

**Evaluation of Multifamily Residential Development Capacity  
Incorporated Village of Mineola**

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**Prepared for:**  
Incorporated Village of Mineola

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The Incorporated Village of Mineola, a municipality located in Nassau County, New York, has been attracting interest in recent years from potential developers for the construction of new multifamily housing, particularly in its downtown within walking distance of its commuter railroad station. While this type of development generally has been found to have significant positive impacts on municipal and school finances with minimal impacts on public services, concerns have been raised about the large number of multifamily projects that are under construction, were recently approved or are currently proposed.

This report was prepared on behalf of the Incorporated Village of Mineola in order to evaluate the potential impacts of new multifamily residential development in downtown Mineola.

As part of our analysis, we undertook the following tasks: field inspections of the study area, including existing projects and the sites of proposed developments; a general survey of existing land uses; review of materials submitted by applicants for multifamily residential development projects; review of the Village of Mineola Zoning Code and Zoning Map; review of the Village of Mineola Comprehensive Master Plan; and review of various data sources utilized to evaluate development impacts.

The remainder of this report consists of five chapters. Chapter II provides background information about downtown Mineola and the area surrounding it, as well as the village as a whole. Chapter III describes various residential and other developments that are under construction, approved or proposed in downtown Mineola. Chapter IV outlines the existing zoning and other development regulations impacting downtown Mineola, as well as relevant sections of the Village's current Comprehensive Master Plan for the downtown. Chapter V analyzes potential impacts from new multifamily residential development in downtown Mineola. Finally, Chapter VI presents recommendations based on the findings in the remainder of the report.

The report's key findings can be summarized as follows:

- Downtown, transit-oriented multifamily dwellings have lesser impacts on a per unit basis than typical suburban single-family homes and generate fewer residents per unit – particularly in terms of school-age children.
- The existing Development Incentive Bonus Overlay District for the downtown area is an effective tool for encouraging appropriate development in the downtown, while providing the Village with more control over the type, form and appearance of new development than is possible with standard zoning.
- The potential addition of a few thousand new residents in downtown Mineola would benefit local businesses by bringing in potential new customers, particularly evenings and weekends, and would help make the area more vibrant.
- It is difficult to determine an exact threshold as to how much development is too much. Instead, the most intense development should be focused on areas closer to the railroad station (i.e. within a quarter-mile radius), with less in outlying areas. Development regulations could set the effective limit through caps on height and/or units, as well as by continuing to mandate the provision of adequate parking spaces for each new development.

## II. BACKGROUND

The Village of Mineola is a mature suburban community that is essentially fully developed with a broad mix of residential and non-residential land uses. It has a moderately sized downtown that flanks a heavily used Long Island Railroad (LIRR) station and is home to Winthrop University Hospital, a major destination and employer. Mineola also is the county seat of Nassau County, and it has been designated by the Regional Plan Association (RPA) as one of eleven “regional downtowns” in the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut metropolitan area. RPA, a well-respected nonpartisan organization with a distinguished planning history, selected these centers due to their attributes including their mixed-use character, the presence of high-frequency transit service and their ability to accommodate additional growth.

Mineola’s population has seen fluctuations similar to those in other mature suburban communities in the past few decades. The 2010 population of 18,799 represents a modest decrease (2.2%) from the Village’s population of 19,234 in 2000. However, Mineola’s peak decennial census population was 21,845 in 1970, meaning there are roughly 3,000 fewer residents in the Village than there were at one time. This trend is a result of single-family residential neighborhoods being built out, with little remaining developable land available, while demographic changes have resulted in smaller household sizes. At the same time, there is a shortage of housing options in many areas of Long Island, particularly for those who do not want to live in a single-family detached home.

For these reasons, there has been growing recognition among regional leaders that the provision of additional multifamily housing is necessary for Long Island’s continued prosperity. A recent opinion piece in the Long Island Business News written jointly by Nassau County Executive Edward Mangano and Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone promotes the development of downtown housing near LIRR stations. The article also notes the changes in Long Island’s population, citing the desire for different housing types in convenient locations for a variety of age groups, from young professionals to “empty nesters” as well as “people of all ages (who) want the flexibility to adapt to new stages of life.”

