# SECTION 6-3-2
# LOCAL AND REGIONAL ECONOMIES

This section presents the assessment of potential beneficial and adverse effects of the project alternatives on the local and regional economies.

## 6-3-2.1 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

### 6-3-2.1.1 DATA SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

United States Census Bureau Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES) Version 7 data were evaluated to provide an overview of general economic conditions in the study areas. LODES, a dataset from the US Census, describes geographic patterns of jobs, using employment locations, residential locations of workers, and the connections between the two locations. LODES Version 7 includes data for 2002-2018, for which Quarter 2 (April – June) is the reference period in each year.

Labor force data were obtained from Census 2000 and the American Community Survey (ACS) 2015-2019. Unemployment data were obtained from the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL). 2017-2018 LEHD data on inflow and outflow of workers were obtained from the US Census OnTheMap.

Zoning and land use information was obtained from the respective municipalities. Sources include ReZone Syracuse, Village of Liverpool Zoning Code and map, Town of Cicero Zoning Code and map, and Town of DeWitt Zoning Code and map.

As described in **Section 6-1, Introduction**, the following four study areas were identified for the Project: Central Study Area, I-481 South Study Area, I-481 East Study Area, and I-481 North Study Area (see **Figure 6-1-1**). In addition, the assessment of economic effects includes three regional study areas: the City of Syracuse, Onondaga County, and the 5-County Region (Onondaga County, Oswego County, Cayuga County, Cortland County, and Madison County), and in response to public comments, expanded economic study areas were considered for the Community Grid Alternative, which include key destinations and locations, adjacent to or near the above study areas, that could experience increases or decreases in consumer base due to changes in travel time and traffic volumes under that alternative. Annual average daily traffic (AADT); Institute of Traffic Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Handbook, 2nd Edition; SMTC Regional Travel Demand Model; and StreetLight data were used to understand exiting travel patterns and project the anticipated changes in travel times and traffic volumes within the expanded study areas. The analysis considered properties along roadways, interstate interchanges, and specific business districts where changes in traffic patterns could alter market conditions by increasing or decreasing access and potential consumer base (see **Figure 6-3-2-1**). A detailed economic assessment of these expanded study areas is included in **Appendix D-2**. The land use and zoning in the expanded study areas were characterized based on field surveys and local zoning regulations. Data from Esri's ArcGIS Business Analyst were utilized to assemble a list of businesses within the study areas, and field surveys in October 2019 verified and supplemented the

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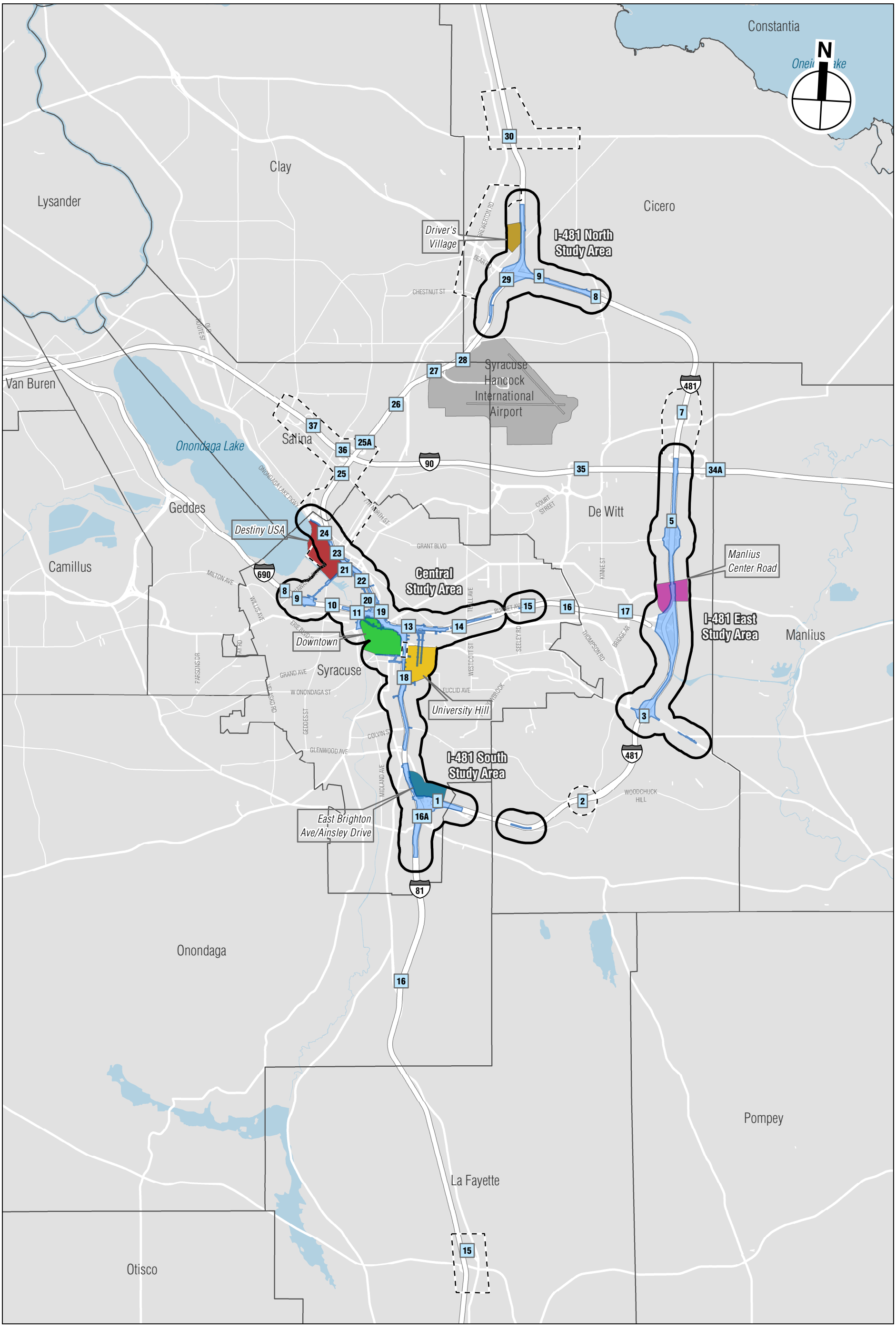



0 2 MILES

*Project Limits*

*Study Area (1/4-Mile Boundary)*

*Expanded Study Areas*

15 *Interchanges*

**I-81 Viaduct Project**

Local and Regional Economies Study Areas

**Figure 6-3-2-1**

Esri business data.[1] Years 2013-2019 hotel trend data for the Syracuse Metropolitan Area and Liverpool, NY (I-81 Interchange 25) were obtained from STR, Inc.[2] Retail sales estimates are based on data from ArcGIS Business Analyst as well as International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) research.[3] Onondaga County hotel visitor statistics were obtained from *Visit Syracuse, Onondaga County, New York, Travel Market Research*, prepared for Visit Syracuse by Young Strategies, Inc., dated November, 2015 (the "Visit Syracuse Report").[4]

Study areas that could see new growth include areas where consumer access would be improved, business visibility would increase, and/or consumer volumes would increase under the Community Grid Alternative. These generally include the areas in the immediate vicinity of the Community Grid improvements, as well as interchanges along I-481, which would be designated as I-81. For these locations, the types and scale of growth were projected based on the expected changes in market conditions and local zoning and land use trends.

Indirect business displacement is the involuntary displacement of businesses that results from a change in economic conditions created by a project. Not all businesses are vulnerable to indirect displacement as a result of changes in traffic patterns; the potential effects on any individual business are dependent upon the specific characteristics of the business, as well as scale of change within a business' consumer trade area.[5] Specific to the Community Grid Alternative, the types of business identified as warranting assessment are:

- Businesses dependent upon specific types and/or volumes of consumer traffic, such as those dependent upon pass-by traffic;[6]
- Businesses sensitive to drive-time changes, changes in the volume of local consumer base within a business' trade areas; and
- Businesses that are particularly sensitive to changes in workforce availability or changes in supply-chain dynamics.

The indirect displacement of an individual business due to market change is an economic issue, not environmental, and is not, in itself, the subject of this DDR/DEIS. However, the DDR/DEIS does consider the potential effects of displacement at a neighborhood level, i.e., whether a project could lead to indirect displacement that in turn leads to disinvestment in a neighborhood, which is an environmental concern. For business displacement assessments within this context, "anchor" business uses are typically of greatest concern. Anchor uses are prominent, unique, or well-visited uses that

1 Esri is a private sector source for location-based demographic, business, and consumer data.

2 STR, formerly known as Smith Travel Research, is an American company based in Hendersonville, Tennessee, that tracks supply and demand data for multiple market sectors, including the global hotel industry.

3 The International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) is the global trade association of the shopping center and retail real estate industry.

4 The *Visit Syracuse* report can be found at: https://eriecanalway.org/application/files/1114/8595/9068/2015_Onondaga_Final_Report_VisitorProfile_YoungStrategies.PDF

5 A "trade area" is a geographic area within which a business draws a majority of its customers.

6 The ITE identifies business types that are sensitive to "pass-by" trips. These include businesses with drive-thrus, convenience stores, gas stations, high turnover restaurants, among others.

draw consumers who also support other local businesses (e.g., smaller retailers, service businesses, and restaurants).[7]

While all businesses are important to a community, and the potential direct and indirect displacement of all businesses is considered, the analysis focuses on anchor uses because those uses tend to draw consumer trips to an area. The loss of an anchor tenant can adversely affect a larger concentration of uses within a neighborhood and could result in indirect displacement of other neighborhood businesses. Indirect displacement effects are also considered at the municipal and regional levels if a project displaces a use that generates a substantial amount of tax revenue, which could compromise the fiscal health of affected taxing jurisdictions. As such, this analysis considers the property tax revenues of business uses identified as potentially vulnerable to indirect displacement.

#### 6-3-2.1.2 LABOR FORCE 2000-2019

Labor force reflects the number of working age people (16 years and older) who reside in a geographic area and who either have a job or are seeking a job. At a regional level, the City of Syracuse experienced a labor force decrease of approximately 3.6 percent between 2000 and 2019, whereas Onondaga County and the 5-County Region experienced labor force increases of 2.9 percent and 1.1 percent, respectively (see **Table 6-3-2-1**). A contributing factor to the decline in Syracuse labor force is the city's shrinking population. The metropolitan area lost 10,161 residents or 1.5 percent of its population from 2010 to 2019. In addition, some of the reduction in labor force is attributable to retiring workers without people to replace them.[8]

**Table 6-3-2-1**
**Change in Labor Force in the Study Areas**

| Labor Force Summary | 2000 | 2019 | % Change |
|---|---|---|---|
| Central Study Area | 22,090 | 22,938 | 3.8% |
| I-481 North Study Area | 6,347 | 6,091 | -4.0% |
| I-481 South Study Area | 5,886 | 6,794 | 15.4% |
| I-481 East Study Area | 5,532 | 5,563 | 0.6% |
| Total Project Area | 39,855 | 41,386 | 3.8% |
| City of Syracuse | 67,072 | 64,624 | -3.6% |
| Onondaga County | 228,431 | 235,099 | 2.9% |
| 5-County Region | 387,765 | 391,865 | 1.1% |
| **Source:** Census 2000 and ACS 2015-2019. | | | |

During this same period of time, the annual unemployment rate for the City of Syracuse Metropolitan Statistical Area decreased from 8.5 percent in 2010 to 5.1 percent in 2017. The unemployment rate continued to decline to 4.3 percent in 2018 and 2019.

Labor force changes varied considerably within the Project Area. As summarized in **Table 6-3-2-1**, the labor force in the Central Study Area overall increased by about 3.8 percent between 2000 and

[7] An anchor tenant—sometimes called a prime or key tenant—is a featured, often regionally or nationally recognized tenant that attracts consumers to a location, and may signal to other potential tenants that a location is favorable for operations. Examples of retail anchors include major grocery stores, department stores, and national chain "big box" stores.

[8] https://www.syracuse.com/business-news/2018/07/while_us_job_market_hums_syracuse_ unemployment_rate_is_stuck_an_economy_in_ neutr.html. Accessed December 31, 2019.

2019. The I-481 South Study Area and I-481 East Study Area experienced labor force increases of 15.4 percent and 0.6 percent, respectively. The I-481 North Study Area experienced a decrease in the labor force of 4.0 percent, similar to the decrease for the City of Syracuse. The combined Project Area experienced a 3.8 percent increase in labor force overall.

#### 6-3-2.1.3 EMPLOYMENT

Employment represents the number of filled positions within a particular geographic area. For the purpose of collecting, analyzing, and publishing statistical data, State and Federal agencies classify employment (i.e., jobs) by industry sectors as defined by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). For this assessment, employment information is provided by total employment.

- **City of Syracuse, Onondaga County, and 5-County Region**: As of 2018, there were 92,369 employees in the City of Syracuse (see **Table 6-3-2-2**). Health Care and Social Assistance (26.1 percent) and Educational Services (19.7 percent) are the dominant employers in the area. These industry sectors are also prominent employers in Onondaga County, representing 17.1 percent and 12.6 percent of its jobs, respectively. Retail Trade (10.6 percent), Manufacturing (8.0 percent), and Accommodations and Food Services (7.4 percent) also represent notable sectors of employment in the County. These sectors of employment are similar to the distribution found in the 5-County Region, where of the 322,278 employees, 189,724 work primarily in Health Care and Social Assistance (16.4 percent), Educational Services (13.8 percent), Retail Trade (11.2 percent), Manufacturing (9.3 percent), and Accommodations and Food Services (8.1 percent).
- **Central Study Area:** In 2018, the Central Study Area had 73,758 workers. As shown in **Table 6-3-2-3**, the two largest industries in terms of employment are Health Care and Social Assistance and Educational Services, which collectively employ over one-third of the workers in the Central Study Area. This is largely due to the presence of Syracuse University, State University of New York (SUNY) Upstate Medical University, and affiliated and other major medical institutions. The other sectors with substantial representation include: Public Administration (10.8 percent); Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (6.9 percent); Accommodation and Food Services (6.6 percent); Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (6.5 percent); and Retail Trade (6.4 percent).

  Major employers located in this area include medical and educational institutions, insurance and utility firms, and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Syracuse (see **Table 6-3-2-4**). Downtown Syracuse is located west of I-81, but the area's largest employers—SUNY Upstate Medical University and Health System (9,525 workers) and Syracuse University (5,283 workers)—are concentrated in the University Hill neighborhood on the east side of I-81. In addition, the retail and food service businesses within Destiny USA are substantial employers.

**Table 6-3-2-2**
**2018 Jobs by North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Industry Sector: Regional Study Areas (City of Syracuse, Onondaga County, and 5-County Region)**

| NAICS Industry Sector | City of Syracuse | | Onondaga County | | 5-County Region | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Count | Share | Count | Share | Count | Share |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting | 0 | 0.0% | 625 | 0.3% | 2,147 | 0.7% |
| Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction | 0 | 0.0% | 138 | 0.1% | 193 | 0.1% |
| Utilities | 1,441 | 1.6% | 1,928 | 0.8% | 4,062 | 1.3% |
| Construction | 1,877 | 2.0% | 9,692 | 4.2% | 13,695 | 4.2% |
| Manufacturing | 3,002 | 3.3% | 18,538 | 8.0% | 29,952 | 9.3% |
| Wholesale Trade | 2,017 | 2.2% | 12,404 | 5.3% | 14,620 | 4.5% |
| Retail Trade | 6,103 | 6.6% | 24,672 | 10.6% | 36,167 | 11.2% |
| Transportation and Warehousing | 1,010 | 1.1% | 10,163 | 4.4% | 12,130 | 3.8% |
| Information | 1,471 | 1.6% | 4,372 | 1.9% | 4,964 | 1.5% |
| Finance and Insurance | 2,937 | 3.2% | 9,651 | 4.2% | 11,156 | 3.5% |
| Real Estate and Rental and Leasing | 1,417 | 1.5% | 3,341 | 1.4% | 4,039 | 1.3% |
| Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services | 4,812 | 5.2% | 14,172 | 6.1% | 16,897 | 5.2% |
| Management of Companies and Enterprises | 2,081 | 2.3% | 3,726 | 1.6% | 4,101 | 1.3% |
| Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services | 5,182 | 5.6% | 12,290 | 5.3% | 14,669 | 4.6% |
| Educational Services | 18,221 | 19.7% | 29,295 | 12.6% | 44,576 | 13.8% |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 24,106 | 26.1% | 39,736 | 17.1% | 53,013 | 16.4% |
| Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation | 863 | 0.9% | 2,555 | 1.1% | 3,386 | 1.1% |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 5,674 | 6.1% | 17,168 | 7.4% | 26,016 | 8.1% |
| Other Services (excluding Public Administration) | 2,159 | 2.3% | 7,911 | 3.4% | 10,855 | 3.4% |
| Public Administration | 7,996 | 8.7% | 9,941 | 4.3% | 15,640 | 4.9% |
| **TOTAL** | **92,369** | **100%** | **232,318** | **100%** | **322,278** | **100%** |

**Source:** U.S. Census Bureau Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES) Version 7.
**Note:** Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

**Table 6-3-2-3**

**2018 Jobs by North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Industry Sector: Central, I-481 South, I-481 East, I-481 North Study Areas and the Project Area**

| NAICS Industry Sector | Central Study Area | | I-481 South Study Area | | I-481 East Study Area | | I-481 North Study Area | | Project Area | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Count | Share | Count | Share | Count | Share | Count | Share | Count | Share |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 8 | 0.0% | 6 | 0.1% | 14 | 0.0% |
| Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Utilities | 1,446 | 2.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 9 | 0.0% | 139 | 1.5% | 1,594 | 1.4% |
| Construction | 1,611 | 2.2% | 186 | 3.8% | 1,369 | 5.8% | 440 | 4.9% | 3,606 | 3.2% |
| Manufacturing | 2,222 | 3.0% | 258 | 5.3% | 2,269 | 9.6% | 1,060 | 11.7% | 5,809 | 5.2% |
| Wholesale Trade | 2,157 | 2.9% | 173 | 3.5% | 1,113 | 4.7% | 390 | 4.3% | 3,833 | 3.4% |
| Retail Trade | 4,733 | 6.4% | 338 | 6.9% | 2,868 | 12.1% | 2,311 | 25.5% | 10,250 | 9.2% |
| Transportation and Warehousing | 889 | 1.2% | 178 | 3.6% | 1,740 | 7.3% | 1,124 | 12.4% | 3,931 | 3.5% |
| Information | 1,414 | 1.9% | 4 | 0.1% | 1,675 | 7.1% | 46 | 0.5% | 3,139 | 2.8% |
| Finance and Insurance | 2,300 | 3.1% | 36 | 0.7% | 3,705 | 15.6% | 75 | 0.8% | 6,116 | 5.5% |
| Real Estate and Rental and Leasing | 1,200 | 1.6% | 84 | 1.7% | 399 | 1.7% | 59 | 0.7% | 1,742 | 1.6% |
| Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services | 4,783 | 6.5% | 165 | 3.4% | 1,995 | 8.4% | 1,632 | 18.0% | 8,575 | 7.7% |
| Management of Companies and Enterprises | 1,907 | 2.6% | 63 | 1.3% | 732 | 3.1% | 5 | 0.1% | 2,707 | 2.4% |
| Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services | 5,098 | 6.9% | 219 | 4.5% | 877 | 3.7% | 153 | 1.7% | 6,347 | 5.7% |
| Educational Services | 10,197 | 13.8% | 187 | 3.8% | 545 | 2.3% | 59 | 0.7% | 10,988 | 9.9% |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 18,344 | 24.9% | 2,404 | 49.1% | 2,041 | 8.6% | 272 | 3.0% | 23,061 | 20.7% |
| Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation | 802 | 1.1% | 36 | 0.7% | 200 | 0.8% | 100 | 1.1% | 1,138 | 1.0% |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 4,851 | 6.6% | 383 | 7.8% | 1,188 | 5.0% | 692 | 7.6% | 7,114 | 6.4% |
| Other Services (excluding Public Administration) | 1,817 | 2.5% | 121 | 2.5% | 990 | 4.2% | 336 | 3.7% | 3,264 | 2.9% |
| Public Administration | 7,987 | 10.8% | 62 | 1.3% | 26 | 0.1% | 153 | 1.7% | 8,228 | 7.4% |
| **TOTAL** | **73,758** | **100%** | **4,897** | **100%** | **23,749** | **100%** | **9,052** | **100%** | **111,456** | **100%** |

**Source:** U.S. Census Bureau Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES) Version 7.

**Note:** Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

**Table 6-3-2-4**
**Major Employers in Central Study Area**

| Name | Number of Employees |
|---|---|
| SUNY Upstate University and Health System | 9,525 |
| Syracuse University | 5,283 |
| Crouse Hospital | 2,700 |
| National Grid | 2,000 |
| Time Warner Cable | 1,800 |
| Syracuse VA Medical Center | 1,400 |
| Roman Catholic Diocese | 1,000 |
| AXA Equitable Life Insurance | 943 |
| **TOTAL** | **23,989** |

**Sources:**
Employment at major employers is from Onondaga County (http://www.ongov.net/about/majorEmployers.html), last accessed 12/17/2019, and Syracuse University (http://www.syr.edu/about/facts.html). Accessed 12/17/2019.

