



# Exit 9 Land Use and Transportation Study

## Executive Summary

Clifton Park and Halfmoon,  
Saratoga County, NY  
December 2008

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Saratoga County, NY

Prepared for:  
Capital District Transportation Committee  
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December 2008



**BFJ Planning**

## Exit 9 Land Use and Transportation Study Executive Summary

### Introduction

The Exit 9 Land Use and Transportation Study was undertaken for the Towns of Clifton Park and Halfmoon to guide land use and transportation decisions by helping address some of the issues and missing benefits in the area. The Exit 9 vicinity was one of the first areas to be developed in Saratoga County as a result of the construction of the I-87 Northway. Over time, the Exit 9 area evolved into an auto-oriented, largely commercial area for the Towns of Clifton Park and Halfmoon. Land uses have become disjointed and accessible almost exclusively by car while at the same time the area lacks the cohesiveness and sense of place that a vibrant, commercial area such as this could have.

Today, the two Towns recognize that there is an increasing desire of community members to have more choices in transportation for everyday activities and more choices in housing types. This desire is being driven by several factors, including:

- Increased traffic congestion on major arterials along with declines in safety for all modes of travel.
- Increasing public health concerns for those that live in auto oriented communities. More awareness has increased the desire for more walking and biking options.
- The desire of community members to age in place. Older community members will require more travel options, particularly for those who will no longer be able to drive, along with smaller,

lower maintenance housing types situated closer to shopping and services.

- Higher fuel prices may be forcing residents to rethink where they live and how they travel. Higher fuel prices have strained household budgets which may force some residents to move closer to job and activity centers. They have already forced some residents to increase carpooling, increase the amount they walk or bike to activities and services and increase the use of transit. However, safe and convenient non-driving travel options and housing choices adjacent to the commercial areas are limited in the two towns.

For all these reasons, the Towns of Clifton Park and Halfmoon, with sponsorship by the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC), which is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Capital Region, have joined forces to look at land use and transportation in the vicinity of the Exit 9 area in a different way. This study was funded in part through CDTC's Community and Transportation Linkage Planning Program which finances local planning activities that integrate land use and transportation. The Linkage Program is an implementation program for CDTC's adopted regional transportation plan New Visions 2030, which recommends more concentrated growth patterns to create vibrant, mixed use town centers, increased opportunities for walking and biking, increased access to transit and better management of congested transportation corridors.

The purpose of the Exit 9 study was to develop a plan which integrates land use and transportation in the Exit 9 area in a more efficient manner than has been done in the past. The result of the study is the development of a Strategic Plan for the Towns that presents a long-term vision for the area and recommends a number

of short, medium and long-term transportation and land use improvement strategies for achieving this vision over time. Collectively, these improvements will create a sense of place and identity for both Towns in a pedestrian friendly, mixed use environment.

### Goals and Objectives

The following objectives were identified early on in the study as a way to help identify some of the land use and transportation issues and needs both towns were facing, such as high gas prices, lack of transportation options, lack of character and identity, and excess areas of pavement:

- Manage and optimize the performance of the transportation system
- Enhance conditions for all travel modes
- Maintain and improve quality of life and community character
- Strengthen the commercial vitality of the center
- Enhance aesthetics and create a clear identity for the study area
- Minimize paved surfaces in order to concentrate growth in already developed areas and preserve open space in other areas
- Strengthen the ties between Clifton Park and Halfmoon
- Prepare a realistic plan that can be implemented

### Vision

Over the course of the study, a vision was established by the Plan participants:

- Creation of a “town center” with multiple uses and activities that is pleasant and walkable
- A place where people can live, work, shop and enjoy cultural activities
- A town center that is easily accessible by all modes of transportation



Mixed use development creating sidewalk and on-street activity

This vision also helped establish some of the potential benefits of the Plan, which could help achieve Smart Growth principles within the Towns, such as a more town-centered development pattern that is transit, pedestrian and bicycle oriented and has a greater mix of housing, commercial and retail uses. The potential benefits also include:

- Long term economic well being
- Increased sustainability
- Reduced traffic congestion
- Increased transportation options
- Pedestrian and bicycle friendly environment
- Pleasing aesthetics
- Preservation of open space

### General Concepts and Guiding Principles

A set of general principles were established to achieve the vision:

- Connect land use and transportation decisions
- Sustainable land use planning
- Complete Streets (CS)
- Rethinking parking
- Enhanced design standards and design guidelines



Typical suburban street before the Complete Street concept was applied



After the Complete Street concept was applied

## Improvement Strategies

Through a collaborative planning process, improvement strategies were established for transportation, land use and aesthetics:

### Transportation Strategies

- Improve traffic flow, safety and traffic management
- Complement local road network
- Mitigate barriers created by I-87
- Add new multi modal linkages
- Improve park and ride facilities
- Supplement the existing trail system with on-street pedestrian and bicycle facilities

These improvement strategies can be specifically applied to the following areas:

#### *Sitterly Road*

- Create a protected left turn lane from Sitterly Road to Woodin Road
- Continue shared use trail from Moe Road to Route 9 – improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities
- Roundabout at intersection of Clifton Park Center Road, the Mall and Sitterly Road

#### *Route 9*

- Access management for commercial sites – consolidation of driveways, interconnections
- Synchronize traffic lights
- Create a raised landscaped median
- Roundabouts to improve traffic flow

- Create a 'Complete Street' (sidewalks and bicycle paths on both sides)

#### *Route 146*

- Synchronize traffic lights
- Create a raised landscaped median
- Roundabouts to improve traffic flow

#### *New Road Extensions*

- Maxwell Road extension to Clifton Park Center Road
- Moe Road (school) to Maxwell Road extension (north road)
- Old Plank Road across I-87
- Old Plant Road to Route 9
- Birch Briar Village extension to Plant Road
- Sitterly Road extension to Plant Road



Proposed roundabout at Route 146 and Clifton Country Road intersection

### I-87 Interchange

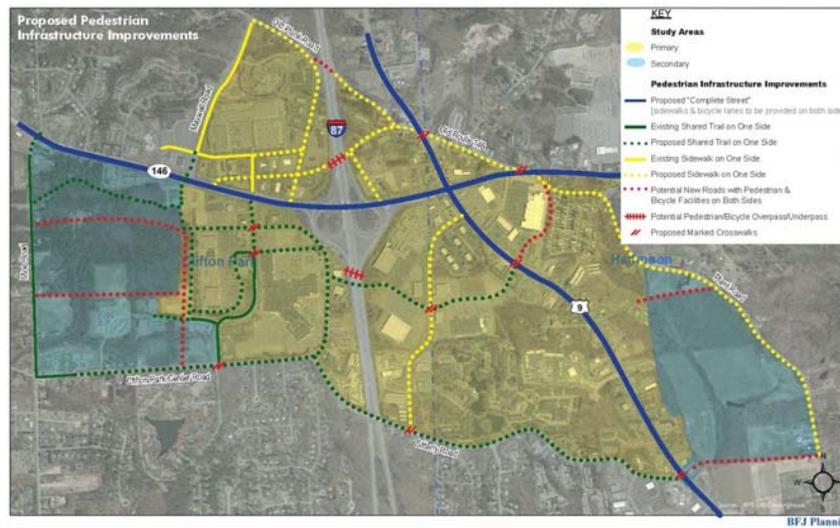
- Provide bicycle lanes, sidewalks and lighting on both sides of Route 146 under the I-87 interchange

### Transit Improvements

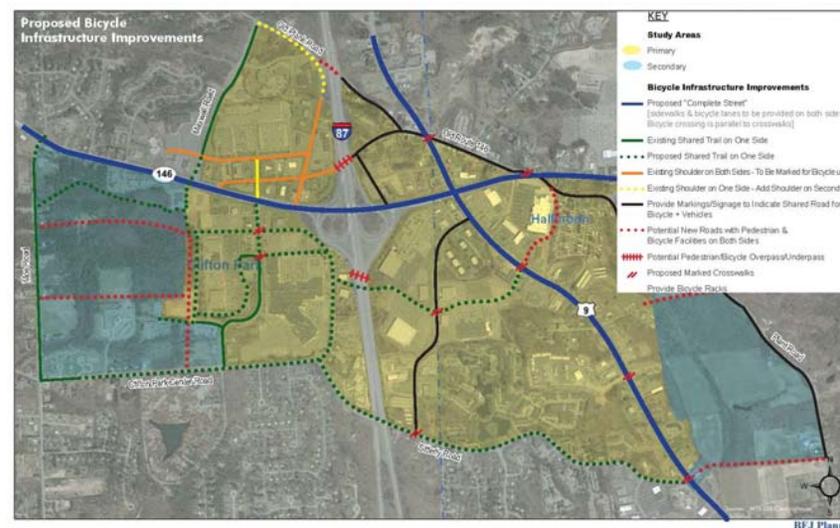
- Provide Route 9 bus route
- Examine feasibility of expanding park & ride lot at Fire Road to allow for future bus service and/or provide incentives to use park & ride lots outside of study area (i.e. Exit 8 park & ride)
- Promote park & ride facilities (Signage, schedules at the Crossings and Fire Road) and support promotion of regional carpool website ([www.ipool2.org](http://www.ipool2.org))

### Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements

- Provide a continuous network of pedestrian sidewalks, bicycle lanes and shared use trails throughout both Towns
- Pedestrian/ bicycle underpass under I-87 connecting two malls (Clifton Park Center and The Crossings)
- Pedestrian/ bicycle overpass north of interchange at Old Plank / Old Route 146
- Provide marked crosswalks and bicycle crossings at all major intersections
- Provide bicycle racks at The Crossings Mall and Clifton Park Center



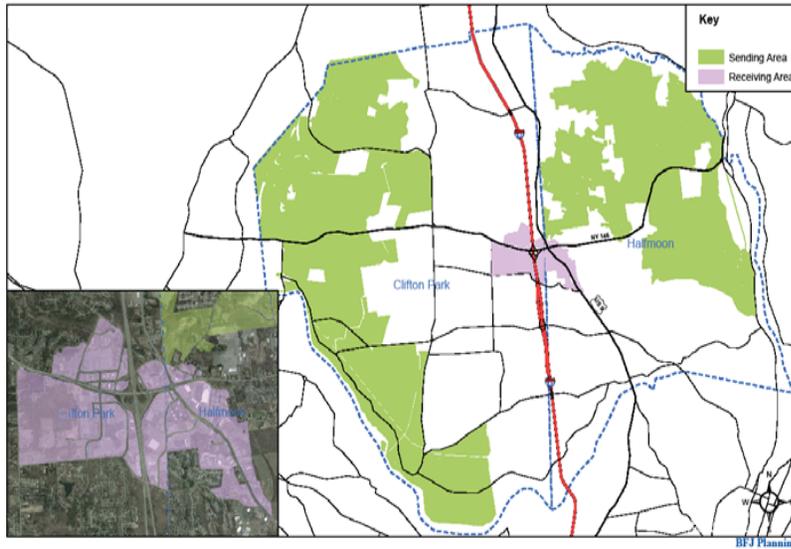
Proposed pedestrian infrastructure improvements



Proposed bicycle infrastructure improvements

### Land-Use Strategies

- Increase densities and greater mix in commercial areas
- Establish/expand TDR Overlay Zones in both towns
- Commercial strip redevelopment in both towns
- Minimize impervious surface



Transfer of Development Rights: Sending and Receiving areas

### Aesthetic Strategies

- Better design standards in both Towns
- Create gateways along Routes 9 and 146, including enhanced paving, street furniture, signage, seasonal landscaping and architectural standards

Ornamental lighting at the entrance to a development is attractive and creates a sense of character and place



### Implementation

The public workshops helped prioritize our recommended strategies. The following are the actions that received unanimous support:

- Access management strategies along Route 9 in Halfmoon
- Extend the shared use trail along Clifton Park Center and Sitterly Road all the way to Route 9
- Upgrade Rte 146 at the Exit 9 area with sidewalks, bike lanes and better lighting on both sides
- Implement/expand upon the Transfer of Development Rights Zoning Overlay in both towns
- Transform Route 146 into a complete street, adding sidewalks and bicycle lanes, pedestrian crossing and landscaping



Portion of Route 146 as a complete street

In addition, the following strategies should be considered by both towns for implementation:

- Transit and park and ride improvements
- Raised medians and roundabouts along Routes 146 and 9
- Designation of proposed roadway extensions as mapped streets
- Establishment of sidewalk improvement program
- Creation of Bi-Municipal Exit 9 Coordination Committee (or Zoning Study Committee) and BID
- Establishment/expansion of the TDR Overlay Zones

The following funding resources are available to help achieve Plan implementation:

Federal and State

- Transportation Improvement Program (Spot Improvement Program and Safety for Non-State Owned Roads)
- Transportation Enhancement Program
- Transportation and Community and System Preservation Pilot Program (TCSP)
- New York State Multi-Modal Program Funding (MMPF)
- State Administered Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
- New York State Marchiselli Funds (NYSMF)

Local Sources

- Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) Bench and Shelter Program
- Town's General Fund

Private Sources

- Mitigation from Development/Redevelopment
- Business Improvement Districts (BID)

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Saratoga County, NY



BEFORE



AFTER

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Transportation Committee**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Exit 9 vicinity was one of the first areas to be developed in Saratoga County as a result of the construction of the I-87 Northway. Over time, the Exit 9 area evolved into an auto-oriented, largely commercial area for the Towns of Clifton Park and Halfmoon. Land uses have become disjointed and accessible almost exclusively by car while at the same time the area lacks the cohesiveness and sense of place that a vibrant, commercial area such as this could have.

A review of the history of development and an analysis of the existing conditions within the Exit 9 vicinity reinforces some of the issues and missing benefits in the area:

- Following a similar pattern of development in many communities along highway interchanges in the 1960s to 1980s, the Exit 9 vicinity was developed to enable the easy accessibility of automobiles to the retail and commercial areas.
- Individual parcel owners have tended to develop their individual properties as their own isolated projects, and there has not been a master plan of the study area to help coordinate or create connections among adjacent parcels.
- Large lot developments with single commercial/ retail units and vast areas of parking have become characteristic of the Exit 9 study area.
- These lots are generally not connected to one another and require customers to return to their cars and drive back onto the busy NY 146 and US 9 routes in order to gain access to an adjacent retail unit.
- Both towns have experienced population increases since 1990. The growth experienced by both towns during this period was far greater than that of the Capital District or New York State. A rapid surge in population brings challenges in terms of housing, infrastructure and service provisions.
- A lack of traditional streets, pedestrian and bicycle facilities has also increased the reliance on the car for mobility within the study area.

Today, the two towns recognize that there is an increasing desire of community members to have more choices in transportation for everyday activities and more choices in housing types. This desire is being driven by several factors including:

- Increased traffic congestion on major arterials along with declines in safety for all modes of travel. A lack of safe transportation choices forces many to drive in the Exit 9 area.
- Increasing public health concerns for those that live in auto oriented communities. Greater awareness has increased the desire for more walking and biking options.
- The desire of the towns to protect open space while allowing for future growth. One way this can be achieved is by concentrating future growth in areas that are already developed or are ready for redevelopment at higher densities with greater mixes of uses.
- The desire of community members to age in place. Older community members will require more travel options, particularly for those who will no longer be able to drive, along with smaller, lower maintenance housing types situated closer to shopping and services.
- Higher fuel prices may be forcing residents to rethink where they live and how they travel. Higher fuel prices have strained household budgets which may force some residents to move closer to job and activity centers. They have already forced some residents to increase carpooling, increase the amount they walk or bike to activities and services and increase the use of transit. However, safe and convenient non-driving travel options and housing choices adjacent to the commercial areas are limited in the two towns.

For all these reasons, the Towns of Clifton Park and Halfmoon, with sponsorship by the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC), which is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Capital Region, have joined forces to look at land use and transportation in the vicinity of the Exit 9 area in a different way. This study was funded in part through CDTC's Community and Transportation Linkage Planning Program, which finances local planning activities that integrate land use and transportation. The Linkage Program is an implementation program for CDTC's adopted regional transportation plan New Visions 2030, which recommends more concentrated growth patterns to create vibrant, mixed use town centers, increased opportunities for walking and biking, increased access to transit and better management of congested transportation corridors.

The purpose of this study is to develop a plan which integrates land use and transportation in the Exit 9 area in a more efficient manner than has been done in the past. The study will develop a Strategic Plan (“Plan”) for the Towns that presents a long-term vision for the area and recommends a number of short, medium and long-term transportation and land use improvement strategies for achieving this vision over time. Transportation strategies developed for the study area address highway, pedestrian, bicycle and public transit modes. Land use, access management and aesthetic strategies support the long-term vision of the study. Collectively, these improvements will create a sense of place and identity for both Towns in a pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use environment.

The Exit 9 vicinity covers land in both the municipalities of Clifton Park and Halfmoon and consists of a primary study area and secondary study area as indicated in Figure 1.1. The primary study area includes lands south of Old Plank Road and Old Route 146, north of Sitterly Road, west of Plant Road and east of Maxwell Drive and Maxwell Drive extension. The secondary study area includes lands south of Route 146, north of Clifton Park Center Road, east of Moe Road, west of Maxwell Drive extension in Clifton Park, and an area of land east of Route 9 and west of Plant Road in Halfmoon.

### 1.1 Study Vision

As a result of the collaborative planning effort for the Towns of Clifton Park and Halfmoon, the Plan participants established a vision for both towns that would help with the creation of a “town center” with multiple uses and activities that is pleasant and walkable, a place where people can live, work, shop and enjoy cultural activities, and a town center that is easily accessible by all modes of transportation. To further promote this vision within the Clifton Park and Halfmoon Exit 9 study area, the Plan will develop a series of fully integrated multi-modal corridors, that safely and efficiently transport people, goods and services within and throughout the study area. Local circulation and access will be enhanced within and between both Towns. People will be able to move within the study area on a well connected network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities and convenient and efficient transit services. Conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists and transit modes will be minimized and transfer between modes will be improved.

Gateways will announce the transition from one distinct area to the next and high quality streetscape and design features will create a sense of place and an aesthetically pleasing environment. The Exit 9 area will be an economically viable and desirable place to live and work. Development will be concentrated around mixed-use nodes of residential and commercial / office development. There will be a mix of housing types and densities to accommodate a variety of lifestyles and income levels.

Figure 1.1: Study Area



## 1.2 Study Goals and Objectives

Using information on existing conditions and stakeholders' input regarding issues in the study area, the project team crafted a set of goals and objectives on which the public reached consensus at the first public workshop on Wednesday January 23, 2008. These goals and objectives guided the development of the recommended short and long-term land use and transportation improvements for the study area. The seven goals and objectives are as follows:

1. Manage and optimize the performance of the transportation system by:
  - Linking transportation improvements to land use decisions.
  - Maintaining good quality of traffic flow and traffic safety through use of various techniques that may include traffic calming, signal coordination, roundabout designs, access management, and limited capacity improvements.
  - Incorporating access management techniques that will work to preserve the function of NY 146 and US 9 in serving through trips while providing safe, convenient and consolidated access to adjoining land uses while supporting the potential for development.
  - Creating new road connections to provide alternative routes and relieve congestion.
2. Plan for all travel modes by:
  - Creating a safe bicycle on-street and off-street network designed for transportation and recreation purposes. Provide convenient connections between the on-road and the off-road network.
  - Improving pedestrian safety and accessibility with the addition of facilities such as crosswalks, sidewalks, landscaped medians, and advanced signal technologies that take into account diverse needs throughout the study area.
  - Requiring street improvements and development projects to support all modes of traveling including walking, bicycling and transit.
  - Exploring possibilities to increase transit service and improve infrastructure and physical conditions to allow for future transit service.
  - Providing convenient connection among all modes of travel within the study area and a more comprehensive network of roads and road connections.
3. Maintain and improve the quality of life and community character, as well as the commercial vitality by:
  - Promoting more compact development that allows for greater convenience for its users and more efficient use of land: discouraging strip roadside development; encouraging interior lot development; encouraging infill development (i.e. redevelopment of existing under-developed sites or vacant sites located between developed parcels).
  - Encouraging mixed land uses that are compatible and mutually supportive of each other (eg. commercial use located on

the ground level and residential use located on second floor or higher levels).

- Improving accessibility to businesses (i.e. providing sidewalks and bike paths that connect to businesses; maximizing ADA accessibility).
- Providing transportation and land use strategies that support the community's character while balancing growth and economic development with livable communities and land preservation.
- Concentrating growth and promoting development that supports non-motorized transportation options and reduce dependence on the automobile.



*Figure 1.2: Multi use path*



*Figure 1.3: Bike lane on highway*



*Figure 1.4: Pedestrian activity along sidewalk*

4. Enhance aesthetics and create a clear identity for the study area by:
  - Improving the aesthetics of NY 146 and US 9 by adding: boulevard routes, landscaped medians, lighting, banners and streetscape improvements in the study area.
  - Developing gateways into the towns along NY 146, east and west of Exit 9, that signify each town's entrances.
5. Minimize impervious surfaces by:
  - Encouraging land banking.
  - Promoting shared parking and off-site parking among uses in proximity to each other with different operating hours.
  - Permitting higher buildings in exchange for more green space / public gathering areas.
6. Ensure the plan can be implemented by:
  - Recommending short-term strategies and long-term improvements that complement the land use goals of the community.
  - Defining those individuals and groups who have roles in the implementation process.
  - Finding creative funding strategies.
  - Encouraging public/private partnerships
  - Developing a toolbox of best practices for planning and development.
  - Establishing an awards program to recognize successful implementation projects.
  - Creating a benchmarking system that tracks indicators and measures progress towards the study's objectives.
7. Strengthen the ties between the Town of Clifton Park and Halfmoon by:
  - Establishing a joint review process for the plan and its recommendations. This review may consist of:
    - exploring grant opportunities to improve the Exit 9 area;
    - establishing common zoning and planning standards, design guidelines , etc.;
    - establishing a downtown environment in both Towns;
    - lobbying the NYSDOT for pedestrian safety improvements in the area; and
    - lobbying local elected officials for funding

## 2. EXISTING CONDITIONS

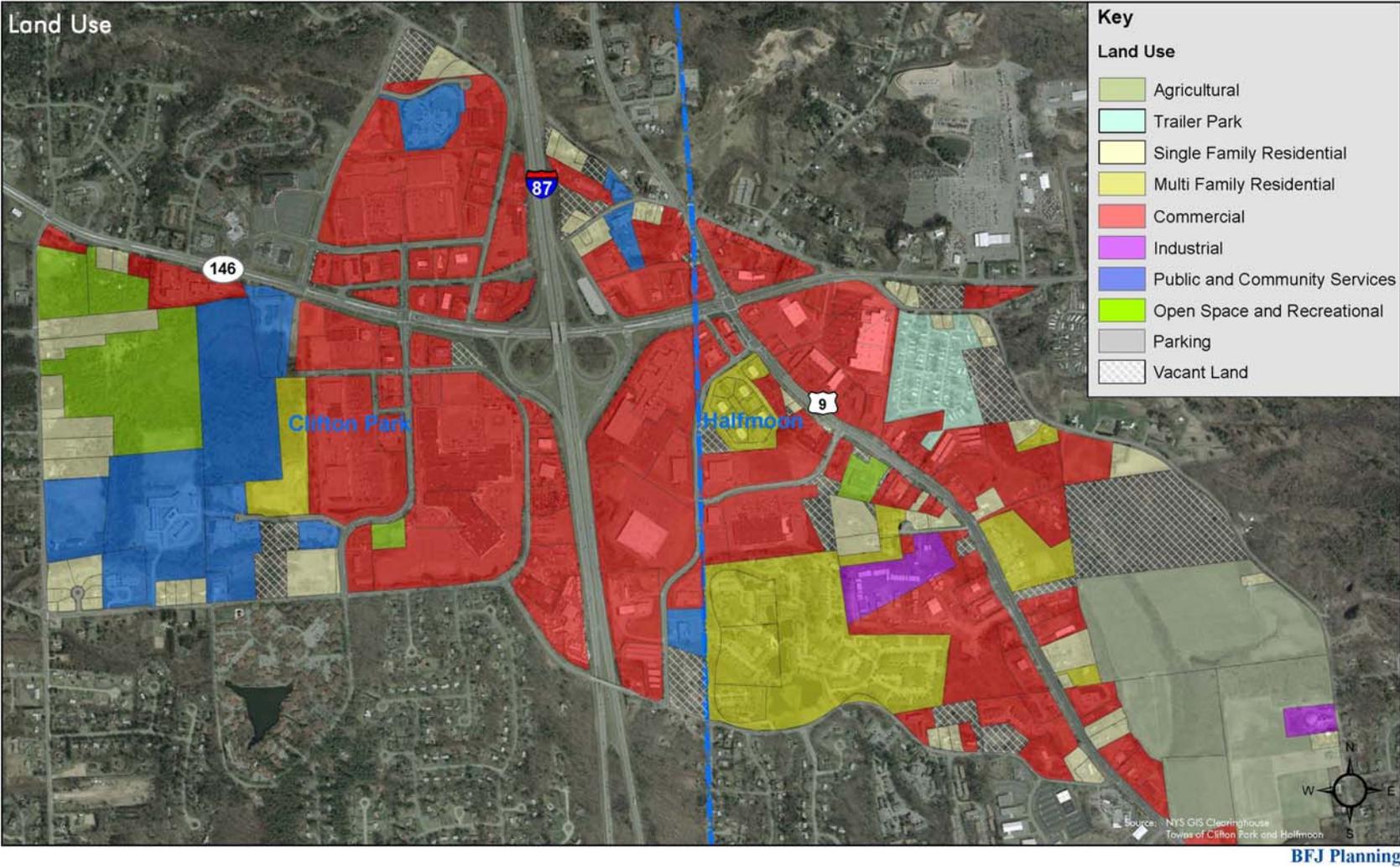
An existing conditions inventory and analysis of the study area was undertaken to establish a baseline of how things currently operate and for comparison purposes. The inventory aided in the evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of conceptual improvement alternatives in the Exit 9 area. The inventory and analysis included a review of existing land uses and zoning along the corridor, assessment of demographics at local, county and state level, a study of residents place of work and commuting patterns, a review of transit facilities and parking provision, an inventory of study area roadway and intersection geometry and traffic control devices, collection of daily and peak hour traffic volumes, a review of existing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and facilities, and a review of safety statistics within the study area. A summary of the pertinent information is presented in this section.

