

GLENVILLE TRANSPORTATION SURVEY RESULTS

We are very pleased that the Glenville Transportation Survey, distributed in the Spring, 2002 *Glenville Newsletter*, generated so much interest on the part of Glenville property owners. Although some surveys were still trickling in as late as October, 2002, we cut off the responses in early August, after having received 627 completed surveys. This represents a response rate of 5.45%. This is a very good response rate, especially considering that a pre-stamped, addressed envelope was not provided to survey recipients.

Such a high response rate means that transportation issues are very important to Glenville residents, and that we believe our “quality of life” is being impacted by local transportation/traffic conditions. Another likely reason for the very good response rate is that, like the weather, traffic is something with which we are all intimately familiar. We are therefore eminently qualified to respond to a transportation survey.

The survey analysis is broken into two parts. The first part, which you are reading now, consists of the numerical survey results, tabulated on the actual survey form, interwoven with a narrative “analysis.” The second part is a summary of written comments provided by survey responders. It should be noted that in the interest of keeping the summary of written comments reasonably brief, duplicate and very similar comments were not repeated.

We begin with survey question number 1 on the following page:

1) Please consider the following traffic “trouble spots” in Glenville and Scotia and indicate how problematic they are to you as a motorist:

| | I travel through here frequently and consider it: | | | I don't travel here frequently or really can't judge the size of the problem |
|--|---|-----------------------|----------------------|--|
| | A serious problem | Somewhat of a problem | Not a problem at all | |
| Overall congestion on Route 50 | <u>265</u> | <u>312</u> | <u>52</u> | <u>6</u> |
| Overall congestion on Mohawk Avenue in Scotia | <u>112</u> | <u>271</u> | <u>90</u> | <u>147</u> |
| Narrow railroad overpasses on Glenridge Road | <u>302</u> | <u>184</u> | <u>97</u> | <u>73</u> |
| Poor visibility in the vicinity of the Maple Avenue/Air National Guard Road intersection | <u>118</u> | <u>206</u> | <u>129</u> | <u>150</u> |
| Too many driveways on Glenridge Road near Mayfair Jewelers/Glenville Post Office | <u>122</u> | <u>262</u> | <u>198</u> | <u>26</u> |
| Odd configuration of the Route 50/Charlton Rd. intersection | <u>45</u> | <u>204</u> | <u>324</u> | <u>83</u> |
| Delays at the Route 50/Freemans Bridge Road intersection | <u>109</u> | <u>303</u> | <u>172</u> | <u>31</u> |
| Delays at the Route 50/Glenridge Rd./Van Buren Rd. intersection | <u>156</u> | <u>239</u> | <u>186</u> | <u>18</u> |
| Delays at the Route 50/Socha Plaza traffic signal | <u>44</u> | <u>204</u> | <u>292</u> | <u>16</u> |
| Delays at the Route 50/Mohawk Avenue (Route 5) intersection | <u>63</u> | <u>223</u> | <u>230</u> | <u>75</u> |
| Delays at the Maple Avenue/Alplaus Avenue intersection | <u>80</u> | <u>154</u> | <u>196</u> | <u>168</u> |
| Delays at the Maple Avenue/Glenridge Road intersection | <u>87</u> | <u>216</u> | <u>219</u> | <u>81</u> |

Analysis: If one adds up the “a serious problem” and the “somewhat of a problem” responses, overall congestion on Route 50 is the most problematic “trouble spot” in Glenville, followed closely by the narrow railroad overpasses on Glenridge Road and overall congestion on Mohawk Avenue. In fact, all but two of the “trouble spots” had 50% or more of the respondents claiming that they are problematic. The two exceptions are the odd configuration of the Route 50/Charlton Road intersection and delays at the Route 50/Socha Plaza traffic signal.

It was pointed out by some respondents that the traffic “trouble spots” in Glenville aren't very significant in comparison to many other areas. It is true that compared to many other more populated areas, Glenville's traffic woes are relatively minor. However, the survey respondents live or own property in Glenville. To compare our problems to suburban Boston or Long Island, for example, has little meaning to Glenville residents. The most meaningful comparison for Glenville residents is to contrast existing trouble spots now with how they used to be five, 10 or 20 years ago. In that vein, many respondents indicated that congestion in Glenville is significantly worse now than it was several years ago.

