

IN MOTION

MORRIS COUNTY'S TRANSPORTATION FUTURE

**Planning Board Meeting
October 15, 2015**

Agenda

- **Public Outreach Update**
- **Literature Review, and Data Collection and Trends Analysis Findings**
- **Goals and Objectives**
- **Street Design Guidelines**

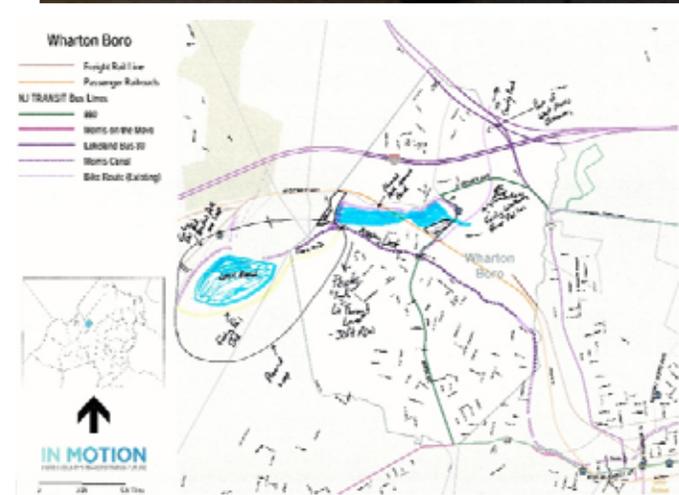
Public Outreach



Public Workshops

- Denville
- Morris Township
- Roxbury

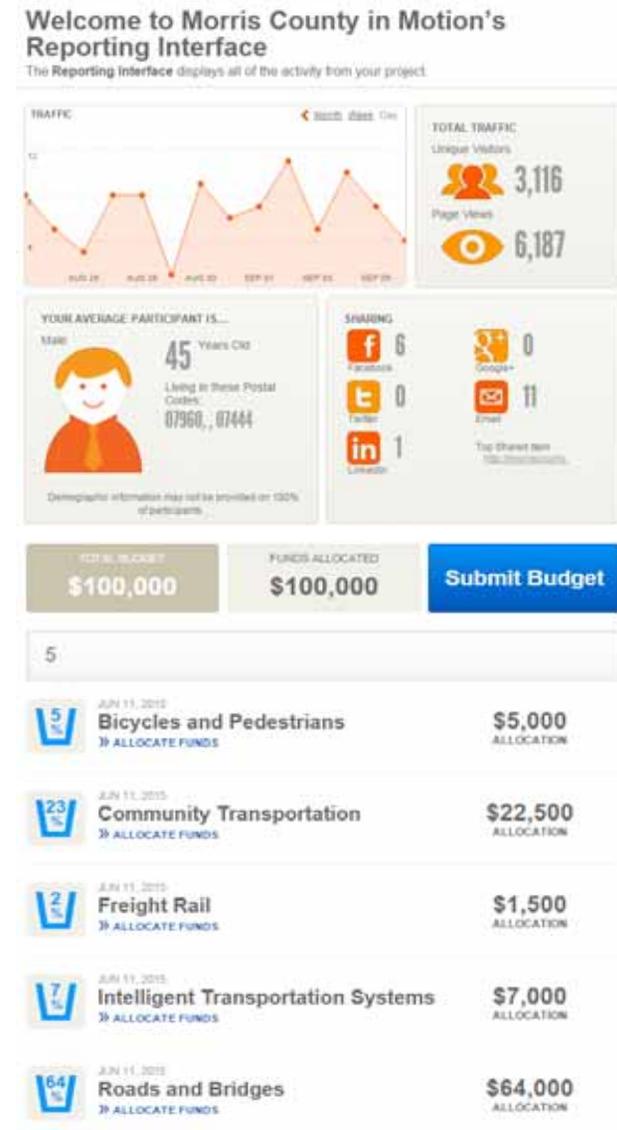
- **Key Findings**
 - Congestion on roads, primarily state and interstate
 - **Desire for safe bicycle and pedestrian facilities**
 - Better bus/train service
 - **Increased needs for access to transit for people with disabilities, low income workers, and in areas of the County without service**
 - Preserve land/focus on redevelopment



MindMixer

Key Ideas/Issues:

- Connect trail network with roads to better serve recreation, school, and commute needs.
- **Provide transportation to shopping at International Trade Center.**
- There is a lack of bus service in western Morris County which limits access to employment, especially for low income workers.
- **Greater need for senior and disabled transportation services.**
- **Morris County Strength** – Accessibility to trails and other recreational/cultural facilities
- **Morris County Challenge** – Traffic Congestion



