

# INDUSTRIAL

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## The R.E. community is revitalizing downtown areas by recycling industrial properties

Government, health and safety officials, environmental groups and society at large daily remind, whether in our homes, business environments, recreational or public places, of the benefits of recycling. Densely populated geographic areas are perhaps more consciously aware, through experience, regular reminders, or a simply better understanding, of such requirements.

Aside from mandated recycling criteria and recommended suggestions typically practiced, the real estate community can be complimented for doing their share; beyond



the obvious. Consider, the planned office/industrial complexes of the present as compared with the single story low clear height industrial building that pre-existed, as in the example of Long Island whose largely "bedroom" community became a suburban one. Downtown areas then not only

boasted community, shopping, and education, but also business activities beyond typical retail and professional establishments. These industrial buildings dotted the landscape on the periphery of many "downtown" locales. That was post World War II and the last half of the twentieth century,

long before recycling became a necessity.

This is now, the twenty-first century, and recycling is as much an imperative for these dated buildings, whose foundations remain rooted, as it is for the revitalization of the communities they once anchored. The challenge of recycling them is to find a new purpose in consideration of property size, parking constraints, and location in contrast with business expansion requirements and an interest to situate within the planned office/industrial state of the art complexes. The answer is to convert such building types to

self-storage use whereby the needs of densely populated residential neighborhoods and the business communities are served.

By way of illustration, a recent conversion of the former Belco Health Manufacturing facility in Lindenhurst, New York comes to mind. Although it possessed high visibility and easy access, the building lacked sufficient property to support an alternative retail or office use. A neighborhood locale and traffic considerations made it prime for conversion to self-storage except, in order to make the project economically feasible, it became necessary to add a floor. In this instance the builder,

The Marcus Organization, Inc. decided to lift the existing roof structure and construct a second floor supported by the first floor exterior walls thereby significantly reducing construction costs and time schedules. The facility, known as Right Track Self Storage, opened its doors for business offering to the community it serves in a changing environment a revitalized and useful facility.

With the previous example as backdrop of the necessity for creative use alternatives, the interest to revitalize downtown areas, and conservation participation, it appears even the real estate community shares the view that it pays to recycle.

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