



# NICE MINI TITLE VI SERVICE EQUITY ANALYSIS

JANUARY 2023



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## INTRODUCTION

Nassau Inter-County Express (NICE) is an agency that is committed to the service planning and operation of a transit system that provides equally accessible and adequate transit services to all residents of Nassau County, with no regard to race, color or national origin as governed under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. As a recipient of federal funding from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), NICE has a duty to provide transit services that are equitable to all, allow equal opportunities for residents to participate in service planning, and ensure that preventative measures are in place to prevent discrimination to any person that uses the system.

NICE is conducting a Title VI Service Equity Analysis for the implementation of a new micro-transit service, NICE Mini, in south shore area of Nassau County, from Lynbrook-East Rockaway to Freeport-Merrick. NICE Mini was designed to provide on-demand service in areas that currently do not have service, and connect them to the larger network for increased mobility at the same price as fixed-route service. This report was prepared in accordance with the requirements specified in the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Circular 4702.1B, "Title VI Requirements and Guidelines for Federal Transit Administration Recipients," dated October 1, 2012.

## BACKGROUND

Nassau Inter-County Express (NICE), operated by Transdev Service Inc., is comprised of over 700 employees that work together in order to provide public transit services to 1.3 million residents of Nassau County.

NICE operates two modes of public transportation in Nassau County -- fixed-route and paratransit services. With a fleet of approximately 277 fixed-route vehicles and 108 paratransit vehicles, NICE operates 38 fixed routes and paratransit service in a suburban/urban service area that expands from Nassau County into Queens County in the west, and Suffolk County in the east. NICE currently operates approximately 8.3 million fixed route revenue miles per year at 21.15 passengers per hour and \$8.04 cost per unlinked trip, and provides approximately 18.3 million passenger trips annually. With a robust transit system that focuses heavily on a personable customer experience for all, NICE riders have the flexibility to travel an efficient system that provides high frequency service heavily influenced by their input.

## SERVICE EQUITY ANALYSIS

In compliance with Title VI, NICE is required to complete a service equity analysis in order to evaluate whether the implementation of a major service change will present any potential disparate impacts or disproportionate burdens on minority and/or low income populations within the service area. This section will address the major service change threshold as defined by NICE, community outreach and public participation, the proposed service change, the methodology, and the impact analysis of proposed service change.

## MAJOR SERVICE CHANGE POLICY

All major increases or decreases in transit service are subject to a Title VI Service Equity Analysis prior to approval of the service change. A Title VI Equity Analysis completed for a major service change must be presented to the Bus Transit Committee for its consideration and included in the NICE Title VI Program with a record of action taken by the BTC.

A major service change is defined as outlined in the table below:

Service Change	Major Service Change Threshold
Revenue Miles	25% or more increase or reduction (<10 total trips - 50% or more)
Service Hours	25% or more increase or reduction (<10 total trips - 50% or more)
Short- or Limited-Term Service	Introduction or discontinuation of short-term service >12 months

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

NICE has developed a public participation plan (PPP) to ensure that prior to implementing adjustments to fares, services and routes of the NICE Transit System, appropriate public comment is solicited and considered in accordance with the terms of the Fixed Route Bus and Paratransit Operation, Management and License Agreement (Operating Agreement) and applicable federal, state and local law. This PPP also identifies strategies and processes to ensure effective public and stakeholder notice and participation, as appropriate, in NICE transportation planning activities, and in the authorized functions of the Transit Committee established pursuant to the Operating Agreement and Local Law 10-2011 (Local Law).

NICE's public participation plan included community outreach events, social media promotion, print media in the form of hand-outs and car cards, how-to videos and news/radio media coverage<sup>1</sup>. Four community outreach meetings were scheduled in the proposed NICE Mini service area or by routes that transfer to the service area between May 2022 and October 2022. NICE educated the public on what micro-transit service is, how to use the service and how flexible NICE was to customizing the service to the needs of the Nassau residents. The meeting locations were chosen so that a diverse crowd of current and potential riders could easily access the meetings via NICE bus routes and/or by paratransit service. Meetings were also held at various times of the day, so that the opportunity to attend was available to all despite varying schedules of the attendees.

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix B for community outreach information.

### Summary Table of Community Outreach Locations

Location	Bus Routes	Date	Type	Limited English Proficiency
Freeport Public Library	n4	5/16/2022	Materials & Site Visit	Spanish
Freeport LIRR Station	n4, n19, n40/41, n43, n88	6/6/2022	Interview with News 12	Spanish
Port Washington Public Library	n23, PW Shuttle	6/8/2022	Materials & Site Visit	No
National Night Out	n70/71/72	8/2/2022	Materials & Site Visit	No
Roosevelt Public Library	n40/41, n43	10/6/2022	Materials & Site Visit	No
Freeport Recreational Center	n19	10/6/2022	Materials & Site Visit	Spanish
Oceanside Public Library	n15	10/20/2022	Materials & Site Visit	No

### LEP Considerations

In compliance with Federal Transit Administration Circular 4702.1B, dated October 1, 2012, which requires that Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964, Nassau Inter-County Express (NICE) is committed to taking reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to its transit services for persons who do not speak English as their primary language and/or who have limited ability to read, speak, write or understand English. The FTA refers to these persons as Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons.

As per a survey conducted by Mjach Designs in 2021 on the demographic characteristics and travel patterns of NICE riders, 41% of our riders self-identify as Hispanic/Latino, and 39% speak Spanish as the primary language of their household<sup>2</sup>. With a significant number of riders that primarily speak Spanish, it was important for NICE to have Spanish translation for all print materials and social media announcements regarding NICE Mini, as well as employees who speak fluent Spanish and are able to provide information for riders who are interested in using the service. French/Haitian Creole was the next most spoken language, where 4% of our riders speak French/Haitian Creole in their household as

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<sup>2</sup> See Appendix A for Rider Demographic Information.

the primary language. NICE also had employees able to translate information on NICE Mini for those potential riders as well. Timely interpretation for attendees who speak other languages were available free of cost upon request.