Community Events

- Chester 4-H Fair - 27
- Wharton Canal Day - 72
- Fosterfields Country Fair - 72
- Transportation Heritage Festival - 65
- Morristown Festival on the Green - 194
- **How they would spend County money on transportation**
 1. Roads and Bridges
 2. Bike/Ped
 3. Human Services Transportation
- **What they like about their community**
 1. System of Parks
 2. Preserved Open Space
 3. Quiet Residential



Findings



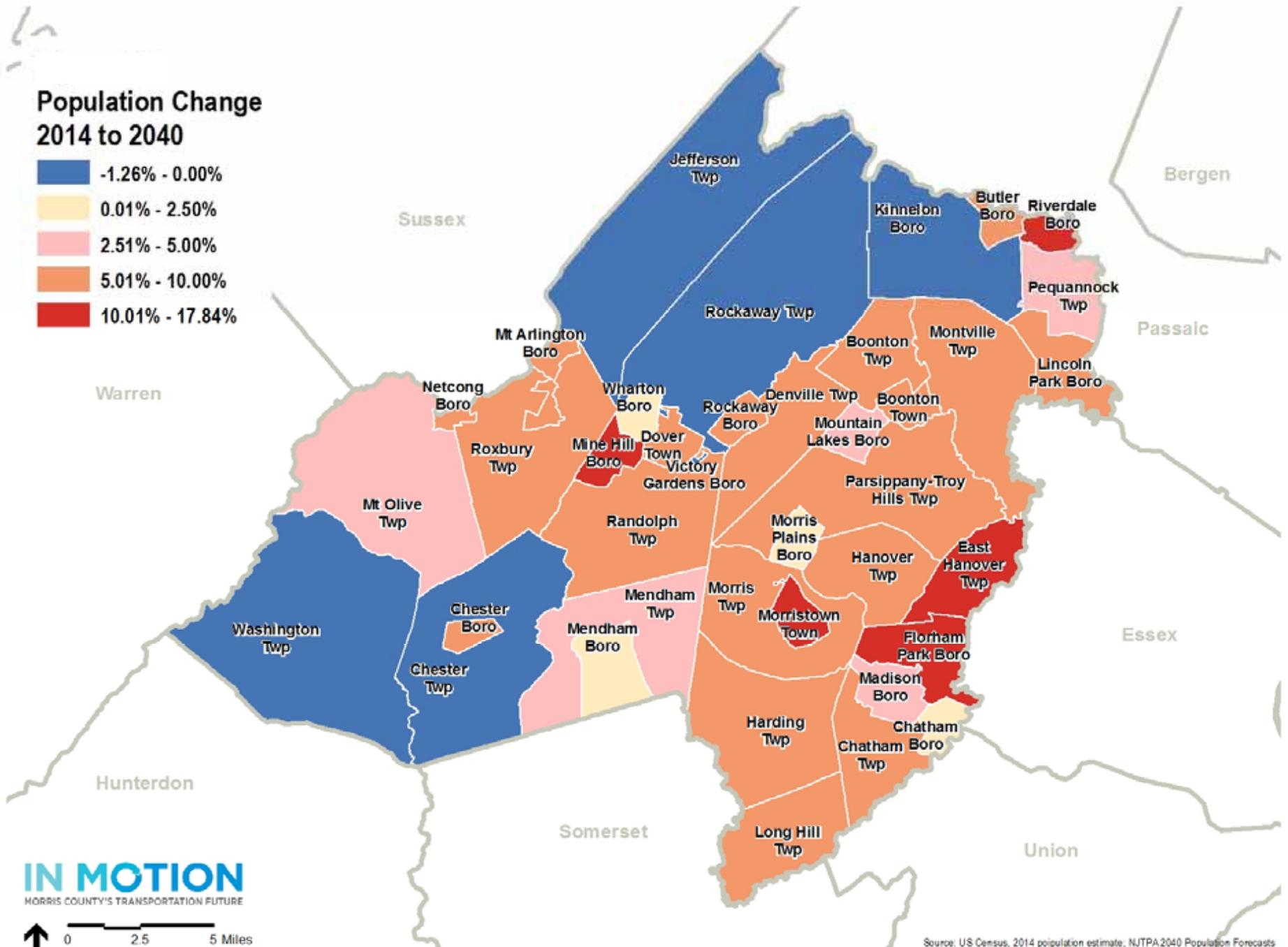
Literature Review

- Themes consistent in most municipal plans:
 - Desire to reduce congestion, promote safety and mobility.
 - Maintain rural, historic, and residential qualities of roadways.
 - Most plans acknowledge the need and desire to improve facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians.
 - Many plans did focus on “center-based growth” for economic development.
 - Limited discussion of public transportation needs at the municipal level; implemented by NJ Transit.