These sentiments have been confirmed by other organizations. A survey conducted in 2011 by the Stony Brook University Center for Survey Research on behalf of the Rauch Foundation found significant concerns among Long Island residents about the high cost of living, particularly for housing, and its impact on the ability of younger residents to remain on Long Island. A majority of surveyed residents favored changing zoning laws to allow increases in height limits in downtown areas and permit apartments above stores. More recently, a study prepared for the Long Island Index by HR&A Advisors, Inc. touts the benefits of increasing the supply of multifamily residential near transit and notes that “developing multifamily housing in central areas could maintain the suburban character of Long Island by preserving existing neighborhoods, farmland, and open space.” This study, Long Island’s Future: Economic Implications of Today’s Choices, recommends additional investment in downtown areas in order to create “live-work-play” centers with amenities that benefit local residents and attract visitors.

In short, transit-oriented downtown settings are appropriate for the provision of new multifamily housing. Potential benefits of this type of development include reduction in traffic compared to the same number of units developed in a more dispersed manner, as the availability of public transportation, shopping and services within walking distance allow for more walking trips. Another strength of downtown Mineola also is the presence of substantial nearby employment opportunities. However, there are potential impacts, such as on traffic, services and community character, that need to be considered – particularly if large numbers of new housing units are built.

It is noted that throughout the New York metropolitan region and in other areas of country, transit-oriented suburban downtowns are experiencing residential and mixed-use development similar to that in downtown Mineola. There are limited examples from other communities in Long Island with downtown, transit-oriented multifamily residential development. But Westchester County has examples ranging from more urban downtowns such as New Rochelle, Port Chester and Yonkers to more suburban communities such as Bronxville, Hastings-on-Hudson, Ossining and Tarrytown. Examples from New Jersey, which has been proactive with suburban transit-oriented downtown development include multiple projects in Cranford, Fanwood, Maplewood, Montclair, Morristown, Rahway, Red Bank, Rutherford, South Amboy and South Orange.

### III. SUMMARY OF PROJECTS

As discussed, there are a number of existing, planned and proposed multifamily residential developments in downtown Mineola. These are described in the following tables.

#### Built Projects

Name	Location	Notes	Units
The Marquis	147 Main Street (at Harrison)	Constructed approximately five years ago	22
Raines Building	Old Country and Mineola Blvd.	More recently constructed	28
The Hudson House	Front and Roslyn	Age-restricted to 55 and over – therefore no schoolchildren	36
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>86</b>

#### Under Construction

Name	Location	Notes	Units
Modera (Winston)	Willis and Old Country	Under construction – occupancy expected to start summer 2015	275
One Third Avenue (250 Old Country)	Old Country and 3rd Avenue	Under construction – occupancy expected May 2015 Starbucks and bank on ground floor	315
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>590</b>

#### Proposed

Name	Location	Notes	Units
Village Green	Second Street and Mineola Blvd.	Mixed-use development across from train station	266
Corpus Christi	Willis and Searing	Furthest from station May help support businesses on Willis	140
159 Harrison	159 Harrison Ave.	Replace two single family homes	21
Harrison and 3rd Avenue	Southwest corner of Harrison and 3rd Ave.	Vacant corner parcel	27
The Bridge (residential component)	Station Plaza South	Also includes hotel component	150
Second Street and Main		Assemblage	30
Keyspan Parking Lot	Front and 8th Avenue	Possible joint venture with Winthrop	50
Winthrop Office/House complex	Front and 5th Avenue	Approximate unit count	100
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>784</b>

\*Awaiting application

It is noted that there is other development activity in and adjacent to the study area being undertaken by Winthrop-University Hospital. These include the recently completed research center located at the intersection of Second Street and Mineola Boulevard and various facilities upgrades on Winthrop's campus which support the hospital's efforts to remain a state-designated Level 1 regional Trauma Center.

#### IV. EXISTING DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

##### A. Comprehensive Master Plan

The current Comprehensive Master Plan for the Village of Mineola was completed in 2005. This document provides extensive background information about the Village and includes numerous strategies and recommendations for the Village as a whole and specific areas within it. An entire chapter of this plan is devoted to downtown Mineola.