## Service Change Proposal

In June 2022, NICE release NICE Mini Line 1 as a pilot program, which is an on-demand rideshare service that services the south shore of Nassau County from Lynbrook-East Rockaway to Freeport-Merrick. NICE recognized that there was a lack of service south of Merrick Rd, creating a struggle for riders who need to travel the “last mile” home from the high frequency corridor in this part of the county. Riders can book a trip in the NICE Mini app on their phones, or call dispatch to book a trip over the phone. Riders can ride to/from mostly any address in the service area, but in some cases, may be directed to a Mini stop where there may be high traffic/pedestrian traffic. NICE Mini has the same fare structure as fixed route buses, and riders can even transfer to/from fixed-route as the NICE Mini Zone intersects with 11 fixed-route lines.

Since the release of NICE Mini Line 1, the service area boundaries have changed several times in response to riders who have submitted their input on how to make the service better for them. The initial hours of operation were Monday through Friday, 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, but have now been extended to 8:00 pm, as requested by riders. NICE is committed to improving the quality of NICE Mini so that customers see value in using it, and be able to expand into other areas of Nassau County.

Unlike other micro-transit models in the US, NICE created the service area to be more elongated in shape to shorten wait times and without duplication of any current fixed routes in this area so as to guarantee efficient service to an area that currently didn’t have, but needed. Since this is a brand new service that has been released as a 12-month pilot program, and NICE now wants to formally implement, NICE Mini Line 1 requires a service equity analysis.

## METHODOLOGY

The methodology of conducting a service equity analysis started with identifying data sources that would most useful in understanding the impact of introducing a new micro-transit service where service does not currently exist. NICE used demographics data from the US Census Bureau’s American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates and 2020 Census, as well as on-board survey data that was collected specifically for NICE in order to assess the rider characteristics and travel patterns through the system. The following steps were completed in conducting the Title VI Service Equity Analysis:

1. Identifying potential adverse effects of the new service implementation.
2. Calculating the percentage of minority and low-income riders in the entire towns/villages in which the NICE Mini Service area overlaps.
3. Calculating the percentage of minority and low-income riders in the NICE Mini Zone only, and then calculating the percentage deviation of the NICE Mini Line 1 Zone to the service area as a whole to assess whether there is a disparate impact or disproportionate burden as a result of the new service.

4. Comparing the difference in the revenue service hours before and after the release of NICE Mini Line 1 as a pilot program to show that the implementation of this service did not result in the reduction of service in any part of the NICE transit system.
5. Propose alternatives to the service change proposal should disparate impacts or disproportionate burdens exist, as the threshold for disparate impacts and disproportionate burdens are established as greater than 20 percent.

## RESULTS

The service equity analysis conducted by NICE determined that the service change proposal of implementing NICE Mini Line 1 will not cause disparate impacts or disproportionate burdens on minority and low-income populations. As a result, since there were no adverse effects of adding this new micro-transit service, finding alternatives to mitigate the impact on Title VI protected classes are not necessary.

### Disparate Impact Analysis Results

Service Change	Service Type	Adverse Effects	Description	Minority Percentage in Mini Zone	Minority Percentage in Service Area	Deviation	Disparate Impact? >20%
NICE Mini Line 1	Micro-transit	None	New Service	31.5%	40.8%	9.3%	NO

### Disproportionate Burden Analysis Results

Service Change	Service Type	Adverse Effects	Description	Low Income Percentage in Mini Zone	Low Income Percentage in Service Area	Deviation	Disproportionate Burden? >20%
NICE Mini Line 1	Micro-transit	None	New Service	7.0%	5.7%	1.3%	NO

## Revenue Service Comparison

NICE is committed to consistently improving service, and service additions are usually well-received by our customers as improvement. One important factor in creating this pilot service was ensuring that service on other routes was not sacrificed for our current/potential customers. Due to budgetary increases, NICE was able to launch NICE Mini Line 1, as well as slightly increase current revenue service on fixed-route. This is a major accomplishment for NICE, as it demonstrates an ability to plan for sustainability while maintaining frequent quality service for the rest of the NICE service area. NICE did a comparison between the vehicle requirements from before and after the launch of Mini Line 1, and the results showed that service remained generally unchanged. This comparison supports the fact that the introduction of this service does not present any adverse effects to customers.

222 Pick (After Mini Launch)

Line	Vehicle Rqmts
ELFX	1
MMCS	1
PWS	1
n1	6
n15	15
n16	4
n19	3
n20G	10
n20H	7
n21	4
n22	16
n23	5
n24	16
n25	8
n26	3
n27	5
n31	7
n32	7
n33	2
n35	6
n4	14
n40/41	9
n43	4
n48	3
n49	4
n54	3
n55	3
n57	1
n58	3
n6	13
n70	7
n71	4
n72	2
n78	1
n79	2
n80	2

122 Pick (Before Mini Launch)

Line	Vehicle Rqmts
ELFX	1
MMCS	1
PWS	1
n1	6
n15	14
n16	4
n19	3
n20G	12
n20H	6
n21	4
n22	13
n23	5
n24	16
n25	7
n26	3
n27	6
n31	7
n32	8
n33	2
n35	5
n4	15
n40/41	8
n43	4
n48	2
n49	3
n54	2
n55	3
n57	1
n58	3
n6	13
n70	9
n71	3
n72	2
n78	1
n79	2
n80	2