- **I-481 South Study Area:** The I-481 South Study Area is located primarily in the southern portion of the City of Syracuse. As discussed in **Section 6-2-1, Neighborhood Character**, land uses in the I-481 South Study Area are residential, commercial, and institutional, including several residential and care facilities for the elderly, such as Loretto Health and Rehabilitation Center, a short and long-term rehabilitation facility; the Heritage, an Alzheimer's care facility; and the Bernardine, an assisted care facility. The Loretto facility is one of the largest employers in Onondaga County, with 2,476 workers.[9] As such, nearly half (49.1 percent) of the estimated 4,897 employees in the I-481 South Study Area work in the Health Care and Social Assistance industry (see **Table 6-3-2-3**). Other prominent industries include: Accommodation and Food Services (7.8 percent); Retail Trade (6.9 percent); and Manufacturing (5.3 percent).

- **I-481 East Study Area:** The I-481 East Study Area, located in the Town of DeWitt, had 23,749 employees in 2018. The northern section of the study area and the area to the east of I-481 are primarily vacant, with small pockets of residential use along Pheasant Road north of Kirkland Road. To the west is a commercial park with medical, office, and industrial uses, including Upstate Orthopedics, advanced manufacturing company Inficon, Guardian Life Insurance, and other office uses. The I-481 East Study Area includes considerable transportation land use, specifically the CSX rail yard. Land north and east of the rail infrastructure is primarily vacant and includes a wooded patch around Butternut Creek. Residential uses line Fly Road to the north and west. South of the rail infrastructure, land use along Manlius Center Road is primarily commercial and industrial. This includes office uses, such as broadband services company New Visions Communications, Inc.; retail uses, such as Hearth and Home showroom; Liverpool Pool & Spa Super Center; and a Kia Dealership. Other uses include auto services, freight trucking company Santaro Development, and building supply company 84 Lumber. A Walmart Supercenter is located just to the west and outside of the study area.

  As shown in **Table 6-3-2-3**, jobs in this area are primarily in: Finance and Insurance (15.6 percent); Retail Trade (12.1 percent); Manufacturing (9.6 percent); Health Care and Social Assistance (8.6

[9] Employment at major employers is from Onondaga County (http://www.ongov.net/about/majorEmployers.html), last accessed 12/17/2019.

percent); Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (8.4 percent); Transportation and Warehousing (7.3 percent); Information (7.1 percent); Construction (5.8 percent); and Accommodation and Food Services (5.0 percent).

- **I-481 North Study Area:** In 2018, there were 9,052 employees in the I-481 North Study Area, which is located in the Town of Cicero and just north of the Syracuse Hancock International Airport (see **Table 6-3-2-3**). Commercial uses in the I-481 North Study Area are located near the I-81 and I-481 interchanges. The commercial concentration west of I-81 at the South Bay Road interchange has multiple automotive uses, including Driver's Village, a former shopping mall with many car dealerships. Around the I-481 and Northern Boulevard interchange are industrial, warehouse, and vacant land uses. One of the industrial uses is SRC, Inc., a company that has approximately 885 employees.[10]

  Jobs in this area are primarily in: Retail Trade (25.5 percent); Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (18.0 percent); Transportation and Warehousing (12.4 percent); and Manufacturing (11.7 percent). Accommodation and Food Services (7.6 percent) is also a prominent industry.

### Worker Inflow/Outflow

The City of Syracuse is an employment destination within the region, particularly within the Educational Services and Health Care and Social Assistance sectors. For the zip codes the overlap with the Central Study Area, 89.6 percent commute from outside the combined zip code area to work while 10.48 percent live and work in the combined zip code area.

**Table 6-3-2-5** presents inflow and outflow of workers within the Project Area at the zip code level. Of the 20,327 people who live within the four zip codes immediately adjacent to I-81, only 32.9 percent work within the combined zip code areas. The remaining 67.1 percent of these residents travel outside the combined zip code area to work.

**Table 6-3-2-5**
**2018 Inflow and Outflow of Jobs within Central Study Area Zip Codes**

| Worker Total | Zip Codes | | | | Combined Zip Code Areas | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 13202 | 13203 | 13205 | 13210 | | |
| Employed in the Zip Code Area | 22,991 | 9,633 | 4,220 | 27,598 | 64,442 | 100% |
| Employed in the Zip Code Area but Living Outside | 22,730 | 9,224 | 3,827 | 26,014 | 57,752 | 89.6% |
| Employed and Living in the Zip Code Area | 261 | 409 | 393 | 1,584 | 6,690 | 10.4% |
| Living in the Zip Code Area | 1,744 | 5,653 | 6,178 | 6,752 | 20,327 | 100% |
| Living in the Zip Code Area but Employed Outside | 1,483 | 5,244 | 5,785 | 5,168 | 13,637 | 67.1% |
| Living and Employed in the Zip Code Area | 261 | 409 | 393 | 1,584 | 6,690 | 32.9% |

**Source:** https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/. Accessed March 8, 2021.

[10] Employment at major employers is from Onondaga County (http://www.ongov.net/about/majorEmployers.html), last accessed 12/17/2019, and Syracuse University (http://www.syr.edu/about/facts.html). Accessed December 17, 2019.

### 6-3-2.1.4 BUSINESS DISTRICTS AND COMMERCIAL AREAS

As discussed above, in response to public comment, the Central Study Area, I-481 South Study Area, I-481 East Study Area, and I-481 North Study Area were expanded to include properties along roadways and interstate interchanges where changes in traffic volume and/or travel time are anticipated in order to assess whether businesses in these areas could be vulnerable to indirect displacement. These expanded study areas, including the major commercial centers within the Project Area, are shown on **Figure 6-3-2-1**.

**Central Study Area**

- **Downtown:** As further described in **Section 6-2-1, Neighborhood Character**, Downtown serves as the commercial center of the City of Syracuse and the greater Central New York region. Downtown generally occupies an area bordered by I-690 to the north, I-81 to the east, East Adams Street to the south, and West Street to the west and includes a mix of land uses typical of a downtown setting. This mix includes commercial uses, such as office and retail; residential and mixed use formats (e.g., residential over ground-floor retail); institutional, including government, medical, and educational uses; and recreation, including public parks and entertainment uses. In recent years, vacant and/or underutilized office and industrial buildings have been converted into residential uses.

  Major employers in Downtown include government, cultural institutions, and health care facilities, such as the Syracuse City Hall; the Museum of Science and Technology (MOST); the Erie Canal Museum; the Oncenter/Nicholas J. Pirro Convention Center/War Memorial Arena; and Upstate Medical University facilities. As such, as shown in **Table 6-3-2-6**, most of the 50,589 total jobs in Downtown as of 2018 were in the Educational Services (30.3 percent), Health Care and Social Assistance (19.1 percent), and Public Administration (14.9 percent) sectors. Approximately 7.1 percent of jobs in Downtown were in Retail Trade, Accommodation and Food Services, and Arts, Entertainment and Recreation sectors. [11]

  Downtown's core has seen increased investment in recent years. Salina Street, the historical "Main Street" of Downtown, no longer serves as the city and region's primary shopping and entertainment district, the result of commercial and residential sprawl that occurred throughout the mid- and late twentieth century. However, over the last two decades, streets surrounding and adjacent to Armory Square, including West Jefferson Street, Walton Street, and South Franklin Street, have been redeveloped and are now the city's primary mixed-use retail and cultural destination. The area is now home to hundreds of residential units and local and national retailers, numerous restaurants, the MOST, and co-working facilities. Redevelopment is now planned in many areas throughout Downtown (see Section 6-2-1, Neighborhood Character for a list of recent and planned developments). Recent development is primarily residential, mixed-use commercial and office, hotels, and institutional uses.

[11] U.S. Census Bureau's OnTheMap. Accessed March 8, 2021.

**Table 6-3-2-6**
**2018 Jobs by North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)**
**Industry Sector: Downtown Syracuse**

| NAICS Industry Sector | Count | Share |
|---|---|---|
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting | 0 | 0.0% |
| Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction | 0 | 0.0% |
| Utilities | 1,440 | 2.8% |
| Construction | 559 | 1.1% |
| Manufacturing | 1,039 | 2.1% |
| Wholesale Trade | 551 | 1.1% |
| Retail Trade | 623 | 1.2% |
| Transportation and Warehousing | 583 | 1.2% |
| Information | 895 | 1.8% |
| Finance and Insurance | 1,202 | 2.4% |
| Real Estate and Rental and Leasing | 749 | 1.5% |
| Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services | 3,482 | 6.9% |
| Management of Companies and Enterprises | 1,325 | 2.6% |
| Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services | 1,724 | 3.4% |
| Educational Services | 15,308 | 30.3% |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 9,662 | 19.1% |
| Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation | 593 | 1.2% |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 2,376 | 4.7% |
| Other Services (excluding Public Administration) | 959 | 1.9% |
| Public Administration | 7,519 | 14.9% |
| **TOTAL** | 50,589 | 100.00% |

**Note:** Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.
**Source:** U.S. Census Bureau's OnTheMap. Accessed March 8, 2021. Includes ZIP Codes 13202 and 13210.

As described in **Section 6-2-1, Neighborhood Character**, the majority of Downtown development, business, and cultural activity is located several blocks from existing highway right-of-way. Generally, development patterns near I-81 lack density, and there is substantial underutilized land. Where active land uses are located within a block of the highways, the uses are often buffered from the highways by large areas of surface parking. Additionally, the majority of recent and/or proposed development within Downtown has been located or been proposed in the higher-density, pedestrian-oriented traditional core, away from I-81 and I-690, and on University Hill. Continued development adjacent to I-81 is limited and primarily associated with SUNY Upstate Medical University.

- **University Hill:** University Hill is immediately east of I-81 between Genesee Street and East Colvin Street. As described in **Section 6-2-1, Neighborhood Character**, University Hill is the City's educational and medical district. The defining land uses are institutional and include Syracuse University, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY ESF), SUNY Upstate Medical University, Crouse Hospital, Syracuse Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center, and Richard H. Hutchings Psychiatric Center. The majority of non-institutional commercial and residential uses either supports or is affiliated with the institutions and caters primarily to university

and medical staff and to students and visitors. Commercial uses include several hotels, as well as retail, the latter primarily along Marshall Street and South Crouse Avenue. Part of the SUNY Upstate campus is located west of Almond Street along Harrison and Adams Streets. This area has also seen the recent development of several apartment buildings that cater to students of the universities and residents from the hospitals.

- **Destiny USA:** The six-story Destiny USA is the nation's sixth-largest shopping center and is accessible from I-81 and Hiawatha Boulevard. The shopping center is surrounded by acres of surface parking lots. To the south of Destiny USA, the Inner Harbor area surrounds a port on Onondaga Creek. A former industrial site, Inner Harbor now includes marinas, a hotel, and commercial office and retail uses. This area also has large tracts of vacant land where former industrial and warehouse uses have been demolished. Some tracts have been slated for new commercial and/or residential development.
- **I-81 Interchanges 23 and 24:** Just north of Destiny USA is a commercial and industrial area. There are a few fast food restaurants, coffee shops, and convenience retail locations in this area, but it is primarily characterized by warehouse and industrial uses. The retail businesses primarily serve local residents and employees and patrons of the warehouse and industrial uses.
- **I-81 Interchange 25:** The interchange of I-90 (New York State Thruway) and I-81 is located approximately 1.5 miles southwest of the Syracuse Hancock International Airport. North of I-90 is primarily single-family residential neighborhoods. South of I-90, along 7th North Street, is a predominantly commercial area. There are 11 hotels, all national brands, located within one mile of this interchange, clustered along the 7th North Street corridor. There are also a number of convenience goods and services, retail, and restaurant uses in this area, including a Pilot Travel Center south of I-90 and east of I-81. The commercial uses at this interchange tend to be highway and airport oriented—i.e., serving the traveling public and truckers traveling on I-90 and I-81. The retail, fast food, convenience goods and services, and hotel uses at this interchange collectively generate approximately 6 percent of the total property tax revenue for the Town of Salina.

**I-481 South Study Area**

- **East Brighton Avenue/Ainsley Drive:** To the north and east of the I-481 and I-81 interchange is a mix of commercial, automotive, and industrial uses along East Brighton Avenue and Ainsley Drive. In addition to numerous auto body and repair establishments, uses include the Syracuse University Physical Plant, tech company Arcom, several wholesalers, a kitchen and bath warehouse, the Willow Rock Brewing Company and tasting room, automobile and machinery rentals, and offices for Pro Literacy Worldwide.
- **I-81 Interchange 15:** The I-481 South Study Area was expanded to include Interchange 15 in the Town of LaFayette because of potential changes in travel times to this location from points north, such as Baldwinsville and Destiny USA, under the Community Grid Alternative. Interchange 15 is a small commercial area concentrated around the interchange. Businesses include McDonald's, Circle K Gas Station, Dollar General, NAPA Auto Parts store, and M&T Bank. These convenience retail and restaurant uses primarily serve pass-by consumers traveling on I-81 and the surrounding rural residential area.

### I-481 East Study Area

- **Manlius Center Road:** Manlius Center Road, which extends beyond the study area boundary, is primarily commercial and industrial. It includes office uses, such as broadband services company New Visions Communications, Inc.; retail uses, such as Hearth and Home showroom; Liverpool Pool & Spa Super Center; and a Kia Dealership. Other uses include auto services, freight trucking company (Santaro Development), and building supply company (84 Lumber).
- **I-481 Interchanges 2 and 7:** The I-481 East Study Area was expanded to include I-481 Interchanges 2 and 7 due to the potential change in pass-by trips under the Community Grid Alternative. The area around Interchange 2 is primarily single-family residential uses to the north and industrial gravel mining operations to the south. The area near Interchange 7 is zoned Hi-Tech and includes a mix of office, commercial, and medical office uses.