The overall goal of the Downtown chapter of the Comprehensive Master Plan is to create a vibrant, walkable, and accessible downtown that is a community focal point. This goal is supported by four broad objectives and a series of recommendations. While there are too many recommendations to list, they can be summarized as being supportive of new development in downtown Mineola, particularly residential. One specific recommendation that has been implemented is the creation of an “overlay” incentive zoning district for an area between Eighth Avenue and Roslyn Road on the south side of the LIRR, as well as areas on the north side of the railroad. This type of zoning provides for flexibility in development type and design in exchange for the provision of public amenities. Part of the rationale for the Comprehensive Master Plan encouraging additional downtown residential development is to bring a substantial number of new residents to the area, which would expand the market for downtown businesses by providing additional potential customers, particularly evenings and weekends.

##### B. Zoning

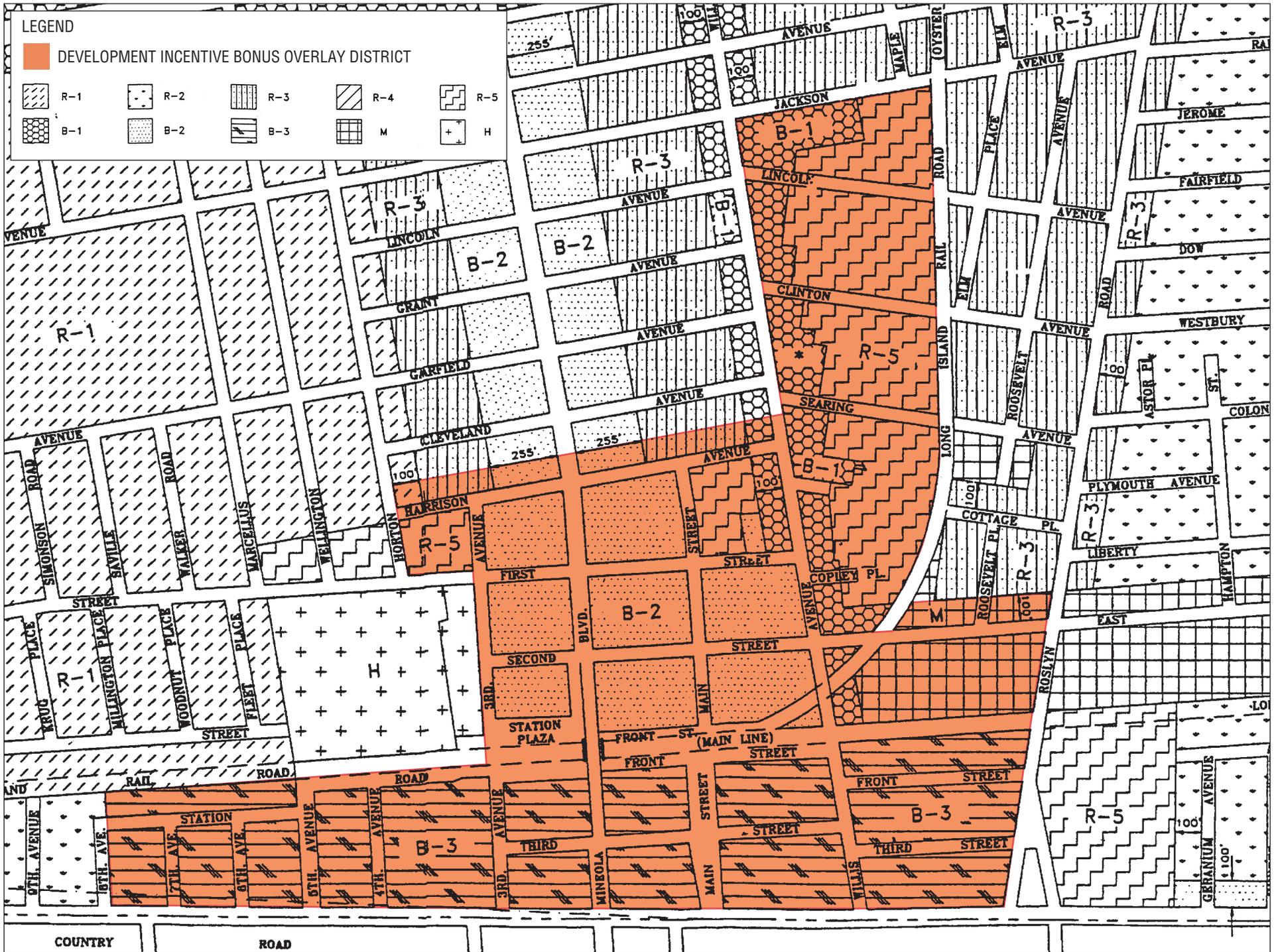
Downtown Mineola is located in multiple zoning districts. The south side of the Long Island Railroad tracks between Eighth Avenue on the west and Roslyn Road on the east is located in the **B-3 Special Office Use zone**. Permitted uses in the B-3 Zone include office buildings, banks, and brokerage houses.