### 2.1 Land Use

Understanding how land is being used in both Clifton Park and Halfmoon is essential to developing realistic redevelopment strategies for the Exit 9 area. The study area consists of approximately 10 general land use categories. Commercial/ Retail activities constitute the predominant land use within the study area. The following are the primary land uses identified:

- Agricultural: an area primarily used for agricultural and associated activities.
- Mobile Home Park: an area primarily used for residential mobile home communities.
- Single-family residential: an area primarily used for single-family residential purposes.
- Multi-family residential: an area used primarily for multi-family residential purposes.
- Commercial: an area primarily used for retail and professional office purposes.
- Industrial: an area primarily used for light industrial production.
- Public and Community: an area primarily used for activities such as schools, libraries, and community activities.
- Open Space and Recreational: an area primarily used for open space and recreational activities.
- Parking and Vacant Land: areas primarily used for parking and undeveloped areas.

Figure 2.1: Land Use in Clifton Park and Halfmoon Study Areas



## 2.2 Zoning

Zoning provides the municipalities of Clifton Park and Halfmoon with a means to regulate development in such a manner as to protect the health, safety and general welfare of the community. The ability to regulate land use and development is granted to municipalities in Article IX, Section 2, of the New York State Constitution and by the various state enabling statutes. It is essential that both Clifton Park and Halfmoon maintain an accurate zoning code to ensure consistent rules about acceptable development patterns. The primary Zoning Districts located within the study area are as follows:

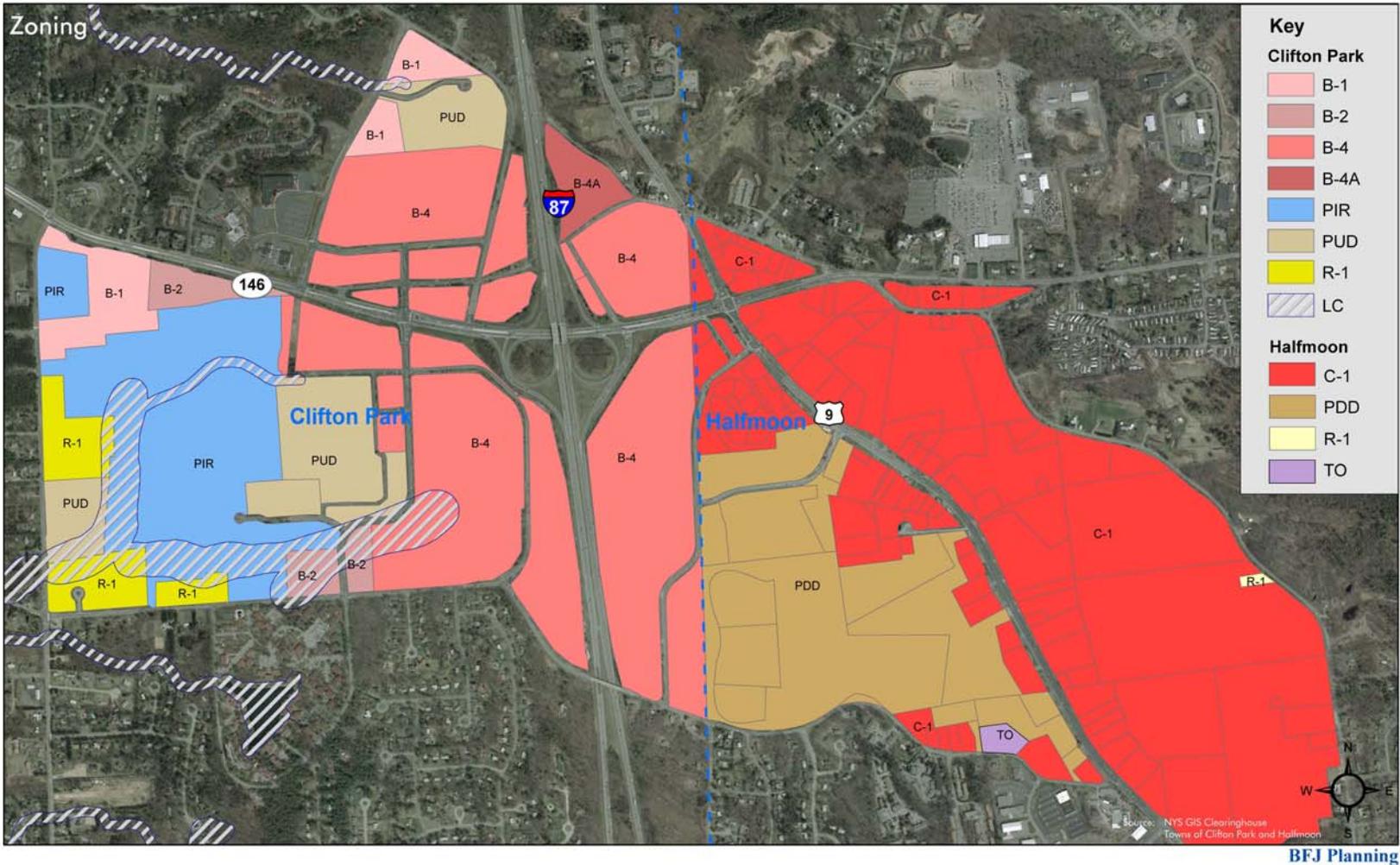
### Clifton Park

- B-1 and B-2: Business Non-Retail Districts – provide suitable locations for various types of general and professional offices as opposed to retail businesses.
- B-4: Highway Business Districts – provide areas for business uses which are mainly automobile oriented.
- B-4A: Highway Business/ Residential Retail Districts – provide areas for business uses which are primarily automobile oriented.
- PIR: Public/ Institutional/ Recreational Districts – provide for public, institutional and recreational uses and associated activities.
- PUD: Planned Unit Development Districts – permit establishment of areas in which one use or diverse uses may be created together, containing both individual building sites and common properties, in compatible and unified development.
- R-1: Residential 1 Districts – primarily for suburban residence uses and to accommodate relatively dense residential development at densities appropriate with environmental restrictions, and which transition between the Town’s primary commercial development districts and lower density districts, both in density and allowable uses.
- L-C: Land Conservation Districts – delineate, protect and conserve wetlands and streams and their respective regulated adjacent areas as designated by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and preserve natural floodplains, as designated by the Town of Clifton Park.

## Halfmoon

- C-1: Commercial Districts – provide locations for commercial, retail and service uses.
- Residential District – permits residential uses for one and two family dwellings in addition to accessory uses and farm and equestrian facilities.
- PDD: Planned Development Districts – provide for land developed as a single interest or as a whole in phases. A PDD may result in open space areas, higher densities, flexibility in design and preservation of key natural features.

Figure 2.2: Zoning in Clifton Park and Halfmoon Study Areas

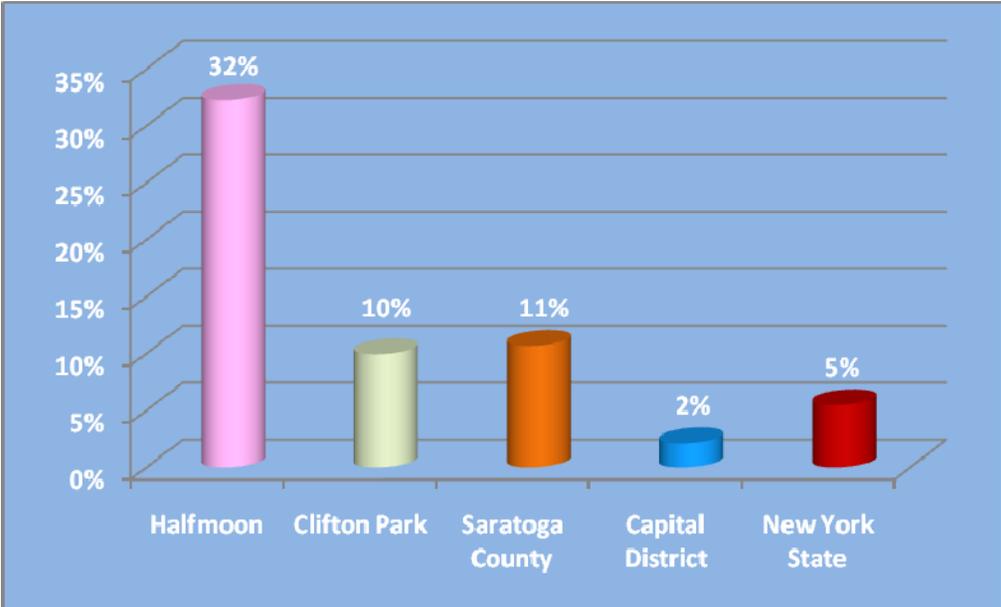


2.3 Demographics

**Population**

According to US Census population estimates for 2006, the Towns of Clifton Park and Halfmoon have populations of 36,447 and 19,687 respectively. This represents a 9% increase in the population of Clifton Park from 2000 to 2006 and a 6% increase in the population of Halfmoon over the same period. The graph below illustrates the population surge that took place in both Clifton Park and Halfmoon in the ten years from 1990 to 2000. Clifton Park experienced a 10% increase in its population over this time, while Halfmoon experienced a 32% increase. The growth experienced by both Towns during this period was far greater than that of the Capital District or New York State. A rapid surge in population brings challenges in terms of housing, infrastructure and service provisions. In addition, decisions regarding future development and revitalization become critical to the successful creation of, socially, economically and environmentally sustainable communities. A significant increase in population also has a positive impact on tax base, job, business and housing development. The creation of short-term and long-term strategies can help to ensure the development of successful places.

**Figure 2.3: Population Trend 1990-2000**

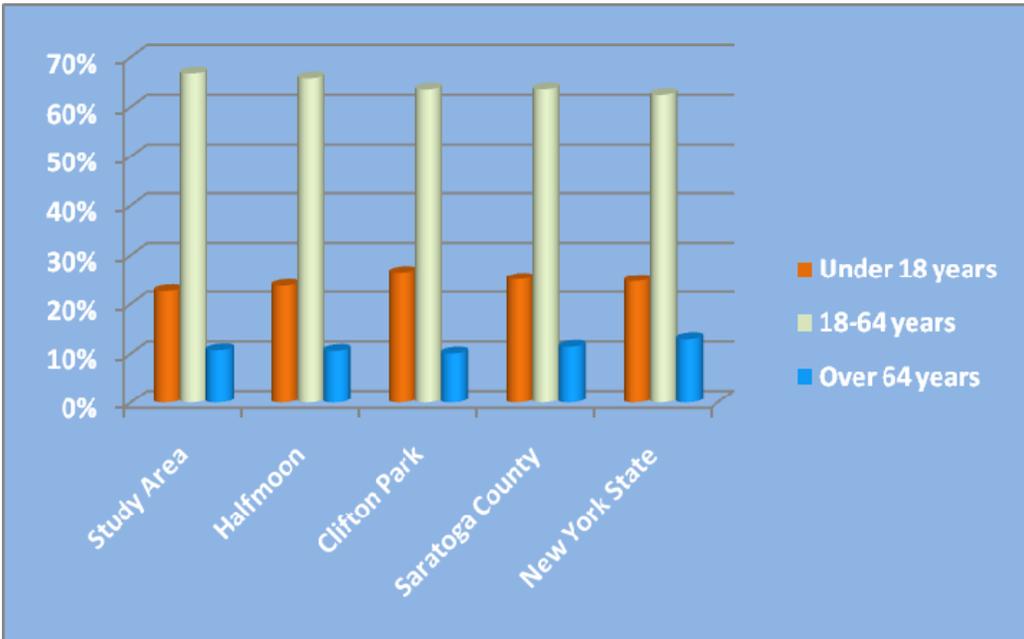


Source: US Census 1990 and 2000

In addition to knowing how many residents live in both Clifton Park and Halfmoon, it is useful to know the age breakdown of the citizens. Age groups require different levels and types of services. A community with a high percentage of senior citizens may expect a higher demand for public transportation and senior related activities, while a community with a high proportion of the 18-64 and 35-64 cohorts may require services such as day care, youth sports and public health assistance. Both Clifton Park and Halfmoon have comparable population distribution by age to the County and the State. The 18-64 cohorts constitute the majority of the population in both municipalities, and specifically in the study area (approx. 65%). There is a relatively low percentage of the population over the age of 64 (less than 10%).

The community will benefit from the high levels of consumption associated with the 35-54 year old age group, resulting from raising a family and buying a home. However, both municipalities must ensure that transportation facilities and options available to all of their citizens are addressed in order to ensure successful, permeable communities.

Figure 2.4: Population by Age

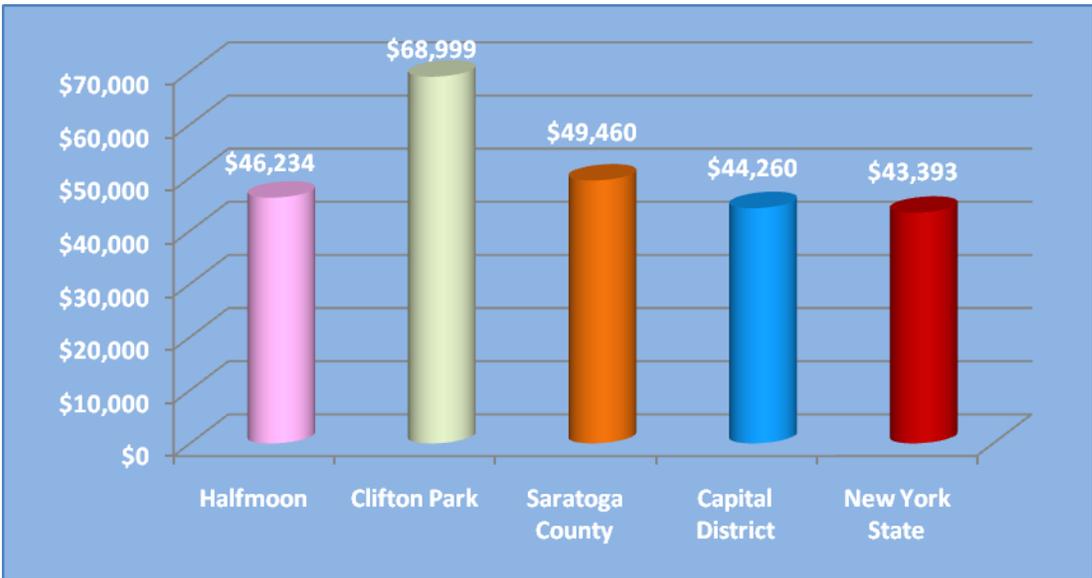


Source: US Census 2000

**Income**

The median household income of Clifton Park and Halfmoon is \$68,999 and \$46,234, respectively. The median income in Halfmoon is comparable to that of the County, Capital District and New York State. Clifton Park’s median household income is approximately 40% to 60% greater than that in Halfmoon, the County, Capital District and New York State. The health of household income in both Towns impacts other community dynamics such as home ownership, consumer confidence, buying power and education. This is reflected in the large number of retail outlets located within the study area.

**Figure 2.5: Household Income**



Source: US Census 2000

**Employment and Commute Pattern**

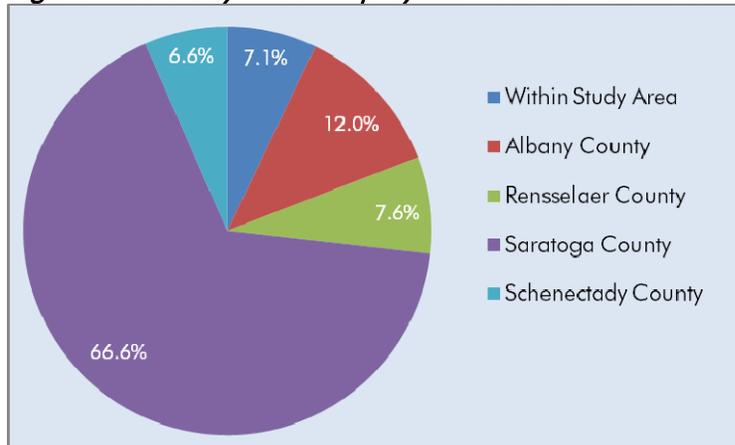
Figure 2.6 shows the study area in relation to the Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ) that was used to assess commuting patterns of the persons residing and/or working in the study area. As can be seen, the study area includes five TAZ zones in their entirety. One additional TAZ (430) is included in the statistics even though it extends beyond the study area.

Figure 2.6: Study Area within Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ)



There are 4,196 persons working in the study area as defined by the TAZ's in Figure 2.6 (also see Figures 2.7 and 2.8). The majority of these (67%) reside in Saratoga County. There is a significant amount of commuting both to and from the Exit 9 vicinity on a daily basis. Of the 4,196 workers in the study area, 3,663 of these workers drive to work alone, 317 carpool, and 55 work at home. Just 137 individuals travel to work via motorcycle, foot or bicycle.

**Figure 2.7: Study Area Employees Place of Residence**



Source: CDTC based on TAZ

**Figure 2.8: Means of Travel to Work in Study Area**

Place of Residence	Total Workers	Drive Alone	2-Persons Car Pool	Bike, Walk, Motorcycle	Work at Home
Within Study Area	299	179	8	65	55
Albany County	505	468	14	0	0
Rensselaer County	320	292	4	10	0
Saratoga County	2,795	2,491	259	62	0
Schenectady County	277	233	32	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,196</b>	<b>3,663</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>55</b>

Source: CDTC based on 2000 Journey to Work Census data

***Residents and Commute Pattern***

There are approximately 2,375 employed residents living inside the study area (as defined by the TAZ’s in Figure 2.6) who work inside or outside of the area. Figure 2.9 shows means of travel to work for the residents in the study area. Only 13% of the Exit 9 area residents work in the study area, while a majority of workers commute to Albany County (42%) and to other parts of Saratoga County (21%).

***Figure 2.9: Means of Travel to Work for the Study Area Residents***

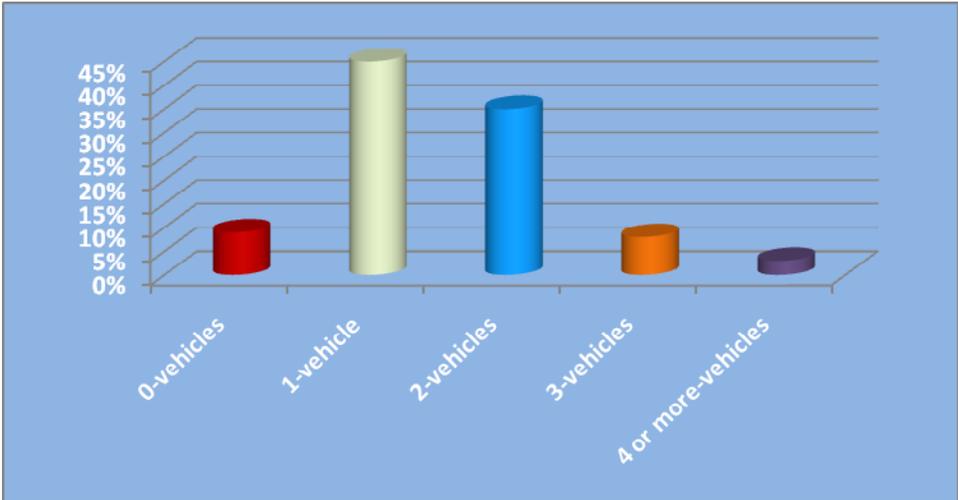
From Location	Total Employed Residents	Drive Alone	2-Persons Car Pool	Bike, Walk, Motorcycle	Work at Home
Study Area	299	179	8	65	55
Rest of Saratoga County	499	442	44	10	0
Albany County	1,008	845	97	0	0
Rensselaer County	185	185	0	0	0
Schenectady County	320	270	45	0	0
Outside Capital District	64	64	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,375</b>	<b>1,985</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>55</b>

*Source: CDTC based on 2000 Journey to Work Census data*

***Car Ownership***

The high level of travel by car is reflected in the car ownership levels within the study area (see figure 2.10). Almost 45% of households own one vehicle, while 35% own two vehicles. A further 8% of households own more than two vehicles. This high level of car ownership reflects the lack of alternative modes of transportation within the study area.

Figure 2.10: Vehicle Ownership



Source: US Census 2000

#### 2.4 Ethnic Characteristics and Environmental Justice

On February 11, 1994, an Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations" was issued by the US government. It was created to ensure that federal government activities that may adversely affect human health or the environment do not disproportionately impact minority or low income populations. This Executive Order is closely related to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. As a federally funded agency, the Capital District Transportation Committee is required to be in compliance with these federal regulations.

For the Capital District, Environmental Justice Target Population Areas are defined as any Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) with low income, minority, or Hispanic populations equal to or greater than the regional average. The regional averages based on 2000 U.S. Census population data are:

- Minority Population = 11.2%
- Hispanic Population = 2.6%
- Low Income Population = 8.9%

Figure 2.11 shows the population breakdown in Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ) related to the study area. As can be seen, 5% of the total population is Hispanic or Latino. Demographic data indicate that there are several areas of special concern in the study area. TAZ's 427A, 427B, 438A, 439A, and 440B are shown in Figure 2.12 and all have populations that exceed the Hispanic threshold and in some cases the minority threshold as well. None of these TAZs have populations that exceed the Low Income threshold.

Because these areas exceed the regional thresholds for Hispanic/Minority populations, they are therefore considered an Environmental Justice Target Population. Impacts on this population will require special consideration in the project development process.

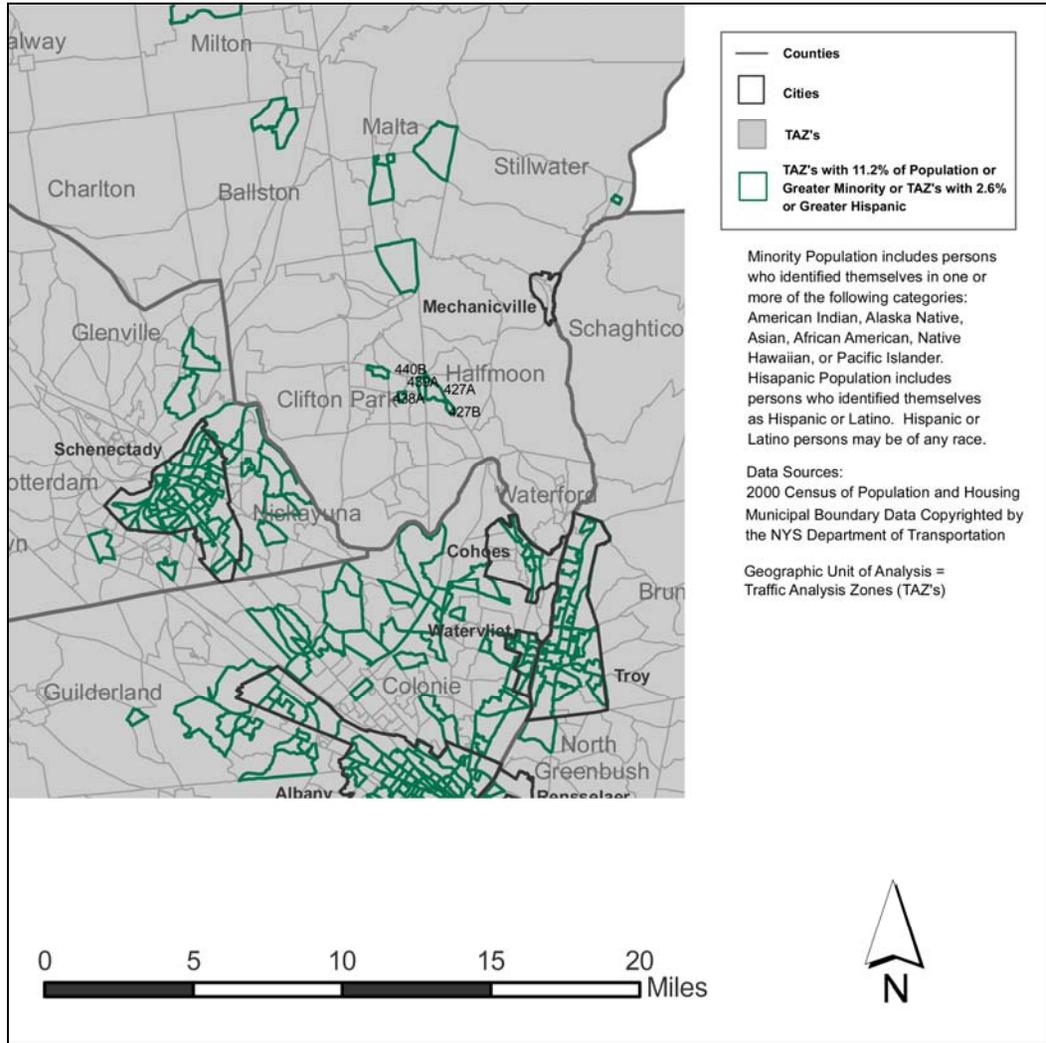
**Figure 2.11: Race Total Population**

Race	Hispanic or Latino	Not Hispanic or Latino	Total	Percent Total
White alone	145	3,845	3,990	92.5%
Black or African American alone	0	105	105	2.4%
Asian alone	0	85	85	2.0%
All other	70	64	135	3.1%
Total	215*	4,099	4,315	100.0%

\*Hispanic or Latino population represents 5% of the total population.

