends with shoppers going north to White Plains and south towards Yonkers.

Grid connectivity is poor and can result in dangerous conditions. There are no dedicated right turning lanes at the intersection that lead north and south bound onto Central Avenue from East and West Hartsdale Avenues, causing long vehicular back-ups at rush hours and other busy times. The congestion creates de facto automobile bypasses in the Dairy Del parking lot (commercial strip plaza, southwest corner) and Hartsdale Public Parking District Site C Lot, as well as on Columbia and South Washington Avenues, causing traffic volume, dangerous conditions and noise. Pedestrian conditions are poor in the parking lot and on these two streets, which currently do not have sidewalks. As noted previously, a sidewalk along Columbia Avenue is planned to be constructed in 2018. Driver visibility and safety on Central Park Avenue is made difficult due to the northbound Westchester County Beeline buses which stop just a few feet from the corners on Central Avenue. Stopped buses impede automobile driver’s ability to see traffic coming from East Hartsdale and/or pedestrians crossing immediately at the corners.

View depicting the narrow existing right-of-way of East Hartsdale Avenue
Existing Conditions - Mobility (Pedestrian)

Walkability and pedestrian access are poor at 4 Corners based on the distance of parking lots from merchants, the amount of vehicular congestion, and the six-lane width Central Park Avenue. Many residents and shoppers have indicated that they feel unsafe walking across the intersection of Central Park Avenue due to the numerous traffic lanes, heavy traffic volume and small existing crosswalks, which are located immediately at the corners.

Among the challenges at the 4 Corners for pedestrians are:

- Pedestrian “refuge” islands consisting of narrow strips of concrete, with limited accessibility features such as curb-cuts.
- Lack of ADA-compliant curb-cuts do not exist at the 4 Corners. The curb at the Gyro Gyro location (northeast corner) is excessively high.
- There are no sidewalks from 4 Corners along West Hartsdale Avenue on the south side of the road and only a small inadequately built section on a portion of the north side of the road.
- Traffic and above ground utility lines contribute to streetscape confusion.
- Shoppers in the Dairy Dell parking lot and pedestrians on South Washington and Columbia Avenues face additional traffic and potential safety issues because those areas have become de facto turning lanes. HPPD Site C also has become a dangerous “cut through.”

Without walkability, safety, improved aesthetics and access, residents and shoppers do not frequent businesses near the intersection except occasionally to stop into one of the more quick-visit transactional businesses there: take-out food, nail salons and dry cleaners.
Existing Conditions - Mobility (Parking)

A lack of accessible off-street and/or on-street parking has been cited by residents, shoppers and merchants as one of the main reasons that businesses are not successful at 4 Corners. Existing parking is seen as inadequate in terms of availability, distance from the stores, and generally being difficult to access safely. While the HPPD Parking Lot C is not far from the intersection (generally less than 500 feet), it is believed that this lot is underutilized, at least in part due to typography and congestion at the ingress and egress points.

Some existing condition features and challenges with respect to parking are as follows:

- No parking structure exists at or near the Corners, only surface parking.
- Limited off-street shared parking exists for residents or shoppers; a small amount of parking in the commercial area adjacent to the “puppy” retail store (southeast corner) is located on Central Park Avenue behind 2-12 East Hartsdale Avenue, which is restricted for customers of the various businesses located there.
- Off-street hourly-metered parking is available in one municipal lot near the Corners, the Hartsdale Public Parking Authority’s Lot C. The parking lot is located off Central Avenue and behind the IHOP restaurant (southeast corner), consisting of 99 places. Parking is also available via permits if the user lives in one of the qualified East Hartsdale Avenue buildings. The waiting list for Permits typically runs 6-12 months. Permits are not allowed for commuters. Retailers have noted that their shoppers do not know the site exists, as it is not highly visible or adequately signed from Central Park Avenue or East Hartsdale Avenue.
- The HPPD Lot C is difficult for East Hartsdale Avenue shoppers to access as the height differential between the street and the lot requires shoppers to utilize a stone staircase.
- There is a lack of interconnectivity amongst the parking lots on the southeast side of the Corners.
- East Hartsdale Avenue parking issues are a problem that impact 4 Corners - on East Hartsdale Avenue, five residential buildings with more than 100 units altogether have no parking whatsoever to offer residents. At least two buildings have waiting lists of 5 and 10 years for garage parking. HPPD Site A Parking Level 3, which has limited parking available for resident overnight passes, which has had a two-year wait list.
- Wilson Avenue, an interior feeder street to East Hartsdale, has a limited amount of on-street metered parking.
Existing Conditions - Mobility (Bus and Train)
Mass transit options to and from the 4 Corners Study Area are very good. The Metro North Hartsdale Train Station is a little more than one half mile, approximately a ten-minute walk from 4 Corners providing direct access to New York City. This station stop is only one stop from White Plains, which is the transit hub of Westchester County.

For pedestrians, current access to the Metro North Hartsdale train station is good from the north and southeast corners. The safety challenges of the intersection and up West Hartsdale Avenue exist for those walking farther to access the train station. The Westchester County Bus System (known as the Bee-Line), which also shares the adjacent City of White Plains as a transit hub, provides excellent service in the Town of Greenburgh and at 4 Corners. Route Numbers 34, 38, 39, 20, 21 and the BxM4C at 4 Corners provide inter-county and service to New York City.

Existing Conditions - Mobility (Biking)
Bike paths and bike path connections do not exist at or near the Corners. The area can be dangerous to bikers due to heavy vehicular congestion and lack of dedicated biking lanes. Early on weekend mornings, when traffic is light, bike clubs utilize Central Park Avenue. There has been at least one incident in which a bicyclist, trying to get around a bus, was struck by a car that the rider could not see. The photo below depicts the narrow right-of-way along East Hartsdale Avenue and highlights that the sidewalk is likely the only safe means to traverse this area on a bicycle.
Existing Conditions - Aesthetics
From an urban design perspective, Four Corners is lacking in several regards. Most buildings and sites within the Study Area are auto-oriented (not designed to accommodate pedestrian circulation). The few buildings that are built with traditional neighborhood design (buildings to the sidewalk) are disproportionately scaled in comparison to the widths of the avenues. The intersection lacks trees and landscaping and the Study Area contains no existing public open spaces or green spaces. There is no coherent, consistent visible representation of Hartsdale, which has beautifully designed single-family neighborhoods and architecturally rich multi-family buildings within short walking distance. Increasing and very visible vacancies create a sense of blight. Some property owners have recently made façade upgrades, which are an improvement, but not to the extent that these improvements can overcome the myriad challenges hindering the Study Area.

[Image of southeast corner of intersection with low architectural value, narrow sidewalks, and numerous overhead wires]

Existing Conditions - Business Composition
The mix of businesses that exist in the 4 Corners Study Area is good. A great variety of ethnic restaurants and grocers exist within the Study Area. Authentic Greek/Mediterranean, Japanese and Italian restaurants, a Classic American Diner, a Euro-market and an Asian Grocer (recently closed, soon to reopen) contribute to this mix. Services such as a shoe repair, dry cleaner and coffee shop all comprise a good mix of uses at the Corners that, in the absence of the parking and other challenges noted, would be expected to thrive.

