

# IN MOTION

Volume 11, Issue 1

September 2018



Newsletter of the Capital District Transportation Committee (CDTC)  
Metropolitan Planning Organization for New York's Capital Region

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## Quotable Quote

*"By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail."*

*-Benjamin Franklin*

## Regional Safety Summit a Success!

On June 13, 2018, CDTC held a Safety Summit related to the development of its Regional Safety Action Plan. The number of fatal and serious injury crashes has risen slowly in the Capital District since 2015 and the Safety Plan intends to explore ways to reverse that trend, particularly on locally owned roadways. CDTC invited state, regional and local government representatives, state and local law enforcement and safety stakeholders from diverse organizations such as the regions' traffic safety boards, county departments of health, and advocacy organizations such as AAA and the Motorcycle Safety Foundation to share their thoughts and exchange ideas on what the most pressing road safety issues are in the Capital District.

The Summit began with a panel discussion that included Frank Gross, VHB, Jim Mearkle, Albany County Traffic Engineer, Lieutenant Ken Pero, Colonie Police Department Traffic Safety Lieutenant, Regina Doyle, Associate Transportation Analyst with NYSDOT and Chris Wallin, City Engineer for the City of Schenectady. This diverse panel brought national, state, county, city and local law enforcement

perspectives to the discussion. Each panelist provided a summary of their work and identified what they considered the most important trends, problems, and opportunities regarding road safety. The discussion, along with a lengthy question and answer session, led to many observations including the following:

- Cell phone use related to distracted driving is under reported in police crash reports.
- Pedestrian error is commonly indicated in police crash reports but it is not broken down by what the error was or what caused the pedestrian error.
- Motor vehicle technology, especially dash board tech, has increased the number of driver distractions.
- Motor vehicles are designed to go faster, move more smoothly, and are quieter than ever before- people are probably driving faster without realizing it.
- Motorcyclists represent 40% of the fatal and serious injury crashes in the Capital District.

*(Continued on page 5)*



Photo Source: CDTC



Photo Source: CDTC

## CDTC Regional Sidewalk Inventory

CDTC has recently completed a Geographic Information System (GIS)-based inventory of existing sidewalk infrastructure in all 77 municipalities within CDTC’s planning area (Albany, Schenectady, Rensselaer, and Saratoga Counties). Data collection for this project took place over four years, beginning in 2014 and completed in December 2017.

The inventory indicates presence and surface type of sidewalk, however, does not indicate sidewalk conditions. The data collected is intended to be used as a baseline or first step in assisting municipalities with developing a screening process to evaluate ADA compliance of their existing sidewalk facilities. In addition to providing a summary of the regional sidewalk mileage, the inventory will be used by CDTC internally to help in future planning projects and programs by identifying existing pedestrian facilities as well as gaps in the pedestrian network.

The following is a brief summary of some of the valuable data points collected during the inventory process.

Within the CDTC Planning Area there are approximately 1,225 miles of sidewalks. Regionally, nearly 20% of roadways have adjacent sidewalks. The majority of sidewalk infrastructure in the region is located in cities, approximately 850 miles or 69%, towns account for approximately 245 miles or 20%, and villages contain approximately 130 miles or 11% of all sidewalk infrastructure. All of the cities and villages within CDTC’s planning area contain sidewalk infrastructure. The City of Albany contains the most sidewalks within the region of any city or municipality type at 273 miles. The Town of Colonie and the Village of Scotia have the most sidewalk mileage of any town or

village in the region with 46 and 31 miles respectively. At the county level, Albany County contains the most miles of sidewalks in the four county region with 511 miles, which accounts for almost half of the entire region’s sidewalk mileage (42%).

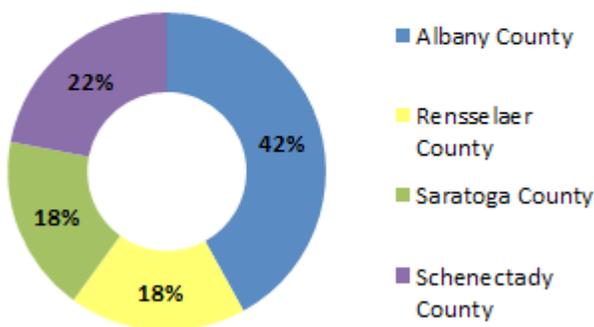
There are 8 towns within the region that do not contain any sidewalk infrastructure at all. Four of these towns are located in western Saratoga County, two are located in Rensselaer County, and Schenectady and Albany Counties each have one town without any sidewalk infrastructure.