Source: CDTC based on TAZ

Figure 2.12: Race Total Population in Census Tract Sub-Blocks Including Study Area



Source: CDTC based on 2000 Census data

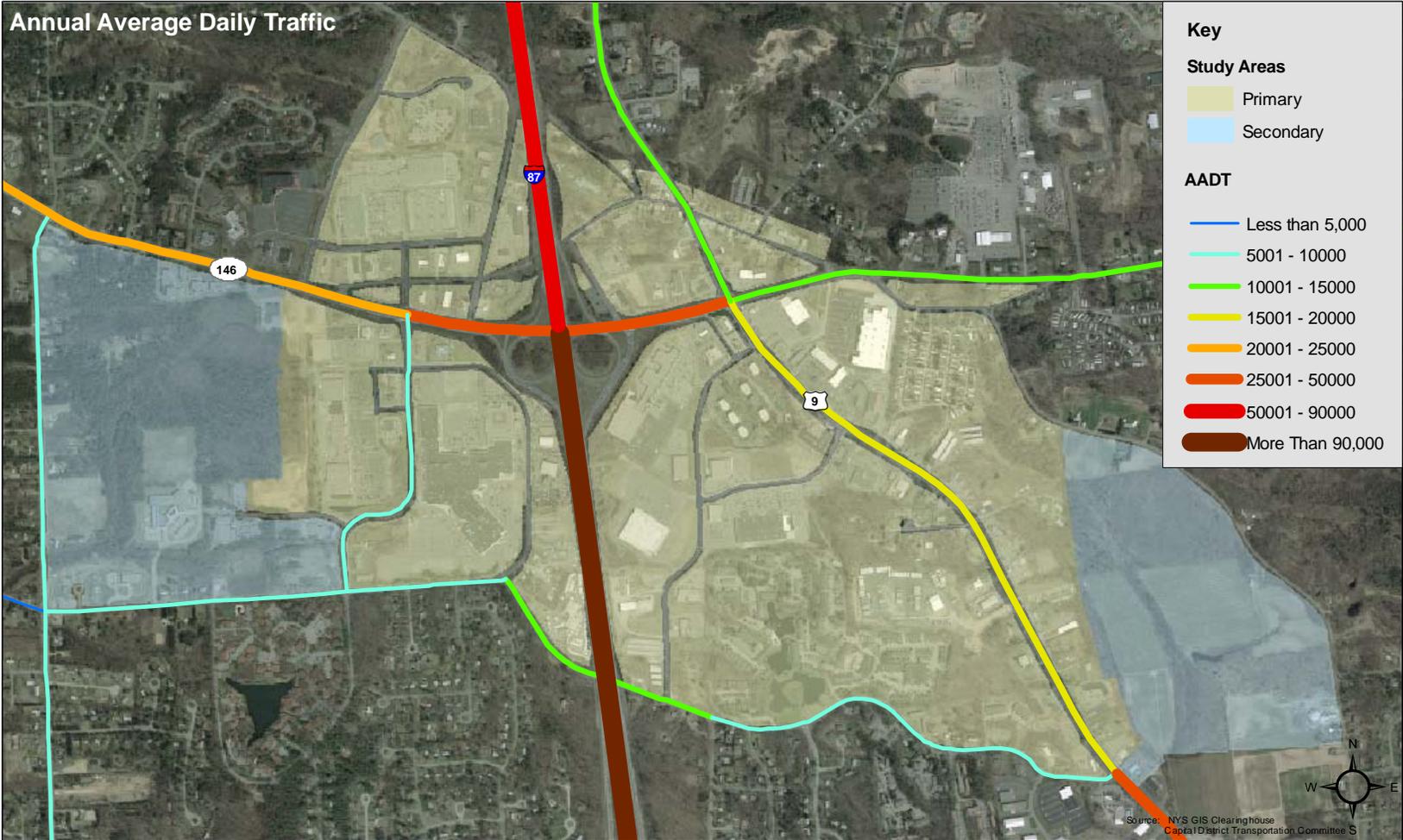
2.5 Transportation

The Exit 9 vicinity was one of the first areas developed in southern Saratoga County resulting from the construction of the Northway (I-87). Following a similar pattern of development to many communities along highway interchanges in the 1960s to 1980s, the Exit 9 vicinity has developed to enable the easy accessibility of automobiles to the retail and commercial areas. Individual parcel owners have tended to develop their individual properties as their own isolated projects, and there has not historically been a master plan of the study area to help coordinate or create connections among adjacent parcels. Large lot developments with single commercial/ retail units and vast areas of parking have become characteristic of the Exit 9 study area. These lots are generally not connected to one another and require customers to return to their cars and drive back onto the busy NY 146 and US 9 routes in order to gain access to each retail unit. Figure 2.13 illustrates the traffic volumes experienced daily on the primary routes in the study area. A lack of traditional streets, pedestrian and bicycle facilities has also increased the reliance on the car for mobility within the study area.

CDTC through its regional transportation plan New Visions 2030 defined priority networks as a way to focus investment where it is needed most and to highlight locations or corridors with multi-modal regional transportation significance. Transportation related strategies for corridors that are identified on a CDTC priority network should specifically consider strategies that make progress on that transportation priority. CDTC’s priority networks include bicycle/pedestrian, transit, arterial management (or access management), goods movement, and ITS (Intelligent Transportation Systems – related to signal and other technology actions). The following roadways in the Exit 9 study area have been identified on CDTC’s priority networks (excluding the I-87 Northway):

Priority Network	Roadway
Bicycle and Pedestrian	US 9
	Maxwell Road
	Moe Road
	Clifton Park Center Road
	Sitterly Road
Arterial Management	US 9
ITS	US 9
	NY 146
Transit	None
Goods Movement	None

Figure 2.13: Annual Average Daily Traffic Volumes



***Bicyclists and Pedestrians***

Accommodating the pedestrian/ bicyclist in balance with the automobile is essential to a successful redevelopment strategy. Separating the pedestrian/ bicyclist from the automobile completely is not feasible or desirable. It is important for both Clifton Park and Halfmoon to maintain and improve existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities including sidewalks, shoulders, bicycle lanes and crosswalks. In addition, there are major deficits in the provision of both pedestrian and bicycle facilities within the study area as figures 2.14 and 2.15 show. There are significant areas where no pedestrian or bicycle facilities exist. In addition to providing linkages of bicycle routes, walking trails and sidewalks, the Towns should consider safety improvements including signage, signalized crossings, dedicated lanes and bicycle racks.

Based on a set of specific characteristics (e.g. number of lanes at intersections, crosswalks present, pedestrian signals, etc.) several signalized intersections in the study area were evaluated and rated for "pedestrian friendliness". Figure 2.16 presents the results of this evaluation. It is clear that almost all of the intersections evaluated are not pedestrian friendly, returning levels of service D and E.

Although the level of service of existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities has been shown to be poor, including the availability of pedestrian and bicycle amenities and infrastructure within the study area, there have been relatively few crashes reported for bicycles and pedestrians in the area. Figure 2.17 indicates that between January 1, 2000 and December 31, 2006, a total of 12 pedestrian/bicyclist crashes were reported in the study area. Three of these crashes occurred on Route 146, three on Route 9, five on Sitterly Road and one on Moe Road. Of the 12 crashes reported during this period, nine occurred at intersections.

Figure 2.14: Existing Pedestrian Infrastructure

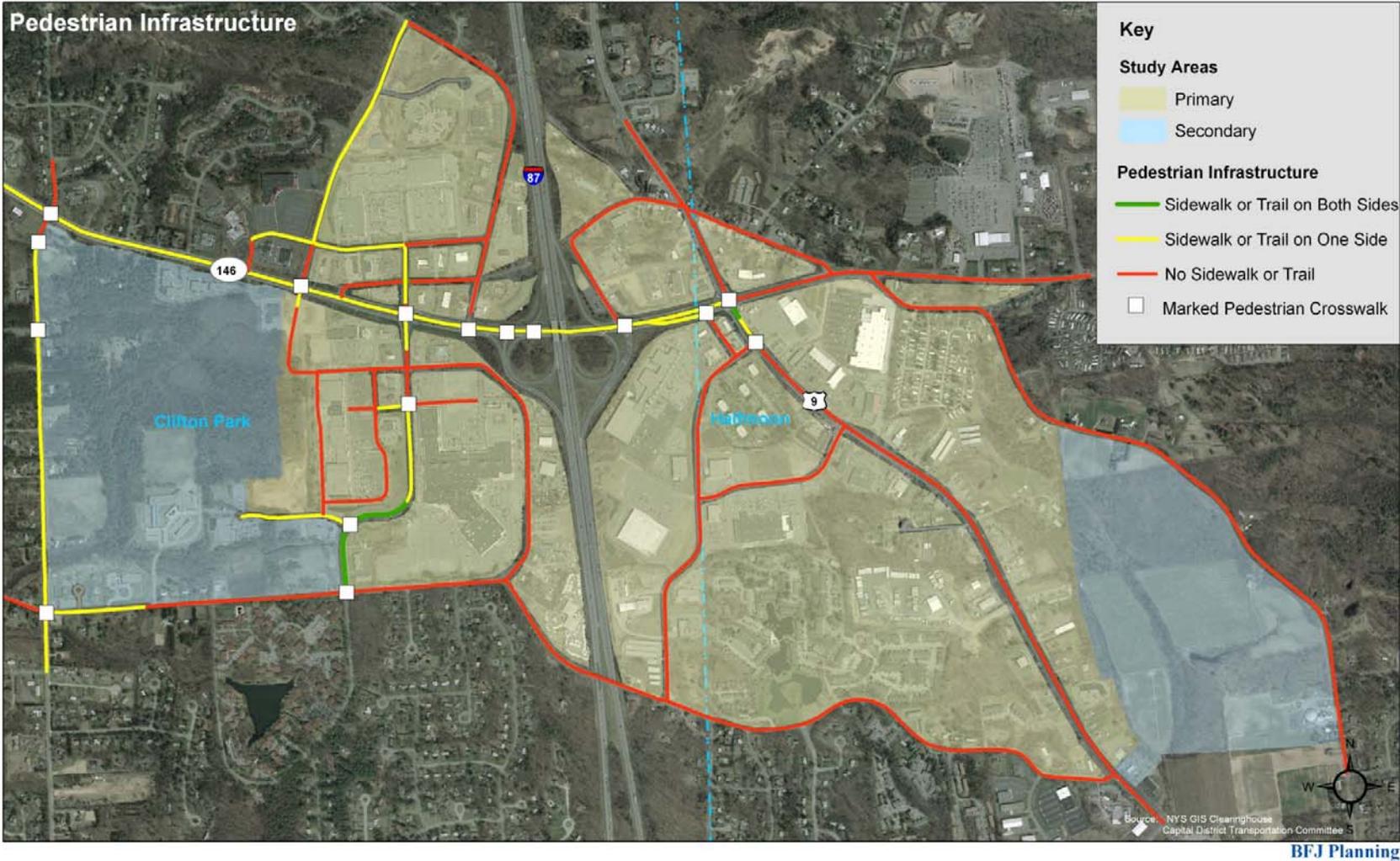


Figure 2.15: Existing Bicycle Infrastructure

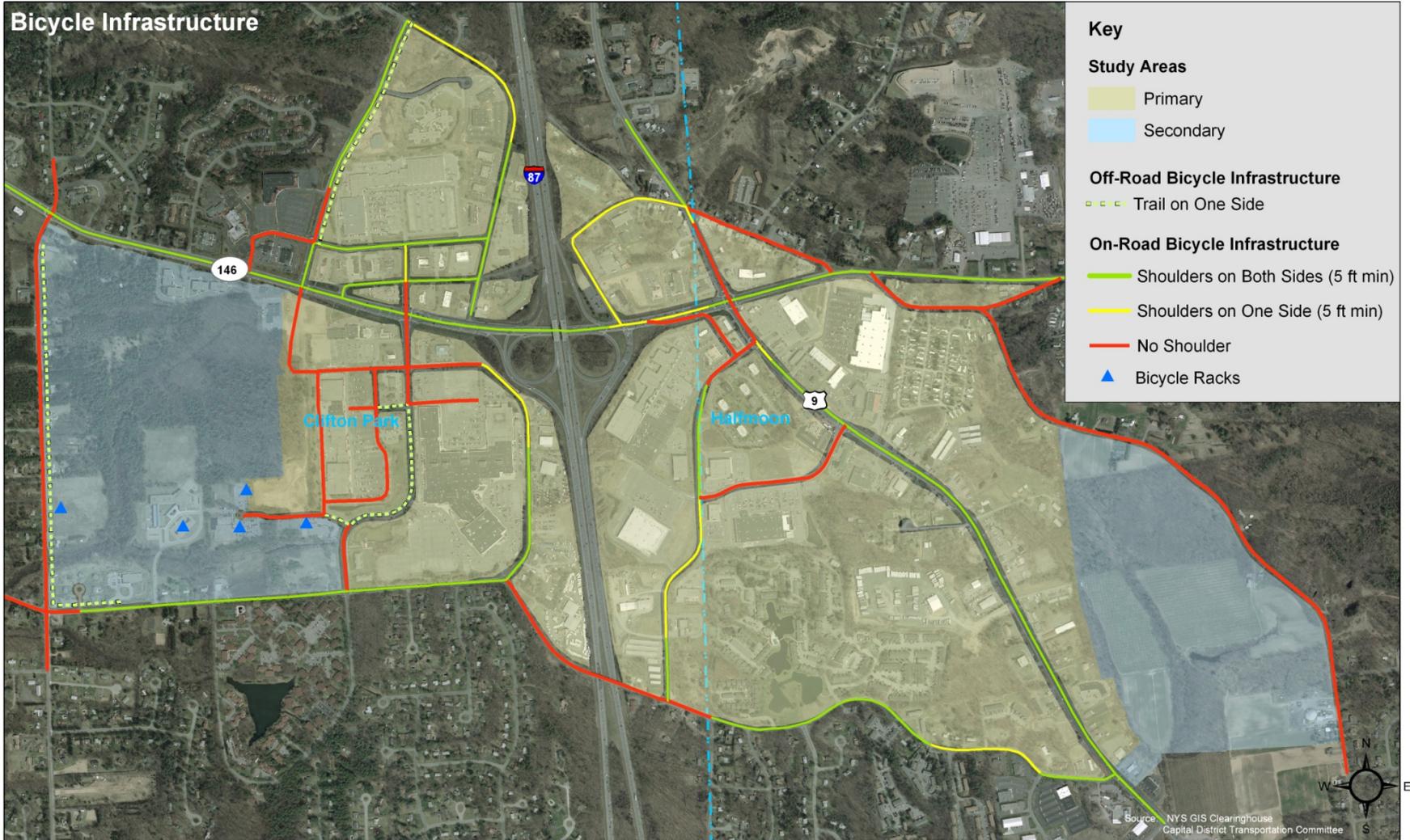


Figure 2.16: Intersection Performance for Pedestrians

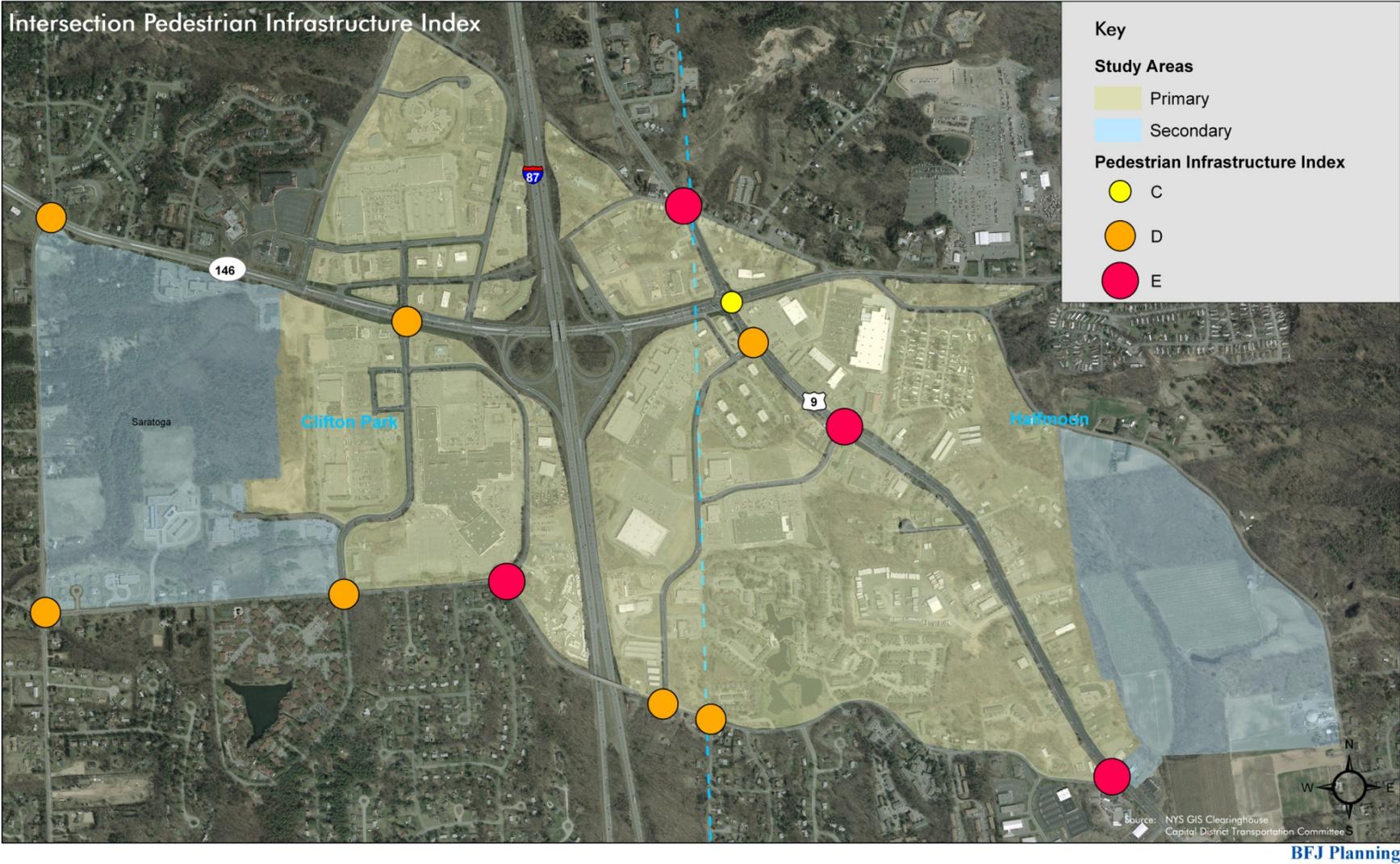


Figure 2.17: Reported Pedestrian and Bicycle Crashes



BFJ Planning

### *Vehicular Transportation*

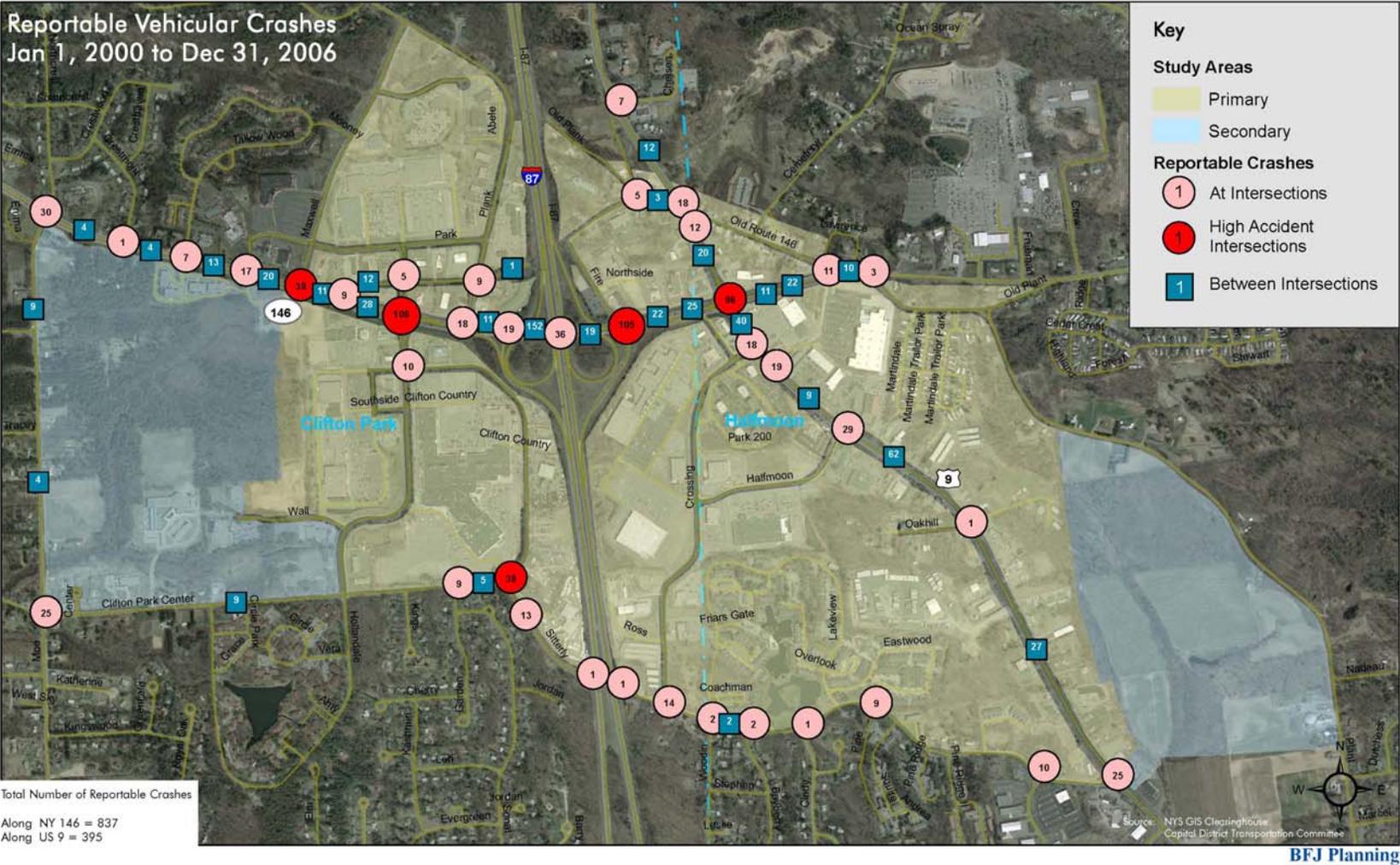
As previously mentioned, the Exit 9 vicinity is primarily auto oriented. This is evident particularly on Route 146 and Route 9. Route 146 contains five lanes of traffic in both directions along stretches of the route. There are left and right turning lanes at major intersections along the route. This coupled with a lack of raised medians, high speed traffic and unsynchronized traffic signals leads to reduced intersection performance and safety concerns. Traffic is heavily congested during peak hours, particularly in the vicinity of the Exit 9 on and off ramps. Figure 2.18 identifies the locations and number of crashes reported between January 1, 2000 and December 31, 2006. The intersection of Route 146 with Clifton Country Road has a particularly high occurrence of crashes (106). This is one of the locations where there are large numbers of turning lanes, no raised medians and high volumes of traffic in both directions. There were a total of 837 crashes reported on Route 146 within the study area during the six year period.

Route 9 is also heavily utilized as there are a number of highway commercial properties fronting the route, all with individual and unconnected driveways. The large numbers of driveways create traffic safety concerns, particularly resulting from the frequent number of turning movements onto and off of the highway. There are also left and right turning lanes along the median of Route 9, which create safety concerns. Figure 2.18 summarizes the 395 crashes reported on Route 9 between 2000 and 2006.

Sitterly Road is also one of the major linkages within the study area. It provides a direct connection between Clifton Park and Halfmoon and acts as an alternative to Route 146. The intersection of Clifton Park Center with Clifton Country Road and Sitterly Road has had 39 reported vehicular crashes during the 2000-2006 period.

Section 4 of this Plan identifies a number of recommended improvement strategies for traffic management and safety on Route 146, Route 9 and Sitterly Road.

Figure 2.18: Reported Vehicular Crashes



Source: NYSDOT and Saratoga County

***Transit***

The Transit Propensity Index in the study area is very low due to a combination of demographics, vehicle ownership levels, and a lack of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. The introduction of a local public transit service beyond park and ride based commuter service is highly dependent on changes to these factors. Clifton Park operates a shuttle service for its senior citizens; however, this service is not coordinated with the Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) or other transit service providers. CDTA plans to introduce a pilot Route 9 bus service in the coming months. Major obstacles to the service design and implementation along this route include a lack of sidewalks and safe waiting areas along Route 9.

Of those currently using public transit in the Capital District, 67% commute to and from work, 34% use it for shopping purposes and 18% travel to and from school. A 61% majority of those travelling via public transit do not own a car, while 28% do so to save money on gas. With increasing gas and parking prices, an opportunity exists to increase the levels of service and encourage more riders to utilize public transit.

***Figure 2.19: Transit Ridership***

	March 2006	March 2007
<b>Trip Purpose</b>		
Work	61%	67%
Shopping/ Restaurant	33%	34%
School	27%	18%
<b>Reason for Riding</b>		
No Car Available	77%	61%
Save Money on Gas	14%	28%
Cheaper than Parking	12%	16%
Environmental	8%	11%

*Source: CDTA 2007 Regular Route Survey Results*

*Note: Some respondents provided more than one answer.*

The Northway Xpress (NX) (formerly Upstate Transit) provides bus commuter service throughout Saratoga County and Downtown Albany. Since the NX commuter bus is specific to commuters only, some data varies from the regular CDTA fixed route riders. A majority of these riders (54%) use this service to save money on gas, while 36% do so to save the environment, compared to only 3% that use the NX service to have less wear and tear on their car, or have no car available, or for the convenience of the service or lack of parking. Similar to CDTA fixed route riders, an opportunity exists to increase the levels of service and encourage more riders to this service as a result of higher gas prices and an increasing concern for the environment.

