

1.21 Transportation

Transportation facilities in Watershed Management Area 4 are shown on Plate 1.21.1. WMA 4 is the most developed of the three Passaic Basin watersheds, with more urban areas. Many WMA 4 residents commute to New York City and other urban areas for work.

Interstates passing through WMA 4 include Routes 287, 87, 280 and 95. Other major roads include the Garden State Parkway, and Routes 3, 17, 19, 20, 21, 23, 46, 208 and 444. There are many railroad and bus lines through WMA 4. The only airport is the Essex County Airport in Fairfield.

Tables 1.21.1 and 1.21.2 show United States Census data from 1990 regarding type and length of commute in Watershed Management Area 4.

Table 1.21.1 - Commuting Patterns – WMA 4

By number of persons

	Drive Alone	Carpool	Public Transit	Work at Home
New Jersey	368,781	70,871	57,444	9,805
New York	9,949	1,963	1,523	445
Total	378,730	72,834	58,967	10,250
% of Total	72.7%	14.0%	11.3%	2.0%

Table 1.21.2 - Commute Length – WMA4

By number of persons

	Less than 15 minutes	15 - 29 min	30 - 44 min	Over 44 minutes
New Jersey	155,662	201,951	97,919	73,845
New York	4,026	4,139	2,219	3,534
Total	159,688	206,090	100,138	77,379
% of Total	29.4%	38.0%	18.4%	14.2%

As indicated above, more than 70% of the commuters drive alone in their automobile, but only about 30% of the commuters have a commute length of more than 30 minutes. The density and diversity of development in WMA 4 result in many workers being reasonably near their place of employment. Improvements in public transportation would reduce the number of cars commuting and reduce the associated environmental effects and congestion. However, improvements in public transportation to serve the less densely populated areas may also make the areas more attractive to additional people and result in additional pressures for development. Historic trends indicate that development tends to follow improved transportation, whether improved highways, rail service, or other public transportation. Improved public transportation to serve potentially growing areas can be a controversial issue.