
**The Nassau Hub Study
Alternatives Analysis/
Environmental Impact Statement**

**Goals & Objectives
Technical Memorandum**

DRAFT FINAL

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Nassau County

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Version Control Sheet

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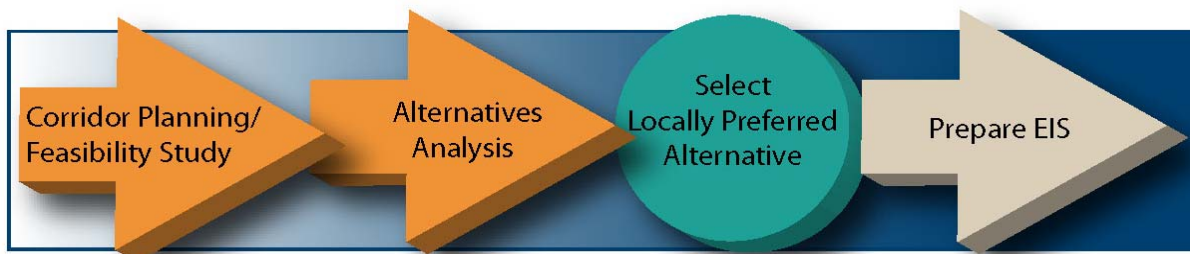
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Nassau Hub Study Overview

Nassau County has undertaken *The Nassau Hub Study Alternatives Analysis/Environmental Impact Statement (AA/EIS)* to define new transportation options and identify land use strategies that will help promote economic development, create jobs in the Study Area and improve access and mobility, which, in turn, will enhance the overall quality of life for all Nassau County residents. The AA phase is expected to result in the selection of a Locally Preferred Alternative or Alternatives (LPA) or a system of near and long-term improvements. Following the selection of the LPA and with the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) concurrence, the potential environmental consequences and necessary impact mitigation required for implementation of the LPA will be evaluated pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) EIS process.

Transit projects seeking funding from the FTA New Starts or Small Starts program must follow a standard process (see Figure 1). New/Small Starts is the Federal funding program for new transit initiatives and Nassau County must follow a prescribed process to be eligible to receive these funds. An important early step in this standardized planning process is the preparation of an Alternatives Analysis (AA) that documents existing and future transportation problems, evaluates a range of potential alternatives to address those problems, and selects an LPA. An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is then prepared to fully disclose the potential impacts of the LPA on the human and natural environment. During both the AA and EIS processes, the public and other stakeholders are given frequent opportunities to review the analyses and provide comments and other input.

Figure 1-AA/EIS Process Flow Chart



1.2 Background

In 2003, the Nassau County Planning Department began efforts to position the County to be eligible for Federal grants related to improving, upgrading and extending the transit network within the County, specifically the Study Area. The results were documented in the 2006 *Nassau Hub Major Investment Study Final Report* (the MIS) that examined and analyzed the demographic, economic and transportation issues within an area known as the "Nassau Hub". The MIS concluded that the County should further study potential transit and related land use improvements, within the context of the FTA's project development process.

1.3 Document Purpose

This document defines the project goals and objectives derived from the project purpose and need, which are described in the Draft Purpose and Need Statement Technical Memorandum (October 2010). In turn, the project purpose and need were defined on the basis of the transportation and related problems documented in the Draft Problem Statement Technical Memorandum (October 2010). Finally, the criteria and measures that will be used to evaluate various transportation improvement alternatives that have the potential to address the project's purpose and need will be defined on the basis of these goals and objectives.

These goals and objectives will be reviewed through the public involvement and agency coordination process and will be refined to reflect public and agency input, as well as additional data and information that are obtained and generated during the AA/EIS process.

1.4 The Nassau Hub Study Area

1.4.1 Primary Study Area

The Nassau Hub Primary Study Area (Study Area) occupies an approximate 11.7 square-mile area in the heart of Nassau County, and is home to Hofstra University (existing campus and planned medical school), Nassau Community College, Museum Row, the Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum, the County Government Center, Nassau University Medical Center, Mitchel Field, Eisenhower Park, Roosevelt Field, and other notable County features (see Figures 2 and 3). Additionally, thousands of residents, employees, students and others live, work, or travel to, within and through the area. This crucial economic center, so vital to the future of Nassau County, has substantial traffic congestion, lacks efficient and direct transit choices and includes large areas of disjointed land use patterns. These factors have contributed to long commutes, decreased environmental quality, and overall difficulty in traveling to, from and within the area.