Existing Conditions - Infrastructure (Stormwater Management)
The 2016 Greenburgh Comprehensive Plan identifies the 4 Corners Study Area as one of the Town’s five major flood cluster areas. According to FEMA Flood Maps, the southern half of the Corners is located in an area of Moderate Flood Hazard. Flooding is a common occurrence at 4 Corners and points east (the Scarsdale Golf Club and rear areas of the buildings on the south side of East Hartsdale Avenue). Runoff from the higher elevations of the 4 Corners Study Area (west up West Hartsdale Avenue and north from Manor Woods), generate uncontrolled surface stormwater runoff, and deficiencies in existing downstream stormwater conveyance infrastructure contribute to this flooding. The Corners are in the Bronx River Major Drainage Basin. Harts Brook and many other streams are tributaries to the Bronx River, many of which have been piped or buried.
Stormwater problems have contributed to flooding in the Hartsdale Avenue corridor for decades. A catastrophic flood in 2007 impacted residences on East Hartsdale Avenue and caused flooding in garages of apartment buildings, closed shops due to flooded basements and basement electrical panels impacted shops at the Corners. In 2011, the flooding on East Hartsdale Avenue forced the NY Sports Club and other local businesses to close due to heavy water damage. Flooding also occurs on Central Avenue near the Fountain Diner, causing periodic lane closures and disruption to travelers and diners.

The reliance on existing watercourses to convey stormwater from the 4 Corners Study Area and the surrounding neighborhoods to the Bronx River is problematic. The functionality of the entire system relies on routine maintenance to be performed by private property owners, in addition to Town and County forces. No one entity is responsible for the free flow of the system. Open watercourses are prone to clogging, especially behind the apartments on East Hartsdale Avenue. East Hartsdale Avenue run-off and storm system back-up causes pooling of water in parking areas close to the southeast (IHOP) Corner. In winter, the icing in the parking areas can be dangerous to cars and shoppers. The landowner at the southeast corner has been forced to repave the lot many times as a result.

Private water maintenance management practices impact the system as blocked culverts, some of which are undersized for capacity, have been reported on the south side of East Hartsdale Avenue and on the pass-by road (behind buildings). Similarly, when the Scarsdale Golf Club’s retention basin needs to be discharged in heavy rains, the discharge may farther saturate the nearby soil. The retention pond at “The Classic,” a condominium directly adjacent to the Corners, has overflowed due to inadequate capacity and/or maintenance issues. The lack of maintenance of the Harts Brook watercourse behind the apartments on East Hartsdale Avenue has caused catastrophic flooding farther East with items found in the stream ranging from shopping carts to downed trees.
Global warming and the expectation of increased rainfall beyond historic averages means that the “hundred-year storms” that might occur with 1% chance in a given year are happening much more frequently, so flooding can be expected to occur more frequently in the future.

Existing Conditions - Infrastructure (Sewers)
The 4 Corners Study Area is located entirely within the Hartsdale Sanitary Sewer District, located within Westchester County’s Bronx Valley Sewer District. This district carries sanitary sewage through lines that are tributary to Westchester County trunk sewer mains. These sewer mains lead to the Yonkers Joint Wastewater Treatment Plant operated by Westchester County. The Bronx Valley drainage basin contains the Jackson Avenue and the Grassy Sprain pump stations, owned and operated by Westchester County. From an overall capacity perspective, the Town’s system is well under needed capacity.
Existing Conditions - Infrastructure (Utilities)
Numerous utility cables in the 4 Corners Study Area are located above ground, creating an unsightly intersection that does not attract shoppers. Utility poles impact driver visibility and safety. Both cables and poles are susceptible to the impact of severe weather and can become dangerous, if not fatal, if they fall.

Existing Conditions - Environmental
Development in the 4 Corners Study Area generally came into existence in the early 1900s, with many of the existing commercial buildings dating to the 1920s. Due to the lack of new development, environmentally sensitive updates were never implemented, leaving buildings, streets and infrastructure that are inefficient and in need of significant upgrades. Some important measures have been privately incorporated into several buildings, including façade updates, interior renovations and fire safety provisions.

The lack of environmental sustainability within the Study Area is evidenced as follows:

- Many of the old structures were built without benefit of energy conservation techniques and do not contain high quality building materials, doors and windows.
- Building design is not properly utilized to create shade.
- Automotive congestion at the intersection does not support the Town’s strategy to minimize its carbon footprint and adds to air quality reduction.
- Environmentally sensitive areas, such as watercourses, are not protected. Run-off from roads causes water pollution.
- The site lacks greenery and there is limited use of green buffers between residential and commercial areas.
- While the Corners are adjacent to a private golf course, there is no public green “open space” or parks at or near each corner and within the Study Area.
- A lack of watercourse maintenance and stormwater infrastructure improvements cause stagnant water behind East Hartsdale Avenue buildings and is a contributor to flooding at the Corners.
Existing Conditions - Community Well-Being
Many residents have indicated that portions of the Town do not have a sense of identity. In particular the 4 Corners Study Area does not presently have a positive identity, primarily due to poor aesthetic conditions and chronic vacancies, contributing to Hartsdale residents feeling disconnected to 4 Corners. This is partly due to low desire to walk to or shop at the Corners given current conditions. It may also be due to the sense that there is little identity of a “downtown” Hartsdale beyond the small train station area.

Neighborhoods adjacent or in close proximity to the Study Area do have a positive identity. College Corners is a beautiful single-family neighborhood with varied traditional architecture. Manor Woods is comprised of many streets with gracious Victorians and Tudor Revival homes. Poets Corners contains a mixture of Cape Cod, Colonial, and Tudor Revival. East Hartsdale Avenue is densely populated with attractive multi-family buildings that lead into the growing restaurant row towards the Hartsdale Train Station.

The Study Area is not a place currently where most people would want to live (if they could find a residence there), or generally prefer to shop, or linger. According to local realtors, East Hartsdale Avenue residential buildings are not attracting a fraction of the young professionals wanting to move from New York City or other Westchester locations and who can bring energy and ideas with them. This important part of the Town is not attracting the significant potential Westchester residents’ retail dollars, despite its location on a major shopping route.

Existing Conditions Summary & Potential Next Steps
The existing conditions of the 4 Corners Study Area identify, at best, a portion of the Town of Greenburgh with good mass transit options but lacking a sense of place, and, at worst, conditions that contribute to safety concerns and economic unsustainability. Two of the existing poor conditions identified are known to require significant financial investment to properly mitigate. A stormwater report prepared for the Town of Greenburgh in 2008 identified a $27 million project (2004$) to address flooding at 4 Corners and along East Hartsdale Avenue. To address traffic congestion, it is likely necessary to widen East and West Hartsdale Avenue to accommodate an additional traffic lane in each direction. These improvements along with related right-of-way improvements, such as burying overhead wires, requires a tens of millions dollar investment.

To improve these and other conditions within the 4 Corners Study Area several questions arise.

1. Do Town, County, State or Federal funding sources exist that would alleviate safety concerns, foster an increased sense of place, take advantage of excellent local transit options, and promote economic sustainability?

2. Can the private sector accomplish these goals?

3. Are there opportunities for public-private partnerships to accomplish these goals?
In the absence of a community-based vision for 4 Corners, only singular aspects of the variety of challenges faced can be improved. With regard to local Town funding, the Town’s proactive steps to finance construction of the sidewalk on Columbia Avenue, for example, will greatly enhance pedestrian safety to East Hartsdale Avenue, which is close to the 4 Corners Study Area, however, this action is not anticipated to bring a significant volume of pedestrians to the area such that vacancies will be impacted. On the contrary, if 4 Corners was a local destination, it is not unreasonable to believe that a greater percentage of residents from the Manor Woods neighborhood, as an example, would utilize the new sidewalk to walk to the 4 Corners area, as opposed to solely walking towards the East Hartsdale Avenue Train Station.

