

ROUTE 59 AREA TRANSPORTATION & LAND USE STUDY

Final Study Report



OCTOBER 2020



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ROUTE 59 AREA TRANSPORTATION & LAND USE STUDY

Prepared by:



With support of:



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Route 59 Area Transportation & Land Use Study (the study) identified and evaluated transportation and development issues and future improvement recommendations in the 4.5-mile stretch of Route 59 that runs from Airmont Road in the Village of Airmont east through the hamlet of Monsey and Town of Ramapo to South Pascack Road in the Village of Spring Valley. The distinct mixture of land uses, number of lanes, and congestion along the corridor differentiated the study area from segments east and west. The study utilized a variety of methods to engage in two-way communication with stakeholders and interested public, including four formal community planning workshops, targeted meetings, pop-up sessions at community events, and one-on-one sessions. These outreach sessions gathered public input on existing conditions, gaps and needs pertaining to transportation modes, and alternative transportation and land-use improvement scenarios that address these issues. Route 59 is the only east-west arterial roadway serving southern Rockland County from Suffern in the west to Nyack in the east. The communities adjacent to Route 59 are some of the fastest growing in Rockland County. Residential and commercial development along Route 59 has placed growing stress on Route 59 as is evidenced by regular congestion, especially within segments that pass through hamlets and villages that have traditionally served as community economic centers. As growth in both population and development in the area have greatly increased, so have rush hour travel and congestion, creating a need to plan for the long-term future of the road.

The diverse commercial and residential land uses within this study area generate a variety of home-based and work-based trips using a variety of modes, with a significant pedestrian presence. Residents use Route 59 for many daily shopping needs as well as visits to a variety of businesses. Residents also use Route 59 to get to and from work, whether they drive the full distance or drive to a transit stop located on or near Route 59. The travel markets that move within and through the area are complex, being a mixture of regional and local person and goods movement and

modes including truck, bus, car, commuter rail, pedestrian, and bicycle. Due to its configuration as a parallel route to Interstate 287 (I-287) with interchanges at Exit 14 just east of the study area and Exit 14B at Airmont Road, Route 59 also provides access to the limited access highway as well as relief during times of congestion on I-287 (a portion of the New York State Thruway system).

The land-use and transportation recommendations were developed through consideration of the input and suggestions of stakeholders and the interested public. The recommendations were evaluated through county and local master plans, along with regional and county transportation plans, discussions with local elected and appointed officials, and through the deliberations of the SAC and the PSC. Some of the recommendations that have emerged include concepts through which future development proposals might be evaluated and accommodated more sustainably.

The recommendations in the report are presented in four categories – Community Design/Process, Roadway, Bicycle/Pedestrian, and Transit – for each of three implementation timeframes: short-term (implemented within a five-year timeframe); medium-term (implemented in a five- to ten-year timeframe); and long-term (implemented in more than ten years). The short-term recommendations utilize existing mechanisms to shape the corridor into a safer, more pedestrian friendly environment with increased efficiency for vehicular traffic, emergency responders, and transit through the corridor. The medium- and long-term recommendations identify additional options that may require more detailed studies or larger funding to implement. Communities within the study area as well as transportation agencies serving the corridor can use this report and its recommendations as a basis for further coordination and discussions about a sustainable future for the Route 59 corridor.

The Route 59 Study was initiated in 2019 and almost all of the community engagement, data collection, analysis and development of recommendations was completed in draft before the emergence of COVID-19 and the resulting public health emergency became a major concern in the study area. Therefore, the recommendations of the study reflect the results of pre-COVID-19 planning and outreach efforts. However, as the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly affected many aspects of daily life from school to work to shopping and housing, the transportation conditions defined and analyzed during the study have themselves been altered.

The course of the pandemic and subsequent recovery is difficult to anticipate at the time of this writing. Since March 2020, community life in the study area has been radically altered by emergency orders enforcing social distancing and limiting all but essential activities. Although the nature of these emergency restrictions has changed over time based on monitored infection rates, conditions over the coming months and years are unpredictable. Future spikes in infection rates are still possible and emergency restrictions will be tightened in response. As a result, travel in and through the study area will likely be altered for most if not all of the immediate implementation period of the study recommendations.

Given these emergency conditions, implementation of the study recommendations will need to be adjusted based on conditions in the short-term. Some aspects of the response to the public health emergency, such as extensive reliance on telework, may have significant impacts on mobility and travel demand in the longer-term. This is also true of increased reliance on e-commerce with the resulting higher commercial vehicle volumes in the study area for deliveries. Longer lasting impacts of the pandemic may also impact real estate markets in unpredictable ways.

Despite this uncertainty, the recommendations identified through the study process remain valid for the future of the corridor. However, these recommendations should be revisited on a regular basis throughout the implementation process so that adjustments may be made in response to future conditions that cannot be currently foreseen.



1 INTRODUCTION



1 INTRODUCTION

Route 59 is the only east-west arterial roadway serving southern Rockland County from Suffern in the west to Nyack in the east. The communities adjacent to Route 59 are some of the fastest growing in Rockland County. Residential and commercial development along Route 59 has placed growing stress on Route 59 as is evidenced by regular congestion, especially within segments

that pass through hamlets and villages that have traditionally served as community economic centers. Between Airmont Road and South Pascack Road, the 4.5-mile stretch of Route 59 serves the communities of the Village of Airmont, the Town of Ramapo, and the Village of Spring Valley.



FIGURE 1: ROUTE 59 STUDY AREA
Between South Pascack Road in Spring Valley and Airmont Road in Airmont

The diverse commercial and residential land uses within this study area generate a variety of home-based and work-based trips using a variety of modes, with a significant pedestrian presence. Due to its configuration as a parallel route to Interstate 287 (I-287) with interchanges at Exit 14 just east of the study area and Exit 14B at Airmont Road, Route 59 also provides access to the limited access highway as well as relief during times of congestion on I-287 (a portion of the New York State Thruway system). The area surrounding Route 59 includes a mix of land uses, with large retail centers as well as commercial and residential sites. The travel markets that move within and through the area are complex, being a mixture of regional and local person and goods movement and modes including truck, bus, car, pedestrian and bicycle. As growth in both population and development in the area have greatly increased, so have rush hour travel and congestion, creating a need to plan for the long-term future of the road.

The Route 59 Area Transportation & Land Use Study (the study) identified and evaluated transportation and development issues and future improvement recommendations in the 4.5-mile stretch that runs from Airmont Road in the Village of Airmont east through the hamlet of Monsey and Town of Ramapo to South Pascack Road in the Village of Spring Valley (see Figure 1). The distinct mixture of land uses, number of lanes, and congestion along the corridor differentiated the study area from segments east and west. The study used stakeholder interviews, community outreach, and public workshops to identify key issues of concern to the community and possible options for improving Route 59.

The study, was funded federally, with New York State providing the local funding match. It was made possible through a partnership between the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC), the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), Rockland County, the Town of Ramapo, the Village of Airmont, and the Village of Spring Valley. NYMTC retained the services of a professional consultant team and NYMTC staff managed the study.



Traffic patterns on Route 59 often lead to congestion at certain locations throughout the day



A man in a dark suit and tie is seated at a table, focused on writing on a large map or document spread out before him. He holds a dark pen in his right hand. The map shows a detailed urban layout with streets and buildings. Other people are visible in the background, some looking at their phones, suggesting a professional or academic gathering. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

2 METHODOLOGY



2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of the study was to address multiple transportation and land use issues within the study area including the Village of Spring Valley, Village of Airmont, and Town of Ramapo and include a robust public outreach effort to develop a sustainable vision for transportation and land use improvements in the corridor.



Many pedestrians use the shoulder of Route 59 as sidewalks are not present in all locations

2.2 PROJECT COMMITTEES

A Project Steering Committee (PSC) was formed to provide day-to-day oversight of the consultant team to ensure project delivery is consistent with the project's scope of work and other contract provisions. The PSC was responsible for fulfilling all relevant federal obligations with regard to the study's funding, for providing direction to the study's consultant team, and for overseeing the study's contractual arrangements.

The PSC comprised the following member agencies of NYMTC or its Mid-Hudson South Transportation Coordinating Committee: the New York State Department of Transportation, the New York State Thruway Authority, the MTA Metro-North Railroad, and Rockland County.

In addition to the PSC, a Study Advisory Committee (SAC) provided essential input to the consultant team relevant to local conditions and key stakeholders. The SAC advised the project team on public engagement and on the development of materials and formats for public workshops and outreach sessions. The SAC comprised representatives from the Town of Ramapo, the Village of Spring Valley, and the Village of Airmont.

The PSC and SAC met regularly to guide the execution of the study and to review the development of study material, presentations, outreach methods, and study recommendations.

2.3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A community engagement program (see Appendix A) was designed to identify stakeholders' primary concerns and suggestions for improvement early in the process, so they could be evaluated by the consultant team and developed into the study's draft recommendations. Stakeholders included residents, local business owners, emergency service providers, community service organizations, commuters that use the corridor, committee members, and the public that attended meetings. The outreach effort enabled active collaboration with stakeholders and the interested public throughout the process to:

- understand their needs and concerns;
- formulate potential improvements; and
- visualize the corridor's future.

The community engagement program was guided by NYMTC's Title VI Program and Language Access operating procedures in accommodating



Community members used maps to highlight areas of concern and suggest improvements

the diverse communities in the study area. Outreach material was provided in English, Spanish, Haitian Creole, and Yiddish per a census analysis of the relevant communities. (See Appendix A for translations of the project Fact Sheet). Meeting notices were presented in these languages, and distributed using distribution lists, New York State DOT's distribution list for the Hudson Link transit service, and the distribution list compiled through New York State DOT's already completed Routes 59 and 45 Pedestrian Safety Study. In addition, advertising was done in the *Rockland County Times* and *Rockland Bulletin* and flyers distributed along the corridor.

The study utilized a variety of methods to engage in two-way communication with stakeholders and interested public, including four formal community planning workshops, targeted meetings, pop-up sessions at community events, and one-on-one sessions. These outreach sessions gathered public input on existing conditions, gaps and needs pertaining to transportation modes, and alternative transportation and land-use improvement scenarios that address these issues. The sections which follow summarize the various mechanisms and sessions undertaken to solicit public input and involvement.



NYMTC presented existing information on existing conditions to the community

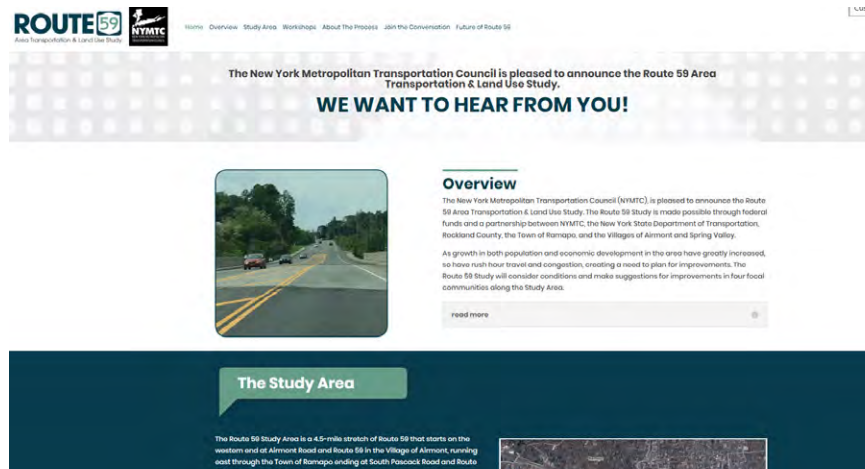
2.3.1 PROJECT WEBSITE

A project website has been maintained to inform the public about the study and to share relevant study materials, including the presentations and materials from the community visioning workshops. The website also provided public access to the project team via email, comment form, and regular mail. Over the course of the study more than 100 comments were received from stakeholders and the interested public via the website for the consideration of the project team and the study committees.

2.3.2 COMMUNITY PLANNING WORKSHOPS

2.3.2.1 COMMUNITY PLANNING WORKSHOP #1

Community Planning Workshop #1, held at the Village of Airmont Community Room on March 13, 2019, provided the first formal opportunity for the community to share insight into how they use Route 59 and the issues



A website was created to provide information on the study to the community

that they experience. The workshop began with a presentation by the project team. The presentation covered the current conditions along Route 59, findings from the socioeconomic research, and discussed the previous studies informing the Route 59 study. This was followed by participants' discussions at breakout tables facilitated by the project team using maps of the study area.

A common theme from the breakout sessions was that the Route 59 study area experiences heavy congestion during several periods throughout the day. Some attendees prefer to avoid Route 59 altogether, while others stated there were not many alternatives. People use Route 59 to reach the many destinations along the route including retail shops, banks, grocery stores, restaurants, and schools.



Over 50 people provided input during the Rockland County Youthfest

Participants began to identify congestion hotspots along the corridor that they felt needed to be addressed through the study. Among the hotspots identified were:

- Intersection of Airmont Road and Route 59
- Intersection near the eastern entrance to Walmart and ShopRite
- Intersection of South de Baun Avenue and Ramapo police and ambulance stations entrance
- Intersection of Cherry Lane/Spook Rock Road
- Main Street going north in Monsey

Several people believed that the congestion can be attributed to the new development within the area. The area has seen rapid population and commercial growth that they believe cannot be supported with existing road and stormwater infrastructure. Participants were concerned that the level of development that is built up to the existing right-of-way may constrain the corridor from adding additional travel lanes, turning lanes, and open space. Participants stated a perception that zoning code enforcement



Stakeholders identified key areas along Route 59 to be addressed by study

along the corridor was not consistent between the two villages and the Town of Ramapo. They expressed a desire for storefront and buildings to be closer to the street with nicer landscape to provide a “Main Street” feel.

Safety was identified as an issue along the corridor. Participants wanted to see additional sidewalks and dedicated bike lanes throughout the corridor. Participants identified instances of drivers not obeying traffic laws, such as using the center turn lane as a passing lane, driving on the shoulder, and speeding through the corridor.

A potential Exit 14X connecting Route 59 to I-287 midway between Airmont and Spring Valley was identified as a transportation investment that had been discussed for many years that could have potential benefits and impacts on the community.

Participants also felt that public transit needed to be reevaluated in and



A long list of recommendations was brainstormed at Community Planning Workshop #1

around the corridor. They commented that some buses are full during the day and empty at night. They would like to have a one-seat ride on the Hudson Link buses to Tarrytown and White Plains. In addition, they wanted service to Port Chester and Nanuet Train stations.

Some early ideas offered by the participants for traffic improvements included:

- Additional left-turn lanes and signals
- Four-way traffic signals with sufficient time for pedestrian crossings
- Improved signal timing and synchronization
- Commercial vehicle restrictions on local streets
- Using the Piermont Branch railroad right-of-way to speed bus transit trips and as a bike/pedestrian path
- Using more variable message signs to inform the public about traffic conditions



Stakeholders discussed demographic changes that effect how people travel within the community

2.3.2.2 COMMUNITY PLANNING WORKSHOP #2

The second community planning workshop built on the feedback received at the first workshop and at the pop-up events. The workshop was held at the Ramapo Town Hall on Monday, April 29, 2019 and began with a presentation by the project team of transportation and land use concepts that could potentially address some of the issues the community had raised previously. The presentation also included important background information presented at Community Planning Workshop #1 to update any participants who were not able to attend the first workshop. Following the presentation, participants divided into small groups to discuss whether the concepts presented are viable along the Route 59 corridor. Attendees reiterated that pedestrian safety is a concern along the Route 59 corridor and stated the desire for continuous, wider sidewalks. In addition, they expressed concern regarding the pedestrian crossings on Route 59, stating that there should be more crossings and they should be made more obvious to both pedestrians and drivers.



Breakout groups let the study team hear from a variety of stakeholders

Workshop 2 participants identified the number of driveways and potential for vehicle and pedestrian conflicts as another issue along the corridor. Decreasing the number of driveways on Route 59 would restrict the number of interactions between pedestrians and vehicles. One group of participants wanted to see pedestrian barriers installed near the Evergreen Kosher Market from Main Street to Robert Pitt Drive to force pedestrians to cross at the crosswalk with the traffic signal.

In the presentation, the project team described an alternative land use and community design that locates development within a grid of local streets with a design that emphasizes pedestrian access. Workshop participants expressed some concern with any new development in the area. However, participants also expressed a desire for existing business to be redeveloped closer to the road to make it more enticing to walk. The methods they identified to transform the community into a more walkable environment include more shared parking, better distribution of parking between businesses, and to encourage walking from one business to another. Improved streetscaping was identified as a method to encourage walking. Participants expressed a desire that any new development should be balanced with new community amenities and green space.

The presentation included examples of communities that established gateways to commercial corridors. Participants expressed a desire for a gateway but one that was more subdued and in keeping with the history of the area. The Finkelstein Memorial Library, South Remsen Road, or west of Spring Valley Marketplace were identified as potential locations for a gateway.

Additional specific transportation ideas raised by participants included:

- Adding turning lanes to College Road
- Adding a northbound right-turn lane from Saddle River Road to Route 59
- Creating an I-287 exit at the current Public Storage near South Remsen Road (Exit 14X)
- Adding an outlet on Bruner Road to Route 59
- Adding a signal on Route 59 between South Remsen Road and Main Street

2.3.2.3 COMMUNITY PLANNING WORKSHOP #3

Community Planning Workshop #3 was held at the Finkelstein Memorial Library on Tuesday, June 18, 2019. The workshop began with a presentation by the project team that further explored the transportation and land



Community Planning Workshop #3 provided a chance to preview different options for roadway, bikeway, pedestrian, and community designs

use concepts introduced in Workshop #2 and how those designs might be applied along Route 59. The presentation was followed by an open discussion with the attendees. The attendees were then asked to view boards illustrating the concepts and to discuss where those concepts could be applied, and which should be prioritized.

In the open discussion following the presentation, similar themes from the previous workshops and pop-up outreach effort were expressed. The corridor is heavily congested and there is a concern that new development would further exacerbate the condition. Participants recommended specific improvements such as additional turn lanes, wider and continuous sidewalks, mid-block crossings for pedestrians, and transit improvements.

They noted that two cars per household should be assumed for any development and that Route 59 would not be able to support that additional traffic. In addition, the need for frequent bus service to the Suffern and



Case studies of alternative community designs were presented and discussed by stakeholders

Spring Valley train stations was expressed. Participants stated that most residents work outside of the community and need additional options to get to work that do not rely on personal automobiles. There was a discussion of whether bike lanes were needed in the community and how they could be made safe. Questions were also raised about the sufficiency of parking in the land use schemes presented. Funding sources that would be available for future improvements was raised as a concern. The project team staff described some of the funding sources that may be available.

2.3.2.4 COMMUNITY PLANNING WORKSHOP #4

The final workshop, held on September 17, 2019 summarized key takeaways and recommendations made by attendees from each of the three previous workshops and various pop-up outreach events and presented visualizations of potential improvements along the corridor. Additionally, the project team presented a series of “conceptual options” addressed in three categories, precursors to the “draft recommendations” contained in this report. These



Participants responded to draft recommendations presented at Community Workshop #4

were low-cost short-term items that could be implemented within five years, medium-term items with low- to high-costs that could be implemented within 5 to 10 years, and longer-term items that would likely require more than 10 years.

Following the presentation, attendees separated into breakout groups to provide feedback on the concepts presented.

2.3.3 POP-UP OUTREACH

2.3.3.1 ROCKLAND COUNTY YOUTHFEST

The first public engagement activity was a pop-up session at the Rockland County Youthfest on March 10, 2019. The project team staffed a booth with aerial photographs of the study area and the project Fact Sheet identifying the project purpose and outreach plan. The booth was staffed for the duration of the event and provided an opportunity for residents to learn about the project and begin to identify issues along the corridor. The team engaged with over 50 people and discussed the issues they encounter on Route 59 and vision they have for the future of the corridor. Attendees shared their thoughts on how to improve transit service, reduce congestion, reduce congestion caused by school buses, and better manage new development.

2.3.3.2 SUPERMARKET POP-UP

On April 18, 2019, the project team held pop-up outreach sessions at the ShopRite in Airmont and the Food Fair in Spring Valley. As they entered and exited the markets, shoppers were asked their thoughts on ways to improve the Route 59 corridor. Approximately 40 residents stopped to talk to the team between the two stores. The shoppers expressed many of the same concerns raised during the first workshop. Several thought the road should be widened but also recognized the challenges that would need to be overcome. As heard in the first workshop, safety was raised as a concern, for both pedestrians and drivers. Several shoppers thought there should be more traffic lights, sidewalks, and pedestrian crossings.



Study team members had informal conversations with residents at supermarkets along Route 59

2.3.3.3 MONSEY PASSEOVER FAIR POP-UP

Another pop-up outreach session was organized at the Monsey Passover Fair on Thursday, April 25, 2019. A booth was set up near the entrance to solicit input from the fair's attendees. Almost 100 people stopped by the booth or spoke to the team from their car as they picked up passengers from the fair.

Many who stopped at the booth stated that they do not view Route 59 as a safe roadway for motorists, pedestrians, or bicyclists. Pedestrian safety was a main concern. Commenters indicated a need for wide, continuous sidewalks along the corridor with improved lighting and guardrails.



Almost 100 attendees at the Monsey Passover Fair discussed issues they encounter along the corridor

Commenters also expressed a desire for safer pedestrian crossings, with additional crosswalk locations at the following intersections:

- Route 59 @ Robert Pitt Drive
- Route 59 @ Requa Lane
- Route 59 @ Saddle River Road / Main Street
- Route 59 @ Augusta Avenue
- Route 59 @ Remsen Avenue

Some commenters preferred pedestrian overpasses or underpasses to allow crossings without the need to wait for traffic to stop. Those who rode bicycles along Route 59 stated that they felt unsafe because of the level of automobile traffic and the lack of protection from other vehicular traffic.



Taxi drivers provided input from their prospective

Commenters frequently indicated a need for additional travel lanes. Some who proposed this also recognized that the width of the Route 59 right-of-way is insufficient for additional lanes without obtaining additional right-of-way. Additional infrastructure improvements that were suggested included removing or reconfiguring the center bi-directional turning lanes, creating longer turn lanes, and building a new on- and off-ramp connecting I-287 to Route 59 (Exit 14X).

2.3.3.4 HAITIAN FLAG DAY POP-UP

The project team provided a booth at the Haitian Flag Day Festival on Sunday, May 19, 2019. Approximately 45 people stopped by the booth to learn about the project and express concerns and ideas for Route 59. Many expressed safety and pedestrian concerns similar to those heard at other public sessions. Many advocated for a more complete sidewalk network. There was also concern about the maintenance and condition of the road, citing several areas with potholes. Attendees identified the Monsey area as very congested and Airmont Road as a congested intersection.



Attendees at the Haitian Flag Day Festival expressed concern about pedestrian safety and about the condition of the road

2.4 INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS

In the early stages of the project, the study committees identified key stakeholders as potential resources for the broader outreach program. These stakeholders are knowledgeable and influential members of their communities. Based on these recommendations, interviews were arranged with Rabbi Yisroel Kahan, a community liaison between various local agencies and the Yiddish-speaking community, and Renold Julien, Executive Director of Konbit Neg Lakay, a community organization providing a variety of services to the Haitian community within Spring Valley in March 2019. In addition to providing valuable insight into the community and possible methods for community outreach, they shared issues they see throughout the corridor including congestion, safety, and transit. Rabbi Kahan expressed concern with pedestrian safety throughout the study area and whether public transit routes serve the current centers of population effectively. Renold Julien expressed concern with pedestrian safety and thought bus shelters could provide better amenities to the riders.

2.5 EMERGENCY SERVICES MEETING

In response to a request made at the initial Community Planning Workshop, the project team attended the Rockland County Fire Chief's Association meeting on April 25, 2019. The Association members in attendance stated that the traffic congestion in the study area hinders volunteer firefighters' access to their station when responding and negatively impacts overall emergency response times. According to the attendees, typical response time within the study area had increased from 6 to 8 minutes to 15 to 20 minutes due primarily to congestion and also as a result of how traffic signals operate. They stated that the traffic is heaviest Wednesday through Friday and is particularly problematic before holidays. They would like to see the road widened but understand the constraints that exist. They suggested converting the center turning lane into a through lane for emergency vehicles. One of the obstacles to creating an emergency vehicle lane is that some drivers currently use the lane as a travel lane. Increased enforcement would therefore be needed to make this a viable option.

The attendees highlighted recent traffic signal preemption enhancements for transit buses as another issue on the corridor, since the signals do not have uniform traffic signal preemption for emergency vehicles. They identified the signalized intersection at Spook Rock Road as a specific issue since the traffic light cycle resets after an emergency vehicle travels through, exacerbating traffic congestion on the north-south approaches.

The attendees expressed concern that the new Park & Ride facility in Monsey will add additional traffic congestion to Route 59 in the morning and afternoon peak hour periods. The Park & Ride will have an eastbound-only exit onto Route 59 and a bi-directional exit onto Saddle River Road. They did not believe that current traffic conditions will allow drivers to turn left on Saddle River Road.

The number of school buses (both public and private) was raised as an additional concern. The attendees felt the buses are frequently traveling through the corridor at all times of the day and create additional delay when they stop to pick up or discharge passengers. In addition, the attendees identified area in the vicinity of Robert Pitt Drive as a hotspot for vehicular accidents.

The physical improvements the emergency service providers recommended were:

- Adjusting the traffic signal timing to allow greater traffic flow per cycle along the Route 59 corridor
- Repaving the roads in the study area
- Adding extra turn lanes at Main Street, Saddle River Road, and Airmont Road
- Adding an on-ramp to I-287 at Saddle River Road or at the overpass on Route 59 (implementation of the Exit 14X concept)

2.6 PANIK RADIO SHOW

NYMTC's Planning Director was a guest on the Panik Radio Show on WRCR AM 1700 on Sunday, July 14, 2019, from 9:20 AM to 10:00 AM. The Panik Radio Show is a Haitian-American radio show broadcast in English and French Creole that has been airing for the last nine years. The program touches on all areas that affect the local Haitian culture and society, including education, social, cultural, religious, and local and international news.

The 40-minute discussion ranged from a general introduction of what NYMTC does to the background for the Route 59 study, the general status of the study, and some of the general feedback from the workshops and pop-up outreach. The hosts also asked for a clarification of how transportation projects are funded. Federal sources of funding that might be obtained for improvements through the NYMTC process were described.



3 EXISTING CONDITIONS



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3 EXISTING CONDITIONS

3.1 COMMUNITY PROFILE

A socio-economic profile was prepared of the geographic area of the Village of Airmont, the Monsey Census Designated Place in the Town of Ramapo, the Village of Spring Valley and unincorporated portions of the Town of Ramapo that correspond with the Route 59 study area. The area profiled is growing rapidly with a younger population overall than Rockland County, particularly in Monsey where the median age is 16.2 years. Between 2000 and 2017, the population in the corridor grew more than twice as fast as that in Rockland County as a whole during the same time period.

The majority of households in the study area are comprised of renters and tend to be larger than households in Rockland County overall. Median household income tends to be lower than in Rockland County as a whole. With the younger population, there are a large number of schools in the study area. There are 53 different schools overall with 16 of these schools supporting over 7,000 students immediately adjacent to Route 59.

Compared to the county as a whole, a lower percentage of people drive alone and a higher percentage carpool, walk, or take transit. Almost 10% of the people in the study area walk to work, compared to about 5% for Rockland County.

The complete socio-economic profile appears as Appendix B to this report.

3.2 TRANSPORTATION

The commercial and residential uses along the Route 59 corridor generate a variety of home-based and work-based trips using a variety of modes, with a significant pedestrian presence. Further, it provides a parallel route of travel to I-287 and serves to provide relief during times of congestion on I-287.

Residents use Route 59 for many daily shopping needs as well as visits to doctor offices. Route 59 serves as a main center of daily activity for residents. Residents also use Route 59 to get to and from work, whether they drive the full distance or drive to a transit stop located on or near Route 59.

3.2.1 TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

Route 59 is a heavily congested transportation corridor that experiences heavy vehicular traffic volumes from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm during weekdays.ⁱ Travel is generated along Route 59 by retail shops, banks, grocery stores, restaurants, and schools that attract residents on a daily or weekly basis. Typical travel times through the entire 4.5-mile study area are unreliable and can take as little as 9 minutes or as long as 35 minutes.ⁱⁱ

- i. NYSDOT Volume Reports.
- ii. WSP review of Google maps data.

Vehicular congestion is not uniform throughout the corridor. There are several intersections with a high volume of left-turn movements, signals, and areas of higher traffic volume that cause choke points by backing up traffic and slowing the flow throughout the corridor. 2015 data from the New York State Department of Transportation show 500 to 660 vehicles per hour in each direction, with 6% of the volume classified as heavy vehicles and 16% as trucks and buses. (See Figure 2 and 3) The data from NYSDOT show

the following route segments and intersections experience congestion and delay during peak hours:

- Forman Drive to Dutch Lane
- Airmont Road to Cherry Lane/Spook Rock Road
- Intersection of Route 59 and College Road
- Intersection of Route 59 and Saddle River Road

Congestion is not limited to those segments and intersections and affects adjacent intersections and roadways. The traffic at the intersections will back up the surrounding roadways causing congestion throughout the study area.

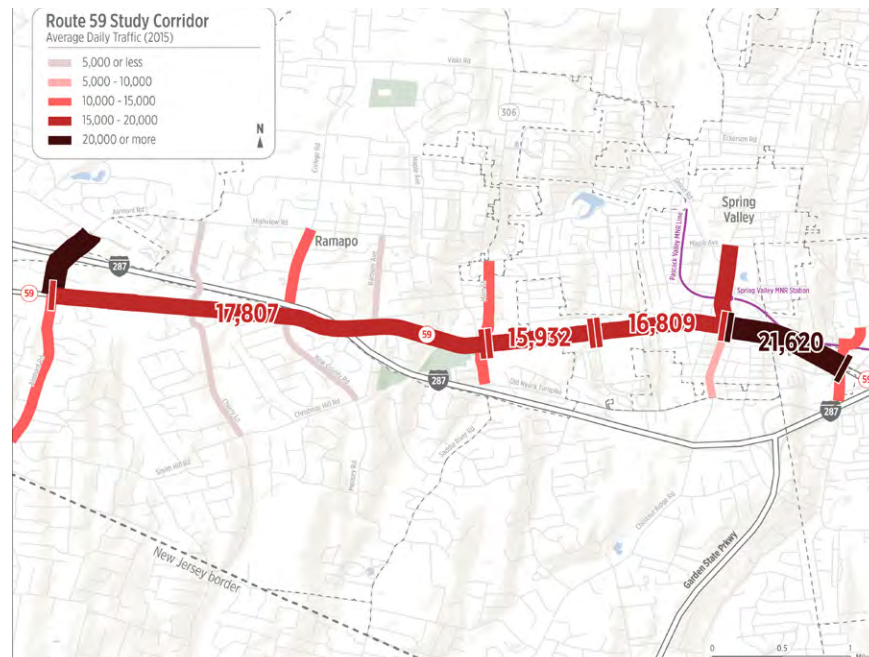


FIGURE 2: AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC VOLUMES

Route 59 is able to handle the high average daily volume with congestion at certain hotspots.

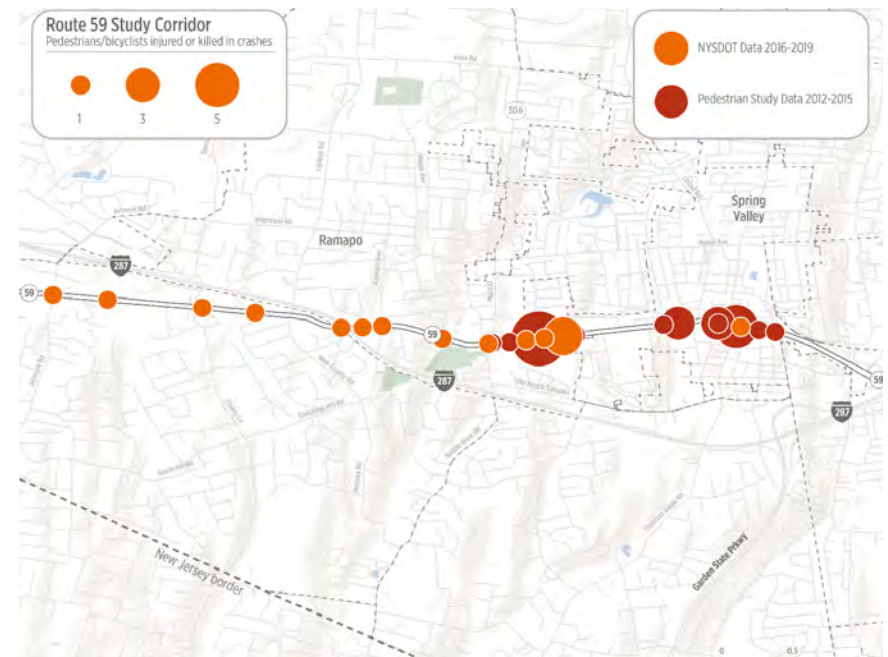


FIGURE 3: PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLIST ACCIDENTS

Pedestrians and bicyclist accidents were identified throughout the corridor

3.2.2 PUBLIC TRANSIT

The study area is served by multiple public transit modes and providers, including regional commuter bus service. Daily bus ridership to New York City is about 700 one-way passengers within the study area including the Exit 14 Park & Ride lot.

