

Chapter 4 Demographics

To effectively plan for the future transportation system in the HOCTS study area, it is necessary to be responsive to future regional demographic forecasts and transportation needs. Recent trends that affect the transportation planning for the HOCTS study area are increased vehicles and trips, decrease in population, fewer households, longer commutes, and increased vehicle miles traveled. Transportation planning needs to consider emerging trends that will affect the future transportation system in the HOCTS study area. These emerging trends include lifestyle changes, deteriorating infrastructure, less funding available, an aging population, rising fuel costs, and concern for climate change. This chapter presents a snapshot of the study area in terms of current population, employment, primary commuting travel patterns, and land use patterns.

POPULATION TRENDS

Based on the 2000 U.S. Census, the population of Oneida County was 235,469. This represents a decrease of 15,367 or a 6.1% decrease from 1990. Oneida County registered the second largest net population loss within New York State between 1990 and 2000. The closing of Griffiss AFB and manufacturing firms are assumed to be partly responsible for the population loss. Herkimer County, also experienced a population decrease of 65,809 or a 2.1% decrease from 1990, based on the 2000 U.S. Census. The average population change for both Herkimer and Oneida Counties over a twenty-year period (1980 to 2000) was – 4.1%. See Figure 4-1.

Figure 4-1. Population Change in Herkimer and Oneida Counties, 1970 - 2000

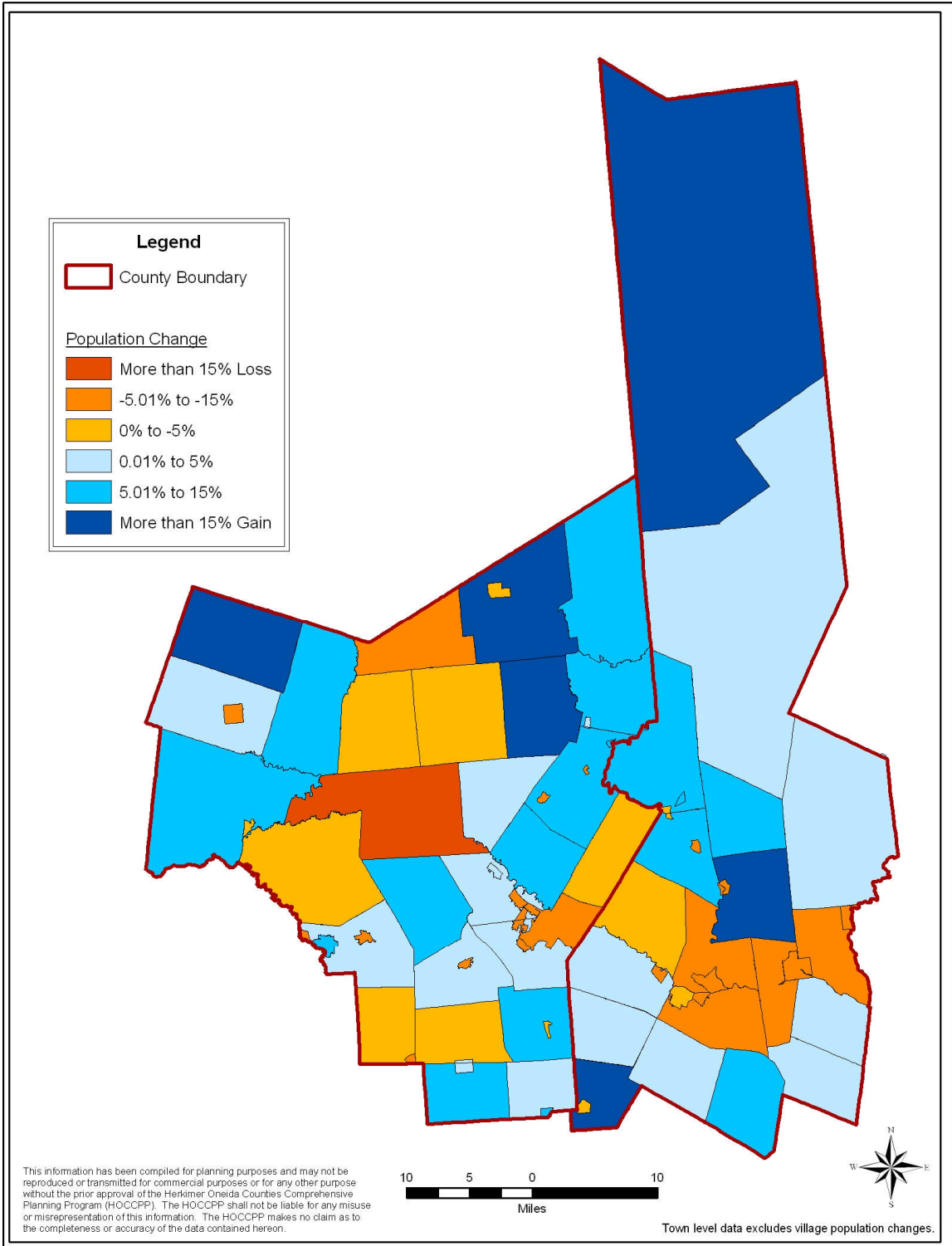
Year	Oneida County		Herkimer County		Two-County	
	Population	%Change	Population	%Change	Population	%Change
2000	235,469	-6.1%	64,427	-2.1%	299,896	-5.3%
1990	250,836	-1.0%	65,809	-1.4%	316,645	-1.1%
1980	253,466	-7.2%	66,714	-1.0%	320,180	-6.0%
1970	273,070		67,400		340,477	

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Based on 2000 U.S. Census data, twelve towns and two villages within Oneida County between 1990 and 2000 showed a 5% or more increase in population. The Town of Florence grew by 27.46%. That is the largest town increase in Oneida County, followed by the Town of Remsen, which had a population increase of 12.59%. During that same time period, the City of Sherrill's population grew by 9.88%. The City of Utica and the City of Rome both had a significant loss in population, 11.64% and 21.20%, respectively.

In Herkimer County, three towns and one village had a population growth over 5% during 1990 and 2000. The towns of Fairfield and Webb had the largest population increase. The Town of Webb grew by 16.80% followed by the Town of Fairfield that grew by 11.44%, See Map 4-1.

Map 4-1. Population Shift, 1990 - 2000



According to the 2000 Census, 7,921 or 12.5% of Herkimer County's population was living below the poverty level and in Oneida County, 28,764 or 13.0% of the population was living

below the poverty level. Overall, the two-county region had 36,685 people living below the poverty level. This is approximately 12.2% of the Herkimer-Oneida Counties population.