On the north side of the railroad, the majority of the downtown is located in the **B-2 Special Business zone**. This zone includes the core area between Third Avenue and Willis Avenue south of First Street, as well as the east and west sides of Mineola Boulevard. The B-2 District allows those uses permitted in the B-1 Zone (commercial uses such as retail stores, barbershops and beauty parlors, dry cleaners and nurseries) as well as office buildings and multi-family dwellings. Additionally, a limited form of mixed-use development is permitted in this zone. The **B-1 Business zone** is generally located along Willis Avenue in the northeast portion of the central business district. The **R-5 Apartment Residential zone** is also located in the northeast part of downtown, as well as additional areas on the downtown fringe. This district permits multi-family residential uses. The **H Hospital zone** is located along the western edge of downtown. This district is comprised entirely of the main campus of Winthrop-University Hospital. Permitted uses in the H Zone are public or private hospitals and accessory uses customarily incidental to the operation of a hospital. Lastly, the **M Light Manufacturing and Industrial Zone** is located along the eastern edge of downtown. Permitted uses in this zone include those allowed in the B-1 and B-2 Districts as well as those devoted to the manufacture of clothing, electrical appliances, machinery parts and accessories, and cold storage warehouses. Maximum building heights in the above zones range from 25 to 35 feet, except in the Hospital zone, where four stories or 50 feet is permitted.

However, downtown Mineola is also located in the **Development Incentive Bonus Overlay District** as recommended in the Comprehensive Master Plan. As noted above, this overlay zone permits additional uses and building height in exchange for the provision of public benefits. Developers may apply to the Village Board for Trustees for special permit approval to permit a use not permitted in the underlying zone district (e.g. multifamily housing) and/or deviations from bulk requirements such

as height, yards or coverage. An applicant must provide one or more facilities or amenities (including open space, parks and recreational facilities, streetscape amenities, landscaping, road improvements, water and sewer system improvements or similar), or payment in lieu thereof, that would benefit the residents of the Village of Mineola in order to take advantage of the incentive bonuses.

The existing zoning districts in downtown Mineola and vicinity are shown on the map on the following page.



EXISTING ZONE DISTRICTS IN DOWNTOWN MINEOLA

## V. IMPACT ANALYSES

### A. Introduction

This chapter evaluates impacts of multifamily residential development in downtown Mineola in order to determine potential benefits and detriments of this type of housing, including impacts on demographics, services and government finances, as well as community character.

### B. Units

As outlined in Chapter III, there have been three downtown housing projects completed in recent years with a total of 86 units. Two additional projects containing 590 units are under construction and expected to begin occupancy in 2015. Other projects that are proposed would add 784 new units, for a total number of dwellings as listed in the tables on page 3 of 1,460. It is important to note that over half of the units are only proposed and therefore may not be built. Furthermore, downtown multifamily dwellings are different than typical suburban single-family homes in many ways. More units can be accommodated in a smaller area due to the higher density as well as the smaller size of units. But the number of residents per unit, including schoolchildren, has been demonstrated to be lower for downtown, transit-oriented housing. One of the developments, The Hudson, is an age-restricted project meaning its population is limited to older adults and does not include any schoolchildren.