Regarding regional funding sources, the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) is helpful to illustrate a major type of funding available to communities like the Town of Greenburgh. The DRI is a New York State grant administered through the state’s Regional Economic Development Councils. In the lower Hudson Valley, municipalities compete for $10,000,000 (all of which goes to one municipality) of funding for municipal improvement projects that tackle many of the issues identified in connection with the 4 Corners existing conditions. Prerequisites for consideration of this revitalization grant include the following: (1) specific vision for a downtown area based on community support; (2) potential for public-private partnerships; (3) expected employment growth; and (4) an attractive physical environment. In the absence of a vision for 4 Corners, it is near impossible for the Town to be successful in obtaining a grant of this nature. As an example, if DRI grant funding was applied for by the Town of Greenburgh and was proposed to be utilized for stormwater improvements to alleviate flooding, it would be difficult to rationalize how this public improvement would create new and long-term employment opportunities, lead to economic development, or meet other challenges faced in the Study Area, such as traffic congestion and commercial vacancies. Other grant applications administered by New York State as part of the annual Consolidated Funding Application also require that municipalities provide a nexus between the public investment sought and how that investment will lead to economic sustainability. These examples highlight the need to consider a vision for revitalization for the 4 Corners Study Area.

With regard to the potential for the private sector to comprehensively address the challenges identified within the 4 Corners Study Area, some examples exist. Some of the land owners (northeast and southwest corners) have invested considerably in façade and other improvements to try to help the businesses attract more tenants. Yet, in general, business conditions have not significantly improved. Owners report ongoing vacancies, with tenant replacement a constant challenge, and low success rates for the few tenants that occasionally are replaced. As discussed later in this study, in a section entitled, “Redevelopment (existing zoning),” the existing zoning districts of the 4 Corners Study Area are not anticipated to stimulate private redevelopment of a scale that would lead to any meaningful improvements with respect to the challenges faced.
Similar to the prospect for local or regional public funding to address the challenges of the 4 Corners Study Area, it is not anticipated that the private sector can alleviate safety concerns, take advantage of excellent local transit options, promote economic sustainability, and create a sense of place that residents and business owners are proud of, in the absence of a vision for 4 Corners.

4 Corners Vision & Guiding Principles

4 Corners Vision
The Town Board desires to revitalize the 4 Corners area in Hartsdale (Central Avenue where it intersects East and West Hartsdale Avenues, and in nearby properties) through a planning and rezoning process to create a vibrant neighborhood center and gateway to the Hartsdale Train Station and surrounding residential communities. A major opportunity exists to comprehensively address existing (and development-created) traffic congestion, inadequate parking, infrastructure (including drainage) issues, etc., in connection with redevelopment of several underutilized parcels. Transforming 4 Corners back to a neighborhood center where residents live, work, recreate and gravitate towards represents major economic development in the Town. An integrated approach for all future rezoned parcels that would keep curb cuts away from the intersection, widen the local street network for enhanced pedestrian amenities and better traffic flow, and provide substantial on-site structured parking, common open spaces, external and internal interconnectivity, requires a more holistic approach than piecemeal development of a few individual parcels. Through coordination and support with all planning partners, this vision for a new 4 Corners can be achieved.
4 Corners Guiding Principles

The guiding principles for the 4 Corners Study Area are intended to be the basis and to provide context for future grant applications, environmental impact mitigations/improvements, future rezoning actions and eventual investment into the Study Area. The principles are intended to supplement those established in the Town’s 2016 Comprehensive Plan. In addition, it should be noted that the Comprehensive Plan and its goals, objectives and policies also form a backbone for all aspects of the 4 Corners Study Area.

The primary 4 Corners Guiding Principle is to plan collaboratively with residents, property owners within the Study Area, area business owners, Civic Associations, land-use Boards (Town Board, Planning Board, Conservation Advisory Council, Town staff, etc.), the Hartsdale Public Parking District, the Greenburgh Central School District, Westchester County, and the New York State Department of Transportation, to address infrastructure limitations and to revitalize the 4 Corners Study Area.

Working collaboratively with these stakeholders, additional 4 Corners Guiding Principles are as follows:

- Improve mobility, including walkability, parking, circulation and safety.
- Allow for a good mix of uses supportive of this unique transit-oriented area.
- Include environmentally sustainable development.
- Ensure contextual development (scale, bulk, height) to achieve aesthetic improvement.
- Improve the infrastructure necessary to achieve success: parking facilities, stormwater management, improved traffic and transportation, and pedestrian focused structures, such as sidewalks and refuge islands, that promote walkability and safety.
- Provide needed flexibility for tenants and building owners to adapt to technological and consumer behavior changes of the future, as well as changing demographics.
- Encourage the use of private/public partnerships to achieve key goals.
Redevelopment Alternatives

As part of any redevelopment initiative it is important to explore a wide range of alternative development concepts to better understand how each concept fits within the 4 Corners Vision.

Redevelopment (existing zoning)
Zoning Districts within the Study Area include the M-174 Multi-Family Residence District, CA Mixed-Use Impact District, and R-7.5 and R-10 One-Family Residence Districts.

As depicted in the Figure below, a majority of the 4 Corners Study Area is located within the CA District. While most, if not all, of this development in the CA District was built prior to the enactment of the CA District regulations, these regulations presently govern future changes of use and/or modifications to the respective sites.

Excerpt of the Town of Greenburgh Zoning Map with CA District properties in the Study Area highlighted in red

Current zoning for the CA District was applied to the 4 Corners area around 1980, and was based on a Comprehensive Development Program for the Central Avenue Corridor, dated October 1976. The principal intent of the Central Avenue Mixed-Use Impact (CA) District was to relate the maximum density of development permitted for the Central Avenue Corridor as a whole to the present traffic-carrying capacity of the road and its intersections as well as to future improvements which would increase the traffic-carrying capacity (including allowances for existing traffic, traffic generated from new development and other traffic affecting the Central Avenue Corridor) as well as to economic, environmental and other impact factors.

Successful components of the CA District are evidenced in some aspects of site design outside of the 4 Corners Study Area. Several major shopping centers in unincorporated Greenburgh contain beautiful landscaped buffers or green spaces between the roadway and shopping center and are a positive defining attribute of those portions of this commercial corridor.
The CA District’s regulations, however, are not conducive to good site design in a more compact area such as 4 Corners. The regulations are designed for larger, more uniformly shaped lots than those in the Study Area. Related CA District building setbacks encourage parking in front of a building with the building set further back into the property, which does not encourage pedestrian-oriented design.

The compact nature (limited lot depth) of some portions of the Study Area combined with some of the area’s historic development pattern of buildings constructed at the street line suggest that the CA District regulations have little or no context for 4 Corners. Many of the properties are located on lots that are less than 5,000-10,000 square feet. With a heavy emphasis on off-street parking setbacks, and deep front yard building setbacks, most of the lots at the Corners would be impossible to build on, in any redevelopment scheme, regardless of the proposed use.

As previously noted, property owners within the Study Area have focused on improvements that do not require zoning map changes or variances. Instead, owners have sought to invest in façade changes and aesthetic improvements that represent an improvement over prior existing conditions but do not represent steps that can meaningfully revitalize 4 Corners.

The CA District allows a variety of uses (retail/restaurant, office, multi-family residential); however, the District’s use and bulk criteria (low maximum floor area ratio, prohibition on combining residential and non-residential, building setbacks) combined with the existing lot traits at 4 Corners, hinder revitalization efforts. Further analysis into whether more flexible zoning and related bulk controls would stimulate different uses follows, with a focus first on analyzing single use development concepts.

Graphic of massing of buildings under redevelopment utilizing the CA District regulations. The northeast corner contains no buildings as the CA District regulations preclude redevelopment in this location without significant variances. The southwest corner would contain a maximum development similar to what presently exists. The southeast and northwest corners would contain less density than presently exists. Inspired Places, LLC copyright 2018
Single-Use Redevelopment (Office-Use Focused)
The purpose of this section is to analyze current and projected office building development dynamics, and whether or not a concept of aligning zoning updates to facilitate new office development at 4 Corners warrants further study. This analysis will factor in the overarching 4 Corners Vision.