Sidewalk infrastructure in the rural towns in the region is primarily located along NYS Routes or local streets within hamlet areas. In suburban towns, the location of sidewalk infrastructure varies greatly, but in general sidewalks are primarily located along NYS Routes, hamlets, residential developments or major commercial areas. Sidewalk infrastructure also varies in villages with some rural villages containing less than one mile of sidewalk, and other rural villages containing 10 or more miles of sidewalk.

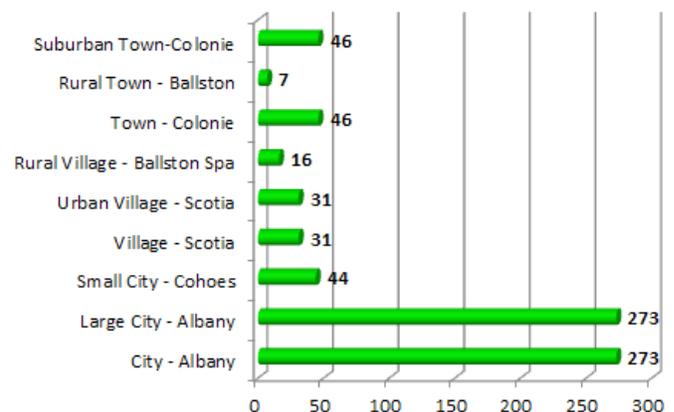
Sidewalks in the region are primarily constructed out of four types of surface material; concrete, asphalt, brick, and slate. The most prevalent material type used for construction of sidewalks in the region is concrete, making up 86% or over one thousand miles of the regions’ sidewalks.

Please visit [www.cdtcmpo.org/programs/bicycle-pedestrian](http://www.cdtcmpo.org/programs/bicycle-pedestrian) for additional information on CDTC’s Regional Sidewalk Inventory.

### Sidewalk Mileage Distribution by County



### Most Miles of Sidewalk by Municipality Type and Size



## Self Driving Cars and the CDTC New Visions Plan

Totally automated vehicles (self-driving cars) until recently were considered by many a concept for the distant future. But today there are many companies developing self-driving cars, and although the timeline is uncertain, companies are claiming that totally autonomous cars will be on the market within a few years.

There is great debate about when autonomous vehicles could be fully integrated into the vehicle fleet. There is also debate about some of the potential impacts of full implementation of this innovation. However, the following statements about potential impacts can be made:

**Potential for near zero crash fatalities, near zero crash injuries-** The safety impacts of autonomous vehicles potentially

could be more significant than near-term crash avoidance technologies already emerging in the market place. By removing driver error, virtually all vehicle crashes could potentially be prevented, including vehicle/pedestrian crashes and vehicle/bicycle crashes.

**Significant increase in highway capacity-** On Interstate highways and expressways, narrower lanes, higher speeds, and closer spacing between cars may become feasible and safe. This would mean higher capacities on highways. Crash related incidents could be essentially eliminated, and congestion could be dramatically reduced without widening facilities.

**Seniors could drive longer, people with**

**disabilities could drive-** Totally automated vehicles would mean that the driver is not needed to be in control of the vehicle, but would simply tell the vehicle where to go. Younger people could potentially “drive” as well, with parental supervision.

**Potential Impacts on Transit-** The impacts of automated vehicles on transit are unknown. It is possible that in some markets, totally automated vehicles could make transit less competitive, but it is also possible that in some markets, transit could become more competitive and attractive. For example, automated shuttles could bring people to main line transit stops.

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## Complete Streets Project Tracking

CDTC's long-range transportation plan, New Visions 2040, included a recommendation to develop a method to track progress and measure performance of complete streets. CDTC has begun to document project completion for projects receiving federal funding to construct complete streets projects, and which are listed on the region's Transportation Improvement Program. As has been the case, NYSDOT continues to be responsible for project oversight. CDTC's effort focuses on “complete streets” type elements of funded projects, including sidewalks, curb ramps, bus stop infrastructure, bike lanes, pedestrian crossing signals, and multi-use trails.

Various agencies, including CDTC, have begun to prioritize funding for projects that consider all roadway users. This effort will help to ensure that outcomes meet expectations.

