

A. INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

The Town of Babylon (i.e. “the Project Sponsor” or “the Town”) is proposing to design and construct the Wyandanch Intermodal Transit Facility (i.e. “the Project”) in the hamlet of Wyandanch, Town of Babylon, Suffolk County, New York. The Project includes seven components: a new structured parking garage, new public open space with new and relocated bus stops, a drop-off and pick-up area, a new street network to provide access to these facilities, off-site roadway and streetscape improvements along Straight Path, drainage improvements, and the installation of signage and wayfinding elements.

The “Project Site” is the area where the Wyandanch Intermodal Transit Facility is proposed. The Project Site is located in downtown Wyandanch adjacent to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) Wyandanch station. To implement the Project, the Project Sponsor proposes to acquire three tax parcels on the Project Site, which are owned by Suffolk County and by two private parties. The Project Site also includes a portion of Acorn Street, which is already owned by the Town of Babylon, and a portion of a lot owned by the MTA that includes the LIRR Wyandanch station and a commuter parking lot. The Project Sponsor will enter into an agreement with the MTA regarding use of this property.

The Town will seek funds administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), Federal Transit Administration (FTA) among the funding sources for development of the Project. Therefore, FTA and the Town have prepared this Environmental Assessment (EA) in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) 42 USC §§ 4321, et seq., and its implementing regulations as set forth in 23 CFR Part 771, 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508, and 49 CFR Part 622. This EA was also prepared in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended; Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations; and other applicable Federal statutes, rules, and regulations. The Project does not involve use of any existing public park, recreation area, wildlife or waterfowl refuge, or historic resource; therefore, an evaluation of the Project under Section 4(f) of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 is not required.

The Town, as a New York State municipal corporation, must comply with the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), Article 8 of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law, and its implementing regulations (6 NYCRR Part 617) in connection with developing, approving, or funding the Project. This EA, together with the accompanying Environmental Assessment Form, will be used by the Town and any other agencies or municipalities with SEQRA obligations to identify, analyze, and document the potential environmental impacts of the Project and to make determinations or findings consistent with the requirements of SEQRA.

B. BACKGROUND

The Wyandanch Intermodal Transit Facility Project is the result of an extensive community-based revitalization process. The process began in 2002 with development of a comprehensive plan for Wyandanch, called *Wyandanch Rising* (i.e., the Wyandanch Hamlet Plan), which was adopted in 2004. In summer 2005, building on the goals and visions set forth in *Wyandanch Rising*, the Town dedicated newly installed lighting along Straight Path, marking a significant milestone in Wyandanch's downtown revitalization initiative. Other recent Town-implemented Straight Path improvements include traffic medians, tree plantings, and new waste receptacles and planters.

In 2008, as part of the overall revitalization effort for downtown Wyandanch, the Town of Babylon designated an area along both sides of Straight Path in downtown Wyandanch, including the Project Site, as an Urban Renewal Area. The Town of Babylon's *Final Wyandanch Downtown Revitalization Plan*, completed in May 2009, set forth the Urban Renewal Plan for the downtown Wyandanch Urban Renewal Area. It also incorporated a New York State Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) Program Step 2 Nomination and a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) to assess the potential impacts of adoption of the Urban Renewal Plan by the Town. The plan developed as the result of this effort aims to revitalize and redevelop downtown Wyandanch into a pedestrian-friendly and safe community, with a new mix of uses that improve the quality of life for residents and visitors.

In coordination with these studies and plans, the Town completed a feasibility study funded by FTA for development of a transit facility at the LIRR Wyandanch station—*Wyandanch Intermodal Transit Facility Feasibility Study* (June 2008). The study included recommendations for a community-based transit plan, new structured parking, a new transit facility, downtown revitalization, enhanced pedestrian safety, and creation of public spaces—the subject of this EA.

The implementation strategy recommended in the Revitalization Plan divided the Urban Renewal Area into seven separate zones, referred to as “strategic sites,” and made specific recommendations for each of those zones. The Plan recommended initial investment on the site identified as “Strategic Site A,” which extended along the east side of Straight Path from Acorn Street to approximately Nicolls Road (including the Wyandanch Intermodal Transit Facility's Project Site). Strategic Site A was identified as the initial catalyst that would set the stage for the other goals identified in the Revitalization Plan. As the area immediately north of the Wyandanch station, Strategic Site A was identified as a “northern gateway” to Wyandanch's central business district and therefore as crucial to recasting the image of the core and creating a more vibrant, successful downtown. The Revitalization Plan identified a recommended implementation plan for Strategic Site A that included construction of an intermodal transit center near the Wyandanch station, and creation of a new street grid across Site A to create parcels with a shape and size conducive for development. Ultimately, the Revitalization Plan identified redevelopment on Site A with transit-oriented development, including housing, retail space catering to commuter and office populations, and commercial office space.