The CA District permits office buildings of four stories as a permitted use, subject to site plan approval. The most recent examples of new office development/approvals on Central Park Avenue include construction of a 3-story office building at 880 Central Park Avenue (P.O. Scarsdale NY), completed in 2017. This building is also located on a prominent intersection (Central Park Avenue and Ardsley Road) in the Town and is successful in that location from an aesthetic, site design (high quality landscaping, new sidewalk, partial structured parking) and redevelopment perspective (replaced a former gas station). While the building is a success, the traits of its location at this intersection are quite different than that of 4 Corners. This intersection has a major shopping center at one corner (successful in terms of limited vacancies), undevelopable green space at another corner, and a successful car dealership and adjacent shopping plaza at the remaining corner. While traffic congestion exists at this location at times, the office and business uses at this intersection are successful.

In 2016, the Town Board approved a medical office building in an underutilized portion of Westchester Square Shopping Center. Construction on this building (6,000 sq. ft.) is anticipated to commence in 2018. This type of approved site design has limited applicability to 4 Corners, as the 6,000 sq. ft. building is surrounded by off-street surface parking in a manner that would be difficult to replicate at 4 Corners due to the following costs: (1) acquisition of multiple lots; (2) demolition of existing sites; and (3) construction cost of new buildings and related mitigations.

Regarding the prospect of a rezoning initiative to accommodate a more dense collection of office buildings at 4 Corners, such that acquisition costs, development costs (including structured parking) and expected return on investment would enable office-based redevelopment, several regional factors are relevant.

The Town of Greenburgh 2016 Comprehensive Plan indicates that, “It is anticipated that the demand for new office space will remain modest at best, partially because of the prevalence of existing vacant office space. The average area utilized per worker is also declining. In 1970, the average employee used 500-700 sq. ft. of work area. This area decreased to 176 sq. ft. in 2012 and was projected to decrease to 151 sq. ft. in 2017. As information technology allows more and more work to be done by offices with smaller staffs or from off-site locations, the demand for office space will likely remain modest even as the economy recovers. The most desirable office space will be in campus settings and/or in spaces which offer state of the art and green amenities.”

According to an Avison Young 2nd Quarter 2018 Westchester County Office Market Report, estimates are that approximately 19% of the office space in Westchester County is vacant. The report notes that these figures would be higher, if not for office to alternate use conversions. As a result of the declining office market, several communities have indeed planned and modified their zoning regulations to convert office parks and office spaces to alternate uses.
In the Town of Greenburgh, zoning amendment requests have been submitted by applicants to diversify the uses permitted in existing office districts. Related approvals have diversified these districts to now permit self-storage uses, retail/restaurant uses, and enclosed recreation uses.

There has also been a trend that large vacant office spaces have the best prospect to be leased in Westchester’s cities, such as White Plains, where there is a desire to be situated near multi-family options with excellent mass transit in a downtown setting.

It does not appear feasible that a concept of aligning zoning updates to facilitate new office development at 4 Corners fits into the vision for this area.

**Single-Use Redevelopment (Commercial/Retail-Use Focused)**

The purpose of this section is to analyze current and projected commercial/retail building development dynamics, and to determine whether or not a concept of aligning zoning updates to facilitate new retail development at 4 Corners warrants further study. This analysis will also factor in the overarching 4 Corners Vision.

The CA District permits commercial buildings of two stories as a permitted use, subject to site plan approval. Much of the Study Area presently consists of single story commercial uses, in either freestanding buildings, strip plazas, or connected storefronts in a somewhat traditional Main St. pattern.

In general, some retail sectors have experienced declining success in the Town of Greenburgh, which is consistent with regional trends. The following was identified by a student intern for the Town of Greenburgh in September 2018, as part of a study “Central Avenue Business Dynamics and Improvement.”

- Identified 40 vacancies along the 3-mile stretch along Central Park Avenue in the Town of Greenburgh, representing 140,000 square feet of vacant space.
• Consumers are increasingly preferring experiences over material goods
• Traditional merchandise retail such as kitchen equipment, clothing or furniture are being outcompeted over price, choice and convenience by the internet
• The share of internet retail within total retail sales has grown 82% between 2013 and 2018, going from 5.5% to 9.5% of all sales. This share has grown increasingly fast in the last decade and is expected to reach 20% in 2025.
• With younger generations geared toward experiences and increasingly shopping on internet, more and more stores will have to revise their business model to suit new demands.

The Town of Greenburgh Comprehensive Plan identifies that “Experience-based retail” is a concept of providing an enhanced consumer space with access to a range of experiences beyond just buying goods and services. Simple components associated with experienced-based retail include safe and inviting pedestrian circulation, outdoor seating in connection with restaurants, seating for general public use within retail locations, higher quality architecture and enhanced landscaping. From a use perspective, traditional retail/restaurant combinations can be deemed experiential if the design and functionality of the space is exceptional. In other instances, experiential retail also includes non-traditional components such as adding a café component with live readings/performances to a traditional bookstore.

Several factors suggest that an attempt to facilitate the creation of an enhanced experiential retail development at 4 Corners may not be successful. With the fragmentation in ownership within the Study Area, and the numerous small-sized parcels that exist, it is anticipated that acquisition costs and development costs (construction of structured parking and other traffic/infrastructure mitigations) would not produce a return on investment. In addition, successful multi-level retail buildings are not common in Westchester, particularly within downtown settings. The CA District permits 2-level retail buildings. There are no well-designed multi-level retail buildings on Central Park Avenue that are typically fully leased. The act of creating new zoning regulations that would allow additional floor area ratio and floor levels for new retail development at 4 Corners, even with design criteria flexibility, does not appear to be appropriate at 4 Corners. There are examples of successful multi-level retail developments in Westchester, such as Ridge Hill in Yonkers, the Cross County Shopping Center in Yonkers, and City Center in White Plains; however, these developments are designed in a more traditional mall/retail setting, or are located within a major city’s downtown, far different from the traits that exist at 4 Corners.

Two examples of multi-level commercial/office buildings (one Town of Greenburgh, one Village of Elmsford) with chronic 2nd floor vacancies
Corners. Some of these development examples also combine mixed-use elements such as residential uses.

**Pre-2016 Comprehensive Plan adoption concept**

As part of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan adoption process, in an earlier version of the Plan that was not adopted because there was a lack of community support to redevelop the Corners at the time, 4 Corners was identified as having the potential to be “a gateway and anchor of unincorporated Greenburgh’s Hartsdale Train Station downtown area, which has nicely landscaped multi-family developments composed of varied traditional architecture. Distinctive mixed-use buildings at each of the four corners could contain a combination of commercial and/or office space in addition to residential units.”

Other components from the earlier draft of the Plan were as follows:

- Distinctive mixed-use buildings at each of the four corners could contain a combination of commercial and/or office space in addition to residential units.
- The positioning of off-street parking for proposed redevelopment is a major design consideration that could foster a successful place.
- Structured parking is likely to be necessary in connection with any redevelopment. Proximity to the Hartsdale Train Station, existing bus lines, and potential jitney service are appropriate factors to consider with respect to parking requirements.
- The southwestern and northwestern corners of the intersection both contain surface parking, which contributes to the redevelopment potential of this section. The location of the Hartsdale Public Parking District’s western parking lot presents an opportunity, at least at one corner, for some version of a public-private joint structured parking facility.
- Due to the numerous separate ownerships of lots within the area, an aggregation of lots is necessary to create a cohesive development. A project of this nature must be designed to complement the physical form of surrounding areas.