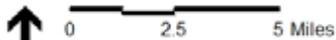
Inventory and Forecasted Trends

- Morris County continues to grow (6.1% since 2000), but at a slower rate than before.
- Long-term population forecasts indicate that where the County will be growing is different than in the past.
- Largest population growth is expected in eastern Morris, while population loss is forecasted for most towns in the Highlands Preservation Area.
- Baby Boomers (1946 to 1964) and Millennials (early 1980's to early 2000's) make up more than half of Morris County's population
- Population ages 0-9, 25-34, and 35-44 all declined between 2000 and 2014

Population Change 2014 to 2040



IN MOTION
MORRIS COUNTY'S TRANSPORTATION FUTURE



Source: US Census, 2014 population estimate; NJTPA 2040 Population Forecasts

Inventory and Forecasted Trends

- Millennials generally prefer living in town centers with greater range of housing and transportation options in close proximity.
- Baby Boomers want to “age in place” in current residence, but need access to critical services as they drive less.
- While most Baby Boomers currently drive, need for more human services transportation evident.
- Generational trends indicate a potential shift away from “peak hour” commuting patterns, to more mid-day and evening periods.

Inventory and Forecasted Trends

- Limited potential for physical roadway capacity growth, so focus on improving operations.
- Traffic Volumes expected to continue to grow between now and 2040, primarily on Interstate and State highways.
- Public transportation is not widely available in Morris County and current service does not reflect fact that most commutes are intra-county.
- Few reverse peak commute options.

Traffic

Traffic Flow Type

- Show Traffic
- Current Traffic
- Historical Traffic
- Key Routes

Coverage:

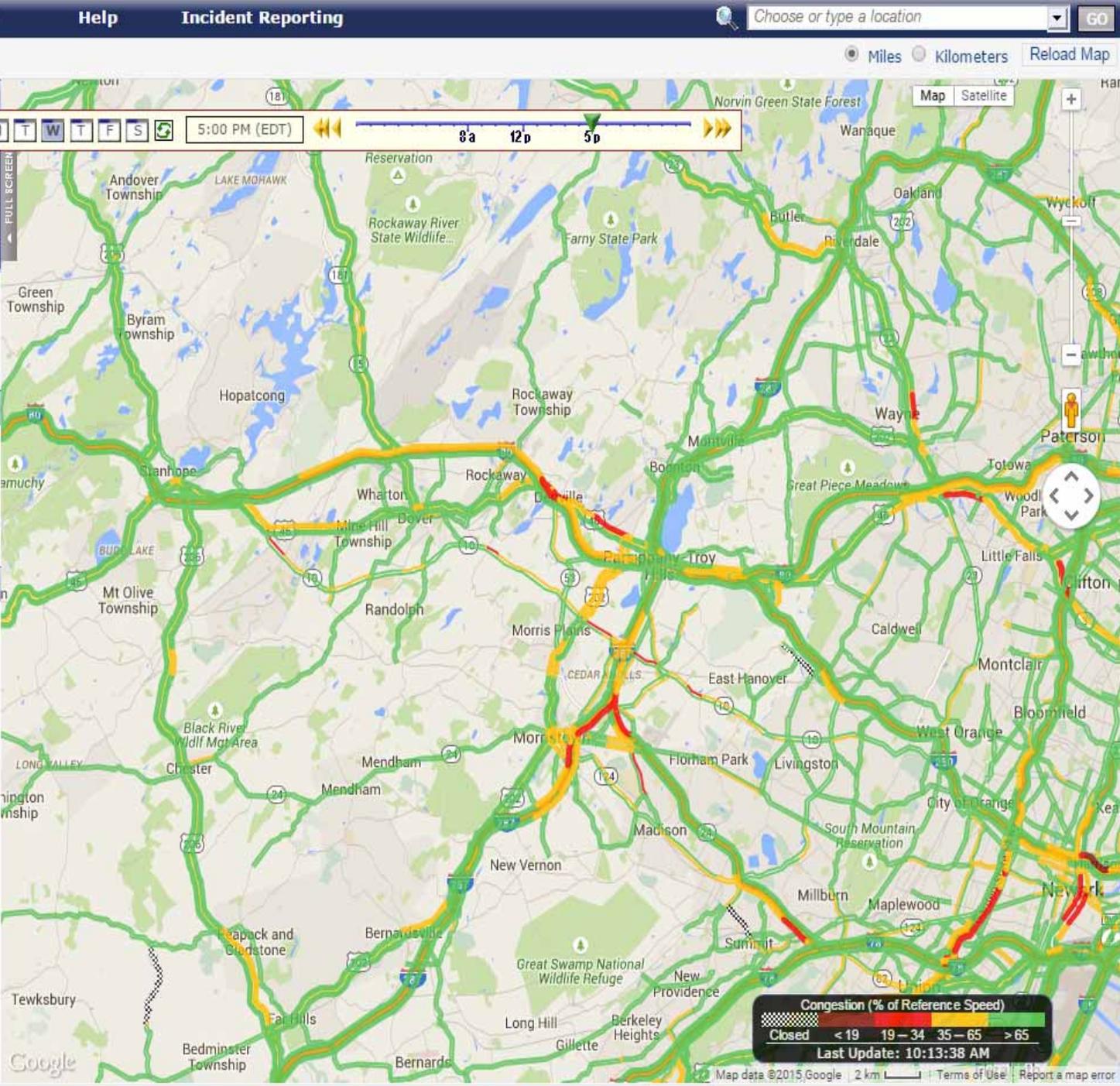
- Freeways
- Arterials
- Ramps
- Coverage Extension