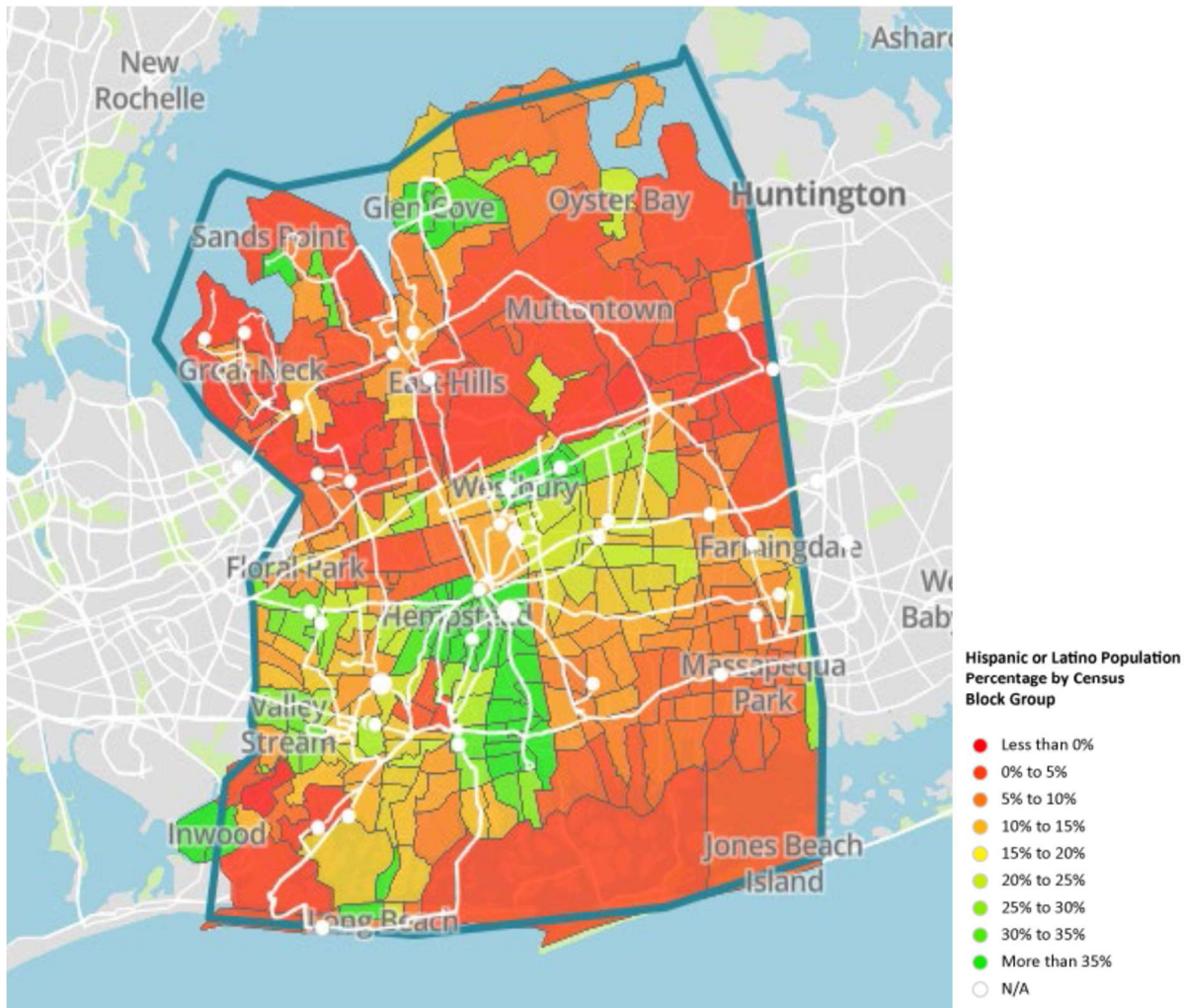
## RECOMMENDATIONS

After conducting the service equity analysis and analyzing the results, it is recommended that NICE proceeds with the implementation of NICE Mini Line 1 in June 2023 as planned. Since there will be no disparate impact on minority populations or disproportionate burdens on low-income populations, NICE is confident that NICE Mini will be an asset to the riders who rely on public transportation for freedom and independence. NICE believes that NICE Mini was the missing link for individuals who desired to use the system, but was unable to due to various reasons. The vision for the future of NICE is to provide mobility to all in the most efficient way possible without sacrificing the customer service experience.

# APPENDIX A: Demographic Information

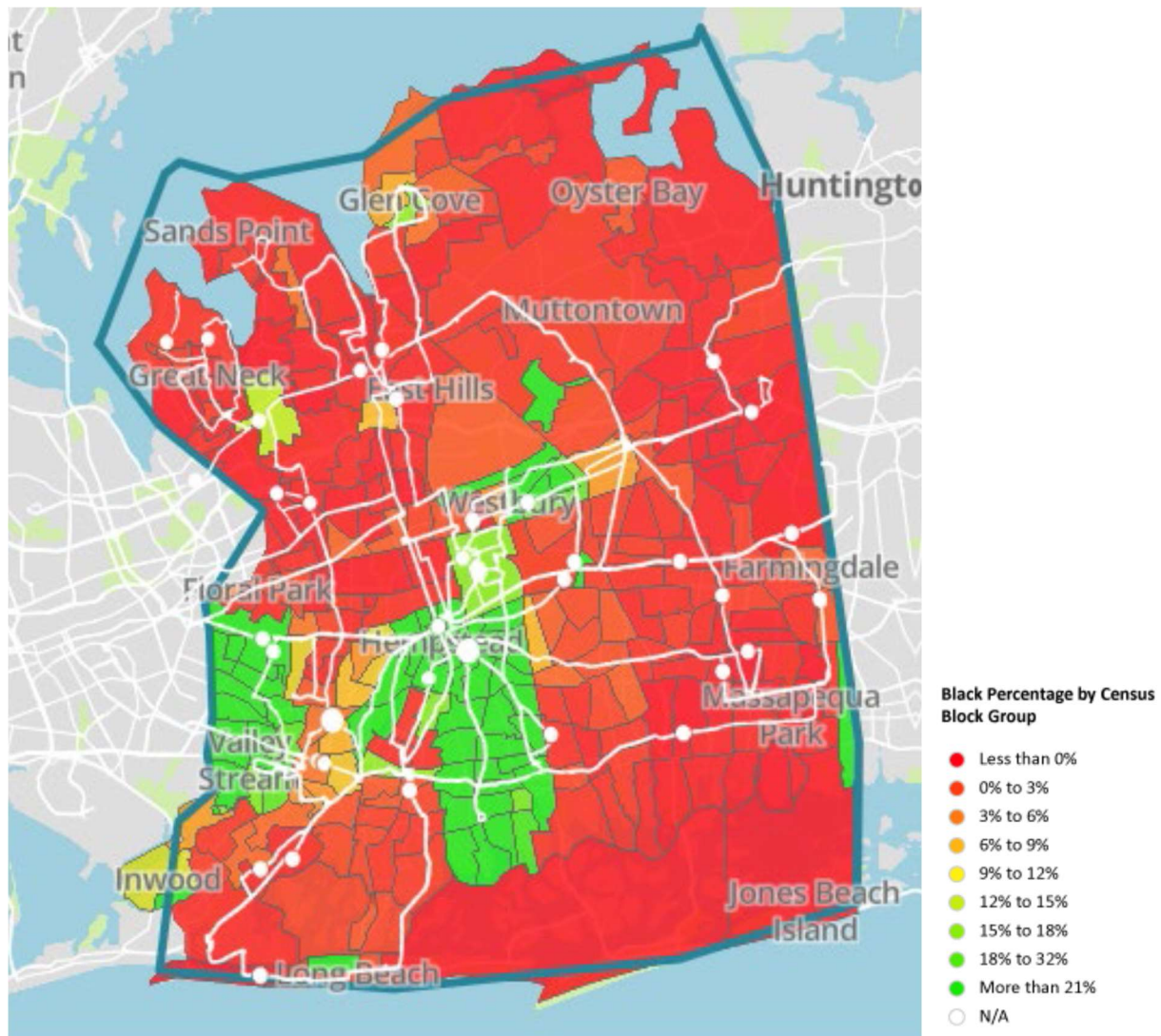
In November 2021, NICE contracted with Mjach Designs to conduct an onboard survey of its riders, so they can assess their demographic characteristics and their travel patterns in order to provide better service. The following maps and map analysis were cited from the final report:

## Hispanic/Latino Population in Nassau County



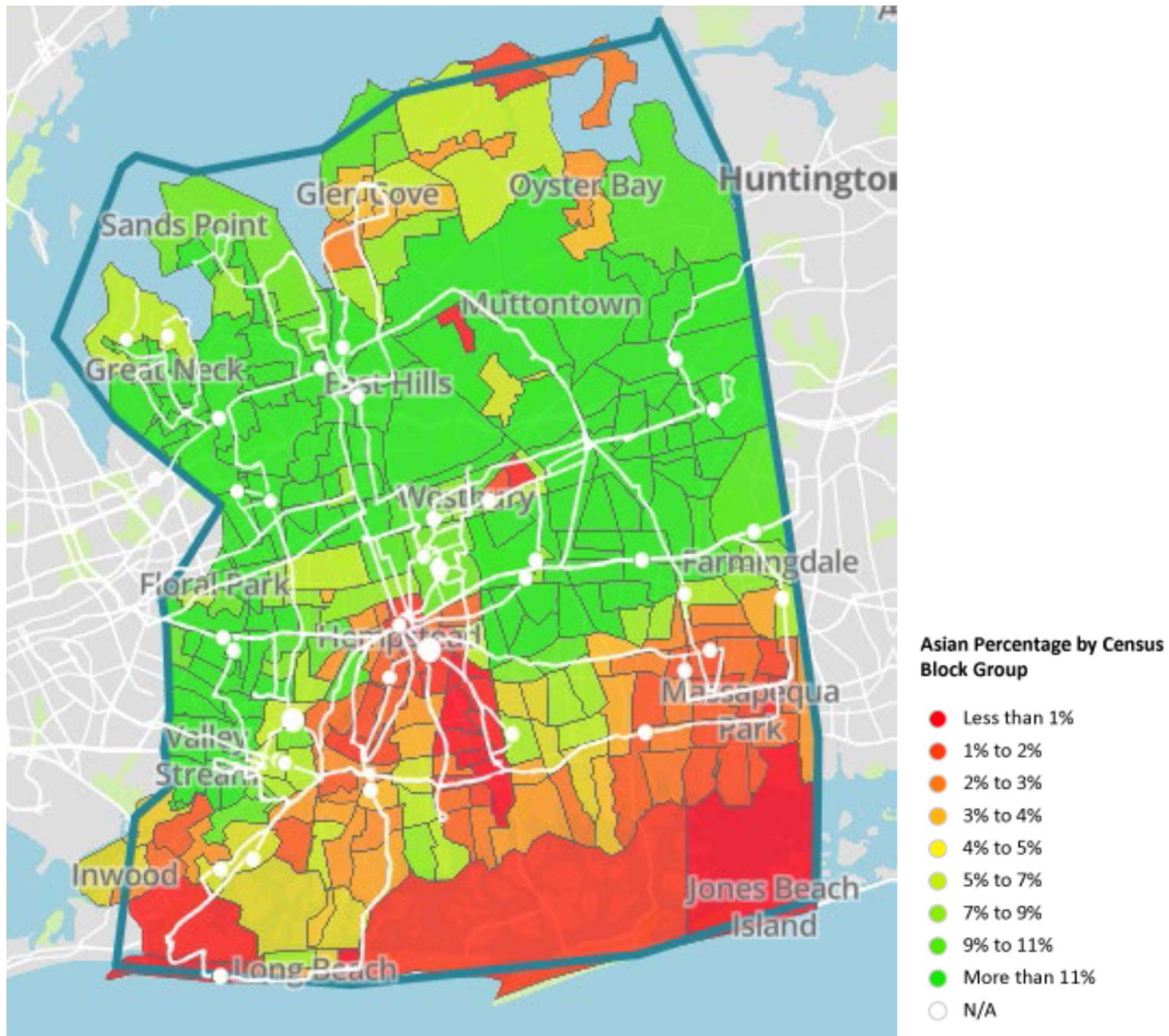
Hispanic/Latino populations are primarily clustered near the center and west portions of Nassau County. The heaviest concentrations (census block groups with Hispanic/Latino population greater than 35 percent of the total population) exist in or near Hempstead, Freeport, and Westbury. Modest concentrations (census block groups with Hispanic/Latino population of 30 to 35 percent of the total population) exist in or near Inwood and Long Beach.