The draft identified that, “the benefits that could be realized in the Hartsdale Four Corners District Center include: (1) an aesthetic and visual enhancement of a prominent intersection, (2) significant private economic investment providing new rateables, (3) private improvements of existing water and sewer infrastructure in an area prone to flooding, (4) an increased built-in customer base to support localized retail, and (5) increased support for existing mass transit options. Lastly, this planned mixed-use district has the potential to act as an anchor development bridged by the existing multi-family complexes of East Hartsdale Avenue and connected to the east by the Hartsdale Train Station District Center.”

A lack of public support for this concept for 4 Corners led to its removal from the 2016 Comprehensive Plan since the Plan’s content was community support driven. It was subsequently adopted as a Study Area in the adopted Plan.
Post-2016 Comprehensive Plan adoption (public support)

Following the Plan’s 2016 adoption, several important factors have led to a renewed interest in visioning for the 4 Corners study area. In 2017, as part of a grassroots approach, the Hartsdale Neighbors Association (the HNA – newly formed Hartsdale-based civic association) began to discuss the prospect of 4 Corners, which included meeting Town planning staff to better understand the Comprehensive Plan, prior planning efforts in the Town, existing zoning, etc. This resident outreach lead to coordination with some of the property owners at 4 Corners regarding potential improvements to the sites at the intersection. Led by private professional consultants (Inspired Places, LLC – Architects/Planners) commissioned by some of the property owners; Inspired Places, with input from residents/HNA, business owners, Town staff, Hartsdale Public Parking District, Greenburgh School District, and the Hartsdale Fire District, prepared a series of planning studies focused on visioning for 4 Corners.

These studies included the following:

- Review of existing conditions
- Review of challenges facing 4 Corners
- Housing, retail, commercial market demographics
- A vision of redevelopment
- A review of comparable redevelopment initiatives in other communities
- Benefits of redevelopment

Public support for a redevelopment initiative based on a collective vision for 4 Corners has been evident at Town Board work sessions in 2018 where the 4 Corners study area was the subject of discussion. At an April 10, 2018 work session of the Town Board, a signed petition included over 500 signatures in support of the visioning efforts for 4 Corners to date, was delivered to the Town Board. As part of a subsequent discussion on 4 Corners at a work session on September 25, 2018, several residents spoke with excitement regarding the potential for the Town of Greenburgh to undertake a visioning process for the area.
Post-2016 Comprehensive Plan adoption (declining conditions)
Since the adoption of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, and as noted elsewhere in this Study with respect to vacancies, conditions at 4 Corners have not improved. In 2018, longtime tenants including a bank and grocery store moved out from their respective buildings. These vacancies add to the pre-existing vacancies in the immediate area, and further contribute to resident interest in planning for an improved 4 Corners.

Mixed-use success in other communities
Many communities in Westchester County have planned for and successfully facilitated redevelopment initiatives based on a community vision. Various aspects of these processes by other municipalities are relevant when visioning for 4 Corners.

From the perspective of the scale of a redevelopment project, it is important to note that infill redevelopment has successfully occurred in communities outside of Westchester’s larger cities such as White Plains, New Rochelle and Yonkers. While redevelopment projects in these cities have enlivened portions of their downtowns and created wonderful open spaces within mixed-use settings, these projects can be of a scale that would be out of character for the Town of Greenburgh. In the Village of Tuckahoe, examples such as the mixed-use buildings along Main Street and redevelopment of a former industrial corridor along the Bronx River have contributed immensely to the vibrancy of this community and enhanced it as a walkable downtown area.

Two very important aspects associated with redevelopment in the Village of Scarsdale have relevance when visioning for 4 Corners. From a scale perspective, Christie Place is a great successful example. The Scarsdale Freightway study notes that, “In 2008, the Christie Place mixed-use development was built. This project was realized after a long effort to replace the existing surface parking lot with a three-level parking garage. Christie
Place is an example of how a process of careful review and consideration by the Village can produce appropriate, contextually scaled development solutions that exceed simple pragmatics. Christie Place replaced the original parking structure proposal with 42 condominiums, ground floor retail, and commuter/resident/public parking provided below ground.”

The second Village of Scarsdale example is related to process. The Village’s Scarsdale Freightway Site Redevelopment Study is noteworthy in many respects but particularly due to the manner in which the public was engaged for this process. Page 43 of the Freightway study identifies that the planning process included six steering committee meetings that were open to the public, three public workshops, three focus group meetings (business owners, residents, property owners and developers, online survey, merchant/commuter intercept survey, and two walking tours). This process is ongoing and had advanced with a Village-initiated Request for Proposals (RFP).

Excerpt from Village of Scarsdale Freightway Study depicting possible development alternative concept (BFJ Planning)

With respect to public-private partnerships, the Town/Village of Harrison, Metropolitan Transit Authority, and AvalonBay partnership is a good example of planning for revitalization in a community. This project was planned as a public-private partnership on a 3.28-acre site (formerly MTA-owned) which has four parking lots that are too small to meet commuter demand and are in need of rehabilitation. The project was planned as a series of pedestrian-oriented, four-story buildings lined with retail stores on the ground floor and apartments on the upper floors. A mixed-use building at the eastern end of the site would create a vibrant streetscape with space for small shops, restaurants and community oriented facilities at street level. AvalonBay’s mixed-use complex would include 143 apartment homes in three residential buildings, 27,000 square feet of street-level commercial space and 751 parking spaces, many of which are reserved for commuters. Two landscaped public plazas would directly connect to the Metro-North train station platforms. The residential units would be split between 76 one-bedroom units, 59 two-bedroom units and eight three-bedroom units. Seven of the 143 apartments planned at the site would be designated affordable housing. Construction for this project could begin in 2019.
As a result of analysis of the three different land-use development alternatives (1. Redevelopment under current CA District Zoning; 2. Redevelopment for new office buildings; and 3. Redevelopment for new commercial buildings) that do not appear capable of addressing the challenges noted for the 4 Corners Study Area and that are not consistent with the vision for 4 Corners, it is apparent that a better mix of uses should be explored.

4 Corners Mixed-Use Neighborhood Redevelopment

A goal of this study is to provide a framework leading to a revitalized 4 Corners, as opposed to mandating certain design elements, or requiring or eliminating specific uses. The approach of this study is to lay out the planning components of a successful redevelopment initiative, and allow subsequent processes, all of which will include input from the public and numerous stakeholders, to contribute the specifics necessary to make 4 Corners a special place.

Land-Use Components of 4 Corners Neighborhood Redevelopment

Similar to the concept previously envisioned in connection with 4 Corners as part of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan process, mixed-use buildings containing a combination of commercial and/or office space in addition to residential units above, have the ability to transform the study area by incorporating attractive architecture, pocket parks, plazas, open spaces and buffers. While the “residential above retail” concept of an increased built-in customer base to support businesses below is a valid concept for new mixed-use buildings at 4 Corners, it is anticipated that the customer base is more accurately described as a combination of the residents above, the existing residents of the surrounding Hartsdale neighborhoods within walking distance, and residents and visitors from points farther, who will have safe and well-signed structured parking access that does not presently exist in the 4 Corners Study Area.
Studies prepared by Inspired Places in connection with the 4 Corners revitalization initiative also support the viability of a residential component. Inspired Places, in its report dated September 25, 2018, document demographic data that supports the small supply and large demand for rental units. This is largely attributed to the following factors: demand for amenity-rich apartment buildings by empty nesters and millennials (desire to live in mixed-use settings with a mix of shopping, restaurants, and transit options; being priced out of NYC) and lack of supply (very few available rentals along East Hartsdale Avenue, aging building stock, etc.).

In addition to mixed-use buildings containing a residential and commercial and/or office component, complementing single-use buildings such as an office building or even a hotel should not be precluded from contributing to a viable redeveloped 4 Corners. The remainder of this section focuses on design elements, mitigations, and opportunities for the 4 Corners Study Area. A basic massing sample prepared by Inspired Places is shown below, highlighting how compact development incorporating parking structures can include green spaces and multi-level buildings.