Color Roads with:

- Congestion - Old Threshold
- Congestion - New Threshold
- Significant Congestion
- Speed
- Comparative Speed

Display:

- Accident/Alert
- Events
- Construction
- Congestion Alerts
- User Reported Alerts
- Traffic Cameras

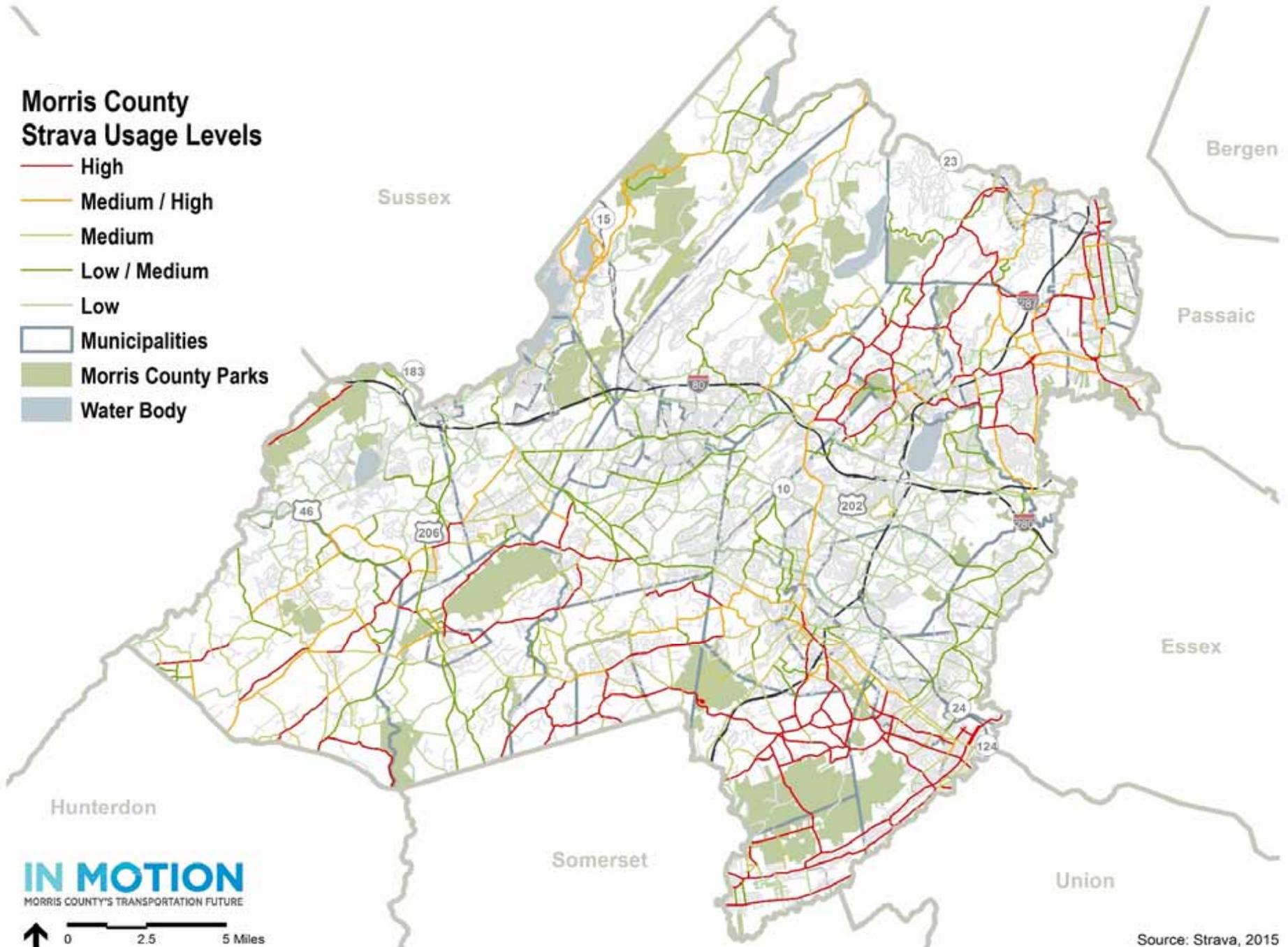


Inventory and Forecasted Trends

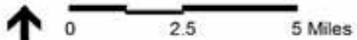
- **Bicycle and pedestrian facilities provided for on an ad-hoc basis with little regional coordination.**
- **Commuting by bicycle and walking not prevalent, but potential gaps in data collection. Used Strava® to measure usage.**
- **“Complete Streets” is growing trend in Morris County. Some have adopted policy, but many others recognize need in less formal manner.**
- **Freight and aviation provide significant economic benefits to the County economy.**

Morris County Strava Usage Levels

- High
- Medium / High
- Medium
- Low / Medium
- Low
- Municipalities
- Morris County Parks
- Water Body