### C. Population

The first step in determining the impacts of new multifamily dwellings in downtown Mineola is to project the number of residents expected to occupy such housing. A commonly utilized source of population projections is the Residential Demographic Multipliers for New York State prepared by Rutgers University's Center for Urban Policy Research. This document provides figures for the number of residents per dwelling unit for various housing types based upon U.S. Census data. The figures are further broken out by number of bedrooms per unit as well as tenure (own or rent) and value (sale price or rent). These multipliers can then be used to estimate the number of residents expected to occupy certain types of housing.

As the exact bedroom mix of all of the developments listed in Chapter III is not known, it is assumed that there would be on average an even mix of one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartments in these developments.<sup>1</sup> It is also assumed that there would be a mix of rental and sale units. To determine an appropriate multiplier, an average of the multipliers for one-bedroom and two-bedroom units, both own and rent, from all values would be 1.98, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Calculation of Multiplier for Total Persons**

5+ Units-Own, 1 BR - All Values	1.86
5+ Units-Rent, 1 BR - All Values	1.88
5+ Units-Own, 2 BR - All Values	1.66
5+ Units-Rent, 2 BR - All Values	2.51
AVERAGE	1.98

*Source: Rutgers University Center for Urban Policy Research, Residential Demographic Multipliers for New York State (2006)*

<sup>1</sup> There are a small number (10) of three-bedroom units in the One Third Avenue project, but not in the Modera. There are not expected to be three-bedroom units in the proposed developments, as transit-oriented projects tend to be limited to studio, one-bedroom and two-bedroom units.

This figure would be somewhat lower if the figures for the highest value units were utilized, but the broader average has been used to be conservative and to determine the likely upper end of the range of projected population of the new developments. Using this multiplier, the projected population of the 1,460 new dwelling units would be **2,890 residents**.

However, the above figures are based upon data from all types of multifamily developments, including those not located proximate to transit. For comparison, demographic multipliers for transit-oriented development tend to have a lower number of residents per unit compared to non-transit-oriented housing. The Regional Plan Association’s Kearny Transit-Oriented Development Vision Plan provides demographic and impact data for a potential transit-oriented development in northern New Jersey, 10 miles west of Manhattan. It includes a multiplier of 1.55 residents per unit of transit-oriented multifamily housing – which if applied the potential number of new multifamily units in downtown Mineola would be **2,263 residents**.

In either case, the estimated household size of a transit-oriented downtown multifamily dwelling unit would be expected to be significantly lower than the average household size in Mineola of 2.60<sup>2</sup>, and thus would generate fewer new residents compared to an average sized existing dwelling in Mineola.

There would be benefits to the downtown area from the potential addition of a few thousand new residents in downtown Mineola. These residents would represent potential customers of downtown businesses, and would be present at times when large numbers of office and hospital workers in the area normally would not be (i.e. evenings and weekends). Downtown retail and services need a certain market size to be successful. In some instances this may be accomplished by attracting additional visitors from outside the area. But it may also be by having a critical mass of people living and working in the vicinity, which would also add to life on the street and make the area more vibrant – thus potentially attracting even more customers from outside the immediate area. Downtown Mineola is currently lacking “anchors” beyond the train station, hospital and offices that attracts Village residents and others to the area on a regular basis. A more vibrant downtown with additional shops, services and attractions may become a destination in its own right.

**D. Public Schoolchildren**

The next step in determining the impacts of new multifamily dwellings in downtown Mineola is to project the number of children attending public schools expected to occupy such housing. The Residential Demographic Multipliers for New York State prepared by Rutgers University’s Center for Urban Policy Research discussed above also provide for public schoolchildren. Utilizing a similar approach described above to calculate an average of the multipliers for one-bedroom and two-bedroom units, both own and rent, from all values would be 0.21, as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Calculation of Multiplier for Public Schoolchildren**

5+ Units-Own, 1 BR – All Values	0.15
5+ Units-Rent, 1 BR – All Values	0.15
5+ Units-Own, 2 BR – All Values	0.09
5+ Units-Rent, 2 BR – All Values	0.43
AVERAGE	0.21

*Source: Rutgers University Center for Urban Policy Research, Residential Demographic Multipliers for New York State (2006)*

<sup>2</sup> Persons per household, 2009-2013 for Mineola (village) from U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates.