**Figure 2.20: NX Commuter Route Transit Use**

	March 2008
<b>Reason for Riding</b>	
Save Money on Gas	54%
Save the Environment	36%
Cheaper than Parking	22%
Less Stress	13%
Dislike Driving (at All, to Albany, on the Northway or 787)	7%
Less Wear and Tear on Car	3%
No Car Available	3%
Convenience	3%
Lack of Parking	3%
Other	15%

*Source: 2008 CDTA NX Route Restructuring Survey – Report of Findings*

*Note: Some respondents provided more than one answer.*

There are currently two park and ride facilities operational in the Clifton Park study area, one of which is served by NX commuter service. Information regarding regional carpooling and transit opportunities can be found by visiting [www.ipool2.org](http://www.ipool2.org). The NX commuter bus makes a stop at The Crossings Shopping Mall to pick-up and drop off passengers. A survey of cars parked in the vicinity

of the bus shelter on November 18, 2008 indicated that 110 cars were utilizing the service. This lot also serves as a transfer point for NX routes north of Exit 9 of the Northway.

The second park-and-ride (P&R) facility is located at Fire Road and is for carpoolers only. A survey of the car pool only P&R lot at Fire Road at 2:30 pm on April 23, 2008 showed 26 cars were parked and 74 spaces were vacant (100 space lot capacity). It is recommended that the feasibility of expanding this P&R lot be investigated due to its proximity to the Exit 9 freeway interchange. If expanded, future bus service could stop at this location. Improvements should be coordinated with P&R strategies for the whole Northway corridor. Incentives for greater use of the Exit 8 P&R lot, which is in the Town of Clifton Park outside of the study area, should be analyzed as an alternative to improving the Exit 9 P&R, or possibly as a supplementary P&R lot.

### 3. GENERAL CONCEPTS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE FUTURE

These general concepts and principles are intended to act as a frame of reference for the specific improvement strategies recommended in Section 4.

#### 3.1 Connect Land Use and Transportation Decisions

The land use/transportation connection lies at the center of smart growth strategies in fighting sprawl. Land use and transportation patterns affect each other in a complex way.

According to Smart Growth literature, travel behavior is affected by four independent factors, referred to as the 4 **Ds**: land use **Density**, **Diversity** (land use mix); pedestrian **Design** and access to regional **Destinations**. Research has shown that by doubling the residential density (a +100% change) per-household, the number of vehicle trips would be reduced by about 4%. These factors are accumulative so that a 100% increase in density *and* diversity *and* design *and* destinations can reduce vehicle trips by approximately 15%.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.smartgrowthplanning.org>

On the other hand, transportation is a key influence on the settlement patterns and quality of life of a community. For instance, Level of Service (LOS) policies that evaluate only vehicular traffic can have a negative impact on community character by imposing over-sized streets and intersections in areas where the road design should be linked to community character. Broadening the methods used to determine LOS to take into account all travel modes can reduce these negative impacts.

Network connectivity is another example of the impact of transportation concepts and design on people’s behavior: a multimodal, highly connected road network allows more direct travel between destinations, offers more route options, and makes non-motorized travel more feasible.

The study area, grown over time around the transportation network, could greatly benefit from a concentrated land use and transportation plan.

### 3.2 Sustainable Land Use Planning

Land use and transportation are inherently linked. The mix and density of land uses affects transportation behavior and demand. Therefore, developing a sustainable land use plan can influence future transportation provision and patterns in the area. Sustainable Land Use Planning involves finding the correct balance between the social, economic and environmental requirements of a community. In order to ensure viable, long term places where people want to stay and live, we need to discover and maintain that balance for individual communities. The following principles of sustainable land use planning will help to create strategies and recommendations to encourage the redevelopment of Clifton Park and Halfmoon as sustainable communities.

1. **Density:** The neighborhood is dense enough for local businesses to flourish, for public transportation to be cost effective and to make walking more feasible.

A key Smart Growth strategy is to locate new development on vacant infill sites and redevelopment areas. One major advantage of developing at such locations is the opportunity to capitalize on their proximity to other regional destinations and to major transportation services, which correlate with reductions in vehicle trip generation per capita.



*Figure 3.1: Examples of infill development:*

*Top: Yellow home as a residential infill development; Bottom: Use of infill to create a public open space*

- 2. **Mixed Income, Mixed Use, Diversity:** Housing is provided for everyone who works in the neighborhood: young and old, singles and families, rich and poor. Businesses and residences are located near each other.

Areas with a good balance between employment and housing, as well as a mix of retail and non-retail employment, tend to promote shorter trips and more non-motorized trips. Also, there is a general perception that bedroom suburbs that are relatively vacant during the day and downtown areas that lack liveliness and are also vacant at night do not contribute to a sense of community for residents and consumers. Smart growth strategies for dealing with this include allowing neighborhood-serving retail uses and offices to be located in residential areas, and encouraging the development of medium- and high-density housing in or near downtown areas. It is preferable that a mix of uses are located within walking/biking distance or alternatively within short driving distance.



*Figure 3.2: Mixed income, use and housing diversity: Neighborhood plan in Cherry Hill, NJ*

- 3. **Accessibility and Landscape:** The neighborhood is attractive (trees and street furniture) and accessible to everyone including people with disabilities. Enhanced comfort has the ability to encourage usage.
- 4. **Pedestrian-friendly Design:** Sidewalks are provided on all streets. Buildings are placed close to the street to cater to foot traffic, with parking lots relegated to the back of the buildings.
- 5. **Schools and Workplaces** are close enough that most residents can walk from their homes.

### 3.3 Complete Streets (CS)

“Complete Streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and bus riders of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across a complete street.”<sup>2</sup>

All streets should be considered multi-modal streets in that they should accommodate multiple travel choices, trip purposes and travel lengths. However, differences exist in the design of streets that have mobility as their main function, versus streets that provide access. The street function designation should define the broad purpose of the street, such as the need to primarily move vehicles or primarily provide land access. The street connectivity level for pedestrian and bicycle travel should be designed according to the function of the roadway and the surrounding land uses. An important concept within the CS concept is that streets are not considered in isolation from land use, but are defined in part by the buildings and land uses that are located next to them. Streets are comprised of the area where vehicles move, the area where bicycles and pedestrians move, and the areas where buildings interface with the rest of the street. Designing multi-modal streets ensures that the design of the entire right of way – travel lanes, parking, bike lanes, medians, sidewalks, and street trees – are appropriate to and complement the adjacent land uses. Multi-modal street types and land uses become the primary components of integrated land-use and transportation decisions.

In general, the Complete Streets concept calls for:

1. Reduced lane widths to calm traffic and allow for wider sidewalks.
2. Installation of controlled crosswalks to reduce gaps between pedestrian crossing locations.
3. Inclusion of bicycle lanes as separate corridors adjacent to roadways and pedestrian sidewalks.
4. Multi-modal improvements and enhanced urban design amenities that still accommodate anticipated traffic increases resulting from increased development on the corridor.
5. Assessment of parking policies within the study corridor.
6. Potential lane reductions to accommodate a potential bus rapid transit (BRT) line. \*

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.completestreets.org>

7. Developing an attractive streetscape and transportation corridor that is an asset to the community.

\*Since the utilization of BRT is closely linked to population density, a BRT line should be considered as a potential long-term goal and only if there is sufficient population density to warrant the service.

These strategies contribute to the overall goal of enabling the street to gradually transform from an auto-oriented commercial strip corridor to a vibrant mixed use area with a balance of commercial and residential uses.

The following figures show how the Complete Streets concept can be applied to a suburban environment:

**Figure 3.3: Before the Complete Streets Concept was applied** – Typical suburban street: Six lanes of traffic, box retailers, unimaginative use of space.



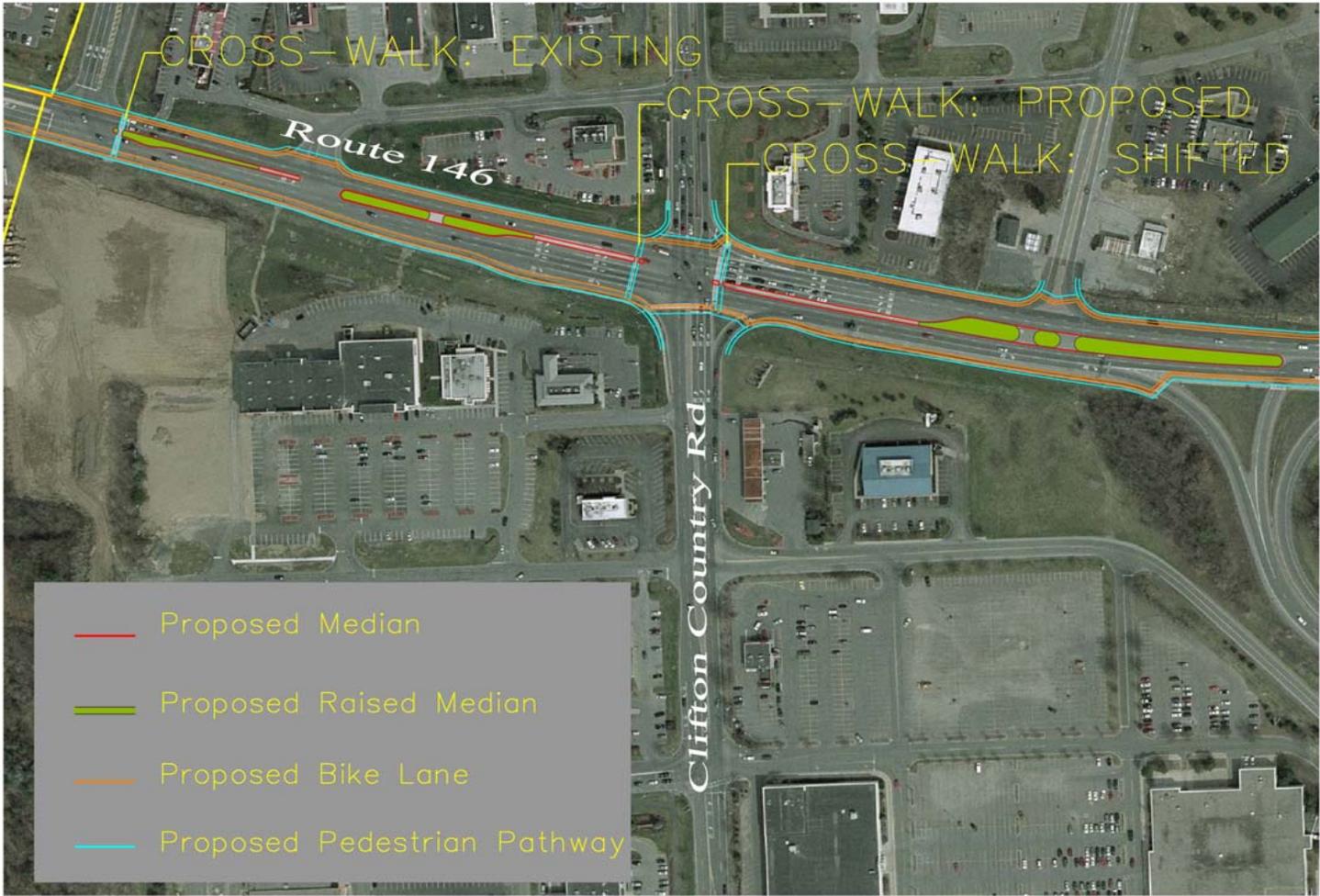
**Figure 3.4: After the Complete Streets Concept was applied** – The road now integrates all modes of transport, it has a landscaped median, treelined sidewalks, dedicated turning lanes, bicycle lanes, on-street parking, and infill development creating a streetscape.



Source: [www.completestreets.org](http://www.completestreets.org)

Figure 3.5 illustrates a proposed view of Route 146 as a Complete Street, with landscaped medians, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, protected crosswalks and bicycle crossings:

Figure 3.5: Complete Street at Route 146 and Clifton Country Road Intersection



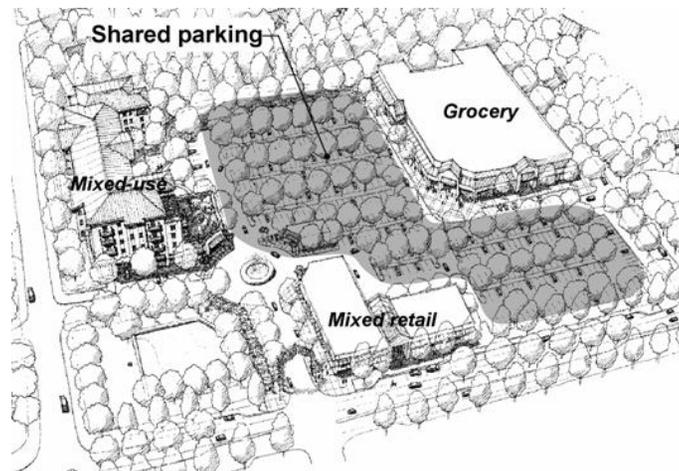
### 3.4 Rethinking Parking

Both town codes require large amounts of dedicated parking for individual businesses, residential complexes, and institutions. The result is large “dead” spaces that are visually unattractive and that make it harder for pedestrians to walk to building entrances.

In order to encourage the area to become more vibrant and pedestrian/bicycle friendly, there are a number of parking strategies that should be utilized where possible:

1. Lowering parking requirements in the zoning code.
2. Allowing and encouraging shared parking, taking advantage of the fact that different land use types need parking at different times of the day, so the demand at any given time is less than the aggregation of demand of the individual uses (offices and residential developments; residences and institutions; etc.). Allowing off-site parking, to further encourage shared parking.
3. Removing parking in front of the buildings where pedestrian activity takes place and providing parking on the side or the rear.
4. Redesigning and retrofitting existing parking lots to accommodate high visibility pedestrian crosswalks and walkways, sidewalks and landscaped median curb islands.
5. Providing bicycle parking facilities in parking lots near store entrances to encourage and accommodate bicyclists.

These strategies should constitute a framework within which single improvements can be designed and implemented.



*Figure 3.6: Shared parking lot*

### 3.5 Enhanced Design Standards and Design Guidelines

Design guidelines should be set for the whole study area and incorporated in the town codes. These guidelines are intended to be used for two purposes: first, as a design aid by developers proposing new developments or redevelopments and second, as an evaluation tool for the Towns of Clifton Park and Halfmoon in their development approval process. The "Guidelines" are not mandatory, but are provided in order to guide planners, design consultants, developers and Town staff about the design objectives. These guidelines are to be used in conjunction with the development criteria of the Towns Codes and all other adopted standards and regulations. These Design Guidelines should pertain to:

#### A. Aesthetic Character:

- Facades, Exterior Walls and Entryways
- Back and Side Facades
- Smaller and Larger Retail Stores
- Detail Features
- Roofs
- Materials and Colors

#### B. Site Design and Relationship to the Surrounding Community:

- Landscaping and Buffering
- Entrances to Communities
- Curb Cuts and Driveways
- Building Setbacks
- Parking Lot Design and Orientation
- Lighting and Glare
- Pedestrian Flows
- Outdoor Storage, Trash Collection and Loading Areas
- Central Features and Community Spaces
- Transportation Consistency Requirements
- Transit Accommodation
- Signage

C. These Design Guidelines Should Emphasize:

- Incorporating mixed uses;
- Respecting human scale development features and creating connections between people\*;
- Preserving open space, natural beauty, and critical environments;
- Creating a strong sense of place;
- Providing a variety of transportation options; and,
- Encouraging desirable employment opportunities.

\*Human scale development refers to an environment that is built at a scale that favors the pedestrian experience. This type of environment can include buildings with store front shopping or restaurants located on the ground floor and at a height that is not overwhelming to people but can still include a mix of uses, including residential, commercial, service and community uses in a dense “village” or “Main Street” area.

*Appendix A* outlines detailed Design Guidelines applicable to both Clifton Park and Halfmoon.

## 4. RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

### 4.1 Transportation Strategies

The following conceptual transportation strategies are recommended for the Exit 9 vicinity to help meet the goals and objectives of this Plan, such as improving existing vehicular infrastructure, traffic safety, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and providing opportunities that enhance the compatibility of land use and transportation. Some of the recommendations may require further engineering design and analysis and may not meet the needs of all the specific locations indicated. Some of these strategies may also be implemented at other locations within the study area.

#### 4.1.1 Route 146 Traffic Management and Safety

##### ***Synchronize traffic lights on Route 146***

The synchronization of the traffic lights along Route 146 will improve traffic flow along this route. Following the upgrade, commuters should experience a reduction in travel time when driving through coordinated signal systems. Better signal synchronization usually results in fewer collisions since there will be smoother traffic flow and fewer stops. It is also possible that, in the long run, new traffic light synchronization eventually will reduce the number of people who drive faster than the speed limit, thus increasing safety for all road users. Environmentally, these improvements will result in less idling by vehicles, reduced air pollution, less gas consumption and cost savings.

##### ***Create a raised and landscaped median on Route 146***

Landscaping the central median will improve the visual quality of this route and will reinforce the 'boulevard' idea.

In addition, raising the landscaped median will create a visual narrowing of the route, without reducing the number or width of traffic lanes. This visual narrowing will:

- reduce traffic speed,
- improve traffic safety, and
- improve pedestrian safety and provide a refuge at the central median for pedestrians.

All existing left-turn lanes will be maintained. Emergency vehicle crossings will be introduced with openings in the median. Depending upon the future of new transit bus routing, bus cut-outs could also be provided. The raised median could contain edging cuts to improve stormwater infiltration and/or act as a bio-swale in order to help stormwater infiltrate into the ground.

These two recommendations will enhance the travel experience for both pedestrians and vehicles, improving safety and flow.

Figure 4.1: Tree-lined median in a multi-lane suburban setting



Figure 4.2: Landscaped median on Route 7, Shelburne, VT



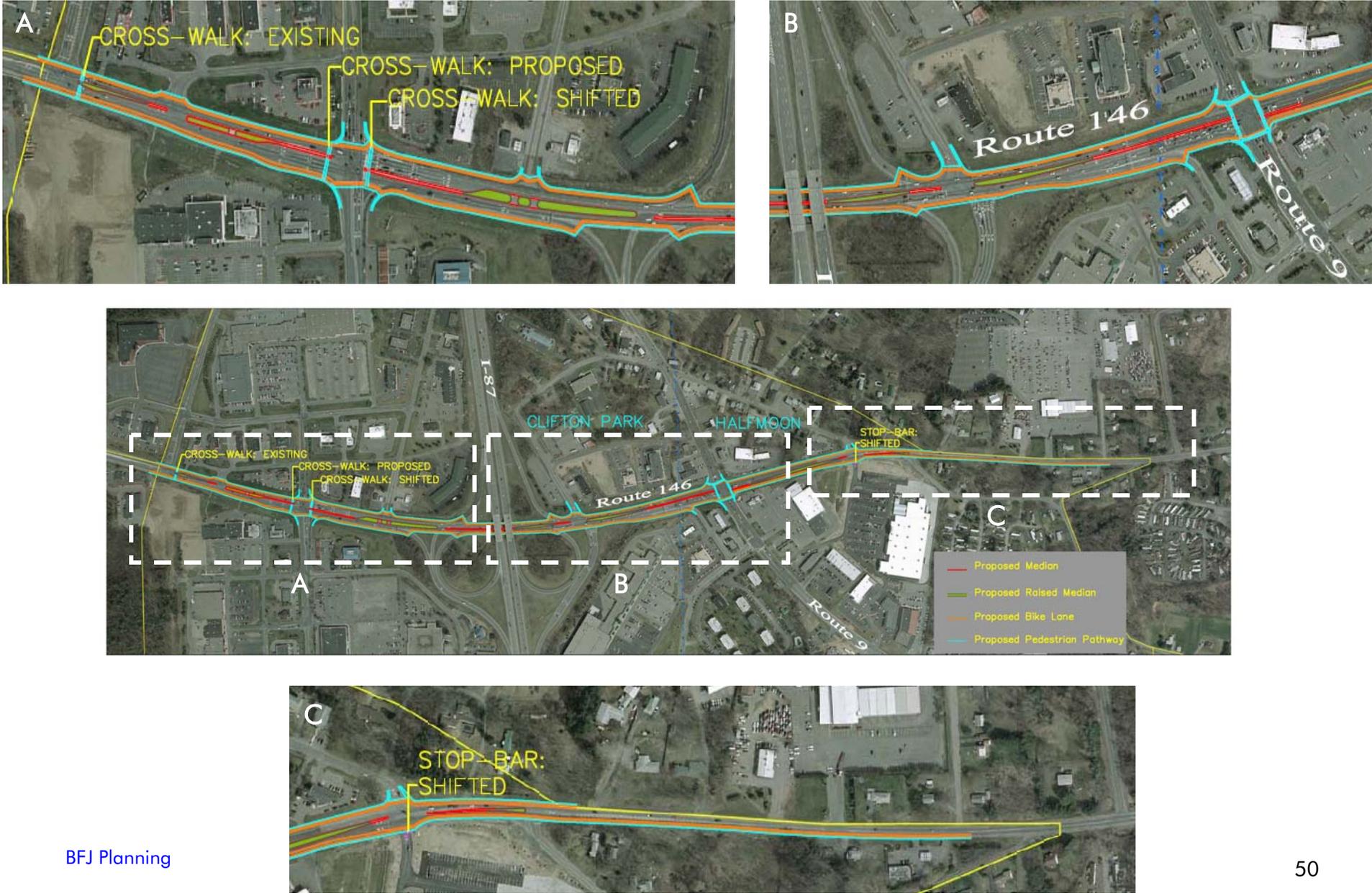
Figure 4.3: Landscaped median in a multi-lane suburban setting



*Change Route 146 into a Complete Street*

Following the creation of a raised landscaped median on Route 146, it is recommended that the concept of the complete street be applied to this route as part of a longer-term vision. The creation of a complete street along this route will create a multi-modal street, designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians and bicyclists will be able to move safely along and across the complete street via dedicated pedestrian sidewalks and bicycle lanes on both sides of the street. There will be crosswalks and bicycle crossings parallel to each other at various points along the route (see Figure 4.4).

Figure 4.4: Route 146 as a Complete Street



***Introduce Roundabouts to Improve Traffic Flow on Route 146***

A large amount of congestion and crashes in the study area occur at intersections, rather than along the links between intersections. Improving intersection performance and safety is thus very important. Roundabouts can be an alternative to traffic signals in appropriate situations for improving safety and operations. Unlike older traffic circles and rotaries, roundabouts have been very effective in reducing crashes at intersections, especially severe crashes, and also in reducing delays, air pollution, and fuel consumption.

While the introduction of roundabouts at a number of strategic locations may be a long-term strategy and require further design consideration, the identification of these locations is prudent as part of this land use and transportation study. A number of suggested locations where roundabouts may improve flow and reduce traffic congestion are:

- At intersection with Route 9
- At Northway Ramps
- At Clifton Country Road and Maxwell Drive intersections

The major benefits gained from a roundabout at these locations include:

- Better overall traffic operations
- Improved business and site access
- Improved safety for all modes
- Aesthetic and beautification opportunities (potential gateway)
- Reduced idling and improved air quality
- Reduced fuel consumption



***Figure 4.5: Sequence of roundabouts in Malta***

Access to existing businesses is greatly improved, as queuing back and blocking of the access points is reduced or avoided. Delays are significantly shortened and opportunities for U-turns are enhanced. Pedestrian facilities are also improved, and the overall aesthetics have the potential to enhance the character for this shopping center area. Roundabouts may also be considered at other signalized intersections along Route 146 which have a level of service (LOS) of E or worse and/or where a high number of accidents occur.

Figure 4.6 shows a potential roundabout design for the intersection of Route 146 and Clifton Country Road:

*Figure 4.6: Proposed Roundabout at Route 146 and Clifton Country Road Intersection*

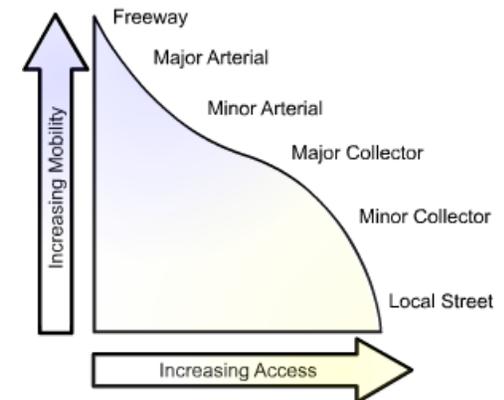


#### 4.1.2 Improve Traffic Flow and Safety on Route 9

##### ***Access Management***

The municipalities should consider incorporating access management strategies into their zoning regulations, particularly along Route 9.

Access Management can be defined as the systematic control of access to land development to enhance safety and promote efficiency along the corridor. This is an important strategy that should be used to preserve and enhance mobility and safety. Defining where and how vehicles access an arterial highway can affect vehicle speeds, bicycle and pedestrian travel, reduce conflict points, and improve roadway safety for all modes.



***Figure 4.7: Access management***

Because of their land-use authority, the municipalities have an important responsibility regarding access management even if the highway is a State Route.

General access management practices that are recommended where land is being (re)developed along the corridor include:

- Consolidation of driveways: commercial property owners should be encouraged to combine and share their driveways. All driveways along an arterial should require a special permit and are allowed on a temporary basis only. If and when an alternate access can be found in the future, the driveway would then be discontinued. For example, a small retail business decides to develop a new lot along a highway. The business owner is granted a new curb cut facing the highway to allow access to and from his/her site; however, the permission is granted only temporarily and via a special permit from the Planning Board. Shortly thereafter, a new and larger shopping center is planned for the adjacent parcel, which will contain a larger full access curb cut and ingress/egress. Under a condition of approval from the Planning Board, the new shopping center is required to allow cross access for patrons and employees of the adjacent smaller retail business, which is then required to close their existing curb cut along the highway and share the same ingress/egress as the larger shopping center. Under this scenario, the existing town zoning codes could be revised to provide specific conditions of this type of special permit, such as defining property owner or applicant responsibilities and/or setting a timeframe that establishes the meaning of a “temporary” driveway, which could become a permanent driveway after a certain length of time has passed before an adjacent property is (re)developed.
- Parcels/parking areas interconnectivity: all commercial properties along Route 9 should be required to provide a vehicular

connection to adjacent properties to allow vehicles to drive from one to the other without driving back onto the main highway. If no connection can be provided in the short-term, the applicant should provide an easement for a future connection. When the neighboring property owner comes to the municipality for a site plan approval or building approval, the municipality can then require the connection. These interconnections may eventually lead to the equivalent of a service road between the commercial properties.