IN MOTION
MORRIS COUNTY'S TRANSPORTATION FUTURE

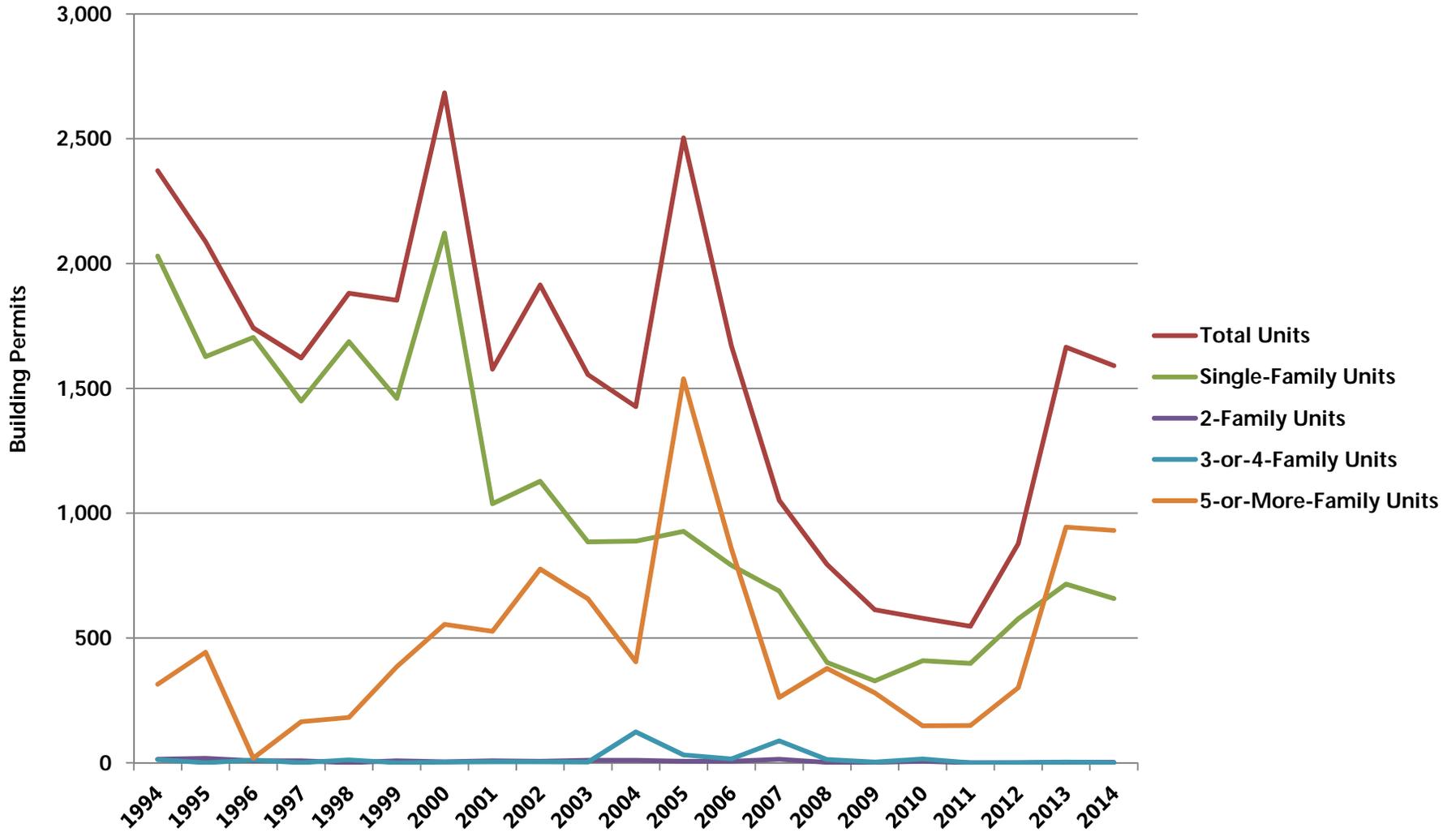


Source: Strava, 2015

Inventory and Forecasted Trends

- Outdated and obsolete office parks in suburbs will need to undergo structural change to be fully utilized. May need to become mixed-use or repurposed altogether.
- Offices in proximity to more “urban” locations within the County are performing stronger than suburban locations.
- Multi-family housing has led Morris County’s housing recovery.

Morris County Residential Building Permits, 1994-2014



Goals and Objectives



Recommendations

- **Goals, Objectives and Strategies from previous plans were reviewed and considered for inclusion in new circulation element.**
- **Many of these are generally consistent with planning needs of today.**