Transforming Challenges into Opportunities (Traffic/Bus/Biking)

The revitalization of 4 Corners must include improving congestion and street grid connectivity by widening the roadway and installing dedicated right turning lanes at the intersection that leads north and south bound onto Central Avenue from East and West Hartsdale Avenue. These actions could minimize the de facto bypasses in the Dairy Del parking lot, as well as on Columbia and South Washington Avenues, alleviating traffic volume, diminishing noise and increasing safety. Such improvements would entail private land transfer donations to the NYSDOT and Town of Greenburgh. Coordination with the Westchester County transportation department on updated bus stop locations as part of redevelopment can ease congestion and enhance visibility. Developing appropriate signage and wayfinding elements to direct both vehicular and pedestrian traffic by coordinating with NYSDOT, the HPPD and the County Bee-line system is another important design element. To the extent that on-street accommodations for bicyclists is possible, bike-friendly design should be coordinated with NYSDOT.
Transforming Challenges into Opportunities (Pedestrian)

Pedestrian challenges can be met with solutions that address the dominance of cars at the Corners. Creating public green spaces and addressing the relationship of the buildings to the sidewalk will make the area more pedestrian focused, drawing residents and visitors.

Installing landscaped pedestrian “refuge” islands in the center of Central Avenue, where pedestrians can stop before finishing crossing this very wide road, is a potential enhancement, providing safety for pedestrians, including those with disabilities, pedestrians who try to cross Central Avenue and find that the crossing can take too long for one traffic cycle. This will also improve safety—with impatient pedestrians less likely to use gaps in traffic that turn out to be too short for safe crossing. The graphic below represents the type of major pedestrian improvements that can be made in a redevelopment scenario.

Other considerations include:

- Creating landscaped public spaces and courtyards will make the area more pedestrian friendly.
- Burying utility lines will diminish streetscape confusion overall, improve aesthetics and increase safety.
- Installing ADA-compliant curb-cuts at the cross walks will improve handicapped accessibility and safety for all sidewalk users.
- Coordinating the installation of sidewalks on West Hartsdale Avenue up from Central Avenue westward will attract pedestrians to the 4 Corners neighborhood and provide safe access to the Hartsdale Train Station.
- Coordinating with NYSDOT (New York State Department of Transportation) on future signalization improvements and lane widening/lane creation.

A potential lane addition to West Hartsdale Avenue presents opportunities for new sidewalk connections.
Transforming Challenges into Opportunities (Parking)

The construction of off-street multi-level parking structures behind new buildings and, where possible, underneath buildings can improve pedestrian safety, aesthetics and energy efficiency. Due to the limitations with respect to lot depths on some of the corners, and to facilitate attractive mixed-use buildings with open spaces, structured parking at or near the corners will be a necessary and required design component.

From a design perspective, the addition of green elements, such as landscaped buffer strips, between the structure and existing residential areas can reduce the impact of bulk and height. The location of the Hartsdale Public Parking District’s western Parking Lot (Lot C) presents an opportunity, at least at one corner, for some version of a public-private joint structured parking facility. Providing parking for the on-site buildings and for the study area presents an opportunity to alleviate parking shortfalls in the Study Area.

Transforming Challenges into Opportunities (Stormwater Infrastructure/Utilities)

Stormwater challenges present one of the most significant challenges for the 4 Corners study area, as well as for the businesses and properties along the East Hartsdale Avenue Corridor.

The following considerations must be incorporated into redevelopment initiatives and municipal planning for 4 Corners:

- Evaluate the potential for a storm water management district in the Study Area and/or the East Hartsdale Avenue corridor.
- Update of the 2008 Leonard Jackson Study with additional focus on those areas at higher elevations and other areas contributing stormwater runoff, and incorporating future expectations of greater rainfall due to climate change.
- Retain/detain new drainage via sustainable storm water management practices, such as “green” roofs, rain gardens, grey water solutions, porous pavements and native plants.
- Consider expanding/improving existing retention basins.
- Coordinate inspection and compliance protocols for drains, culverts and other key infrastructure along East Hartsdale Avenue to ensure water can flow freely to designated basins, including on private properties.
- Secure grants or partner in grant applications for stormwater infrastructure improvements.
- Evaluate the cost and feasibility of replacing the existing aboveground existing cables in the 4 Corners Study Area with underground cables.
Transforming Challenges into Opportunities (Environmental/Open Space)

A transformed 4 Corners can be a model for sustainability by incorporating the following:

- Use energy conservation techniques and green building construction practices, along with the use of high quality green building materials, doors and window, as well as the proper utilization of building design to create shade.
- Preserve any environmentally sensitive areas, such as watercourses.
- Promote green buffers between residential and commercial areas.
- Create landscaped public spaces, plazas and courtyards within site development.
- Promote conservation easements within developments.
- Build sustainable landscaped “refuge” islands on Central Avenue for pedestrians for safety and streetscape improvement.
- Promote the use of renewable energy at the site whenever possible.
- Use grey water recycling, rain gardens and other recycling initiatives as much as practicable to support the new landscaped environment, as well as other purposes.
- Encourage the use of storm water and other water capture as a means of generating electricity.
- Alleviate vehicular congestion to assist with the transition to a much lower emission environment and an additional reduction of cumulative CO2 emissions over the coming decades. Utilize building design guidelines for environmentally sustainable development.
- Encourage or require alternative transportation methods to help reduce the need for cars (bike rentals, shuttles to the station, etc.)
- Install charging stations for electric vehicles to help the migration to lower emission fuels, improving air quality and fossil fuel conservation.
- Create a location on one or more sites for shared, rented vehicles to help reduce parking needs.
Transforming Challenges into Opportunities (Aesthetics)

The aesthetic value of 4 Corners will be transformed with the following:

- Design of attractive buildings that are consistent with the surrounding community character.
- Break up the surface planes of the new buildings to create depth and remove the monotony of unvarying surface facades.
- Use appropriate setbacks to vary height (tiered heights of buildings and their relation to the frontage).
- Incorporate enhanced public space, courtyards and pedestrian-friendly elements along the two corridors, as appropriate.
- Install street lighting that is attractive and accommodates the intended use of the public and private space.
- Create landscaped pedestrian crossings set back from the intersection to enhance the streetscape, provide greater safety, and enhance mobility.
- Create a landscape buffer between residential and commercial area.
- Install tree-lined Hartsdale Avenue frontage, along with streetscape furniture (trash receptacles, benches, planters, etc.).
- Bury service and utility lines or locate them underground or behind buildings – not along the public streetscape.
- Make parking an aesthetic asset, not a detriment, through creation of off-street attractive structured parking behind or in the new buildings.
- Improve the streetscape through the attractive inviting storefronts that are prominent to passersby.

A contrast depicting buildings in the Study Area having low architectural value with a rendering of approved and under construction mixed-use development in Westchester County (Credit 2nd image to Westchester Business Journal)
Transforming Challenges into Opportunities (Community Well-Being)

A well designed and inviting 4 Corners neighborhood redevelopment will function as a gateway to the Hartsdale Train Station and surrounding residential communities. In addition to being a source of pride for local residents as a revitalized neighborhood, the image for the Hartsdale hamlet will be significantly enhanced. A 4 Corners Neighborhood Development can attract other Westchester residents to eat and shop in an attractive and relaxing environment. Hartsdale has the potential to be viewed as a “go to” real estate choice, with diverse and high-quality housing. The creation of a second hub with strong linkage to the Hartsdale train station district can accomplish much for the community. It can be a magnet for surrounding neighborhoods through better connectivity, as a walkable destination. The revitalization is anticipated to create a better sense of community identity for Hartsdale and “sense of place” at 4 Corners.

