

PUBLIC MEETING #2

Southern Middlesex County Freight Movement Study

April 17, 2023

WELCOME TO THE MEETING! TO ALLOW FOR THE MOST DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK, WE BEGIN WITH AN OPEN HOUSE SESSION, FOLLOWED BY A SLIDE PRESENTATION at **6:35**, AND CONCLUDING WITH A SECOND OPEN HOUSE SESSION.

DURING THE OPEN HOUSE, PLEASE VISIT EACH OF THE STATIONS WITH DISPLAY BOARDS TO SEE, DISCUSS, AND COMMENT ON DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE STUDY. RECOMMENDATIONS ARE ORGANIZED AROUND SIX THEMES: TRUCK ACCESS; NEIGHBORHOOD PROTECTION; WAYFINDING; TRUCK PARKING; WORKPLACE ACCESS; AND IMPLEMENTATION.

PUBLIC MEETING # 2

Southern Middlesex County Freight Movement Study

April 17, 2023

Meeting Goal and Agenda

- Goal: share draft recommendations and receive public feedback
- Agenda:
 - Initial Open House and Public Discussion
 - Presentation by Study Team
 - Study Overview
 - Public Engagement Results
 - Data Analysis Highlights
 - Draft Recommendations
 - Next Steps
 - Concluding Open House and Public Discussion

Project Team

Project Lead



Andrew Lappitt, PP/AICP, Project Manager
Mike Dannemiller, PE, Supervising Engineer

Project Partner



William Long,
Principal Planner, Subregional Studies

Project Support



Alan Meyers,
Project Manager
Carlos Bastida,
Deputy Project Manager



Anthony Durante, AICP/RSP
Senior Associate



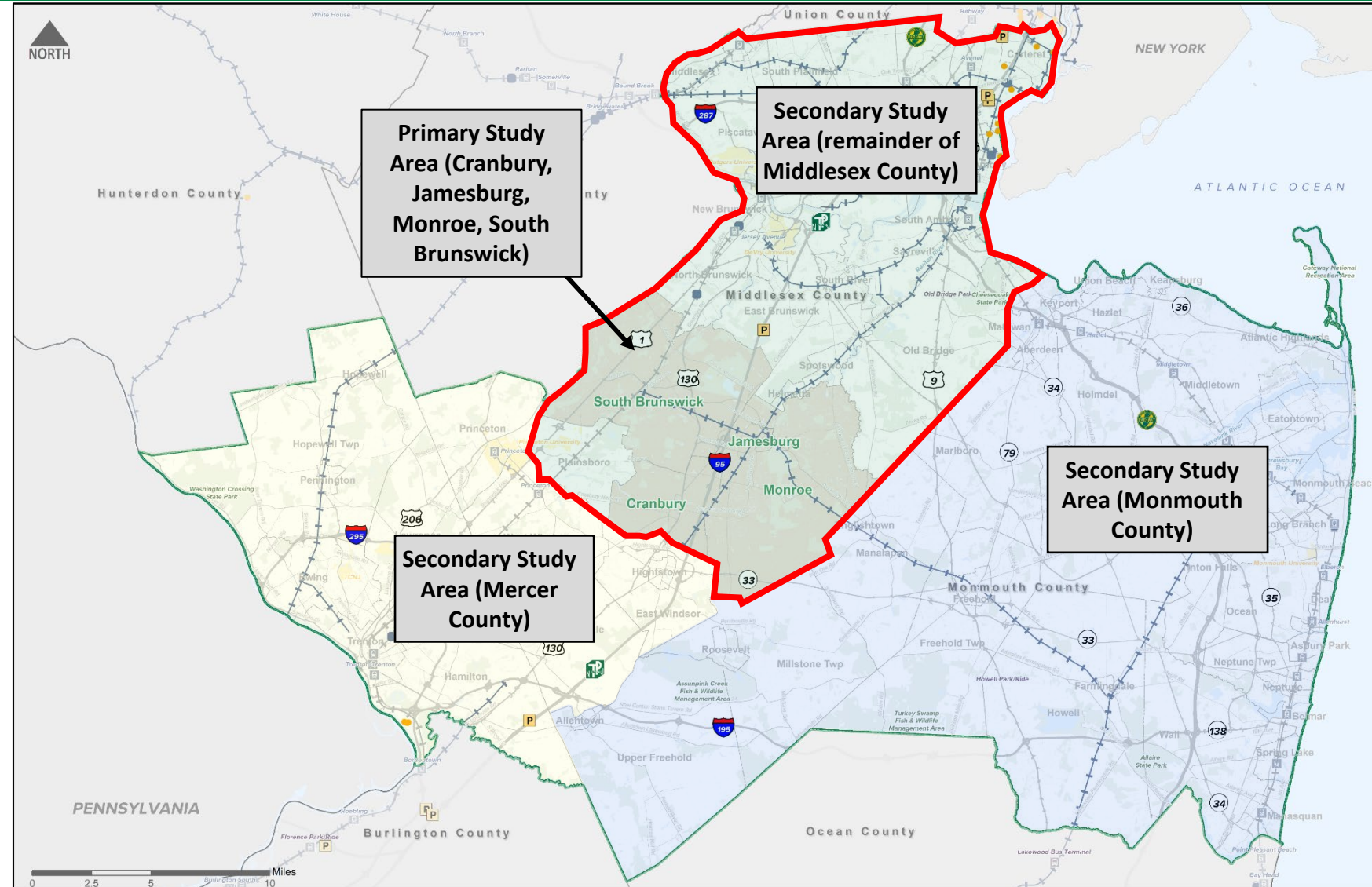
Ryan Walsh, AICP/PP
Community Engagement Manager
Hannah Brockhaus, AICP
Community Engagement Staff

Statement of Study Goals

- **Foster collaboration** among municipal partners, private industry, and regional entities, and build consensus for study recommendations.
- **Evaluate the existing transportation facilities (road and rail)** used for regional and local freight movement within, to, and from the primary and secondary study areas.
- **Identify potential routing alternatives for trucks** to remove negative impacts to local communities within the primary study area, avoiding environmentally sensitive lands and conservation areas.
- **Identify potential improvements to existing road and rail facilities** to address congestion, safety, multi-modal mobility, accessibility, traffic operations, and impacts of regional traffic on local communities.
- **Identify recommendations to improve job access for logistics industry workers** within the study area.
- **Fairly distribute the benefits and burdens of study recommendations.** Avoid recommendations that cause a disproportionate burden on environmental justice communities.