- **Identify policies, programs, and projects.**
- **Create a “toolbox” of bike/ped strategies.**

Goal #1: Maintain and improve safety and efficiency for all users on County roads



Goal #1 Objectives

1.1: Improve Roadway Operations

1.2: Complete missing links by improving direct connections between major roadways

1.3: Address safety issues on County roads

1.4: Promote safe and efficient truck travel

1.5: Create safe, convenient, and appealing bicycle and pedestrian facilities

1.6: Establish a coordinated bicycle and pedestrian network

1.7: Develop County planning policies and procedures that encourage opportunities for bicycling and walking

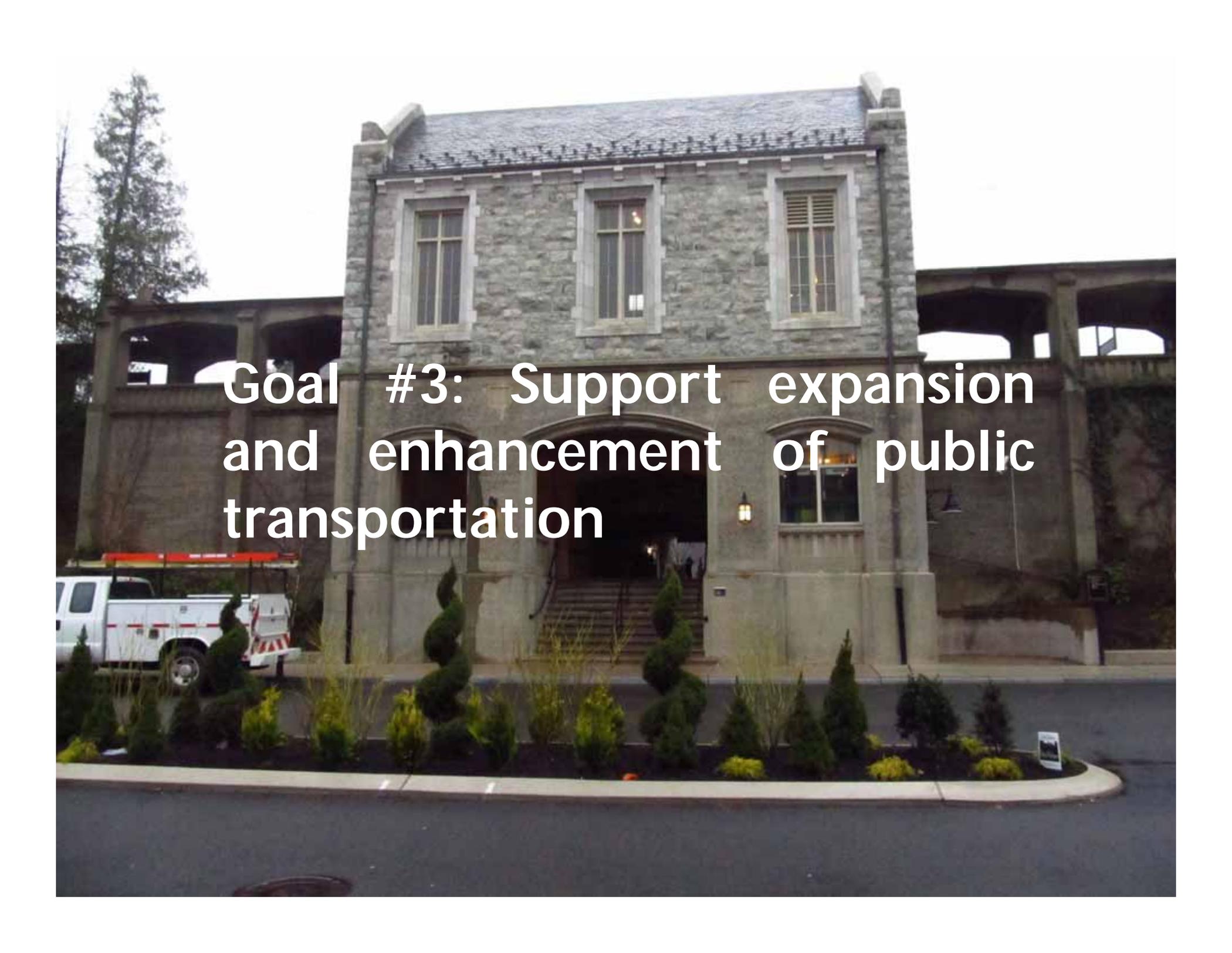
1.8: Promote public awareness and acceptance of bicycling and walking