Transforming Challenges into Opportunities (Mix of Uses)

As noted previously, the 4 Corners Study area presently contains a good mix of uses, however, the design and functionality of the present Study Area precludes the types of investments needed to allow businesses to thrive, and precludes investment that can meaningfully improve traffic, stormwater and other environmental challenges. The vision for 4 Corners encompasses broadening the mix of uses in the Study Area to include mixed-use buildings incorporating a residential component (apartment rentals) and a range of complementary uses such as commercial, office, restaurant, hotel, pocket parks/public space, etc. The best case scenario entails many of the present business owners of the Study Area reoccupying new restaurant, service, and business spaces with the same unique and authentic services that they currently provide to the community.

Collaborative Planning and Zoning Process (Public-Private Partnership)

The successful redevelopment of 4 Corners is best achieved with a collaborative planning and zoning process that functions as a public-private partnership. The preliminary stakeholders in this process have been identified previously, and include: residents, property owners, area business owners, Civic Associations, Town Officials and land-use Boards (Town Board, Planning Board, Conservation Advisory Council), the Hartsdale Public Parking District, the Greenburgh Central School District, Westchester County, and New York State Department of Transportation, and potentially developers that do not presently own land in the study area.

Redevelopment at 4 Corners will require significant private investment, likely exceeding $200 million, with potential funding supplements from infrastructure/redevelopment grants. The basic parameters of partnership efforts from the various stakeholders, along with a process narrative, are highlighted below.

From a process perspective, planning for redevelopment at 4 Corners is best understood as a series of phases.
Through the 4 Corners Study, adopt a vision for the area with Guiding Principles, Goals, Objectives, and Policies, involving broad public and stakeholder input.

Analyze environmental factors (traffic, stormwater, community character) to derive the appropriate scale for redevelopment. This analysis will allow for a new Zoning District formulation that can facilitate appropriately scaled redevelopment consistent with the 4 Corners vision. All steps to include broad public and stakeholder input.

Utilizing the regulations of the new Zoning District, an applicant or co-applicants would file a site plan application for development in the 4 Corners Study Area, consistent with the vision and zoning regulations of the area. A development proposal in the 4 Corners Study Area will be enhanced with resident participation.

In connection with receiving site plan approval, the Zoning Map would be updated to be reflective of the new Zoning District. Similar to the provisions of the Town’s Planned Unit Development District, the Zoning Map update could be contingent on infrastructure improvements to support the viability of the Study Area having been made and development commencing within a certain allotted timeframe.

Phased development would include demolitions, mitigation construction (roadway, stormwater, etc., project construction).

### Process Step
### Process Description
### Ongoing Coordination

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<th>Process Step</th>
<th>Process Description</th>
<th>Ongoing Coordination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 Corners Vision Adoption</td>
<td>Through the 4 Corners Study, adopt a vision for the area with Guiding Principles,</td>
<td>Public/Stakeholder Input</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Goals, Objectives, and Policies, involving broad public and stakeholder input.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technical Analysis/ Zoning District Formulation</td>
<td>Analyze environmental factors (traffic, stormwater, community character) to derive the appropriate scale for redevelopment. This analysis will allow for a new Zoning District formulation that can facilitate appropriately scaled redevelopment consistent with the 4 Corners vision. All steps to include broad public and stakeholder input.</td>
<td>Municipal Grant Applications (Planning/ Stormwater/Traffic Studies)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Development Application</td>
<td>Utilizing the regulations of the new Zoning District, an applicant or co-applicants would file a site plan application for development in the 4 Corners Study Area, consistent with the vision and zoning regulations of the area. A development proposal in the 4 Corners Study Area will be enhanced with resident participation.</td>
<td>Ongoing Coordination with Hartsdale Public Parking District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoning Map Update</td>
<td>In connection with receiving site plan approval, the Zoning Map would be updated to be reflective of the new Zoning District. Similar to the provisions of the Town’s Planned Unit Development District, the Zoning Map update could be contingent on infrastructure improvements to support the viability of the Study Area having been made and development commencing within a certain allotted timeframe.</td>
<td>Private Property Owner Partnerships/ Agglomerations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Development</td>
<td>Phased development would include demolitions, mitigation construction (roadway, stormwater, etc., project construction).</td>
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</table>
1st Phase, 4C (Visioning)

The first phase constitutes a land-use based visioning study. The study will document existing conditions; analyzes the existing zoning districts and potential buildout under existing zoning; analyze market trends; forecast the prospect for a variety of different redevelopment schemes focusing on use: commercial redevelopment, office redevelopment, mixes of these two uses, mixed-use (combining residential and non-residential uses); discuss redevelopment in other communities; identify areas of concern to be addressed (traffic, stormwater, etc. with concepts for mitigations); advocate for a better mix of uses at 4 Corners; and identify goals, objectives and policies to advance an initiative to redevelop 4 Corners. This study would not be actual rezoning, but would identify policies which would support a future rezoning consistent with the adopted vision.

As the study will not result in an actual rezoning, the SEQRA related to a potential adoption of the study will be less specific than the subsequent SEQRA process of Phase 2. As the vision for 4 Corners is attractive mixed-use buildings with open spaces, and well-designed parking structures, the related SEQRA would initially identify and address mitigations that take into consideration:

- **Neighborhood Character** – Articulating that excessive heights are not consistent with the neighborhood
- **Traffic/Pedestrian** – Identification of traffic congestion and unsafe pedestrian conditions, and that post-development conditions must be improved. Probable mitigations would be identified such as widening East/West Hartsdale Avenue, pedestrian refuge, center island on Central Park Avenue, additional turning lanes, project site driveways away from intersections, etc.)
- **Open Space/Recreation** – Identify that zero public benefits exist in this regard. Clarify that post development conditions will include pocket parks/public walkways, etc.
- **Parking** – Identify that structured parking accommodate existing and future businesses, as well as those for the residents. Promote and build to accommodate ride share and shared car services.
- **Cohesive Development** – Identify that future zoning will have proper mechanisms to ensure that one corner of development does not preclude cohesive or complementing development on the next corner or other corners. This can potentially be achieved by density bonus provisions and/or transfer development rights.
2nd Phase, 4C (Technical Analysis/Zoning District Formulation)

The second phase constitutes a comprehensive review of technical data, which will lead to new Zoning District formulation.

Developing the language for a new zoning district which will enable redevelopment at 4 Corners must be undertaken concurrently with comprehensive SEQRA studies carried out by planning and engineering professionals. The previously described level of SEQRA review associated with the Study Area would be informative and serve as a guide for the more specific SEQRA review that will inform Zoning District formulation.

Whereas the SEQRA analysis associated with the 4 Corners vision study was identified to be general, the SEQRA analysis for a new Zoning District will be quite specific. Several of the previous examples of SEQRA analysis, now with updated levels of emphasis, are as follows:

- **Neighborhood Character** – Identifying the actual height maximums, numbers of stories, setbacks, etc.
- **Traffic/Pedestrian** – Preparing traffic counts, projecting traffic flow for various volumes of residential units, office, commercial, hotels, etc. Identifying proper mitigations, with NYSDOT input (widening East/West Hartsdale Avenue, pedestrian refuge, center island Central Park Avenue). Additional turning lanes, project site driveways away from intersection, etc.) Identifying land acquisition space necessary for lane widening.
- **Open Space/Recreation** – Identify pocket parks/public walkways/plaza, public space requirements.
- **Parking** – Identify mixed-use shared parking requirements to accommodate existing and future businesses, as well as those for new residents.
- **Cohesive Development** – Identify density bonus provisions, transfer development right, or other zoning provisions to prohibit piecemeal development that does not exhibit conformance with the vision. Any future zoning district will have proper mechanisms to ensure that one corner of development does not preclude cohesive or complementing development on the next corner or other corners.