### I-481 North Study Area

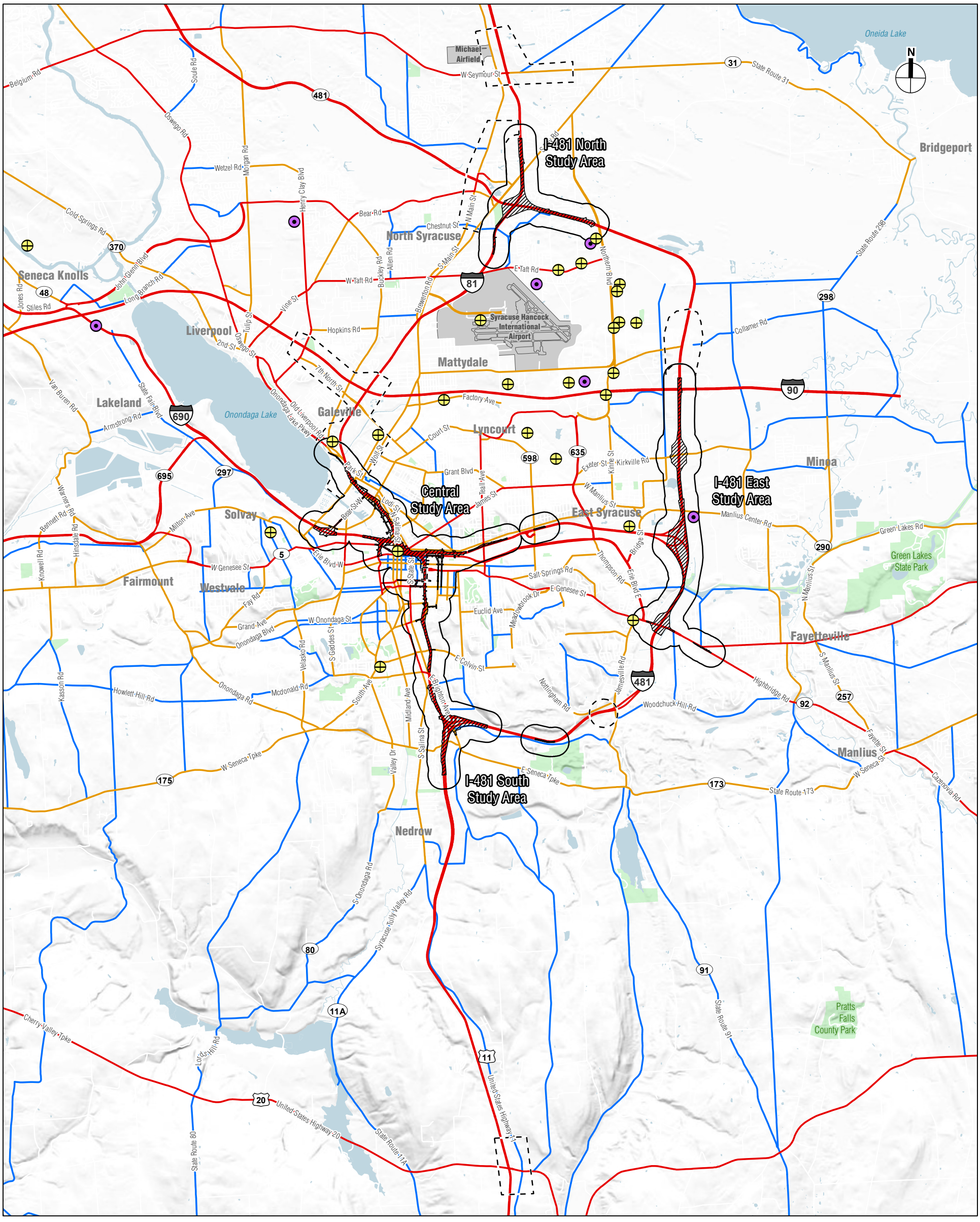
- **Driver's Village:** Located near the interchange of I-81 and I-481 is Driver's Village, a former shopping mall that now holds several automobile dealerships. To the west of Driver's Village there are a number of convenience goods and services, neighborhood retail, and restaurant businesses along North Main Street/Brewerton Road. Major retailers along this corridor include a Walmart Supercenter, Wegmans grocery store, Home Depot, Lowe's, and Price Chopper. This area, primarily in the Town of Cicero, was identified because of the potential change in travel time to this location from points south under the Community Grid Alternative. These retail uses are supported by several local restaurants and fast food establishments including McDonald's, Taco Bell, and KFC. The concentration of major national retailers at this location makes it a destination retail area drawing from Syracuse and its northern suburbs. While Driver's Village is highly visible from I-81, these other retail and fast food uses have limited visibility and wayfinding, thus limiting their draw of pass-by consumers from I-81.
- **I-81 Interchange 30:** At Interchange 30 is another cluster of restaurants, retail, and convenience goods and services businesses including an Aldi grocery store, Cracker Barrel, local diners, Walgreens, and Comfort Inn. These convenience retail, grocery, and restaurant uses primarily serve pass-by consumers traveling on I-81 and the surrounding suburban and rural residential areas. Hotel and food information signage for businesses at this interchange is available on I-81.

## 6-3-2.1.5 SPECIFIC BUSINESS TYPES

### Freight (Trucking)

As shown in **Figure 6-3-2-2**, there are a number of freight and truck-oriented businesses within the study areas, including warehouse and distribution centers, as well as freightliner companies. These businesses are mainly concentrated on the outskirts of Syracuse, particularly near the I-481 North Study Area and the I-481 East Study Area, which are nearest to the New York State Thruway (I-90) and Syracuse Hancock International Airport. As discussed above, the transportation and warehousing sector is a major employer in the I-481 North Study Area, comprising 12.4 percent of the workforce. In the I-481 East Study Area, the sector comprises 7.3 percent of the workforce (see **Table 6-3-2-3**).

9.30.20




Existing Freight Companies, Distribution Centers, and Freight Routes Through the Project Area

**Figure 6-3-2-2**

The existing interstate highway system in and around the study areas includes I-81, I-90, I-690, and I-481, and these interstates are the primary routes that trucks use through the area. In addition, **Figure 6-3-2-2** identifies the Principal Arterial, Major and Minor Collector, and Local Roads that may also be used by trucks.[12] The Principal Arterial roads are the primary roads that trucks use to travel through the study areas, whereas the Major and Minor Collector and Local Roads are primarily used to access points within the City of Syracuse.

Based on traffic data collected for the Project, trucks account for approximately 8 percent of northbound I-81 vehicles in both the AM and PM peak periods within the Central Study Area. Truck traffic accounts for about 9 percent and 10 percent of the southbound I-81 traffic in the AM and PM peak periods, respectively. Within or near the North, South, and East Study Areas, trucks account for approximately 7 percent and 9 percent of vehicles traveling northbound on I-481 in the AM and PM peak periods, respectively; and for 6 percent of southbound I-481 traffic in both the AM and PM peak periods.

Trucks coming from the north and south currently travel on I-81 to access points within the City of Syracuse and destinations south of its northern interchange with I-481, such as the Syracuse Hancock International Airport. I-481 is currently used to bypass the City of Syracuse or to reach points east of the City. Both I-81 and I-481 provide access to I-690 and I-90; as such, trucks may use either route to access destinations within these corridors.

**Chapter 5, Transportation and Engineering Considerations** presents existing travel times and speeds between points within the Project Area. Additional analysis of the movement of freight through the Project Area is also provided in **Chapter 5, Transportation and Engineering Considerations**.

### Medical

Numerous medical institutions are located within the Central Study Area, including St. Joseph's Hospital, SUNY Upstate Medical University, Crouse Hospital, and Syracuse VA Medical Center. These medical institutions are currently accessible from I-81 Interchanges 18, 19, and 20. As discussed above, the health care industry is a major employer in the region and, in particular, in the Central and I-481 South Study Areas, where it employs 24.9 percent and 49.1 percent of the workforce, respectively (see **Table 6-3-2-3**).

### Institutions of Higher Learning

Syracuse University is located within the Central Study Area. The approximately 270-acre campus is located east of I-81 and south of the I-690 interchange. Syracuse University is a major employer and source of economic activity within the Central Study Area. Total university enrollment in the fall of 2017 was approximately 22,484 students. Syracuse University employs 920 tenured and tenure-track faculty, 837 non-tenure-track faculty, and 3,524 staff.[13]

SUNY Upstate Medical University, identified above under "Medical," also falls under this category of businesses, as it is an educational institution in addition to providing medical services.

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12 Principal Arterial, Major and Minor Collector, and Local Roads are NYSDOT Functional Classifications.

13 http://www.syr.edu/about/facts.html. Accessed December 17, 2019.

Also within the Central Study Area is SUNY ESF. The approximately 12-acre ESF campus supports a total enrollment of 1,800 undergraduate students and 400 graduate students.[14] SUNY ESF employs 205 faculty and staff.[15]

In total, 13.8 percent of the workforce in the Central Study Area is in the educational services industry (see **Table 6-3-2-3**).

### Retail

Retail concentrations within the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County serve as the primary retail destinations for the 5-County Region. Downtown Syracuse contains locally owned stores and small national retailers, concentrated in and around Armory Square and along South Salina Street, the traditional Downtown retail spine. The majority of local and regional retail is located outside of the Central Study Area (including Downtown) in portions of Syracuse and surrounding Onondaga County. Generally, retail within the region is located in shopping centers anchored by mid-box or big-box format stores along arterial roadways, in regional malls, and interspersed with other uses in small storefronts along the main streets of towns.

Destiny USA is located in the Central Study Area. With approximately 2.4 million square feet of retail and entertainment space, including over 300 stores, it is the largest shopping mall in New York State. Other shopping centers in the City of Syracuse are found off I-81 to the north of Downtown near the airport, along Erie Boulevard to the east of Downtown, Genesee Street to the west of Downtown, and in smaller neighborhood concentrations.

Based on data from Esri, a national data provider, the 5-County Region contains approximately 5,857 retail establishments. As shown in **Table 6-3-2-7**, many establishments (30 percent) are food service and drinking places. Miscellaneous store retailers represent 11 percent of establishments, and food and beverage stores represent approximately 10 percent. Retail establishment data from Esri for the U.S. indicate that the distribution of retail establishments across retail sectors is generally similar for the metropolitan area and the nation as a whole, with the exception of the high percentage of food service and drinking places.

Regionally, retail has experienced decentralization over the years, with large-scale shopping centers found in suburban locations to the east, west, and north of Syracuse in surrounding Onondaga County. In DeWitt to the east, Erie Boulevard (NY-5) near the I-690 and I-481 interchange is lined with stand-alone national retailers, shopping centers, and the nearly one million-square-foot Shoppingtown Mall. Similarly, Genesee Street to the west in Camillus is lined with large, national retail stores. In North Syracuse, US-11 north of I-481 also hosts a number of national chains. Farther north, the town of Clay is home to the Great Northern Mall, an 896,000-square-foot mall situated at the intersection of I-481 and NY-31, as well as a number of freestanding chain retailers, located just west of the mall.

[14] https://www.esf.edu/welcome. Accessed December 17, 2019.

[15] http://www.esf.edu/faculty. Accessed December 17, 2019.

**Table 6-3-2-7**
**Retail Establishments in the 5-County Region, 2017**

| Retail Type | Number | Percent of Total Retail |
|---|---|---|
| Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers | 551 | 9% |
| Furniture & Home Furnishing Stores | 210 | 4% |
| Electronics & Appliance Stores | 179 | 3% |
| Building Materials, Garden Equipment & Supply Stores | 366 | 6% |
| Food & Beverage Stores | 574 | 10% |
| Health & Personal Care Stores | 334 | 6% |
| Gasoline Stations | 227 | 4% |
| Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores | 399 | 7% |
| Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores | 296 | 5% |
| General Merchandise Stores | 243 | 4% |
| Miscellaneous Store Retailers | 620 | 11% |
| Non-store Retailers | 72 | 1% |
| Food Service & Drinking Places | 1,786 | 30% |
| **TOTAL** | **5,857** | **100%** |

**Source:** Esri's ArcGIS Business Analyst. Esri and Infogroup. Esri 2019 Updated Demographics. ArcGIS Business Analyst 2017 Retail MarketPlace.

There are fewer shopping centers located in the four counties surrounding Onondaga County. To the south, the primary retail concentration in Cortland County is found near the convergence of NY-281 and NY-13 to the west of Downtown Cortland, which includes the 476,000-square-foot Cortlandville Crossings and smaller shopping centers anchored by mid- or big-box establishments or grocery stores. Retail in Madison County to the east is generally centered along NY-5 in the northern portion of the county, but options are limited to scattered retailers and stand-alone big-box retailers. Retail in Oswego County to the north is concentrated in Fulton, at the convergence of I-481 and NY-3, and in Oswego, along NY-104 near I-481. A larger concentration of retail is found along NY-20 in Cayuga County, just west of Auburn.Local retail in the Central Study Area is largely concentrated in Downtown, with Salina Street serving as the traditional Downtown retail corridor and Armory Square providing an example of retail growth through mixed-use revitalization. The primary retail concentration, at Destiny USA, is located in the northernmost area of the study area adjacent to I-81. Additional, smaller retail clusters are located throughout Downtown. East of I-81, there is a concentration of retail toward the northern end of the Syracuse University campus, with some additional retail located along East Genesee Street. Retail in the University Hill area—especially along Marshall Street—tends to be college-oriented, catering to the students and employees of Syracuse University and SUNY ESF.

Based on 2017 data from Esri's ArcGIS Business Analyst, the Central Study Area currently contains approximately 694 businesses, including 449 retail establishments and 245 food service and drinking places, with an estimated $1.2 billion in annual sales (see **Table 6-3-2-8**).

**Table 6-3-2-8**
**Retail Demand, Sales, and Capture Rates for Central Study Area**

| Retail Sector | Retail Demand (Millions of 2017 Dollars) | Retail Sales (Millions of 2017 Dollars) | Retail Surplus (Millions of 2017 Dollars) | Capture Rate (% of Demand Captured In Specified Area) | Number of Businesses |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total Retail Trade | $169.1 | $1,065.8 | $896.7 | 630% | 449 |
| Total Food Services & Drinking Places | $18.4 | $159.3 | $140.9 | 864% | 245 |
| **TOTAL** | **$187.5** | **$1,225.2** | **$1,037.6** | **653%** | **694** |

**Notes:**
[1] Retail sales estimates sales to consumers by establishments. Retail demand (expenditure potential) estimates the amount spent by consumers at retail establishments.
**Source:** Esri's ArcGIS Business Analyst, 2017 Retail Market Place Profile report.

According to Esri's ArcGIS Business Analyst data, retail sales at these 694 businesses account for nearly 10 percent of all retail within the 5-County Region. At the same time, demand for retail goods and services from households living in the study area is estimated at $169.1 million. As such, there is a $1.037 billion surplus in retail and food and drink sales within the Central Study Area, as the supply exceeds the local demand. Therefore, the Central Study Area is drawing retail sales from a base much wider than its own year-round residential population, including from workers, tourists, or other visitors, making it a retail destination.

Destiny USA's national and local retail, dining, and entertainment attractions draw customers from the City of Syracuse, the Region, and elsewhere in New York State, Pennsylvania, and Canada. As such, Destiny USA, like many large shopping malls, relies on its proximity to highways as they provide regional high-capacity access to and from these facilities.

Destiny USA is an important component of the local and regional economy as a result of revenue generated from the 8 percent sales tax on retail goods. Of this, 4 percent goes to the County and 4 percent goes to the State. The center is exempt from most property taxes under a 30-year agreement with the City of Syracuse that expires in 2037.[16] Based on ICSC retail sales data for malls in the Northeast U.S., Destiny USA generates an estimated $1.3 billion in annual retail sales, resulting in an estimated $52.8 million in sales taxes to Onondaga County and $52.8 million to the State of New York.[17]

### Hotels

According to STR, Inc., there are an estimated 9,419 hotel rooms in the greater Syracuse Metropolitan Area. This includes a mix of national brands and locally owned hotels, and the full range of price points (economy through luxury). This figure includes hotel rooms in downtown and central business districts, small towns, and highway interchange locations. Between 2013 and 2019, hotels within the

[16] Tim Knauss, "Destiny USA Won't Expand Again; Syracuse Won't Get Tax Payments for 30 Years," *Syracuse.com,* June 06, 2012. http://www.syracuse.com/news/index.ssf/2012/06/destiny_usa_wont_be_growing_la.html. Accessed December 4, 2019.

[17] Retail sales estimates for Destiny USA utilize ICSC data because Esri's ArcGIS Business Analyst does not provide a complete estimate of the mall's sales. AKRF's estimate of Destiny USA retail sales assumes $550 in sales per square foot of $550 (from ICSC) for the mall's approximately 2.4 million square feet of gross leasable area.

Syracuse Metropolitan Area had an average occupancy rate of 56.9 percent. Revenue per available room (RevPAR)[18] in the Syracuse Metropolitan Area was $57.10.

As previously noted, the Community Grid Alternative may change travel patterns near Interchanges 23 through 25 where there are several hotels. The potential effects of these changes are described in Section 6-3-2.4.3 below, and the following data is provided as context for that analysis. There are 1,676 rooms at the 14 hotels north of Downtown near I-81 Interchanges 23 and 25.[19] These 14 hotels had an average occupancy rate of 58.9 percent between 2013 and 2019. Revenue per available room (RevPAR)[20] was $57.25. Several factors contribute to these hotels' slightly higher performance metrics as compared to Syracuse as a whole. These include the age and quality of the hotels, their proximity to regional destinations including the Syracuse Hancock International Airport and Destiny USA, and their proximity to major highways (I-81 and I-90). Eleven of these 14 hotels are classified as Upper Midscale Class or greater; this is a much greater percentage than the Syracuse Metropolitan Area, where 59 of the 137 properties (about 43 percent) are classified as Upper Midscale Class or greater.

### 6-3-2.2 NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE

The No Build Alternative would maintain the highway in its existing configuration with ongoing maintenance and repairs. Existing access to employment centers, universities, and businesses would be maintained.

### 6-3-2.3 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE VIADUCT ALTERNATIVE

#### 6-3-2.3.1 PERMANENT/OPERATIONAL EFFECTS

Under the Viaduct Alternative, I-81 and I-690 and their interchanges would be rebuilt or modified, improving the connections between these two interstates and increasing access from local roadways. The Viaduct Alternative would maintain interstate access through the Central Study Area for cars and trucks, and new roadway design elements would improve safety and operations. In addition, as further discussed in **Chapter 5, Transportation and Engineering Considerations**, travel times through the Project Area would improve under the Viaduct Alternative. **Table 5-24** provides the No Build Alternative and Viaduct Alternative travel times along I-81 through the study area. In most instances there would be either no change in travel time or modest improvement in travel time along these interstate routes. The modest improvements in travel time, combined with the safety and operational improvements of the Viaduct Alternative, would have an overall positive effect for users of I-81 throughout the region, including residents, workers, and freight operators.

**Table 6-3-2-9** presents the change in AADT between the existing, No Build, and Viaduct Alternative conditions. Significant increases or decreases in traffic volumes could affect a businesses' customer base, in particular, businesses that rely heavily on pass-by traffic such as gas stations, convenience stores, and fast food. As shown in **Table 6-3-2-9**, there would be modest increases or decreases in

[18] Revenue per available room, or "RevPAR" is a performance metric that multiplies a hotel's average daily room rate (ADR) by its occupancy rate.

[19] STR, Inc. Trend Report - Syracuse, NY, January 2013 to September 2019, and Trend Report - Liverpool, NY Area Selected Properties, January 2013 to September 2019.

[20] Revenue per available room, or "RevPAR" is a performance metric that multiplies a hotel's average daily room rate (ADR) by its occupancy rate.

volume under the Viaduct Alternative. The most substantial decrease would be at the northbound entrance ramp to I-81 from Hiawatha Boulevard, which would realize a decrease of 3,369 vehicles per day as a result of the new direct connections between I-690 and I-81 that diverts traffic from local streets to the interstate system.