Other populations relevant to the transportation demographic profile are the elderly, people with disabilities, and households without vehicles. According to the 2000 Census, the elderly constitutes 16.5% (38,753) of the total Oneida County population; the people with disabilities make up 19% (44,106); and the households without vehicles make up 12.3% (11,130). Of the total Herkimer County population, the elderly make up 16.8% (10,844), people with disabilities make up 18% (11,689), and households without vehicles make up 10.1% (2,691). See Figure 4-2.

Figure 4-2. Population Demographics for the HOCTS Planning Area

Data Set*	Oneida County	Herkimer County	TOTAL Two-County Area
Total Population	235,469	64,427	299,896
Total Households	90,496	25,734	116,230
Minority Population	23,055	1,396	24,451
% of Total Population	9.8%	2.2%	8.2%
People in Poverty**	28,764	7,921	36,685
% of Total Population	13.0%	12.5%	12.2%
Elderly Population (65 yrs.+)	38,753	10,844	49,597
% of Total Population	16.5%	16.8%	16.5%
Persons with Disabilities	44,106	11,689	55,795
% of Total Population	19%	18%	18.6%
Households without Vehicles	11,130	2,691	13,721
% of Total Population	12.3%	10.1%	4.6%

*Source: 2000 U.S. Census

**Based on Poverty Thresholds for 2002 issued by U.S. Census Bureau

Population Diversity

According to the 2000 Census, 23,055 people in Oneida County and 1,396 people in Herkimer County were classified as non-white minorities. Although not reflected in the 2000 Census minority numbers, the Mohawk Valley has had a rise in the number of new minority population groups. The City of Utica has experienced over a 72.5% increase in refugee populations in the past ten years. Refugees, primarily within the City of Utica, are initially dependent on social services. The cultural differences and language barriers, of the growing refugee population, can make it difficult to secure employment. In the last ten years, nearly 7,474 refugees have been relocated to Utica and the Mohawk Valley.

Refugee Population

Utica is the home of the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees (MVRRCR), one of the largest resettlement agencies in the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service network.

According to the Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees, Utica is one of few selected cities in the U. S. accepting refugees. Due to its cultural diversity, affordable housing and generous spirit, the community provides a foundation where these new Americans can find safety, freedom and the opportunity for a better life. MVRRCR boasts that Oneida County, about 4% of the total population, has the fourth highest concentration of refugees in the United States, and the City of Utica of nearly 12% of the total population, and is poised to become a leader as a multi-cultural institute. MVRRCR remains a nationally recognized leader in refugee services. Since its inception, MVRRCR has assisted refugees from more than 31 countries, including Bosnia, Cambodia, Czechoslovakia, Haiti, Hungary, Laos, Poland, Romania, the former Soviet Union, Vietnam, Sudan, Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, China, Burma and others. Today the refugee population being resettled is increasingly diverse with individuals and families from the former Soviet Union, Afghanistan, Burma, Somalia, Liberia and many other countries. Utica's growing immigrant community includes many from Latin America.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

According to the Civil Rights Office at the U.S. Department of Transportation, individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English can be Limited English Proficient, or "LEP". These individuals may be entitled language assistance with respect to a particular type of service, benefit, or encounter.

The enactment of Executive Order 13166: *Improving Access to Services for Persons With Limited English Proficiency (LEP)* August 16, 2000, was to clarify Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by ensuring accessibility to all federally conducted programs and activities to individuals whom English is not their primary language and who might have a limited ability to read, speak, write or understand English.

Executive Order 13166 applies to all federal agencies and all programs and all operations of entities that receive funding from the federal government, including state agencies, local agencies and governments including the MPO, private and non-profit entities and subrecipients.

Local LEP Efforts

The Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugee (MVRRCR) in Utica, NY is actively working to fulfill new strategic directions for the center reflecting the presence and needs of the growing refugee and non-refugee immigrants in our community, estimated future growth to be approximately 15% of Utica's population.

MVRRCR is focused on enabling individuals and communities to promote and sustain their cultural identity. The center is collaborating with the Mohawk Valley Latino Association (MVLA) and the African Alliance as they work to solidify their organizations within the community. MVRRCR offers these groups and others an opportunity to share facilities and services that will provide the necessary tools to build long-term relationships in their respective ethnic communities and in the Utica community.

MVRRCR is also striving to increase access to medical assistance to Limited English Proficiency individuals within the community. MVRRCR recently completed contractual agreements with Faxton-St. Luke's Healthcare and St. Elizabeth Medical Center to provide interpretation-translation services that will enhance the support system for Utica's growing immigrant

population. These services provide Limited English Proficiency (LEP) patients critical access to medical services. Currently, the center is able to provide interpretation-translation services in eight (8) languages, including Bosnian/Serbo Croatian, Russian, Arabic, Persian/Dari, Burmese, Vietnamese, Maay, Kiswahili and Spanish. MVRCCR is actively recruiting potential interpreters in these and other languages, who will be professionally trained to provide quality interpretation.

MVRCCR seeks to enhance the provision of culturally and linguistically appropriate services in the community. The center’s objective is to provide fee-based cross-cultural competence training and technical assistance. The program is designed to help educators, service providers and business managers, effectively deliver service to clients and manage personnel from different cultural backgrounds. HOCTS has worked with MVRCCR to address the needs of refugee populations through the use of JARC funds.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Statistics

According to the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), Region 2, which includes Oneida and Herkimer Counties and four other counties, has 13,540 LEP residents, giving it the 8th most LEP residents out of NYSDOT’s 11 regions. LEP residents make up 3% of the total population of Region 2.

Figures 4-3 and 4-4 show two counties in Region 2 having significant LEP populations: Montgomery (1,859 residents, 4% of the total population) and Oneida (8,968 residents, 4% of the total population). Herkimer (994) and Madison (944) Counties are close to having a significant LEP population. Out of 62 counties, Oneida has the 16th highest number of LEP residents (8,968). In Montgomery and Oneida Counties, almost 70 percent of the LEP population lives in the largest city. Utica maintains 6,101 LEP, 11 percent of the city’s population. Outside of New York City, Utica has the 8th largest LEP population of any city in New York State. Map 4-2 shows the LEP populations in Herkimer and Oneida Counties and Map 4-3 shows LEP population concentrations in Oneida County.

Utica’s LEP population mostly comes from the European nation of Bosnia (3,319), where an Indo-European language is spoken. A wave of Bosnians immigrated to Utica between 1992 and 1995. Currently, refugees from the Asian nation of Burma (560) are moving to Utica. According to data provided by the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, other common refugee groups in Utica are Ukrainian (453), Vietnamese (412) and Belarusian (361).