This figure would be significantly lower if the figures for the highest value units were utilized, but the broader average has been used to be conservative and to determine the likely upper end of the range of projected number of public schoolchildren in the new developments. Using this multiplier, the high-end projection would be **299 public schoolchildren** for the 1,424 new dwelling units expected to generate school-age children. (As noted, the 36-unit Hudson House development is limited to residents 55 and over and thus has been subtracted from the 1,460 unit total above.)

The difference between transit-oriented multifamily and other types of residential development is more pronounced when it comes to estimating the number of schoolchildren generated by new development. Sources that focus only on transit-oriented development have documented lower numbers of schoolchildren in developments proximate to transit. One such source is What About Our Schools?, a 2008 study from Urbanomics & Edison Exchange that was prepared for a proposed transit-oriented development in central New Jersey. This document calculated a multiplier of 0.03 school-age children per dwelling unit based upon figures from transit-oriented developments throughout the country. This figure does not account for children not attending public schools (e.g. students attending private schools or being homeschooled).

Another source examines the number of children living in transit-oriented developments attending public schools. In the Residential Demographic Multipliers for New Jersey prepared by Rutgers University's Center for Urban Policy Research, the multiplier for public school children generated by new housing proximate to transit is 0.02 children per unit. (The figure in Regional Plan Association's Kearny Transit-Oriented Development Vision Plan is slightly lower, at 0.017 public schoolchildren per unit.) The figure of 0.02 public schoolchildren per unit would translate to **28 public schoolchildren** generated by the potential 1,424 new non-age-restricted multifamily dwelling units in downtown Mineola.

Therefore, there is a sizable gap between potential numbers of public schoolchildren depending on the multipliers that are utilized. In either case, the figures again are lower than would be expected for the same number of single-family homes (e.g. 0.64 public school children per unit for single-family detached three-bedroom homes or 1.0 public school children per unit for single-family detached four-bedroom homes per the Rutgers study). Residents of new multifamily housing, particularly in a downtown and/or transit-oriented location, are self-selecting and tend to be young professionals, empty nesters or others who tend not to have school-age children. The amenities important to these groups – proximity to transit, jobs and/or services, maintenance-free lifestyle, etc. – are generally different than those of families with children. For those reasons, it can be anticipated that the lower end of the range of potential public schoolchildren in the new multifamily housing in downtown Mineola is a reasonable assumption. This range would be approximately **25 to 45 public schoolchildren**, based on the multipliers of 0.017 to 0.03 public schoolchildren per unit.

## **E. Government Services and Finances**

The various proposed developments would increase the number of residents in downtown Mineola as outlined above, which would result in additional demand for public services and usage of facilities and services. However, the impacts of additional residents would be tempered by a few factors. First, the proposed buildings would all be constructed in an area with existing infrastructure and services in place. A benefit of “infill” development of this type is that roads and utilities do not need to be extended to serve new development, as would be the case in more outlying locations. Second, new developments would need to provide for necessary upgrades to existing facilities, whether water or sewer, adjoining intersections or adjacent sidewalks. The Village Board of Trustees has required new developments to provide adequate parking for their residents as well.

In terms of impacts on schools, the projected numbers of public schoolchildren would be a small percentage of overall new residents as detailed above. They would also represent a minimal increase in the school district's enrollment. The high-end projection of 299 students would mean an average increase of around 23 students per grade, but as noted it is unlikely the amount would be this high – and could be roughly one-tenth that amount, or an average of **2 to 3 additional students per grade**. That said, the revenues from taxes and other sources to the Mineola Union Free School District may well exceed the increased costs to accommodate these additional students.

## F. Community Character

One final, more subjective analysis is the potential impacts of larger scale development on an area. The addition of a number of taller buildings may make a place feel more “urban.” However, downtown Mineola and the adjacent portion of the Village of Garden City already differ in character and scale from most residential neighborhoods in Mineola. It seems reasonable to expect additional development in this area compared to smaller, more remote hamlets, especially in light of trends favoring development in existing centers close to transit, employment and services. Adding additional taller buildings and multifamily housing in a focused area would not have direct impacts on the availability of light or air, or impact views, of nearly any residents of neighborhoods outside of downtown Mineola.