Clearly there is no shortage of traffic “trouble spots” in Glenville, in the opinion of Glenville residents and landowners. The question becomes “what do we do about it?” If the survey results are to guide us, “fixes” should be concentrated on Route 50, Glenridge Road, and Mohawk Avenue, all of which are state highways. Some fixes could be simple (i.e. adjusting the timing of a traffic signal), while others call for multi-million dollar investments (i.e. rebuilding the railroad overpasses on Glenridge Road).

2) A number of highway improvements for the segment of Route 50 between Freemans Bridge Road and K-Mart have been discussed. Of the following “fixes,” please check the one that you believe is the strongest candidate for the State and Town to pursue.

| | |
|--|------------|
| Don’t do anything | <u>90</u> |
| Leave as is but reduce or combine existing driveways and add curbs to “organize” vehicles | <u>77</u> |
| Add a middle turning lane only | <u>160</u> |
| Widen Route 50 to four lanes, or four lanes plus a middle turning lane | <u>161</u> |
| Build a local access road parallel to and east of Route 50, between Freemans Bridge Road and Glenridge Road, using portions of existing County Airport roads and driveways | <u>129</u> |

Analysis: The results of this question do not reveal any sort of consensus or mandate in terms of what should be done to improve traffic flow on Route 50 between Freemans Bridge Road and K-Mart. The only obvious conclusion to be drawn is that a significant majority of those who responded would like to see something done to relieve congestion on this segment of Route 50, whether that be adding a middle turning lane, widening Route 50 to four lanes plus a turning lane, or building a parallel access road.

The lack of a consensus reflected in the numbers was also reflected in the diversity of comments that were offered. Comments ranged from “Route 50 has become one ugly and dangerous road. Improve it before it turns into Wolf Road” to “Don’t do anything – don’t be in such a hurry” to “This is an idiotic question.” With such large numbers of respondents “voting” all across the spectrum, and with a significant number of strongly worded comments on either end of the spectrum, any proposed improvements to this segment of Route 50 will be closely scrutinized by the public.

3) Would you be willing to accept traffic levels and congestion roughly as they are now on Route 50 if bus service, walking, biking, landscaping, attractiveness, and safety could be improved in the Route 50 corridor?

| | |
|----------|------------|
| Yes | <u>170</u> |
| No | <u>211</u> |
| Not sure | <u>116</u> |

Analysis: As with the results of question #2, the answers to this question reveal no strong majority opinion. When asked if people would be willing to put up with roughly the existing level of traffic congestion on Route 50 as a trade off for pedestrian, landscaping, and safety improvements, 34% said yes, 43% said no, and 23% weren't sure.

Based on the large number of "not sure" answers, as well as a reading of many of the written comments offered, it appears that this question was confusing to some. Many of the survey respondents thought that this question implied that landscaping, bus service, sidewalks, and other amenities could or would improve traffic flow on Route 50. Actually, what the question was asking is if people would be willing to forego additional travel or turning lanes on Route 50, with funding for improvements instead going to making Route 50 more accommodating to pedestrians, bicyclists, busses, etc. This would tell us, indirectly perhaps, if residents are willing to accept the impacts that would accompany a widened Route 50 in order to move traffic more efficiently, or if it is more important to keep the scale of Route 50 as it currently exists, but provide more opportunities in the corridor for other modes of travel.

Confusion or not, the results of this question, as well as the results of question #2, indicate that the majority of respondents believe that improvements are needed in the Route 50 corridor. However, finding a solution that will appeal to the majority of people will likely prove difficult.

4) At present, the Town is considering requiring sidewalks along busy highways only (i.e. Route 50, Freemans Bridge Road, Glenridge Road, etc.). How important is it that the Town pursue the installation of sidewalks in these areas? (Check One)

| | |
|----------------------|------------|
| Very important | <u>174</u> |
| Somewhat important | <u>146</u> |
| No opinion | <u>62</u> |
| Somewhat unimportant | <u>105</u> |
| Very unimportant | <u>135</u> |

Analysis: In question #4, we begin to probe residents' opinions on the topic of sidewalks. This question seeks a general opinion on whether the Town should pursue sidewalks, while question #5 asks for opinions on sidewalks along specific road segments.

