

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



## WHAT IS THE FREIGHTWAY PROJECT AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO SCARSDALE VILLAGE?

- The Freightway Site is approximately 2.53 acres of Village-owned land south of the Popham Road Bridge and west of the Metro-North train tracks and is primarily utilized for commuter permit parking. The center of the Site is occupied by the aging and unsightly 5-story Freightway Garage.
- The Freightway Garage, built in 1971, requires an investment of approximately \$2 million in the short term to provide critical repairs and renovations.
- Within 15 to 20 years, the Garage will require complete replacement that could cost well in excess of \$25 million.
- To offset the cost of these repairs and to capitalize on an opportunity to provide fiscal benefits to the Village in the form of recurring property taxes and other fees, the Village is seeking to engage a Preferred Developer to redevelop the Freightway Site.
- In addition to fiscal benefits, redevelopment of the Freightway Site would maintain commuter parking and provide an opportunity to create a marquis project that would:
  - » Preserve and enhance the character and vibrancy of the Village Center; and,
  - » Enhance the physical and visual connectivity between

the Freightway Site and Scarsdale Avenue and the Village Center.

## WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR REDEVELOPING THE FREIGHTWAY SITE?

- The Village Center Component of the 2010 Updated Comprehensive Plan revealed that most residents prefer to see the Freightway Site developed as a way to achieve improved parking and a more vibrant Village Center and provide features such as connectivity, open space, and community uses/space.

Maximizing citizen participation was, and continues to be, an essential part of the effort to redevelop the Freightway Site.

- In 2017, the Village created the “Freightway Steering Committee” to develop a vision for the potential redevelopment of the Site. The 2017-2018 planning process provided numerous opportunities for public input, including four public workshops, an online survey, intercept surveys taken at the train station, walking tours with the public and Freightway Steering Committee members, stakeholder interviews, focus group meetings, and the collection of emailed comments.
- The process culminated with the release of the “Freightway Site Redevelopment Study” in February 2018 that defined a

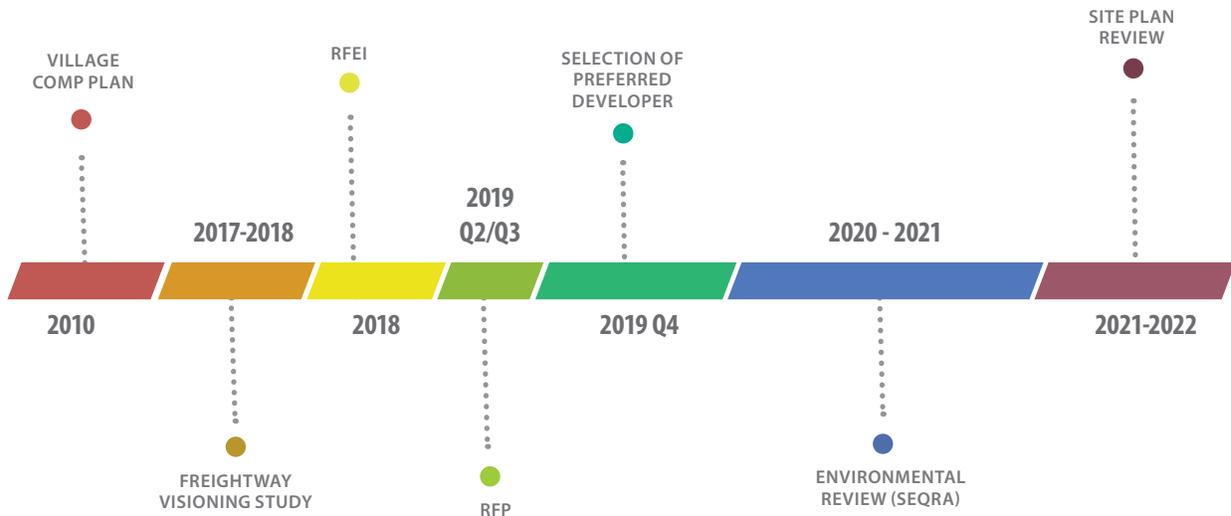


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set of realistic and publicly supported development goals and objectives for the Freightway Site.