**Table 6-3-2-9**
**Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADTs) Volumes at I-81 Interchanges 23, 23A, and 25 in the Existing, No Build Alternative, and Viaduct Alternative Conditions**

| Interchange and Movement | | Existing AADT | No Build AADT (2026) | Change in AADT Existing to No Build | Viaduct AADT (2026) | Change in AADT from No Build to Viaduct |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Northbound I-81** | | | | | | |
| 23 | Northbound exit to Hiawatha Blvd/Harborside Dr | 16,035 | 15,755 | (280) | 16,836 | 1,082 |
| | Northbound entrance from Hiawatha Blvd | 7,050 | 7,371 | 321 | 4,002 | (3,369) |
| 25 | Northbound exit to 7th North St. | 6,156 | 6,571 | 415 | 6,704 | 133 |
| | Northbound entrance from 7th North St | 5,962 | 6,026 | 64 | 5,880 | (145) |
| 25A | Northbound exit to I-90 | 4,315 | 4,725 | 410 | 4,891 | 165 |
| | Northbound entrance from I-90 | 5,972 | 6,203 | 231 | 5,612 | (590) |
| **Southbound I-81** | | | | | | |
| 25A | Southbound exit to I-90 | 4,815 | 4,945 | 130 | 4,594 | (351) |
| | Southbound entrance from I-90 | 3,609 | 3,818 | 209 | 3,539 | (278) |
| 25 | Southbound exit to 7th North St | 6,106 | 6,339 | 233 | 6,577 | 238 |
| | Southbound entrance from 7th North St | 4,510 | 4,924 | 414 | 5,078 | 155 |
| 23A | Southbound exit to Hiawatha Blvd | 11,053 | 11,785 | 732 | 9,993 | (1,792) |
| | Southbound entrance from Old Liverpool Road | 3,916 | 3,900 | (16) | 11,558 | 7,658 |
| | Southbound entrance from NY 370 | 8,465 | 8,406 | (59) | | |

New ramp connections between eastbound I-690 and northbound I-81 and from southbound I-81 to westbound I-690 would be added, improving connectivity to and from this area, and between Destiny USA and I-690 west of the existing interchange. Additionally, ramps connecting West Street to and from I-690 would be reconfigured and West Street would be rebuilt as a surface street, enhancing the visual and physical connection between Downtown and the Near Westside. The removal of the West Street overpass also would provide an opportunity to expand the Creekwalk and relocate a portion of the trail to be adjacent to Onondaga Creek. Increased visibility and pedestrian activity between these neighborhoods could have a beneficial effect on the local economy, as more residents and businesses may relocate to the area.

The Viaduct Alternative would result in the acquisition of 24 buildings in the Central Study Area. These structures have 555 employees. While the acquisition of the commercial and retail buildings could potentially reduce employment if the businesses are unable to relocate within the Central Study Area, as described in **Section 6-3-1, Land Acquisition, Displacement, and Relocation**, options exist within the Central Study Area for the businesses to relocate. Furthermore, even if these businesses choose to relocate outside of the area, the loss of the 555 employees represents less than one percent (0.7 percent) of total Central Study Area employment, and 0.5 percent of total City, County, or Regional employment.

The Viaduct Alternative would not result in perceptible changes to business districts. Within Downtown, where the majority of business displacement would occur, less than one percent of total jobs within the Central Study Area would be displaced and there are many options for business relocation within Downtown. Additionally, and as discussed in **Section 6-2-1, Neighborhood Character**, the Viaduct Alternative is unlikely to alter current development patterns in areas adjacent to the viaduct where development has been influenced by the presence of the existing highway for decades. Existing properties are underutilized and passive, as evidenced by the numerous surface parking lots and vacant properties. Many of these parcels are poorly connected to, and lack visibility from, areas on the other side of the viaduct, and few have been redeveloped or are to be redeveloped (see **Figure 6-2-1-7** and **Table 6-2-1-2**). These development patterns are expected to continue under the Viaduct Alternative. Therefore, the Viaduct Alternative would not have a substantial effect on local or regional economies, as key industries, including healthcare and education, and employers, such as Upstate Medical University and Syracuse University, would remain, and development plans under the No Build Alternative are expected to proceed as planned. Furthermore, the Viaduct Alternative would not substantially alter the movement of goods or people through the City of Syracuse compared to the No Build Alternative. Existing routes and commercial and retail development patterns would be expected to continue/be maintained within the Central Study Area.

In summary, the Viaduct Alternative would improve vehicular travel to, from, and through Downtown Syracuse, and it would improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity between neighborhoods in the Central Study Area. The continued presence and wider footprint of the I-81 viaduct south of I-690 would limit the alternative's potential to encourage development on underutilized lots adjacent to it or to better connect neighborhoods in a manner that would meaningfully affect the local economy.

#### 6-3-2.3.2 CONSTRUCTION EFFECTS

Construction of the Viaduct Alternative would last approximately six years and could result in adverse effects to businesses due to temporary lane and/or road closures that could impede access by customers and/or workers, including drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

Short-term benefits to the Project Area would occur during the construction phase of the Project in the form of increased demand for local materials, services, and labor. The short-term increases in employment would be expected to filter through the regional and local economies, generating consumer and business spending. Some of the additional spending within the regional and local economies would be expected from contractors, sub-contractors, and employees, and would be in the form of additional retail and entertainment sales, food and beverage, and hotel stays.

Temporary lane, road, and intersection closures and associated rerouting of traffic would be likely during construction. These closures would temporarily affect the movement of cars, pedestrians, and bicyclists within and between the neighborhoods in the Central Study Area (described in **Section 6-2-1, Neighborhood Character**), which would occur at different areas at different times depending on where construction work is taking place. Lane closures on I-81 would be conducted during the off-peak period to minimize traffic effects. Temporary traffic increases may also occur in areas where vehicles are diverted due to construction work, which could result in increased business patronage to businesses along these routes during construction.

While temporary easements may be required, there would be no additional acquisitions for construction. However, the Viaduct Alternative could result in effects to business access, which may

require mitigation (e.g., signing, detours), but in all cases, NYSDOT and/or the Contractor would maintain a point of access to these uses unless it would be infeasible and/or impractical to do so. Temporary loss of access to a business could occur during the paving of sidewalks or driveway aprons in front of that business. Temporary street closures may also limit access to businesses for discrete periods of time during construction. Efforts would be made to time these activities while businesses are closed and/or during off-peak times to avoid financial loss. **Table 4-7** identifies measures to mitigate adverse effects to businesses during construction, and additional mitigation measures may be identified once a contractor has been selected and a construction plan is put in place.

In addition, efforts would be undertaken to communicate about construction activities with businesses that would be affected by the temporary construction inconveniences. The Contractor would be required to prepare an approved communication and outreach plan for implementation throughout the six-year construction period. The plan would include outreach to notify affected parties of construction activities and mitigation efforts (see **Chapter 4, Construction Means and Methods**).

Mitigation efforts would include a traffic management plan, which would facilitate access to local businesses during construction (see **Chapter 5, Transportation and Engineering Considerations**). The effectiveness of the plans would be monitored throughout the construction period and modified as needed.

#### 6-3-2.3.3 INDIRECT EFFECTS

The Viaduct Alternative would involve the continuation of an existing transportation corridor and, with the exception of the acquisition properties; its implementation would not substantially impede existing employment, businesses, or institutional uses in the Central Study Area.

As described in **Section 6-3-1, Land Acquisition, Displacement, and Relocation**, the Viaduct Alternative would be unlikely to induce additional business or employment displacement or relocation. Building acquisitions would not remove a substantial number or percentage of businesses and employment, either in total or in any one industry sector that may influence a business to move or lose its customer base.

The direct displacement of 555 employees would unlikely have substantial indirect effects on other area businesses that serve commuters (i.e., restaurants, convenience stores, gas stations). The businesses are located throughout the Central Study Area such that displacement would be dispersed. Furthermore, there is opportunity for relocation to occur in other buildings within and near the Central Study Area.

Therefore, it is unlikely that any individual business would be substantially impaired by the displacement of employees. As such, overall business activity would not be affected by the loss of these establishments. If the displaced businesses relocate to one of the many properties nearby that are for lease or for sale and could accommodate these businesses, then the property would benefit from the lease of its space, thus reducing building vacancy in the area.

The Viaduct Alternative would unlikely induce substantial new retail, commercial, mixed-use, or institutional development beyond the No Build Alternative. Development patterns are already influenced by the presence of the existing I-81 highway, as evidenced by the many vacant or surface parking lots directly abutting the highway, and the Viaduct Alternative would not improve or create an environment substantively different or more attractive to development types most likely to locate

in a downtown as compared with the No Build Alternative. The exception to this would be in the vicinity of the North Clinton Street and West Street improvements. As discussed in **Section 6-2-1, Neighborhood Character**, some new development may be attracted to this area due to the improved access and visual connections that would result from the reconstruction and extension of North Clinton Street and the removal of the West Street ramps.

### 6-3-2.3.4 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

As described in **Chapter 5, Transportation and Engineering Considerations**, the Viaduct Alternative would meet regional travel needs well into the future to support the current businesses and employment within the Central Study Area. As described above, the Viaduct Alternative would not substantially alter the existing pattern of development within the City of Syracuse as compared to the No Build Alternative.

The alternative could positively affect the freight industry as a result of improved travel times and safety on I-81; however, the time savings would be modest (see **Chapter 5, Transportation and Engineering Considerations**). Additionally, as previously shown in **Figure 6-3-2-2**, most freight businesses are located closer to I-481 and I-90 (New York Thruway); thus, the I-81 highway improvements would not affect these businesses in a meaningful way.

Based on the effects of the Viaduct Alternative described above, no adverse cumulative effects to the local and regional economies would be anticipated as a result of the Viaduct Alternative.

### 6-3-2.3.5 MITIGATION

Efforts were made during preliminary engineering of the Viaduct Alternative to avoid or minimize property acquisitions. For example, in several instances where initial engineering indicated a building acquisition would be required, further refinements to the alignment were undertaken as practicable to avoid the building or structure (refer to **Chapter 3, Alternatives**, for a discussion of the screening of the viaduct options). As a result, permanent displacement of businesses within the I-81 Study Area was reduced to 24 buildings under the Viaduct Alternative.

The displacement of businesses would be undertaken pursuant to the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act) and the New York State Eminent Domain Procedures Law. Owners and tenants of affected properties would be provided relocation assistance, and owners of properties that would be acquired would be compensated at fair market value. Research indicates that there is sufficient commercial availability in the study area to reasonably accommodate the businesses that would be displaced by the Viaduct Alternative. The Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan is in **Appendix D-1**.

As discussed in **Chapter 4, Construction Means and Methods**, NYSDOT and its Contractor would implement measures to protect business access and promote communications with business owners and customers during construction (see **Table 4-7**). These measures include maintaining access to businesses as much as possible, relocating acquired businesses prior to construction, providing a signage program for affected businesses, and establishing regular communications with business owners and delivery services.

The Contractor would be required to prepare an approved communication and outreach plan for implementation throughout the six-year construction period early in the Design-Build process. Refer

to **Chapter 4, Construction Means and Methods**, including **Table 4-7,** for more information about the requirements of a communication and outreach plan.

### 6-3-2.4 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE COMMUNITY GRID ALTERNATIVE

#### 6-3-2.4.1 PERMANENT/OPERATIONAL EFFECTS

Under the Community Grid Alternative, the portion of I-81 between the existing southern I-481 interchange (Interchange 16A) and the existing northern I-481 interchange (Interchange 29) would be reclassified as Business Loop (BL) 81. I-481 would be designated I-81 and would carry four to six lanes of through traffic around the eastern side of Syracuse.

As further discussed in **Chapter 5, Transportation and Engineering Considerations**, the Community Grid Alternative would result in some slight travel time increases through the Project Area. **Chapter 5, Transportation and Engineering Considerations** presents the estimated travel times, delay, and speeds for 11 travel routes by direction during the AM and PM peak hours. During the AM peak hour, increases in travel time range from 0 to five minutes, and during the PM peak hour, increases in travel time range from 0 to 6 minutes. Outside of the peak hours, the changes in travel times would be the same as or less than in the peak hours.

**Table 6-3-2-10** below presents the change in AADT between the existing condition, No Build Alternative, and Community Grid Alternative. Significant increases or decreases in traffic volumes could affect businesses' customer base; in particular, businesses that rely on pass-by traffic such as gas stations, convenience stores, and fast food. As shown in **Tables 6-3-2-10**, there would be modest increases or decreases in volume under the Community Grid Alternative. The most substantial decrease would be at the southbound I-81 entrance ramp to I-81 from Old Liverpool Road and at the entrance ramp to I-81 from NY 370, which would see a combined decrease of 4,533 vehicles per day (a 32.7 percent decrease as compared with the No Build Alternative).

The Community Grid Alternative would improve the connectivity of the Central Study Area by re-establishing east-west crossings along Almond Street, re-establishing the street grid in the Near Eastside, providing new access points to and from BL 81 and I-690, and providing improved pedestrian and bicycle amenities and connections between Downtown/Southside and University Hill/Near Eastside. These pedestrian and traffic improvements would improve the flow of people and goods between these neighborhoods and could result in improved economic activity due to improved conditions for development currently supported by market conditions, namely mixed use residential and commercial.

The Community Grid Alternative would promote the use of the street grid throughout the Central Study Area, including the reconnection of some streets (e.g., the extension of Irving Avenue to I-690) and the restoration of others (e.g., Oswego Boulevard and Pearl Street). The re-establishment of the street grid in this area would potentially create surplus right-of-way under the existing I-81/I-690 interchange and I-81 viaduct (see **Figure 6-3-2-3**). As further discussed below, the potential redevelopment of these parcels could add to local property tax revenues and may increase local sales taxes, should retail be redeveloped.

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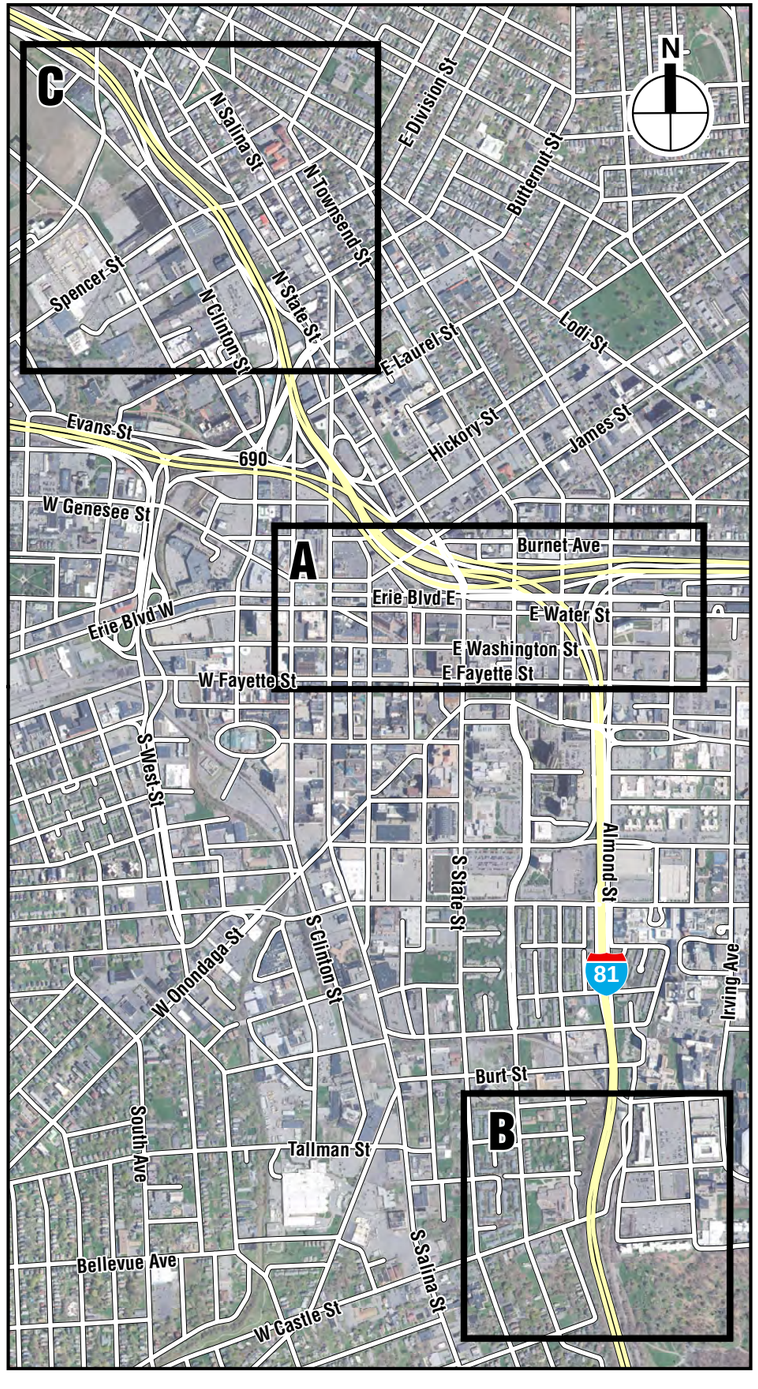
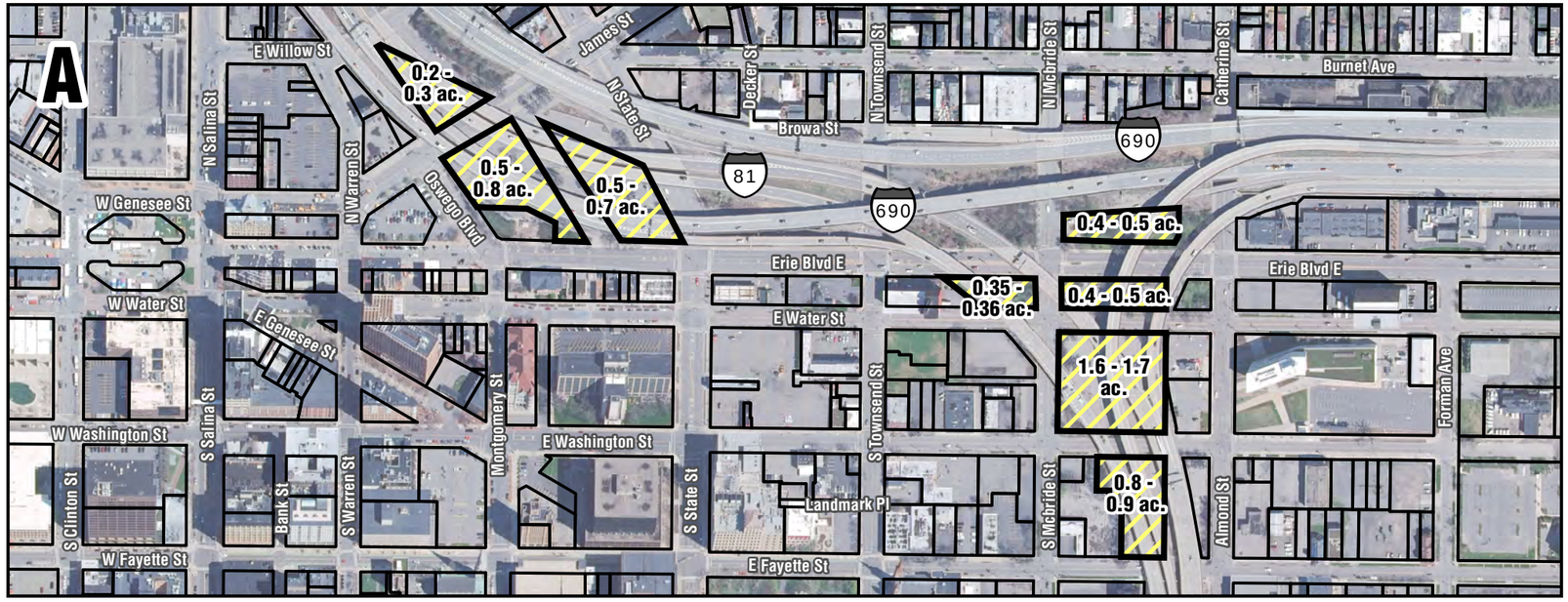
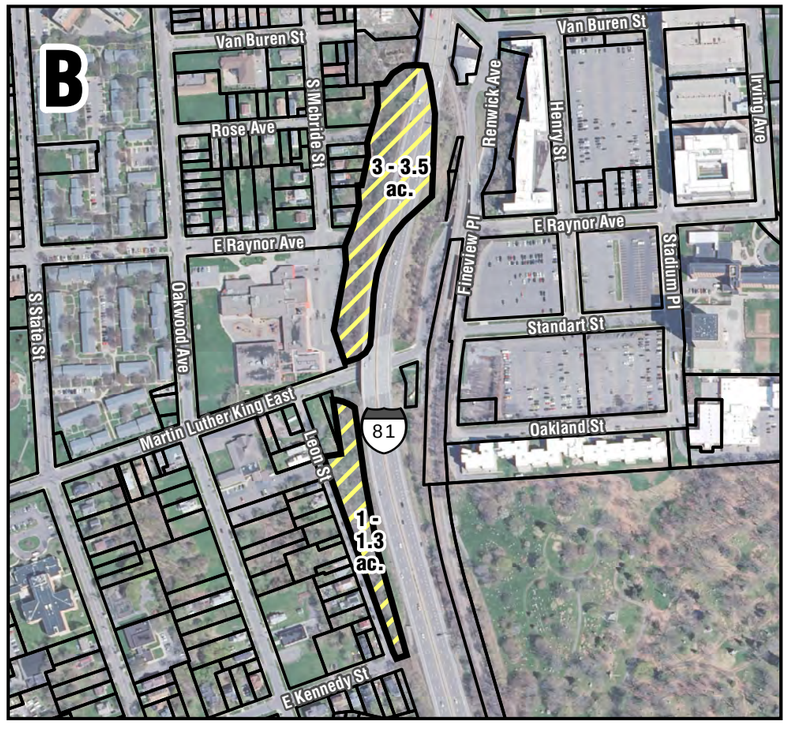
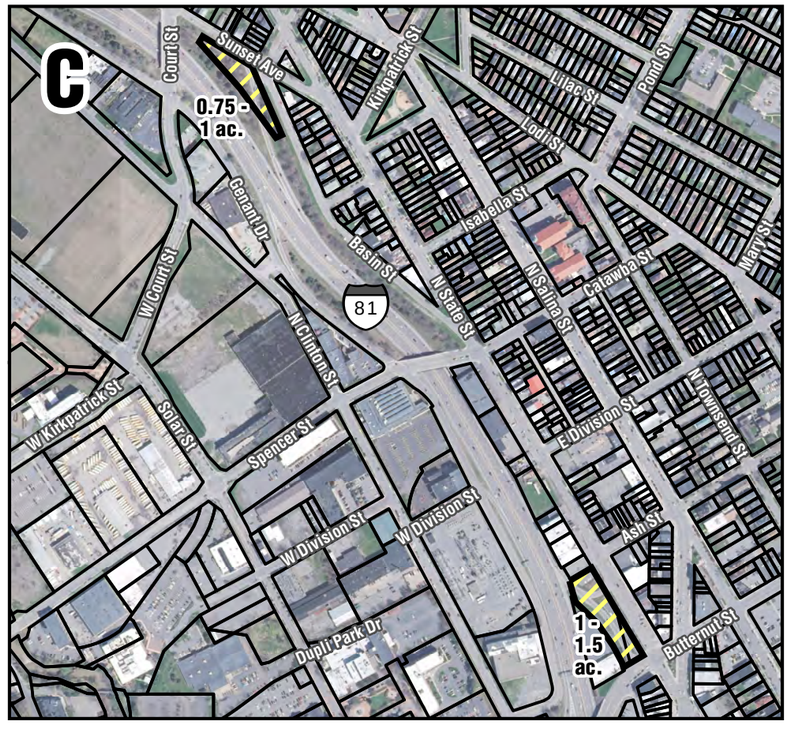