Since completion of the Revitalization Plan, the Town of Babylon has been proceeding with the steps necessary to implement the redevelopment of downtown Wyandanch. A new form-based zoning code is currently being prepared for the downtown area to guide the redevelopment. The Town also intends to solicit proposals from developers for the redevelopment of certain downtown parcels beginning in 2011. In addition, the Town Board, in coordination with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, was awarded funds for assessing the feasibility of extending

the local sewer district infrastructure to Wyandanch, and has completed the design for sewers along Straight Path, with construction scheduled to begin in the summer of 2010 and to be completed in late 2011 or early 2012.

C. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND NEED

PURPOSE OF WYANDANCH INTERMODAL TRANSIT FACILITY PROJECT

The Project has multiple purposes, all related to revitalizing downtown Wyandanch as a component of the larger downtown revitalization strategy that has been initiated by the Town of Babylon. These purposes include the following: 1) providing additional parking capacity for LIRR commuters; 2) consolidating parking to allow additional, non-parking-related TOD near the LIRR Wyandanch station; 3) creating an intermodal hub that provides an opportunity for connections between the various modes of transportation, including taxis, vehicles, pedestrian, bus, and rail and provide a downtown destination; 4) encouraging redevelopment and investment in the vicinity of the Project Site through a strategic street network that allows for adequately sized development parcels and that will serve the proposed intermodal transit facility by providing improved traffic circulation; and 5) improving physical, aesthetic, and safety conditions along the Straight Path corridor and within downtown Wyandanch. These actions together will help to stimulate economic redevelopment within downtown Wyandanch, consistent with the Town's planning efforts.

NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Although downtown Wyandanch has good transit access, with the LIRR Wyandanch station in the center of the downtown and Suffolk County Transit bus service near the train station, it does not have a defined downtown hub or centralized transit center. Instead, the LIRR Wyandanch station is surrounded by large surface parking areas that operate beyond their capacity on weekdays. These occupy land that could be more productively used for other purposes in the central downtown area, and they contribute to traffic congestion and safety issues in downtown Wyandanch. On weekdays when the parking lots are full, vehicles park illegally within the parking lots, on adjacent roadways, and within parking lots that serve other uses (e.g., the retail shopping center located at the corner of Straight Path and Acorn Street). In addition, taxis use the lots and adjacent roadways to drop-off and wait for passengers. This creates congestion on local roadways; poses safety concerns for pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles; and adversely affects the character and economic vitality of downtown Wyandanch.

Straight Path (a four-lane north-south roadway that runs by the Wyandanch train station) experiences heavy vehicular volumes, particularly truck traffic that currently dominates downtown and discourages pedestrian and bicycle use. In addition, the intersection of Acorn Street and Straight Path, at the train station, has been identified as a problematic intersection because of the volume of heavy truck traffic that passes through this intersection.

In addition to transportation concerns, downtown Wyandanch has suffered from declining economic stability with a deficiency in commercial activity and development, high vacancy rates, dilapidated storefronts, and a general lack of neighborhood identity. Wyandanch needs a catalyst to stimulate growth and healthy activity in downtown to overcome its past that has been defined by drugs and violence.

Wyandanch Intermodal Transit Facility

The Wyandanch Intermodal Transit Facility Project will be an important first step to fulfill the goals of the *Wyandanch Downtown Revitalization Plan* by removing incompatible uses in the core downtown area and replacing them with more efficient and productive land uses—in this case, a parking garage, public plaza, transit and streetscape improvements, and new street grid, that together will be a critical first step and catalyst for the future redevelopment of downtown Wyandanch. In addition, the Project will also address the current shortage of open spaces in the downtown area by creating a new central public gathering place in Wyandanch that will provide a more traditional pedestrian-friendly downtown, as well as offer residents and commuters a place to sit, reflect, and participate in community activities.