Goal #2: Minimize regional travel impacts on local roads and residential neighborhoods

Goal #2 Objectives

- 2.1:** Encourage municipalities and businesses to develop traffic mitigation strategies
- 2.2:** Clearly define existing truck routes through mapping and signage initiatives and identify new truck routes where possible
- 2.3:** Work with municipalities to identify locations where “Quiet Zone” designations are feasible and most urgently needed
- 2.4:** Where local truck access needs are identified, enhance truck access to the major regional highway system in ways that minimize future community impacts and reduce existing impacts to the extent possible
- 2.5:** Address existing inefficiencies in the county’s freight system in a cost-effective manner that minimizes community impacts and addresses quality-of-life issues
- 2.6:** Protect the character of historic, rural, and natural areas of Morris County



Goal #3: Support expansion and enhancement of public transportation

Goal #3 Objectives

- 3.1:** Support and encourage efficient, reliable, safe, and convenient passenger rail service
- 3.2:** Work with NJ Transit to maintain, improve, and expand bus service and facilities in the County
- 3.3:** Promote the expansion and development of new park and ride facilities
- 3.4:** Work with NJ Transit to improve and maintain the railroad stations in Morris County
- 3.5:** Preserve and protect rail and roadway rights-of-way for future transit use and multi-modal access



**Goal #4: Enhance mobility options
for vulnerable populations**

Goal #4 Objectives

4.1: Meet the transportation needs of senior and disabled residents

4.2: Consider the needs of mobility-impaired populations in transportation improvements. While there is a need to comply with all Americans with Disability Act, improvements can be made to provide better conditions for users

4.3: Investigate alternative strategies for meeting paratransit demand within ADA regulations. This could include using taxis or fixed-route service to complete trips

4.4: Work with TransOptions and the County Superintendent of Schools to explore carpooling options, opportunities, and incentives for parents to reduce school-related congestion

Goal #4 Objectives

4.5: Increase bicycle and pedestrian accessibility to schools to promote health, safety, and independence of schoolchildren

4.6: Explore route expansion, possibly into adjacent counties, for Morris On the Move (MOM)

4.7: Advocate for weekly bus passes by NJ Transit or coordination with local businesses that would allow low-income individuals to access discounted transit rates without the large upfront financial commitment

Goal #5: Provide quality connections to recreational, historical and cultural facilities



Goal #5 Objectives

- 5.1:** Create recreation challenges to encourage residents to take advantage of the county's paved and natural trails
- 5.2:** Advance the creation of the Rockaway River Greenway
- 5.3:** Coordinate with Morris Canal Greenway Working Group and municipalities to determine physical and programmatic needs along the Greenway
- 5.4:** Determine feasible off-road and on-road Morris Canal Greenway (MCG) route utilizing existing infrastructure

Goal #5 Objectives

5.5: Explore potential linkages between linear recreational routes (MCG, West Morris Greenway, Patriots' Path, Traction Line, etc.) and other open space, cultural facilities, and historic sites

5.6: Determine ability to connect centers of place to open space, cultural facilities, and historic sites via multi-modal connections

5.7: Explore potential for Transit to Parks program. This program would provide opportunities to connect populations with limited mobility options to recreational areas



Goal #6: Support local and regional economic development and growth through transportation investments

Goal #6 Objectives

- 6.1:** Promote the transport of goods by rail
- 6.2:** Support aviation services in Morris County (1992)
- 6.3:** Promote industrial clusters in areas with good highway and freight rail access to minimize impacts on local neighborhoods and encourage appropriate economies of scale for multiple industrial users
- 6.4:** Promote density of development in town centers and around train stations and bus park and rides
- 6.5:** Support local initiatives for center-based planning and placemaking through technical support and improvements on surrounding roadways