The Study Area has been established as the focus of this Study and is the area where it is anticipated that the majority of physical improvements associated with any given alternative may occur. During the MIS, a Study Area boundary was established based on the nexus of major roadways, transit stations and infrastructure, major land-use features and institutions and principal trip origins and/or destinations that might benefit from transit and mobility improvements. The MIS' Study Area northern boundary was located just to the north of the LIRR's Port Jefferson Branch, while the southern boundary was just to the south of Hempstead Turnpike. The western boundary ran along Rockaway Avenue and Cathedral Avenue, and the eastern boundary was Eisenhower Park. It included all or parts of the Villages of Mineola, Westbury, Garden City and Hempstead; the Hamlets of Carle Place and Uniondale; and the U.S. Census defined area of East Garden City. This area also included the Mineola, Carle Place, Westbury, Garden City, Country Life Press, and Hempstead LIRR stations; the Mineola Intermodal Center; the Rosa Parks – Hempstead Transit Center; and the Roosevelt Field Bus Transfer Facility. Finally, major roadways within these boundaries that serve both regional and local destinations include: the Meadowbrook State Parkway, Franklin Avenue, Clinton Road, Merrick Avenue, Hempstead Turnpike, Old Country Road, and Stewart Avenue.

The MIS Study Area boundary has been adopted as the starting point for this AA with one modification (see Figure 3). The eastern boundary has been extended to incorporate the Nassau University Medical Center's East Meadow campus that is immediately east of Eisenhower Park. It was determined that the Medical Center is integral to any consideration of improved transit because it is:

- a major provider of public healthcare;
- a major employer with existing transit-dependent users and visitors;
- a destination with significant expansion plans; and,
- a key location on Hempstead Turnpike and adjacent to the existing MIS Study Area boundary.

The Study Area boundary is not necessarily a hard and fast line. Rather, as the Study progresses with technical analyses and outreach to the public, stakeholders and government agencies, the boundaries may contract or expand if dictated by Study needs.

1.4.2 Preliminary Regional Study Area

A Preliminary Regional Study Area (Regional Study Area) has also been defined based on travel patterns, potential opportunities for connections among activity centers, and key economic development opportunities outside the Primary Study Area. Building on the conclusions of the MIS, coupled with a need to incorporate areas that have the greatest potential for economic development, boundaries have been established. These boundaries extend slightly north of Mineola along Jericho Turnpike, on the east to the Village of Bethpage along the Seaford Oyster Bay Expressway, on the south along Sunrise Highway, and to the west along Nassau Boulevard (see Figure 4). Beyond the features included in the Study Area, this area includes portions of the West Hempstead, Babylon and Ronkonkoma Branches of the LIRR; major roadways such as the Northern and Southern State Parkways, the Wantagh State Parkway, Routes 106/107, the Seaford Oyster Bay Expressway, Sunrise Highway and Jericho Turnpike; as well as major town centers such as the Hamlet of Hicksville and the Village of Freeport; and the former Grumman site in unincorporated Bethpage (currently undergoing redevelopment). The Regional Study Area was established to capture the context of the larger travel market to the Study Area.

As noted above for the Study Area, the boundary of the Regional Study Area may be modified if warranted by findings of the Study's technical analyses and/or input from the outreach process.