Figure 4-3. LEP Population, NYSDOT Region 2 by County

COUNTY	Spanish	Indo-European	Asian-Pacific	All Others	Total
Fulton	267	381	83	18	749
Hamilton	9	12	2	3	26
Herkimer	207	733	50	4	994
Madison	414	353	112	65	944
Montgomery	1155	590	93	21	1859
Oneida	2178	5374	1237	179	8968
Fulton	267	381	83	18	749
Total	4497	7824	1660	308	14289

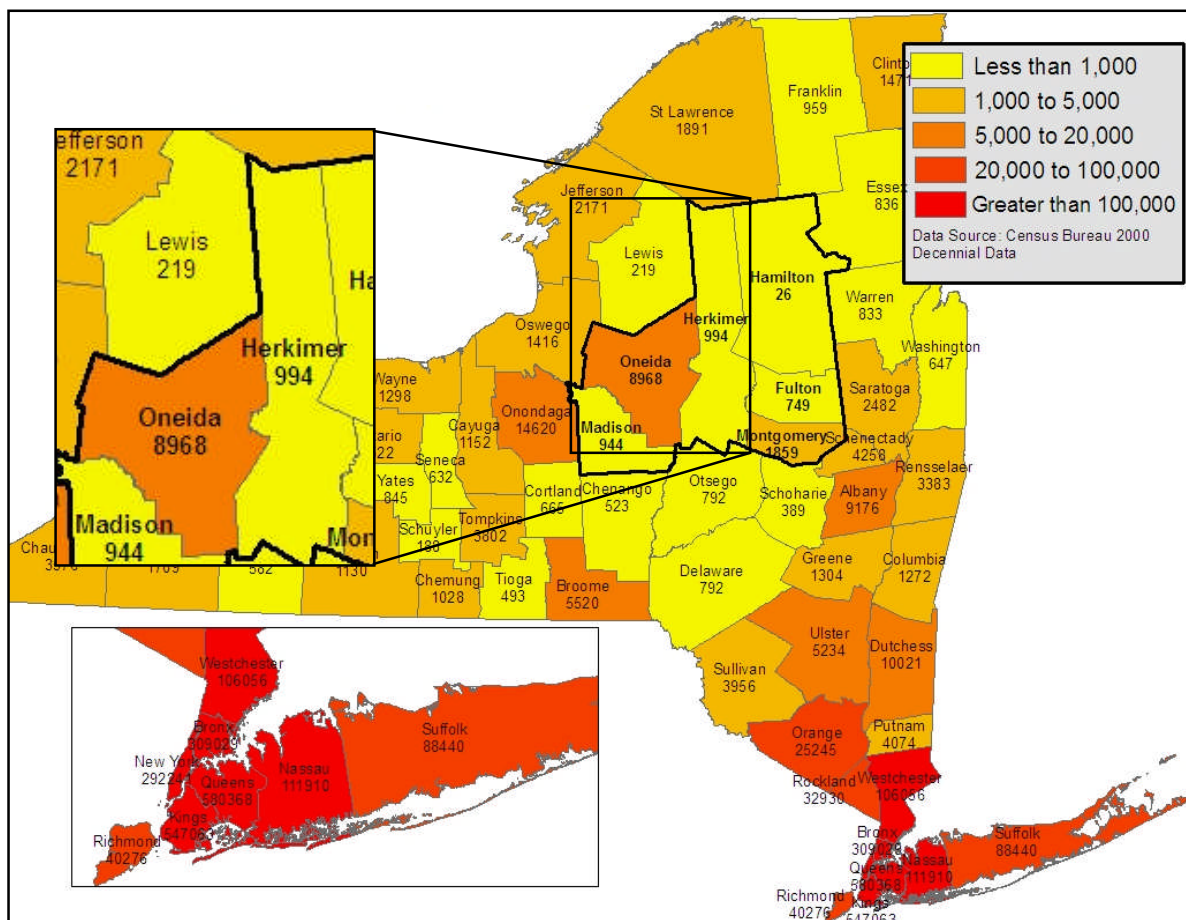
Source: NYSDOT

Figure 4-4. LEP Population, NYSDOT Region 2 by City

CITY	Spanish	Indo-European	Asian-Pacific	All Others	Total
Amsterdam	904	328	51	0	1,283
Gloversville	88	187	48	18	341
Johnstown	24	56	16	0	96
Little Falls	16	59	10	0	85
Oneida	104	38	8	25	175
Rome	319	430	71	23	843
Sherrill	4	0	0	0	4
Utica	1,098	3,907	969	127	6,101

Source: NYSDOT

Map 4-2. New York State LEP Population by County



Source: NYSDOT

Population Forecasting

Based on population projections provided by the Cornell Institute for Social and Economic Research, Oneida County may see a slight decrease in its population over the projected 20-year period. Likewise, the overall population for Herkimer County is projected to decrease slightly; see Figure 4-5 below.

Figure 4-5. Population Projections, 2010 - 2025

County	2000 Actual	2010 Estimate	2015 Estimate	2020 Estimate	2025 Estimate
Oneida	235,469	233,761	232,884	231,681	229,671
Herkimer	64,427	61,616	59,949	58,054	55,831

Source: Cornell Institute for Social and Economic Research, 2003

TRAVEL TRENDS

In March of 2000, a “Statewide Attitudinal and Preference Survey” funded by New York State Metropolitan Planning Organizations, was part of a statewide initiative to attain public input for transportation planning purposes. The surveyed region of Central New York was comprised of ten counties: Oneida, Herkimer, Madison, Wayne, Seneca, Cayuga, Tompkins, Oswego, Onondaga, and Cortland.

According to the survey, in the Central New York region 86.4% of the respondents surveyed commute on a daily basis. The primary reason for their commute is to get to work and the household vehicle is the clear mode choice. Respondents who commute by car commented that convenience and lack of alternative transportation options are the major reasons for using their car instead of public transportation. However, out of the 300 Central New York residents surveyed, 240 or 80% indicated that carpooling would be an option if there were more Park and Ride locations in their area.

Travel Characteristics

The Census Transportation Planning Package (CTPP 2000) profiled and compared travel characteristics for 1990 and 2000. Figure 4-6 below illustrates those characteristics for Herkimer and Oneida Counties.

