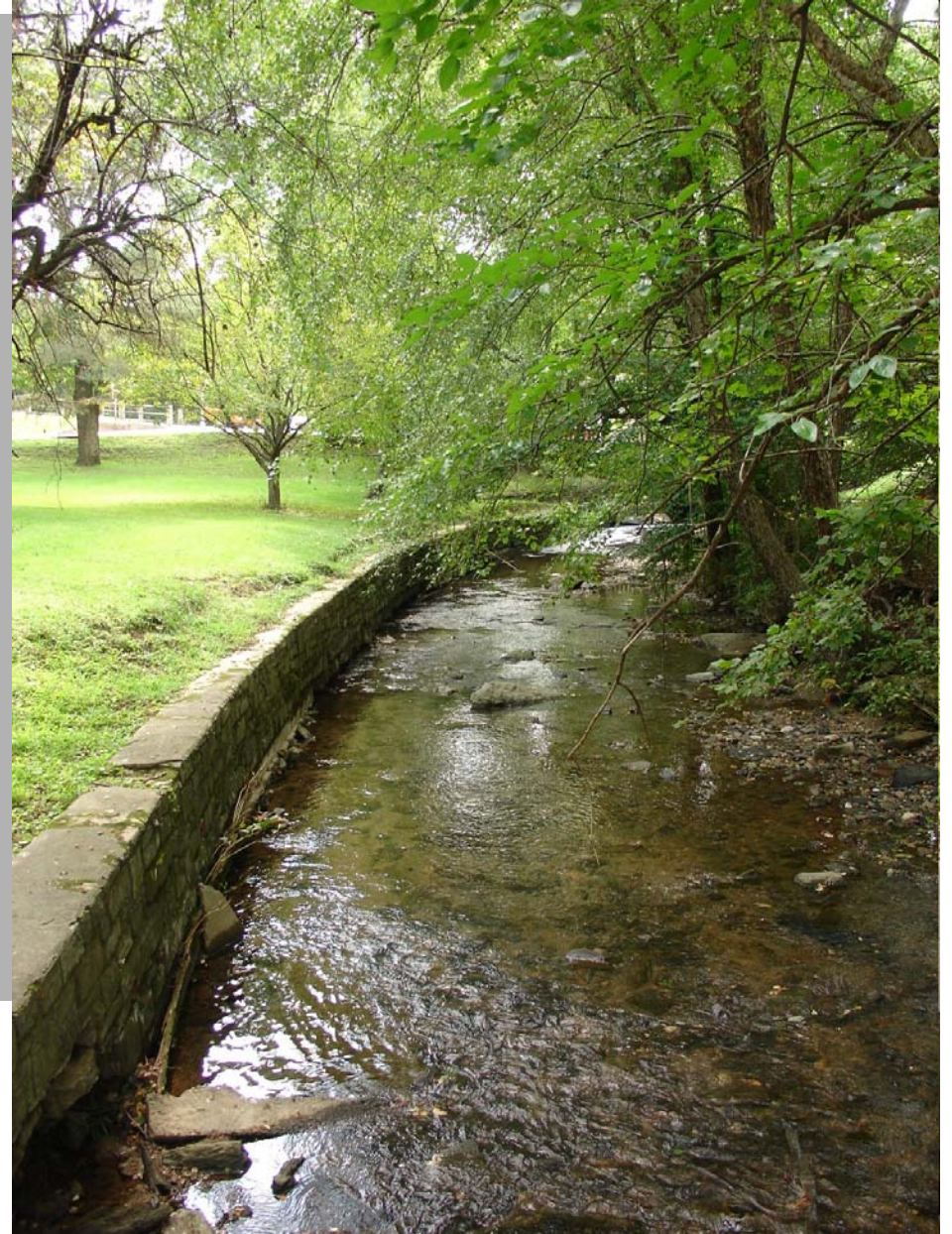


Cheltenham Chamber Of Citizens

Analysis of SEPTA May 2009
Rider Survey
Jenkintown / Wyncote
Train Station Parking Garage



**Cheltenham Township
Public Works Committee Meeting
January 13, 2010**



Learn more about the

**Cheltenham Chamber of
Citizens**

**A community organization
focused on local issues.**

For more information visit or to join our e-mail
list:

www.cheltenhamchamberofcitizens.com

Introduction:

You are about to hear from residents who have spent many hours studying the results of the May 2009 SEPTA Rider Survey. They are experts in survey data analysis. Carefully consider their analyses.

The bottom line is this: --- SEPTA only cares about the perceived convenience of the riders who live in the far suburbs, such as Lansdale and Doylestown, which trumps ALL other concerns whether it is the increase in traffic for us, or more greenhouse gas pollution for our region. This is the logic that is the driving force behind the construction of a large garage and transportation center at the Jenkintown-Wyncote Station.

To my fellow residents:

You *would have parking spaces* available to you at the local stations if SEPTA was serious about addressing the *real problems* and not the far suburbanites' *perceived convenience*. SEPTA needs to fix the problems they have and address the continual population growth in the outer suburbs ---- NOT have them all drive and park here. This is a battle about alternatives which ARE being ignored by SEPTA.

To the SEPTA representatives:

I remind you that we are your customers and the taxpayers who fund your projects. We do not believe the data from your survey supports your plans and you are not making appropriate use of our money for the sustainability of our region. You are about to hear from residents who are experts in survey data analysis. They have spent many hours studying the results of the May 2009 SEPTA Rider Survey. The survey data clearly proves that riders want better service and more parking at their local stations.

Commuter Preference & Parking Needs Study, 2009

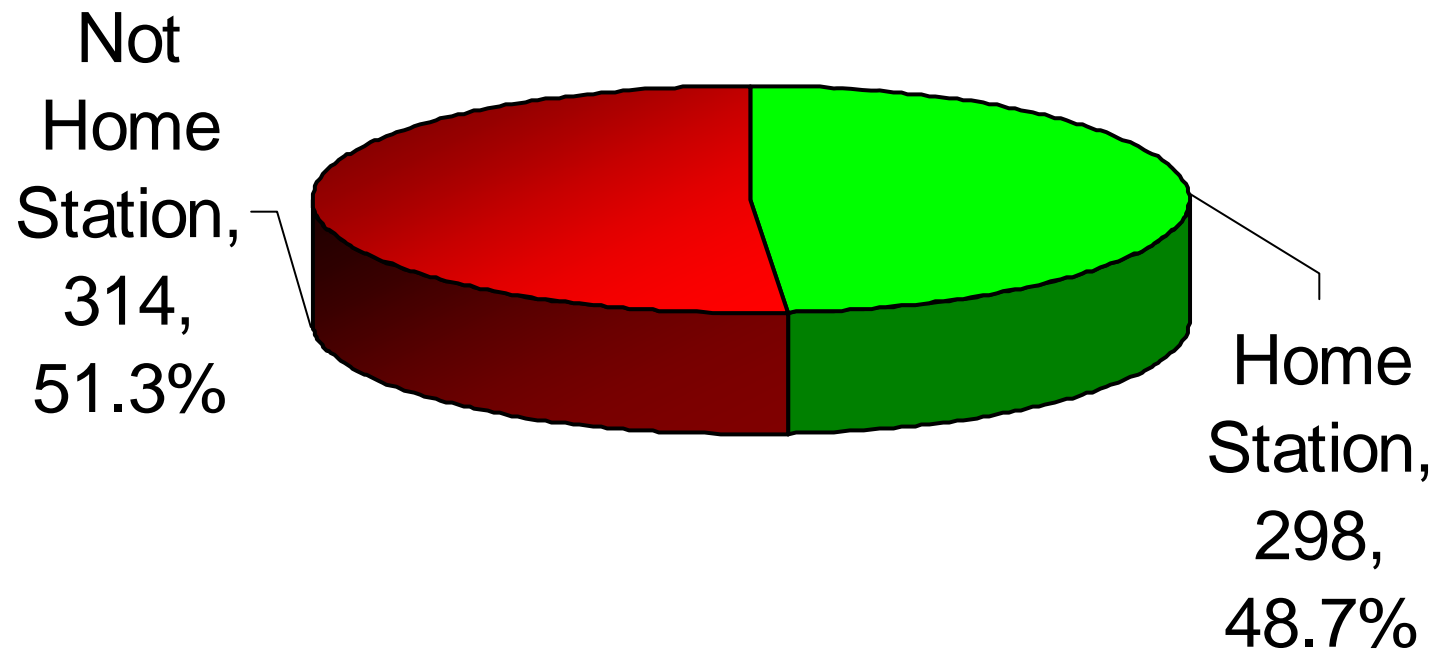
- Original studies conducted in May 2000 (revised in 2004)
 - Surveys/analysis flawed
- Cheltenham citizens petitioned SEPTA & commissioners in April 2009 to conduct new survey with appropriate questionnaire
 - Citizens participated in SEPTA workshops and provided input into questionnaire
 - Study was conducted in mid-May; citizens subsequently blocked from agreed-upon input into study analysis and interpretation
- Data (scanned questionnaires) finally received late summer; draft report received on Dec 23rd
 - No input from citizens on analysis or interpretation
 - Citizens left to invest numerous hours entering data by hand

Examples of Major Assumptions/Flaws in Parking Demand Calculation

- Latent Demand (i.e., those commuters who aren't currently parking but who would if parking were readily available)
 - Walkers, Drop-offs, Cyclists
- Mis-representation of the impact of fuel prices on transit
 - A 2008 UPenn study (Weinberger et al) found that increases in gas prices resulted in a 10% growth in transit riders on SEPTA's RR system
 - SEPTA uses that information to **incorrectly** conclude that a \$1 increase in fuel costs would result in 10.2% of non-transit riders converting to RR
 - Dr. Weinberger (via email, 1/6/10): "It is ironic that anyone should use my research as a justification to build additional parking. The bulk of my work looks at the problems of excess parking facilities across America. It is not my sense that parking lots constitute the highest and best use of land adjacent to transit stations."
- No discussion of the impact of increased parking fees on demand
 - Assumption is that off-site parkers (e.g., side streets) prefer parking in SEPTA lot but are "shut-out" because of no available spaces
 - Reality: many of those parkers choose to park off-site because it's FREE!
 - A parking garage with \$2-\$3 per day fees will likely **increase** off-site parking

Is J-W Your Local (Home) Station?

