



CONNECTING
PEOPLE, PLACES,
AND
POTENTIAL.

TOGETHER 202: REIMAGINING COMPLETE COMMUNITIES ALONG A CONNECTING CORRIDOR

FALL 2013

A LOCAL DEMONSTRATION PROJECT



COMPLETE
COMMUNITIES

CORRIDOR-WIDE
OPPORTUNITIES

FACILITATING
COLLABORATION



PROJECT PARTNERS

Hunterdon County



Somerset County



Branchburg Township



Bridgewater Township



Flemington Borough



Raritan Borough



Raritan Township



Readington Township



Somerville Borough



PROJECT PARTNERS

HART TMA



RideWise TMA



Trans Bridge



Somerset County Business Partnership



Hunterdon Chamber of Commerce



Raritan Valley Community College



NJ Department of Transportation



PROJECT TEAM

Regional Plan Association



The Williams Group



NJ TRANSIT



North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority



Together North Jersey



TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT TOGETHER NORTH JERSEY	2
ABOUT THE LOCAL DEMONSTRATION PROJECT PROGRAM	3
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
INTRODUCTION	10
PHASE 1: WHERE ARE WE NOW? WHERE ARE WE HEADED?	19
Building on Existing Efforts	20
Key Challenges	21
Demographics Analysis	23
Market & Economic Analysis	28
Transportation & Mobility	32
Existing Land Use	37
PHASE 2: WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO?	45
Goals Prioritization	46
Visioning	48
Centers Strategies	52
Edges Strategies	54
Crossroads Strategies	58
Rural Neighborhood Strategies	62
Scenic Highway Strategies	64
PHASE 3: HOW DO WE GET THERE?	67
Implementation	68
Creating a Lasting Forum	78

ABOUT TOGETHER NORTH JERSEY

In November 2011, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded TOGETHER NORTH JERSEY (aka, North Jersey Sustainable Communities Consortium) a \$5 million Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant. The grant is matched with an additional \$5 million in leveraged funds from project partners. Grant funds have been used to implement the Local Demonstration Project (LDP) Program, develop a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development (RPSD) for the 13-county planning region (pictured to the right), and provide technical assistance and offer education opportunities that build the capacity of jurisdictions, organizations and the public to advance sustainability projects and initiatives.

The plan is both “place-based” and “issue-based” and uses sustainability, transit system connectivity and Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) as the central framework for integrating plans, regulations, investments, and incentive programs at all levels of government to improve economic and environmental conditions, while promoting regional equity and resource efficiency. For more information, please visit

togethernorthjersey.com

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 13 County Governments in the NJTPA Region
- Edward J. Bloustein School for Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University
- North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA)
- NJ TRANSIT
- NJ Office of Planning Advocacy (NJOPA)
- Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey (HCDN-NJ)
- Sustainability Institute/Sustainable Jersey at The College of New Jersey
- NJ Future
- Building One New Jersey
- PlanSmart NJ
- Regional Plan Association (RPA)

DISCLAIMER

The work that provided the basis for this report was supported by funding under an award from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The substance and findings of the work are dedicated to the public. The authors of the report are solely responsible for the accuracy of the data,



statements and interpretations contained in this document. Such statements and interpretations do not necessarily reflect the views the Together North Jersey Steering Committee or its individual members or any other agency or instrumentality of Government.

ABOUT THE LOCAL DEMONSTRATION PROJECT PROGRAM

The Local Demonstration Project (LDP) Program seeks to advance specific projects, initiatives, and other investments for local communities to achieve short-term, implementable projects which are consistent with the RPSD goals and program outcomes.

The LDP Program provides technical assistance for strategic planning studies focused on designated areas or corridors associated with established or anticipated transit services and/or facilities. Eligible LDP projects will be sponsored by municipalities, counties, non-governmental organizations, community development corporations, and other interested organizations.

These demonstration projects help to identify partnering opportunities, milestones, and potential funding sources and serve as a model for future initiatives.

Please visit www.togethernorthjersey.com to learn more

12 KEY ISSUES

The range of issues faced by the communities within the Region in positioning themselves for a more sustainable future is broad. The Local Demonstration Project program as a whole will attempt to engage all of the the major policy issues that have been identified in

recent years, as seen in the adjacent diagram. Each project of the LDP program will address Land Use and Transportation at its core and will identify several primary issues as the project's focus.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

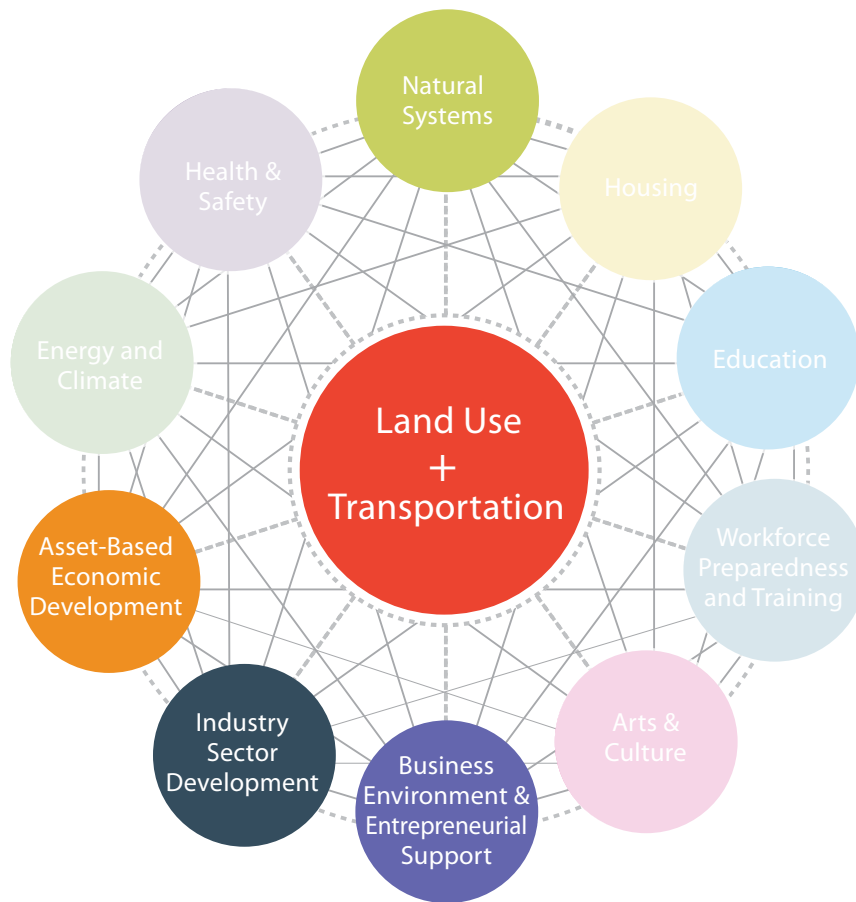
Together 202: Reimagining Complete Communities along a Connecting Corridor is a project that builds directly off of prior planning efforts and local stakeholder input to:

1. Foster a working and collaborative network of interested citizens, residents, business owners, and stakeholders living in the communities to participate in the process and support project actions and outcomes
2. Develop a deep understanding of the corridor to better identify the opportunities for growth and connectivity along the corridor
3. Develop a stakeholder-driven vision for the corridor that identifies opportunities and provides strategies that link land use to business development, redevelopment and transportation

The project's study area encompasses U.S. Route 202 and surrounding land uses from the Somerville Circle in Somerset County to the Flemington Circle in Hunterdon County, as it passes through the following municipalities: Somerville Borough, Raritan Borough, Bridgewater Township, Branchburg Township, Readington Township, Raritan Township and Flemington Borough and including downtown Somerville, Raritan and Flemington.



Route 202 corridor



The product is a stakeholder-driven vision that identifies opportunities and provides strategies for key areas along the corridor, and for the corridor as a whole.

PROJECT THEMES

The study encompasses various themes, including:

- Land Use & Transportation
- Natural Systems
- Asset-Based Economic Development
- Industry Sector Development
- Business Environment & Entrepreneurial Support

APPROACH

Together 202: Reimagining Complete Communities along a Connecting Corridor utilizes a corridor approach to examine and string together land use opportunities. A corridor approach to planning discourages isolated decision-making, which can contribute to disconnected land uses, and encourages cross-jurisdictional collaboration to create a cohesive corridor vision.

In the past, the counties, municipalities, NJ TRANSIT, and other local partners have completed a number of mobility studies that examine ways to enhance transportation options along the corridor. Together 202 supplements these transportation and

mobility studies with a land use element and market analysis, underscoring the importance of relating potential transportation enhancements to land use patterns and changes, in the context of market conditions. The objective is a community-based corridor that not only enables mobility of all kinds – cars, transit, biking, walking – but supports strong economic development and maintains community character.

This study provides current facts about land use, demographic and market trends and offers site-specific land use recommendations that – if implemented – can help to foster an economically competitive, better connected corridor.



Vacant retail center along corridor

KEY CHALLENGES

This project identifies and addresses the following key challenges, derived from research and outreach:

- Limited transit options and reliance on single occupancy vehicles lead to congestion along the Route 202 corridor.
- Sprawl development patterns bring about disconnected, auto-oriented land uses within the corridor.
- An oversupply of big box and strip retail along the corridor leads to underutilized/ vacant retail centers and parking lots.
- Businesses are increasingly looking to relocate to places near transit and amenities, leaving behind expansive, vacant parcels of land and diminishing economic vitality.

VISION & STRATEGIES

The Route 202 corridor encompasses a broad range of places – from traditional downtowns and commercial strips, to rolling fields and farmlands. As such, five types of places have been identified: centers, edges, crossroads, rural neighborhood, and scenic highway. These place types have their own challenges and opportunities and differ in terms of intensity, character and how they relate to the Route 202 corridor.

For each place type, suggested planning and

design strategies have been identified which can help to support the economic viability of the communities and the corridor as a whole, as well as help facilitate future transit enhancements. Because the same basic principles inform all five place types, many of the same strategies and recommendations are used for each. By thinking of this diverse landscape in terms of place types the following strategies and recommendations can inform other similar places across the region:

- Create connections to the surrounding areas.
- Create mobility choices.
- Provide additional uses and programming to make these into complete places, each with a distinct identity.
- Ensure an economically competitive, strategically collaborative corridor.
- Engage in collaborative advocacy and decision-making as a corridor.

CENTERS

Centers are compact, mixed-use places organized around a walkable and well-connected street network. The corridor study area is anchored at each end by historic town centers: Flemington to the south, and Raritan and Somerville to the north. These centers are healthy and so the guiding strategy should be to reinforce the existing pattern, through means such as introducing new uses through infill and redevelopment, promoting mobility choice, and making connections to the larger context. In terms of new uses, the downtowns benefit from the kinds of activities that reinforce their role as regional destinations. Cultural activities that create night life, such as theaters, are especially synergistic with specialty dining and shopping. In terms of mobility choice, while the centers are already transit-accessible, there are some strategic enhancements that can be made, such as improving the bike network and increasing the interconnectivity between trains, buses and shuttles. Finally, there are opportunities to create stronger linkages between the downtowns and the areas surrounding them.

EDGES

Edges are parts of a community where the built landscape is in transition from the more compact patterns in the centers to a more

dispersed, suburban pattern. Examples along the corridor include the shopping centers and offices in Bridgewater and Greater Flemington, such as Bridgewater Towne Centre, Liberty Village Premium Outlets and Flemington Mall. The centerpiece of the strategy here is to make these more complete places by building on and pulling together what is already there through a series of land use, design and mobility strategies. With a detailed understanding of what is there now, it is possible to identify new complementary uses that together, make this feel like a destination where one might spend more time walking between places and socializing in public spaces. Edge locations also present opportunities for reuse and repurposing.



Bridgewater Towne Centre



Downtown Flemington



Liberty Village Premium Outlets, Source: Bing Maps

CROSSROADS

There are many intersections along the corridor of all different sizes, from small local streets to intersections with county and state designated routes. There is often a diverse mix of uses at these crossroads: larger-scale office and industrial uses, auto-oriented retail, and restaurants. There may even be some institutional uses. The Route 202 and Old York Road intersection is an interesting case in this regard: the Branchburg Municipal Building is located here, as is an underutilized elementary school. The priority should be to understand how to make crossroads, like the intersection of Route 202 and Old York Road, more complete and better-connected places. Once they have a stronger identity as a place, and not just another traffic light on Route 202, they can be re-branded to attract more investment and better uses.

RURAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Just off of the corridor, set among the trees, is what can be considered rural neighborhoods. This place name captures the balance between nature and settlement that can be found here: there are enough houses to create identifiable neighborhoods, but the pattern of streets and blocks is dispersed. Three Bridges, an unincorporated community in Readington, is an example of this place type. The corridor can play an important role

in the quality of life of these neighborhoods. The roads that connect these neighborhoods to the corridor are often the places where nodes of commercial activity can be found. Because these nodes serve as the “front doors” to the neighborhoods, they should be well-designed. Sprawling commercial strips along the corridor should be limited. Design guidelines for these places can ensure that pedestrians are accommodated and that there is cross-access and/or shared parking between properties. Rural neighborhoods can incorporate walking and biking amenities and trails not only for mobility purposes, but also for recreational purposes. Small, compact nodes of commercial activity should also accommodate bus stops.



School near the Old York Road and Route 202 intersection



Roche Molecular at Old York Rd and Route 202 intersection



Three Bridges

SCENIC HIGHWAY

Portions of the corridor contain almost no visible development beyond a barn or farm house in a field. This stretch of the corridor – from the western portion of Branchburg to the eastern portion of Raritan Township – can be described as a scenic highway, containing relatively few intersections and

limited development along and adjacent to the corridor. Farmland preservation should remain a priority in order to protect farmers from encroachment. In addition to the value of the agriculture products themselves, there are a variety of associated financial gains. Agriculture supports tourism by providing produce to restaurants in the centers, which

can offer fresh, farm-to-table products. Renewed interest in how we get our food supports agro-tourism: tours of orchards and farms where visitors can learn where their food comes from and taste or purchase the freshest products at farm stores.

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of this plan's strategies requires short and long-term action and collaboration between municipal, county, and state partners, and community organizations. The approach to implementation can be organized into four overarching goals:

1. Foster a better connected corridor
2. Reimagine diminishing/obsolete corridor uses
3. Strengthen ties between agriculture and the rest of the corridor
4. Support ongoing corridor-wide collaboration

Specific short and long-term implementation actions are identified for each place type along with necessary implementation partners. Key to achieving any of these steps will be the continued collaboration between county partners, local elected officials, businesses and non-profit organizations.



Rural open space in Readington

INTRODUCTION

CORRIDOR APPROACH

Planning and visioning are often conducted on a micro level; decisions made by municipal or county representatives are bound by political and administrative lines. Such level of planning and visioning does not always take into account the frequent, even daily, movement of people and goods across these lines. Regional and corridor planning efforts convene stakeholders and local representatives to consider and discuss issues which simultaneously impact multiple communities.

Together 202: Reimagining Complete Communities along a Connecting Corridor utilizes a corridor approach to examine and string together land use opportunities. A corridor approach to planning discourages isolated decision-making, which can contribute to disconnected land uses, and encourages cross-jurisdictional collaboration to create a cohesive corridor vision. Building on prior planning efforts and studies, the objective of this project is a community-based corridor that not only enables mobility of all kinds – cars, transit, biking, walking – but supports strong economic development and maintains community character.