Documenting project completion will enable CDTC to track actualization of complete streets elements that gave the project an advantage in the project selection process. Projects completed without the planned complete streets type elements will enable us to dig deeper to fully understand obstacles in the Capital Region. CDTC's Complete Streets Advisory Committee, made up of municipal representatives as well as NYSDOT staff, will meet regularly to review project results and make any recommendations for further action that could help CDTC overcome complete streets obstacles.

Complete Streets are appropriate to the community context and designed and operated to enable safe, convenient access for all users of all ages and abilities, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation users, motorists, and the movement of goods.



Flower Hill Trail Crossing of Rosendale Rd. in the Town of Niskayuna

Photo Source: CDTC

## Coordinated Plan Seeks Public Input

CDTC hosts the Regional Transportation Coordination Committee (RTCC) of public, private, non-profit, and human services transportation providers. This group works toward better integration and coordination of public transit-human service agency transportation services and guides the implementation of the Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Transportation Plan (Coordinated Plan). The Coordinated Plan is a federally required document that identifies transportation providers; transportation needs for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and people with low incomes; and the gaps between available services and existing need. The plan then identifies strategies and priorities to address those gaps.

CDTC's Public Participation Policy and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) guidance documents say that a Coordinated Plan should be developed with input and participation from human service agencies, transportation providers and members of the public. This fall, CDTC staff will visit local groups to better understand the transportation needs, gaps, barriers, issues, and opportunities for people with disabilities, seniors, and people with lower incomes. Staff will then draft the updated Coordinated Plan and disseminate the draft for review. It will also be posted to the CDTC website at [www.cdtcmpo.org](http://www.cdtcmpo.org).

**We need your help!** If you know of existing groups that would like to share their ideas on human services transportation please contact Carrie Ward at 518-458-2161 or [cward@cdtcmpo.org](mailto:cward@cdtcmpo.org).

## Self Driving Cars and the CDTC New Visions Plan (Cont.)

*(Continued from Page 3)*

In addition, totally automated transit vehicles could increase transit viability.

**Potential Impacts on Smart Growth-** It is difficult to predict the impact of totally automated vehicles on development patterns. It is possible that commuting a longer distance will become more stress-free and more attractive, encouraging development further away from urban centers. However, auto use will still have a cost that will increase with distance. Totally automated vehicles could also make urban centers more attractive and more accessible.

**Totally Automated Trucks-** Freight movement can also be impacted in many ways that are difficult to foresee with certainty. In the relative near term, trucks may be able to operate on Interstate highways without a driver, so that a driver would only be needed once the truck leaves the Interstate. This could allow a driver to rest while the truck is in operation, increasing the number of hours a driver can spend safely operating the vehicle, and therefore leading to significant reductions in cost.

Assessing the potential future impacts of totally automated vehicles with certainty is not possible. Nevertheless, transportation planners must consider travel patterns for the next 20 years and beyond when building projects. Given the uncertainty surrounding automated vehicles, the New Visions 2040 Plan presents the following recommendations:

**Potential for totally automated vehicles to impact highway and bridge design-** In designing for new capacity projects, intersection projects, and other infrastructure projects, 20 year traffic forecasts are considered, and for bridge projects, 30 year traffic forecasts are considered. The potential for future increased capacity resulting from totally automated vehicles should be strongly considered in highway and bridge design.

**Smart Growth-** The CDTC New Visions Plan supports sustainable development patterns and site design, urban reinvestment, and community-based land use planning. While the impacts of totally automated vehicles on smart growth are uncertain, the region should continue to develop as an attractive region with vibrant urban and suburban communities that are walkable; and rural character and open space should continue to be protected.

**Transit-** While the impacts of self-driving cars are uncertain, the New Visions Plan recognizes the importance of transit in our region and continues to strongly support transit investments.

**Complete Streets-** The New Visions Plan continues to strongly support complete streets. National organizations such as National Association of City Transportation Officials have proposed setting strong guidelines for accommodating self-driving cars with street designs that protect walkability, cycling, transit and quality of life.

