

HARRISON STREETS FOR ALL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | JUNE 2024

The **Town of Harrison**, Hudson County, despite its relatively small geographic size of 1.3 square miles, is crossed by several major regional transportation routes, including the Northeast Corridor rail line, the Port Authority Trans-Hudson (PATH) rail line, the NJ TRANSIT Morris & Essex rail line, and Interstate 280 (I-280). Harrison has experienced significant change over the past several years due to new development, hundreds of acres of redevelopment, and general investment, including a modernized and expanded PATH station, significant cleanup of formerly contaminated sites, and the opening of the 25,000-seat Red Bull Arena in 2010. In response to this change, Harrison's population grew substantially, from 13,620 in 2010 to 19,450 in 2020, a 43% increase.

Harrison Streets for All, an effort funded through the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority's (NJTPA's) Planning for Emerging Centers program, was intended to **support the planning and implementation of Complete Streets in Harrison**. This project complements the current investment in town and supports ongoing population growth and mobility for both new and existing Town residents as well as the many people who visit or commute through Harrison on a regular basis.

Complete Streets are multimodal and multifunctional streets that not only serve the mobility needs of travelers of all ages and abilities but also provide community gathering spaces, beautification, and stormwater management. Re-imagined streets that better accommodate Harrison residents and visitors will enhance the Town's position as a vibrant, transit-oriented, and walkable community.

Since Complete Streets are never one-size-fits all, the Harrison Streets for All project team produced **two key products** fully customized to the Harrison context:

- ▶ A **Street Design and Implementation Guide** (Design Guide) is meant to steer the design and programming of streets by outlining the application of over 40 Complete Streets design and operational treatments to various street types in Harrison. The Design Guide builds on previous Town planning efforts by incorporating a review of existing plans, studies, and other written resources related to the street and transportation network. The Guide is further informed by community makeup (demographics and equity considerations); existing



street conditions and characteristics; existing and planned land uses; and an assessment of historic crash data. Feedback from the community and a Steering Advisory Committee supplemented the analyses of existing conditions by providing qualitative input on the everyday experience of navigating the Town's streets.

- ▶ A draft **Complete Streets Policy** for the Town of Harrison was also produced as a guiding document that establishes formal support for Complete Streets and provides a framework for future implementation. The Policy includes municipal goals related to Complete Streets and creates a Complete Streets Advisory Committee that can work with Town departments and project teams (engineers, planners, contractors) to review plans and guide the incorporation of Complete Streets elements into future street projects in Harrison.

▶ INPUTS TO THE STUDY

DATA INPUTS

The work of Harrison Streets for All, including its major work products, was informed by a combination of existing plans and studies, demographic and socioeconomic data, land use, historic crash data, and an evaluation of the existing transportation network, ensuring that study outputs were appropriate and relevant to Harrison's context and street network. Below are takeaways from the data collection and analysis phase:

DATA INPUTS

1. Existing Plans, Studies, and Written Resources
2. Population and Equity Factors
3. Existing Transportation Network
4. Crash Data
5. Land Uses

- ▶ A review of existing municipal plans and studies revealed recurring recommendations to promote Harrison as a mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented community; encourage and increase non-auto travel; and establish a Complete Streets roadway network.
- ▶ Harrison is an urban community of dense land uses spread over only 1.3 square miles. In a municipality of this size and character, a Complete Streets network would enable residents and visitors to choose between a variety of travel modes – walk, bike, scooter, car, or bus – when making short trips within the Town for shopping, school, recreation, social visits or accessing the PATH.

- ▶ The demographic makeup of Harrison’s population, with high percentages of minorities, low-income residents, foreign-born, limited English speakers, young people, and zero car households, strongly supports a need for Complete Streets that provide safe and affordable travel options for non-drivers and residents without access to a car.

Sample Demographic Statistics comparing the Town of Harrison and Hudson County

	TOWN OF HARRISON	HUDSON COUNTY
Minority	76.2%	71.8%
Low Income	34.3%	30.5%
Foreign Born	56.0%	42.9%
Limited English Proficiency	30.0%	22.7%

Source: American Community Survey 2017-2021

- ▶ Historic crash data from 2016–2020 points to a need for safety improvements along Harrison Avenue, Frank E. Rodgers Boulevard, and Hamilton Street. Pedestrian and bicyclist crash concentrations on Frank E. Rodgers Boulevard and Harrison Avenue will require additional safety considerations and interventions to reduce these crash types.