- Subsequent to the Freightway Study, the Board of Trustees decided to employ a two-step process to engage a Preferred Developer for the Freightway Site.
- The first step was the distribution of a Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI) to the development community.
  - » The RFEI was posted on several prominent websites that are known to the development community and that regularly host similar RFEIs.
  - » Village staff distributed the RFP directly to a distribution list created by the Village Planning Department.
  - » Responses from seven well-known and respected development companies were received in 2018.
  - » The RFEI responses provided the Board of Trustees and the public with important insights from the development community on potential conceptual development plans that align with the community's vision.
- The second step was the release of the Request for Proposals (RFP) to a select group of developers that responded to the RFEI.
  - » The RFP was sent to Toll Brothers, East End Capital, Gateway Development Group, Avalon Bay Communities, LCOR, and LMC.

- » The Board of Trustees invited the above Respondents to respond to the RFP because their vision for the Freightway Site was most in line with the principles expressed in the February 2018 Freightway Study.
- » The Board of Trustees, in accordance with the recommendation of our professional consultants, believes it is important to honor the RFEI's stated intention to use the responses submitted to "determine the firms/organizations that will be invited to submit and RFP to the Village."
- Upon selection by the Board of Trustees of a short list of development proposals, finalists will be invited to make a presentation at a public meeting.
- The Board of Trustees will use the selection criteria outlined in the RFP to select a Preferred Developer and will enter into negotiations on the terms of an agreement that will allow the Preferred Developer to pursue redevelopment of the Freightway Site by making a formal land-use application to the Board of Trustees.
- Once selected, the Preferred Developer will go through the typical land use process. This includes:
  - » A detailed environmental review pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) that will likely include an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). This



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**Table 1**

**RFP AND ENTITLEMENTS TIMELINE**

Action	Date
Responses to Questions Distributed	July 31, 2019
Proposals Due to Village	September 16, 2019 @ 4:00 PM EDT
Notification of Finalists	October 2019
Community Presentation by Finalists	November 2019
Interviews with Finalists	November 2019 <sup>^</sup>
Selection of Preferred Developer	December 2019 <sup>^^</sup>
Environmental Review (SEQRA) & Rezoning Process	March 2020 to September 2021 <sup>^^</sup>
Site Plan & Architectural Review Processes	October 2021 to January 2022 <sup>^^</sup>
Groundbreaking	Spring 2022 <sup>^^</sup>

<sup>^</sup> *If scheduled*

<sup>^^</sup> *Dates and durations are approximate*

review will address potential parking, traffic, school, economic/fiscal, and natural resource impacts.

- » The Site Plan Review process, including a detailed review by the Planning Board and the Board of Architectural Review (BAR).

**WHAT ABOUT PARKING AT FREIGHTWAY?**

- As expressed in the Freightway Study’s Vision Statement, any redevelopment of the Freightway Site should “maintain its current function as a commuter lot.” There is an expectation that there would be no net reduction in the number of parking spaces provided at Freightway after redevelopment is complete.
- There may be temporary parking adjustments during construction; however, one of the criteria by which responses will be evaluated is the ability of the Project to retain access to the train station for the maximum number of Scarsdale resident commuters that park at Freightway.

**WHAT ABOUT OUR SCHOOLS?**

- The Board of Education has been involved in the Freightway process from its inception. A member of the Board of

Education served on the Freightway Steering Committee during 2017-2018.

- The potential for impacts to the School District will be one of the most critical considerations assessed by the community. This assessment cannot be completed until there is a specific project proposed.

**ISN’T THERE TOO MUCH TRAFFIC IN THE VILLAGE CENTER ALREADY?**

- Traffic can certainly be heavy, particularly as trains arrive in Scarsdale during the evening rush hour.
- Redevelopment of the Freightway Site is expected to enhance vehicular circulation at the Freightway Site compared to the existing conditions.
- Evaluating on- and off-Site impacts to traffic circulation will also be an important component of the environmental review process.



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## WHAT ABOUT OTHER THINGS WE HAVE HEARD ABOUT, LIKE A PARK, THEATER, POOL OR OTHER AMENITIES?

- As part of the proposed development, there may be public amenities available to the community in addition to a new parking garage that is not funded by taxpayer dollars.
- The public benefits will be determined as part of the negotiations with the Preferred Developer.
- At a minimum, redevelopment of the Freightway Site is expected to provide the following public benefits to the Village:
  - » Enhanced vibrancy of the Village Center;
  - » New or improved physical and visual connections from the Freightway Site to Scarsdale Avenue, the Village Center, Popham Road, and Garth Road;
  - » Indoor and/or outdoor community uses and/or spaces;
  - » Affordable and/or workforce housing;
  - » Improvements to the visual and aesthetic character of the Site; and
  - » A fiscal benefit to the Village of Scarsdale.