## Black/African-American Population in Nassau County



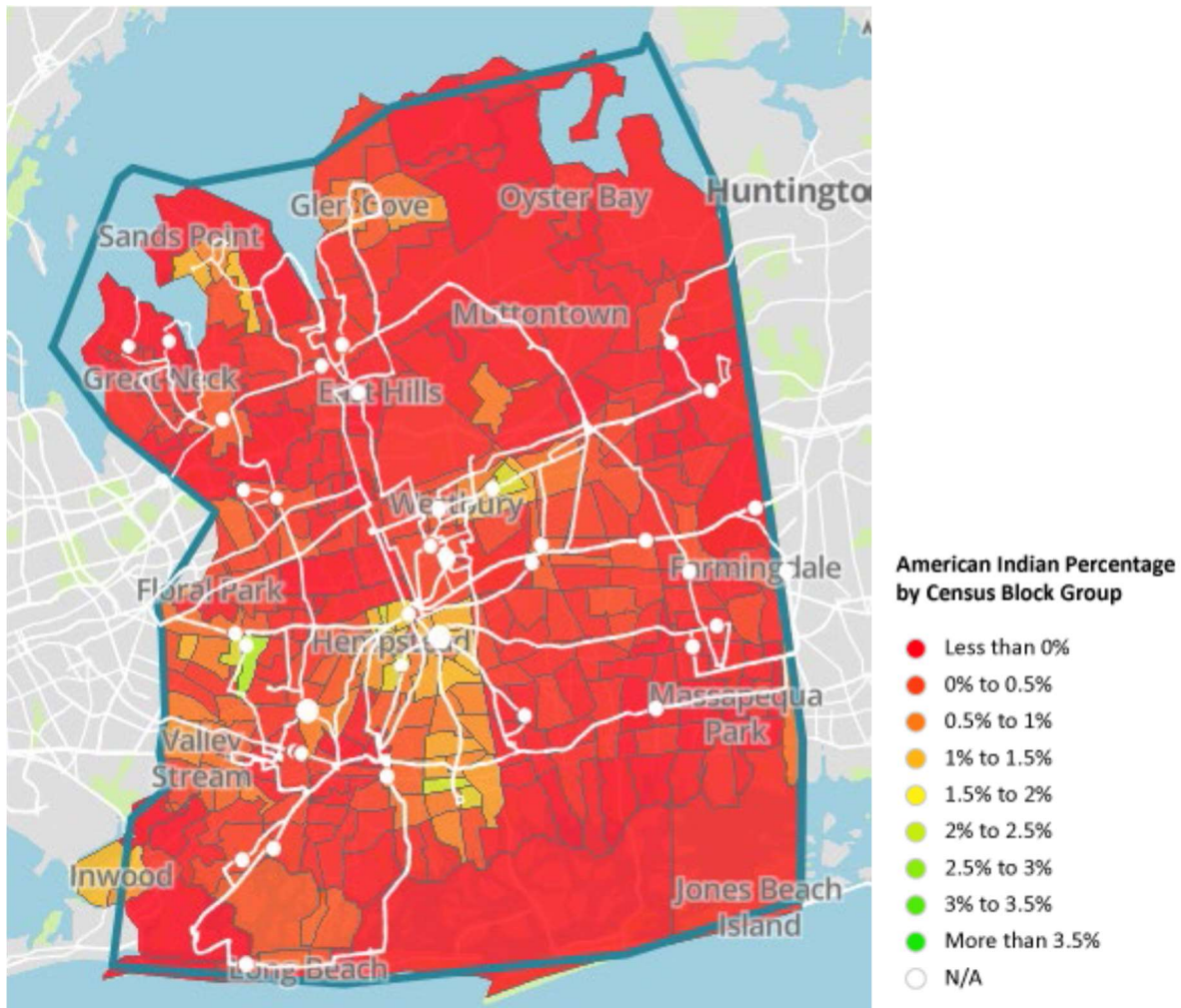
Black/African American populations are primarily concentrated in central Nassau County (Hempstead, Uniondale, Baldwin, Bay Colony, Freeport, and Westbury), far east Nassau County (East Massapequa) and far west Nassau County (Elmont). A modest Black/African American population resides in or near Lawrence and Long Beach.

## Asian Population in Nassau County



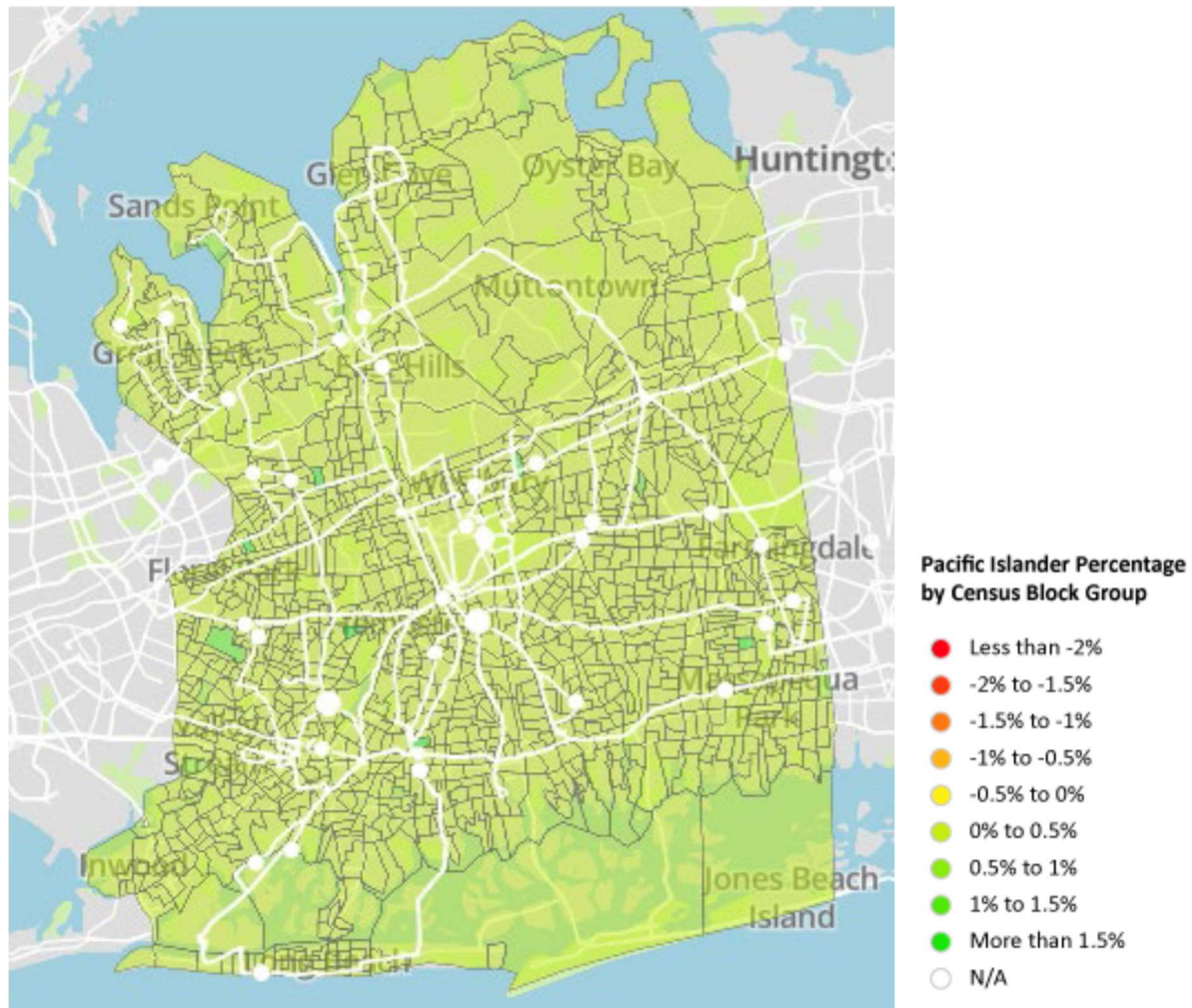
Asian populations are more spread out across Nassau County with high concentrations (census block groups with Asian population greater than 11 percent of the total population) throughout most of the county north of Hempstead and Massapequa Park. The Asian population is least concentrated in the southern portions of the county (census block groups with Asian population less than 3 percent of the total population) including Hempstead, Point Lookout, Long Beach, and Freeport.