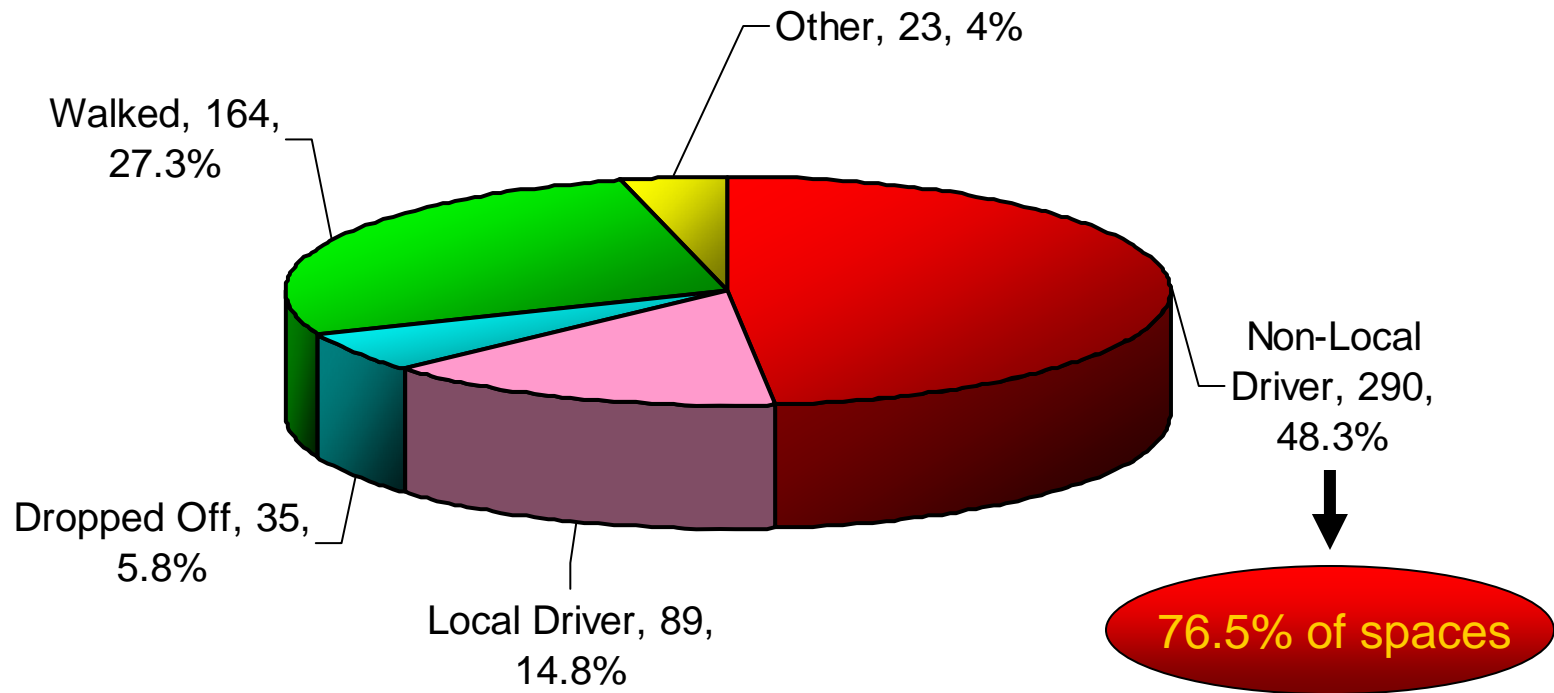
J-W Riders Responding to May 2009 Survey (n=612)



Source: SEPTA tabulation results of May 2009 J-W rider survey as provided by SEPTA to CCC

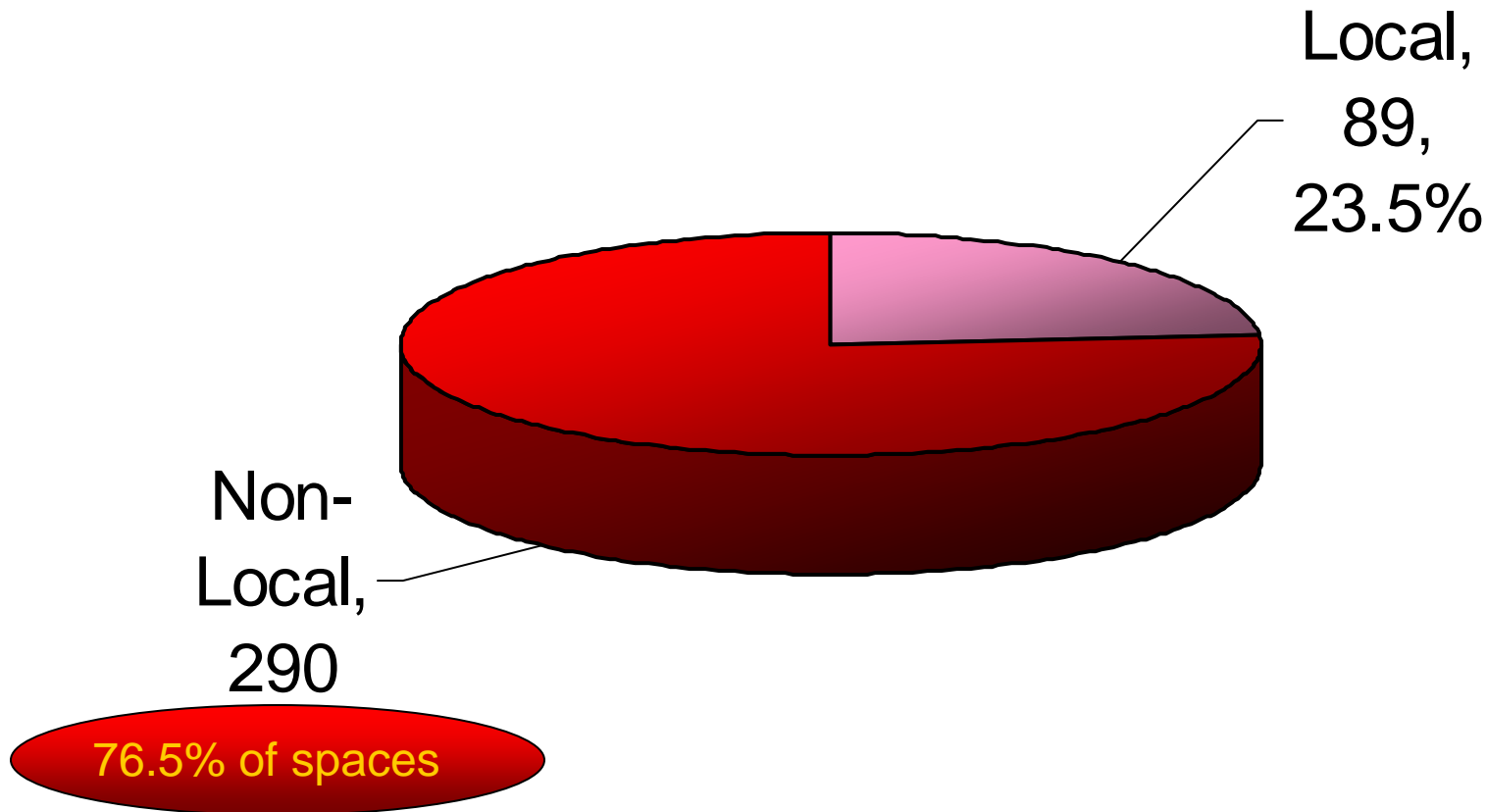
How Did You Arrive at the Station?

J-W Riders Responding to May 2009 Survey (n=612)



Source: SEPTA tabulation results of May 2009 J-W rider survey as provided by SEPTA to CCC

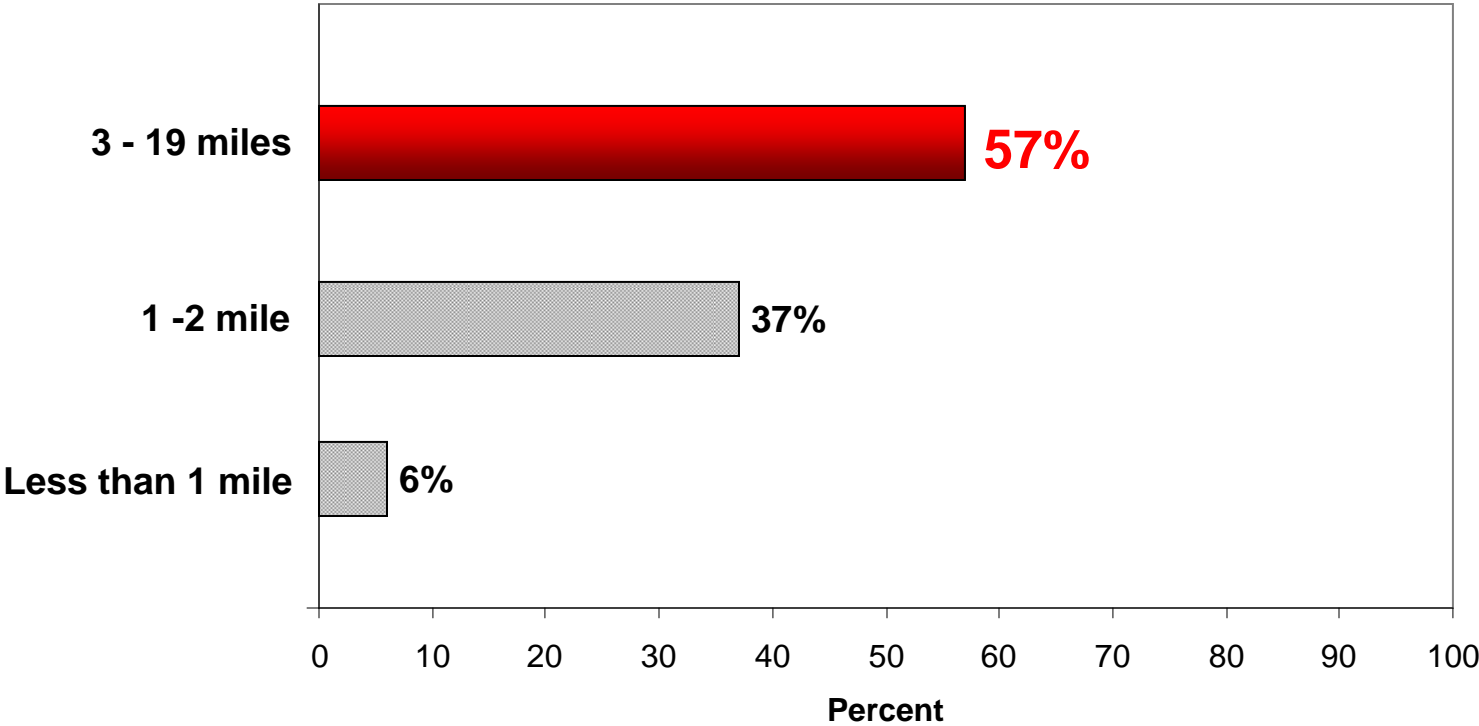
J-W Riders That Responded to May 2009 SEPTA Rider Survey:
Calculated Use of Station Parking



Source: SEPTA tabulation results of May 2009 J-W rider survey as provided by SEPTA to Cheltenham Chamber of Citizens

A High Percent of the Non-Local Drivers Live Far from J-W Station

Percent of Drivers, by Distance Driven from Home to J-W
(Calculated Actual Driving Miles)



Percent (%) Distribution of Driving Distances of Drivers using Jenkintown Station, by Local and Non-local Driver Status, 2009 Survey Data