That said, urban design, at the scale of a building, site, block and neighborhood, can affect perceptions of a place. Two similarly sized buildings with the same number of units can be perceived differently depending on the quality of their design – or lack thereof. The following chapter includes some recommendations for building and site design to promote high-quality development.

As far as impacts on character from the addition of new residents to the downtown, such an influx would be consistent with the Village's Comprehensive Master Plan. Additional residents would improve the vitality of the area by adding pedestrians in the downtown as well as supporting local businesses. An increase in people living in and visiting downtown would make it a more desirable place for new anchors to locate, such as performing arts or cultural facilities. Traffic impacts also would be mitigated as residential use has different peak times than office and retail development. Downtown residents would have options for getting to work or other destinations without driving, as a major train station is a short walk away and there are services and employment centers (e.g., Winthrop-University Hospital, Nassau County offices, law offices) within walking distance.

Lastly, any development in downtown will have impacts. However, residential development and the related public amenities that are required to permit it would result in more positive impacts on the surrounding area, Mineola as a whole and even the commercial areas of Garden City than development only of permitted uses under current zoning. As-of-right development would be lower in value and would not be required to provide additional public amenities. Adding more offices or retail uses without an increase in the residential population would not be viable.

## **VI. RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **A. Introduction**

This chapter lists recommendations for potential changes to development regulations, including whether there should be some limit to the amount of new multifamily housing in the downtown.

### **B. Zoning**

The existing overlay incentive zoning for the downtown area permits uses and densities that are appropriate for a downtown transit-oriented setting, but only in exchange for provision of public benefits. This approach enables the Village to have more control over the type, form and appearance of new development than with standard zoning.

A reasonable question to consider is how much development is too much. In terms of absolute numbers, it is difficult to say with certainty. Even if incremental impacts are minimal, at some point, the number of new residents and public school children, as well as amount of traffic, may not be able to be accommodated.

One way to approach the issue is that development regulations will set the limit. The combination of a finite amount of developable land within walking distance of the train station, along with caps on height and/or units, limit the maximum amount that could be built. Parking requirements will also determine the amount of development. If the Village maintains the ratio of 1.5 parking spaces per unit, developers will need to set aside adequate land and/or building area to accommodate the required number of spaces. The more units that are provided, the more area that will need to be devoted to parking. At some point, it will be cost-prohibitive to construct more spaces.

A different way to approach this question is that the market will help determine how much housing can be built. Given the developed nature of the area and the amount of investment required to construct large multifamily buildings, it is unlikely that developers would overbuild this type of housing.

That said, the Village should consider setting some parameters – such as limits on height and/or increased setbacks, particularly on the fringes of downtown adjacent to residential neighborhoods. The benefits of transit-oriented housing are greater when located within reasonable walking distance of a transit station. Planners generally use a quarter-mile radius (or five-minute walk) from a transit station as the ideal location for transit-oriented development, although a half-mile radius still can reasonably be considered transit-oriented. The entire Planned Incentive Overlay District is located within a half-mile radius of the Mineola train station. Consideration should be given to allowing somewhat lower densities and/or building heights in locations beyond a quarter-mile radius of the station. In addition, the zoning regulations could encourage lot consolidation by permitting larger developments only on larger properties.

Retail space should be mandated on the ground floor space of buildings in certain locations in order to promote vibrant streetscapes. This approach would also help focus retail in the most appropriate locations, helping maintain its viability. There is no need to mandate ground floor commercial use in more remote settings, although providing active uses (such as tenant exercise rooms, leasing offices, common areas and the like) along ground floor facades when possible would enliven street frontages.

The above changes could be addressed in more detail in an update to the Comprehensive Master Plan.

### C. Design

This section includes general design guidelines for buildings, sites and street frontages to help ensure high-quality, attractive development.