Note: All acreages are approximate. NYSDOT will not determine the actual acreage of surplus property until construction is complete.

*Potential Surplus Right-of-Way* *Tax Lot Boundary*

Potential Surplus Right-of-way

**I-81 Viaduct Project**

**Figure 6-3-2-3**

**Table 6-3-2-10**
**Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADTs) Volumes at I-81 Interchanges 23, 23A, and 25 in the Existing Condition, No Build Alternative, and Community Grid Alternative**

| Interchange and Movement | | Existing AADT | No Build AADT (2026) | Change in AADT Existing to No Build | Community Grid AADT (2026) | Change in AADT from No Build to Community Grid |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Northbound I-81** | | | | | | |
| 23 | Northbound exit to Hiawatha Blvd/Harborside Dr | 16,035 | 15,755 | (280) | 15,068 | (686) |
| | Northbound entrance from Hiawatha Blvd | 7,050 | 7,371 | 321 | 8,718 | 1,347 |
| 25 | Northbound exit to 7th North St. | 6,156 | 6,571 | 415 | 5,522 | (1,048) |
| | Northbound entrance from 7th North St | 5,962 | 6,026 | 64 | 6,425 | 399 |
| 25A | Northbound exit to I-90 | 4,315 | 4,725 | 410 | 4,308 | (417) |
| | Northbound entrance from I-90 | 5,972 | 6,203 | 231 | 6,686 | 484 |
| **Southbound I-81** | | | | | | |
| 25A | Southbound exit to I-90 | 4,815 | 4,945 | 130 | 5,061 | 115 |
| | Southbound entrance from I-90 | 3,609 | 3,818 | 209 | 2,500 | (1,317) |
| 25 | Southbound exit to 7th North St | 6,106 | 6,339 | 233 | 6,669 | 330 |
| | Southbound entrance from 7th North St | 4,510 | 4,924 | 414 | 4,369 | (555) |
| 23A | Southbound exit to Hiawatha Blvd | 11,053 | 11,785 | 732 | 11,603 | (182) |
| | Southbound entrance from Old Liverpool Road | 3,916 | 3,900 | (16) | 7,773 | (4,533) |
| | Southbound entrance from NY 370 | 8,465 | 8,406 | (59) | | |

Even with the planned MX zoning for the area (further discussed in **Section 6-3-2.4.3**), the uses introduced by the potential redevelopment of these parcels would not be of a scale or type that would substantively alter or accelerate existing market forces within the area. The land surrounding the potential redevelopment parcels is primarily publicly owned land, major institutions, and public or rent-subsidized housing. These uses would not be displaced without further public actions and associated environmental reviews, and the residential and worker populations associated with these uses would continue to be the dominant market forces influencing property values and land uses in the area. New development would be expected to be shaped by these local demand drivers and could include uses such as housing for students and medical professionals, as well as retail uses that cater to the area's existing residents and workers. In addition, outside of the limited redevelopment opportunities presented by the Community Grid Alternative, there are few developable parcels within the Project Area, which limits potential for broader market effects due to induced growth (**see Figure 6-3-2-3**). Considering these factors, the Community Grid Alternative is not anticipated to result in substantial gentrification or displacement within the Project Area. The Community Grid Alternative would not directly or indirectly displace any public housing units or public housing residents.

West Street ramps to and from I-690 would be reconfigured, and the West Street overpass would be removed. This would improve the visual and physical connection between Downtown and the Near Westside. It would also provide an opportunity to expand the Creekwalk and relocate a portion of the trail to be adjacent to Onondaga Creek. Between I-690 and the BL 81, ramps would be reconstructed to current standards, which would improve connectivity between the two highways. Increased visibility and pedestrian activity between these neighborhoods could have a beneficial effect on the

local economy. The transportation and pedestrian improvements would improve community character and cohesion by removing the existing viaduct—both a visual and physical barrier to redevelopment. As further discussed below under Indirect Effects, these improvements, along with ReZone Syracuse, could encourage new mixed-use commercial and residential development.

The Community Grid Alternative would require the acquisition of four commercial buildings in the Central Study Area. Three buildings are occupied with active businesses and one is used as storage. These businesses employ an estimated 35 people. The loss of the 35 employees represents less than one-tenth of one percent (0.1 percent) of total Central Study Area employment. It is likely that suitable space for these businesses could be found in the nearby area. There would be no displacement in the I-481 South, I-481 East, or I-481 North Study Areas. See **Section 6-3-1, Land Acquisition, Displacement, and Relocation**.

#### 6-3-2.4.2 CONSTRUCTION EFFECTS

Construction of the Community Grid Alternative would last approximately five years and could result in adverse effects to businesses due to temporary lane and/or road closures that could impede access by customers and/or workers, including drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists. **Table 4-7** of **Chapter 4, Construction Means and Methods** identifies measures to mitigate adverse effects to businesses during construction, including temporary business signs to identify business entrances and to direct customers to businesses that would be affected by detours.

Short-term benefits to the Project Area would occur during the construction phase of the Project in the form of increased demand for local materials, services, and labor. The short-term increases in employment would be expected to filter through the regional and local economies, generating consumer and business spending. Some of the additional spending within the regional and local economies would be expected from contractors, sub-contractors, and employees, and would be in the form of additional retail and entertainment sales, food and beverage, and hotel stays.

Temporary lane, road, and intersection closures and associated rerouting of traffic would occur during construction (see **Chapter 4, Construction Means and Methods**). These closures would temporarily affect the movement of cars, pedestrians, and bicyclists within and between the neighborhoods in the Central Study Area (described in **Section 6-2-1, Neighborhood Character**), which would occur at different areas at different times depending on where construction work is taking place. Lane closures on I-81 would be conducted during the off-peak period to minimize traffic effects. Temporary traffic increases may also occur in areas where vehicles are diverted due to construction work, which could result in increased business patronage to businesses along these routes during construction.

While temporary easements may be required, there would be no additional acquisitions for construction. However, the Community Grid Alternative could result in effects to business access, which may require mitigation (e.g., signing, detours), but in all cases, NYSDOT and/or its Contractor would maintain a point of access to these uses unless it would be infeasible and/or impractical to do so. Temporary loss of access to a business could occur during the paving of sidewalks or driveway aprons in front of that business. Temporary street closures may also limit access to businesses for discrete periods of time during construction. **Table 4-7** identifies measures to mitigate adverse effects to businesses during construction, and additional mitigation measures may be identified once a contractor has been selected and a construction plan is put in place.

In addition, efforts would be undertaken to communicate about construction activities with businesses that would be affected by the temporary construction nuisances. The Contractor would be required to prepare an approved communication and outreach plan for implementation throughout the five-year construction period. The plan would include outreach to notify affected parties of construction activities and mitigation efforts (see **Chapter 4, Construction Means and Methods**). Mitigation efforts would include a traffic management plan, which would facilitate access to local businesses during construction (see **Chapter 5, Transportation and Engineering Considerations**). The effectiveness of the plans would be monitored throughout the construction and modified as needed.

### 6-3-2.4.3 INDIRECT EFFECTS

The Community Grid Alternative would not displace residents or lead to the loss of economic activity associated with residents. This section analyzes the potential for induced growth and economic benefits, as well as the potential for indirect (or secondary) business displacement, of the Community Grid Alternative. The analysis is presented by study area. Supplemental analysis of potential indirect effects is found in **Appendix D-2**.

#### Central Study Area

*Potential Economic Growth Inducement*

Because it would remove the existing viaduct and related ramps, the Community Grid Alternative would result in surplus transportation right-of-way that could be used for other purposes. The Community Grid Alternative would remove the I-81 viaduct above Almond Street from the New York, Susquehanna, and Western Railway bridge (at Renwick Street) to the I-81/I-690 interchange and replace it with a surface street. Former highway traffic with destinations in Syracuse would use numerous north-south and east-west streets, resulting in greater use of the local street network. Almond Street would carry two lanes in each direction, as well as turning lanes when needed. Almond Street would include a planted median with breaks at key intersections and parallel parking where reasonable. The alternative would also include pedestrian and bicycle amenities with new or wider sidewalks and cycle tracks or shared use paths on Almond Street.

Important points of entry from the proposed limited-access highway system to the street network would be enhanced as gateways. Gateway enhancements would be developed to create a distinct and identifiable sense of entry and sense of place. These enhancements include establishment of a consistent theme or motif, use of specialty materials and site elements, historical elements, landscaping, signage, aesthetic earth forms, and sculptural elements to mark the entrance to the City of Syracuse. Gateways have been identified at the new West Street and Genesee Street intersection, new James Street exit at Oswego Boulevard through the creation of a new "Canal District," at the new Crouse and Irving Avenues interchange with I-690, and at the new MLK Jr., East entrance to the city.

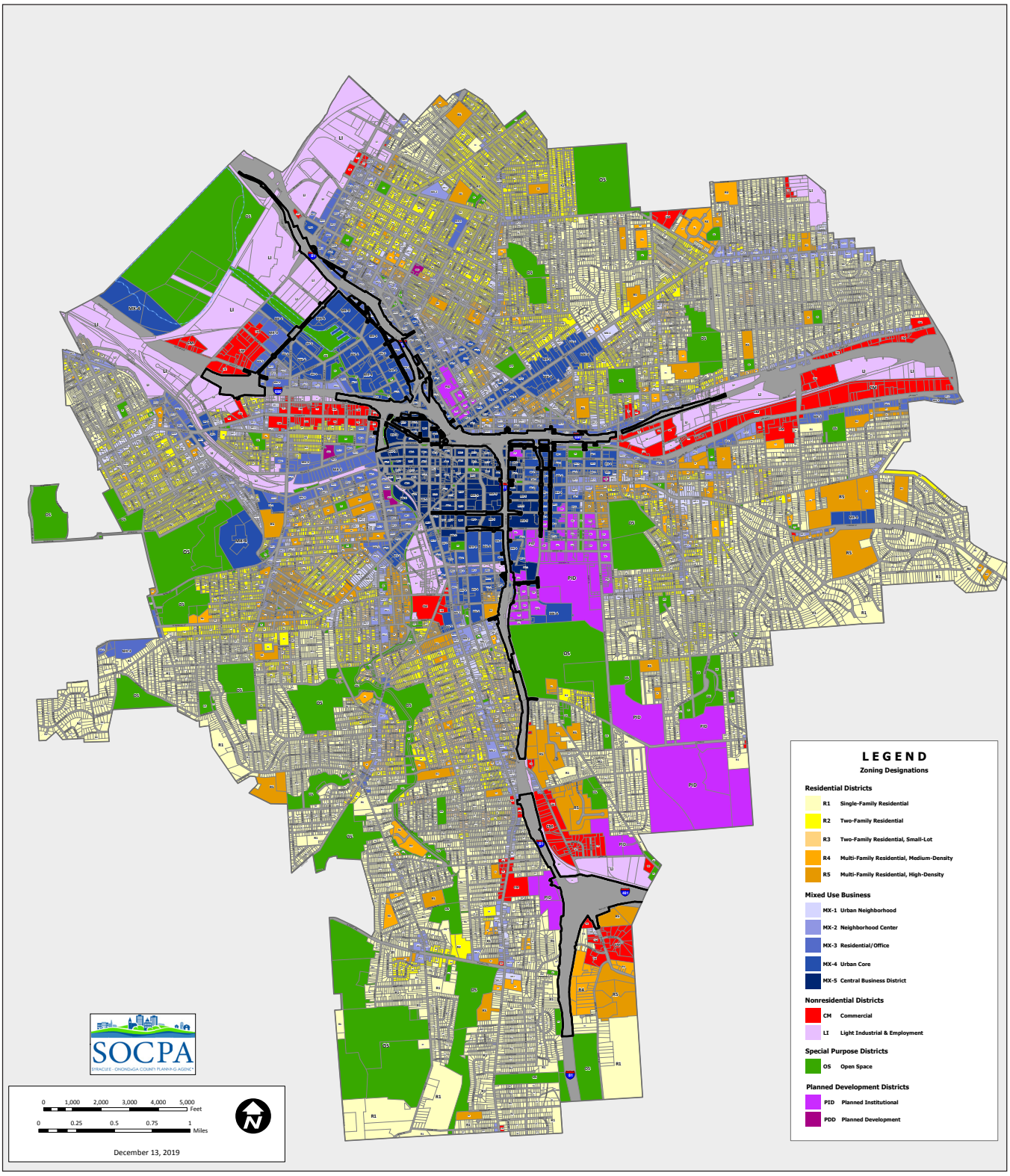
Most of the land beneath the existing viaduct would be used for transportation, pedestrian, and parkland improvements in the Community Grid Alternative. However, upon the completion of construction, NYSDOT could dispose of potential surplus transportation right-of-way in the Central Study Area in accordance with Federal and State law, or the Contractor may sell staging sites. In total, implementation of the Community Grid Alternative could result in 10 to 12.5 acres of surplus transportation right-of-way, depending on how much land would be needed to accommodate the highway, sidewalk, shared use (bicycle and pedestrian) path, and other transportation features (see

**Figure 6-3-2-3**). NYSDOT would determine the size and location of the parcels once construction is complete. The potential surplus transportation right-of-way would consist of several sites near Almond Street and Erie Boulevard where the I-81 and I-690 ramps would be removed (see Inset A on **Figure 6-3-2-3**); a parcel north of Erie Boulevard between McBride and Catherine Streets where the eastbound I-690 ramp from McBride Street would be removed (see Inset A on **Figure 6-3-2-3**); a parcel north of Butternut Street between BL 81 and State Street where the existing northbound I-81 entrance ramp from Butternut Street would be removed (see Inset C on **Figure 6-3-2-3**); a parcel south of Court Street between BL 81 and Sunset Avenue where the existing northbound I-81 ramp to Sunset Avenue would be removed and relocated to Bear Street (see Inset C on **Figure 6-3-2-3**); and two parcels near MLK, Jr. East where the alignment of BL 81 shifts eastward (see Inset B on **Figure 6-3-2-3**). The parcels on Almond Street would range from about 0.75 to 1.5 acres; those on Erie Boulevard would range from about 0.3 to 0.5 acres; the parcel north of Butternut Street would be 1 to 1.5 acres; the parcel south of Court Street would be 0.75 to 1 acre; the parcel north of Butternut Street would be 1 to 1.5 acres; the parcel south of Court Street would be 0.75 to 1 acre; the parcel north of MLK, Jr. East would be 3 to 3.5 acres; and the parcel south of MLK, Jr. East and east of Leon Street would be 1 to 1.3 acres. The Community Grid Alternative would also result in a total of 2 to 2.5 acres consisting of numerous land strips that would be too small for development but may be of use to adjacent property owners.