Buses that serve the Spring Valley Transit Center (SVTC) and along Route 59 include:

- Hudson Link—Commuter service between Rockland and Westchester counties with access to MTA Metro-North Railroad at Tarrytown and White Plains
- Transport of Rockland (TOR)—Local bus service in Rockland County.
- Monsey Trails—Commuter service to/from Port Authority Bus Terminal (PABT), Lower Manhattan, and Brooklyn
- Rockland Coaches—Serves Port Authority Bus Terminal (PABT) and Midtown Manhattan
- Orange Westchester Link (OWL)—Serves Orange County, Rockland and Westchester County



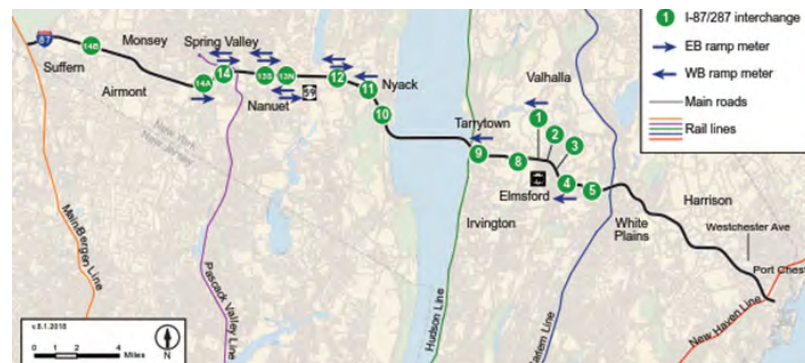
Metro-North Railroad and a variety of bus services provide different transit options along the corridor

The MTA Metro-North rail station in Spring Valley provides an intermodal connection to TOR, Hudson Link and other bus routes that serve Route 59 and the surrounding communities. About 150 people every weekday use Metro-North service to Penn Station in Manhattan with a transfer at Secaucus, NJ. The new Hudson Link commuter service along the I-287 corridor between Suffern to the west and White Plains to the east includes Route 59 in Rockland County. Hudson Link provides connections at Tarrytown and White Plains to MTA Metro-North Railroad stations that provide service to Grand Central Terminal in Manhattan and local stations in Westchester and the Bronx along Metro-North's Hudson and Harlem lines. In addition, Hudson Link provides service to downtown White Plains.

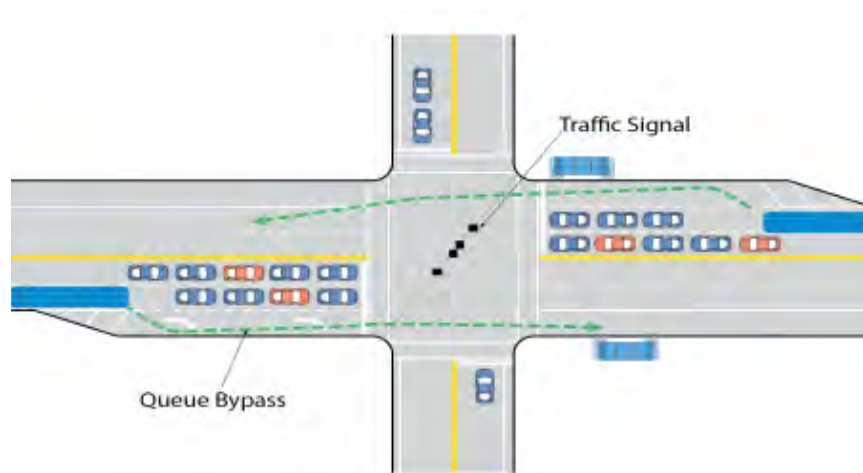
The development of Hudson Link by the New York State Department of Transportation included a range of transportation improvements. Pedestrian safety was improved along the Route 59 corridor from Monsey to Spring Valley through the installation of sidewalks, high-visibility crosswalks with HAWK (High-Intensity Activated crossWalk beacon) signals, guide rails, and signage upgrades. Other improvements include new bus shelters and, with Rockland County, the construction of the new Monsey Park and Ride facility.

The Hudson Link service also features several enhancements that allow quicker, more reliable travel times for bus commuters in the corridor. Ramp metering on I-287 and dedicated bus lanes on the Governor Mario M. Cuomo Bridge will improve vehicle travel times. New real-time travel information and upgraded traffic signals along Route 59 and adjacent local roads in Rockland County will improve travel times on Route 59. The upgrades to the traffic signal system include transit vehicle priority and queue jumping. The buses are equipped with Global Positioning System (GPS) technology and communicate with the signals.

Rockland County's TOR bus service operates three loop routes in and around the Route 59 corridor, as well as the TOR #59 local service between Nyack and Suffern. TOR routes #91, #92 and #93 also operate within the study area.



https://www.dot.ny.gov/portal/page/portal/lhlt/repository/LHTL_Ramp_Meters_Bus
Ramp metering along I-287 will help move traffic along the busy corridor



Traffic signal priority and queue jumping will provide priority to buses along Route 59

3.2.3 PEDESTRIANS & BICYCLES

Many pedestrians and bicyclists travel in the Route 59 corridor, but there are many locations where sidewalks are not present, forcing many pedestrians to use the shoulders of the road. NYSDOT is currently completing installation of sidewalks and other pedestrian improvements in specific locations, but this will not create a continuous sidewalk network for the length of the study area. The Village of Spring Valley has the most complete sidewalk network, with continuous existing and proposed sidewalks and a moderate density of crosswalks. Gaps in the sidewalk network and scattered crossings limit the walking network in Airmont and Monsey. Bicyclists ride along Route 59, mostly on the shoulder or on sidewalks where present, but there is no dedicated street space within the study area.

A lack of defined driveways with clear pedestrian crossings into some businesses makes it particularly challenging for pedestrians to walk safely along Route 59 in some areas. This is particularly prevalent in Spring Valley between South Pascack Road and South Central Avenue/Dutch Lane where there is no physical curb separating Route 59 and the parking lots of the commercial properties. Numerous open driveways (or absence of curb cuts) means that pedestrians walking in this section have no protection from automobiles exiting and entering those properties (see Figure 3 and 4).



In some areas, the lack of sidewalks provides a challenge to pedestrians

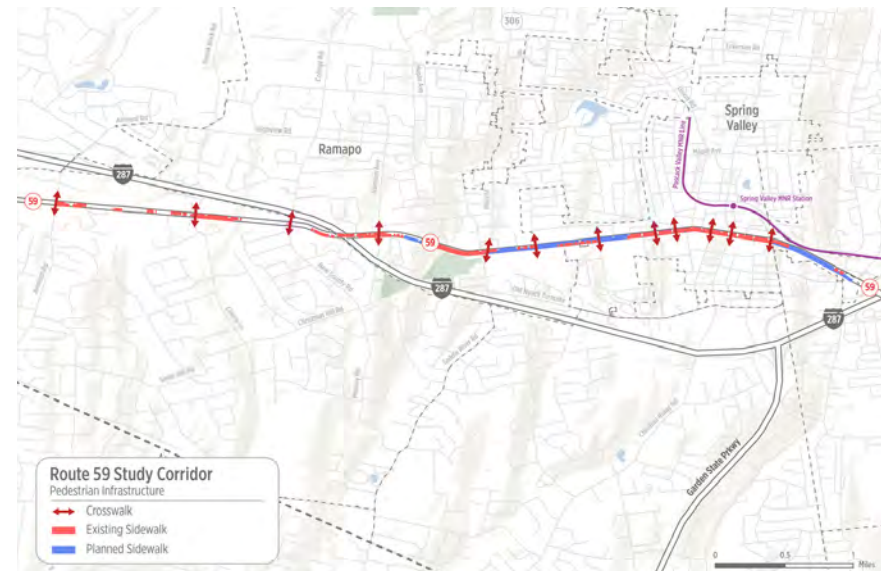
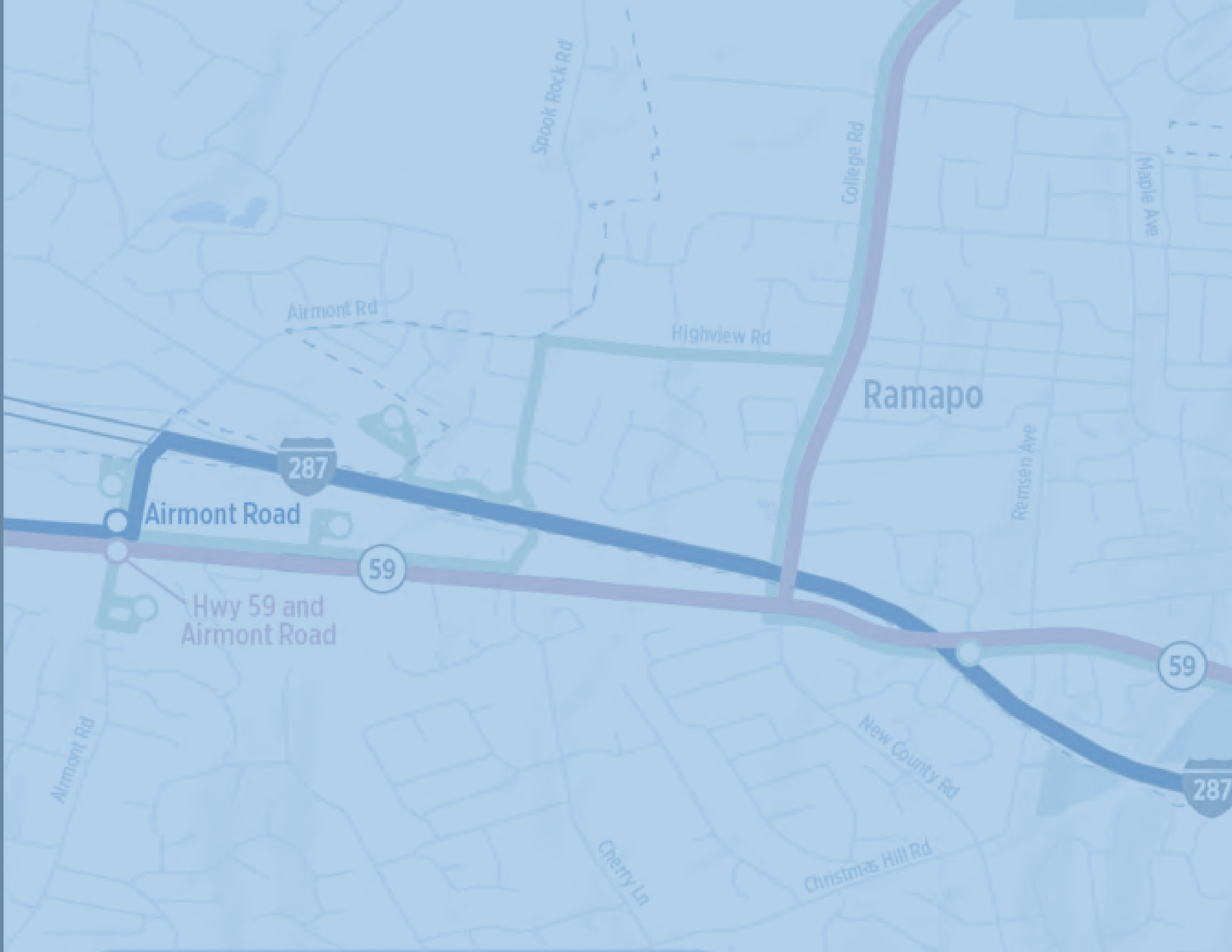


FIGURE 4: SIDEWALK NETWORK

NYS DOT is completing construction of planned sidewalks. However, certain gaps remain and should be addressed.



Spook Rock Rd

College Rd

Maple Ave

Airmont Rd

Highview Rd

Ramapo

Remsen Ave

287

Airmont Road

59

Hwy 59 and
Airmont Road

Airmont Rd

59

New County Rd

287

Christmas Hill Rd

Cherry Ln

4 STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS



4 STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

The land-use and transportation recommendations described below have been developed through consideration of the input and suggestions of stakeholders and the interested public; through an evaluation of county and local master plans, along with regional and county transportation plans, discussions with local elected and appointed officials, and through the deliberations of the SAC and the PSC. The project team provided research and developed concepts in conjunction with the overall development process. Some of the recommendations that have emerged include concepts through which future development proposals might be evaluated and accommodated more sustainably.

The extensive outreach performed for the study has revealed specific concerns among stakeholders and the interested public about future land-use development in the study area. However, a more technical assessment of future land use scenarios was beyond the scope of the study. Therefore, quantified recommendations on future development plans are not included among the study recommendations.

The study did reach a qualitative judgment on future development, given the evaluation of local master plans, the existing conditions in the study area, and the public expressions of concern. Future development in the study area should be approached with caution, within the context of local master planning and zoning. The recommendations that follow are a step toward the mitigation of traffic congestion along Route 59 and on surrounding roadways in the study area, but they will not eliminate that

congestion. Local master planning and zoning should take this judgment into account as future development is considered.

The recommendations that follow are presented in four categories – Community Design/Process, Roadway, Bicycle/Pedestrian, and Transit – for each of three implementation timeframes: short-term (implemented within a five-year timeframe), medium-term (implemented in a five- to ten-year timeframe), and long-term (implemented in more than ten years). The short-term recommendations are generally low- to medium-cost within a five-year timeframe. The medium-term recommendations are low- to high-cost that could be implemented within a five- to ten-year timeframe. The long-term recommendations would take more than ten years to implement at a higher cost. Priority for recommendations is different than the implementation timeframe. While some short-term, low-cost items may have a high priority, other longer-term, high-cost actions could also have high priority. Prioritization of recommendations would require on-going collaboration between stakeholders.

4.1 SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS (0 TO 5 YEARS)

4.1.1 COMMUNITY DESIGN/PROCESS

- **Revise the zoning codes to include design standards for frontage along Route 59 and intersecting local and county streets.**
Bringing buildings closer to the street will provide a better pedestrian experience and provide a Main Street feel desired by many residents. This would require coordination with NYSDOT.
- **Evaluate parking requirements or implementation of a parking district for new development to accommodate shared parking.**
Coupled with a better pedestrian experience with interconnected paths, changing the parking requirements and allowing shared parking would encourage fewer automotive trips and would reduce congestion on Route 59.
- **Continue to use the comprehensive planning and local zoning process to identify appropriate levels of development along Route 59 and evaluate where mixed-use zoning would be appropriate.**
Many residents raised concerns with the rate of development and felt that zoning laws were not properly followed.
- **Evaluate the possibility of small mixed-use zoning nodes closer to residential populations that could provide access to convenience goods to minimize shopping trips to Route 59.** The commercial centers are clustered along the Route 59 corridor, requiring residents to travel to Route 59 on a daily or weekly basis. Allowing small commercial nodes closer to residential neighborhoods located away from Route 59 could allow for more trips to be completed by walking or would avoid a car trip to Route 59.
- **Ensure that the town and the villages have conducted State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) training for land use boards.** Residents raised a concern that traffic and environmental impacts from new development were not properly considered.



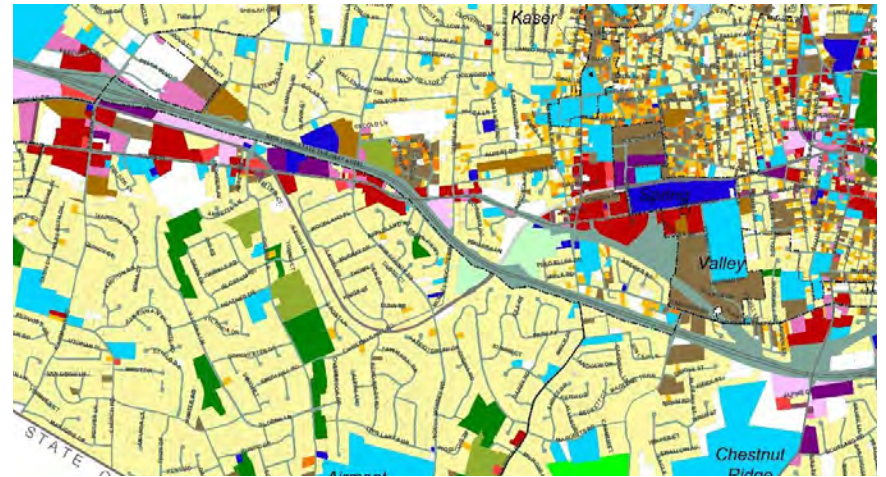
Existing commercial properties prioritize room for automobiles and lack pedestrian connections to the street



Placing buildings closer to the street creates a better pedestrian environment

Conducting regular SEQR training would lead to more consistent application of SEQR to land-use development projects. The Rockland Municipal Planning Federation provides training opportunities for SEQR training.

- **Continue to use the New York General Municipal Law (GML) 239 process to guide planning.** The law requires that certain types of municipal planning, zoning, and subdivision projects be referred to Rockland County for review prior to local action being taken. The requirement seeks to promote coordination of land-use decision-making and to enhance consideration of potential inter-municipal and county-wide impacts.
- **Coordinate on a consistent definition of significant impact requiring mitigation.** The determination of what constitutes a significant impact that requires mitigation is left to the judgment of the lead agency. Therefore, adjacent municipalities and the county may not agree on whether a proposed project will cause a significant impact. Coordination could reduce the impact of new development on the corridor, or require a more consistent approach to project mitigation.



The town and villages should consider zoning map changes that allow mixed-use nodes closer to residential communities



Residential apartments over retail space can be an attractive building type in suburban communities

4.1.2 FURTHER STUDY

- **Conduct an Alternatives Analysis for the potential future uses, including a multi-modal path, for the MTA Metro-North Railroad Piermont Branch.** The Town of Ramapo and Metro-North have an agreement in place for the construction and maintenance of a pedestrian and bicycle path. The right-of-way would need to reserve the option of being revertible to rail, and there is currently rail freight service in the western portion of the right-of-way in the study area. Both factors limit some of the potential uses but provides an opportunity to the community to create additional bicycle, pedestrian,



Opportunities exist to create multi-use paths for pedestrians, bicyclists, and rubber tire transit.

and rubber tire transit from residential areas north of Route 59 to commercial uses along Route 59. (Sponsor and funding to be determined)

- **Conduct study of the feasibility of Exit 14x.** Many residents expressed a desire for an additional interchange between Interstate 287 and Route 59 to alleviate some of the congestion on Route 59. The construction of the interchange is a long-term/high-cost project but the initial feasibility study can be conducted in the short term. (Sponsor and funding to be determined)



A potential Exit 14x could use right-of-way along I-287 to provide limited access from Route 59

4.1.3 BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN

- **Complete the sidewalk network throughout the study corridor.** Pedestrian safety was frequently raised as a concern. Even with the current NYSDOT project to extend sidewalks within the study area, the sidewalk network will still not offer a continuous network in all locations.
- **Evaluate the implementation of low cost solutions and permanent solutions to indicate walking paths.** Pavement treatments such as high visibility crosswalks are low cost solutions to enhance the safety of pedestrians.
- **Evaluate the implementation of traffic signals with Leading Pedestrian Intervals where there are high volumes of vehicles turning.** Leading Pedestrian Intervals give pedestrians a three- to seven-second lead into the intersection before cars are given a green light. It increases the visibility of pedestrians and is shown to have a 60% reduction in pedestrian-vehicle crashes at intersections.ⁱⁱⁱ
- **Identify locations where signage could be added to indicate to pedestrians where the nearest crosswalk is located.** Increasing the awareness of the nearest crosswalk could lead to fewer pedestrians crossing illegally.
- **Evaluate implementation of enhanced pedestrian crossings with high-visibility markings/signage to alert drivers.** The enhancements help make pedestrians more visible and can reduce crashes by 23-48%.^{iv}

iii. https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/provencountermeasures/lead_ped_int/

iv. https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/step/docs/TechSheet_VizEnhancemt_508compliant.pdf



Different options can provide high visibility pedestrian crossings that can enhance pedestrian safety

4.1.4 PEDESTRIAN/ROADWAY

- **Evaluate the addition of curb-extensions at crosswalks.** A low-cost solution would add curb-extensions by using paint/striping and bollards. The extension improves the pedestrian experience by decreasing the crossing distance and the time it takes to cross the intersection.
- **Consolidate driveways/curb-cuts where there are multiple entries/exits.** Reducing the number of curb-cuts would reduce the number of potential conflicts automobiles have with pedestrians and traffic on Route 59.
- **Review the geometry of the curb-cuts along the corridor.** As with the recommendation to consolidate curb-cuts, altering the geometry of curb-cuts could improve the interactions between automobiles and pedestrians. The geometry of the curb-cut can influence the speed at which cars enter and exit a property. Wide curb-cuts encourage higher turning speeds and expose pedestrians to increased risk.



This illustration shows how curb extensions could reduce crossing distance for pedestrians and enhance safety

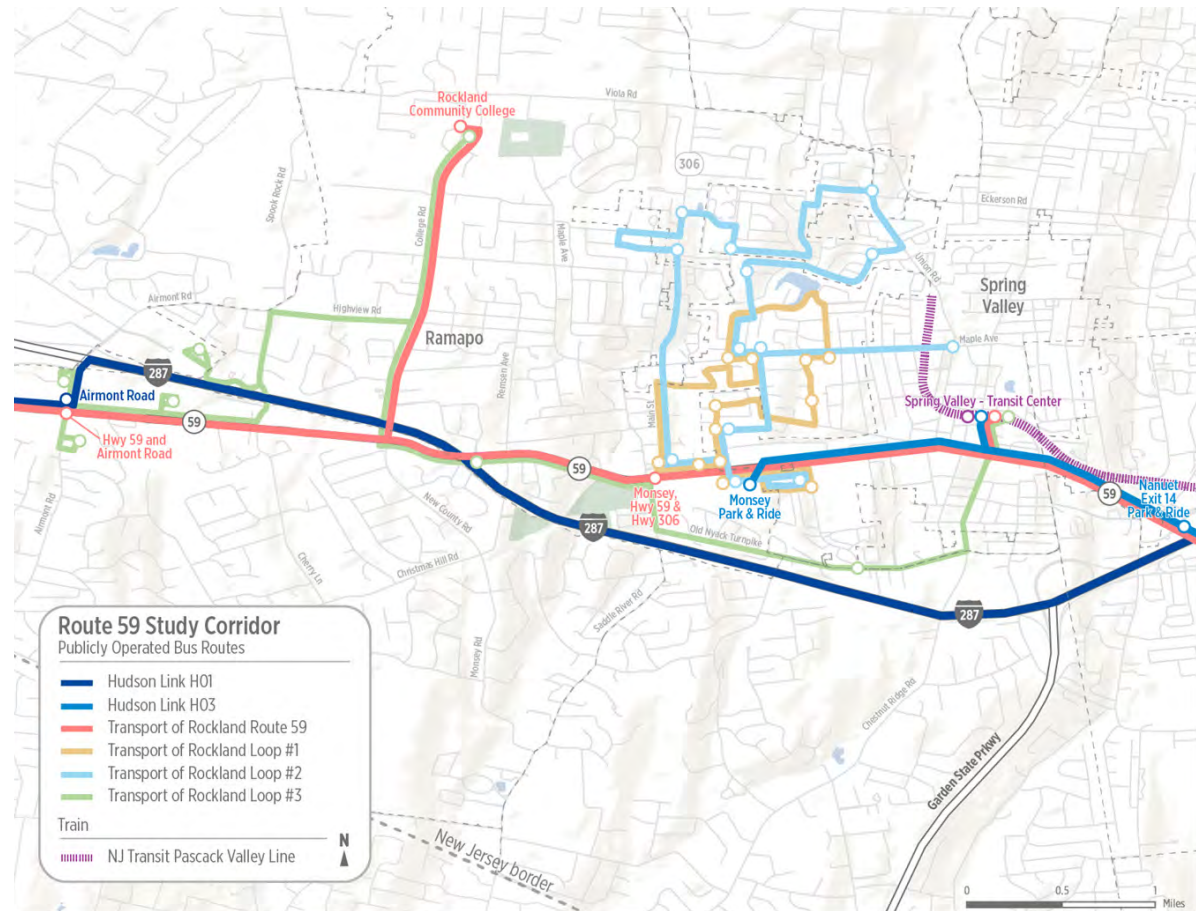
4.1.5 ROADWAY

- **Coordinate emergency vehicle signal preemption with bus prioritization.** Signals with bus prioritization are being installed along the corridor as part of the Hudson Link enhancements. Coordination of traffic signals with the emergency service providers could speed response times for emergencies.
- **Evaluate optimization of signal timing or implementation of adaptive signal controls.** Outdated signal timing can contribute up to 10% of traffic delays. The Hudson Link system is upgrading signals throughout the corridor (see 3.5 Hudson Link Enhancements). After the upgrades, the signals could be optimized, interconnected, and additional adaptive signal controls could be added to intersections not upgraded.^v

v. https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/innovation/everydaycounts/edc-1/pdf/asct_brochure.pdf

4.1.6 TRANSIT

- **Evaluate opportunities to increase ridership on NYSDOT's Hudson Link that links to rail and other bus services.** Hudson Link is a new service that can continue to evolve to provide opportunities for increased ridership. As NYSDOT continues to implement the service and other roadway and operational improvements (such as transit-signal prioritization and ramp metering), it should review schedule and service plans to best serve commuter needs.
- **Evaluate the coordination of schedules between bus and train.** Commuters caught in traffic on Route 59 may miss their bus or train connection. Periodic evaluation of bus and train schedules to adjust for prevalent conditions on Route 59 could address some of these issues.
- **Continue to evaluate modifications to Transport of Rockland (TOR) routes to adapt to changing population patterns and ridership demand.** As the population and development surrounding Route 59 evolves, the bus routes should be routinely examined to determine the optimal bus routes. If more people are living in areas currently unserved by bus routes, those routes could possibly be extended or realigned.



The Route 59 corridor is served by a number of bus routes. Continued coordination of routes and schedules should be done to respond to demographic changes

4.2 MEDIUM-TERM / LOW-COST RECOMMENDATIONS (5 TO 10 YEARS)

4.2.1 COMMUNITY DESIGN/PROCESS

- **Consider implementation of design standards or guidelines to place buildings closer to the front lot line and locate parking in the rear.** Design standards or guidelines are another tool that communities can use (in addition to zoning) to better guide development in a manner more consistent with a desired community character. Design standards are typically mandatory. Design guidelines are more illustrative.
- **Provide wayfinding to connect village centers to Route 59.** Village centers, such as Spring Valley, can be located off the Route 59 corridor. Providing visual cues for pedestrians to direct them to the centers can build a sense of place for the area.



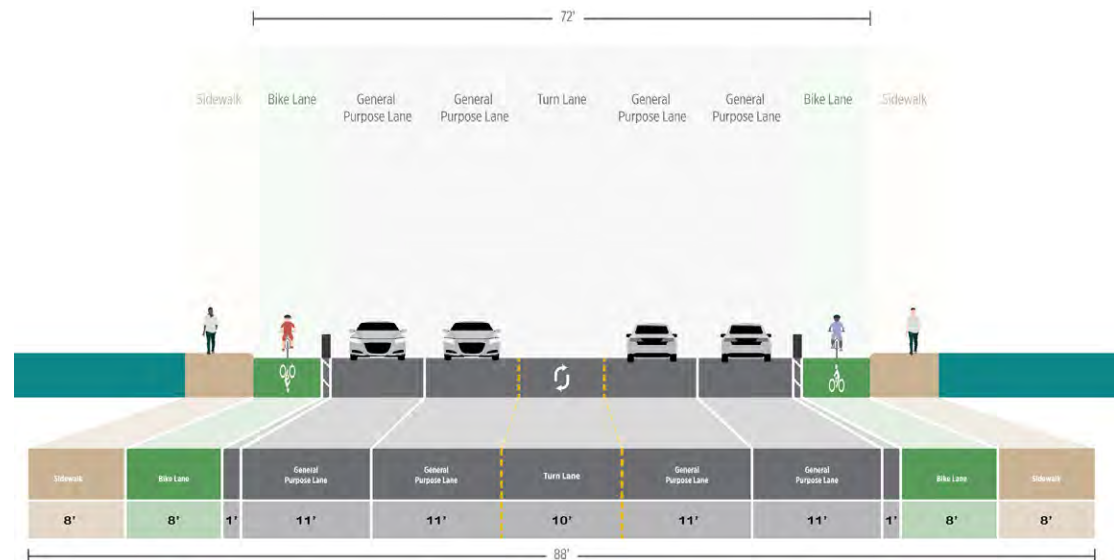
Design standards and guidelines can be another tool that communities can use to better guide development in a manner more consistent with a desired community character

4.2.2 PEDESTRIAN/ROADWAY

- Consider implementation of **protected bike lanes along Route 59**. Protected bike lanes improve safety and reduces the risk of collisions with over-taking vehicles. The protection can be via vertical bollards or a raised median (with planters near key destinations).

4.2.3 ROADWAY

- Evaluate the use and design of the center turning lane and/or dedicated left-turn lane within each segment of Route 59 to see if there are options to improve movements or add physical separations to restrict movements.** Participants in the public engagement described automobiles using the turning lane as a travel lane, which can lead to accidents. Additionally, first responders expressed a desire to use the center lane as an emergency vehicle only lane when responding to emergencies. The existing turning lane provides an opportunity to re-examine its use and determine whether there are opportunities to better use that space.



In some areas Route 59 has enough width to allow protected bike lanes. However, the center turn lane should be evaluated within each segment to see if there are options to improve movements or add physical separations to restrict movements

4.3 MEDIUM-TERM / MEDIUM-COST RECOMMENDATIONS (5 TO 10 YEARS)

4.3.1 COMMUNITY DESIGN/PROCESS

- **Include open space and public amenities with any new development.** Many participants expressed the desire for more public space along the corridor. As commercial properties are redeveloped or developed, design standards or guidelines through zoning codes can encourage the creation of open spaces for public use.