### American Indian/Alaskan Native Population in Nassau County



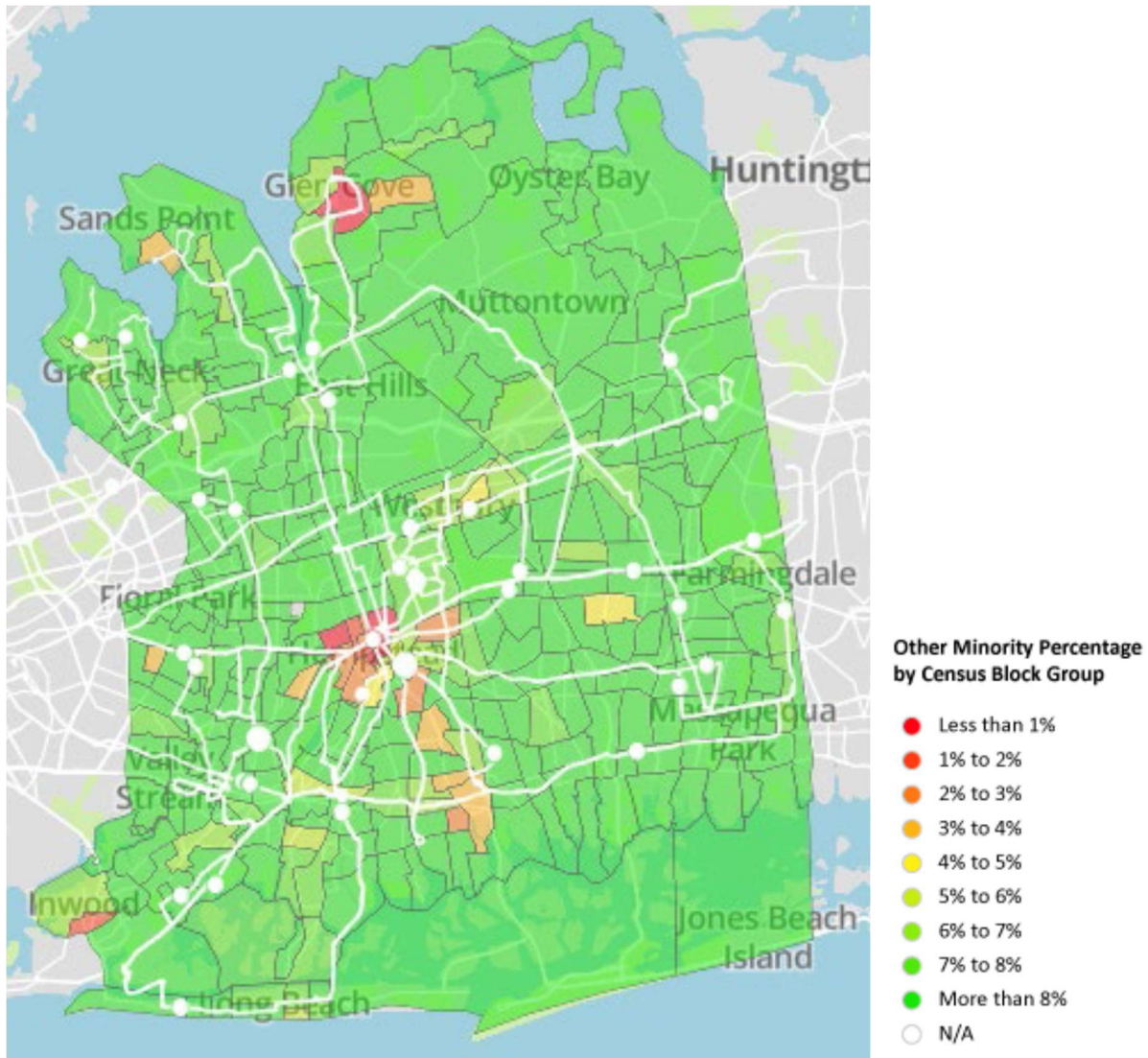
Concentrations of American Indian/Alaskan Native populations are modest within Nassau County. However, clusters do exist throughout the County, including near Franklin Square, Westbury, and Freeport.

## Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Population in Nassau County



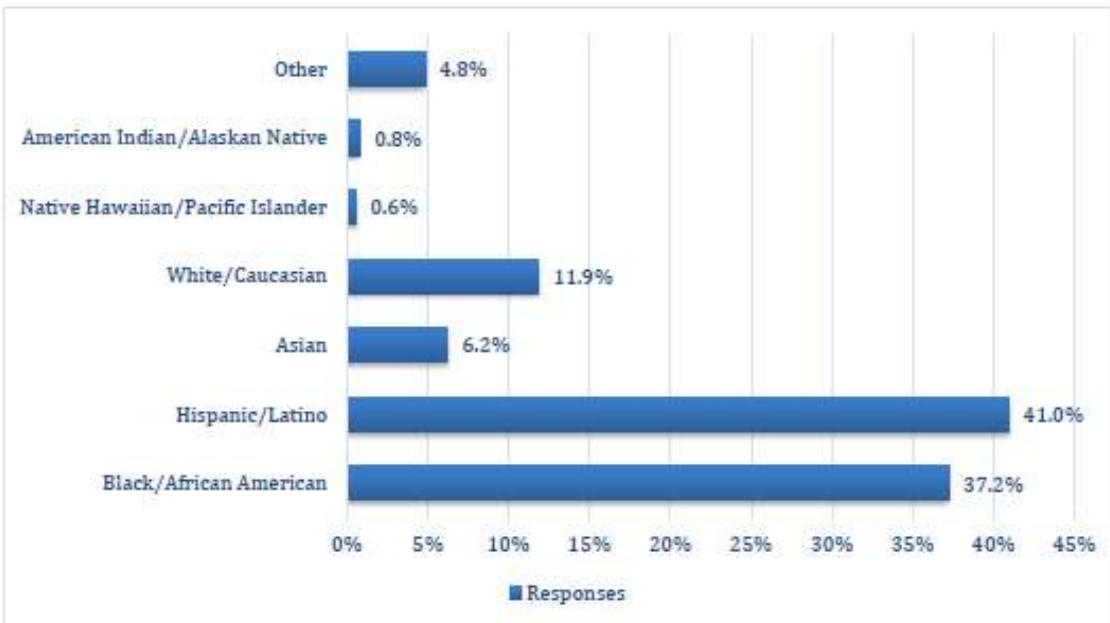
There are no significant concentrations of persons identifying themselves as being Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander in Nassau County. Small, low-density pockets (census block groups with Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander population greater than 1% of the total population) exist in the vicinity of Elmont and Freeport.

## Low-Income Population in Nassau County

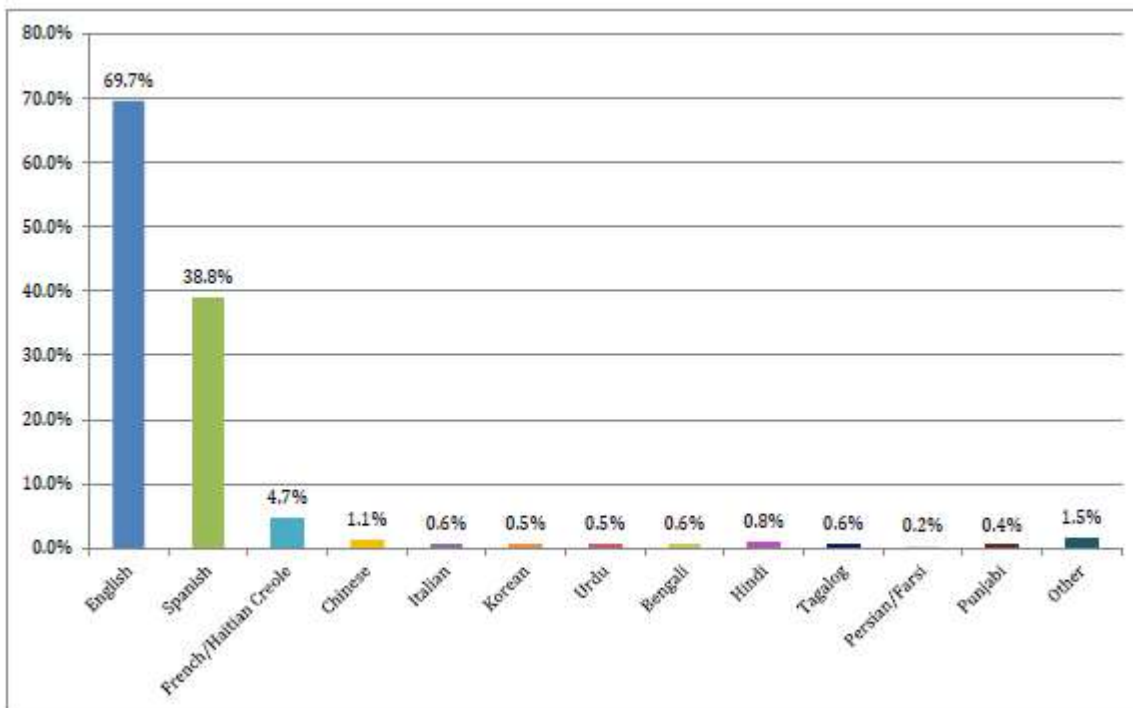


The image above presents the concentration of persons living below the federal poverty line (\$12,880/year – CY 2021) in Nassau County. Low-income residents are primarily clustered south of the Long Island Expressway. Key areas with a more dense concentration (census block groups with low-income population greater than 1,000/square mile) include Hempstead, Freeport, Elmont, and Long Beach. There are several modest concentrations near Glen Cove and Great Neck as well.

## Rider Ethnicity



## Primary Languages Spoken at Home by Riders



# APPENDIX B: Public Participation Plan

## Educational Outreach (Print Materials)

- Car Cards: Advertisement inside of the buses
- Signs: Placed at physical bus stop locations in the Mini Zone
- Hand-outs: Operators and Road Supervisors handed them out to riders at the terminals
- Full-size Pop-Up Posters

## Community Outreach Events

- Freeport Public Library, Freeport
- Port Washington Public Library, Port Washington
- National Night Out, Bethpage
- Oceanside Public Library, Oceanside

## Social Media Outreach

- Websites: posted advertisement on NICE's main website (nicebus.com) and created another website dedicated only to NICE Mini (ridemini.com)
- Facebook: Posted on Facebook, as well as posted customer testimonials about the service quality
- Instagram: Created posts for advertisement

## News Media & Advertisements

- Press Release: announced NICE Mini pilot launch and showed interviews with current riders
- Newspaper Advertisements
- Promotional Video on how to use NICE Mini