## CDTC Adopts New Federal Performance Targets

Performance-based planning is not new in New York State. Performance measures have been used by CDTC for quite some time in the development, monitoring, and implementation of its regional transportation plans and programs, most recently in New Visions 2040. Specifically, regional performance measures based on plan goals and objectives were established and used during the development of the New Visions Plan to evaluate the effectiveness of alternative actions. New York State and CDTC also identified a number of measures for the monitoring of the

performance of the region's transportation system as projects are implemented. Examples of transportation performance measures that are monitored include pavement and bridge condition, level of traffic congestion and delay, vehicle and pedestrian/bike crashes, air quality emissions, and transit quality.

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act re-emphasized a framework first established under MAP-21 for monitoring the effectiveness of Federal transportation

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## Regional Safety Summit a Success! (Cont.)

(Continued from Page 1)

- More education on road safety is needed, especially in the schools.

The panel discussion was followed by breakout groups to discuss two case study local roads, one urban and one rural. The roads selected represent the typical roadway character and crash conditions occurring throughout the region. The groups discussed the existing conditions of the roadway, identified

potential countermeasures that could improve the safety for each type of user (pedestrian, bicyclists, and motorist) and identified potential tradeoffs associated with the safety countermeasures. A detailed summary of the event is available at [www.cdtcmpo.org/safetyplan](http://www.cdtcmpo.org/safetyplan) along with more information related to CDTC's Regional Safety Action Plan and a survey for additional public input.

## City of Albany S. Pearl St. Heavy Vehicle Study

CDTC staff recently completed the *City of Albany: S. Pearl St. Heavy Vehicle Travel Pattern Study*, a joint Freight and Environmental Justice effort. The primary objectives were to research and analyze heavy vehicle travel patterns along S. Pearl St. /NY 32, and to develop potential strategies to mitigate the negative impacts of heavy vehicles on residents of the study area. The project study area included S. Pearl St. /NY 32 in the South End of the City of Albany, from Corning Hill Rd. /NY 32 in the south to the I-787 on and off ramps in the north, an Environmental Justice area.

Most of the land uses along S. Pearl St. /NY 32 in the study area are commercial or industrial in nature, with the notable exception being the Ezra Prentice Homes. The close proximity of residential to commercial and industrial land

uses in the study area has created incompatibility issues. Heavy vehicles travel through, to, and from the study area to access industrial and commercial properties, via S. Pearl St. /NY 32 and I-787.

A license plate survey was performed to help understand heavy vehicle travel patterns in the study area. The license plate survey data was collected using 15 automatic license plate readers (ALPRs) at 6 locations, for one week. The ALPR data was sent to the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles (NYSDMV) to obtain registration data, to distinguish between different vehicles types, and identify heavy vehicles. The heavy vehicle data was then aggregated into routes, and assigned to the roadway network. During the same time frame, NYS-DOT Region 1 performed traffic counts at 3 locations in/near the study area.

Next, strategies were evaluated to assess their potential to mitigate the negative impacts of heavy vehicle traffic traveling along S. Pearl St. /NY 32 through the residential area of Ezra Prentice Homes. Each strategy evaluated includes a brief description of the effort, mobility implications, potential benefits, potential drawbacks, responsible parties, and next steps. The study only considered transportation-related strategies that have the potential to reduce the number of heavy vehicles, as other efforts are better suited to specifically assess air quality, land use, and housing mitigation strategies.

For more information, and a full description of each of the evaluated mitigation strategies please visit [www.cdtcmpo.org/programs/freight-goods-movement](http://www.cdtcmpo.org/programs/freight-goods-movement) to view the final report.



Photo Source: Times Union

## Bethlehem Streetscape Enhancements



Photo Source: CDTC

Construction is nearly complete on the Town of Bethlehem's Delaware Avenue Hamlet Streetscape Enhancements project. The new streetscape enhancements are located along Delaware Avenue from Adams Street to Elsmere Avenue, as well as along Adams Street from Kenwood Avenue to Hudson Avenue. The project was developed in order to strengthen Delaware Avenue's Main Street Character and provide for safe and efficient travel and access for vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users along the corridor.

The new streetscape enhancements include new ADA compliant sidewalks and curb ramps, crosswalks, curbing, on-street parking, street trees, transit shelters, and decorative lighting. One remaining item to be completed is landscaping in various places, which the Town will be completing this fall.

The project cost a total of \$3.1 million, with \$1.9 million being provided by the town and \$1.2 million being provided by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) through the Transportation Enhancement Program.