The Route 202 corridor



Kickoff meeting convenes a collaborative network of stakeholders

PROJECT DESCRIPTION & OUTCOMES

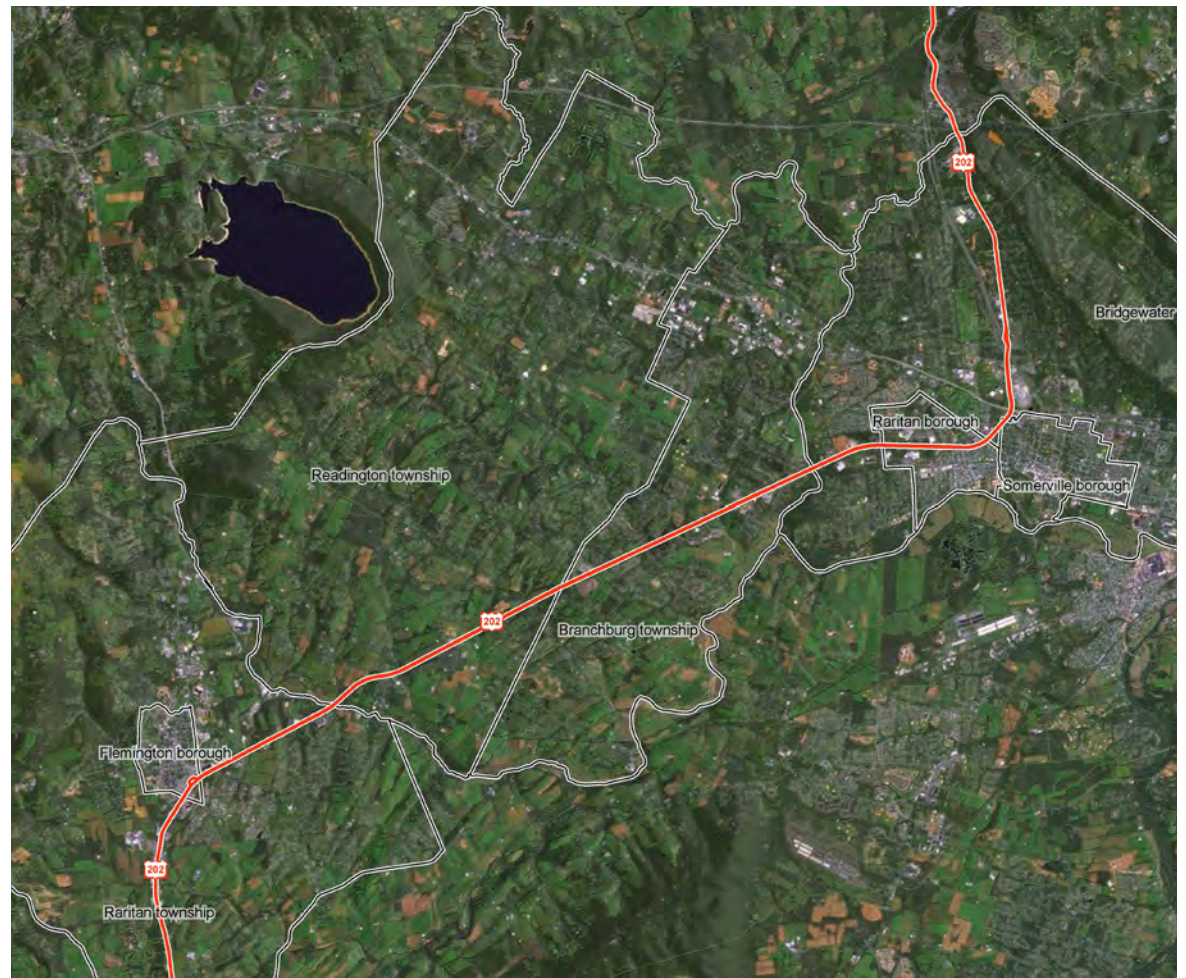
Together 202: Reimagining Complete Communities along a Connecting Corridor is a project that builds off of prior planning efforts and local stakeholder input and aims to:

1. Foster a working and collaborative network of interested citizens, residents, business owners, and stakeholders living in the communities to participate in the process and support project actions and outcomes
2. Develop a deep understanding of the corridor to better identify the opportunities for growth and connectivity along the corridor
3. Develop a stakeholder-driven vision for the corridor that identifies opportunities and provides strategies that link land use to business development, redevelopment and transportation

The product is a stakeholder-driven vision that identifies opportunities and provides strategies for key areas along the corridor, and for the corridor as a whole.

STUDY AREA

The project's study area encompasses Route 202 and surrounding land uses from the Somerville Circle in Somerset County to the Flemington Circle in Hunterdon County, as it passes through the following municipalities: Somerville Borough, Raritan Borough, Bridgewater Township, Branchburg Township, Readington Township, Raritan Township and Flemington Borough, and including downtown Somerville, Raritan and Flemington.



Study area

OUTREACH EFFORTS

This vision plan is a result of local stakeholder, resident and business input. A range of outreach efforts were conducted throughout the project timeline, from October 2012 through May 2013, and are described below.

Kickoff Meeting

A kickoff meeting on October 1, 2012 at the Somerset County Complex convened potential steering committee members and served as a point of introduction for the project. Participants engaged in discussion to inform project team members of local issues and opportunities and completed a “dotmocracy” activity to prioritize project goals and objectives. Stakeholders reaffirmed that the project should encourage greater municipal collaboration.



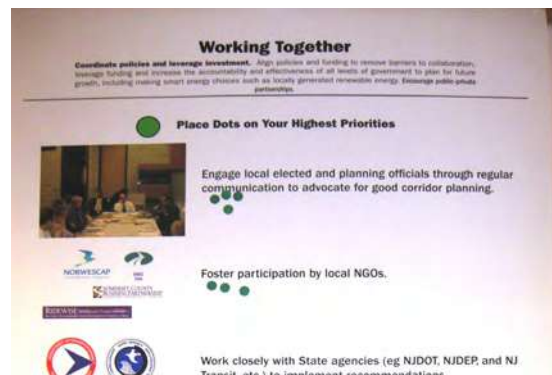
Dotmocracy exercise at the kickoff meeting

Corridor Tour

Conducted after the kickoff meeting, the corridor tour on November 30, 2012 allowed project team members to meet with steering committee members at key sites along and near the corridor, including vacant and underutilized sites.

Transportation Round Table

A transportation round table on December 20, 2012 at the Somerset County Complex convened key transportation stakeholders, including NJ TRANSIT, NJTPA, NJDOT, Trans Bridge and the study area’s two transportation management associations (TMAs), HART and RideWise, to discuss land use and mobility along Route 202. Project team members presented diagrams that showed “nodes of activity” along the corridor which could



Sample dotmocracy exercise

potentially be served by transit service.

Discussion takeaways included the need to break the typical auto-centric planning approach; garner cooperation from private developers, business owners and employers to encourage shared parking and multi-modal options; and educate on the benefits of transit-friendly planning.

Steering Committee Calls

Steering committee conference calls took place on January 16, February 14, March 25 and April 5, 2013. They were primarily administrative in nature and served to update the steering committee on project progress, as well as to receive input from members on local issues and opportunities, content of outreach efforts, and project goals and objectives.



Project team stops in Raritan Borough on corridor tour



Participants engage in discussion at public workshop #1

Public Workshop #1

Public workshop #1, on January 23, 2013 at the Hunterdon County Complex, consisted of a project overview presentation, an economic and market presentation, and two activities. In the first activity, participants traced on a map their typical trip as it relates to the corridor. In the second activity, participants discussed land use and mobility issues and opportunities at five general place types along the corridor. Attendees agreed that the most significant growth should be concentrated in the downtowns, with opportunities for reinvention at the edges, maintaining open space and agricultural land uses in the middle of the corridor.



Typical trip activity from public workshop #1

Business Round Table

A business round table on February 21, 2013 at Raritan Valley Community College convened the Hunterdon Chamber of Commerce, the Somerset County Business Partnership, and Raritan Valley Community College, as well as local business owners and leaders, to engage in dialogue on economic realities and trends along the corridor. Project team members presented the results of an in-depth economic and market analysis, which was followed by discussion. Major takeaways included the need for better communication between local governments and businesses, the need to retain and attract businesses, as well as the potential for greater connections between educational institutions and major employers along the corridor.



Business round table

Presentation to the Regional Center Partnership of Somerset County

This meeting, conducted on March 19, 2013 at the Somerset County Complex, offered an opportunity to present the Together 202 project to members of the Regional Center Partnership, a group established to ensure the successful implementation of regional goals and objectives in the Somerset County Regional Center, which contains Somerville, Raritan Borough, and parts of Bridgewater. An overview presentation was given that included initial findings of the study. Members of the partnership offered thoughts on implementation. The concept of forming a larger partnership across Somerset and Hunterdon Counties, focused on economic development around the corridor, was

suggested as a potential step towards implementation.

Mayors Meeting

A mayors meeting on March 22, 2013 at the Branchburg Municipal Building offered an opportunity for mayors of the study area municipalities to convene and discuss local plans and hopes for the corridor. Participants offered ideas on how to retain older and younger populations, as well as how to repurpose underutilized and vacant spaces. Mayors agreed that moving forward, municipal communication and collaboration is critical.

Major takeaways from outreach events can be found in “What We’ve Learned” boxes throughout the following chapter of the report. In-depth meeting summaries and materials can be found in Appendices G through P.



Mayors meeting

Public Workshop #2

Public workshop #2 on March 28, 2013 at the Somerset County Complex allowed residents and stakeholders to weigh in on elements of a draft corridor vision. The event was publicized via highway signage along Route 202, which directed interested parties to take an interactive survey. Survey results indicate desire to see improvements in land uses and traffic conditions. After a brief overview presentation, workshop participants rotated between six stations (five for the different place types and one Together North Jersey station) to offer feedback on what they like and what they would change about vision elements. Generally, participants approved of vision elements, but expressed concern that change can more easily be envisioned in certain areas over others along the corridor.

Final Presentation

At the final presentation on May 20, 2013 at the Somerset County Headquarters, project team members shared with Steering Committee members a locally-driven corridor vision as well as steps to implementation. Feedback on priorities and implementation has been incorporated into this report and the final vision.



Advertising in Branchburg for public workshop #2



Station at public workshop #2



Final presentation

State Agency Walk, Talk & Act Tour

NJ TRANSIT, NJTPA and the New Jersey Office of Planning Advocacy arranged a corridor tour for July 31, 2013 to show those state agencies identified as implementation partners key opportunity sites along the corridor. The tour convened at the Hunterdon County Complex. At these key sites, agencies representatives met with local elected officials, stakeholders and the project team to develop a deeper understanding of project recommendations and immediate actions that could be taken to implement recommendations.

Outreach to Traditionally Disadvantaged Populations

Throughout the engagement process, RideWise and HART played a significant role in providing contacts for and reaching out to elderly and minority populations along the corridor, along with persons with disabilities. The TMAs and other organizations spoke on behalf of the mobility issues of the elderly population, while the project team reached out to various senior centers along the corridor to help promote public workshops.



Steering Committee members, local elected officials, state agency representatives and project team partners stop in Flemington during walk, talk & act tour





PHASE 1: WHERE ARE WE NOW? WHERE ARE WE HEADED?

BUILDING ON EXISTING EFFORTS

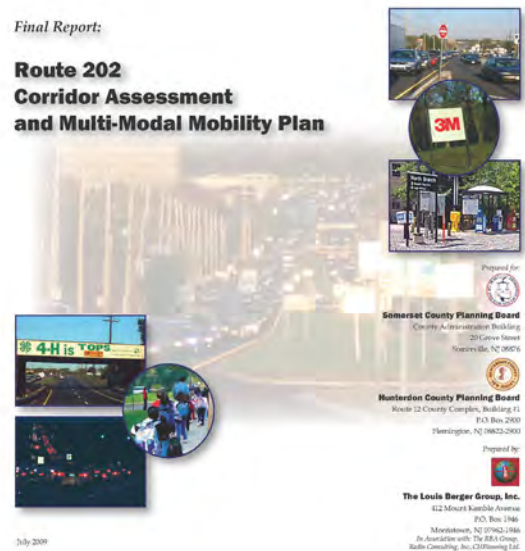
Recognizing prior planning efforts and mobility analyses completed for the Route 202 corridor and communities, the project team reviewed a range of plans and related documents. The reports below have informed the existing conditions of key sites, opportunity areas, trends, and potential strategies:

- Route 202 Corridor Assessment and Multi-Modal Mobility Plan (2009)
- DRAFT Flemington Corridor Transit Study (2012)
- Branchburg Township Master Plan: Land Use Element (2011)
- Bridgewater Township Master Plan Reexamination Report (2011)
- Flemington Borough Master Plan (2010)
- Hunterdon County Growth Management Plan (2007)
- Hunterdon County Transportation Plan (2008)
- Raritan Borough Master Plan Update (2003)
- Raritan Township Master Plan (2008)
- Readington Township Master Plan Reexamination (2009)
- Somerset County Regional Center: Draft Strategic Master Plan (2006)
- Somerset County Investment Framework Study (2012)
- Somerset County CEDS: Investment Somerset (2013)

Much of the analysis for the corridor in recent years has focused on transportation and mobility improvements. Together 202 supplements these transportation studies with a critical land use analysis, to understand how enhanced transit can serve nodes of activity along the corridor and how the market will support them.

Final Report:

Route 202 Corridor Assessment and Multi-Modal Mobility Plan



2007 Hunterdon County Growth Management Plan



Route 12 County Complex
Flemington, NJ 08822
Phone: 908-788-1490
Fax: 908-788-1662
www.co.hunterdon.nj.us/planning

ADOPTED: DECEMBER 13, 2007



Land Use Element Branchburg Township Master Plan

Somerset County, NJ



KEY CHALLENGES

Based on review of existing reports, analysis of demographic and market conditions, and feedback from public outreach, the following key challenges have been identified.

1. *Limited transit options and congestion*

Limited transit options and use of single occupancy vehicles lead to congestion along the Route 202 corridor. As a U.S. highway, Route 202's connections to other heavily traveled roads, such as U.S. Route 22, Interstate 287, and Interstate 78, exacerbate rush hour and peak time congestion. While a large share of work trips are within the two counties, public transit and inter-county transit options are very limited, compelling travelers to rely on personal vehicles for work-related trips and daily errands.



Congestion along Route 202

2. *Disconnected land uses*

Sprawl development patterns have resulted in disconnected land uses within the corridor, constraining opportunities for new or enhanced transit service along the corridor. While a number of amenities along Route 202 are available within a reasonable distance of residential areas, lack of pedestrian and multi-modal connections ensures these uses are auto-centric.



Disconnected land uses along Route 202, Source: Bing Maps

3. Retail oversupply and vacant retail establishments

There is an oversupply of big box and strip retail along the corridor, leading to underutilized/vacant retail centers and parking lots. Big box and strip retail buildings can be found predominantly in Bridgewater and the Greater Flemington area. Underutilized centers, vacant centers and large parking lots are not only visually unappealing, but diminish the economic potential of the corridor and surrounding communities.

4. Businesses want to be in well-connected places

Businesses are increasingly looking to relocate to places near transit and amenities. While the corridor currently has several large employers, recent trends indicate that employers are looking to relocate to well-connected places. Many of the corporate facilities within the study area were developed as self-contained campuses, isolated from other amenities. A lack of incentives to implement employee shuttles, multi-modal infrastructure and shared parking encourages the use of cars to travel to and from large employer destinations along the corridor. Recently, Merck & Co. decided to relocate operations from nearby Whitehouse Station in Readington Township to the City of Summit



Retail oversupply in Flemington area, Credit: Silbert Realty & Management Company

in Union County, citing proximity to transit and amenities as a major draw. Although not located on the Route 202 corridor, Merck's departure from Readington indicates a new trend for major employers vacating large corporate campuses for better connected areas, and leaving behind expansive, vacant parcels of land and diminishing economic success.¹

¹ Amidst cost reduction efforts, Merck announced in October 2013 the shutdown of its Summit facility, and use of its office in Kenilworth, NJ as the company's new headquarters.

DEMOGRAPHICS

This demographics analysis uses data from the 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census, American Community Survey (ACS) 2010 5-year estimates, NJTPA 2035 Employment and Demographics Forecasts, and New Jersey Population Trends: 1790 to 2000 from the New Jersey State Data Center. The analysis was completed for the corridor (in 1, 3, and 6 miles radii around the corridor) and the seven study area municipalities. For comparison purposes, data was also collected for Hunterdon County and Somerset County, and the 13-county North Jersey region. Summary of this data and analysis can be found in Appendix C. An full analysis of traditionally disadvantaged populations can be found in Appendix Q.

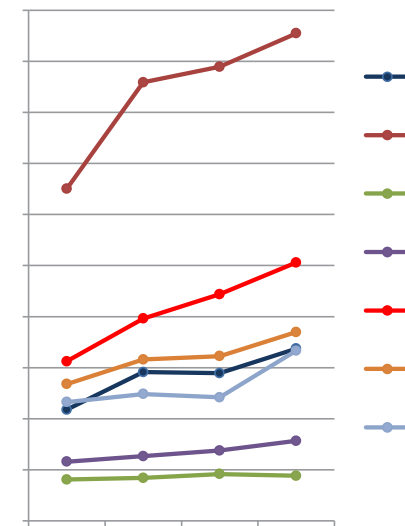
POPULATION

In the near future, population growth in the immediate corridor area is expected to be stagnant. However, by 2035, population within the study area municipalities is projected to grow considerably. Empty nesters are the fastest growing demographic group within the corridor, while young college graduates are leaving the corridor. Future corridor land use decisions should take into account how to retain the growing empty nester population as well as attract young college graduates.

In line with regional trends, the population of the study area municipalities has increased since the 1940s, though population growth has slowed in the last decade. In terms of the corridor, population growth is projected to grow at a very slow rate based on estimates for 2013 to 2018, with growth estimated at 1.2% at a 1-mile radius, and -1% at a 3-mile radius. Generally, flight of young college graduates from the corridor area is creating a stagnant growth pattern. The median age at 1 mile around the corridor is 42 years old, higher than the national median age of 37.5 years old. The fastest growing demographic group within the corridor is empty nesters. Elderly persons (75 years+) and persons with disabilities comprise 6.4% and 8.2% of the population respectively. Mobility needs for these groups must be addressed.

While the two study area counties and the North Jersey region saw growth in the number of households within the last decade, change in the number of households varies by study area municipality. Raritan Township saw the greatest percentage increase in households.

With the exception of Flemington, all of the study area municipalities are expected to experience population and household growth through 2035.



Population from 1990 to 2035, Source: U.S. Census & NJTPA

What We've Learned

- The needs of future workers should be addressed. Young people are more likely to use transit and want to live in better-connected areas.
- There is a need to retain the corridor's growing empty-nester population with cultural amenities, health facilities, and mobility options.