Study Areas

- Primary Study Area (focus of recommendations)
 - Cranbury, Jamesburg, Monroe, South Brunswick
- Secondary Study Area (considered in data collection/analysis)
 - Remainder of Middlesex County
 - Mercer County
 - Monmouth County



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT FEEDBACK TO DATE

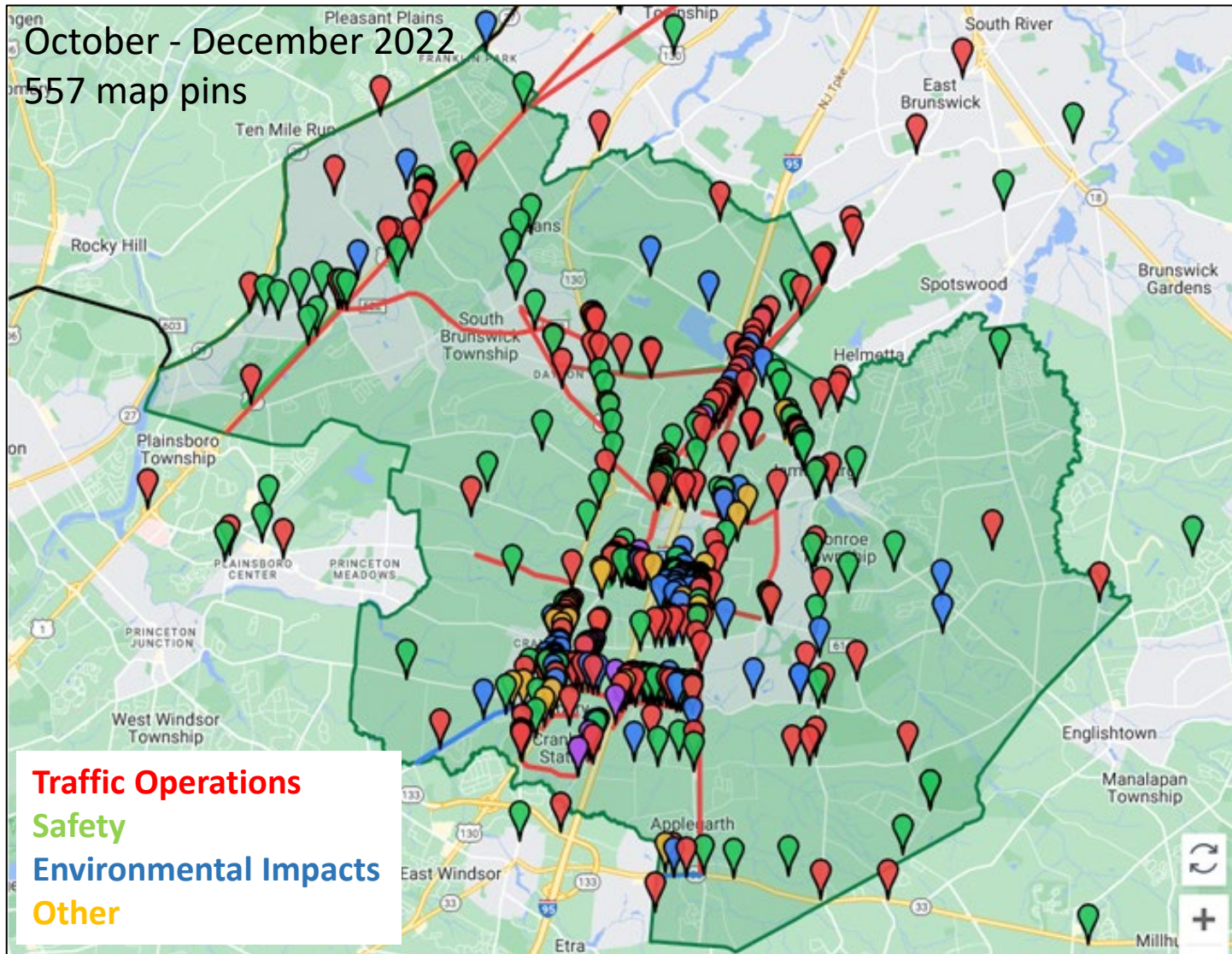
Public Meeting Take-Aways

Nearly 100 attendees
December 7, 2022
Monroe Senior Center



- Perception that the area has been overdeveloped
- Truck traffic should be more separated from residential traffic
- Many residents feel burdened by traffic safety and noise from trucks
- Attendees offered 100+ comments and suggestions on maps at breakout stations – these were considered in developing the recommendations

Survey/Map Feedback



- 361 recommendations
 - Truck restrictions (79)
 - Road widening/turn lanes (48)
 - Policy, new roads/traffic pattern changes, signals, enforcement, operations, signage (>25 each)
 - Bike/ped facilities, noise barriers, other (>9 each)

Industry Interview Feedback

■ Interviews/comments from:

- Truck customers/operators
 - Amazon, UPS, Hermann Distribution, Wakefern, NJ Motor Truck Association
- Rail operators
 - Norfolk Southern, CSX, Delaware and Raritan RR
- Real estate developers/advisors
 - Forsgate Partners, ProLogis, Federal Business Centers, Avison Young
- NJ Turnpike (specific to draft recommendations involving NJTP)