- Providing service roads behind parcels: subdivision plans should include side streets connecting to Route 9, and no new driveways should be allowed onto the highway. The side streets (collectors) should connect as much as possible to other local roads to form a network that allows flexibility and distributes the traffic over several roads. If no connection can be achieved in the short-term, the applicant should provide easements for future connections.
- Providing uniform driveway definition and width.
- Prohibiting certain movements where appropriate: left turns into or out of a driveway are particularly disruptive.
- Use of median treatments and turn lanes to control access - e.g. landscaped medians would eliminate uncontrolled left turns.

The highway commercial properties fronting Route 9 represent ideal targets for access management.

### ***Synchronize traffic lights on Route 9***

The synchronization of the traffic lights along Route 9 will improve traffic flow along this route, and the benefits will be much the same as described for synchronization on Route 146.

### ***Create a raised and landscaped median on Route 9***

As with the proposed median along Route 146, raising and landscaping the central median will improve the visual aesthetics of this route, improve traffic flow and safety and will aid in pedestrian refuge and use. Raising and landscaping the median will create a visual narrowing of the route, thereby slowing traffic without reducing the number or width of traffic lanes. The landscaped median can also be turned into a vegetated bio-swale to allow for better drainage and infiltration of stormwater into the ground. Depending upon the future of new transit bus routing, bus cut-outs could also be provided. Openings with exclusive turn lanes would remain for existing left-turn lanes and major turn movements.

*Figure 4.8: Example of a landscaped median on Route 9 in Saratoga*



***Introduce roundabouts to improve traffic flow on Route 9***

As previously discussed in relation to Route 146, providing intersection performance and safety is very important. Roundabouts provide better overall traffic operations; improved circulation; improved safety for all modes and aesthetic beautification. Roundabouts can also provide a safer alternative to U-turns for traffic wishing to turn around. One suggested location for a roundabout in this area is at the intersection of Route 146 and Route 9. A study of Route 9, to be undertaken by NYSDOT, may also analyze this intersection and provide similar or alternative recommendations. The findings of the two studies, when complete, should be reviewed carefully by the two towns.

4.1.3 Implement Traffic Flow and Safety Improvements on Sitterly Road

***Turning Lanes***

The creation of protected left turn lanes on Sitterly Road would improve traffic flow and safety; the intersection of Sitterly Road with Woodin Road is a prime example.

### *Shared Use Trail*

It is recommended to continue the shared use trail for bicycles and pedestrians along Sitterly Road, from Moe Road to Route 9. The provision of pedestrian level lighting along this route to enhance safety is also recommended.

### *Roundabouts*

A roundabout at the intersection of Sitterly Road, Clifton Park Center Road and the Mall, could improve traffic flow and would act as a traffic calming measure at this location.

#### 4.1.4 Complement Local Road Network

Rather than increasing capacity along Route 146 and widening it in Clifton Park and Halfmoon, it is proposed to shift traffic from Route 146 to alternative roads, and therefore relieve congestion.

The primary routes identified for initial multimodal connectivity are:

1. Maxwell Drive extension to Clifton Park Center Road
2. From Moe Road (School) to Maxwell Drive Extension (north road)
3. From Moe Road (Library) to Maxwell Drive Extension (south road)
4. Reconnecting Old Plank Road across I-87
5. From Old Plant Road behind Lowe's to US 9
6. Birch Briar Village Extension to Plant Road
7. Sitterly Road extension to Plant Road

The new multimodal routes provide options for both towns where all or a combination of some proposed multimodal connections can be made.

Figure 4.9: Proposed multi-modal linkages



#### 4.1.5 Mitigate Barriers Created by I-87

##### *Improve Existing at Grade Connections*

- Provide dedicated bicycle paths and pedestrian sidewalks on both sides of Route 146 in the I-87 Interchange area, to provide a safe pedestrian and bicycle environment and reduce the barrier effect of the Northway.
- Improve the safety conditions of the pedestrian and bicycle experience under I-87 along Route 146 through landscaping and lighting, making the route more user friendly and safe.

##### *Create New Pedestrian and Bicycle Overpass and/or Underpass*

Creating a new pedestrian and bicycle overpass and/or underpass will effectively reduce the barrier created by I-87 by making it easier for pedestrians to cross over the route. It would also result in the reconnection of old road alignments and the commercial areas, so that it would be possible to shop at the malls on both sides of I-87 without the use of a car.

A possible means of creating additional crossing points is to:

- Erect a pedestrian overpass, reconnecting Old Route 146;
- Create a pedestrian and bicycle underpass connecting Clifton Park Center and the Crossings Mall.

Since the above pedestrian and bicycle overpass and/or underpass are conceptual in design, further design consideration is suggested.

##### *Crossing the Northway by Car*

Reconnect Old Plank Road across the I-87 with a tunnel to provide congestion relief on Route 146.



*Figure 4.10: Pedestrian and bicycle overpass*

Figure 4.11: Proposed pedestrian and bicycle connections across I-87



#### 4.1.6 Transit Improvements and Park and Ride Facilities

Improved transit availability and services in Clifton Park and Halfmoon would encourage greater ridership. Transit improvements will tend to reduce traffic volumes on Route 9 and Route 146, thereby contributing to the traffic management on these routes. Transit will also offer an alternative for those travelers who have no access to the automobile or who cannot afford the costs of operating a car.

Even though both Clifton Park and Halfmoon have very low densities and low transit propensities, the study area does include a concentration of commercial uses and service jobs that would benefit from transit access. Transit improvements should therefore be focused on the immediate Exit 9 area and should rely on pedestrian access for the service jobs in the primary study area and on park-and-ride access for the greater area made up of both Towns. The pedestrian improvements discussed in the complete street sections and in subsequent chapters are important components of the transit improvement plan. Given that future bus service would likely be concentrated around the intersections of Route 146 with I-87 and with Route 9, priority should be given to any pedestrian improvements within a radius of half a mile from these intersections.

#### *Route 9 CDTA Bus Route*

CDTA plans to implement a bus route along Route 9 on a pilot basis. This service is subject to annual performance reviews and would be discontinued if it does not meet its target ridership measurement. This route would likely connect the major towns and destinations served by this important highway. It would provide a transit alternative to residents commuting in the Route 9 corridor and reduce traffic volumes on Route 9 as a result.

Potential bus stops along Route 9 may be considered just north of Route 146 where bus riders could walk to the Park-and-Ride lot on Fire Road and to other destinations along Route 146. There may also be a demand for a bus stop somewhere between Sitterly Road and Halfmoon Road; however, any bus stop needs to be carefully coordinated with pedestrian amenities such as continuous sidewalks. Investigating the feasibility of a new bus route should include the consideration that implementing the increased densities and the mix of uses proposed within the land use strategies will possibly transform the Exit 9 area into a transit-supportive district. Added jobs, housing and retail near transit have been demonstrated to increase transit ridership and reduce vehicle trip generation per household. This growth would help to meet thresholds of effectiveness for intended transit modes in order to support capital investment and operating costs for the new bus line. Doubling the population density within a half-mile of a transit station can increase peak period

*Figure 4.12: Park and Ride Facility*



transit ridership by about 19%, while doubling employment within a quarter-mile of the station can increase peak period transit ridership by over 20%.<sup>3</sup>

### ***Park and Ride Facilities***

A significant increase in the number of commuters utilizing the park-and-ride (P&R) service would have a positive impact on the peak period traffic flow in the area, mostly on I-87.

Figure 4.13 shows how the P&R lot on Fire Road could be expanded and improved to serve the NX buses operating along the Northway. This lot would be more efficient for the express buses to get on and off of the Northway. Occupancy checks at the Fire Road and Crossings P&R facilities indicate that there might be enough parking capacity at the Fire Road lot alone. As shown in the figure, the lot can be expanded towards the north and a bus turnaround could be created so that the buses could return fairly quickly to the Northway. Route 9 bus service could also stop here. Improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities and infrastructure, such as bike racks and sidewalks, would further complement the proposed bicycle and pedestrian path improvements along Route 146 and pedestrian connections across I-87 due to the close proximity of the Fire Road P&R to these areas.

The improvement of the Fire Road P&R may be achieved by:

- Promotion of the park and ride facility to both transit riders and carpoolers
- Improved signage to and at the facility
- Posting of a bus schedule and route map at the parking facility and possibly at key locations throughout the Towns (e.g coffee shops, church, etc.)
- Providing bike racks at the P&R lot and new sidewalks along Fire Road
- Supporting promotion of the regional carpool website, [www.ipool2.org](http://www.ipool2.org)

It should be noted that other planning efforts are underway to study potential transit improvements in the Route 9/I-87 corridor. One is the high-speed rail study that may also evaluate restructuring and improving the NX service and the other is the I-87/Route 9 interconnection study for which the scope of work is currently being developed. Improvements should also be coordinated with park and ride strategies for the whole Northway corridor. As an alternative to expanding the Fire Road park and ride lot, incentives for greater use of the Exit 8 P&R lot, which is outside of the study area, should be further explored for additional capacity needs.

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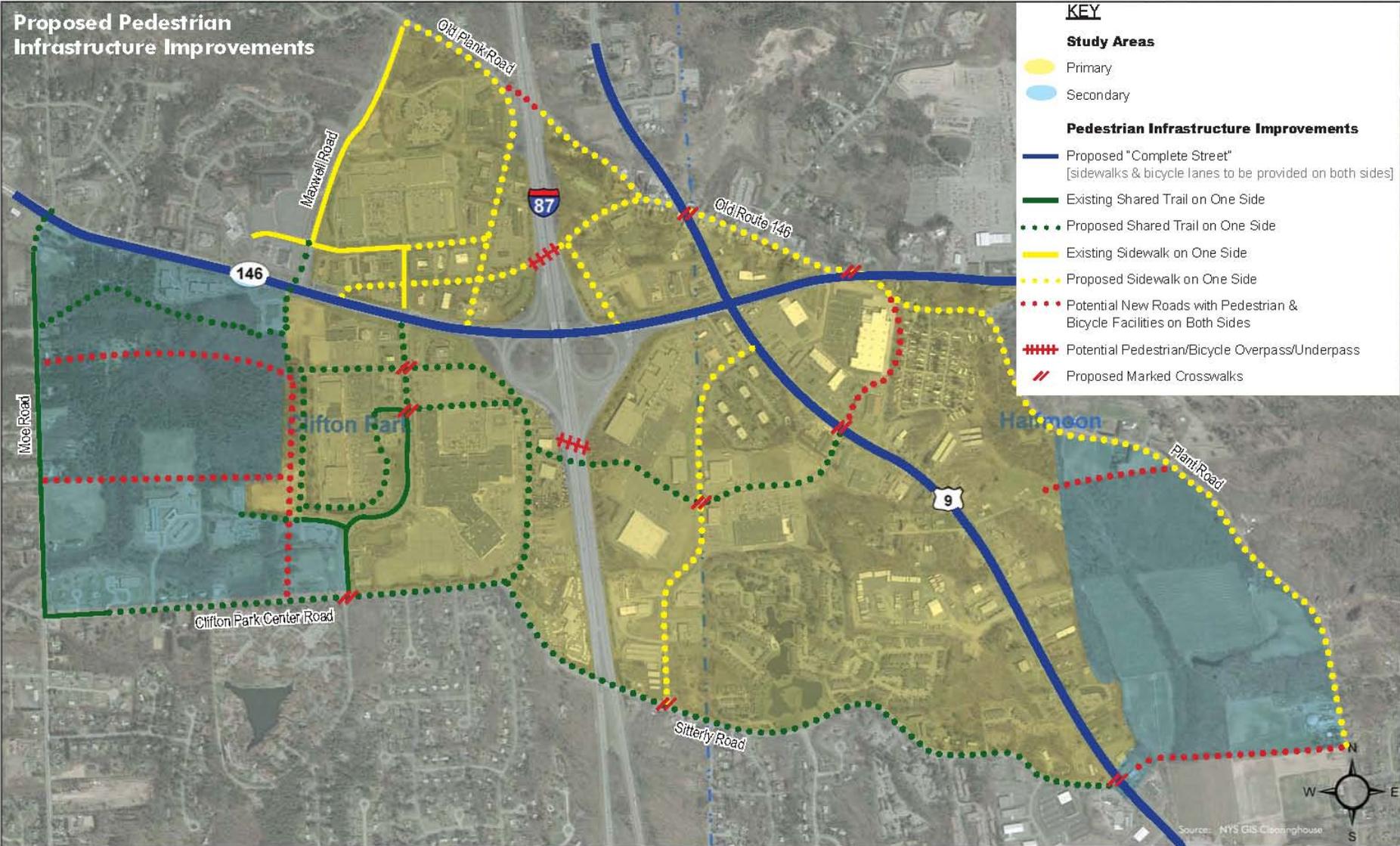
<sup>3</sup> <http://www.smartgrowthplanning.org>



#### 4.1.7 Supplement the Existing Trail System with On-Street Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

The study area needs to be pedestrian and bicycle friendly in order to meaningfully encourage people to use alternative modes of transport for short trips. Thus, in addition to the off-road trail system, it is necessary to identify additional on-street networks for bicycles and pedestrians in order to provide safe and viable transportation alternatives. These routes should link to existing pedestrian and bicycle routes and to the existing trail system in order to create a connected network for use by pedestrians and cyclists throughout the Towns of Clifton Park and Halfmoon (see pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements overleaf). The previously introduced concept of “Complete Streets” calls for an integrated vision of the way the road is perceived, designed and used. Pedestrian and bicycle circulation should be part of the roadway design as much as vehicular circulation is and should accommodate uses of all ages and abilities. To encourage walking and bicycling, pedestrian and bicycle facilities should be coordinated with streetscape improvements, land use strategies and circulation improvements to make the pedestrian and bicycle journey safer and more interesting.

Figure 4.14: Proposed pedestrian infrastructure improvements



***Continuous Pedestrian Network***

A key goal of the smart growth movement is to create places that people enjoy walking around in. The minimum requirement is to provide a continuous pedestrian network of sidewalks, trails and safe crosswalks along the major streets and highways. Figures 4.15 through 4.18 show examples of basic pedestrian amenities.

***Figure 4.15: Sidewalk and Green Strip***



***Figure 4.16: Accessible Crosswalk***



***Figure 4.17: Crosswalk and Refuge Island***



***Figure 4.18: Crosswalk with Pedestrian Refuge***



*Mall Pedestrianization*

Pedestrian amenities in the mall areas, such as landscaping and benches, encourage walking and resting. Providing shade trees, planter strips, landscaping, benches, and other amenities can make a substantial qualitative difference in the pedestrian environment.

*Figure 4.19: Curb Extension and Sitting Area*



*Figure 4.20: Bench Sculpture in Mall*



*Figure 4.21: Covered Pedestrian Walkway*



*Figure 4.22: Street Lighting*



### *Count Down Pedestrian Signal*

Signal heads should be installed at all signalized crosswalks to alert the people crossing the road as to how much time they have left to complete the crossing.

*Figure 4.23: Countdown Pedestrian Signal*



### *Bicycle Network*

It is recommended to create an on-street network of bicycle lanes and shoulders to complement and connect to the off-street trail system. Bicycle racks at commercial locations should be provided. Bicycles can extend the distances people can travel without autos. They can also work well with buses for multi-modal trips. The design challenge for accommodating bicycles is that they are vehicles and should be separated from pedestrians, and yet are too slow and vulnerable to mix well with the motorized traffic stream on high speed and high volume streets. The best strategy for accommodating bicycle trips is to provide adequate bicycle lanes and to educate the driving public on the need to share the road with bicyclists. Figures 4.24 through 4.27 show examples of bicycle amenities.

Figure 4.24: Bicycle Lane



Figure 4.25: Paved Shoulder



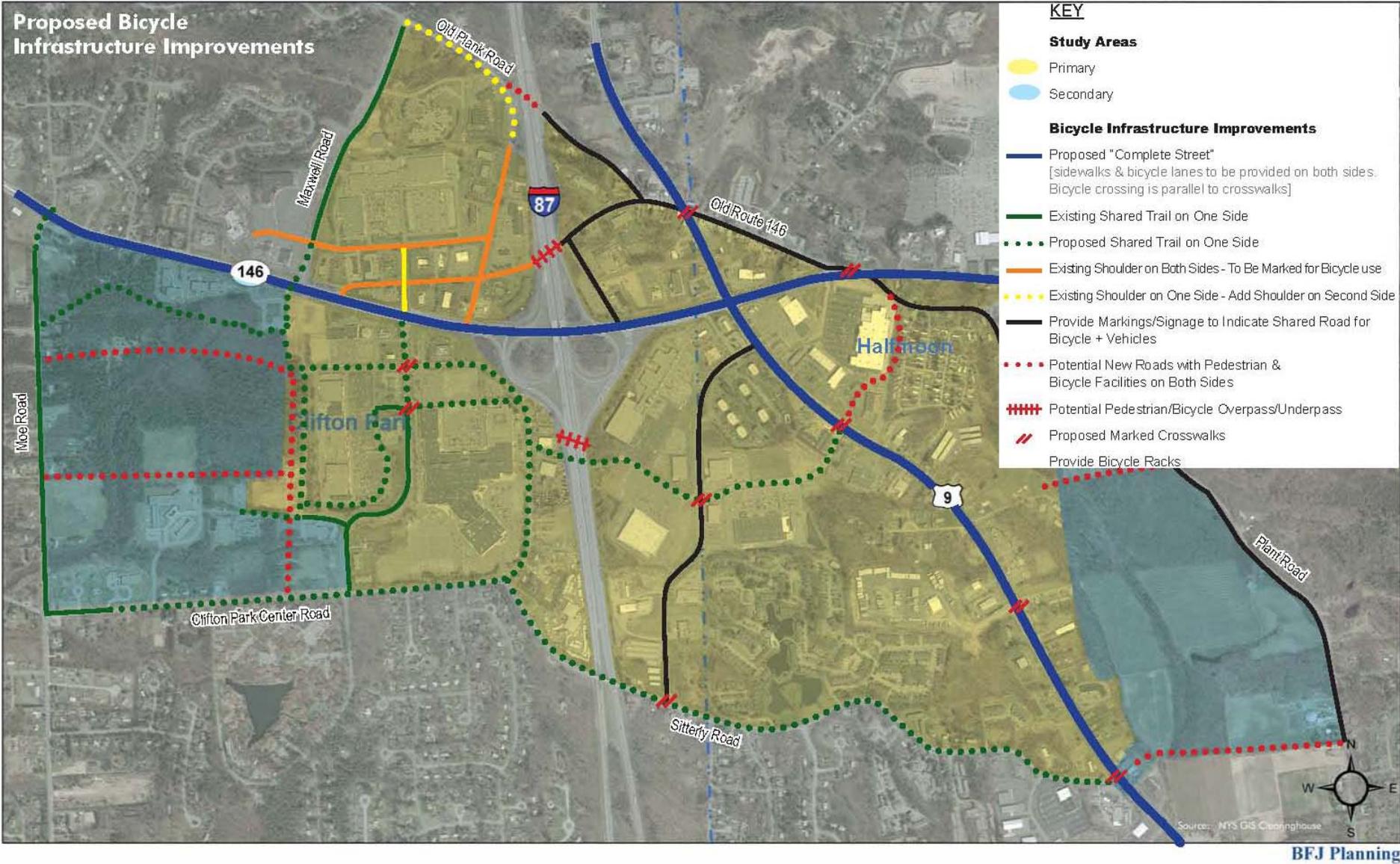
Figure 4.26: Off-Road Shared Path



Figure 4.27: Bicycle Racks in Retail Area



Figure 4.28: Proposed bicycle infrastructure improvements



## 4.2 Land Use Strategies

### 4.2.1 Create Higher Densities and Greater Mix of Uses

#### *Concentrate Development*

Land use strategies such as increasing density and concentrating growth in designated zones in the study area will address a number of goals and objectives of the study. Concentrating development in designated areas results in increased population density, allowing for more efficient provision and use of infrastructure and services. The concentration of residential and commercial facilities gives a “town center feel” to the area and creates walkable neighborhoods.

*Figure 4.29: Sprawl v Compact Development*



Possible strategies to accomplish concentration of growth include zoning changes in designated areas, such as:

- density bonuses, high lot coverage and low setback requirements, increasing as-of-right density (the density currently allowed by the Zoning Code);
- lowering parking requirements, encouraging shared parking and disincentives for single-purpose and reserved parking;
- reducing curb cuts and consolidate access to properties;
- encourage mixed use developments (residential over commercial/ retail), and traditional, village-style development;
- encourage a greater range of housing alternatives, including compact senior housing;
- encourage the creation of larger public open spaces rather than individual lot green space;
- encourage public anchors- such as a new Town Hall facility for Clifton Park.

It is recommended that development in concentrated growth nodes be compliant with design standards and guidelines. The Exit 9 Land Use and Transportation Study includes illustrated design guidelines for new development in residential and commercial / mixed-use areas. These could be included in the Comprehensive Plans for both Towns. Some examples may include:

- form based zoning (i.e. the creation of streetscapes through street lines, building height guidelines, street width requirements, etc.);
- guidelines on architectural style and materials;
- encouragement of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)\* neighborhood concepts;
- encouragement of mixed-use developments (e.g. residential over retail/commercial) to extend the active hours of the neighborhood;
- parking and access with emphasis on shared driveways and parking to the side and rear of buildings;
- maintenance of existing trees where possible in addition to quality site landscaping;
- reduction of green space on individual lots in favor of municipal parks\*\*;
- encouragement of cluster development for residential subdivisions;
- encouragement of shared parking and allowing off-site parking.

\*LEED is a third-party certification program by the United States Green Building Council (USGBC) and a nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high performance green buildings. LEED gives building owners and operators the tools they need to have an immediate and measurable impact on their buildings' performance. LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in five key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection and indoor environmental quality (Visit <http://www.usgbc.org/> for more information).

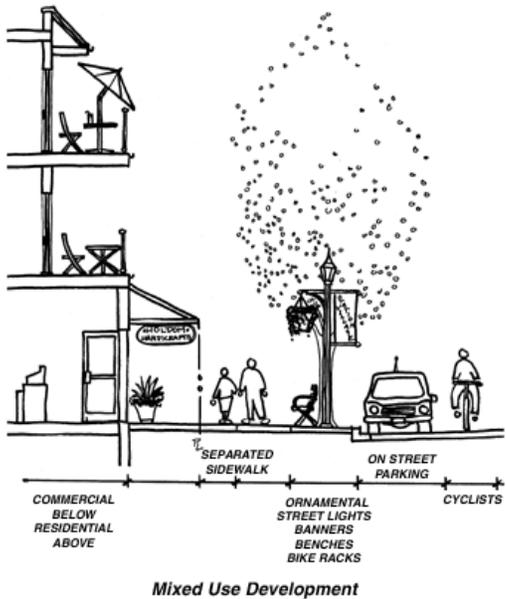
\*\* Prior to reducing portions of green or open space, underutilized paved areas should be eliminated first. Higher density design, quality design and the importance of visual appeal (i.e. quality landscaped areas) at strategic locations in the study area are not mutually exclusive concepts. Quality design of existing and proposed developments in the study area should coincide with the design concepts proposed for the landscaped boulevards and complete streets. The visual appeal of streets and their adjacent properties is instrumental in accomplishing the overall vision of this study.

The areas that will be redeveloped with infill or higher densities and a mix of uses will be designed as “nodes” of opportunity within the study area. These areas have been identified as suitable locations for concentrated development and improvement. In general, the nodes identified are located at existing commercial areas or in close proximity to good transportation links and hubs, allowing for easy access and further transit improvements. The location of these nodes also allows for future expansion of these areas and the creation of links between other development clusters. Infill opportunities should first occur over currently paved areas.

Figure 4.30: Compact Mall Development



Figure 4.31: Mixed Use Development



A possible constraint to infill development includes existing leases on a property that is considered an infill and redevelopment opportunity. As a last resort, some local governments have used eminent domain practices where a property or number of

properties represented a blighted area that if redeveloped could contribute to a public purpose. It is recommended to avoid the use of eminent domain except as a last resort and instead consider other incentives that would entice an owner to redevelop an infill parcel. The towns could revise their zoning codes to include incentives, such as less restrictive density and parking requirements and/or an expedited site plan review process.

#### 4.2.2 Minimize Impervious Surfaces

Excessive impervious surfaces contribute to the degradation of the built and natural environment. Consequences of low-density sprawl, the resultant reliance on cars for transportation and the associated parking requirements include increased emissions, run-off, and loss of habitat. Development in mixed-use, compact centers provides a variety of housing and travel choices, thereby reducing car reliance and typically requiring less parking. The creation of greener streets, the landscaping of medians, improving landscaping elements of proposed new developments, etc., contribute to the reduction in impervious surfaces.

The existing oversupply of parking infrastructure in Clifton Park and Halfmoon could be better utilized for more intensive urban revitalization. Parking alternatives, such as shared parking, increased use of pedestrian and other transit modes, and incentives such as tax free transit subsidies can be implemented to offset the reliance on the car as the preferred transportation mode.

Construction of unnecessary impervious surfaces increases the impacts of stormwater runoff, either on the storm sewer system or the surrounding land. Paved surfaces can also result in water pollution and flooding, resulting in a decline in adjacent property values. Heat islands or areas of artificially raised temperatures are also exacerbated by unnecessary paving.

Consuming land for parking also reduces the land available for greenspace or other more productive development. Parking decks well hidden or integrated in the developments represents an opportunity to reduce impervious surfaces. Land preserved as part of the green infrastructure allows stormwater to percolate into the soil, provides wildlife habitat, provides air quality and noise reduction benefits and is aesthetically desirable. Land developed for living, working and shopping, rather than for parking alone, provides more intensive use. This lowers the demand to develop additional lands nearby or elsewhere in the area, thereby reducing sprawl. Intensifying uses also creates a more supportive environment for transit, walking and bicycling.