## CDTC 2018 Bicycle and Pedestrian Education Series

You are invited to the CDTC Bicycle & Pedestrian Education Series. CDTC has purchased a series of webinars and educational opportunities which it is offering to the Capital District public and private sector planners, engineers and designers at no cost. CDTC offers webinars

developed by the Association of Pedestrian & Bicycle Professionals (APBP), Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE), Pedestrian & Bicycle Information Center (PBIC), and Transportation Research Board (TRB) throughout the year. The webinars are valuable and informative in ad-

vancing transportation planning and engineering in the Capital Region. Professional development and continuing education credits are available for most webinars. The schedule below will continue to be updated as new educational opportunities are announced.

DATE	TIME	EVENT	CREDIT	LOCATION
Jul 18	3:00 – 4:00 PM	APBP Webinar: Safety Manuals – The Good Stuff	.1 CEU	CDTC
Aug 15	3:00 – 4:00 PM	APBP Webinar: Moving Beyond the Centerline – Advisory Bicycle Lanes, Best Kept Secret	.1 CEU	CDTC
Sep 19	3:00 – 4:00 PM	APBP Webinar: Placemaking in the Burbs	.1 CEU	CDTC
Oct 17	3:00 – 4:00 PM	APBP Webinar: Ten Years of Safe Routes to School – Where do we go from here?	.1 CEU	CDTC
Oct 23	8:00 AM – 4:30 PM	NACTO Training: Transit Street Design Guide	TBD	Albany Marriott
Nov 14	3:00 – 4:00 PM	APBP Webinar: Conflict Resolution: Good Sidepath Design	.1 CEU	CDTC
Dec 12	3:00 – 4:00 PM	APBP Webinar: What Do You Do? Bicycle & Pedestrian Coordinator Skills	.1 CEU	CDTC

## Performance Targets (Cont.)

*(Continued from page 4)*

investments through a national performance management approach to transportation decision-making. In implementing the performance management approach, the USDOT has developed specific highway and transit performance measures, and requirements for States, transit operators, and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) like CDTC in establishing and reporting targets for each performance measure. Nationally, the following six goal areas have been established by USDOT:

**Safety:** Achieve reduction in fatalities and serious injuries across all modes on all public roads

**Infrastructure:** Maintain pavement and bridge assets in state-of-good-repair

**Congestion:** Reduction in congestion on the National Highway System (NHS)

**Reliability:** Improve the efficiency of the surface transportation system

**Freight Movement:** Improve freight networks to access national and international trade markets

**Environmental Sustainability:** Enhance performance while protecting the natural environment

Under the national performance management framework, the State of New York is required to establish statewide performance targets for each of the six measures, and CDTC is required to establish targets for the metropolitan area. Targets are set for each of the performance areas and are compared to a base year value. CDTC is required to plan and program for achievement of those targets.

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## Capital District Clean Communities: 2018-19 Update

The Capital District Clean Communities Coalition (CDCC) has taken on two major tasks this year as part of their 2018 contract. The first task is a series of focus group meetings with alternative fuel fleet managers. These focus group meetings have given CDCC and the fleets the opportunity to speak candidly about their experience transitioning to alternative fuels and what they have learned about the vehicles. The information gathered through these meetings will help to identify technology gaps, lessons learned, and critical improvements that provide important feedback to the U.S. Department of Energy's Clean Cities research program and inform future research needs related to vehicles, in-

frastructure, and unforeseen end-use complications.

CDCC has also been working with local and regional emergency management organizations in an effort to incorporate alternative fuels into emergency preparedness and disaster recovery plans to enhance energy resiliency and reliability. A workshop has been scheduled for October 12, 2018 to present the benefits of alternative fuels, the available alternative fuel vehicles, case studies, and a demonstration of a tool developed by the National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO), called the Initiative for Resiliency in Energy through Vehicles (iREV). CDCC will de-

velop model language for organizations to include in their emergency management plans, if interested.

The CDCC, hosted by CDTC, is part of the U.S. Department of Energy Clean Cities program, a collection of over 100 coalitions across the country working to implement alternative fuels and advanced vehicle technologies. As part of CDCC efforts to foster economic, environmental, and energy security, alternative fuel fleets in the Capital District displaced almost 5 million gallons of petroleum and reduced greenhouse gas emissions by over 58,000 tons in 2017. For more information, visit [www.capitalcleancommunities.org](http://www.capitalcleancommunities.org).

