

D. East End Transportation Authority

The 1999 Comprehensive Plan Update¹⁷ stated the following with regard to the necessity of “regional cooperation:”

“Southampton has in recent years experienced the negative results of decades of transportation planning and non-planning. These results have resulted in oppressive traffic, high volumes of traffic on rural streets, and a feeling among residents of being condemned to frustration, especially in the desirable summer season.”

“These problems defy easy and quick fixes. Rather, the Town will need to adopt a long-term perspective on implementation. As noted in the 1986 Vollmer study, the Town will need to commence a “system wide program of improvements” to avoid the failure of its street system. This system wide program must incorporate alternative, non-auto, means of travel for Southampton to maintain or enhance its way of life.”

“One of the vision goals expressly noted that a “regional perspective” is necessary. The Town of Southampton should “seek inter-municipal, inter-governmental and public/private partnerships to promote alternatives to deal with what are in fact regional transportation issues.”

“The Town will also need to build alliances in order to fully implement the goals expressed in this report. Clearly, as described earlier in connection with ISTEA, the State’s Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) will need to be amended; the support of both the State Department of Transportation and County Department of Public Works will have to be secured; so too must the support of the Long Island Railroad (LIRR) and the private ferry and bus/jitney operators in town. The Town of Southampton should also reach out to other South Fork communities, as well as perhaps North Fork communities, to join in a regional effort to reduce traffic and promote alternatives to the automobile.”¹⁸

“...There are a number of ways in which the Town can joint with its neighbors to better deal with transportation.” One of the strategies noted in the 1999 Comprehensive Plan Update in a footnote is the possibility that “an authority could be formed...made up of South Fork communities, in addition to the

¹⁷ 1999 Southampton Town Comprehensive Plan Update, page 357.

¹⁸ 1999 Southampton Town Comprehensive Plan Update, page 416.

State. Precedent for revenue sharing...is found in the Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority, which is a subsidiary of the MTA.¹⁹

The Land Committee also suggested, “The establishment of an East End Transportation Authority (at least geographically covering the South Fork) to address all modes of transportation solutions involved in air, land and sea to ensure the public’s interest and demand for transportation solutions are effectively integrated”. Such an authority may be an avenue toward overcoming the multi-jurisdictional layers of government which do not always focus on the transportation problems in a cohesive manner, particularly on the East End of Long Island.

Such an authority would presumably be capable of operating a coordinated rail/bus transportation system as outlined previously in Section VI.B. Operation of such a system could be locally based with a local control system capable of operating the LIRR track system. The central operations facility would monitor train positions from Shirley/Mastic to Montauk and provide central control of switching. The existing Long Island Rail Road trains would be allowed to enter the system and be locally controlled upon entering. In addition, the authority would operate its own local inter-hamlet trains. These would be coordinated with local connector bus service also operated by the Authority. Using Intelligent Transportation Systems concepts, the position of all trains and buses operated by the Authority would be known and that information could be relayed to local stations and other critical pickup points, so that passengers would know when the next bus or train would arrive.

A cohesive coordinated transportation system as described above and outlined in Section IV.B of this report could best be operated by a separate authority focused on local, rather than larger regional issues. It would be an outgrowth of the development of the coordinated rail/bus transportation system as described. However, the separate authority would not be necessary, if such a coordinated rail/bus transportation system was not eventually to be developed.

Creation of an East End Transportation Authority would require an act of the New York State Legislature. In addition to requiring an act of the Legislature to create, the legislature’s approval would also be necessary to create a financing strategy to support its operation and capital program. The legal intricacies and viability of creating such an authority are beyond the scope of this study. Should an integrated rail/bus transit system as previously described in Section IV.B. be feasible from an economic and ridership perspective, a separate local authority to operate it would appear worthy of consideration.

¹⁹ 1999 Southampton Town Comprehensive Plan Update Technical Report on Transportation.

Mortgage tax revenues, by Act of the State Legislature, currently are directed to various transportation and transit entities, such as the MTA. Currently one half of the mortgage transfer tax collected by Suffolk County pursuant to New York State Law is used to fund the MTA. Recently, this tax has yielded well over 5 million dollars annually in the Town of Southampton. Table IV-3 Mortgage Tax Revenues, Towns of Southampton and East Hampton 1999 to 2003, provide data on the mortgage tax revenue generated in the Towns of Southampton and East Hampton over the latest five year period. As it is proposed that an East End Transit Authority assume operation of the MTA's operations, this tax money should be available to fund these facilities. East Hampton's share should also be available if the East End Transit Authority were operating the train facilities in East Hampton.

Mortgage Tax Revenues			
	Southampton	East Hampton	Southfork - Subsidy to MTA via Mortgage Tax
1999	\$5,432,779.26	\$2,876,856.27	\$8,309,635.53
2000	\$5,670,022.82	\$3,268,326.33	\$8,938,349.15
2001	\$6,318,299.25	\$3,399,073.27	\$9,717,372.52
2002	\$9,752,434.94	\$5,256,725.68	\$15,009,160.62
2003	\$11,952,038.80	\$6,132,114.59	\$18,084,153.39
Total Over 5 Years	\$38,765,515.07	\$20,933,096.14	\$59,698,611.21

Table IV-3
Mortgage Tax Revenues
Towns of Southampton and East Hampton
1999 to 2003

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