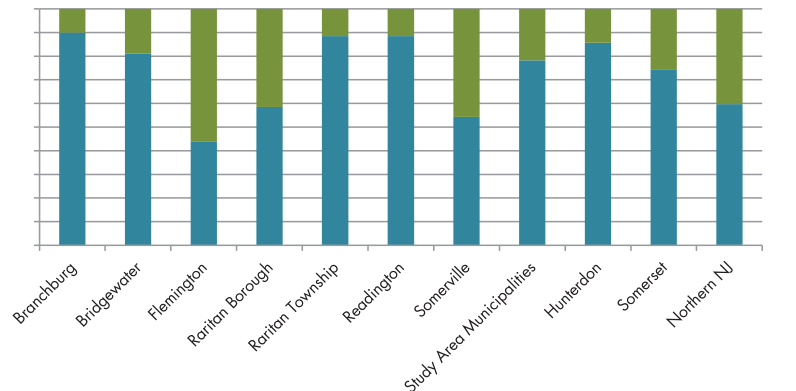
RACE & ETHNICITY

While racial and ethnic composition varies by municipality, all of the study area municipalities have become increasingly diverse over the past decade. The Asian community and Hispanic/Latino community may have a growing social and economic impact on the corridor and study area municipalities.

Taken together, the study area municipalities have a relatively high share of population (approximately 77.5%) that identifies as White. Nearly 11% of the population identifies as Asian; 7.7% identifies as Hispanic/Latino; 2.7% identifies as Black; and approximately 1.2% identifies as Other. While the study area municipalities are predominantly White, they have become increasingly diverse over the past decade, attributable to growth in Asian and Hispanic/Latino populations. Less than 7% of residents in the study area municipalities have limited English proficiency, lower than in the North Jersey region.

HOUSING MIX & HOMEOWNERSHIP

When compared to the region, the study area municipalities have high rates of homeownership, suggesting that these are relatively stable communities. However, the study area municipalities contain less diverse



Housing mix in 2010, Source: ACS 2010 5-year estimates

housing options than the region, and there is a lower share of HUD-subsidized units in the study area than in the region. Research has shown that empty nesters and young college graduates prefer to live in mixed-use, multifamily places – future land use decisions should take this into account in order to retain these populations.

Housing mix varies by municipality, but taken together, approximately 77.9% of housing units in the study area communities are single-family, and approximately 21.7% of housing units in the study area communities are units in multifamily structures. There is a lower diversity of housing options within the study area communities than in the

North Jersey region. However, Flemington, Somerville and Raritan Borough contain greater diversity of housing options than the study area townships. The corridor scores relatively low for empty nester housing when compared to the national average. Approximately 79.5% of households in the study area municipalities are owner-occupied, while 20.5% are renter-occupied – this has remained relatively unchanged within the past decade. Taken together, homeownership rates

What We've Learned

- There is a lack of housing choice in the study area.



Multifamily housing near the corridor, Source: Bing Maps



Single family housing near the corridor, Source: Bing Maps

are higher in the study area municipalities than in the region.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME, POVERTY & HOUSING COSTS

Taken together, the corridor communities have higher median household income, lower poverty rates, and lower share of households burdened by housing costs than respective figures for the region, suggesting that residents of these municipalities are relatively well off. Nevertheless, disparities between municipalities in household income, poverty and housing cost burden reflect the economic diversity in the study area. Renters in the study area municipalities are more likely to be burdened by housing costs than owners, perhaps reflecting a lack of housing options.

The average household income based on different radii around the corridor ranges from \$134,800 (at a 1 mile radius) to \$161,000 (at a 3 mile radius). Median household income varies by municipality, ranging from \$54,261 in Flemington to \$120,821 in Readington. The disparity in household income between municipalities reflects that there is a diverse range of purchasing power within the study area municipalities.

Poverty rates also vary by municipality,

ranging from 1.3% in Branchburg to 16.1% in Flemington.¹ The cumulative poverty rate in study area communities is 4.1%, lower than the regional poverty rate. The share of people living within the means of low or moderate income increased within the past decade in the study area communities, mirroring regional trends.²

In the study area municipalities, nearly 39% of all households face housing cost burden and approximately 16.5% of all households face severe housing cost burden.³ Nearly 52% of renter-occupied households are burdened by housing costs, and over half of these households (26.6% of all renter-occupied households) are severely burdened by housing costs. Approximately 36% of owner-occupied households are burdened by housing costs, with 14.3% of owner-occupied households severely burdened by housing costs. The cumulative cost burden of the study area municipalities indicates that these households are less likely to face housing cost burden than households in the region.

¹ Measured as share of individuals below poverty line

² Low income is defined as at or below the poverty rate, while moderate income is defined as twice the poverty rate.

³ Housing cost burden is defined as expenditure of 30% or greater of household income on housing costs. Severe housing cost burden is defined as expenditure of 50% or more of household income on housing costs.

VEHICLE OWNERSHIP & COMMUTING TO WORK

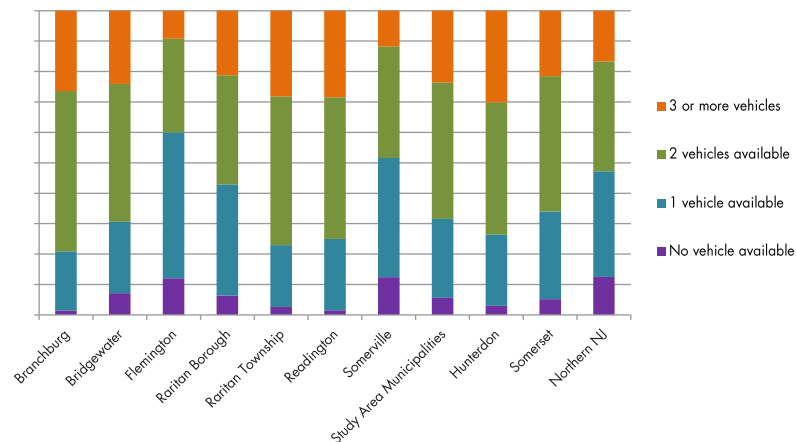
Vehicle ownership rates are relatively high in the study area municipalities, indicating that the corridor and communities are auto-centric. Most resident workers use single-occupancy vehicles to commute to work, contributing to congestion along the corridor. A significant share of work trips involves inter-county or intra-county travel.

Approximately 68.4% of households have at least two vehicles, compared to 52.8% in the region. Nevertheless, this indicates that approximately 31.6% of households have one or no vehicle and thus may require multi-modal travel options or access to compact community amenities. Vehicle ownership rates are lower in the boroughs, which can be attributed to several reasons: the boroughs contain downtowns that are more walkable; amenities are more easily accessible; or lower household income and higher poverty means that fewer households are able to afford the costs of vehicle ownership.

In the study area communities, approximately 93.6% of resident commuters use an automobile to travel to work; about 86% of resident commuters drive alone, while 7.6% carpool. Car usage as a means of transportation to work is relatively higher

in the study area municipalities than in the region. Share of public transportation usage is not noticeably higher in Somerville and Raritan Borough, municipalities with lower rates of vehicle ownership and more frequent Raritan Valley Line service.

Data from the Draft Flemington Corridor Transit Study (drawn from ACS 2008) indicate that approximately 44% of Somerset County residents travel to work destinations within the county, and 3% travel to work destinations in Hunterdon County. Approximately 43% of Hunterdon County residents travel to work destinations within the county, and 19% travel to work destinations in Somerset.



Vehicle ownership in 2010, Source: 2010 ACS 5-year Estimates

What We've Learned

- The corridor is very auto-centric.
- Many private employers do not take an active role in offering options for employees to get to work, including services such as a commuter shuttle.
- There are opportunities to connect Raritan Valley Community College, the prime educational/institutional presence in the area, to the corridor.

EDUCATION

The corridor contains many highly educated residents, an element of business attraction.

Cumulatively, study area residents of age 25 and over are highly educated; nearly half have at least a Bachelor's degree. Approximately 94% of study area residents of age 25 and over are high school graduates, greater than the share of high school

graduates in the region. Overall, the corridor contains a highly educated white-collar workforce with skills in computers, math, life sciences and education.

EMPLOYMENT

The cumulative unemployment rate of the study area municipalities is lower than that of the region. Reflecting high levels of educational attainment, many resident

workers are employed in high skill industries.

The study area municipalities have approximately 65,917 residents in the labor force; 5.9% are unemployed. The unemployment rate of the study area municipalities is lower than that of the region (7.5%). Mirroring regional trends, both labor force participation and unemployment in the study area municipalities have risen within the past decade.

Resident workers are primarily employed in the following industries:

1. Educational services, health care and social assistance
2. Manufacturing
3. Professional, scientific, management, and administrative and waste management services
4. Retail trade
5. Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing

In terms of occupation, resident workers living in the study area municipalities work primarily in management, business, science and arts occupations; and sales and office occupations.



Raritan Valley Community College

MARKET & ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

The market and economic analysis utilizes a ten step screening process and scorecard to determine strengths and weaknesses of the Route 202 corridor. Demographic, economic and other market data parameters were utilized to support the approach. The corridor ten step screening process examines ability to:

1. Foster downtown growth to support transit and business success.
2. Support health, environment and energy business sectors as growth opportunities.
3. Support positive image and business attraction with linked trail system through businesses along corridor.
4. Provide incentives for businesses to embrace transit with green ribbon awards, tax breaks and corporate support.
5. Spark demographic growth by keeping older baby boomers downtown with targeted housing.
6. Attract graduating college professionals with downtown housing and amenities.
7. Maintain downtown densities to support transit systems.
8. Provide convenient intermodal connections.
9. Support existing transit opportunities.
10. Support infill development to focus on business clustering rather than sprawl.

Overall, the corridor scores well, especially in terms of quality of life and access to an educated workforce. However, there are weaknesses related to housing choice and transit that should be addressed. An in-depth market and economics analysis can be found in Appendix A.

Category Description	Score	Commentary
Downtown growth to support transit and business success	5	This has great possibility, based on zoning to encourage empty nester housing. More housing supports transit and businesses.
Health, environment and energy business sectors as growth opportunities	5	There are existing sector clusters, but more needs to be done to incentivize these sectors as growth opportunities.
Positive image and business attraction with linked trail system through businesses along corridor	1	Businesses and transit need to work together through park and rides, stops and shuttles.
Incentives for businesses to embrace transit with green ribbon awards, tax breaks and corporate support	2	This is very possible, but the process needs to get started.
Demographic growth by keeping older baby boomers in downtown with targeted housing	5	There is strong potentials for this, as long as downtown multi-family mixed-use housing is supported and incentivized.
Graduating college professionals with downtown housing and amenities	2	This can be harnessed and will supply the workforce, but targeted housing needs to be encouraged in the downtowns.
Downtown densities to support transit	3	Downtowns could support more density.
Convenient intermodal connections	4	Add more park and rides at shopping areas, businesses and large density residential areas.
Existing transit opportunities with park and rides, stops, assets	1	Structure is existing, but more business involvement is required to make it work.
Infill development to focus on business clustering rather than sprawl	3	Areas of opportunity exist around Old York Road, downtowns, and existing business campuses.
Total score	31	
Total max possible	50	

Route 202 scorecard of attracting business and supporting transit. A score of 1 is lowest, while a score of 5 is best in terms of attributes for success.

INDUSTRIES

Primary industry clusters that exist on the corridor include health/pharmaceutical and environmental industries. Coupled with health and environmental services, the information technology and energy industries are considered to be top growth industries in the state. There are major employers along the Route 202 corridor within each of these industries; a list can be found in Appendix A.

TOURISM

The corridor contains or is proximate to sites such as the Delaware & Raritan Canal State Park, Duke Farms, Northlandz, golf courses and downtowns. However, these tourism amenities should be marketed in such a way as to attract visitors, residents and businesses.

RETAIL ECONOMICS

A retail economics analysis shows that existing retail along the corridor is oversupplied by \$133 million. However, general merchandise and office are undersupplied. Opportunities exist in specific categories in urban locations that are supported by office and housing demand, particularly in Somerset. Based on spending, approximately 110,000 square feet of specialized retail can be supported in the downtowns.¹

¹ Claritas, 2013. For further analysis, refer to Appendix A.



Ortho Clinical Diagnostics



Duke Farms

What We've Learned

- Strong tourism elements in the study area serve as an asset for the corridor.
- Retail centers need to be repurposed. A shift away from retail uses could be accomplished through innovative mixed-use ideas, like live-work places.



Shopping center in Raritan Township

HOUSING MARKET

The existing housing supply within the corridor area is primarily single family residential. While much of the housing does not directly border the corridor, it can be found behind corporate centers and several hundred yards back from the corridor accessible by single roads that feed into a planned development. Most of the housing is high value, over double the US average.

National housing market trends point to increased apartment construction, fulfilling strong demand for rental multifamily units, as well as increased demand for transit-oriented development (TOD). The corridor contains a large empty nester population. However, multifamily housing to complement the aging empty nester population (and potential capture of young graduates) is relatively limited. Along the corridor, multifamily housing is undersupplied and demand for apartments is strong, especially in transit-supportive locations like Somerville and Raritan Borough. The average multifamily vacancy rate is 2% and dropping, indicating very high demand.²

² Claritas, 2013. For further analysis, refer to Appendix A.

OFFICE MARKET

Hunterdon and Somerset Counties have office vacancy rates of over 20% and low leasing activity, suggesting low demand for new office construction.³ While pharmaceuticals is a strong industry along the corridor, shifts in this industry's market – including consolidation of pharmaceutical companies – leaves uncertain the future of pharmaceutical employers located along Route 202. Given the commercial office trends in the corridor, and Merck's departure from Readington, it would be difficult to justify new development. Shifts in the biotech and pharmaceutical industry are expected to continue. Additionally, workers can telecommute, require less space, and with rising transportation costs associated with driving, prefer a transit-linked office environment. While office inventory along the corridor is in good physical condition, moving forward, some office buildings and campuses may need to be repurposed.

³ Cushman & Wakefield, 2013



SJP corporate offices, an underoccupied office complex in Bridgewater, near the corridor, Source: Bing Maps

What We've Learned

- There is insufficient affordable housing in communities along the corridor.
- Major employers have picked more expensive locations to do business. The corridor and region are losing competitive edge because of the combination of expense of business, dispersed growth patterns, lack of real targeted amenities, and lack of transportation options.
- Companies do not necessarily live in one place permanently.
- There should be an effort to retain existing businesses along the corridor.

INDUSTRIAL MARKET

Overall, the industrial market, which includes research and development (R&D), flex (lightly-zoned industrial/office) and distribution, is a fairly strong market for the corridor. While R&D can create many high paying and high skilled jobs per square foot of space, distribution and flex do not.

Traffic concerns along the corridor are already a major problem at both the morning rush hour and the PM commuting period. The Route 202 corridor is a major arterial but it is a significant distance from an I-287 or I-78 interchange. As such, the preference for distribution, from an operator standpoint, is proximity to an interstate exit; for R&D, the need is less so. From an economic development perspective, the link between planning and real estate for the industrial sector may be more closely aligned with R&D, but may leave out the other components of industrial for more suitable locations with less traffic impact on residential communities and downtowns.



Manufacturing facility along Route 202

TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

EXISTING ROAD CONDITIONS

The Route 202 Corridor Assessment and Multi-Modal Mobility Plan describes in-depth Route 202's traffic and circulation conditions. The 13-mile stretch between the Flemington and Somerville Circles contains 13 traffic signals and 6 unsignalized breaks, as well as suffers from congestion, delays and safety issues during peak travel periods. The plan offers many strategies to improve circulation and mobility along the corridor. While several traffic-related improvement projects have been advanced along the corridor, the counties, municipalities and other stakeholders will need to continue close collaboration with each other and with NJDOT to implement many of the improvements identified in prior plans.

In terms of multi-modal options, the corridor does not contain any infrastructure that specifically accommodates bicycles (such as bike lanes or sharrows), but does have a large shoulder. Small portions of the corridor – primarily stretches in front of existing housing – contain sidewalks. Otherwise, there is a lack of sidewalks and crosswalks in front of strip malls, large retail centers, major intersections, office buildings and office parks.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Generally, there are limited public transportation options along the corridor. The corridor and its communities are served by NJ TRANSIT's Raritan Valley Line, private Trans Bridge commuter buses, and county shuttles. While a large number of trips consist of travel within or between the two counties, there is no inter-county public transit service.