■ Key themes

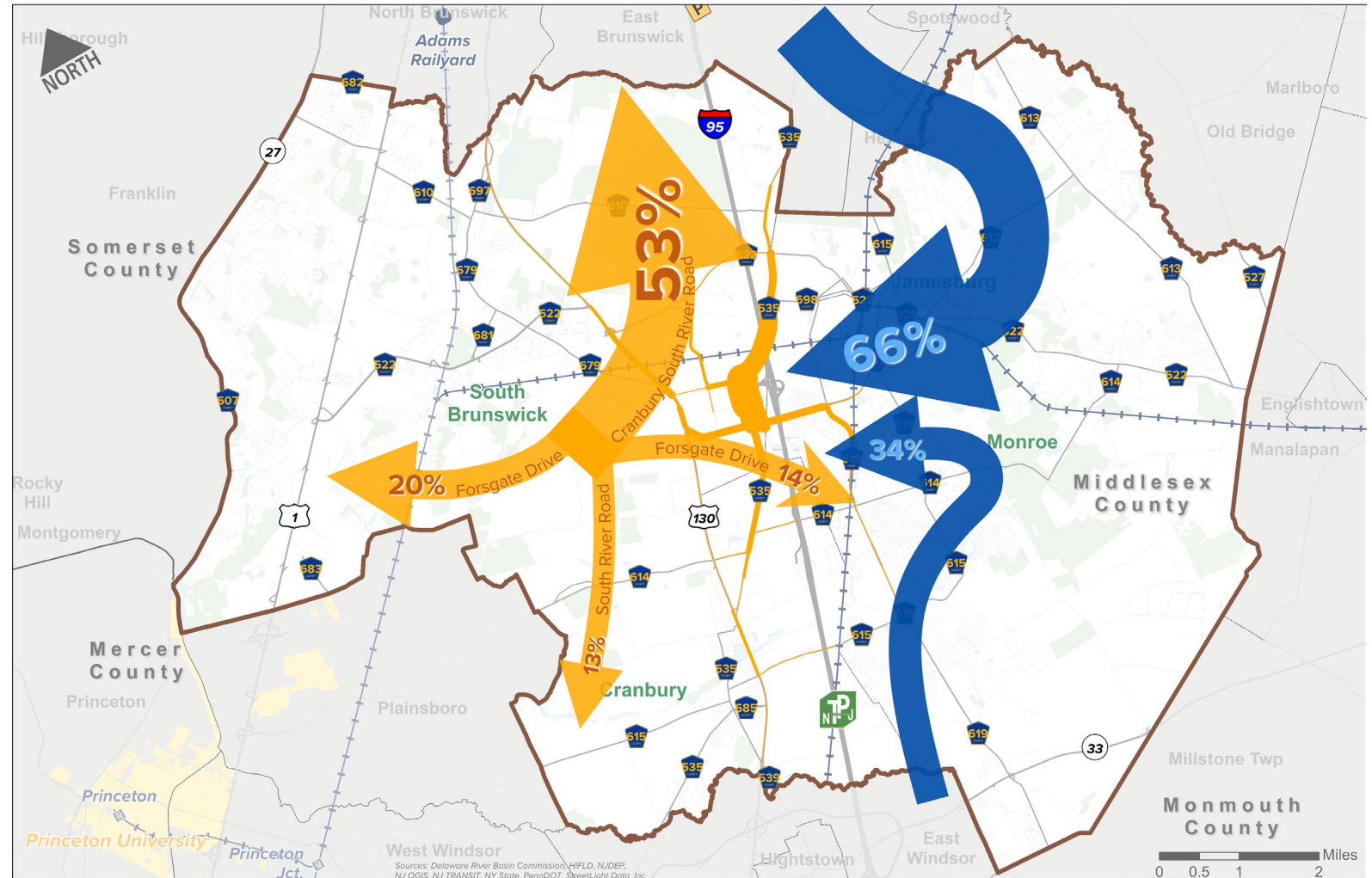
- Primary Study Area has generally acceptable truck congestion, safety, etc. but trucks usually follow the fastest non-restricted route
- Truck parking needs are more short-term (for early arrivals) than long-term (overnights)
- Limited opportunity for modal diversion to rail
- Watch for growth along NJ 33 Corridor impacting the southeast portion of Primary Study Area
- **Alignment of industry and community**
 - Reducing congestion on industrial access roads and especially around 8A should reduce the need for use of neighborhood roads

DATA ANALYSIS HIGHLIGHTS

Interchange 8A Trucks and Local Trip Patterns

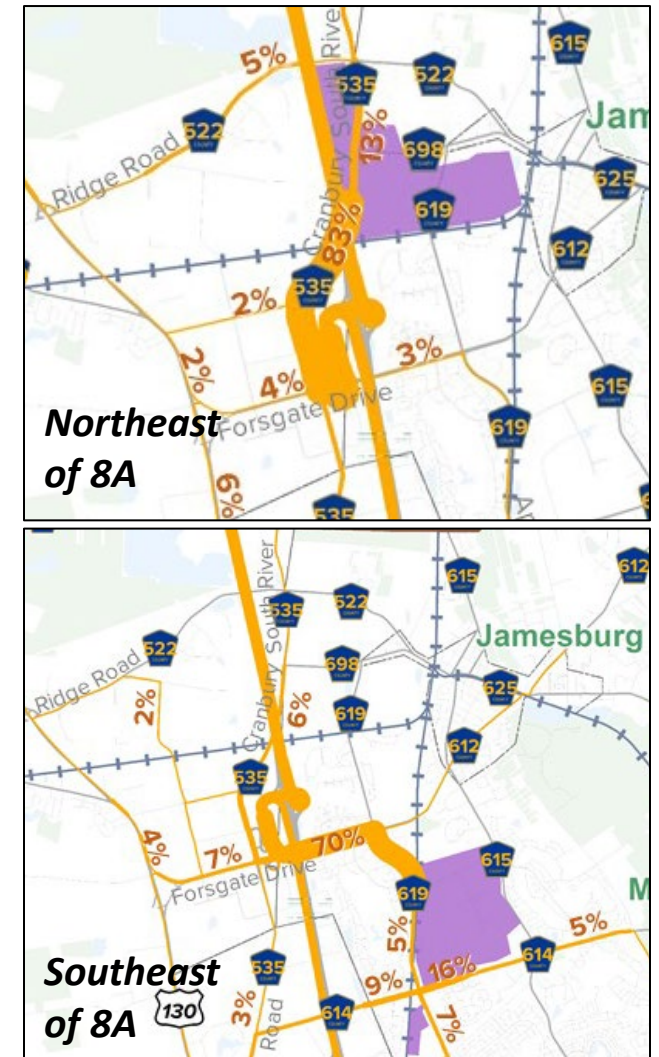
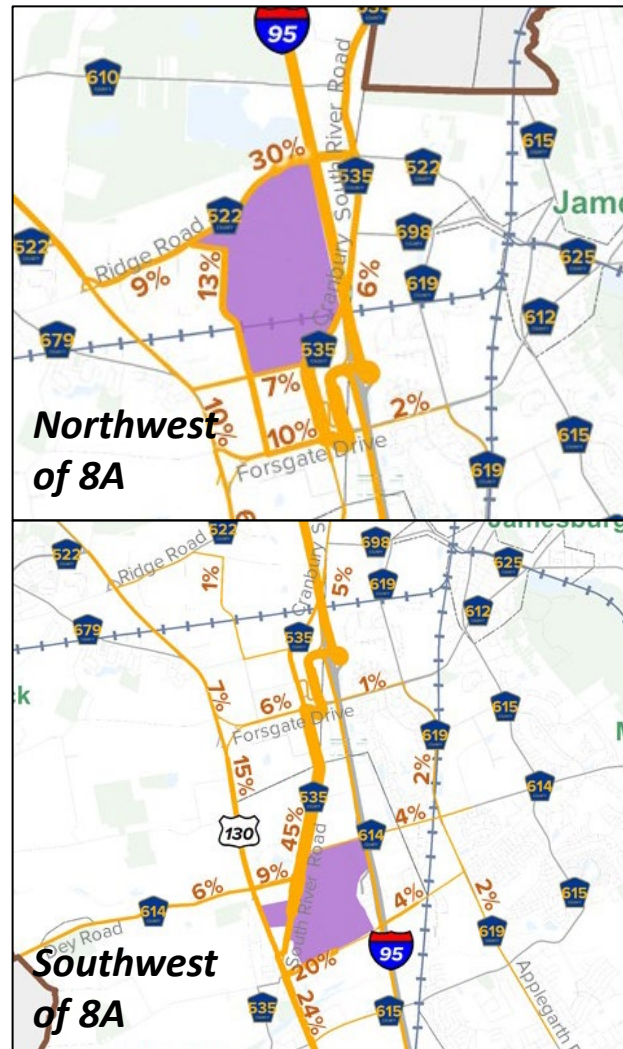
- Exit 8A is the most important truck access to the Primary Study Area
 - 57% of all trips enter or exit the Primary Study Area at 8A
- Trucks continue from 8A:
 - First on Cranbury South River Rd, South River Rd, Forsgate Dr
 - Then connecting to US 130, industry access roads, and neighborhood roads
 - Serving primary and secondary study areas
- Points to:** need for good performance on main 8A access routes