NYSDOT will form a land use working group consisting of representatives from the city, the city's school district, economic development and economic opportunity organizations, the business community, environmental justice communities, neighborhood residents, and other organizations and stakeholders as appropriate to provide input to NYSDOT in establishing a framework for the non-transportation use of potential surplus parcels. Further details about the formation of and participation in this working group will be presented during continued project public involvement activities.

The City of Syracuse is currently undergoing a city-wide zoning text and map update called ReZone Syracuse (see **Figure 6-3-2-4**). NYSDOT participated in Stakeholders' Advisory Working Group (SAWG) meetings where they discussed the goals and objectives of the ReZone Syracuse effort as it relates to I-81, and there have been public meetings about ReZone Syracuse. Areas that are currently roadway or transportation right-of-way are shown as roadway on the proposed ReZone Syracuse map and are not assigned a zoning designation. The City of Syracuse, which has sole jurisdiction over local zoning, would recommend the same zoning designation as the adjacent parcels to the surplus parcels.

The Final Draft Zoning Ordinance, dated December 2019, proposes to rezone much of the area adjacent to the existing I-81 within the Central Study Area as "MX-5 Central Business District." According to the draft, the proposed new MX-5 District would consolidate the numerous existing Central Business District zones that have a wide range of uses allowed and dimensional standards. The proposed zoning would implement the Downtown Overlay character area, increase maximum heights and densities with minimal parking, prohibit first floor residential, and would have the greatest range of uses including retail, service, commercial, entertainment, and small-scale manufacturing. Therefore, new development in this area would likely be mixed-use and could include combinations of residential, retail, medical, educational, and office uses. Redevelopment of these properties consistent with ReZone Syracuse would increase employment and business opportunities in the Central Study Area. With their improved pedestrian, bicycle, and visual connections, these development parcels could attract institutional and/or private investment (e.g., mixed use residential and commercial) to the area for housing and supportive retail adjacent to jobs. The potential surplus




Proposed ReZone Syracuse Zoning near the Community Grid Alternative

**I-81 Viaduct Project**

**Figure 6-3-2-4**

transportation right-of-way sites near Almond Street and Erie Boulevard (see Inset A on **Figure 6-3-2-3**) would likely be designated as MX-5 as that is the designation surrounding each of those parcels.

There are also several vacant and underutilized properties near the new I-690 interchange at Crouse and Irving Avenues. This new interchange would enhance the connection from I-690 to and from University Hill, which would increase the desirability of this area for infill development. ReZone Syracuse designates this area as MX-3 Residential/Office for the two blocks nearest I-690, and MX-4 Urban Core nearest the University Hill. The MX-3 district promotes pedestrian-friendly, transit-supportive higher-density residential development and compatible nonresidential office and commercial uses. It permits greater vertical or horizontal mixing of uses and a range of residential housing types, apartments, and live-work units.

The new MX-4 district also promotes pedestrian-friendly and transit supportive higher-density residential development and commercial uses, but at greater heights, density, and range of uses than MX-3. The MX-4 district accommodates larger-scale commercial and retail uses, consistent with the urban core location. ReZone Syracuse and private investment would ultimately determine the future use of large vacant and underutilized properties near the new I-690 interchange. However, the improved connection to University Hill, and improved streetscape experience under the Community Grid Alternative, would build on the rezoning efforts that specifically promote pedestrian and transit improvements. As such, the Community Grid Alternative could spur new mixed-use development of privately owned vacant or underutilized properties in the area.

The Community Grid Alternative would also create a parcel where the existing I-81 right-of-way would shift east and under the railroad bridge to connect to Almond Street just north of MLK, Jr. East (see Insert B on **Figure 6-3-2-3**). This is a mixed-use area and ReZone Syracuse proposes R3, R4, R5, and MX-4 north of MLK Jr. East and MX-2 south of MLK Jr. East. R3 is two-family small-lot residential and R4 and R5 are multi-family residential zoning districts. MX-2 is "neighborhood center" zoning. The purpose of the MX-2 district is to provide for a pedestrian-friendly, transit-supportive mix of medium to higher-density residential uses and nonresidential uses that offer goods and services to surrounding neighborhoods. The future zoning designation of the surplus transportation right-of-way parcels near MLK Jr. East are undetermined but could include a single designation or mix of the surrounding zoning designations.

The potential surplus transportation right-of-way parcel north of Butternut Street between BL 81 and State Street (see Insert C on **Figure 6-3-2-3**) is adjacent to proposed MX-3 and MX-4 parcels and would likely be placed in either of those zoning districts. The parcel south of Court Street between BL 81 and Sunset Avenue (see Inset C on **Figure 6-3-2-3**) is adjacent to proposed MX-2 parcels and would likely be zoned MX-2.

In addition, the removal of the West Street overpass and creation of a signalized intersection at that location would include pedestrian crossings and result in improved visual connections, as well as enhanced vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle connectivity. Further, the reconstruction and extension of North Clinton Street would provide a new and alternate route to Downtown as well as pedestrian and bicycle amenities. These new amenities associated with the Community Grid Alternative could attract new development to this area. This area would also be zoned MX-5, and thus new development in this area would likely be mixed-use and could include combinations of residential, retail, medical, educational, and office uses. Redevelopment of these properties consistent with ReZone Syracuse would increase employment and business opportunities in the Central Study Area.

*Potential Indirect Business Displacement*

The Community Grid Alternative would result in changes in travel times and changes in the volumes and types of trips at certain study area locations (see **Tables 6-3-2-10, 6-3-2-11, 6-3-2-12,** and **6-2-3-13**). The following section considers these factors' influences on commercial market conditions to determine whether any existing businesses could be vulnerable to indirect business displacement.

The Community Grid Alternative would decrease the volume of traffic in certain locations within the Central Study Area (see **Table 6-3-2-10)**. This decrease correlates to the diversion of existing I-81 traffic to I-481 and is primarily interstate highway traffic that passes through Syracuse without destinations in the Central Study Area. Although the volumes on BL 81 would be lower than on existing I-81, they would be at street level and at slower speeds. Businesses on BL 81 south of I-690 would experience an increase in pass-by potential customers, which could marginally benefit sales. Furthermore, the business loop designation may attract through travelers on I-81 looking for convenience retail and restaurant uses.

By removing the viaduct and dispersing traffic to local streets, the Community Grid Alternative would result in increased travel times for some trips, particularly those from the south that would otherwise travel along I-81 to their destination. Changes to local street traffic patterns could also slightly affect travel times on local streets.

Average daily travel times to destinations within the Syracuse Metropolitan Area were estimated based on the SMTC Regional Travel Demand Model (see **Chapter 5, Transportation and Engineering Considerations**). **Figures 6-3-2-5 and 6-3-2-6** show the average daily travel times in 5-minute intervals to destinations within the Syracuse Metropolitan Area for the No Build and Community Grid Alternatives. **Figures 6-3-2-7 and 6-3-2-8** provide a large-scale graphic of the Central Study Area with 2-minute intervals. As shown in these figures, there is not a substantial difference in average daily travel times between the No Build and Community Grid Alternatives—in most instances, there is no difference or a difference of two minutes or less.

A national study of the impact of retail proximity on consumer purchases found that 92 percent of urban consumers typically travel 15 minutes or less to make their everyday purchases. Typical travel times were 1 to 7 minutes for fuel; 8 to 12 minutes for groceries, fast food, and casual dining; 13 to 16 minutes for oil changes, hair salons, and home and garden retailers; and 17 to 20 minutes for movies and clothing or shoe retailers.[21] Given these typical driving distances, the businesses within the Central Study Area providing everyday goods and services would retain their existing customer bases with the Community Grid Alternative because travel times would not substantially change, and their existing customers travel from nearby locations such that re-routing would not provide shorter travel times to comparable goods and services.

StreetLight data[22] were used to estimate the potential loss in patronage at select business uses in the Central Study Area due to their inability to capture "pass-by traffic" that would be re-routed to I-481.

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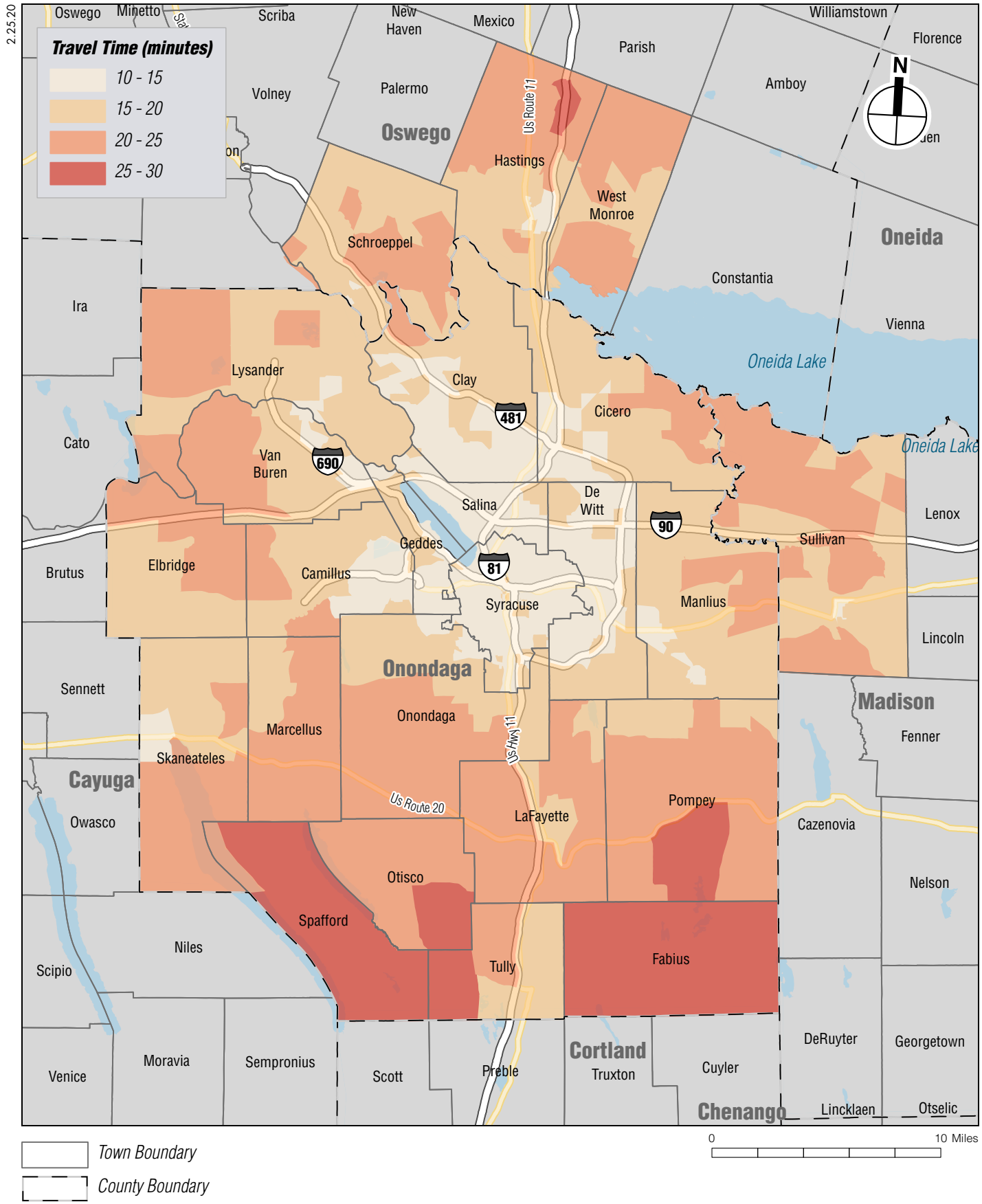
21 Access Development. *National Consumer Study Summary: The Impact of Retail Proximity on Consumer Purchases.* 2016-17. https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hubfs/263750/Access_Consumer_Spend_Study_2016.pdf

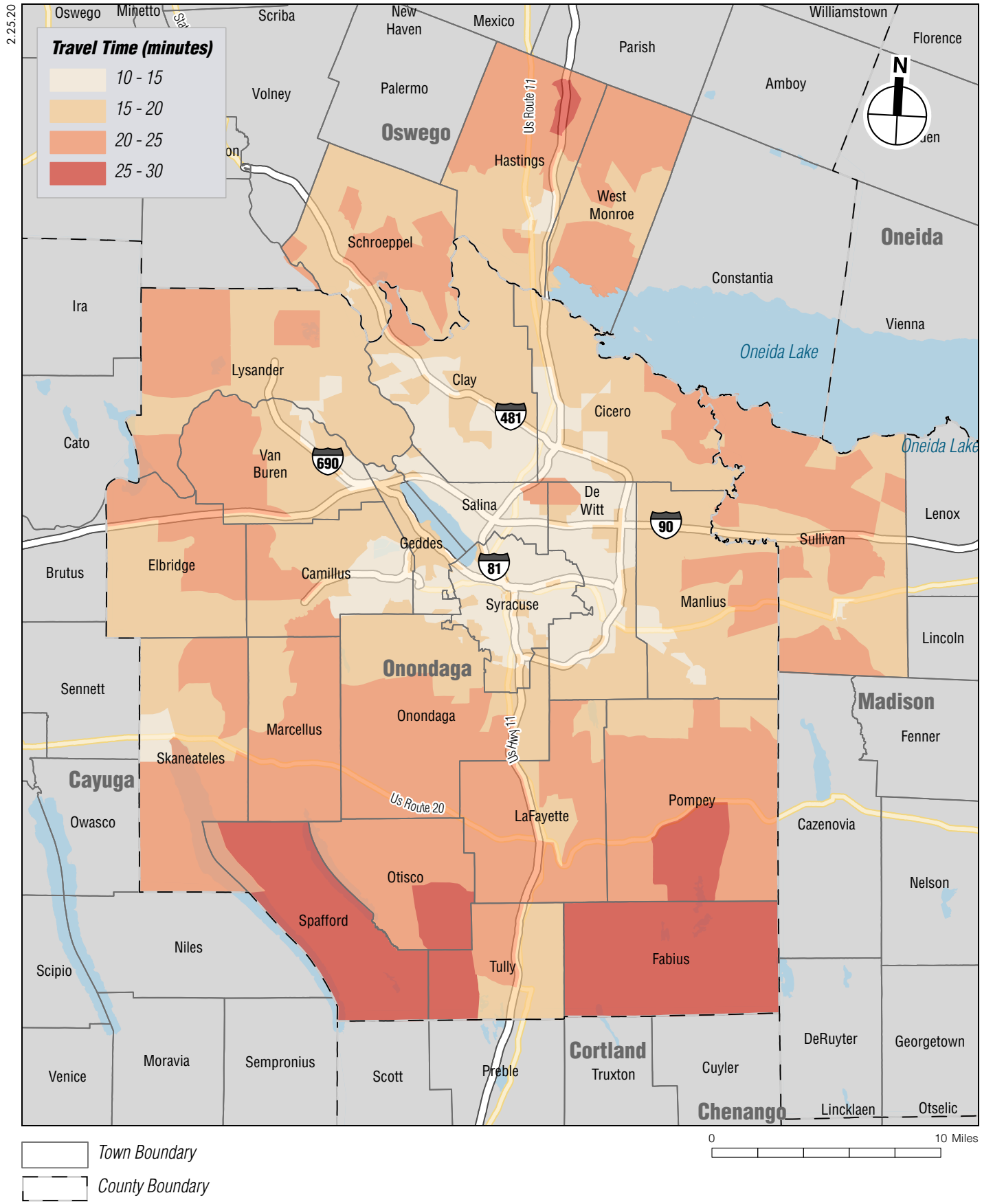
22 StreetLight Data is an on-demand mobility analytics platform that takes and analyzes vehicle movements using data from mobile devices, connected cars and trucks, as well as census data, road network information and more. This data can be used to determine the number of trips during different periods of time; trip variations by day, time period and vehicle type; traffic volumes; and identify trip time, length, speed and trip purpose.