## Performance Targets (Cont.)

(Continued from page 6)

There are consequences for failure to meet the targets for some but not all of the measures. In addition, performance targets are required to be incorporated into the next long-range plan, New Visions 2050.

CDTC coordinated with our regional, state, and federal partners to establish performance measure targets for the CDTC planning area. In accordance with Federal requirements, New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) established statewide targets for the safety, pavement, bridge, congestion, and freight performance measures, and released them for CDTC review in May of this year.

After careful review, CDTC agreed that these initial targets represent realistic goals of the safety, operational, and infrastructure recommendations of New Visions 2040. With the exception of performance measures related to traffic congestion, CDTC had the option to support New

York's targets or adopt its own performance targets. After careful study and lengthy discussion, CDTC's Planning Committee voted on June 27, 2018 to recommend that CDTC's Policy Board adopt the targets offered by NYSDOT in their entirety.

The table to the right shows an example of the performance rules and measures established for pavement condition that will need to be addressed within the next two years. The table shows current and forecast conditions for the State and CDTC planning area for the National Highway System.

For more information on the national performance management framework and the requirements for all performance measures please visit the CDTC performance measures webpage at [www.cdtc-mpo.org/documents/performance-measures](http://www.cdtc-mpo.org/documents/performance-measures).

Performance Targets Developed by NYSDOT and Adopted by CDTC for NHS Pavements		
<b>Federal Directive</b>		
USDOT's final rule directs States to carry out the National Highway System Performance Program, and to assess the condition of National Highway System. The goal is to achieve a state of good repair.		
<b>Performance Measures</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % NHS Interstate in good condition</li> <li>• % NHS Interstate in poor condition</li> <li>• % NHS Surface Streets in good condition</li> <li>• % NHS Surface Streets in poor condition</li> </ul>		
<b>Baseline Conditions</b>		
NHS Category	Statewide	CDTC Plan Area
NHS Interstate Good	52.20%	44.20%
NHS Interstate Poor	2.70%	1.20%
NHS Surface Street Good	20.40%	16.70%
NHS Surface Street Poor	8.30%	7.80%
<b>Performance Targets</b>		
Measure	2-year 2020	4-year 2022
NHS Interstate Good	46.40%	47.30%
NHS Interstate Poor	3.10%	4.00%
NHS Surface Street Good	14.60%	14.70%
NHS Surface Street Poor	12.00%	14.30%
<b>Notes</b>		
1. More than half of New York's Interstate mileage is in good condition. In the Capital region although less than half of interstate mileage is in good condition, fewer miles are in poor condition.		
2. The condition of surface street mileage -- both statewide and in the Capital region -- needs work. Less than one-quarter of the system is in good condition. Pavements in poor condition are approaching 10 percent.		
3. Using state-of-the practice pavement modeling tools, NYSDOT expects interstate and surface street condition to slip a bit over the next 2-4 years. The need for increased NHS bridge investment is one possible reason for the decline.		



### Capital District Transportation Committee

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#### ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

## CALENDER

Please call CDTC to confirm.

- 09/07/18 CDTC Policy Board @3:00 PM, CDTC Office
- 09/11/18 Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee @9:00 AM, CDTC Office
- 09/13/18 CDTC Community Planner Forum @9:30AM, CDTC Office
- 09/13/18 Capital District Trails Plan Open House @2:00 PM, Albany Heritage Visitors Center
- 10/03/18 CDTC Planning Committee Meeting @9:30 AM, CDTC Office
- 10/09/18 Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee @9:00 AM, CDTC Office
- 11/07/18 CDTC Planning Committee Meeting @9:30AM, CDTC Office
- 12/06/18 CDTC Policy Board Meeting@3:00 PM, CDTC Office

IN MOTION is published by the Capital District Transportation Committee as an aspect of its public outreach program. Funding for the newsletter is provided by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration as part of CDTC's Unified Planning Work Program. The contents of the articles are the responsibility of the CDTC staff and do not necessarily reflect the policies of FHWA, FTA, NYSDOT, or other agencies or governments.

#### Editing and Layout: Jacob Beeman

Comments and requests to be added or deleted from the mailing list or to receive the newsletter electronically are welcome and should be sent to:  
[newsletter@cdtcmpo.org](mailto:newsletter@cdtcmpo.org)