Distance (Miles)	Driver Type		
	Local	Non-Local	All Drivers*
<1	51.2	5.7	20.6
1 - <2	36.2	17.6	23.7
2 - <3	7.9	19.9	15.9
3 - <4	1.6	14.9	10.5
4 - <5	0.8	14.5	10.0
5+	2.4	27.5	19.3

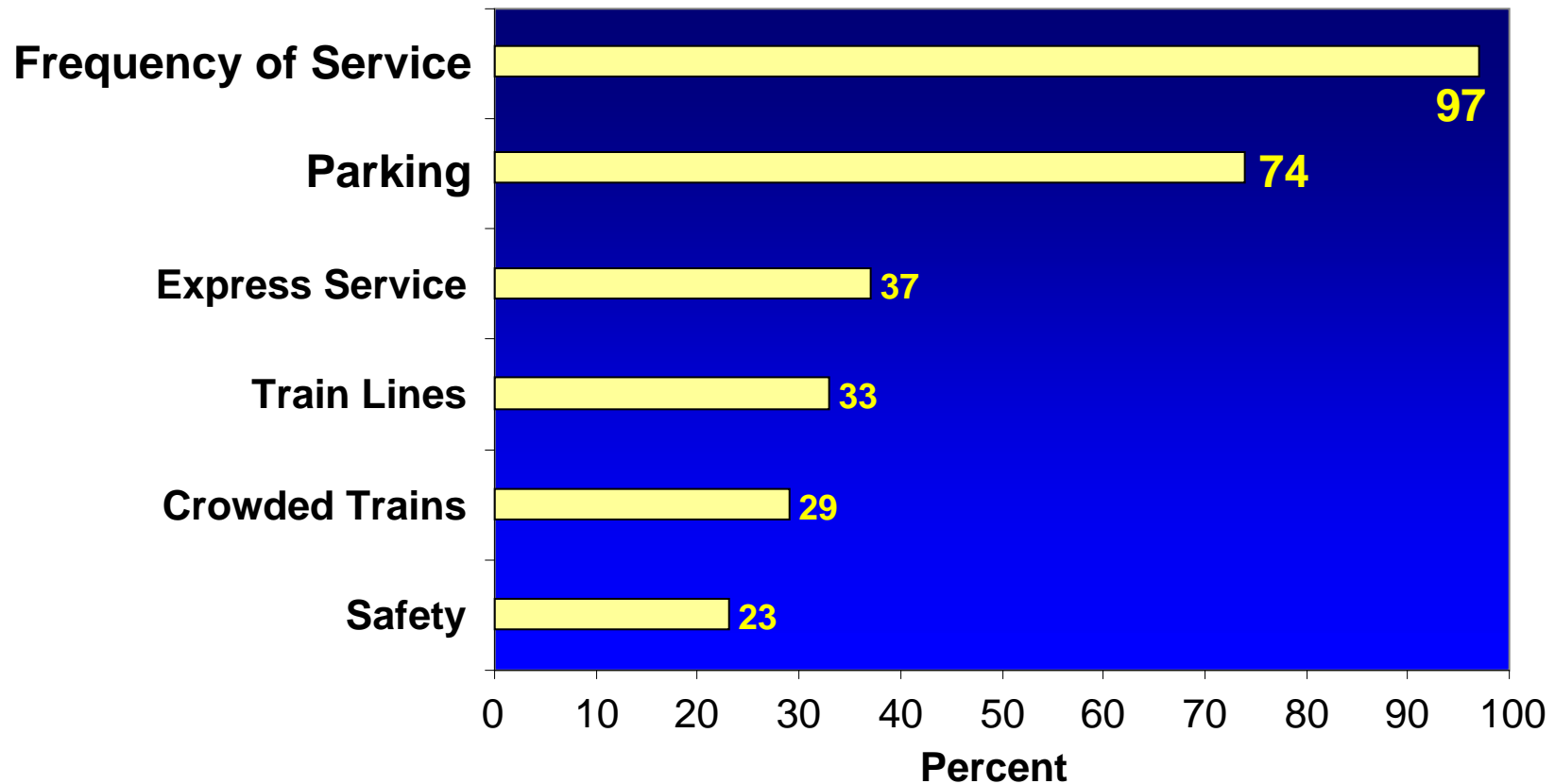
* The distribution of driving miles is statistically significantly different between local and non-local drivers (p < 0.0001)

Notes:

1. Non-Local is term for those drivers who did not use their local station

Why Are Non-Local Drivers Not Using Their Home Stations?

Percent of Drivers Stating the Reason was “Important” or “Extremely Important”



Who Pays for This?

- We (Cheltenham Township) will!
 - Taxpayer money to fund the garage
 - Increased parking fees - 100-200%
 - Likely increase in off-site parking on residential streets
 - Increased traffic/congestion
 - Etc.

Learn more about the

**Cheltenham Chamber of
Citizens**

**A community organization
focused on local issues.**

For more information visit or to join our e-mail
list:

www.cheltenhamchamberofcitizens.com

Shift in SEPTA Survey Analysis Tactics

- Resident concerns proven valid by new survey.
- Riders want home service and parking.
- Why do the SEPTA survey conclusions use % of “ridership” instead of parkers?
- Why did SEPTA deemphasize the rider’s desire for more trains and parking at their home stations?
- Why do the SEPTA survey conclusions use miles of radius from J-W Station?

Why is SEPTA changing the conversation?

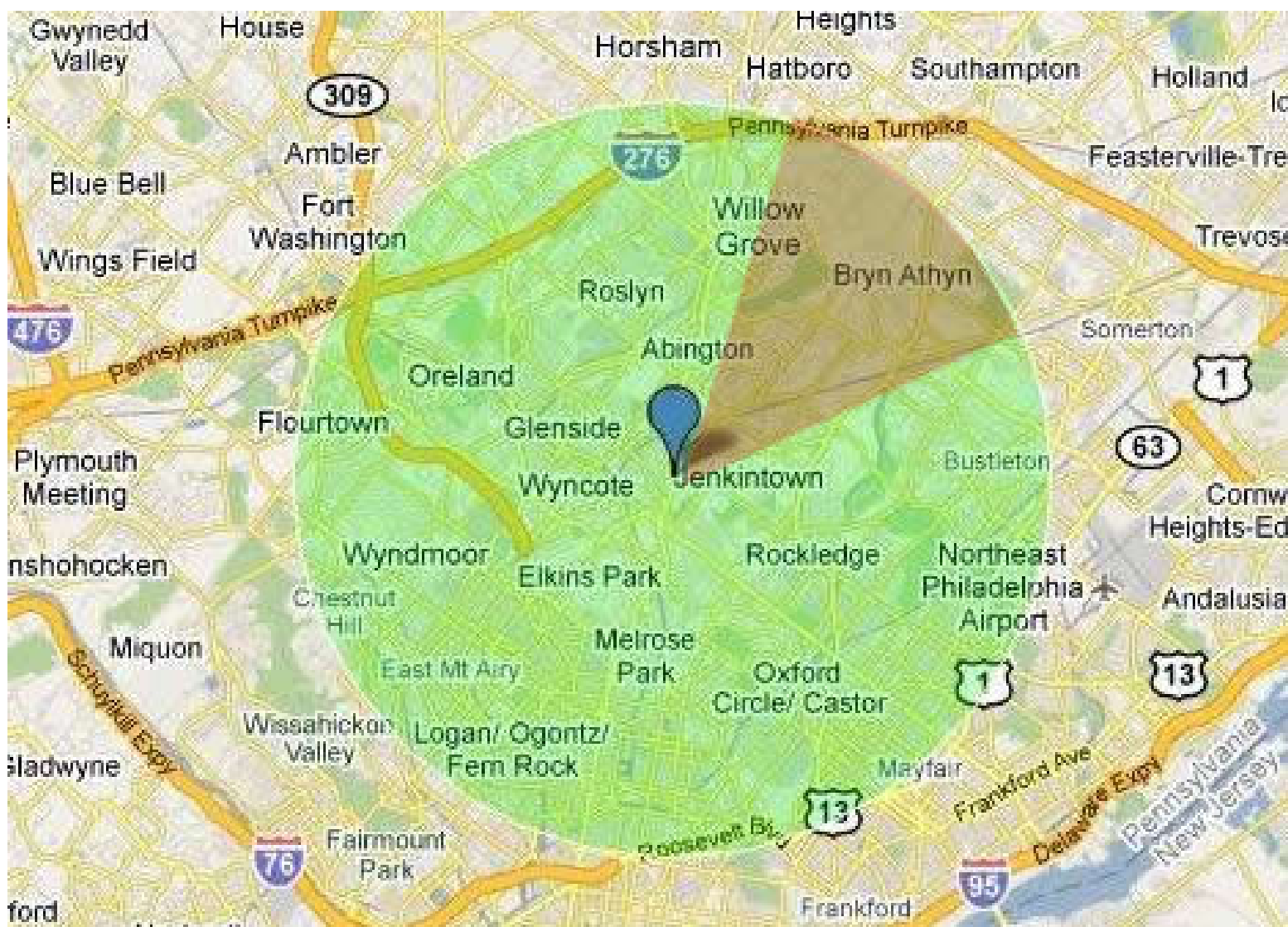
- SEPTA wants to talk about station “riders” not parkers when they talk about the garage to dilute the high 76.5% of non-local parkers.
- This is a garage for cars not walkers, drop-offs or bikers – so let’s talk about parkers.
- Because there is a big difference.
(--- 37% of J-W riders do not park and 2 of every 3 local riders do not park)

How Big Is A 5 Mile Radius?