If we combine the "very important" and "somewhat important" answers to question #4 and compare them to the combined responses to "somewhat unimportant" and "very unimportant," we find that 51.5% of respondents favor sidewalks, while 38.5% oppose. The remaining 10% had no opinion. One couldn't qualify these results as "overwhelming support" for sidewalks, but the margin between those who support sidewalks verses those who oppose sidewalks is meaningful.

This question generated a variety of written comments, many of which were strongly written either in support of or in opposition to the idea of sidewalks. One comment that was repeated by many is that "people don't walk along Route 50," or something very similar, with the implication being that if sidewalks are built, particularly along Route 50, they won't see much use. While it is true that one doesn't see many pedestrians along Route 50 at present, it's reasonable to argue that one wouldn't dare walk along Route 50 due to the complete absence of accommodations for pedestrians. It simply is too dangerous to walk along Route 50 at this time. Installing sidewalks would allow for a safe walking environment, which in turn might lead to considerable pedestrian use. We simply have no way of knowing at this time, however.

5) Do you believe that installing sidewalks along the following street segments would be a good idea?

| | Yes, I or a member of my family might use this sidewalk with some frequency (once a month) | Yes, although I would not be likely to use this sidewalk | Not needed | No opinion |
|--|--|--|------------|------------|
| Route 50 in the Town Center area - (K-Mart to Price Chopper) | <u>149</u> | <u>186</u> | <u>226</u> | <u>41</u> |
| Route 50 between Socha Plaza South and K-Mart | <u>78</u> | <u>184</u> | <u>264</u> | <u>55</u> |
| Route 50 from Price Chopper to Charlton Road | <u>69</u> | <u>157</u> | <u>288</u> | <u>73</u> |
| Glenridge Road from the Library to Route 50 | <u>122</u> | <u>186</u> | <u>216</u> | <u>59</u> |
| Van Buren Road from Indian Brook Apartments to Route 50 | <u>77</u> | <u>236</u> | <u>174</u> | <u>85</u> |
| Dutch Meadows Lane (new street on which Wal Mart is located) between Route 50 and Freemans Bridge Road | <u>58</u> | <u>106</u> | <u>316</u> | <u>107</u> |
| Freemans Bridge Road (entire length) | <u>52</u> | <u>128</u> | <u>299</u> | <u>86</u> |
| Sacandaga Road (Route 147) between the Scotia-Glenville High School and Vley Road | <u>1</u> | <u>223</u> | <u>129</u> | <u>144</u> |
| Amsterdam Road (Route 5) between Schermerhorn Street and Maalwyck Park | <u>59</u> | <u>139</u> | <u>164</u> | <u>224</u> |
| Alplaus Avenue within the hamlet of Alplaus | <u>58</u> | <u>167</u> | <u>154</u> | <u>211</u> |

Analysis: In this question we asked residents if they support construction of sidewalks along 10 different streets or street segments within the town. All of the streets/street segments are either state or county roads, with the exception of Dutch Meadows Lane, which is a town road.

Answers to this question were certainly influenced by where the survey respondent lived. For example, Woodhaven residents were much more likely to support sidewalks on Glenridge Road than, say, Village of Scotia residents. “No opinion” answers also were driven in part by the location of the respondent’s residence. Where you see a relatively large number of “no opinion” responses, it is most likely the result of a high percentage of survey takers not being familiar with that road or stretch of road. This explains why a segment of Amsterdam Road (between Schermerhorn Street and Maalwyck Park) and Alplaus Avenue garnered large numbers of “no opinion” votes. Many respondents simply don’t travel in these locations very often.

What follows are two tables. The first is a ranking of streets/street segments based on the percentage of respondents who voted for one of the two “yes” answers. The second table dismisses the “no opinion” answers and simply compares the percentage of “yes” votes verses “not needed” votes. One could argue that the results of the first table are compromised a bit because of the large number of “no opinion” responses. For example, for some of the streets/street segments, over 1/3 of the respondents didn’t have an opinion. In the second table we get a clearer idea of what streets/street segments merit sidewalks, according to those who are actually familiar with that particular street.