The Project will capitalize on the availability of existing transit and create a central hub to synchronize connections between these modes of transportation. The Project will provide a place for residents and visitors to gather or wait comfortably for public transit; improve the current poor state of pedestrian, vehicular, and bicycle safety; better coordinate different modes of transportation; and increase parking capacity on weekdays. The increased parking capacity will serve to alleviate the existing overcrowding in these lots, which, in turn, currently increases roadway congestion as a result of illegally parked vehicles. In addition, the new street grid will help to eliminate truck traffic from the problematic Straight Path/Acorn Street intersection, and allow train commuters to move freely between the station, train platform, and their parked vehicles without having to cross a heavily traveled, high-speed truck route at an uncontrolled mid-block location. The proposed off-site roadway and streetscape improvements will help to provide traffic calming measures along Straight Path that will help ensure pedestrian and traffic safety, encourage walkability, and improve the aesthetics of the roadway. These changes are expected to contribute to the revitalization of downtown Wyandanch.

D. PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

The EA analyzes two alternatives, the Preferred Alternative—the proposed Wyandanch Intermodal Transit Facility (also referred to as the Project)—and the No Action Alternative.

THE PROJECT

PROJECT SITE

The Project Site includes three entire tax parcels, a portion of a parcel owned by the MTA, and a portion of Acorn Street. The Project Sponsor will enter into an agreement with the MTA regarding partial use of the MTA-owned parcel. To implement the Project, the Project Sponsor proposes to acquire the other three tax lots, which include the following:

- Section 40, Block 2, Lot 11 (Lot 40-2-11): The privately owned Wyandanch Shopping Center with adjacent surface parking.
- Lot 40-2-12: A Suffolk County-owned commuter parking lot.
- Lot 40-2-14: A privately owned vacant building and accessory parking area used by a car dealer for the storage of vehicles.

All structures on the Project Site, with the exception of the train station, will be demolished as part of the Project.

PROJECT COMPONENTS

The Project consists of seven components:

- New structured parking garage on the Project Site to accommodate commuters at the LIRR Wyandanch station. The garage will have six levels of parking, including the roof, and will accommodate 2,000 vehicles. The garage will provide a central transportation hub with connectivity to different transit modes including the LIRR and Suffolk County Transit (bus service), as well as taxis and automobiles. Bicycle facilities and storage will also be located at the perimeter of the building at the north and south entrances.
- Plaza area on the Project Site at the LIRR Wyandanch station to provide public open space at the intermodal transit facility. A new 2.65-acre public plaza will be located beside the train station, with seating areas, green open space, walkways, and bike racks. At the western side of the plaza (at Straight Path), a relocated bus stop area will include a bus shelter, as well as a bus pull-out on Straight Path, just south of the intersection with Acorn Street, along the western edge of the plaza.
- Drop-off and pick-up area on the Project Site along Acorn Street to serve commuters and taxis.
- New street network adjacent to the Project Site. This street network will provide access to the intermodal facility and future access to and connections with the future development anticipated on Strategic Site A as part of the build out of the Wyandanch Downtown Revitalization Plan. The new street grid was designed to create development parcels of adequate size and shape to attract private development on Strategic Site A as envisioned in the Wyandanch Downtown Revitalization Plan. The roadway network includes a North 9th Street Extension that will run adjacent to the proposed parking garage on its eastern edge, allowing some truck traffic to bypass Straight Path and the center of downtown Wyandanch. It also includes a realignment of Acorn Street near the train station to eliminate pedestrian-vehicular conflicts.
- Roadway and streetscape improvements to Straight Path between the LIRR tracks and Nicolls Road, to increase safety for commuters traveling to and from the new intermodal facility and safety for bus passengers on routes using Straight Path. These improvements include providing 10-foot-wide travel lanes, with 8-foot-wide parking lanes on both sides of the street and 12-foot-wide sidewalks that also include 4-foot-wide areas of right-of-way acquisition or easement from adjacent properties. In the center of Straight Path, a 14-foot-wide area will be reserved as a landscaped median and to provide areas for vehicles waiting to make left turns. In addition, crosswalks will be provided at each intersection. As part of these improvements, to better coordinate bus service into the intermodal facility, the bus stop that is currently located at Straight Path and Long Island Avenue will be relocated to Straight Path between Merritt Avenue and North 13th Street. New bus stops will be located adjacent to the public plaza (for northbound buses) and across the street from the public plaza (for southbound buses). The Town of Babylon has discussed this element of the Project with Suffolk County, which has indicated support of this modification.
- Drainage improvements, which include leaching basins and vegetative plantings, to handle storm water.
- Installation of signage and wayfinding on and off the Project Site to make navigation to the train station and intermodal facility easier.

Wyandanch Intermodal Transit Facility

The details of the garage and plaza designs will be further refined during the final design of the Project.