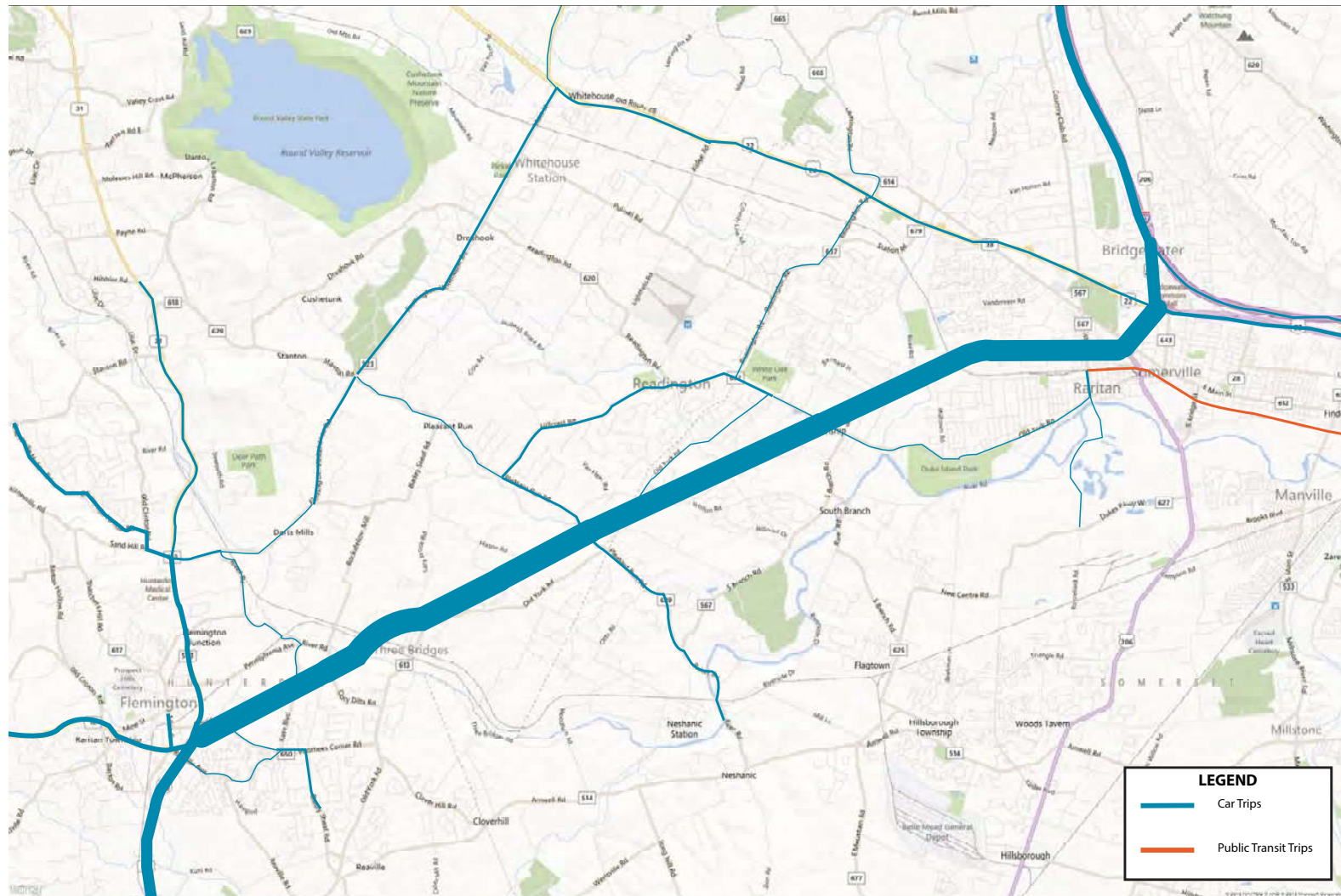
NJ TRANSIT's Raritan Valley Line runs service between High Bridge in Hunterdon and Newark Penn Station. Two stations – Somerville and Raritan – are most proximate to the corridor. There are also stations located in Bridgewater (Bridgewater Station), Branchburg (North Branch) and Readington (White House). Service to stations west of Raritan is relatively infrequent. Somerville contains a permit-only parking lot with 260 spaces, and a daily lot with 156 spaces. Between Raritan Station's five parking lots, there are 118 permit-only spaces, 28 daily-only spaces, and 142 mixed permit and daily spaces. Both stations contain bike racks and lockers. Ridership on the Raritan Valley Line and at the Raritan and Somerville stations has increased over the past decade.

Trans Bridge, a private bus company, offers commuter bus service from Pennsylvania to Newark and New York. The Doylestown

Route originates in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania and runs directly along Route 202, making stops at Liberty Village in Flemington, Hunters Crossing in Three Bridges, and a park and ride in Branchburg. Destinations include MetLife Stadium, Newark Liberty International Airport and the Port Authority Bus Terminal in New York City. Trans Bridge's Allentown Line services a park and ride in Clinton, adjacent to Raritan and Readington Townships. The Branchburg park and ride is currently at capacity; however, there may be room for additional accommodation at the Liberty Village park and ride.

What We've Learned

- There is a need for continued transportation and congestion reduction improvements.
- There is a lack of bike and pedestrian infrastructure along the corridor.
- There is interest in enhanced/better coordinated Raritan Valley Line service.
- The Liberty Village/Trans Bridge park and ride could handle greater capacity.



Results of a “typical trips” mobility activity from public workshop #1. Participants were asked to draw their typical trip as it relates to the corridor.

NJ TRANSIT offers bus service in Somerset County. Below is a table of the buses near or within the study area, their routes, and stops.

Somerset and Hunterdon offer a range of intra-county transportation services. In Somerset, the SCOOT bus, DASH and CAT provide public shuttle services. These shuttles serve various locations in Branchburg, Somerville, Raritan Borough and Bridgewater as well as major destinations in these municipalities, such as the Somerville station, Raritan Valley Community College, and Bridgewater Commons Mall.

The Hunterdon Link provides two services within the county, including the Flemington Shuffle, a shuttle that operates within Flemington and Raritan Township, and a cross county demand response service. The latter does not have a fixed schedule, but rather requires that riders call in advance to schedule pick-up and drop-off times and locations within the county.

The study area is served by two transportation management associations (TMAs) – RideWise in Somerset County and HART in Hunterdon County. TMAs provide commuter information and services and traffic demand management assistance, as well as facilitate multi-modal travel options and programs

such as employer shuttles and carpools/vanpools.

Further information on routes, stops and destinations of the aforementioned services can be found in Appendix D.

What We've Learned

- Commuters occasionally use underutilized retail parking lots on an unofficial basis as park and rides.
- Corridor residents often use the Clinton Trans Bridge park and ride, which has more parking and offers more “express” service to New York.
- There is demand for more park and rides. Several office and retail facilities have underutilized parking lots that could be used for shared parking. However, private owners are reluctant to cooperate and little consensus has been reached with municipalities on where to locate an additional park and ride.

Bus	Study Area Communities	Stops	Service To
NJ TRANSIT 114	Bridgewater	Bridgewater Commons	Port Authority Bus Terminal, Somerset County, Union County
	Somerville	Main St & Grove St	
NJ TRANSIT 117	Somerville	Mountain Ave at Brookside Ave	Port Authority Bus Terminal, Somerset County, Union County
		Main St & Grove St	
NJ TRANSIT 65/66	Bridgewater	Bridgewater Commons	Newark, Somerset County, Union County
	Somerville	Main St & Grove St	

What We've Learned

- Setbacks along Route 202 aren't built for local buses, but private developers are reluctant to implement transit-friendly amenities. Planning Boards should be better educated on the benefits of transit-friendly planning.
- Flemington and Somerville lack inter-region, local and feeder services, which precludes the downtowns from reaching their potential.
- Underserved, aging populations are limited in public transportation options to conveniently bring them to destinations such as grocery and large retail shops. In order to age in place, better service that caters to this population may be required.



A Trans Bridge bus pulls into Liberty Village park and ride



This sign at the Trans Bridge Liberty Village park and ride is the only indicator that this is a transit-served location.



Hunterdon LINK serves Downtown Flemington



SCOOT, a RideWise shuttle

DEMOGRAPHIC & MARKET SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The Route 202 Corridor Assessment and Multi-Modal Mobility Plan contains results from a survey of commuters who travel via the corridor, and of select major employers on the corridor. Respondents from this survey indicated that public transit in the study area is inadequate, and that a bus route that services Route 202 and connects to rail stations and other bus systems would be useful. Employers responded that while they are not inclined to provide vehicles for car shares, they encourage carpools and offer commuter tax benefits for public transportation riders.

Journey to work data indicates that only about 7% of Somerset County residents and 4% of Hunterdon County residents travel to the urban core (Manhattan and Hudson County) for work. Approximately 44% of Somerset County residents work in Somerset County, while 62% of Hunterdon County residents work in Somerset or Hunterdon, demonstrating that a large share of work trips is comprised of resident workers traveling within the two counties.¹

¹ Draft Flemington Corridor Transit Study. ACS 2006-2008.

Sprawl development in the study area has discouraged efficient transit. However, the market and economic analysis shows that downtown areas may be able to support additional transit service. The downtowns may be able to capture empty nester demand for multifamily housing and walkable communities, creating a greater “pool” of potential transit riders.



HART provides information on multi-modal travel options

What We've Learned

- There is demand for more inter-county and intra-county shuttle service.
- Younger people want to live in more connected areas. This should be accommodated in order to attract and retain recent college graduates and young professionals.

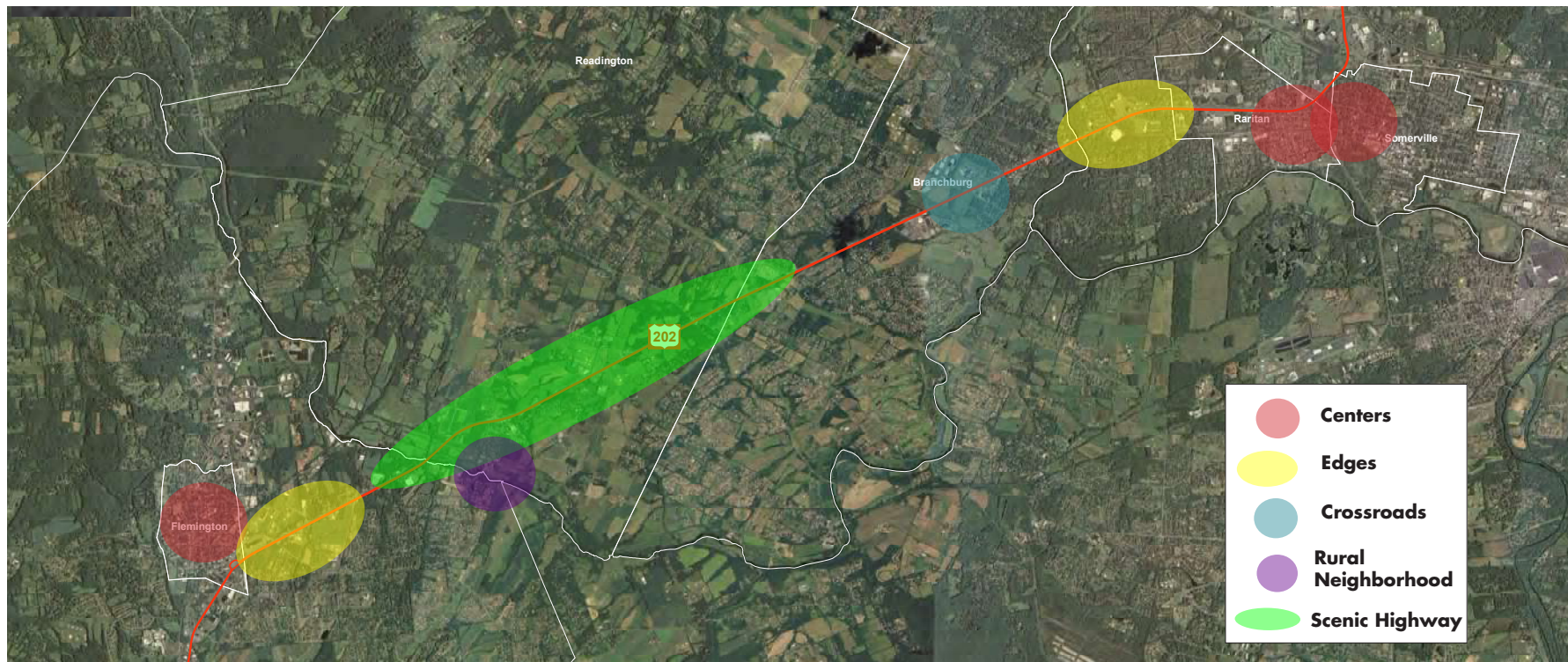


Somerville rail station

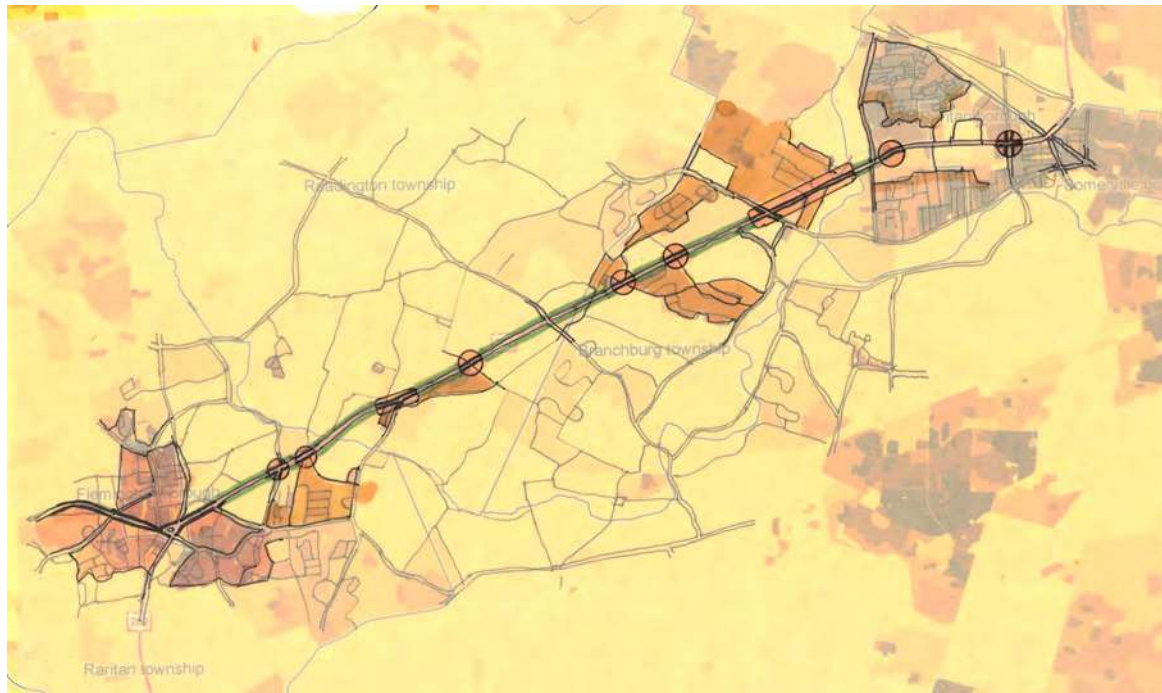
EXISTING LAND USE

The Route 202 corridor encompasses a broad range of places – from traditional downtowns and commercial strips, to rolling fields and farmlands. As such, five types of places have been identified: centers, edges, crossroads, rural neighborhood, and scenic highway. These place types have their own issues and opportunities and differ in terms of intensity, character and the way they relate to the Route 202 corridor.

The figure below demonstrates how these place types align with the corridor. The pattern is apparent as one drives the length of the corridor between downtown Flemington and downtown Raritan or Somerville: the progression between urban, suburban and rural environments and back again.



Place types along the corridor



Layers of existing population density, development intensity and the road network show nodes of activity along the corridor



Downtown Flemington



Street-and-block pattern, Source: Bing Maps



Downtown Raritan Borough



Downtown Somerville

CENTERS

The corridor study area is anchored at each end by historic town centers: Flemington to the south, and Raritan and Somerville to the north. These are the most intensively developed places in the study area; their characteristics may be familiar to those who go there to shop at specialty stores, eat at ethnic restaurants, or partake in cultural attractions and civic events, like parades and town government functions. They are compact, mixed-use places organized around a walkable and well-connected street network.

While the Route 202 corridor is an important link between these centers, from a community design point of view, Route 202 can serve as more of an obstacle than an asset. In Raritan Borough, the embankment that leads to the Somerville Circle flyover has created a pocket of disinvestment at the Super 8 Motel and adjacent sites. In Flemington, Route 202 cuts the downtown off from retail areas to the south.

Because the centers have significant concentrations of both people and businesses, they are better-served by transit. Flemington is the site of a park and ride facility just west of the Liberty Village Premium Outlets. Local shuttle routes converge in the downtowns as

well. Raritan and Somerville play larger roles in the regional transportation network as they have rail stations on NJ TRANSIT's Raritan Valley Line.

In the past decade, demographic and economic trends have fueled the rediscovery of these places as reservoirs of housing choice and economic opportunity. In these centers, a growing elderly population can walk to shopping and transit, while younger people can find a lively, affordable environment in which to begin their professional lives. With the ability to walk or bike to a train or bus stop, residents of these centers can minimize the costs associated with car ownership and travel.

What We've Learned

- People in Flemington would like to make trips to retail areas south, but because pedestrian conditions are dangerous, many short trips that could be made on foot or bicycle are made by car.
- There is vast stakeholder interest in fostering a strong foundation for the arts, culture and history in the corridor's centers.

EDGES

As the name implies, these are parts of the community where the built landscape is in transition from the more compact patterns in the centers to a more dispersed, suburban pattern. Examples along the corridor include the shopping centers and offices in Bridgewater and Greater Flemington, such as Bridgewater Towne Centre and Liberty Village Premium Outlets. The more connected street network found in the centers begins to break down, creating large parcels which accommodate uses that might not fit as easily in the more compact centers. Because these are at the edges of urbanization, they are surrounded by neighborhoods and open spaces, but generally have few (if any) connections.