Interchange 8A Select Link Analysis



Access to Industry Clusters

- Trucks are moving to/from four primary industry clusters using different routes
 - Northwest of 8A: Cranbury South River, Ridge, Forsgate, Herrod
 - Southwest of 8A: Cranbury South River, US 130, Dey Rd/Prospect Plains, Station
 - Northeast of 8A: Cranbury South River
 - Southeast of 8A (Monroe Industrial): Forsgate, Prospect Plains, Applegarth
- Points to:**
 - Importance of CR 535 and other routes
 - Opportunity to reduce pressure on neighborhood roads with improved north-south connections and 8A access



Source: NJDOT, Streetlight

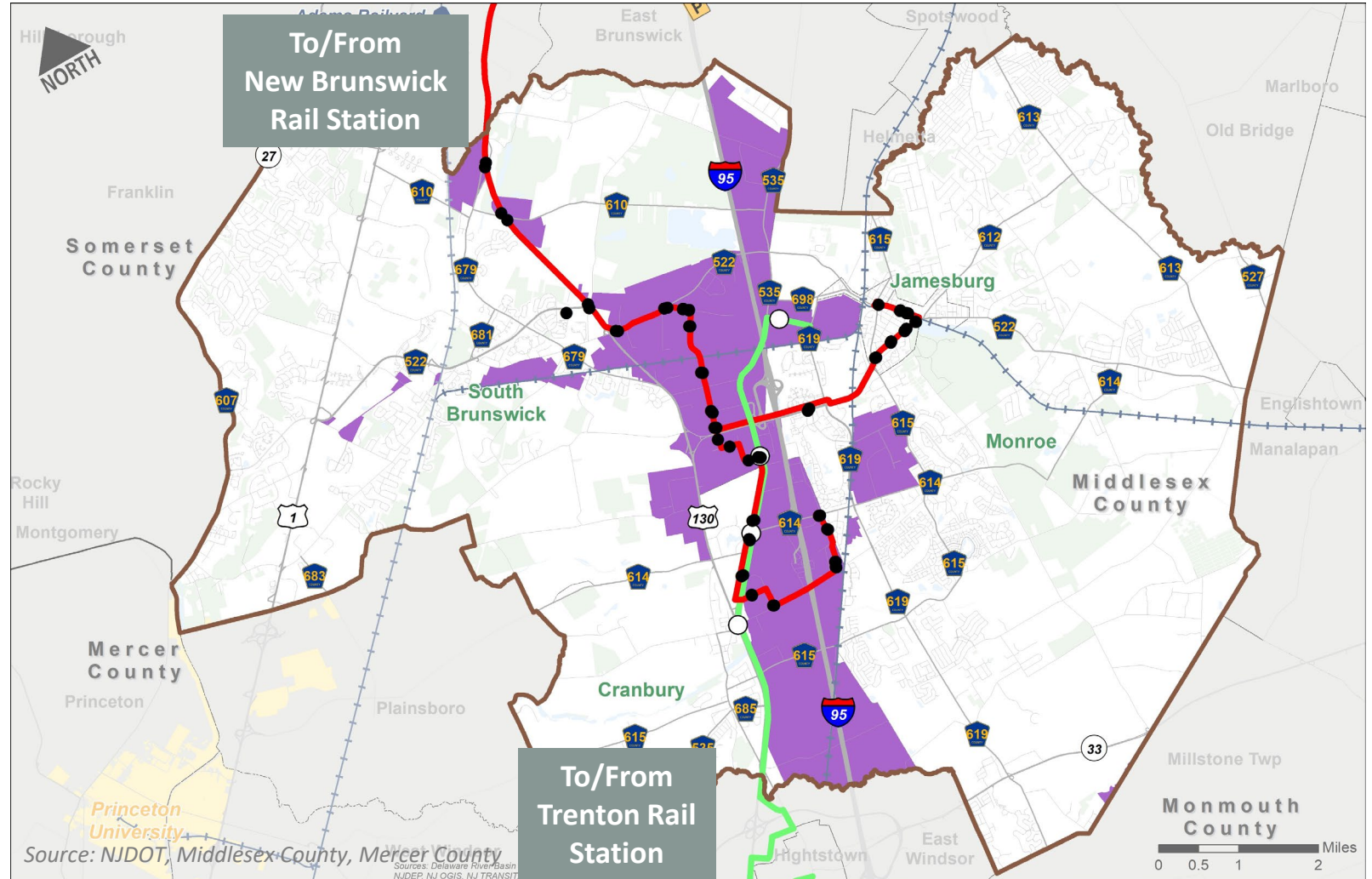
Roadway Capacity Analysis

- Level of Service Analysis
 - 2022 Intersection Level of Service E/F at:
 - Cranbury South River Rd at Forsgate
 - Ridge Rd at Georges Rd
 - 2050 Future “No Build” Intersection Level of Service E/F at:
 - Cranbury South River Rd. at Forsgate, NJ 32, Ridge Rd, US 130
 - Station Rd at US 130
 - Ridge Rd at Georges Rd
 - Prospect Plains at Applegarth
- **Points to:** opportunities to upgrade key intersections

Transit Connections are Limited

- No direct rail transit to Primary Study Area
- Limited public bus service
 - MCAT Route M1
 - Mercer County's Route 130 Connection
- Additional municipal and private buses serve local shopping or NYC-bound trips but not local workplace access
- Private companies operate some shuttles, but not coordinated
- **Points to:** opportunities for public and private service upgrades

Existing Public Transit to Primary Study Area



DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

About the Draft Recommendations

- These are DRAFT Recommendations presented for your review and comment – not final recommendations by the study team or commitments by any public agency.
- Recommendations are presented by Core Strategies, reflecting different approaches to the challenge
- If you haven't already, please provide your feedback on the recommendations, and especially let us know what actions you think are most important now.
- Your input will be used and considered as the recommendations are finalized.