PROJECT COST

The total construction cost for all of the Project elements is estimated at approximately \$65.4 million. If federal funding is approved for the Project, the Project will be jointly funded with federal funds, New York State funds, and funds from Suffolk County and the Town of Babylon. A portion of the Project may also be funded through a public/private initiative. To date, the Project Sponsor continues to research and secure funding for the construction of the Wyandanch Intermodal Transit Facility.

CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE AND COMPLETION DATE

Construction of the Project is scheduled to begin in 2011, and is expected to be fully complete in 2012.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Consistent with SEQRA requirements, this EA compares the effects of the Project to those of a No Action Alternative. Under the No Action Alternative, the Project Site would remain under current ownership. The existing structures on the Project Site would likely remain, with the remainder of the site continuing to be used as free and uncoordinated surface parking for the LIRR Wyandanch station; no new street network would be developed; Straight Path would continue to be a high-speed, heavily traveled roadway that does not encourage pedestrian or bicycle traffic or promote safety; and downtown Wyandanch would continue to function in its degraded condition with no distinct hamlet center to focus redevelopment opportunities.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE PROJECT

LAND USE, ZONING, AND PUBLIC POLICY

The Project will not result in significant adverse impacts related to land use, zoning, or public policy.

With the Project, the existing land uses on the Project Site will be replaced by the proposed Wyandanch Intermodal Transit Facility including a new structured parking facility, new public open space, a drop-off area near the plaza, and pedestrian amenities. The proposed parking garage will consolidate the existing surface parking on the Project Site into one structure, and will greatly increase parking capacity on the Project Site. The proposed public plaza will be a new use that will provide a public gathering place that will create a sense of place for downtown Wyandanch.

In addition, on and near the Project Site, the Project includes development of a new roadway network for Strategic Site A, to serve the intermodal facility and the future development anticipated as part of the Wyandanch Downtown Revitalization Plan. In addition to supporting the proposed intermodal facility, the new street network will enhance traffic circulation and pedestrian safety, and will provide an alternate route for trucks and other traffic to bypass the more congested intersection of Acorn Street and Straight Path.

Development of an intermodal transit facility and public plaza on the Project Site is consistent with, and a critical first step for, the various public policies that are being implemented to revitalize downtown Wyandanch. As set forth in the *Final Wyandanch Downtown Revitalization Plan*, an intermodal transit facility in downtown Wyandanch is proposed to encourage TOD, smart growth, and mixed residential, retail, and office uses; improve parking conditions; consolidate existing parking areas in the vicinity of the LIRR Wyandanch station; introduce a public plaza providing much needed open space and a place for community gathering for area residents and workers; and create a garage that is functionally connected to the train station. The proposed new street grid and improvements to Straight Path near the Project Site are also critical first steps in the future development of downtown Wyandanch in accordance with the established public policies for the area.

The proposed intermodal transit facility and public plaza will be consistent with the anticipated future zoning of the Project Site, which is expected to facilitate higher-density, mixed-use, transit-oriented development. (The Town of Babylon is currently developing a new zoning code to facilitate higher-density, mixed-use, transit-oriented development in downtown Wyandanch).

SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS

To implement the Project, the Project Sponsor will acquire the three tax parcels on the Project Site. This will result in the displacement of the businesses in the retail center and the Huntington Honda vehicle storage facility on the Project Site. An estimated 62 employees will be affected, mostly in the retail shopping center. In addition, the property taxes currently generated by these two privately owned tax parcels on the Project Site will no longer accrue to the Town once the Project Site is in public ownership. With the following mitigation measures, there would not be any significant adverse displacement impacts as a result of implementing the Project:

- All relocation activities and assistance will conform to the provisions of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, and applicable State laws. In accordance with these laws, owners and tenants of affected properties will be provided compensation and relocation assistance. With such assistance, businesses and tenants that will be displaced as a result of the Project will likely be able to relocate close to their existing locations with minimal disruption to business activity and minimal loss of employment.

The Project will not require displacement of any residents or provide residential units on the Project Site. The Project will benefit low-income and transit-dependent populations.

Furthermore, the Project is anticipated to act as a catalyst for future redevelopment in downtown Wyandanch, which would involve replacing underutilized uses with active, tax-generating uses to stimulate the local economy and result in positive fiscal benefits for the Wyandanch community and the Town of Babylon as a whole.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

The Project is part of the Town of Babylon's larger effort to redevelop and revitalize downtown Wyandanch and a critical component and, as such, will contribute to an overall improvement in the community character of the area. Replacing surface parking, a retail center, and an industrial use with a parking garage and plaza will create a new focal point in the community, and the plaza will provide a place for community gathering, which is currently lacking in the area.