Figure 2-Regional Context for Study Areas

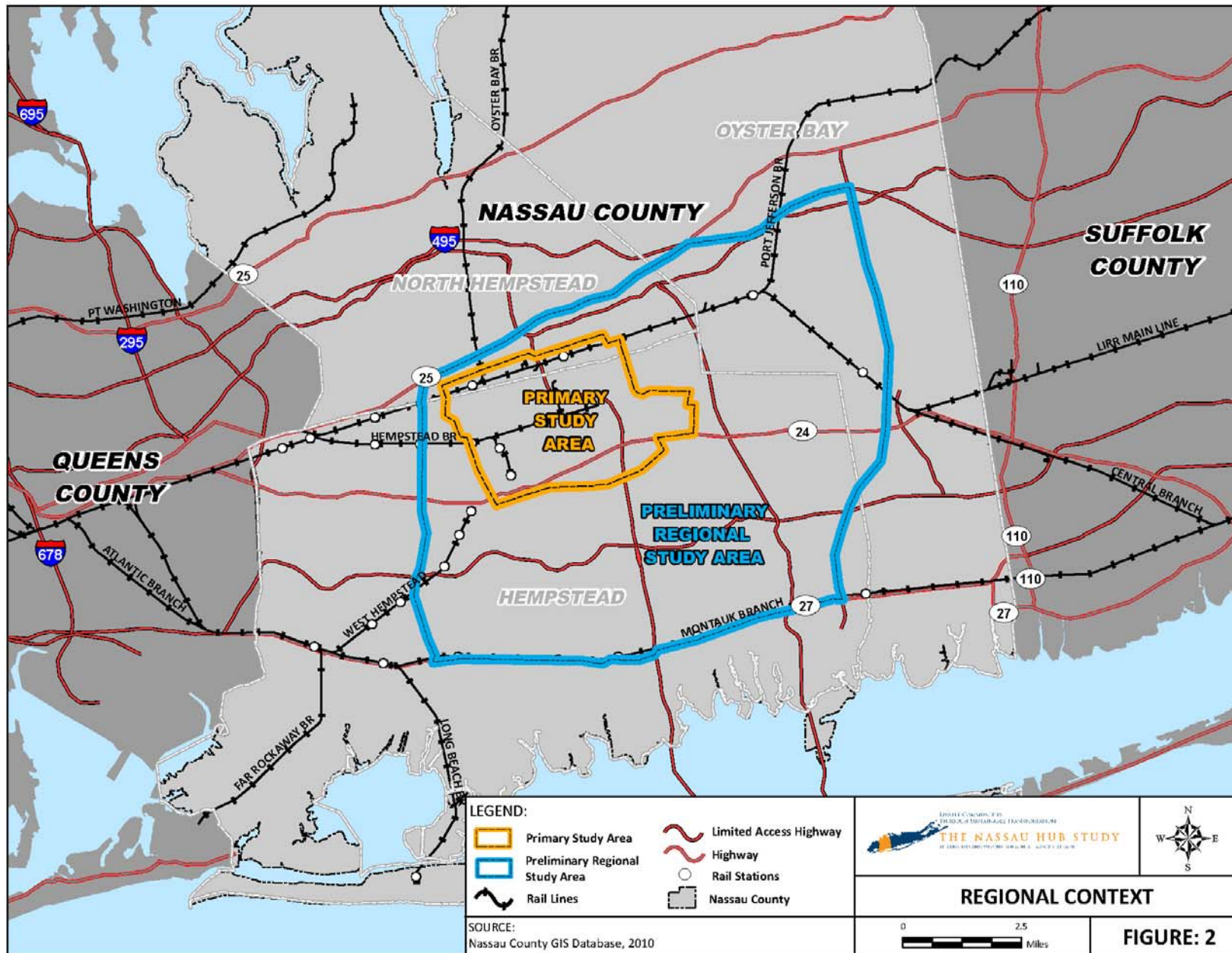