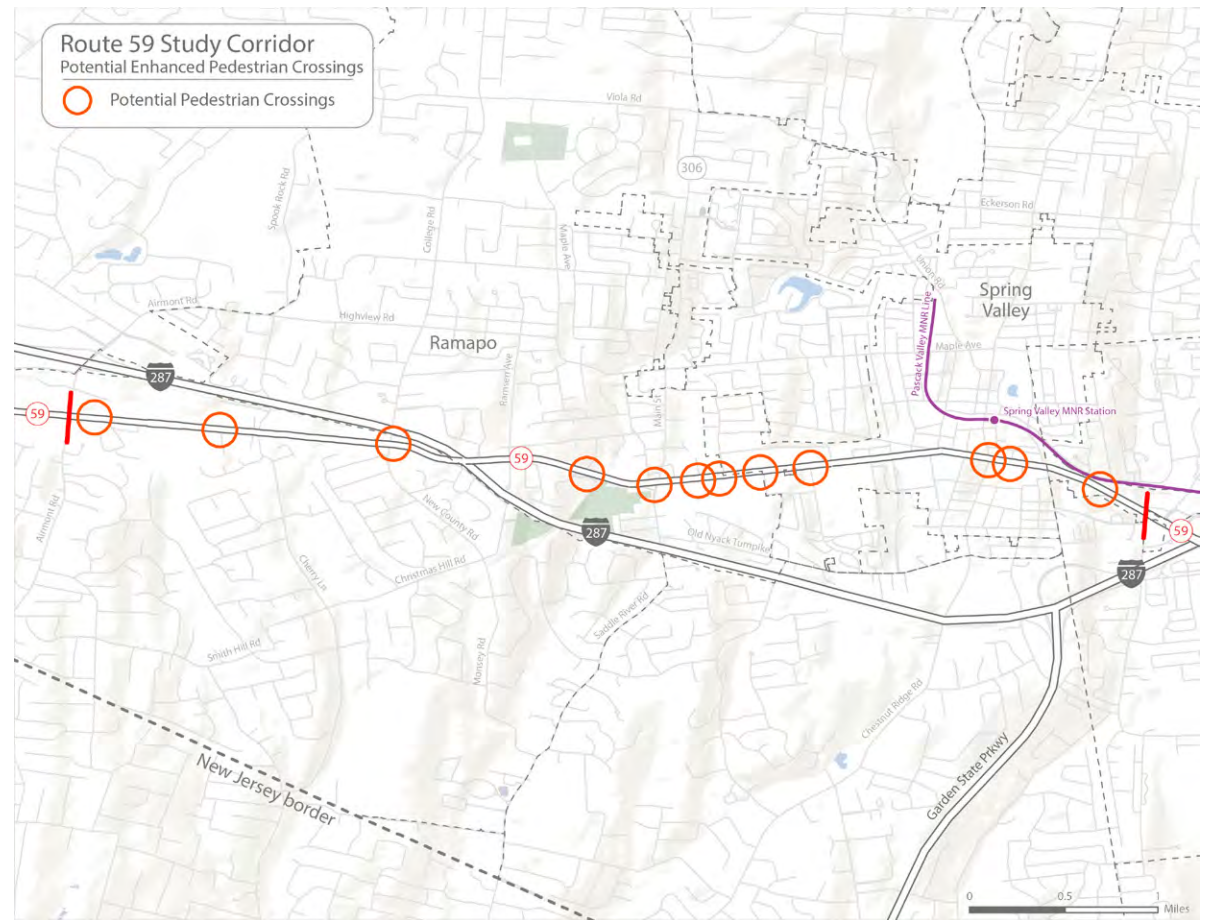
4.3.2 PEDESTRIAN

- **Consider widening existing sidewalks to 10 feet near key destinations.** Current sidewalks are being built to a width of 5 feet. However, sidewalks at 10 feet would better accommodate the pedestrians that use the network, allowing ample space for two strollers to pass.



Public spaces are an important part of community design and should be included in any design standards and guidelines that are developed

- **Consider converting the sidewalk into a multiuse path where space is available.** Where the right-of-way provides ample width, additional space for alternative modes could be considered such as bike lanes where the street does not accommodate bikes.
- **Evaluate the implementation of mid-block crossings and barriers to facilitate and prohibit pedestrian movements.** A common issue cited during the public process was that there are not an adequate number of crossings, forcing pedestrians to walk long distances to protected crossings, which leads to pedestrians crossing in the middle of the block. Implementation of mid-block crossings with HAWK signals and/or creating prohibitions on such crossings could enhance pedestrian safety.
- **Evaluate the addition of permanent curb-extensions at crosswalks.** If the temporary curb extensions prove to be effective, the temporary structures or painting can be replaced with more permanent physical extensions of the curbs.

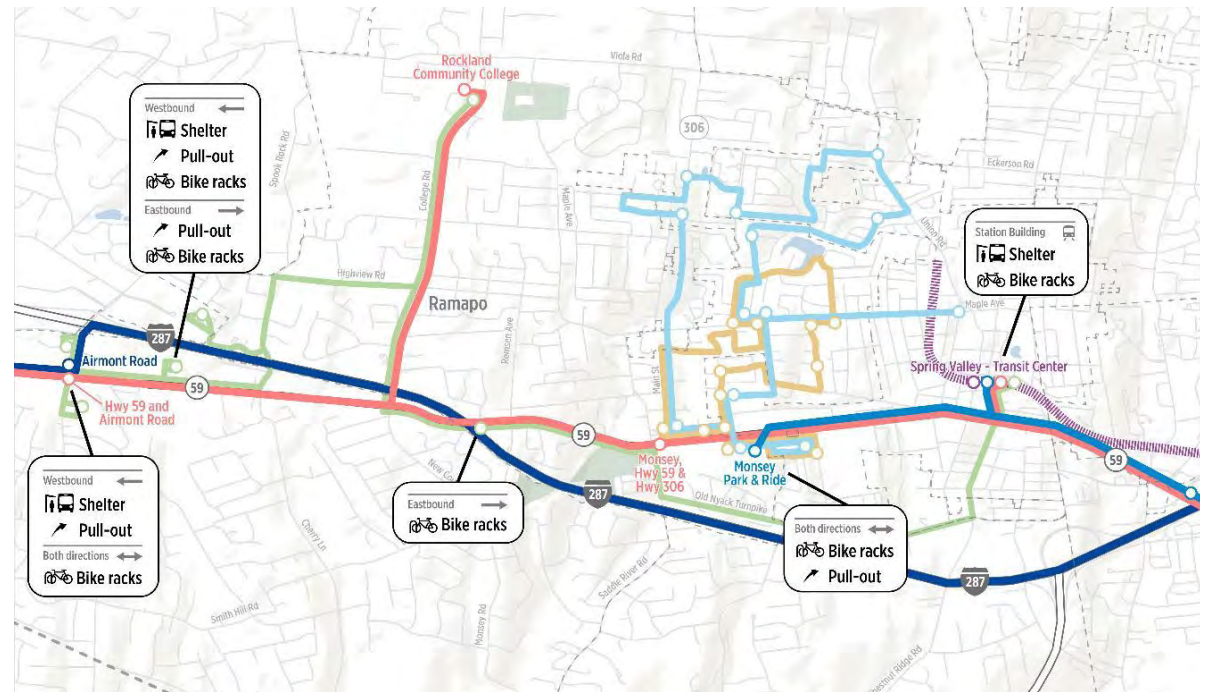


Stakeholders identified a number of opportunities for new or enhanced pedestrian crossings

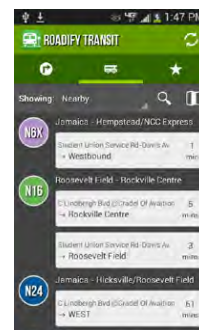
4.3.3 TRANSIT

- **Improve the bus stops and add pull outs.**
Adding pull outs would allow buses to pull over to receive and discharge passengers, reducing the impact on traffic flow.
- **Implement real time arrival information.**
Providing real time information for the TOR buses through a smartphone application or variable electronic messaging at the stop will allow customers to adjust their behavior so that they experience shorter wait times and greater trip satisfaction. By knowing when a bus is arriving the customer will be able to time their departure to align with the arrival of the bus. This technology is planned for TOR and will be implemented as part of the TOR ITS project.
- **Consider the concept of a TMA – Transportation Management Association – to coordinate and provide shared transportation options to optimize the existing resources (e.g. shared parking, shared rides to transit stations).** TMAs are non-profit, public/private organizations that can coordinate transportation services along the corridor or to nearby transit destinations. An example can be found in neighboring Bergen County, NJ where EZ Ride provides carpool, vanpool, and shuttle services for over 700,000 passenger trips per year.^{vi}

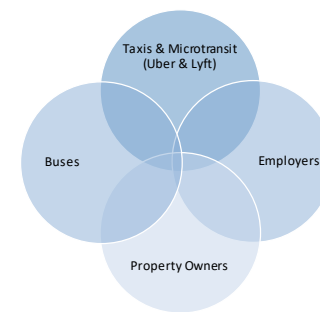
vi. <https://ezride.org/about/>



Adding passenger amenities such as shelters and bike racks may attract riders to existing bus service



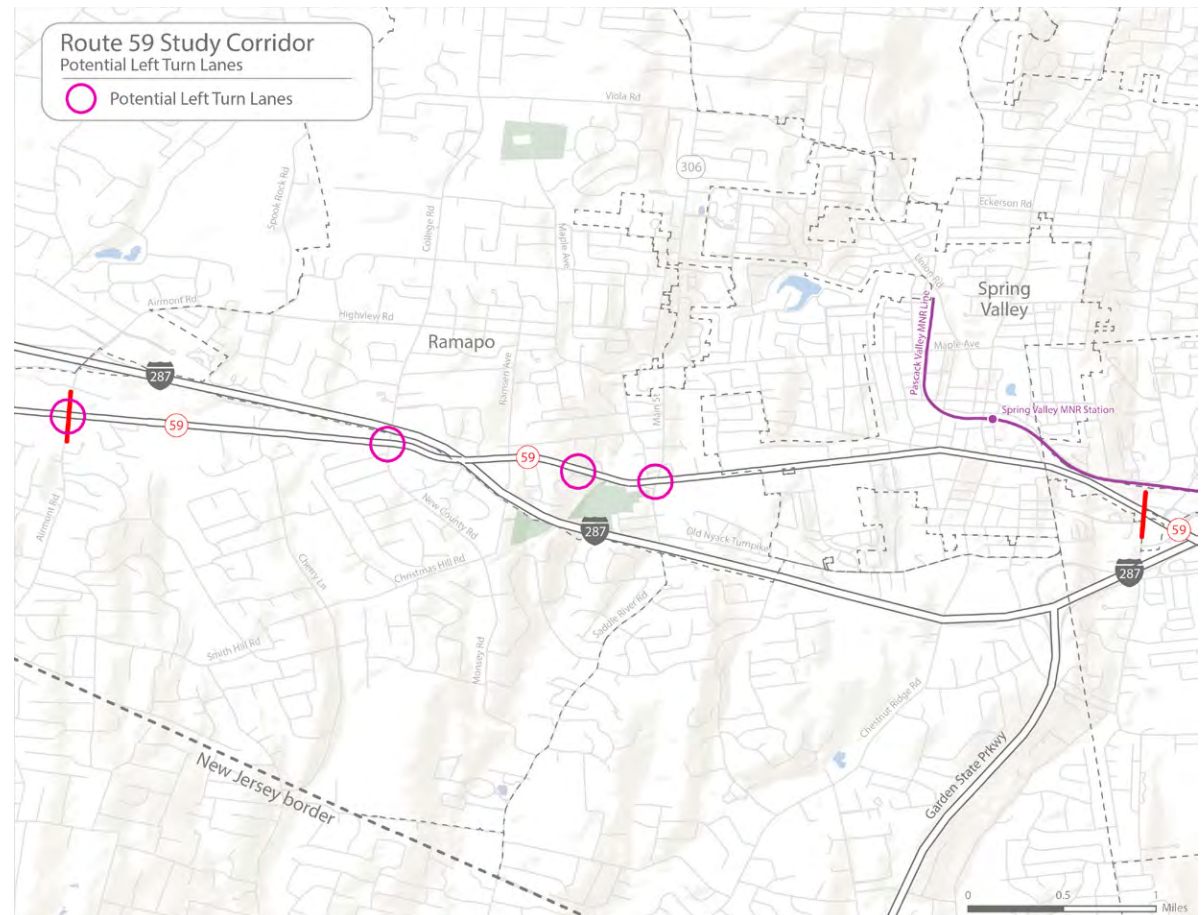
Smart phone apps can help transit users know when a bus will be arriving so they can save time



Transportation management associations can be used to coordinate transportation options between riders, employees, and property owners

4.4 MEDIUM-TERM / HIGH-COST RECOMMENDATIONS (5 TO 10 YEARS)

- Consider feasibility of left-turn lanes at key intersections. A common suggestion throughout public engagement was the need for additional left-turn lanes. Adding left-turn lanes in places where they do not exist on Route 59 could reduce crashes by 28-48% and improve the flow of traffic. ^{vii}



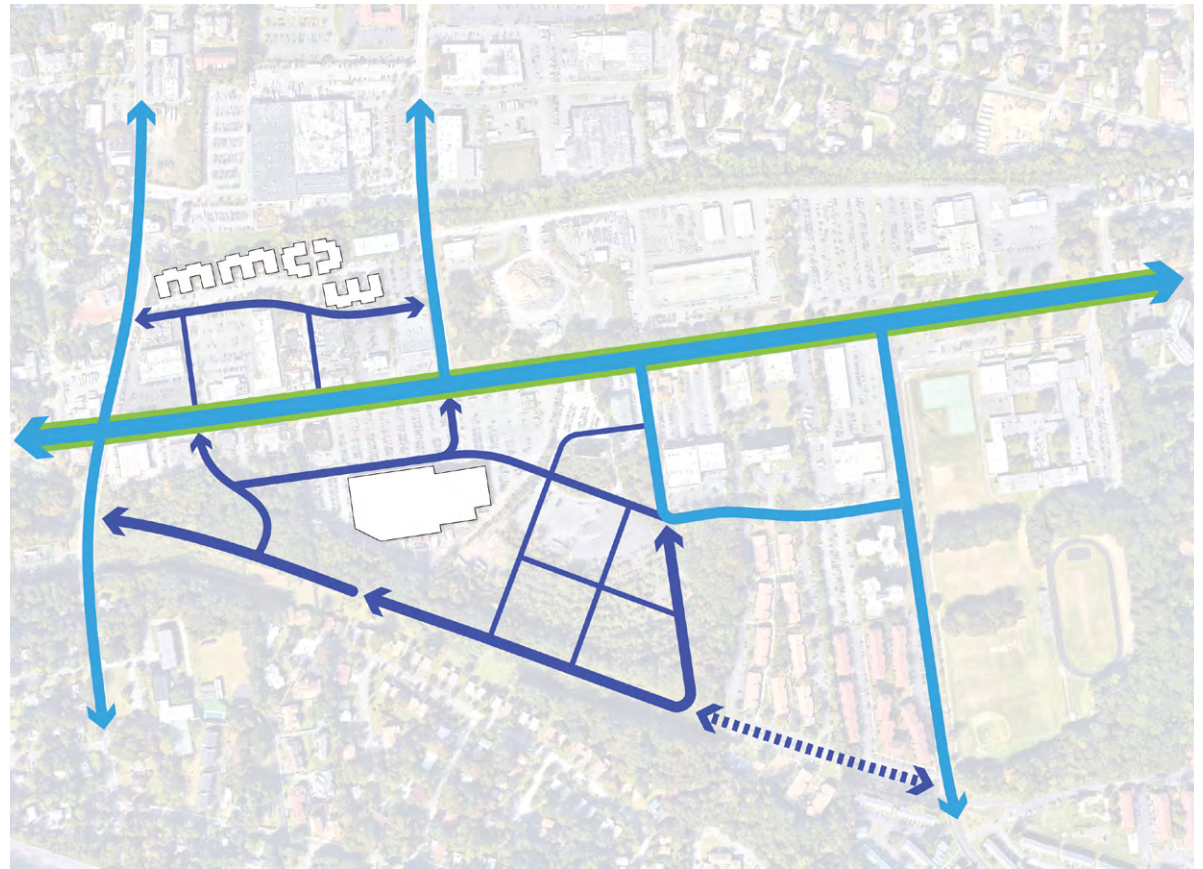
Stakeholders identified several locations where left turn lanes should be considered

vii. https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/provencountermeasures/left_right_turn_lanes/

4.5 LONG-TERM / HIGH-COST RECOMMENDATIONS (MORE THAN 10 YEARS)

4.5.1 COMMUNITY DESIGN/PROCESS

- **Reconfigure private properties to include a grid of pedestrian friendly local streets.** Within the Monsey area, where the size and depth of properties might allow for a reconfiguration of the street layout, as properties are developed or redeveloped, adding local access streets that parallel Route 59 could provide residents visiting commercial establishments an additional route that could relieve congestion. Combining these walkable streets with other recommendations relating to design guidelines/standards for new land use could create a new community character that would be conducive to walking trips.

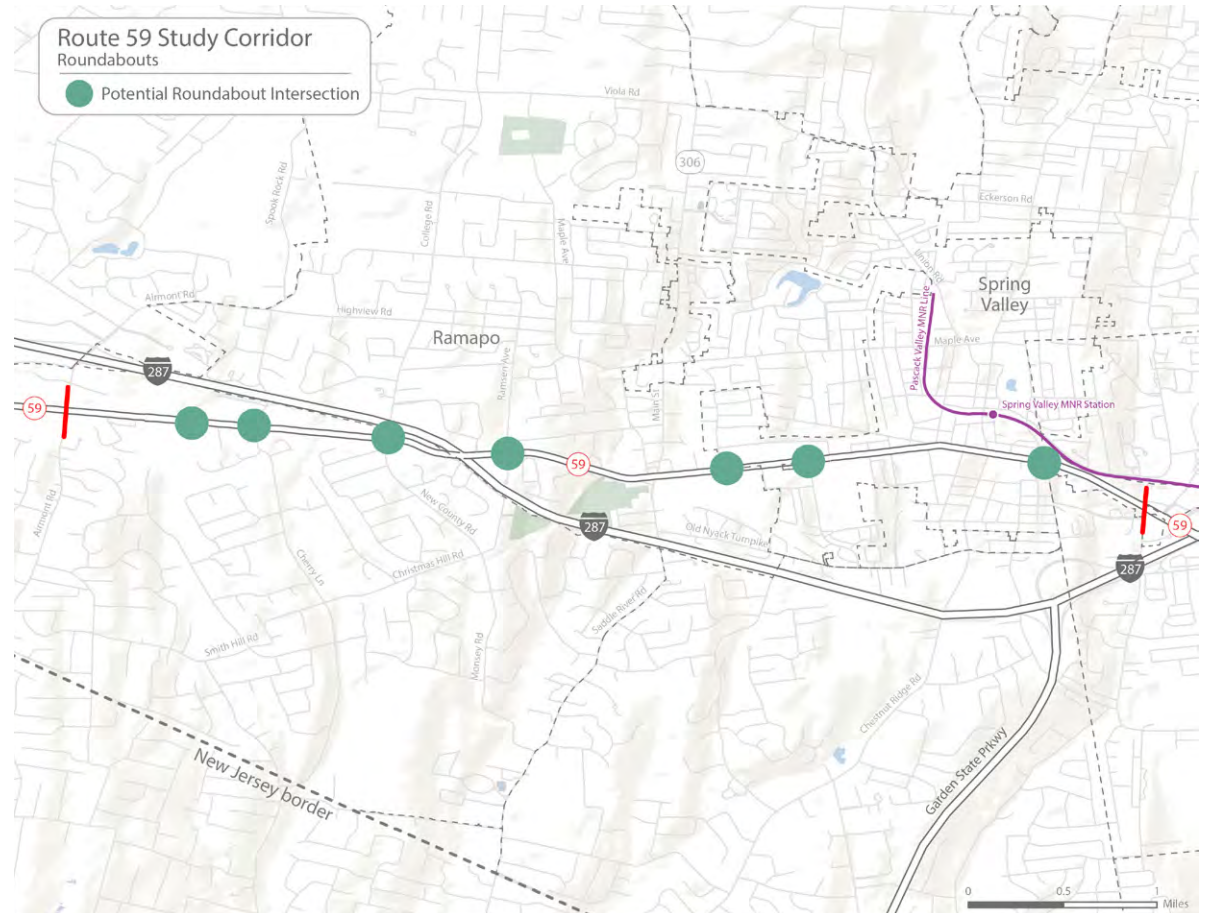


Adapting the street grid to a pedestrian scale could create opportunities for more walking trips within the corridor

4.5.2 ROADWAY

- **Study the feasibility of installing roundabouts at intersections with equal turning volumes in all directions.** Roundabouts have been shown to reduce overall wait times and congestion at intersections while providing increased safety, traffic calming, and aesthetic benefits. Roundabouts have been successfully installed or are currently being installed in many locations in the Hudson Valley region. The following intersections could be studied in the short-term to determine whether roundabouts would be appropriate:

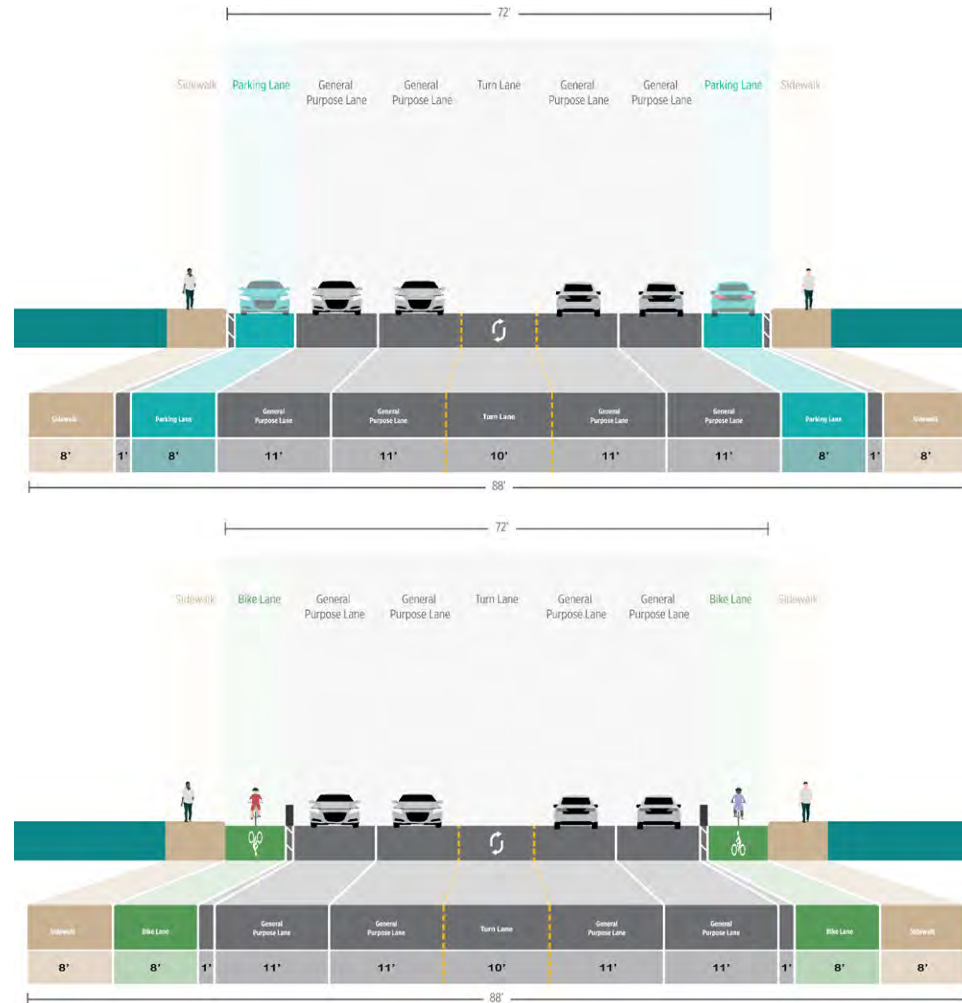
- Airmont
 - Wal-Mart
 - Spook Rock Road
- Monsey
 - Remsen Avenue
 - College Road
 - Robert Pitt Drive
- Spring Valley
 - Central Avenue
 - Kennedy Drive



Roundabouts have been shown to reduce overall wait times and congestion at intersections while providing increased safety, traffic calming, and aesthetic benefits

- Consider the feasibility of widening of Route 59 the length of the study area from Airmont Road to Pascack Road.

While congestion is a prevalent issue, there were many voices in how to proceed, with some in favor of widening while some were not in favor of widening. The widening of 4.5 miles of state road would incur a significant construction cost at an estimated \$200 to \$250 million in today's cost not including right-of way or engineering costs. The project would also have considerable impacts to private properties adjoining the right-of-way. As illustrated in Figures 5-8, there are several locations within the study area where a wider road would impact existing buildings, residences and parking areas. Finally, it is important to note a roadway widening would likely require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to properly assess the social and environmental impacts to the community.



There are several options for arranging travel, parking, bicycle and pedestrian lanes. However, tradeoffs may have to be made to accomplish this in some areas.

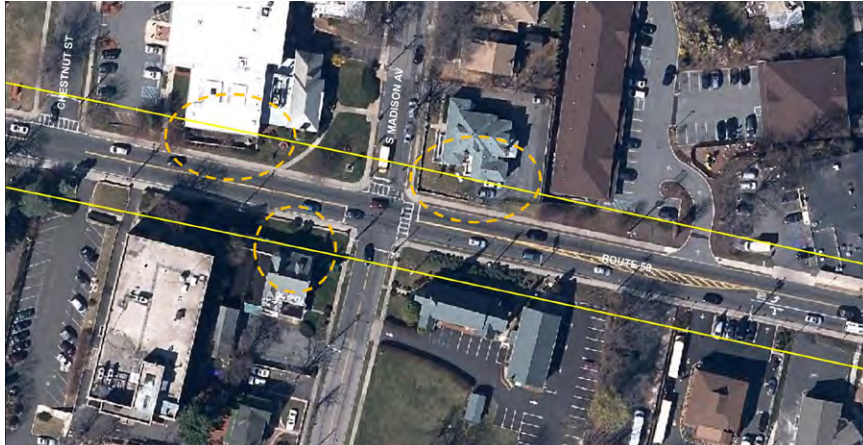


FIGURE 5: WIDENING NEAR FINKELSTEIN MEMORIAL LIBRARY
Potential conflicts from widening near Finkelstein Memorial Library

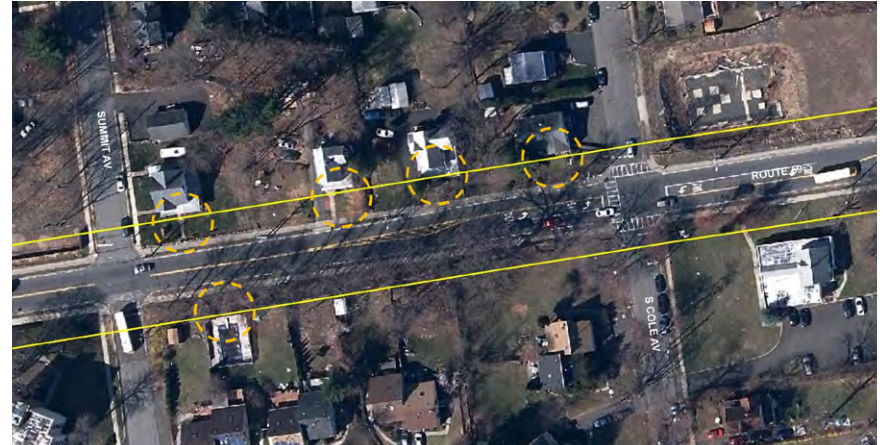


FIGURE 6: WIDENING IN SPRING VALLEY
In Spring Valley, older houses are close to the Route 59 right-of-way



FIGURE 7: WIDENING IN AIRMONT
Section of Route 59 in Airmont could potentially be widened but would require changes to access, parking, and landscaping



FIGURE 8: WIDENING IN MONSEY
Within Monsey, widening of Route 59 would have to integrate pedestrian improvements and circulation between properties

4.5.3 TRANSIT

- **Evaluate coordination/integration of fare collection systems regionally to increase convenience for riders.**

Trends in the broader technology and retail payments sectors offer the regional transit agencies opportunities to enhance operations and improve the customer experience by incorporating transformative new fare payment methods and systems. Applying a common system among different transit operators could encourage users to use the systems where a linked trip might be required, which improves the ease of using transit and in doing so may increase transit ridership.



5 PUBLIC REVIEW OF THE DRAFT STUDY REPORT

The Draft Report was made available on the project website on April 27, 2020. An email blast announcement was sent to the project email list, posted on the NYMTC website, and forwarded through our agency partners' email lists announcing its availability. NYMTC had originally planned to hold the public review meetings in the spring following the release. However, due to the ongoing public health crisis caused by Coronavirus (COVID-19), it was determined that the best method to receive public feedback was through virtual workshops. The announcement for the virtual public workshops was sent out on June 29, 2020 which initiated the 45-day comment period on the draft report.

5.1 VIRTUAL PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

The virtual public workshops were held on July 15, 2020 at 10 AM and 3 PM and on July 16, 2020 at 6 PM. The workshops consisted of a presentation utilizing Poll Everywhere software to solicit input throughout the event. Over 50 attendees participated in the virtual workshops and provided information on how they used Route 59 both before and during the public health crisis, how their travel might change in the future, and feedback on the report recommendations. The attendees were asked to rank recommendations that were grouped in categories, regardless of the timeframe or fiscal constraints. Each slide contained between three and six recommendations, which were ranked from highest to lowest priority order by entering them in order into the Poll Everywhere website, mobile app, text messages, or chat box. This method provided valuable feedback on the priority of recommendations on that given slide, although it made it difficult to make comparisons of the priority of the recommendations in different categories presented on different slides.

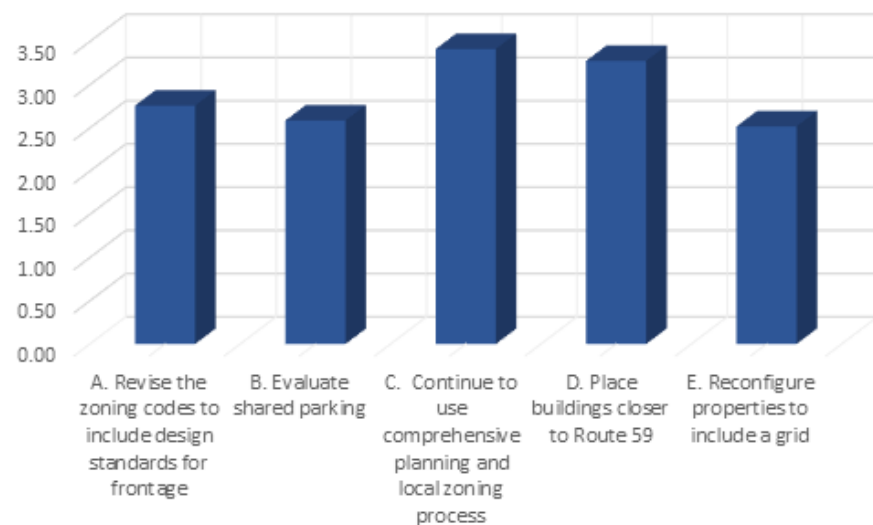
All of the study recommendations got at least one first or second priority ranking by the attendees. This illustrates that each recommendation was a priority to at least one of the attendees and reflective of the feedback received throughout the study. The rankings were averaged between the three sessions resulting in a final score for each recommendation. It should be emphasized that the actual scoring should not be used as a definitive prioritization of recommendations, but as a relative ranking of similar recommendations and an expression of how stakeholders felt that issues within the Route 59 corridor could be addressed.

Results of the polling are presented below by category of the recommendations.

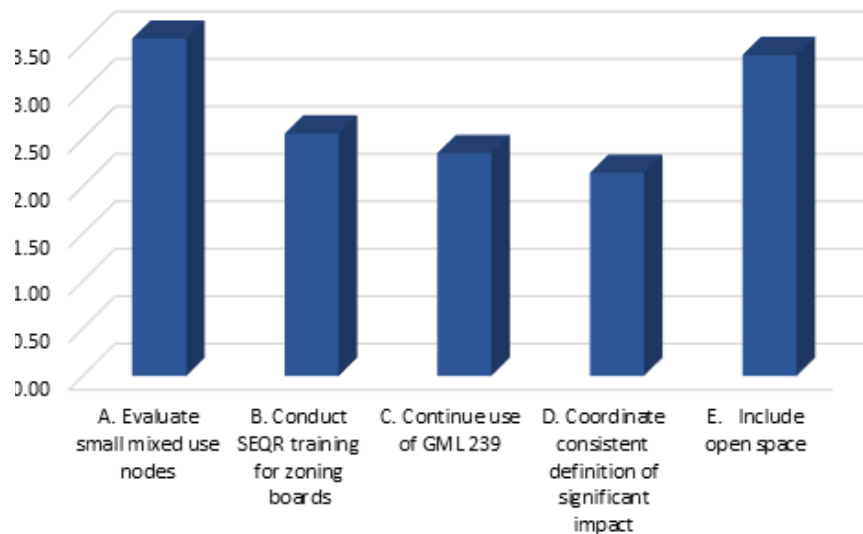
5.1.1 COMMUNITY DESIGN & PROCESS

Within the community design recommendations, the attendees gave the highest priority to the recommendations to continue the use of the comprehensive planning and local zoning process to identify appropriate levels of development along Route 59 and bringing small shops closer to residential neighborhoods. This second recommendation could conceivably reduce overall traffic volumes on Route 59 by making many local trips short enough to walk.