Therefore, the Project is anticipated to have positive benefits with respect to community character.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

There are no historic resources or areas of archaeological sensitivity within the Area of Potential Effect for the Project. In a letter dated September 21, 2009, the New York State Historic Preservation Office made a determination of no adverse effect on historic and archaeological resources for the Project.

URBAN DESIGN AND VISUAL RESOURCES

Overall, the Project is anticipated to improve the current urban design character surrounding the LIRR Wyandanch station and will not result in significant adverse impacts on urban design. The existing parking lots and other land uses will be replaced with a well thought-out intermodal transit facility that will incorporate pedestrian and bicycle access, and easier, more efficient vehicular access to secure parking. Since there are no visual resources on the Project Site or in the study area, the Project will not adversely affect any visual resources.

The Project will construct a structured parking garage with reflecting pool and pedestrian entrance on the Project Site and a new public plaza adjacent to the LIRR Wyandanch station. New street trees, street furniture, and signage will be installed along the new roadways in the vicinity of the Project Site and at the plaza. The Project also includes new circulation routes to separate truck traffic from the downtown, pedestrian-oriented areas, elimination of heavy vehicular traffic adjacent to the public plaza, and efficient organization of traffic flow in and around the Project Site. In addition, along Straight Path, planted medians with physically separated left-turn lanes will provide greenery and pedestrian islands in the center of the street. While the new garage will be taller than buildings currently on the Project Site, the *Wyandanch Downtown Revitalization Plan* calls for greater density and increased height near the LIRR Wyandanch station to foster transit-oriented development at this commuter hub.

TRANSPORTATION

The Project will not result in significant adverse impacts to transit service, traffic conditions, parking, or pedestrian safety in the study area. In contrast, it is intended to improve traffic conditions, parking, and pedestrian safety.

TRAFFIC

To provide sufficient and safer access to LIRR commuters and others near the train station, roadway improvements are proposed.

One of the critical elements of the Project in improving pedestrian conditions is the relocation of the intersection of Acorn Street and Straight Path away from the railroad crossing. In addition to creating a public plaza, and allowing space for a northbound bus pullout, the realignment of Acorn Street to the north will provide safer operations in the vicinity of the railroad tracks. The intersection will also be made safer at Acorn Street by meeting Straight Path at a right angle, rather than at a 45-degree angle as is the current condition. Acorn Street will be realigned to form a signalized intersection on Straight Path opposite N. 12th Street.

Along Straight Path between approximately Long Island Avenue and Nicolls Road, the roadway will be modified within the existing curb lines to provide 10-foot moving lanes and 8-foot

parking lanes, both of which have been approved by the Suffolk County Department of Public Works. This will slow traffic and provide safer operating conditions for vehicles and pedestrians. It is proposed that the southbound direction be one-lane in this area. Physically separated left-turn bays (where left-turn bays are required and allowed) will extend from raised mid-block medians. At areas near the train station where high pedestrian volumes are anticipated (e.g., between the pedestrian entrance of the parking garage and the plaza and train station platform), curb extensions will be added. Based on consultations between the Town of Babylon and Suffolk County, it was determined that the existing traffic signal at Straight Path and Merritt Avenue will be removed and that new traffic signals along Straight Path at Washington Avenue and the realigned Acorn Street will be installed.

Overall, traffic conditions in the vicinity of the Project Site will be acceptable with the Project.

In terms of safety, it is anticipated that the narrower travel lanes and adjacent on-street parking along Straight Path will slow traffic along the roadway. These traffic calming measures, as well as the installation of an additional traffic signal along Straight Path, will make conditions safer for vehicles and pedestrians, consistent with the Project goals and objectives. Better marked pedestrian crosswalks will decrease the numbers of vehicle-pedestrian accidents in the area. It is possible that the realignment of Acorn Street to the north, so that conflicting side-street volumes will no longer be immediately north of the railroad tracks, will also decrease the numbers of accidents in the area. All of these changes and improvements that will result from the implementation of the Project is consistent with the Project's goals and objectives.

PARKING

The Project includes new on-street parking spaces to accommodate future growth in the downtown area. To ensure that these spaces are utilized for retail use and not by commuters who should be using the garage, Suffolk County Police will need to maintain regular patrols to provide enforcement of parking regulations. In the Project, all commuter parking will be located in the garage, which will have 2,000 spaces. Access to the garage will be provided on two access roads. The proposed parking garage will provide almost 900 parking spaces beyond what exists today, for use by commuters, taking pressure off of the overcrowded parking areas at stations in the surrounding communities.