Average Daily Travel Time to Destinations
in the Syracuse Metropolitan Area
No Build Alternative

**I-81 Viaduct Project**

**Figure 6-3-2-5**




Average Daily Travel Time to Destinations
in the Syracuse Metropolitan Area
Community Grid Alternative

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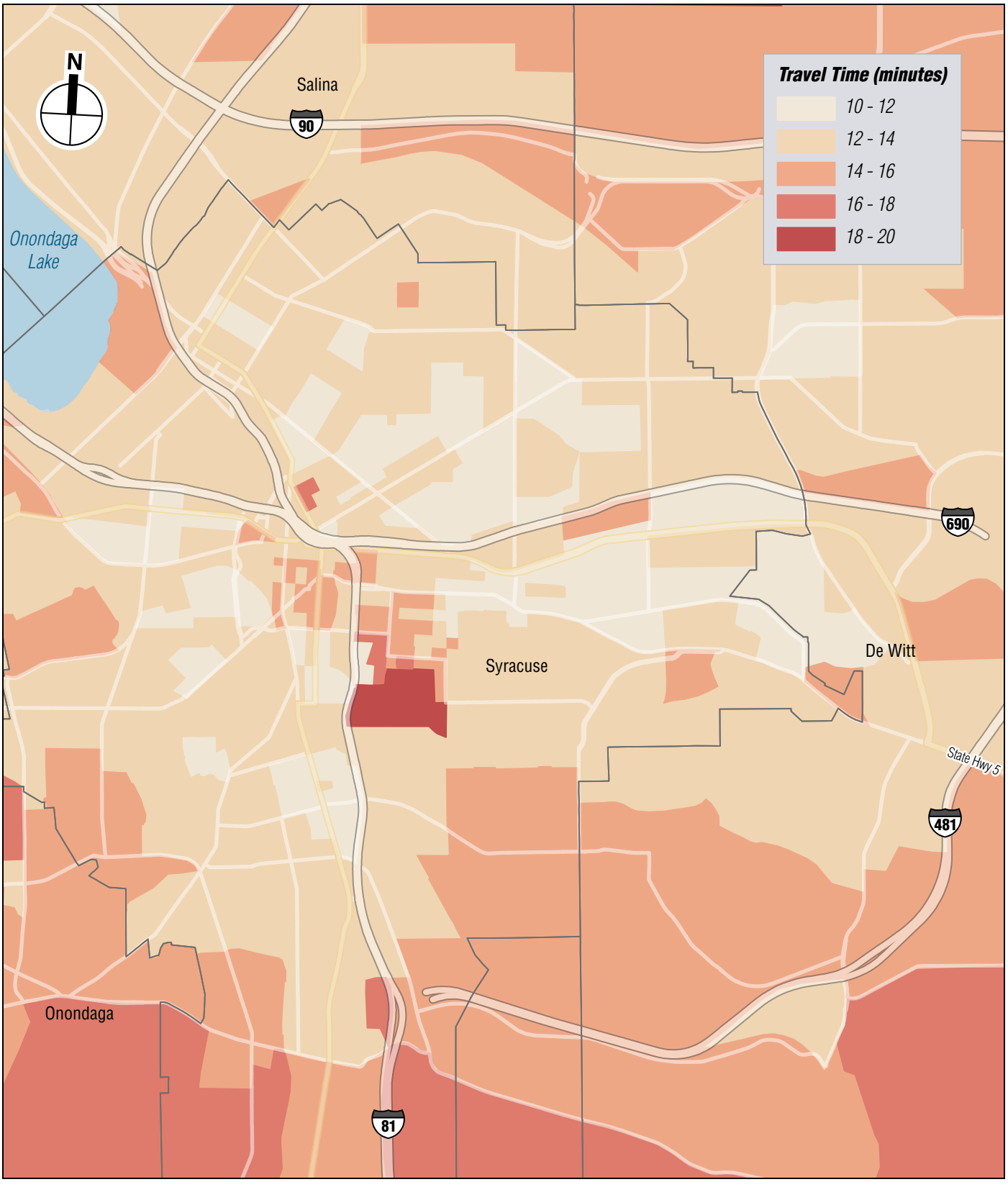


Average Daily Travel Time to Destinations
in the Syracuse Downtown Area
No Build Alternative

**I-81 Viaduct Project**

**Figure 6-3-2-7**

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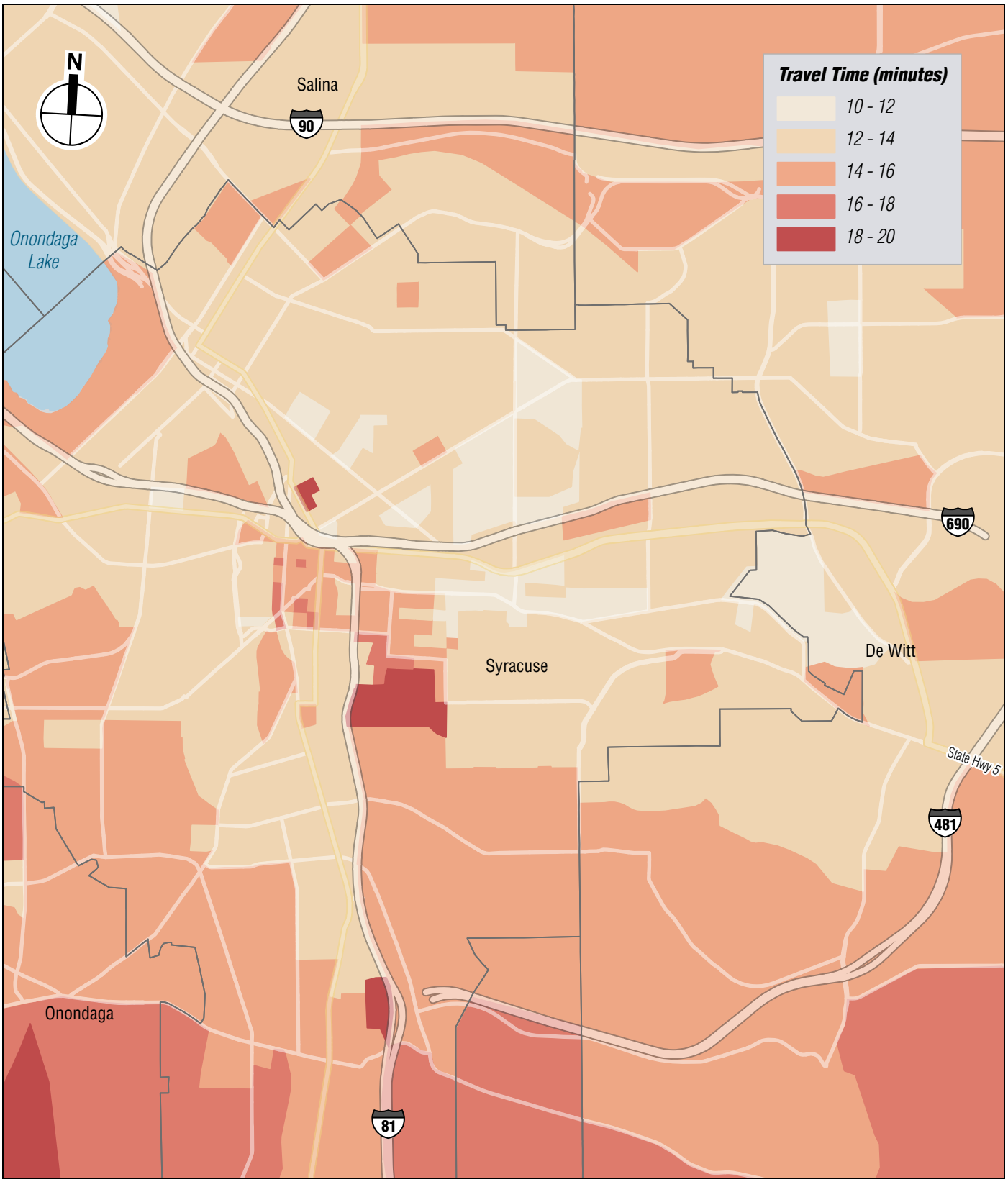



Average Daily Travel Time to Destinations
in the Syracuse Downtown Area
Community Grid Alternative

**I-81 Viaduct Project**

**Figure 6-3-2-8**

The business uses selected were the hotel cluster in the vicinity of the I-81/I-90 interchange, Destiny USA, and the Pilot Travel Center south of I-90 and east of I-81. These business uses were selected because their consumer trade areas[23] extend beyond the Central Study Area. As noted above, businesses whose trade areas do not extend beyond this area would not be expected to lose customer base due to re-routing traffic under the Community Grid Alternative.

StreetLight was used to identify the paths traffic currently takes to the following three destination "zones" shown in **Figure 6-3-2-9**:

- Zone 1: Hotel cluster in the vicinity of the I-81/I-90 interchange;
- Zone 2: Destiny USA super regional shopping center; and
- Zone 3: Pilot Travel Center.

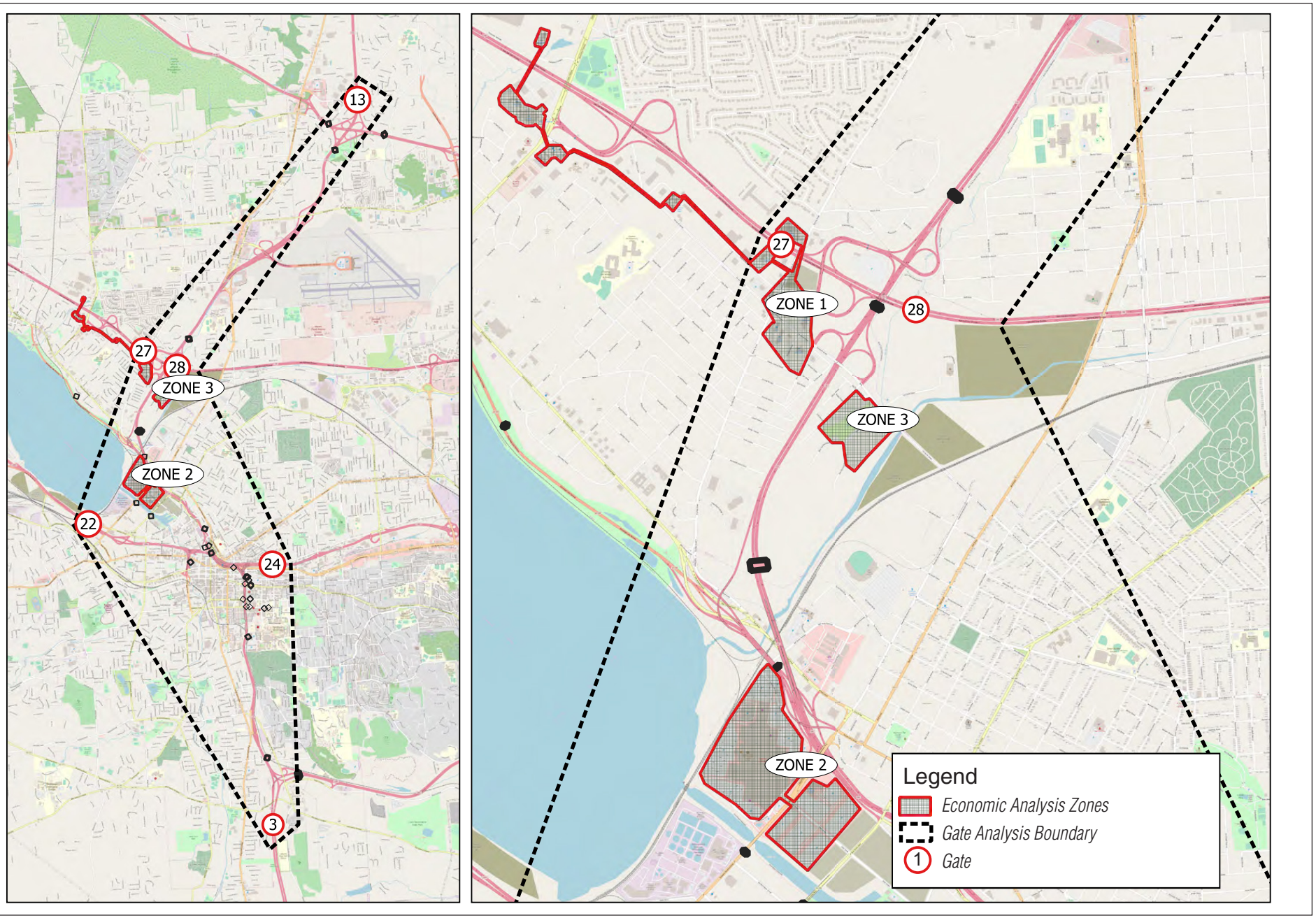
The analysis focused on trips to these zones originating from I-81, north or south of its interchanges with I-481 (see **Figure 6-3-2-9**). A large percentage of the trips that arrive via I-81 from areas beyond the I-481 north and south interchanges were consumers who were traveling with the intention to stop at these destinations (e.g., visitors from Canada traveling to Destiny USA). Under the Community Grid Alternative, it is expected that these consumers would continue to frequent the zones at the same rates, because as detailed above, the travel times to those zones would not substantively change. However, a subcomponent of that traffic flow is composed of "pass-by" trips—consumers with a different ultimate destination in mind, who decide to stop and frequent the zone upon pass-by recognition of the business. Pass-by trips originating from I-81 north or south of its interchanges with I-481 would no longer frequent the zones because their origin and ultimate destination would find them re-routed on I-481. The SMTC regional model was used to determine the percentage of through trips under the Community Grid Alternative that would be re-routed from I-81 to I-481. This factor was then applied to the total estimated pass-by trips from I-81 under existing conditions to calculate the potential loss of pass-by trips under the Community Grid Alternative.

To quantify the potential loss in consumer base, the percentage of pass-by trips expected to be "captured" as customers under existing and future conditions with the Community Grid Alternative were estimated. For Zones 2 and 3, pass-by trip capture rates from the ITE Trip Generation Handbook, 2nd Edition were applied to the projected pass-by traffic originating from I-81 north or south of its interchanges with I-481.

ITE does not report pass-by capture rates for hotel uses. A "pass-by" trip is one that is made as part of a another trip purpose and is typically occurs because the service is available along a previously planned route. For example, a driver might stop for coffee on his or her way to work, and therefore, the trip to the coffee shop is part of an already planned trip. Hotels are destinations with a distinct, and typically pre-planned, purpose, and therefore, ITE does not identify a pass-by trip credit for hotels.

Therefore, data from Visit Syracuse was used to account for pass by customers that patronize a business because they see it from I-81 in route to their destination. The Visit Syracuse report found that for overnight leisure trips, approximately 4 percent of domestic travelers and 8 percent of international travelers who stayed at hotels in Onondaga County were passing through Onondaga

[23] A trade area is the area within which a majority of customers or clients of a business are drawn.




Source: Parsons

StreetLight Analysis Zone

**I-81 Viaduct Project**

**Figure 6-3-2-9**

County in route to another destination. Based on this visitor profile, the analysis applied a weighted average of 5.3 percent pass-by capture rate for the Zone 1 hotel uses.[24]

**Table 6-3-2-11** summarizes the estimates. Zone 1, representing the hotels, receives the highest percentages of consumer traffic from I-81 north and south of I-481 (10.7 percent and 14.5 percent, respectively). This is expected given the nature of the business use—a hotel draws customers largely from a population not living in the immediate area. Zone 2/Destiny USA receives substantially less of its consumer traffic from I-81 north and south of I-481 (2.9 percent and 4.4 percent, respectively). Zone 3/Pilot Travel Center receives percentages similar to Zone 2/Destiny USA, at 4.2 percent from I-81 north of I-481, and 3.9 percent from south of I-481.

**Table 6-3-2-11**
**Percent of All Daily Trips Destined to Zones 1, 2, and 3**

| Gate # | Description | Zone 1<br>Hotels | Zone 2<br>Destiny USA | Zone 3<br>Pilot Travel Center |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | I-81 South of I-481 | 10.7% | 3.9% | 4.2% |
| 13 | I-81 North of I-481 | 14.5% | 4.4% | 3.9% |
| 22 | I-690 West of Hiawatha Blvd | 12.9% | 9.7% | 4.1% |
| 24 | I-690 East of I-81 | 18.6% | 9.1% | 2.7% |
| 27 | I-90 West of I-81 | 23.8% | 1.0% | 5.3% |
| 28 | I-90 East of I-81 | 19.5% | 2.8% | 8.5% |
| | Other (including I-81 between north and south I-481 interchanges) | | 69.1% | 71.2% |
| | **Total** | **100.0%** | **100.0%** | **100.0%** |
| | From I-81 (Outside 481) | 25.2% | 8.3% | 8.1% |
| | % Pass-By Trip Capture | 5.3%* | 34.0%** | 66.0%*** |
| | Total Reduction in Customers (CG) | 1.3% | 2.8% | 5.3% |

**Notes:**
* This figure is based on data from the *Visit Syracuse* report which found that of all Syracuse leisure trip hotel stays, approximately 4 percent of domestic and 8 percent of international travelers were passing through Onondaga County en route to another destination. When accounting for the numbers of international vs. domestic travelers, the weighted average is approximately 5.3 percent.
** The ITE Trip Generation Handbook, 2nd Edition. The 34.0% value assumed for this analysis is the average pass-by capture rate for shopping centers of various sizes, and is extremely conservative for a large regional shopping center like Destiny USA. ITE data shows a correlation between Average Pass-by Trip Percentage and Gross Leasable Area of a Shopping Center (820), with larger shopping centers capturing substantially fewer pass-by trips (ITE Trip Generation Handbook, 3rd Edition, Figure E.7, Shopping Center (820).
*** The ITE Trip Generation Handbook, 2nd Edition.
**Sources:** Visit Syracuse. ITE Trip Generation Handbook, 2nd and 3rd editions.

As noted above, many trips to these zones that originate from north and south of I-481 had these zones as their original destination, and would continue to be captured under the Community Grid Alternative. To estimate potential loss in consumer base, the *Visit Syracuse* and ITE data were used to

[24] The 5.3 percent figure is based on data from the *Visit Syracuse* report which found that of all Syracuse leisure trip hotel stays, approximately 4 percent of domestic and 8 percent of international travelers were passing through Onondaga County en route to another destination. When accounting for the numbers of international vs. domestic travelers, the weighted average is approximately 5.3 percent.

apply pass-by capture rates to the percentages from locations north and south of I-481 in order to derive the subset that are pass-by captures from these locations:

- **Zone 1**: Under existing conditions, an estimated 5.3 percent of the 25.2 percent of hotel customers traveling to Zone 1 on I-81 from points north and south of the I-481 interchanges did not intend to stay overnight in Syracuse but did. With the Community Grid Alternative, the resulting approximately 1.3 percent of hotel customers (5.3 percent of the 25.2 percent) would re-route to I-481, and would no longer visit the hotels in Zone 1.
- **Zone 2**: Under existing conditions, an estimated 34.0 percent of the 8.3 percent of Destiny USA visitors traveling to Zone 2 on I-81 from points north and south of the I-481 interchanges did not intend to stop at Destiny USA but did. With the Community Grid Alternative, the resulting approximately 2.8 percent of Destiny USA visitors (34.0 percent of the 8.3 percent) would re-route to I-481 and would no longer visit Zone 2.
- **Zone 3**: Under existing conditions, an estimated 66.0 percent of the 8.1 percent of Pilot Travel Center customers traveling to Zone 3 on I-81 from points north and south of the I-481 interchanges did not intend to stop at the Pilot Travel Center but did. With the Community Grid Alternative, the resulting approximately 5.3 percent of customers (66.0 percent of the 8.1 percent) would re-route to I-481 and would no longer visit Zone 3.

The following sections examine whether the estimated reductions in consumer trips could lead to the indirect displacement of business uses within these zones.

**Zone 1**

The Community Grid Alternative would alter existing travel patterns to the hotels near Interchange 25. **Table 6-3-2-11** above presents the percentage of daily travelers from I-81 that originate from points north or south of I-481 and travel to Interchanges 23 through 25. While these hotels would still be accessible via the interstate highway system (I-90) and BL 81, they would not have direct access from the signed I-81. To access these hotels from the south, travelers would take either BL 81 or I-81 (current I-481) to I-90.

Because visitors are drawn to these hotels for a number of factors, and the change in travel time from the expected route of travel would be negligible, the hotels would continue to capture many consumer trips originating from locations north and south of the I-481 interchanges. Most hotel customers make reservations in advance of their arrival (they do not make last-minute decisions to stop based on visual recognition) so they would plan their hotel stay as part of their route. The *Visit Syracuse* report indicates that only 10 percent of overnight domestic and 6 percent of overnight international travelers book their accommodations on the day of arrival. However, within this group, most customers are using online reservation platforms and mobile apps to research and book last-minute reservations and comparison shop as opposed to being a "walk-in" guest.