COMMUNITY DESIGN/PROCESS



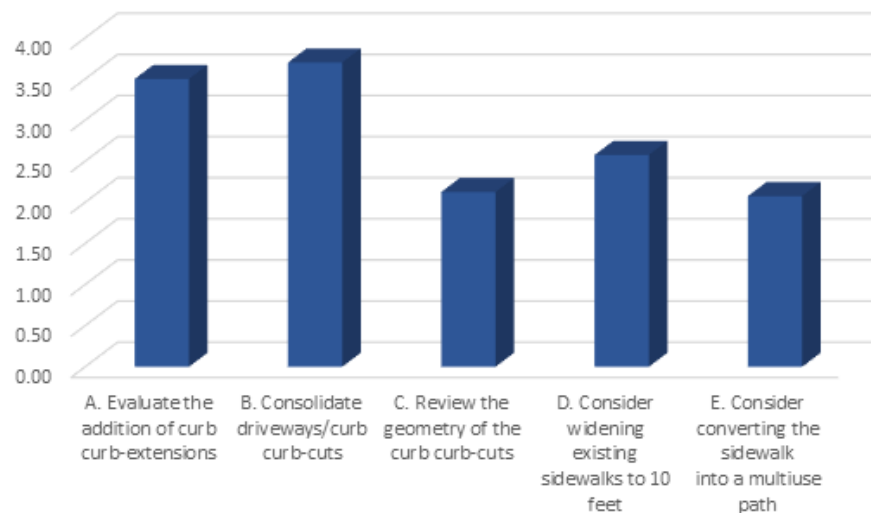
COMMUNITY DESIGN/PROCESS 2



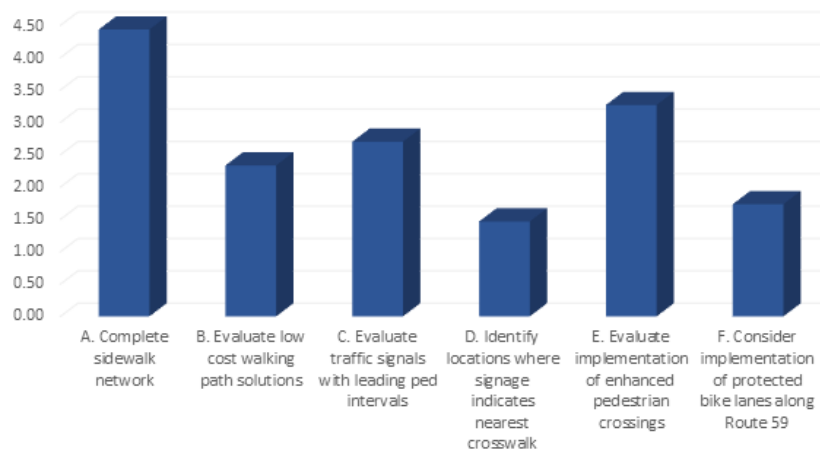
5.1.2 BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

The next series of recommendations identified improvements for the pedestrian/cyclist and their interaction with the road network. In those recommendations, the attendees were most interested in seeing improvements to the pedestrian environment by completing the sidewalk network, reducing the number of driveways and curb cuts along that network, and adding more mid-block crossings.

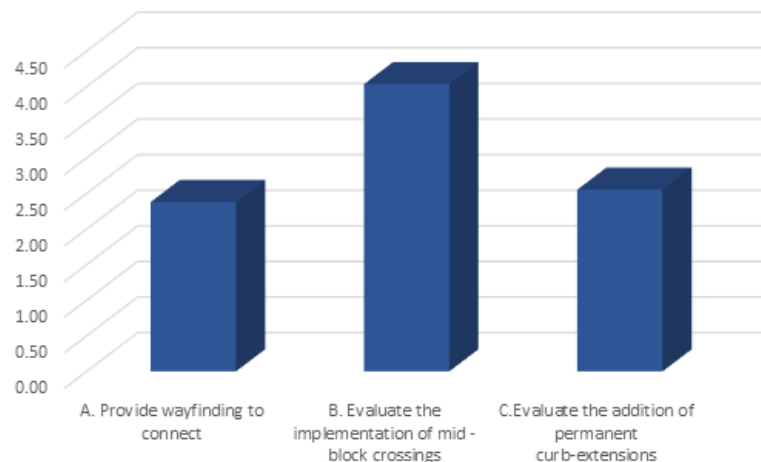
PEDESTRIAN/ROADWAY



BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN



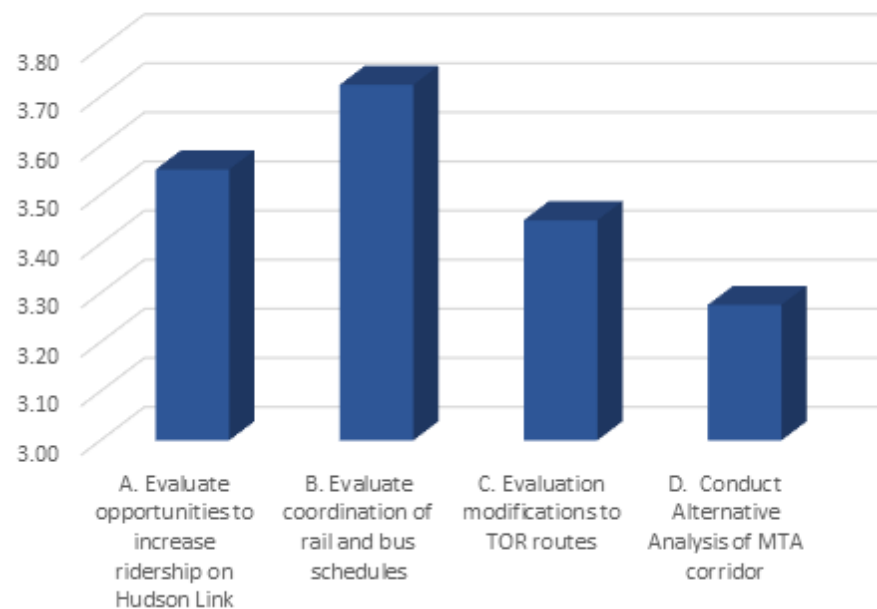
PEDESTRIAN/ROADWAY 2



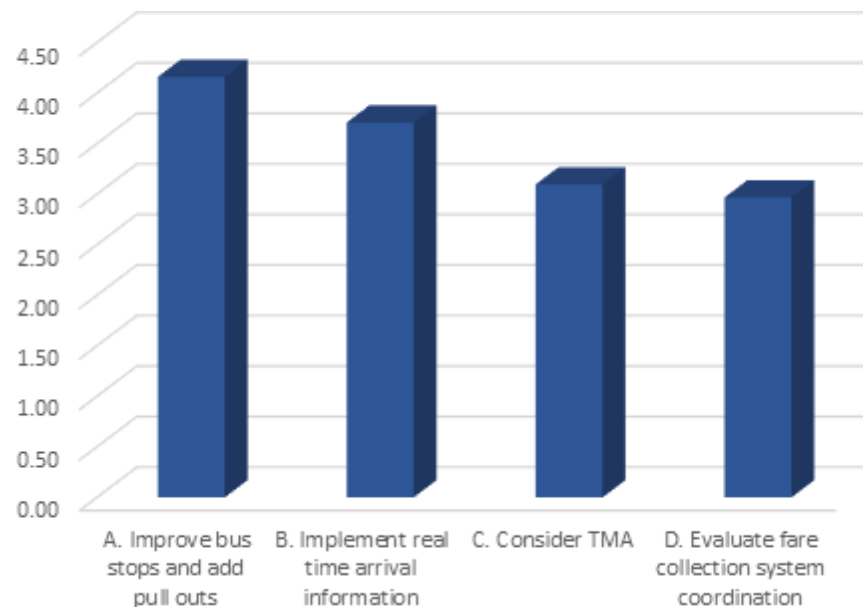
5.1.3 TRANSIT

Stakeholders showed support for continued evaluation of bus and rail schedules to ease commuting as well as opportunities to improve the commuters experience through upgrades to bus stops.

TRANSIT



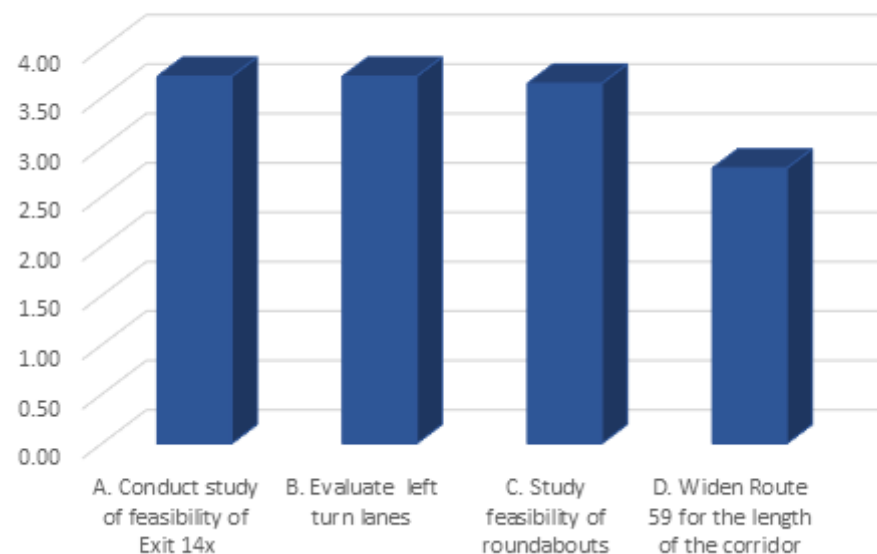
TRANSIT 2



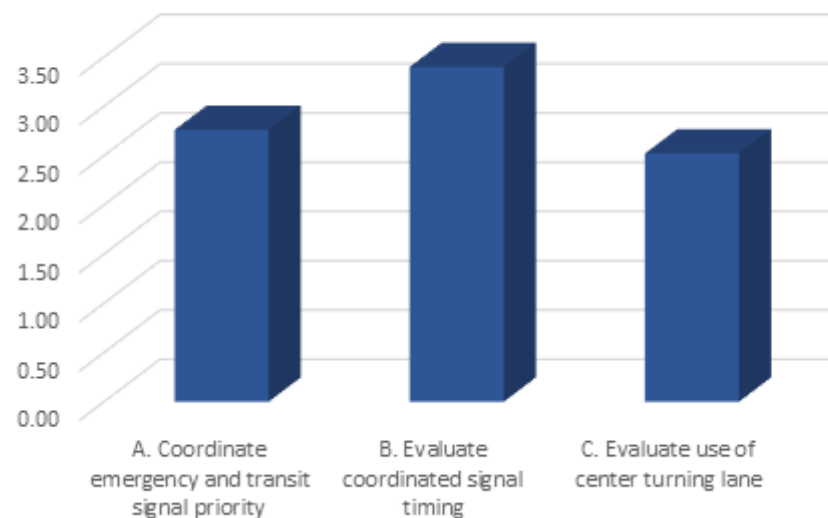
5.1.4 ROADWAY

The last two slides of recommendations dealt with improvements to the roadway. On the first roadway slide, the attendees favored equally a study of the feasibility of Exit 14x and adding more left-turn lanes at key intersections. They also wanted to see optimization of the signal timing or implementation of adaptive signal controls along the corridor.

ROADWAY



ROADWAY2



5.2 COMMENTS

NYMTC provided several methods for stakeholders to provide feedback on the draft report. In addition to the surveys conducted during the presentation, stakeholders were able to “chat” with NYMTC during the presentation. Those chat comments received in the virtual meetings were recorded and incorporated into the discussion of comments received via the project email below. The comments (in bold) have been summarized and grouped into similar categories.

The population in the area has experienced rapid growth and causes frequent congestion on Route 59 and the surrounding roads. There should be a moratorium on future development until improvements have been made to the roads.

Stakeholders have expressed concern about future development throughout the study. Several of the recommendations seek to address the concern regarding future development by utilizing existing processes such as the comprehensive planning and local zoning process, the continued use of New York General Municipal Law (GML) 239 which allows municipalities to refer certain projects to the county planning board, and coordination on a consistent definition of significant impact. The processes seek to minimize impacts on the community, while allowing public input on the future of their community.

Several commenters expressed support for a new exit 14x.

The study recommends a study of the feasibility of Exit 14x. A sponsor and funding need to be determined for that study.

Commenters expressed concern regarding the safety of pedestrians and cyclists along Route 59. They would like to see a protected bike lane along Route 59 to encourage more bicycle trips.

The study recommends consideration of protected bike lanes along Route 59. Implementation of a Complete Street element could help in offering different ways for trips to be completed.

One suggestion was to convert portions of the center turn lane into pedestrian islands with push button walk signals.

The study recommends evaluating the use and design of the center turning lane and/or dedicated left-turn lane within each segment of Route 59 to see if there are options to improve movements or add physical separations to restrict movements. The pedestrian islands could be one of the options examined in that study. The study also includes a recommendation to evaluate potential locations for mid-block crossings, which could use the median as an element of the crossing.

Add a left-hand turn signal at the intersection of College Road and Route 59.

The intersection of College Road and Route 59 was identified in the study's recommendation as one of the key intersections that a left-turn lane should be considered.

The parking lots in the area have been closed to pedestrian traffic by the addition of fences between lots. Consider open walkways with benches between the stores that will be closed to traffic.

Opening up adjoining parking lots to both pedestrian travel and vehicular travel would be a good way to allow residents to access several businesses without having to reenter Route 59. The Town and Villages could implement this sort of practice through modifications to local zoning. The recommendation to evaluate parking requirements does suggest interconnected paths with shared parking to encourage fewer automotive trips and would reduce congestion on Route 59. In addition, the recommendation to include open space and public amenities with any new development would add additional public amenities such as benches.

The study should include Route 59 from Airmont Road west to Hemion Road.

The scope of the project was defined by the study partners originating on South Pascack Road in the Village of Spring Valley and ending at Airmont Road in the Village of Airmont. However, many of the recommendations are not site specific and could be applied on Route 59 west of Airmont Road.

The Final Report should add a section on micro-mobility travel needs and opportunities.

The study made several recommendations that would address the infrastructure needs of micro-mobility travel such as protected bike lanes, converting the sidewalk into a multi-use path where space is available, and studying the MTA Metro-North Railroad Piermont Branch ROW as a multi-use path.

The study should acknowledge and work to reduce GHG emissions by- encouraging electric vehicles including public buses and charging stations.

The study identified and evaluated transportation and development issues in the Route 59 corridor. The study's recommendations support infrastructure for non-vehicular trips through protected bike lanes and a safer pedestrian environment. In addition, several recommendations would enhance bus service which, combined with non vehicular trips, would reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Would the physical improvements to Route 59 such as curb-extensions have a negative impact on traffic flow.

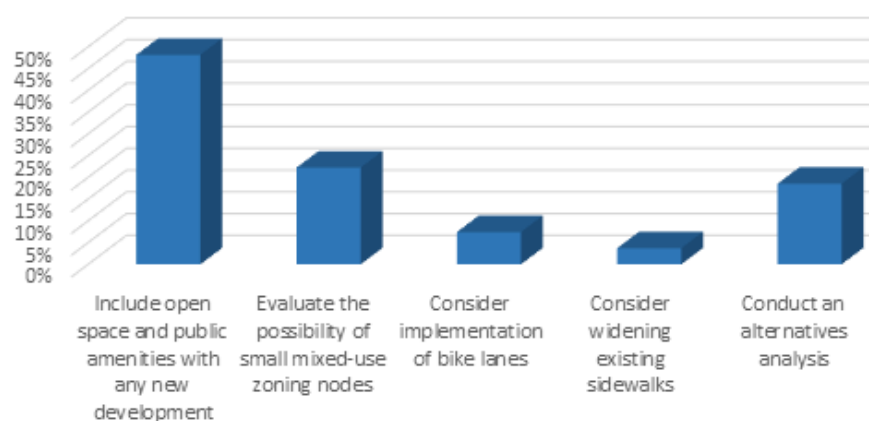
The recommendations that would include physical improvements to Route 59 would need to be designed to identify the proper geometry and location of those improvements as well as their effects on traffic flow. Some improvements would need to balance enhanced pedestrian or bicyclist safety with minor impacts on traffic flow.

Recognizing the effects of COVID-19 in general and within the Route 59 study area, participants were asked a series of questions about how their travel patterns had changed or might change in the future. Most participants indicated that their primary mode of travel within the study area was by driving both before the public health emergency and would remain so after. Most also indicated that they will travel less in the next 12 to 18 months. Several people indicated that they plan to bike/scooter more after the public health emergency.

When asked to evaluate a sub-set of recommendations as to which best adapts Route 59 to changes in travel brought on by COVID-19, the two options that scored highest were land use recommendations: “include open space and public amenities in any new development” and “evaluate the

possibility of small mixed-use zoning nodes.” This seems to indicate an awareness that land use patterns and site planning can be instrumental in creating healthy communities that meet the changing needs of the population. Amongst the transportation recommendations, “conduct an alternatives analysis for the Piermont Branch,” scored higher than the other transportation related recommendations: “consider implementing bike lanes” and “consider widening existing sidewalks.” So, as the region continues to ponder the effects of COVID-19 in planning and transportation, alternative physical plans and alternative modes of transportation seem to be gaining interest.

Which recommendation best adapts Route 59 in response to changes in travel brought on by the public health emergency?







APPENDIX A

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A. Introduction

The New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC), through its SFY 2018-2019 Unified Planning Work Program, is funding the Route 59 Area Transportation & Land Use Study, which was proposed by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and Rockland County (NY). Route 59 serves several transportation and community design objectives within a mixed-used environment. This includes commercial and residential uses within the diverse communities of the Village of Spring Valley, the Village of Airmont, and the Town of Ramapo (from Airmont Road in the west to South Pascack Road in the east). The Route 59 corridor supports a variety of home-based and work-based trips using a variety of modes, with a significant pedestrian presence. The study will address multiple transportation and land-use issues to develop a sustainable vision for transportation and land-use improvements in the corridor.

1) Objectives of Public Outreach Plan

The Public Outreach Plan (POP) comprises a robust and comprehensive effort to educate stakeholders on the study's purpose and need, solicit and incorporate their input, and gain broad stakeholder support for a vision of the Route 59 corridor. From previous experience in integrated corridor studies and working with communities throughout the Hudson Valley, the WSP Team knows that changes to land-use patterns can often generate a level of uncertainty or discomfort. Similarly, any changes to the geometry of the road can often appear as a non-starter to stakeholders who only know the road under congested conditions. Identifying stakeholders' wants and concerns early in the process is important, so they can be incorporated into study recommendations that will address possible issues and help build consensus. The outreach effort will enable active collaboration with stakeholders throughout the process to:

- understand stakeholders' desires and concerns.
- distill their concerns into essential values or principles.

- visualize for stakeholders what the future might look like while adhering to those values.

The Outreach Plan will form the basis for public outreach throughout the envisioned 15 to 18 month project schedule. The Outreach Plan will support Task 4, Community Visioning, by securing stakeholder input on existing conditions, gaps and needs pertaining to transportation modes, and alternative transportation and land-use improvement scenarios that address these issues. The Outreach Plan incorporates a period of stakeholder engagement following the release of the Draft Study Report.

Given the presence of several diverse communities within the study area, the Outreach Program will also be guided by NYMTC's Title VI Program and Language Access operating procedures. Specifically, measures will be taken to provide outreach material in Spanish, Creole, and Yiddish.

B. Public Outreach Activities

The Public Outreach Plan utilizes a variety of methods to engage in two-way communication with stakeholders, including workshops, targeted meetings, "pop-up" sessions at community events, social media interactions, and one-on-one sessions. Below are proposed outreach activities and timeline.

1) Visioning Interactive Workshops and Additional In-Person Outreach

Workshops that both educate and solicit input from stakeholders are highly effective ways to help gain stakeholder buy-in to the study and achieve consensus. The WSP Team will coordinate four (4) workshops throughout the study process, supported by additional "pop-up" and/or one-on-one meetings with stakeholders.

A variety of techniques may be used to encourage widespread participation of workshop attendees and solicit input from as many participants as possible. Options include:

- one-on-one / small group conversations at presentation boards.
- hands-on workshops with an opening presentation and interactive breakout sessions; facilitator directs the conversation through questions and recorded notes and sketches in printed maps.
- circulation of a printed survey to participants (and/or use of electronic survey collection tools).
- Breakout session in which facilitator asks group to write down the first three things that come to mind when they think about their travel on Route 59. Facilitator will share all responses and identify common themes.
- Breakout sessions in which participants view over-sized map of the study corridor and place red stickers on what they view as problem areas (heavy congestion, road in need of repair, etc).

The frequency and number of workshops and other in-person outreach will be influenced by the nature of stakeholder input and may be revised as the study progresses. At this time, we propose the following:

a) Workshop #1:

Pre-workshop: To prepare for this workshop, in the weeks prior to the session, the WSP Team will conduct targeted interviews and/or small group sessions to gain an early understanding of stakeholders' salient interests and concerns for the study corridor. Stakeholders for these targeted interviews will be identified through consultation with the Study Advisory Committee (SAC).

This workshop will have the dual purpose of serving as the general introductory kick-off for the study and support Task 2, Existing Conditions, by soliciting stakeholder input on:

- how stakeholders use and how frequently they travel on Route 59.
- their typical route.
- any specific areas along the study corridor that require special attention.
- critical issues with respect to safety, congestion, transit, and/or land use.

The WSP Team will schedule a meeting with the Project Steering Committee (PSC) prior to Workshop #1 to preview the session and immediately following the workshop to debrief.

Post-Workshop #1 Outreach:

Pop-up sessions. In the weeks following Workshop #1, the WSP Team will conduct a series of "pop-up" sessions to deepen stakeholder engagement. These will be conducted at venues within the study corridor where stakeholders are gathered, including houses of worship, community events, or business group meetings. (See Table 1, "Potential Venues for Pop-Ups").

Small Group and/or one-on-one sessions. Stakeholders that were identified by the Project Steering Committee or through Workshop #1 as needing more intense outreach will be engaged through small group or one-on-one sessions. Specialized outreach to these individuals or groups will help alleviate concerns before they rise to the level of delaying the study and help build consensus.

b) Workshop #2:

In support of Task 2, Focus Area Analysis, this session will work to identify Focus Areas in the study corridor based on stakeholder input. One way this may be accomplished is through the use of Wikimapia and the development of heat maps based on stakeholder comments. The WSP Team will prepare a series of visualizations of land-use and roadway configurations. Roadway improvements under consideration will include such elements as travel, turn, and bike lanes; sidewalks; and landscaping.

The purpose of establishing Focus Areas is to look at conditions within a specific area of the corridor that may be prototypical of the entire 4.5 mile corridor and identify unique desirable or undesirable features.

The WSP Team will meet with the PSC and the SAC prior to the workshop to review preliminary visualizations.

Post-Workshop #2 Outreach:

Pop-up sessions. A second set of pop-up sessions will be conducted in the weeks following Workshop #2 to encourage the public to “test fit” roadway improvements in each of the focus Areas. This activity will help stakeholders understand potential trade-offs, given right-of-way and adjoining properties. Questions such as, “Would you rather have an additional travel lane or sidewalks in this particular area?” will be posed.

Pop-up sessions will be conducted at venues within the study corridor where stakeholders are gathered, including houses of worship, community events, or business group meetings. (See Table 1, “Potential Venues for Pop-Ups”)

Small Group and / or one-on-one sessions. Stakeholders that were identified by the PSC or through Workshop #2 as needing more intense outreach will be engaged through small group or one-on-one sessions. Specialized outreach to these individuals or groups will help alleviate concerns before they rise to the level of delaying the study and help build consensus.

c) Workshop #3:

This workshop will be scheduled toward the end of Task 3, Focus Area Analysis, to share results of the analysis with stakeholders and seek their input. The WSP Team will develop interactive activities to promote engagement. These may include the use of “kit of parts” or a similar technique to encourage discussions of opportunities with the right-of-way for roadway modifications and/ or changes to land use along the corridor. The “kit of parts” would enable participants to overlay to-scale mock-ups on aerial photographs of the focus Areas.

The WSP Team will meet with the PSC before Workshop #3 to preview the session and immediately after for a meeting debrief.

d) Workshop #4:

The Study Team’s initial recommendations for roadway improvement and land-use scenarios will be presented to stakeholders at this workshop and their input solicited. Stakeholder feedback from this session will be reviewed and considered prior to finalizing the recommendations in the Draft Study Report.

The WSP Team will schedule a meeting with the PSC immediately following this workshop for a meeting debrief.

2) Public Review of the Draft Study Report

The WSP team will coordinate and implement up to three (3) public meetings to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to review the Draft Study Report. A detailed agenda for these meetings will be prepared and submitted to the PSC and SAC for review and approval. The agenda will include a period for presenting an overview of the Draft Study Report and opportunities for stakeholders to submit feedback. Comments received from stakeholders at these public meetings will be summarized and submitted to NYMTC’s Project Manager, the PSC, and the SAC for discussion as to how the plan should be modified to incorporate specific comments.

C. Public Outreach Communications

The team will develop a range of print and electronic communications to support the outreach efforts and ensure that stakeholders are effectively informed throughout the study process. All materials and communications are subject to NYMTC review and approval. Methods of communication may include:

1) **Website**

The WSP Team will develop a project website that will allow the public to view materials relating to the study, including the study-area profiles and development scenarios in advance of the community visioning workshops and the Draft Study Report.

2) **PowerPoint presentations**

The WSP team will develop and prepare all presentations needed for visioning workshops, public meetings to review the Draft Study Report, and other outreach activities.

3) **Meeting notices and press release**

The WSP team will publicize the visioning workshops and public meetings to maximize attendance via press releases distributed to local and regional media outlets in the study area, as well as meeting notices posted in public venues in the study corridor.

4) **Meeting summaries and photos**

The WSP team will prepare meeting summaries of all stakeholder workshops and meetings and take photos of the sessions.

5) **Social Media interactions**

The WSP team will facilitate a social media tool to gather public input from stakeholders. This tool will not be a typical posting board, which requires extensive monitoring, but an informal way for stakeholders to submit responses to periodic questions or polls that may be distributed by the project team.

D. Appendix

Table 1 – Potential Events for Pop-Up Outreach (Preliminary List—Work in Progress)

Date	Event	Location	Description
02/22/2019 - 02/24/2019	Suburban Home & Garden Show	Rockland Community College Field House 145 College Rd. Suffern, NY 10901 Contact # 800.223.4648	Over 400 display booths offering a range of home improvement products and related services.
02/21/2019	Leadership Rockland - Arts/Culture/Media Day	175 Main Street Nyack, NY 10960	
02/15/2019 - 02/18/2019	45 th Northeast RV Show	Rockland Community College Field House 145 College Rd. Suffern, NY 10901 Contact # 800.223.4648	Over 50 recreational vehicle (RV) related vendors including campgrounds, RV service and repair, along with related products.
02/23/2019	Winter Blast	JTS Community, Health & Sports Center 115 Torne Valley Rd. Hillburn, NY 10931	Free family event providing inflatable rides, arts & crafts, and player meet & greet with the Rockland Boulders baseball team.
02/28/2019 - 03/03/2019	World Fishing & Outdoor Expo	Rockland Community College Field House 145 College Rd. Suffern, NY 10901 Contact # 800.223.4648	
02/28/2019 - 03/05/2019	Northeast's Premier Fishing & Hunting Show	Rockland Community College Field House 145 College Rd. Suffern, NY 10901 Contact # 800.223.4648	
09/10/2019	Rockland County YOUTHFEST	Rockland Community College Field House 145 College Rd. Suffern, NY 10901 Contact # 800.223.4648	The Rockland County YouthFest is a collaborative effort staffed by a team of dedicated volunteers from Rockland Community College, Hudson Valley Boy Scout Council, Hackensack UMC, HeadStart of Rockland Inc, Liberty Mutual, New Horizons Baton Twirlers, AM/PM Consulting, H&S Sales Consultants, Inc., Nyack Hospital and TD Bank. The Rockland County Youth Bureau serves as the lead agency for this annual event.

Table 2 – Potential Venues for Pop-Up Outreach (Preliminary List—Work in Progress)

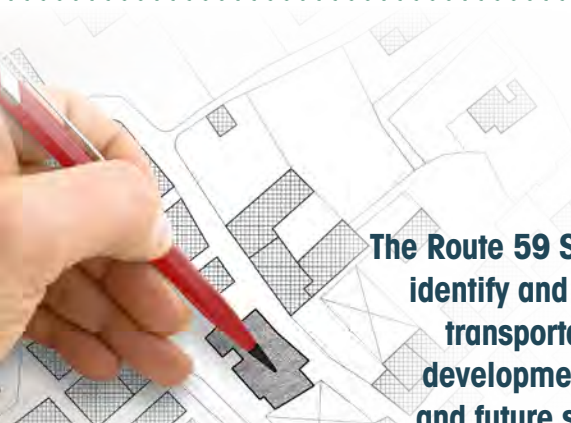
PLACES OF WORSHIP	Address	City, State, ZIP	Phone Number
United Church of Spring Valley	11 E. Church St.	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-356-2863
Upper Room House of Worship	118 Bethune Blvd.	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-371-7141
Church of God	13 W. Church St.	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-356-5806
French Speaking Baptist Church of Spring Valley	80 N. Madison Ave.	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-425-8676
Spring Valley Seventh Day Church	7 Johnson St.	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-352-4806
Spring Valley United Methodist Church	2 S. Madison Ave. #1	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-356-0238
Inglesia Del Reino	99 S. Central Ave. #3	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-352-0126
Sinai Seventh-Day Adventist Church	7 Johnson St.	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-426-2256
Church of the Nazarene	103 N. Main St.	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-352-2791
Church of St. Joseph	245 N. Main St.	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-356-0311
Church of the Living God	130 Bethune Blvd.	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-352-6975
Grace Assembly of God	19 N. Madison Ave.	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-356-2120
First Baptist Church	3 Hoyt St.	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-578-9232
Young Israel of Spring Valley	23 Union Rd.	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-356-3363
Temple Beth El	415 Viola Rd.	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-356-2000
Tiferes Gedalya	9 N. Saddle River Rd.	Airmont, NY 10952	845-352-5122
Kehillat New Hempstead	720 Union Road	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-362-2425
St. Peter & Paul Ukrainian	39 Collins Ave.	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-356-1634
St. Paul's AME Zion	121 West St.	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-356-3585
First Timothy Christian Church	198 N. Main St.	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-709-9372
St. Paul's Episcopal Church	26 S. Madison Ave.	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-356-1857
SCHOOLS			
East Ramapo Central School District (K-12)*	105 So. Madison Avenue	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-577-6011
Ramapo High School	400 Viola Road	Spring Valley, NY 10977	
Spring Valley High School	361 Rt. 59	Spring Valley, NY 10977	
COMMUNITY CENTERS			
The Salvation Army	179 N. Main St.	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-352-9577
Hacso Community Center, Inc.	24 West St.	Spring Valley, NY 10977	
Haitian American Cultural	24 West St.	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-352-5897
William "Bill" Darden Community Center	Dr. Berg Ln	Spring Valley, NY 10977	
Chabad Jewish Enrichment Center	750 Chestnut Ridge Road	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-356-6686
COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS			
Historical Society of Rockland County	20 Zukor Road	New City, NY 10956	845-634-9629
Finkelstein Memorial Library	24 Chestnut St.	Spring Valley, NY 10977	845-352-5700
Town of Ramapo Senior Citizens Center		Montebello, NY	
Notes: * The East Ramapo School District serves areas of eastern Town of Ramapo, and portions of the towns of Clarkstown and Haverstraw, including Chestnut Ridge, New Hempstead, New Square, Spring Valley, which spans Ramapo and Clarkstown, and portions of Airmont and New City. The district also serves the hamlets of Hillcrest and Monsey, as well as the Village of Pomona.			

Fact Sheet

WWW.ROUTE59STUDY.ORG

Planning for Improvements

As growth in population and economic development in the area around Route 59 have increased significantly, so have rush-hour travel and congestion, creating a need to plan for improvements. The New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) is pleased to announce the Route 59 Area Transportation & Land Use Study. This comprehensive study is made possible through federal funds and a partnership among NYMTC, the New York State Department of Transportation (NYCDOT), Rockland County, the Town of Ramapo, and the Villages of Airmont and Spring Valley.