TRANSIT

The Project will require coordination between LIRR and Suffolk County Transit so that a more effective intermodal facility can be achieved. As part of the proposed roadway and streetscape improvements, to better coordinate bus service into the intermodal facility, the bus stop that is currently located at Straight Path and Long Island Avenue will be relocated to Straight Path between Merritt Avenue and N. 13th Street, with new stops adjacent to and across the street from the proposed public plaza. The new northbound stop will include a bus pull-out adjacent to the plaza, which will remove buses from traffic immediately north of the railroad tracks and prevent them from blocking the right-turn lane. The Town of Babylon has discussed these elements of the Project with Suffolk County, which has indicated its support of these modifications and improvements. Suffolk County Transit will need to review and approve final plans and design drawings for relocation of the existing bus stop and the construction of the new bus pull-out lane adjacent to the Project plaza, prior to the implementation of these improvements.

AIR QUALITY

The Project will not result in significant adverse mobile source or stationary source air quality impacts.

The results of the air quality screening analysis demonstrate that none of the study area intersections require detailed microscale air quality analysis; therefore, no significant adverse air quality impacts are expected to occur as a result of the Project's mobile sources.

The maximum predicted carbon monoxide (CO) concentrations from the proposed parking garage were also analyzed. The CO impacts from the proposed parking garage were predicted to be substantially below the applicable standard; therefore, the proposed parking garage will not result in any significant adverse air quality impacts.

NOISE

The Project will not result in significant adverse noise impacts. The noise analysis considered the Project's potential effects on noise related to three sources: 1) the rerouting of traffic with changes in street operations; 2) new vehicle trips associated with development of the intermodal transit facility; and 3) vehicular activity within the intermodal transit facility.

The analysis concluded that based on FTA impact criteria, the Project will not result in any moderate impacts or severe noise impacts at Receptor Sites 1 or 2. At Receptor Site 3 (on the west side of Straight Path between N. 12th and N. 13th Streets), based on FTA impact criteria, the Project will result in a moderate noise impact, but not a severe impact. This impact will occur because of the Project-related increase in vehicular traffic on Straight Path. Considering the relatively high existing noise levels near the Project Site and the existence of double-glazed windows and air-conditioning (i.e. an alternate means of ventilation) at the Church on Site 3, this moderate impact does not constitute a significant adverse noise impact.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The Project will require the following services:

- Electrical connections from the Long Island Power Authority to the proposed garage to provide lighting within the garage and power for its mechanical system, and to the roadways and plaza for street lighting;
- Natural gas connections from National Grid to the proposed garage for its maintenance office;
- Water connections from the Suffolk County Water Authority for deck washing, irrigation for roof deck planters, and fire protection;
- Telephone and data service connections to the garage for its maintenance office, security systems, and access and revenue systems; and
- Weekly garbage pick-up by the Town of Babylon's Sanitation Department.

The increase in water, energy, and solid waste services will not pose a significant adverse impact to the providers of these services since the increase will be nominal. Further, installation of a new sewer system is scheduled to begin in summer 2010 as part of a separate initiative. This new system will provide adequate coverage for the Project Site.

CONTAMINATED MATERIALS

Based on the findings of the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment prepared for the Project (August 2009) and the potential construction activities for the Project, with the proposed mitigation measures, no adverse impacts related to hazardous materials will occur during the construction of the Project. Following construction, there will be no significant adverse impacts related to hazardous materials. The Phase I Environmental Site Assessment identified the potential for contamination of soil and/or groundwater at the site because of past and present activities on the site. Therefore, a subsurface (Phase II) investigation will be conducted to determine whether those activities have affected subsurface conditions. Based on the results of the subsurface (Phase II) investigation, a Remedial Action Plan (RAP) will be prepared to address both identified and unanticipated conditions that may be encountered during project construction. This will include measures for managing contaminated on-site soil and groundwater, removing underground petroleum storage tanks, and procedures for stockpiling and off-site transportation and disposal in accordance with applicable federal, State and local regulatory requirements. To minimize the potential for impacts to the community and construction workers, all work involving soil disturbance will also be performed under an Environmental Construction Health and Safety Plan (CHASP) that will specify dust control, air monitoring and other appropriate actions including testing and/or monitoring if underground storage tanks, contaminated soil or groundwater, or unforeseen environmental conditions are encountered. These measures will ensure that further investigation and removal of any hazardous substances or contaminated materials is undertaken in a way that will protect workers and the public from potential adverse effects. Demolition and remediation activities will be performed in accordance with applicable local, State, and federal regulations.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The Project will not result in any adverse impacts on natural resources, including floodplains, water resources (groundwater and surface water), geology, soils, and hydrology, and vegetation and wildlife. Unlike the No Action Alternative, the Project provides for leaching basins within the Project Site and the piping of stormwater from the proposed garage to the existing retention basin, which will improve water quality in the future. In addition, landscaping associated with the Project, including at the new plaza and in the median along Straight Path, will provide a positive impact, adding much needed vegetation to the Project Site.

CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS

The construction of the Project is estimated to take approximately 12 months to complete and is anticipated to occur in two phases. The phasing plans, and other details related to Project construction, will be further refined during the final design of the Project. Based on the preliminary construction information developed to date, Phase 1 will entail construction of the garage and access roadways, and will last an estimated 6 to 7 months. Construction will begin with demolition of existing structures on the Project Site. Following demolition, the former shopping center site in the southwest corner of the site will be paved, to create a temporary commuter parking lot while the new garage is under construction. The new garage will be constructed in this phase. Near the end of this phase, the northern and southern access roads to the garage—the relocated Washington Avenue and Acorn Street—and the N. 9th Street Extension along the eastern boundary of the site will be constructed.

Wyandanch Intermodal Transit Facility

Once the garage and Washington Avenue, Acorn Street, and the N. 9th Street Extension are completed, the garage will open to serve commuters using the LIRR Wyandanch station. Then, construction on the public plaza and remaining roadways through the site will occur in Phase 2. This phase is anticipated to last approximately 5 months. Off-site improvements to Straight Path, such as traffic signal changes and median reconstruction, will also most likely occur during this phase. Phase 2 activities will be coordinated with the construction of the sewer expansion project in downtown Wyandanch, which is anticipated to begin in the summer of 2010.

Construction staging areas, including construction worker parking areas, will be established close to the construction zone. During construction of Phase 1 (garage and access roadways), the staging area is likely to be adjacent to the garage site. During construction of Phase 2 (plaza and remaining roadways), the staging area or areas will likely be near the construction sites but will not interfere with operation of the garage.

As with any construction project, the construction of the Project will result in localized, temporary disruptions; however, construction of the Project would be of relatively short duration and would not result in substantial construction-related effects.

Construction activities required for the Project could be disruptive to nearby uses because of the noise, dust, and increased trucking activity associated with construction. However, the Project Site is buffered from sensitive uses (such as residences or community facilities) on all sides, which will limit the disruption to any sensitive uses. The following measures will be implemented to minimize the disruption from construction:

- **Land Use:** Access to the industrial area that is east of the Project Site, including the businesses that use the Washington Avenue extension through the area where the new off-site roadway network is to be created, will be maintained.
- **Traffic:** A Maintenance and Protection of Traffic (MPT) Plan will be developed to address traffic conditions during construction. The MPT Plan will be used to ensure traffic on Straight Path is not significantly disrupted during work on that roadway. A minimum of one lane in each direction will be maintained at all times through the construction zone.
- **Parking:** At all times, parking for LIRR commuters will be maintained on the Project Site and in the immediate area.
- **Transit:** Operations at the LIRR Wyandanch station will not be disrupted during construction, and operations of nearby bus routes will be maintained.
- **Air Quality:** The potential for dust and air emissions will be limited during construction by the use of dust control measures and minimizing unnecessary idling for trucks and equipment.
- **Noise:** As required by the Town Code, construction work will occur on weekdays between 7:00 AM and 8:00 PM. Some construction work could be required outside of those hours for particularly time-sensitive activities; when this occurs, the construction will be conducted in accordance with the Town Code, which requires a special variance for such work.
- **Contaminated Materials:** Prior to construction of the Project, further environmental investigation (Phase II investigation and asbestos and lead paint surveys) will be conducted that may identify the need for remedial activities. All demolition, excavation, and construction activities, including the removal and disposal of storage tanks, asbestos, contaminated soils and groundwater, and handling of lead-based paint, will be undertaken by licensed handlers in compliance with local, state, and federal regulations. Furthermore, all construction activities on the Project Site will be undertaken in accordance with a

construction-specific Health and Safety Plan (HASP) that will specify measures to protect workers and the general public during construction of the Project.

- Storm Water Pollution Prevention and Erosion and Sediment Control Plans: Because construction will affect a site of greater than one acre, a New York State Department of Environmental Conservation General State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permit will be required for construction. As part of the permit process, a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan and an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan will be developed. These plans will identify procedures to be implemented for controlling and treating storm water from the Project Site and adjacent area during construction.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

The Project will greatly enhance the safety and security of the Project area. The roadway improvements, public plaza, and parking garage will incorporate security features in their design, such as pedestrian-scaled lighting and unobstructed clear sight lines. In addition, the traffic calming measures and pedestrian enhancements proposed for Straight Path and the LIRR Wyandanch station area will improve pedestrian and vehicular safety in those areas, consistent with Project goals and objectives.