Street/Street Segment

Percentage of “yes” votes (“yes” vs. “not needed” and “no opinion”)

| | |
|--|--------|
| <i>Route 50 in the Town Center area (K-Mart to Price Chopper)</i> | 55.7%% |
| <i>Van Buren Road from Indian Brook Apartments to Route 50</i> | 54.8% |
| <i>Glenridge Road from the Library to Route 50</i> | 52.9%% |
| <i>Route 50 between Socha Plaza South and K-Mart</i> | 45.1% |
| <i>Sacandaga Road between the Scotia-Glenville High School and Vley Road</i> | 44.9% |
| <i>Route 50 from Price Chopper to Charlton Road</i> | 38.5% |
| <i>Alplaus Avenue within the hamlet of Alplaus</i> | 38.1% |
| <i>Amsterdam Road between Schermerhorn Street and Maalwyck Park</i> | 33.7% |
| <i>Freemans Bridge Road</i> | 31.9% |
| <i>Dutch Meadows Lane</i> | 27.9% |

Street/Street Segment

Percentage of “yes” votes (“yes” vs. “not needed” – “no opinion” votes dismissed)

| | |
|--|-------|
| <i>Van Buren Road from Indian Brook Apartments to Route 50</i> | 64.3% |
| <i>Sacandaga Road between the Scotia-Glenville High School and Vley road</i> | 63.2% |
| <i>Route 50 in the Town Center area (K-Mart to Price Chopper)</i> | 59.7% |
| <i>Alplaus Avenue within the hamlet of Alplaus</i> | 59.4% |
| <i>Glenridge Road from the Library to Route 50</i> | 58.8% |
| <i>Amsterdam Road between Schermerhorn Street and Maalwyck Park</i> | 54.6% |
| <i>Route 50 between Socha Plaza South and K-Mart</i> | 49.8% |
| <i>Route 50 from Price Chopper to Charlton Road</i> | 43.9% |
| <i>Freemans Bridge Road</i> | 37.6% |
| <i>Dutch Meadows Lane</i> | 34.1% |

In examining the two tables, there are a few streets that received fairly strong support, whether or not the “no opinion” votes were dismissed. These include Route 50 within the Town Center area, Glenridge Road, and Van Buren Road. On the other end of the spectrum, both Freemans Bridge Road and Dutch Meadows Lane lacked strong support under both analytical scenarios. And there were a few streets/street segments, namely Sacandaga Road, Alplaus Avenue, and Amsterdam Road, of which sidewalks were supported by more than half of the respondents, if the “no opinion” votes were dismissed.

Again, where the respondent lived influenced the results. In general, people are supportive of sidewalks in their neighborhood, but are less supportive of sidewalks that would benefit other neighborhoods or areas of town. As for the “poor” showing by Freemans Bridge Road and Dutch Meadows Lane, the fact that there are no significant residential neighborhoods adjacent to these streets may have factored into the results. Since most respondents can’t envision walking from their neighborhood to sidewalks along Dutch Meadows Lane or Freemans Bridge Road, they are less likely to support sidewalks along these two roads.

The Sacandaga Road stretch between the Scotia-Glenville High School and Vley Road was something of an anomaly. If the “no opinion” votes were included, Sacandaga Road ranked 5th with 44.9% of respondents showing support. If the “no opinion” votes were dismissed, this road segment “scored” second, with 63.2% in favor of sidewalks. Yet, only one person voted “yes, I or a member of my family might use this sidewalk with some frequency.” However, 223 voted “yes, although I would not be likely to use this sidewalk.”

The reason for the odd but supportive voting on Sacandaga Road probably can be attributed to the fact that this stretch of highway is frequented by children walking to and from the Scotia-Glenville High School and the Middle School. While the vast majority of those who responded would not necessarily use this sidewalk, they recognize the importance of providing a safe pedestrian environment for students who must walk to school.

6) With the recent opening of Wal Mart and the recent installation of sewers along Freemans Bridge Road and portions of Route 50, there will undoubtedly be interest to develop/redevelop land along Route 50, Freemans Bridge Road, and Dutch Meadows Lane. With this new development will come additional traffic. How should the Town address this additional development pressure?