Edges contain a fairly diverse set of uses: office buildings of different sizes, services, retail of different sizes and formats, and restaurants, usually of the “fast food” variety. Despite the fact that these uses are not very far from one another physically, there is limited interaction between them. There are no well-defined public spaces. Instead, the landscape is dominated by surface parking lots. Because these are predominantly auto-oriented, other forms of mobility, such as biking, walking and transit, are very limited.

As successive rounds of commercial development have followed residential sprawl to cheaper land farther out into the landscape, the edge type place is starting to be left behind.



Wegmans at Bridgewater Towne Centre



Vacant Expo Center at Bridgewater Towne Centre

What We've Learned

- Development along the corridor is most favorable in the edges because these places are already developed, and therefore there is no incremental impact on open space.
- There is a need to address the increase in vacant/underutilized buildings and struggling businesses along the corridor.



Liberty Village Premium Outlets



Old York Road intersection, Source: Bing Maps



Roche Molecular Systems

CROSSROADS

There are intersections along the corridor of all different sizes, from small local streets to intersections with county and state designated routes. Some of the larger-scale intersections are also places that can accommodate larger-scale commercial and institutional uses. Instead of the suburban or rural street pattern that surrounds these places, there are individual access roads to corporate or industrial parks. As is typical for these kinds of corporate facilities, buildings are surrounded by well-manicured landscapes that are part of the corporate image. Some of the corporations here, such as Roche Molecular Systems at Old York Road, have large numbers of employees, enough to justify shuttle services or car and vanpools.

As with other places in our landscape, there is often a diverse mix of uses at these crossroads: larger-scale office and industrial uses, some auto-oriented retail, and restaurants. There may even be some institutional uses. The Route 202 and Old York Road intersection is an interesting case in this regard: the Branchburg Municipal Building is located here, as is a school building that is underutilized.

The challenge is that each of the four quadrants around the intersection is

disconnected from the others by wide, busy roads and by longer-than-usual walking distances. Although residential neighborhoods exist on all sides, there are no connections between the activities at the crossroads and these neighborhoods, with the exception of the intersecting arterial – in this case, Old York Road itself.

What We've Learned

- Corridor stakeholders do not envision a level of development at Old York Road that would transform it into a center, but there is a desire to tie together existing assets and allow for some limited, but strategic, new development.

RURAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Much of the landscape along the corridor is rural, but the green areas along the corridor are not just comprised of preserved farmland and undeveloped rolling hills. Just off of the corridor, is what can be considered rural neighborhoods. This place type captures the balance between nature and settlement that can be found here: there are enough houses to create identifiable neighborhoods, but the pattern of streets and blocks is dispersed. In some very low density places, there is more nature than buildings. Regardless, the landscape of rolling hills and farmland is part of the character of these places. Three Bridges, an unincorporated community in Readington, is an example of this place type.

There is usually a substantial buffer of trees and landscape between the road and the houses. Even though these neighborhoods do not directly engage the corridor, inevitably residents have to cross or drive along the corridor. Route 202 serves as a major link to the region and the shortest route for many work and shopping trips. Interestingly, there are several places along the corridor where small-scale commercial nodes have taken hold, providing nearby access to shopping. Hunter's Crossing, a neighborhood development in Three Bridges that is

proximate to a small-scale commercial node at the Summer Road intersection, is served by Trans Bridge bus service to New York City.

The challenges here are somewhat different from other places along the corridor – these neighborhoods need to be protected from unwanted intensification. Nevertheless, what these neighborhoods do share with other places along the corridor is a lack of transit alternatives to the automobile.



Three Bridges

What We've Learned

- There is a preference for maintenance of rural character and low-intensification improvements to these areas.



Rural neighborhood, Source: Bing Maps

SCENIC HIGHWAY

Portions of corridor contain almost no visible development beyond a barn or farm house in a field. Readington Township's proactive steps in preserving farmland along Route 202 has created sweeping views of farmland and an established green edge to the corridor. This stretch of the corridor – from the western portion of Branchburg to the eastern portion of Raritan Township – can be described as a scenic highway, containing relatively few intersections and limited development along or adjacent to the corridor. Several parks and greenways are in the vicinity of this portion of Route 202, presenting opportunities for biking (though more so for recreational purposes than daily use).

There are a few roadside farm stands in the area now. Public desire for farm-fresh products has grown dramatically. In the past decade, farmers markets have increased statewide from 40 in 2004 to 148 in 2013. The landscape qualities of the corridor are essential to the quality of life in the region and must be protected.



Agricultural uses

What We've Learned

- There is strong support for preserving agricultural and open space along the corridor and better connecting the corridor to these assets.



Scenic highway, Source: Bing Maps



PHASE 2: WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO?

Connectivity
to
County College

BRIDGEWATER
(NEW TRIST RAIL)
NEAR CUSTOM HAVING
SHOPPING / RETAIL
BUSINESS

Last
mile

Fix MA / Route
202

SOMERVILLE
CIRCLE

Downtown
Somerville
Underway

Somerville

Bridgewater

Branchburg

Expand
High Tech
Investment

AND
TECH
TREATMENT

GOALS PRIORITIZATION

During the October 2012 kickoff meeting, local stakeholders completed a “dotmocracy” exercise in which participants were asked to vote on priorities for the Together 202 project and Route 202 corridor by placing dots on various goal statements. From this exercise, the following goals were identified.

- Getting Places: Connect workers, residents and employees to key employment and commercial destinations through enhanced transit
- Expanding Economic Opportunity: Make recommendations for existing businesses to capitalize on transit/corridor improvements
- Growing in Place: Identify target opportunity sites for redevelopment, reinvention or repositioning
- Working Together: Work closely with state agencies to implement recommendations
- Keeping Healthy, Safe & Vibrant: Find ways to improve connectivity along the corridor

These stakeholder-identified goals have helped guide each phase of the project, from initial research and analysis, to outreach and visioning.

Working Together

Coordinate policies and leverage investment. Align policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy. *Encourage public-private partnerships.*

Place Dots on Your Highest Priorities

Engage local elected and planning officials through regular communication to advocate for good corridor planning.

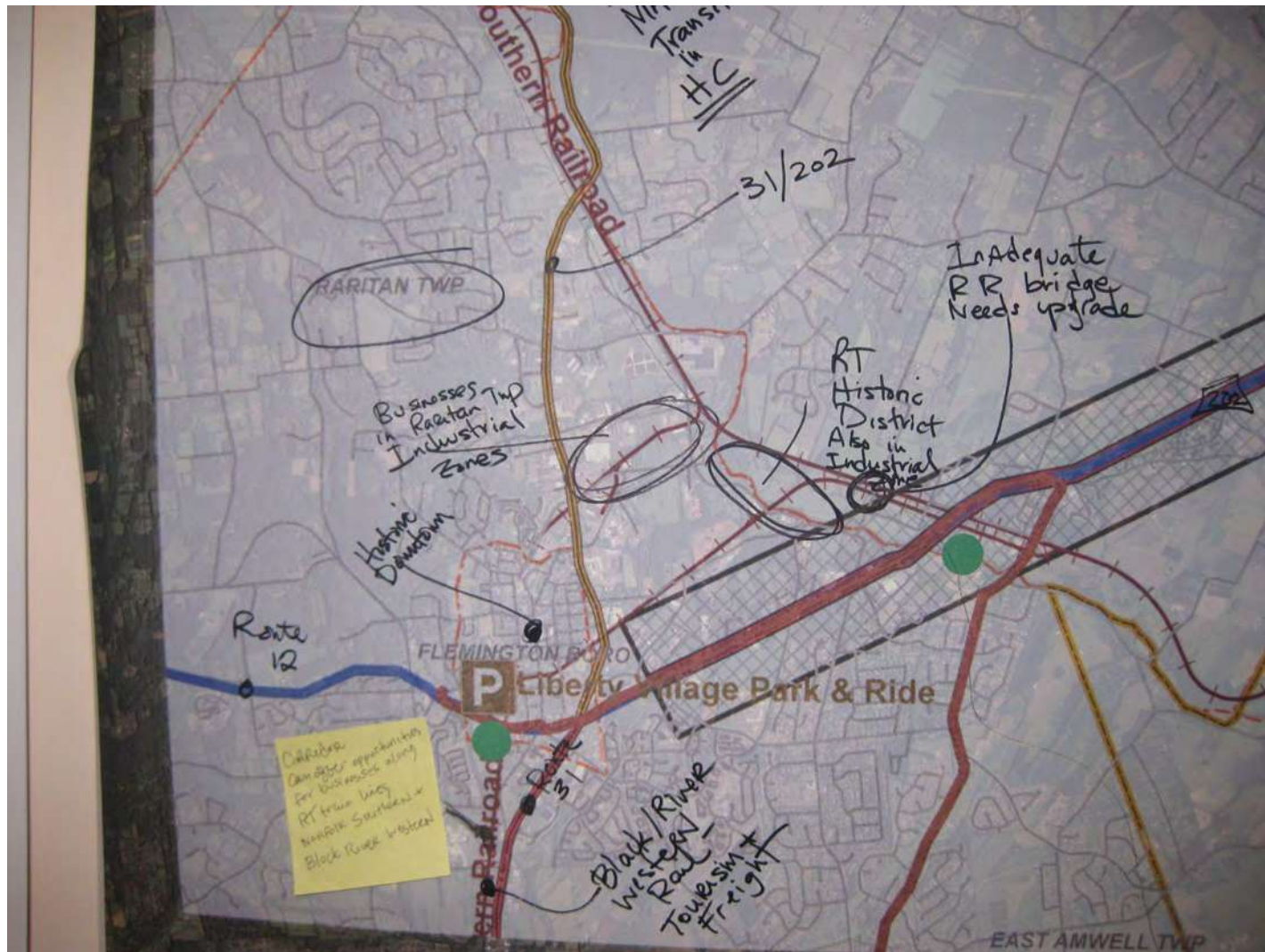
Foster participation by local NGOs.

Work closely with State agencies (eg NJDOT, NJDEP, and NJ Transit, etc.) to implement recommendations.

Develop model Master Plan elements and zoning amendments to allow for seamless implementation.

Additional Suggestions:

“Working Together” dotmocracy results

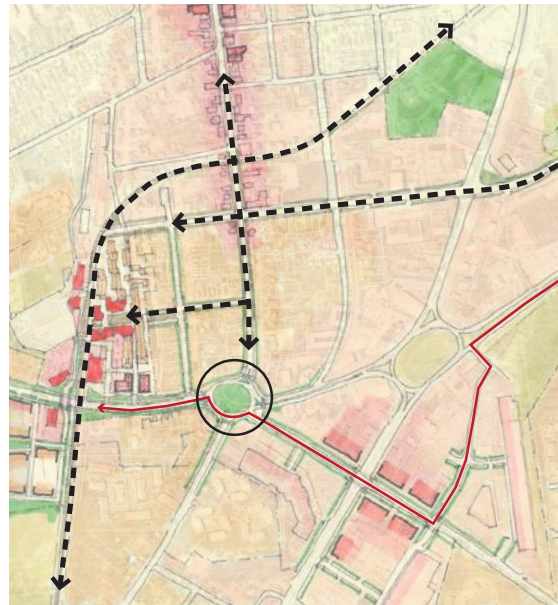


Kickoff meeting activity

VISIONING

For each of the five place types, suggested planning and design strategies have been identified. Because the same basic principles inform all five place types, many of the same strategies and recommendations are used for each.

By thinking of this diverse landscape in terms of types of places, the following guiding principles can inform other similar places across the region.



Create connections to the surrounding areas.

These places benefit by thinking beyond individual development sites: businesses benefit from proximity to workers or shoppers in nearby neighborhoods, while residents in nearby neighborhoods benefit from having access to services via shorter car trips or trips that are close enough to be made on foot or on bicycle. In many cases, there is a large reservoir of potential riders who would be near a node or transit stop on the corridor.



Create mobility choices.

Every neighborhood, regardless of how rural or developed it is, benefits from having access to different ways of getting around. In many places along the corridor, this means access to more transit, including new or increased bus or shuttle services, and inter-county transit. Both existing and new development should be designed to accommodate transit. Creating mobility choice also means enabling biking and walking, for recreational purposes, journeys to work, and shopping.



Provide additional uses and programming to make these neighborhoods into complete places, each with a distinct identity.

Places that have more diverse uses can more readily become destinations for nearby neighborhoods, reducing travel distances and car trips. These destinations are also more likely to support transit. Introducing new uses can also help give these places a unique sense of place, thereby making them more attractive for investment.



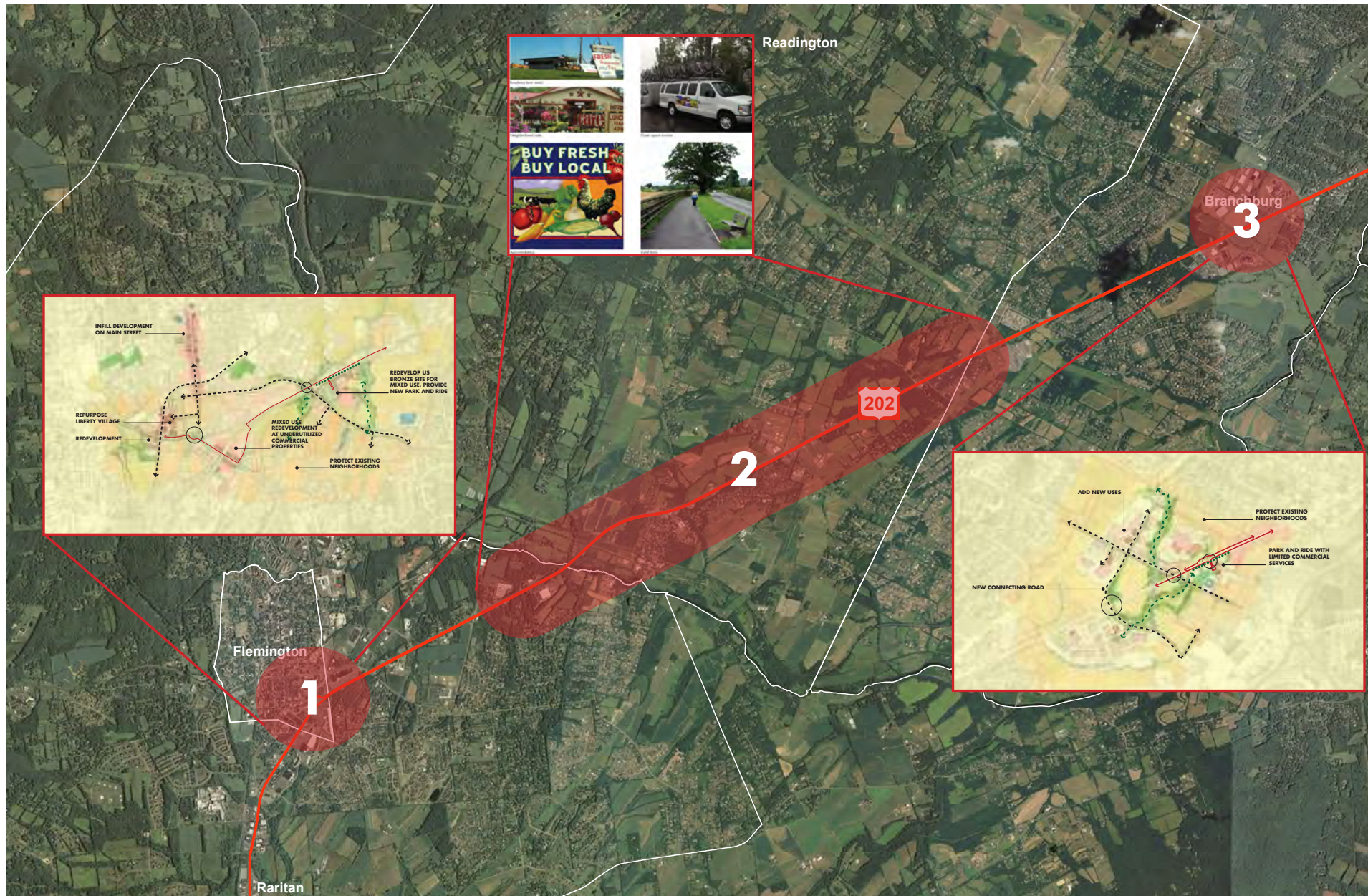
Make decisions as a corridor.

Along the corridor, development or change in one community has impacts on each of the communities surrounding it. Thus, there is an opportunity for communities along the corridor to communicate regularly, work together and consider how local decisions can be made, and resources can be leveraged, for the good of their community and the greater corridor.



Ensure an economically competitive, strategically collaborative corridor.

As market trends change over time, corridor businesses, farmers, academic institutions and county and local government can work together to adapt to changing conditions and position the corridor as an economically competitive place to work and do business.





The image to the left represents a corridor vision, containing strategies for each of the five place types and key sites identified in the research and engagement process.

1) Greater Flemington, center and edge
Please refer to pages 52-55 and 57.