Goal #6 Objectives

- 6.6:** Encourage zoning updates, increased density, enhanced connections to mass transit, and mixed-use development to promote re-use of legacy office park development in-line with recognized best practices occurring around the country that are appropriate to Morris County
- 6.7:** Explore the potential for Special Improvements Districts (SIDs) to promote transportation investments within clusters of office and industrial development
- 6.8:** Target transportation investments to support municipal initiatives to promote development around transit stations, areas in need of redevelopment or rehabilitation, brownfield redevelopment, and where there are densities of population, and employment
- 6.9:** Work with municipalities to take advantage of state-sponsored initiatives, such as the Economic Opportunity Act, Urban Transit Hub Program, Main Street Program, and Transit Village program, to support and advance transportation and economic initiatives



Goal #7: Adapt to new technology and innovation for transportation

Source: FHWA

Goal #7 Objectives

7.1: Invest in Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), including adaptive traffic signals, which can help to relieve congestion and improve safety

7.2: Explore the creation of traffic monitoring centers for County roads or develop partnership with NJDOT to monitor key County roadways

7.3: Include traffic signal pre-emption devices on County roads for emergency responders as traffic signals are replaced and upgraded over time

7.4: Develop a centralized Advanced Traveler Information System (ATIS) that permits commuters to check parking availability at park and rides through their phone, email, or computer

Goal #7 Objectives

7.5: Work with NJDOT and NJ Transit to identify “highway intercept” locations where real-time transit and parking information could be displayed to provide information on bus and rail arrivals and departures

7.6: Install traffic signal technology that could be upgraded to provide connected-vehicle vehicle-to-infrastructure communications as vehicle technology advances over time

7.7: Review county road design standards as advanced vehicle technologies are developed

IN MOTION

Goal #8: : Promote a coordinated, comprehensive, and cooperative transportation planning process



Goal #8 Objectives

8.1: Ensure that County site plan review includes consideration of bicycle and pedestrian needs, and encourage developers during County site plan review to add bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure elements to their projects where appropriate

8.10: Establish an ongoing dialog between neighboring governments to discuss land use planning and transportation infrastructure cost sharing opportunities

8.12: Coordinate with MCEDC to foster dialogue between public sector and private sector interests on transportation and land use business/employee needs

8.15: Support regional pedestrian and bicycle trails initiatives including the Morris Canal Greenway

Goal #8 Objectives

8.20: Work with NJDOT to address congestion and safety issues on state roads

8.25: Encourage NJ Transit to investigate reverse peak and increased off-peak/weekend transit service to Morris County

8.27: Build partnerships with independent transportation services (i.e. Uber, Lyft, etc.) to connect human transportation service needs to providers

8.28: Assist municipalities in taking advantage of the Highlands TDR Program by providing technical assistance and coordination with the Highlands Council



Goal #9: Advocate for long-term transportation funding solutions that address current and future needs

Source: Morris County

Goal #9 Objectives

- 9.1:** Seek out transportation planning funds from federal and state grant programs
- 9.2:** Explore the possibility of using a portion of the Morris County Preservation Trust Fund for bicycle and pedestrian projects
- 9.3:** Provide support for municipal grant applications that meet the county and regional transportation objectives
- 9.4:** Investigate potential Transportation Development Districts (TDD). TDD's act as the entity responsible for developing, improving, maintaining, or operating a project relative to the transportation needs of the area
- 9.5:** Allocate more funding in line with the Fix-it-First policy. A focus on preventative maintenance results in lower costs than for major repairs ultimately required when maintenance is deferred
- 9.6:** Ensure that budgets for new construction include long-term maintenance costs

Goal #9 Objectives

9.7: Facilitate state and federal funding for transportation investments that are context-sensitive to surrounding land uses

9.8: Provide sufficient funding for maintenance of County roads and bridges

9.9: Advocate for the construction of the Gateway Tunnel on the Northeast Corridor with an appropriate cost-sharing agreement between New Jersey, New York, and the Federal Government

9.10: Collaborate regularly with municipalities to ensure that transportation investments needed to support local land use and (re)development activities are accounted for in NJTPA's three federally required programs, which include the Unified Planning Work Program, the Transportation Investment Program (TIP), and the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (Long Range Plan)

9.11: Work with municipalities to identify a locally defined priority area map for growth and incentives offered at the regional and state levels

Street Design Guidelines

- Need for flexibility on how County roads are utilized based on surrounding land use activity
- Different from FHWA Highway Function Classifications, but do not replace
- Guidelines will include a matrix and example cross-sections



Next Steps

- **Finalize Policy and Design Guidelines Memorandum**
- **Complete Recommendations Technical Memorandum**
- **Draft of Circulation Element to Morris County by December 31, 2015**
- **Final Draft – March 2016**
- **Plan Adoption – May 2016**

Questions