- 78.5 Square Miles
- 3.5 Manhattan Islands
- 35 – 40 Additional Commuter Rail Stations
- Nearly Half A Million Residents
- *That is 5 miles as the bird flies, not driving miles through traffic at rush hour.*
- *SEPTA thinks a 5 mile radius for J-W is okay!*

Five Mile Radius Around J-W

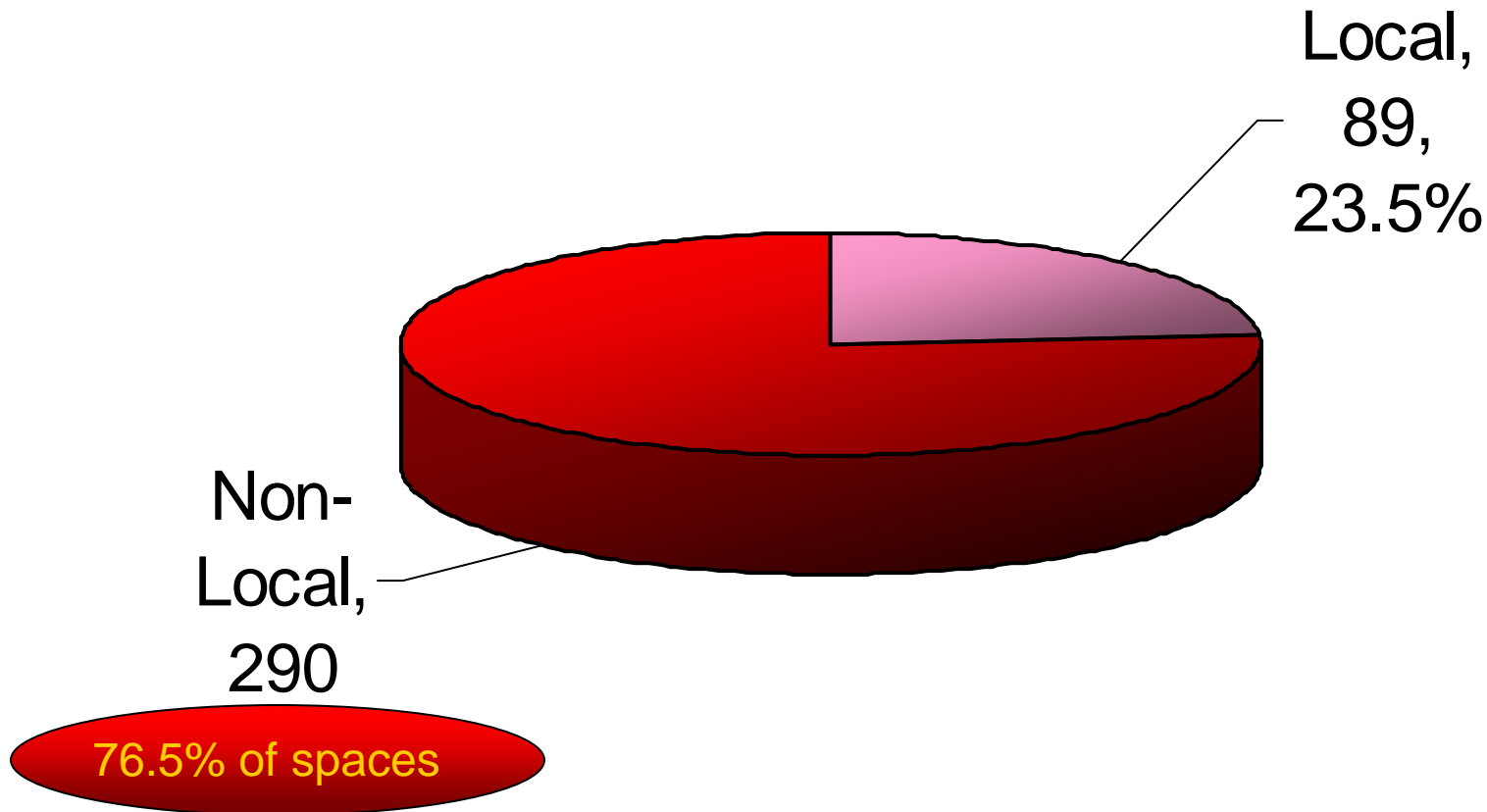
Brown Area = Part of R8 Ridershed



What Are We Talking About?

- More than 400 of the 527 parking spaces at J-W are filled by people that by-passed every station closer to their home.
- Those people want more service and parking at their home stations.
- We all want to reduce traffic, VMT and GHG emissions.
- SEPTA can and should lead the way.

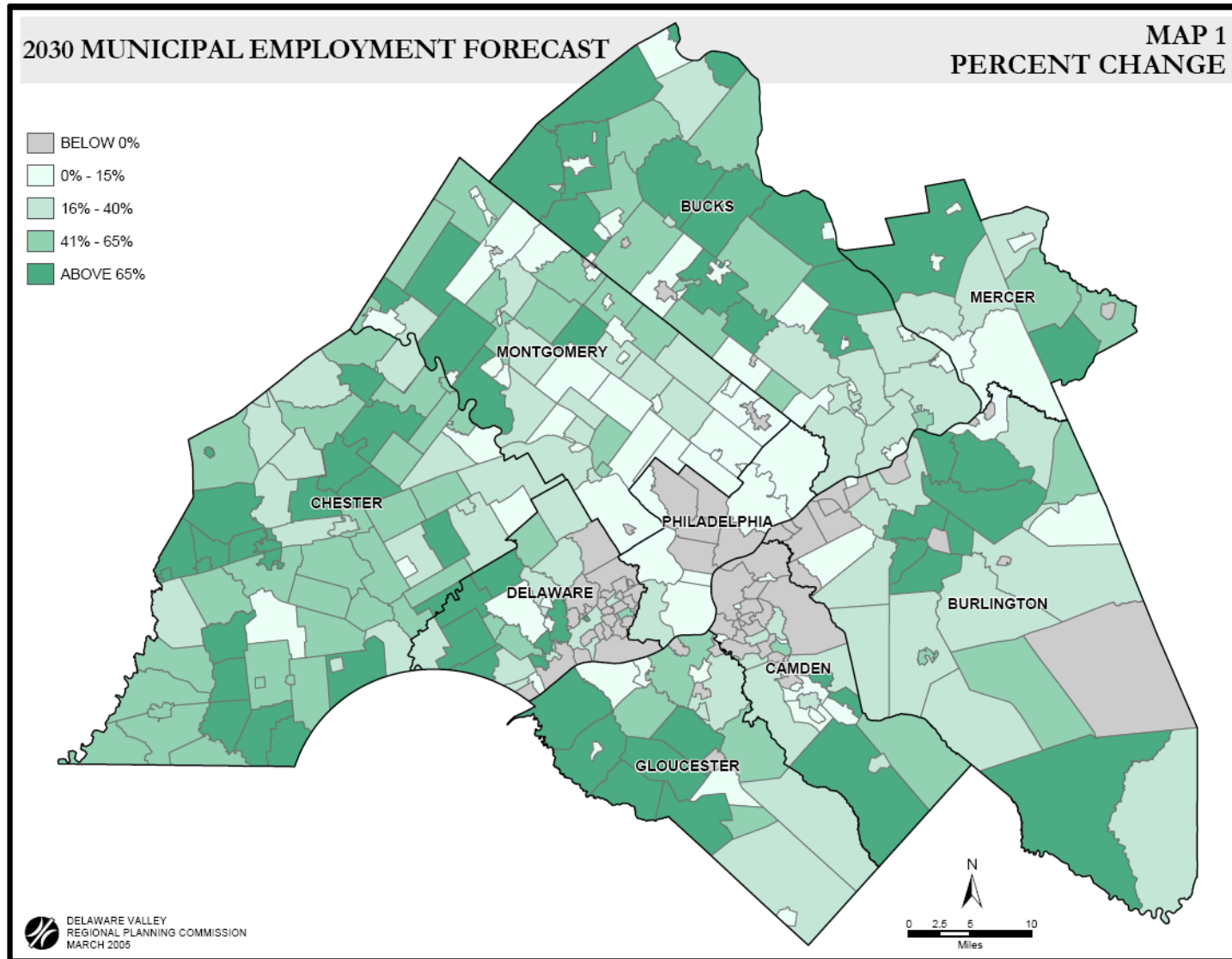
J-W Riders That Responded to May 2009 SEPTA Rider Survey:
Calculated Use of Station Parking



Source: SEPTA tabulation results of May 2009 J-W rider survey as provided by SEPTA to Cheltenham Chamber of Citizens

People Commute to Jobs - not to other People

- Future Job Growth through 2030 is not in the City!



“Perception of Convenience”

- The perception of rider convenience attracts more riders, drivers & parkers.
- The perception of inconvenience starves home stations.
- Increase the “perception of convenience” of home stations for the riders to reduce VMT, GHG emissions and to free up J-W parking for our neighbors.

Best Solution:

**Increase rail rider miles
not just rail ridership.**

Question:

Where are the empty parking spaces?

Answer:

Where the trains don't stop as often...

Orland, North Hills, and Melrose Park.

Scheduled Stops

“Stop the trains and they will come.”

Learn more about the

**Cheltenham Chamber of
Citizens**

**A community organization
focused on local issues.**

For more information visit or to join our e-mail
list:

www.cheltenhamchamberofcitizens.com

Cost/Benefit for the Parking Garage

- current proposal: \$20-25M (?) to add 236 spaces.
 - \$85-105K/space.
 - \$290/ft²
 - \$12M/acre for parking land
- that's a ridiculous price for parking spaces
 - center city spaces cost less
 - could buy/pave properties at Glenside & Greenwood for \$35K/space or less
 - could buy/pave all of Cliff Terrace for \$25K/space
 - could buy/pave on Woodland for about \$15K/space
 - the spaces reserved for Mia Pomodoro are probably worth much more than their lease
 - not that any of these are good ideas, because we probably don't really need more parking...

Amortize the cost?

- at a 5% cost of capital: \$5K/space/year
 - spaces aren't worth nearly that much to current patrons
 - monthly permits are \$240/year, and there's no black market
 - free parking a 5 minute walk from the station
 - even under ridiculously optimistic assumptions
 - full parking garage every weekday (!)
 - every parker a rider who wouldn't ride SEPTA otherwise (!!)
 - transporting passengers costs SEPTA nothing (!!!)
- resulting SEPTA revenue covers less than half the taxpayer cost (\$20/day)
- this is just an irresponsible use of tax dollars

Learn more about the

**Cheltenham Chamber of
Citizens**

**A community organization
focused on local issues.**

For more information visit or to join our e-mail
list:

www.cheltenhamchamberofcitizens.com

Additional Informational Slides

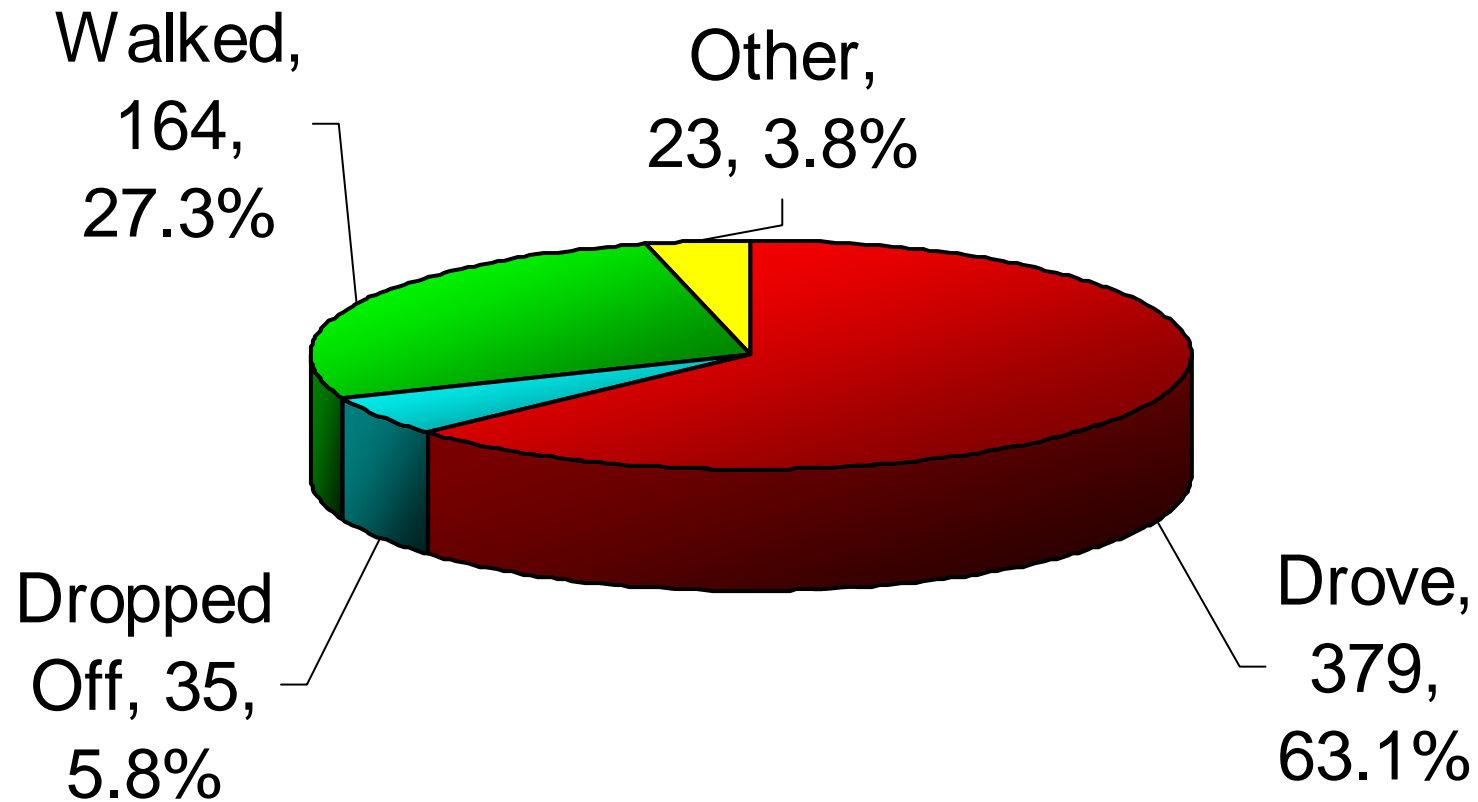
Demand Summary for Jenkintown

- Total new spaces needed based on 2009 survey data: 213
- Existing spaces: 527
- Total Need: 740

If realize that walkers will still walk, drop-offs still occur, etc.

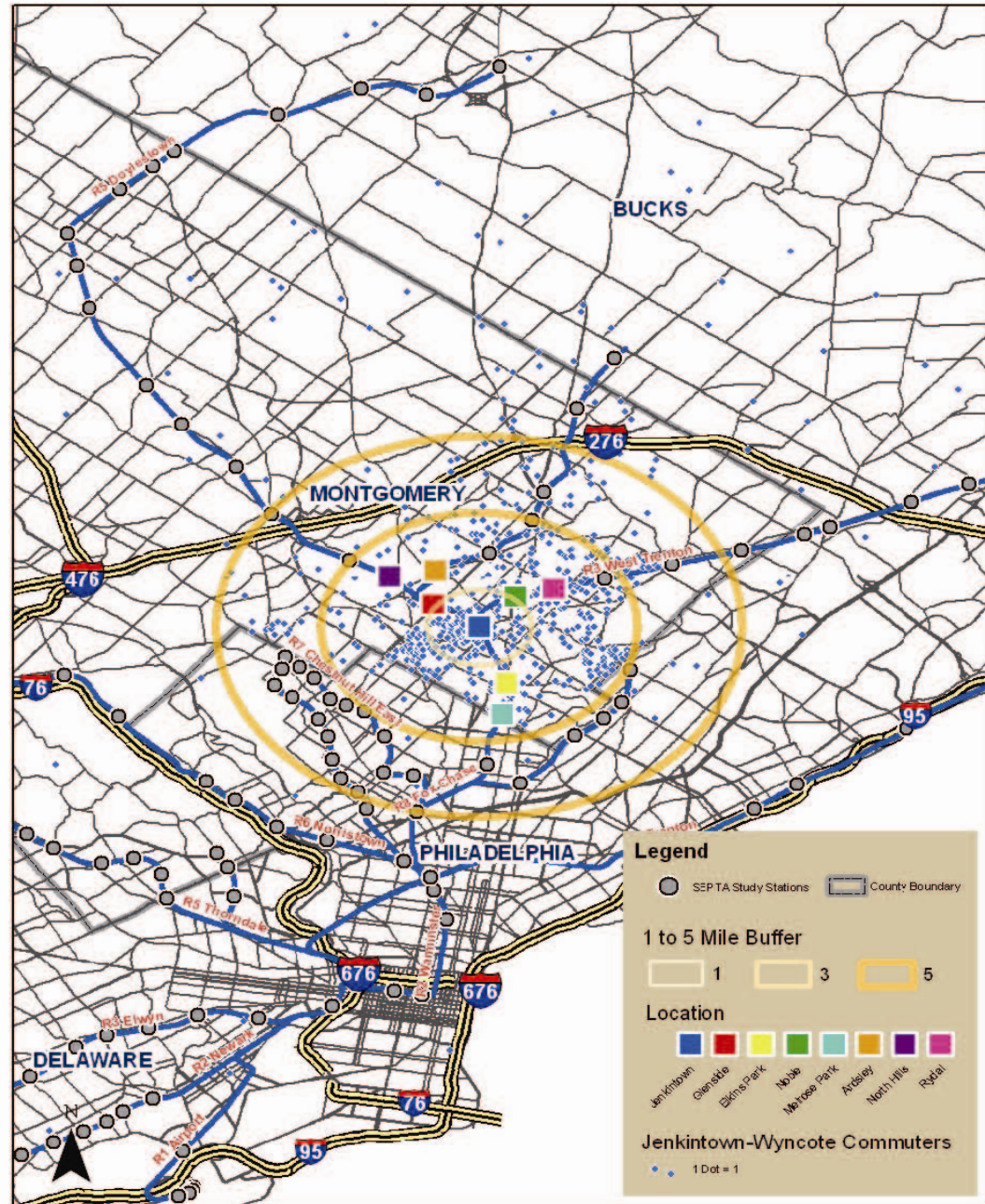
- Total new spaces needed based on 2009 survey data: 129
 - Existing spaces: 527
 - Total Need: 656
-
- Growth Factors are not important consideration based on local employment projections

J-W Riders That Responded to May 2009 SEPTA Rider Survey:
How Did You Arrive at the Station?



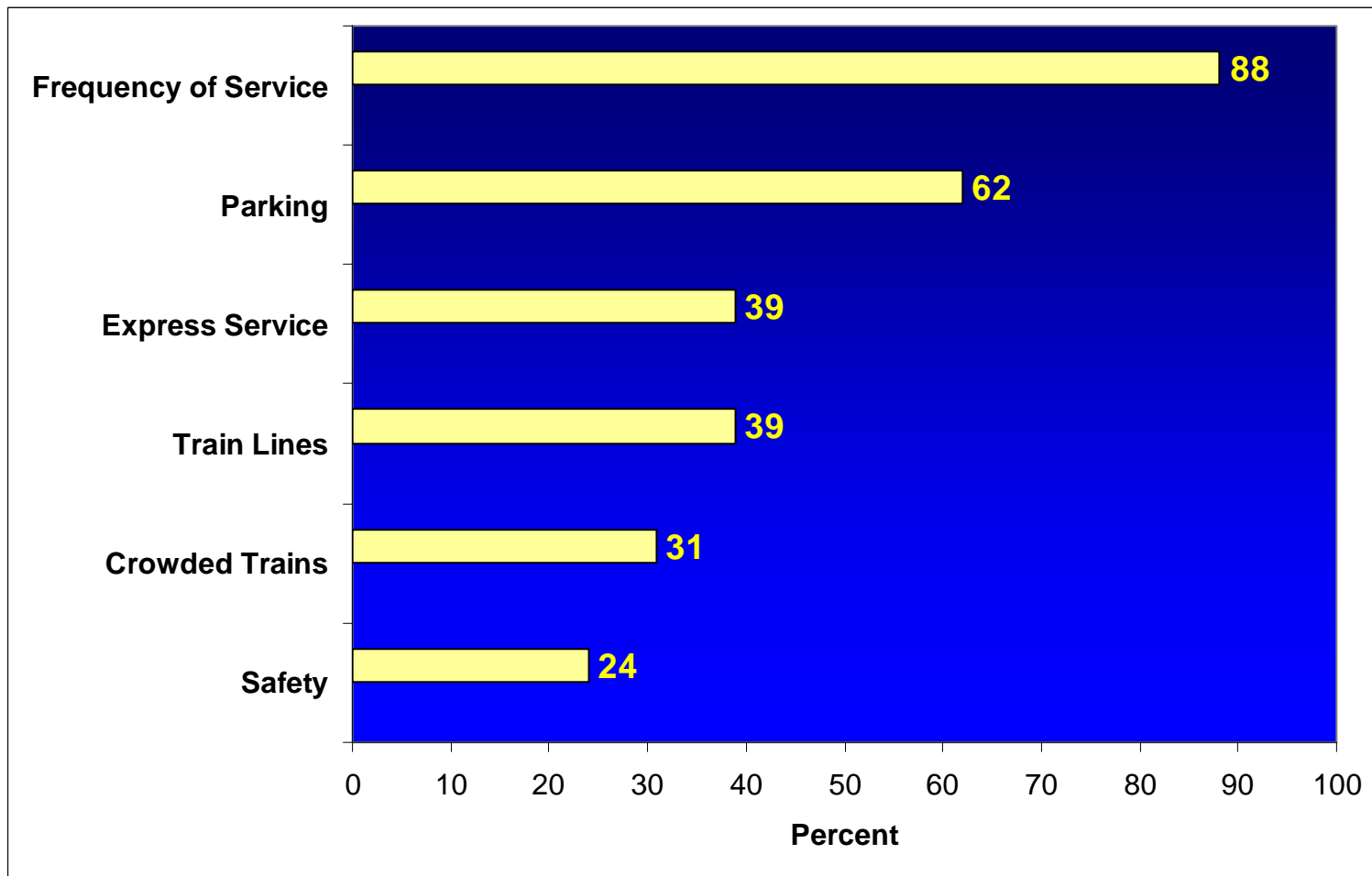
Source: SEPTA tabulation results of May 2009 J-W rider survey as provided by SEPTA to Cheltenham Chamber of Citizens

SEPTA Map of Source of J-W Ridership May 2009



Top Reasons Non-Local Jenkintown Riders Do Not Use Their Local Station

(Percent of Riders Stating Reason Was Important or Extremely Important)



2000 Demand Survey: Background, cont'd

SEPTA Passenger Survey

Jenkintown-Wyncote Station

SEPTA is conducting an important survey at selected rail stations to determine how parking could be improved. Please take the time to carefully consider and answer the following questions, and return by mail.