INPUT FROM THE COMMUNITY

Community outreach efforts consisted of various points of engagement designed to maximize feedback from the public.

- ▶ A **website** was created as an online home for the project where stakeholders could find information about Complete Streets, project updates, and ways to get involved.
- ▶ An **online survey** and **interactive map** were used to solicit information about safety concerns, the street user experience, and desired improvements. The questions asked helped the project team understand what respondents saw as opportunities and concerns with the street network in Harrison. The

ENGAGEMENT BY THE NUMBERS:





Demonstration project on Hamilton Street and N. 5th Street

mapping exercise gave respondents a chance to provide location-specific input on different travel modes and topics. The survey was conducted in four languages based on the community’s language needs: English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Chinese.

▶ The project team also hosted in-person outreach activities throughout October 2023, including three “pop-

up” events at which team members were present at high-traffic areas in Harrison to meet people “where they are” and discuss street conditions, mobility, and safety. Two such pop-up events included temporary safety **demonstration projects**, specifically curb extensions that were painted at two different intersections to demonstrate intent and function.

- ▶ A **Walkability Workshop** held in October 2023 provided an additional in-person opportunity for community stakeholders to provide more in-depth feedback via a guided walking tour of Harrison streets during which participants could directly observe and comment on street conditions, mobility and safety concerns, and opportunities to advance Complete Streets.
- ▶ A **Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC)** was convened three times during the project. The SAC acted in an advisory role by informing, providing guidance to, and collaborating with the project team to develop Harrison Streets for All work products. The SAC was comprised of Town of Harrison elected officials and staff and included representatives from Hudson County, NJ TRANSIT, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ), Hudson Transportation Management Agency (TMA), and Hudson County Complete Streets.