Figure 4-6. Mode Split, 1990 to 2000

HERKIMER			ONEIDA		
	CHANGE 1990 to 2000			CHANGE 1990 to 2000	
Characteristic	1990 - %	2000 - %	Characteristic	1990 - %	2000 - %
Drove Alone	75.4	77.3	Drove Alone	77.3	80.2
Carpooled	11.8	12.5	Carpooled	12.7	11.3
Public Transportation	0.6	1.1	Public Transportation	1.9	1.5
Bicycled or Walked	6.8	5.4	Bicycled or Walked	5.0	4.0
Work at Home	4.3	3.4	Worked at Home	2.5	2.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The ten-year comparison revealed an increase in people driving alone to work and there was a slight reduction in the occurrence of commuters carpooling to work. However, the use of public transportation increased in Herkimer County while in Oneida County it decreased. The existing

transit in the HOCTS planning area is primarily the Utica, Rome, parts of Oneida County, Little Falls, and the Mohawk Valley corridor.

Travel Time to Work

Average travel time to work, for workers in the Utica-Rome Metropolitan Area, increased slightly between the 1990 and 2000 Censuses, as illustrated in Figures 4-7 and 4-8. The two longer categories ('20-45 Minutes' and 'Greater than 45 minutes') show a combined increase of 5%, possibly indicating that there are more workers using the transportation system for a longer duration daily. It is difficult to conclusively determine from this statistic alone whether the slight increase in travel time is due to congestion or population shift. But based on analysis of the population shift portrayed in Map 4-1 and the vehicle miles traveled (VMT) data shown in Figure 4-9, it is reasonable to presume this increase is more likely attributable to population shift than increased traffic congestion.

Figure 4-7. Travel Time to Work, 1990

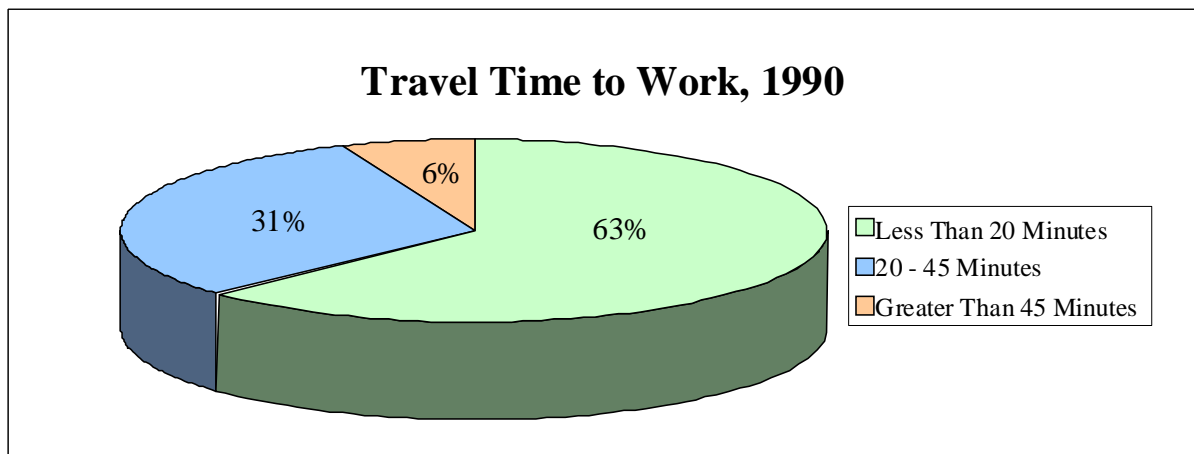
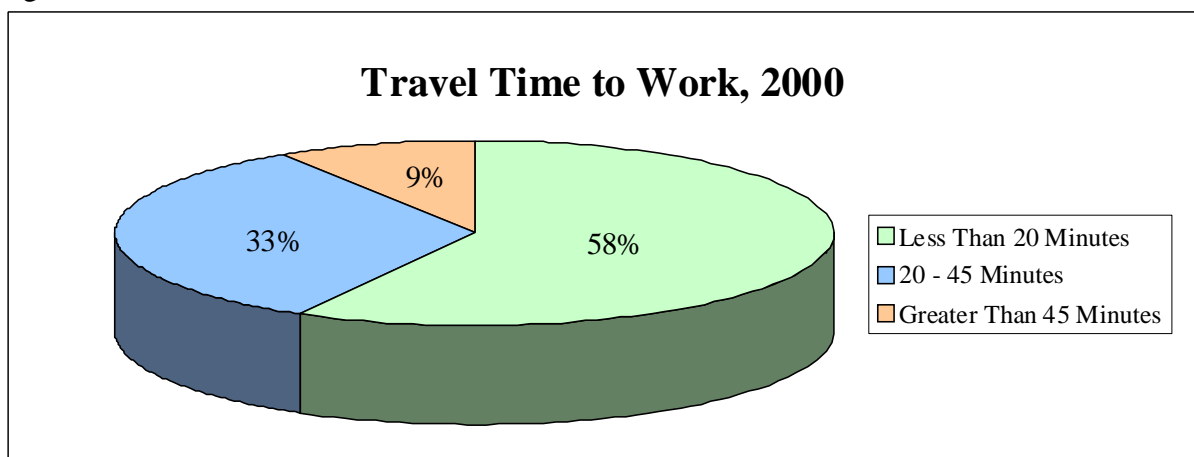


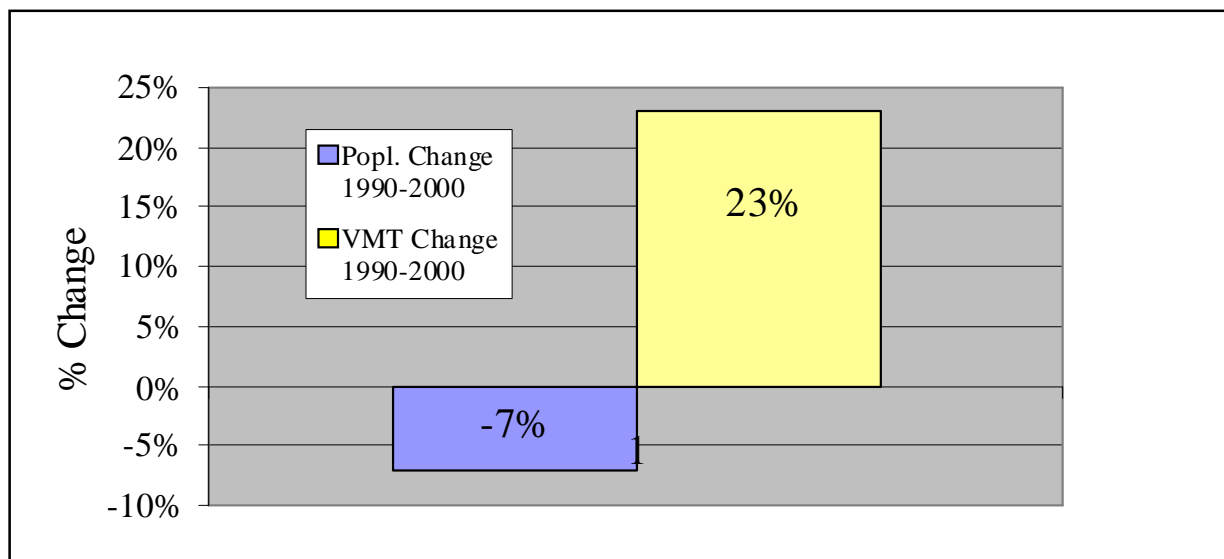
Figure 4-8. Travel Time to Work, 2000



Vehicle Miles Traveled

According to the Federal Highway Association (FHWA), there was a 23% increase in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) in the Herkimer-Oneida Counties Urbanized Area from 1990 to 2000, as illustrated in Figure 4-9 below. While VMT increased, population in the Urbanized Area decreased by 7%. Although population has declined, factors such as multiple-vehicle households, more trips per household, increase in the number of eligible drivers per household, and living further away from work all contribute to the increase in VMT.