1. How did you arrive at this station today?

- Drove Where are you currently parked? SEPTA lot On street Other: _____
 Drop-off Carpool Taxi Bus (SEPTA #77) Walk Bicycle Train Other: _____

2. If additional SEPTA parking spaces were provided at **Jenkintown AND Glenside**, at which station would you park?

- Jenkintown Glenside Current Off-site Parking Location Will not Drive

3. If additional SEPTA parking spaces were provided **ONLY at Jenkintown**, at which station would you park?

- Jenkintown Current Off-site Parking Location Will not Drive

4. If additional SEPTA parking spaces were provided **ONLY at Glenside**, at which station would you park?

- Glenside Current Off-site Parking Location Will not Drive

5. To determine where passengers come from, can you tell us: your zip code, township/borough name, and the nearest intersection to your residence?

Zip code: _____ City/Township/borough: _____

Nearest intersection: _____

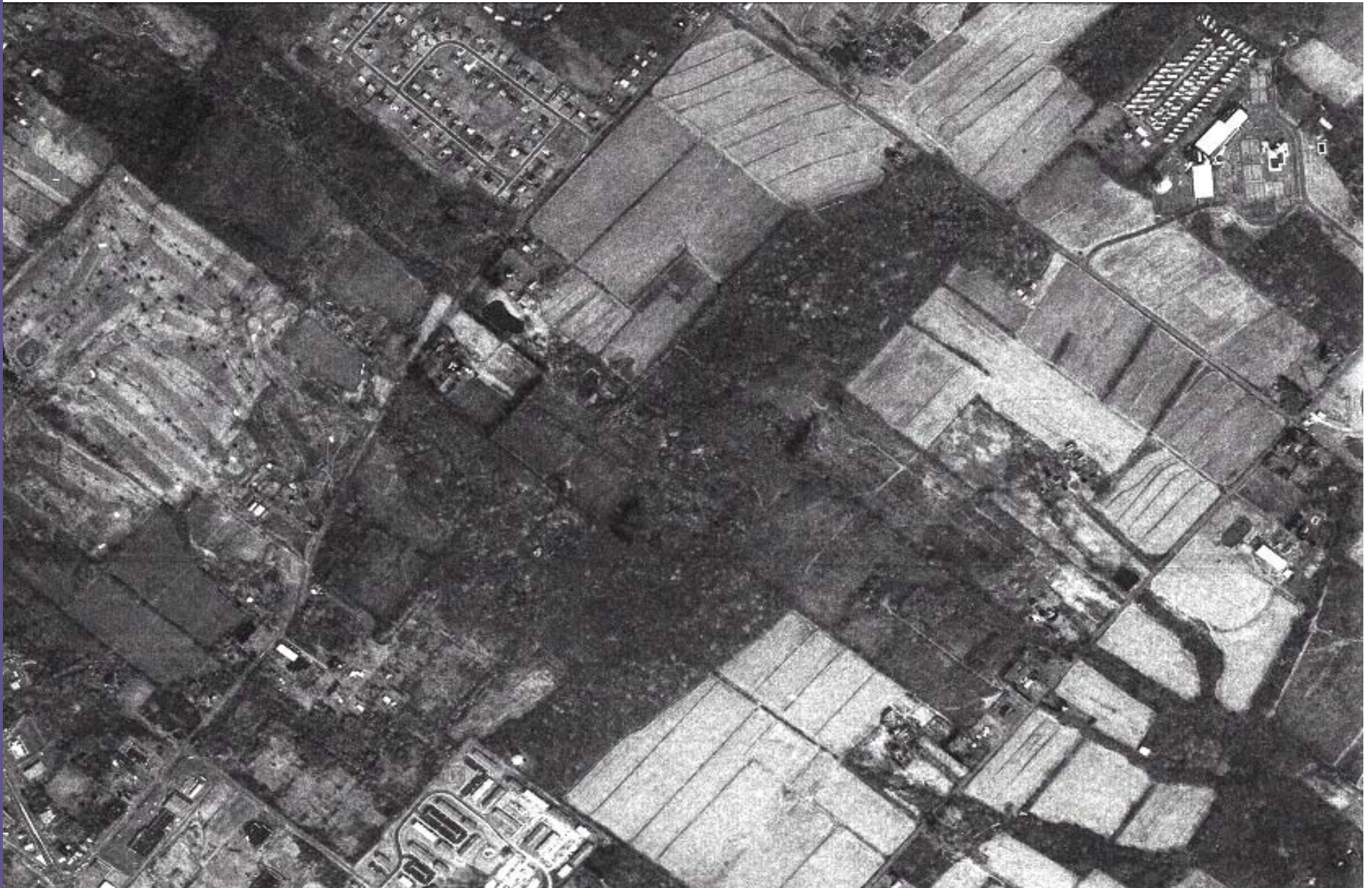
6. Would you use a bicycle, if bicycle parking were available? No Yes

7. What Station is your final destination? _____

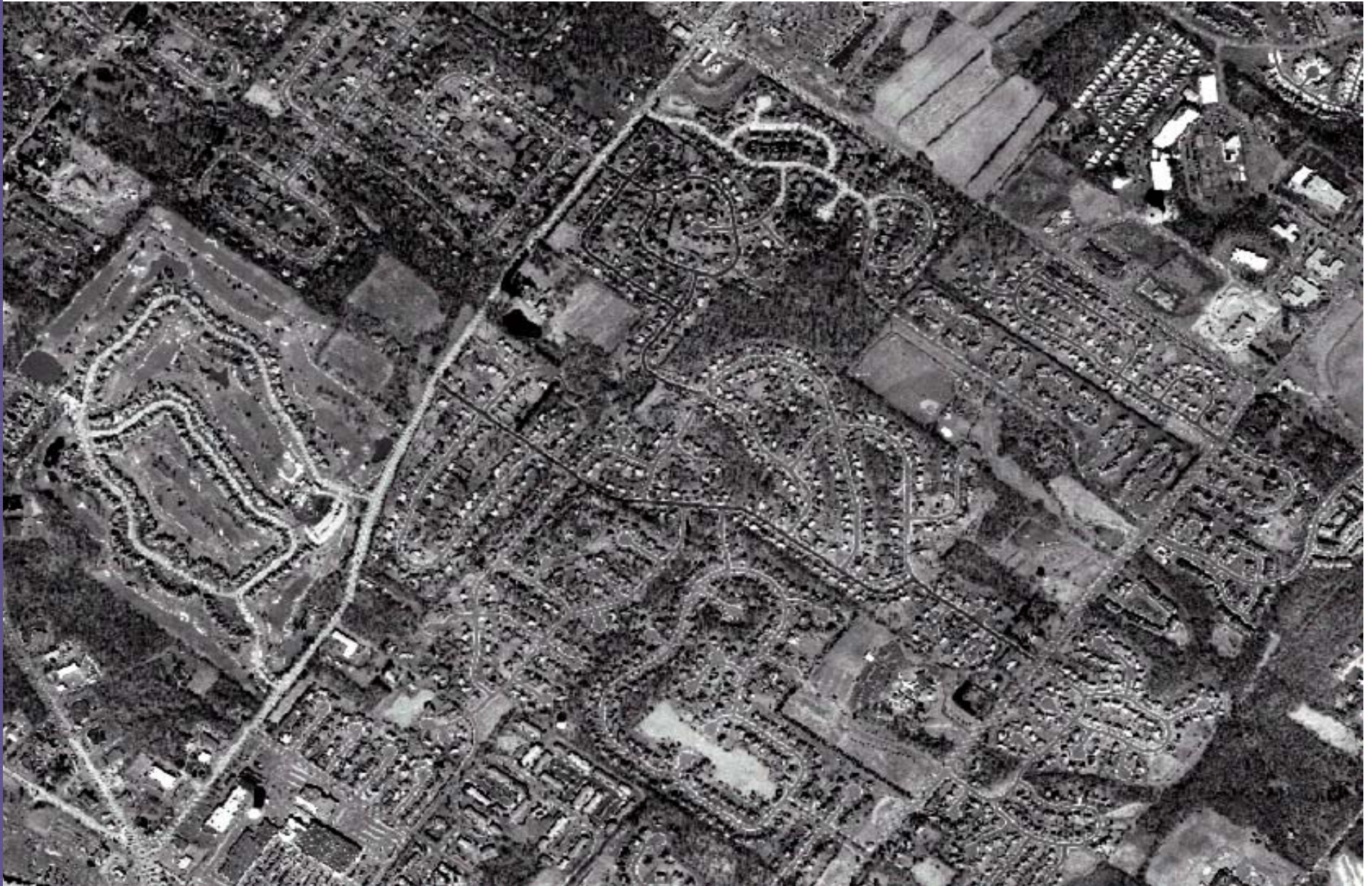
8. Suggestions/Comments: _____

Thank you for your help.

Montgomeryville – Circa 1985



Montgomeryville – Circa 2000



The Necessary Transition for the Post Oil Economy: Decrease Driving and Increase Rail Rider Miles



- Cars and trucks consume 50% of all crude oil consumed daily by the United States.
- Cars and trucks are overall the least efficient form of transportation.

Possible Alternatives

Existing Station

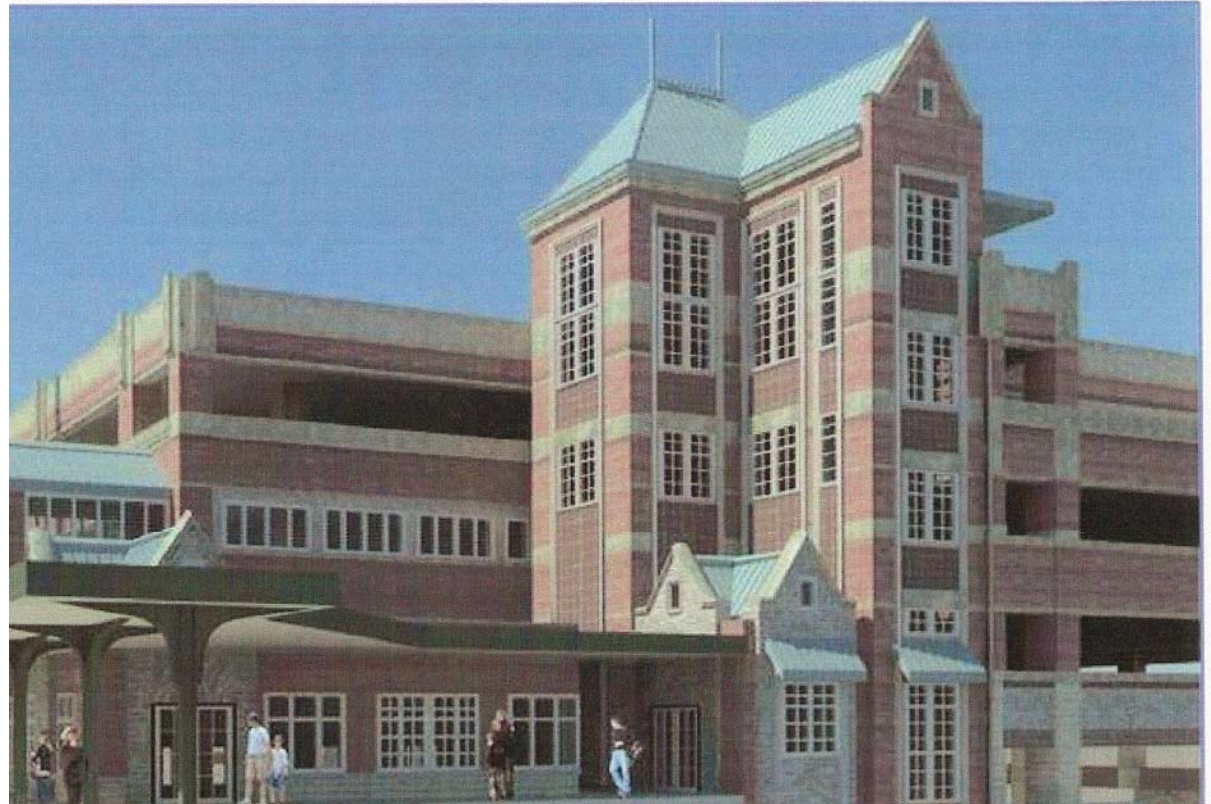
- Historic gem, functional waiting rm. & ticket office
- Center of the community
- Natural amenities
- Intimate surroundings
- Pedestrian environment
- Individual scale