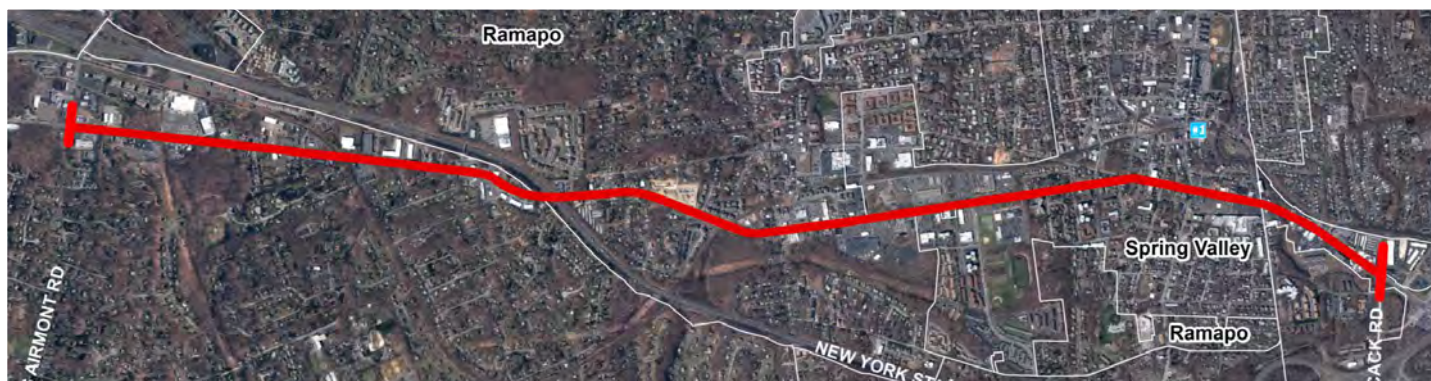


The Route 59 Study will identify and evaluate transportation and development issues and future scenarios in the Route 59 corridor.

About the Study

The Route 59 Study Area is a 4.5-mile stretch of Route 59, starting on the western end at Airmont Road and Route 59 in the Village of Airmont, running east through the Town of Ramapo ending at South Pascack Road and Route 59 in the Village of Spring Valley.

The area surrounding Route 59 comprises a mix of land uses, including large retail centers, commercial and residential sites, and a significant pedestrian presence. Regional and local people and goods move through the area by a range of modes, including truck, bus, car, pedestrian, and bicycle.



Your Input Is Essential!

NYMTC invites those who use Route 59, those who live in and around the corridor, property and business owners, community groups, elected officials, and other organizations to help shape the future of the Route 59 corridor. The many ways that you can share your thoughts and ideas are listed on the reverse page. Please join the conversation!

The Study Process

Providing a framework for possible future development of the Route 59 corridor, the Study will be completed over 15-18 months and be divided into three phases:

Stage One: Community Input

January – August 2019

Input from the public and other stakeholders is vital to the Route 59 Study. The Study Team is conducting a robust community outreach effort to secure ideas, suggestions, and feedback from the public and other stakeholders.

Stage Two: Draft Study Report

Fall 2019

The Draft Study Report formalizes the ideas and recommendations from NYMTC, the Study team, and community and stakeholder feedback. The community will be able to continue to review and comment on the Draft Study report prior to the Final Draft stage of the study.

Stage Three: Final Study Report

Spring 2020

Providing a foundation for the future development of the Study Area by NYSDOT, the Town of Ramapo, and the Villages of Airmont and Spring Valley, the Final Study Report will be made available to the general public, members of the local communities, and other stakeholders.

Community Planning Workshops – Your Voice Counts!

Your input is vital to the planning process. To generate as much public comment and participation as possible in the Route 59 Study, the Study team is hosting a series of four Community Planning Workshops.

The first of these workshops took place on March 13, 2019, in Airmont, NY. At this interactive session, members of the community and other stakeholders discussed existing conditions in the Study Area and provided their input on how they use and travel on Route 59.

We encourage you to attend and provide your input at one or more of the remaining Community Planning Workshops:

Workshop #2 - Focal Areas

Monday, April 29, 2019
Ramapo Town Hall
237 NY-RT 59,
Airmont, NY 10901

This session will work to identify Focus Areas in the study corridor based on community input.

Workshop #3 - Community Visioning

Tuesday, June 18, 2019
Finkelstein Memorial Library
24 Chestnut Street,
Spring Valley, NY 10977

This workshop will share results of and seek community input on the Focus Area Analysis.

Workshop #4 - Summary of Initial Findings

Tuesday, July 30, 2019
Spring Valley High School
361 NY-RT 59,
Spring Valley, NY 10977

This session will address key initial findings of the Study Team, as well as recommendations for roadway improvement and land-use scenarios based on community feedback and public comments.

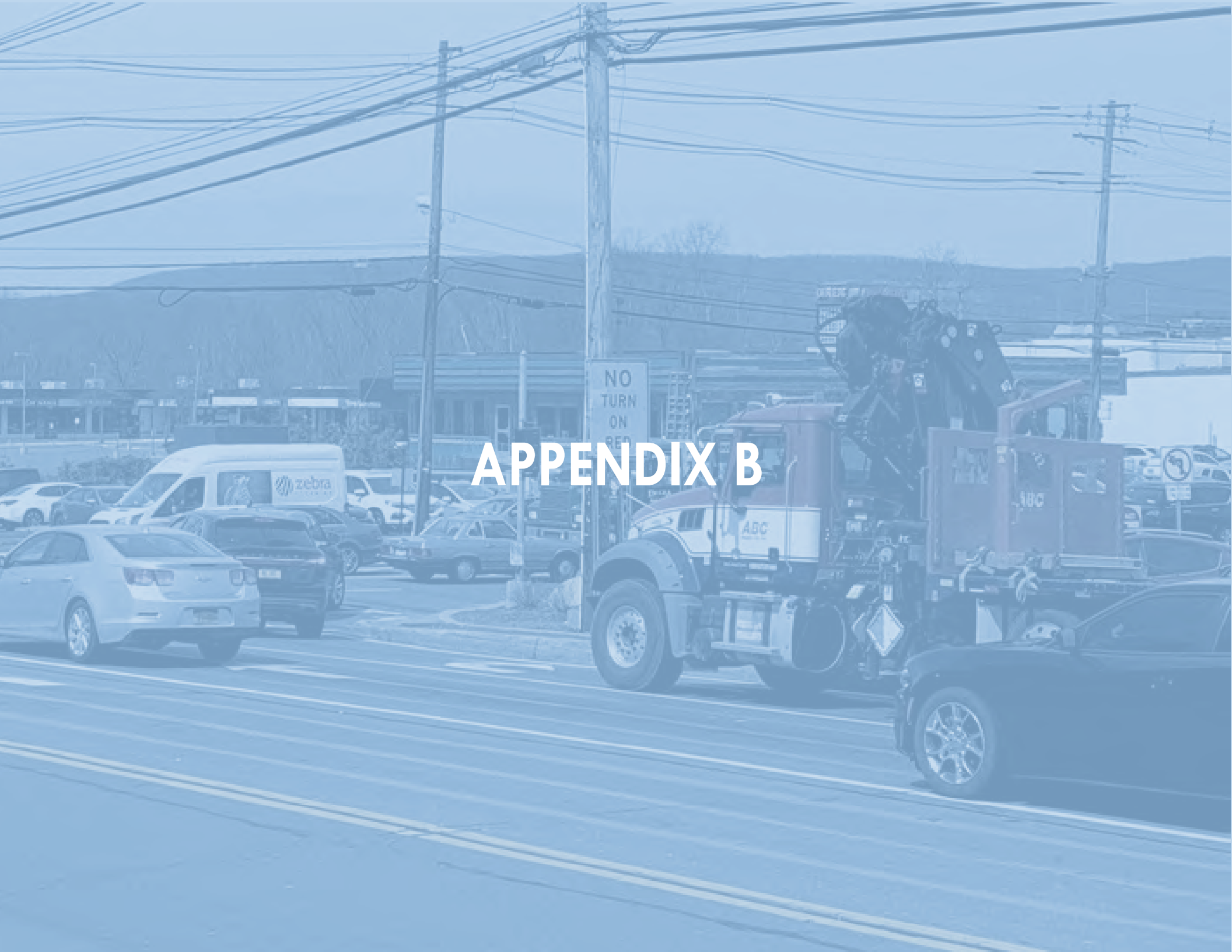
Can't make the meetings?

There are other ways to participate that don't require your attendance at a meeting. You can submit questions or comments on the Route 59 Study, the Study area, or the Study process:

Email: Comments@Route59Study.org | Online: www.Route59study.org

Mail: New York Metropolitan Transportation Council-Mid-Hudson South
TCC - Route 59 Area Transportation and Land Use Study
Attn: Ali Mohseni
4 Burnett Boulevard, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603





APPENDIX B

Route 59 Area Transportation and Land Use Study

Socioeconomic Profile

February 2019

Prepared For
NYMTC

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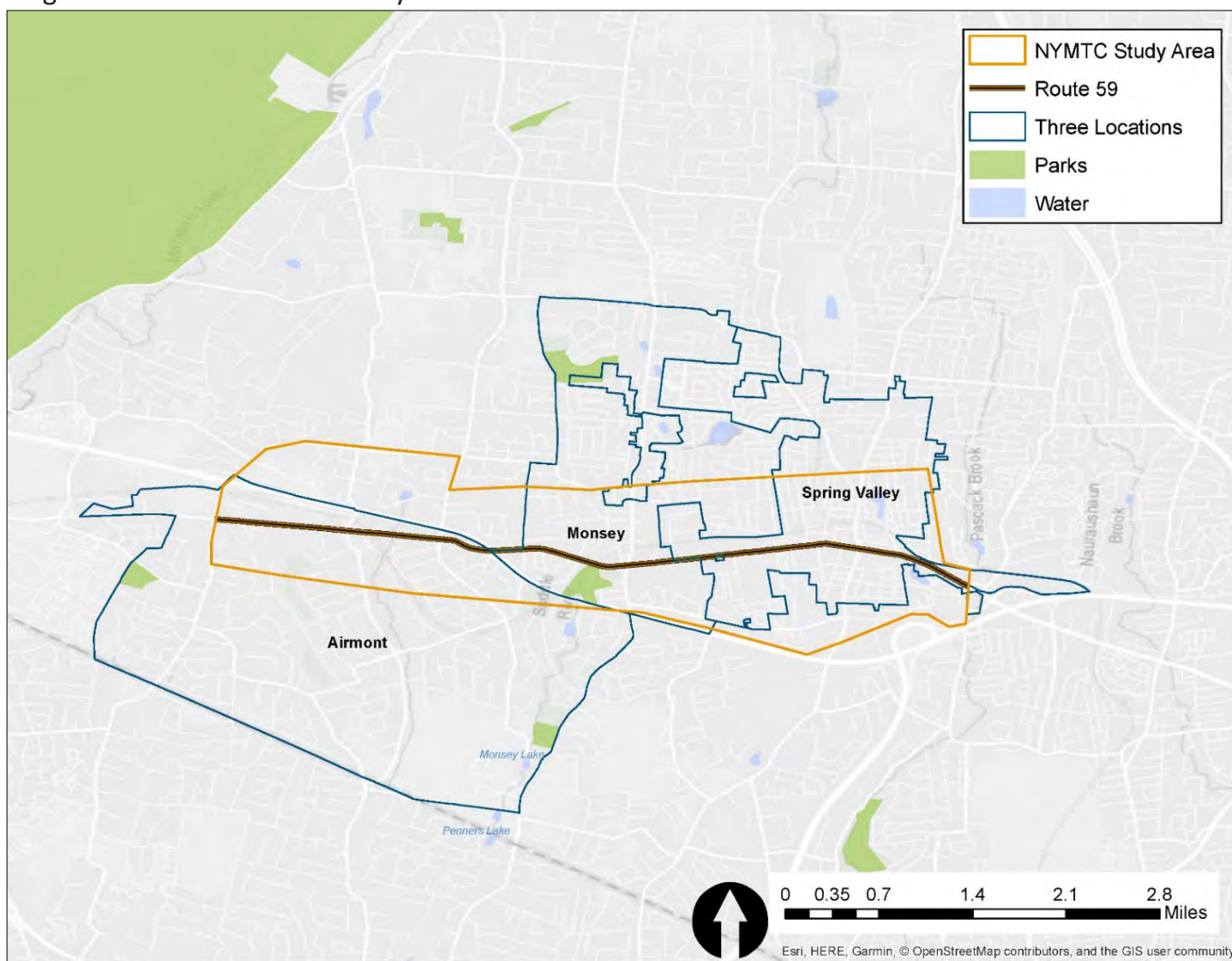
I. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to assess the current socioeconomic existing conditions within the Route 59 corridor to better understand the people who live and work within the study area and to inform the corridor Transportation and Land Use Plan. To this end, Urbanomics analyzed data on the block group, census tract, census designated place (CDP), Town, and County levels. Data were collected and compared to assess different trends occurring within the corridor.

The portion of the Route 59 corridor being studied runs from the intersection of North Airmont Road to South Pascack Road. A study area boundary north and south of Route 59 was defined in consultation with the Town of Ramapo and Village of Airmont. That study area for analysis is shown in gold in Figure 1.

The study area lies entirely within the Town of Ramapo, but includes portions of three census designated places¹ (CDP): the Village of Airmont, Monsey CDP, and the Village of Spring Valley. The Village of Airmont is an incorporated village fully within the Town of Ramapo. The Village of Spring Valley is an incorporated village with most of its land area within the Town of Ramapo; a small portion of the Village of Spring Valley extends into the Town of Clarkstown beyond the defined study area. Socioeconomic conditions regarding these areas, both individually and combined, are compared to Rockland County as a whole.

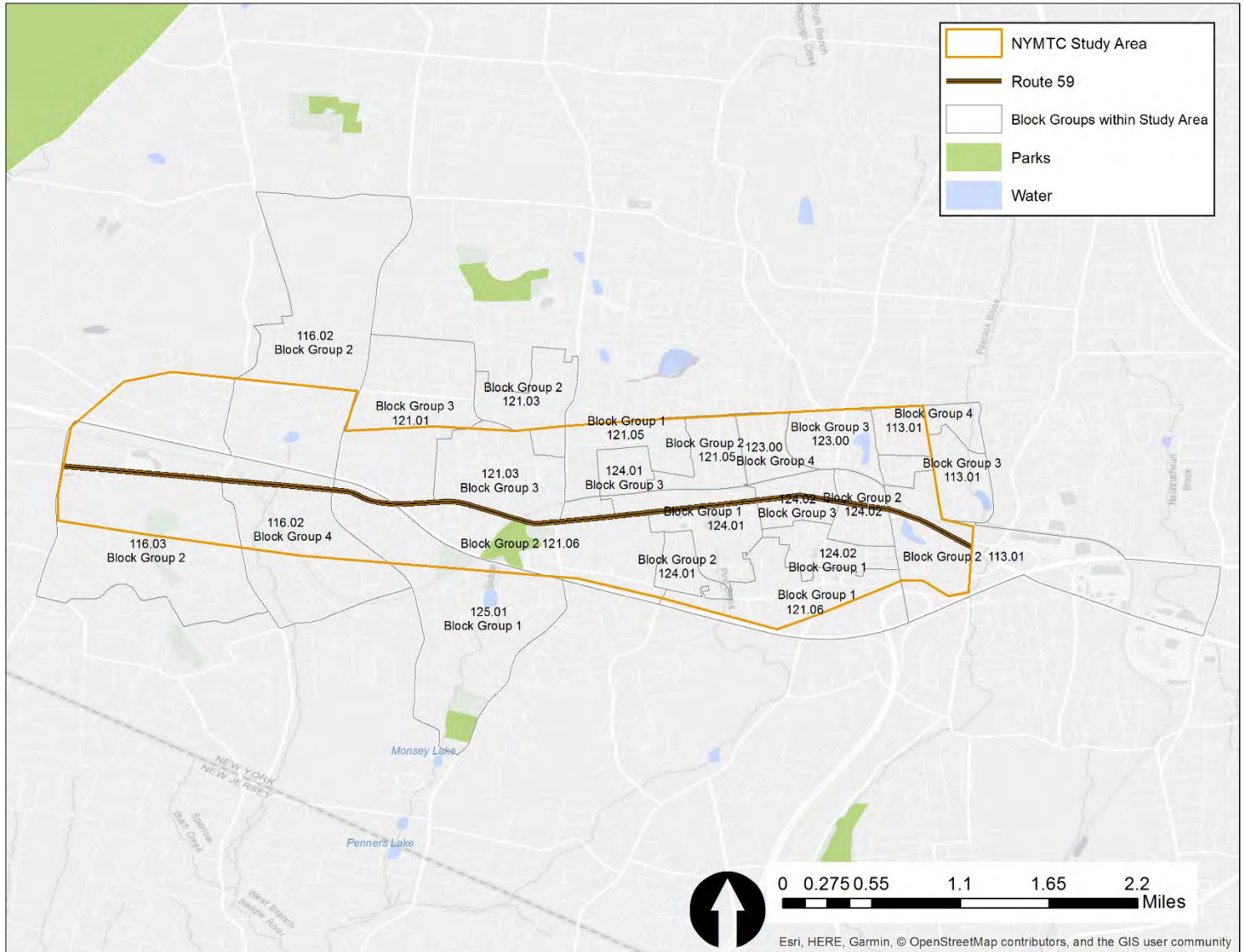
Figure 1. CDPs within the Study Area



¹¹ A CDP is any incorporated or unincorporated area identifiable by name with sufficient population density to make data collection statistically feasible.

In the second section of this report, Urbanomics looks at the study area corridor on a more granular level in order to include the portions of the study area that are not within CDPs and meet Title VI requirements. In order to do this, block group data were collected and analyzed based on a boundary suggested by the Town of Ramapo and Village of Airmont. If 50 percent or more of a block group's boundary was located within the study area it was selected to be part of the Route 59 corridor analysis (see Figure 2). The study area comprises 22 block groups within 11 census tracts. Due to the relatively small number of people within these areas, only a limited amount of data is available.

Figure 2. Block Groups within the Study Area



II. Profile of Route 59 (CDP and County Comparison)

Population and Households

From 2000 to 2010, the population growth rate in the corridor communities (22.2%) was almost three times that of Rockland County (8.7%). After 2010, the rate of population increase drops off sharply in all of the areas except Monsey, which is on trend to equal or exceed the growth it saw in the last decade by 2020. As shown in Table 1.

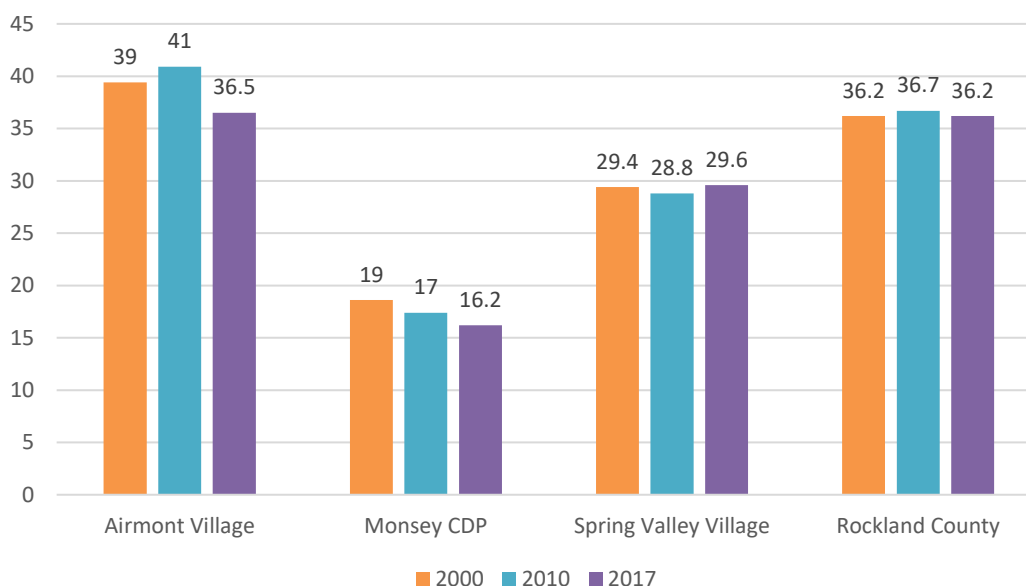
The population within the study area communities is significantly younger than the County, which has a median age of 36.2. Within each of the three communities, more than 25 percent of the population is between the ages of 0 and 17; in Monsey, however, more than 50 percent of the population is under 18. As shown in Figure 2, the median age in Monsey decreased between 2000 and 2017 to 16.2 years. Airmont is closer in age make-up to the county as a whole, with a median age of 36.5 years.

Table 1. Total Population Trends, 2000-2017

Total Population Trend, 2000-2017				Change in Population	
	2000	2010	2017	2000-2010	2010-2017
Airmont Village	7,799	8,628	8,869	10.63%	2.79%
Monsey CDP	14,504	18,412	22,043	26.94%	19.72%
Spring Valley Village	25,464	31,347	32,538	23.10%	3.80%
Total of all Three Locations	47,767	58,387	63,450	22.23%	8.67%
Rockland County	286,753	311,687	325,027	8.70%	4.28%

Source: Decennial Census 2000 & 2010, ACS 2013-2017

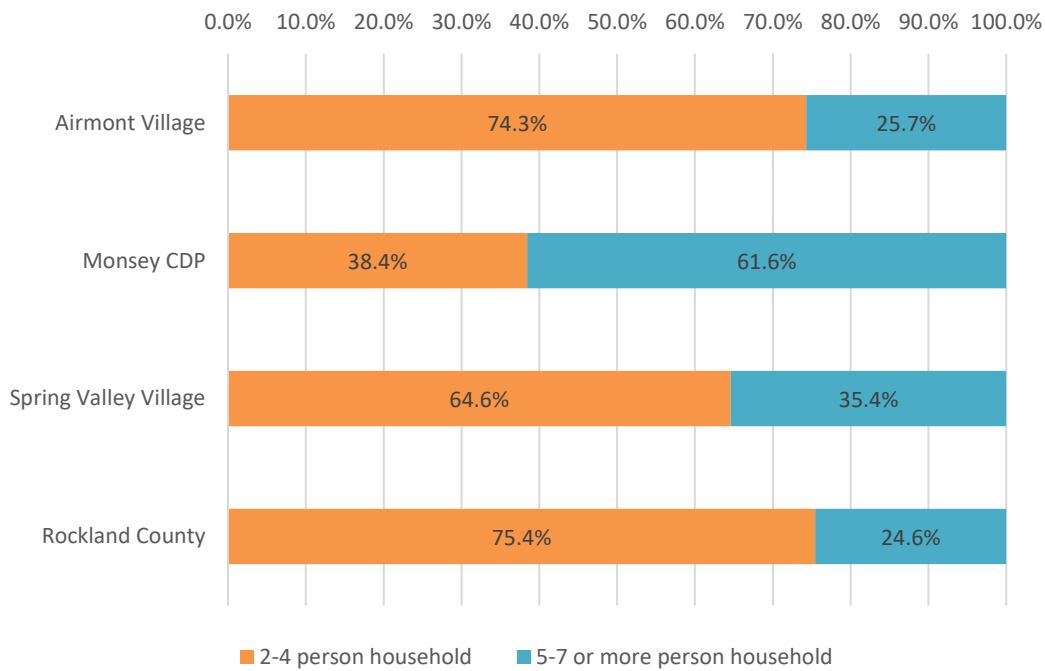
Figure 3. Median Age 2000-2017



Source: ACS, 2013-2017

The vast majority of Rockland County households are Family Households (90%)²; the corridor communities have a slightly greater share of family households with 91.3%. However, the size of families differs greatly among the communities: roughly one in four Rockland County and Airmont family households are considered “large”, having between 5 and 7 members; in Spring Valley, large families make up more than one third (35.4%) of the total and in Monsey 61.6 percent of families have more than 5 members.

Figure 4. Family Households, 2017



Source: ACS, 2013-2017

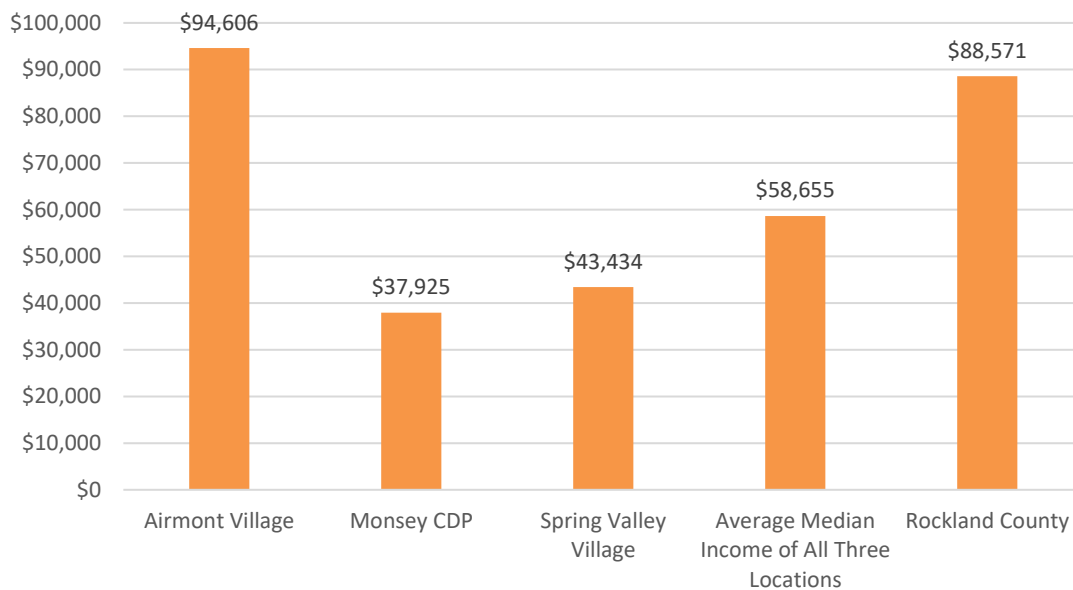
² The US Census Bureau defines a “Family Household” as “a group of two people or more (one of whom is the householder) related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together; all such people (including related subfamily members) are considered as members of one family.”

Table 2. Income Distribution, 2017

Income	Airmont Village	Monsey CDP	Spring Valley Village	Total of all Three Locations	Rockland County
<\$50K	27.5%	56.0%	56.2%	51.5%	30.3%
\$50K-\$99K	23.9%	27.3%	26.8%	26.4%	24.8%
\$100K-\$199K	32.3%	12.5%	12.6%	15.8%	29.9%
\$200K or more	16.3%	4.2%	4.4%	6.3%	15.1%
Total Households	2,533	3,984	8,956	15,473	99,935

Source: ACS, 2013-2017

Figure 5. Median Household Income, 2017



Source: ACS, 2013-2017

The median income in Rockland County was \$88,571 in 2017. As shown in Figure 5, there is significant income disparity among the corridor communities.

More than 50 percent of households in Monsey and Spring Valley have incomes of less than \$50,000. Even given Airmont's relatively high incomes, when averaged, the median income of the three study area communities are approximately \$30,000 less than the median income of Rockland County.

Housing Characteristics

There are 16,687 housing units in the three corridor communities, with a combined vacancy rate of 7.3 percent, which is 2 percentage points higher than the County as shown in Table 3. A housing market is considered healthy if the rental vacancy rate is between 6 and 7 percent and the owner vacancy rate is around 3 percent, the very low vacancy rates in the corridor communities indicate a need for additional housing units of both housing types.

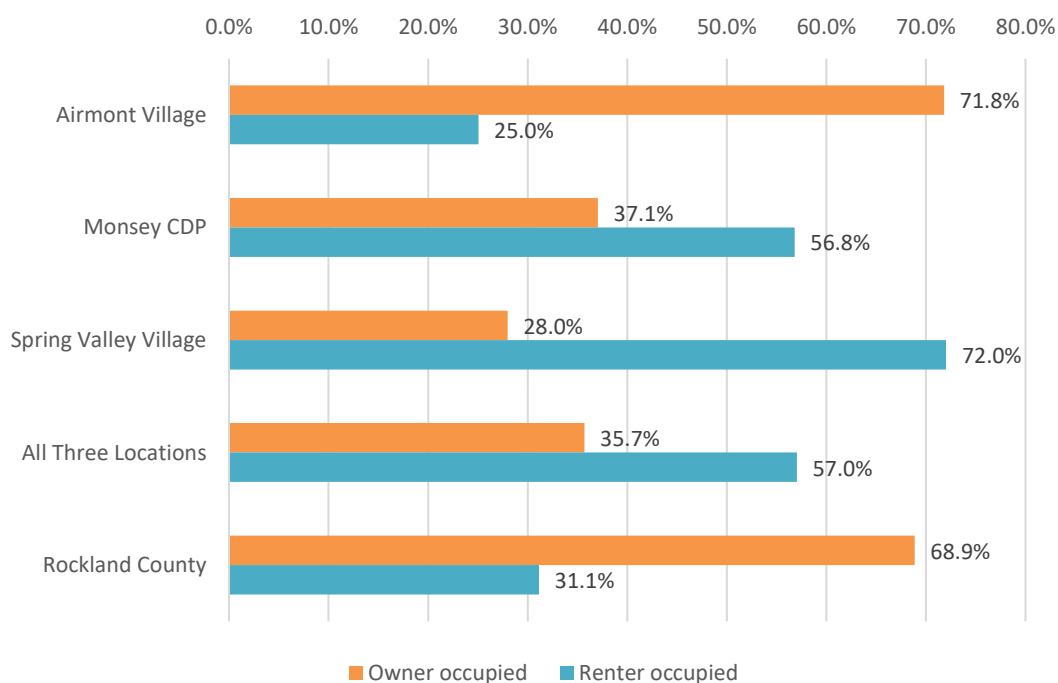
More than half (57.0%) of the households in the three communities are renters, which differs from the County where there are more owner-occupied units as seen in See Figure 6.

Table 3. Housing and Vacancy, 2017

	Airmont Village	Monsey CDP	Spring Valley Village	Total of all Three Locations	Rockland County
Total housing units	2,615	4,244	9,828	16,687	105,530
Occupied housing units	96.9%	93.9%	91.1%	92.7%	94.7%
Vacant housing units	3.1%	6.1%	8.9%	7.3%	5.3%
Homeowner vacancy rate	0.0%	0.4%	3.0%	-	1.3%
Rental vacancy rate	2.8%	2.8%	3.6%	-	4.2%

Source: ACS, 2013-2017

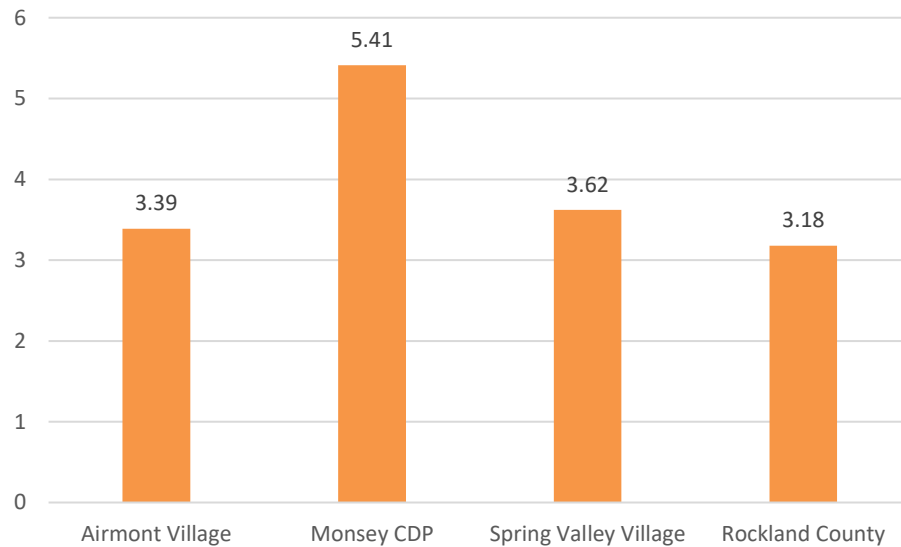
Figure 6. Housing Tenure, 2017



Source: ACS, 2013-2017

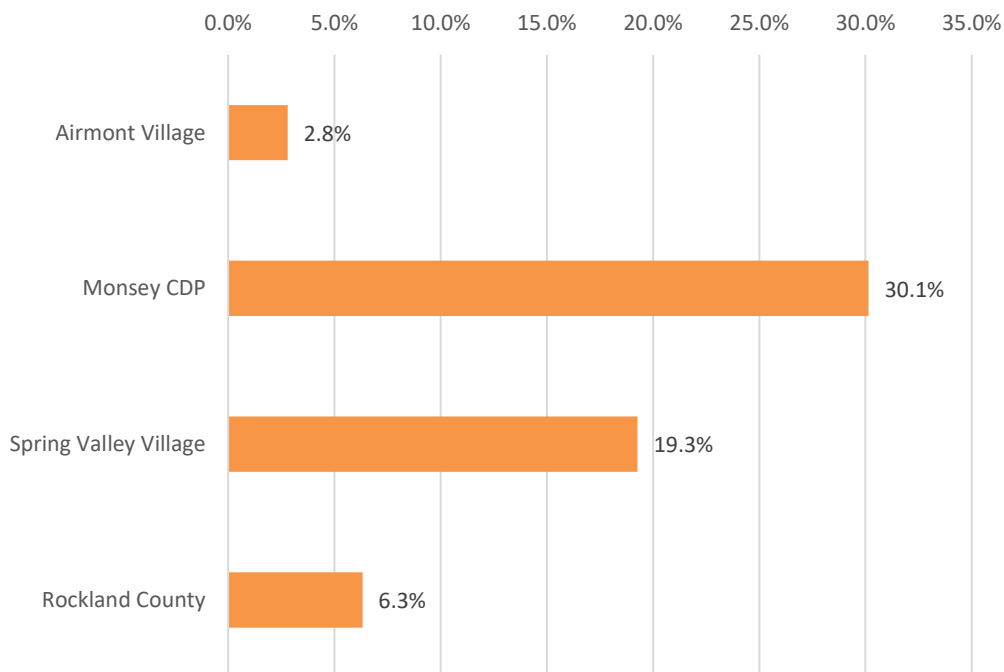
While Airmont, Spring Valley, and Rockland County all have similar household sizes, Monsey has an average household size of 5.41. This explains why more than 30 percent of the CDP's households are overcrowded, compared to the County where only 6.3 percent of households have more than one occupant per room.