Figure 4-9. Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and Population Change, 1990-2000



Regional Labor Market Travel Patterns

The majority of workers in both Herkimer and Oneida Counties work in their County of residence – 59% and 88% of workers age 16 or older, respectively.¹ In addition to the statistics shown in Figure 4-10, there are 4,579 non-residents who work in Herkimer County and 19,230 non-residents who work in Oneida County.²

Figure 4-10. Employment-Related Travel Patterns

	Herkimer County	Oneida County
Workers Age 16 or Older	28,622	100,800
Work in County of Residence (%)	16,760 (59%)	89,035 (88%)
Work Outside County of Residence (%)	11,862 (41%)	11,765 (12%)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000.

Employment

In June 1993, the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) voted to realign Griffiss Air Force Base effective September 30, 1995. With the realignment completed, Griffiss Air Force Base ceased to operate and was renamed The Griffiss Business and Technology Park.

¹ U.S. Census 2000.

² U.S. Census Bureau – Community Transportation Planning Package, 2000.

Redevelopment at Griffiss Business & Technology Park has attracted a wide variety of tenants. The business park has been successful in attracting public and private investment from the research, banking, technology, transportation, education, medical, technical, distribution, telecommunications, manufacturing, law enforcement and hotel industries. The U.S. Air Force maintains a presence at Griffiss and remains as a major tenant in the business park.

Today, few vacant buildings remain at Griffiss, meaning future development – and most recent development – will be private sector construction of new buildings. In 2005, Family Dollar invested \$64 million in a new distribution center, a local credit union spent \$7 million to build a new office and branch, a local human services agency invested \$7 million in a new campus, a local dentist built a new building, and a local ophthalmologist-turned-developer constructed a third office building for lease. In 2007, one of North America's largest olive oil distributor moved into a new plant, a local bank opened a new office, the human services agency expanded and the ophthalmologist-turned-developer constructed a fifth office building, bringing total employment at Griffiss Business & Technology Park to over 5,000. The City of Rome School District also has constructed a new high school – Rome Free Academy – on the Griffiss campus.

Overall, the Mohawk Valley continues to move forward by focusing on its assets and meeting its challenges. The Mohawk Valley has strengths and growth potential in several industrial clusters, among them are:

- **Aviation** - Empire Aero Center, a subsidiary of Israel Aerospace Industries, operates a maintenance, repair and overhaul facility in a refurbished former Air Force hangar. In 2006, Mohawk Valley Community College opened an airframe and power plant mechanic training program next door to Empire Aero Center's facility, to train the next generation of aviation personnel. Within sight of the Empire Aero Center hangar, manufacturer Goodrich Power Transmission Systems is the world's leading supplier of high technology drive systems for helicopters, fighter/bomber aircraft and tiltrotor aircraft
- **Logistics** - In 2006 Family Dollar opened the third major retail distribution center in the Mohawk Valley, joining Rite Aid and Wal-Mart as national chains that have realized the logistical value of the Mohawk Valley.
- **Metals Manufacturing** - This cluster has a strong regional history dating to the early 1800s. From the founding of Remington Arms and Revere Copper Products almost two centuries ago to the advanced metallurgy found today at Special Metals Corporation, HMI Metal Powders (a United Technologies Company) and others, the Mohawk Valley has been at the forefront of this industry. International Wire, Owl Wire (owned by the Marmon Group), and TECT all have major manufacturing operations in the Mohawk Valley.
- **Finance, Insurance and Real Estate** - The Mohawk Valley has become a center of major back office operations including insurance claims, check processing and call centers. Bank of America, The Federal Reserve, Bank of New York, Metropolitan Life, The Hartford, Defense Finance and Accounting Service and ACS all have major centers in the Mohawk Valley, and Utica National Insurance Company's international headquarters are here.

- **IT and Information Assurance** - Led by the Air Force Research Laboratory Information Directorate headquarters, the Mohawk Valley has developed a significant niche in the IT industry over the last half century. Today, international firms such as PAR Technology, BAE Systems, Booz Allen Hamilton, ITT Industries and Northrop Grumman have offices in the region, and homegrown companies such as Dolphin Technology, Black River Systems, Assured Information Security, New York State Technology Enterprise Corporation, Syracuse Research Corporation and Research Associates of Syracuse are becoming forces in the industry.

Occupational Projections

According to the New York State Department of Labor’s “Occupational Projections 2006 – 2016,” employment for the Mohawk Valley Region for “all occupations” for the ten-year period is projected to increase from 221,410 to 230,530, a 4.1% change.

Listed below are the occupations projected to have the most openings from 2006 – 2016. Please note that total openings include not only openings due to growth, but also openings due to separations, the need to replace people exiting the occupation.

Figure 4-11. Employment Projections in the Mohawk Valley, 2006 - 2016

Title	Annual Average Openings	Employment	
		2006	2016
Cashiers	290	6,110	5,690
Retail Salespersons	250	6,390	6,900
Waiters and Waitresses	170	3,030	3,110
Registered Nurses	150	4,810	5,550
Home Health Aides	140	3,720	4,800
Customer Service Representatives	140	3,160	3,610
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	120	3,290	3,340
Food Preparation Workers	110	2,550	2,760
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	110	4,070	4,350

Source: New York State Department of Labor

Listed below are the 10 fastest growing occupations in the Mohawk Valley. Please note that some of these occupations, although growing fast, have relatively small employment levels.