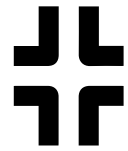
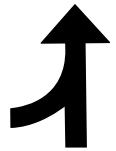
Core Strategies and Draft Recommendations

Strategy	Description and Examples of Draft Recommendations
Truck Access	Evaluate improvements to preferred truck routes.
Neighborhood Protection	Evaluate selected large truck restrictions and turn improvements. Upgrade geometry, turn options, and signage for trucks that have to be in neighborhoods. Implement “Complete Streets” practices.
Wayfinding	Upgrade physical signage and influence electronic routing systems.
Truck Parking	Understand and address needs for early arrival/expired Hours of Service trucks.
Workplace Access	Increase workplace access options for freight industry employees.
Implementation	Identify funding mechanisms and partnerships to deliver improvements.

Truck Access – Draft Roadway Recommendations

6 Corridors: Conduct studies to

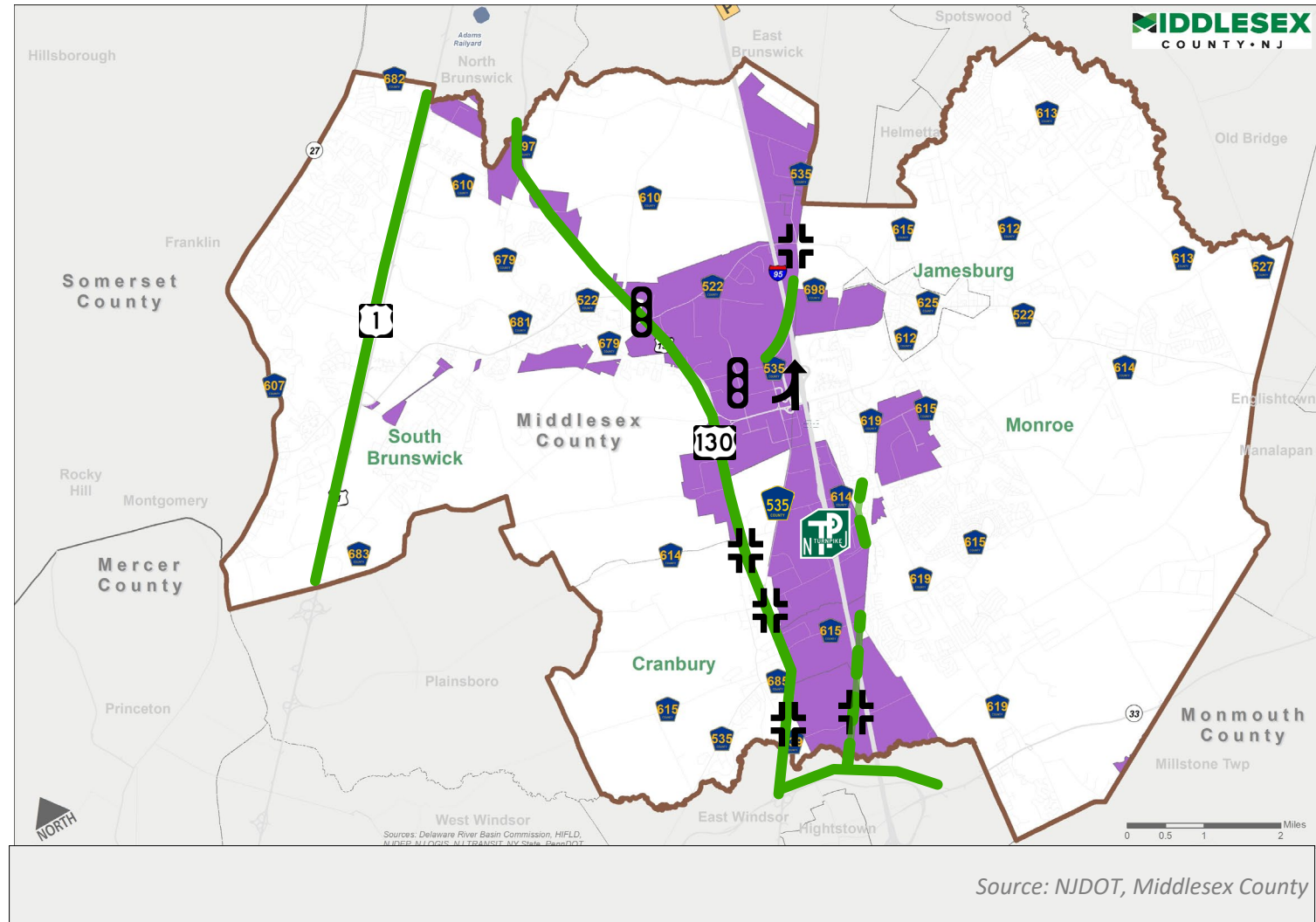
- Examine feasibility of roadway widening, geometry, intersection, signal, other improvements
- Study feasibility of upgraded/new north-south truck corridor



1 location: Improve truck access to Turnpike at Exit 8A

5 locations: Simplify intersections and improve turning

2 locations: Signalize intersections and ramps

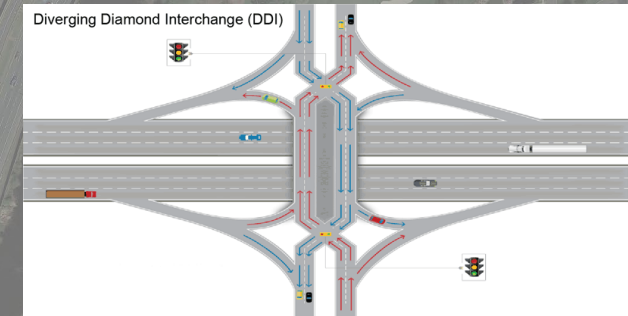
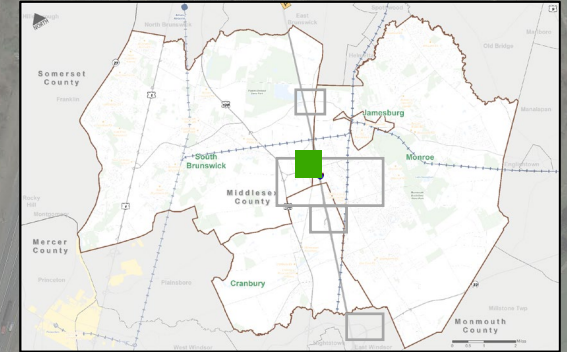


Draft Concept for NJ Turnpike Exit 8A

Investigate feasibility of constructing diverging diamond or other improvements to accommodate queuing and reduce turn conflicts