Figure 3-Primary Study Area

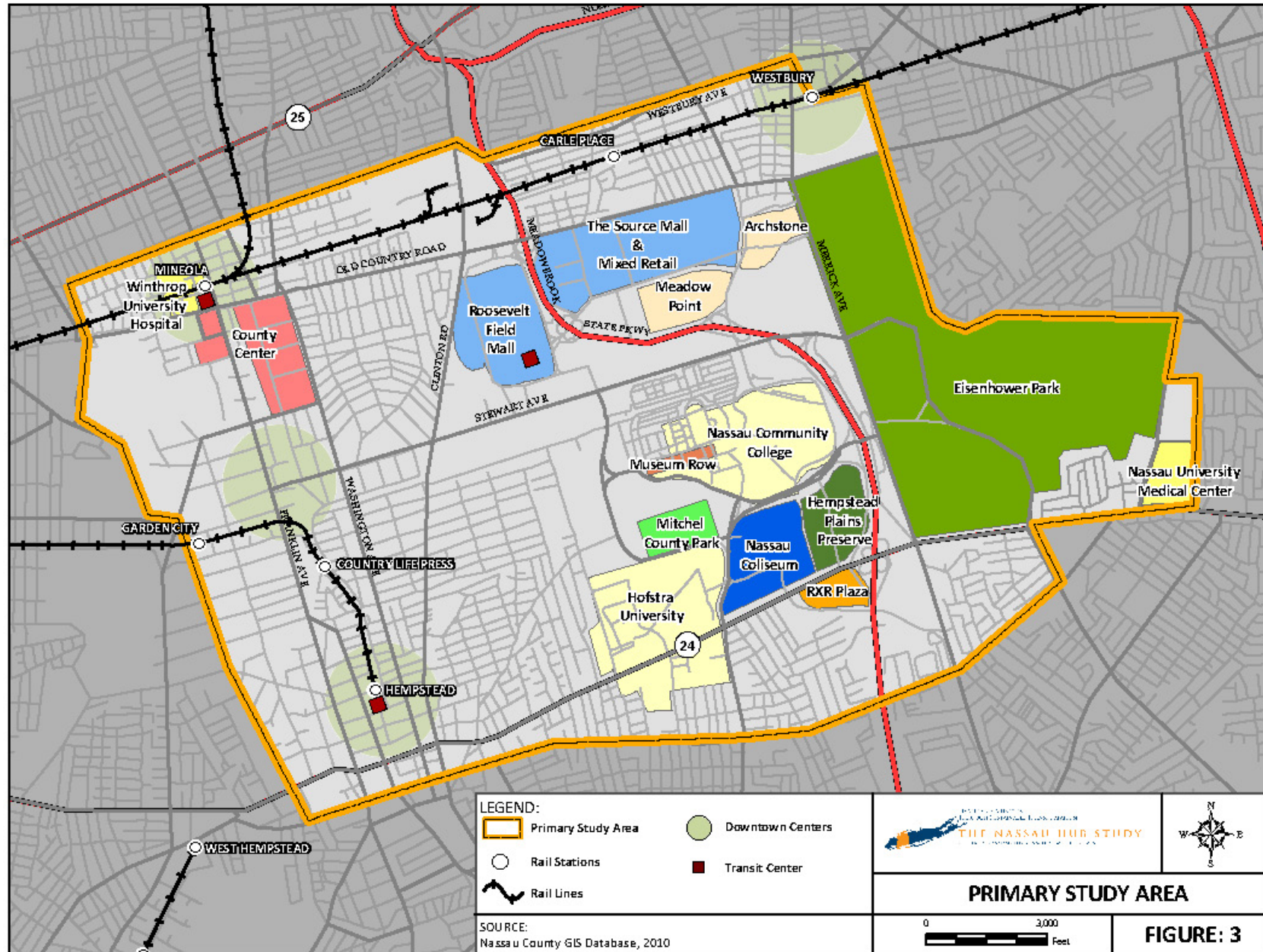
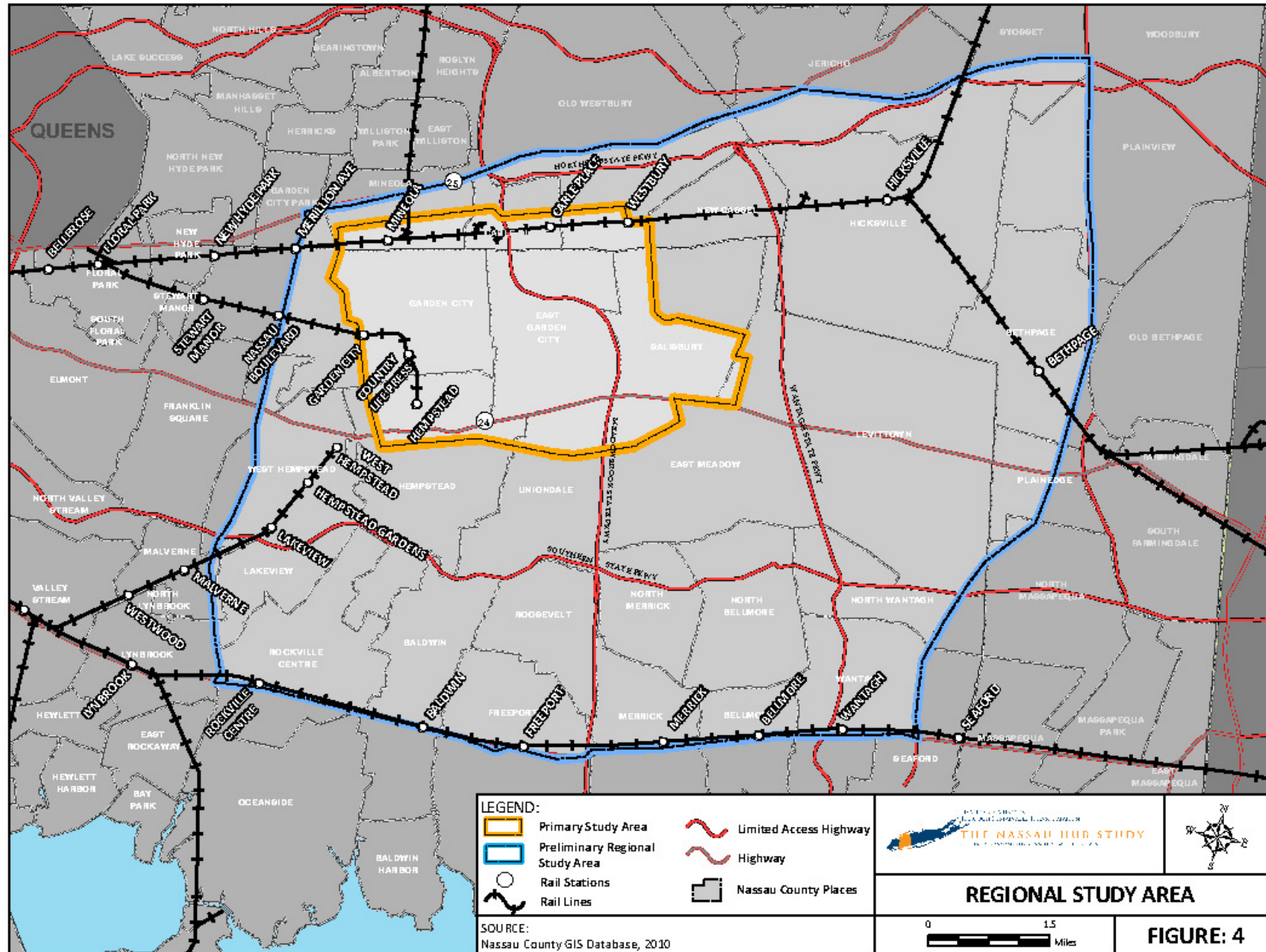