2) Rural neighborhood and scenic highway.
Please refer to pages 62-65.

3) Crossroads of Old York Road and Route 202. Please refer to pages 56-60.

4) Expo Center, an edge. Please refer to pages 54-56.

5) Downtown Raritan Borough, a center.
Please refer to pages 52-53.

6) Downtown Somerville, a center. Please refer to pages 52-53.

CENTERS STRATEGIES

The centers, Flemington, Raritan Borough and Somerville, are healthy and so the guiding strategy should be to reinforce the existing pattern. This means facilitating infill development that supports the character of surrounding neighborhoods. The centers can be reinforced by applying the principles enumerated above: introduce new uses through infill and redevelopment, promote mobility choice, and make connections to the larger context.

In terms of new uses, the downtowns benefit from the kinds of activities that reinforce their role as regional destinations. A mix of cultural, historical and arts activities could attract and retain young professionals and aging empty-nesters. Cultural activities that create night life, such as theaters, are especially synergistic with specialty dining and retail businesses. There is considerable interest in arts activities and arts districts in both downtown Somerville and Flemington. Stakeholders also expressed interest in creating satellite facilities for the local community college or medical centers. The connections to the college could help promote the role of the downtowns as “hubs” of entrepreneurship.

Additional multifamily rental housing units can be supported in the downtowns, mitigating demand for apartment units

and capturing young graduate and empty nester populations. Somerville and Raritan Borough also have an opportunity to capture additional retail spending from residents and commuters; over 110,000 square feet of specialized urban retail could be supported if developed along with a plan for transit-oriented, mixed-use residential development near the rail stations. Mixed-use development in the downtowns can help make transit more efficient and more utilized.

In terms of mobility choice, while the centers are already transit-accessible, some strategic improvements can be made. For example, the lack of bike accommodation can be resolved with implementation of bike lanes, share-the-road sharrows, and bike racks in new buildings and facilities. There are opportunities to increase the interconnectivity between trains, buses and shuttles. Study area stakeholders expressed particular interest in more robust transit connections between the downtowns at each end of the corridor.

Finally, there are opportunities to create stronger linkages between the downtowns and the areas surrounding them. This has benefits for both the neighborhoods and main streets, including a bigger market for the goods and services the businesses are offering, as well as better access to services,

shopping, work destinations and transit for residents. In Flemington, this is especially strategic because the downtown can be linked to the shopping areas to the south, benefiting both. The Liberty Village Premium Outlets would also benefit from closer connection to the neighborhoods of downtown. Downtown Raritan Borough has a unique connection to Duke Farms that could be further capitalized on. Many of these linkages can be accomplished through pedestrian and bike connections, thus reducing congestion, minimizing vehicle travel, and enabling more active and healthy lifestyles.

WHAT IT COULD BE



Infill before



Infill after



The Union Hotel in Flemington is an example of adaptive reuse of a structure in a center. Developers plan to redevelop the hotel and adjacent building. Reviving the hotel is expected to play a large role in downtown economic development and revitalization.



Transit-oriented development



Somerville pedestrian walk



Somerville's new mixed-use infill housing development, pictured above, is adjacent to a ShopRite shopping center and across from the NJ Transit rail station. This new development demonstrates the opportunity to support increased, transit-oriented retail and housing in the North Jersey centers.

EDGES STRATEGIES

The centerpiece of the strategy here is to make these more “complete places” by building on and pulling together what is already there through a series of land use, design and mobility strategies. With a detailed understanding of what is there now, it is possible to identify new complementary uses that together, make this feel like a destination where one might spend more time walking between places and socializing in public spaces. Edge locations also present opportunities for reuse and repurposing.

With retail oversupply and 20% office vacancy in the study area counties, there are opportunities to reuse and repurpose obsolete or underutilized shopping centers and office buildings. While a detailed analysis on potential new uses has not been done, discussions with stakeholders suggest what some of these uses might include: a greater variety of small businesses and restaurants; civic or institutional uses such as a satellite branch of a college; or medical offices associated with nearby hospitals. In some cases these new uses can be accommodated in existing buildings. Some limited new construction can also create more housing choice, which is important for enabling families to stay together as parents age or as older children seek to settle near where they grew up. A complete neighborhood should be

able to accommodate multiple generations.

Design plays an important role in pulling these places together: if new buildings have a clear relationship with neighboring buildings, the entire area can feel more like one unified place. Carriageways between parking areas can become more like streets, with sidewalks, pedestrian-scale lighting, and landscaping. New buildings can help define these streets, and by turning the expanses of parking lots into what feel more like streets and blocks, moving between different activities becomes clearer. Rear service roads located behind new developments, instead of directly off of the corridor, can help to ensure a robust public realm. Most important will be to create new public spaces, also defined by buildings.

Once these edges become more like mixed-use destinations and the circulation within is better organized, new forms of mobility become possible: people have safe and clearly defined bikeways, paths and sidewalks. New transit service can connect the edges to existing centers. Buses can operate off of the Route 202 corridor and circulate through the area. There is potential to discuss with property owners for either shared parking, or a devoted place for park and ride facilities with appropriate services. As an intermediate step to potential bus

service, there should be improved intra and inter-county shuttle service, vanpools and carpools. Finally, by creating pedestrian and bike connections between the centers and surrounding neighborhoods, more people can readily access shopping, services and transit.

Making these edges more complete and transit-accessible will attract residents and visitors to shop, work and possibly live at these locations. By giving these edges a distinctive image as destinations, they will be able to compete for investment with “Anywhere USA”.

WHAT IT COULD BE



Pedestrian-oriented public spaces in a shopping center, Credit: Anthony Prater, Steiner + Associates



Caruth Health Center, part of St. Petersburg College in Pinellas Park, Florida, is an example of how a suburban, auto-oriented shopping center can be redeveloped into a satellite facility or educational center. Similar transformations can occur in vacant shopping centers and offices along the corridor. Image source: Google Maps



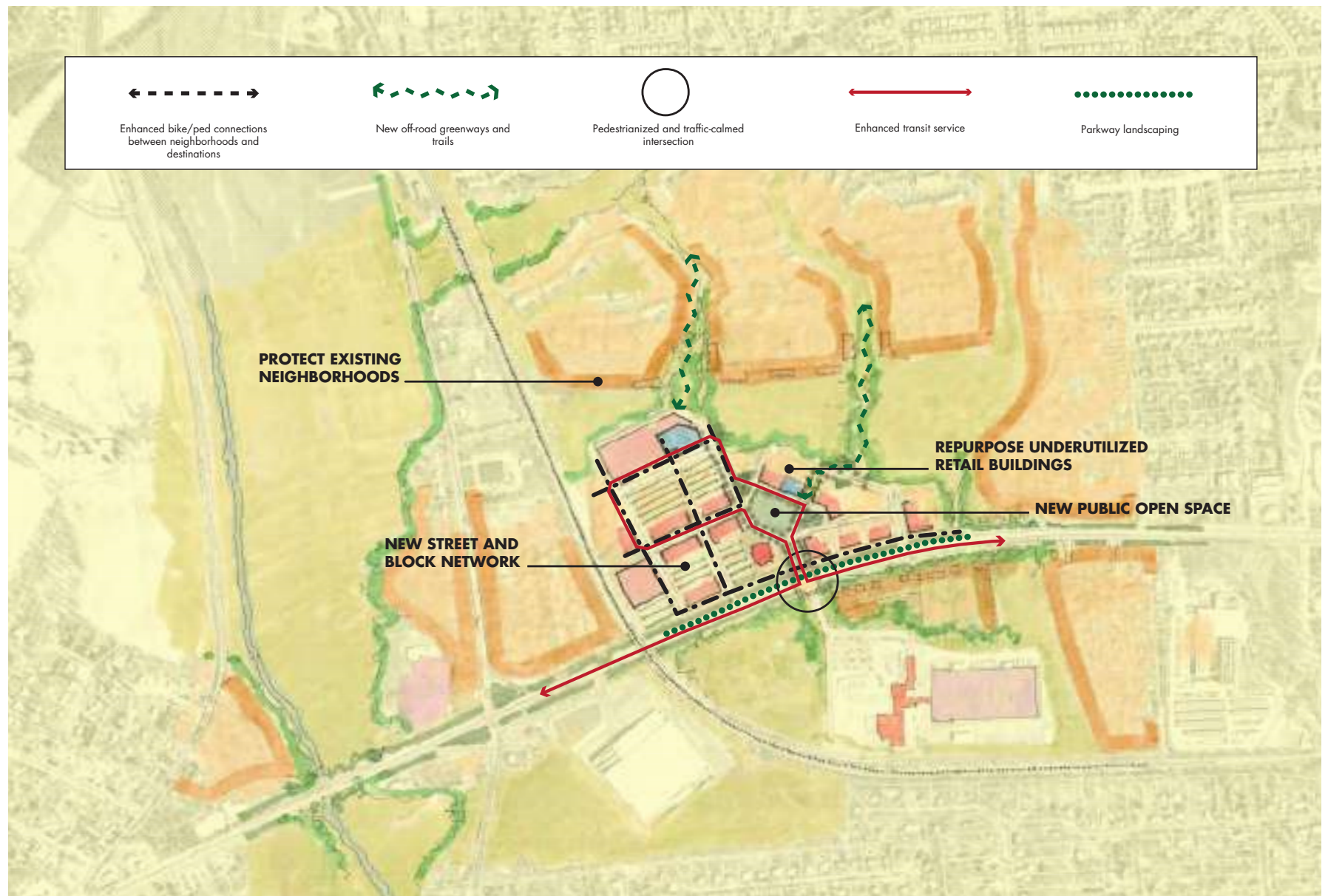
Before: Houston, TX mall in 2004, Source: Google Earth



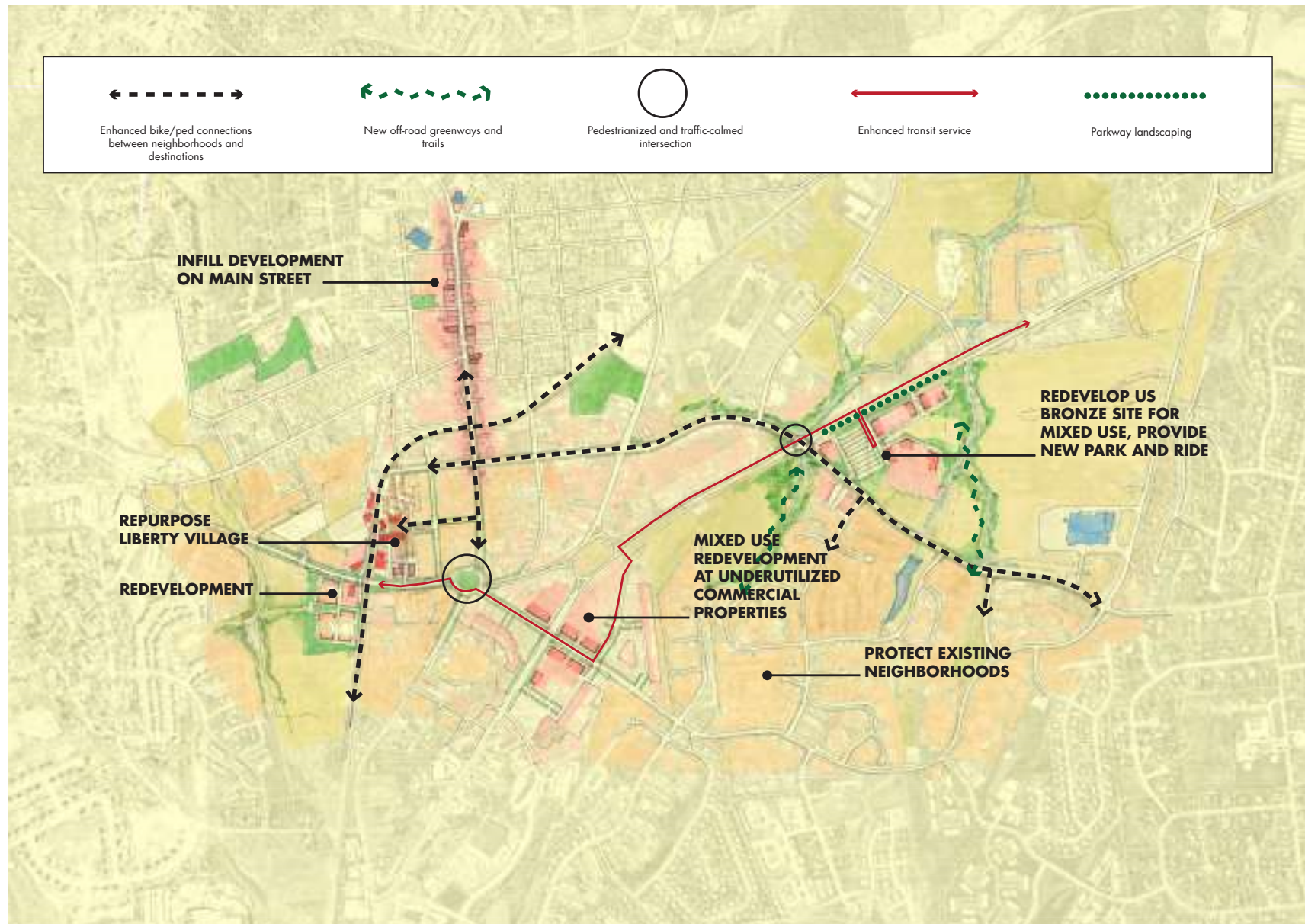
After: Retrofitted to CityCentre in 2012, Source: Google Earth



Fox Gate Town Center, when completed, will be a mixed-use development located just off Route 50 in Loudoun County, Virginia. Similar edge locations near the corridor, such as Liberty Village, can be reimaged as a mixed-use development. Image credit: Hughes Group Architects



Planning framework diagram for Bridgewater Towne Centre



Planning framework diagram for Greater Flemington, edge and center

CROSSROADS STRATEGIES

As with the edge condition described above, the priority should be to understand how to make crossroads, like the intersection of Route 202 and Old York Road, more complete and better-connected places. Once they have a stronger identity as a place, and not just another traffic light on Route 202, they can be re-branded to attract more investment and a greater mix of uses.

While this may never become a single and completely unified place, it is important to look at all of the assets collectively: there are large numbers of employees traveling to destinations that are in reasonable proximity; there are beautiful corporate landscapes; and the presence of a civic use, like a town hall, suggests that the Old York Road intersection is already a distinct place in the minds of residents.

Nevertheless, there are still benefits to maximizing the connectivity at the crossroads and looking for synergies among the activities, in order to make these places more competitive and minimize the friction that arises from short car trips within a small area. While a complete street network is not necessarily fitting for these locations, there are strategic linkages that can greatly improve mobility choice and transit access. At the Old York Road intersection, Somerset County has

proposed that West County Drive be extended so that it would be possible to drive to, and between, the quadrants without adding additional load to the existing intersection. If this is done, the new road extension should include sidewalks and bike lanes; or a parallel multi-purpose trail that links to other greenway connections in the larger area. The intersection with Route 202 should make pedestrian and bicycle crossings possible.

Improving transit here will also strengthen it as a destination. As with other places along the corridor, surrounding neighborhoods which do not immediately abut the corridor, but are well within walking and biking distances or a short car ride away from a transit stop, contain a large reservoir of potential riders. Connections to the neighborhoods do not have to consist of new roads, but could be part of a larger greenway amenity.

Parking lots at corporate and industrial campuses are rarely full; it is worth discussing with those property owners for either shared parking, for flex commuter parking or car share services, or a devoted place for park and ride facilities. Access for buses and shuttles should be considered. As an intermediate step to new bus service, there should be improved intra and inter-county

shuttle service, vanpools and carpools. In the planning framework diagram for Old York Road on page 60, a new bus stop is combined with park and ride capability on both sides of Route 202.