The location of the hotel along the expected route of travel is one factor among several that affects a traveler's choice of hotels. Travelers can be expected to continue to stay at these hotels because the *de minimis* change in travel time between I-81 and BL 81 would have no effect on the overarching reason that the traveler chooses to visit the Syracuse area or to stay at a particular hotel, which can be attributed to proximity to an attraction or airport, cost, amenities, brand loyalty, and other factors. This is especially true given hotel guests use of mobile apps for booking and wayfinding.

There is a concentration of hotels at Interchanges 23 and 25, but no comparable cluster of hotels along the proposed I-81 (existing I-481) corridor. As such, a pass-through traveler looking to stop and sleep would still consider the hotels at Interchanges 23 and 25, even though these options may be slightly off-route, especially given the minor difference in travel time and available amenities in the vicinity of these hotels. From the north in particular, which is where the 8 percent of international pass-through travelers are arriving from, the hotels would continue to be accessible via high-speed, limited access highway (BL 81) and the traveler could easily reconnect with I-81 after their hotel stay.

For the following reasons, the Community Grid Alternative would not result in the indirect displacement of one or more of the hotels near Interchanges 23 and 25:

- **The hotels would continue to be strategically located within the market.** The hotels would continue to be well positioned to capture east-west trips on I-90 as well as southbound trips on I-81 connecting with I-90. The hotels would be easily accessible from the portion of BL 81 north of Downtown Syracuse. In addition, the hotels would continue to be within close proximity to the airport, Destiny USA, and Downtown Syracuse.
- **The hotels' national branding provides marketing capability to remain prominent regionally.** Online presence, combined with mobile apps and wayfinding, reduces these hotels' dependence on capturing consumer trips through visual recognition and at-the-moment visitation decisions.
- **The projected 1.3 percent decrease in consumer trips represents a very small portion of total bookings.** As detailed in Section 6-3-2.1.5 above, the 14 hotels within Zone 1 have higher performance metrics in terms of average occupancy rate and revPAR as compared to the Syracuse market as a whole, suggesting that a slight decrease in bookings would not jeopardize their viability.

**Zone 2**

Destiny USA is a retail and entertainment destination that draws visitors from well beyond the Central Study Area. For "super" regional malls, which are destination-oriented and average over 1,000,000 square feet of gross leasable area (GLA), consumer trade areas can extend 25 miles and consumer travel times can exceed 30 minutes.[25] Destiny USA in their press materials cite a 2.5-hour trade area with the potential to reach 5.5 million people, and 15 percent of purchases made by Canadians.

Based on projected changes in travel time with the Community Grid Alternative, existing Destiny USA visitors who had Destiny USA as their trip purpose would continue to frequent the mall. There would be no change in overall average daily travel time to Destiny USA; average daily travel time from locations within the Syracuse Metropolitan Area to Destiny USA would be 14 to 16 minutes under the No Build and Community Grid Alternatives, which is less than the 20 minutes a typical consumer is willing to travel for clothing and other mall retailers. The locations that are predicted to experience increased travel times to Destiny USA are presented in **Table 6-3-2-12**. The travel time difference between the No Build and Community Grid Alternatives would be one minute or less from most locations. The exception is LaFayette, which is the farthest south in the study area and could experience an increase in travel time of five minutes in the PM peak hour.

[25] U.S. Shopping-Center Classification and Characteristics, from ICSC Research and CoStar Realty Information, Inc., January 2017. Travel time data from ULI's Shopping Development Center Handbook, Third Edition.

**Table 6-3-2-12**
**Travel Times to Destiny USA**

| Origin | Destination | Peak | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | AM Travel Time (minutes) | | | PM Travel Time (minutes) | | |
| | | No Build | CG | Difference | No Build | CG | Difference |
| Baldwinsville | Destiny USA | 22 | 23 | +1 | 20 | 21 | +1 |
| Downtown | Destiny USA | 5 | 6 | +1 | 5 | 6 | +1 |
| LaFayette | Destiny USA | 16 | 20 | +4 | 15 | 20 | +5 |
| Liverpool | Destiny USA | 6 | 7 | +1 | 6 | 7 | +1 |

**Source:** Chapter 5, Transportation and Engineering Considerations.

Based on this assessment of travel time and volumes, and the following considerations, the Community Grid Alternative would not result in the indirect displacement of Destiny USA tenants:

- **Travel time changes would not substantially alter capture rates within Destiny USA's consumer trade areas. Destiny USA visitors who live in areas that are projected to have slightly longer travel times are expected to continue to frequent Destiny USA.** There are no comparable retail and entertainment offerings within a closer drive time, and many consumer trips occur outside peak commuting hours so that most regular Destiny USA visitors would see little to no difference in travel time.
- **Destiny USA is not highly dependent upon "pass through" trips. Destiny USA is recognized regionally, nationally, and internationally as a retail and entertainment destination**.[26] Visitors to retailers at Destiny USA make planned trips for purchases of "shopping goods," rather than stop-in visits for day-to-day convenience goods as there are a limited number of convenience retail stores within the center.[27] In this respect, the 2.8 percent reduction in pass-by customers would not substantively affect consumer visits.

**Zone 3**

As detailed above, with the Community Grid Alternative the Pilot Travel Center at Interchange 25 is projected to lose an estimated 5.3 percent of all trips (cars and trucks), including 22.8 percent of the interstate truck traffic traveling on I-81 (see **Table 6-3-2-13)**. This truck stop would continue to serve pass-by customers from I-90 and trucks using BL 81 to deliver merchandise to nearby Destiny USA and the warehouse and industrial uses between near the existing I-81 Interchanges 24 and 25. However, this business' high dependence on pass-by truck traffic from I-81 could affect its viability, and therefore, the Pilot Travel Center may be vulnerable to indirect displacement.

This DDR/DEIS considers whether the potential displacement of a business could lead to further neighborhood disinvestment. Because it is not an "anchor" use, the potential displacement of the Pilot Travel Center would not have such effects. The location would continue to be viable for surrounding businesses, and the property could be redeveloped to other uses.

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[26] In the Visit Syracuse Report, 47 percent of overnight domestic travelers and 65 percent of overnight international travelers surveyed visited Destiny USA while visiting Onondaga County.

[27] https://www.destinyusa.com/directory/, last accessed 2/21/2020.

**Table 6-3-2-13**
**Percent of Daily Truck Trips Destined to Zone 3**

| Gate # | Description | Zone 3<br>Pilot Travel Center |
|---|---|---|
| 3 | I-81 South of I-481 | 11.4% |
| 13 | I-81 North of I-481 | 11.5% |
| 22 | I-690 West of Hiawatha Blvd | 5.4% |
| 24 | I-690 East of I-81 | 3.2% |
| 27 | I-90 West of I-81 | 18.8% |
| 28 | I-90 East of I-81 | 19.1% |
| | Other (including I-81 between north and south I-481 interchanges) | 30.7% |
| | **Total** | **100.0%** |
| | From I-81 (north of south of I-481) | 22.8% |

This DDR/DEIS also considers the potential effects if a project displaces a use that generates substantial tax revenue, such that the loss of the use could compromise the fiscal health of affected taxing jurisdictions. This truck stop currently generates $5,204, $2,729, and $26,965 in property taxes for Onondaga County, Town of Salina, and Liverpool Central School District, respectively. These taxes represent a very small percentage (less than one-tenth of one percent) of the overall tax levy for each taxing jurisdiction. Therefore, even if the Pilot Travel Center were to be displaced and the parcel remained undeveloped, it would not be considered an adverse effect on tax revenue.

### I-481 South Study Area

*Potential Economic Growth Inducement*

Because the I-481 South Study Area is where I-81 and BL 81 would intersect, there would be no substantive change in traffic volumes at the I-81 and I-481 interchange between the No Build and Community Grid Alternatives (see **Chapter 5, Transportation and Engineering Considerations)**. North- and southbound travelers on I-81 and BL 81 would continue to pass through this interchange, regardless of the ultimate destination. Therefore, the Community Grid Alternative would be unlikely to induce new highway-oriented retail and service business at this location.

*Potential Indirect Business Displacement*

The convenience retail and restaurant uses at Interchange 15 primarily serve local residents and pass-by consumers traveling on I-81. Since no substantial changes in pass-by traffic are anticipated at this location, the Community Grid Alternative would not indirectly displace businesses at Interchange 15 or more broadly within the I-481 South Study Area.

### I-481 East Study Area

*Potential Economic Growth Inducement*

The Community Grid Alternative would divert some of the existing north-south traffic from the existing I-81 corridor to I-481 (see **Chapter 5, Transportation and Engineering Considerations,**

**Tables 5-51** and **5-52**). This could modestly increase the consumer base of, and demand for, new highway-oriented development at the six existing I-481 interchanges. These are Interchange 2 at Jamesville Road, Interchange 3 at East Genesee Street, Interchange 4 at I-690, Interchange 5 at Kirkville Road, Interchange 6 at I-90, and Interchange 7 at Collamer Road. Any development near these interchanges would be subject to local zoning and approvals by the Town of DeWitt.[28]

The area near Interchange 2 is mostly zoned R-1, permitting single-family residential uses. Therefore, substantial development from the Community Grid Alternative would be unlikely in this area.

East Genesee Street at Interchange 3 is zoned Special Business Transitional to the east of I-481 and Business Transitional to the west of I-481. This area is currently characterized by highway commercial businesses, including retail centers, banks, and grocery stores. Land just to the north and south of East Genesee Street is zoned for single family residential. Therefore, any new development induced by the Community Grid Alternative would likely be infill development consisting of smaller-scale, highway-oriented retail and service business uses.

Interchange 4 east of I-481 is zoned Industrial, which permits a variety of uses including manufacturing, warehousing, retail, and vehicle service station uses. Any potential development adjacent to this interchange spurred by the Community Grid Alternative would likely consist of smaller-scale highway-oriented retail and service business uses. West of I-481 is primarily zoned for single-family residential uses. Therefore, new development is not anticipated in that area.

The area in the vicinity of Interchanges 5, 6, and 7 is zoned Hi-Tech, which allows for many different uses including office, industrial (manufacturing and distribution), hotels, nursing and senior care facilities, and retail. Drive-thru facilities are permitted by Special Permit. Therefore, the Community Grid Alternative could support new highway-oriented businesses in the vicinity of these interchanges.

*Potential Indirect Business Displacement*

The Community Grid Alternative would increase traffic volume on I-481 between Interchanges 2 and 7. This increase in volume could increase the number of pass-by customers for convenience retail and restaurant uses in this area. This could have a positive economic benefit to these types of businesses. As such, no indirect business displacement is anticipated in the I-481 East Study Area.

### I-481 North Study Area

*Potential Economic Growth Inducement*

As discussed above, the Community Grid Alternative would divert some existing north-south traffic from the existing I-81 corridor to I-481 (see **Chapter 5, Transportation and Engineering Considerations**). This could modestly increase the desirability of new highway-oriented development (e.g., fast food retailers, gas stations) at two interchanges within the Town of Cicero: Interchange 8 at Northern Boulevard and Interchange 9 at I-81. Any development near these interchanges would be subject to local zoning and approvals by the Town of Cicero.

Zoning in the I-481 North Study Area allows for industrial and commercial uses around I-481 Interchange 8, residential and agricultural uses in many areas north or south of I-481 and east of I-81, and regional retail and commercial uses north of I-481 and west of I-81. The Community Grid

[28] Town of DeWitt Zoning Map: http://www.townofdewitt.com/documents/324.pdf, last accessed 2/24/2020.

Alternative could induce new highway-oriented retail and service business development at Interchange 8. However, any new development at Interchange 9 would be unlikely to be attributable to the Community Grid Alternative since there would not be a notable difference in traffic volume at that interchange between the No Build and Community Grid Alternatives.

*Potential Indirect Business Displacement*

The Community Grid Alternative would increase traffic volume on I-481 between Interchanges 8 and 9. This increase in volume has the potential to increase the number of pass-by customers for convenience retail and restaurant uses in this area. This could have a positive economic benefit to these types of businesses. As such, no indirect business displacement is anticipated in the I-481 East Study Area, and instead, economic benefits may be realized.

### Specific Business Types

*Freight (Trucking)*

Under the Community Grid Alternative, I-481 would be designated I-81. The alternative would not add access points to or from I-481 or I-81 in the North, South, or East Study Areas; thus, it would not change existing truck access to these study areas. The Community Grid Alternative would also include improvements to the re-designated I-81 (I-481) to increase capacity and flow.

Freight operators currently use I-481 to access points north and south of the City of Syracuse. The improvement of this highway would facilitate the movement of goods through the study areas. It is anticipated that existing travel routes to access points north of the existing I-690 and I-81 interchange, such as the Syracuse Hancock International Airport, would be modified by drivers who would now access the airport from different routes, including I-90 and the re-designated I-81 (existing I-481).

As shown in **Table 6-3-2-14**, when comparing travel times between Interchanges 17 and 29N on the existing I-81 to the proposed I-81 (existing I-481), the Community Grid Alternative would not substantially alter the travel times on I-81 from existing or No Build conditions. Instead, the Community Grid Alternative would improve northbound travel times during the PM peak hour in 2056 over the 2056 No Build Alternative. In the AM peak, travel times would be the same or about a minute longer than in the No Build Alternative.

**Table 6-3-2-14**
**Comparison of Travel Times on Existing I-81 and Proposed I-81 under the Community Grid Alternative (in Minutes)**

| Route | Direction | 2026 No Build | | 2026 Community Grid | | 2056 No Build | | 2056 Community Grid | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | AM | PM | AM | PM | AM | PM | AM | PM |
| BL 81/former I-81 from Interchange 17 to Interchange 29N | NB | 13 | 14 | 18 | 19 | 14 | 13 | 19 | 19 |
| | SB | 17 | 13 | 20 | 17 | 17 | 13 | 19 | 19 |
| New I-81/former I-481 from Interchange 2 to Interchange 8 | NB | 13 | 13 | 14 | 13 | 13 | 14 | 13 | 13 |
| | SB | 13 | 13 | 13 | 13 | 13 | 15 | 13 | 13 |

**Note:** From Interchange 16A to Interchange 29.
**Source:** Chapter 5, "Transportation and Engineering Considerations," Tables 5-47 and 5-48.

However, travel times on BL 81 would be greater than travel times along proposed I-81. The increase in travel time would be approximately 5 minutes when compared to the No Build Alternative, which is a modest increase for trucks accessing points within the City of Syracuse (see **Table 6-3-2-14** and **Chapter 5, Transportation and Engineering Considerations, Table 5-48**).

Since the new I-81 would bypass the airport, trucks would travel either on BL 81 in the northern segment (existing I-81 between I-690/I-81 and I-481/I-81 interchanges) or on I-90 to access the airport and destinations within that area. This could add travel time to existing travel routes of trucks with origins south of Syracuse. See **Chapter 5, Transportation and Engineering Considerations** for an analysis of potential impacts to the movement of freight through the Project Area.

The Community Grid Alternative may increase travel time for some freight trips. For the most part, the greatest change (4 to 6 minutes) would be for trucks with origins or destinations in the Central Study Area. As these are trips to and from specific locations, the change in travel time would not substantially impact freight operations in the Central Study Area. There would be less change in travel time to other freight hubs. Overall, the Community Grid Alternative would not impede freight movement in the study area.

*Medical*

Medical uses would continue to be a destination use within the Downtown area. Changes in travel times and patterns are not anticipated to substantially affect medical uses within the study areas. Rather, improved connectivity to the surrounding neighborhoods would increase access to these locations, and as further discussed above, the Community Grid Alternative could induce complementary or supportive development on nearby underdeveloped parcels.

*Institutions of Higher Learning*

Educational uses would continue to be a destination use within the Downtown area. Changes in travel times and patterns are not anticipated to substantially affect educational uses within the study areas. Rather, improved connectivity to the surrounding neighborhoods would increase access to these locations, and the Community Grid Alternative would support complementary or supportive development on nearby underdeveloped parcels.

*Retail*

Retail would not be adversely affected as a result of traffic diversions or travel time changes associated with the Community Grid Alternative, and in some instances access to retail would improve. For example, in Downtown, increased pass-by traffic along local routes could improve business conditions of local retail establishments and attract additional establishments.

Regionally, although I-81 would be re-routed along the current I-481 alignment, highway connections to Destiny USA would continue to be available from all directions. As further discussed above, the Community Grid Alternative would not result in the indirect displacement of Destiny USA tenants.

*Hotels*

Regionally, changes to travel patterns under the Community Grid Alternative are not anticipated to substantially affect the hotel industry. Potential impacts to specific concentrations of hotels are discussed above.

### 6-3-2.4.4 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

As described in **Chapter 5, Transportation and Engineering Considerations**, the Community Grid Alternative would meet regional travel needs well into the future to support existing and future businesses and employment within the Project Area. Enhancements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities under this alternative, in combination with other conceptualized and planned improvements in the City of Syracuse's bike plan, would improve accessibility to local businesses and places of employment. As described above, the Community Grid Alternative would potentially lead to limited increased economic opportunities and investment in University Hill and Downtown.

### 6-3-2.4.5 MITIGATION

Efforts were made during preliminary engineering of the Community Grid Alternative to avoid or minimize property acquisitions. For example, in instances where building acquisition would be required, further refinement to the alignment was undertaken wherever practicable to avoid the building or structure. As a result, permanent displacement of businesses under the Community Grid Alternative was reduced to four buildings holding four establishments.

The displacement of businesses would be undertaken pursuant to the Uniform Act and EDPL. Owners and tenants of affected properties would be provided relocation assistance, and owners of properties that would be acquired would be compensated at fair market value. Additionally, research indicates that there is sufficient commercial availability in the Central Study Area to reasonably accommodate the businesses that would be displaced by the Community Grid Alternative. The Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan is in **Appendix D**.

As discussed in **Chapter 4, Construction Means and Methods**, measures to protect business access and promote communications with owners and customers during construction have been developed (see **Table 4-7**). These measures include maintaining access to businesses as much as possible, relocating acquired businesses prior to construction, providing a signage program for affected businesses, and establishing regular communications with business owners and delivery services.

The Contractor would be required to prepare an approved communication and outreach plan for implementation throughout the construction period. Refer to **Chapter 4, Construction Means and Methods**, including **Table 4-7,** for more information about the requirements of a communication and outreach plan. Mitigation efforts would include a traffic management plan, which would facilitate access to local businesses during construction (see **Chapter 5, Transportation and Engineering Considerations**). The effectiveness of the plans would be monitored throughout the construction period and modified as needed.