At the site level, building setbacks should allow adequate width for sidewalks along streets, particularly in retail areas, while maintaining a streetwall to provide visual interest while avoiding “dead” spaces. Greater setbacks may be appropriate toward the fringes of downtown, with landscaping, patios or other features between the building and the sidewalk.

In terms of building design, larger buildings can be broken down visually into a series of smaller elements to better fit into the downtown context. Building forms can take cues from common themes evident through the various architectural styles visible in Mineola and other downtowns, such as the use of bays and a base/middle/top, and stepping-back the tallest portions of some buildings as described below.

Requiring building facades to be broken down into a series of distinct bays would prevent long, flat facades. The distinguishing features of such bays should include dimensional changes, not just flat surface changes such as color, texture or pattern. Bay definition ideally should extend through all levels of a building, except where horizontal massing changes in the façade plane or upper-story stepbacks are provided to break up the bulk of a building. Other design techniques include window size and rhythm of spacing, pattern of balconies and variation in surface material and pattern. Building design also should place the focus on major pedestrian entryways and any corner elements.

Creating a base of a building to differentiate from upper floors helps to visually ground the building. This should include varied fenestration, varied materials, taller floor heights on the lowest level, horizontal banding, detailing, and varied textures or patterns. The pattern of window openings within a building’s base should relate to the building’s vertical bay pattern. Retail storefronts and lobbies leading to upper-story uses should have large clear glass windows. The middle levels of the building can be distinguished from the base and top by horizontal belt courses or cornices; or by changes in material, façade detailing, or fenestration pattern and proportion. At the top of buildings, either the entire top floor or the roofline should be differentiated from the lower floors by means of fenestration size and pattern, contrasting materials, differing floor heights, and/or provision of a parapet wall, balustrade, or deep cornice.

Stepbacks are an architectural device that creates a horizontal break at upper floors and allows a building to relate to the prevailing lower scale of adjacent buildings, and provides more sunlight onto the street. Stepbacks may be highlighted with linear architectural detailing such as cornices or changes in materials, and can be designed to serve as terraces or balconies.

Other design elements include maintaining a distinction between ground floor and upper floor windows. A higher proportion of ground floor portions of facades should consist of glass than on upper floors. Pedestrian building entries should be clearly visible and highlighted within the front facade through projections, recessions, material changes, canopies, overhangs, and/or lighting. Street-facing facades of the first level of buildings in commercial areas should have a retail-style design that reinforces the public character and visibility of the first level. Windows shall be storefront-style, plate glass windows that maximize views into the interior. Building design should provide a logical space within the first level, above any retail or commercial storefronts, doors, or windows, for retail signage. Any security grates, access panels, and garage window grilles should be enlivened with artwork, decorative tiling or ornamental metalwork where possible.

## VII. SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

The report was prepared on behalf of the Incorporated Village of Mineola in order to evaluate the potential impacts of new multifamily residential development in downtown Mineola. Some of the pertinent conclusions of this report are as follows:

- There is a need for new multifamily housing in Long Island. Political leaders as well as foundations and policy organizations have called for the provision of additional dwellings in transit-oriented settings, especially existing downtowns.
- Downtown Mineola is a very appropriate location for transit-oriented housing, given its stellar transit access, its proximity to employment and services and the availability of redevelopable land in the downtown.
- Mineola is essentially built out, and there were over 3,000 fewer people living in Mineola in 2010 than there were in 1970 – a decrease of 14 percent from the Village's peak population.
- A critical mass of new dwelling units in downtown is necessary to support new retail and services. The addition of new residents in downtown Mineola would benefit local businesses by bringing in potential new customers, particularly evenings and weekends, and would help make the area more vibrant. Increasing the number of people living in and visiting downtown would make it a more desirable place for new anchors to locate, such as performing arts or cultural facilities.
- The Village of Mineola's Development Incentive Bonus Overlay District is an effective zoning tool for encouraging appropriate development in the downtown, while providing the Village with more control over the type, form and appearance of new development than is possible with standard zoning.
- More intense development should be focused on areas within a quarter-mile radius of the railroad station. Continuing to mandate the provision of adequate parking spaces for each new development (1.5 spaces per unit) would effectively limit the potential amount of new development.