- | | |
|--|------------|
| The Town should allow all development, as long as impacts are carefully considered | <u>186</u> |
| The Town should restrict growth to only certain types of development (i.e. no used car dealerships, no gas stations, no fast food chains, etc.) | <u>244</u> |
| The Town should require sidewalk installation, attractive architecture and landscaping, regardless of development type | <u>270</u> |
| The Town should strictly limit all types of development | <u>161</u> |

Analysis: The four possible responses to this question are not mutually exclusive, meaning that there may be more than one “right” answer, as far as the survey respondent is concerned. This is reflected in the results, which illustrate that 861 “answers” were given, yet only 627 people responded to the survey.

By examining the results, we once again see that there is no mandate or overwhelming choice among the four possible answers. What we do see, however, is that a large majority of respondents support additional development, provided the development is carefully guided, and that the development is one of quality. Only 18.7% indicated that the Town should strictly limit all types of development.

Written comments to this question were numerous and varied. There was evidence of support for a variety of uses, ranging from additional parks to additional manufacturing operations, and everything in between. Some of the more common “wish list” land uses included restaurants (i.e. TGIFs, Applebees, Ruby Tuesdays, Outback Steakhouse and many others), specialty retail stores, clothing stores, bookstores and higher end department stores (i.e. Filene’s Penney’s, Boscov’s, etc.).

Conversely, there was significant opposition to new big box stores, drug stores, automobile dealerships, bars, and fast food restaurants. Many respondents also used this opportunity to criticize the Town for allowing a new Wal Mart to open up on Dutch Meadows Lane. There were also several references to other communities/retail areas, with the sentiment being that Glenville shouldn’t try to be like other “commercialized” towns (i.e. “No Clifton Park!” or “no need to have a Wolf Road in Glenville”).

In short, the written responses told us the same thing as the “checked” responses; meaning that the majority of respondents are okay with additional development, but the Town should be selective about what we let get built to ensure “quality” growth.

7) The two railroad overpasses on Glenridge Road have impeded traffic flow for decades. The State is considering an improvement project on Glenridge Road that would involve replacing the two bridges to provide adequate width and height for two-lane traffic, including trucks. The project would also improve/widen the intersection of Glenridge Road and Maple Avenue. What is your opinion about this project?

| | |
|--|------------|
| This is a high priority project and the State should move forward with it | <u>332</u> |
| This is an important project, but there are higher priority highway improvement projects in Glenville that should be attended to first | <u>126</u> |
| This project should go forward, but trucks should be prohibited from entering neighborhood streets | <u>165</u> |
| This project should not go forward | <u>60</u> |
| No opinion | <u>13</u> |

Analysis: This question was quite direct, asking people if they support the proposed project to replace the two existing railroad overpasses on Glenridge Road with two bridges that would provide adequate width and height for two-lane traffic, including trucks. As in question #6, one could look at question #7 and surmise more than one “right” answer. That is why we received 696 responses to this question, even though only 627 people responded to the survey.

*Nearly half (47.7%) indicated that **this is a high priority project and the State should move forward with it**. Another 23.7% said that **this project should go forward, but trucks should be prohibited from entering neighborhood streets**. This translates to support for this project in excess of 71%. Another 18.1% agreed that **this is an important project, but there are higher priority highway improvement projects that should be attended to first**. Only 8.6% of respondents said that **this project should not go forward**.*

Of the seven questions on the survey, this question yielded the strongest majority opinion. That being, a significant percentage of respondents would like to see the two railroad overpasses on Glenridge Road replaced with bridges that meet current design standards relative to automobile and truck usage.

Written comments on this question were voluminous, with passionate statements being made both in support of and opposition to the Glenridge Road project. Those in support frequently referenced the “long overdue” nature of this project, safety/automobile accident concerns, the embarrassing nature of the bridges, etc. The dissenters were very vocal, noting that removal of the bridges would introduce truck traffic, increase overall traffic volumes, and promote speeding. Others felt that the bridges were unique and/or historical, and that they give Glenville an identity all to its own.