



## NY 443/Delaware Avenue from Elsmere Avenue to the Normanskill Bridge Summary of Key Findings: Existing Conditions Report – January 2017

- ✓ NY 443/Delaware Avenue in the Town of Bethlehem is owned and maintained by New York State. In general, it is a four-lane roadway 48 feet wide, with two 11-foot wide travel lanes in each direction, one-foot wide shoulders, and two-foot wide striping in the center. The roadway widens in the central part of the study area near Delaware Plaza and provides a 5-lane cross section (60 feet wide), and transitions on both ends to provide a two-lane cross section entering the Delmar hamlet on the west, and the City of Albany to the east. The roadway right-of-way is typically 66 feet wide; 90 feet wide near the Delaware Plaza, and variable width approaching the Normanskill bridge.
- ✓ As an urban minor arterial in a Commercial Hamlet District, Delaware Avenue serves several different functions. The roadway provides access to adjacent residential neighborhood streets and residences, businesses and a school, as well as serving as a multi-modal commuting route between the Town of Bethlehem and the City of Albany and activities elsewhere in the region.
- ✓ Delaware Avenue from Elsmere Avenue to Delaware Plaza carries about 18,300 vehicles on an average weekday. Daily traffic volumes between Delaware Plaza and the Normanskill Bridge are lower at approximately 15,600 vehicles. The amount of motor vehicle traffic along Delaware Avenue has remained relatively the same over the last 30 years.
- ✓ CDTA's bus route 18 travels the study area providing service between Slingerlands and downtown Albany with most frequent service provided during the evening commute. There are 7 bus stops in each direction within the 1.3 mile long study area. Route 18 is considered a trunk route with total ridership of over 449,700 passengers in 2015/16. Transit service is an asset to the corridor by providing an alternative to driving and improving mobility for those who cannot drive or without access to a car.
- ✓ Delaware Avenue serves current motor vehicle traffic fairly well. The level-of-service (LOS) analysis focuses on the PM Peak Hour and indicates that:
  - ✓ Traffic operates below capacity for the mainline sections.
  - ✓ Both signalized intersections currently operate at LOS C overall (approximately 25 seconds of average delay).
  - ✓ Average delays from the unsignalized side streets are also primarily LOS C.
  - ✓ Driveways operate similarly to unsignalized side streets and are generally LOS C/D (LOS D = 26 to 35 seconds average delay) except for the Philips Hardware driveway, which has average delays of 49 seconds (LOS E) during the afternoon peak travel period.
  - ✓ Some motorists wait longer especially trying to make left turns at unsignalized locations.
  - ✓ Overall average delay is reasonable based on standard traffic engineering measures.

- ✓ Arterial level of conflict ratings\* along Delaware Avenue are poor indicating frequent conflict between through traffic and traffic accessing driveways and side streets. Higher levels of conflict also negatively impact travel by pedestrians, transit users, and bicyclists and are correlated with higher numbers of motor vehicle crashes.
- ✓ The Delaware Avenue corridor is part of both the Town of Bethlehem's and CDTC's Bicycle and Pedestrian Priority Network. Sidewalks are present along the south side of Delaware Avenue for the entire length of the study area. Along the north side sidewalks are lacking from the Park and Ride/Bank of America to the Normanskill Bridge. Sidewalks are typically 4 feet wide and are separated from the travel lanes with a narrow asphalt maintenance strip. Pedestrian infrastructure improvements are needed at various locations along the corridor to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- ✓ Protected pedestrian crossings and crosswalks exist at the two signalized intersections in the study area which are located 0.5 miles (or 2,600 ft.) apart. Crossing the road for a pedestrian can be a challenge at unsignalized side street intersections, and walking distances to the nearest protected pedestrian crossing can be long depending on location, resulting in low pedestrian scores for the corridor. According to the NYSDOT's Highway Design Manual suggested spacing of crossings are as follows:
  - ✓ Central business/walking districts – from 100 m to 150 m (330 ft. to 500 ft.) apart and based on density.
  - ✓ Urban or suburban residential/retail areas – based on density/ land use and not to exceed 0.4 km. (1/4 mile or 1,300 ft.)
- ✓ There are no facilities specifically oriented towards bicycle travel along Delaware Avenue. The limited shoulder width makes bicyclists share the road in the travel lane for the majority of the corridor. Less confident bicyclists use the sidewalks. As a result, the calculated bicycle level-of-service or comfort level is poor along the entire length of the corridor. Motor vehicle travel speeds, the volume of traffic, and the lack of space for bicycles, contribute to the low ratings.
- ✓ Traffic crashes within the study area number 213 for the most recent five year period and crash rates exceeded the statewide average for similar roadway facilities. There were no fatalities but 23% of crashes resulted in injuries. Nine (9) of the 213 crashes involved bicyclists or pedestrians. Together, right-angle and rear-end crashes make up the majority of crashes (25% and 20%, respectively).
- ✓ The speed limit within the study area is 40 mph, except within the 30 mph school zone around Elsmere School. Motor vehicle travel speeds along the corridor mostly adhere to the 40 mph speed limit in the section between Elsmere Avenue and Delaware Plaza. Speeds are higher in the section between Delaware Plaza and the Normanskill. Immediately beyond the study area in both directions, the posted speed limit is lower (30 mph entering the Hamlet of Delmar to the west, and 30 mph entering the City of Albany to the east).

*\* Arterial level of conflict or LOC ratings compare the number and spacing between driveways along a roadway to its traffic volume – the more frequent the number of driveways and the higher the traffic volume, the poorer the rating.*

**To read the full Existing Conditions Report and to learn more about the study please visit the project website [www.DelawareAveCompleteStreets.com](http://www.DelawareAveCompleteStreets.com)**