Investigate feasibility of slip ramp to TPK on-ramp from CR 535 NB

Widen TPK on-ramp to two lanes



Source: Wisconsin DOT



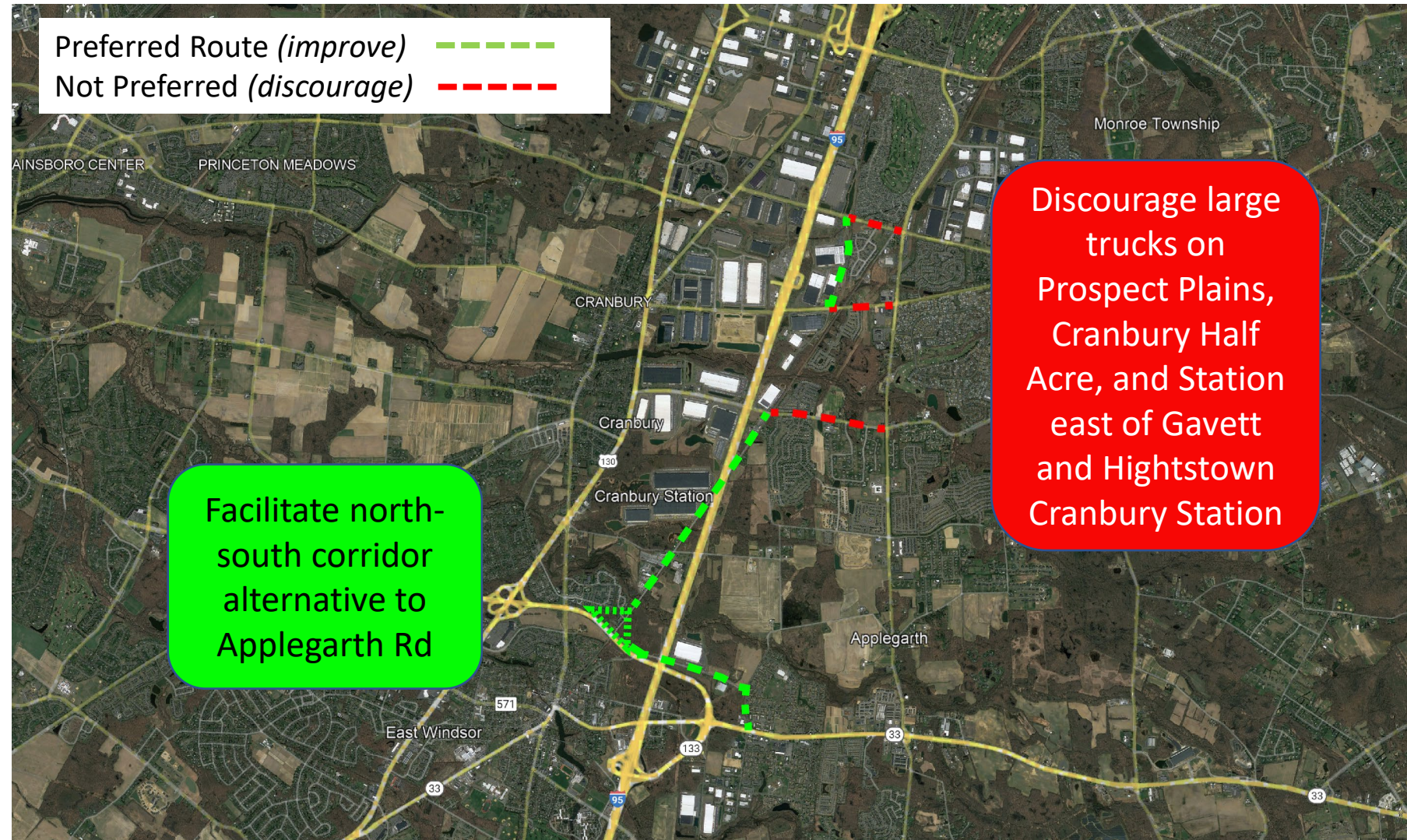
Source: Google Earth

Draft Concept for Upgraded North-South Corridor

Study improved truck route (in green) along *Probasco Rd, Wyckoff Mills Rd, Hightstown-Cranbury Station Rd, and Gavett Rd* with new interchange at *NJ 133*

This route would provide north-south alternative to Applegarth and improved connection to Exit 8

Could pair with truck limits/restrictions (in red) east of improved route



Neighborhood Protection – Draft Roadway Recommendations

Discourage use by large trucks with size/weight restrictions and turn options

- Prospect Plains Rd east of Gavett Dr
- Cranbury Half Acre Rd east of Gavett Dr
- Station Rd east of Hightstown-Cranbury Station Rd

Intersection improvements

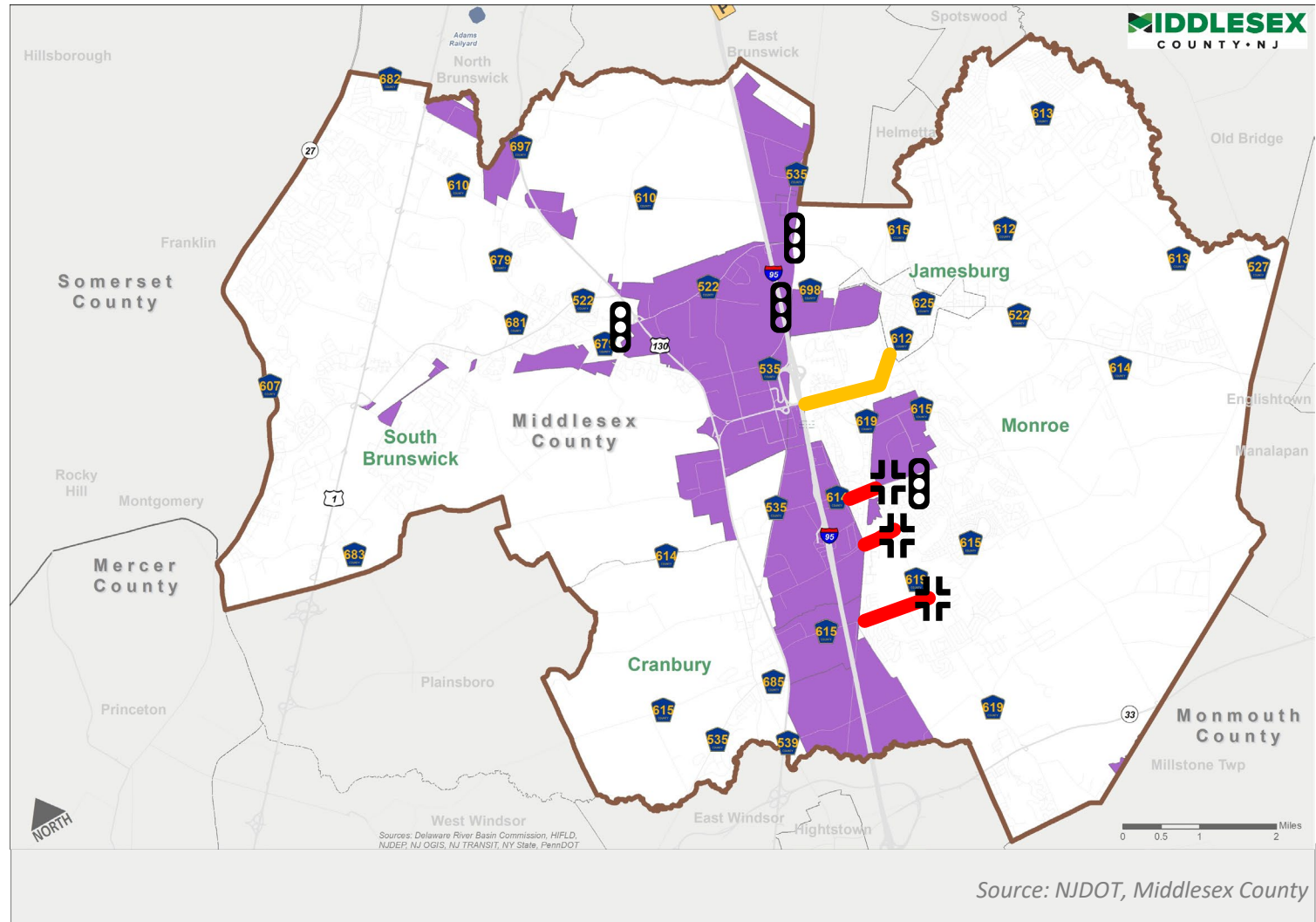
- Applegarth Rd. at Prospect Plains Rd, Cranbury Half Acre Rd, Station Rd