Port Washington Library

Port Washington

June 2022



National Night Out

Bethpage

August 2022

# NICE Mini Hand Outs (English/Spanish)



**nice mini**  
MINI ES UN BAJO DEMANDA  
SERVICIO DE VIAJE COMPARTIDO

**¡EXCELENTE MANERA DE IR  
Y VENIR DE LA ESCUELA  
EN CUALQUIER LUGAR  
DENTRO DE NUESTRA  
MINI ZONA!**

**DISPONIBLE  
LUNES-VIERNES**



**TARIFAS:**

- Tarifa Completa  
Solo De Ida..... **\$2.75**
- Tarifa Para Personas Mayores  
Solo De Ida..... **\$1.35**
- Tarifa Para Personas Con Discapacidad  
Solo De Ida..... **\$1.35**

**PAGO DE TARIFA**

- Monedas (NO DOLLAR BILLS)
- MetroCard
- Paper or MetroCard Transferir
- NICEMini aplicación
- GoMobile aplicación (CANNOT BE USED ON A MTA BUSES/SUBWAYS)

**\*\*ONE WAY FARE INCLUDES  
2 FREE TRANSFERS WITHIN TWO (2) HOURS\*\***



**nice mini**  
MINI IS AN ON-DEMAND  
RIDESHARE SERVICE.

**GREAT WAY TO GET AROUND  
THE SOUTH SHORE  
RIDE ANYWHERE  
WITHIN OUR  
MINI ZONE!**

**AVAILABLE  
MONDAY-FRIDAY**



**FARES:**

- One way Full Fare..... **\$2.75**
- One way Senior Fare..... **\$1.35**
- One way Disabled Fare..... **\$1.35**

**FARE PAYMENT**

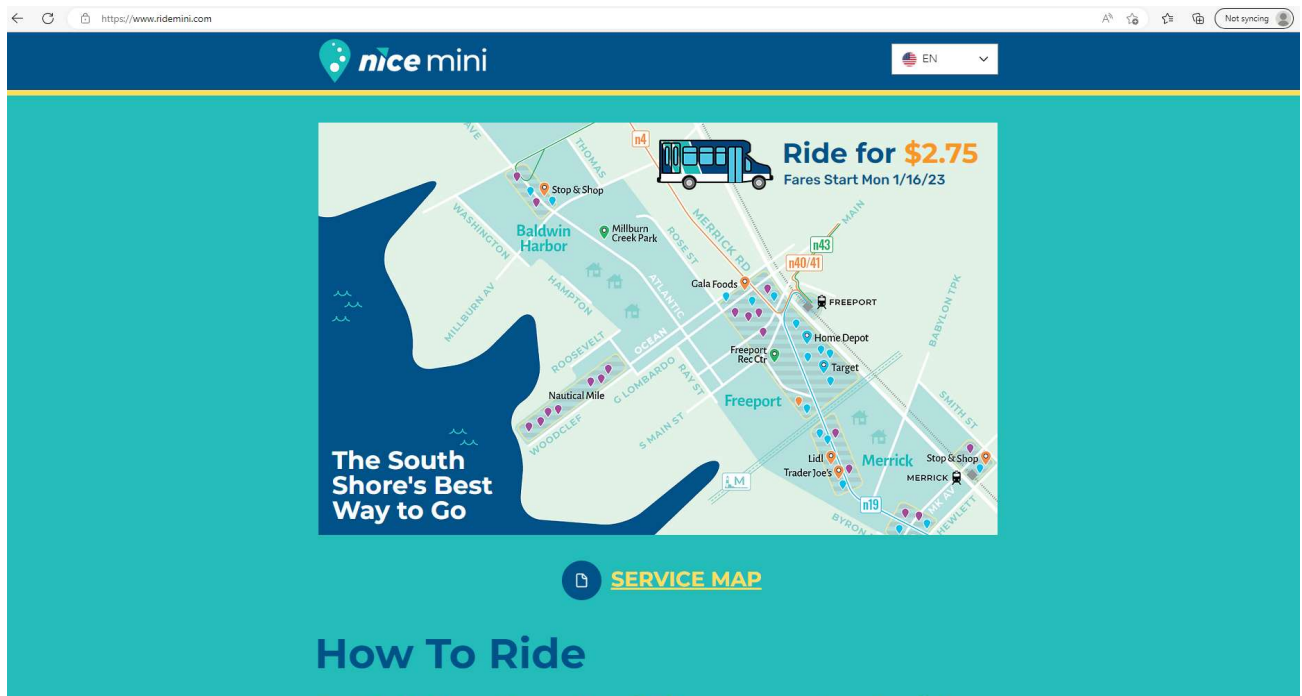
- Coins (NO DOLLAR BILLS)
- MetroCard
- Paper or MetroCard Transfer
- NICEMini app
- GoMobile app (CANNOT BE USED ON A MTA BUSES/SUBWAYS)

**\*\*ONE WAY FARE INCLUDES  
2 FREE TRANSFERS WITHIN TWO (2) HOURS\*\***

## Website Advertisement (nicebus.com)



## Website Advertisement (ridemini.com)



## NICE Mini Service Map



## Advertisement/Customer Testimonial on Facebook

**NICE Mini is at Lazy Lobster.**  
July 18, 2022 · East Rockaway, NY · 🌐

NICE Mini is the way to go on the South Shore!

We received this wonderful letter from Mini Rider Rose and her Husband:

"Thank you sooo much to the person/people who came up with this service! We love it! It's given my wheelchair bound husband (and me) freedom to travel outside our home. He was recently approved for AbleRide as well (and we equally appreciate this service) but nice mini has been a God send I cannot stop talking about. Thank you thank you! And the bus drivers have been angels. 🙏❤️"

Rose and her Husband use Mini to go shopping and to eat at an East RockawAy favorite hot spot, the Lazy Lobster. Mini is convenient, easy to use, affordable....and unlike taxis, Uber and Lyft... ACCESSIBLE to those who use mobility devices.

So get out there and explore the South Shore this week with Mini....try it for free!

Learn more at [www.ridemini.com](http://www.ridemini.com)




**NICE Mini**  
11m · 🌐

Are you tired of surge pricing? Looking for an affordable alternative to Uber, Lyft and taxis? A new way to rideshare in Nassau is on the way !

Launching this June, find out more at [www.ridemini.com](http://www.ridemini.com)

[#freeporntny](#) [#lynbrookny](#) [#eastrockawayny](#)



Launching in June 2022, MINI is an on-demand rideshare system that extends the NICE network with frequent, convenient service to the places you want to go.

News 12 Media Coverage (Freeport, NY)