Figure 7. Household Size, 2017



Source: ACS, 2013-2017

Figure 8. Overcrowded (+1 Occupants Per Room), 2017



Source: ACS, 2013-2017

Labor Force

65.3 percent of Rockland County's population 16 and over is either employed or seeking work. Of these, 6.3 percent are unemployed. The labor force participation rates in the corridor communities range from a high of 71.1 percent in Spring Valley to a low of 49.6 percent in Monsey. While Spring Valley has the highest labor force participation rate, it also has the greatest share of unemployment. Relatively low labor force participation in Monsey and high unemployment in Spring Valley would indicate a greater number of residents in the Route 59 corridor during standard working hours.

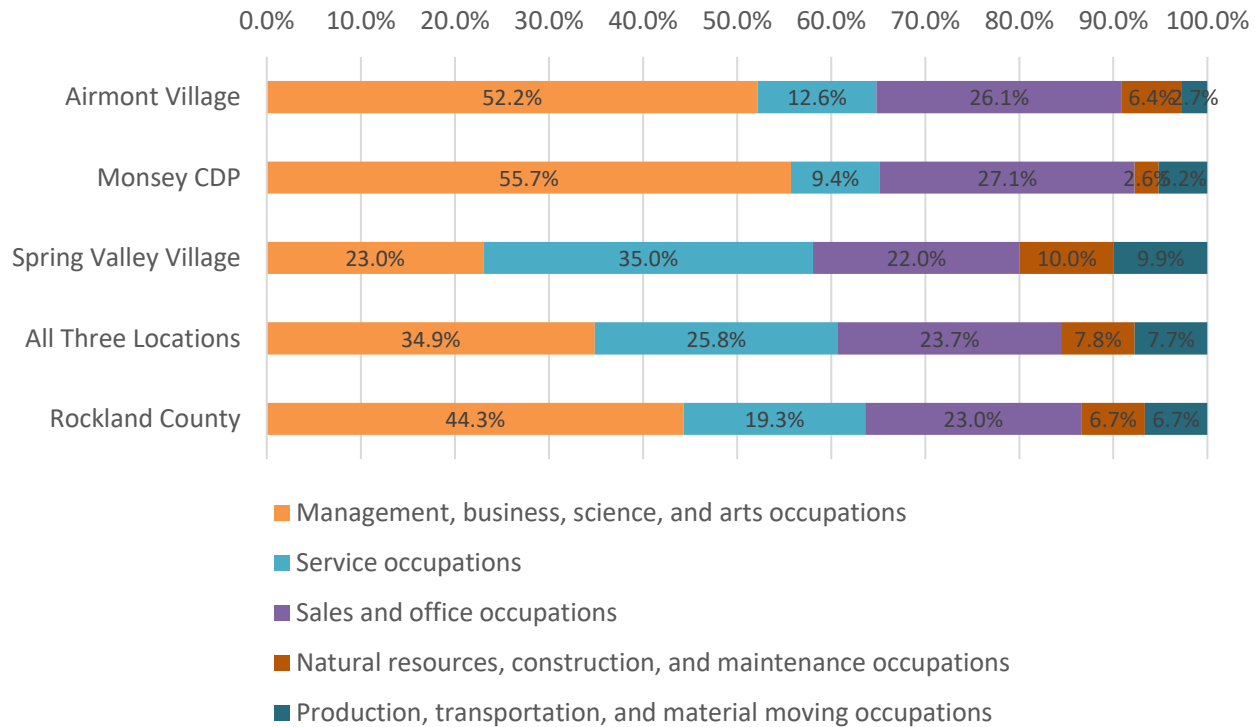
For Rockland County and all three communities combined, the largest share of the labor force has management, business, science, and art occupations as shown in Figure 9. Spring Valley differs, having the greatest share of workers in service occupations (35%).

Table 5. Labor Force 2017

	Rockland	Airmont	Monsey	Spring Valley
Population 16 and over	245,070	6,494	11,153	22,623
Labor Force Participation	65.3%	58.3%	49.6%	71.1%
Unemployment	6.3%	3.8%	6.7%	10.0%

Source: ACS, 2013-2017

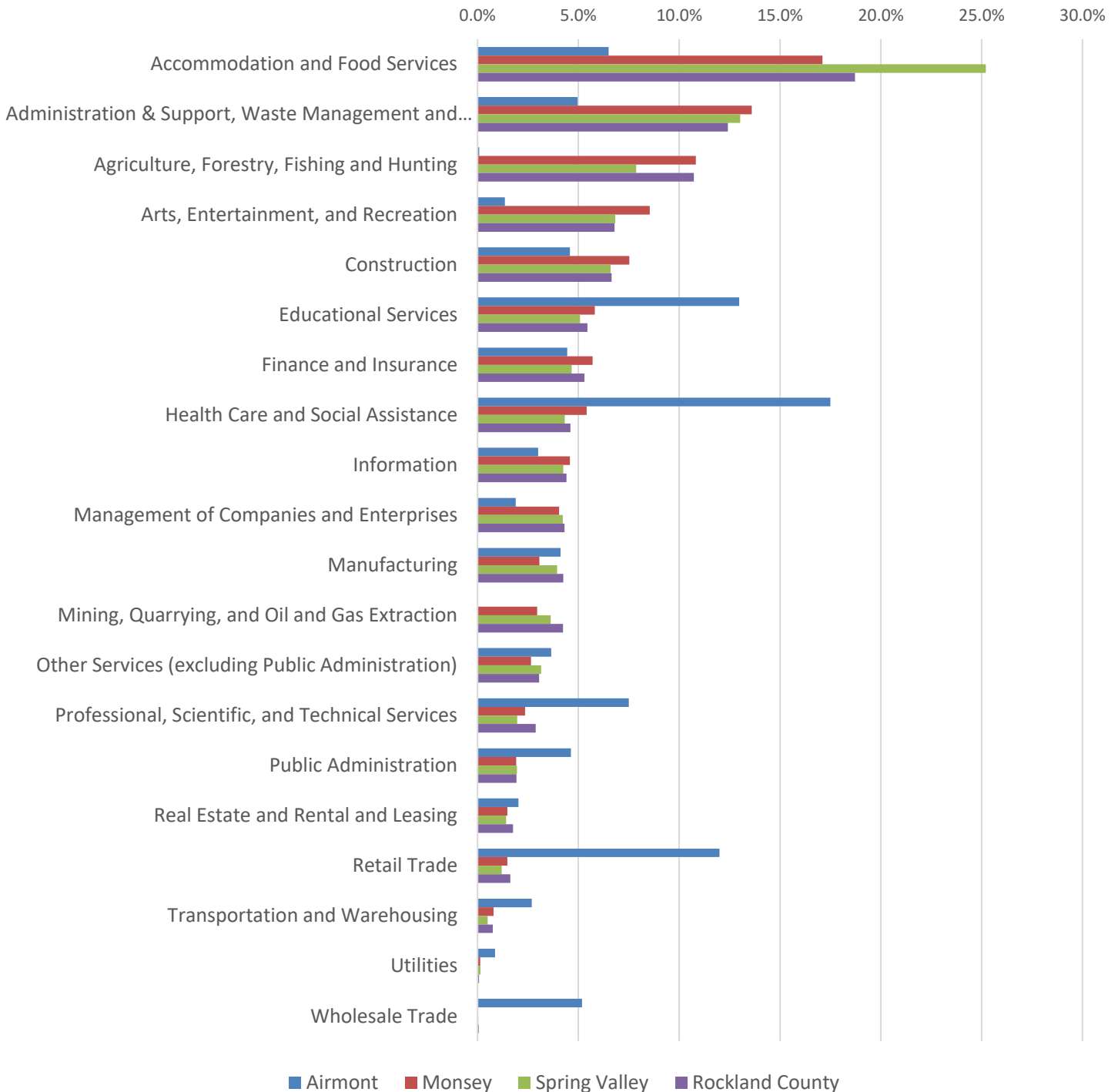
Figure 9. Occupation by Civilian Employed Population 16 Years or Over, 2017



Source: ACS, 2013-2017

Figure 10 shows the industries in which employed residents of the County and three communities work. Airmont differs most from the County standard in that it has much greater shares of residents working in healthcare, education, retail, wholesale and professional, scientific and technical services than the other areas. Spring Valley has a notable difference in the share of persons in accommodation & food services at 25.2%; whereas Monsey residents are much more likely to work in administration & support; agriculture; arts, entertainment, and recreation; construction; and, finance & insurance.

Figure 10. Industries Employed Residents Work in, 2015



Source: CES onTheMap

Employment

Table 6 shows the 10 largest employers within the three communities. Among them they have some 1,389 workers who travel through the corridor each day. They are concentrated within Spring Valley; five are located within the study area corridor as shown in Figure 11.

Table 6. Top Employers within the Study Areas

Business Name	Address	City	Employees
Trans Group LLC	W Church St	Spring Valley	500
Pine Valley Ctr	N Main St	Spring Valley	250
Target	Spring Valley Market Pl	Spring Valley	150
Christmas Tree Shops	Spring Valley Market Pl	Spring Valley	100
Spring Valley Municipal Office	N Main St	Spring Valley	99
New York Life	Robert Pitt Dr	Monsey	80
Quality Software	Old Nyack Tpke	Spring Valley	63
Interstate Toyota Rentals	Route 59	Airmont	62
Finkelstein Meml Pubc Library	24 Chestnut St	Spring Valley	45
J J J Concrete Corp	21 Grove St #1	Spring Valley	40

Source: Esri Business Analyst, 2019

Figure 11. Top Employers within the Study Areas

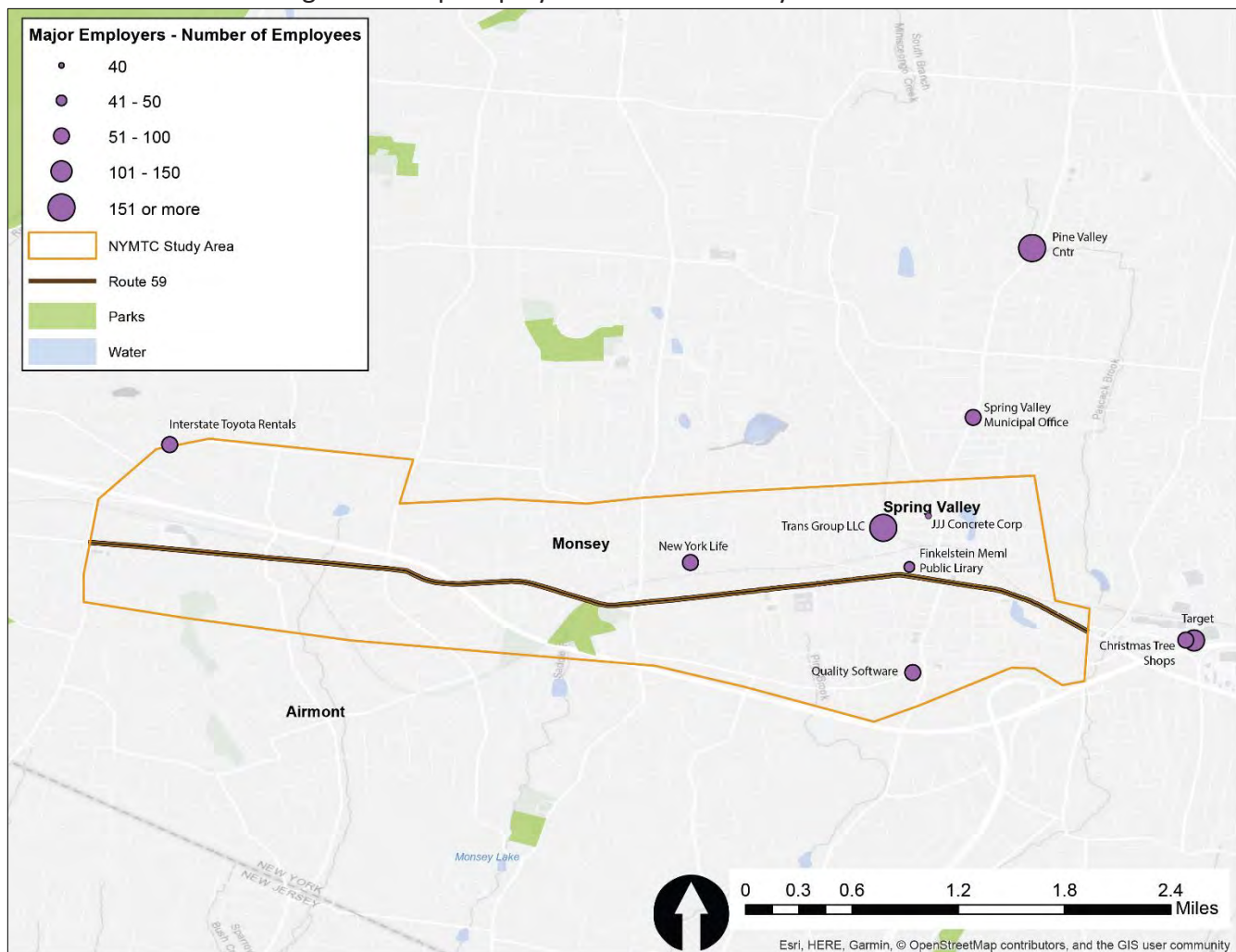
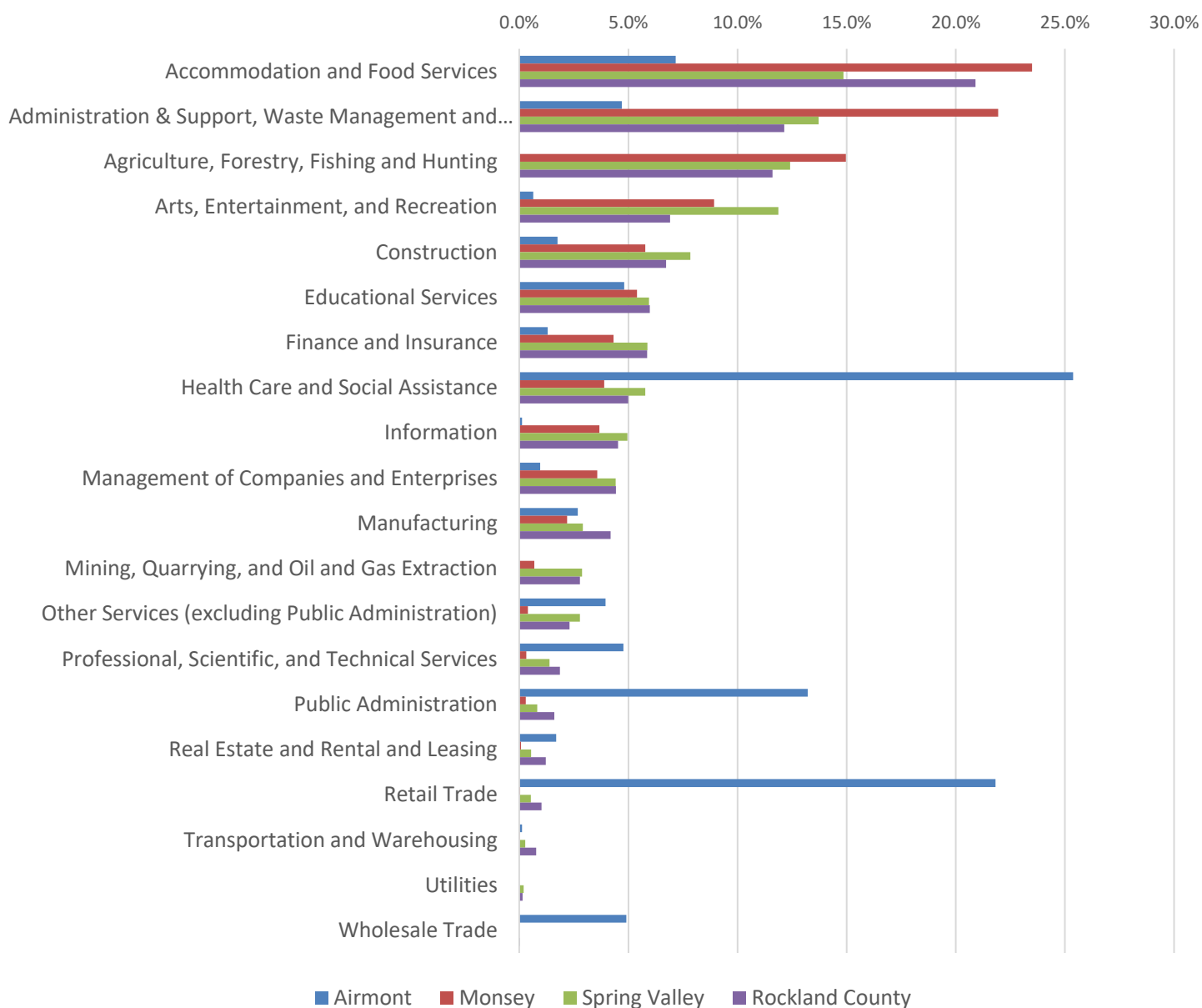


Figure 12 provides a snapshot of the share of jobs by industry in each community compared to Rockland County. Airmont's high concentrations of health care and retail reflect the concentration of uses along the Route 59 corridor.

Figure 12. Jobs by Location by Industry 2015

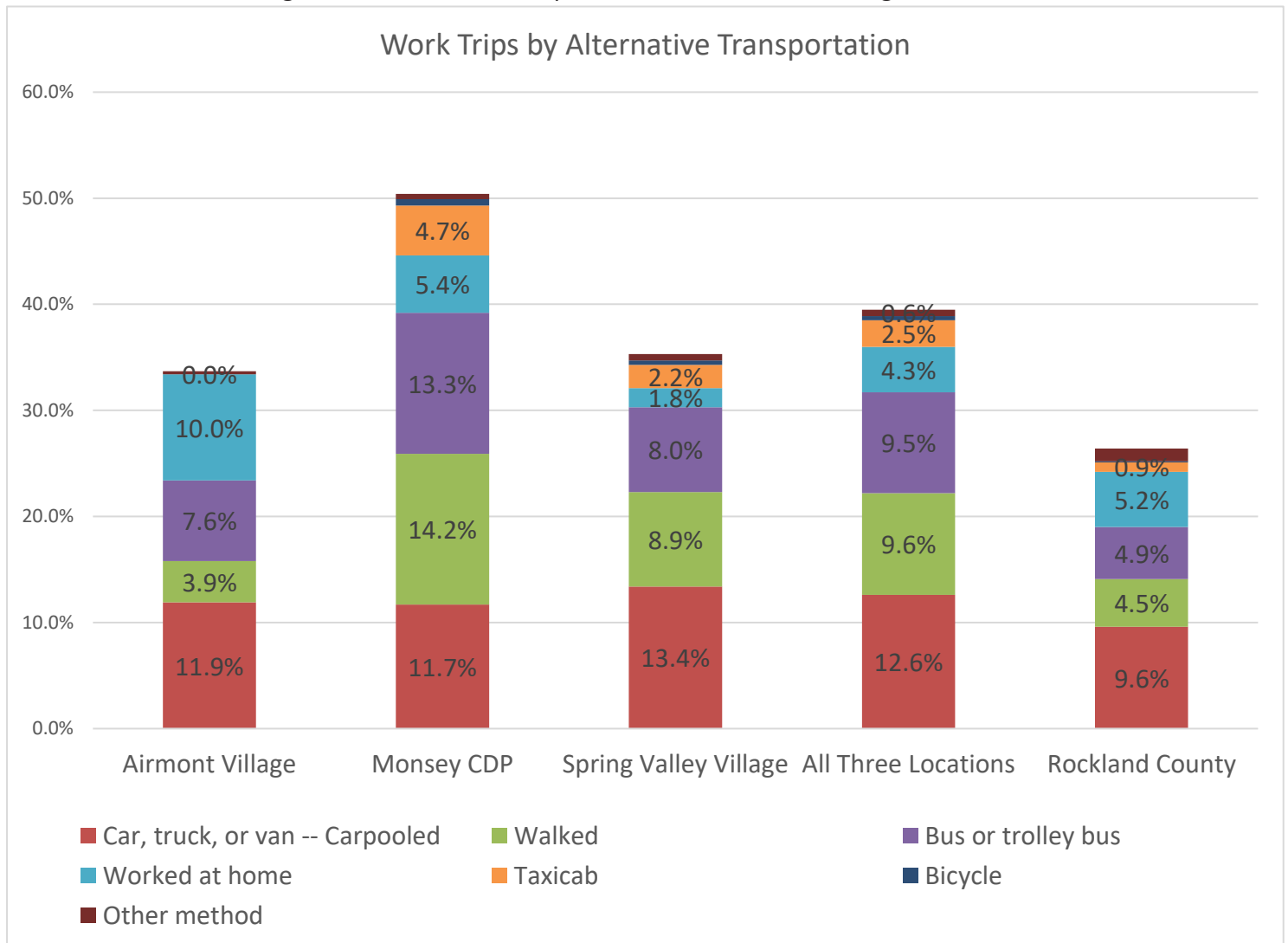


Source: CES onTheMap

Journey to Work and Occupation

More than 50 percent of workers who live or work within the Route 59 corridor drive alone. Less than 15 percent carpool in all three locations but there are more carpoolers in these locations than Rockland County as a whole. There is a significant share of residents who walk to work in Monsey, 5 times the county share and twice the county share for workers.

Figure 13. Means of Transportation for Workers over Age 16, 2017



Source: CTPP, 2006-2010

Of those working in the corridor, 26.9 percent commute in from other places. The largest share, or 12.2 percent, come from Monsey, followed closely by Spring Valley at 11.5% and New York City at 9.5% as seen in Table 7.

The majority of working study area residents (living in Airmont, Monsey CDP and Spring Valley) are employed elsewhere (83.8%). The most common workplace destination of residents (20.5%) is New York City. Most residents (49.7%) travel less than 10 miles from their home to work.

Table 7. Worker Origins and Destinations, 2015

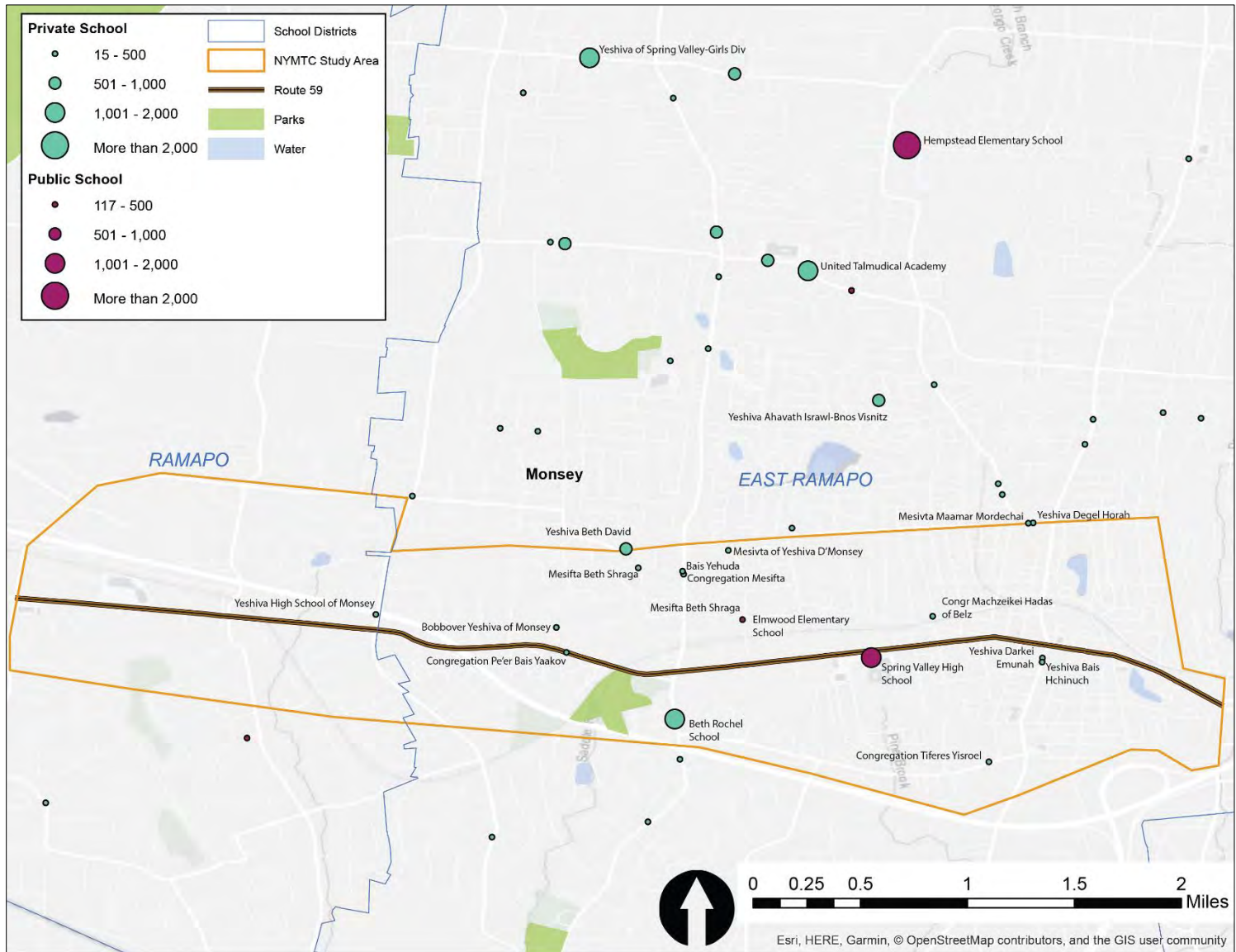
Where Corridor Workers Come From		Where Local Residents Go	
Monsey CDP, NY	12.20%	New York City, NY	20.50%
Spring Valley village, NY	11.50%	Spring Valley village, NY	7.20%
New York City, NY	9.50%	Monsey CDP, NY	6.40%
Airmont village, NY	3.20%	Nanuet CDP, NY	4.40%
Kaser village, NY	3.00%	Chestnut Ridge village, NY	3.30%
Viola CDP, NY	2.90%	New City CDP, NY	2.80%
New Square village, NY	2.70%	Airmont village, NY	2.60%
New City CDP, NY	2.50%	Viola CDP, NY	1.50%
Nanuet CDP, NY	2.20%	New Square village, NY	1.40%
Chestnut Ridge village, NY	2.20%	Kiryas Joel village, NY	1.30%
All Other Locations	48.20%	All Other Locations	48.60%

Source: CES onTheMap

School Enrollment

There are 7 public schools (5,554 students) and 46 private schools (21,172 students) within the study area. The majority of the private schools are located within Monsey and Spring Valley; they are primarily Jewish. There will be even greater school enrollment in the future: in a recent meeting with Rockland County, it was stated that there are an additional 3,500 students within the Town of Ramapo waiting for new private schools to be constructed, and that once they are, another 3000 students will come from elsewhere in the region.

Figure 14. Public and Private School Enrollment, 2017



Source: NYSED IRS

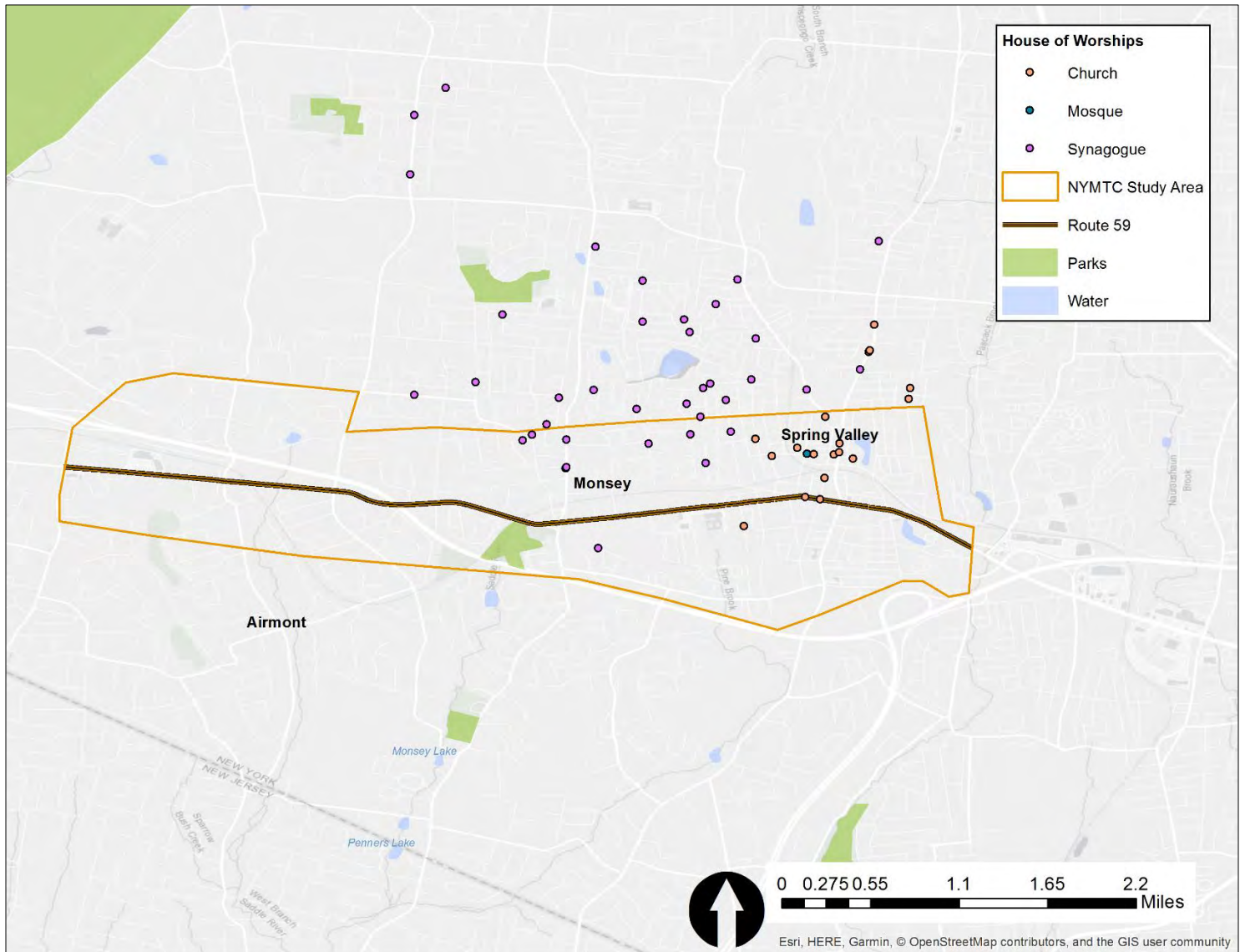
Social Organizations

There are a total of 11 community groups (social service organizations and non-profit organizations) within the study area.