In evaluating the environmental factors above, it is important to recognize that they all are inter-connected. As an example, if a widening of East and West Hartsdale Avenues could facilitate a specified number of residential units and specified square footage of retail and office space in a mixed-use development in the 4 Corners study area from a traffic perspective, there are other factors to consider. If the residential heights needed for that number of residential units are not in character with the surrounding neighborhood, the scope of the project would have to be scaled down for neighborhood character reasoning, as opposed to traffic considerations.
It is anticipated that a prospective private developer or developers would engage professional engineering and planning services for buildout analysis studies, which would lead to a petition to the Town for rezoning/SEQRA review. This analysis would be coordinated with and be collaborative with the Town of Greenburgh, the public, and various other stakeholders. Conversely, in the absence of developer interest in carrying out the studies necessary to create zoning enabling legislation, the Town of Greenburgh has the ability to seek planning grants for this purpose. The Town may be able to voluntarily finance portions of the studies; however, the most feasible funding mechanism is likely a public-private partnership with municipal grant funding combined with private investment.

The use of a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is a viable SEQRA mechanism to ensure that each environmental impact is properly scoped and studied. The benefit of the preparation of a GEIS or EIS is that potentially, no further SEQRA compliance is required if a subsequent proposed action is carried out in conformance with the conditions and thresholds established for such actions in the generic EIS or its findings statement.

Earlier in this study it was identified that the exact boundaries of the future 4 Corners project area cannot be determined at present; however, the general project area depicted below represents an understanding that a critical mass of land area is needed to allow for a properly designed development with a good mix of uses, structured parking, stormwater infrastructure upgrades, and open space. It is also recognized that a larger area may be needed to accomplish the objectives of this vision statement.

Aerial View of the 4 Corners Study Area
From a SEQRA perspective the zoning text for a new zoning district ("the Planned 4C Neighborhood Development District," as an example) should be studied for a defined area which would not be expanded. This area would be a maximum area that the Town Board supported as a full buildout area, consisting of project limits, east, west, south and north. This analysis would project an appropriate or acceptable yield of residential units, maximum square footage of office/retail, hotel, etc., required and planned parking spaces in this defined area. The appropriate density yield analysis will be based upon stakeholder input, stormwater and traffic analysis, and all other relevant environmental factors. The actual project area and project, however, could be smaller based on property acquisitions, willing developers, etc.

Once an acceptable project limit is established, and an acceptable development maximum is deemed appropriate from a SEQRA perspective, a district such as the “Planned 4C Neighborhood Development” could be legislatively approved. The recommendation is that this would be as a result of a zoning text amendment and added to Chapter 285: Zoning. It would be a recommendation to have the zoning district set in the Zoning Ordinance, but not have the Zoning District mapped until such time as until such time as infrastructure issues have been addressed and an actual development application is proposed and approved.

3rd Phase, 4C (Site Development Application/Zoning Map Updates)

At the conclusion of the 2nd Phase, several aspects of the 4 Corners redevelopment process would have clarity.

- The project boundaries would largely be established.
- The development capacity of the study area would be established, outlining acceptable numbers of residential units, and square footages of commercial, office and/or hotel space.
- Mitigations would be identified for the various SEQRA factors such as traffic, community character, pedestrian safety, stormwater.

With these constants, a future developer or developers can continue to proceed with confidence that, should agreements with property owners and/or acquisitions of properties take place, a final site plan can be developed and approved. The advantage of not adopting a zoning map change to a “Planned 4C Neighborhood Development” for eligible properties until an application is proposed and approved is a protection to ensure that said development consists of cohesive development throughout the project area, consistent with the vision for 4 Corners.

4th Phase, 4C (Site Development)

At the conclusion of the 3rd Phase, a site plan approval will have been obtained, and the 4 Corners study area will be rezoned to the new Zoning District. It is at this time that development can commence on several aspects including demolitions, site mitigations (traffic, stormwater, etc., project buildout (buildings, parking, open space). It is likely that the project would commence in construction phases, with demolition and infrastructure improvements first, followed by phased project buildout. Appropriate phasing would be addressed in connection with the technical SEQRA analysis associated with Phase 2 and finalized in connection with Phases 3 and 4.
Hartsdale 4 Corners Goals, Objectives and Policies

GOAL 1.1: Revitalize the Hartsdale 4 Corners Study Area through a planning and rezoning process to create a vibrant neighborhood center and gateway to the Hartsdale Train Station and surrounding residential communities

OBJECTIVE 1.1.1: Strengthen the viability of the 4 Corners Study Area through a collaborative public process with residents, businesses and public agencies.

POLICY 1.1.1.1: Ensure resident and stakeholder participation into the processes associated with 4 Corners revitalization at each planning phase.

POLICY 1.1.1.2: Plan for public asset enhancements such as those associated with the Hartsdale Public Parking District and Hartsdale Fire District through potential public-private partnerships.

POLICY 1.1.1.3: Coordinate with local and regional agencies (Town of Greenburgh land-use boards and committees, Westchester County Planning Department, Greenburgh Central School District, New York State Department of Transportation, etc.) at each planning phase.

OBJECTIVE 1.2.1: Utilize existing transportation assets and planned improvements to be consistent with planning for 4 Corners.

POLICY 1.2.1.1: Support infrastructure improvements that support neighborhood-scaled mixed-use development at 4 Corners.

POLICY 1.2.1.2: Encourage flexible multi-modal transportation facilities that adapt to changes in technology and demographics/lifestyle choices.

POLICY 1.2.1.3: Encourage better parking options, safe convenient and adequate for residents, businesses and visitors, including but not limited to structured parking, shared parking, car sharing services, bike stations and jitney shuttle services.

POLICY 1.2.1.4: Encourage development that mitigates traffic congestion, promotes vehicular, cycling and pedestrian safety, and take advantage of public transportation options.

OBJECTIVE 1.3.1: Facilitate an appropriate mix of uses that contribute to a vibrant neighborhood-scaled development.

POLICY 1.3.1.1: Consider a broad range of uses (office, commercial, hotel, etc.) that complement mixed-use buildings with a residential (rental) component.
OBJECTIVE 1.4.1: Utilize innovative zoning techniques to facilitate the creation of cohesive neighborhood scaled mixed-use development at 4 Corners.

POLICY 1.4.1.1: Utilize form-based zoning or another flexible zoning district (with Planned Unit Development concepts), to promote development consistent with the 4 Corners vision.

POLICY 1.4.1.2: Support residential (rental)/non-residential mixed-use development at 4 Corners.

POLICY 1.4.1.3: Incorporate Density bonuses or other zoning based mandates to ensure compatible cohesive development at each of the 4 Corners.

OBJECTIVE 1.5.1: Foster development that achieves LEED-Neighborhood Development status for the mixed-use planning initiatives at 4 Corners.

POLICY 1.5.1.1: Facilitate development that incorporates opens spaces for public use.

POLICY 1.5.1.2: Facilitate development that uses sustainable construction practices.

POLICY 1.5.1.3: Encourage development that utilizes energy generating technology at 4 Corners.

POLICY 1.5.1.4: Facilitate development that improves existing environmental and quality of life conditions at 4 Corners.

OBJECTIVE 1.6.1: Foster development that mitigates environmental challenges.

POLICY 1.6.1.1: Submit Consolidated Funding Applications to New York State or other applicable grant applications to appropriate agencies for funding (planning, stormwater, traffic, etc.) associated with the 4 Corners redevelopment initiative.

POLICY 1.6.1.2: Base future zoning regulations and density allowances on the technical analysis that identifies appropriate mitigations for transportation, stormwater and other environmental considerations.

POLICY 1.6.1.3: Require land transfer for public right-of-way enlargement for potentially necessary lane widening and/or utility structures.