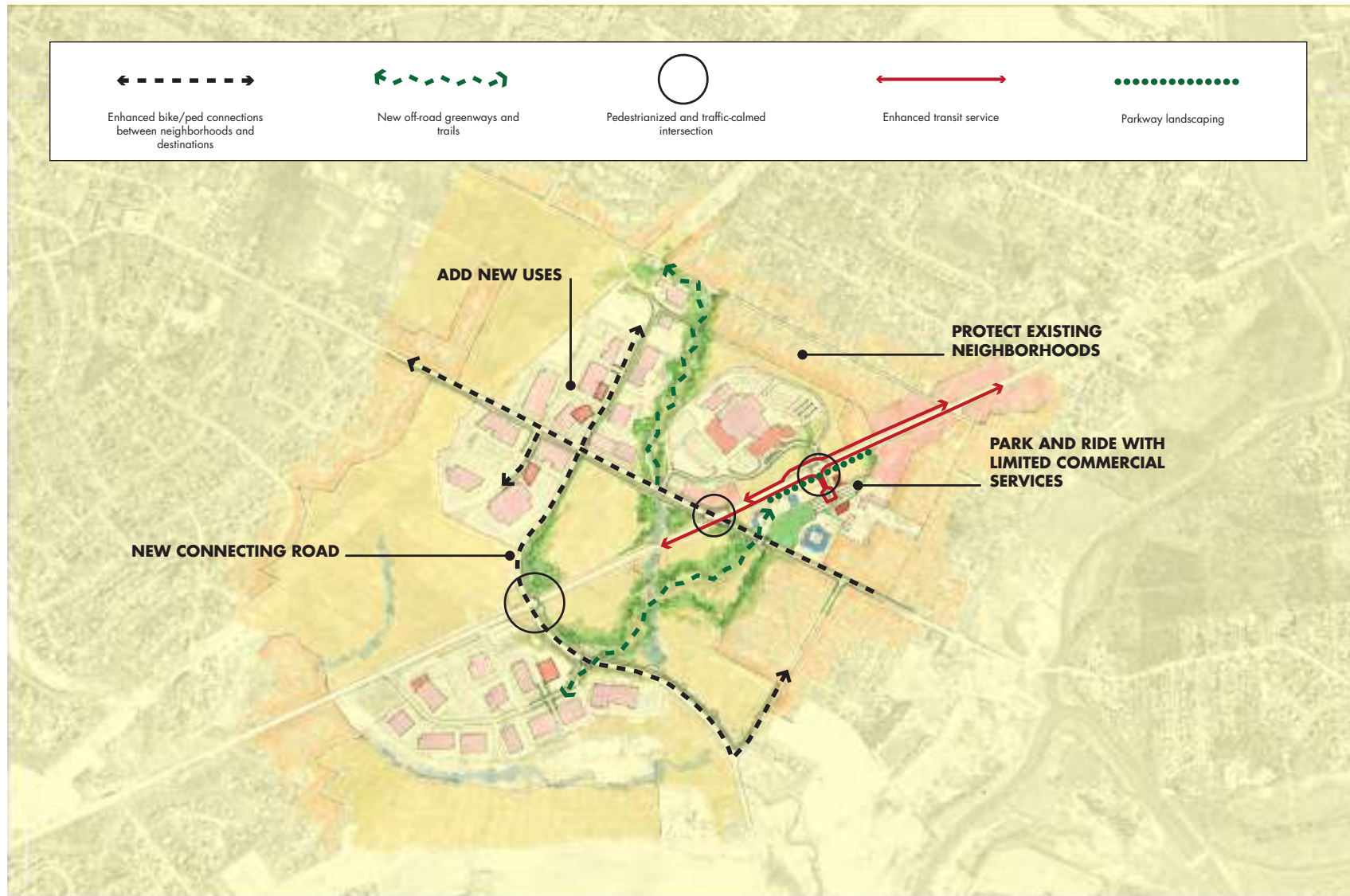
Bus access accommodated at a shopping center



Car-sharing can be incorporated into shared lots



Multi-purpose trails



Planning framework diagram for Old York Road and Route 202 intersection, a crossroads

WHAT IT COULD BE

Meridian in Aurora, Illinois, pictured at the bottom left, is an example of how suburban office parks can be connected to the buildings and amenities around them. Roads and walkways connect various developments to each other, promoting use of multi-modal options, such as walking or biking, to travel relatively short distances. While this precedent is of a much larger scale than the Old York Road crossroads, it demonstrates how the different quadrants at the Old York Road and Route 202 intersection can be interconnected.

Pictured below is an intersection landscaping treatment. Pedestrians and cyclists are more easily able to travel between four quadrants, discouraging the use of automobiles for short trips.



Meridian office park, Credit: Tom Fox, SWA Group



Meridian office park, Credit: Tom Fox, SWA Group

RURAL NEIGHBORHOOD STRATEGIES

The corridor can still play an important role in the quality of life of rural neighborhoods. The roads that connect the neighborhoods to the corridor are often the places where nodes of commercial activity can be found. Because these nodes serve as the “front doors” to the neighborhoods, they should be well-designed. Further sprawl of commercial strip uses should be limited. Design guidelines for these places can ensure that pedestrians are accommodated and that there is cross-access or shared parking between properties. As work environments evolve – employees telecommute or operate their own businesses from home – these nodes, even as they remain small and compact, should provide a full range of services to support workers. For example, these nodes can serve as a place to mail packages, or have meetings with colleagues and clients.

There may be new construction in these places as people renovate or add onto their houses, or as vacant lots are finally built upon. New construction should consider local housing market conditions, including the fact that there is limited demand for single family housing. Nevertheless, construction on empty lots or additions to existing houses should be controlled by residential design guidelines to maintain neighborhood character. Site design and landscape design guidelines can

ensure that the quality of the landscape as well as balance between buildings and nature is maintained. The connection to the land should also be reinforced through community farming or gardens and the use of locally grown foods in neighborhood restaurants.

Access to transit and alternative forms of mobility is also important: there are health benefits from biking and walking, and there are cost-of-living benefits from being less car-dependent. Rural neighborhoods can incorporate walking and biking amenities and trails not only for mobility purposes, but also for recreational purposes, attracting and connecting visitors to larger tourism destinations along the corridor. Small, compact nodes of commercial activity should also accommodate bus stops.

WHAT IT COULD BE



*Pedestrian and bike accommodation adjacent to a highway,
Credit: Genesis Group*



Community gardens



Agriculture-oriented services



Design guidelines to encourage rural character



Rosendale is a small town in Ulster County, New York that has started to attract technology and other small businesses. A rural neighborhood such as Three Bridges can attract these small-scale services, while maintaining its rural character, as shown in the image above.

SCENIC HIGHWAY STRATEGIES

The scenic highway contributes greatly to the character of Route 202. As such, farmland preservation should remain a priority in order to protect farmers from encroachment. Farmland preservation could become easier as New Jersey's agriculture economy strengthens, driven by major changes in the way we think about food and our awareness of the costs of transporting it.

In addition to the value of the agriculture products themselves, there are a variety of associated financial gains. Agriculture supports tourism by providing produce to restaurants in the centers, which can offer fresh, farm-to-table products. Renewed interest in how we get our food supports agro-tourism: tours of orchards and farms where visitors can learn where their food comes from and taste, "pick their own", or purchase the freshest products at farm stores. Coupled with the presence of downtown centers, the corridor could brand itself as a destination for agro-tourism and cultural entertainment.

The landscape qualities of the corridor are important if this area wants to identify itself as a place for sustainable agriculture practice and an agro-tourism destination. Auto-oriented uses should not be allowed to gain a foothold here. In cooperation with NJDOT, a landscape design strategy should be created

for the median and edges of the corridor.

In addition, if farmers have some presence on the corridor, they can promote their individual businesses and use the corridor as part of a promotional effort to build awareness of, and support for, agriculture. While this portion of the corridor should not contain typical auto-oriented uses, it is possible to design a place that is in character with the overall rural setting in which local farms can display and sell their produce. No large-scale commercial signage or billboards would be permitted.

At these same strategic locations, there could be a connection between transit along the corridor and smaller shuttle buses or vans that deliver people to the farms that want to participate in the agro-tourism initiative. These vehicles could be branded to promote agro-tourism in this area. While biking and walking will not be a significant share of mobility here, these facilities should be provided as recreational uses that are compatible with the overall rural character as well as provide tourism connections to the downtowns.

Finally, the corridor plays an important role in goods movement and moving farm products to the market. Improved conditions on the corridor mean more efficient and less expensive transport of locally produced foods.

WHAT IT COULD BE



Preserved farmland



Rural landscaping maintained along the corridor



Agrotourism and celebrating agriculture, Credit: Flickr user Hopeful in NJ



Farmstands



Pictured above is a proposed plan to create a farm supermarket at the intersection of Summer Road and Route 202 in Readington Township. The first of its kind along the corridor, the supermarket will supply fresh products from an adjacent state-of-the-art farm, and potentially other nearby farms. By celebrating and fully leveraging its agricultural amenities, Route 202 could become a greater destination for agro-tourism and markets like this one could be developed in similar places throughout North Jersey.



PHASE 3: HOW DO WE GET THERE?



IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the strategies described requires short and long-term action and collaboration between municipal, county, and state partners, and community organizations. Understanding that Route 202 crosses multiple jurisdictions, partnership and collaborative advocacy between municipal elected officials and county leaders will be crucial to moving ahead with strategies to implement improvements along the corridor. Additionally, all recommendations must be tempered by the fiscal realities on the ground. Any and all enhancements, from land use development to improved transit, will likely require more funding than is currently available in any state, county or local budget. Thus, partnerships between TMAs, transit providers, corporations, developers and state, county, local governments, and others will be essential to implementing these short and long-term recommendations, including matching any federal funds that may be available.

The approach to implementation can be organized into four overarching goals with sub-priorities.



Foster a better connected corridor.

Prior studies have analyzed the potential for transit and mobility improvements along the corridor. This study has affirmed that connectivity across the corridor is key. Enhanced connectivity along the corridor ranges from small, early phase steps, such as improved striping, which enhances safety, to more long term solutions, like new transit service. Stakeholders will need to work together to find creative solutions that foster connectivity and relate to land uses. Early action steps include:

- Support additional enhanced opportunities for walking and biking (sidewalks, crosswalks, traffic calming, bike lanes, bike facilities)
- Align and link existing transit routes, schedules and service across municipal and county boundaries
- Allow for greater access to transit (improved shelters, signage and development that accommodates transit)



Reimagine diminishing/obsolete corridor uses.

A number of priority sites along the corridor are well-suited to be reimaged. Diminishing and obsolete uses today could serve as the face of reinvention of the corridor tomorrow. Market forces can position this corridor well for opportunities that attract and retain young graduates and empty nesters. Land use changes can help to drive improvements in transportation. Early action steps include:

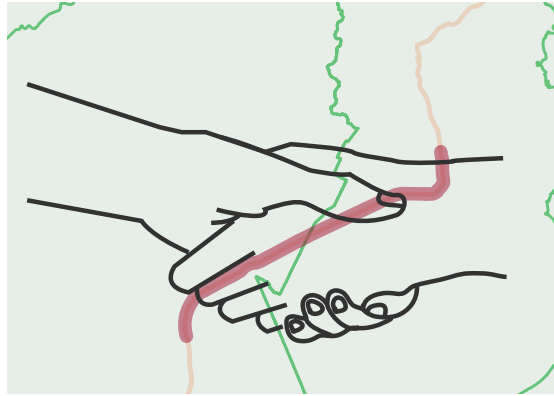
- Choose pilot sites and determine what policy changes would be required to shift uses at corporate campuses, commercial strip centers, outlet malls, etc.
- Support, politically and through funding, innovation at these sites



Strengthen ties between agriculture and the rest of the corridor.

Stakeholders demonstrated a strong interest in preserving the agricultural assets that are found along the corridor. Unlike many areas of the state, much effort has been undertaken to protect agriculture in the study area and there is a good opportunity to take full advantage of these efforts at many levels. Early action steps include:

- Support and encourage agro-tourism
- Support farm-to-table initiatives with local businesses
- Support implementation of farmers markets and community gardens
- Support linkages between schools and farms



Support ongoing corridor-wide collaboration.

In order to implement these recommendations, stakeholders will need to work together. Because of the significant work that precedes this study to analyze mobility, market and land uses along the corridor, there is already a strong framework for collaboration. Whether it is mayors getting together more frequently to share concerns and opportunities, or businesses and government representatives developing economic plans, there is much that can be accomplished as a unified corridor. Early action steps include:

- Convene and participate in corridor-wide forums of county partners, mayors, other local elected officials, businesses and the non-profit community to work towards implementation
- Develop a corridor-wide economic plan and branding to attract businesses, new residents and visitors

The matrices on the following pages identify specific actions that could be taken for each place type, explaining the next steps that partners can take to implement the Together 202 vision. These actions include steps identified by elected officials and other stakeholders on the State Agency Walk, Talk & Act Tour held on July 31, 2013.

Appendix B contains an analysis of Route 202 zoning opportunities for edge and crossroads locations.

CENTERS	Actions		Actors	Opportunity Sites		
	Short Term	Long Term		Downtown Somerville	Downtown Raritan	Downtown Flemington
Land Use						
Infill residential and mixed-use development	1. Develop design guidelines for study areas 2. Implement TOD/TND zoning 3. Work with owners to reposition Liberty Village	1. Identify redevelopment areas and implement area-specific plan 2. Integrate new mixed-use Liberty Village into downtown	Municipalities; Zoning & Planning Boards; Counties; Property owners	X	X	X
Open a downtown satellite campus of Raritan Valley Community College (RVCC)	Identify a temporary site for pilot project	Create a permanent facility	Municipality; RVCC			X
Ensure locally produced foods from nearby farms in downtown restaurants	Convene local farmers and restaurateurs	Develop a full farm-to-table program	Local businesses; Business associations; County Agriculture Development Boards	X	X	X
Open a downtown satellite health clinic of nearby hospitals	Identify a temporary site for pilot project	Create permanent facility	County & Municipal Health Departments; Hospitals	X	X	X
Create/promote a cultural arts district	1. Study appropriate locations and potential for arts district 2. Develop an overlay zone for arts	Implement arts district plan/zone	Municipality; Arts groups	X		X

Economic/Market Approach:

1) Downtown retail to complement multi-family residential. Up to 20K SF of food, restaurants, services targeted at riders and downtown population. Phase in more retail as multi-family develops in centers, over 100K SF supportable for targeted retail for urban environments. Do not compete head on with malls.

2) Transit-oriented development mixed use residential to meet demand from empty nesters/baby boomers and recent graduates. Over 100 units supportable immediately based on demographics and ridership. Additional targeted units as new businesses develop in corridor and as baby boomers continue to age.

CENTERS	Actions		Actors	Opportunity Sites		
	Short Term	Long Term		Downtown Somerville	Downtown Raritan	Downtown Flemington
Mobility						
A. Transit						
Increase intermodal connectivity	Coordinate existing routes/schedules and increase opportunities for shared ride arrangements in centers	Link new and existing services	TransBridge; NJ TRANSIT; Counties; HART; Ridewise; NJDOT; NJTPA	X	X	X
Create inter-center travel between Flemington, Raritan and Somerville and their edges	Develop and test a pilot route	Implement a permanent inter-county and inter-municipal transportation system	Counties; HART; Ridewise; NJDOT NJTPA; NJ TRANSIT	X	X	X
Improved bus shelters	1. Upgrade existing shelters 2. Test pilot shelters in Somerville	Provide new shelters at new stations	TransBridge; NJ TRANSIT; Counties; Municipalities; NJDOT; NJTPA	X	X	X
Improved transit way-finding	1. Improve existing signage 2. Study where additional signage is needed	Install new signage	TransBridge; NJ TRANSIT; Counties; Municipalities; NJDOT; NJTPA	X	X	X
Marketing transit	Distribute information about existing services	Implement full travel demand management (TDM) program	TransBridge; NJ TRANSIT; Counties; HART; Ridewise; NJDOT; NJTPA; Businesses and institutions	X	X	X
Create more station parking (bus and train)	Negotiate with land owners/developers for shared parking	Create new parking facilities	TransBridge; NJ TRANSIT; Counties; Municipalities; NJDOT; NJTPA; Property owners/developers	X	X	X
B. Alternative Mobility						
Create opportunities for walking and biking	1. Full ped/bike audit 2. Develop design guidelines for enhanced sidewalks and new bike lanes 3. Install pilot bike lanes/shared lanes	Upgrade sidewalks and fully implement bike plans	Municipalities; Counties; NJDOT; NJTPA	X	X	X
Support biking facilities	1. Develop design guidelines for bike facilities 2. Test pilot facilities at select locations	Provide bike parking facilities in new developments, at government buildings, and other locations	Municipalities; Counties; NJDOT; NJTPA	X	X	X
Ensure connections between existing bike trails and centers	Identify and complete missing links	Expand and enhance network	NJDOT; NJ Division of Parks and Forestry; Counties; Municipalities	X	X	X

EDGES	Actions		Actors	Opportunity Sites			
	Short Term	Long Term		Greater Flemington Retail Centers, Hunterdon County	Bemis Site, Raritan Township & Flemington	US Bronze Site, Raritan Township	Expo Center Site, Bridgewater
Land Use							
Repurpose existing abandoned and underutilized retail, corporate and former manufacturing buildings/sites							
a. Incorporate compact, residential live-work space and associated mixed-uses (e.g. centers for social/community activities; arts, office/business center, fitness etc.)	1. Re-zone for mixed-use residential where appropriate 2. Develop design guidelines for study areas, encouraging green building/infrastructure 3. Work with owners to reposition buildings/sites	Identify redevelopment areas and implement area-specific plans	Municipalities; Zoning & Planning Boards; Counties; Property owners	X	X	X	X
b. Incorporate RVCC satellite or health facility	1. Re-zone for institutional where necessary 2. Develop design guidelines for study areas, encouraging green building/infrastructure 3. Work with owners to reposition buildings/sites	Identify redevelopment areas and implement area-specific plans	Municipalities; Zoning & Planning Boards; County & Municipal Health Departments; Hospital	X	X		X
c. Attract small and midsize businesses, boutiques, specialty/high quality grocer	Conduct market demand study for small scale retail	Develop a business attraction/retention plan to draw small and midsize businesses and boutique retail	Property owners; Business associations	X	X	X	X
Create streets and blocks in large expanses of surface parking to facilitate new development types and public spaces	1. Develop planning framework diagrams for where frontages and streets should be established 2. Remove some surface parking spaces and begin to integrate public green spaces into existing parking lot 3. Begin to lay down a better defined set of thoroughfares in the lot	Complete a street and block network around new development and public spaces	Property owners; Business associations	X	X	X	X

Economic/Market Approach:

1) Changing demographics supports repurposing of obsolete retail to targeted residential for empty nesters. Leverage current and growing demand for alternative housing choices. Manage sprawl and continue to market attractiveness of quality of life and skilled workforce as a means to repurpose existing obsolete buildings and sites at the edges.