Table 8. Community Groups

Name of Community Groups	Address	Town	Description
Community Outreach Center Inc.	21 Remsen Ave	Monsey	Social Services Organization
Bikur Cholim of Rockland County	25 Robert Pitt Dr # 101	Monsey	Non-Profit Organizations
HamaspiK of Rockland County	58 NY-59 #1	Monsey	Non-Profit Organizations
Mid Hudson Community Council Inc	63 Carlton Rd	Monsey	Non-Profit Organizations
Yeshiva Association of Rockland County Inc	50 Melnick Drive	Monsey	
Vision for Haiti	22 S Madison Ave	Spring Valley	Non-Profit Organizations
Konbit & Neg & Lakay Inc	5048, 16 E Church St	Spring Valley	Social Services Organization
Worldwide Community First Responder, Inc.	60 N Madison Ave	Spring Valley	Non-Profit Organizations
Spring Valley Community Dev	115 Maple Ave	Spring Valley	Non-Profit Organizations
Echo National Institute For Health	295 W Rte 59	Spring Valley	Non-Profit Organizations
Hudson Valley Community Services (HVCS) Spring Valley	86 NY-59	Spring Valley	Social Services Organization

Figure 15. Houses of Worship



There are a total of 57 different house of worships within the three locations: approximately 36 synagogues, 20 churches, and 1 mosque. The majority of the synagogues are located in Monsey. The majority of the churches are located within Spring Valley. Data on the size of the congregations are not available.

III. Profile of Route 59 Corridor (Block Group Level)

Population and Households

The population within the 22 block groups surrounding the Route 59 corridor increased by 8.6 percent from 39,624 to 43,021 between 2010 and 2017, double the rate of Rockland County in the same time period. The corridor population is quite young, with 37.0 percent of residents under 18 as shown in Figure 16.

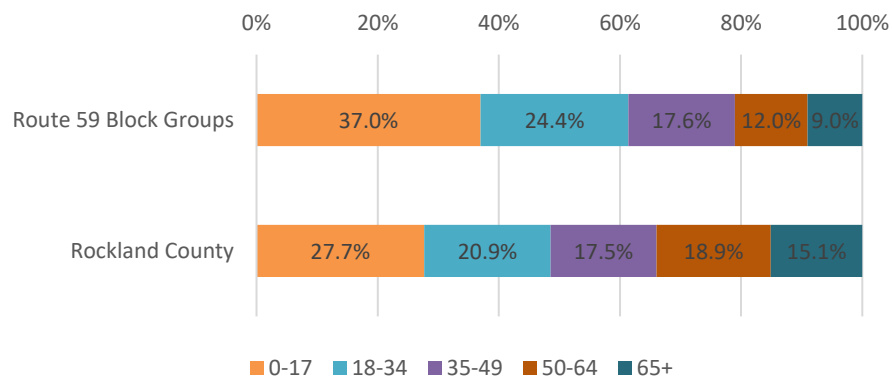
The average median income within the block groups in 2017 is \$50,204³. Roughly half of the households within the block groups make less than \$50,000.

Table 9. Total Population, 2000-2017

	2000	2010	2017	Population Change 2010-2017
Route 59 Block Groups	-	39,624	43,021	8.6%
Rockland County	286,753	311,687	325,027	4.3%

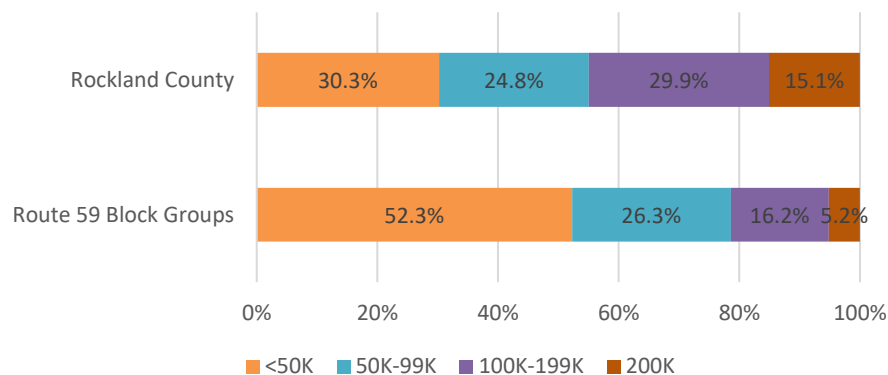
Source: ACS, 2013-2017

Figure 16. Age Distribution in Route 59 Corridor, 2017



Source: ACS, 2013-2017

Figure 17. Income Distribution in Route 59 Corridor, 2017



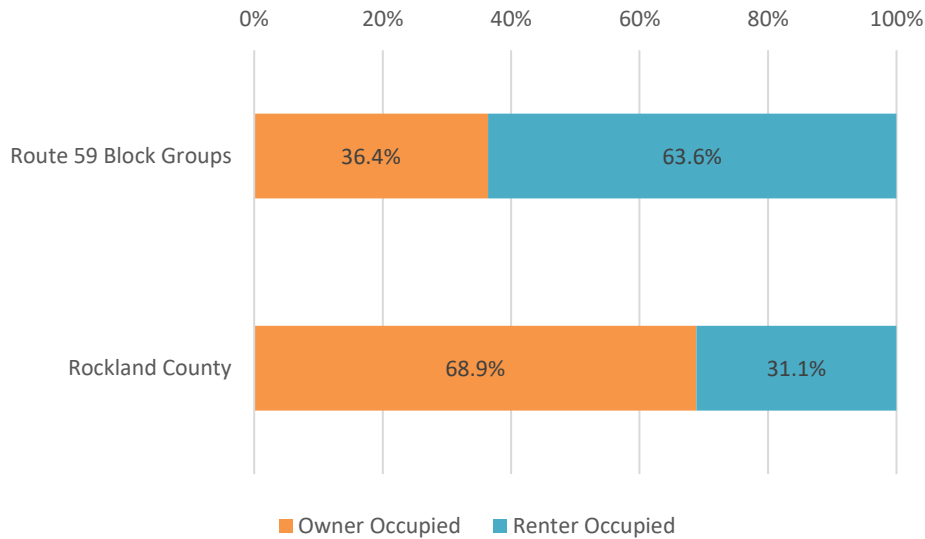
Source: ACS, 2013-2017

³ Data not available for Block Group 3, Census Tract 121.03

Housing

There are a total of 11,497 housing units within the corridor of Route 59 in 2017. There are 757 vacant units (vacancy rate of 6.6%), indicating a relatively healthy housing market. Of the vacant units, the largest share is classified as “other vacant,” which indicates the properties are being held by the owner without actively seeking new occupants.

Figure 18. Tenure in Route 59 Corridor, 2017



Source: ACS, 2013-2017

Table 10. Vacancy Status in Route 59 Corridor, 2017

	2017
Total	757
For rent	23.0%
Rented, not occupied	20.1%
For sale only	10.7%
Sold, not occupied	6.9%
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	6.3%
For migrant workers	0.0%
Other vacant ⁴	33.0%

Source: ACS, 2013-2017

⁴ According to ACS, if a vacant unit does not fall into any of the categories specified above, it is classified as "Other vacant." For example, this category includes units held for occupancy by a caretaker or janitor, and units held for personal reasons of the owner.

The majority of occupied housing units are rentals (63.6%). Between 2013 and 2017 there was an increase in renter-occupied housing units of 19.8 percent in the corridor block groups and 5 percent in the county. The new units are not those in the most affordable category as in this same period, the share of renters paying less than \$999 in gross rent decreased by 16.9 percent in the corridor and by 13.3 percent in Rockland County.

Table 11. Gross Rent in Route 59 Corridor, 2017

	Route 59 Block Groups		Rockland County		Percent Change 2013-2017	
	2013	2017	2013	2017	Route 59 Block Groups	Rockland County
Total Renter- Occupied Housing Units	5,702	6,829	29,625	31,113	19.8%	5.0%
Less than \$999	31.1%	21.6%	25.0%	20.6%	-16.9%	-13.3%
\$1,000-\$1,499	36.0%	37.0%	35.7%	33.1%	23.2%	-2.7%
\$1,500-\$1,999	20.4%	23.7%	21.5%	23.3%	39.5%	13.8%
\$2,000 or more	8.9%	13.4%	14.4%	19.4%	80.5%	41.1%
No cash rent	3.6%	4.2%	3.3%	3.6%	40.5%	12.1%

Source: ACS, 2013-2017

Labor Force and Journey to Work

There are 15,365 employed residents in the corridor block groups. As seen in Table 12, while the majority of corridor residents drive to work, almost 30 percent use other means including the 15.1 percent who take public transportation and 6 percent who walk to work.

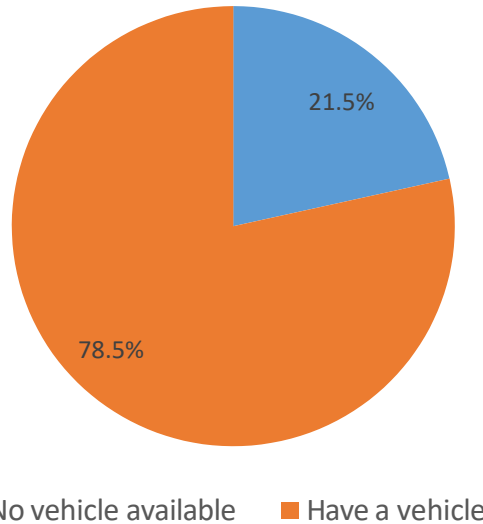
Only 78.5 percent of households within the corridor block groups have a vehicle as shown in Figure 19, compared to 89.5 percent of Rockland County households.

Table 12. Means of Transportation to Work (Workers 16 and Over) in Route 59 Corridor, 2017

	Route 59 Block Groups	Rockland County
Total	15,365	144,060
Car, truck, or van	70.1%	81.6%
Drove alone	74.5%	86.2%
Carpooled	25.5%	13.8%
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	15.1%	8.7%
Taxicab	2.7%	0.9%
Motorcycle	0.0%	0.1%
Bicycle	0.4%	0.1%
Walked	6.0%	3.3%
Other means	0.5%	0.5%
Worked at home	5.2%	4.8%

Source: ACS, 2013-2017

Figure 19. Vehicle Availability by Household in Route 59 Corridor, 2017



Source: ACS, 2013-2017

As seen in Table 13, the most common place of residence of the 24,420 corridor workers is New York City (11.8%). The next most common origin is Spring Valley (8.9%) followed by Monsey (7.2%). All other communities are home to three percent or less of the corridor's workers.

The majority of those living within the corridor block groups are employed elsewhere (86.6%); the most common workplace destination of residents (21.4%) is New York City. Spring Valley and Monsey follow at 5.7 percent and 5.1 percent, respectively.

Table 13. Worker Origins and Destinations, 2015

Where Corridor Workers Come From		Where Local Residents Go	
New York City, NY	11.80%	New York City, NY	21.4%
Spring Valley village, NY	8.9%	Spring Valley village, NY	5.7%
Monsey CDP, NY	7.2%	Monsey CDP, NY	5.1%
New City CDP, NY	3.0%	Nanuet CDP, NY	4.6%
Nanuet CDP, NY	2.7%	New City CDP, NY	3.5%
Airmont village, NY	2.6%	Chestnut Ridge village, NY	3.2%
Chestnut Ridge village, NY	2.1%	Airmont village, NY	2.6%
Suffern village, NY	2.1%	Pearl River CDP, NY	1.5%
Viola CDP, NY	2.0%	Viola CDP, NY	1.4%
Hillcrest CDP, NY	1.8%	West Nyack CDP, NY	1.4%
All Other Locations	55.8%	All Other Locations	49.5%

Source: CES onTheMap

Title VI Requirements

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Executive Order 12898 on Environmental Justice (EJ) are an integral part of the transportation planning and programming process throughout the United States, particularly in urban regions. Because there are no federal standards for conducting a Title VI related assessment, NYMTC has developed approaches to process outcomes on minority populations and low-income households. One of these approaches includes identifying Communities of Concern. The tables below reflect identifying census tracts that analyze conditions related to race/ethnicity and income.

The conditions of Communities of Concern are assessed two ways:

1. Minority population, as defined in the 2010 Census, makes up more than 57 percent of the tract population.
2. More than 16 percent of the total population lives at or below poverty line as defined in the 2010 Census.

Within the Study Area, approximately 72.74 percent of the population identify as non-Hispanic White, therefore this population does not meet the first criterion. However, 20.1 percent of the population within the Route 59 census tract corridor are below the poverty level indicating the corridor is a community of concern.

Table 14: Route 59 Corridor Race and Ethnicity by Census Tract, 2010⁵

Total Population	60,097	
Hispanic or Latino	10,952	18.2%
Not Hispanic or Latino:	49,145	81.8%
White alone	35,746	72.74%
Black or African American alone	10,476	21.32%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	105	0.21%
Asian alone	2,009	4.09%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	11	0.02%
Some Other Race alone	103	0.21%
Two or More Races	695	1.41%

Source: Decennial Census 2010.

Table 15: Route 59 Corridor Population in Poverty by Census Tract, 2010

	Population	Percent in Poverty
Total Population ⁶	56,813	-
Below 100 percent of the poverty level ⁷	11,433	20.1%

Source: Decennial Census 2010.

⁵ Title VI requires using the latest decennial census for this analysis.

⁶ Population for whom poverty status is determined.

⁷ As determined by the Census.

Another approach used by the Title VI Program includes identifying Limited English Proficiency (LEP) populations within a study area. LEP populations comprise persons who are unable to communicate effectively in English because their primary language is not English or have not developed fluency in the English language. Under the Safe Harbor Provision of Title VI, written materials related to planning or analyses must be translated into languages that meet or exceed 5 percent of the affected population. The LEP Population was calculated using census tracts within the study area since block group level data were not available for languages spoken at home.

More than 16,000 corridor residents have limited English proficiency as shown in Table 16. Under Title VI guidelines, there is significant population speaking Spanish or Spanish Creole, Yiddish, and French Creole to require translation.

Table 16. Limited English Proficiency by Census Tract, 2015

	Population of Those Who Speak English Less Than "Very Well"	Percentage of Total LEP Population
Spanish or Spanish Creole	6,532	39.8%
Yiddish	5,430	33.1%
French Creole	2,165	13.2%
All Other LEP ⁸	2,301	14.0%
Total	16,428	100%

Source: ACS, 2011-2015

⁸ None of the other languages represented make up more than 5% of LEP.





APPENDIX C

The project team received comments via email throughout the study. Below is a list of the comments received with the responses that were sent at the time in italics. A revised response that identifies how the comment was incorporated in the Final Report is included in brackets after the original response. For comments received after the draft Final Report was released, only the new response to each comment is provided.

J. Modafferi, email 3/10/2019 -

It was a pleasure speaking with you today at the Rockland FamilyFest. Something else I thought of today that absolutely needs to be considered is incorporation of mass transit for connection to Westchester, as it was considered in the planning and construction of the new bridge. Of course, the lower part of 59 will need to tie all of this together. Also, I am sure you are reaching out to local community groups and business chambers, but you may want to speak with the Rockland Business Association. Thanks for listening. I am looking forward to seeing the final study and what happens out of this study to propel Rockland forward.

Back in March 2019 we responded by saying thank you for your input into the Route 59 Transportation and Land Use Study and taking your time to speak with us at the YouthFest. We do like your suggestion about showing photos of how Route 59 was evolved. We will take into consideration the incorporation of mass transit and your suggested outreach contacts. (March 29, 2019).

[Please see the recommendations on page 37 of the Final Report that identifies evaluation of opportunities to increase ridership on NYSDOT's Hudson Link that links to rail and other bus services.]

F. Auriemma, email 3/11/2019 –

Do you think you could give people a little more time and send out this invitation in a more timely and responsible manner? We have lived for the last 43 years adjacent to Route 59 and we have seen it change into a major thoroughfare with no community input. There are mornings when we [cannot] get out onto Route 59 from our development because of the amount of traffic. At other times, people drive well above the 55-mph speed limit. Overall we have seen a decrease in our air quality, a phenomenal increase in noise pollution and a generally negative impact on our quality of life. Do you think you would ever get away with sending out a flyer like this on Monday at 3:46 pm for a meeting on Wednesday in a community like Scarsdale or Chappaqua? Simply put--you would be devoured.

Back in March 2019 we responded by saying thank you for expressing interest in the Route 59 Transportation and Land Use Study. Since the study area is focused on the portion of Route 59 from Spring Valley to Airmont in the Town of Ramapo, we have been targeting our outreach to those communities and we began notifying stakeholders at the end of February. The e-mail that you received was sent with the help of Transdev, which operates the Hudson Link service, following a community event held on March 10. We know that many people use Route 59 in a variety of ways and we hope to hear from many people in Rockland County. The workshop on March 13 was only the first of several that will be scheduled over the next six months. There are no specific proposals being discussed; rather, we solicited input from residents and businesses on how they envision the future of Route 59.

Please visit our website (www.Route59Study.org) where we will be posting additional information and where you can provide comments directly to us. (March 29, 2019).

[Please see the recommendations on page 37 of the Final Report that identify coordination on a consistent definition of significant impact requiring mitigation. Coordination could reduce the impact of new development on the corridor, or require a more consistent approach to project mitigation.]

D. Wheeler , email 3/12/2019 –

There is no way that the NYSDOT should be allowed to take on any further projects until they fix the mess they have already created! Commuters passing through between Tarrytown and Spring Valley add at least 20 minute delays each way while waiting at the mall Lot J transfer. Ridership on the “reverse” commute is down as people can not get to work on time, even after arranging 30 minute delays in their starting times. Those trying to make further connections at Spring Valley often have to wait another 20 minutes. In my case you have effectively turned a 2 1/2 hour commute each way into a 3 1/2 hour commute each way! Is it that hard to understand? Options are easy:

- 1) Extend the H06 from the Lot J end point to Spring Valley. OR**
- 2) Change the schedules so that the West bound H07 has an H03 West bound at Lot J 5 minutes later - and east bound H03 has an east bound H07 at Lot J 5 minutes later.**

I would also suggest passengers are allowed to exit along the route and also be able to flag the buses along the routes. Don't want to hear any [nonsense] about it being illegal, the Coach USA buses do it all the time.

Back in March 2019 we responded by saying we have forwarded your comments to the Hudson Link team and will send notifications for future Route 59 Area Transportation and Land Use Study Public Workshops. (March 20, 2019)

[Please see the recommendations on page 37 of the Final Report that identify evaluation of the coordination of schedules between bus and train and to continue to evaluate modifications to Transport of Rockland (TOR) routes to adapt to changing population patterns and ridership demand.]

S. Pomeranz , email 3/14/2019 –

**Thank you for your message.
The “directly” [affected] emergency services are:**

- **Tallman FD**
- **Monsey FD**
- **Spring Valley FD**
- **Ramapo Valley Ambulance/EMS**
- **Spring Hill Ambulance/EMS**
- **Faist Ambulance/EMS**
- **Hatzalah Ambulance/EMS**
- **Rockland Paramedics**
- **Ramapo PD**
- **Spring Valley PD**

You should communicate with each of those organizations. You should also reach out to the Director of Rockland County Emergency Services, Chris Kear. He should be able to help coordinate meeting with all the agencies. His offices are located at the Rockland County Training Center where they have classrooms, an auditorium, etc which would be a good option for having a meeting with the agencies. You can reach Chris Kear via telephone XXX.XXX.XXXX or via email _____ Please bear in mind - all the FD's in Rockland County (26 different departments) are 100% volunteer with no one assigned to “on/off shift” and therefore usually there is no one “staffing” the firehouse. Volunteers respond from their homes, work places etc to the firehouses and then respond with the appropriate equipment. The volunteers do not have red lights/sirens in their personal vehicles and therefore cannot legally move around the traffic, go thru red traffic lights, etc. They are stuck sitting in any traffic that exists. This delays emergency response. Also keep in mind that Route 59 from Spring Valley to Suffern is the main roadway to the only hospital in the western portion of the county (we only have 2 hospitals in Rockland, the second being in Nyack).

Back in April 2019 we responded by saying I wanted to follow up with you on your earlier messages. As you recommended, we've been working with Chris Kear to engage Emergency Services. At his recommendation we will be attending the Ramapo Chiefs Association meeting on April 25. (April 9, 2019)

[Please see the recommendations on page 36 of the Final Report that identify coordination of emergency vehicle signal preemption with bus prioritization and optimization of signal timing or implementation of adaptive signal controls. And the recommendation on page 39 to evaluate the use and design of the center turning lane and/or dedicated left-turn lane within each segment of Route 59 to see if there are options to improve movements or add physical separations to restrict movements.]

K. Brezner, email 3/14/2019 –

Thank you the meeting last on this important topic. Please place me in your email list.

My two primary comments, as I told Joe, are

1) smart development as required by NYS law; not being practiced by town of Ramapo like no increase in traffic delay times. This mean significant limits on new large housing projects

2) Route 59 in the study area is super saturated in regards to traffic and cannot take anymore. Bring more lanes would greatly place many of the businesses in study area out of business

3) sidewalks are badly needed

I look forward to attending future meetings

Back in March 2019 we responded by saying thank you for your comments. We look forward to seeing you at future meetings.

Your concerns about development are important and have been recorded. There are others who feel similarly. In addition, many stakeholders have expressed the need for the completion of the sidewalk network. (March 18, 2019)

[Please see the recommendations on page 32 and 33 of the Final Report that identify short term recommendations for community design and process related to future development in the community. And the recommendation on page 35 to complete the sidewalk network throughout the study corridor.]

S. Klein, email 3/28/2019 –

I attended the March 13 workshop (Village of Airmont) and offered to brief your team and provide a blunt assessment of this project. There are multiple high-density housing projects under construction and in the “pipeline” along the area in question that have the potential to derail any meaningful proposals and render them obsolete when they are complete. The biggest obstacle is the unquenchable thirst for blatant disregard of normal zoning board regulations in pursuing these types of development along the corridor ,e.g., negative impact on the character of the community/neighborhood, adverse environmental impact, etc. The current Town of Ramapo Supervisor and his chief of staff have already established their willingness to plumb the grey areas in their wanton disregard for the will of the people per their involvement in the boondoggle stadium project which was soundly defeated in a public referendum but was built anyway. Mr. Specht was the ZBA counsel and his chief of staff had a different title that was part of this cabal that foisted this money-pit on the taxpayers. It does not reflect well on the town that they have been elevated to their current positions. How your committee navigates this will be crucial. Furthermore, I extend my offer to provide a ride-along tour of the reckless overdevelopment in the area (my vehicle) to Mr. Mohseni, Mr. RIVERA, and Mr. Bogacz. You will have a myriad of obstacles thrown at you by the Town of Ramapo. The Park-and-Ride project is a prime example of a project that was not properly vetted for environmental and traffic impact. There was no substantial publicity for a “public hearing” regarding said project. I look forward to the 4/29 workshop.

Back in April 2019 we responded by saying your active participation in workshop #1 for the Route 59 Area Transportation and Land Use Study is

appreciated. Your concerns about development are important and have been recorded. There are others who feel similarly. This input will be helpful to the study as the process moves forward. (April 5, 2019)

[Please see the recommendations on page 32 of the Final Report that suggest that the town and the villages have conducted State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) training for land use boards.]

J. Modafferi, email 3/29/2019 –

Thanks. I saw an article in the Rockland Business Journal that the Town of Clarkstown has [put] together an economic development panel to review the corridor in Clarkstown, I think mostly Nanuet. You should reach out to see if you could work together and bounce information/ideas off of each other. Enjoy the weekend.

Back in April 2019 we responded by saying thank you for your additional input into the project. The project team has been made aware of your suggestion. We will look to collaborate with the Town of Clarkstown to improve Route 59 and will reach out to engage them in the study. (April 15, 2019)

H. Geneslaw, email 4/17/2019 –

In follow up to our meeting last week, attached please find our table of potential proposed uses for the NS (Neighborhood Shopping) District in Airmont. NS is the zoning designation of the tract at the southwest corner of the intersection of Route 59 and Airmont Road, which Lerner Properties owns. We originally gave this to the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee as part of our participation in the Comprehensive Plan Update process, and some of our suggestions were incorporated into an initial round of zoning amendments which were enacted in September 2018. Thereafter, we updated the table to show in red

the changes which resulted from those zoning amendments. Lerner Properties continues to support and advocate for a broadening of uses in the NS District, to include those suggested in the attached table, as this will facilitate development of the property and better enable the Village to meet its goals as expressed in the Comprehensive Plan Update to revisit uses and use requirements in the NS District, as well as to maintain Route 59 as the economic backbone of the community and to enable development at the gateway intersection of Route 59 and Airmont Road. Please contact me if you have any questions or would like to discuss any of these proposed uses. Finally, if you would like some further background on Lerner Properties, here is a link to their website: <https://protect2.fireeye.com/url?k=0b89ece6-57afd852-0b8b15d3-000babd9fe9f-ed4e2ba8e02f9b14&u=http://lernerproperties.com/>. I have pasted the “about us” section of that website below for your reference. about us Headquartered in Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Lerner Properties prides itself on its consistent success and achievements in an ever-changing commercial real estate environment. Through multi-generational, single-family ownership, Lerner Properties has been able to maintain a solid sense of tradition and leadership. We develop, own, and manage a portfolio of strategically located open-air shopping centers and retail properties in high barrier-to-entry markets. Through a “hands-on” management approach, Lerner Properties is able to optimally achieve the highest potential for its end users. Stephen Lerner, founder of Lerner Properties, has a proven track record of over 40 years in the commercial real estate industry. Throughout his career, Stephen has developed a superb reputation for integrity, innovation, and responsibility. His expertise and leadership has allowed the company to consistently prove its financial capacity and transactional capabilities on single-tenant assets, regional retail centers and ground-up development opportunities. Lerner Properties is constantly looking for new opportunities to expand its existing portfolio and is always eager to reveal the true value in real estate assets.

Back in April 2019 we responded by saying thank you for your follow up on our meeting on 4/11. It was very helpful to hear some of the challenges that

developers face along the corridor. Thanks also for pointing out the error on the website. We changed the day of the week for workshop #4 on the NYMTC website. Finally, thanks for the list of uses for the NS District zoning that you provided. We will consider how to incorporate this information in our discussions with the community on land use. We look forward to your continued participation in the project. (April 22, 2019).

[Please see the recommendations on page 32 of the Final Report that identify the continued use of comprehensive planning and local zoning process to identify appropriate levels of development along Route 59 and evaluate where mixed-use zoning would be appropriate.]

L. Amdur, email 4/27/2019 –

What ever happened to the planning charrettes for the northwest section of Ramapo? We haven't heard anything since the second meeting held at the Pomona Middle School. I'd appreciate a response to this inquiry.

Back in May 2019 we responded by saying thank you for expressing interest in the Route 59 study. The planning charrettes for the northeast section of Ramapo are being held for the Envision Ramapo study which is a separate study being conducted by the Town of Ramapo. See the Town's website for more information on Envision Ramapo. The Town is participating in the Route 59 study as part of the Study Advisory Committee and we will pass along your concerns about the progress of that study. (May 13, 2019)

S. Montemorano, email 5/6/2019 –

I think it's great that you are doing this study. Just one point at this time: Keep in mind that the Ultra-Orthodox community will double in about 10 years and will suffocate the area around Route 306 and Route 59. The key should be to offer shopping and other amenities

away from Route 59 for them. Move it all to within Monsey so they can walk their with lots of kids in tow.

Back in June 2019 we responded by saying thank you for expressing interest in the Route 59 study. Land use is a key component of the study and we are looking at different scenarios to improve walkability. We will take your suggestion of locating services within closer walking proximity into consideration. (June 13, 2019)

[Please see the recommendations on page 32 of the Final Report that suggest evaluating the possibility of small mixed-use zoning nodes closer to residential populations that could provide access to convenience goods to minimize shopping trips to Route 59.]

S. Klein, email 5/7/2019 –

Coming before the Village of Airmont ZBA on 5/9/19- "a commercial flex-space consisting of 2,500 sq. ft. of office space and 8,480 sq. ft. of warehouse/storage with associated facilities. The property is located on the east side of Spook Rock Road approximately 400 ft. north of Route 59." Ask Mr. Bogacz about the over-development on Spook Rock Road. I will be at the meeting to speak against this project.

Back in May 2019 we responded by saying thank you for your continued interest and participation in the Route 59 study. Questions about the timing, size, and location of new development are certainly of interest as we consider options for the future of Route 59. However, while the study is contemplating land uses along the corridor in the long term, the study has no influence over specific proposals that the Town is currently considering. (May 17, 2019)

[Please see the recommendations on page 32 of the Final Report that identify the continued use of comprehensive planning and local zoning process to identify appropriate levels of development along Route 59 and evaluate where mixed-use zoning would be appropriate.]

H. Geneslaw, email 5/29/2019 –

These comments are submitted on behalf of Lerner Properties, in follow up to our meeting with NYMTC representatives at WSP's offices on April 11, 2019. During Workshop #2, some slides were shown of a potential mixed use concept for the former Grand Union site at the northwest corner of Route 59 and Airmont Road (see pp. 29-31 of the PowerPoint). This is generally consistent with the Village of Airmont's recent Comprehensive Plan Update and the subsequently proposed floating zone, but nothing similar (in fact, nothing at all) was shown in concept for Lerner Properties' tract across the street at the southwest corner of the intersection, even though it offers substantial development potential in addition to the existing Chase Bank. Lerner Properties would be supportive of concepts for its property like those shown on the PowerPoint at pp. 29-31, as an additional development option. As we previously noted in our meeting, it will be important to manage/mitigate traffic impacts at the Route 59/Airmont Road intersection. Consideration should be given not only to traditional methods – such as land use planning as well as engineering solutions like signal timing and dedications for road widening as a condition of development approvals – but also to evaluating options for diverting traffic away from the intersection, such as through the proposed DeBaun Avenue Bypass or a new Interchange 14X. Both of these approaches have been “on the table” and the subject of informal discussion for years, but a more formal evaluation of their potential is needed. We look forward to continuing to participate in the Route 59 Area Transportation & Land Use Study. Please contact me if you have any questions or would like to discuss Lerner Properties' suggestions.

Back in June 2019 we responded by saying thank you for your continued participation in the Route 59 study. We focused on the property across from the Lerner property as it is a previously developed site the redevelopment of which would be consistent with the vision the Village of Airmont has already proposed, as you stated. We consistently heard from the community that there is too much development and wanted to proceed with caution.

The workshop #3 presentation does examine options for diverting traffic. While it does not specifically propose the DeBraun Avenue Bypass, it does include a similar concept. As well as recommending further examination of interchange 14x. (June 17, 2019)

[Please see the recommendations on page 32 of the Final Report that identify the continued use of comprehensive planning and local zoning process to identify appropriate levels of development along Route 59 and evaluate where mixed-use zoning would be appropriate.]

S. White, email 6/3/2019 –

The current status of Rt 59 traffic is very congested. Not only Rt 59 itself but also other highways, especially Rt 45, and also many local streets which are de-facto alternative highways (examples: Memorial Park Dr and Dutch La) and even local residential streets which no one would have thought of using as a short-cut around traffic are now seeing heavy traffic as the main and secondary roads are so crowded. Many blocks are very short (example West St. Between RT. 59 and S. Central Ave) which results in gridlock as traffic from one intersection backs up past the other. This not only had traffic but also air quality impacts. There are several bus depots and the Woodbine train Depot which complicate the pollution issue. A study of air quality should be done. Both traffic and air quality are likely to become much worse as thousands of new residential units have been approved in Spring Valley in the past two years and have yet to be built or occupied, as well as hundreds of thousands of feet of commercial space (yet to be built or occupied), and this is just the Village not including pending development in the Town. Most of the streets accommodating the intense volume have very narrow, poorly maintained sidewalks with no separation from the roadway. A plan which only addresses Rt. 59 proper and not the impact of overdevelopment on all the local streets has the potential to do more harm than good, even if it speeds traffic on the main road, due to Braess's paradox. Conclusion: you must review all current and planned use and development and get

cooperation from local government to curtail redevelopment to have a meaningful impact on quality of life. Closing the Woodbine Depot and routing trains via the Piermont line to Suffern would also relieve much traffic and improve air quality.