Figure 4-Preliminary Regional Study Area



2. GOALS

The following Study goals, outlined below, have been defined based on the project's purpose and need. These goals may be refined over the course of the AA/EIS process, based on feedback from stakeholders including the public, government agencies, and other interested parties.

- Develop transit improvements that will provide additional realistic and practical travel options to, from and within the Study Area and help to mitigate congestion on roadways in a cost-effective manner.
- Develop transit improvements that will enhance mobility to, from and within the Study Area in a cost-effective manner.
- Develop transit improvements that encourage the development of sustainable, transit-friendly land use patterns and support economic development activities.
- Develop transit improvements that enhance quality of life and minimize adverse environmental impact.
- Develop transit improvements that support and complement transit friendly and economically sustainable parking strategies.

The following table presents the needs from the Purpose and Need Statement and the corresponding goal that addresses each need. In some instances, needs address more than one individual goal.

Table 1-Goals by Associated Study Area Purpose and Need

GOAL	NEEDS
<p>Develop transit improvements that will provide additional realistic and practical travel options to, from and within the Study Area and help to mitigate congestion on roadways in a cost effective manner.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand transportation system capacity, routes, and connectivity. • Increase travel choice options. • Improve travel time reliability. • Improve transit access. • Identify locations where service expansion and contraction is required. • Better integrate LIRR into local and regional travel options. • Provide better off-peak and reverse-peak transit options. • Improve operational efficiency.
<p>Develop transit improvements that will enhance mobility to, from and within the Study Area in a cost-effective manner.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve transit access. • Identify locations where service expansion and contraction is required. • Better integrate LIRR into local and regional travel options. • Provide better off-peak and reverse-peak transit options. • Improve operational efficiency.
<p>Develop transit improvements that encourage the development of sustainable, transit-friendly land use patterns and support economic development activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve transit access. • Support transit-oriented economic development opportunities and land use plans.
<p>Develop transit improvements that enhance quality of life and minimize adverse environmental impact.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide better off-peak and reverse-peak transit options. • Support transit-oriented economic development opportunities and land use plans. • Improve environmental quality.
<p>Develop transit improvements that support and complement transit friendly and economically sustainable parking strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support transit-oriented economic development opportunities and land use plans. • Improve transit access. • Expand transportation system capacity, routes, and connectivity.