2) Changing business trends point to linkages between RVCC and hospitals developing skilled workforce needs and new business attraction in obsolete big boxes and corporate campuses. Continue discussions with community colleges and hospital to grow into existing available sites in the corridor. Create an emphasis on attracting new businesses to the corridor, marketing the area's assets and existing space as cost efficient locations.

EDGES	Actions		Actors	Opportunity Sites			
	Short Term	Long Term		Greater Fleming-ton Retail Centers, Hunterdon County	Bemis Site, Raritan Township & Flemington	US Bronze Site, Raritan Township	Expo Center Site, Bridge-water
Mobility							
A. Transit							
Make transit-accessible: provide access and facilities for buses, bikes and shuttles	1. Pilot study 2. Identify key locations for new bus stops that serve redevelopment sites 3. Develop redevelopment site plans that include bus stops and accommodate buses	1. Implement new bus stops at redevelopment sites 2. Market as transit-oriented 3. Develop corridor-wide access management plan	NJDOT, NJTPA, Counties; Municipalities; Property owners/developers	X	X	X	X
Provide park and ride facilities (shared parking opportunities) and upgrade existing facilities	Identify key locations for park and ride facilities at redevelopment and infill sites	Implement park and ride facilities at redevelopment site	TransBridge; NJ TRANSIT; Counties; Municipalities; NJDOT; NJTPA; Property owners/developers	X	X	X	
B. Alternate Mobility							
Create ped/bike connections throughout	1. Develop design guidelines 2. Reserve easements for parks/sidewalks 3. Build first strategic segments 4. Create zoning incentives to enlist land owners in building sections 5. Sidewalk and crosswalk improvements	Create networks across redevelopment sites	NJDOT; NJTPA; Property owners; Counties	X	X	X	
Create ped/bike connections to surrounding areas (sidewalks, crosswalks, etc.)	1. Develop design guidelines 2. Identify and build most strategic links	Build full bike/pedestrian network	NJDOT; Counties; Municipalities; Property owners	X	X	X	
Provide bike facilities	1. Identify locations 2. Provide incentives for biking	1. Revise zoning to mandate 2. Build dedicated facilities	NJTPA; NJDOT; Municipalities; Property owners	X	X	X	X

CROSSROADS	Actions		Actors	Opportunity Sites
	Short Term	Long Term		Old York Road, Branchburg
Land Use				
Support transition to the most viable office and industrial uses with public-private partnerships	1. Evaluate policy effectiveness (office park/industrial zoning - retail needs to be supported) 2. Detailed surveys of existing businesses 3. Determine: vacancies, needs, missing amenities, policy supportiveness, demand, location, etc.	1. Implement the necessary policies/ zoning (state; counties; municipalities supporting development - PILOTS, Redevelopment designation; Strategic Plan - expedited permitting) 2. Provide financial incentives	Property owners; Business associations; NJEDA	X
Provide some new services/businesses to make these more complete places	Identify what additional uses would make these more “complete places’ (service businesses, open space amenities)	1. Implement policies/zoning needed to get them there (state; counties; municipality supporting development - PILOTS; Redevelopment designation; Strategic Plan - expedited permitting)	Municipality; Property owners	X
Reserve large parcels for campus scale developments	Preserve in Master Plan	1. Re-calibrate zoning to the market studies 2. Create design guidelines for large parcels that preserve campus character and promote connections between developments 3. Create corridor design guidelines for control character of any frontages along Route 202	Municipality; Business owners	X

Economic/Market Approach:

1) In order to attract new businesses to the corridor, and occupy space being vacated by large corporate users, it is essential to attract the younger workforce, which is currently leaving for more hip, urban environments. Support alternative housing options. Understand changes in the style of the new workforce (home office, telecommuting, transit vs. cars). Continue to market assets of the corridor and incentivize site and building repurposing over new development while controlling sprawl.

2) Market demand study for service businesses.

CROSSROADS	Actions		Actors	Opportunity Sites
	Short Term	Long Term		Old York Road, Branchburg
Mobility				
A. Transit				
Make transit-accessible: provide access and facilities for buses	Work with owners on access and liability issues	Implement full TDM program	TransBridge; NJ TRANSIT; Counties; Municipalities; NJDOT; NJTPA; Property owners/developers; HART; Ridewise	X
Provide park-and-ride facilities	1. Complete demand study for park and ride at this location 2. Identify potential locations	Provide new facilities/dedicated area (waiting area, dedicated for access for transit)	TransBridge; NJ TRANSIT; Counties; Municipalities; NJDOT; NJTPA; Property owners; Businesses	X
Coordinate with employer shuttles	Study intermodal possibilities (schedule coordination, etc.)	Implement full TDM program	TransBridge; NJ TRANSIT; Counties; Municipalities; NJDOT; NJTPA; Employers	X
Provide new road connection with access to Route 202 (West County Drive extension)	1. Map route and reserve right-of-way 2. Zoning bonus to incentivize public/private partnership to build segments	Build new connecting road extension to be bike/pedestrian-friendly	County; Property owners; NJDOT	X
B. Alternative Mobility				
Create ped/bike connections between areas	1. Reserve easements 2. Build first strategic segments 3. Create zoning incentives to enlist property owners in building sections	Create network between the quadrants of the crossroads with pedestrianized crossings for Route 202	NJDOT; NJTPA; Counties; Property owners	X
Create ped/bike connections to surrounding neighborhoods	Identify and build most strategic links	Build full bike/pedestrian network	NJDOT; NJTPA; Municipality; Property owners	X
Provide bike facilities	1. Identify locations 2. Provide incentives for biking	1. Revise zoning to mandate 2. Build dedicated facilities	NJDOT; NJTPA; Property owners	X

RURAL NEIGHBORHOOD	Actions		Actors	Opportunity Sites
	Short Term	Long Term		Three Bridges, Readington
Land Use				
Limited, context-sensitive new development within the neighborhoods	Develop neighborhood-scale design guidelines	Implement new development at opportunity areas	Municipalities; Zoning & Planning Boards; County; Property owners	X
Create a new node on the corridor with neighborhood-scale services	New zoning to guide appropriate mix of uses	Implement new node	Municipalities; Zoning & Planning Boards; County; Property owners	X
Community farming/gardens	1. Identify advocates and pilot sites 2. Implement “buy local” campaign	1. Link to agrotourism and farm-to-table initiatives 2. Develop a community farming program and school curriculum	Local advocates; Schools	X
Ensure locally produced foods from nearby farms in local restaurants	Convene local farmers and restaurateurs	Develop a full farm-to-table program	Local businesses; Business associations; Hunterdon County Agriculture Development Board	X
Mobility				
A. Transit				
Provide park and ride facility at new bus stop	1. Complete demand study for park-and-ride at this location 2. Identify potential locations	Provide new facilities/dedicated area (waiting area, dedicated for access for transit)	NJDOT; TransBridge; County; Municipality	X
B. Alternative Mobility				
Create ped/bike connections throughout	1. Reserve easements 2. Build first strategic segments 3. Create zoning incentives to enlist property owners in building sections	Create networks across redevelopment sites	NJDOT; NJTPA; Counties; Property owners	X
Create ped/bike connections to surrounding areas	Identify and build most strategic links	Build full bike/pedestrian network	NJDOT; NJTPA; Municipality; Property owners	X
Provide bike facilities	1. Identify locations 2. Provide incentives for biking	1. Revise zoning to mandate 2. Build dedicated facilities	NJDOT; NJTPA; Property owners	X

Economic/Market Approach:

1) Changing demographics suggests lack of demand for large single family units that currently occupy the rural areas off of Route 202. Shift housing focus to the centers and edges. Utilize rural areas as a way to continue to improve quality of life as part of the overall business attraction package with trails, alternative transit options, green space, farmers markets, and other sustainable concepts.

2) Industrial and distribution has a market but most users demand immediate access to interstates. Traffic caused by distribution and some industrial should be seriously considered; most industrial, except R&D, utilizes significant space but jobs are limited. Encourage repurposing that supports existing business clusters and ties into high growth industries such as health care, green energy, etc.

SCENIC HIGHWAY	Actions		Actors	Opportunity Sites
	Short Term	Long Term		Route 202 between Raritan Township and Branchburg
Land Use				
Promote open space preservation to preserve scenic highway character	1. Develop scenic highway landscape design guidelines 2. Explore “Scenic Byways in New Jersey” program	Purchase/transfer remaining development rights	Municipalities; Open space and farm preservation organizations; NJDOT	X
Promote agriculture and eco-tourism	1. Develop a local promotional strategy for agricultural products 2. Coordinate with farm-to-table effort	Make this and surrounding area an eco-tourism destination	NJ Division of Travel and Tourism; Counties; Municipalities; County Agriculture Development Boards; Restaurateurs	X
Community farming/gardens	1. Identify advocates and pilot sites 2. Implement "buy local" campaign	1. Link to eco-tourism and farm-to-table initiatives 2. Develop a community farming program and school curriculum	Local advocates; Schools	X
Farm stands/farmers markets/farm supermarkets	Reinforce and market the existing stands	1. Identify shared facilities (farm super-market) 2. Link to eco-tourism and farm-to-table initiatives	NJ Division of Travel and Tourism; Counties; Municipalities; County Agriculture Development Boards; Restaurateurs	X
Mobility				
A. Transit				
Provide bus stop at new farm outlets	Identify location for pilot service	Build new bus stops at farm outlets	TransBridge; NJ TRANSIT; Counties; Municipalities; NJDOT; NJTPA; Property owners/developers	X
Vans with branding link farms/farm stands to surrounding areas	Pilot van programs linking to farms and farm stands	Branded vans and routes link eco-tourism destination in Somerset and Hunterdon Counties	National/state touring companies; County Agriculture Development Boards; Farmers	X
B. Alternative Mobility				
Create both on-street and off-street rural bike and hiking routes	Identify short term ped/bike/hiking opportunities	Complete comprehensive on and off-road trail network	Counties; Municipalities; Property Owners	X

Economic/Market Approach:

1) Support business attraction and control sprawl by encouraging agriculture and eco-tourism along the scenic highway. Shift housing focus to the centers and edges and link the centers to scenic highway with trails and bike paths. Continue to understand that the changing demographics supports more transit, less car usage, more urban housing and more work choices; use the scenic highway as a means to enhance quality of life and maintain the green pastoral image. Support and enhance local tourism and eco-attraction elements that can be marketed as part of a long term business attraction package.

CREATING A LASTING FORUM

The recommendations and implementation steps outlined above include a variety of actions across a broad array of land use types. But all have one thing in common: implementing them will require cooperation across jurisdictions and disciplines. This local demonstration project has been enriched by a series of collaborative, regional discussions with transportation experts, elected officials, government officials and businesses. These collaborative discussions have allowed the resulting recommendations to be regional in scope with corridor-wide benefits, rather than simply benefitting one municipality or county over another. Participants have expressed a desire to maintain a regional forum beyond the life of the project, in order to ensure implementation. Such a forum – or set of forums – could be established by building on existing partnerships, but should focus particularly on the following topics.

1. Transit efficiency and enhancement

A collaborative forum or partnership should bring together municipal leaders and planners, county planners, engineers and public transit providers, and representatives from the NJ Department of Transportation and NJ TRANSIT. Together, these representatives can work to

implement transportation recommendations from prior studies and ensure that these enhancements are supportive of the land use recommendations presented in this study.

2. Business and municipal coordination

Businesses along the corridor share an interest in leveraging the corridor as a good place to do business and attract employees. The Somerset County Regional Center Partnership already serves as a model for how businesses and municipal, county and state governments can work together toward common goals. Such a model can be expanded across the corridor to include Hunterdon County. The Somerset County Business Partnership and the Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce can play a pivotal role in organizing joint conversations around corridor-wide business issues. The comprehensive economic development strategy (CEDS) process, completed in Somerset County and underway in Hunterdon County, can serve as an organizing framework for conversations. Working with the NJ Economic Development Authority, strategic investments could be made along the corridor to benefit business.

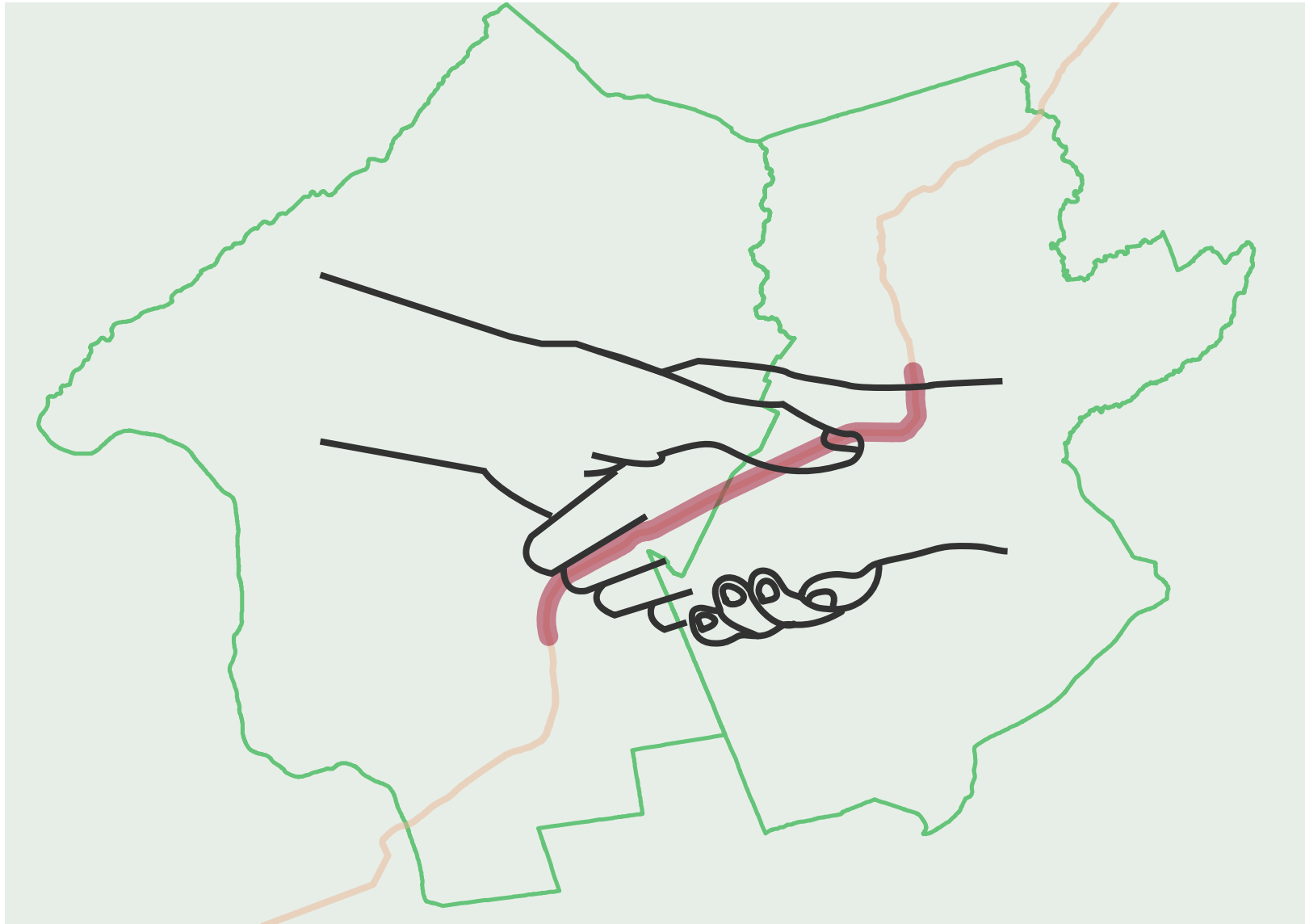
3. Academic partnership

Raritan Valley Community College serves as a corridor-wide asset to communities in both

Somerset and Hunterdon counties. As the recommendations indicate, there are even greater opportunities to engage the college in activities and services locally through satellite programs. An educational and municipal forum could be arranged by the counties that helps communities and the college to realize these budding opportunities. The NJ Department of Education can also play a role in expanding opportunities for education locally.

4. Agricultural assets

All too often, the agricultural community is overlooked or unable to participate in conversations about municipal development opportunities. One of the corridor's greatest assets is its working and preserved agriculture. The Somerset and Hunterdon County Agriculture Development Boards – with support and guidance from the NJ Department of Agriculture – should convene forums around opportunities for increasing the market for agricultural products in corridor communities. Whether it is additional farmers markets or integration of locally grown foods into the menus of local restaurants, there are many opportunities for improving access to the products of the corridor's farms.



**TOGETHER 202: REIMAGINING COMPLETE
COMMUNITIES ALONG A CONNECTING CORRIDOR**