Lower speed limit

- Forsgate Dr

Adjust signal timing

- Ridge Rd @ Cranbury-South River Rd
- Cranbury-South River Rd @ Costco Dr
- Prospect Plains Rd @ Applegarth Rd
- Ridge Rd @ Georges Rd



Neighborhood Protection – Draft “Complete Streets” Recommendations



Build sidewalks

Mark crossings

Conduct road safety audit

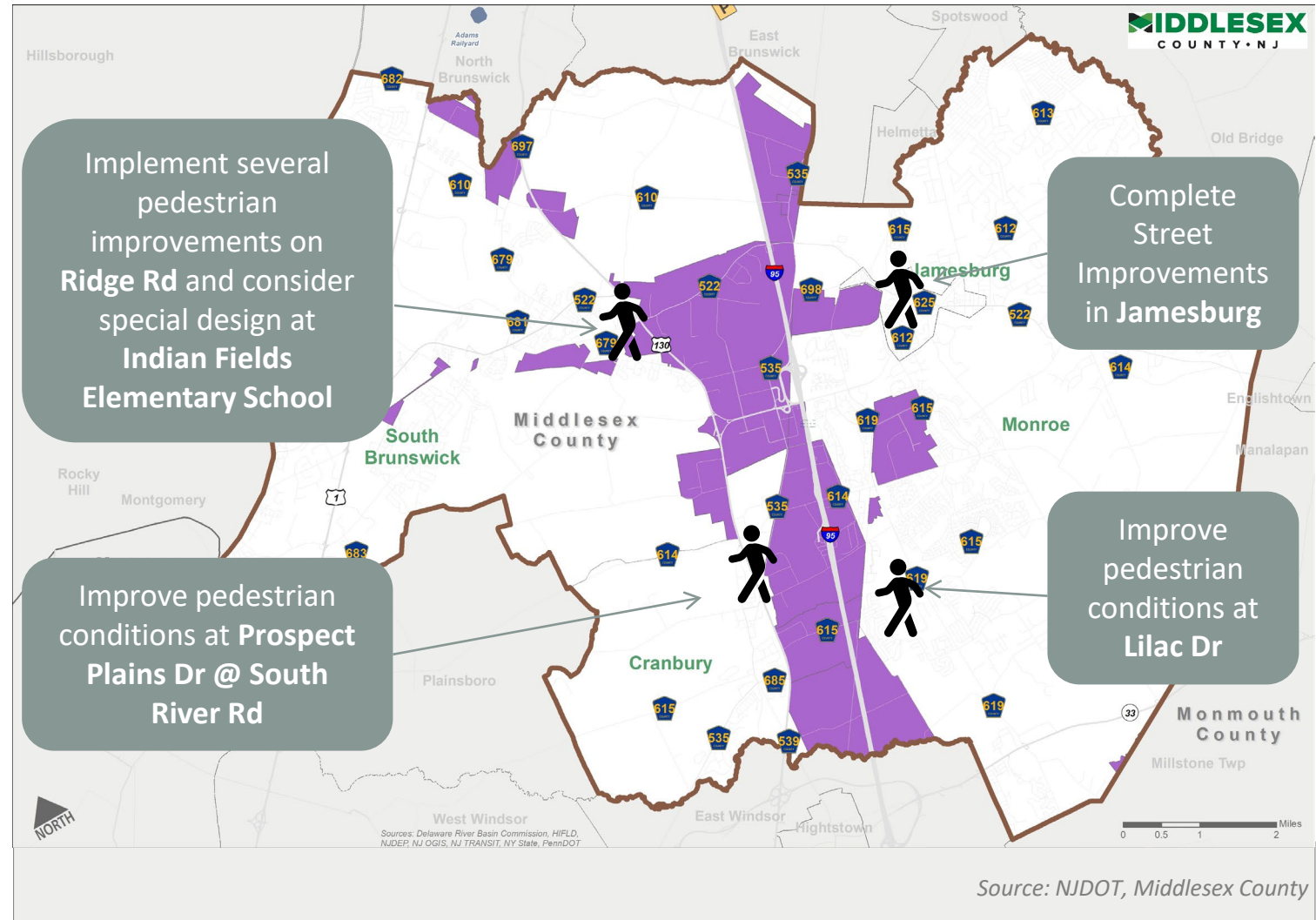
Slow trucks near schools

Area-Wide Recommendations

Install additional lighting along truck routes

Consider installing speed feedback signs and lowering speed limits

Consider special traffic calming design treatments at schools and warehouses



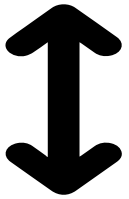
Wayfinding – Draft Recommendations



Signage to direct trucks onto desired routes



Signage to direct trucks to turn from appropriate lanes

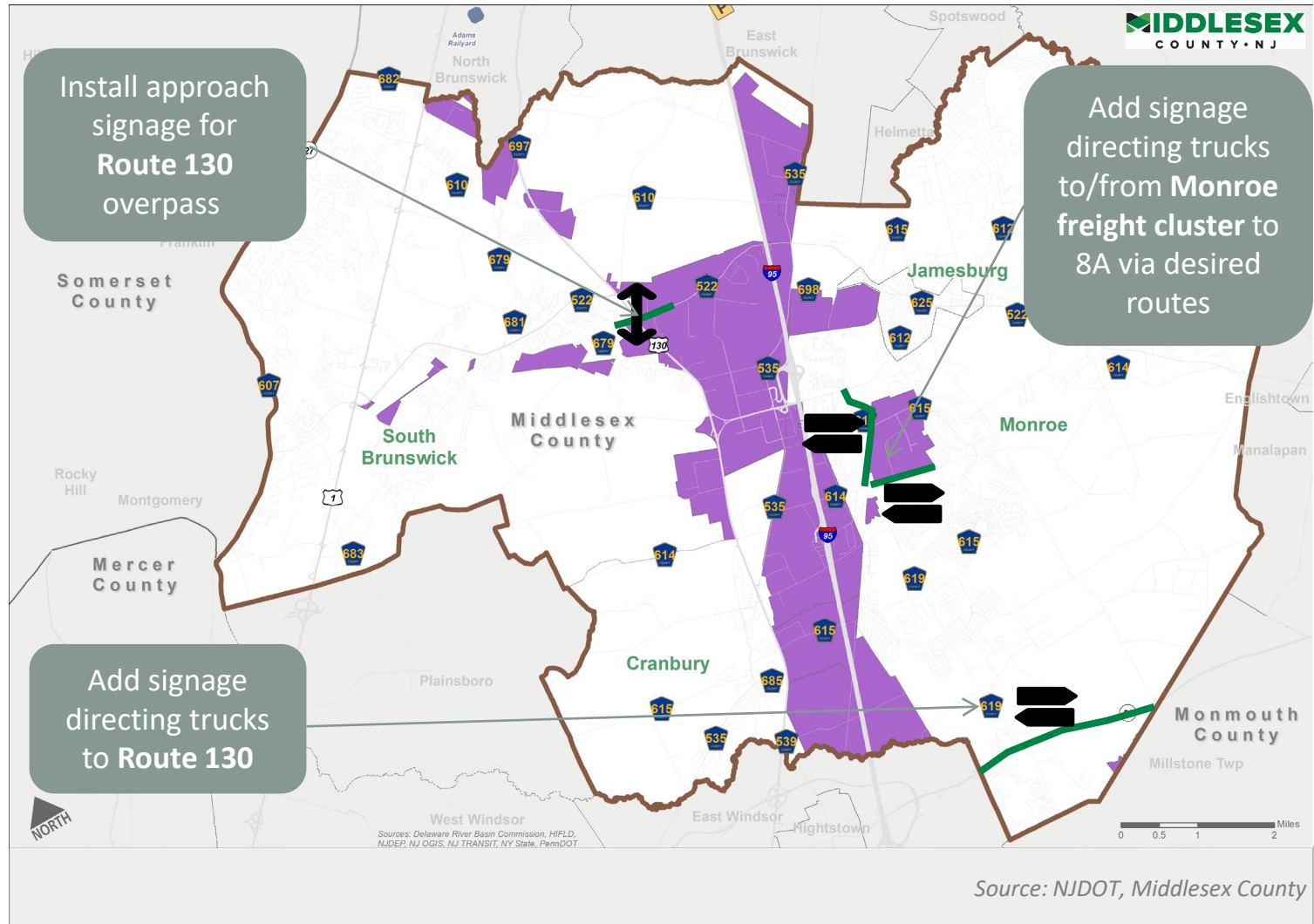


Upgrade vertical clearance signage

Area-Wide Recommendations

Work with private companies and GPS providers to avoid or prefer certain routes

Develop Subarea Travel Demand Model covering County roadways to improve recommendations going forward



Truck Parking – Draft Recommendations

- Non-designated truck parking could be reduced by providing suitable designated parking.
 - Short-term parking areas with minimal or no amenities, mostly for early arrivals
 - Long-term parking areas with additional services, mostly for overnights and expired hours-of-service
- Challenge to find suitable sites for truck parking without negatively impacting neighborhoods

Draft Recommendations:

Study potential for short-term truck parking areas/wait lots, similar to airport cell phone lot

Study potential sites for overnight long-term parking; work toward regional solutions



Source: NJTPA

Workplace Access – Draft Recommendations

- Employment access can be improved by enhancing public transit facilities and private transit services, and by improving non-auto accessibility (pedestrian, bicycle, transit) in freight clusters

Area-Wide Recommendations

Mark crosswalks in freight cluster