Where parking is required, the use of porous parking surfaces can reduce the impervious surface area and minimize stormwater run-off. Alternatives to concrete and asphalt concrete include gravel, cobble, mulch, brick, grass pavers, turf blocks, natural stone, pervious concrete and porous asphalt. In addition, the location of bio-retention areas in grass medians and parking lot dividers help to manage stormwater on-site.

Breaking up large parking lots can reduce the total amount of impervious surface and disconnect paved surfaces, thereby reducing stormwater run off and facilitating groundwater recharge.

*Figure 4.32: Landscaped Islands/Bio-Retention Areas*



*Figure 4.33: Pervious Parking Surface*



#### 4.2.3 Transfer of Development Rights

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) programs use market forces to simultaneously promote conservation in high value natural, agricultural and open space areas while encouraging smart growth in developed and developing sections of the community. To avoid a situation where we increase densities in the commercial center and guide sprawl toward more outlying areas, we recommend the use of the TDR concept that is already in place in both Town Codes. This TDR concept should be expanded to include the Exit 9 study area as a receiving zone and will allow a shift in growth from outlying areas to the more central zones. This concept will maximize the benefits of the more sustainable development in the core and will reduce the negative impacts of development at the fringes.

Figure 4.34: Transfer of Development Rights Concept



The TDR program proposed for the Exit 9 area is a voluntary program and is not designed to prohibit development in the outlying areas. It should provide incentives to commercial developers to purchase development rights from land owners in outlying areas to create more sustainable developments in the centers.

The mechanism for TDR in Clifton Park, the Open Space Incentive Zoning Code, is applicable to applicants within Western Clifton Park within the following three zoning districts: the Conservation Residential (CR), Hamlet Mixed Use (HM) and Hamlet Residential (HR) districts. Under Clifton Park's current program, which is a variant of a TDR program, both the sending and receiving areas are within the western half of the town, and in its current form, the program does not include lands within the Exit 9 vicinity. Halfmoon has included the TDR concept in its Comprehensive Plan; although, it has not identified any sending and receiving areas through which to implement the program. To date, the Town of Clifton Park has approved additional density to be transferred within the CR district for two subdivisions that have not yet been constructed (as of September 2008); the TDR mechanism has not been used to any significant degree in Halfmoon.

Expanding the receiving areas and setting clear TDR guidelines could in effect increase the success of the TDR programs. With more specific parameters set for sending and receiving zones, conversion ratios, and transfer mechanisms in the Zoning Code, the TDR function may become a more transparent and predictable process, still subject to Town Board approval. The following are some of the steps that could be taken for this purpose:

- Identify Receiving Zones where greater densities and mix of uses can be accommodated in conjunction with Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) (Receiving Zones should be located or expanded within the study area). Examine existing

zoning constraints in receiving zones to determine current limits for development and potential greater densities and mixes in the TDR overlay zone.

- Identify Sending Zones where we want to maintain natural resources, agricultural uses, vistas, etc. (Sending Zones are located outside of the study area).
- The TDR process will be a private transaction between property owners as long as the proposed development density in the receiving zone is within the maximum build out allowed by the TDR overlay zone.
- Develop a transfer mechanism; for instance, one could transfer TDR based on the traffic generation of the proposed use to other uses.

The TDR program in Clifton Park:

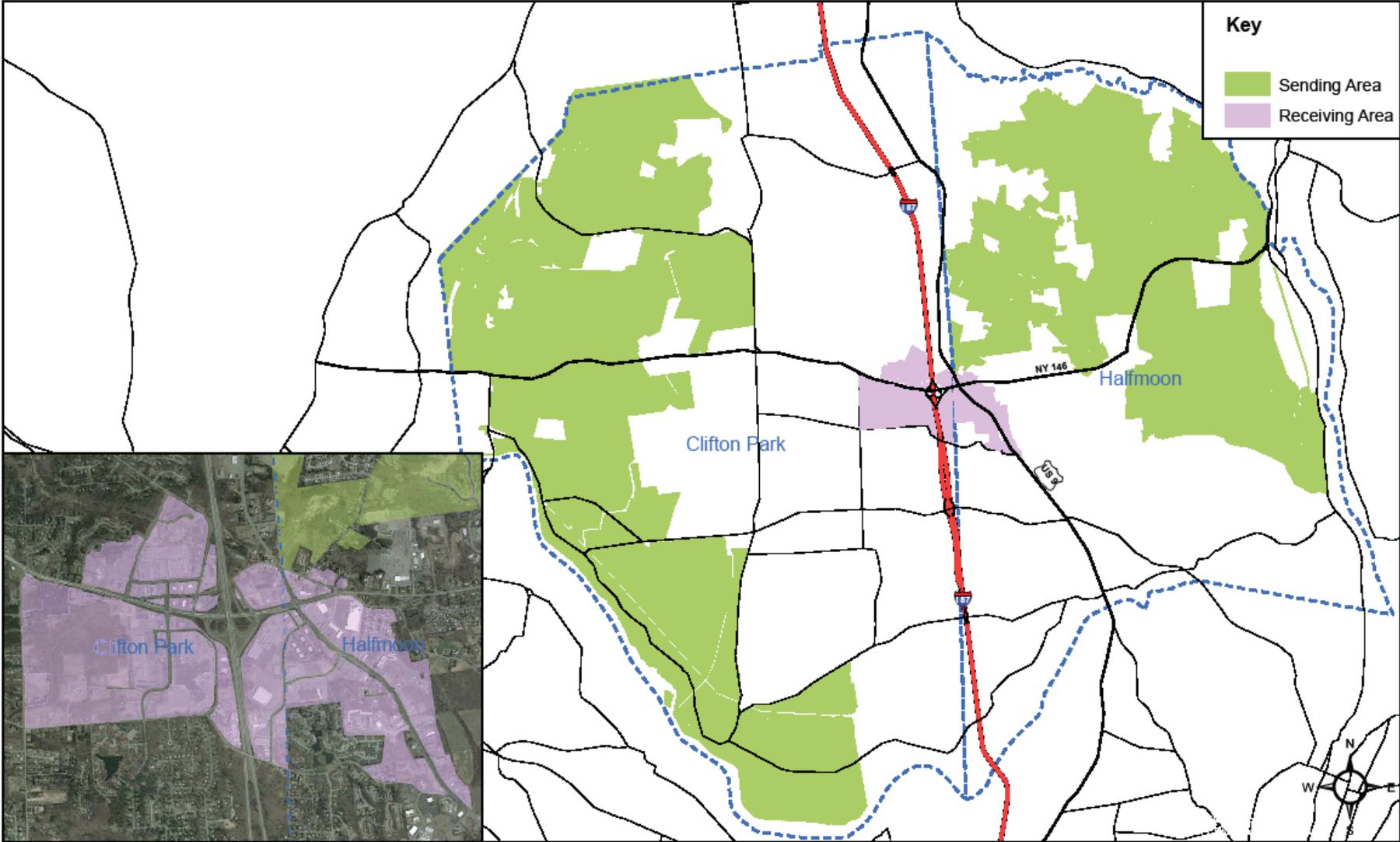
- Already provides for a variant of a TDR program through its Open Space Incentive Zoning Code.
- The program currently only applies to Western Clifton Park within the Conservation Residential (CR), Hamlet Mixed Use (HM) and Hamlet Residential (HR) districts.
- Currently, applicants for the open space incentive must secure open space conservation within Western Clifton Park through one of four options in order to be granted additional density within the western part of the town.
- The receiving area (and Open Space Incentive Zoning Code program) could be extended to include lands within the Exit 9 study area.
- The sending area could be extended to include the Historic Clifton Park District as well as properties zoned as agricultural use; this would ensure the preservation of these properties.

The TDR program in Halfmoon:

- Development rights could be sent from the Agricultural Residential district (A-R) to the commercial districts (C-1).
- The identified “nodes” could be included as Receiving Areas, allowing for more concentrated development in these areas.

Figure 4.35 provides suggested Sending and Receiving Areas for both towns.

Figure 4.35: Transfer of Development Rights: Sending and Receiving Areas



BFJ Planning

The Receiving Areas are those parcels in the Exit 9 Study Area zoned as B-1, B-2, B-4, B-4A, PIR, R-1 and PUD in Clifton Park and zoned as C-1, PDD and TO in Halfmoon. It is important to develop a transfer mechanism that is economically feasible and entices developers to purchase development rights.

One of the existing development constraints for the commercial zones in Clifton Park and in Halfmoon is the maximum lot coverage of 50%. This means that the building footprint and all pavement for parking and roads cannot exceed 50% of the lot area. The remaining 50% has to be green. This regulation is unusually conservative and has a significant impact on the development density. It results in large grassy areas surrounding the buildings and parking lots, and makes it practically impossible to walk from one parcel to the adjacent parcel. In effect it makes the commercial zones not very user friendly in that distances between buildings and parcels become relatively long and sometimes convoluted.

This density constraint represents an opportunity to provide incentives for developers to purchase development rights in outlying areas and to create greater efficiencies (densities and mixes of uses) in the commercial zones. The Towns can create an economic incentive and encourage the developers to purchase development rights in the outlying areas and allowing them to build at greater densities in the receiving zones. This can result in a win-win situation in that the Towns reduce the sprawl in outlying areas and encourage smart growth in the centers, on a voluntary basis. Smart growth in this context means a development pattern that creates an environment allowing various activities in a more concentrated area, where people like to stay and spend time to shop, to eat, maybe to work and live, and to pursue cultural activities. In terms of transportation, people would park and then walk to the various destinations. To achieve this type of development pattern the Towns must be flexible enough in terms of the transfer mechanism so that there is sufficient economic incentive for the property owners to enter into these agreements.

Appendix B provides further detail on how the TDR program may be implemented for the Exit 9 Study area.

#### 4.2.4 Commercial Strip Redevelopment

Following the creation of the mechanisms required to create higher densities and greater mix of uses, communities can begin to reclaim existing shopping strips which developed along highway arterial routes. This 'retrofitting' can only take place if the community agrees to a long-term redesign program that will gradually transform the strip into a mixed use center with each successive site plan application.

*Figure 4.36: Existing strip development*



*Source: Dutchess County Planning and Development*

The process of retrofitting the strip takes place over time through a number of steps:

- Restricting further development of outlying highway frontage and limiting existing commercial districts to under 1/2 mile in length;
- Consolidating entrances along the road to a few main driveways with internal service streets based on a block system to connect businesses in between;
- Unifying the streetscape with continuous street trees, high quality landscaping and where possible, planted medians to prevent unlimited left hand turns;
- Building sidewalks and crosswalks throughout the area to create connections to shared parking, public transportation, walking between stores and to nearby housing;

*Figure 4.37: Coordinated circulation and landscaping*



*Source: Dutchess County Planning and Development*

- Filling in fronts of large parking lots with small, closely spaced or attached storefronts to build a street frontage with courtyard parking behind;
- Creating street fronts with buildings using attractive architecture, wall signs and sidewalks, instead of parking lots and pole signs;
- Encouraging a mix of housing and other uses adjacent to shopping, to begin building a walkable neighborhood, rather than a strictly commercial district that is reliant on the car.

*Figure 4.38: Rebuilding a commercial center step by step*



*Source: Dutchess County Planning and Development*

### 4.3 Aesthetic Strategies

Gateways can enhance and support the overall plan for the Exit 9 area communicating a change of roadway character and reinforcing function. Attractive gateways can also stimulate business and enhance the area’s economic potential, as well as be used as traffic calming devices.

Gateways should be designed to provide a unique identity and sense of place for each location and to convey a sense of arrival to the area they give access to. The design should create landmarks and focal points to provide orientation and improve legibility for workers, residents and visitors, indicating the arrival or the departure from a particular area.

Design elements may include:

- Paving materials and street furniture to reflect the character of the town as a whole, while at the same time creating a strong identity.
- Seasonal landscaping.
- A focal point, possibly a work of art or welcome sign.
- A traffic calming feature, such as a roundabout.

*Figure 4.39: Landscaped welcome signage*



*Figure 4.40: Banners creating gateway entrance*



Figure 5.1 (Implementing the Improvement Strategies) identifies a number of locations along Route 146 and Route 9 for gateway treatment in order to create a sense of arrival and a sense of place and identity in both Clifton Park and Halfmoon.

## 5. IMPLEMENTATION AND PHASING

The Exit 9 Land Use and Transportation Study provides a framework for the future conceptual improvements to be achieved incrementally over time, recognizing that there are no current large scale roadway reconstruction projects planned for or funded. Some of the smaller scale projects may secure funding from state and federal sources for preliminary engineering and design, and potentially as partial funding for construction and implementation. These improvements, when combined with private development projects and opportunities, may be achieved within a shorter time period, while others will occur over a longer term when funding opportunities arise in the future.

The benefits of working co-operatively to compile this Land Use and Transportation Study are that the Towns of Clifton Park and Halfmoon can now take advantage of opportunities related to future development and mitigation of traffic impacts, can have greater confidence in the future, be prepared to take advantage of potential funding sources in a comprehensive manner, and have a sense of ownership in this study.

The establishment of a Business Improvement District (BID) to assist in implementing some of the recommended improvements, and more importantly, in maintaining the landscape enhancements, may be an effective mechanism for initiating implementation. In addition, it may be useful to set up a bi-municipal Exit 9 Coordinating Committee (similar to the Study's Advisory Committee), which meets twice or three times annually in order to ensure the continued implementation and coordination of the Plan and to review progress in both municipalities. A Zoning Study Committee, which is specifically charged with developing zoning recommendations, can also be established.

### 5.1 Potential Funding Sources

A number of potential funding sources may be available for the recommended action items. They include both public and private sources. A description of available sources includes:

### 5.1.1 Federal and State Sources

#### **Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

The CDTC is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Capital Region. The CDTC has responsibility under federal law to adopt a multi-year program of proposed transportation improvement projects within the MPO area. CDTC with input from NYSDOT and local government is responsible for programming federal transportation funds for state and local highway and transit projects. CDTC notifies communities when soliciting projects for the TIP under the various federal funding programs. CDTC is committed to enhancing pedestrian and bicycle mobility in the MPO area. As part of their planning process, CDTC typically allocates funds for pedestrian and bicycle projects.

Communities interested in having their project considered for funding must complete and submit a Project Justification Package for CDTC review. If the project is selected, it receives federal funds generally up to a maximum of 80% of the overall cost. The remaining 20% is the responsibility of the project sponsor.

Each federal aid program has different eligibility requirements but for most roadway reconstruction projects, the minimum requirement is that the facility must be on the federal aid eligible list and thus the road must function as a collector or arterial highway.

CDTC has reserved federal funds in the TIP for specific set-aside programs that target specific project types. The following are two of the programs most relevant to implementing the recommendations of this study:

#### 1) Spot Improvement Program

CDTC has set aside \$100,000 per year in its TIP for projects that provide low cost pedestrian and bicycle improvements that are too small for other programs such as TIP and TEP. Spot improvement projects typically address problems at specific locations such as intersections and short lengths of roadway. All spot improvement projects are funded with a maximum of 80% federal funds and are capped. The remaining 20% is a local match and typically funded by the project sponsor.

Short-term action recommendations may be funded as a spot improvement project.

#### 2) Safety for Non-State Owned Roads

This set-aside is intended to be a mechanism for funding safety projects off the state owned roadway system that address known safety problem areas for not only motor vehicles but for bicyclists, pedestrians and other users of the roadway system. It is expected that these projects will be on roadways in which there is a demonstrated history of fatal or injury crashes or locations with a high frequency of total crashes. Currently, federal safety funds require only a 10% local match from the project sponsor.

Short-term action recommendations on the locally owned road systems may be funded as a safety set-aside project.

### **Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP)**

The Transportation Enhancement Program is a federal reimbursement program administered by NYSDOT. When funds become available, CDTC sends notices to local communities and other potential applicants soliciting projects that meet at least one of the twelve program categories. One of these categories is the provision of facilities for bicycles and pedestrians. The federal contribution is fixed at a maximum of 80% of the project cost. Funding under TEP is limited and only a select number of projects are typically approved in the State of New York.

A TEP Guidebook, which further explains the program, is available through the CDTC and NYSDOT.

### **Transportation and Community and System Preservation Pilot Program (TCSP)**

The TCSP is a nationwide discretionary program administered by the Federal Highway Administration. Projects, which are eligible for funding, must meet several objectives, which include:

- Improving efficiency of the transportation system;
- Reduce environmental impacts of transportation;
- Ensure efficient access to jobs, services and centers of trade;
- Encourage private sector development patterns.

Similar to the CDBG Program, TCSP funding availability is limited.

### **New York State Multi-Modal Program Funding (MMPF)**

The MMPF legislation requires that all funds are solely utilized for capital project costs for construction, reconstruction, reconditioning and preserving of facilities and equipment with a service life of 10 years or more. However, funds cannot be used for the mandated non-federal matching share of federally funded projects.

The amount of funds available under the MMPF is very limited. The most likely scenario is to utilize multi-modal funding for right-of-way acquisition, preliminary engineering and construction supervision and the inspection portion of a project.

### **State Administered Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)**

This is a federally funded program administered under CDBG Small Cities Program. New York State is responsible for the distribution of funds to non-entitlement communities such as cities, towns and villages with a population of less than 50,000. Projects which receive funding under this program need to be part of an overall revitalization project that benefits low to moderate income families within the area.

### **New York State Marchiselli Funds (NYSMF)**

As previously outlined, TIP projects are 80% federally funded and the remaining 20% would be the responsibility of the project sponsor. However, locally sponsored projects have received Marchiselli Aid, which is a state funding source that can fund up to 75% of the local cost. It is important to note that these funds must only be utilized for highway use. Pedestrian and bicycle facility projects are not eligible to receive Marchiselli Aid, unless it is part of a highway construction project. There is no assurance that funding will be available to offset some of the local share of the project cost.

#### 5.1.2 Local Sources

### **Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) Bench and Shelter Program**

CDTA typically budgets approximately \$400,000 system-wide annually for shelters and benches, including replacements. The demand for shelters and benches outweighs the available funds on an annual basis.

Since 2004, CDTA has formalized the criteria used to determine placement of new shelters. Lower volume stops may be outfitted with a bench initially, while providing basic waiting area accommodations.

The shelter program is evaluated using the following criteria:

- Number of passengers that board at the stop (benchmark at 100 per day, but exceptions are made if other conditions are met);
- Number of routes that use the stop, with priority given to transfer points;
- Presence/absence of safe pedestrian access (sidewalks, crosswalks, traffic light with pedestrian phase);
- Adjacent land use (priority to higher density, transit friendly development with street frontage);
- Number of customer requests and/or recommendations by Superintendent or honoring prior commitments;
- Willingness of landowner/road owner to sign an agreement and/or maintain electrical connection, shelter or a pad that already exists; and
- Low income neighborhoods are given special consideration.

## **Town's General Fund**

There may be a number of local source options available to fund the recommended actions. One potential source is the Town's general fund. Clifton Park and Halfmoon would need to set aside funds on an annual basis until adequate funding is available to construct the proposed improvements. The Town's could also bond the recommended improvements. However, due to budgetary constraints, local funding of the proposed long-term actions would be difficult.

### 5.1.3 Private Sources

## **Mitigation from Development/Redevelopment**

Generally, developers construct local roads within a commercial/residential development, dedicate the right-of-way to the Town and participate in the design and construction, or other needed improvements to local, collector and arterial roadways and intersections that are impacted by their proposed developments. Therefore, future developments are potential funding sources when mitigation of transportation impacts are required as identified during the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) process for proposed

developments or redevelopments. The preparation of a Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS), a number of which have been carried out in Clifton Park, identify a number of mitigation measures for development/redevelopment projects and may relate the improvements to the development projects by assigning fair-share mitigation contributions. Through this process the specific transportation impacts of such developments or redevelopments must be identified, along with measures needed to mitigate these impacts.

### **Business Improvement Districts (BID)**

The establishment of a Business Improvement District (BID) to assist in implementing some of the recommended improvements, and more importantly, in maintaining the landscape enhancements, may be an effective mechanism for initiating implementation. To establish a BID over 50% of the property owners in the designated BID have to agree to the property tax surcharge to fund the BID. The BID could probably cover both towns as long as both Town Boards approve the BID.

BIDs have been successful in implementing various services in their designated districts mostly because the property owners via the BID Board are able to control the BID revenues and expenditures. Unlike a municipality's general taxation the trail of funds from the tax payer to the actual expenditure is direct and transparent. In this case the BID would have a primary role in maintaining some of the proposed improvements, especially the landscaped medians along Route 146 or Route 9 (As an alternative or supplement to the BID providing maintenance of the proposed improvements, an established local civic group or the towns themselves could provide maintenance assistance). Ongoing maintenance within the BID has the potential to attract people to the area and increase property values. The BID also becomes a more powerful lobbying group representing the interests of the property owners within the district.

Generally, residents in a district vote for the BID's board of directors with specific openings for local public officials, residents, business owners and tenants. If both towns approve a bi-municipal BID, the organization of the BID should be set-up to allow an even number of representatives or an equal proportion of representatives from both towns. The benefit of one bi-municipal BID is that it maximizes the use of funds toward improvement services and cuts down on administrative costs. However, it is possible for each town to adopt their own respective BIDs depending upon the level of participation of property owners.

## 5.2 Implementing the Plan

### 5.2.1 Bi-municipal Exit 9 Coordinating Committee/Zoning Study Committee

The establishment of a bi-municipal Exit 9 Coordinating Committee (similar to this Study's Advisory Committee), may be crucial to the successful implementation of the Exit 9 Plan. The committee could meet twice or three times annually to maintain the initiative's momentum and to ensure the continued implementation and coordination of the Plan. The committee may also wish to review progress in both municipalities on an ongoing basis.

In addition to the Bi-municipal Exit 9 Coordinating Committee the two Towns could establish a singular Zoning Study Committee. The Zoning Study Committee would be specifically charged with developing zoning recommendations for adoption by the two towns that are consistent and meet objectives of this study's recommendations. Staff support should be provided by the professional planning staff of the two towns, and if that is not feasible, the work, or a portion thereof, can be consulted out. The Zoning Study Committee would also help to avoid uneven implementation of this study's recommendations.

The management structure of the Zoning Study Committee should consist of members of each town only, such as local planning or other town staff, public officials, and Zoning and Planning Board members. The Zoning Study Committee should appoint a chair person whose appointment changes annually with representation from each town changing every other year for this position.

### 5.2.2 Implementation of Strategies

Figure 5.1 summarizes the recommended improvements described in previous sections. The table describes each strategy, lists the responsible agencies, potential funding sources and the suggested implementation phase. For those strategies that were graded in the last public workshop, the average grade is also indicated, with 1.0 representing the most favored grade and 5.0 the least favored.

Appendix C includes the summary of the public workshop where the participants were asked to provide feedback regarding the various strategies that were presented.

The following are the actions that received unanimous support:

- Implement access management strategies along Route 9 in Halfmoon
- Extend the shared use trail along Clifton Park Center and Sitterly Road all the way to Route 9
- Upgrade Rte 146 at the Exit 9 area with sidewalks, bike lanes and better lighting on both sides
- Implement the Transfer of Development Rights Zoning Overlay in both towns
- Transform Route 146 into a complete street, adding sidewalks and bicycle lanes, pedestrian crossing and landscaping

In general, the sidewalk and shared paths strategies, as well as the transit improvements received fairly good support.

The raised medians and roundabouts along Routes 146 and 9 received mixed support; however, these improvements should be considered for implementation because of their very positive impacts on safety and beautification. Since the proposed roundabouts are conceptual in design, further detailed design is required.

The roadway extensions also received mixed support, depending on the specific extension. Some were seen as very positive and others were perceived to be traffic threats. Even though these extensions were not always perceived as being very positive, it is recommended that both municipalities designate them as mapped streets in their master plans so that the possibility continues to exist for future generations.

Both towns should also consider establishing a sidewalk improvement program with reasonable implementation targets that can be realized over a number of years. Sidewalk improvement programs can be used for sidewalk repair or replacement, maintenance and/or construction of new sidewalks. Generally, municipalities share the cost of repair or construction, such as a 50/50 split with the property owner. As an alternative, the towns could use their own specific municipal contractors with appropriations determined each year when the towns' budgets are approved. These programs will be useful in raising additional funding for the sidewalks from government and private sources. The towns can also utilize volunteers from civic or other groups to assist in continuing sidewalk maintenance.

It is recommended that further analysis is conducted in order to implement the TDR strategies. Each town may review their land use and development strategies to determine which density multiplier is best suited for a particular type of land use. A detailed conceptualization of a master plan for the Receiving Areas would assist the towns during any zoning code amendments that further establish their respective TDR Overlay Districts.

Finally the Bi-Municipal Exit 9 Coordinating Committee as well as the proposed BID will be important vehicles that can forward the recommended strategies.