Figure 4-12. Growth Occupations in the Mohawk Valley, 2006 - 2016

Title	Percent Change	Employment	
		2006	2016
Personal and Home Care Aids	38.2	1,700	2,350
Home Health Aides	29.0	3,720	4,800
Network Systems and Data Communication Analysts	26.3	190	240
Dental Hygienists	26.1	230	290
Physical Therapist Aides	25.0	80	100
Medical Assistants	25.0	120	150
Computer Software Engineers, Applications	24.0	250	310
Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers	21.7	230	280
Physician Assistants	21.7	230	280
Dental Assistants	21.7	230	280

Source: New York State Department of Labor

Welfare-To-Work

The region's welfare to work effort has been successful in dealing with many adults, leaving those still needing services the hardest to serve due to barriers to employment that include ex-offender status, disability status and refugee status.

Health services remain the major employment sector that can hire and place new workers, but for those with the barriers mentioned above, entry level jobs are difficult to obtain. Geographically, job growth remains concentrated outside of the core cities where the most people live, however there have been efforts on the part of CENTRO to address this by adding routes to suburban areas, such as shopping malls, that are also major entry-level employers.

Addressing these barriers has resulted in a number of partnerships between the Workforce Investment Board and Social Services to develop programs that focus on the populations with the greatest needs. For example, the Wheels to Work program, which involves the WIB, DSS and Resource Center for Independent Living, can help individuals who need private transportation to get to and from work meet the cost of a down payment on a car and arrange the financing.

Because many potential job seekers come with skills deficits, the WIB and DSS are partners in a Wage Subsidy program that offers a small number of cases a wage subsidy for a period of time, which makes it much easier for an employer to "take a chance" on a welfare-to-work customer.

A mix of training and supports is offered to young adults with disabilities between the ages of 16 and 25 through the WIB's CareerStart program, funded by a federal grant. By increasing the numbers of young adults with disabilities attached to the workforce, this project can help young adults who are able to be self-supporting.

One of the most interesting chapters of the regional welfare-to-work effort began in the summer of 2009 as the WIB and a coalition of more than 30 partners began implementation of the Career Pathways project, a regional effort that covers six counties including Herkimer and Oneida. The program seeks to provide entry-level training and jobs for individuals with barriers to employment and is designed to also provide training that will allow clients to enter employment with the skills they need to handle not just their first job, but the next as well.

Empire Zones

The New York State Empire Zones (EZ) Program, formerly known as the New York State Economic Development Program, was created in 1986 to stimulate economic growth through a variety of financial incentives designed to attract new businesses and to enable existing businesses to expand and create new jobs. As a result of the regional economic development strategy devised by area officials in 1997, Mohawk Valley EDGE (EDGE) has coordinated the economic development efforts for Oneida County. EDGE has been designated by the County of Oneida and the City of Rome to administer both the Oneida County and City of Rome Empire Zone programs. See Empire Zone Maps 4-2 and 4-3

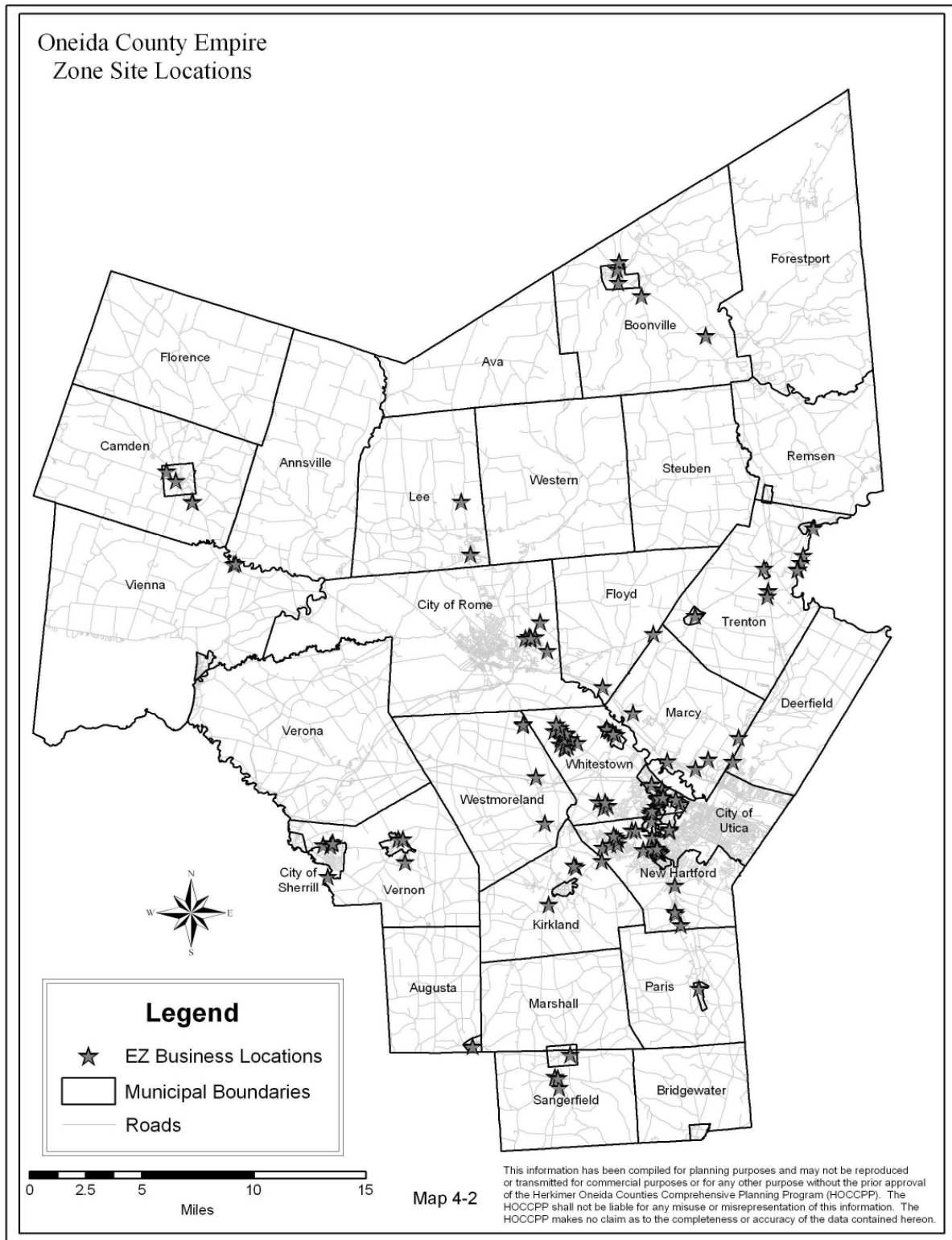
The City of Rome Empire Zone identified those areas with current zone businesses with potential for expansion, areas with the highest potential for future growth and to address the blighted condition of the central business district. The three areas identified by the City of Rome Zone are

the West Rome Industrial Park, Griffiss Business & Technology Park which are desirable for future growth and the City of Rome Central Business District which will address Rome's Downtown Urban blight through the revitalization of three targeted downtown corridors. In the Rome Zone there are 109 certified businesses that employ approximately 3,150 employees. The five largest employers are Revere Cooper Products, Rite Aid Distribution Center, Empire Aero Center, Goodrich Corporation and Cathedral Corporation.