Possible Alternatives

Proposed Garage

- Increase in vehicular traffic on small residential streets
- Increase in fossil fuels
- Massive imposing structure
- Magnet for crime
- Maintenance & appearance concerns
- Value engineering
- Large Institutional complex



Possible Alternatives



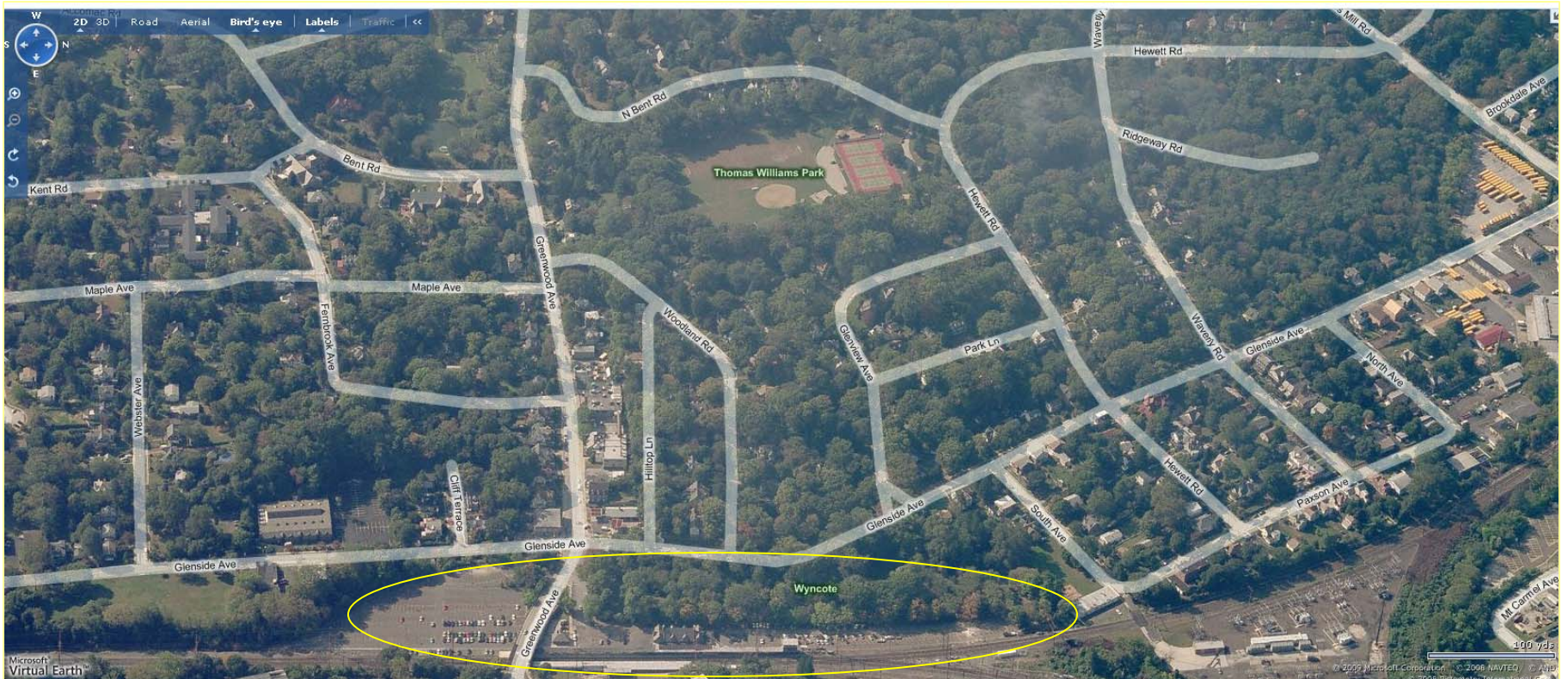
ALTERNATE SOLUTIONS STUDY

AERIAL PHOTO

Existing Parking Conditions

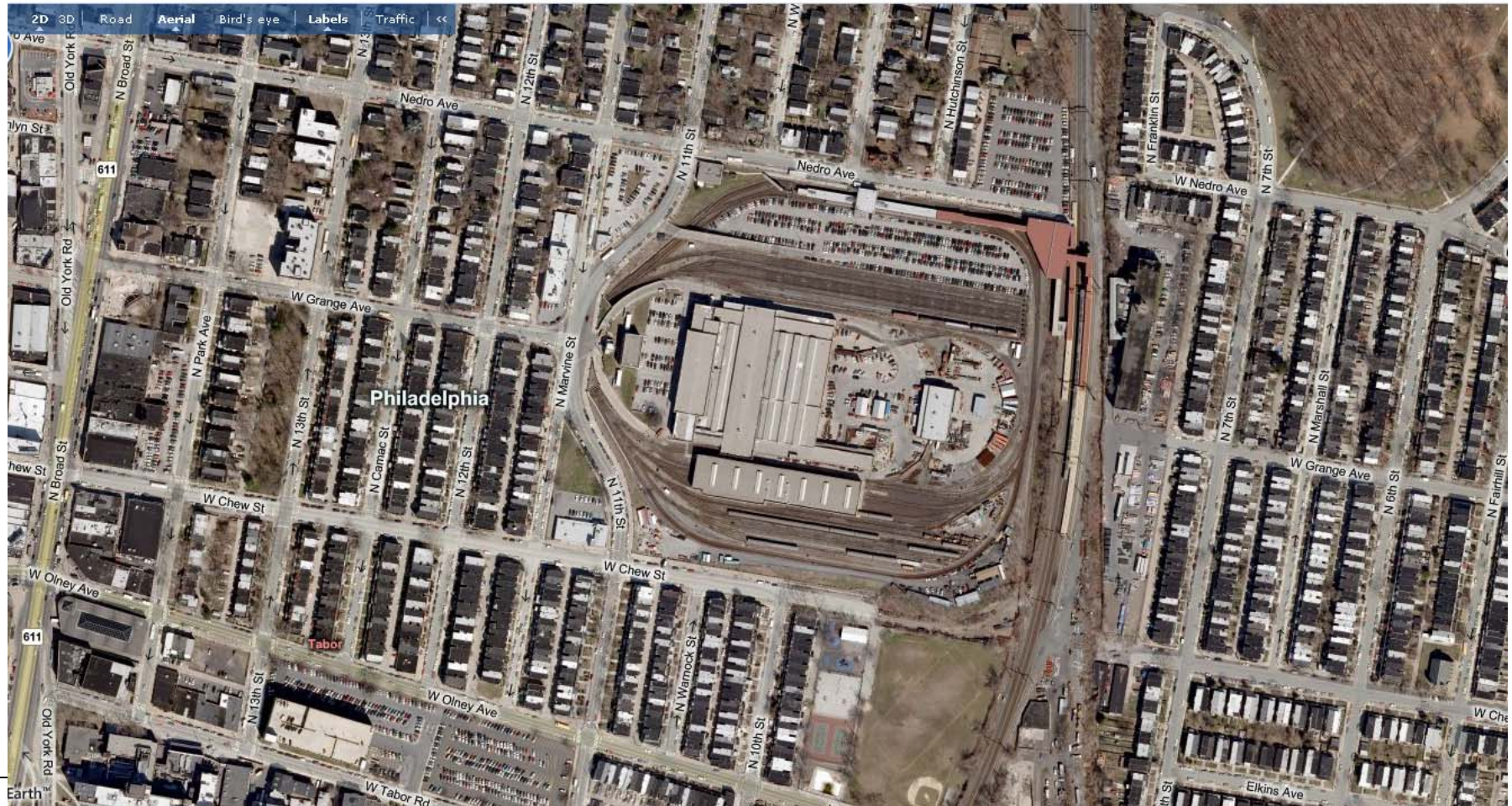
14

Possible Alternatives



WYNCOTE NEIGHBORHOOD SURROUNDING STATION

Possible Alternatives



FERN ROCK TRANSPORTATION CENTER

Possible Alternatives



NORRISTOWN TRANSPORTATION CENTER

Learn more about the

**Cheltenham Chamber of
Citizens**

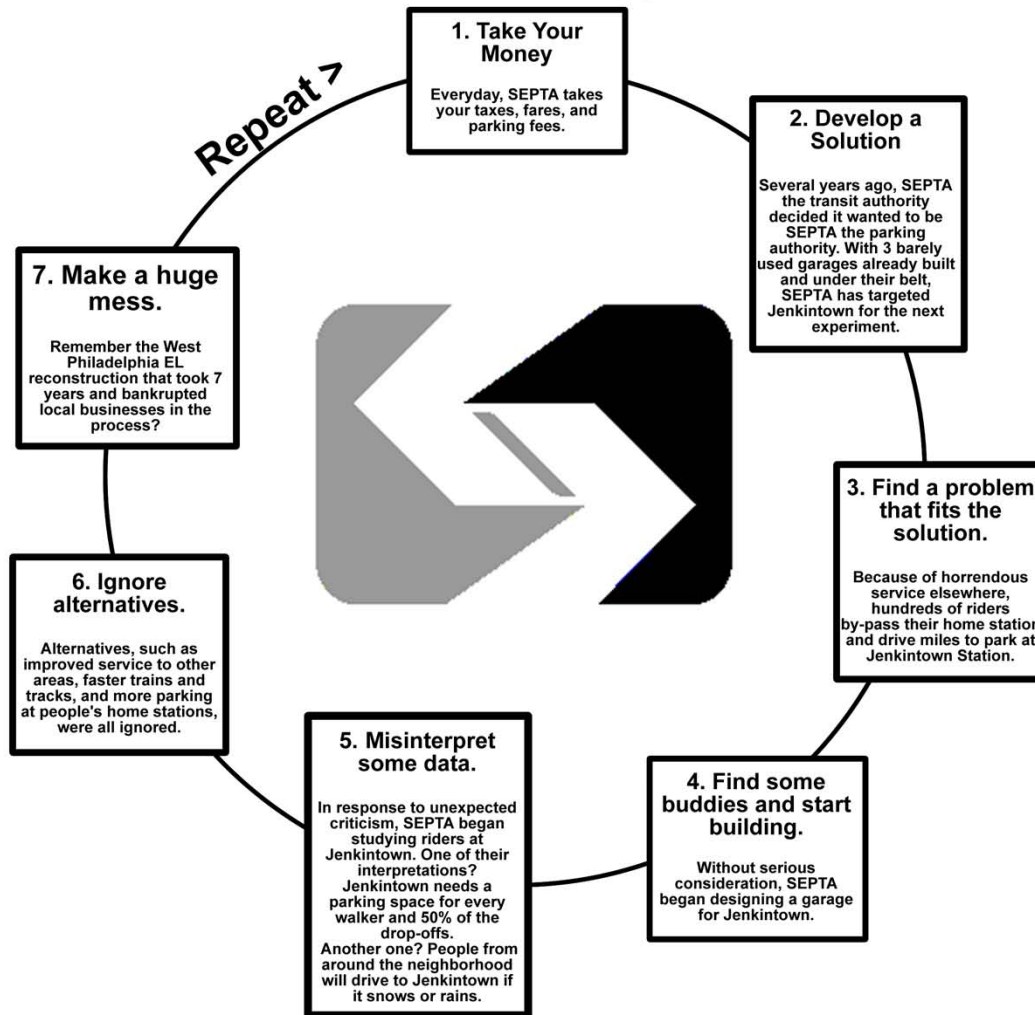
**A community organization
focused on local issues.**