Figure 5.1: Implementing the Improvements Strategies

Action	Responsible Agency	Potential Funding Source	Time Frame (short, medium or long term) (= 1-5,5-10 or 10+ years)	Workshop Grading (1 most favored, 5 least favored)
<b>Route 146</b>				
Synchronize traffic lights	NYSDOT	NYSDOT	Short term	1.8
Create a raised landscaped median	NYSDOT	NYSDOT plus maintenance agreement from BID	Short term	3.0
Roundabout at intersection with Route 9	NYSDOT	NYSDOT	Long term	2.5
Roundabouts at Northway ramps	NYSDOT	NYSDOT	Long term	2.5
Roundabout at Clifton Country Road	NYSDOT	Impacting development/ NYSDOT	Medium/long term	2.5
Complete Streets: pedestrian sidewalks and bicycle lanes on both sides of Route 146	NYSDOT	NYSDOT	Long term	1.2
<b>Route 9</b>				
Access management – consolidate driveways	Halfmoon, Clifton Park	Adjacent development	Short/medium term	1.0
Synchronize traffic lights	NYSDOT	NYSDOT	Short term	2.2
Create a raised landscaped median	NYSDOT	NYSDOT plus maintenance agreement from BID	Short term/Medium term	3.5
Complete Streets: provide pedestrian sidewalks and bicycle lanes on both sides of Route 9	NYSDOT	NYSDOT	Long term	1.8
<b>Sitterly Road</b>				
Create protected left turn lane from Sitterly Road to Woodin Road	Halfmoon, Clifton Park	Towns, Developers	Short Term	2.0
Continue shared use trail from Moe Road to Rte 9	Halfmoon, Clifton Park	TEP/TIP/Towns	Short/medium term	1.0
Roundabout at Clifton Park Center Road, the Mall and Sitterly Road.	Clifton Park	Town/Adjacent development	Medium term	2.8

Action	Responsible Agency	Potential Funding Source	Time Frame (short, medium or long term) (= 1-5,5-10 or 10+ years)	Workshop Grading (1 most favored, 5 least favored)
<b>Road Connections/Extensions</b>				
Maxwell Road extension to Clifton Park Center Road.	Clifton Park	Town/Developers	Short Term	2.2
Moe Road (school) to Maxwell Road extension (north road)	Clifton Park	Town/Developer /School District	Long Term	4.8
Moe Road (library) to Maxwell Road extension (south road)	Clifton Park	Town/Developer /School District	Long Term	4.8
Old Plank Road across I-87	Clifton Park NYSDOT	TIP/NYSDOT	Long Term	1.6
Old Plant Road to Route 9	Halfmoon	Town/Developer	Long Term	5.0
Birch Briar Village extension to Plant Road	Halfmoon	Town/Developer	Long Term	4.5
Sitterly Road extension to Plant Road	Halfmoon	Town/Developer	Medium Term	3.3
<b>Interstate 87 Northway</b>				
Provide bicycle lanes, sidewalks and lighting on both sides of Route 146 under the I-87 interchange	NYSDOT	TEP/TIP/ NYSDOT	Short term	1.0
Pedestrian/bicycle underpass connecting two malls	Clifton Park	TEP/TIP	Long term	3.8
Pedestrian/ bicycle overpass north of interchange at Old Plank/ Old Route 146	Clifton Park	TEP/TIP/ NYSDOT	Mid-Long term	3.2
<b>Transit Improvements</b>				
Provide a Route 9 bus Route	Clifton Park, Halfmoon, CDTA	CDTA	Mid term	2.0
Create a Park & Ride lot served by transit at Fire Road	Clifton Park, CDTA, NYSDOT	CDTA, NYSDOT	Short term	1.7
Promote both park & ride lots (signage, schedule, ...)	Clifton Park, Halfmoon, CDTA	CDTA	Short term	2.3

**EXIT 9 LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION STUDY**

Action	Responsible Agency	Potential Funding Source	Time Frame (short, medium or long term) (= 1-5,5-10 or 10+ years)	Workshop Grading (1 most favored, 5 least favored)
<b>Pedestrian &amp; Bicycle Improvements</b>				
Provide sidewalk on northern side of Old Route 146, west of Rte 9 continuing on the west side of Fire Road	Clifton Park	TEP/TIP/Clifton Park	Short-Medium term	1.0
Continue shared use trail from Moe Road to Route 146	Clifton Park	TEP/TIP	Short/medium term	1.0
Continue shared use trail Road along Clifton Park Center Road and Sitterly Road from Moe Road to Route 9 intersection.	Clifton Park, Halfmoon	TEP/TIP	Short/medium term	1.0
Continue shared use trail from Clifton Park Center Road to Route 146 interchange	Clifton Park	TEP/TIP/Developers	Short/medium term	1.0
Continue shared use trail from Maxwell Road, along Maxwell Road extension to Wall Street	Clifton Park	TEP/TIP/Developers	Short/medium term	1.0
Provide shared use trail through northern car park of Clifton Park Center, along Clifton Country Road to Clifton Park Center Road	Clifton Park	TEP/TIP/Developers	Short/medium term	1.0
Provide shared use path from Clifton Park Center Road [under I-87 via proposed underpass] along Halfmoon Road to Route 9 intersection	Clifton Park and Halfmoon	TEP/TIP/Developers	Short/medium term	1.0
Improve surface and lighting of shared trail through woods from Moe Road to Maxwell Road extension	Clifton Park	TEP/TIP/Clifton Park	Short/medium term	1.0
Extend sidewalk on Park Ave to Plank Road intersection	Clifton Park	TEP/TIP/Clifton Park	Short/Medium Term	1.0
Provide sidewalk on one side along Old Rte 146 from Rte 146 to Plank Road	Clifton Park	TEP/TIP/Clifton Park	Short/Medium Term	1.0
Provide sidewalk on western side of Plant Road	Halfmoon	TEP/TIP/Halfmoon/Developers		
Provide sidewalk on western side of Plank Road	Clifton Park	TEP/TIP/Halfmoon	Medium Term	1.0
Provide sidewalk on one side of Old Route 146 Between Rtes 9 and 146	Halfmoon	TEP/TIP/Halfmoon	Medium Term	1.0
Continue sidewalk on one side of Park Ave	Clifton Park	TEP/TIP/Clifton Park/Developers	Medium Term	1.0

Action	Responsible Agency	Potential Funding Source	Time Frame (short, medium or long term) (= 1-5,5-10 or 10+ years)	Workshop Grading (1 most favored, 5 least favored)
<b>Pedestrian &amp; Bicycle Improvements (continues)</b>				
Between Rtes 9 and 146				
Continue sidewalk on one side of Park Ave	Clifton Park	TEP/TIP/Clifton Park/Developers	Medium Term	1.0
Provide sidewalk on one	Clifton Park	TEP/TIP/Clifton	Medium Term	1.0
Provide marked crosswalk at Clifton Country Road and Clifton Park Center Road intersection	Clifton Park	CDTC Spot Improvement Program/Adjacent development	Short Term	2.5
Provide marked crosswalk at Old Rte 146 and Rte 9 intersection	NYSDOT	CDTC Spot Improvement Program/State/NYSDOT	Short Term	
Provide marked crosswalk at Old Route 146 and Route 146 intersection (Halfmoon)	NYSDOT, Halfmoon	CDTC Spot Improvement Program/NYSDOT	Short Term	2.5
Provide marked crosswalk at Halfmoon Crossing and Route 9	NYSDOT	CDTC Spot Improvement Program/NYSDOT	Short term	2.5
Provide marked crosswalk at Oakhill Road and Rte 9		CDTC Spot Improvement Program/NYSDOT	Short term	2.5
Provide marked crosswalk at Sitterly Road and Route 9 intersection	NYSDOT	CDTC Spot Improvement Program/NYSDOT	Short Term	2.5
Provide marked crosswalk at Crossing Blvd and Sitterly Road	Clifton Park	CDTC Spot Improvement Program	Short Term	2.5
Provide landscaping, lighting and benches at Clifton Park Center	Clifton Park Developer	Developer	Short Term	
Provide landscaping, lighting and benches at The Crossings Mall	Clifton Park, Halfmoon, Developer	Developer	Short Term	
Provide high visibility crosswalks in parking lot at Clifton Park Center & Crossings Mall	Halfmoon and Clifton Park	Adjacent development	Short Term	
Mark shoulders on both sides of Old Route 146 in Clifton Park for bicycle use	Clifton Park	CDTC Spot Improvement Program, Clifton Park	Short Term	
Mark shoulders on both sides of Park Ave for bicycle use	Clifton Park	CDTC Spot Improvement Program/Clifton Park	Short Term	
Provide road markings and signage to indicate that Plant Road is a shared road	Halfmoon	CDTC Spot Improvement Program/Halfmoon	Short Term	
Provide bicycle racks at Clifton Park Center & Crossings	Clifton Park, Halfmoon	Clifton Park, Halfmoon, Developers	Short Term	

**EXIT 9 LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION STUDY**

Action	Responsible Agency	Potential Funding Source	Time Frame (short, medium or long term) (= 1-5,5-10 or 10+ years)	Workshop Grading (1 most favored, 5 least favored)
<b>Land Use Strategies</b>				
Create TDR overlay district	Clifton Park, Halfmoon	Clifton Park, Halfmoon	Short-Term	1.0
Increase densities and greater mixes	Clifton Park, Halfmoon	Clifton Park, Halfmoon	Short-Term	3.0
Commercial strip redevelopment	Clifton Park, Halfmoon	Clifton Park, Halfmoon, Developers	Mid-Term	4.0
Better design standards	Clifton Park, Halfmoon	Clifton Park, Halfmoon,	Short-Term	2.0

Action	Responsible Agency	Potential Funding Source	Time Frame (short, medium or long term) (=1-5,5-10 or 10+ years)	Workshop Grading (1 most favored, 5 least favored)
<b>Gateways</b>				
Provide Welcome signage at all entrances to Clifton Park and Halfmoon	Clifton Park, Halfmoon	Clifton Park, Halfmoon	Mid-Term	2.3
Create a gateway at Sitterly Road and Rte 9 intersection entrance to Halfmoon	Halfmoon	Halfmoon	Medium/long term	2.3
Create a gateway at Plant Road and Rte 146 intersection entrance to Halfmoon	Halfmoon	Halfmoon	Medium/long term	2.3
Create a gateway at Old Route 146 and Rte 9 intersection entrance to Clifton Park and Halfmoon	Clifton Park and Halfmoon	Clifton Park, Halfmoon	Medium/long term	2.3
Create a gateway at Moe Road and Rte 146 intersection entrance to Clifton Park	Clifton Park	Clifton Park	Medium/long term	2.3
Create a gateway at west and east Rte 146 and I-87 interchange at Exit 9	Clifton Park and Halfmoon	Clifton Park, Halfmoon	Short/medium term	2.3

## APPENDIX A

### Design Guidelines for Clifton Park and Halfmoon

Future development in the study area should adhere to a set of design guidelines, intended as a design aid for developers and as an evaluation tool for the Towns of Clifton Park and Halfmoon. Portions of these guidelines can be adopted as zoning changes within each town and are summarized below.

The guidelines are designed to achieve the following broad goals:

- To encourage an overall improvement in design quality that will support existing development and ensure high quality new investment within both Towns.
- To provide a design vocabulary that will establish a clear and attractive identity for the study area.
- To establish criteria that will allow design flexibility and choice and encourage creative and imaginative site layout and design.
- To provide reference to existing, positive examples of development within the local area, thereby recognizing the areas existing character and heritage.
- To create a strong sense of place.
- To help ensure that traffic safety requirements are met.

The guidelines that follow are illustrated with examples drawn primarily from the Towns of Clifton Park and Halfmoon and the surrounding region. They are grouped into four broad categories as follows:

- Roadway and Parking Design
- Development Sites
- Streetscape
- Architectural Character

## A ROADWAY AND PARKING DESIGN

Existing and proposed new development along Route 9 and Route 146 may add to the existing traffic conflicts due to the increased number of curb cuts and vehicle turning movements. Eliminating unnecessary entry/exit points and improving their design remains an important design goal for the study area. In addition, raised landscaped medians on both Route 9 and Route 146 will enhance the aesthetics and the safety of these routes for all road users.

### A-1 Raised landscaped Median

The introduction of a raised median on Route 146 and Route 9 would improve the aesthetics of these routes in addition to reducing traffic speeds, separating traffic flowing in opposite directions and improving overall traffic safety. Left turns would still be provided at specific locations as well as bus cut-outs, depending upon the future of new transit bus routing. Raised medians could also contain edging cuts to improve stormwater infiltration and/or act as a bio-swale in order to help stormwater infiltrate into the ground.

### A-2 Site Access

Property owners should be encouraged to share driveway access points, particularly along Route 9. These driveways may straddle the property line or they could be located on one or the other of the shared properties.

Cross easements (allowing access to and from adjacent properties) should be encouraged, providing shared access through side and rear parking areas.

Adjoining sites should have interconnected pedestrian systems to allow customers to walk from one unit to another without moving their car.

Numerous driveways reduce road safety and limit opportunities for attractive landscape treatment along Route 9



Raised landscaped median on Route 9 at Hyde Park



Sidewalks should be made continuous across driveways to increase pedestrian visibility to turning vehicles

### A-3 Parking

Surface parking areas can often represent the largest land use within a business zone. The siting and treatment of lots is, therefore, an important factor in the overall design of the area.

All commercial and mixed-use sites should be required to provide interconnections between adjacent properties. With shared access drives and interconnections between adjacent sites, it becomes easier to circulate from one site to another without using Route 9. This improves safety along the highway and increases accessibility to the properties along it.

The interconnections also allow for shared parking facilities when uses have different peak hours. For instance, an office building could share a significant number of parking spaces with a retail use next door, assuming that the two sites are well connected for vehicular traffic and for pedestrian circulation.

To the maximum extent practicable, parking and service areas should be located to the side and/or rear of primary buildings, with no more than ten percent of the parking located as convenience (short-term) parking in front of the main building.

Landscaping should be used to break up continuous pavement of interior parking areas. This will provide aesthetic improvements, in addition to improving the legibility of the parking lot for vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Minimizing impervious surfaces also reduces stormwater runoff.

In general, it is suggested that no lot should be allowed more than one curb cut in order to encourage connections and coordinated circulation between adjoining internal parking lots. This concept could be applied as a zoning change and could act as a supplemental



Use of landscaping to break up large areas of parking



Pedestrian facilities in parking lots



Entrance signage at The Crossings

requirement even on roadways controlled by other agencies, such as the NYSDOT. Entranceways to lots should have driveways with open green space on both sides.

#### **A-4 Site Entry Points**

Site entry points along Route 146 and Route 9 should be emphasized as “gateways” for larger scale developments. These entries should be designed as attractive landscaped features that incorporate an integrated set of signage, lighting and planting elements.

### **B DEVELOPMENT SITES**

The large scale parcels of undeveloped land within the study area provide opportunities for mixed commercial use, with development set back from the highway to allow for generous landscaping along the road frontage. Well-planned development within parcels requires careful consideration of preferred building uses, site layout guidelines and landscape provisions.

#### **B-1 Mixed Uses**

Mixed land uses within one development parcel - for example, retail use, offices and residences - will be encouraged.

Some of the benefits include: 1) ensuring an attractive blend of building scales, densities, and purposes (and limiting the risk of single-use strip development), 2) encouraging pedestrian safety and friendliness – such as walking between groups of buildings – and thus removing traffic from Route 146 and Route 9 for short trips and, 3) creating the potential for fewer paved areas, since parking spaces can be shared among land uses with different peak periods.



Mixed Use development creating sidewalk and on-street activity.

New residential uses may be appropriate for areas adjacent to existing housing in order to act as a buffer to proposed commercial development.

Multiple story buildings of two to four stories should be encouraged.

A range of uses should be encouraged both horizontally (across the area) and vertically (within individual buildings).

Active uses such as retail and restaurants should be located on the ground floor to create pedestrian activity. Office and residential uses should be located on the upper floors.

**B-2 Layout**

Development should make full use of the rear areas of parcels in order to take advantage of the site’s development potential and allow for generous open space provision along the roadside.

Open spaces should be integrated with adjacent properties in order to create public gathering spaces.

Where multiple structures and uses are proposed, buildings should be clustered with access provided by common entrances and internal road systems.

Continuous service roads towards the rear of the property should be required for vehicular traffic. Continuous pedestrian connections should be built at the front of the buildings.

**B-3 Landscape Design**

Creating buffer edges along the major routes and ensuring adequate setbacks for parking areas as well as for buildings is an important design goal for the town. Site



Existing trees and grass margins should be protected and maintained

planning for new commercial or residential development within the study area should consider the following:

Open spaces, surface parking lots and landscaping should be designed as an integral part of an overall site design, property related to buildings and existing natural features.

Surface parking lots and loading and service areas should be screened from the street by buildings, fencing or landscaping. Setback areas should incorporate shrubs and other planting, and where feasible, berms should be included to act as an additional buffer to views from a public right-of-way.

Natural landscape elements should be preserved to the maximum degree possible, with re-grading of land kept to a minimum.

Landscaping plans should incorporate native species and low maintenance plants so that individual parcels work as part of an overall system carefully linked to the surrounding natural landscape.

Landscaping can also protect existing residential neighborhoods. Lots abutting residentially-zoned land should include densely planted strips of deciduous trees and shrubs, landscaped berms and fencing to preserve the residential character of the neighborhood.

When creating complete streets, the quality and appearance of future street furnishings will have a significant impact on the overall image presented by the streetscape. Benches, litter receptacles, bus stop shelters and other furniture should present an attractive and coordinated design theme. Selected colors should, for example, match the color of light poles or other streetscape features.

Where a building façade cannot be used to frame the sidewalk edge, landscaping such as hedges, shrubs or low walls and fences should be used. The height of such landscaping should not interfere with vehicular visibility and should be planted in consideration of sight triangles at corner properties.



Sidewalk along Clifton Park Boulevard West

## C. STREETScape

### C-1 Pedestrian and Bicycle Routes and Crosswalks

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities in both Clifton Park and Halfmoon consist of short, somewhat isolated sections of sidewalks and bicycle lanes. These sections now need to be connected in order to create a continuous pathway system that extends throughout both Towns.

Pathways should be a minimum of five feet in width, of scored concrete. Consideration should be given to adding a grey pigment to the concrete mix.

A landscape strip, to include grass, low level plantings or where feasible, street trees, should be provided.

Clearly marked crosswalks should be placed to all four sides of major intersections to encourage pedestrian access between differing uses within the study area.

Street furniture (e.g. benches) should be located at regular intervals along pedestrian routes.

Landscaped medians should be provided along Route 146 and Route 9. In addition to improving safety and aesthetics, this would provide refuge for pedestrians crossing these wide, heavily trafficked routes.

### C-2 Street Trees

Regularly spaced street trees should be planted between the roadway and sidewalk in order to provide a sense of protection for pedestrians.



Bicycle lane along Route 9



Landscaped medians provide refuge for pedestrians crossing busy routes

Rows of trees will also help to visually unify the parking lots and buildings that line the roadway.

Tree planting can form an effective screen to parking lots located adjacent to the major roads.

Consideration should be given to utilizing ornamental trees in selected areas and encouraging a mix of tree species to create more variety within the Town's streetscape.

### **C-3 Signage**

Commercial signage plays an important role in determining the visual quality of the Exit 9 study area, due to the number of large free-standing signs that compete for the attention of passing motorists. The following guidelines are designed to provide a more attractive and consistent design approach.

The siting of free-standing signs should be carefully related to other site landscape features such as landscaped setbacks, trees and plantings.

Signs should be designed so that they are informative and visible at both the pedestrian and vehicular scale.

Signage design should relate to adjacent buildings in terms of general appearance and choice of materials.

Grouped signs, for example at commercial plazas, or shopping malls, should have a consistent design character and quality in terms of materials, colors and typeface.



Low level signage at Shenendehowa Senior Center



Welcome to Clifton Park Signage with landscaping

Low, monument-style free-standing signs are recommended rather than tall pole or pylon signs because ground-based signs can be more easily integrated with landscaping. At 4 to 7 feet high, they can also be directly seen from eye level and are less likely to obstruct views of neighboring properties.

Signs should have a minimum of information to avoid clutter and confusion. The use of bold, easily recognized symbols, logos and simple illustrations that identify a business or activity is encouraged.

Signs with dark background colors and light-colored letters are preferred since this minimizes the apparent size of signs within the streetscape.

The number of colors used in a sign should be limited to three unless used in an illustration.

### C-4 Lighting

Existing street lighting is provided primarily through the use of high-level cobra style lights that are generally mounted on utility poles along major routes throughout the study area. Recommendations for an improved lighting scheme for the area include:

New traffic light poles should be installed to provide a more attractive and stronger design identity for the Exit 9 study area.

Street lighting selection should reflect the need to provide safe and attractive lighting for pedestrians who will utilize future sidewalk and path systems.

Outdoor lighting should be designed to ensure effective shielding in order to eliminate or reduce glare. Lighting for signs, for example, should be top-mounted to project downward on to the signs. Internally lit signs should not be used.



Cobra-headed lighting fixed to utility poles is typically found throughout the study area.



Example of pedestrian scale outdoor lighting



Outdoor lighting for building site areas such as service and parking lots should avoid the use of high-level poles to reduce the spread of illumination. Parking lot lights, for example, should be limited to a maximum height of 14 feet.



#### **D. ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER**

Future development within the study area will focus on mixed-use and commercial development, with a focus on retail uses. The existence of several large scale, big box retailers and a number of large undeveloped parcels means that careful consideration should be given to siting and building scale. It is the intention of both Clifton Park and Halfmoon, to create more concentrated areas of development and to create a downtown for both centers. Consistent architectural designs to consolidate the architectural character of the area are suggested instead of requiring specific styles of architecture; thus, the character of a particular neighborhood should always be taken into consideration.



Traditional architectural character in the historic areas of Clifton Park/Halfmoon

#### **D-1 Building Form**

Building footprints should be modulated to achieve varied building shape and mass. Varied footprint shapes, for example, create opportunities to provide more complex building shapes with the addition of small-scale additions to the main building form.

Wall and roof heights should be varied in order to break down the scale of building facades. Building massing should be differentiated through the use of wall offsets and setbacks that articulate the horizontal and vertical planes of the buildings. This variety can be achieved, for example, by varying the design of front, side or rear building facades, or by giving special emphasis to the entry façade.

In “town center” areas and on driveways or local roads within mixed-use developments, new



Varied building façade, with building transparency at ground floor level in Clifton Park.

buildings should be constructed at or near the sidewalk, to create a consistent street façade and “sense of enclosure” for pedestrians.

Small setbacks should be used where appropriate to accommodate room for outdoor seating or public gathering areas/courtyards.

Building transparency at street level is encouraged. This is achieved through the use of generous quantities of vertical windows on the ground floor.

### **D-2 Façade Design**

The design of main building façades should reflect the scale of local development through modulation of vertical and horizontal elements such as changes in the predominant wall plane, use of projections, and alignment of cornices. Use the overall façade composition to break the building down into smaller, distinct portions.

The main building façade and main entrance should be located facing the street. On a corner lot, the main façade should be located along both streets. Architectural features should be encouraged on all visible façades.

Building entries should be emphasized through canopies, awnings and other architectural elements. The use of covered arcades and canopies are encouraged as an architectural feature in façade design and to provide weather protection.

A secondary entrance facing the rear parking lot should be provided for deliveries, etc.

The façade of existing buildings with setbacks should be brought closer to the sidewalk edge where possible through landscaping or a low wall or fence, to define the interior of the sidewalk edge.

Color palates and complimentary rendering on buildings in the same area is encouraged.



Use of façade composition to break the building into distinct portions

**D-3 Building Heights**

Varied building heights are encouraged. Maximum building heights should increase to 45 to 50 feet or three stories. An exception may be granted where special uses or site conditions warrant a fourth floor, up to a maximum height of 60 feet. In no case may this extra floor extend over more than 20 percent of the building footprint (See Table 2: Potential Amendments to Current Zoning Regulations for TDR Overlay District for more information on suggested zoning changes).

**D-4 Roofs**

Many of the Towns’ more attractive buildings incorporate pitched roofs with varied forms and features. Roofscape in new development is therefore an important consideration in building design.

Main, dominant roofs should be pitched. Attached secondary roofs that are smaller and lower than the main roof ridge line should also be pitched.

Roof designs should incorporate varied roof types and forms. For example, a main pitched roof could be combined with secondary roof types. Large roof expanses should incorporate dormers, cupolas and other features to help reduce the scale of pitched roofs.

Rooftop mechanical equipment should not be visible from the street.



Town of Halfmoon Town Hall



Pitched roof on Clifton Park and Halfmoon Public Library



Primary and secondary roofs at an office building on Route 9

APPENDIX B

Creating a Municipal Transfer of Development Rights Program for Clifton Park and Halfmoon

A. Purpose of creating a TDR Program:

- The primary intent is to shift major growth from outlying areas to the identified development centers of Clifton Park and Halfmoon.
- It is not intended to eliminate or prohibit development in the outlying areas, rather to concentrate development in the centers.
- It is intended to provide sufficient incentives to encourage developers to purchase development rights from landowners in sending areas and concentrate development within these centers.
- It is intended that the program will allow flexibility in the transfer mechanism, to take into account market variations and the desirability of new uses in the centers.
- The program will encourage mixed use development and will therefore allow property owners and developers to transfer development rights from one land use to another, e.g. residential to commercial, etc.
- The program will be strictly voluntary for both property owners in the sending area and developers in the receiving area.

**B. Suggested Sending and Receiving Areas in Clifton Park and Halfmoon**

**Clifton Park**

The Town of Clifton Park has previously outlined its intent to protect its open space resources, while recognizing the importance of new development and the expansion of the Town. The Town of Clifton Park Open Space Plan, 2003 identifies the Town's desire to protect open space, natural habitats, working farmland and other natural and cultural resources within the Town.

Lands zoned as Agricultural/Residential in Western Clifton Park are those primarily recommended for protection. It is suggested that these lands should be designated as sending areas for the TDR program, transferring the development rights from these peripheral areas to allow for more concentrated and compact development in the Exit 9 study area.

Lands within the study area are zoned for Business Non-Retail development (B-1 and B-2); Highway Business and Highway Business/Restricted Retail development (B-4 and B-4A); Public/Institutional/Recreational development (PIR); Residential development (R-1) and Land Conservation (L-C). It is suggested that these lands (with the exception of the R1 and LC districts) are designated as receiving areas.