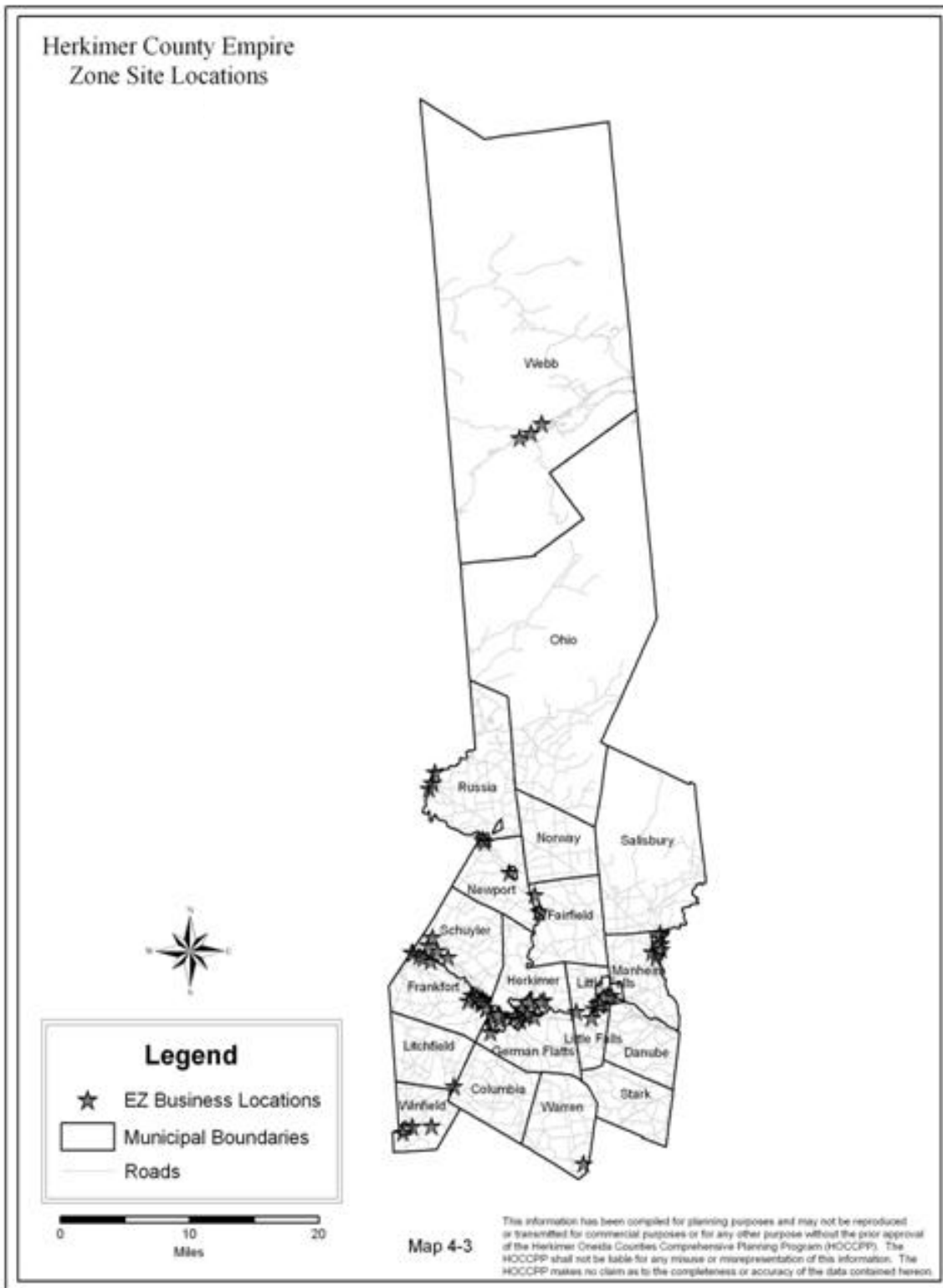
In the re-designation of the Oneida County Empire Zone the Zone identified areas in Oneida County with existing zone businesses with potential for expansion, areas with the highest potential for future development, and areas where there has been significant job loss. The seven areas identified by the Oneida County Empire Zone are Judd Road, Town of Whitestown; Griffiss Business & Technology Park (Family Dollar site); Oneida County Airport Business Park; Town of New Hartford (New Hartford Business Park, Woods Road, and Middle Settlement Road); Village of New York Mills; Sherrill (Oneida Ltd. former manufacturing plant and warehouse); and Boonville (former Ethan Allen furniture manufacturer's site. In addition to the seven identified zone areas two additional sites have been approved as Regionally Significant projects giving them Empire Zone designation. There are currently 106 certified businesses in the Oneida County Zone employing 8,660 employees. The five largest certified businesses located within the designated zone areas are: The Bank of New York, Special Metals, Daimler Commercial Buses North America, The Hartford and Family Dollar Distribution Center.

In 2005, Herkimer County had 52 Empire Zone certified businesses employing 3,231 full time employees. The Herkimer County Industrial Development Agency coordinates the Empire Zone in Herkimer County. There are seven designated Empire Zones in Herkimer County located in the following areas, 1) Little Falls Industrial Park area, 2) East Herkimer (former Herkimer Distribution site and the Lowe's Home Improvement Center site), 3) West Herkimer (near the County Garage combined with an area along Route 5S in Mohawk), 4) Village/Town of Frankfort (5 South and 5S North Business Parks), 5) Town of Frankfort (West Frankfort Industrial Park area), 6) Town of Schuyler (Schuyler Business Park area), and 7) Village of Ilion (Remington Arms and former Duofold plant area). There are also numerous businesses that are certified that were "grandfathered" into the program after re-designation of the zone was done in 2006. Also, Erie Educational Services in the Village of Frankfort is a certified business that was included after being designated a "Regionally Significant Project".

Map 4-4. Empire Zone Sites in Oneida County



Map 4-5. Empire Zone Sites in Herkimer County



Land Use

General Land Use Patterns

Land use in the Herkimer-Oneida Counties area consists of immense areas of forest, agriculture and other undeveloped land. Developed land consists of relatively small urban/village centers that have sprawling suburban residential development.