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT (TOD) AT FREIGHTWAY?

- Redevelopment of the Freightway Site would help enhance the character and vibrancy of the Village Center. It would add additional residents in the Village Center, which in turn would add foot traffic to the Village Center, benefiting our existing merchants.
- It is likely that the type of housing proposed for the Freightway Site will be similar to other recently constructed TODs, which tend to attract younger residents and empty-nesters. Expanding the type of housing options available within the Village will provide options for people moving in, or desiring to remain in, the Village.
- TODs are inherently environmentally sustainable as residents, merchants, and patrons can easily make use of mass-transit or walking/biking, thereby reducing the need for vehicle trips.

## WILL THE FREIGHTWAY PROJECT HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON MY TAXES?

- One of the primary goals of redeveloping the Freightway Site is to provide a fiscal benefit to the Village in the short- and long-term.

**Any development at the Freightway Site would be based on its net benefit: Community benefits must exceed community costs.**

- A detailed analysis of the costs and benefits of redeveloping the Freightway Site will be provided during the environmental review process. The analysis will include estimates of the increases/decreases to the expenses and revenues of the Village and School District.
- Redevelopment of the Freightway Site must be feasible not only for the developer, but must also provide residents with net benefits from both one-time and recurring sources of revenue and other sources of value.
- In the absence of redevelopment of the Freightway Site, the existing garage would have to be renovated and, ultimately, replaced. It is likely that the Village would have to borrow funds to pay these costs, which would result in a modest increase in real estate taxes to cover the cost of paying the debt.

## WILL THE NEW BUILDING FIT IN WITH SCARSDALE'S BEAUTIFUL VILLAGE CENTER?

- A critical component of any new development will be its contextual design.
- The RFP, in several places, reinforces that any project must "create a vibrant addition to the Village Center that is respectful of the Village's architectural character."

**"The Project should create a distinctive, yet contextually appropriate, place. The architecture, including building articulation, fenestration, and materials, should be such that the building(s) will be able to 'age-gracefully,' similar to the Village Center's most visually appealing buildings."**

**– Request for Proposals**



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- The Planning Board and Board of Architectural Review will play critical roles in the land-use approval process, ensuring the compatibility of any new development.
- The Village's agreement with the Preferred Developer will incorporate design guidelines that ensure that the project is in keeping with Scarsdale's Village Center.

## **WILL A NEW DEVELOPMENT UTILIZE SUSTAINABLE FEATURES?**

- The RFP encourages redevelopment of the Freightway Site to a sustainable model in the construction and operation of a TOD. Respondents must describe the sustainable features of their Proposed Project and the RFP lists several areas of potential sustainability, including:
  - » The use of sustainable and healthy building materials.
  - » Measures to reduce building energy and potable water consumption.
  - » Incorporation of renewable energy resources.
  - » Installation of green stormwater infrastructure.
  - » Provision of metered electric car parking.
  - » Measures to reduce solid waste generation, such as food scrap recycling.

## **AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES AND RIDE SHARING MAY REDUCE THE NEED FOR PARKING SPACES. WHY WOULD WE BUILD A NEW PARKING LOT NOW?**

- Parking needs, including the number and location of parking spaces required, may change dramatically in the future. However, there will continue to be substantial need for parking at our train station for the foreseeable future.
- The Village recognizes that during the lifetime of any new development at Freightway, the amount of parking needed at the train station may decline. Therefore, the RFP requires that Respondents describe the ways in which the space allocated to parking may be converted to other uses if/when demand for on-Site parking declines.

## **WHAT HAPPENS IF WE DO NOT MOVE FORWARD WITH A NEW DEVELOPMENT AT FREIGHTWAY?**

- The Village will repair and upgrade the existing parking structure starting with an approximately \$2 million capital improvement program over the next few years and similar programs again every 5-10 years (short and medium term).
- In the longer term, the Village would have to build a new parking structure at a cost that is likely to exceed \$25 million.
- If Freightway is not redeveloped, the Village will not be able to take advantage of the Transit-Oriented Development opportunity and its associated benefits of enhanced economic vitality as well as connectivity and place-making within our Village Center.

