

Freight White Paper – Summary of “What is New”

Freight and goods movement in metropolitan regions is complex and does not lend itself to simple fixes. Trucks on area roadways and trains on the region’s railroads may pass through the Capital District without stopping, contributing to costs in terms of wear on infrastructure, congestion, emissions, and safety hazards without creating a direct benefit. Other trips that either begin or end at locations in the region provide the goods movement necessary to support local industries that do business beyond CDTC’s four counties. These trips include air and maritime cargo. Many truck trips travel entirely within the Capital District, moving goods from distribution centers to retail establishments, healthcare centers, or educational institutions.

In 2015, CDTC developed a Freight and Goods Movement Study to better understand the role and profile of freight transportation throughout the region. In 2016, the CDTC Policy Board adopted the Regional Freight Plan (“Freight Plan”). The Freight Plan helps guide CDTC and its members to make appropriate investments to support the efficiency and safety of goods movement. For this effort, the Freight Plan’s underlying data and assumptions were considered relevant and mostly accurate. The purpose of the Freight White Paper is not to replace the Freight Plan, but rather to review and update the status keys elements of the plan as part of the New Visions 2050 process. The Freight Advisory Committee (FAC) served as the steering committee for the development of the Freight White Paper.

The CDTC Freight Priority Network (FPN) was reviewed as part of the New Visions 2050 effort. The FPN provides a logical system of routes that facilitate efficient and safe truck mobility within, to, and from the CDTC region. FPN designation is important because it provides CDTC and its constituent municipalities, counties, and State agencies with guidance on roadway investment, planning, design (e.g., clearances, turning radii), maintenance, pavement, signalization, and access management to help support freight mobility across the region. The proposed revisions to the FPN:

Proposed Removals:

- NY Route 32/S. Pearl St (I-787 to S Port Rd)

Proposed Additions:

- Port Route; S. Port Rd, Normanskill St, Raft St, and Smith Blvd (NY 32 to Port of Albany)
- NY Route 7 (I-88 to Rotterdam Industrial Park)
- Everett Rd (I-90 to Commerce Ave) and Commerce Ave

The FAC supported keeping all other roadways previously included on the FPN; see the Freight White Paper for a complete list and graphics.

The recommendations break out into two general categories: (1) Projects; and (2) Programs, Policies, and Studies:

- *Projects* involve construction, reconstruction and/or changes to physical transportation infrastructure.

- *Programs, Policies, and Studies* are non-capital initiatives that seek to employ regulatory, guidance and/or planning tools to facilitate more cost-effective and efficient use of existing and planned transportation infrastructure.

Proposed removal of projects (due to completion):

- I-87 Exit 4 Albany International Airport Access Project
- Port of Albany Expansion
- Port of Albany Cargo Handling Capacity Upgrade

Proposed new long-range projects:

- Maintain a State-of-Good-Repair on FPN Pavements and Bridges: Prioritize the construction/reconstruction of pavements and bridges on the FPN to decrease pavements classified as “poor” and bridges classified as “structurally deficient”. This “new” project replaces and formalizes a ‘policy’ recommendation from the Freight Plan (2016).
- These projects were identified in the New York Statewide Freight Transportation Plan (August 2019), and the CDTC FAC supported addition to CDTC’s long-range plan for consistency.
 - Castleton Bridge over Hudson River: Construct/ Reconstruct the Castleton Bridge over Hudson.
 - Sand Bank Track/ Schenectady Mainline relocation: The project includes relocation and reconstruction of several rail lines.
 - Port of Albany Track Rehabilitation: Track rehabilitation for heavy-lift traffic at the Port of Albany.
 - Voorheesville Runaround Track Construction: The project is needed to increase the efficiency of train switching activities at the Northeastern Industrial Park.

Proposed removal of programs, policies, and/or studies:

- FPN Bridge Improvement Prioritization – formalized (above) as part of capital projects
- I-787 Rail Relocation Feasibility Study - stakeholders have indicated this is not a feasible option

Proposed new programs, policies, and/or studies:

- NY 7 Freight & Land Use Study - Examine freight movement and operations to, from, and through the corridor, and land use implications.

The FAC supported keeping all other recommendations from the CDTC Regional Freight Plan; see the Freight White Paper for a complete list.