Urbanized land uses in Herkimer County are primarily located within a few miles of the NYS Thruway, Erie Canal, and NYS Routes 5 and 5S. In Oneida County, suburban residential and commercial development extends outward from the City of Utica, to the south and west along highway corridors, including the towns of New Hartford, Whitestown and Kirkland. Residential and commercial development continues in the Town of Verona due to the expansion of the Turning Stone Casino, an increasingly popular tourist destination.

There is a mix of residential densities and housing types within the cities and villages of Herkimer and Oneida Counties. Single-family housing is the dominant type of residential use. However, two-family and, to a lesser extent, multi-family housing is more common in the Utica urbanized area. Low-density housing and sub-divisions are located in outlying areas. Individuals residing in outlying rural developments may generate higher levels of Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) than individuals who reside in an urbanized setting.

New Housing Units in Oneida and Herkimer Counties

New Housing “Starts” information provided by the 2000 U.S. Census provides an indication of growth or migration patterns within a certain geographic area. In Oneida County, the towns with over 200 “new” (built since 1980) housing starts included:

- Vienna
- Verona
- New Hartford
- Whitestown
- Westmoreland
- Outer portion of the City of Rome

Herkimer County towns with over 200 “new” (built since 1980) housing starts included:

- Ohio
- Webb
- Danube
- Little Falls
- Winfield

Also, in Oneida and Herkimer Counties, there were 22 towns that had “new” housing starts ranging from 100 to 199.

Sprawl in Upstate New York

An October 2003 study by the Brookings Institution entitled "Sprawl Without Growth: The Upstate Paradox," analyzes growth and development trends and population in Upstate New York. This study points out the between "1982 and 1997 upstate New York converted over

425,000 acres of land from rural uses to urban development" while the population only grew by 2.6%.

According to the same article, the Central New York region, which includes Syracuse, Utica-Rome and surrounding counties, urbanized over 100,000 acres between 1982 and 1997, a 45% increase, even though it lost 6,500 residents resulting in a 32 percent decrease in its density. As a result of this upstate sprawl, people have been leaving cities and villages and moving out to less urbanized areas. The "new" housing starts statistics noted above underscores this point in the Herkimer-Oneida Counties area.

The article goes on to say that critical impacts of upstate sprawl is the decline in city tax bases and a dramatic decline in cities' assessed value. As a result, cities bond for many of their infrastructure or economic development improvements, increasing municipal indebtedness and compounding the problems associated with a shrinking tax base. The study noted that if projects funded by the bonds fail to increase cities' tax base, future taxpayers will be burdened with rate increase unless there is increased financial support from the State level. Findings from the study cite the disparity among the property tax rates of Upstate cities, villages, and towns to be the most important policy-related contributor to sprawl.³

The impact of sprawl on transportation infrastructure is becoming more apparent as populations migrate to more rural and suburban communities and put an increased demand on the local road system. Many towns are faced with people living in scattered, low-density areas without services and infrastructure found in more urbanized areas.

Municipalities are authorized to undertake comprehensive planning through New York's General City, Town and Village Laws. Similar provisions exist in the General Municipal Law, which grants counties and regional planning councils the authority to develop county and regional comprehensive plans. Comprehensive planning, at both the municipal and regional levels, serves as an effective mechanism to identify and initiate sound planning principles. Chief among these principles is that such planning responds to a community's own sense of how and where it wants to grow. Consistent with the State's energy policy objectives, a chief benefit of sound planning is the potential efficiency gains derived from communities that plan around compact, mixed-use centers that do not rely on automobile trips for all day-to-day needs. Smart Growth integrates land use planning and transportation on both the local and regional level to create communities that use less energy; that is, compact, mixed-use, walkable, bikeable, transit-friendly communities that rely less on automobile travel.

Future projects will be reviewed for implementation not only by utilizing the available land use data, but also in terms of what type of corridor (i.e. trade, commuter, tourism, intercity passenger, and general purpose, including multi-modal). These corridor types are included in NYSDOT's *Strategies for a New Age: New York State's Transportation Master Plan for 2030* and may be used as the basis for all transportation planning and program development. Future planning efforts by NYSDOT may also include looking at projects on a more global scale, including new projects that could impact neighboring counties and states.⁴

³ *Sprawl Without Growth: The Upstate Paradox*. Brookings Institution, 2003.

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Transportation Modeling

Transportation modeling involves both data collection and the use of software to analyze the data and output the results of the transportation model. The Long- Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) looks at both the current road network and its traffic volume to analyze traffic scenarios. Using this model for the LRTP can create future transportation scenarios for the two-county area.

Transportation modeling is a very data dependent process and analysis. The data needed includes, but is not limited to, demographic data, land use information, traffic counts, and the road network to be modeled.

In using this data, the model is created for the transportation network in our two-county region. The model estimates where traffic is coming from and going to and what route the trip uses to get from the origin to the destination. Using current data and traffic counts the model is calibrated to accurately simulate known values on the road network. The same model parameters may or may not be used to look at future scenarios. Altering future land use and employment data is used to estimate future traffic scenarios.

SUMMARY

HOCTS, as the designated MPO for the two-county area, continues to effectively plan for the future transportation system in the two-county area by being responsive to future regional demographic forecasts and transportation needs. The information gathered in this chapter reflects the recent trends that affect the transportation planning in the region which include increased vehicles and trips, decrease in population, fewer households, longer commutes, and increased vehicle miles traveled. Emerging trends that will effect the region's future transportation system include lifestyle changes, deteriorating infrastructure, less funding available, an aging population, rising fuel costs, and concern for climate change. Public comments are always encouraged and are an important component for future transportation planning for the region. The public input and demographic data provide the framework for the LRTP for ensuring a responsive and comprehensive transportation system for the communities of the planning area.

Findings and Recommendations

Findings:

- Although the two-county population continues to decline, it is slowed by the increase in the refugee population.
- Population continues to shift from urbanized areas to rural and outlying suburban communities
- The number of vehicles per households has increased
- More people are driving alone and have longer commutes
- Vehicle miles traveled (VMT) has increased
- Disabled, low-income, and the elderly constitute a significant portion of the population
- Fastest growing occupations for the next 10 years include the fields of Technology, Health Care, and Social Services
- Local and regional land use plans should be updated on a regular basis

Recommendations:

- Encourage "Smart Growth" land use policies and urban revitalization efforts
- Encourage alternate modes of transportation such as biking, walking, and use of public transit
- Support Welfare-to-Work and ride share transportation programs
- Continue efforts of the Transportation Coordination Committee for the coordination of human service transportation planning in the two-county area for the low-income, disabled, elderly and refugee populations
- Research transportation needs of regional employers
- Support updating local and regional land use plans