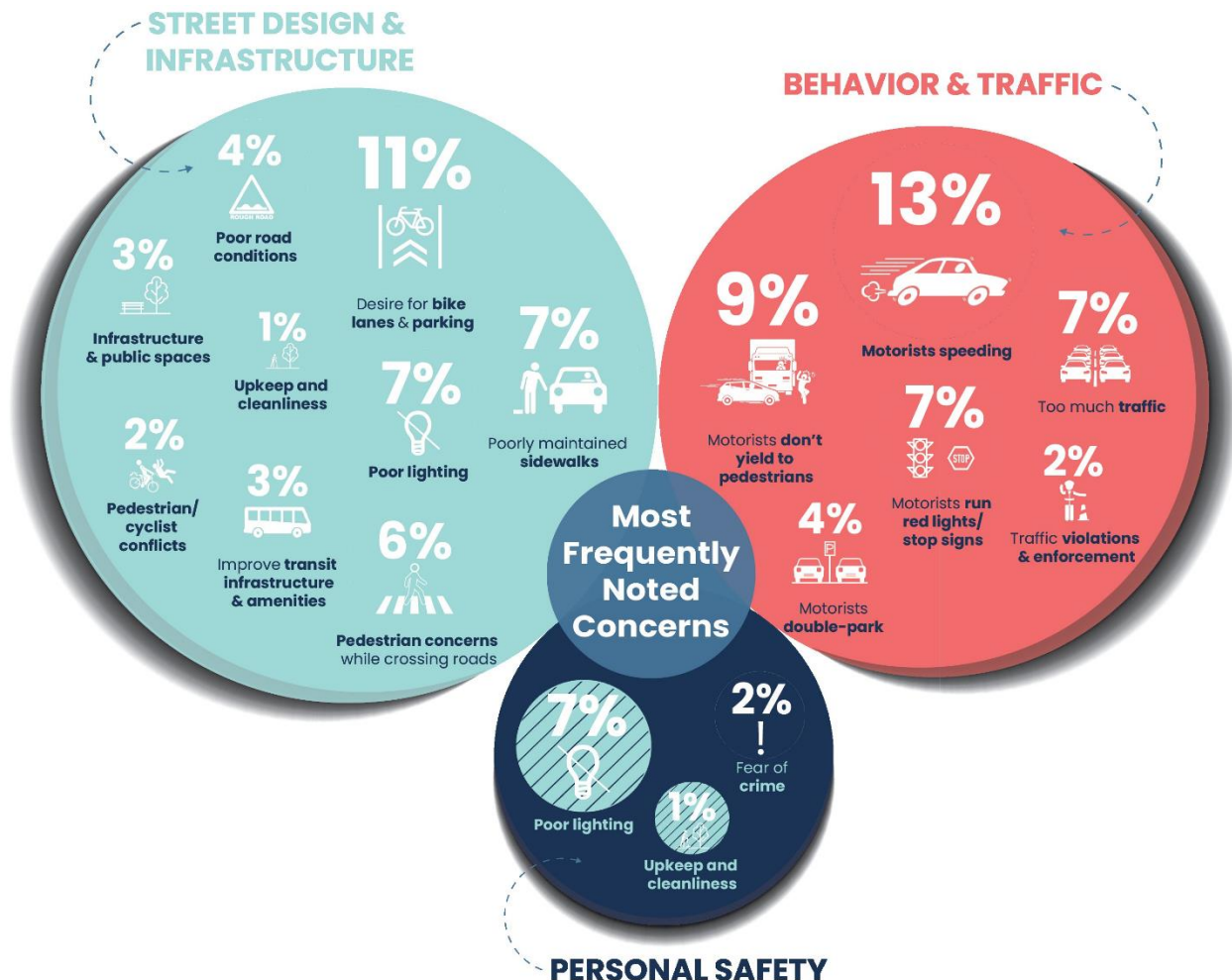
WHAT WE HEARD

During approximately three months of active public outreach, the project team heard perspectives on Harrison’s transportation challenges and opportunities from diverse

stakeholders. The following concerns and opportunities were heard consistently throughout the community outreach process:

- ▶ Concerns about speeding by drivers, and the risk this poses to other drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Outreach respondents expressed a strong interest in managing travel speeds to improve safety.
- ▶ A desire for improved pedestrian safety and more pedestrian infrastructure, such as crosswalks and sidewalks.
- ▶ A desire to provide safer streets for bicyclists, including by providing bicycle lanes and bicycle parking.
- ▶ A desire to improve transit infrastructure, amenities, and services – including bus and PATH connectivity, frequency, drop-off/pick-up locations, additional bus stops, and routes.

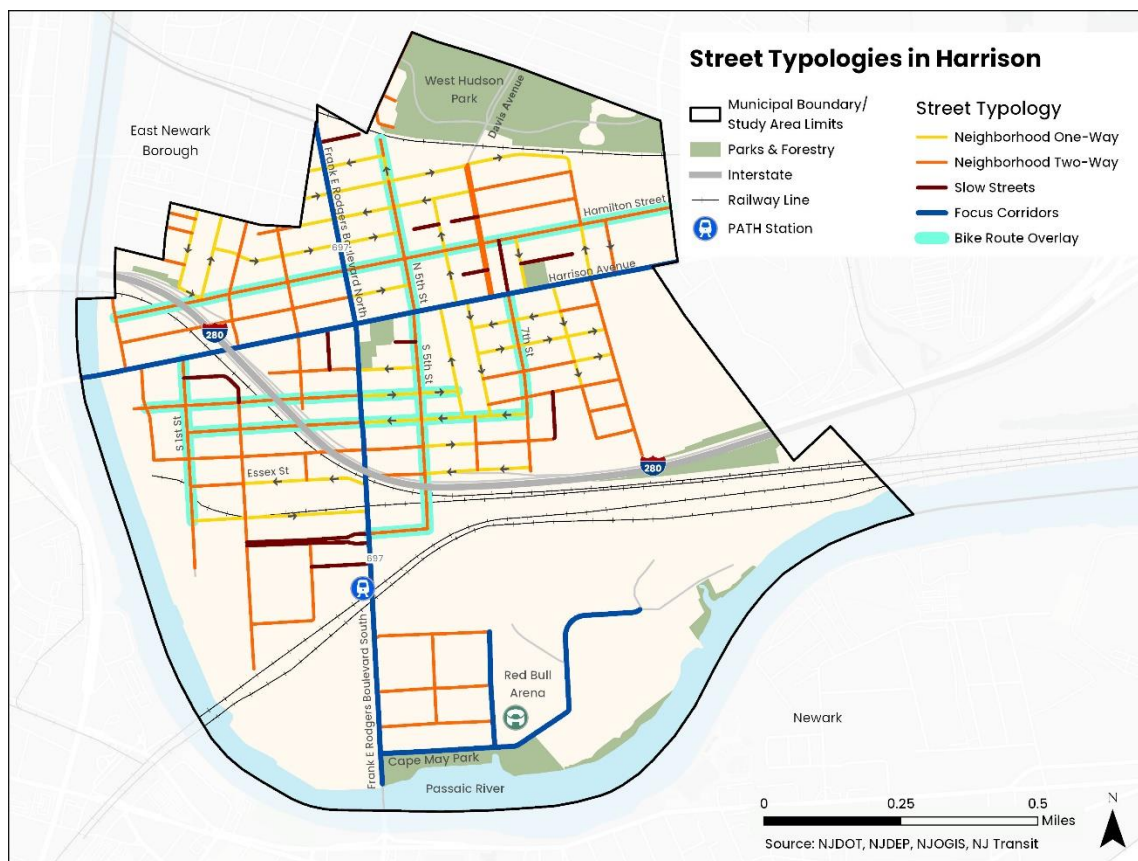
Most frequently noted concerns:



► **STREET DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE**

The Harrison Streets for All Design and Implementation Guide is a reference tool for town officials, engineers, planners, contractors, or anyone involved with street upgrades in Harrison to plan and design safer and more accessible streets.

Using the most recent design and operational guidance from the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO), and other sources, the Design Guide provides contextual design direction based on defined street typologies in Harrison. (See map below.) Street typologies are determined by similar endemic characteristics such as function, adjacent land uses, width, number of lanes, or other conditions.



Map of categorized street typologies in Harrison

Complete Streets design treatments such as high visibility crosswalks, curb extensions, mid-block crossings, transit stops, rain gardens, or loading zones are assigned to the various street typologies in a contextual manner based on conditions.



Street rendering showing the application and combination of various Complete Street design treatments. Several such renderings appear in the Design Guide.

Within the Guide, Complete Streets treatments are also assigned to various types of street projects such as signage and striping, resurfacing, safety, intersection upgrades, sidewalk improvements, full-scope construction or reconstruction, and quick-build projects. In this way, project teams can apply Complete Streets treatments to the type of street they are working on and/or the type of project they are undertaking. This makes for a flexible and user-friendly resource, providing opportunities for project teams to consider and incorporate Complete Streets treatments into Harrison streets.

A simplified process for using the guide consists of:

1. Identify street typology
- 2A. Determine applicable Complete Streets treatments by typology
- 2B. Determine Complete Streets treatments by project type
3. Reference design guidance for the identified Complete Streets treatments
4. Apply Design Guidance

▶ COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

A Complete Streets Policy was drafted for the Town of Harrison, adapting content from the New Jersey Complete & Green Streets for All Model Policy to reflect the Harrison context.

The Complete Streets Policy formalizes Town support for Complete Streets through a Resolution, identifies goals related to Complete Streets implementation, and establishes mechanisms to support implementation. One mechanism includes the creation of a dedicated Complete Streets Advisory Committee, made up of Town staff and other municipal stakeholders, which will work in coordination with the Harrison Construction and Engineering Department to oversee street projects (new street construction, utility work, repaving, etc.) and work to incorporate Complete Streets elements into those projects. The second mechanism is the creation of Complete Streets “checklists” that project teams – engineers, contractors, etc. – fill out to formally document consideration of Complete Streets treatments in street projects.

▶ CONCLUSION

Harrison Streets for All provides legacy resources including a customized Street Design and Implementation Guide intended to guide future Complete Streets projects as well as a Complete Streets Policy that expresses municipal support for safe and accessible streets and establishes an oversight body to review street projects and advocate for implementation. If adopted and used, these resources will allow the Town’s Street network to complement ongoing growth and investment by accommodating multimodal travel, reducing dependency on auto travel and parking demand, increasing the resiliency of Harrison’s street network, and advancing safe mobility for travelers of all ages and abilities. Safe, connected, and accessible streets will help Harrison advance its municipal goals and improve quality of life for both current and future residents.

NEXT STEPS

Following project completion in June 2024, Town of Harrison officials should consider the following next steps to review, adopt, and/or employ the work products summarized herein, and, eventually, plan, design, and implement Complete Streets to complement other ongoing investments.

- Review all work products and provide comments or questions to Peter Bilton, Manager Sustainable Transportation Planning, NJTPA at pbilton@njtpa.org.
- Empower the Construction & Engineering Department to begin using the Design Guide as a resource for planning and design stages of all street projects. The Town should consider adopting the Design Guide as an element of the Circulation Element of the Master Plan.
- Review the Complete Streets Policy, which can be adopted as-is or customized further to meet the Town's needs.
- Establish a Complete Streets Advisory Committee to begin administering the Policy.
- Review and adopt the Subdivision and Site Plan Review Procedures.