Back in June 2019 we responded by saying thank you for your input into the Route 59 Transportation and Land Use Study. We have heard from many residents that the Route 59 corridor is very congested and has an impact on the local street network. While the study does examine the land use and transportation network centered on Route 59, the goal of the study is to identify recommendations that can be replicable through the community. We will pass your suggestion of closing the Woodbine Depot and routing trains via the Piermont line to Suffern to the MTA. (June 17, 2019)

[Please see the recommendation on page 33 of the Final Report that identifies the coordination on a consistent definition of significant impact requiring mitigation.]

L. Wilkie, email 7/9/2019 –

Is a new exit from the NYS Thruway dropping into [Monsey] seriously being considered in this plan? That would be wonderful!

Back in July 2019 we responded by saying thank you for your input into the Route 59 Transportation and Land Use Study. We have heard from many residents that an additional Thruway exit is needed along the corridor. The study team will be discussing this with the New York State Thruway Authority to determine the most appropriate recommendation to address this concern. (July 29, 2019)

[Please see the recommendation on page 34 of the Final Report that identifies conducting further study of the feasibility of Exit 14x. A sponsor and funding need to be determined for that study.]

A., email 9/5/2019 –

I live in Wesley [Hills] NY. Please expand route 59. It is currently so congested that it can take me over an hour to get from [Nanuet] to Suffern. Please help!!

Back in September 2019 we responded by saying thank you for expressing interest in the Route 59 study. The study is looking at different scenarios to improve Route 59 and widening Route 59 is one of the options. We will take your suggestion of how to improve Route 59 into consideration. (September 19, 2019)

[While the Final Report includes a recommendation to “consider the feasibility of widening Route 59” from South Pascack Road to Airmont Road (see page 46 of the Final Report), that recommendation also identifies the financial, engineering, and environmental challenges that would have to be addressed with potential widening.]

I., email 9/5/2019 –

Please widen the roads on Route 59 and add pedestrian walkways

Back in September 2019 we responded by saying thank you for expressing interest in the Route 59 study. The study is looking at different scenarios to improve Route 59 and widening Route 59 and improving sidewalks are included in the options. We will take your suggestion of how to improve Route 59 into consideration. (September 19, 2019)

[While the Final Report includes a recommendation to “consider the feasibility of widening Route 59” from South Pascack Road to Airmont Road (see page 46 of the Final Report), that recommendation also identifies the financial, engineering, and environmental challenges that would have to be addressed with potential widening.]

D. Lerer, email 9/5/2019 –

I support this effort. I also support concurrent construction of Light Rail between Suffern & White Plains along the same corridor and long as [it] displaces traffic but doesn't compete for space/capacity.

Back in September 2019 we responded by saying thank you for your input into the Route 59 Transportation and Land Use Study. We have heard from many residents that the Route 59 corridor is very congested and they would like to see more transit options to the rail stations in Suffern and White Plains. We will take your suggestion of a light rail between Suffern and White Plains into consideration. (September 27,2019)

[Please see the recommendation on page 34 of the Final Report that recommends an Alternatives Analysis for the potential future uses, including a multi-modal path, for the MTA Metro-North Railroad Piermont Branch. However, the right-of-way would need to reserve the option of being revertible to rail, and there is currently rail freight service in the western portion of the right-of-way in the study area. Both factors limit some of the potential uses but provides an opportunity to the community to create additional connections from residential areas north of Route 59 to commercial uses along Route 59.]

P. Steen, email 9/6/2019 –

As a Ramapo resident, I frequently have the need to use Route 59 between the highway (87/287) and Suffern. Please consider making sure there are left-turn lanes as well as sidewalks/pedestrian accommodation along that entire area. Currently those two features exist only in parts of the route. I believe those two things would make the area safer and the traffic run more smoothly. I believe they are more important than additional capacity.

Back in September 2019 we responded by saying thank you for your input into the Route 59 Transportation and Land Use Study. We have heard from

many residents that the pedestrian safety on Route 59 corridor needs to be a priority. We will take your suggestion of how to improve Route 59 into consideration. (September 27,2019)

[Please see the recommendation on page 43 of the Final Report that identifies evaluation of left-turn lanes at key intersections. And the recommendation on page 35 to complete the sidewalk network throughout the study corridor.]

H. Grossman, email 9/6/2019 –

The congestion and lack of traffic flow on Route 59 for the stretch that this study addresses is well-documented. Additional travel lanes, turn lanes, center island for pedestrian safety, crosswalks for pedestrian access to both sides of the street are so obvious that it is mind- [boggling] that it has taken this long for it to be addressed. It would stimulate business [by] making it easier to get to them and increase the quality of life as NOBODY likes sitting in slow-moving traffic. This proposal is necessary TODAY let alone looking ahead to future development. If the concept of an exit ramp from the Thruway to Monsey could be incorporated that would make it even BETTER!.

Back in September 2019 we responded by saying thank you for expressing interest in the Route 59 study. The study is looking at different scenarios to improve Route 59 and widening Route 59 and pedestrian improvements are included in the options. We will take your suggestions of how to improve Route 59 into consideration.(September 19, 2019)

[Please see the recommendations on page 43 of the Final Report that identify evaluation of left-turn lanes at key intersections, the recommendation on page 35 to complete the sidewalk network throughout the study corridor, and the recommendation on page 34 that identifies conducting study of the feasibility of Exit 14x.]

Email 9/6/2019 –

[Route] 306 is such a nightmare that I avoid it, sometimes going out of my way to do so. 1.) Too much traffic; need 2 lanes, especially going south. 2) not enough drainage when it rains. 3) need more trees along the road. Their removal has caused the drainage problem. Need more traffic lights for pedestrian crossing. All this could apply equally to College Road in Monsey, another nightmare.

Back in September 2019 we responded by saying thank you for expressing interest in the Route 59 study. We have heard from many residents that the Route 59 corridor is very congested and has an impact on the local street network. While the study does examine the land use and transportation network centered on Route 59, the goal of the study is to identify recommendations that can be replicable through the community. We will pass your suggestion on improving Route 306 and College Road to Rockland County and the Town of Ramapo. (September 27, 2019)

[Please see the recommendations on page 41 of the Final Report that suggest implementation of midblock crossings and the recommendation on page 35 to complete the sidewalk network throughout the study corridor. While the Final Report includes a recommendation to “consider the feasibility of widening Route 59” from South Pascack Road to Airmont Road (see page 46 of the Final Report), that recommendation also identifies the financial, engineering, and environmental challenges that would have to be addressed with potential widening.]

S. Ungar, email 9/6/2019 –

As a resident of Airmont, I use Rt 59 daily to get around in my community. I would like for Rt 59 to be widened with accommodation for pedestrians. This will keep pedestrians and riders safe. It will be a great service for the community.

Back in September 2019 we responded by saying thank you for expressing

interest in the Route 59 study. The study is looking at different scenarios to improve Route 59 and widening Route 59 and pedestrian improvements are included in the options. We will take your suggestions of how to improve Route 59 into consideration. (September 19, 2019)

[Please see the recommendation on page 35 to complete the sidewalk network throughout the study corridor. While the Final Report includes a recommendation to “consider the feasibility of widening Route 59” from South Pascack Road to Airmont Road (see page 46 of the Final Report), that recommendation also identifies the financial, engineering, and environmental challenges that would have to be addressed with potential widening.]

H. Stern, email 9/6/2019 –

Hi! My name is _ I'm a Rockland county resident, and I would like to ask to please widen rt 59 . Thanks alot!

Back in September 2019 we responded by saying thank you for expressing interest in the Route 59 study. The study is looking at different scenarios to improve Route 59 and widening Route 59 is one of the options. We will take your suggestion of how to improve Route 59 into consideration. (September 19, 2019)

[While the Final Report includes a recommendation to “consider the feasibility of widening Route 59” from South Pascack Road to Airmont Road (see page 46 of the Final Report), that recommendation also identifies the financial, engineering, and environmental challenges that would have to be addressed with potential widening.]

Nadav, email 9/6/2019 –

The current situation with route 59 traffic cannot continue. We are definitely interested in widening the street.

Back in September 2019 we responded by saying thank you for expressing interest in the Route 59 study. The study is looking at different scenarios to improve Route 59 and widening Route 59 is one of the options. We will take your suggestion of how to improve Route 59 into consideration. (September 19, 2019)

[While the Final Report includes a recommendation to “consider the feasibility of widening Route 59” from South Pascack Road to Airmont Road (see page 46 of the Final Report), that recommendation also identifies the financial, engineering, and environmental challenges that would have to be addressed with potential widening.]

L. Lenik, email 9/6/2019 –

I believe the widening of Route 59 is crucial to the safety and convenience of all of the people in the Monsey/Spring Valley area. The traffic in that area is hazardous. A pedestrian bridge by the shopping area just east of Rt. 306 would help insure the safety of pedestrians. Sidewalks for that area have to be built. A wider street with designated turning lanes, rather than the center lane, turn whichever way you want lane or commonly know as the “Suicide lane,” will help prevent the high amount of traffic accidents in that area as well.

Back in September 2019 we responded by saying thank you for expressing interest in the Route 59 study. The study is looking at different scenarios to improve Route 59 and widening Route 59 and pedestrian improvements are included in the options. We will take your suggestions of how to improve Route 59 into consideration. (September 19, 2019)

[While the Final Report includes a recommendation to “consider the feasibility of widening Route 59” from South Pascack Road to Airmont Road (see page 46 of the Final Report), that recommendation also identifies the financial, engineering, and environmental challenges that would have to be addressed with potential widening.]

N. Fish, email 9/6/2019 –

I [have] deep concern for the need to widen route 59. Since the community has thank God grown there [is a] great need for this to keep our community safe. Please widen route 59.

Back in September 2019 we responded by saying the study is looking at different scenarios to improve Route 59 and widening Route 59 is one of the options. We will take your suggestion of how to improve Route 59 into consideration. (September 19, 2019)

[While the Final Report includes a recommendation to “consider the feasibility of widening Route 59” from South Pascack Road to Airmont Road (see page 46 of the Final Report), that recommendation also identifies the financial, engineering, and environmental challenges that would have to be addressed with potential widening.]

B. Goldberger, email 9/6/2019 –

I support widening rt 59. Way [too] much traffic. Backed up most of the time

Back in September 2019 we responded by saying the study is looking at different scenarios to improve Route 59 and widening Route 59 is one of the options. We will take your suggestion of how to improve Route 59 into consideration. (September 19, 2019)

[While the Final Report includes a recommendation to “consider the feasibility of widening Route 59” from South Pascack Road to Airmont Road (see page 46 of the Final Report), that recommendation also identifies the financial, engineering, and environmental challenges that would have to be addressed with potential widening.]

D. Lerer, email 9/27/2019 –

I would also suggest an integrated transit/development/density tax based on the quarter mile/walking distance measurement. As you’ve probably noted in your studies, Rockland doesn’t suffer from “overdevelopment” it suffers from bad development. With an integrated transit development plan (developers within a denser “transit village” would have to pay a tax based on acquired development rights), we could start a virtuous cycle.

Back in October 2019 we responded by saying that we will pass along your suggestion of an integrated transit development plan and taxing district to the Town and Villages.(October 11, 2019)

[Please see the recommendations on page 32 and 33 of the Final Report that suggest utilizing existing mechanisms to shape the corridor into a safer, more pedestrian friendly environment with increased efficiency for vehicular traffic.]

D. Fleischmann, email 10/4/2019 –

Thanks for sharing, and for your patience. It’s been a very busy week for me. Here are my thoughts in blue:

Slide 22:

*** Revise zoning to include design standards for frontage along Route 59 and intersecting local/county streets.**

In the Town of Ramapo, zoning laws are selectively or not enforced,

and variances are often granted. In the rare cases the government does its job and refuses to “accommodate,” RLUPA lawsuits swiftly follow that would bankrupt the town. We [cannot] assume that everyone shares, or will be convinced to share, the same goals or values. We unfortunately need to assume malicious intent and plan accordingly.

***Consider evaluating parking requirements for new development and to accommodate shared parking.**

Look at how this worked oh so well in Lakewood, NJ. The similarities to Rockland are indeed very striking. People were parking in front of fire hydrants, in fire lanes, double parked on narrow streets where parking was supposed to be only on 1 side, for over 2 hours in commercial zones that were on the honor system, at expired meters where meters exist, and anywhere else they felt like it. Tickets led to accusations of anti Semitism, the police backing off, and more of the same. As in the previous point, we [cannot] take it for granted that people follow the same ethics and standards of behavior, because many examples exist to the contrary.

***Continue to use the comprehensive planning and local zoning process to identify appropriate levels of development along Route 59 (evaluate where mixed-use zoning would be appropriate)**

It didn’t take long for “mixed use” developments, or even industrial parks, in Lakewood to be turned into schools and houses of worship. Always try to predict the worst case scenario, and any loopholes that could potentially be exploited.

Slide 23:

*** Ensure that Town and Villages have conducted SEQR training for planning boards.**

We really need to understand 2 key underlying issues: 1) Priorities, and 2) lack of secular education. Issue #1: When the population doubles exponentially every decade, finding a place for all these people to live, go to school, park their large family vehicles, etc. becomes much more important than open public space, trees, grass, water, etc. Issue #2: Religious fundamentalists believe God created the Earth for us, so animals, plants, fish, water, etc. are there specifically for people to take and use. Fundamentalists are also forbidden to learn unholy subjects like environmental science, which

would contradict most of those religious teachings. So it's not a matter of training nor persuasion. The boards almost certainly know the rules, but due to political pressure and religious reasons, will follow only what suits their interests.

*** Coordinate on a consistent definition of significant impact requiring mitigation**

Due to differences in experience (ex living in dense neighborhoods like Boro Park), ethics, and standards of behavior, those thresholds for significant impacts will likely be higher than in surrounding towns. While Ramapo may have a higher tolerance for traffic, a degraded natural environment, etc., those impacts will inevitably spill over into neighboring towns that will refuse to tolerate it. Mitigation should thus be viewed on a regional scale. The instigating developers should be the ones to pay for infrastructure repairs or upgrades, not the county or state taxpayers.

Slide 25:

*** Several points about signage**

We need to consider language and educational barriers that exist for a lot of people who live in the area. Consider maximizing simple pictures / cartoons to convey maximum information quickly, without requiring literacy or higher order analytical skills.

Slide 29:

*** Implement the coordination of schedules between bus and rail**

As I saw this week, the issue is that buses get bogged down in Rt 59 traffic, are late to the Palisades Ctr Lot J stop where connections sometimes need to be made, and ultimately arrive late to the train station. When this happens often enough, more people drive in the short term, and more seriously evaluate relocation alternatives out of the area in the long term.

Something to consider, but it may be out of scope for this particular project: We know a lot of fundamentalists are moving into the study area, and as neighborhood demographics change, secular people would like to, or in many cases get harassed to, move out. Reference the blockbusting that "turned" the formerly "mixed" communities in Monsey, for instance. Many of the established residents get even angrier because Rockland was historically a bedroom community for the working class, and they [cannot] afford a comparable living

situation by leaving. Consider how offering a lump sum or phased relocation assistance package to anyone who will take it could both temporarily relieve some of the area traffic congestion, and foster more agreement on standards of zoning, impact mitigation, etc. among the people who choose to remain.

Back in October 2019 we responded by saying thank you for this valuable feedback on several of the options identified in our Workshop #4 presentation. Your perspective helps us to understand the underlying issues. It has been clear through our outreach to the community that there remain a number of fundamental questions about growth and how growth can be accommodated or managed within the Town and surrounding areas. What we propose are measures to help facilitate dialogue and a common understanding of the vision of the community and how to implement it. We recognize that there are differences in how this understanding is applied. Although this study can influence local decision-making, we would encourage you to also engage Town of Ramapo elected officials on several of the points you've raised. Regarding your last comment on coordination of schedules between bus and rail, we do understand that NYSDOT is still working to implement the Hudson Link service in coordination with roadway improvements (I-287 ramp metering and transit signal prioritization). Hopefully those improvements will improve reliability of the bus service over the long run. (October 16, 2019)

[Please see the recommendations on page 32 and 33 of the Final Report that suggest utilizing existing mechanisms to shape the corridor into a safer, more pedestrian friendly environment with increased efficiency for vehicular traffic.]

Y. Kraines, email 10/17/2019 –

I am writing as a member of the board for the HOA of Rose Garden Condominiums. I must first thank you for taking the initiative to make much needed improvements to Rt 59. The sidewalks that have already been installed have greatly increased the safety of pedestrians in our area.

At the same time, there are other areas of concern that need to be addressed. Our development of 78 families is located on Rose Garden Way (linked here) for which Rt 59 is the only access road. If Rt 59 were to be closed to thru traffic, we would still be allowed in as this is the only way to reach our homes. In fact, the headline picture on the Route59.org website was taken immediately in front of our development! As you can see Rt 59 is an integral and vital part of our community.

But inasmuch as it is our lifeline, it is also a barrier to us. Many of us need to cross it to pray at synagogues that are on the Northern side. Not just adults, but children as young as seven or eight as well. Some of our children also need to pass over to reach their schools. So we cross Rt 59. Sometimes by waiting for a gap in traffic. Sometimes by crossing mid-way and waiting in the turning-lane until the path is clear. And sometimes hurrying across when safety dictates that we should have waited a little longer. In the steep half-mile stretch between Remsen and Main street, there is no other option available to cross Rt 59. (walking to either side would add another half a mile to destination, something that is not reasonable to expect).

As you can see, the goings on of Rt 59 very much affect us. However, I note with concern that I was recently informed that the study is almost complete but we have not yet received a single notice informing us of, or involving us in, the study. This is despite our close proximity and how essential it is for our community. Please advise us of the current plans for this section of Rt 59.

I also take this opportunity to invite you to our neighborhood so that you can see first-hand how important Rt 59 is to us as well as the related issues that affect us. Please let me know of your availability so that we can arrange a meeting as soon as possible.

Once again, I thank you for your efforts in making a greater and

safer Rt 59.

Back in October 2019 we responded by saying thank you for your thoughtful comments on the Route 59 Study. Our team has reviewed them and I'd like to offer the following information. I'm sorry that you weren't aware of the public workshops or other outreach events that we've conducted, but rest assured that your comments through your e-mail are just as valid and just as timely. The Route 59 Study website includes the presentation of initial conceptual recommendations made at Workshop #4 (<http://route59study.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Workshop4-Presentation.pdf>). As you review these slides, you will see that we address pedestrian safety along Route 59 and suggest evaluating potential locations for mid-block pedestrian crossings or high-visibility pedestrian crossings, including near Glen Hill Road (see Slide 25). Since Route 59 is a State roadway, it would ultimately be up to the New York State DOT – a partner in the study -- to approve a new traffic signal; but recommending something like that is certainly in the spirit of the current study. Please also rest assured that, aside from current improvements to sidewalks being completed by the New York State DOT and adjustments to traffic signals in association with the new HudsonLink bus service, there are no immediate plans for any further work on Route 59. The purpose of the Route 59 Transportation and Land Use Study is to identify what the community would like to see done and what is feasible over the short-term, mid-term, and long-term. So the study is in fact the beginning of a process, not the end. We plan to release a draft of the final report in early January 2020 and then will hold public review sessions in March 2020. We would welcome your input during those sessions and I will ask the study team to include your e-mail in our distribution list so you will get notification of upcoming meetings. Please do not hesitate if you have any further questions. And thank you again for your input. (October 18, 2019)

[Please see the recommendation on page 41 of the Final Report that suggests the evaluation of midblock crossings.]

L. Wilkie, email 10/24/2019 –

What is the likelihood/possibility that the NYS Thruway would authorize the addition of a new exit in Monsey, NY?

Back in October 2019 we responded by saying thank you for your input into the Route 59 Transportation and Land Use Study. We have heard from many stakeholders that an additional Thruway exit is needed along the corridor. [The Study has] put forth a recommendation to study an additional exit. In addition, NYS Thruway committed in The New NY Bridge Mass Transit Task Force Final Transit Recommendations (February 2014) to examine the feasibility of Exit 14x. (October 19, 2019)

[Please see the recommendation on page 34 that identifies conducting further study of the feasibility of Exit 14x. A sponsor and funding need to be determined for that study.]

L. Wilkie, email 2/18/2020 –

I know that construction of an additional Exit (14x) on the Thruway in Monsey has been talked about for a few years with renewed interest and consideration during the past 6 months. Do you have any further information? Thank you for your time.

Back in February we responded by saying thank you for your interest in the Route 59 Transportation and Land Use Study. We have no new information about additional Exit on the Thruway. (February 19, 2020)

[Please see the recommendation on page 34 that identifies conducting further study of the feasibility of Exit 14x. A sponsor and funding need to be determined for that study.]

L. Wilkie, email 5/13/2020 –

I am very interested in the possibility of a new exit (14X) being constructed in Monsey. Any information is greatly appreciated.

Back in May we responded by saying Thank you for your comment on the Route 59 Area Transportation and Land Use Study. While the draft Final Report is under review, we are compiling all public comments. At the conclusion of the comment period, we will work with the appropriate agencies to respond to the comments received. (May 19, 2020)

[Please see the recommendation on page 34 that identifies conducting further study of the feasibility of Exit 14x. A sponsor and funding need to be determined for that study.]

A. Gilbert, email 7/12/2020 –

It is very important that we include separated cycling and pedestrian infrastructure as well as frequent transit along this corridor. We need Dutch-style separated cycle paths, not a 'bike lane' that is actually just the shoulder of what is effectively a freeway. We are in the midst of a climate crisis and planning for anything but a steep decrease in car use is unacceptable. People refuse to cycle and take transit today because it is borderline suicidal to do so given how dangerous it is to be on the road for anybody not in a car at all times. We should be removing as many car lanes from the road as possible to make room for this pedestrian/bike infrastructure as well as dedicated bus lanes for expanded Hudson Link service.

The study recommends consideration of protected bike lanes along Route 59. Implementation of a Complete Street element could help in offering different ways for trips to be completed.

D Fleischmann, Virtual Meeting Chat Comment 7/15/2020 –

- **Would squaring off intersections remove speedy turning lanes and cause traffic to back up even more further on 59?**
- **Another question to consider regarding mass transit: Would more people locally agree to use it if gender segregation were in effect?**
- **Ever been to India? Someone always breaks the railing to cross even major highways!**
- **The TZ buses rarely have accurate real-time arrival information. Once the bus goes out of service, for a meal break etc, the sign suddenly shows an excessive arrival time of the next bus. No-body trusts it anymore,**
- **Same thing: technology gaps and incompatibilities. Just like the bus transponder gets turned off when the driver is actually close by, forcing people to call to hear the truth, or find some other way to get in.**
- **Roundabouts require assumptions of basic driver skills and courtesy that too often is lacking in that area.**
- **We must assume the worst case scenario in terms of driver skills and courtesy. Ex using the center turn lane to pass slow or stopped traffic. A lot of local drivers come from Brooklyn, and so have different norms of acceptable driver behavior.**
- **Remember regarding the “education” to zoning board members. We can provide all the education in the world, but it probably won’t change behavior. The decisions on land use will still be made based on local priorities, even to the detriment of the environment.**
- **Don’t forget with local chain stores closing, people may have to drive further into NJ or Westchester to shop.**
- **Eventually waivers will be sought for open spaces because developers will need all available land to respond to the forever growing population pressures. By many estimates, it doubles every 5-10 years.**

The recommendations that would include physical improvements to Route 59 would need to be designed to identify the proper geometry and location of those improvements as well as their effects on traffic flow. Some improvements would need to balance enhanced pedestrian or bicyclist safety with minor impacts on traffic flow. In addition, the study’s recommendation to evaluate the use and design of the center turning lane and/or dedicated left-turn lane includes the option to add physical separations to restrict movements.

Unknown, Virtual Meeting Chat Comment 7/15/2020 –

yes, thanks for addressing this issue` I worked in the [Monsey] [Route] 59 corridor and I agree that people get frustrated and drive haphazardly, going around stopped traffic to the center or to the right. The huge amount of foot traffic and families walking across the street makes it extremely dangerous. I will watch another meeting to start from the beginning and look at full report

Please see the recommendation on page 39 that identifies evaluating the use and design of the center turning lane and/or dedicated left-turn lane within each segment of Route 59 to see if there are options to improve movements or add physical separations to restrict movements.

The scope of the project was defined by the study partners originating on South Pascack Road in the Village of Spring Valley and ending at Airmont Road in the Village of Airmont. However, many of the recommendations are not site specific and could be applied on Route 59 west of Airmont Road.

P Wooters, Virtual Meeting Chat Comment 7/15/2020 –

Airmont Road to Hemion Road should be included. This is incomplete. I am concerned to have safer pedestrian and bike use over everything else.

Please see the recommendation on page 39 that recommends consideration of protected bike lanes along Route 59. Implementation of a Complete Street element could help in offering different ways for trips to be completed.

J. Weitzner, email 7/15/2020 –

I am a business property owner on route [Route] 59 and attended your session.

Who is Graham, what is his role in this study, and how can I contact him.

As a business property owner on Route 59, I was surprised that I only heard about this study, and this meeting last night. I do not reside in the Town of Ramapo, but have been contacted by the town regarding building permits,... Why were the property owners not notified by NYS.

Thank you for attending one of the sessions yesterday. We're sorry that you are just now learning of the Route 59 study. Since we began the study in January 2019 we have tried to use a variety of channels to alert residents, business owners, and other stakeholders to the study. The Town of Ramapo has helped by forwarding our e-mail notifications to its list of residents and business owners. Yesterday's presentation was done by Graham Trelstad who is the project manager at WSP, the planning firm that NYMTC retained to conduct this study. Other members of the consultant team were also listening in on the call. The draft Final Report is available for review on the project website (www.Route59Study.org) as are presentations and materials from the four public workshops held in 2019. We are accepting comments via e-mail at comments@Route59Study.org through August 14, 2020. At this time, the Route 59 study only identified potential land use and transportation options for addressing congestion and safety along Route 59. None of the Rockland County or New York State transportation agencies that participated in the study have active proposals for any projects at this time. Please feel free to contact us, if you have any questions.

P. Wooters, email 7/15/2020 –

I participated in the workshop today. Thanks. I am most concerned about safety of pedestrians and bikes along Route 59 (as well as all roads).

When I visited London I used pedestrian crosswalks on the Cromwell Road. You push a button and shortly the traffic going closest to you stops. You walk to a center island in the middle of the road with a fence blocking you from traffic going in the other direction. You walk a short way up the block and press a second button to stop traffic going in the opposite direction. Again it stops very quickly. There is no reason not to wait. I felt very safe. Mothers with children would be safe.

In recent years there are far more people biking to work. They use sidewalks because roads are so unsafe for them. This is terrible. I believe this study is very incomplete because it doesn't encompass Route 59 to Hemion Road. NYS recently did a beautiful job rebuilding 202 and 59 in downtown Suffern, but the piece between Airmont Road and Hemion Road has all the same dangers for pedestrians and bikers.

Please see the recommendations on page 35 that identifies recommends the evaluation of a variety of pedestrian features including improved crosswalks, leading pedestrian signal intervals, and curb extensions, which would provide some of the benefits that the writer found at crosswalks in London. The study also recommends evaluating the use and design of center turning lanes within each segment of Route 59. Median pedestrian islands could be added at certain intersections in the space used by the center turn lane. The study also includes a recommendation to evaluate potential locations for mid-block crossings, which could also use the median as a pedestrian island.

The scope of the project was defined by the study partners originating on South Pascack Road in the Village of Spring Valley and ending at Airmont Road in the Village of Airmont. However, many of the recommendations are not site specific and could be applied on Route 59 west of Airmont Road.

S. Freiman, Virtual Meeting Chat Comment 7/16/2020 –

- I don't see any categories that acknowledge and work to reduce GHG emissions - transportation is about 40% of our emissions. That must have a place in here somewhere.
- encourage electric vehicles and install charging stations
- What about hop on/hop off electric buses? Free if necessary, along both Rt 59 and Maple Ave, to accommodate local shoppers?

The study identified and evaluated transportation and development issues specific to the Route 59 corridor, particularly existing congestion, and not the overall transportation system. Still, some of the study's recommendations support cleaner transportation in addition to improving local infrastructure conditions. For instance, the study's recommendations support infrastructure for non-vehicular trips through protected bike lanes and a safer pedestrian environment (see pages 35 and 39 of the Final Report). In addition, several recommendations would enhance bus service which, combined with non vehicular trips, would reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

S. Kernan, Virtual Meeting Chat Comment 7/16/2020 –

- D is designated as LT; is it so hard to coordinate regional fare collection systems?
- Widening only invites more traffic.
- Reference for delivery: <https://medium.com/sidewalk-talk/the-future-of-last-mile-delivery-has-arrived-in-a-small-dutch-city-f2fd8e2c0263>
- Real estate here in Pomona is hot. People are moving here from NYC.

The coordination of a regional fare collection system would include several agencies and private providers adding to the complexity.

R. Joachim, Virtual Meeting Chat Comment 7/16/2020 –

- Did I see in the Draft Report your population figures showed growth through 2016 or 17? I think the growth since then has increased more dramatically.
- (widening) and it allows for more traffic calming features and protected bike lane
- Thought emergency services vehicles (fire, at least) are already using those signal-changing transponders?

The study used the current census data when it was compiled. The growth could have increased since then and the current health crisis due to COVID-19 might have further accelerated that trend. The study recommends consideration of protected bike lanes along Route 59.

J. Fried, Virtual Meeting Chat Comment 7/16/2020 –

- I highly support exit 14 x which will ease congestion in high traffic areas
- is there going be a exit 14 x soon

Please see the recommendation on page 34 that recommends further study of the feasibility of Exit 14x. A sponsor and funding need to be determined for that study.

W. Friedman, email 7/22/2020 –

I am hoping that the very busy light at College Rd and Route 59 will add a left hand turn signal.

The intersection of College Road and Route 59 was identified in the study's recommendation as one of the key intersections that a left-turn lane should be considered (see page 43 of the Final Report).

A. Mizrachi, email 7/24/2020 –

Thank you for [studying] the area of route 59 to improve the flow of traffic, pedestrians and bicycle. I've been living in Monsey for over thirty years, watching it growing and getting more and more congested. Therefore I appreciate the opportunity to email my opinion.

In the east north corner of route 59, there are many many stores. a few years ago people used to be able to walk from one mall strip to another but fences have been put up and unless you're willing to do a lot of walking around the fences, people have to drive around and around which of course increases the amount of cars in that particular corner and in the intersection of route 59 and 306.

I would like to see parking spots at the edges of that corner and inside open walkway between the stores that will be close to traffic. And also benches for people to sit down. I think this will decrease the amount of cars and also will create a pedestrian friendly safe area.

I would also like to see bicycle lanes on route 59 since there is a great need for these lanes.

I wish you much success in your beautiful project.

Opening up adjoining parking lots to both pedestrian travel and vehicular travel would be a good way to allow residents to access several businesses without having to reenter Route 59. The Town and Villages could implement this sort of practice through modifications to local zoning. The recommendation to evaluate parking requirements does suggest interconnected paths with shared parking to encourage fewer automotive trips and would reduce congestion on Route 59. In addition, the recommendation to include open space and public amenities with any new development would add additional public amenities such as benches (see pages 32 and 40 of the Final Report).

M. Perlstein, email 7/27/2020 –

We applaud the review on planning for the future of the Route 59 corridor. Though, it's apparent that part of the mix, may include "housing" on the "route 59" section within the vicinity of the intersection at Evergreen and the old bus stop. As a Monsey resident who passes this intersection once or more times daily, I can attest to the fact the vast amount of services this road serves, has overwhelmed the area, thereby creating an enormous burden for the community and travelers who frequent route 59 (even just to use this road as a thoroughfare to go from Nanuet to Suffern).

Common sense would dictate that before planning for any "new" housing projects or even commercial space, priority should be directed towards mitigating "existing" traffic and congestion. Only after several years of mitigating and reducing the original issues, would it be feasible to plan on any expansion projects.

I'm surely, not advocating for shelving any plans of future development altogether, which may or may not be deemed feasible. I'm pleading to at least place a moratorium for a good few years "while" successfully mitigating original issues. Only afterwards shall another public phase be in the works to obtain engineering and society's input, to see how development may progress at that period.

Stakeholders have expressed concern about current and future development in the study corridor throughout the course of the study. Several of the study's recommendations seek to address the concern regarding future development by utilizing existing processes such as the comprehensive planning and local zoning process, the continued use of New York General Municipal Law (GML) 239 which allows municipalities to refer certain projects to the county planning board, and coordination on a consistent definition of significant impact (see page 32 of the Final Report). The processes seek to minimize impacts on the community, and facilitate public input on the future of their community.