**Halfmoon**

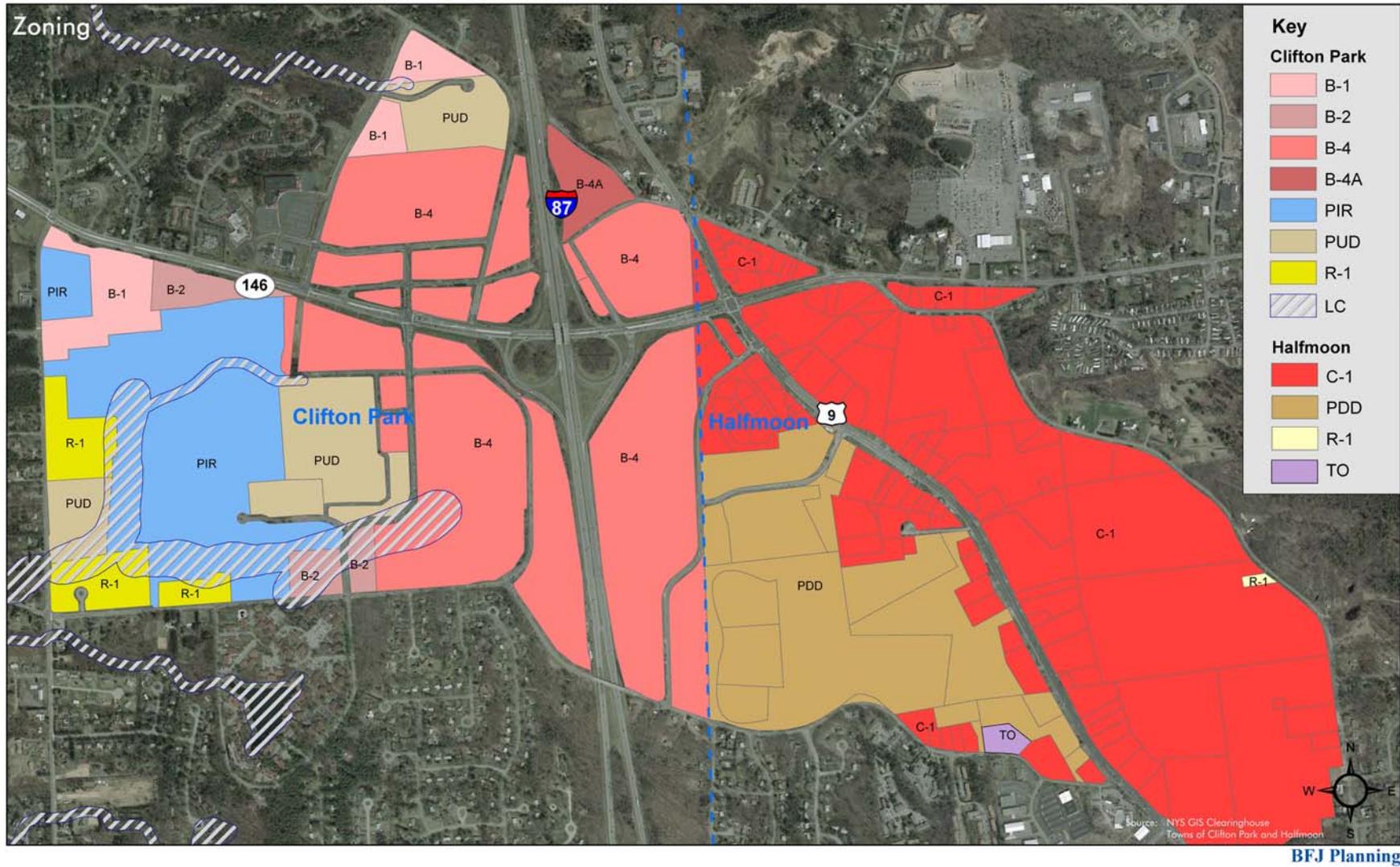
The Town of Halfmoon's zoning map identifies a large portion of land to the east as Agricultural/Residential. The Town has indicated its intent to limit the adverse impact of future development on its sensitive natural, environmental and cultural resources. It is suggested that these lands should be designated as sending areas for the TDR program, transferring the development rights from these peripheral areas to allow for more concentrated and compact development in the Exit 9 study area. This includes remaining large open spaces that could be designated as possible sending areas on a voluntary basis.

Lands within the study area are zoned for Commercial development (C-1); Residential development (R-1); and a Planned Development District (PDD). There is also a small parcel of Town Owned (TO) land within the study area. It is suggested that these lands are designated as receiving areas.

The attached figure shows the existing zoning districts in the study area. The TDR overlay district could cover all zones except for the LC district.

# EXIT 9 LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION STUDY

## ZONING DISTRICTS IN EXIT 9 STUDY AREA



# EXIT 9 LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION STUDY

## EXIT 9 LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION PLAN Transfer of Development Rights



BFJ Planning

### C. Recommended TDR Mechanisms and Incentives

#### *TDR Overlay District*

A TDR Overlay District may be implemented in the identified receiving areas to:

- Allow for higher densities and greater mix of uses.
- Allow site coverage to increase from 50% to 70% average (i.e. 40% increase in development).
- Reduce the green space requirement\*.
- Allow shared parking or off-site parking.

\* Prior to reducing portions of green or open space, underutilized paved areas should be eliminated first. Higher density design, quality design and the importance of visual appeal (i.e. quality landscaped areas) at strategic locations in the study area are not mutually exclusive concepts. Quality design of existing and proposed developments in the study area should coincide with the design concepts proposed for the landscaped boulevards and complete streets. The visual appeal of streets and their adjacent properties is instrumental in accomplishing the overall vision of this study.

#### *Traffic Generation and Developer Incentives*

The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) provides a substantial database that allows us to calculate traffic generation equivalencies of various land uses. It is proposed that the weekday traffic generation rate be used as an equivalency factor between alternate uses.

Table 1 shows how the development rights of single-family homes in the sending areas could be converted to other uses in the receiving areas based on daily traffic generation. This table can be further expanded for other uses that are surveyed by ITE.

In addition to the traffic generation equivalency we propose to use a multiplying factor that takes into consideration the desirability of converting outlying sprawling growth into concentrated mixed-use developments. We recommend that a range of multiplying factors be used from a minimum of 2 to a maximum of 10. This allows the Town Board, who has to approve the transfer, to use their policy

prerogative, to encourage certain uses more than others. For instance, if a developer applies to convert 20 single family homes from the sending area into townhouses in the receiving area, the Town Board may allow a multiplying factor of 5, but if the applicant proposes to convert the 20 single family homes into affordable townhouses or townhouses for seniors the Board may allow a multiplying factor of 8 or 10. The multiplying factor takes the following into consideration:

- The fact that in a denser mixed-use environment actual traffic generation rates are lower than the typical ITE rates. The ITE rates are based on single-use suburban conditions. Some of the automobile trips in the suburban condition become pedestrian trips in town centers and thus reduce traffic impacts and add to the local vitality.
- The desirability of the uses created in the receiving zone, including the social benefits (e.g. providing housing needed for certain population segments), the economic benefits (adding to the synergy and level of activities) and environmental benefits (greater activity at lower environmental costs).
- The desirability of preserving the specific sending areas, i.e. the environmental and economic value related to maintain certain areas in a natural state, maintaining agricultural activities, maintaining view sheds, etc.
- The market conditions, i.e. the value of the additional development for the applicant in the receiving zone versus the value of single-family home development for the property owner in the sending areas.

The elected officials can express the desirability of the transfer and conversion by deciding on the multiplying factor. The factor should range from 2 to 10.

Table 1: TDR Transfer Mechanism

TDR Transfer Mechanism from Single-Family Homes to Other Uses			
	<i>Weekday Traffic Generation Rate</i>	<i>Per</i>	
<i>Single-Family Detached Home</i>	9.57	Dwelling unit	
<i>Townhouse</i>	5.86	Dwelling unit	
<i>Office</i>	11.01	1,000 sq. ft.	
<i>Shopping Center</i>	42.94	1,000 sq. ft.	
<i>Supermarket</i>	102.24	1,000 sq. ft.	
Traffic Equivalency Factor of One Single-Family Detached Home			
	<i>Weekday Traffic Generation Rate</i>	<i>Per</i>	
<i>One single-family detached home is equivalent to:</i>	1.63	Dwelling units /Townhouse	
	869	sq. ft. Office	
	223	sq. ft. Shopping Center	
	94	sq. ft. Supermarket	
Range of TDR Equivalencies of One Single-Family Detached Home			
	<i>Multiplying Factor</i>		
	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>
<i>Dwelling Units/ Townhouse</i>	3.3	8.2	16.3
<i>Sq. ft. Office</i>	1,738	4,346	8,692
<i>Sq. Ft. Shopping Center</i>	446	1,114	2,229
<i>Sq. ft. Supermarket</i>	187	468	936

BFJ Planning, 2008

Both Town codes should allow off-site parking and shared parking subject to approval by the Planning Board. Shared parking takes advantage of the fact that peak parking demands for different land uses occur at different time periods. For instance, peak parking for office buildings occurs on weekdays from 9 am to 12 noon; and to a lesser degree, movie theaters and restaurants have their peak hours outside these periods (from 2 pm to 5 pm) and shopping centers peak on Saturdays. By combining and sharing the parking facility, a significant savings in paved area can be achieved. Table 2 presents potential zoning amendments for the TDR Overlay District. Table 3 shows a typical calculation for shared parking. In this particular example, the summation of the code requirements would total almost 1,500 spaces whereas the shared parking yields a total of 1,042 spaces, a savings of 30%.

Table 2: Potential Amendments to Current Zoning Regulations for TDR Overlay District

Zoning District		Existing Zoning Regulations	Potential TDR Overlay District Regulations
<b><i>CLIFTON PARK</i></b>			
B-1 and B-2: Business Non-Retail Districts	Maximum lot coverage	50%	70%
	Maximum building height	35 feet	50 feet
	Minimum green space	50%	30%
B-4: Highway Business District	Maximum building height	35 feet	50 feet
	Minimum green space	35%	30%
B-4A: Highway Business/ Restricted Retail District	Maximum gross floor area for retail establishment	30,000 sq. ft.	60,000 sq. ft.
	Minimum green space	35%	30%
PIR: Public/ Institutional/ Recreations Districts	Maximum building height	35 feet	50 feet
	Minimum green space	45%	30%
R-1: Residential 1 District	Minimum land area per dwelling: With central sewer and water With central sewer only Without central sewer and water	20,000 sq. ft. 30,000 sq. ft. 40,000 sq. ft.	+ 20%

Table 2: Potential Amendments to Current Zoning Regulations for TDR Overlay District (*continued*)

Zoning District		Existing Zoning Regulations	Potential TDR Overlay District Regulations
<b>CLIFTON PARK</b>			
Parking	Minimum stall size	9 ft. x 18 ft.	9 ft. x 18 ft. short-term; 8.5 ft. x 18 ft. long-term
<b>HALFMOON</b>			
C-1: Commercial District	Maximum building lot coverage	50%	60%
	Maximum building height	35 feet	50 feet
	Minimum green space	20%	15%
R-1: Residential District	Minimum lot size: Single family-public sewer and water Single family-public sewer or water Single family-no utilities  Two family-public sewer and water Two family-public sewer or water Two family-no utilities	20,000 sq. ft. 30,000 sq. ft. 40,000 sq. ft.  30,000 sq. ft. 40,000 sq. ft. 50,000 sq. ft.	+ 20%
	Maximum building lot coverage	20% (30% two family-no utilities or farm)	+ 20%
Parking	Minimum stall size	10 ft. x 20 ft. standard (9 ft. x 20 ft. for infrequent use)	9 ft. x 18 ft. short-term; 8.5 ft. x 18 ft. long-term

Table 3 shows a typical shared parking calculation.

Table 3: Typical Shared Parking Calculation

Building Use	Size  1000 Sq. Ft. or Dwelling Units	Peak Parking		Weekday AM (10-11)		Weekday Lunch (12- 2)		Weekday PM (3-4)		Weekday Evening (7-8)		Weekday Night (11pm- 6am)		Saturday Midday (12-2)	
		Ratio	Spaces	% Present	Cars	% Present	Cars	% Present	Cars	% Present	Cars	% Present	Cars	% Present	Cars
Retail	117.6	4.01	472	70%	330	85%	401	75%	354	80%	377	0%	-	100%	472
School	49.0		70	100%	70	100%	70	100%	70	5%	4	0%	-	5%	4
Restaurant	10.0	10.1	101	30%	30	75%	76	50%	51	100%	101	10%	10	75%	76
Health Club	33.0	5.19	171	70%	120	50%	86	75%	128	90%	154	0%	-	75%	128
Medical Office	40.0	3.53	141	100%	141	85%	120	95%	134	20%	28	0%	-	20%	28
Office	18.5	2.84	53	100%	53	85%	45	90%	47	10%	5	5%	3	20%	11
Residential	156.0	1.20	187	45%	84	45%	84	45%	84	70%	131	100%	187	60%	112
Cinema	1,200	30.0	302	0%	-	0%	-	20%	60	80%	242	80%	242	50%	151
<b>Total</b>			<b>1,497</b>		<b>828</b>		<b>881</b>		<b>929</b>		<b>1,042</b>		<b>442</b>		<b>982</b>

- Notes:**
1. The peak parking ratio represents the amount of parking that would have to be supplied if each use was built independently on its own lot. In this case we use the average ratios given for each use by the ITE publication "Parking Generation" 3rd Edition, 2004 and adjust these ratios for the modal split.
  2. The percentages for the presence of each peak parking demand by time period are based on "Shared Parking" by the Urban Land Institute 2005 Second Edition, "Parking Generation" 3rd Edition, Institute of Transportation Engineers, 2004, and on BFJ experience.

APPENDIX C

Exit 9 Land Use and Transportation Study  
Summary of Second Planning Workshop

Towns of Clifton Park and Halfmoon

Wednesday June 4th, 2008



Prepared by

**BFJ Planning**

June 9, 2008

## Introduction

The second public workshop for the Exit 9 Land Use and Transportation study was held on Wednesday June 4, 2008 at the Clifton Park Senior Center. The study is undertaken for the towns of Clifton Park and Halfmoon and is sponsored by the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC) with the following goals/objectives:

- Manage and optimize the performance of the transportation system;
- enhance conditions for all travel modes;
- improve quality of life and community character;
- strengthen the commercial vitality of the center;
- enhance aesthetics and create a clear identity for the study area;
- minimize paved surfaces;
- strengthen the ties between Clifton Park and Halfmoon; and
- prepare a realistic plan that can be implemented.

The purpose of the second workshop was to present the recommendations and potential improvement strategies of the Exit 9 Land Use Transportation Study conducted by BFJ Planning, and to brainstorm issues and opportunities and gather feedback from the citizens and stakeholders living and working in the area. The first public workshop was held on January 23, 2008, in the Town of Halfmoon and focused on existing conditions, issues, and opportunities in the study area.

At the second workshop the public was asked for their reactions to the Exit 9 Plan's potential improvement strategies, for their opinions on what works or does not work, what needs improvement, what they like or don't like about the improvement strategies, what changes they would like to see and finally, for any additional ideas or comments in relation to the study. The workshop was interactive and designed to elicit public response. Approximately 40 people participated, the majority of whom were residents and/or business owners in Clifton Park and Halfmoon.

The workshop began with an address by Jennifer Viggiani, the Open Space Coordinator for the Town of Clifton Park's Planning Department. Sandy Misiewicz outlined CDTC's role in the study process and Lindsay Zepko, a Planner for the Town of Halfmoon,

provided an introduction to the reasons for the study, the role of the advisory committee and the purpose of the workshop. The Planning Director of the Town of Clifton Park, John Scavo, then welcomed the participants and thanked them for taking part in this important community activity. Following these introductory addresses, Georges Jacquemart, a principal at BFJ Planning made a PowerPoint presentation. The presentation included slides displaying the methods for creating a “town centre” with multiple uses and activities where people can live, work, shop and enjoy cultural activities; a recap of the study goals and objectives; and the guiding principles of the study, which consist of connecting land use and transportation decisions, integrating sustainable land use planning, creating complete streets, alternative parking strategies, and appropriate design standards and guidelines. Strategies were presented to reduce congestion and improve traffic flow and safety, including synchronizing traffic lights, creating raised and landscaped medians, introducing roundabouts, expanding local road networks, improving and developing pedestrian and bicycle paths and networks, upgrading park and ride facilities and bus routes, utilizing mixed use development, establishing a transfer of development rights program, and minimizing underutilized open space and impervious surfaces.

### **Round Table Discussions**

After a short break, participants separated into four groups for round table discussions. Each group was presented with a list of the potential improvement strategies (see below) and were asked to rate each strategy from 1, most favored to 5, least favored, and to prioritize each strategy as a short-, medium- or long-term action. Representatives from the consultant team assisted the tables to help facilitate the discussions.

### **Improvement Strategies to Grade for Round Table Discussions**

#### *Route 146*

- Synchronize traffic lights
- Create a raised landscaped median
- Roundabouts to improve traffic flow
- Create a ‘Complete Street’ (sidewalks and bicycle paths on both sides)

*Route 9*

- Access management for commercial sites: consolidation of driveways, and interconnections
- Synchronize traffic lights
- Create a raised landscaped median
- Roundabouts to improve traffic flow
- Create a 'Complete Street' (sidewalks and bicycle paths on both sides)

*Sitterly Road*

- Create a protected left turn lane from Sitterly Road to Woodin Road
- Continue shared use trail from Moe Road to Route 9 – improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities
- Roundabout at intersection of Clifton Park Center Road, the Mall and Sitterly Road

*New Road Extensions*

- Maxwell Drive extension to Clifton Park Center Road
- Moe Road (school) to Maxwell Drive extension (north road)
- Moe Road (library) to Maxwell Drive extension (south road)
- Old Plank Road across I-87
- Old Plant Road to Route 9
- Birch Briar Village extension to Plant Road
- Sitterly Road extension to Plant Road

*I-87 Interchange*

- Provide bicycle lanes, sidewalks and lighting on both sides of Route 146 under the I-87 interchange

*Transit Improvements*

- Provide Route 9 bus route
- Expand park & ride lot served by buses at Fire Road
- Promote park & ride facilities (Signage, schedules at the Crossings and Fire Road)

*Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements*

- Provide a continuous network of pedestrian sidewalks, bicycle lanes and shared use trails throughout both Towns
- Pedestrian/ bicycle underpass under I-87 connecting two malls (Clifton Park Center and The Crossings)
- Pedestrian/ bicycle overpass north of interchange at Old Plank / Old Route 146
- Provide marked crosswalks and bicycle crossings at all major intersections
- Provide bicycle racks at The Crossings Mall and Clifton Park Center

*Gateways*

- Create gateways

*Land-Use Strategies*

- Increase densities and greater mix in commercial areas
- Better design standards
- Transfer of development rights
- Commercial strip redevelopment

## Workshop Participation Comments

The following is a summary of the presentations that were made by each of the four groups.

### Group 1:

#### Route 146 & Route 9

- Traffic lights need to be synchronized in the short-term
- Complete Streets are a good thing, create in the short-term, but they require appropriate signage for all the different uses (vehicle, buses, bikers, pedestrians)
- Concerned with size of roundabout, needs to be large to accommodate larger vehicles (trucks, etc.)

#### Sitterly Road

- Need a traffic signal timing study for AM & PM peak hours
- Consider traffic sensors and turn lanes
- Complete Streets are a good thing, but require appropriate signage for all the different uses (vehicle, buses, bikers, pedestrians)

#### New Road Extensions

- Old Plant Road- no additional traffic needed
- Eliminate the Y in the traffic road pattern and continue extension all the way to 146 direct
- Make East End of Plant Road (go out to Route 146 from bend of the road) a dead end

#### Ideas and Comments

- Where is Town's escrow money (\$90K from Lowes)?!?!
- Create meeting, gathering place, picnic/sitting area, bicycle racks, trees & flowers, in the open green space between stores at the new mall parking area

## Group 2

### Route 146

- Synchronizing lights are a priority and should happen in the short-term
- Concerns about how a raised median will handle snow storage and the needed funding to maintain a raised/planted median
- Crosswalks at the raised medians are important
- Don't give up turning lanes
- Apprehensive about roundabouts, require further consideration

### Route 9

- Access management is important because of all the congestion
- Synchronizing lights are a priority and should happen in the short-term
- Complete streets are positive and should happen in the short-term
- Apprehensive about roundabouts, need to review where on Route 9 they are proposed
- Concerns about how a raised median will handle snow storage and the needed funding to maintain a raised/planted median

### Sitterly Road

- Creating the left turn lane is a priority, looking at side roads for people to avoid center
- Continue the pedestrian/bicycle trail- especially along Northway Mall
- Connecting bike trail is a priority
- Mixed feelings towards roundabout- note that is a large intersection
- Improve Woodin Road in the short-term

### New Road Extensions

- Old Plank Road across I-87- concerned about road extension near school and residential neighborhoods near Clifton Park Center and Moe Road
- Moe Road (library) to Maxwell Drive extension (south road)- design it as a service road, some concerns about connections, not feasible as it is in a school district

I-87 Interchange

- Bicycle and walking lanes are a top priority, short-term

Transit Improvements

- Route 9 bus route is NOT needed
- Make bus passes cheaper

Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements

- Trails and sidewalks should ONLY be improved on existing roads, Moe & Maxwell- north-side (need connection to new malls) are high priorities and should be done in the short-term
- Important to improve bike trails and bike trail connections on Route 9
- Prefer tunnels (underpasses) to bridges, a medium-term priority

Ideas and Comments

- Bicycle uses are a TOP PRIORITY

**Group 3**

Route 146

- Creating the complete street is an important short-term priority to better manage the heavy traffic and share multi-modal traffic
- Creating a raised landscaped median is less important, but the median as a pedestrian refuge is important

Route 9

- Access management is an important short-term priority, need to consolidate driveways, which are a big problem
- Creating a raised landscaped median is less important
- Creating the complete street is a short-term priority

#### Sitterly Road

- Shared use trail from Moe road to Route 9 is important, and improve connectivity between the trails

#### New Road Extensions

- Prohibit development near adjoining areas off of Moe Road
- Old Plank road across I-87 is a good extension, first priority
- Create a centre bike loop on outer circle of study, this would provide a loop for locals who prefer avoiding the main highways
- Maxwell Drive to Clifton Park Center Road is the second priority

#### I-87 Interchange

- Bicycle lanes and sidewalks are an important short term priority

#### Transit Improvements

- Public transportation is needed on Route 9
- Provide bike racks at park and ride facilities

#### Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements

- Align lanes in existing facilities
- Pedestrian areas at all "Main Street" corridors
- Pedestrian/bike improved connections is an important short-term priority
- Better pedestrian signage on highways is important

Land-Use Strategies

- Make immediate provisions for mixed-use zoning
- TDR is an important short-term priority

Ideas and Comments

- Create an Exit 9A at Kinns road to take pressure off Exits 9 and 10
- Create Single Point Urban Interchange (SPUI) at Exit 9
- Create a commuter rail in the future
- Prohibit development near adjoining areas off of Moe Road, don't want another commercial corridor, instead create a Town Center

**Group 4**

Route 146

- Important to synchronize traffic lights
- Medians and roundabouts are not priorities
- Complete streets are good here

Route 9

- Complete streets are not important here, because it is a vehicles centric road
- Consolidating driveways is important, but it is a long-term goal
- Synchronizing lights are important and a short-term goal

Sitterly Road

- Short term priorities are left turn lanes and bicycle trail connections

#### New Road Extensions

- Maxwell Drive to Clifton Park Center Road, Old Plank Road across I-87, and Sitterly road to Plant Road are all good extensions, and medium-term goals
- Chose EITHER Moe Road (school) to Maxwell Drive (north road) or Moe Road (library to Maxwell Drive (south road) extensions, don't need both extensions

#### I-87 Interchange

- Bike lane is a good idea, but a long-term/low priority

#### Transit Improvements

- Bus line on Route 9 is a good idea, but a long-term/low priority

#### Gateways

- Not important

#### Land-Use Strategies

- Concerned that increased density and greater mix will create too much of a city atmosphere

#### Ideas and Comments

- Missing a new I-87 interchange, Exit 9A underpass

## Conclusion

A number of ideas emerged from the round table discussions, which will be taken into consideration while finalizing the Exit 9 Land Use and Transportation Study report. The participants approved of the overall scope of the study, but they expressed preferences for specific recommendations. All of the groups approved of the complete streets proposal and most of the groups preferred a short-term timeframe. Another recommendation that received general support was improving pedestrian and bicycle connectivity within the communities. Finally, almost all groups identified the need for coordination and synchronization of the traffic lights along all routes.

Creating a raised landscaped medium received mixed reviews. Some participants felt it would be an effective way to improve safety and congestion, while others felt it would be an unnecessary aesthetic expense. However, most of the groups did approve of utilizing the medians as a safety haven for pedestrian crossings. Another element that met with controversy was the implementation of roundabouts. Some participants understood the value in the roundabout as a traffic calming measure and safety improvement, while others were uncomfortable and resistant to the concept and requested that additional research be conducted before integrating them into the Towns' traffic plan.

The overall concept of improving road connectivity was supported, but specific road extensions were more accepted than others. The Maxwell Drive extension to Clifton Park Center Road and the Old Plank Road extension across I-87 received the highest ratings and the extensions along Moe Road and Old Plant Road received the lowest ratings in the round table survey forms. While the community wants to improve road connectivity, they are concerned that the extensions might end up increasing traffic, and consequently reducing safety, on smaller local roads.

Providing bicycle lanes, sidewalks and lighting on both sides of Route 146 under the I-87 interchange received unanimous support, with the most favored rating and the short-term time frame. Overall, improving the bicycle lanes and pedestrian sidewalks along Route 146, Route 9, Sitterly Road, Clifton Park Center, The Crossings and all major intersections received high ratings. Utilizing bicycle and pedestrian trails is an important part of the Towns' lifestyles and a priority for their transportation plan. One group even requested creating a loop on the outskirts of the study area in order to have a recreational path separate from the main roads, which could be enjoyed without the inconvenience and interference of vehicle congestion.

In contrast, creating a bus route along Route 9 received opposing reviews, and was rated with either the highest or lowest scores. This contrasting evaluation reflects the challenges of establishing a successful bus line within a low density, car dependent community. Increasing densities and a greater mix of uses in commercial areas received medium to low scores on the surveys, and the participants who spoke did not elaborate on their reasoning. Additionally, sufficient feedback was not given on the transfer of development rights plan; though two of the surveys gave the recommendation the highest rating (the other two surveys were left blank).