INDIRECT AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Overall, the Project will largely have beneficial indirect effects on the surrounding community and the Town of Babylon as a whole. The Project is expected to serve as the initial catalyst for future mixed-use, higher-density, transit-oriented development as envisioned for downtown Wyandanch in the Town of Babylon's *Wyandanch Downtown Revitalization Plan* (May 2009). The Revitalization Plan concluded that the commuters anticipated to utilize the Project will bring retail buying power to the area that can lead to more retail options for local residents and allow for viable retail uses on Strategic Site A. The Project will facilitate redevelopment of the larger Strategic Site A and ultimately encourage development throughout the Urban Renewal Area in downtown Wyandanch.

The Revitalization Plan analyzed the projected full build-out of the Wyandanch Urban Renewal Area (which includes the Project Site), including the proposed Wyandanch Intermodal Transit Facility. The analysis presented in the *Wyandanch Downtown Revitalization Plan* considered a full range of environmental issues and did not identify any potential significant adverse impacts. Conversely, implementation of the *Wyandanch Downtown Revitalization Plan* including the proposed intermodal transit facility is expected to result in largely positive benefits for the hamlet and region. Cumulatively, these projects would serve to alleviate blighted conditions and act as catalysts for the revitalization and redevelopment of downtown Wyandanch.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

The proposed Wyandanch Intermodal Transit Facility will occur in a potential environmental justice area—or an area with substantial minority and low-income populations. As a project that is requesting federal funds, the Project must comply with Executive Order 12898, “Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations.” This Executive Order requires federal agencies to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority and low-income populations, and to include outreach to the public in its decision-making process. The proposed Wyandanch Intermodal Transit Facility will

not result in any significant adverse impacts, and therefore will not have disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority and low-income populations. The Project will benefit both the immediate area and the downtown Wyandanch area overall, by improving commuter parking at the LIRR Wyandanch station, providing a new public open space and other amenities in the station area, and serving as the catalyst for future development initiatives in downtown Wyandanch. Moreover, the Project includes an extensive public outreach and participation program, including outreach to affected minority and low-income populations.

F. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

The Wyandanch Intermodal Transit Facility Project is the result of an extensive community-based revitalization process of visioning and planning that began in 2002, called *Wyandanch Rising*. During that process, the Wyandanch Implementation Committee was developed; the committee continued to meet throughout the development of the *Wyandanch Downtown Revitalization Plan* and will continue to meet to assist in developing plans for the downtown area, including helping to shape the Project.

Following the *Wyandanch Rising* phase, community outreach during development of the *Wyandanch Downtown Revitalization Plan* included regular meetings of a Steering Committee to help guide the process. The Wyandanch Steering Committee was composed of representatives from the Office of Downtown Revitalization; the Wyandanch Implementation Committee; federal, State, County, and local municipal departments; Wyandanch Community Development Corporation; Sustainable Long Island; and the consultant team; and provided an opportunity to formally bring together the many stakeholders and groups that have been working separately to implement *Wyandanch Rising*. In addition, as part of development of the *Wyandanch Downtown Revitalization Plan* and related *Wyandanch Intermodal Transit Facility Feasibility Study*, meetings were held with specific groups throughout 2007 and continuing to date to update representatives of the community on the planning and development efforts for downtown Wyandanch. A Public Information Meeting on the *Wyandanch Downtown Revitalization Plan* and the *Wyandanch Intermodal Transit Facility Feasibility Study*, and alternatives for the Project, was held in Wyandanch at Wyandanch Youth Services on September 18, 2007. Additionally, the Town of Babylon sponsored and/or participated in meetings held throughout 2008 and 2009 and into 2010 to update the community on the Project and the overall planning efforts for downtown Wyandanch. Further, the Wyandanch Implementation Committee, which includes representatives from the community's civic associations, continues to meet monthly to provide input related to the Project's planning process.

The Project's public outreach and participation program will be ongoing throughout the NEPA process in accordance with applicable regulations. As one critical element in the Project's public outreach, FTA and the Project Sponsor will solicit public comments on this EA. This EA will be made available to the public.

This EA will be available for review on the Town's website at www.townofbabylon.com and at Babylon Town Hall and FTA's offices at the addresses listed below. For further information regarding this document, please contact one of the following:

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