Improve bus stop infrastructure in freight cluster – protection, signage, information

Consider operating additional public bus routes timed to serve freight cluster work shifts

Study opportunities to coordinate and support private workplace shuttle systems

Complete Streets (from “Neighborhood Protection”)

Existing Bus Stops



Source: Google Streetview, Security Drive

Implementation – Draft Recommendations

- The Southern Middlesex County Freight Movement Study is not only about potential capital projects and investigations, but also about creating a system to promote and implement collaborative solutions

Area-Wide Recommendations

Truck operations education program

Parking enforcement

Study area-wide adaptive signal system

Explore regional “freight district” and financing mechanisms for needed improvements

Establish municipalities working group to advance and implement recommendations

- This study did not address land use planning or permit conditions, which is a municipal responsibility. Municipalities may wish to coordinate land use approaches with the transportation recommendations in this study, individually or collectively.

NEXT STEPS FOR THE STUDY

Next Steps

- To complete the Study, we will:
 - Incorporate public feedback into Draft Report. **Please submit your comments at the open house work stations, on the comment forms available here in the room, and/or by e-mail before May 1st to:**

Planning@co.Middlesex.nj.us

- Finalize the Report by end of June 2023 and publish a Newsletter summary

THANKS FOR LISTENING!

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO OFFER COMMENTS, ASK QUESTIONS, OR MAKE SUGGESTIONS AT OUR CONCLUDING OPEN HOUSE SESSION.

STUDY MEMBERS WILL BE AVAILABLE AT DIFFERENT WORK STATIONS, WITH BOARDS SUMMARIZING THE DRAFT STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS, ORGANIZED BY EACH OF THE KEY RECOMMENDATION THEMES

Ronald G. Rios, *Director*
Shanti Narra, *Deputy Director*
Claribel A. Azcona-Barber
Charles Kenny
Leslie Koppel
Chanelle Scott McCullum
Charles E. Tomaro