3. OBJECTIVES

Based on the goals for the project, a series of objectives has been identified:

GOAL: Develop transit improvements that will provide additional realistic and practical travel options to, from and within the Study Area and help to mitigate congestion on roadways in a cost effective manner.

OBJECTIVES:

- Reduce travel time and costs associated with congestion.
- Reduce dependence on the use of automobiles for trips to, from and within the Study Area.
- Increase public transportation options and use as a means of access to and from the Study Area.
- Increase public transportation options and use as a means of circulation within the Study Area.
- Develop a public transportation alternative that will attract new riders.
- Identify a transit alternative that is capable of growing and adapting to changes in the demand for service.
- Develop a transit alternative that takes advantage of the use of existing transportation infrastructure, where appropriate.
- Develop a transit alternative that encourages use of alternate transportation modes (walking, bicycling, carpool and other travel demand management methods) to travel by auto where practicable.

GOAL: Develop transit improvements that will enhance mobility to, from and within the Study Area in a cost-effective manner.

OBJECTIVES:

- Utilize a high quality, attractive transit vehicle technology.
- Develop a transit alternative that provides travel time savings compared to existing options.
- Develop a seamless, convenient and integrated regional transportation system.
- Develop transportation alternatives that attract transit-dependent and non-transit-dependent riders.
- Provide improved transit access to, from and within the Study Area.
- Locate transit to enhance the economic competitiveness of the Study Area, creating new job opportunities and supporting existing businesses.
- Expand the geographical capture area for Study Area employment centers by providing access to workers who are transit-dependent.
- Develop an alternative that will have a capital cost that is consistent with anticipated financial resources for construction.
- Develop an alternative that will have an operating and maintenance cost that can feasibly be funded annually with state and local resources.

- Develop an alternative that is capable of being funded for construction through traditional or alternative/innovative funding mechanisms.
- Develop an alternative that is capable of being funded for operation through traditional or alternative/innovative funding mechanisms.
- Explore alternatives that can be phased incrementally, consistent with available funding.

GOAL: Develop transit improvements that encourage the development of sustainable, transit-friendly land use patterns and support economic development activities.

OBJECTIVES:

- Develop a transit alternative that can be supported by local land use plans and development policies.
- Use transit to enable more compact land uses that could better support a transit-oriented development scenario.
- Use transit to promote mixed-use development as a means of discouraging auto-dependent, single-use patterns of development.
- Encourage redevelopment of underutilized parcels.
- Use transit to better serve existing activity centers.
- Accommodate proposed land uses and react to anticipated development growth in the Study Area in the future.
- Support development with a mix of uses that remains vibrant throughout the day and night.
- Address volume, availability and economics for the use of land for parking in the Study Area.
- Provide improved access to open space resources.
- Encourage uses at street level that will support a lively streetscape on a pedestrian scale with diverse activity in the vicinity of station areas.

GOAL: Develop transit improvements that enhance quality of life and minimize adverse environmental impact.

OBJECTIVES:

- Use transit as part of a regional approach to address congestion-related air quality concerns and regional air quality conformity.
- Use transit as part of a regional approach to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions.
- Develop a transit alternative(s) that mitigates overall energy consumption for trip making.
- Incorporate alternative fuels and energy sources into the transit alternative, as appropriate.
- Coordinate transit infrastructure and services with land use to promote sustainability and livability and enhance quality of life.

GOAL: Develop transit improvements that support and complement transit friendly and economically sustainable parking strategies.

OBJECTIVES:

- Encourage reduced parking ratios for developments that can be accessed via transit.
- Encourage the reduction, consolidation and relocation of surface and structured parking from transit accessible sites for the purpose of encouraging land uses that are more economically vibrant and sustainable.
- Encourage transit use and mitigate roadway congestion by creating regional parking facilities at major transit centers and other appropriate locations.

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4. NEXT STEPS

The goals and objectives identified in this Technical Memorandum will be used to develop the evaluation criteria and evaluation measures that will be used to screen the Study alternatives, ultimately leading to the selection of a locally preferred alternative.

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