For more information visit or to join our e-mail
list:

www.cheltenhamchamberofcitizens.com

Flyers for Meeting

How SEPTA Uses Your Money, in Seven Steps



Break the cycle. Ask SEPTA to do an honest study, and look at alternatives.

PARKING SPOTS FOR WALKERS?

SEPTA is now counting walkers in their parking demand study, in order to justify the need to spend \$50 million on garage spots for people who live somewhere else or drive invisible cars:

Question 6 sought to determine the mode of travel. Of those surveyed, 65 drove, 13 were dropped off and 41 walked. As with many of the Jenkintown-Wyncote commutershed population, the survey found a large number of walkers and drop-offs as a percentage of total AM peak ridership. **The high number of walkers and drop-offs indicates a significant latent parking demand potential.** As Melrose Park is not a constrained station many of these walkers would have ample parking options. However, with 130 of the total 185 spaces occupied it is possible that during winter periods a constrained parking situation could occur.

SEPTA JENKINTOWN-WYNCOTE STATION REGION
Commuter Preference and Parking Needs Study, p. 78.

Significant latent demand. That means we need a new garage for the people who chose to walk to the station but really want to drive. They can't drive because there's no parking. What about other stations? Well, let's see. SEPTA looked at Melrose Park, and also felt that everybody that walks there would rather drive. Except that Melrose Park still has plenty of parking:

walkers and drop-offs indicates a significant latent parking demand potential. As Melrose Park is not a constrained station many of these walkers would have ample parking options. **However, with 130 of the total 185 spaces occupied it is possible that during winter periods a constrained parking situation could occur.**

SEPTA JENKINTOWN-WYNCOTE STATION REGION
Commuter Preference and Parking Needs Study, p. 78.

Where are the cars, then, if walkers would rather drive? **It is possible**, as SEPTA suggests, that the cars only show up in the winter. Close enough for government work, right?

Maybe not. SEPTA would know this if they had visited the station after the last snowfall. The extra cars never came. Why? Perhaps because they didn't plow on time? Or maybe because most people own umbrellas and jackets? You decide.

Ask SEPTA if they've EVER actually observed more cars being parked in the winter, or if they are just making this up. Let's not waste our transit funds on invisible cars.

Only 5 Miles!

Five miles. That's what SEPTA considers "local" when it comes to Regional Rail stations. They'll tell us that most people using Jenkintown come from within a 5 mile radius. That's pretty good, they tell us. In fact, it would be even better if more people came to Jenkintown, so they'll build a garage to encourage them.

How big is a 5 mile radius, anyway? Well...

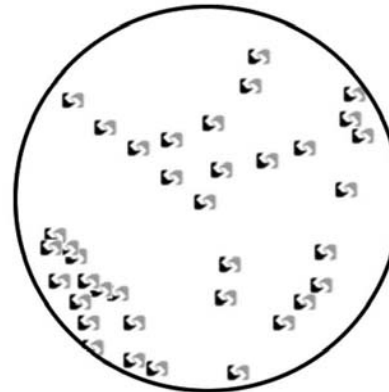


3½!

In a 5 mile radius, you can fit 3½ Manhattan Islands! Or, if you prefer, just under 4 Bermudas.

How many stations are there in a 5 mile radius of Jenkintown?

35 Stations!



Almost **700,000** people live in the 5 mile radius around Jenkintown-Wyncote Station. That's equivalent to:

- 20% of Montgomery County + 20% of Philadelphia
- 1 in 6 Pennsylvanians!
- 1 in 1000 Americans!
- The entire state of Wyoming!

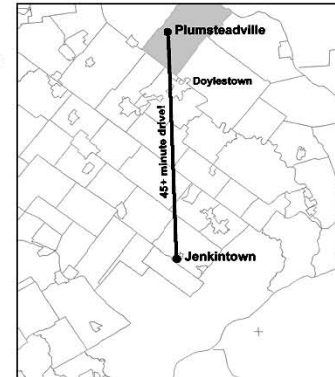
Now, ask yourself:

Should all these people really be using one station?

PLUMSTEADVILLE?

What is Plumsteadville?

Plumsteadville is just north of Doylestown, 22-1/2 miles from Jenkintown-Wyncote. While it is not heavily populated, it is a high growth area.



Who Cares?

SEPTA believes that people in this area are driving to Jenkintown and that growth in this area justifies two large multilevel parking garages, one in Jenkintown-Wyncote and one in Glenside:

most transit users within this population. However, due to the service characteristics and ridership convenience associated with the Jenkintown-Wyncote station, some exurban and rural residents will continue to make a longer commute to these stations rather than use their most local station as shown by the large commutershed. This increased demand from remote areas is

EPTA Commuter Preference and Parking Needs Study, p.28

Why are they driving this far?

Don't they have their own station?

Good questions. SEPTA studied parking patterns at Jenkintown but did not look at the root causes of this long haul driving pattern. The nearest station to Plumsteadville is Doylestown, but Doylestown is too slow. Warminster is another good one, but it also has no parking. Ridiculously, Jenkintown is one of the best remaining options!

What should we do?

Ask SEPTA to study alternatives to a garage in Jenkintown. Ask them to look at track and schedule improvements to Doylestown and Warminster. Ask them to consider Newtown, Quakertown, and New Hope trains as options.

***Your money. Your neighborhood.
Let them know it.***

Learn more about the

**Cheltenham Chamber of
Citizens**

**A community organization
focused on local issues.**

For more information visit or to join our e-mail
list:

www.cheltenhamchamberofcitizens.com

COMMENTS FROM JENNIE BRANTNER REGARDING SEPTA REPORT
JANUARY 2010

SEPTA biases the data: "two methods were used to estimate the existing parking demand for a constrained station, and ultimately parking demand was identified by selecting **the greater calculated demand of the two methods [my bold]...**"

SEPTA used different formulas to extrapolate "demand" depending upon whether they classified a station as "constrained" or "unconstrained" with those designated as "constrained" having leading to higher extrapolations of future demand. One of the methodologies defines "constrained" as a "greater than 75-percent plus a waiting list for parking permits." This would appear to mean that anytime 150 out of 200 spaces are filled and there is even one person on a permit waiting list, it could get the "constrained" designation. Additionally, this definition of "constrained" double dips because the person requesting a parking permit is probably currently counted as part of the 75% currently using the lot.

LETTER OF COMMENT TO CHELTENHAM BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

RE: SEPTA PRESENTATION OF JANUARY 13, 2010

Lady and Gentlemen,

Two weeks ago you heard SEPTA's latest plan - the so-called 30% plan - to build a huge, intrusive parking garage at the Jenkintown-Wyncote (J-W) commuter station. You also heard the response from the Cheltenham Chamber of Citizens (CCC) and a number of other residents. The arguments against this garage and SEPTA's rationale and justification for it continue to be persuasive.

I won't take time in this letter to reiterate the many reasons why this garage violates public policy, fails to deal with regional issues, and is bad news for Cheltenham Township. But I hope that by now you truly grasp the extent and depth of the animosity over this ill-conceived project.

There are, however, three aspects of this ongoing debate that I want to discuss with you:

1 As Art Haywood stated at the Jan 13 meeting, some township residents *want* this garage. However, I'm willing to bet that it's not a garage per se they want. Like everyone else up and down the SEPTA lines *they just want available parking at their own local station*. And why can't they find spaces at J-W? Because over half of all the spaces are taken up by commuters who are compelled by SEPTA's indifference and inaction to drive here from many miles away. If those distant drivers could park at or much closer to their local stations, our own people would have plenty of space without any garage! That's the message you should expound to those among us who say they want the garage. Help them to see that a garage is not the answer to their inability to park at J-W.

2 Many reasons have been cited as to why the proposed garage is a bad idea, not just for the immediate Wyncote neighborhood, but for all of Cheltenham Township. Now I suppose there *could* be some benefits, although I can't think of any way the township would be better off. You, on the other hand, as our leaders, may have insight and privileged knowledge that exposes potential benefits. If so, it is incumbent on you to explain, factually and dispassionately, exactly how the township might be a better place to live and work if SEPTA's current plan were to be implemented. Are there economic benefits? Will our infrastructure improve in some way? How else might the township come out ahead? I don't expect you to weigh any such benefits against the negatives or indicate how you might vote someday. I just want to know if you think there *are* any advantages to this garage and what they are so they can be debated openly and fairly. You owe us that much.

3 At a meeting in SEPTA offices on Jan 15, representatives from Bucks County brilliantly and convincingly made the case for restoring the long dormant R8 line to Newtown. Even ranking SEPTA personnel sort of conceded (grudgingly) that the R8 and the J-W garage should not be separate issues. It is abundantly clear that commuters who

could and would take the R8 have been forced to drive to stations on the R2 (Warminster) and R3 (West Trenton) lines or to J-W, taking up spaces everywhere that should go to the local residents. The large population growth in the R8 corridor since that line was abandoned has significantly compounded the parking problem at J-W *and* the region as a whole, a fact that SEPTA avoids acknowledging.

The many \$millions that SEPTA plans to spend on a garage here would be far better spent reviving R8, and Cheltenham Township should emphatically advocate for its restoration. It is a *regional* solution in which everybody wins.

For the record, I have owned and lived at 105 Hewett Road in Wyncote for nearly 46 years.

Sincerely, Ronald C Dunbar